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## AGENDA

<b>Committee</b>	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
<b>Date and Time of Meeting</b>	MONDAY, 11 JULY 2016, 2.30 PM
<b>Venue</b>	COMMITTEE ROOM 4 - COUNTY HALL
<b>Membership</b>	Councillor Richard Cook (Chairperson) Cynghorwyr Boyle, Chaundy, Gordon, Joyce, Murphy, Dianne Rees and Lynda Thorne  Mrs P Arlotte (Roman Catholic representative), Carol Cobert (Church in Wales representative) and Mrs Hayley Smith (Parent Governor Representative)

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|----------|--|----------------------------|
|          |  | Approx<br>Amser<br>2.30 pm |
| <b>1</b> | <b>Apologies for Absence</b><br><br>To receive apologies for absence.  |                            |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Declarations of Interest</b><br><br>To be made at the start of the agenda item in question, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.  |                            |
| <b>3</b> | <b>School Organisation Proposals - Specialist Provision for Primary aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties</b> <i>(Pages 1 - 164)</i><br><br>Draft Cabinet Report for consideration.<br><br>(a) Councillor Sarah Merry (Cabinet Member for Education) will be in attendance and may wish to make a statement;<br><br>(b) Nick Batchelar (Director of Education and Lifelong Learning) and JENNIE Hughes (Senior Achievement Leader Inclusion) will present the report and be available to answer questions Members have; and<br><br>(c) Questions from Committee Members. | 2.35 pm                    |

**4 Work programme 2016/17 Report (Pages 165 - 186) 3.25 pm**

To provide the Committee with an opportunity to discuss and agree a number of potential options for inclusion in the Committee's work programme for next year.

- (a) Scrutiny Officer to briefly introduce the report;
- (b) Discussion of draft items; and
- (c) Agreement of future work programme.

**5 Implementation of the Social Service and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 (Pages 187 - 278) 3.55 pm**

Briefing on the Prevention Service together with the Early Help Strategy.

- (a) Councillor Sue Lent (Cabinet Member, Early Years, Children & Families and Deputy Leader) will be in attendance and may wish to make a statement;
- (b) Tony Young (Director of Social Services), Cheryl Chapman (OM for Early Intervention) and Angela Bourge (OM Resources) will introduce the report and be available to answer Members' questions; and
- (c) Questions from Committee Members.

**6 Way Forward 4.25 pm**

**7 Date of next meeting**

The date of the next regular meeting is Tuesday 27 September at 4.30 pm

**David Marr**

Interim Monitoring Officer

Date: Tuesday, 5 July 2016

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

**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF  
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**11 July 2016**

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**SCHOOL ORGANISATION PROPOSALS - SPECIALIST PROVISION FOR  
PRIMARY AGED PUPILS WITH SPEECH AND LANGUAGE  
DIFFICULTIES, AND WITH BEHAVIOURAL EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL  
DIFFICULTIES – DRAFT CABINET REPORT**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide Members with the opportunity to consider and review the Draft Cabinet report on the proposals for primary aged pupils with speech and language difficulties and with behavioural emotional and social difficulties. The report reflects the outcome of the consultation exercise recently undertaken following the publication of the proposals (copy attached at **Appendix A**).

**Background**

2. A proposal entitled “Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties, and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties” was approved by the Cabinet on 3 December 2015. The report’s recommendation was for the Cabinet to:

- *“Authorise officers to consult on the proposal to remodel SEN<sup>1</sup> provision specifically to respond to the falling demand for speech and language places and increased demand for provision of children with behavioural social and emotional needs through the closure of Meadowbank Special School by August 2017.*

*“This will be supported by the following proposed changes:-*

- *An increase in the capacity for mainstream support for children with speech and language needs;*

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<sup>1</sup> Special Educational Need

- *A change in the use of the Allensbank Specialist Resource Base (SRB) to provide additional places for pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties;*
  - *An increase in the number of Nurture/Revolving Door classes in mainstream schools across the city.*
- *“Note that prior to implementation of the proposal a further report will be provided to the Cabinet providing details of any objections received, the responses to those objections and recommendations for implementation or otherwise of the proposal.”*

### **Previous Scrutiny**

3. The public consultation exercise was undertaken between 11 February 2016 and 6 April 2016. During the consultation period, the Chairperson of this Committee received correspondence from a number of citizens, who requested the opportunity to address the Committee. They wished to express their views on the proposals, and for Members to be aware of the impact they felt the closure of Meadowbank would have on the lives of children with a Speech and Language Impairment in Cardiff who receive at first hand the experience of the staff, pupils and the environment in which they work in.
4. At its 17 May 2016 meeting, the Committee considered the 3 December 2015 Cabinet Report and heard the comments and concerns of those presenting to Committee. After the meeting, Members agreed to write to the Cabinet Member (copy attached at **Appendix B**), with the following comments and advice:

*“The Committee discussed in detail the Cabinet report and information provided, and agreed to raise the following issues for you to take into consideration, prior to the approval of the proposals for Meadowbank School at Cabinet in the near future. We believe that the school should remain open until:*



- a. *“A detailed Cardiff wide strategy for the provision of Speech and Language Difficulties, and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties support, is developed, consulted on and implemented.*
- b. *“An assessment of current support for children with Speech and Language Difficulties, and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties across Cardiff’s primary schools is undertaken, and is determined to be fit for purpose.*
- c. *“The professional views of all primary and secondary head teachers on the impact of pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties, and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties currently in their schools is sought and assessed.*
- d. *“Further discussions are held with the school and appropriate third sector organisations on the support and needs of children and young people with Speech and Language Difficulties, and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties.*
- e. *“That the school’s expertise is promoted as a centre of excellence or as a training centre for teachers across Cardiff and the wider region.*
- f. *“Ensure that the Council continues to provide early specialist intervention, as it is considered to be the most effective and efficient method of managing children with special educational needs.*

*“The Committee also wishes to receive anonymised data on the number and cost of any “Out of County” placements of children with Speech and Language Difficulties, and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties, as it was unable to assess from the Cabinet report the financial impact of the overall proposals.*

*“The Committee recommends that you consider the above points before you agree the final proposals for Meadowbank School, and that you inform the Committee of your views on the above”.*

### **Draft Cabinet Report**

5. The draft Cabinet report summarises the findings of the consultation exercise undertaken between 11 February 2016 and 6 April 2016. In total 253 responses were received including 52 online responses and 201 paper / email responses. Responses were received from Estyn, governing bodies of schools, head teachers, other stakeholders including The Cardiff and the Vale Speech and Language Therapists, the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, Afasic, the Welsh Language Commissioner, the Social Services Directorate, and from school staff, parents, pupils and members of the public. The formal responses are included in **Appendix 2**.
  
6. The Draft Cabinet Report recommends that the Cabinet authorises the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education to:
  - *“Carry out a further review of speech and language support in Cardiff with the aim of bringing forward revised proposals;*
  
  - *“Undertake further engagement with schools and other stakeholders in relation to early intervention for children with behavioural emotional and social needs*
  
  - *“Work with the governing bodies of Meadowbank and Allensbank Schools to ensure the needs of children with speech and language needs placed at the schools can continue to be met effectively, pending any revised proposals”.*

## **Scope of Scrutiny**

7. The scope of this scrutiny is for Members to:

- Consider that the draft Cabinet Report reflects on the points raised in the Committee's letter dated 24 May 2016;
- Pass on any observations, comments or recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education for consideration prior to the consideration of the Draft report by Cabinet.

## **Way Forward**

8. Councillor Sarah Merry (Cabinet Member for Education) and Nick Batchelar (Director of Education and Lifelong Learning) will present the report to the Committee, and will be available to answer any questions Members may have.
9. This report will also enable Members to provide any comments, concerns or recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

## **Legal Implications**

10. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure

Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

### **Financial Implications**

11. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is recommended to:

Review the information contained in the draft Cabinet Report, attached at **Appendix A**, together with information provided at the meeting and provide any recommendations, comments or advice to the Cabinet Member and / or Director of Education and Lifelong Learning prior to the report's consideration by Cabinet.

**DAVID MARR**

**Interim Monitoring Officer**

**5 July 2016**

CABINET MEETING: 14<sup>th</sup> July

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**SCHOOL ORGANISATION PROPOSALS: SPECIALIST PROVISION FOR  
PRIMARY AGED PUPILS WITH SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES,  
AND WITH BEHAVIOURAL EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL DIFFICULTIES.**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

**AGENDA ITEM: 10**

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PORTFOLIO: EDUCATION (**COUNCILLOR SARAH MERRY**)

**Reason for this Report**

1. To inform the Cabinet of responses received following the consultation on specialist provision for primary aged pupils with speech and language difficulties and with behavioural social and emotional difficulties.

**Background**

2. At its meeting on 03 December 2015 the Cabinet authorised officers to undertake a public consultation on proposals to:
  - Close Meadowbank Special School at the end of the academic year 2017.
  - Continue to maintain a Specialist Resource Base (SRB) at Allensbank School but cease admission of pupils with speech and language difficulties, unless transferring from Meadowbank Special School. Redesignate this as an SRB for pupils with autism spectrum conditions (ASC), with first admission of ASC children in September 2018.
  - Continue to maintain a Specialist Resource Base at Fairwater School but cease admission of pupils with statements for behaviour emotional and social difficulties. Redesignate this as an Early Intervention Class (EIC) from September 2018.
  - Maintain the specialist classes at Glan Yr Afon (Revolving Door) and Springwood (Nurture Class), but rebadge these as Early Intervention Classes, adopting the proposed admission criteria and operational procedures outlined above from September 2018.
  - Identify four additional primary schools (one in Welsh-medium sector, three school in the English-medium sector) in various locations across the city to host Early Intervention Classes.

## **Issues**

3. The consultation ran from 11 February to 06 April 2016.
4. Parents and others in the local community, together with staff and Governors of the affected schools were invited to respond to the consultation.
5. The consultation process involved:
  - Distribution of a Consultation Document outlining background, rationale and implications. This document has been distributed to parents, Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of affected schools, all Members and other stakeholders. (a copy of the consultation document can be seen at Appendix 1);
  - Meetings with Staff and Governors of the schools affected and a public meeting at which the proposal and the options were explained and questions answered;
  - Meetings with parent of children currently attending the affected SRBs or special school;
  - Two public drop in sessions where officers were available to answer questions;
  - Questionnaires were provided for pupils at the affected schools, to be completed with the help of their teachers;
  - A consultation response slip for return by post or e-mail, attached to the consultation document;
  - An online response form at [www.cardiff.gov.uk/21st Century Schools](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/21st Century Schools).

## **Responses received during the consultation period**

6. In total 253 responses were received including 52 online responses and 201 paper/ e-mail responses).
7. Responses were received from Estyn, Governing Bodies of schools, Headteachers, other stakeholders including The Cardiff and the Vale Speech and Language Therapists, the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, Afasic, the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Social Services Directorate and from school staff, parents, pupils and members of the public
8. Formal responses are included in Appendix 2.
9. The views expressed at Council organised meetings and on paper or electronically through the appropriate channels, have been recorded.

10. The majority view expressed during the consultation at meetings and in written correspondence was one of opposition to the proposed closure of Meadowbank Special School and re-designation of Allensbank SRB for speech and language as an SRB for autism spectrum conditions.
11. A minority of the responses also expressed a view about the proposal to open a network of Early Intervention Classes. Those who did so expressed concern about a lack of clarity regarding the purpose and criteria for these classes.
12. A summary of the main views expressed and the Council's response are set out below.
13. The points raised are set out in *italics* below. The paragraphs following these points contain the Council's response.

### **Estyn Response**

14. A response from Estyn noted the following points (for the full response, please see Appendix 2):
  - *The clear rationale for the proposal responds to the falling demand for speech and language places and the increased demand for provision for other areas of special education need.*
  - *The clear Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Strategy, which sets out the principles and high-level actions for developing SEN provision through School Organisation Planning.*
  - *The clearly defined the reasons why Meadowbank Special School should close, for the re-designation of existing SRBs and for the identification of additional primary school to host Early Intervention Classes, including one in the Welsh medium sector.*
  - *Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the educational outcomes and provision for pupils in the area.*

### **Appraisal of views expressed by ESTYN**

15. The Council acknowledges the views expressed.

### **Governing Bodies' Responses**

16. Responses were received from the Governing Bodies of Meadowbank, Allensbank, Fairwater, Glan Yr Afon, and Springwood primary schools. The full responses are included in Appendix 2.
17. The points raised are set out in *italics* below. The paragraphs following these points contain the Council's response.

18. The Governing Body of Meadowbank School expressed the following views:
- *Meadowbank has been a great resource for the whole primary sector in Cardiff and has successfully promoted integration.*
  - *The school was not adequately engaged in the development of proposals for the provision for primary aged pupils with speech and language difficulties.*
  - *The proposal would lead to the dispersal of expertise at Meadowbank, and risk losing key skills from Cardiff.*
  - *Mainstream placements are unlikely to be suitable for all primary pupils with severe needs.*
  - *The shift in parental preference has not been adequately explained.*
  - *The recently established school-based therapy service is not yet fully tested in practice.*
  - *Concerns were expressed regarding the strategy to consider Early Intervention Classes focusing on children with behavioural emotional and social difficulties in parallel with speech and language provision.*
  - *Meadowbank should preserve its status as a centre of excellence, and to further develop its links to mainstream, such as through:*
    - Day classes;*
    - Short term admissions for intensive support;*
    - Longer term support for pupils not ready or suitable for mainstream, where appropriate;*
    - Centre of expertise for training teachers and other staff in mainstream;*
    - Provision of specialist speech and language therapy services.*
19. The Governing Body of Allensbank Primary School made the following points:
- *Recognised a reduced demand for speech and language provision but consider there is a continuing role for some specialist provision for speech and language.*
  - *Allensbank would be willing to become an ASC base.*
  - *During the transition phase, the Governing Body would wish to avoid a temporary mix of needs in the base, with children with ASC and specific language impairments in one class, and a temporary mix of foundation phase and KS2 pupils in one class.*
20. The response from the Governing Body of Fairwater Primary School included the following points:
- *The school would not wish to open an Early Intervention Class. There is insufficient information provided at this stage regarding the proposed change of provision.*
  - *Concerns expressed regarding pupils with speech and language difficulties and behavioural and emotional social needs in the same class.*
  - *Concerns expressed regarding pupils in Early Intervention Classes returning to mainstream classes within 3-4 school terms.*



- *The Fairwater Primary School Governing Body wish for nursery provision to be established at the school, and for the existing SRB to close.*
21. The Glan yr Afon Primary School Governing Body expressed their views at a consultation meeting held at the school, and through a written response from one governor:
- *The Governing Body would consider hosting an EIC if they were able to negotiate on the age and severity of the pupils admitted to the class.*
  - *Admitting Year 5 and 6 pupils with severe needs to the Revolving Door class has a detrimental impact on the school but functions well when places are occupied by year 3 and 4 children.*
22. The response from the Governing Body of Springwood Primary School included the following points:
- *Consideration must be given to ensuring there is sufficient accommodation in the school should the LA decide to base other services onsite. Operating with a much reduced space may impact on the ability to accommodate an EIC.*
  - *A wish for clarity around the nature of the children who would attend the EIC.*
  - *Concern around a panel of Headteachers and staff placing children without input from a school's senior leadership or governors.*
  - *Concern that the mix of children with autism attending the school's SRB for autism) and pupils with complex emotional social and behavioural needs would be difficult to manage in one school.*

### **Appraisal of views expressed by Governing Bodies**

23. The Council notes the views expressed by the Governing Bodies that responded to the consultation.
24. The Council has worked in partnership with Meadowbank on a number of projects to develop speech and language provision including a review of secondary support for pupils with severe specific language impairments and the review and further development of an outreach service to support pupils in nursery settings.
25. The key criteria for the Early Intervention Classes would be 'children at risk of exclusion' i.e. those who are experiencing behavioural difficulties. However, the child's needs would be addressed holistically, including any speech and language needs, and any specific difficulties with literacy and numeracy that may co-exist with the child's emotional and social needs.
26. The demand for special school and SRB places for children with specific language impairments has been falling in Cardiff and other local authorities for many years. The decline in numbers since 2010 is set out in the table below, but the fall in demand was already an ongoing trend. Prior to 2006, Allensbank SRB offered 30 places. A

class was closed in 2006, in response to falling numbers, and the Allensbank class size reduced from 20 to 16 in 2011. The reasons for this trend are set out in the consultation document on pages 5-7.

*Meadowbank and Allensbank SRB numbers on roll, 2010-2015*

	M'bank	Allensbank	total pupils
2010-11	40	18	58
2011-12	35	18	53
2012-13	34	13	47
2013-14	32	16	48
2014-15	27	14	41
Nov-15	23	11	34

27. A key aspiration for the Council is to achieve staff reduction as far as possible through redeployment rather than voluntary redundancy or compulsory redundancy. Therefore, the Council is committed to maximising opportunities for school staff to secure employment in other schools in Cardiff and if the proposal were progressed, would facilitate a redeployment process. If progressed, the proposal would generate a range of new specialist posts in the city which would provide the opportunity to retain specialist skills in Cardiff.
28. The Council acknowledges that the view that there is an ongoing need for some specialist provision for children with the most complex speech language and communication needs (SLCN) and that this view is shared by the majority of respondents. The Council will therefore give further consideration to this issue with a view to retaining some specialist provision for speech and language in the future.
29. The Governing Body's suggestion that Meadowbank could develop a different role, providing part-time and short-term placements for pupils, and providing specialist support and training to mainstream, is noted. However:
- An SRB would generally be considered to be a more effective way to provide part-time and short term placements than a Special School, as the mainstream location of an SRB ensures children remain in contact with mainstream peers and good language role models.
  - SRBs are a more cost effective means of providing short term and part time placements. The cost of an SRB place is between one third to one-half the cost of a special school place.
  - In Cardiff, a comprehensive programme of training and support to mainstream is provided by the specialist teacher service in partnership with the UHB speech and language therapy service.

30. The concerns of the Governing Body of Allensbank regarding redevelopment are noted. If the proposal were progressed, the Council would work with the Governing Body to avoid any mix of needs or ages that would impact negatively on pupils.
31. It is noted that Fairwater Primary School does not wish to host an EIC. It is considered that further discussion to clarify the criteria and purpose of the EIC may reassure the Governing Body on a number of points. However, it is important that host schools are willing partners in the process of establishing the classes, and alternative locations will be considered in light of this response.
32. It is anticipated that pupils placed in the EICs would have less complex long-term needs than the pupils currently based in the SRB and there would be good prospects for reintegration. The Council maintains special school places at The Court School for children with long-term behaviour, emotional and social needs (BESN).
33. The desire of the Fairwater Primary School Governing Body for nursery provision is outside the scope of this consultation. Should the Council identify a need to establish a nursery at the school, there is sufficient space to continue hosting a specialist class.
34. Any decision to close the existing Fairwater SRB would be subject to a full public consultation, and a formal decision by Cabinet. Before undertaking consultation on this issue, the Council would need to secure suitable alternative provision for children with behaviour, emotional and social needs, such as the Early Intervention Classes, to ensure closure would not result in pupils unable to access the provision they need.
35. The Council notes the response of the Glan Yr Afon Primary School Governing Body. If the proposal were progressed there would be further discussion with the school to clarify the criteria and age range for the Early Intervention Class. The classes are intended as an early intervention and there would be scope to identify some classes for a younger age range.
36. The views of the Springwood Primary School Governing body are noted. Host schools would be represented on admission panels and would have a say in which pupils should be admitted. Consideration would be given to the mix of needs and ages in each class and whether the class is able to meet the needs of each child.
37. The Council acknowledges the Governing Body's concern that the existing SRB for children with autism spectrum conditions should not be compromised by accommodating a specialist provision for children with BESN at the school. Alternative locations for the EIC would therefore be considered.

## Primary School Headteachers' Responses

38. Primary school Headteachers provided a collective response setting out their opposition to the proposed closure of Meadowbank Special School and to the re-designation of Allensbank SRB. Separate responses were also received from the Headteachers of Meadowbank, Moorland and Springwood primary schools.
39. The full responses are included in Appendix 2.
40. The points raised are set out in *italics* below. The paragraphs following these points contain the Council's response.
41. The collective primary school Headteachers' response included the following points:
- *Meeting the needs of the most complex children has improved but remains a challenge.*
  - *The fall in demand for places at Meadowbank and Allensbank correlates with fewer statements for children with speech language and communication needs being issued in recent years.*
  - *The skills of highly trained staff in specialist environments is often the most effective way of securing the best outcomes for these learners with speech language and communication skills and challenging behaviour.*
  - *Greater emphasis should be placed on speech, language and communication assessments for children whose overt needs appear behavioural. Early support for SLCN is essential to reduce the risk of young people becoming NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training).*
  - *The high proportion of Meadowbank and Allensbank pupils who successfully reintegrate to mainstream is evidence of the high quality teaching they received and the long lasting impact of the placements. This level of reintegration is not the case for any other specialist provision within the city.*
42. The response of the Headteacher of Meadowbank School raised the following points:
- *Opposition to the closure of Meadowbank School,*
  - *Support for the redesignation of Allensbank SRB*
  - *Support for the development of EICs:*
  - *Children with severe and profound speech and language impairments (SLI) require a small class setting with experienced teaching staff that understand speech and language difficulties, specialist resources and specialised teaching approaches and strategies. Meadowbank is a centre of excellence that provides all of the above.*
  - *Attending Meadowbank School ensures that children have an effective start to their education that often leads to them being successfully reintegrated into a mainstream school.*

- *Concern expressed that there is insufficient data presented to demonstrate that children with SLI in mainstream classes make progress.*
- *Meadowbank staff, governors and parents believe that parental preference has been guided away from specialist provision by the local authority.*
- *Concern that the local authority is planning to close Meadowbank School whatever the outcome of the consultation.*
- *Concern that the closure of Meadowbank School would lead to a loss of expertise, fragmented multi-agency working, reduced intensity and specialised speech and language therapy and a reduction in choice of schools for parents.*
- *Concern that there would be no specialist provision for SLI in Cardiff. All other local authorities in Wales have some form of specialist provision for children with SLI.*
- *Meadowbank School should be retained as a 'Centre of Excellence'.*
- *Meadowbank can provide mainstream opportunities and experiences for children more effectively than Allensbank by providing this provision in a child's own local school, enabling the child to develop a supportive peer group before they transfer to secondary school.*

43. The response of the Headteacher of Springwood Primary School raised the following points:

- *Meadowbank School should not close but should address the shortage of places for pupils with behaviour issues.*
- *Opposition to the development of EICs*
- *Support for the redesignation of Allensbank SRB:*
- *Pupils with behaviour needs and pupils with speech and language, communication needs should not be in the same specialist class.*
- *The EIC classes should have a set age range as the needs of Key Stage 2 pupils are very different to those of Foundation Phase pupils.*
- *Disagrees that behaviour emotional and social difficulties are caused by speech and language difficulties.*
- *Concern that there is not enough support in place for pupils who are displaying negative behaviours*

44. The response of the Headteacher of Moorland Primary School raised the following points:

- *Meadowbank School should not close but the Council should explore whether BESN/ SLCN provision could be developed at the school.*
- *Support for the proposed development of EICs.*
- *Concern expressed that the needs of the pupils in the EICs will be too broad.*
- *Concern at the sufficiency of EIC places.*
- *There is a need to ensure an equitable system for placement across the city, recognising that the demand/threshold in some areas will be much higher than in others.*

## Appraisal of views expressed by Headteachers

45. The Council acknowledges that Headteachers consider there is an ongoing need for some specialist provision for children with the most complex SLCN and that this view is shared by the majority of respondents. The Council will therefore give further consideration to this issue with a view to retaining some specialist provision for children with speech and language needs.
46. Evidence suggests the majority of the pupils supported in mainstream are making good progress against the targets set by therapists and specialist teachers.
- In Autumn 2015:
    - a. 96% of pupils supported at School Action plus met or partially met their targets,
    - b. 97% of pupils with statements met or partially met their targets.
  - In Spring 2016:
    - c. 87% of pupils at School Action plus met or partially met their targets,
    - d. 100% of statemented pupils met their targets.
47. The number of new statements for speech and language has fallen since the funding for statements was delegated to schools in 2012, as would be expected. However, the Local Authority continues to issue statements for pupils with the most significant needs so this would not be expected to impact on demand for special school places.
48. It is not correct to state that parents have been directed away from the special school. When issuing a statement of special educational needs, the local authority provides parents with a full list of schools, including special schools and specialist resource bases, and asks parents to identify their preferred school. Parents are encouraged to visit schools before making a decision. The factors leading to fewer requests for specialist placements are set out in the consultation document on pages 5-7 and include the following:
- A national policy and expectation for inclusion, reinforced by equalities legislation and a responsibility on local authorities to increase the extent to which children's special educational needs can be met in mainstream;
  - A successful programme of capacity building and early intervention, including universal screening for speech and language for all Reception aged children, extensive training, and specialist support from specialist teachers. This has significantly improved parental confidence in mainstream support.
  - Approximately 88% of children with the most serve speech and language needs attend their local mainstream school and evidence shows that they make good progress with the specialist support they receive (see paragraph 46).

49. Local Authorities in Wales have been surveyed regarding their provision for SLCN. Four local authorities responded. Bridgend and Pembrokeshire report that they no longer maintain specialist provision for SLCN but instead support all SLCN children in mainstream classes. Rhondda Cynon Taf and Carmarthen continue to maintain SRBs for speech and language but report a fall in the demand for SRB places, resulting from improved support in mainstream and parental expectation of mainstream inclusion.
50. A survey of English and Welsh local authority websites and school lists in England and Wales identified that no other local authority maintains a special school for specific language impairment although the majority do maintain SRBs. There is a small number of Independent Special Schools for SLI in England.
51. Multi agency working in Cardiff to support speech and language is strong and is not based on any single setting. The Council does not agree that this would be fragmented if the special school closed.
52. It is recognised that Meadowbank has supported reintegration of some pupils to their local mainstream schools: this has also been an outcome for some Allensbank SRB pupils. However, a strength of a specialist resource base is that it can provide mainstream learning experiences and good language role models throughout the period of the placement, which a special school does not have access to.
53. The Council recognises the need to increase provision for children with behavioural, emotional and social needs (BESN). If the proposal were progressed, places in mainstream-based provision for BESN would increase from 26 places (at Fairwater SRB, Glan yr Afon Revolving Door and Springwood Nurture Class) to 56 places. This would include a class in a Welsh medium school.
54. The criteria for placement in an EIC, and the range of needs are clarified in paragraph 25.
55. If the proposal were progressed, further work would be undertaken to clarify the age range for each Early Intervention Class. It is anticipated that some would admit Foundation Phase children while others would be designated for Key Stage 2.
56. Many respondents shared the view that the use of 'neighbourhood panels' could lead to inequitable access to the Early Intervention Classes. If the proposal were progressed, the Council would work with all schools to agree on a fair approach to placements.
57. Based on current levels of referral, it has been calculated that 56 EIC places would be sufficient to respond to current need.
58. The Council acknowledges the points made regarding the high incidence of SLCN in children and young people with behavioural

emotional and social needs. A range of steps have been taken in Cardiff to address this including:

- Universal screening for speech and language needs in Reception.
- A collaborative approach between the specialist teacher service and the UHB speech and language therapy service to ensure every child with a diagnosed need receives appropriate support.
- Joint working between the specialist teacher services for speech and language and for behaviour support. A speech and language therapist employed by Education to work in both teams.
- Where schools refer children for behaviour support, the Partnership Area Referral Meeting (PARM) routinely requires information about the child's speech and language scores, literacy and numeracy levels and considers support needs holistically.
- Two terms of intensive support at The Court Special school to embed Speech and Language Links and to develop a range of speech and language interventions in the practice of the school.
- Arranging for the Youth Offending Service to be included in speech and language training provided by AFASIC.
- There are plans to work with Bryn y Deryn and Greenhill to embed speech and language screening and to undertake further collaborative work with the Youth Offending Service.

59. The Council will consider any further steps that may be needed to screen and support pupils who have been identified as being 'at risk' to prevent young people becoming 'NEET'.

60. Should the Council proceed with proposed development of the network of 7 Early Intervention Classes, this would require a revenue investment of £364,896 per annum (based on 2016 costs) plus an initial capital investment to adapt appropriate classrooms. The proposal is based on a reinvestment of resources which would be released from the closure of Meadowbank School. To retain Meadowbank while also opening the Early Intervention Classes, as suggested by some respondents, additional resources would need to be identified.

61. Consideration of developing Meadowbank as a provision for BESN is noted but is beyond the scope of this consultation.

### **Formal responses from statutory and voluntary sector partners**

62. Formal responses were received from Cardiff and the Vale Speech and Language Therapists, the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, Afasic, the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Social Services Directorate of Cardiff Council. The full responses are included in Appendix 2.

63. The points raised are set out in *italics* below. The paragraphs following these points contain the Council's response.



64. Therapists employed by Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board provided a collective response which included the following points:
- *A very positive collaborative working relationship has been established with the Education Service in recent years, with many joint initiatives and projects including setting up a mainstream speech and language therapy service to local primary and high schools.*
  - *Concern expressed that although many children with speech and language difficulties can be managed within mainstream settings, mainstream schools are not able to deliver highly specialised interventions to the most needy pupils*
  - *There should be some specific and specialist provision for the small percentage of children that require short-term, specialist, intensive speech and language intervention in the early years.*
  - *The school-based therapy service is currently a pilot established in response to feedback from parents and schools that they would prefer children to access this support in school, and was not intended to replace specialist provision. It has not been evaluated and therefore no conclusion has been reached on the future of this aspect of the therapy service.*
  - *The EICs do not appear to include the needs of children with severe speech and language difficulties.*
  - *Research shows that children with significant language impairment are at risk of behavioural difficulties, mental health problems, and of becoming offenders in adolescence and adulthood.*
  - *Speech Links and Language Links are screening tools only and do not provide a comprehensive language or speech sound assessment. The local authority should not over-rely on this data as an outcome measure for children with children with severe and complex language difficulties.*
  - *The increased demand for specialist provision for children with autism is acknowledged but there are concerns about whether there is scope to develop a suitable environment at Allensbank. For example, having enough space to create 'quiet' or 'sensory' areas.*
65. The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) made the following points:
- *There should be a focus on inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream settings but this should be balanced by a requirement for specialist services to be delivered flexibly in order to enable inclusion.*
  - *In an inclusive society, specialist and targeted services for these children should be integral to universal mainstream provision. The integration of education, health and social care for children means they should be able to access all the services they require-whether universal, targeted or specialist, flexibly and locally wherever possible.*
  - *In this response, RCSLT would wish to stress the need to ensure that children with speech language and communication difficulties*

*in Cardiff receive the service that they need, which includes the availability of adequate specialist places within a given area.*

- *RCSLT would wish to see the availability of specialist resource bases with the philosophy of short-term intensive support with the outcome of returning to mainstream education.*

66. The Social Services Directorate of Cardiff Council provided a response, which outlined support for the proposal. The response includes the following points:

- *Social Services would support the inclusion of children and young people within their local communities, receiving educational, social and community support as close to home as possible.*
- *It would be beneficial to consider the learning and support needs of Allensbank School as part of the change of delivery proposal.*
- *Clarification of measures being taken to support the school as an improving school are required.*

67. The formal response from Afasic opposed the closure of Meadowbank and redesignation of Allensbank SRB. The response included the following points:

- *The proposals contradict principles set out by the Cardiff Council Additional Learning Needs Strategy on page 9 of the consultation document.*
- *The proposals appear to suggest pupils do not benefit from specialist provision, which is not the case.*
- *The proposals do not offer a full and fair picture of evidence. There is insufficient evidence to support the view that children's needs are fully met in mainstream.*
- *The proposals wrongly suggest that a specialist placement is incompatible with inclusion.*
- *Gaps in knowledge and skills, and lack of capacity in mainstream, and there is no provision for increasing the mainstream service to compensate for closure, or set out a plan to retain the skills of specialist staff at Meadowbank.*
- *The proposals are vague and do not offer parents an alternative but equivalent effective learning environment, such as dual placements with a combination of full and part time places, with short, medium or longer term admission as appropriate.*
- *There is no information about how speech and language therapy will be offered as part of the proposed changes.*

68. A formal response from the Welsh Language Commissioner included the following points:

- *The proposals acknowledge the importance of language to pupils and of addressing this in any reorganisation of SEN support*
- *The changes to school organisation must ensure that any internal or external support provided by the relevant agencies is available in Welsh. Educational psychology, specialist teaching and information for parents should be available in Welsh.*

- *Staff development planning is needed to ensure a sufficient number of special educational needs (SEN) staff who are able to provide support through the medium of Welsh.*

### **Appraisal of views expressed by statutory and voluntary sector partners**

69. It is acknowledged that the school-based service currently provided by the UHB speech and language therapists is a pilot scheme and has not yet been evaluated, and that it was not set up to replace specialist provision.
70. The Council notes the comments regarding a mainstream approach to support, including the need for adequate specialist places focused on short-term intensive support. The view that there is an ongoing need for some specialist provision for SLCN is shared by the majority of respondents. The Council will therefore give further consideration to this issue with a view to retaining some specialist provision for children with speech and language needs.
71. If the proposals were progressed, a range of training and development opportunities would be provided to ensure Allensbank Primary School is able to develop the skills and practice required to support pupils with autism spectrum conditions. The Central South Consortium also provide support to the school to ensure further improvement.
72. The point made about the need to consider extension of the specialist speech and language support service to improve the support available in mainstream schools is noted. Further consideration will be given to this point.
73. The Council does not agree that the proposals contradict the principles set out in Cardiff Council's Additional Learning Needs Strategic Framework. The principles are set out on page 9 of the consultation document and the proposal is consistent with these principles. Of particular relevance are the following:
- An effective graduated response to additional learning needs is underpinned by collaboration with health, children's services and other partners.
  - With the right training, strategies and support, nearly all children with special educational needs can be successfully included in mainstream education.
  - As far as practicable, provision for special educational needs should be locally based, to reduce the extent to which children travel to access education.
74. A response to the suggestion that the role of Meadowbank School could be developed to provide a mixture of short and long terms places is set out in paragraph 29.
75. The need for staff development planning and to ensure external support services are available in Welsh is acknowledged. A range of

continuing professional development opportunities are available to staff in English and Welsh language settings. The Educational Psychology Service delivers services in Welsh and English. A Welsh language audit has identified the need to increase Welsh language capacity in the specialist teacher team and will be addressed through planned recruitment.

### **Responses of staff, parents, pupils and other stakeholders**

76. Meadowbank Staff provided a collective response and a number of individual responses were received from Meadowbank staff and from other schools.
77. The points raised are set out in *italics* below. The paragraphs following these points contain the Council's response.
78. The responses included the following points:
- *There has been good capacity building in mainstream schools which has improved the speech and language support available for all children, and for those with communication delays.*
  - *Mainstream schools do not have enough resources, staff or time to fully support children with the most needs.*
  - *There are many children in mainstream schools who could benefit from the support of Meadowbank, but parents are not aware of the school and don't know what support would be available.*
  - *The Day Class was a good way to provide intensive part time support and to assess whether a specialist placement was needed. This should be reinstated.*
  - *The central team of 4.6 specialist teachers is inadequate to support all of the children who currently need direct support.*
  - *The number of children being identified with SLCN is increasing in Cardiff: there is a need to ensure there is provision for these pupils.*
  - *Responses from other staff included the following points:*
  - *That the proposal is a cost-cutting exercise, at the expense of children with special educational needs.*
  - *That more provision for children with BESN is needed, but the criteria and purpose of EICs is not sufficiently clear.*
79. Responses from parents and other family members of pupils and former pupils of Meadowbank School strongly opposed the closure of Meadowbank School. Their responses included the following points:
- *A special school placement has been essential to meet their child's needs.*
  - *Mainstream and SRB placements would not be able to offer the level of specialist support that has been provided by Meadowbank.*
  - *Some families cite experiences of social isolation and bullying prior to their child's admission to Meadowbank.*
  - *Parents value the support for the whole family provided by Meadowbank.*

- *Families believe that parents do not have enough information about Meadowbank and urged the Council to 'advertise' the school more widely.*
  - *Many families refer to the day Class as a good way to have become familiar with the school prior to admission and suggest this should be reopened.*
80. A survey was used to seek the views of children and young people about their schools. Surveys were sent to the schools directly affected by the proposals and teachers were asked to help children to respond. The local authority speech and language team also invited a number of pupils attending secondary mainstream schools to respond.
- *All the responses reflected the children's positive feelings about their school and the support they receive.*
  - *The written or scribed responses from Meadowbank pupils reflect their positive experience of the school and in many cases the children record that they do not wish the school to close.*
81. A petition with 3078 signatories was received by the Council, opposing the closure of Meadowbank School.
82. 122 response forms were submitted opposing the proposal and expressing the view that Meadowbank School should not close.
83. Other responses from members of the public include the following points:
- *The Court Special School would benefit from better accommodation. If Meadowbank School closes, the Council should consider transferring the The Court School there.*
84. Responses were also received from Councillors, the Liberal-Democratic Group, local AMs and MPs, opposing the proposal to close Meadowbank. Their responses included the following points:
- *A recent research paper from Cambridge University argues that special schools remain a valid part of the education mix. The findings suggest that especially for children with severe learning difficulties (SLD), special school provision still plays an important role.*
  - *The belief of Afasic, the charity for adults and children with specific language disorders, in the effectiveness of special school provision provides expert endorsement of a special school model in the appropriate circumstances.*
  - *Concern that the stated demand for "inclusion" may be driven by financial considerations rather than pupils' needs.*
  - *Children should not transfer to mainstream schools before they are able to learn the necessary communication skills to successfully integrate with their peers.*
  - *The loss of expertise which the closure of Meadowbank would entail.*
  - *Concern is expressed regarding the capacity of mainstream schools to support a wide range of needs.*

- *If Meadowbank were retained for speech and language, then redesignating Allensbank for ASC would be a positive move. If the Allensbank pupils transferred to Meadowbank, this would bring the school to capacity.*
- *Speech and language impairment is a lifelong condition that cannot be resolved in a short term placement of twelve months.*
- *The proposals state that the EICs will not have any impact on standards in mainstream, but they will surely impact on the host schools.*

### **Appraisal of views expressed by staff, parents, pupils and other stakeholders**

85. The views expressed are noted.
86. A response to the view that there is an ongoing need for specialist provision for speech and language is set out in paragraph 26.
87. The assertion that parents are not informed about Meadowbank School is addressed in paragraph 48.
88. A number of respondents express the view that the Council should actively encourage parents who have named a mainstream school, to consider a place in Meadowbank School. The Council view is that such an approach would be contrary to the statutory responsibilities set out in the Education Act 1996, and the SEN Code of practice. Section 316A of the Education Act 1996 specifies that children with special educational needs should normally be educated in mainstream schools so long as this is compatible with receiving the special educational provision that their learning difficulty calls for; the efficient education of other children, and the efficient use of resources. This is also reflected in the Special Educational for Needs Code of Practice for Wales.
89. The Council is confident that there are effective processes in place to monitor the progress of children in mainstream, and ensure support is effective. However, in response to the concerns expressed by some respondents, that there may be children in mainstream schools who are not making sufficient progress and for whom specialist placement would be appropriate, the Council will request the specialist speech and language team and the UHB therapy service to undertake a review of the mainstream caseload.
90. The Day Class was funded by a Welsh Government grant which ceased in 2012. The Council continues to fund an outreach service to support pupils with speech and language needs in nursery settings and has supported the development of universal screening in Reception to ensure needs are identified and met early.
91. The speech and language specialist service is a team of 8, comprising 4.6 teachers, 3 specialist teaching assistants and an education- employed therapist who works in both the speech and

language team and behaviour support team. The speech and language team works collaboratively with speech and language therapists to support a shared caseload.

92. The Council rebuts the notion that the proposal is a cost-cutting exercise which will reduce provision for children with special educational needs. The proposal aims to reshape specialist provision in response to changing patterns of need. The majority of children with severe speech and language needs are well supported in mainstream schools and making progress there. Very few parents are requesting a specialist placement for a speech and language child. However, there are growing numbers of children experiencing behaviour emotional and social needs, for whom there is insufficient provision. If the proposal were progressed, resources released through closure of the special school would be reinvested in alternative SEN provision and support.
93. The criteria and purpose of EICs is clarified in paragraph 25.
94. The suggestion that The Court Special School could be transferred to the Meadowbank site is noted but is outside the scope of this consultation.
95. The research supporting the continued importance of special school places to support pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD) is noted. The definition of SLD or 'severe learning difficulties' is a low cognitive ability or low IQ, resulting in severely impaired understanding and ability to learn. The Council maintains a range of special school and SRB places for children with severe or profound learning difficulties, including Ty Gwyn, Woodlands and Riverbank Special Schools and the SRBs at Llanederyn, Llanishen Fach, Bryn Hafod and Marlborough Primary Schools and the Council accepts the point that special schools are an important part of the range of inclusive provision for children with low cognitive functioning.
96. In contrast, Meadowbank Special School and Allensbank SRB are designated for pupils with specific language impairment (SLI), which is defined as a disorder in the development of language, despite adequate intelligence and opportunity and in the absence of any associated disorders that may underlie the language difficulties, such as hearing loss, autism or learning disability. While SLI is a lifelong condition and may range from 'moderate' to 'severe', it is distinct from a 'severe learning difficulty' or SLD.
97. SLI is acknowledged to be a lifelong condition which would continue whatever support or placement is provided, whether this is in mainstream or a specialist placement. The aim for supporting a child with SLI in any setting is to enable them to develop strategies and skills to manage their impairment and fulfil their potential.
98. The endorsement of Afasic for a special school model for speech and language is noted. However, a range of alternative models are

described positively by specialists, including the views of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, summarised in paragraph 61, which describes a mainstream model of support, with 'sufficient specialist resource bases with the philosophy of short-term intensive support with the outcome of returning to mainstream education'.

99. A response to the concerns expressed about a loss of expertise is set out in paragraph 25.
100. The suggestion that if Allensbank SRB pupils transferred to Meadowbank this would bring the school to capacity is noted. However, this would not address the falling roll at both settings, as illustrated in paragraph 26.
101. The consultation document notes that establishing the EICs would not impact on standards. The pupils attending the classes would be dual registered and their learning outcomes and other data would continue to be recorded at their local school. There would be no impact on the data of the host school.

#### **Summary of views expressed during the consultation and proposed way forward**

102. The initial proposal set out a significant reshaping of specialist provision to respond to the changing pattern of special educational needs and the increased capacity of mainstream schools to support special educational needs.
103. The proposed reshaping would maintain the current level of investment in specialist provision and support for special educational needs, while ensuring a better fit to the current pattern of need.
104. There has been an ongoing gradual decline in the number of parents who request a specialist speech and language placement for their child, which has resulted in a steady fall in the number of funded places over many years, from 70 places prior to 2006; to 58 places in 2010, and to 34 places in November 2015.
105. The Council has responded to this shift in expectation by investing in mainstream support over several years. Work to build capacity for speech and language support began in 2010 and remains ongoing. The Council believes the fall in demand/ need for specialist places is a direct result both of parental expectations for mainstream inclusion and the capacity building work that has been done to meet needs more effectively in mainstream.
106. Alongside the changes affecting speech and language provision, there has been an increased demand for specialist provision for children with special educational needs such as autism spectrum conditions and behavioural emotional and social needs.



107. ESTYN recognised the rationale for responding to these pressures in its proposals for re-shaping provision by closing Meadowbank School, redesignating the SRB at Allensbank for ASC and developing a network of Early Intervention Classes.
108. In relation to support for speech and language needs, many respondents acknowledged the effectiveness of the work that has been undertaken in recent years to build capacity and skills in mainstream schools. This work has included a comprehensive training programme; universal early screening for speech and language needs; and a collaborative working relationship between Cardiff and the Vale UHB Speech and Language Therapy Service and the Specialist Teacher Service.
109. There is also a general acknowledgment among respondents, of the need for some change in the pattern of provision to support speech and language needs.
110. However, there is a strong consensus among stakeholders regarding the importance of continuing to maintain an effective range of specialist support for children with speech language and communication needs, and concerns that the proposal does not yet fully address this issue.
111. In particular, strong views have been expressed regarding the need to retain some designated specialist provision for children with the most severe speech and language needs.
112. Some respondents express the view that special school places should continue to form part of the range of specialist provision. Other respondents put more emphasis on the need for early intervention in the form of resource bases.
113. Given the strong views expressed by stakeholders it is deemed advisable for additional work to be undertaken to engage with stakeholders more fully prior to bringing forward a revised proposal for consideration.
114. In developing a revised proposal, the relative benefits and costs of SRB and special school provision will need to be borne in mind. There is evidence to suggest that SRBs are a more efficient and effective means of delivering short-term or part-time support. The cost of an SRB place is between one third and one half the cost of a special school place, while the mainstream location of SRBs offers additional benefits for children of ongoing contact with mainstream peers and learning experiences.
115. In relation to support for behavioural emotional and social needs, many respondents acknowledged the growing demand for specialist provision for children presenting with behavioural emotional and

social needs, and recognised that there are insufficient specialist places available to meet this need at present.

116. The Council agrees with this analysis and this factor was key reason for the proposal outlined.
117. However, there is not yet consensus about the criteria and purpose of Early Intervention Classes. Further work is therefore needed to clarify and develop this aspect of the proposal prior to bringing forward a revised proposal for consideration.
118. The initial proposal to develop a network of Early Intervention Classes was based on a reinvestment of the resources and skills that would be released by closure of Meadowbank School. In the absence of significant new investment, it would not be possible to proceed with these classes while also retaining Meadowbank School.

### **Reason for Recommendations**

119. The consultation has identified a number of views that are significant concerns for stakeholders. It is deemed advisable for additional work to be undertaken to engage with stakeholders more fully prior to bringing forward a revised proposal for consideration.

### **Financial Implications**

120. There are no direct financial implications of a decision to carry out further review and engagement and the subsequent development of revised proposals as recommended in this report. However any revised proposals developed would need to be subject to detailed financial implications as part of future Cabinet reports.
121. Meadowbank School is currently operating within its delegated budget, which, for 2016/17, totals £641,710. In addition, the school has been able to maintain a surplus balance despite falling pupil numbers. The surplus balance at 31 March 2016 was £65,774. However, should pupil numbers continue to fall, the school's ability to operate within its delegated budget would need to be considered as part of any financial implications of future decisions around the future of the school.

### **Legal Implications (including Equality Impact Assessment where appropriate)**

122. Section 316A of the Education Act 1996 specifies that children with special educational needs should normally be educated in mainstream schools so long as this is compatible with receiving the special educational provision that their learning difficulty calls for; the efficient education of other children, and the efficient use of resources. This is also reflected in the Special Educational for Needs Code of Practice for Wales.

123. Parental preference refers to the obligation under section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, which requires a local authority to make arrangements enabling the parent of a child to express a preference as to the school at which they wish education to be provided for his child and to give reasons for his preference. The preference expressed must be taken into consideration in relation to the statutory assessment process when statements of special educational needs are prepared. However, the type of provision will also be based upon the professional advice given and is individual to each child according to their needs.
124. Any proposal to establish a community school or to discontinue a community school and to make changes to special educational needs provision at a school may be considered as a regulated alteration to a school under Sections 41 and 43 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
125. Section 48 of the 2013 Act requires that any proposal in respect of a regulated alteration regulated alteration must first be consulted upon and then a formal notice published in accordance with the Schools Organisation Code.
126. Under the Code the Authority is required to take into account certain factors in formulating proposals and those factors are referred to in the text of this Report.
127. The Council also has to satisfy its public sector duties under the Equality 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.
128. Protected characteristics are:
- Age
  - Gender reassignment
  - Sex
  - Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
  - Disability
  - Pregnancy and maternity
  - Marriage and civil partnership
  - Sexual orientation
  - Religion or belief – including lack of belief
129. The information from the consultation process will need to feed into an Equality Impact Assessment. The purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment is to ensure that the Council has understood the potential impacts of the proposal in terms of equality so that it can ensure that it is making proportionate and rational decisions having due regard to its public sector equality duty.

130. The Cabinet must make a final determination of the proposals after any statutory notices are published, an objection period of 28 days is allowed, within 16 weeks of the end of the objection period.

### **HR Implications**

131. At this stage there are no direct HR implications arising from the recommendations in this report. It is important that all schools based staff who were potentially affected by the original proposal are informed of the outcome of the consultation process.
132. The implications for employees arising from the review of speech and language support; considerations around early intervention for behavioural, emotional and social needs; and any future revised proposal in relation to Meadowbank and Allensbank schools, will need to be fully considered.
133. With regard to Meadowbank Special School, the budgetary impact of falling pupil numbers has meant that the Governing Body has had to take decisions to reduce its staffing levels from 1st September 2016. It is anticipated that falling pupil numbers will lead to further reductions in staffing levels.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet is recommended to authorise the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, in consultation with the cabinet Member for Education, to;

1. Carry out a further review of speech and language support in Cardiff with the aim of bringing forward revised proposals;
2. Undertake further engagement with schools and other stakeholders in relation to early intervention for children with behavioural emotional and social needs;
3. Work with the governing bodies of Meadowbank and Allensbank Schools to ensure the needs of children with speech and language needs placed at the schools can continue to be met effectively, pending any revised proposals.

**Nick Batchelar**  
**Director**

*The following appendices are attached:*

Appendix 1 – Consultation document  
Appendix 2 – Formal responses  
Appendix 3 – Statutory Screening Tool

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

24 May 2016



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Councillor Sarah Merry  
Cabinet Member - Education and Skills  
County Hall  
Atlantic Wharf  
CARDIFF  
CF10 4UW

Dear Sarah

**Cabinet proposal Meadowbank School – Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties, and with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties**

The Committee has asked me to write to you following its consideration of the Cabinet report on the proposals for Meadowbank School, views of a number of interested stakeholders, as well as comments contained in the Estyn inspection letter and the Directorate Quarter 4 performance report, at Committee on 17 May 2016.

I was initially contacted by a number of people who were concerned about the proposals for Meadowbank School. As you are aware a Scrutiny Committee may invite anyone whom it believes can make a useful contribution to address it, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions. To this end I agreed to include an item on the agenda to enable anyone wishing to express a view on the proposals to address the Committee.

At the Committee meeting a number of parents and staff, the chair of governors and a third sector organisation expressed their wish to address the Committee and / or submit documents for the Committee to consider. The Committee heard some very passionate comments about the education and support provided by the school, and how these proposals could impact on the future outcome of pupils with speech and language difficulties and with behavioural emotional and social difficulties.

The Committee is fully aware that the consultation period had ended, however having read and considered the information in the Cabinet report and reflected on the information provided by the parents, staff and governors the Members agreed to provide you with its comments, concern and recommendations in respect of the policy and service development proposed in the Cabinet report dated 3 December 2015, prior to the final decision being taken by Cabinet.

The Committee also reflected on comments made by Estyn: *“Pupils most at risk of exclusion often have speech and language difficulties”* and also the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning in the Quarter 4 performance report *“There is a decline in performance on both National strategic indicators relating to the timeliness of processing Statements of Special Educational Needs and targets have not been met. The main contributory factors to this decline are*

- 1) *An increase in the volume of requests for statutory assessments and the associated work*
- 2) *A commitment to try to resolve issues with parents/carers which often extends timescales*
- 3) *Challenges in securing placements at specialist provisions*
- 4) *The capacity of the Education Psychology Service and Local Health Board to respond to the increase in demand for advice.*

*Action to improve performance is focused upon reducing the reliance upon statements to meet children's needs in mainstream schools, by introducing alternative provision, funding models, business processes and improved information sharing."*

The Committee discussed in detail the Cabinet report and information provided, and agreed to raise the following issues for you to take into consideration, prior to the approval of the proposals for Meadowbank School at Cabinet in the near future. We believe that the school should remain open until:

- a. A detailed Cardiff wide strategy for the provision of Speech and Language Difficulties, and with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties support, is developed, consulted on and implemented.
- b. An assessment of current support for children with Speech and Language Difficulties, and with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties across Cardiff's primary schools is undertaken, and is determined to be fit for purpose.
- c. The professional views of all primary and secondary head teachers on the impact of pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties, and with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties currently in their schools is sought and assessed.
- d. Further discussions are held with the school and appropriate third sector organisations on the support and needs of children and young people with Speech and Language Difficulties, and with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties.
- e. That the school's expertise is promoted as a centre of excellence or as a training centre for teachers across Cardiff and the wider region.
- f. Ensure that the Council continues to provide early specialist intervention, as it is considered to be the most effective and efficient method of managing children with special educational needs.

The Committee also wishes to receive anonymised data on the number and cost of any "Out of County" placements of children with Speech and Language Difficulties,

and with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties, as it was unable to assess from the Cabinet report the financial impact of the overall proposals.

The Committee recommends that you consider the above points before you agree the final proposals for Meadowbank School, and that you inform the Committee of your views on the above.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Cook', with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK**  
**Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

CC: Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
Angela Kent, Head of Achievement and Inclusion.

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# 21st Century Schools Consultation Document 2016

**Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech  
and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional  
and Social Difficulties**

11 February - 23 March 2016



This document can be made available in Braille. Information can also be made available in other community languages if needed. Please contact us on 029 2087 2720 to arrange this.





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- 20. Financial matters**
- 21. Human Resources matters**
- 22. Land matters**
- 23. Learner Travel arrangements**
- 24. Impact of the proposal on the Welsh language**
- 25. Equality matters**
- 26. Sustainability matters**
- 27. Considering community impact**

**28. What happens next?**

- Key dates
- Consultation period
- Statutory Notice
- Determination of proposals
- Decision notification

**29. Consultation Response Form**

## 1. Introduction

This consultation is an opportunity for people to learn about the school organisation proposal put forward in relation to specialist provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in Cardiff. It is your chance to ask questions and make comments that will be considered when the Council decides how to proceed.

Before any decisions are made the Council needs to ensure that it offers a number of opportunities for individuals and interested groups to make their views and opinions on the proposal known.

Our consultation process therefore follows Welsh Government guidelines outlined in the School Organisation Code 2013 and a range of individuals and groups are being asked for their views about these proposals.

Table 1 sets out details of the groups the Council is consulting:

Children and young people	All Cardiff schools
Parents/ carers	Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board
School staff	Voluntary Sector Organisations
School Governing Bodies	Neighbouring Authorities
Local residents	Welsh Ministers
Local Members/ Assembly Members/ Regional Assembly Members/ Members of Parliament	Police and Crime Commissioner
Diocesan Directors of Education	Central South Consortium Joint Education Service (CSCJES)
Trade Unions	Welsh Language Commissioner
Estyn	Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RHAG)
Cardiff and Vale College	

## 2. How you can find out more and give your views

Public meetings and drop in sessions have been arranged where the proposals will be explained. These are provided so you can ask questions and make comments that will be recorded. You may also provide your views in writing.

Information regarding this proposal will be available to view at all Cardiff maintained schools.

Details of the consultation meeting dates are given in table 2 below:

<b>Nature of Consultation</b>	<b>Date/ time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Cardiff Headteachers	4 <sup>th</sup> March, 9-10am	Future Inn, Cardiff Bay
Governors meeting	7 <sup>th</sup> March 6.45pm	Meadowbank School
Parents meeting	25 <sup>th</sup> February, 2-3pm	Meadowbank School
Staff meeting	25 <sup>th</sup> February, 3.45pm	Meadowbank School
Governors meeting	7 <sup>th</sup> March, 5.30pm	Allensbank Primary

		School
Parents meeting	24 <sup>th</sup> February, 2-3pm	Allensbank Primary School
Staff meeting	24 <sup>th</sup> February, 3.30pm	Allensbank Primary School
Governors meeting	15 <sup>th</sup> March, 6pm	Fairwater Primary School
Parents meeting	23 <sup>rd</sup> February, 2-3pm	Fairwater Primary School
Staff meeting	23 <sup>rd</sup> February, 3.30pm	Fairwater Primary School
Governors meeting	23 <sup>rd</sup> February, 4.30pm	Glan yr Afon Primary School
Staff meeting	24 <sup>th</sup> February, 3.30pm	Glan yr Afon Primary School
Governors meeting	17 <sup>th</sup> March, 6.30pm	Springwood Primary School
Staff meeting	17 <sup>th</sup> March, 3.30pm	Springwood Primary School
Drop in session (West of the city)	1 <sup>st</sup> March, 1-2pm	Ely and Caerau Hub
Drop in session (East of the city)	2 <sup>nd</sup> March, 2-3pm	Rumney Hub
Public meeting	16 <sup>th</sup> March, 6-7.30pm	Ysgol Glantaf

In addition, workshops will be arranged with pupils and young people to provide an opportunity for pupils to ask questions, learn more about the proposals and give their views.

### 3. Your Views Matter

Your views matter and we want you to tell us what you think about the proposal. You can do this by attending one of the meetings or drop in sessions above, and/or by completing the online form [www.cardiff.gov.uk/21stcenturySchools](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/21stcenturySchools)

Alternatively, contact the School Organisation Planning Team on (029) 2087 2720, by email to [schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk) or by post to Room 422, County Hall, Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff, CF10 4UW.

The closing date for responses to this proposal is 23 March 2016.

### 4. Explanation of terms used in this document

Please note the following terms used throughout this document:

**SEN** – Special Educational Needs. A child has SEN if he or she has learning difficulties which require special educational provision to be made for him or her. A learning difficulty means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than most children of the same age or that the child has a disability that needs different educational facilities from those that the school generally provides for children.

**School Action (SA)** - When the class or subject teacher identifies that a pupil has SEN they provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school's usual curriculum.

**School Action Plus (SA+)** - When the class or subject teacher and the SEN Co-ordinator are provided with advice or support from outside specialists, so that alternative interventions additional or different to those provided for the pupil through School Action can be put in place.

**Statemented** – A small number of pupils with SEN may need a place in a Special School or a Specialist Resource Base, or they may need extra funded support in their local school. These children will usually have a statement of special educational needs, which describes their needs and their strengths and sets out what support must be in place to make sure they make progress in their learning. The statement will also name the school they attend and any extra resources provided for the pupil.

**Specialist Resource Base (SRB)** - A small class (usually between 8 and 10 pupils per class) in a local mainstream school, funded by the local authority for pupils with significant SEN. Specialist Resource Base classes are taught by specialist teachers and specialist learning support assistants, but pupils also have opportunities to integrate with mainstream peers and are fully included in the life of the school. All pupils attending a Specialist Resource Base have a statement of SEN, and usually have significant, long term special educational needs.

**Revolving Door Class (RD) / Nurture Class** - Small classes similar to a Specialist Resource Base in terms of size, location and staff expertise, which can provide a short term placement for vulnerable learners. Pupils do not usually have a statement of SEN but are placed temporarily in the RD or Nurture class because they are struggling to cope in their local school due to their behavioural, social and emotional needs. Pupils attend on a temporary basis, while also remaining on the roll of their local school. Pupils re-integrate to their local school following the placement.

**Early Intervention Class** – this is the term being used to describe a new initiative in Cardiff. A detailed description of the proposed purpose, function and outcomes of early intervention classes are set out in sections 15-20 of this document.

**Statutory Notice** - A statutory notice is the formal publication of a finalised proposal, if approved by Council's Cabinet and will only be considered once the Cabinet have received a report on all the responses from the consultation. This is a legal requirement as outlined in the School Organisation Code 2013.

## **5. Background to the proposal**

### **5a. Support for speech and language needs in Cardiff**

Meadowbank School is a small Special School located in Gabalfa adjacent to Gabalfa Primary School and Ysgol Glan Ceubal, for children aged 4-11 with significant speech and language difficulties.



Historically the Vale of Glamorgan Council funded 10 places at the school and at that time the school operated at 40 places. In 2010, the Vale of Glamorgan gave notice of their intention to withdraw from this arrangement, making no new placements. In July 2015 the last Vale child left the school. The number of Cardiff pupils admitted to the school has also fallen over the last five years, and there are now 23 pupils on the school roll.

Cardiff also maintains a Specialist Resource Base (SRB) at Allensbank Primary School, for 20 pupils with speech and language difficulties. Admissions have fallen since 2010 and there are now only 11 pupils attending the base.

The Speech and Language Therapy Service provides school-based therapy to pupils in Meadowbank and Allensbank in line with their assessed level of need.

Admissions to Meadowbank Special School and to Allensbank SRB are subject to a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and are managed by the local authority in accordance with the SEN Code of Practice for Wales 2002.

In line with equalities legislation and the statutory framework for SEN, children are only placed in a Special School or Specialist Resource Base where this is:

- consistent with parents' wishes and
- if there is substantial evidence to show that their needs cannot reasonably be met other than by placement in a specialised setting.

The prospects for pupils with speech and language difficulties to be reintegrated to mainstream school are good; the majority of pupils attending Meadowbank Special School and Allensbank SRB transfer to a local high school at Year 7 and many pupils make sufficient progress to transfer at an earlier age.

There has been a trend away from Special School places for speech and language needs as part of a national trend towards inclusion. Cardiff is the only local authority in England and Wales still maintaining a Special School specialising solely in speech and language needs.

While Special School continues to be an important option for some children with complex, long term learning difficulties, there has been a growing national trend for children with moderate learning delays, speech and language difficulties and physical disabilities to attend a local school. This trend is also reflected in Cardiff.

## **5b. Changes in demand for Special School and SRB places**

Although the number of children and young people with speech and language difficulties has not fallen, demand for places at both Meadowbank Special School and Allensbank SRB has reduced in recent years.

At the present time (figures from November 2015) there are 22 pupils on roll at Meadowbank Special School. Demand for places at Allensbank SRB has also fallen from 18 pupils in 2010-11, to 11 pupils in November 2015. This trend is illustrated in Table 1 below.



**Table 1: Meadowbank and Allensbank Specialist Resource Base numbers on roll, 2010-2015**

	<b>Meadowbank</b>	<b>Allensbank</b>	<b>Total pupils</b>
2010-11	40	18	58
2011-12	35	18	53
2012-13	34	13	47
2013-14	32	16	48
2014-15	27	14	41
November 2015	23	11	34

Admissions have been falling for a few years with the result that there are now very few Foundation Phase pupils in either setting. There were no admissions to either setting in September 2015. The current age profile is illustrated in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Age profile of pupils in speech and language provision**

	<b>Meadowbank</b>	<b>Allensbank</b>	<b>Total</b>
Reception	0	0	0
Year 1	2	0	2
Year 2	4	4	8
Year 3	3	2	5
Year 4	2	2	4
Year 5	6	3	9
Year 6	6	0	6
	23	11	34

The table shows that there are now only 10 Foundation Phase pupils attending Meadowbank and Allensbank SRB, and 24 Key Stage 2 pupils.

As the number of pupils has fallen, the therapy allocation to Meadowbank Special School and Allensbank SRB has been reduced in order to provide more support for pupils in mainstream schools.

### **5c. Why has the need for Special School and SRB places fallen?**

The trend does not arise from a reduction of need, but from changing expectations and from the availability of effective mainstream support.

The following factors are explored in more detail below:

- There is a national trend towards more inclusive educational practice;
- A successful programme of early intervention and capacity building has been implemented in Cardiff's mainstream schools;
- Between September 2014 and July 2015, the therapy service rolled out a school-based therapy service, in place of the clinic-based model;
- Pupil outcomes for children with speech and language difficulties in mainstream are good.

### **5d. National trend for inclusion**

The trend away from Special School places for speech and language needs is part of a national trend towards inclusion. The majority of children attending a Special School now have severe and complex needs and are likely to benefit from a specialist education throughout their school life.

In contrast, children with specific speech and language difficulties have good prospects for succeeding in mainstream education provided they receive effective specialist support when young. Increasingly, this support can be provided effectively in a mainstream context.

Pupils who attend Meadowbank Special School or Allensbank SRB typically transfer to mainstream secondary schools. It can be very challenging for pupils to transfer directly from a small special class to a large mainstream secondary school in one step. The local authority undertook consultation with Meadowbank Special School and Allensbank SRB parents in 2012, to identify the best way of supporting transition to secondary school.

There were two main outcomes from this consultation:

- The capacity of the Specialist Teacher Team was increased in order to provide more support for transition and for secondary pupils in mainstream; and
- Both Allensbank and Meadowbank schools began working towards earlier reintegration to mainstream. Many pupils now have the chance to reintegrate to a local primary school and to establish friendships there before transferring to secondary school.

In the past, a significant factor in the choice of the Special School or SRB was that these settings were the only schools where school-based therapy was provided and where therapists and teachers worked closely together to provide support. Children who remained in their local mainstream school would be obliged to miss school on a regular basis and travel to a clinic to receive therapy. Direct contact between therapists and mainstream teaching staff was often minimal and varied from one area to another.

With the roll out of a school-based therapy service in 2014-15, pupils included in mainstream are no longer disadvantaged in terms of access to therapy and there are additional benefits to remaining in the local school:

- The child experiences fewer transitions;
- Local friendships;
- Good role models to support the child's speech and language development.

## **5e. Early intervention and capacity building in Cardiff**

Since 2010, a strategic programme of capacity building and early intervention has significantly improved the extent to which children with speech and language difficulties can be well-supported in their local mainstream school.

The Specialist Teacher Speech and Language Team provides effective support, training and advice to mainstream schools and provides direct teaching intervention to pupils with the most severe difficulties.

Using the ‘Speech Links’ and ‘Language Links’ programmes, primary schools assess the language development of all children entering Reception and use a range of strategies and interventions to address any language delays identified. This approach has been effective in improving the language skills of children by an average of 20 percentage points during the Reception year. The quality and timeliness of therapy referrals has also improved, with a positive impact on reducing therapy waiting times.

Speech Links and Language Links have been established in all but one primary school in Cardiff and are now being rolled out across secondary schools.

Joint working between Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board (CVUHB) Speech and Language Therapy Service and the Education Service has led to improved support for children with speech and language difficulties. Speech and language therapists work closely with the specialist teacher team to deliver the five stage graduated response, with a single referral pathway and a shared caseload. This approach has led to less duplication and a more efficient and effective service. The partnership between health and education in Cardiff was awarded an NHS prize for innovative practice in 2014.

**5f. School-based therapy service (introduced in Cardiff between September 2014 and July 2015)**

In 2014-15, the Speech and Language Therapy Service established a school-based therapy service, with a range of benefits:

- Children in mainstream education are no longer disadvantaged in comparison to Special School or SRB pupils, as now they do not have to travel to a clinic to access therapy;
- School-based therapy is more accessible for families without their own transport and children do not miss school in order to attend the clinic;
- There are stronger links between schools and the therapy service, with therapists providing direct advice to class teachers and teaching assistants to enable them to deliver and oversee programmes.

The school-based service was rolled out in the Vale of Glamorgan a year earlier than in Cardiff. Data collected by CVUHB demonstrates that the school-based service has led to fewer pupils being discharged early due to non-attendance at clinic. Early signs suggest that the same benefits are being realised in Cardiff.

A breakdown of the therapy caseload demonstrates that the majority of speech and language children are now being supported in mainstream schools. This is illustrated in Table 3.

**Table 3: Therapy caseload by level of need (Stage 5 being the highest level of need), June 2015**

	Meadowbank	Allensbank	Mainstream	Total
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		<b>Specialist Resource Base</b>		<b>caseload</b>
<b>Stage 5 (direct input)</b>	7	1	48	56
<b>Stage 4 (direct input)</b>	11	12	188	211
<b>Stage 3 (monitoring)</b>	7	2	249	258

### 5g. Outcomes for pupils in mainstream education

Pupils in mainstream education are achieving their measurable targets. These targets are jointly set between education and health. Progress is also measured via the Speech and Language Link screening tools and school-based attainment progress. This is illustrated in Table 4 below, which sets out the results of pre- and post- intervention screening in Reception.

**Table 4: Data showing the increase in reception age pupils with age appropriate Language Skills and the progress they make over the academic year**

<b>Year</b>	<b>2010- 2011</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>
<b>Pre Screen</b>	63.8%	57.2%	69%	63.8%	67.5%
<b>Post Screen</b>	84%	80.1%	83%	83.7%	84.9%
<b>% point increase</b>	20.2	22.9	14	19.9	17.4

### 6. Changing need for Special School, Specialist Resource Base and early intervention provision for other areas of SEN

A review of specialist provision for pupils with SEN was completed in 2013. This identified a number of priorities for future development of Special School and SRB provision, including the need to create additional places for:

- Complex learning difficulties
- Autism Spectrum Conditions
- Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties

Demand for Special School or SRB places for primary aged children presenting with challenging behaviours has increased over the last two years. In 2014-15 there was a 30% increase in the number of new statements for this area of need.

In March 2014 a focus group of Headteachers, health professionals, children's services and parent partnership representatives was consulted on the priorities for future development of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties provision in Cardiff.

There was consensus on the need for:

- Additional capacity for early intervention such as Nurture Classes and Revolving Door classes;
- Greater emphasis on the underlying needs experienced by this group including: mental health and medical needs; speech and language difficulties; literacy and numeracy delays.

Extending capacity for early intervention for pupils with behavioural emotional and social difficulties is therefore a high priority for Cardiff. The need to plan for future expansion of provision for Autism Spectrum Conditions and for complex learning difficulties is also a priority.

## **7. A Strategic Approach to Improving SEN Provision**

In 2015, the Education Strategic Group discussed and agreed an Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Strategy which sets out the principles and high level actions for developing SEN provision through School Organisation Planning.

The Strategy sets out the following principles:

- All children should have access to an appropriate education that affords them the opportunity to achieve their personal potential.
- An inclusive approach to education incorporates the views of parents and children, and recognises the wider needs of vulnerable families.
- An effective graduated response to additional learning needs is underpinned by collaboration with health, children's services and other partners.
- With the right training, strategies and support, nearly all children with special educational needs can be successfully included in mainstream education.
- Children in Welsh and English medium education should have equitable access to specialist learning provision.
- As far as practicable, provision for special educational needs should be locally based, to reduce the extent to which children travel to access education.
- Mainstream education will not always be right for every child all of the time: a high quality range of Learning Resource Bases and Special Schools should be maintained in order to offer excellence and choice for all children.
- Special Schools should function as 'Centres of Excellence' providing a high quality learning environment for children with a complex range of needs, and sharing expertise with their mainstream partners.
- The interests of all pupils must be safeguarded.

These principles underpin the current proposal.

## **8. Early Intervention Classes**

Cardiff Council is therefore proposing to develop a network of 7 Early Intervention Classes across the city. This would significantly increase capacity to support primary aged pupils who are vulnerable to exclusion due to their social emotional difficulties.

The goal would be for each of the six neighbourhood areas to have an Early Intervention Class to provide places for children in the Neighbourhood. In addition, a Welsh medium EIC would provide places for children in the Welsh medium sector.

The existing 'Revolving Door' class at Glan yr Afon Primary School, the Specialist Resource Base at Fairwater Primary School and the 'Nurture Class' at Springwood Primary School would cease to operate as they do at present and become part of the network of Early Intervention Classes.

In addition the Local Authority would establish four new Early Intervention Classes including one in a Welsh medium school.

### **8a. Purpose of an Early Intervention Class**

- To provide intensive assessment and short term support for children displaying significant difficulties due to attachment disorders; language, literacy and numeracy delays; poor social skills and understanding; challenging social circumstances; emotional difficulties.
- Work in collaboration with parents/ carers, educational psychology, specialist support services, health, children's services and other partners.
- Establish and implement an Individual Development Plan.
- Work in partnership with the child's local school to enable successful reintegration.
- Support the development of positive relationships between home and school.

### **8b. Processes**

- Placement decisions will be made by panels of Headteachers and professionals.
- Consent of parent/ carers must be obtained before a referral is made.
- The views of parents/ carers and the child must be sought and will inform the placement decision.

### **8c. Criteria**

Placement in an Early Intervention Class will be considered when there is evidence that:

- Despite sustained, relevant and purposeful action to support them, the child is unable to settle and learn in a mainstream classroom.
- The child has good potential for reintegrating and succeeding in mainstream with the right support.

### **8d. Operation**

- Children will be dual registered in their local school and the EIC school.

- Placements will be for 3-4 terms, with phased reintegration undertaken over the course of the placement.
- Ongoing multi disciplinary assessment to identify the child's strengths and needs.
- Every child will have an Individual Development Plan.
- Team Around the Family plans where appropriate.
- A plan for supporting and developing capacity at the local school, to enable successful reintegration.
- The local school will contribute to cost of the placement.
- Educational Psychology Service and Specialist Teacher Services will contribute to assessments, support and advice to both the EIC school and the local school, provide training and support to the local school as identified in plans.

### **8e. Neighbourhood Approach**

It is anticipated that once the full network of 7 EICs is in place, they will operate on a locality basis, providing places for children within the neighbourhood and reducing the need for children to travel long distances to access specialist support.

### **9. The proposal**

To respond to the falling demand for speech and language places and the increased demand for provision for other areas of special educational need, the Council is now consulting on the following proposals:

1. Close Meadowbank Special School at the end of the academic year 2017. In consultation with parents, the 11 remaining pupils would be offered places at Allensbank Specialist Resource Base (SRB) or in a mainstream local school with funded support.
2. Continue to maintain a Specialist Resource Base (SRB) at Allensbank but cease admission of pupils with speech and language difficulties, unless transferring from Meadowbank Special School. Redesignate this as an SRB for pupils with autism spectrum conditions, with first admission of ASC children in September 2018.
3. Continue to maintain a Specialist Resource Base (SRB) at Fairwater but cease admission of pupils with statements for behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Redesignate this as an Early Intervention Class from September 2018.
4. Maintain the specialist classes at Glan Yr Afon (Revolving Door) and Springwood (Nurture Class), but rebadge these as Early Intervention Classes, adopting the proposed admission criteria and operational procedures outlined above from September 2018.
5. Identify four additional primary schools (one in Welsh medium sector, three schools in English medium sector) in various locations across the city, to host Early Intervention Classes. Consideration will need to be given to availability of suitable accommodation and distribution of schools across the city. Further

consultation with named schools will be needed before a final decision could be reached.

## 10. School Capacities, Condition and Suitability of School Buildings

Table 5 below provides details of school capacities and information regarding the condition and suitability of school buildings

<b>Capacity, condition and suitability of schools affected by the proposals</b>				
Name of School/Age Range	Language medium/ Category of school	Condition Category as identified by 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Survey	Current Published Capacity (age 4-11)	Published Capacity (nursery part-time places)
Meadowbank School (4-11)	English-medium (Special)	Satisfactory	40	0
Allensbank Primary School (3-11)	English-medium (Community)	Satisfactory	300	64
Fairwater Primary School (4-11)	English-medium (Community)	Satisfactory	283	0
Glan yr Afon Primary School (3-11)	English-medium (Community)	Satisfactory	292	64
Springwood Primary School (3-11)	English-medium (Community)	Poor	420	48

## 11. Location of Schools affected by the proposals

The location of each of the above schools can be seen on the map below:





**12. How would other schools be affected?**

The proposal would reduce the number of special school places available, however this is not expected to impact on access to or the quality of provision available.

It is anticipated that the proposal would have no effect on the number of pupils on roll at Allensbank Primary, Fairwater Primary, Glan yr Afon Primary or Springwood Primary.

**Table 6 below illustrates the number of pupils on roll at schools affected by the proposals and the projected number of pupils on roll should the proposals proceed/not proceed**

School	January 2010 (NOR)	January 2011 (NOR)	January 2012 (NOR)	January 2013 (NOR)	January 2014 (NOR)	January 2015 (NOR)	2015/2016 Projection	2016/2017 Projection	2017/2018 Projection	2018/2019 Projection	2019/2020 Projection
Meadowbank School	41	40	35	34	30	29	23	17	11	9	6
Allensbank Primary School	139	165	218	231	242	252	267	270	286	272	267
Fairwater Primary School	206	216	205	201	211	205	227	233	229	229	217
Glan yr Afon Primary School	152	143	138	134	151	156	163	178	181	173	168
Springwood Primary School	160	154	129	160	158	178	177	186	176	183	173

### 13. Interim arrangements

Changes would be carefully planned in consultation with parents and professionals to take account of the needs of pupils attending each of the affected settings, to minimise disruption to their learning and to take full account of parental views.

#### Meadowbank pupils

The proposed closure date for Meadowbank Special School is the end of the academic year 2017. The majority of current pupils would have transferred to secondary school or reintegrated to a mainstream primary by that date. Remaining pupils would be offered a range of options, depending on their needs and on parents' views.

The options would include:

- Transfer to the SRB at Allensbank, which will continue to be a speech and language SRB until the current pupils have transferred to secondary school.
- A supported programme of reintegration to their local mainstream school. This would include funded additional support from an appropriately trained Teaching Assistant, school-based therapy if this continues to be an assessed need; support from the Specialist Teacher Service. Many Meadowbank pupils have taken this step over the last few years and it has proved more successful and an easier transition for the pupil than reintegrating to mainstream education at the end of year 6.

#### Allensbank Specialist Resource Base pupils

The proposed change of use of the SRB at Allensbank Primary School would be timed to take account of the needs and ages of existing pupils. The classes would continue to operate as a speech and language specialist setting until the current pupils move on, including any pupils who may transfer from Meadowbank.

Even if all Meadowbank pupils transfer to the Allensbank place, there will be capacity to begin admission of pupils with Autism Spectrum Conditions from September 2018. This is illustrated in the table below:

Year	Projected number of speech and language pupils in Allensbank SRB	Available places
2017-18	19	1
2018-19	15	5
2019-20	10	10

During the period of transition, there may be a period of 2-3 years when the SRB would operate mixed classes of pupils with speech and language needs and Autism Spectrum Conditions. Classes for a range of needs operate successfully in many Cardiff schools and in other local authorities. However, care would be taken not to compromise the quality of support by placing pupils with incompatible needs together.

## **Fairwater Specialist Resource Base pupils**

The proposed change of use at Fairwater Primary School, from an SRB for statemented pupils, to an Early Intervention Class, could be phased in over time, with some statemented pupils continuing to be taught alongside new admissions on the early intervention programme. As the needs of all pupils would be similar, the mixed arrangements would not have a detrimental impact on the pupils.

It is possible that the processes of supported reintegration for pupils admitted on the early intervention programme, could enhance the prospects for some statemented pupils to reintegrate to mainstream schools.

## **Glan yr Afon 'Revolving Door' class**

The 'Revolving Door' class at Glan yr Afon Primary School currently admit pupils for a one term programme, after which they return to their local school or transfer to more specialist provision. There would therefore be no implications for current pupils.

## **Springwood 'Nurture Class'**

The 'Nurture Class' at Springwood Primary School currently admit pupils for a three to four term programme, after which they return to their local school or transfer to more specialist provision. This is the same placement pattern as that planned for the early intervention classes so there would be no implications for current pupils.

## **14. Quality and Standards**

The Council works closely with the governing bodies of schools to ensure that standards in schools are high, that teaching is good and that leadership and governance is strong. The Council works closely with two organisations in order to monitor the performance of schools and to support school improvement.

Estyn is the office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales. It is a Crown body, established under the Education Act 1992. Estyn is independent of the National Assembly for Wales but receives its funding from the Welsh Government under Section 104 of the Government of Wales Act 1998. Estyn inspects quality and standards in education and training providers in Wales.

Central South Consortium Joint Education Service (CSCJES) was established in September 2012. The Local Authority has commissioned the Consortium to support and challenge schools in Cardiff.

When proposing changes of this type to schools, Local Authorities are required to refer to the most recent Estyn reports, other evidence derived from performance monitoring and any other information available on a school's effectiveness.

They must also demonstrate the likely impact of the proposals on the quality of:

- outcomes (standards and wellbeing);

provision (learning experiences, teaching, care support and guidance, and learning environment);and

- leadership and management (leadership, improving quality, partnership working and resource management).

## **Estyn**

Schools are inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of an inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise standards achieved by their pupils (Estyn)

The relevant Estyn Inspection reports provide grades against Key Questions and provide schools with recommendations for improvement.

Estyn inspection carried out after September 2010, provide judgements against three Key Questions.

Each key question is provided with a judgement:

Excellent – many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice

Good – many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement

Adequate – strengths outweigh areas for improvement

Unsatisfactory – important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

## **Welsh Government categorisation of schools**

In 2014 the Welsh Government introduced a new categorisation system that considered each school's standards alongside the school's capacity to improve so as to understand the level of support that organisations such as the CSCJES need to provide to each school in order that they achieve their targets.

The categorisation system is described in Table 7 below:

<b>Table 7: Welsh Government Categorisation System</b>	
Category	What the category means
Green	A highly effective school which is well run, has a strong leadership and is clear about its priorities for improvement.
Yellow	An effective school which is already doing well and knows the areas it needs to improve.
Amber	A School in need of improvement which needs help to identify the steps to improve or to make change happen more quickly.
Red	A school in need of greatest improvement and will receive immediate, intensive support.

To determine the colour coded category as explained in the table above, schools are placed in one of four groups for standards (1-4) and for bringing about improvement (A-D) with one being the highest grouping for standards and A being the highest for improvement capacity.

For further information about the new categorisation scheme, please see Welsh Government's parents' guide to the National School Categorisation System:

<http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150119-parents-guide-en.pdf>

### **Meadowbank Special School**

Meadowbank Special School was last inspected in November 2013. The school's performance was judged to be good with prospects for improvement judged to be adequate.

In December 2014, the school was judged to have made good progress and as a result was removed from the list of school required Estyn monitoring.

### **Allensbank Primary School**

Allensbank Primary School was last inspected in December 2013. The school's performance was judged to be adequate with prospects for improvement judged to be adequate.

In February 2015, the school was judged to have made sufficient progress and was removed from the list of school requiring significant improvement.

The Welsh Government has classified the school as Red.

### **Fairwater Primary School**

Fairwater Primary School was last inspected in July 2013. The school's performance was judged to be adequate with prospects for improvement judged to be adequate.

In November 2015, the school was judged to have made sufficient progress and was removed from the list of schools requiring significant improvement.

The Welsh Government has classified the school as Red.

### **Glan yr Afon Primary School**

Glan yr Afon Primary School was last inspected in January 2015. The school's performance was judged to be adequate with prospects for improvement judged to be good.

The Local Authority will monitor the school's performance.

The Welsh Government has classified the school as Red.

## **Springwood Primary School**

Springwood Primary School was last inspected in September 2012. The school's performance was judged to be good with prospects for improvement judged to be adequate.

In December 2013, the school was judged to have made good progress and was removed from the list of schools required Estyn monitoring.

The Welsh Government has classified the school as Yellow.

### **Standards**

The Council's aim is to provide good quality SEN support in both English-medium and Welsh-medium across the city. All children and young people in Cardiff should be educated in environments that are fit for purpose, in the right place to enable the effective delivery of first class education.

The Council has in place policies to support school improvement e.g. 'High Achievement for All' and 'Achievement for Inclusion'. It is working to respond to the key principles of the School Effectiveness Framework to secure better learning outcomes and well-being for all children including those at the schools which form part of these proposals.

It is acknowledged that there are differing standards at the schools included in these proposals and support specific to the needs of each school is in place and will continue to be provided as appropriate with a view to raising standards and improving outcomes for all.

As the proposals are not proposing any changes in respect of mainstream education provision it is not anticipated that there will be any impact on the quality of standards of education or the delivery of the Foundation Phase and in each key stage of education at any of the schools.

### **Provision**

The number of pupils requiring SEN support is increasing that the changes to existing SRB provision/establishment of additional SRB provision will ensure the availability of appropriate English-medium and Welsh-medium capacity.

### **Leadership and Governance**

The Council will work with the leadership of any school affected by the proposals to develop a rigorous whole school approach to improvement planning and secure good relationships with parents and other partners in order to ensure pupils receive a high quality education.

Careful planning will take place during the proposed period of change to avoid any risk of distraction or disruption to leadership and governance that could impact on educational outcomes.

The LA has no information to suggest that the Quality and Standards of existing schools would be negatively affected by the proposals.

### **15. What are the benefits of these proposals?**

The proposal would offer the following educational benefits:

- Reduce the number of school transfers for children with speech and language difficulties, by ensuring every child can be effectively supported in mainstream education throughout their education.
- Significant expansion of Early Intervention Classes for vulnerable learners with social and emotional needs, attachment difficulties and mental health needs. This will strengthen the graduated response to SEN. It will increase the number of children who can be successfully included in their local school.
- Additional provision in the Welsh medium sector. An Early Intervention Class will supplement the SRB provision currently available in Welsh medium.
- An increased number of SRB places for children with complex learning difficulties, and with Autism Spectrum Conditions, in line with projected needs.

### **16. Potential disadvantages of the proposals**

- A small number (11) of younger pupils currently attending Meadowbank Special School would be affected by the school closure as they would need to transfer to an alternative school. However, there would be sufficient time to plan and support a transition to ensure as much consistency as possible. Parents would be fully consulted on the appropriate school for their child, and the support that would need to be in place. Places in Allensbank SRB would be available for every Meadowbank child if this is parental preference, although it is anticipated that some may choose a local mainstream school.
- A few pupils at Allensbank and Fairwater SRB's could be affected by the changes during the period of transition. Although they would not need to change school, the resource bases may begin to admit pupils with a different set of needs, while some current pupils are still attending. Care would be taken to ensure that any transition arrangements are appropriately staffed, and that the needs of each child would be appropriately met.

### **17. Risks associated with these proposals**

- Failure to secure sufficient growth in the number of Early Intervention Classes and Specialist Resource Bases to meet the growing demand for children with additional needs could affect the wellbeing and progress of some children.
- The number on roll at Meadowbank Special School and Allensbank Specialist Resource Base is falling steadily and projected to fall further. If action is not

taken, there is a risk that both settings could become too small to deliver education effectively to the remaining pupils.

## **18. Alternatives considered**

The option of keeping Meadowbank open as a speech and language Special School has been considered however this is not considered viable. The school roll has fallen consistently over the last five years and there is no expectation that the trend will reverse. This places the future of the school at risk even if no action is taken.

## **19. Admission arrangements**

Admission to Specialist Resource Bases and Special Schools are currently through a statement of special educational needs. The draft Additional Learning Needs Bill proposes changes to this statutory framework, and would replace statements with Individual Development Plans (IDPs). As yet there is no guidance on how admission arrangements will be affected, although it is likely that the process will be similar to the current system.

Temporary placement in the proposed Early Intervention Classes would be through placement panels, subject to agreement by parents/ carers. Placements would be temporary and the child would continue to be registered in their local school.

## **20. Financial matters**

All Cardiff schools are funded from the delegated schools budget which is a ring fenced account that allocates funding to each school using the Formula Funding Mechanism. The Formula Funding Mechanism is primarily based on a pupil number basis for Primary and Secondary schools and on a place basis for Special Schools and Specialist Resource Bases (SRB's).

In this particular instance, the phased reduction of the number of places at the Special School will result in a corresponding reduction in the amount of funding being provided to this school. The school is currently operating within its delegated budget and maintains a surplus balance despite falling number of places. However this may not continue to be the case should pupil numbers continue to fall. Using the revised number of places a financial profile of the school for the forthcoming medium term is required in order to establish whether or not the school will be in deficit at any point. In the event of the financial profile indicating a deficit then there will be a need to identify an appropriate source which would bridge the gap. Consideration also needs to be given to the governance arrangements of the school when financial viability becomes a clear risk.

The need for some additional places in some SRB's has been identified and the funding for these will be found from the amount released from the reduction in places in Meadowbank Special School. There will also need to be consideration of any other financial impact on schools as a result of increasing capacity in order to ensure that schools are appropriately funded. This proposal is likely to generate savings for



the delegated schools revenue budget but this cannot be effectively quantified at this stage and will need to be considered in detail.

Once identified, there will be a need consideration of the site currently occupied by Meadowbank Special School in terms of potential capital receipt or alternative use.

## **21. Human Resources matters**

A Human Resources Framework has been produced in consultation with key stakeholders including headteachers, governors, representatives of the diocesan authorities and the trade unions. It provides the basis for managing the human resources issues associated with School Organisation Planning and its purpose is to support governing bodies and staff working in schools, through a variety of strategies and with the ultimate aim of minimising compulsory redundancies across schools in Cardiff.

In the period leading up to the closure of a school, as pupil numbers reduce, the impact on the school budget and staff resources will need to be managed through the School's Redeployment and Redundancy Policy and Procedure, which has been developed in consultation with trade unions and key stakeholders. The Council will also support the Headteacher and governing body during this time, as they will need to ensure that staff continue to be supported and motivated during what may be a potentially difficult situation and the Headteacher is able to manage recruitment and retention of employees.

A key aspiration for the Council is to achieve staff reductions as far as possible through redeployment rather than voluntary redundancy or compulsory redundancy means. Therefore the Council is committed to maximising opportunities for school staff to secure employment in other schools in Cardiff and will facilitate a redeployment process.

Full support will be offered to the school staff and governing body of Meadowbank Special School by HR People Services throughout the reorganisation. This will involve attendance at consultation meetings, meetings with school staff where appropriate and the circulation of a Frequently Asked Questions document.

## **22. Land matters**

The future use of the Meadowbank Special School site would be considered should the proposal be progressed to implementation. It is expected that the site would be retained for educational purposes.

## **23. Learner travel arrangements**

Under these proposals there are no plans to change the Council's policy on the transport of children to and from schools. Any pupils affected by this proposal would be offered the same support with transport as is provided throughout Cardiff and in accordance with the same criteria that apply across Cardiff. The Council's transport policy can be viewed on the Council's website

([www.cardiff.gov.uk/ENG/resident/Schools-and-learning/Schools/School-transport/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/ENG/resident/Schools-and-learning/Schools/School-transport/Pages/default.aspx)).

There is a statutory legal obligation on the Council to provide free home to school transport to Primary school pupils who live 2 miles or more from the nearest suitable school, as measured by the shortest available walking route.

When deciding which is the nearest suitable school, the local authority must consider any disability a child has and any special educational needs (SEN).

#### **24. Impact of the proposal on the Welsh language**

It is anticipated that the proposal would have a beneficial impact on Welsh language as it would address the need for Welsh medium SEN provision.

#### **25. Equality matters**

An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out. The assessment concluded that this proposal would not adversely affect a particular group in society. The assessment will be reviewed following consultation.

#### **26. Sustainability matters**

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the proposal has been carried out in accordance with European Legislation. The assessment confirms that the proposal is compatible with the environmental objectives identified in the SEA of Cardiff's 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Strategic Framework for a School Building Improvement Programme.

#### **27. Considering community impact**

There is a need to respond to a trend away from Special Schools for speech and language needs and to increase provision for Primary aged pupils presenting with challenging behaviours without impacting adversely on the community. The following are taken into account when considering a proposal: Public Open Space, parkland, noise and traffic congestion. Officers will work with schools and any community groups to ensure that should the proposal proceed it would avoid negative impacts wherever possible.

#### **28. What happens next?**

##### **Key dates**

The feedback from this consultation will be collated and summarised, and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet. This consultation report will be available for all persons to view on the Council website and copies can be obtained on request by using the contact details in this document.

There are a number of further stages that the Council would have to go through before a final decision is made by the Council.

## **Consultation period**

The consultation period for these proposals starts on 11th February 2016 and ends on 23rd March 2016.

Within 13 weeks of 23rd March 2016 a consultation report will be published on the City of Cardiff Council website. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the issues raised by consultees during the consultation period and provide the Council's response to these issues. The report will also contain Estyn's view of the proposals.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the consultation report and decide whether or not to proceed with the proposals.

If the Cabinet decides to continue with the proposals the City of Cardiff Council must publish a statutory notice.

## **Statutory Notice**

The statutory notice would be published on the City of Cardiff Council website and posted at or near the main entrance to the school/sites subject to the notice. Copies of the notice would be made available to schools identified in the notice to distribute to pupils, parents, guardians and staff members (the school may also distribute the notice by email). The notice sets out the details of the proposals and invites anyone who wishes to object to do so in writing within the period specified.

## **Determination of proposals**

The City of Cardiff Council Cabinet will determine the proposals. Cabinet may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposals with modifications. In doing so, Cabinet will take into account any statutory objections that it has received.

## **Decision notification**

Following determination of proposals, all interested parties will be informed of the decision which will be published electronically on the City of Cardiff Council's website.

## CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM (SEN Provision 2016)

Consultation on specialist provision for primary aged pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties.

Your views matter, please tell us what you think about the proposal by:

- Completing and returning the accompanying questionnaire to the address given at the bottom of the form.
- Completing the on line response form [www.cardiff.gov.uk/21stcenturyschools](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/21stcenturyschools)
- Or if you prefer you can e-mail your views to: [schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk)

**Please note that all comments sent in writing or by e-mail must contain the full name and full postal address of the person making the comments.**

**The closing date for responses to this consultation is 23 March 2016. Unfortunately no responses received after this date can be considered by the Council.**

Consultation responses will **not** be counted as objections to the proposals. Objections could only be registered following publication of a **statutory notice**.

Any responses received can be requested under the Freedom of Information Act and may have to be made public, however any information that would identify an individual such as name and address would be removed.

Your name:

.....

Address:

.....

Postcode:

.....

Date:

.....

Your status: Parent  Governor  Pupil  Member of Staff  Other  (please specify)

.....

1. Do you support the proposal to address the fall in demand for speech and language special school places by closing Meadowbank Special School?

Yes

No

If you **do not** support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.

2. Do you agree with the proposal to respond to the fall in demand for places at Allensbank SRB by redeveloping this as a Specialist Resource Base for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions?

Yes  No

If you **do not** support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.

3. Do you agree with the proposal to convert Fairwater Specialist Resource Base, Glan yr Afon Revolving Door Class and Springwood Nurture Class to Early Intervention Classes?

Yes  No

If you **do not** support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.

4. Do you agree with the proposal to open four additional Early Intervention Classes (subject to further consultation with named schools).

Yes  No

If you **do not** support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.

Thank you for your comments

Please tick the box below if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report

Please return this form to the School Organisation Planning Team, Room 422, County Hall, CF10 4UW by 23 March 2016.

<p>This document is about changes proposed to schools in your area. You have been sent this document for you to find out more about this proposal and for you to give your views. Please tick this box if you require this information in your language and write your name, address and telephone number in English or Welsh in the large box at the bottom of the form. Please return this form to the address at the top of the form.</p>	
FR	<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Ce document est sur les changements proposés dans les écoles de votre région. Vous avez été envoyé ce document pour que vous vous renseigniez d'avantage au sujet de la proposition et pour vous de donner votre opinion.          Veuillez cocher cette case si vous avez besoin de cette information dans votre langue et écrire votre nom, l'adresse et numéro de téléphone en Anglais ou en Welsh/Gallois dans la grande case au bas de ce formulaire. S'il vous plait, retourner ce formulaire à l'adresse indiquée au début de ce formulaire.</p>
CN	<input type="checkbox"/> <p>這份文件是關於您所在地區附近學校更改的提議。該文件已發送給您，讓您更加了解這些提議，並讓你提出你的意見。          如果您需要了解這些用你的母語翻譯的信息，請勾選此框。          在表格末的大框格里，用英語或威爾士語寫你的姓名，地址和電話號碼。並請將本表格寄回該表格頂部的地址。</p>
SM	<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Warqadani waxay ku saabsantahay aragtida is bedel la doonaayo in lagu sameeyo iskuulada xaafada.          Fadlan hadaad u baahantahay faahfaahin ku qoran afkaaga hooyo ,hoos calaamadee.          Magacaaga,adireeskaaga, iyo telefonkaagaba ku qor afka ingiriisiga , AMA welshka.          Dibna igu soo dir foomka , adireeska kor ku qoran</p>
PL	<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Dokument ten dotyczy proponowanych zmian w szkołach w Pańskiej okolicy. Wysłano go po to, by mogli się Państwo dowiedzieć więcej na temat projektu oraz wyrazić swoją opinię.          Proszę zaznaczyć to okienko, jeżeli potrzebują Państwo owych informacji w języku ojczystym oraz proszę podać imię, nazwisko, adres i numer telefonu po angielsku lub walijsku w dużym okienku na dole formularza. Proszę zwrócić formularz na adres <b>podany na górze</b>.</p>
CZ	<input type="checkbox"/> <p>Tento dokument se týká změn, které byly navrženy školám ve vašem okrsku.          Dokument vám byl zaslán, abyste se dozvěděli více o tomto návrhu a abyste měli možnost vyjádřit své názory.          Prosim zaškrtněte toto políčko, pokud potřebujete tuto informaci ve vašem jazyce a napište svoje jméno, adresu a telefonní číslo v anglickém nebo velšském jazyce do velkého políčka, které je v dolní části tohoto formuláře. Prosim zašlete tento formulář zpět na adresu, která je poskytnuta v horní části tohoto formuláře.</p>
AR	<input type="checkbox"/> <p>هذه الوثيقة بخصوص بعض التغييرات المقترحة على المدارس في منطقتك . و لقد أرسلنا هذه الوثيقة إليك لكي تعلم و تتعرف على هذه المقترحات ثم تبدي رأيك فيها.          من فضلك ضع علامة على هذا المربع إذا كنت تحتاج معرفة هذه المعلومات مترجمة الى لغتك الأصلية ، ثم اكتب أسمك ، و عنوانك ، و رقم هاتفك باللغة الإنجليزية أو لغة الويلش في المربع الكبير الموجود بأسفل هذه الورقة .          من فضلك أرسل هذه الورقة الى العنوان الموجود في أعلى هذه الورقة.</p>
HD	<input type="checkbox"/> <p>यह दस्तावीज़ आपके क्षेत्र में स्कूलों के लिए प्रस्तावित परिवर्तनों के बारे में हैं। आपको यह दस्ताविज़ इस प्रस्ताव के बारे में और अधिक जानकारी देने के लिए और इसके बारे में आप आपने विचार देने के लिए भेजा गया हैं।          अगर आपको आपनी भाषा में इस जानकारी की अवश्यकता हैं तो कृपया इस बॉक्स में टिक करे, और फॉर्म के ताल पर बड़े बॉक्स में अंग्रेजी या वेल्श में अपना नाम, पता और टेलिफोने नंबर लिखे। कृपया इस फार्म को उपर दिए गए पते पर वापस भेजे।</p>



Please return this form to **Room 213, County Hall, Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff CF10 4UW** by  
**29 FEBRUARY 2016**

DR	<input type="checkbox"/>	این اطلاعات راجب عوض شدن برنامه در مکتبہا در این منطقه است. این اطلاعات برای شما روان شدہ است کہ شما بیشتر راجب این موضع بفہمید و نظر خود را بگویید. این چارخانہ را علامت بزنید اگر می خواهید این اطلاعات در زبان خودتان باشد. اسم و ادرس و تلفن نمبر خود را در انگلیسی یا در ولسی در داخل چار خانہ کلن کہ در پایان این فورم است نوشتہ کنید. خواہش یس این فورم را در ادرس کہ در بالا فورم نوشتہ است روان کنید.
GJ	<input type="checkbox"/>	આ દસ્તાવેજ તમારાં વિસ્તારની શાળાઓના દરખાસ્ત થયેલ ફેરફારો બારામાં છે. આ દસ્તાવેજ તમને દરખાસ્ત બાબત વધુ માહિતી મેળવવાં ને તમારાં અભિપ્રાયો આપવા માટે મોકલાયેલ છે. મહેરબાની કરી આ માહિતી તમને તમારી ભાષામાં જોઈએ તો આ ખાનું ભરી દર્શાવો ને તમારું નામ, સરનામું ને ટેલીફોન નંબર અંગ્રેજી કે વેલ્શમાં પત્રકના છેવાડે મોટાં ખાનામાં લખો. મહેરબાની કરી આ પત્રક મથાળે આપેલ સરનામે પરત કરશો.
KD	<input type="checkbox"/>	نه م نامه به ده رباره ی نه و گورانکارپانه به که پیشنیار کراون بو فوتابخانه کانی ناوچه که ت نه م نامه به ت بو ده نیرین بو نه وه ی ناگداری نه و پیشنیارانه ت بکه ین و بو چونی خوتمان بو روون بکه پته و ه . تکایه نه و چوار گوشه ب چوکه ده ستینشان بکه نه گه ر ده ته ویت کویبیه که له م زانبارانه به زمانی خوت بو بنیرین. ناوی خوت و نه دره سه که ت و زماره ی ته له فونه که ت به ننگلیزی یان به ویلزی له و چوار گوشه گه وره به ی خواره وه ی نه م لا په ره به بنوسه . تکلیه نه م لا په ره بنیره بو نه و نه دره سه ی له سه روی نه م لا په ره نوسراوه
PJ	<input type="checkbox"/>	ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਆਪ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਦੇ ਸਕੂਲਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਪ੍ਰਸਤਾਵ ਉਪਰ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਆਪ ਦੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਸਤਾਵਾਂ ਉਪਰ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਵਧਾਉਣ ਅਤੇ ਆਪ ਦੇ ਸੁਝਾਵ ਲੈਣ ਲਈ ਭੇਜਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਅਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਹਿਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਖਾਨੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਟਿੱਕ ਕਰੋ ਅਤੇ ਅਪਣਾਂ ਨਾਂ, ਪਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਨੰਬਰ ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼ ਜਾਂ ਵੈਲਸ਼ ਵਿੱਚ ਫਾਰਮ ਦੇ ਨਿੱਚੇ ਬੱਠੇ ਵੱਖ ਖਾਨੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖੋ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਹ ਫਾਰਮ ਉਪਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਪਤੇ ਤੇ ਵਾਪਸ ਕਰੋ।
UD	<input type="checkbox"/>	یہ دستاویز آپ کے علاقے میں سکولوں کی تجویز تہدیلیوں کے بارہ میں ہے۔ آپ کو یہ دستاویز اس لیے لیے بھیجی جارہی ہے تاکہ آپ اس تجویز کے بارہ میں مزید جان سکیں اور اپنی رائے سے آگاہ کریں۔ اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات اپنی زبان میں چاہیے تو برائے مہربانی اس خانے میں نشان لگادیں اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر انگریزی یا ویلش زبان میں اس فارم میں چھپدے گئے بڑے خانے میں لکھ دیں۔ مہربانی فرما کر یہ فارم اوپر دیے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیجوا دیں۔
BG	<input type="checkbox"/>	ইহা আপনার এলাকার স্কুলগুলিতে পরিবর্তন সম্বন্ধে প্রস্তাবিত একটি ডকিউমেন্ট। এই ডকিউমেন্টটি আপনাকে পাঠানো হয়েছে আপনার অবগতি এবং আপনার মতামত জানার জন্য। যদি এই তথ্যটি আপনার ভাষায় পেতে চান তবে দয়াকরে এই বাজেট টিক দিন এবং আপনার নাম, ঠিকানা ও টেলিফোন নাম্বার ওয়েলশ অথবা ইংরেজীতে এই ফর্মের নিচের বড় বাজের মধ্যে লিখুন। দয়াকরে ফর্মের উপরে লিখিত ঠিকানায় এই ফর্মটি ফেরৎ পাঠিয়ে দিন।

✉	Name:
	Address:
☎	Phone:



## **Estyn response to the proposal for school organisation in relation to specialist provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in Cardiff**

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

### **Introduction**

The proposal is by Cardiff Council.

The proposal is to:

1. Close Meadowbank Special School at the end of the academic year 2017. In consultation with parents, the 11 remaining pupils would be offered places at Allensbank Specialist Resource Base (SRB) or in a mainstream local school with funded support.
2. Continue to maintain a Specialist Resource Base (SRB) at Allensbank but cease admission of pupils with speech and language difficulties, unless transferring from Meadowbank Special School. Redesignate this as an SRB for pupils with autism spectrum conditions (ASC), with first admission of ASC children in September 2018.
3. Continue to maintain a Specialist Resource Base (SRB) at Fairwater but cease admission of pupils with statements for behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Redesignate this as an Early Intervention Class from September 2018.
4. Maintain the specialist classes at Glan Yr Afon (Revolving Door) and Springwood (Nurture Class), but rebadge these as Early Intervention Classes, adopting the proposed admission criteria and operational procedures outlined above from September 2018.
5. Identify four additional primary schools (one in Welsh medium sector, three schools in English medium sector) in various locations across the city, to host Early Intervention Classes. Consideration will need to be given to availability of suitable accommodation and distribution of schools across the city. Further consultation with named schools will be needed before a final decision could be reached.

### **Summary/ Conclusion**

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the educational outcomes and provision for pupils in the area.

### **Description and benefits**

The proposer has given a clear rationale for the proposal that responds to the falling demand for speech and language places and the increased demand for provision for other areas of special educational need. The proposer clearly outlines its Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Strategy, which sets out the principles and high-level actions for developing SEN provision through School Organisation Planning.

The proposer clearly defines the reasons why Meadowbank Special School should close, for the re-designation of existing SRBs and for the identification of additional primary schools to host Early Intervention Classes, including one in the Welsh medium sector. It clearly and fairly considers the benefits and potential disadvantages of the proposals. The benefits include ensuring that mainstream education can effectively support children with speech and language difficulties, that the graduated response to SEN will be strengthened, and that there will be an increased number of SRB places for children with complex learning difficulties and Autism Spectrum Conditions. In addition, there will be increased provision in the Welsh medium sector. Potential disadvantages include the small number (11) of younger pupils currently attending Meadowbank Special School would be affected by the school closure, as they would need to transfer to an alternative school. However, the proposer considers reasonably that there would be sufficient time to plan and support a transition to ensure as much consistency as possible.

The proposer has included a clearly defined list of options and risks associated with the proposal. These appear to be reasonable and focus mainly on the potential failure to secure sufficient growth to meet the increasing demand for children with additional needs. The proposer has considered suitable alternatives, including keeping Meadowbank Special School open, but gives good reasons as to why this has been discounted. It points to the view that while Special School continues to be an important option for some children with complex, long term learning difficulties, there has been a growing national (UK) trend for children with moderate learning delays, speech and language difficulties and physical disabilities to attend a local school. It maintains that Cardiff also reflects this trend.

The school currently has 23 pupils on roll compared to the current published capacity of 40. The overall building condition is categorised as satisfactory based on the Welsh Government's assessment of building condition.

The proposer has set out the pupil projections year on year until January 2020. These are very low. The proposal would reduce the number of special school places available. However, this is not expected to impact on access to or the quality of provision available. It anticipates that the proposal would have no effect on the number of pupils on roll at Allensbank Primary, Fairwater Primary, Glan yr Afon Primary or Springwood Primary.

The proposer has clearly set out admission arrangements, including a consideration of how this might be impacted on by changes to the statutory framework proposed by the draft Additional Learning Needs Bill. Consideration is given to both the SRBs and the Early Intervention Classes. The proposer suggests that Individual Development Plans (IDPs) would determine admission to the SRBs and that placement in the proposed Early Intervention Classes would be through placement

panels, subject to agreement by parents/ carers. Placements would be temporary and the child would continue to be registered in their local school.

The proposer has considered the impact of the changes on learner travel and anticipates that once the full network of seven Early Intervention Classes is in place, they will operate on a locality basis, providing places for children within the neighbourhood and reducing the need for children to travel long distances to access specialist support.

The proposer anticipates that the proposal would have a beneficial impact on Welsh language as it would address the need for Welsh medium SEN provision. It has undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment that includes a consideration of impact upon people and communities whose language of choice is Welsh. It has concluded that these proposals would not adversely affect any particular group.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The proposer notes that Meadowbank Special School was last inspected in November 2013. The school's performance was judged to be good with prospects for improvement judged to be adequate. In December 2014, the school was judged to have made good progress and as a result was removed from the list of school required Estyn monitoring. The proposer does not give details of the categorisation by the regional school improvement consortium (CSC).

The proposer has included information about the performance of schools identified as potential recipients for Meadowbank pupils should there be a decision to close the school. This information includes their inspection outcomes and their national category. The information indicates that Allensbank is categorised as a red school and that its inspection outcomes are at least adequate.

Of the schools considered to house designated or re-designated Early Intervention Classes, three are categorised as red schools (schools in need of greatest improvement and in receipt of immediate, intensive support) and one as yellow school (an effective school that is already doing well and knows the areas it needs to improve). Their inspection outcomes are at least adequate.

In relation to standards, the proposer notes that there are no proposed changes in respect of mainstream education provision. Therefore, it is not anticipated that there will be any impact on the quality of standards of education or the delivery of the Foundation Phase and in each key stage of education at any of the schools.

The information suggests that should the proposal be implemented, it is likely that outcomes and provision for pupils in the area would improve or be maintained.

Faint, illegible text covering the majority of the page, appearing to be bleed-through from the reverse side of the document.

**Phillips, Joanna**

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**From:** Sharpe, Sarah (AM Support Staff, David Melding) <Sarah.Sharpe@assembly.wales>  
**Sent:** 15 March 2016 13:28  
**To:** School Responses  
**Subject:** Meadowbank Special School - Consultation Response by the Governing Body  
**Attachments:** Meadowbank Consultation.docx

15<sup>th</sup> March 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Meadowbank Special School**

On 7<sup>th</sup> March the Governing Body met to receive a presentation from the Authority on its consultation document "Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties", and to agree a response. After a full discussion it was resolved to oppose the proposal for the closure of Meadowbank Special School. The reasons for this decision are set out below together with the Governing Body's alternative proposal.

The Governing Body is deeply concerned that the school has not been involved in a meaningful and timely way in the development of provision for primary aged pupils with speech and language difficulties. The educational data on which the Authority has based its proposals is sketchy and must pass reasonable challenge if it is to be considered robust. We note that the evidential basis of the data quoted by the Authority has not been made transparent. It is particularly disappointing that key decision makers such as the Cabinet Member for Education, Cllr. Sarah Merry, have not visited the school. This has all combined to produce proposals that seem abrupt and lacking in strategic depth. The bald statement in the consultation document that the "option of keeping Meadowbank open as a speech and language special school has been considered however this is not considered viable" (p 20) indicates a rigid top-down approach that is not open to wider participation.

Closure of Meadowbank would end the Authority's outstanding record in providing a centre of excellence for primary pupils with severe speech and language difficulties. Meadowbank has been a great resource for the whole primary school sector in Cardiff and has successfully promoted integration. Most pupils who leave Meadowbank return to mainstream schools. This innovative approach has led to an effective balance between early, intensive intervention and longer term integration which has served pupils very well. The Authority's proposals to disperse the expertise at Meadowbank seems particularly ill judged. There is no plan to retain key skills in Cardiff which will surely put at risk the Authority's past achievements in speech and language needs provision. Here, the assertion in the consultation document that "Cardiff is the only local authority in England and Wales still maintaining a special school specialising solely in speech and language skills" (p4) is partial and unhelpful. In fact, many authorities maintain specialist

provision in some form. Yet Cardiff proposes to end specialist provision and this is surely risky as mainstream placements are unlikely to be suitable for all primary pupils with severe needs.

The apparent shift in parental preference is cited by the Authority as one of the main drivers in moving to a mainstream model for speech and language need provision. This change has been rapid and has resulted in a sudden fall in referrals to the school. We do not believe that this shift has been adequately explained. Is this a result of a change of preference based on full information and consideration of the range of options? Parents, staff and governors at Meadowbank are of the view that this abrupt change in parental preference has been guided to some extent by the Authority when providing information to parents seeking appropriate support for their children's speech and language needs.

The Governing Body is also concerned that the recently established (2014-15) school-based therapy service is not yet fully tested in practice. More information on the schools based model is required as there is a fear that it will be more generic and less suitable for pupils requiring intensive therapy.

Given the lack of specialist provision for speech and language difficulties, the Early Intervention Classes will focus on children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. These difficulties are sometimes experienced by pupils with severe speech and language difficulties, but it is not a common feature. That the future provision of speech and language needs provision and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties provision have been elided in this consultation is indicative of a flawed strategy.

Meadowbank Special School has a proven track record in responding to changing needs and preferences. It was once a regional school for primary and secondary pupils and had boarding facilities. It then became a day school only, then a primary school, and has developed a range of innovative approaches to promote integration and mainstreaming. We are disappointed that this tradition of improvement and innovation is not being further developed.

After careful consideration, the Governing Body thinks that a better approach for the development of speech and language needs provision in Cardiff would be to keep Meadowbank open, preserve its status as a centre of excellence, and to further develop its links to mainstream. This could be done in a number of ways:

- day classes
- short term admissions for intensive support
- longer term support for pupils not ready or suitable for mainstream
- centre of expertise for training teachers and other staff in mainstream
- provision of specialist speech therapy services

It is our hope that the Authority will act on our recommendations and withdraw its proposal for closure, and instead retain Meadowbank Special School as a centre of excellence.

Yours faithfully,

David Melding AM

Chair, Governing Body, Meadowbank Special School





RESPONSE TO 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY SCHOOLS CONSULTATION DOCUMENT 2016

Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils

Governors accept the evidence provided by the local authority in regards to the decrease in demand for speech, language and communication placements but feel that with Meadowbank closing, there is still a demand for specialist support which Allensbank could provide.

However, Allensbank is in a good position to accommodate a School Resource Base for pupils with Autism Spectrum conditions due to its friendly and accepting atmosphere and the fact that it is a feeder school for Cathays High School where such provision exists at Secondary level thus enabling pupils to make the Primary/Secondary transition alongside some already familiar faces.

Governors are concerned that:

- The period of transition should not result in mixed classes of either:
  - (a) Foundation stage and KS2 pupils or
  - (b) Pupils with Speech and Language needs and pupils with Autism Spectrum conditions.

In the case of (a), it would be detrimental to pupil inclusion if they were not placed within their peer group

In the case of (b), the needs of pupils with Speech and Language needs and pupils with Autism Spectrum conditions differ considerably and are to some extent conflicting.

- Staff working in the Resource Base should receive adequate and appropriate training **before** the period of transition or intake of pupils with Autism Spectrum conditions to ensure the consistency and continuity needs of these pupils. This will be negatively impacted if there is the disruption of frequent supply cover to facilitate training.
- Additional accommodation and training costs should not be funded from the school budget. The school will need to consider provision within a potential ASC resource base, not only in terms of resources but also the classroom learning environment. The current SRB classes are contained with one classroom for Foundation Phase and a second class for Key Stage 2. The school utilises all other teaching spaces and consideration would therefore need to be given to the appropriateness of the building for such provision.

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to the Secretary of the Department of Education.

2. The second part of the document is a letter from the Secretary of the Department of Education to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

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10. The tenth part of the document is a letter from the Secretary of the Department of Education to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

11. The eleventh part of the document is a letter from the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to the Secretary of the Department of Education.

**Response to the Consultation Document *Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties.***

**The Governing Body of Fairwater Primary School does not support the proposal for the following reasons:**

The proposal lacks a clear rationale both for the assessed need and the exact nature of the proposed change of provision. There is insufficient audit information on numbers of appropriately trained staff and likely distribution of children needing SRB places.

- Governors are concerned that provision for **individual** pupil needs is not clearly defined. The proposal reports that the focus group from March 2014 identified the need for greater emphasis on the underlying needs experienced by pupils with BES difficulties. It is not clear in the proposal whether this emphasis could be addressed within an overarching provision of Early Intervention Classes. Specifically Governors have a concern over the potential negative impact of catering for both pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and BES difficulties in the same provision, given the serious level of BES difficulties currently catered for in Fairwater.
- It is not clear how the notion of 'Early Intervention Classes' will differ from 'Nurture Classes', particularly as staff are currently being trained in 'Nurture' provision.
- The proposal does not include sufficient information on costs or projected capacity building to provide appropriately trained teaching and non-teaching staff to support Early Intervention Classes.
- Governors are concerned that the current process of referring mainstream pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties was extremely complex and onerous and may be contributing to the fall in numbers. More seriously, there is a doubt over the capacity of the local authority to provide sufficient support for children with Speech and Language Difficulties in mainstream schooling.
- The proposal that children in Early Intervention Classes could be returned to mainstream within 3/4 terms is not supported by experience at Fairwater, where some children have remained in SRB for 6 years.

**The Governing Body of Fairwater Primary School does not support the proposal to convert Fairwater Specialist Resource Base to an Early Intervention Class.**

The Governing Body are fully committed to both inclusive education and to Welsh Government aims to reduce the impact of deprivation on achievement.

The reasons for not agreeing with this aspect of the Proposal relate to Governors assessment of the most appropriate strategic direction for Fairwater Primary:

1. The GB have been petitioning LA over several years for nursery provision at Fairwater and have recognized the following factors as supporting their case:
  - Acknowledgement from WG that indicators show that by the age of 5, children from deprived backgrounds can be as much as a year behind in their language and learning has been noted.
  - The fact that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme identifies the creation of nursery provision on primary school sites as one of the main priorities.

- The reporting by the Estyn Inspection in July 2013 that, on entry, many pupils at Fairwater had below expected levels of basic skills and maturity.
  - Fairwater Reception baseline assessment from 2016 indicating the significant number of stages needed to achieve the baseline
  - Comment from the Assistant Director at a Strategic Briefing Meeting in Autumn Term 2015 that Cardiff Council recognized the importance of investing in early years.
2. Fairwater has made significant improvement in raising standards over the past 18 months resulting in moving from Red to Amber categorisation, and the Estyn re-visit report of November 2015 assessing Strong Progress having been made on all five recommendations. The catchment area includes pockets of serious social deprivation and nursery provision is seen as necessary both to meet local social needs, and to ensure that the school continues to reduce the impact of deprivation by raising standards.
  3. In improving educational attainment at Fairwater, the GB believes it should be a first priority to address local needs. As far as the children currently in the SRB are concerned, only 2 out of 9 are resident in Fairwater. As far as the Proposal is concerned, it is noted that a 'Neighbourhood Approach' is being advocated, with the 7 EICs operating on a locality basis, reducing the need for children to travel long distances. However, given the current allocation at Fairwater, with children travelling from the other side of the city and as far as Gwaelod y Garth, it is difficult to see how there is anticipated need for pupils from the Fairwater area alone.
  4. Budget allocation for Fairwater currently shows a deficit in excess of £30,000 and at their meeting on 15 March 2016 the GB voted to commence a process of staff redundancy in order to reduce the deficit. GB are therefore conscious that strict budgetary control will continue to be necessary, and have a concern that there are periphery costs incurred by the current hosting of the SRB. In addition to the overheads relating to the accommodation, the school is not funded for supply cover to release teachers and teaching assistants for their specialist training, as in the recent example of training for the use of the BSquared Assessment Tool.
  5. At their meeting in May 2015, the GB felt it was important to have oversight of the long term strategic direction of the school. Since the rooms occupied by the SRB were considered by the LA to be suitable to for nursery provision, it was agreed to give notice of the intention to open negotiations to terminate the SRB at Fairwater. The GB further voted unanimously on 15 March 2016 to give formal notice to terminate the hosting of the SRB at Fairwater.

On behalf of the Governing Body  
 Fairwater Primary School  
 18 March 2016

**Consultation period**

The consultation period for these proposals starts on 11th February 2016 and ends on 23rd March 2016.

Within 13 weeks of 23rd March 2016 a consultation report will be published on the City of Cardiff Council website. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the issues raised by consultees during the consultation period and provide the Council's response to these issues. The report will also contain Estyn's view of the proposals.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the consultation report and decide whether or not to proceed with the proposals.

If the Cabinet decides to continue with the proposals the City of Cardiff Council must publish a statutory notice.

**Statutory Notice**

The statutory notice would be published on the City of Cardiff Council website and posted at or near the main entrance to the school/sites subject to the notice. Copies of the notice would be made available to schools identified in the notice to distribute to pupils, parents, guardians and staff members (the school may also distribute the notice by email). The notice sets out the details of the proposals and invites anyone who wishes to object to do so in writing within the period specified.

**Determination of proposals**

The City of Cardiff Council Cabinet will determine the proposals. Cabinet may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposals with modifications. In doing so, Cabinet will take into account any statutory objections that it has received.

**Decision notification**

Following determination of proposals, all interested parties will be informed of the decision which will be published electronically on the City of Cardiff Council's website.

## CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM (SEN Provision 2016)

Consultation on specialist provision for primary aged pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties.

Your views matter, please tell us what you think about the proposal by:

- Completing and returning the accompanying questionnaire to the address given at the bottom of the form.
- Completing the on line response form [www.cardiff.gov.uk/21stcenturyschools](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/21stcenturyschools)
- Or if you prefer you can e-mail your views to: [schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk)

**Please note that all comments sent in writing or by e-mail must contain the full name and full postal address of the person making the comments.**

**The closing date for responses to this consultation is 23 March 2016. Unfortunately no responses received after this date can be considered by the Council.**

Consultation responses will **not** be counted as objections to the proposals. Objections could only be registered following publication of a **statutory notice**.

Any responses received can be requested under the Freedom of Information Act and may have to be made public, however any information that would identify an individual such as name and address would be removed.

.....  
[REDACTED]  
.....  
Date:

24/02/2016

.....  
Your status: Parent  Governor  Pupil  Member of Staff  Other  (please specify)  
.....

1. Do you support the proposal to address the fall in demand for speech and language special school places by closing Meadowbank Special School?

Yes

No

If you **do not** support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.

2. Do you agree with the proposal to respond to the fall in demand for places at Allensbank SRB by redeveloping this as a Specialist Resource Base for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions?

Yes

No

If you **do not** support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.

3. Do you agree with the proposal to convert Fairwater Specialist Resource Base, Glan yr Afon Revolving Door Class and Springwood Nurture Class to Early Intervention Classes?

Yes

No

If you **do not** support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.

As a Governor for Glan yr Afon school, I support the EIC proposal but our school suffer severely from having older yr 5/6 high tariff pupils there. I support the proposal providing we have the ability to negotiate the age and severity of the pupils we accept.

4. Do you agree with the proposal to open four additional Early Intervention Classes (subject to further consultation with named schools).

Yes

No

If you **do not** support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.

Thank you for your comments

Please tick the box below if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report

Please return this form to the School Organisation Planning Team, Room 422, County Hall, CF10 4UW by 23 March 2016.



**From:** Boyle, Joe (Cllr)  
**Sent:** 06 April 2016 10:52  
**To:** School Responses  
**Cc:** Hoffer, Pat  
**Subject:** Springwood Primary School - Response to SLD consultation

Hello,

I am submitting this response to the consultation on specialist provision for primary aged pupils with speech and language difficulties and with behavioural emotional and social difficulties on behalf of the governing body at Springwood Primary School, where I am chair of governors.

Governors received a presentation from council officers on 17th March and discussed their position subsequently.

We have restricted our comments purely to the issue of changing the nurture class currently operating at Springwood into an Early Intervention Class (EIC). We have chosen not to make any comment on the plans for Meadowbank, Allensbank or the other schools identified as a possible base for an EIC.

1. Do you support the proposal to address the fall in demand for speech and language special school places by closing Meadowbank Special School?

n/a

2. Do you agree with the proposal to respond to the fall in demand for places at Allensbank SRB by redeveloping this as a Specialist Resource Base for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions?

n/a

3. Do you agree with the proposal to convert Fairwater Specialist Resource Base, Glan yr Afon Revolving Door Class and Springwood Nurture Class to Early Intervention Classes?

No

The context for our comments is important. Springwood opened its nurture class in January 2014. This came little more than a month after we were first approached by the local authority, shortly before Christmas in 2013. Opening the class at such short notice caused some concern and even led to a resignation from the governing body. However, it was felt this was an important step for the school and that we had the capacity to help the local authority at a moment of need.

We also felt able to make the move because the remit of the nurture class was relatively tight, in terms of the children we would be hosting, the challenges they presented with and their young age.

The nurture class was a success and contributed to the school's growing reputation for inclusivity. In fact, this success allowed us to embrace the opportunity to open an autism resource base with confidence. The SRB opened in September 2014 and is now a vital part of our school.

One final piece of context is important. Shortly before the Easter holidays, the local authority's school organisation team met the headteacher and chair of governors to discuss the school's 'footprint'. The strong message we were sent was that the school has too much space for the number of children on roll. It appears likely that the local authority will therefore requisition a large part of the upper floor for use by other council-run organisations. This means we will be operating with a much reduced space.

With this context established, governors feel they cannot at present support the location of an EIC at Springwood for the following reasons:

- A lack of clarity about the nature of the children the EIC will host: the broad range of behavioural challenges they will present with; the diagnoses they will come with; their age; the remit of their individual development plans.
- Uncertainty about the school's role in deciding which children to admit. We are uncomfortable that the panel of headteachers and staff that will make this decision would not include input from the school's senior leadership or governors.
- Concern that the reduced amount of space that the school will have following the SOP review might impact on our ability to accommodate the EIC safely.
- Concern that the mix of children with autism (from our SRB) together with children presenting with complex emotional and behavioural difficulties could be difficult to manage. We do not want to see the success of our SRB compromised by introducing children to the school with a further range of complex needs.

While we have reservations about the proposals as outlined in the consultation, Springwood governors will nonetheless give serious consideration to using the space currently allocated to the local authority nurture class to housing its own nurture class. We understand the authority is supportive of schools running their own nurture classes and have identified a clear need in our school for such provision. We are supportive of early intervention strategies which will enable vulnerable pupils to develop the skills and attitudes they need to become successful and well-adjusted young people and adults in the future.

4. Do you agree with the proposal to open four additional Early Intervention Classes (subject to further consultation with named schools).

n/a

We hope these views will be taken into consideration.

Regards,

Joe Boyle (Chair of Governors, Springwood Primary School)  
Councillor – Penylan  
029 2046 2187

ROATH PARK  
PRIMARY SCHOOL



Roath Park Primary School  
Pen-y-Wain Road  
Roath Park  
Cardiff  
CF24 4BB

Telephone 029 20499549  
Fax 029 20485762

E-mail [roathparkprm@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:roathparkprm@cardiff.gov.uk)

Headteacher C J Skinner (B.ED HONS)

29<sup>th</sup> January, 2016.

Dear Nick,

I am writing on behalf of Cardiff primary headteachers to express our collective concern in response to the consultation on the proposed closure of Meadowbank Special School and the Speech and Language Resource Base at Allensbank Primary School.

In the report which was presented to Cabinet on 3rd December 2015, the reason for the report is identified as "the falling demand for speech and language places and increased demand for provision for children with behavioural social and emotional needs." As a body, we have serious concerns about this statement and the potential loss of this expertise within the city.

Whilst we acknowledge that provision for supporting speech and language within mainstream schools has improved significantly in recent years following the introduction of Speech and Language Link programmes in schools and the more recent introduction of Speech Therapy Services into schools, we do find the statement that "demand for places at Meadowbank and Allensbank SRB has fallen in recent years" to be very surprising. The provision for children with less complex needs has certainly improved significantly within our schools but it still remains a challenge to meet the needs of the most complex children. It is the experience of many Headteachers that statement requests for pupils with complex SLC needs have been turned down much more readily in recent years. This correlates directly with the fall in demand for places which is identified within the proposal.

We are also concerned that the obvious link between poor speech, language and communication skills and challenging behaviour seems to be completely overlooked within the proposal. In a report published by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists in August 2015, they identify over 70% of young offenders with significant speech, language and communication difficulties. They state that many of these young people lack the language skills to understand what is happening to them in the justice system and are unable to access the rehabilitation programmes which are on offer to them. As primary headteachers, we are able to clearly identify pupils in our schools at the present time who are exhibiting challenging behaviour but whose underlying issues stem from speech, language and communication difficulties. These can be masked when behaviour is extreme and we have no doubt that the percentage of pupils with underlying SLC difficulties in The Court and Greenhill Schools is disproportionately high. We would like much greater emphasis on speech, language and communication assessments for children whose overt primary need comes across as behavioural.

We know that the proportion of NEEI young people across the city continues to present a significant challenge for the council. The potential NEET pupils of the future are already identifiable in primary schools and many of these display significant difficulties with speech, language and communication. Early intervention is crucial and the skills of highly trained staff in specialist environments is often the most effective way of securing the best outcomes for these learners.

The historical picture shows that the prospects for pupils with speech and language difficulties to be reintegrated into mainstream school from Meadowbank and Allensbank SRB are good. This implies that the high quality of teaching that they have received during their time in specialist provision has made a long lasting impact on their speech, language and communication skills and enabled them to access their high school education in a mainstream setting. As far as we are aware, this is not the case for any other specialist provision within the city.

Yours sincerely,

*Colin Skinner*

(Vice Chair Cardiff Primary Headteacher Conference)

Copy to: Rosalie Phillips.

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM (SEN PROVISION 2016)

Your Name: Lorraine Felstead

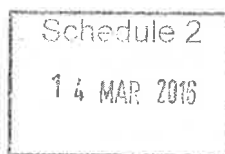
Address: Meadowbank School

Postcode: CF14 2QQ

Date: 10 March 2016

Your status: Parent  Governor  Pupil  Member of Staff

Other  (please specify)



1. Do you support the proposal to address the fall in demand for speech and language special school places by closing Meadowbank Special School?

Yes

No

If you do not support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.

All children need language to learn, develop their literacy skills, get on with others, manage their behaviour and develop emotionally. Children with severe and profound speech and language impairments (SLI) require a small class setting, experienced teaching staff that understand speech and language difficulties, specialist resources and specialised teaching approaches and strategies. Meadowbank School is a centre of excellent that provides all of the above. It is an invaluable resource that effectively supports the needs of children with SLI. SLI impacts on all areas of a child's learning and on their future prospects and social outcomes. Attending Meadowbank School ensures that children have an effective start to their education that often leads to them being successfully re-integrated into a mainstream school.

The data contained in the consultation document aims to show that children with SLI in mainstream classes make progress and that their needs are being met. However, the data presented is sketchy and is not sufficiently robust for this assumption to be made.

The Local Authority states that parental preference is one of the main reasons for the lack of referrals to the school. However, staff, governors and parents believe that parental preference has been guided away from specialist provision by the Local Authority. As a result of the lack of referrals to the school the 'option of keeping Meadowbank open as a speech and language special school has been considered, however this is not considered viable' (p 20 of the consultation document). This statement shows that the Local Authority is planning to close Meadowbank School whatever the outcome of the consultation.

Closing Meadowbank School will lead to a loss of expertise, fragmented multi-agency working, reduced intensity and specialised speech and language therapy and a reduction in choice of schools for parents.

If Meadowbank School closes and Allensbank School's SRB becomes a provision for children with ASC there will be no specialist provision for children with SLI from September 2018 in the capital city of Wales. All other Local Authority's in Wales have some form of specialist provision for children with SLI.

I strongly believe that Meadowbank School should remain open so that a centre of excellence is preserved. The expertise at the school can continue to effectively meet the needs of children with the most severe and profound SLI and also for the expertise at the school to be used in supporting staff and children in mainstream schools.

This could be achieved in a number of ways:

- Setting up a 'revolving door' day class for children who attend on a part-time/short time placement in order to access intensive support for a limited time.
- Longer term placements for children who need extensive support and a specialist placement and whose needs cannot be met in a mainstream class.
- Extending the early years outreach provision to include children in reception classes.
- Providing specialist speech and language therapy.
- Developing a centre of specialist SLI professional development for teachers and support staff in mainstream schools

2. Do you agree with the proposal to respond to the fall in demand for places at Allensbank SRB by redeveloping this as a Specialist Resource Base for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions?

Yes  No

If you do not support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.

I agree with this proposal as there is an increased demand for specialist provision to meet the needs of children with Autism Spectrum Conditions.

Allensbank's SRB is currently cited as an alternative to Meadowbank School as it can provide mainstream opportunities/experiences for children who need them. However, I believe that Meadowbank can provide these opportunities and experiences more effectively by providing this provision in a child's own local mainstream school. This enables children to maintain

links with their friends who they live near and to be part of a supportive peer group as they move onto secondary school.

3. Do you agree with the proposal to convert Fairwater Specialist Resource Base, Glan yr Afon Revolving Door Class and Springwood Nurture Class to Early Intervention Classes?

Yes  No

If you **do not** support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.

I agree with this proposal as there needs to be consistency across the Local Authority if Early Intervention Classes are to be established.

4. Do you agree with the proposal to open four additional Early Intervention Classes (subject to further consultation with named schools)?

Yes  No

If you **do not** support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.

I agree with this proposal. However, the Local Authority needs to consider the following points to ensure that this provision is set up effectively to meet the needs of children who are identified as requiring access to an Early Intervention Class.

- There needs to be clear admission/entry criteria.
- There needs to be a transparent admission process.
- The combination of need and age.
- The location of the classes - some areas of Cardiff may require this provision more than others.
- There needs to be experienced and trained staff in the classes.
- There needs to be a nominated person in the Local Authority who has overall responsibility of the classes to ensure that there is consistency of practice between the classes and the above points are all addressed.

Thanks you for your comments

Please tick the box below if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report.

Please return this form to the School Organisation Planning Team, Room 422, County Hall, CF10 4UW by 23 March 2016



MB16/242

Headteacher  
Moorland Primary School

**Do you support the proposal to address the fall in demand for speech and language special school places by closing Meadowbank Special School?**

No

**If you do not support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that would like to suggest.**

I think the loss of this specialist provision would have a negative impact on provision for children with the most complex SLCD. Whilst Language Link has had a very positive impact on the Speech and language development of the majority of learners, the most complex children still benefit from a specialist setting where every member of staff is a SLCD expert. I am aware of at least 2 SLCD referrals for statutory assessment in the last 12 months that were both turned down so it is misleading to say there have been no recent referrals. I believe that the majority of pupils who have ESBG statements will also have SLCD, often unidentified as it may have been masked by extremely challenging behaviour. Current research shows that 70% of young offenders have SLCD. It would be beneficial to explore whether ESBG/SLCD provision could be developed in Meadowbank in order to try and address the growing ESBG needs across the city.

**Do you agree with the proposal to respond to the fall in demand for places at Allensbank SRB by redeveloping this as a Specialist Resource Base for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions?**

Yes but only if SLCD provision was still available at Meadowbank

**If you do not support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.**

**Do you agree with the proposal to convert Fairwater Specialist Resource Base, Glan yr Afon Revolving Door Class and Springwood Nurture class to Early Intervention Classes?**

Yes but I have concerns that the needs of the pupils in these classes will be too broad. It is also difficult to imagine what would happen to children who appear in the system when all the places are taken up for 3-4 terms at a time.

**If you do not support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.**

**Do you agree with the proposal to open four additional Early Intervention Classes (subject to further consultation with named schools)**

Yes but there would need to be an equitable system across the city, recognising that the demand/threshold in some areas will be much higher than others. The funding must be directly linked to the children with the most complex needs and not to the areas where the parents shout the loudest.

**If you do not support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.**

MB16/242

Headteacher  
Springwood Primary School

**Do you support the proposal to address the fall in demand for speech and language special school places by closing Meadowbank Special School?**

**If you do not support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.**

I would like to extend the use of Meadow Bank school, particularly to address the shortage of places for pupils with behaviour issues. I am concerned that with the increase in population in Cardiff that we may be too quick to close this resource.

**Do you agree with the proposal to respond to the fall in demand for places at Allensbank SRB by redeveloping this as a Specialist Resource Base for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions?**

Yes

**If you do not support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.**

**Do you agree with the proposal to convert Fairwater Specialist Resource Base, Glan yr Afon Revolving Door Class and Springwood Nurture class to Early Intervention Classes?**

No

**If you do not support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.**

I do not believe that it is a good idea to mix together pupils who are not coping in a mainstream class due to issues with behaviour, speech and language, communication. The pupils who have been referred to the Nurture class, were referred because their placement in the mainstream school had broken down. When this happens negative behaviours tend to be displayed, the atmosphere within the group is very fragile and can be stressful. I would suggest that this is not appropriate for pupils who are quiet and withdrawn due to communication and possibly Nurture/attachment issues. I also think that the EIC classes need to have a set age range that each EIC accepts. The needs of Ks2 pupils is very different to FP, the staff will need to have different skill sets, I think we are expecting too much of the staff.

**Do you agree with the proposal to open four additional Early Intervention Classes (subject to further consultation with named schools)**

No

**If you do not support the proposal, please give your reasons together with any changes or alternatives that you would like to suggest.**

I would not like one of these classes at Springwood. As stated previously I think it is fundamentally wrong to put these children together in one class, and label it as an EIC and not a behaviour class. Currently there is not enough support in the system for pupils who are displaying negative behaviours and I do not agree with the assumption that most of these behaviour issues are linked directly to speech and language difficulties, it is far more complex than that.



GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Caerdydd a'r Fro  
Cardiff and Vale  
University Health Board

## Children's Speech & Language Therapy Therapi Iath a Lleferydd Plant

Riverside Health Centre  
Wellington Street  
Canton  
Cardiff  
CF11 9SH  
Phone 029 2090 7645

Canolfan Iechyd Glanrafon  
Stryd Wellington  
Treganna  
Caerdydd  
CF11 9SH  
Ffôn 029 2090 7645

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016

Please find below, comments regarding the *Consultation Document 2016: Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties*. This is a team response from Cardiff & Vale UHB Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service:

### 1. Cardiff and Vale UHB SLT Service to local primary and high schools:

Cardiff and Vale UHB Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service has developed a very positive collaborative working relationship with Cardiff LEA in recent years, and as a result there have been many joint initiatives and projects including setting up a mainstream speech and language therapy service to local primary and high schools. This was set up in response to:

- Guidance from RCSLT that all school aged children with SLCN should be offered speech and language therapy in school (RCSLT Clinical Guidelines)
- Feedback from parents and schools that they would prefer services delivered in school
- A need to provide equity for children requiring Speech and Language Therapy in different educational environments
- Concerns raised by SLTs, schools and other health professionals about children who had a recurring discharge and re-referral pattern due to non-attendance.

We have a number of concerns about the Consultation Document's references to the Cardiff and Vale UHB Children's SLT Service and in particular the pilot project to deliver services to local primary and high schools for all children with SLCN. These are:

- The SLT mainstream school service was not set up to replace specialist provisions for children with severe SLCN.
- This is currently a pilot project. It has not been evaluated and therefore no conclusion has been reached on the future of this aspect of the Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service. Whilst the project has been well received in most schools and by most parents, there have been some challenges including: concerns around consent, increased travel costs and a reduction in the number of children that staff can be seen in a day.

As a team, we are concerned that information has been included in the document and comments made in the press regarding the way in which our Speech and Language Therapy Service is running at present. This was included without

Delyth M. Lewis, Head of Children's Speech and Language Therapy  
Riverside Health Centre, Wellington Street, Canton, Cardiff, CF11 9SH

Ref: Ack 2.

discussion or consultation with anyone from Cardiff & Vale UHB Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service;

## **2. Clinical risks of the proposals for children with severe, specific speech and language difficulties**

We acknowledge that there has been a fall in demand for places in Meadowbank and Allensbank in recent years as a result of parental choice and an improvement in the capacity of local schools to deliver speech and language interventions. However if these proposals are implemented, there will be no specialist provision for children with severe and complex speech and language difficulties in Cardiff. Whilst we agree that many children with speech and language difficulties can be managed within mainstream school settings we have significant concerns that there will be no specific and specialist provision for:

- the small percentage of children that require short-term, specialist, intensive speech and/or language intervention in the Early Years. The proposals laid out in the consultation document that describe the Early Intervention Classes (8a, 8b, 8c, 8d) sound like a suitable proposal for managing many different needs, however they do not appear to include the needs of children with severe specific speech and language difficulties. It is unclear in the document what the difference is between the current 'nurture classes' and the proposal for the 'Early Intervention Classes'. Early intervention is the key to positive outcomes for children with speech and language difficulties.
- those children that 'fail' within their local school despite a high level of support both within the classroom and from external specialist services such as SLT and the SLCD specialist teacher team.. These children are extremely vulnerable to mental health difficulties and at risk of exclusion.

Research shows that children with significant language impairment are at a high risk of behavioural difficulties (*Tomblin, Zhang, Buckwalter & Catts, 2000; Carson et al, 1998*), mental health problems (*'Let's Talk About It' – The Communication Trust, 2011*) and of becoming offenders in adolescence and adulthood (*Tomblin, 2000; Bryan, 2004*). Self esteem, emotional health and wellbeing are impacted upon significantly and often have the consequence of affecting social acceptance (*Botting & Conti-Ramsden, 2000*)

## **3. The capacity of local schools to deliver specialist interventions**

The SLTs who deliver services to children with SLCN in their local schools have identified a number of concerns around the capacity of mainstream schools to deliver highly specialised interventions to the most needy children (service level 5):

- Mainstream staff have significant difficulties implementing a specialist strategy or approach within a busy mainstream class of 30 pupils
- It is often not possible for schools to allocate a named member of staff to work with the Speech and Language Therapist and the child between the Speech and Language Therapist's visits.

- There are significant gaps in the knowledge of mainstream school staff to support these children with the most significant levels of need..

If the proposal to close Meadowbank School and re-classify Allensbank SRB proceeds, there will be a number of teachers and support staff with significant knowledge and experience of supporting children with severe communication difficulties available to help with these challenges.

#### **4. Measuring outcomes**

The document suggests that the Local Authority and schools are relying very heavily on the use of *Speech Link* and *Language Link* to measure outcomes for children with SLCN. Whilst these outcome measures are undoubtedly useful for many children with mild and moderate SLCN, we would urge a note of caution. It should be noted that *Language Link* and *Speech Link* are screening tools only. They do not provide a comprehensive language or speech sound assessment. In particular, *Language Link* screens a limited range of comprehension skills and it does not address expressive language skills at all. *Language Link* is not a reliable outcome measure for children with severe and complex language difficulties.

#### **5. Redesignation of Allensbank SRB as an ASD provision**

We acknowledge that there is an increased demand for specialist educational placements for those children with ASD. However, our current experience of working in Allensbank Primary School and SRB raises some concerns about being able to create a suitable environment for children with ASD. For example, having enough suitable space to create 'quiet' or 'sensory' areas, when space is already at a premium in the school.

Cardiff & Vale UHB Children's Speech & Language Therapy Team

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**RCSLT Response to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Consultation Document 2016**  
**– Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and**  
**Language Difficulties and with Behavioural, Emotional and Social**  
**Difficulties**

The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) is the professional body for speech and language therapists (SLTs), SLT students and support workers working in the UK. The RCSLT has 15,000 members (450 in Wales) including around 88% of SLTs working in the UK. We promote excellence in practice and influence health, education, care and justice policies.

Approximately 70% of SLTs registered in the UK work with children. It is estimated that approximately 6-8% of children aged between 0-11 years have speech, language and communication needs. The prevalence for children with severe and complex needs may be a further 1%.

In a key position paper on 'Supporting children with speech, language and communication needs within integrated children's services' RCSLT set out its view that there should be a focus on inclusion of children with special (or additional) needs in mainstream settings but that this should be balanced with a requirement for specialist services to be delivered flexibly in order to enable inclusion. Vulnerable children and those with additional needs form part of the population of 'all children'. In an inclusive society, specialist and targeted services for these children should be integral to universal mainstream provision. The integration of education, health and social care for children means they should be able to access all the services they require – whether universal, targeted or specialist, flexibly and locally wherever possible.<sup>1</sup> In this response, RCSLT would wish to stress the need to ensure that children with speech language and communication difficulties in Cardiff receive the service that they need, which includes the availability of adequate specialist places within a given area.

We are aware that a great deal of positive work has been undertaken across Wales in recent years with regard to inclusive primary schools and specialist resource bases. RCSLT would wish to see the availability of specialist resource bases with the philosophy of short-term intensive support with the outcome of returning to mainstream education. We would be happy to provide further examples if required.

---

<sup>1</sup> Gasgoigne, M (2006). *Supporting children with speech, language and communication needs within integrated children's services*. RCSLT:London.

**Dr Alison Stroud**  
**Head of RCSLT Wales Office**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 1 Cathedral Road**  
**Cardiff**  
**CF11 9SD**  
**029 20397729**  
**Alison.stroud@rcslt.org**

*(Faint, illegible text, possibly a header or footer)*

The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) is the professional body for speech and language therapists (SLTs) in the UK. We provide support workers working in the UK. The RCSLT has 18,000 members (45% in Wales) including around 83% of SLTs working in the UK. We promote excellence in practice and influence health, education, care and justice policies.

Approximately 70% of SLTs registered in the UK work with children. It is estimated that approximately 6-8% of children aged between 0-11 years have speech, language and communication needs. The prevalence for children with severe and complex needs may be a further 1%.

In a key position paper on 'Supporting children with speech, language and communication needs within integrated children's services', RCSLT set out its view that there should be a focus on inclusion of children with special (or additional) needs in mainstream settings but that this should be balanced with a requirement for specialist services to be delivered flexibly in order to enable inclusion. Vulnerable children and those with additional needs form part of the population of all children. In an inclusive society, specialist and targeted services for these children should be integral to universal mainstream provision. The integration of education, health and social care for children means they should be able to access all the services they require - where universal, targeted or specialist, locally and locally wherever possible. In this response, RCSLT would wish to stress the need to ensure that children with speech, language and communication difficulties in Wales receive the services that they need, which include a high quality of specialist support, alongside universal provision.

We are aware that a great deal of work is being undertaken to ensure that children with special (or additional) needs are included in mainstream settings. This work is essential to ensure that all children have the opportunity to access the services they need, which include a high quality of specialist support, alongside universal provision.



# Afasic CYMRU

voice for life  
llais ar gyfer bywyd

Charity No. 1045617

**Cardiff Council 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Consultation Document 2016  
Consultation on specialist provision for primary aged pupils with  
Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural, Emotional and  
Social Difficulties.**

**Consultation  
response form**

Your name: **Zein Pereira**  
Organisation: **Afasic Cymru**  
e-mail/telephone number: [zein@afasiccymru.org.uk](mailto:zein@afasiccymru.org.uk)  
Tel: 029 2046 5854

Your address:  
Afasic Cymru  
203 Titan House  
Cardiff Bay Business Centre  
Lewis Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5BS

Date: 5 April 2016

This response concerns the Cardiff Local Authority proposals to close all specialist speech and language provisions as part of the consultation on Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties.

Our response is based on careful consideration of the consultation document and parental feedback received during face-to-face meetings and through questionnaires and written submissions in relation to this consultation. It is organised under ten key objections. In addition, Afasic Cymru will submit consultation responses from children and young people with speech and language needs.

These proposals seek to remove all speech and language specialist provision for children with severe speech and language needs in Cardiff by 2018. Afasic Cymru strongly opposes the proposed closure of Meadowbank Special School and the proposed change of remit of Allensbank School specialist resource base.

### **Key objections**

- 1. These proposals contradict the principles set out by the Cardiff Council Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Strategy set out in 21<sup>st</sup> century schools consultation document 2016, page 9.**

In particular:

- 'All children should have access to an appropriate education that affords them the opportunity to achieve their personal potential.'
- 'Special Schools should function as Centres of Excellence'
- 'The interests of all pupils must be safeguarded.'

- 2. The proposals appear to suggest that children with severe and persisting speech and language difficulties do not benefit from or need specialist provision and therefore LA resources will no longer be organised and invested in this way for children with these needs.**

However, the Local Authority appears to recognise the value of a graduated approach that includes specialist provisions in their consideration of meeting the range of needs of children with ASD.

Children with severe speech and language difficulties also require access to a comparable spectrum of provision as part of the LA graduated response. These proposals deny this population of children access to a specialist placement that would deliver an "appropriate education that affords them the opportunity to achieve their personal potential," as stated above. Afasic Cymru is concerned that these proposals show a lack of understanding of the complexity and impact of these needs and could appear to be discriminatory.

There is plenty of evidence to show that children with severe and persisting speech and language needs do benefit from a specialist provision and that these benefits extend into all aspects of a child's life. Parental reports of outcomes in Meadowbank include accelerated progress and the building of confidence and skills to enable future achievement and attainment. There is also documented evidence of the benefits for children in specialist provisions as part of their annual review paperwork that will include professional assessment of levels of achievement.

Parents of children with severe speech and language needs, past and present, report that in spite of best efforts, the available support in mainstream was ineffective and their children began to thrive once they were placed in a specialised provision. Parents report 'fighting' for the right provision to meet their child's needs and we are concerned that this may worsen under these proposals.

From the consultation document, a placement at Meadowbank costs approximately £25,000 per year whereas a place in local primary school is approximately £3,600. This figure of £3,600 does not appear to take account of the variable costs of effective additional support and the costs incurred if support is not provided. Please follow the link to our Cost to the Nation poster <http://www.afasiccymru.org.uk/new-bilingual-poster/> for information about the essential nature of speech and language skills for life and work and the cost of untreated needs to the individual, the family and the nation.

Indeed it may cost considerably more for an out of county placement at a specialist speech and language provision in a neighbouring authority or even a residential place for example, at an ICAN school in England. We are concerned that these proposals may increase the likelihood of appeals to Tribunal. This would be extremely stressful and potentially costly for families as well as the Local Authority.

### **3. The proposals do not offer a full and fair picture of evidence.**

The LA asserts that:

i) Parents of children with severe speech and language needs are making a fully informed choice about placement options.

Parents repeatedly tell us that the option of a specialist speech and language provision was and is not being properly mentioned as a part of the process of assessment and provision. Parents say that specialist provisions are kept "hush hush."

An example from a parent: "I have not been made aware of the full range of options available to me, despite the Consultation document claiming that parents are opting for mainstream. This is not my experience of parental choice.....I feel very strongly that the central claim of the Consultation document does not reflect the true experience of parents that are confused and frightened at a very emotional time for them."

Parent example 2: "Doesn't get enough s.a.l.t. (speech and language therapy) not sure if mainstream school is best for him, been told no room in special needs school."

Parent example 3: "Mainstream didn't believe that my child had a SLC (speech, language and communication) difficulty. It took 7 years of asking for them to listen."

This is very concerning and contradicts one of the LA's core assertions that the falling rolls are due to parental choice.

The apparent 'trend' in parental preference does not appear to have been fully discussed with the specialist provisions in the years prior to these proposals. This is also very concerning and may be construed as a deliberate policy to undermine the demand for specialist placements.

Feedback from speech and language schools in England does not uphold this apparently abrupt 'trend', for example Moorhouse, a specialist speech and language school, report being "inundated with requests from across England for placements at Key Stage 2."

ii) The outcomes of children with speech and language needs in mainstream are good.

The proposals state that 'outcomes for children with speech and language difficulties in mainstream are good'. This statement is too vague and further information is essential.

- What evidence underpins this broad statement?
- Does this refer to Foundation Phase *and* Key Stage 2?
- Do all the children referred to by this statement have severe and persisting speech and language needs?
- Does this statement include children with transitory speech and language delay?
- Have the children referred to by this statement received specialist provision?

- Why haven't the outcomes for the specialist provisions been included in this picture?

**4. The proposals wrongly suggest that a specialist placement is incompatible with inclusion.**

Parents tell us that they want their children to "thrive not just cope."

The Welsh Government guidance document, Inclusion and Pupil Support, points out that "mainstream education is not always right for every child or young person all of the time but if mainstream education is not right at a particular stage this should not prevent the child or young person from being included successfully at a later stage." (page 2, 1.1.1)

Parents tell us that timely access to specialist provisions like Meadowbank enable inclusion for children with severe needs who could not manage in mainstream.

Specialist provisions like Meadowbank do this through the carefully tailored and intensive specialist support and development of skills and strategies needed to participate fully. Children do transition successfully from Meadowbank to their local mainstream schools. Through this process and as part of the approach by the now closed Dayclass, mainstream schools can be supported to include children with speech and language needs.

Parent example 4: "He came straight into Reception and improved so much that by Y3 he was in mainstream. His speech is excellent now. I don't think potential parents are told about Meadowbank, but well-targeted early intervention meant my son thrived when he eventually entered mainstream. Put simply, Meadowbank taught him to speak and changed his life."

Parents need support and information to make fully informed choices. The Welsh Government guidance document, Inclusion and Pupil Support, highlights the importance of working supportively and in partnership with parents/carers and the children and young people themselves.

As part of a LA parent consultation in January 2012, parents highlighted that inclusion is part of school life in the specialist provisions.

If the LA promoted a culture of partnership working between special schools and mainstream schools, easy access to the expertise of special school staff would enable the pro-active consideration of a specialist provision in true partnership with parents at an early stage rather than waiting until a child has failed and/or viewed as compromising the efficient education of other children.

Parent example 5:

"The (mainstream) school decided that my son was a distraction that they could not handle... segregated to the point where he was not allowed to partake in assemblies, lunch or school trips...It eventually resulted in my son only being allowed into school for two hours in the mornings and being sent home with work for me to teach him. This continued for two years.... my son still could not speak..... My son was then referred to (name of a Specialist Resource Base) for six weeks which was a wholly disheartening and scary experience for both myself and my son as it was a completely inappropriate setting for his needs. Throughout this whole time I was attending over forty meetings with various members of the medical and teaching profession in regards to my son's situation and not once was Meadowbank offered as an option" ..... I am happy to inform you that my son can now communicate with myself and others. He has learnt that he is not stupid or incapable and he has the confidence to sing on stage with his school mates and not feel ostracised. He can tackle reading and maths and is learning that he is deserving of friendship and understanding. He can enjoy school trips and is allowed to eat lunch with others. He is made to feel welcome and can feel proud to wear his school uniform. This is largely because of the amazing work of the staff in Meadowbank. The facilities and support they provide is something that I know cannot be replaced anywhere else."

- 5. The proposals are vague and do not offer parents an alternative but equivalent effective learning environment with an equivalent extent and intensity of specialist support.**

Meadowbank offers small class sizes, specialist teachers delivering the curriculum and a signing environment. Teachers, teaching assistants and speech and language therapists meet to plan their interventions together every week so that support is effectively joined up. The speech and language therapists are on-site to offer advice and support progress at a class and whole school level as well as direct therapy with the children. Parents report that the specialist staff know the children well and are able to take the time to listen and understand.

Strategies for supporting independence are embedded into everyday activities by a range of specialist staff across the whole school.

Current parents credit the specialist speech and language provision with enormous and transformative benefits including:

- Changing their child's life,
- Increasing the pace of progress, achievement and attainment,
- Improving children's self-belief and
- Helping the whole family to understand and communicate with their child.

Parents make a clear connection between appropriate specialist support and improved well-being and this is reflected in the research literature about severe speech and language needs.

Support in mainstream for severe speech and language needs in Cardiff does not offer the equivalent extent and intensity of support as a specialist placement, even at Stage 5 of the graduated response. Mainstream teachers do not have the same level of expertise. There are weekly visits from specialists in six week blocks and a child may be offered a programme with a one to one support worker.

The differences in type and extent of support for severe speech and language needs between mainstream and specialist provision needs to be clearly communicated to parents early on in the process of support.

If a child's needs cannot be met within a mainstream model, what alternatives is the LA offering as part of these proposals?

If a child has a profile with additional diagnoses that require a range of specialisms, the proposals suggest a placement at a special school that caters for children with global learning disabilities like Riverbank School, ASD like the Hollies School, a behaviour support SRB or in a nurture class.

However a child with a more specific profile of severe, persisting speech and language difficulties, who is unable to thrive in mainstream, will not have their needs addressed appropriately under these proposals. The specialist provisions mentioned above do not have the appropriate focus, specialist expertise and more intensive speech and language therapy.

Parent example 6: "(My child) was in a SRB (Specialist Resource Base) which did not meet his needs. The staff were inexperienced and were not trained to educate a child with my child's difficulties. He started to become behavioural.

His behaviour problems stopped when he started Meadowbank. Meadowbank has changed my son's life for the better. He could not express himself or answer simple questions before he went there."

The long term implications of poorly supported speech and language needs on educational attainments, mental health, employability and offending behaviours are evident in the research literature and in documents such as A Generation Adrift by The Communication Trust. To enable the best possible outcomes, it is important that the invisibility, impact and extent of this disability are properly understood and prioritised.

**6. These proposals do not acknowledge the gaps in knowledge and skills and lack of capacity in mainstream to support severe speech and language needs.**

Afasic Cymru remains concerned about the capacity in mainstream to meet the needs of children with severe speech and language needs.

Speech and language needs may impact on learning, literacy, overall achievement, play, social and emotional skills. As far as we are aware, all mainstream teachers across the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 are not routinely trained in specialised strategies for speech and language needs.

Head teachers have told us that their class teachers do not all feel equipped to teach children with severe speech and language needs. Mainstream speech and language programmes are usually delivered by teaching assistants, but this can be difficult in Key Stage 2 due to staffing pressures. For example, one school highlighted that there is only one teaching assistant to cover 110 children.

Comments from head teachers include:

- "Better (outcomes) in Foundation phase due to one to ones. Not enough TAs in key stage 2 to make much impact."
- "Higher burden on TAs in Key Stage 2, fewer TAs to share workload, less knowledge and understanding of development needs by teachers in Key Stage 2."
- "We feel that having a specialist provision is essential for speech and language and that our children will suffer without it. Early support is vital to preventing longer term learning delay."
- "We do not have the SEN resources to support these pupils as much as they need. We are delivering Speech Link sessions but do not feel fully equipped to do so as well as needed."



- “School staff are not able to provide a high level of speech and language therapy for children with significant difficulty in these areas.”

It is helpful for children with speech and language needs that can be met in mainstream, to be in a school that adopts a whole school approach to speech and language with training for all staff updated on a regular basis offering best practice universal strategies. Having one or two members of staff trained to level 2 or 3 through an Eklan course, is also a positive resource for a school but does not ensure specialist teaching for severe speech and language needs throughout the school.

Head teachers have told us that training and capacity building in mainstream has had mixed success. Comments include:

- “TAs (Teaching Assistants) do not have the expertise that exists in special schools.”
- “Training is useful as an additional support to specialist speech therapy but instead is increasingly being used to replace specialist support.”

Parents argue that prior to receiving a Statement of Educational Need for Meadowbank, support received in mainstream was inadequate and often over-reliant on teaching assistant support. Parents argue that their children need to be taught by teachers who are aware of and have the expertise necessary to teach children with these severe needs. They fear that the specialist approaches that their children need will be diluted and lost.

Parent example 7: “I struggled to understand the teaching was disengaged and could not follow instructions from the teacher. J had one to one support from the age of 2.5 due to his behaviour and little communication skills. Mainstream upset him so much he was taken kicking and screaming most mornings. Every child deserves an opportunity to succeed and be happy in life. It is so hard not to be heard or understood. Mainstream does not have the facilities or support network to assist those who need it. (a 1 to 1 worker was not enough to meet my sons needs and the sign language offered was sporadic at best). Meadowbank is much more than a school it offers support both emotionally and educationally to children and their families.”

Parent example 8: “My son struggled in mainstream as he had very poor language skills. He found it hard to communicate with other children. He had one excellent 1-2-1 assistant who undertook relevant training to help him

develop his language skills, the others weren't properly skilled to deal with his poor language skills. Had to fight for adequate 1-2-1 support but it wasn't going to help him long term with his education as he needed specialist intervention. He would not be the happy confident boy he is today had he stayed in mainstream and he wouldn't have the good friendships that he has in Meadowbank either as he really struggled with making friends before going here. Specialist intervention at an early age is so important so why remove such a provision?"

Parent example 9: "My two children attended Meadowbank. They had one to one support (in mainstream) but still struggled with speech as staff weren't experienced in this area. Meadowbank has been a great support for my children behaviour and emotional needs. They provide a good caring environment and they come on well with school work."

- 7. These proposals do not mention an increase in capacity in the number of specialist staff based in the achievement and inclusion team to support severe speech and language needs across the city.**

The reported specialist teacher staffing levels appear to be inadequate to enable an approach that consistently supports severe speech and language needs effectively as part of these proposals. What will be the size of caseload for each specialist teacher?

- 8. The proposals do not include a strategy to retain the skills of the specialist staff at Meadowbank and Allensbank so that they may continue to support children with severe speech and language needs.**

Staff have been issued with redundancy notices and this appears premature in light of a yet to be completed consultation process. The proposals show no regard for the importance of the specialism and no strategic planning to utilise staff knowledge and skills as far as possible for the benefit of children with severe speech and language needs. This does not inspire parents with confidence about the capacity of the LA to meet the needs of children with severe speech and language needs as part of these proposals.

- 9. The proposals do not include how speech and language therapy will be offered as part of these proposed changes.**

Parents are concerned about the intensity and specialism of speech and language therapy in a mainstream setting. Arrangements for

specialist, school-based speech and language therapy have not been clarified for children with severe and persisting speech and language needs. There is also no information about what the specialist speech and language therapy input would be to Early Intervention Classes.

The proposals promote the recent mainstream based speech and language therapy service, highlighting its advantages in terms of time and attendance at appointments. However, parents tell us that speech and language therapy in mainstream can be fragmented, not always specialist or collaborative and largely delegated. Even though the community service is based in mainstream schools, speech and language therapists, teachers and teaching assistants do not have the time and opportunity to meet together to plan and deliver carefully tailored activities on a weekly basis.

**10. The proposals do not include a clear look at possible alternatives that may retain and develop the range of specialist provision for severe, persisting speech and language needs in Cardiff.**

Retaining, growing and developing a specialist provision as a centre for excellence for the benefit of all children with severe and persisting speech and language needs in Cardiff does not appear to have been considered by these proposals. This is surprising as the Welsh Government identifies the value of utilising the expertise in special schools as centres of excellence.

Early and appropriate specialist intervention requires the pro-active consideration of a specialist provision in true partnership with parents at an early stage rather than waiting until a child has failed and/or is viewed in negative terms as compromising the efficient education of other children. Waiting until a child has failed is not inclusion. Feedback from parents in an LA speech and language consultation in 2012 and in connection with this consultation has highlighted how included their children feel when they are receiving the right specialist support in the right environment.

The development of specialist speech and language provisions could include re-introducing dual placements with a combination of full time and part time places, with short, medium or longer term admissions as appropriate according to a child's needs.

Afasic Cymru hopes that the Council will listen carefully to the parents, children and specialist staff who contribute to this consultation, and replace the proposal for closure with a strategic and comprehensive

plan to secure the current and long term future of specialist provisions for specific severe speech and language needs in Cardiff.

**We do wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report.**

### References

Cost to the Nation

<http://www.afasiccymru.org.uk/new-bilingual-poster/>

Generation Adrift

<https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/resources/resources/resources-for-practitioners/a-generation-adrift.aspx>

SLI handbook:

<http://www.afasic.org.uk/recognising-a-problem/useful-reading/> click on sample pages

Welsh Government Inclusion and Pupil Support guidance document

<http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/160318-inclusion-and-pupil-support-en.pdf>



[ymatebionysgolion@caerdydd.gov.uk](mailto:ymatebionysgolion@caerdydd.gov.uk)  
School Organisation Planning Team  
Room 219  
County Hall  
Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

11/03/2016

**21st Century Schools, Consultation Document 2016: Consultation on Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties (Wales)**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments on the above document. The Welsh Language Commissioner's comments, and the issues which Cardiff County Council may wish to address as it develops the document further, may be summarised as follows:

The document provides guidance on how the proposed changes to schools organization introduced in relation to specialist provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in Cardiff, will ensure a Welsh medium provision for pupils. In addition, there is reference to the growing need for efficient and specialist provision that includes the Welsh language.

It shows that the increase in demand for places in a Special School or a Specialist Resource Base for primary age pupils with challenging behaviour has increased by 30 percent over the past two years. The document states that the new arrangements will be of benefit to SEN pupils who need specialist Welsh medium support.

- **Considering how fundamental language is to any additional learning provision that may be required by learners, we suggest that the changes to school organization must ensure that any internal or external support provided by the relevant agencies is available in Welsh.**

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Siambrau'r Farchnad  
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post@comisiynyddygybraeg.org  
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Comisiynydd y  
Gymraeg  
Welsh Language  
Commissioner

- During the period of transition there is a possibility that the Specialist Resource Base will be operating mixed classes of pupils. During this period you should ensure that Welsh medium provision is available for pupils who need it and the language needs of learners are not therefore undermined.
- The document suggests that the proposed changes will be beneficial to the Welsh language with a Welsh medium intervention class provided in addition to the existing provision within the specialist resource bases. As part of this provision, a sufficient number of SEN staff who are able to provide support through the medium of Welsh should be ensured.
- You should ensure that you have an adequate supply of Welsh medium services in order to achieve the changes. In utilising external support from the Educational Psychology service and the Specialist Teachers Services who contribute to the assessments, providing support and advice, you should ensure that the information together with any support is available in Welsh for children and parents/carers.

## Context

The principal aim of the Welsh Language Commissioner is to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh. This entails raising awareness of the official status of the Welsh language in Wales and imposing standards on organizations. This, in turn, will lead to the establishment of rights for Welsh speakers.

Two principles underpin the Commissioner's work:

- In Wales, the Welsh language should be treated no less favourably than the English language;
- Persons in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so.

Secondary legislation has introduced new powers allowing the setting and imposing of standards on organizations. At the same time, the Commissioner will continue to inspect statutory language schemes through the powers inherited under the Welsh Language Act 1993.

The role of Welsh Language Commissioner was created by the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The Commissioner may investigate failure to implement a language scheme; interference with the freedom to use Welsh in Wales and, in future, complaints regarding the failure of organizations to meet standards.



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Welsh Language  
Commissioner

One of the Commissioner's strategic aims is to influence the consideration given to the Welsh language in terms of policy development. Comments are provided on policy in accordance with this remit and the Commissioner acts as an independent advocate on behalf of Welsh speakers in Wales who could be affected by this Bill. This approach is used to avoid any possible compromise of the Commissioner's functions in the area of regulation, and should the Commissioner wish to formally review the performance of individual bodies or the Welsh Government in accordance with the provisions of the Measure.

### **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011**

The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 incorporates all the rights of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into Welsh domestic law. A number of the UNCRC articles refer specifically to language and freedom of expression.

Article 2 protects the child from suffering language discrimination and places a duty upon nations that are party to it to protect the child from all forms of discrimination. Articles 12 and 13 confer a right to freedom of expression for children and Article 30 gives a child who belongs to a minority the right to use his/her own language in a community with other members of his/her group.

**Considering how fundamental language is to any additional learning provision that may be required by learners, we suggest that the changes to school organization must ensure that any internal or external support provided by the relevant agencies is available in Welsh.**

**During the period of transition there is a possibility that the Specialist Resource Base will be operating mixed classes of pupils. During this period you should ensure that Welsh medium provision is available for pupils who need it and the language needs of learners are not therefore undermined.**

### **Welsh Government Policy Aims in terms of the Welsh Language**

Strategic Aim 1 of the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Strategy calls for an improvement in the planning of Welsh-medium provision in the pre-statutory and statutory phases of education, for learners with ALN. The Strategy notes that the aim of the Government in (SO1.5) is:

*'To expect improved planning of Welsh-medium education provision and services for learners with additional learning needs (ALN) as an integral part of education provision at national, regional and local levels.'*



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Gymraeg  
Welsh Language  
Commissioner

In the Government's strategy for promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh in everyday life, 'A living language: a language for living', the following aims are outlined:

*'to increase the provision of Welsh-medium activities for children and young people and to increase their awareness of the value of the language; to increase and improve Welsh-language services to citizens'*

A number of children and young people with additional learning needs may be vulnerable, and ensuring that vulnerable people can access services in the language in which they feel most comfortable is an intrinsic part of good service provision and effective workforce planning. The relevant organizations must acknowledge that some people can only express their needs effectively through the medium of Welsh, and services have a duty to meet those needs:

**You should ensure that you have an adequate supply of Welsh medium services in order to achieve the changes. In utilising external support from the Educational Psychology service and the Specialist Teachers Services who contribute to the assessments, providing support and advice, you should ensure that the information together with any support is available in Welsh for children and parents/carers.**

### **The importance of the document in Planning Welsh Medium Provision**

The document explains the impact of the changes to school organization and in particular the benefits to pupils with additional learning needs who need Welsh medium support. However, the document is not sufficiently specific in some aspects. We refer in particular to underlining the importance of gathering evidence not only of the demand from learners for Welsh medium services but also in terms of the Welsh language skills of staff who will be providing the whole range of services under the banner of additional learning needs.

It is fair to say that not enough primary evidence has been gathered in terms of the number of pupils with specialist or additional learning needs and the adequacy of the support available in Welsh. Without this information, it is unclear how Welsh medium provision will be ensured for every child who needs it. There is reference to the need to use the Educational Psychology services and wider specialist support in the provision of additional support for pupils. Once again, there are no specific guidelines on how to provide for pupils who need this provision through the medium of Welsh:

**The document suggests that the proposed changes will be beneficial to the Welsh language with a Welsh medium intervention class provided in addition to the existing provision within the specialist resource bases. As part of this provision, a sufficient number of SEN staff who are able to provide support through the medium of Welsh should be ensured.**

### **Closing remarks**

There is an attempt in this document to provide specifically for the Welsh language in planning the reorganization of schools introduced in relation to specialist provision for





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Welsh Language  
Commissioner**

pupils with special learning needs in Cardiff. The proposed changes acknowledge the importance of language to pupils and go as far as to say that the new arrangements will be beneficial to SEN pupils who need Welsh medium specialist support. However, you must also consider how these changes are to be achieved when looking in greater detail at the workforce planning in the context of the Welsh language.

Yours sincerely,

**Meri Huws**  
Welsh Language Commissioner

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**Social Services Directorate collaborative response**

**Do you support the proposal to address the fall in demand for speech and language special school places by closing Meadowbank Special School?**

Yes. Social services would support the inclusion of children and young people within their local communities, receiving educational, social and community support as close to home as possible.

**Do you agree with the proposal to respond to the fall in demand for places at Allensbank SRB by redeveloping this as a Specialist Resource Base for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions?**

Yes. From previous lessons learned, it would be beneficial to consider the learning and support needs of the school as part of the change of delivery proposal. There may be a need for staff to consider the potential changes to their roles and delivery methods due to the change in needs of young people. Social services would support a holistic approach to working in partnership in meeting the needs of these young people. NB - the school is listed as a Red rated school. Does this change in function address the measures required to improve delivery? If not what additional measures are being put in place to improve the school and what impact will this have in the provision of support for young people with ASC?

**Do you agree with the proposal to convert Fairwater Specialist Resource Base, Glan yr Afon Revolving Door Class and Springwood Nurture class to Early Intervention Classes?**

Yes. This proposal supports the Social Services early intervention and prevention agenda, and it is pleasing to note the reference to Team Around the Family in the proposals for those young people where this may be required. It is essential that those young people who are identified early as needing additional support from an early intervention class are offered an early assessment of need, preferably using the JAFF assessment and TAF approach adopted through Cardiff's Early Help Strategy. Please liaise with Ceri George to explore further how this can be integrated from the outset to ensure a holistic approach to early help.

**Do you agree with the proposal to open four additional Early Intervention Classes (subject to further consultation with named schools)**

Yes. In addition to the comments in Q8, how will proposals for those identified for Early Intervention classes, support families and young people in need to access support via the Information, Advice and Assistance services. Processes and relationships need to be considered and developed to ensure synergy between identification of need, and wider sources of support that can work in partnership with education services to provide an holistic early intervention approach to meeting the needs of vulnerable children and young people.



**Phillips, Joanna**

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**From:** Chaundy, Paul (Cllr)  
**Sent:** 20 March 2016 20:19  
**To:** School Responses  
**Cc:** Merry, Sarah (Cllr)  
**Subject:** Consultation Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties

Dear All,

I understand the consultation for this closes 23 March 2016, I would dearly hope the following might be included please.

**Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties**

I would like to submit two following points in relation to these proposals:

1. Can you confirm that there will be sufficient places for pupils at 'special schools' with a particular learning profile for example those needing sign language, deaf-blind-born pupils, pupils with blindness and significant learning disabilities as well as difficulties with severe language impairment.
2. You state that demand for Specialist Resource Base (SRB) places are actually increasing in number, can the specialist and essential support for these pupils for the future be 'secure' given the financial constraints to and cuts to budgets for education currently taking place.

Thank you!

Yours sincerely,

Paul Chaundy (Cllr)



**From:** Martin, Alex  
**Sent:** 06 April 2016 09:34  
**To:** School Responses  
**Cc:** Cowan, Jayne (Cllr)  
**Subject:** Message from Cllr Cowan re: Meadowbank Special School

Dear sir/madam

I would like to put on record my huge concern about the prospect of Meadowbank Special School closing.

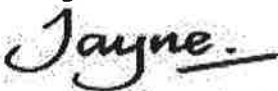
As a former teacher and current chairman of a special school, I know the importance of specialist provision.

I hope the Cabinet will reflect and allow this school to thrive and prosper. It is essential that the school is well promoted and all parents in Cardiff know that this facility is available.

Thousands of names have been submitted on a petition and many letters have been passed to the Council.

I hope this school is saved for the current pupils and future pupils needing this specialist provision.

Kind regards



Jayne L Cowan  
CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF COUNCILLOR FOR RHIWBINA





**Phillips, Joanna**

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**From:** Boyle, Joe (Cllr)  
**Sent:** 05 April 2016 18:22  
**To:** School Responses  
**Cc:** 110 - E-Mail All Liberal Democrats; Eluned Parrott lib/dem (elunedp@hotmail.co.uk)  
**Subject:** Liberal Democrat response to SLD consultation  
**Attachments:** SLD consultation Lib Dem group response.docx

Please find attached a document containing the formal response of the Liberal Democrat group to the consultation on specialist provision for primary aged pupils with speech and language difficulties and with behavioural emotional and social difficulties.

In relation to the four questions, our headlines responses are as follows; the attached document provides detailed explanation:

1. Do you support the proposal to address the fall in demand for speech and language special school places by closing Meadowbank Special School?

**No**

2. Do you agree with the proposal to respond to the fall in demand for places at Allensbank SRB by redeveloping this as a Specialist Resource Base for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions?

**Yes**

3. Do you agree with the proposal to convert Fairwater Specialist Resource Base, Glan yr Afon Revolving Door Class and Springwood Nurture Class to Early Intervention Classes?

**No**

4. Do you agree with the proposal to open four additional Early Intervention Classes (subject to further consultation with named schools).

**No**

Regards,

Joe Boyle  
Councillor – Penylan  
029 2046 2187.



## Response to the proposals to close Meadowbank School

We contest the claim in the consultation that there is a 'falling demand for speech and language places.' All the evidence shows that the diagnosis of speech and language disorders among children is rising and that an increasing number of families are seeking solutions.

The figures that relate to demand for Meadowbank can be interpreted in a variety of ways and even manipulated to paint a narrative that fits the needs of the local authority rather than the needs of the children. The drop in numbers attending Meadowbank could be for a variety of reasons, not least a failure by the local authority to publicise the provision there adequately or specify it within statements of SEN.

As councillors, we have received powerful testimony from families who, in one breath, stress the importance of Meadowbank while, in the next, confirm that they were unaware of the provision until hearing about it through word of mouth. How many children who could benefit from the provision there are missing out because of a lack of awareness among families? There may well be a national trend towards more inclusive practice but that is different from concluding that inclusive education is the only model and that we should provide a one-size-fits-all solution. The drop in numbers is not, in and of itself, proof that such provision is unnecessary.

As we know, the Vale historically funded ten places. Therefore, in 2010-11, when the school had a full complement, 30 places would have been filled from within Cardiff. That has dropped to 23, which indicates that there remains a demonstrable need from within Cardiff. There is no firm proof that this number would not rise were the school's role better publicised and its rating (currently amber) improved. Indeed, once combined with the children in Allénbank, the school nears its full capacity.

Afasic, the charity for adults and children with specific language disorders, lists special Speech & Language schools across the UK. Their belief in the effectiveness of such provision (albeit through private institutions) provides expert endorsement of a special school model in the appropriate circumstances.

Current research regarding the benefit of special schools is also far less conclusive than the consultation might lead one to believe. The following findings from a recent paper to emerge from Cambridge University argues that special schools remain a valid part of the education mix:

'... inclusion policy should not be one-size-fits-all or subject to heavy political correctness or financial influence, but rather be individual-oriented and needs-led. The findings suggest that especially for children with severe learning difficulties (SLD), special school provision still plays an important role in the current education system considering its pedagogy expertise, professional staff team, specialised resources, and curriculum flexibility. This paper therefore concludes that specialised educators from independent special schools for SLD children may tend to see special school provision as positively contributing to inclusive education, and should hence be regarded as an inseparable part of the current education system.'

- *Understanding Special School Provision for Children with Severe Learning Difficulties in Relation to Inclusive Education, Xiao Qu (2015)*

In fact, the consultation describes just how effective such specialist provision is when it states that '[T]he majority of pupils attending Meadowbank Special School and Allensbank SRB transfer to a local high school at Year 7 and many pupils make sufficient progress to transfer at an earlier stage.' This admission of success is justification for retaining this type of provision rather than closing it.

As the Additional Learning Needs Strategy sets out, 'all children should have access to an appropriate education.' The success Meadowbank has with its pupils shows that this is the appropriate setting for them. There is insufficient evidence to prove that an alternative provision, such as an Early Intervention Class, would be appropriate. Maintaining a broad palette of provision is therefore the surest way of ensuring that all children access appropriate education.

The counter argument made in the consultation, that the school-based therapy service is sufficient, is not adequately evidenced and the historical data is inevitably lacking. Equally lacking is evidence relating to the success of early intervention and capacity building within Cardiff's mainstream schools. As with much of this consultation document, this is an assertion and not a proof. In making decisions of this seriousness, we would have expected greater rigour and it is disappointing that the effort to make the case is not supported with better evidence. The only evidence provided (5e and Table 4) refers to an improvement of 20 percentage points during the Reception year. What is this data based on? How many children are being referred to? Are those children diagnosed as having a specific language disorder? Children without a language disorder who come to school from a language impoverished household or with English as a second language may well make good progress through 'Speech Links' and 'Language Links' programmes. But evidence of these programmes' effectiveness with children who have more complex or neurological challenges must be provided if a satisfactory conclusion can be drawn. Table 4 (page 8) does not provide enough detail to make such judgements.

Once again, the consultation fails to provide this rigorous analysis and there is a justifiable anxiety that assertion and partial evidence is being used in place of evidence.

### **Response to proposals in relation to Allensbank School**

Were the specialist provision to be maintained at Meadowbank, we are broadly supportive of the plans to convert Allensbank to an autism specialist resource base. It is clear from existing bases that the specialist support provided in them is well-suited to children with more high-functioning autism or Asperger's Syndrome.

### **Response to proposals in relation to Early Intervention Classes**

Based on the consultation report, we are unconvinced that the plans are robust enough to progress and we cannot support their implementation at this stage.

We have concerns about the following:

### **Purpose of an EIC (paragraph 8a)**

The first bullet point of paragraph 8a covers a broad spectrum of conditions and children, some of whom may merit formal diagnosis but have not yet received one. It seems the height of folly for a child with a pervasive developmental disorder, not otherwise specified, to be thrown into close proximity with a child displaying severe emotional difficulties. The range of interventions and settings needed to deal with the two are likely to be different. There are no guarantees within the consultation to reassure us that the EICs will be able to provide an appropriate level of support and education.

The move towards specialist resource bases for autism and other conditions such as dyslexia is an acknowledgement that many conditions require specialist help and that a one-size-fits-all solution is not appropriate for children with these diagnoses. Such specialist provision is also surely necessary for other children presenting with complex conditions and behaviours, even if they do not currently have a formal diagnosis.

As the proposals for Allensbank state, 'care would be taken not to compromise the quality of support by placing pupils with **incompatible needs together**.' However, is this not precisely the risk that is being taken with the EICs?

The suggested benefits are illogical. The proposals, it is claimed, will 'reduce the number of transfers for children with speech and language difficulties, by ensuring every child can be effectively supported in mainstream education throughout their education.' However, by not having the option of Meadowbank, precisely what specialist support will they receive? Will local schools be expected to develop specialisms in dyspraxia, aphasia, selective mutism, semantic and pragmatic disorders, receptive language problems, PDD (NOS) and so on?

Will children who would merit a place at Meadowbank in fact now find themselves attending an EIC for three to four terms, before returning to their local school? This surely amounts to a 'transfer'. What then, if said child finds that the reintegration at their local school does not provide the necessary level of support? Will they be expected to transfer once more to an EIC for another three to four terms?

There appears to be an assumption that a speech and language disorder is something temporary or akin to a behavioural difficulty that can be ironed out over twelve months. This flies in the face of any credible research. SLDs are often pervasive developmental disorders that do not simply vanish.

### **Processes (paragraph 8b)**

We believe the schools with the EICs, should these plans be pushed through, ought to have a say about which children they accept. We do not believe these decisions should be left to a panel of headteachers and professionals without the input of the headteacher of the EIC school or its governors. The consent of the hosting school must be received before children are admitted.

### **Operation (paragraph 8d)**

For such a critical issue, we are surprised that the consultation does not go into more detail about how the EICs would work.

- What happens if, after four terms, integration to the local school is not deemed appropriate or the local school is unwilling to receive the child back?

- Who will manage the phased reintegration, the IDPs, the multi-disciplinary assessments, the liaison with psychology and specialist teacher services? The hosting school, the local school or the local authority?
- Where are the case studies to show how local schools would develop capacity to enable successful reintegration? What capacity would they be expected to develop? How would it be funded? What level of support would be required to ensure that the reintegrated child did not slip back?

Without detail about these issues, it is impossible to judge whether the plans offer a cogent and well-conceived strategy.

### **Quality and Standards**

We question the decision to place EICs in Fairwater and Glan yr Afon considering their red status, a problem shared by Allensbank. At a time when these schools are clearly struggling with their mainstream operations, it is debatable whether it is wise to provide them with further burdens and leadership requirements.

In particular, we are mystified by the claim that, 'as the proposals are not proposing any changes in respect of mainstream education provision it is not anticipated that there will be any impact on the quality of standards.' The implication of this is that the EICs will be entirely detached from the operation of the mainstream school. It is hard to see how this can be true. If the children who attend an EIC are to feel a genuine part of their hosting school community, then housing such a class is a serious commitment for that school. It must, by necessity, affect leadership, the existing school staff and pupils and the wider school community. Were it not to, one would have to question why the EIC was being placed in a mainstream school in the first place. It might just as well be put in County Hall.

If the local authority did not anticipate any potential impact on standards, the consultation would not need to assert that 'careful planning will take place during the proposed period of change to avoid any risk of distraction or disruption.' In other words, there is a risk of distraction and disruption. However, there is no clarity at all about what the 'careful planning' referred to will entail, what additional funding or resources will be provided, what alterations to school buildings will be required. This lack of clarity is alarming.

Equally alarming is the fact that merely two potential disadvantages of the proposals are listed. Our response and the response from other consultees have demonstrated that the potential disadvantages are legion. It is hard to believe that this consultation has worked its way through officers, senior directors and a cabinet member with only these two mild disadvantages identified. Once again, the lack of rigour is alarming. For the Equality Impact Assessment then to blithely claim that the proposals would not adversely affect a particular group without any reference to the disability protected characteristic seems extraordinary. As a result, the proposals lack credibility.

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**Eluned Parrott**

Aelod Cynulliad dros  
Ganolf De Cymru

Assembly Member for  
South Wales Central



Cynulliad National  
Cenedlaethol Assembly for  
Cymru Wales

School Organisation Planning Team  
Room 219  
Cardiff Council  
County Hall  
Atlantic Wharf  
Cardiff CF10 4UW

[schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk)

Ref: 137030/CW/Education

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016

#### MEADOWBANK SCHOOL

I am writing to express my concern at the proposed closure of Meadowbank School.

I understand officers have recommended its closure because there has been a significant decline in pupil numbers but I am also advised that not all parents are made aware of its existence and, if they had been, they would have elected for their children to receive the specialist services it provides.

I am, therefore, concerned that parents are not choosing to send their children to mainstream education but, rather, they are not being given the choice of an alternative.

10 years ago, the architect of the integration of special needs children into the mainstream education system published a damning report on how this ideal was failing to achieve its ambitions and how children can feel excluded if they are placed into a mainstream school. Apart from feeling socially isolated, such children can also easily fall victim to bullying.

Whilst Eluned Parrott AM will treat as confidential any personal information which you pass on, she will normally allow staff and authorised volunteers to see if this is needed to help and advise you. The AM may pass on all or some of this information to agencies, such as the DWP, the Inland Revenue or the local Council if this is necessary to help with your case.

Eluned Parrott AM may wish to write to you from time to time to keep you informed on issues which you may find of interest. Please let her know if you do not wish to be contacted for this purpose.

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Caerdydd, CF24 3AD  
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**Eluned Parrott**

Aelod Cynulliad dros  
Ganol De Cymru

Assembly Member for  
South Wales Central



Cynulliad National  
Cenedlaethol Assembly for  
Cymru Wales

I recognise it is important that the Council continually reviews Cardiff's education provision to match school places to school demand but I am concerned that the stated demand for "inclusion" may be driven by financial considerations rather than pupils' needs.

I am also concerned that the need to match school places to school demand is already failing to meet the needs of mainstream children transferring from primary to secondary education and the proposal for a supported programme of reintegration of Meadowbank's current and future pupils to local mainstream school will be to the disadvantage of everyone concerned.

I believe that, as the only specialist speech and language school in Wales, which also receives funding from participating local authorities, should be maintained and that it would be counter-productive, both emotionally and financially, to force children to transfer to mainstream schools before they are able to learn the necessary communication skills to successfully integrate with their peers.

Yours sincerely,

**ELUNED PARROTT AM**

Welsh Liberal Democrat Assembly Member for South Wales Central

Whilst Eluned Parrott AM will treat as confidential any personal information which you pass on, she will normally allow staff and authorised volunteers to see if this is needed to help and advise you. The AM may pass on all or some of this information to agencies, such as the DWP, the Inland Revenue or the local Council if this is necessary to help with your case.

Eluned Parrott AM may wish to write to you from time to time to keep you informed on issues which you may find of interest.

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**Phillips, Joanna**

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**From:** Morgan, Julie (Assembly Member) <Julie.Morgan@assembly.wales>  
**Sent:** 05 April 2016 14:10  
**To:** School Responses  
**Subject:** Meadowbank

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to the proposal to change the arrangements for provision for children with speech and language difficulties and in particular, the proposal to close Meadowbank School in August 2017. I understand it is the only special school of its kind in Wales, which provides day education for primary aged pupils who have statements of special educational needs for their severe and specific speech, language and communication needs. I am aware that many parents of children attending the school are fighting to save the school from closure as they feel that mainstream education is not a suitable alternative for their children and I can understand why they are concerned.

I am aware that pupils will be offered a transfer to the specialist resource base at Allensbank Primary School or a supported programme of reintegration into their local mainstream school. However, Meadowbank is a centre of excellence, with very small classes, and specialist staff and this has been extremely helpful to the pupils, many of whom have improved their speech and language abilities and as a result they have been able to make friends and become more sociable, whilst this was not possible when they attended mainstream schools. Parents have told me how their children's lives have been transformed after a period in Meadowbank.

I am concerned at the loss of expertise which the closure of Meadowbank would entail. At a public meeting for parents recently, when this was raised, they were told that the teachers could be retrained or possibly redeployed but this seems an appalling waste of expertise, which will surely still be needed under the new system. I understand that speech and language problems are growing. Surely we must keep the expertise of Meadowbank staff in these circumstances.

The reason given for the recommendation by officers to close Meadowbank in August 2017 is what is described as "a significant decline in pupil numbers". However, I have heard that many parents describe the school as "Cardiff's best kept secret", as they feel it is not sufficiently publicised. Many paid for private sessions for their children with a speech and language therapist and only then learned from the private tutor about Meadowbank, while they had never before been told of the existence of the specialist school. They therefore feel that it is possible that there are still many other children who could benefit from such a facility, if they knew about it.

I have concerns that schools not specialising in speech and language therapy will not be able to meet the needs of the children. Please can the local authority rethink its proposals and find some way of enabling this school to continue its excellent work.



**Julie Morgan AC/AM**  
**Aelod Cynulliad Gogledd Caerdydd**  
**Assembly Member for Cardiff North**

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru / National Assembly for Wales  
Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay  
CAERDYDD / CARDIFF  
CF99 1NA

Swyddfa'r Cynulliad / Assembly Office: 0300 200 7143  
Swyddfa'r Etholaeth / Constituency Office: 029 2061 4577

[www.juliemorgan.org](http://www.juliemorgan.org)

[www.twitter.com/juliemorganLAB](https://www.twitter.com/juliemorganLAB)

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**Cynulliad**      **National**  
**Cenedlaethol**      **Assembly for**  
**Cymru**      **Wales**

**Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg**  
**We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English**

*Ystyriwch amgylchedd - oes rhaid i chi brintio'r ebost hwn?*  
*Please consider the environment - do you really need to print this email?*

*"Dylai unrhyw ddatganiadau neu sylwadau uchod gael eu trin fel rhai personol ac nid o reidrwydd fel datganiadau neu sylwadau gan y Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru, unrhywn ran ohoni neu unrhywn gorff sy'n gysylltiedig a hi."*

*"Any of the statements or comments made above should be regarded as personal and not necessarily those of the National Assembly for Wales, any constituent part or connected body."*

**Phillips, Joanna**

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**From:** WILLIAMS, Craig <craig.williams.mp@parliament.uk>  
**Sent:** 07 March 2016 11:57  
**To:** School Responses  
**Subject:** Specialist provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties.

My Ref: CW/AR/Meadowbank

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools: Specialist provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties.

I have been contacted by several constituents in relation to the above consultation. They have highlighted to me that the consultation proposes the closure of Meadowbank school and have asked me to support their opposition to its closure, which I am happy to do.

I am concerned that much of the justification for the closure of Meadowbank school appears to be falling rolls. A number of those who contacted me emphasised how the provision at Meadowbank offered what could not be offered in mainstream school (including those with SRB provision) and highlighted how their children have developed successfully due to attendance at Meadowbank.

All who contacted me made the point that in their view Meadowbank was not promoted by the LEA as an alternative to mainstream options and that in some cases it was just by chance that they were made aware of it. They feel that this has exacerbated the issue with falling rolls.

In view of the comments I have received I would be grateful if you could reconsider the proposal to close Meadowbank school.

With kind regards,

Craig

**Craig Williams MP**

Member of Parliament for Cardiff North

e: [craig.williams.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:craig.williams.mp@parliament.uk) | t: 029 2240 1350

a: Office of Craig Williams MP, Unit 5, Heol Llanishen Fach, Rhiwbina, Cardiff, CF14 6RG

w: [www.craigwilliams.wales](http://www.craigwilliams.wales) | t: @Craig4CardiffN | f: fb.com/Craig4CardiffNorth

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**Phillips, Joanna**

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**From:** WILLIAMS, Craig <craig.williams.mp@parliament.uk>  
**Sent:** 29 March 2016 12:47  
**To:** School Responses  
**Subject:** Specialist provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties.  
**Attachments:** Specialist provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties.

Our Ref: CW/AR/Meadowbank

Dear Sir/Madam,

Further to my previous email (attached for convenience), one of my members of staff attended the public meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> March and highlighted to me that there were a number of points raised by those present. Whilst I am sure that you have captured the comments made at the meeting, I felt it important to re-iterate the following points:

- 1) Many offered examples of success stories for their children and it is important that these are not overlooked in the final decision
- 2) A number felt that they had been offered schools which were not suitable in the first instance and that the option of Meadowbank had not been given.
- 3) Those present also felt that Meadowbank was not publicised by the Council, especially in relation to statemented children.
- 4) There was concern about the staff and whether their jobs would be protected. If the school closes then there is a high risk that a lot of experienced, specialist staff will be lost.
- 5) Comments were made about the parent/teacher pupil ratio in mainstream for those who are statemented/with SEN compared with that at Meadowbank.

As previously, I'd be grateful if you could take the comments into consideration and reconsider the proposal to close Meadowbank school.

With kind regards,

Craig

**Craig Williams MP**

Member of Parliament for Cardiff North

e: [craig.williams.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:craig.williams.mp@parliament.uk) | t: 029 2240 1350

a: Office of Craig Williams MP, Unit 5, Heol Llanishen Fach, Rhiwbina, Cardiff, CF14 6RG

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## Appendix 3



### Cardiff Council Statutory Screening Tool Guidance

If you are developing a strategy, policy or activity that is likely to impact people, communities or land use in any way then there are a number of statutory requirements that apply. Failure to comply with these requirements, or demonstrate due regard, can expose the Council to legal challenge or other forms of reproach.

For instance, this will apply to strategies (i.e. Housing Strategy or Disabled Play Strategy), policies (i.e. Procurement Policy) or activity (i.e. developing new play area).

Completing the Statutory Screening Tool will ensure that all Cardiff Council strategies, policies and activities comply with relevant statutory obligations and responsibilities. Where a more detailed consideration of an issue is required, the Screening Tool will identify if there is a need for a full impact assessment, as relevant.

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The main statutory requirements that strategies, policies or activities must reflect include:

- **Equality Act 2010 - Equality Impact Assessment**
- **Welsh Government's Sustainable Development Bill**
- **Welsh Government's Statutory Guidance - Shared Purpose Shared Delivery**
- **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**
- **United Nations Principles for Older Persons**
- **Welsh Language Measure 2011**
- **Health Impact Assessment**
- **Habitats Regulations Assessment**
- **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

This Statutory Screening Tool allows us to meet all the requirements of all these pieces of legislation as part of an integrated screening method that usually taken no longer than an hour.

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The Screening Tool can be completed as a self assessment or as part of a facilitated session, should further support be needed. For further information or if you require a facilitated session please contact the Policy, Partnerships and Citizen Focus Team on 2078 8563 e-mail: [siadavies@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:siadavies@cardiff.gov.uk). Please note:

- **The completed Screening Tool must be submitted as an appendix with the Cabinet report.**
- **The completed screening tool will be published on the intranet.**

## Statutory Screening Tool

<b>Name of Strategy / Policy / Activity:</b>  School Organisation Proposals: Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties.	<b>Date of Screening:</b>  June 2016
<b>Service Area/Section:</b> Education	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Nick Batchelar
<b>Attendees:</b> Self-assessment	

<b>What are the objectives of the Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/ Service/Function</b>	<b>Please provide background information on the Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function and any research done [e.g. service users data against demographic statistics, similar EIAs done etc.]</b>
<p> <span style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 10 of 10</span>           The Cabinet is recommended to authorise the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education, to;         </p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out a further review of speech and language support in Cardiff with the aim of bringing forward revised proposals;</li> <li>Undertake further engagement with schools and other stakeholders in relation to early intervention for children with behavioural emotional and social needs;</li> <li>Work with the governing bodies of Meadowbank and Allensbank Schools to ensure the needs of children with speech and language needs placed at the schools can continue to be met effectively, pending a revised proposal.</li> </ol>	<p> <u>Background</u>            At its meeting on 03 December 2015 the Cabinet authorised officers to undertake a public consultation on proposals to:         </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Close Meadowbank Special School at the end of the academic year 2017.</li> <li>Continue to maintain a Specialist Resource Base (SRB) at Allensbank School but cease admission of pupils with speech and language difficulties, unless transferring from Meadowbank Special School. Redesignate this as an SRB for pupils with autism spectrum conditions (ASC), with first admission of ASC children in September 2018.</li> <li>Continue to maintain a Specialist Resource Base at Fairwater School but cease admission of pupils with statements for behaviour emotional and social difficulties. Redesignate this as an Early Intervention Class (EIC) from September 2018.</li> <li>Maintain the specialist classes at Glan Yr Afon (Revolving Door) and Springwood (Nurture Class), but rebadge these as Early Intervention Classes, adopting</li> </ul>

the proposed admission criteria and operational procedures outlined above from September 2018.

The initial proposal set out a significant reshaping of specialist provision to respond to the changing pattern of special educational needs and the increased capacity of mainstream schools to support special educational needs.

The proposed reshaping would maintain the current level of investment in specialist provision and support for special educational needs, while ensuring a better fit to the current pattern of need.

There has been an ongoing gradual decline in the number of parents who request a specialist speech and language placement for their child, which has resulted in a steady fall in the number of funded places over many years, from 70 places prior to 2006; to 58 places in 2010, and to 34 places in November 2015.

The Council has responded to this shift in expectation by investing in mainstream support over several years. Work to build capacity for speech and language support began in 2010 and remains ongoing. The Council believes the fall in demand/ need for specialist places is a direct result both of parental expectations for mainstream inclusion and the capacity building work that has been done to meet needs more effectively in mainstream.

Alongside the changes affecting speech and language provision, there has been an increased demand for specialist provision for children with special educational needs such as autism spectrum conditions and behavioural emotional and social needs.

ESTYN recognised the rationale for responding to these pressures by re-shaping provision by closing Meadowbank School, redesignating the SRB at Allensbank for ASC and developing a network of Early Intervention Classes.

#### The consultation response

In relation to support for speech and language needs, many respondents acknowledged the effectiveness of the work that has been undertaken in recent years to build capacity and skills in mainstream schools. This work has included a comprehensive training programme; universal early screening for speech and

language needs; and a collaborative working relationship between Cardiff and the Vale UHB Speech and Language Therapy Service and the Specialist Teacher Service.

There is also a general acknowledgment among respondents, of the need for some change in the pattern of provision to support speech and language needs.

However, there is a strong consensus among stakeholders regarding the importance of continuing to maintain an effective range of specialist support for children with speech language and communication needs, and concerns that the proposal does not yet fully address this issue.

In particular, strong views have been expressed regarding the need to retain some designated specialist provision for children with the most severe speech and language needs.

Some respondents express the view that special school places should continue to form part of the range of specialist provision. Other respondents put more emphasis on the need for early intervention in the form of resource bases.

Given the strong views expressed by stakeholders it is deemed advisable for additional work to be undertaken to engage with stakeholders more fully prior to bringing forward a revised proposal for consideration.

In developing a revised proposal, the relative benefits and costs of SRB and special school provision will need to be borne in mind. In Council's view, SRBs are a more efficient and effective means of delivering short-term or part-time support. The cost of an SRB place is between one third and one half the cost of a special school place, while the mainstream location of SRBs offers additional benefits for children of ongoing contact with mainstream peers and learning experiences.

In relation to support for behavioural emotional and social needs, many respondents acknowledged the growing demand for specialist provision for children presenting with behavioural emotional and social needs, and recognised that there are insufficient specialist places available to meet this need at present.

The Council agrees with this analysis and this factor was key reason for the proposal

outlined.

However, there is not yet consensus or sufficient clarity about the criteria and purpose of Early Intervention Classes. Further work is therefore needed to clarify and develop this aspect of the proposal prior to bringing forward a revised proposal for consideration.

The initial proposal to develop a network of Early Intervention Classes was based on a reinvestment of the resources and skills that would be released by closure of Meadowbank School. In the absence of significant new investment, it would not be possible to proceed with these classes while also retaining Meadowbank School.

Reason for recommendation

The consultation has identified a number of views that are significant concerns for stakeholders. It is deemed advisable for additional work to be undertaken to engage with stakeholders more fully prior to bringing forward a revised proposal for consideration.

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**Part 1: Impact on outcomes and due regard to Sustainable Development**

Please use the following scale when considering what contribution the activity makes:		
<b>+</b>	Positive	Positive contribution to the outcome
<b>-</b>	Negative	Negative contribution to the outcome
<b>ntrl</b>	Neutral	Neutral contribution to the outcome
<b>Uncertain</b>	Not Sure	Uncertain if any contribution is made to the outcome

	Has the Strategy/Policy/Activity considered how it will impact one or more of Cardiff's 7 Citizen focused Outcomes?	Please Tick				Evidence or suggestion for improvement/mitigation
		+	-	Ntrl	Un-Crtn	
<b>1.1</b>	<b>People in Cardiff are healthy;</b> <i>Consider the potential impact on</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>the promotion of good health, prevention of damaging behaviour, promote healthy eating/active lifestyles etc,</i></li> <li><i>vulnerable citizens and areas of multiple deprivation</i></li> <li><i>Addressing instances of inequality in health</i></li> </ul>		✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The delay in a decision regarding the future of provision for speech and language needs will cause a delay in the goal of providing additional specialist places for children experiencing behaviour emotional and social difficulties.</li> <li>The number of primary aged pupils who require a specialist placement due to their behaviour emotional social needs is</li> </ul>

	Has the Strategy/Policy/Activity considered how it will impact one or more of Cardiff's 7 Citizen focused Outcomes?	Please Tick				Evidence or suggestion for improvement/mitigation
		+	-	Ntrl	Un-Crtn	
						<p>increasing. There are insufficient specialist places to meet this need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is a high risk that in September 2016 there will be 12 or more pupils unable to access the specialist provision they need, and their needs will be insufficiently met.</li> </ul>
Page 144	<b>1.2 People in Cardiff have a clean, attractive and sustainable environment;</b> <i>Consider the potential impact on</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>the causes and consequences of Climate Change and creating a carbon lite city</i></li> </ul>			✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The recommendation to develop revised proposals will have no impact on this outcome.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>encouraging walking, cycling, and use of public transport and improving access to countryside and open space</i></li> </ul>			✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The recommendation to develop revised proposals will have no impact on this outcome.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>reducing environmental pollution (land, air, noise and water)</i></li> </ul>					N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>reducing consumption and encouraging waste reduction, reuse, recycling and recovery</i></li> </ul>					N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>encouraging biodiversity</i></li> </ul>					N/A

	Has the Strategy/Policy/Activity considered how it will impact one or more of Cardiff's 7 Citizen focused Outcomes?	Please Tick				Evidence or suggestion for improvement/mitigation
		+	-	Ntrl	Un-Crtn	
1.3	<p><b>People in Cardiff are safe and feel safe;</b>  <i>Consider the potential impact on</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>reducing crime, fear of crime and increasing safety of individuals</i></li> <li>• <i>addressing anti-social behaviour</i></li> <li>• <i>protecting vulnerable adults and children in Cardiff from harm or abuse</i></li> </ul>		✓			- high quality support for speech and language pupils in mainstream schools, and in specialist settings will continue pending revised proposals. However, there will be a delay in securing additional provision for pupils with behavioural emotional and social difficulties with the outcome that some vulnerable learners and their families will be adversely affected.
1.4	<p><b>Cardiff has a thriving and prosperous economy;</b>  <i>Consider the potential impact on</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>economic competitiveness (enterprise activity, social enterprises, average earnings, improve productivity)</i></li> <li>• <i>Assisting those Not in Education, Employment or Training</i></li> <li>• <i>attracting and retaining workers (new employment and training opportunities, increase the value of employment,)</i></li> <li>• <i>promoting local procurement opportunities or enhancing the capacity of local companies to compete</i></li> </ul>					N/A.
1.5	<p><b>People in Cardiff achieve their full potential;</b>  <i>Consider the potential impact on</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>promoting and improving access to life-long learning in Cardiff</i></li> <li>• <i>raising levels of skills and qualifications</i></li> <li>• <i>giving children the best start</i></li> <li>• <i>improving the understanding of sustainability</i></li> <li>• <i>addressing child poverty (financial poverty, access poverty, participation poverty)</i></li> <li>• <i>the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child and Principles for Older persons</i></li> </ul>		✓			- high quality support for speech and language pupils in mainstream schools, and in specialist settings will continue pending revised proposals. However, there will be a delay in securing additional provision for pupils with behavioural emotional and social difficulties with the outcome that some vulnerable learners and their families will be adversely affected.

	Has the Strategy/Policy/Activity considered how it will impact one or more of Cardiff's 7 Citizen focused Outcomes?	Please Tick				Evidence or suggestion for improvement/mitigation
		+	-	Ntrl	Un-Crtn	
Page 146	<b>1.6 Cardiff is a Great Place to Live, Work and Play</b> <i>Consider the potential impact on</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promoting the cultural diversity of Cardiff</li> <li>• encouraging participation and access for all to physical activity, leisure &amp; culture</li> <li>• play opportunities for Children and Young People</li> <li>• protecting and enhancing the landscape and historic heritage of Cardiff</li> <li>• promoting the City's international links</li> </ul>					N/A
	<b>Cardiff is a fair, just and inclusive society.</b> <i>Consider the potential impact on</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the elimination of discrimination, harassment or victimisation for equality groups</li> <li>• has the community or stakeholders been engaged in developing the strategy/policy/activity?</li> <li>• how will citizen participation be encouraged (encouraging actions that consider different forms of consultation, through more in depth engagement to full participation in service development and delivery)?</li> </ul>	✓				See Equality Impact Assessment below (and attached).  - The education community, families and other partners have been engaged in consultation on the initial proposal. The recommendation to develop revised proposals is a recognition of the concerns that have been expressed and the need to reconsider some elements of the proposal.
	<b>1.8 The Council delivers positive outcomes for the city and its citizens through strong partnerships</b> <i>Consider the potential impact on</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strengthening partnerships with business and voluntary sectors</li> <li>• the collaboration agenda and the potential for shared services, cross-boundary working and efficiency savings</li> </ul>	✓				- In the process of developing revised proposals, there will be further engagement with stakeholders, including schools, pupils, families, NHS health services and voluntary sector partners, with a view to further developing collaborative approaches to supporting children with special educational needs and their families.



Has the Strategy/Policy/Activity considered how it will impact one or more of Cardiff's 7 Citizen focused Outcomes?	Please Tick				Evidence or suggestion for improvement/mitigation
	+	-	Ntrl	Un-Crtn	
Will this Policy/Strategy/Project have a <b>differential impact</b> on any of the following:					<i>Please give details/consequences of the differential impact (positive and negative), and what action(s) can you take to address any negative implications?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Age</b> (including children and young people aged 0-25 and older people over 65 in line with the United Nations Conventions)</li> </ul>		✓			<b>Age 4 – 11</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is insufficient provision for pupils with behaviour emotional and social needs in this age group.</li> <li>- Projections of need suggest that an additional SRB for pupils with autism spectrum conditions will be needed by September 2017.</li> <li>- The delay in making a decision regarding the reshaping of specialist provision for primary aged pupils will have an adverse impact on the above groups.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Disability</b></li> </ul>		✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- high quality support for speech and language pupils in mainstream schools, and in specialist settings will continue pending revised proposals. However, there will be a delay in securing additional provision for pupils with behavioural emotional and social difficulties with the outcome that some vulnerable learners and their families will be adversely affected.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Gender Reassignment</b></li> </ul>			✓		N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b></li> </ul>			✓		N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b></li> </ul>			✓		N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Race</b></li> </ul>			✓		The proposal would not have a differential impact upon one particular ethnic group as the provision would be available to all.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Religion/Belief</b></li> </ul>			✓		N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Sex</b></li> </ul>			✓		All schools would continue to admit pupils of both sexes.

	Has the Strategy/Policy/Activity considered how it will impact one or more of Cardiff's 7 Citizen focused Outcomes?	Please Tick				Evidence or suggestion for improvement/mitigation
		+	-	Ntrl	Un-Crtn	
Page 148						The Council's procedure for managing staffing changes arising from reorganisation would be used in implementing the changes in this proposal. This ensures that good practice is followed, including the application of the Council's policies on equal opportunities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual Orientation</li> </ul>			✓		N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh Language</li> <li>• Other languages</li> </ul>	✓				<p>The decision to revisit the proposals could delay provision of Welsh-medium specific provision for behavioural social and emotional difficulties.</p> <p><u>Other Language support</u></p> <p>The proposal will not directly impact on the level of support provided as all support is dependent on the Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant which is reviewed and then renewed according to the results of the annual Needs Assessment Survey. The allocation of teachers and Bi-lingual Teacher Assistants (BTAs) is usually in place for the period of the academic year but is liable to change throughout the year to meet fluctuations in demand.</p>

**SUMMARY OF APPRAISAL (highlight positive and negative effects of the policy / plan / project being assessed, demonstrating how it contributes to the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the city):**

**Economic/Educational/Social**

The decision not to progress the initial proposal will initially have a potentially adverse effect on the education of a small group of vulnerable learners with behavioural social emotional needs, for whom there is currently insufficient provision. The initial proposal attempted to address this by releasing resources from under-subscribed speech and language provision, and investing in additional specialist places for this group.

The decision to undertake further work and revise the proposals will ultimately result in proposals that address the concerns of stakeholders.

**WHAT ACTIONS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED OR CHANGES BEEN MADE TO THE POLICY / PLAN / PROJECT AS A RESULT OF THIS APPRAISAL:**

The following assessments to be undertaken:

- Equality Impact Assessment to be updated once revised proposals have been developed

## Part 2: Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening

		Yes	No
2.1	Does the plan or programme set the framework for future development consent?		X
2.2	Is the plan or programme likely to have significant, positive or negative, environmental effects?		X

Is a Full Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Needed?	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If yes has been ticked to both questions 2.1 and 2.2 then the answer is yes</li> <li>▪ If a full SEA Screening is required then please contact the Sustainable Development Unit to arrange (details below)</li> </ul>		<p>X</p> <p>An SEA has been undertaken (see attached) and will be updated following public consultation on the school proposals.</p>

If you have any doubt on your answers to the above questions regarding SEA then please consult with the Sustainable Development Unit on 2087 3228 [sustainabledevelopment@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:sustainabledevelopment@cardiff.gov.uk)

## Part 3: Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA)

		Yes	No	Unsure
3.1	Will the plan, project or programme results in an activity which is known to affect a European site, such as the Severn Estuary or the Cardiff Beech Woods?		X	
3.2	Will the plan, project or programme which steers development towards an area that includes a European site, such as the Severn Estuary or the Cardiff Beech Woods or may indirectly affect a European site?		X	
3.3	Is a full HRA needed?		X	

Details of the strategy will be sent to the County Ecologist on completion of the process to determine if a Habitat Regulation Assessment is needed. For further information please phone 2087 3215 or email [biodiversity@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:biodiversity@cardiff.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1 – Statutory Requirements

It is possible that the Impact Screening Tool will identify the need to undertake specific statutory assessments:

- **Equality Impact Assessment:** *This assessment is required by the Equality Act 2010 and Welsh Government's Equality Regulations 2011.*
- **Sustainable Development Bill:** *The Bill, when it comes into effect, will require sustainable development (SD) to be a central organising principle for the organisation. This means that there is a duty to consider SD in the strategic decision making processes.*
- **Shared Purpose Shared Delivery-** *The Welsh Government requires local authorities to produce a single integrated plan to meet statutory requirements under a range of legislation. Cardiff Council must therefore demonstrate its contribution towards Cardiff's own integrated plan; "What Matters".*
- **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:** *The Children Act 2004 guidance for Wales requires local authorities and their partners to have regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child.*
- **United Nations Principles for Older Persons:** *The principles require a consideration of independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment and dignity.*
- **The Welsh Language Measure 2011:** *The measure sets out official status for the Welsh language, a Welsh language Commissioner, and the freedom to speak Welsh.*
- **Health Impact Assessment:** *(HIA) considers policies, programmes or projects for their potential effects on the health of a population*
- **Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment:** *A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is an European Directive for plans, programmes and policies with land use implications and significant environmental effects.*
- **Habitats Regulations Assessment:** *The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 provides a requirement to undertake Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of land use plans.*

Initial Equality Impact Assessment  
**Corporate Assessment Template**



<b>Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function Title:</b>	
School Organisation Proposals: Specialist provision for primary aged pupils with speech and language difficulties and with behavioural emotional and social difficulties	
<b>New/Existing/Updating/Amending:</b>	
New	
<b>Who is responsible for developing and implementing the Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function?</b>	
Name: Jennie Hughes	Job Title: Senior Achievement Leader Inclusion
Service Team: Inclusion	Service Area: Education
Assessment Date: December 2014	

**1. What are the objectives of the Policy/Strategy/Project/ Procedure/ Service/Function?**

**It is proposed that:**

The Cabinet is recommended to authorise the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education, to;

1. Carry out a further review of speech and language support in Cardiff with the aim of bringing forward revised proposals;
2. Undertake further engagement with schools and other stakeholders in relation to early intervention for children with behavioural emotional and social needs;
3. Work with the governing bodies of Meadowbank and Allensbank Schools to ensure the needs of children with speech and language needs placed at the schools can continue to be met effectively, pending a revised proposal.

**2. Please provide background information on the Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function and any research done [e.g. service users data against demographic statistics, similar EIAs done etc.]**

There has been a trend away from special schools places for speech and language needs as part of a national trend towards inclusion. Cardiff is the only local authority in England and Wales still maintaining a special school specialising solely in speech and language needs.

While special school continues to be an important option for some children with complex, long term learning difficulties, there has been a general trend for children with moderate learning delays, speech and language difficulties and physical disabilities to attend a local school.

Meadowbank School is a small special school located in Gabalfa adjacent to Gabalfa Primary School and Ysgol Glan Ceubal, for children aged 4-11 with significant speech and language difficulties.

Historically the Vale of Glamorgan Council funded 10 places at the school and at that time the school operated at 40 places. In 2010, the Vale of Glamorgan gave notice of their intention to withdraw from this arrangement, making no new placements. In July 2015 the last Vale child left the school.

Cardiff also maintains a specialist resource base (SRB) at Allensbank Primary School, for 20 pupils with speech and language difficulties.

Although the number of children and young people with speech and language difficulties has not fallen, demand for places at both Meadowbank and Allensbank SRB has fallen in recent years, with an increasing number of parents expressing a preference for mainstream education, with support provided in the local catchment school.

At the present time, November 2015, there are 23 pupils on roll at Meadowbank.

Demand for places at Allensbank has also fallen from 18 in 2010-11, to 11 pupils in November 2015.

The prospects for pupils with speech and language difficulties to be reintegrated to mainstream school are good; the majority of pupils attending Meadowbank and Allensbank SRB transfer to a local high school at Year 7, and many pupils make sufficient progress to transfer at an earlier age.

A report on specialist provision for pupils with SEN/ ALN was completed in 2013. This identified a number of priorities for future development of special school and SRB provision.

In March 2014 a focus group of Headteachers, health, children services and parent partnership representatives was consulted on the priorities for future development of BESD provision in Cardiff (Appendix 3). There was consensus on the need for:

- More capacity for early intervention such as Nurture Classes and Revolving door classes;
- Greater emphasis on the underlying needs experienced by this group including: mental health and medical needs; speech and language difficulties; literacy and numeracy delays.

Demand for special school or SRB places for primary aged children presenting with challenging behaviours has increased over the last two years. In 2014-15 there was a 30% increase in the number of new statements for this area of need..

The initial proposal set out a significant reshaping of specialist provision to respond to the changing pattern of special educational needs described above. The proposed reshaping would maintain the current level of investment in specialist provision and support for special educational needs, while ensuring a better fit to the current pattern of need.

There is also a general acknowledgment among respondents, of the need for some change in the pattern of provision to support speech and language needs.

However, there is a strong consensus among stakeholders regarding the importance of continuing to maintain an effective range of specialist support for children with speech language and communication needs, and concerns that the proposal does not yet fully address this issue. In particular, strong views have been expressed regarding the need to retain some designated specialist provision for children with the most severe speech and language needs.

Given the strong views expressed by stakeholders it is deemed advisable for additional work to be undertaken to engage with stakeholders more fully prior to bringing forward a revised proposal for consideration.

In relation to support for behavioural emotional and social needs, many respondents acknowledged the growing demand for specialist provision for children presenting with behavioural emotional and social needs, and recognised that there are insufficient specialist places available to meet this need at present. The Council agrees with this analysis and this factor was key reason for the proposal outlined.

However, there is not yet consensus or sufficient clarity about the criteria and purpose of Early Intervention Classes. Further work is therefore needed to clarify and develop this aspect of the proposal prior to bringing forward a revised proposal for consideration.

The consultation has identified a number of views that are significant concerns for stakeholders. It is deemed advisable for additional work to be undertaken to engage with stakeholders more fully prior to bringing forward a revised proposal for consideration.

### 3 Assess Impact on the Protected Characteristics

#### 3.1 Age

Will this Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function have a **differential impact [positive/negative/]** on younger/older people?

	Yes	No	N/A
3-11 years	+ve /-ve		
12 - 65 years	x		
Over 65 years	x		

#### Please give details/consequences of the differential impact, and provide supporting evidence, if any.

High quality support for speech and language pupils in mainstream schools, and in specialist settings will continue pending revised proposals.

However, there will be a delay in securing additional provision for pupils with behavioural emotional and social difficulties with the risk that some vulnerable learners and their families will be adversely affected. It is anticipated that some pupils who require specialist placement will be unable to access this support and will remain in their local mainstream school with funded support. This will increase the risk of exclusion, school placement breakdown and adverse impact on other pupils.

#### What action(s) can you take to address the differential impact?

The Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate, via the behaviour support team, education psychology service and inclusion managers, will work closely with schools to ensure continued support for vulnerable pupils.

#### If no differential impact, explain the reason(s) for this assessment:

#### 3.2 Disability

Will this Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function have a **differential impact [positive/negative]** on disabled people?

	Yes	No	N/A
Hearing Impairment			X
Physical Impairment			X
Visual Impairment			X
Learning Disability			x
Long-Standing Illness or Health Condition			X
Mental Health	-ve		
Substance Misuse			X
Other			X



**Please give details/consequences of the differential impact, and provide supporting evidence, if any.**

The rise in the number of children displaying challenging behaviour correlates with the increase in mental health issues in very young children, which has been identified as national phenomenon.  
The delay in securing additional specialist provision for this vulnerable group, increases risks for children experiencing mental health difficulties.

**What action(s) can you take to address the differential impact?**

**If no differential impact, explain the reason(s) for this assessment:**

The Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate, via the behaviour support team, education psychology service and inclusion managers, will work closely with schools to ensure continued support for vulnerable pupils.

**3.3 Gender Reassignment**

Will this Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function have a **differential impact [positive/negative]** on transgender people?

	Yes	No	N/A
<b>Transgender People</b> (People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process [or part of a process] to reassign their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex)		X	

**Please give details/consequences of the differential impact, and provide supporting evidence, if any.**

**What action(s) can you take to address the differential impact?**

**If no differential impact, explain the reason(s) for this assessment:**

N/A

**3.4. Marriage and Civil Partnership**

Will this Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function have a **differential impact [positive/negative]** on marriage and civil partnership?

	Yes	No	N/A
Marriage			X
Civil Partnership			X

**Please give details/consequences of the differential impact, and provide supporting evidence, if any.**

**What action(s) can you take to address the differential impact?**

**If no differential impact, explain the reason(s) for this assessment:**

N/A

**3.5 Pregnancy and Maternity**

Will this Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function have a **differential impact [positive/negative]** on pregnancy and maternity?

	Yes	No	N/A
Pregnancy		X	
Maternity			X

**Please give details/consequences of the differential impact, and provide supporting evidence, if any.**

**What action(s) can you take to address the differential impact?**

<b>If no differential impact, explain the reason(s) for this assessment:</b>
N/A

**3.6 Race**

Will this Policy/Strategy/Project//Procedure/Service/Function have a **differential impact [positive/negative]** on the following groups?

	Yes	No	N/A
White		X	
Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups		X	
Asian / Asian British		X	
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British		X	
Other Ethnic Groups		X	

<b>Please give details/consequences of the differential impact, and provide supporting evidence, if any.</b>
<b>What action(s) can you take to address the differential impact?</b>
<b>If no differential impact, explain the reason(s) for this assessment:</b>
N/A

**3.7 Religion, Belief or Non-Belief**

Will this Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function have a **differential impact [positive/negative]** on people with different religions, beliefs or non-beliefs?

	Yes	No	N/A
Buddhist		X	
Christian		X	
Hindu		X	
Humanist		X	
Jewish		X	
Muslim		X	
Sikh		X	
Other		X	

<b>Please give details/consequences of the differential impact, and provide supporting evidence, if any.</b>
<b>What action(s) can you take to address the differential impact?</b>
<b>If no differential impact, explain the reason(s) for this assessment:</b>
N/A

**3.8 Sex**

Will this Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function have a **differential impact [positive/negative]** on men and/or women?

	Yes	No	N/A
Men		X	
Women		X	

<b>Please give details/consequences of the differential impact, and provide supporting evidence, if any.</b>
<b>What action(s) can you take to address the differential impact?</b>

**If no differential impact, explain the reason(s) for this assessment:**

### 3.9 Sexual Orientation

Will this Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function have a **differential impact [positive/negative]** on the following groups?

	Yes	No	N/A
Bisexual		X	
Gay Men		X	
Gay Women/Lesbians		X	
Heterosexual/Straight		X	

**Please give details/consequences of the differential impact, and provide supporting evidence, if any.**

**What action(s) can you take to address the differential impact?**

**If no differential impact, explain the reason(s) for this assessment:**

### 3.10 Language

Will this Policy/Strategy/Project/Procedure/Service/Function have a **differential impact [positive/negative]** on Language?

	Yes	No	N/A
Welsh Language	-ve		
Other languages		x	

**Please give details/consequences of the differential impact, and provide supporting evidence, if any.**

The initial proposal made provision for a welsh medium specialist class for children experiencing behaviour emotional and social needs. Development of this specialist class may be delayed due to undertake further work and develop revised proposals.

**What action(s) can you take to address the differential impact?**

The Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate, via the behaviour support team, education psychology service and inclusion managers, will work closely with schools to ensure continued support for vulnerable pupils.

**If no differential impact, explain the reason(s) for this assessment:**

The proposal will not directly impact on the level of support provided as all support is dependent on the Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant which is reviewed and then renewed according to the results of the annual Needs Assessment Survey. The allocation of teachers and Bi-lingual Teacher Assistants (BTAs) is usually in place for the period of the academic year but is liable to change throughout the year to meet fluctuations in demand

### 4. Consultation and Engagement

What arrangements have been made to consult/engage with the various Equalities Groups?

- Revision of the proposals will include engagement with all stakeholders, including schools, pupils and their families, health, social care and voluntary sector organisations.

**5. Summary of Actions [Listed in the Sections above]**

<b>Groups</b>	<b>Actions</b>
Age	The Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate, via the behaviour support team, education psychology service and inclusion managers, will work closely with schools to ensure continued support for vulnerable pupils.
Disability	The Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate, via the behaviour support team, education psychology service and inclusion managers, will work closely with schools to ensure continued support for vulnerable pupils.
Gender Reassignment	None identified
Marriage & Civil Partnership	None identified
Pregnancy & Maternity	None identified
Race	None identified
Religion/Belief	None identified
Sex	None identified
Sexual Orientation	None identified
Language	The Education and Lifelong Learning Directorate, via the behaviour support team, education psychology service and inclusion managers, will work closely with schools to ensure continued support for vulnerable pupils.
Generic Over-Arching	None identified .

**6. Further Action**

Once revised proposals have been developed, a new EIA and SA/SEA appraisal will be undertaken.

**7. Authorisation**

The Template should be completed by the Lead Officer of the identified Policy/Strategy/Project/Function and approved by the appropriate Manager in each Service Area.

Completed By:	Date:
Designation:	
Approved By:	
Designation:	
Service Area: Education	

## **Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the proposal relating to Specialist Provision for Primary Aged Pupils with Speech and Language Difficulties and with Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties.**

### **Background**

In 2008, a retrospective Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of Cardiff's 21st Century: A Strategic Framework for a School Building Improvement Programme (published in 2006) was carried out based on the guidance that supports the European SEA Directive 2001/42/EC.

The retrospective approach to assessment was quality assured by an external consultant and their independent compliance review determined that the report detailing the assessment on the strategic framework met the key requirements set out for reporting the SEA process as required by the SEA Directive.

The assessment provides the basis for assessing current and future school organisation proposals at a strategic level.

**To request a copy of the assessment on the Strategic Framework please contact Clive Bailey, 029 2087 3166, [CBailey@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:CBailey@cardiff.gov.uk) .**

### **Proposal**

At its meeting on 03 December 2015 the Cabinet authorised officers to undertake a public consultation on proposals to:

- Close Meadowbank Special School at the end of the academic year 2017.
- Continue to maintain a Specialist Resource Base (SRB) at Allensbank School but cease admission of pupils with speech and language difficulties, unless transferring from Meadowbank Special School. Redesignate this as an SRB for pupils with autism spectrum conditions (ASC), with first admission of ASC children in September 2018.
- Continue to maintain a Specialist Resource Base at Fairwater School but cease admission of pupils with statements for behaviour emotional and social difficulties. Redesignate this as an Early Intervention Class (EIC) from September 2018.
- Maintain the specialist classes at Glan Yr Afon (Revolving Door) and Springwood (Nurture Class), but rebadge these as Early Intervention Classes, adopting the proposed admission criteria and operational procedures outlined above from September 2018.

### Background

The initial proposal set out a significant reshaping of specialist provision to respond to the changing pattern of special educational needs and the increased capacity of mainstream schools to support special educational needs.

The proposed reshaping would maintain the current level of investment in specialist provision and support for special educational needs, while ensuring a better fit to the current pattern of need.

There has been an ongoing gradual decline in the number of parents who request a specialist speech and language placement for their child, which has resulted in a steady fall in the number of funded places over many years, from 70 places prior to 2006; to 58 places in 2010, and to 34 places in November 2015.

The Council has responded to this shift in expectation by investing in mainstream support over several years. Work to build capacity for speech and language support began in 2010 and remains ongoing. The Council believes the fall in demand/ need for specialist places is a direct result both of parental expectations for mainstream inclusion and the capacity building work that has been done to meet needs more effectively in mainstream.

Alongside the changes affecting speech and language provision, there has been an increased demand for specialist provision for children with special educational needs such as autism spectrum conditions and behavioural emotional and social needs.

ESTYN recognised the rationale for responding to these pressures by re-shaping provision by closing Meadowbank School, redesignating the SRB at Allensbank for ASC and developing a network of Early Intervention Classes.

#### The consultation response

In relation to support for speech and language needs, many respondents acknowledged the effectiveness of the work that has been undertaken in recent years to build capacity and skills in mainstream schools. This work has included a comprehensive training programme; universal early screening for speech and language needs; and a collaborative working relationship between Cardiff and the Vale UHB Speech and Language Therapy Service and the Specialist Teacher Service.

There is also a general acknowledgment among respondents, of the need for some change in the pattern of provision to support speech and language needs.

However, there is a strong consensus among stakeholders regarding the importance of continuing to maintain an effective range of specialist support for children with speech language and communication needs, and concerns that the proposal does not yet fully address this issue.

In particular, strong views have been expressed regarding the need to retain some designated specialist provision for children with the most severe speech and language needs.

Some respondents express the view that special school places should continue to form part of the range of specialist provision. Other respondents put more emphasis on the need for early intervention in the form of resource bases.

Given the strong views expressed by stakeholders it is deemed advisable for additional work to be undertaken to engage with stakeholders more fully prior to bringing forward a revised proposal for consideration.

In developing a revised proposal, the relative benefits and costs of SRB and special school provision will need to be borne in mind. In Council's view, SRBs are a more efficient and effective means of delivering short-term or part-time support. The cost of an SRB place is between one third and one half the cost of a special school place, while the mainstream location of SRBs offers additional benefits for children of ongoing contact with mainstream peers and learning experiences.

In relation to support for behavioural emotional and social needs, many respondents acknowledged the growing demand for specialist provision for children presenting with

behavioural emotional and social needs, and recognised that there are insufficient specialist places available to meet this need at present.

The Council agrees with this analysis and this factor was key reason for the proposal outlined.

However, there is not yet consensus or sufficient clarity about the criteria and purpose of Early Intervention Classes. Further work is therefore needed to clarify and develop this aspect of the proposal prior to bringing forward a revised proposal for consideration.

The initial proposal to develop a network of Early Intervention Classes was based on a reinvestment of the resources and skills that would be released by closure of Meadowbank School. In the absence of significant new investment, it would not be possible to proceed with these classes while also retaining Meadowbank School.

#### Reason for recommendation

The consultation has identified a number of views that are significant concerns for stakeholders. It is deemed advisable for additional work to be undertaken to engage with stakeholders more fully prior to bringing forward a revised proposal for consideration.

The Cabinet is recommended to authorise the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education, to;

1. Carry out a further review of speech and language support in Cardiff with the aim of bringing forward revised proposals;
2. Undertake further engagement with schools and other stakeholders in relation to early intervention for children with behavioural emotional and social needs;
3. Work with the governing bodies of Meadowbank and Allensbank Schools to ensure the needs of children with speech and language needs placed at the schools can continue to be met effectively, pending a revised proposal.

Key:

<b>xx</b>	= very incompatible; very negative effect
<b>x</b>	= incompatible; negative effect
<b>✓</b>	= compatible; positive effect
<b>✓✓</b>	= very compatible; very positive effect
<b>0</b>	= no links; neutral effect
<b>?</b>	= uncertain effects
<b>DNA</b>	= data not available

\* Comparison of the preferred option to do nothing or possible alternative options is required in a SA/SEA.

SEA objective	Proposed Closure of Meadowbank		Rating	Do Nothing
	Rating	Commentary/ explanation of compatibility with SEA objective		Commentary/ explanation of compatibility with SEA objective
1. <i>Promote</i> a greener economy by delivering a sustainable pattern of speech language and communication (SLCN) behaviour emotional and social needs (BESN) provision across Cardiff	✓	Achieved as this proposal would provide a better match of supply to demand.	X	Do nothing is not an option as the change in the pattern of special educational needs and demand has to be addressed. However, in view of the concerns of stakeholders expressed during consultation, it is deemed advisable to undertake further work with a view to developing revised proposals.
2. <i>Reduce</i> greenhouse gas emissions through:  a) Energy efficient building design and disposing of poor quality surplus accommodation  b) Promoting sustainable modes of transport and integrated transport systems	N/A	N/A          N/A	N/A          N/A	N/A          N/A
3. <i>Promote health and wellbeing</i> by protecting and enhancing public open space and improving access to POS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A



4. <i>Minimise</i> air, light and noise pollution associated with building development and traffic congestion	N/A	N/A	<b>N/A</b>	N/A
5. <i>Protect</i> and enhance biodiversity, flora and fauna	<b>N/A</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
6. <i>Protect</i> and enhance the landscape (habitats/visual amenities)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
7. Conserve water resources and increase water efficiency in new developments and promote sustainable urban drainage systems	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
8. <i>Promote</i> regeneration by delivering inclusive schools that will improve equality of opportunity and access for all	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
9. <i>Protect and enhance</i> designated historic assets	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

## **Conclusion**

The proposal has been assessed to be largely compatible with the environmental objectives used to assess the goal and principles of the “21st Century Schools: A Strategic Framework for A School Building Improvement Programme” that underpin school organisation proposals.

**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF  
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**11 JULY 2016**

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**COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to invite Members to consider the approach they would like to take to setting the Committee's work programme for the municipal year 2016/17.

**Background**

2. The Council's Constitution states that each Scrutiny Committee will set its own work programme for the forthcoming year (Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7). With the establishment of a new administration the Committee is now tasked with constructing a work programme for the year ahead that ensures the time available to the Committee is used most effectively, by considering items in a timely fashion that maximise the impact of scrutiny.
3. This Committee's terms of reference give the Committee responsibility for scrutinising, measuring and actively promoting improvement in the Council's performance in the provision of services and compliance with Council policies, aims and objectives in the area of Education and Children's Services:
  - To scrutinise, measure and actively promote improvement in the Council's performance in the provision of services and compliance with Council policies, aims and objectives in the area of children and young people, including:

School Improvement	Governor Services
Schools Organisation	Children's Social Services
School Support Services	Children & Young People's
Education Welfare & Inclusion	Partnership
Early Years Development	Youth Services and Justice
Special Educational needs	Play Services

- To assess the impact of partnerships with and resources and services provided by external organisations including Welsh Government, Welsh Government Sponsored Public Bodies and quasi-departmental non-governmental bodies on the effectiveness of Council service delivery.
  - To report to an appropriate Cabinet or Council meeting on its findings and to make recommendations on measures, this may enhance Council performance and service delivery in this area.
4. The calendar of meetings for the year was agreed at Council on 30 June 2016, and are as follows:
- 4.30pm, Tuesday 27 September 2016 in Committee Room 4 at County Hall
  - 2.30pm, Tuesday 18 October 2016 in Committee Room 4 at County Hall.
  - 2.30pm, Tuesday 8 November 2016 in Committee Room 4 at County Hall
  - 4.30pm, Tuesday 6 December 2016 in Committee Room 4 at County Hall
  - 2.30pm, Tuesday 10 January 2017 in Committee Room 4 at County Hall
  - 9.30am, Monday 13 February 2017 in Committee Room 4 at County Hall
  - 4.30pm, Tuesday 14 March 2017 in Committee Room 4 at County Hall
5. In addition to the above, the Committee is requested to hold a joint meeting with the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee in order to receive and scrutinise the Director of Social Services' Annual Report 2016/17. The first meeting of which was agreed by Council for 1 December 2016,

6. Members may also decide to hold Task & Finish group meetings, where several Committee members take on work to investigate and scrutinise a specific area in depth, on behalf of the whole committee, either over a period of time or throughout one day. The subsequent report is then considered by the whole Committee prior to approval.

### **Developing a work programme**

7. The work programme is normally constructed at the beginning of the municipal year but can be updated during the year. Given the range of Directorates and subjects covered by each Committee, the work programme needs to be carefully constructed to ensure that it meets with the Council's corporate priorities and that the time available to the Committee is most effectively used.
8. There are many scrutiny approaches open to the Committee when constructing its work programme, including:
  - a. **Policy Review & Development** – where the Committee contributes to the development of a policy, at an early stage, by scrutinising and making recommendations on proposals.
  - b. **Pre decision of draft Cabinet reports** - Where the Committee has evaluated and commented on proposals before they go to the Cabinet, giving the Cabinet the opportunity to know Scrutiny Members' views prior to making their decision.
  - c. **Inquiries and Investigations** – where the Committee examines a clearly defined topic using a planned approach over a set period of time, resulting in a clear set of key findings and recommendations.
  - d. **Performance Review and Monitoring** – where the Committee regularly analyses Corporate Performance reports as well as key performance data from the service areas within its' remit in order to: highlight good performance;

identify poor performance; examine trends over time; benchmark against other authorities; and examine the impact that initiatives and changes in resources have on performance and service delivery.

- e. **Monitoring Reports** - Where the Committee undertakes monitoring of the Council's Partnership's and Regional Consortium's performance and progress in implementing actions previously agreed.
  - f. **Call Ins** – the Council's constitution allows for any Member to call-in a Cabinet decision prior to implementation. The Call-In period is set at seven working days after the publication of the decision on the Council's intranet site. For a decision to be valid for Call-In it has to comply with criteria and parameters set out in the constitution.
9. These activities enable Scrutiny Committees to have a clear input into the development and implementation of the Council's corporate priorities, as well as the main policies and strategies that form the Council's policy framework. The Committees can also comment on operational and service delivery issues, identify potential improvements and savings, highlight good practice and reflect the voice and concerns of the public. Members can hear from relevant Cabinet Members and officers as well as external witnesses such as statutory partners, third sector organisations, service user representatives, advocacy groups and other stakeholders.
10. Scrutiny Services have developed various tools to assist Committees with developing specific inquiries and investigations for their work programme. The first stage is to identify potential work programme items for consideration, by seeking suggestions from Members and stakeholders, relevant auditors, inspectors and regulators, partnerships, consortiums and regional groups.
11. Following the identification of items and issues, Committee Members will need to prioritise the list to form a balanced work programme for the year. Mechanisms that have consistently been used by this Scrutiny Committees in Cardiff include:

- a. A mechanism to consistently prioritise topics suggested for scrutiny (known as **PICK**):
- Public Interest
  - Impact
  - Council Performance and
  - Keeping in context.
- b. **Scoping reports:** these are designed following discussions with the relevant directorate, stakeholders and to other interested parties to clearly state the terms of reference for each agreed scrutiny inquiry, proposed timescales, involvement of other agencies, major constraints and resource and research issues, and the critical success factors that can be used to judge the success of the scrutiny exercise.

## **Work Programme Development**

12. The construction of a work programme involves obtaining information from a range of sources, these include:

- Issues Arising from the 2015/16 Annual Report/Issues carried forward from Previous Inquiries;
- Suggestions and ideas put forward by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee;
- Information from relevant Directorates;
- Relevant extracts from the current Corporate Plan 2016-18; and
- Performance Information/Issues Arising from Correspondence Reports.

13. The topics gathered from the sources identified above are summarised in a document titled 'Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme – Potential Items 2016/17'. This has been attached to this report as **Appendix A**.

14. During this session Members will have an opportunity to review the 'Children and Young people Scrutiny Committee Work Programme – Potential Items 2016/17'

and ask any questions that they may have on the potential items. Once this discussion is complete each Member will be given a priority scoring matrix so that they can record their scrutiny priorities for 2016/17, copy attached at **Appendix B**. Following the meeting the collective scores will be calculated and used to identify Member priorities for scrutiny during 2016/17.

## **Way Forward**

15. The Member priorities will then be placed into a draft 2016/17 work programme document and brought back to the September Scrutiny Committee meeting for formal approval.

## **Legal Implications**

16. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.



## **Financial Implications**

17. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is recommended to:

- Discuss and agree the issues to be considered for the Committee's work programme for 2016/17, so that a final version of the programme can be brought back to Committee in September for formal approval.

**DAVID MARR**

Interim Monitoring Officer

5 July 2016

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## **CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME – POTENTIAL ITEMS 2016/17**

This paper sets out the items that have been identified as potential items for the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee during 2016/17. At this meeting Members will need to prioritise which items to include on the 2016/17 work programme.

This document contains suggestions arising from the following sources:

- Standing Items on the Committee's Agenda;
- Issues Arising from the 2015/16 Annual Report/Issues carried forward from Previous Inquiries;
- Suggestions and ideas put forward by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee;
- Information from relevant Service Areas;
- Relevant extracts from the current Corporate Plan 2016-18; and
- Performance Information/Issues Arising from Correspondence Reports

### **Standing Items on the Committee's Agenda:**

- Budget 2017/18
- Quarterly performance reports
- C&YPSC Annual Report 2016/17
- Correspondence Reports
- Schools Annual Report – Performance report

**Issues Arising from the 2015/16 Annual Report/Issues carried forward from Previous Inquiries:**

- National & Regional Adoption Service
- Schools causing concern – Phase 2
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) – response from Cabinet and further review
- Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 – series of briefing papers on each work stream

**Information from Relevant Service Areas:**

Education

- Education 2020 – Aiming for Excellence – Progress/Update Report
- Looked After Children – Finalised Results (available October 2016)
- Consortium Delivery Plan
- Youth Service – Progress/Update Report
- Draft Admission Policy 2018-2019
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme – Update Report

Children's Services:

- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – End of Financial Year Progress Report
- Early Help & Prevention Strategy – End of Financial Year Progress Report

**Suggestions and ideas put forward by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee:**

Education related

- Education - NEETS – how other cities in England tackle this, ESTYN consistently say Cardiff's figures are too high and at the last committee meeting it was admitted that resources are not enough. Can we do things differently?

- Young people not in education employment or training (NEET), prevention and what *actually* works (Global), an appraisal (again some research) consulting with various agencies, voluntary groups and organisations.
- Sufficiency of (future) school placements primary and secondary for young people across Cardiff.
- Sufficiency of (future) school placements for those young people identified with severe hearing and language difficulties, across Cardiff.
- Educational prospects of white working class boys in Cardiff schools.
- Task and Finish topic: Educational provision of excluded pupils
- School catchment areas and admissions policies
- School federation
- Education provision for asylum seeking refugee children, schools well being programmes in Primary and secondary education

#### Children's Services Related

- Children's Services - Listening event – not completed last year
- Welsh Government funding for young people's mental health services and preventative support. How are Cardiff Council's children's services working in partnership with the voluntary and health sectors to utilize this extra funding?
- Families first programme that is newly overseen by children's services and the impact to children young people and families - in particular what are the next step for third sector as it is in its final year, and how does this fit with children services outcomes going forward

#### Other

- A short scrutiny into the numbers of girls in Cardiff affected by Female Genital Mutilation ( FGM ). To include how to identify and prevent the practice and education of ethnic minorities in prevention of the crime of FGM.

## **Extracts From The Corporate Plan 2016-2018:**

### ***Priority 1: Better education and skills for all***

#### *Improvement Objective 1.1: Every Cardiff school is a good school*

In order to achieve the above the Council will:

- Deliver the Schools Organisation Programme including the completion of Band A investment projects by 31 March 2019
- Contribute to the development of a regional 'Central South Wales networked learning community', run by schools for schools by September 2017, focused on improvements in the quality of leadership, teaching and learning
- Implement the requirements of the new curriculum for Wales - 'Successful Futures' - by September 2021, commencing with the introduction of the Digital Competence Framework in all Cardiff schools by September 2016
- Implement the new statutory framework for supporting children and young people with additional learning needs, in accordance with the legislative framework, by 2021
- Turn around the performance of the minority of Secondary Schools that are causing concern by July 2018
- Improve and sustain the expertise of Cardiff schools in Mathematics and English, increasing capacity in teaching and learning at all levels
- Address the persistent impact of poverty on attainment and the marked variations between schools in the attainment of FSM pupils

#### *Improvement Objective 1.2: Looked after children in Cardiff achieve their potential*

In order to achieve the above the Council will:

- Embed key elements of the Corporate Parenting Strategy in collaboration with partners by March 2017

## **Priority 2: Supporting vulnerable people**

### *Improvement Objective 2.1: People at risk in Cardiff are safeguarded*

In order to achieve the above the Council will:

- Improve the system for protecting children from significant harm by implementing new Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) arrangements for managing referrals by June 2016
- Improve the recruitment and retention of children's social workers, ensuring the Council achieves and maintains a vacancy rate for children's social workers below 18% by March 2017
- Implement key elements of the Cardiff Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy in collaboration with partners by March 2017
- Work towards Cardiff becoming a 'Child Friendly City' by March 2017
- Complete roll out of the second phase of a specialist training programme regarding the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Introduce and deliver within the school curriculum a WJEC accredited "Challenging Extremism" module to raise awareness and prevent radicalisation

### *Improvement Objective 2.3: People in Cardiff are supported to live independently*

In order to achieve the above the Council will:

- Improve the effectiveness of transitional support for disabled and vulnerable children approaching adulthood

## **Priority 3: Creating more jobs and better paid jobs**

### *Improvement Objective 3.3: All young people in Cardiff make a successful transition into employment, education or training*

In order to achieve the above the Council will:

- Improve multi agency arrangements:
  - to ensure the early identification of children and young people at risk of not progressing to ongoing education, training or employment after leaving school; and
  - to ensure that identified children and young people receive early and appropriate support
- Strengthen and extend the existing 'lead worker' model to directly support the transition of young people from school into employment, utilising European Social Fund resources to extend capacity for the next 3 years
- Improve information sharing and tracking systems between partners for young people pre and post 16 by September 2016
- Implement the Welsh Government Youth Guarantee and Cardiff Commitment to ensure appropriate progression routes for all learners by September 2016
- Enhance the range of opportunities for young people to develop employability skills and secure employment in Cardiff

### **Performance Information:**

**Issues Arising from Quarter 4 Performance Report (considered by C&YPSC – 17 May 2016) – *text in italics is quotes from letters from the Chair to the relevant Cabinet Member.***

#### Children's Services

- Increase in referrals into Children's Service – *“had had a detrimental impact on the percentage of referrals with decisions made within one day”.*
- New set of Performance Indicators for 2016/17 – *“undertake further briefings on the new performance measures in the near future”.*
- CSSIW inspection report on Children's Services – *“the Committee requested a copy of the relevant action plans that address the recommendations, so that*



*it can monitor the Directorate's implementation of the actions, and assess that the outcome addresses the concerns identified in the inspection report".*

## Education

- *To recap, this letter requests several actions, requests for information and recommendations, as follows and requires:*
  - *A copy of the action plans which have been developed and include the areas that the Estyn letter highlighted.*
  - *Details of the plans to improve the admissions procedure across all schools, to be provided with the next quarterly performance report.*
  - *A breakdown, by number, of the different reasons for pupils to be not in education, training or employment;*
  - *A detailed briefing and actions focussing on the "wider capped points score" and Level 2 threshold.*

## **Correspondence Report – Future Actions 2015/16**

### Correspondence report – 15 March 2016

- *Child Health and Disability progress report - resolved "to continue to monitor"*
- *New Model for Children's Play - resolved "awaiting business plans; Further report to be presented to Committee"*

### Correspondence report – 14 June 2016

- *Further monitoring reports on the level of social worker vacancies – resolved "Continue to monitor".*
- *Accommodation of youth offending service and looked after children service – resolved "Further briefing to be issued"*

- Education and Consortium Delivery Plans 2016-2018 – resolved “*Receive further reports in June / July*”
- Quarter 3 performance – resolved “*To monitor the provision of information*” on Cardiff commitment to youth engagement and progression; and a progress report on Biometric school meals

### Other Issues to be considered by Committee

Members are asked to score each item from 0 -5, with 0 being the lowest priority and 5 being the highest priority, in the first column, using the following **P.I.C.K.** criteria:

is the item of **P**ublic Interest, can scrutiny of the item deliver an **I**mpact, are there issues with the **C**ouncil's Performance in this area, and, in terms of **K**eeping it in context, is it timely to scrutinise this item or should it be delayed.

Members can then suggest whether the item could be scrutinised through one of the following methodologies: full Committee, off-agenda briefing, Inquiry or investigation, or through an on-going panel of members reporting back to Committee.

Potential Agenda Items	Priority Score 0 to 5	Report at Cttee	Report off agenda	T & F or Investigation	Ongoing Panel
<b>ITEMS IDENTIFIED VIA 2015/16 ANNUAL REPORT/CARRIED FORWARD</b>					
National & Regional Adoption Service					
Schools causing concern – Phase 2					
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) – response from Cabinet and further review					
Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 – series of briefing papers on each work stream					
<b>ISSUES RAISED BY SERVICE AREAS</b>					
Education 2020 – Aiming for Excellence – Progress/Update Report					
Looked After Children – Finalised Results (available October 2016)					
Consortium Delivery Plan					
Youth Service – Progress/Update Report					
Draft Admission Policy 2018-2019					
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme – Update Report					
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – End of Financial Year Progress Report					
Early Help & Prevention Strategy – End of Financial Year Progress Report					

## Appendix B

Potential Agenda Items	Priority Score 0 to 5	Report at Cttee	Report off agenda	T & F or Investigation	Ongoing Panel
<b>MEMBER SUGGESTIONS</b>					
Education - NEETS – how other cities in England tackle this, ESTYN consistently say Cardiff's figures are too high and at the last committee meeting it was admitted that resources are not enough. Can we do things differently?					
Young people not in education employment or training (NEET), prevention and what <i>actually</i> works (Global), an appraisal (again some research) consulting with various agencies, voluntary groups and organisations.					
Sufficiency of (future) school placements primary and secondary for young people across Cardiff.					
Sufficiency of (future) school placements for those young people identified with severe hearing and language difficulties, across Cardiff.					
Educational prospects of white working class boys in Cardiff schools.					
Task and Finish topic: Educational provision of excluded pupils School catchment areas and admissions policies					
School federation					
Education provision for asylum seeking refugee children, schools well being programmes in Primary and secondary education					
Children's Services - Listening event – not completed last year					
Welsh Government funding for young people's mental health services and preventative support. How are Cardiff Council's children's services working in partnership with the voluntary and health sectors to utilize this extra funding?					

## Appendix B

Potential Agenda Items	Priority Score 0 to 5	Report at Cttee	Report off agenda	T & F or Investigation	Ongoing Panel
Families first programme that is newly overseen by children's services and the impact to children young people and families - in particular what are the next step for third sector as it is in its final year, and how does this fit with children services outcomes going forward					
A short scrutiny into the numbers of girls in Cardiff affected by Female Genital Mutilation ( FGM ). To include how to identify and prevent the practice and education of ethnic minorities in prevention of the crime of FGM.					
<b>CORPORATE PLAN 2016/18 PRIORITIES</b>					
Deliver the Schools Organisation Programme including the completion of Band A investment projects by 31 March 2019					
Contribute to the development of a regional 'Central South Wales networked learning community', run by schools for schools by September 2017, focused on improvements in the quality of leadership, teaching and learning					
Implement the requirements of the new curriculum for Wales - 'Successful Futures' - by September 2021, commencing with the introduction of the Digital Competence Framework in all Cardiff schools by September 2016					
Implement the new statutory framework for supporting children and young people with additional learning needs, in accordance with the legislative framework, by 2021					
Turn around the performance of the minority of Secondary Schools that are causing concern by July 2018					
Improve and sustain the expertise of Cardiff schools in Mathematics and English, increasing capacity in teaching and learning at all levels					

## Appendix B

Potential Agenda Items	Priority Score 0 to 5	Report at Cttee	Report off agenda	T & F or Investigation	Ongoing Panel
Address the persistent impact of poverty on attainment and the marked variations between schools in the attainment of FSM pupils					
Embed key elements of the Corporate Parenting Strategy in collaboration with partners by March 2017					
Improve the system for protecting children from significant harm by implementing new Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) arrangements for managing referrals by June 2016					
Improve the recruitment and retention of children's social workers, ensuring the Council achieves and maintains a vacancy rate for children's social workers below 18% by March 2017					
Implement key elements of the Cardiff Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy in collaboration with partners by March 2017					
Work towards Cardiff becoming a 'Child Friendly City' by March 2017					
Complete roll out of the second phase of a specialist training programme regarding the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014					
Introduce and deliver within the school curriculum a WJEC accredited "Challenging Extremism" module to raise awareness and prevent radicalisation					
Improve the effectiveness of transitional support for disabled and vulnerable children approaching adulthood					
Improve multi agency arrangements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to ensure the early identification of children and young people at risk of not progressing to ongoing education, training or employment after leaving school; and</li> <li>• to ensure that identified children and young people receive early and appropriate support</li> </ul>					

## Appendix B

Potential Agenda Items	Priority Score 0 to 5	Report at Cttee	Report off agenda	T & F or Investigation	Ongoing Panel
Strengthen and extend the existing 'lead worker' model to directly support the transition of young people from school into employment, utilising European Social Fund resources to extend capacity for the next 3 years					
Improve information sharing and tracking systems between partners for young people pre and post 16 by September 2016					
Implement the Welsh Government Youth Guarantee and Cardiff Commitment to ensure appropriate progression routes for all learners by September 2016					
Enhance the range of opportunities for young people to develop employability skills and secure employment in Cardiff					
<b>PERFORMANCE INFORMATION</b>					
Increase in referrals into Children's Service – <i>"had had a detrimental impact on the percentage of referrals with decisions made within one day"</i>					
Children's Services New set of Performance Indicators for 2016/17 – <i>"undertake further briefings on the new performance measures in the near future"</i> .					
CSSIW inspection report on Children's Services – <i>"the Committee requested a copy of the relevant action plans that address the recommendations, so that it can monitor the Directorate's implementation of the actions, and assess that the outcome addresses the concerns identified in the inspection report"</i> .					
<i>A copy of the action plans which have been developed and include the areas that the Estyn letter highlighted.</i>					
<i>Details of the plans to improve the admissions procedure across all schools, to be provided with the next quarterly performance report</i>					

## Appendix B

Potential Agenda Items	Priority Score 0 to 5	Report at Cttee	Report off agenda	T & F or Investigation	Ongoing Panel
<i>A breakdown, by number, of the different reasons for pupils to be not in education, training or employment;</i>					
<i>A detailed briefing and actions focussing on the “wider capped points score” and Level 2 threshold.</i>					
<b>CORRESPONDENCE REPORTS</b>					
Child Health and Disability progress report - resolved <i>“to continue to monitor”</i>					
New Model for Children’s Play - resolved <i>“awaiting business plans; Further report to be presented to Committee”</i>					
Further monitoring reports on the level of social worker vacancies – resolved <i>“Continue to monitor”</i> .					
Accommodation of youth offending service and looked after children service – resolved <i>“Further briefing to be issued”</i>					
Education and Consortium Delivery Plans 2016-2018 – resolved <i>“Receive further reports in June / July”</i>					
Quarter 3 performance – resolved <i>“To monitor the provision of information”</i> on Cardiff commitment to youth engagement and progression; and a progress report on Biometric school meals					



**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF  
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**11 July 2016**

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**UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES and WELL -  
BEING (WALES) ACT 2014 - PREVENTION SERVICE BRIEFING**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. This report provides Committee with a briefing on the progress being made to ensure the Council is prepared to implement the Social Services and Well- being (Wales) Act 2014 around the Prevention service, copy attached at **Appendix 1**.

**Background**

2. The Committee has previously received briefings in January, July 2015, January 2016 and March 2016 providing an update on progress with the preparations for the Act. These briefings included:
  - an implementation timeline and self- assessment of readiness;
  - information on the implications of the Act for Social Services and the wider Council;
  - details of the advice and support available to assist Councils in implementing the Act;
  - details on the various statutory codes of guidance and regulations that Welsh Government were enacting to support the primary legislation;
  - the Cardiff and Vale Social Care and Workforce Development Plan, which will ensure the workforce receive the information they need to deliver the changes the Act requires;
  - Information that a Regional Steering Group has been established to oversee and monitor the preparations for implementing the Act and reports to the Integrated Health and Social Care Governance Board, so that all partners are kept up to date on progress;

- An updated Regional Implementation Plan, which reflects the nine work streams being delivered through the Sustainable Social Services Programme and includes a risk assessment of the tasks required to implement the Act; and
  - The governance structure together with regional task and finish groups for each work stream and lead co-ordinating officers.
3. In addition four national work groups have been established to share best practice and produce consistent material on an all Wales basis. Cardiff and the Vale region have appointed officers to contribute to each of these groups. They are helping with the development of national checklists and, where possible, avoidance of duplication.
4. At the meeting in March 2016 Committee asked for the final briefings on the prevention service to be provided latter in the year.

### **Update and Issues**

5. The Act establishes four key principles and these can be summarised as:
- We must support people who have care and support needs to achieve **well-being**.
  - **People** are to be put at the heart of the new system by giving them an equal say in the support they receive.
  - **Partnership** and co-operation must drive service delivery.
  - Services will promote the **Prevention** of escalating need and ensure that the right help is available at the right time
6. New services are being developed to work towards these principles. Part 2 of the Act sets out a duty on local authorities, with support from their local health boards, to ensure the provision of an information, advice and assistance service for all people in their area, not just people who have an immediate need for care and support. This

service will be designed to ensure that people can get access to the right help at the right time to meet their individual situation.

7. The Prevention Service (the Service) is central to the success of the transition to the care and support system under the Act. The Acts requirements for the Provision of Preventative Service by Local Authorities are to provide or arrange for the provision of preventative services in order to:

- Help prevent or delay the development of people's needs which require care and support;
- Reduce the needs for care and support for those who have these needs;
- Promote the upbringing of children by their families, when it is consistent with the wellbeing of the child
- Prevent people from suffering abuse or neglect
- Enable people to live as independently as possible;
- Reduce the need for:
  - i. Care of supervision orders under the Children's Act 1989
  - ii. Criminal proceedings against children
  - iii. Proceedings which may lead to children being placed into local authority care.

8. The report provides details of the briefing report provided for the Task & Finish Group on the "Current position in relation to Preventative Services across Cardiff and the Vale, copy attached at **Appendix A** and the "Early Help Strategy", which sets out the strategic direction for delivering a partnership approach to Early Help and provides guidance for everyone who works with children, young people and families in Cardiff in order that the strategic approach can be successfully implemented across the Cardiff Partnership copy attached at **Appendix B**.

### **Scope of Scrutiny**

9. The scope of this scrutiny is to consider the implementation of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014, and to pass on any observations, comments or recommendations to the Director of Social Services, and cover:

- the progress being made to undertake this area of the Implementation Plan, in accordance with the Act's requirements;
- any identified risks and the appropriateness of any proposed countermeasure;
- The effectiveness of the implementation plan in addressing the requirements of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014.

## **Way Forward**

- 10.** Tony Young (Director of Social Services), Angela Bourge (Family Intervention Support Services /CAMHS) and Cheryl Chapman (OM for Early Intervention) have been invited to Committee present the briefing and answer any questions Members may have.
- 11.** Members are invited to consider the information set out in this report and to identify any issues on which they would wish to receive further information.

## **Legal Implications**

- 12.** The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

## **Financial Implications**

13. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. These financial implications will need to be considered before any changes are implemented. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is recommended to:

Consider this briefing paper and provide comments or advice to the Cabinet Member and Director of Social Services.

**DAVID MARR**  
Interim Monitoring Officer  
5 July 2016

**TONY YOUNG**  
Director of Social Services

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## The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act Prevention Services Briefing

### Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to brief the Children and Young Person's Scrutiny Committee Members on the work undertaken across Cardiff and Vale region to address the requirements set out in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 to plan and promote preventative services.
2. The report will also include information on *Dewis Cymru* which provides a central place where information about well-being can be accessed by members of the public and professionals across Wales.
3. The report outlines the work of the regional Social Services Planning and Promoting Preventative Services Task and Finish Group and provides a short summary of the development of Cardiff's Early Help Strategy.

### Background information on the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act (The Act)

4. The Act 2014 radically transforms the way social services are delivered in Wales, ensuring they meet the needs of individuals, giving people a voice in how Social Services assess and deliver their care and support and ensuring services are sustainable for the future.
5. It focuses on earlier intervention, increasing preventative services in the community, helping people maintain their independence and enabling people to get the help they need before their situation becomes critical. This will help to reduce pressure on more costly statutory services.
6. Additionally the Act:
  - ensures easy access to information and advice is available to all
  - Introduces new eligibility criteria focused on individual need, replacing the current threshold system
  - Introduces portable assessments, so people who move from one part of Wales to another will receive the services they need in their new area without immediately having to undergo a new assessment

- Introduces new arrangements so that, if they want to, young people will be supported to stay with their foster carers until they reach 21 (or 25 if they are in education or training)
- Requires local authorities and health boards to come together in new statutory partnerships to drive integration, innovation and service change.

## Dewis Cymru

7. Dewis is the place for information and advice regarding well-being in Wales and helps people find what they need to know for both themselves and the person they may care for. The resource originally developed across North Wales is now being adopted by the other regions across Wales and was launched in Cardiff & the Vale of Glamorgan in April 2016. To view Dewis please go to [www.dewis.wales](http://www.dewis.wales)
8. Dewis Cymru promotes people's well-being by making it easier for them to find out about how to improve their well-being, and the sources of advice and support which can help them. It is also intended to support the successful delivery of the new requirements placed on local authorities, around Information, Advice and Assistance, as set out Part 2 of the Act.
9. Dewis has two parts. The first is a narrative content, to help people identify their own needs; the second part is the resource directory. The resource directory has all services on an equal footing; a resource can be a lunch club or a commissioned service. As part of the development they have developed the search facility with feedback to make improvements. The resource directory includes a range of resources; these may be Community services, Health services, Local Authority services, Third Sector services as well as commercial services. Our local site includes the Family Support Directory held on the Family Information Service (FIS) website and provides a link to FIS.
10. Each entry in the Resource Directory include a large amount of information answering the following key questions:
  - What is it?
  - Who is it for?
  - Is there a cost? If so how much?
  - How to contact?
  - Where the resource is? Geographical area covered (currently down to Ward level, maybe possible to go to Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level)



Each resource will have to be reviewed at least twice a year, though this can be more frequently if providers decide. Reminder emails will be sent to providers when any resources that have been logged on Dewis are due to be reviewed.

## **The Act's requirements for the Provision of Preventative Services**

11. Linked to local assessment, local authorities are also required to provide or arrange for the provision of preventative services in order to, for example:

- Help prevent or delay the development of people's needs which require care and support;
- Reduce the needs for care and support for those who have these needs;
- Promote the upbringing of children by their families, when it is consistent with the wellbeing of the child;
- Prevent people from suffering abuse or neglect;
- Enable people to live as independently as possible;
- Reduce the need for,
  - Care of supervision orders under the Children Act 1989
  - Criminal proceedings against children
  - Proceedings which may lead to children being placed into local authority care.

In order to do the above, the local authority must pay attention to existing services and which make the best use of resources available. The local authority has the duty to promote the third sector in the provisions of their areas of care.

12. The Act reinforces a partnership approach to prevention and a recognition that developing and delivering preventative services can only occur through the local authority working closely with key relevant partners. Indeed, the whole local authority, not just social services needs to have a stake, and in terms of assistance to improve well-being, people may well require input from a variety of different key sectors, community and local businesses.

13. The Act brings in new duties to promote not for profit organisations to provide Preventative services which include social enterprises, co-operatives, user-led services and the third sector. The NHS also has a key role to play in terms of preventing and managing health issues for adults and children in line with "prudent health care." The contribution to prevention made by other statutory services such as the police, the fire service and schools is also very important.

## Planning and Promoting Preventative Services Task Group

14. A regional Planning and Promoting Preventatives Services Task and Finish Group has been operational since September 2015 to support the implementation of the Act. The group is co-chaired by Angela Bourge, Operational Manager for Strategy, Commissioning & Resources (Cardiff) and Suzann Clifton – Head of Service for Business & Innovation (Vale of Glamorgan). The group takes its membership from a range of statutory and voluntary sector organisations that are engaged in delivering or supporting the delivery of preventative services for adults and children across the region.
15. As part of the work of the task and Finish Group, a *Briefing Report on the Current Position in relation to Preventative Services across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan* was produced by Val Connors (Practice Solutions) who provided a resource to the group. The purpose of the report was to describe the current position with regard to preventative services across the region, as well as setting out the linkages to other relevant areas of the Act Implementation. It identified key actions to take forward the preventative agenda across the region. The full briefing is located at **Appendix A** of this report for information.
16. The briefing report clarified that “*Prevention*” is a term that is used increasingly frequently when describing health and social care services and policy. However, there is no definition or consensus as to what constitutes ‘preventive services’. It recognised that this lack of clarity is further compounded by the haziness around the boundary between health and social care and between social care and wider community services such as housing and transport.
17. The report recognised that at its simplest, taking a preventative approach means building a stronger community infrastructure in neighbourhoods/localities and providing accessible public services for vulnerable adults to reduce, delay or prevent them from becoming socially excluded and needing more intensive, costly support. Its primary focus is not personal care for those with substantial and complex needs and it is not a simple re-labelling of existing traditional low level services, e.g. laundry services, meals-on-wheels.
18. However, the report identified that from a narrow perspective, a preventive service may be one that aims to prevent or delay a specific condition or outcome. An example, it could be a service that aims to prevent admission to hospital because of a fall, where there is a well-defined outcome. A holistic or whole-systems approach to prevention carries within it both the idea of inclusion and engagement. It adds value to the social cohesion agenda, by delivering services and support that help to create and strengthen the ‘glue’ that binds communities together. People are enabled and supported to maintain and improve their own wellbeing, that of their families, neighbours

and local communities. Using a wider definition, the report recognised that prevention includes activity that enhances and extends quality of life.

19. The Planning and Promoting Preventative Services Task and Finish Group considered the findings of the briefing report and convened a workshop in April 2016 to consider two of its strategic recommendations and how these should be taken forward.

- The development of a joint prevention strategy with all key partners and stakeholders and,
- Consideration of the arrangements required to develop a joint commissioning approach which supports the shift in health and social care towards prevention and early intervention.

20. Members of the Task and Finish Group who attended the workshop identified that in order for these strategic recommendations to be progressed the following conditions needed to be promoted in order to achieve success:

- **Conditions for creating an effective Preventative Strategy**
  - Co-operation and collaboration between partner agencies at the most senior level as well as operational levels
  - A commitment to join up cross-cutting work-streams to achieved better synergy (e.g. tackling Poverty programmes / Future generations Act / Social services & Well-being Act)
  - Recognition of the role of the independent sector
  - Actively promote and support Social Enterprise
  - Recognition that prevention is everybody's business, recognising the different levels of prevention (e.g. primary, secondary & tertiary)
  - Commitment to Co-production
  - Recognition that there may need to agree an invest to save arrangement where money freed up from provision of services for people with complex needs is reinvested to strengthen preventative services
  - Think Family Approach
- **Conditions for creating joint commissioning that supports prevention & early intervention**
  - Robust governance arrangements need to be in place that promote an outcome focussed approach to commissioning.
  - Pooled budgets are not always necessary – we need to start the process with small, manageable steps that do not create further barriers for progressing the joint-commissioning agenda but act as enablers
  - An understanding that commissioning for early intervention is different to commissioning for complex needs and that it may not always end up with the procurement of services

- We need to develop a more co-operative approach that promotes co-production

21. The feedback from the workshop has been shared with the Regional Steering Group and at the time of writing this report, consideration is being given to how best to take this work forward. There are clearly some merits in bringing together current preventative work-streams that focus on either children & families or adults to provide an all-inclusive population approach. However, consideration is also being given to how we can continue to promote the preventative agenda at a local level where significant progress has already been made in some areas (for example, Cardiff's well established Early Help Strategy) whilst maximising the benefits of planning, promoting and commissioning preventative services on a regional basis where it is appropriate and practicable to do so.

## **Cardiff Children's Early Help Strategy**

22. In Cardiff, the Children's Early Help Strategy is a positive example of how key organisations across the Partnership have come together to support families in caring for children which is clearly emphasised by the Act, with a focus on helping parents develop their own ability to identify and manage problems, keeping families together in a safe, supportive and stable environment. A copy of the Early Help Strategy is located at **Appendix B** for information.

23. The Act identifies specific areas for focus when considering preventative services for children and families. These are:

- The importance of cross agency work to prevent children from suffering from abuse or neglect
- The importance of preventing or delaying circumstances that might lead to a child or young person being looked after by a local authority
- The importance in youth justice to prevent offending or re-offending by children and young people
- It is clear that children and families present a wide range of areas for preventative activity and there is already considerable experience to be drawn from national programmes such as Flying Start and Families

24. The Early Intervention & Prevention Steering Group has developed the Early Help Strategy to promote and facilitate intervening early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and their families.

25. Engagement of partners in the Steering Group has been positive and work has been undertaken to develop a common language that describes preventative support as “Early Help” with a focus on support rather than assessment. It promotes the right conversations taking place at the right time, between the right people. The Strategy was successfully launched in September 2015 with all key partners who are represented on the Vulnerable Children and Families Programme Board physically signing up to it and wider partners pledging their commitment to adopting the early help approach.
26. The Early Help Strategy recognises that all organisations in the Cardiff partnership share in the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Working alongside other agencies is extremely effective for improving outcomes for children due to the cross cutting themes that organisations are able to come together over. It’s by coming together to share information and raise concerns that we can increase the likelihood of protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare so that fewer children suffer from significant harm.
27. In order to strengthen the approach to Early Help across the Partnership and to secure the timeliness of progress against the key tasks required for the successful implementation of the Early Help Strategy, Children’s Services reconfigured existing funding to create a dedicated post that is responsible for progressing actions set out in the Implementation Plan located in the Appendix of the Strategy Document (located at **Appendix B** of this report) - The Prevention & Partnerships - Improvement Project Manager leads on the development of Cardiff’s Early Help Strategy, promoting best practice in the delivery of Early Help Services across Cardiff and facilitating effective partnership working in the delivery of Early Help Provision.
28. The transfer of the administration of the Families First Grant to Children’s Services earlier this year has strengthened the links between Families First services and the Early Help Strategy and their interface with Children’s Services. This is viewed by Families First providers and Children’s Services as a very positive development that promotes stronger joint-working arrangements around step-up and step-down arrangements between preventative and statutory services.
29. The Strategy focuses on two strategic objectives and thereby achieving two strategic outcomes, namely:
- **Strategic Objective 1** - Ensure that children & young people receive help at the lowest level or intervention that is safe and effective in promoting good outcomes.

- **Strategic Objective 2** - Maximise the impact of Children's (Social) Services by strengthening the effectiveness of social work intervention and specialist / targeted family support.

30. Actions that address the requirements set out in the two key objectives above are detailed in the summary work plan located in Appendix G of the Strategy Document located at **Appendix 1**. It is expected that these actions will contribute to achieving the following strategic outcomes:

- **Strategic Outcome 1** - To reduce the number of children, young people and their families requiring support at the "remedial" end of the Cardiff continuum of support to families (See Appendix D in the Strategy Document located at Appendix 1 – Spectrum of Need and Services for details).
- **Strategic Outcome 2** - To narrow the gaps for children and young people, at risk of poor outcomes, in Cardiff and their peers.

31. It is anticipated that over the next three years the implementation of the Early Help Strategy and its early intervention approach will achieve a 5% reduction in Cardiff's Looked after Children Population resulting in a £1,274,000 saving for the Local Authority.

32. Savings of this order has been achieved by other Local Authorities that have brought together a suite of strategies combining the efforts of partners by focusing everyone who works with children and young people on a common goal of prevention. Local Authorities that have already adopted this approach have reduced the need to spend large sums on a few children with poor overall outcomes. Instead they spend lower cost effective sums on a wider population of children whilst securing better outcomes. This has resulted in fewer children's needs being met through the court arena, in the Looked After system or in the criminal justice system with more children being able to enjoy family life in their own homes.

33. Progress against the key actions outlined in the plan is monitored via the Early Intervention and Prevention Steering Group with regular updates to the Vulnerable Children and Families Programme Board.

**Briefing report on the current position in  
relation to Preventative Services across  
Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan**

CARDIFF & VALES OF GLAMORGAN SOCIAL SERVICES

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## Background

The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 signalled Welsh Government's intention to shift the emphasis of Social Care from acute and intensive services towards prevention, health promotion and community services. It encourages investment in Prevention to improve people's wellbeing and wherever possible to prevent hospital admissions and the use of institutional care. In order to achieve this aim it will be important to embed a preventative ethos in partnership with the Third Sector, local business sector and public services across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, so that people are actively supported to:

- Look after themselves, stay healthy and retain their independence
- Participate fully as active members of their communities
- Choose and have easy access to the type of help they need, when they need it
- Remain safe and secure and continue to enjoy a good quality of life

The purpose of this paper is to describe the current position with regard to preventative services across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, as well as setting out the linkages to other relevant areas of Act implementation and key actions to take forward the agenda.

## The Social Services & Well Being (Wales) Act and Preventative Services

The Social Services & Well Being (Wales) Act will be implemented from 6 April 2016. It brings in new duties for local authorities, local health boards and other public bodies, and covers adults, children and carers.

The Act aims to reform and simplify the law: it repeals many previous laws and guidance relating to care and support and replaces them with this Act. It builds on the White Paper 'Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A Framework for Action' to modernise the law for care and support in Wales.

The Act aims to change the way **people's** care and support needs are met – putting an individual at the centre of their care and support and giving them a voice in, and choice and control over, reaching the personal outcome goals that matter to them. Central to this is the concept of **well-being** – helping people to maximise their own well-being.

The Act attempts to rebalance the focus of care and support to **prevention and earlier intervention** – increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of needs to a critical level.

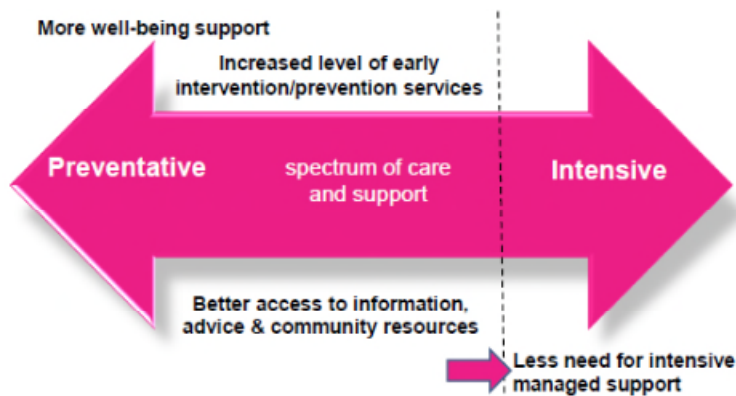
The Act creates both a strategic and practical duty in relation to preventative services. At a strategic level, local authorities and local health boards will be under a duty to assess the extent of need for a range and level of preventative services (see Population Assessment pages 16 - 19). At a practical level, local authorities are required to provide/ arrange for the provision of services that will contribute towards preventing/ delaying/ reducing the development of needs for care and support; minimising the effect on disabled people of their disabilities; helping to prevent people suffering abuse and neglect and enabling people to live their lives as independently as possible.

Strong partnership working between organisations and co-production with people needing care and support is a key focus of the Act. The Act requires a culture change from the way in which services have often been provided, to an approach based on **collaboration**, and an equal relationship between practitioners and people who need care and support and carers who need support.

These principles will enable people to be at the centre of their care and support and ensure their well-being will be central to any decisions made about their lives.

Part 2 outlines the overarching duties that relate to anything people do under the Act, including the well-being duty. Part 2 also sets out the requirements to undertake a population assessment, and provide preventative services and an information, advice and assistance service, as well as the duty to promote social enterprises / diverse forms of delivery.

## What the Act is trying to achieve in relation to Prevention



*Shown above is a diagrammatic representation of the principles and assumptions underpinning the Act.*

The key assumption is that through an increased level of effective earlier intervention / preventative services, including better access to information and advice for everyone, and well-being support for those who need some help (the left hand side of the care and support spectrum), more people will be able to be supported without need for managed intensive support. Hence the dotted line moves to the right: fewer citizens will need care and support planning for managed, complex care.

The Act attempts to rebalance the focus of care and support to prevention and earlier intervention – increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of needs to a critical level. The Act also recognises carers' vital input and aims to help them maintain their caring role, which of course will often help the people they care for to postpone the need for more managed, complex care.

Promoting prevention needs to happen at a strategic, operational and individual level by local authorities and their partners. The Part 2 Code of Practice identifies ways that local authorities can 'do' prevention on a strategic level by setting out tools, methodologies, services and behaviours. This will require a robust population assessment and good partnership working to collect, analyse and act on information about the needs and outcomes that are important to the population.

At an individual level, the local authority has a duty to assess whether, and if so, to what extent, the provision of preventative services could contribute to the achievement of personal outcomes or otherwise meet the needs of an individual. The assessment of individuals and getting this right is crucial to not only the success of promoting prevention but also providing evidence about what type of preventative services are needed and where.

## Code of Practice

The Code of Practice for Part 2 states that *“There is no one definition for what constitutes preventative activity. It can be anything that helps meet an identified need and could range from wide-scale measures aimed at the whole population to more targeted individual interventions, including mechanisms to enable people to actively engage in making decisions about their lives... local authorities should consider the range of options available.”*

The Act does require that local authorities must provide or arrange for the provision of a range and level of preventative services which they consider will achieve the following purposes:

- a. Contributing towards preventing or delaying the development of people’s needs for care and support
- b. Reducing the needs for care and support of people who have such needs
- c. Promoting the upbringing of children by their families, where that is consistent with the well-being of children
- d. Minimising the effect on disabled people of their disabilities
- e. Contributing towards preventing people from suffering abuse or neglect
- f. Reducing the need for:
  - i. Proceedings for care or supervision orders under the Children Act 1989
  - ii. Criminal proceedings against children
  - iii. Any family or other proceedings in relation to children which might lead to them being placed in local authority care, or
  - iv. Proceedings under the inherent jurisdiction of the High Court in relation to children
- g. Encouraging children not to commit criminal offences
- h. Avoiding the need for children to be placed in secure accommodation; and
- i. Enabling people to live their lives as independently as possible.

Local Health Boards must also take a preventative approach that helps achieve these aims, collaborating where appropriate.

## Charging for Preventative Services

Regulations and the Code of Practice in relation to Part 5 of the Act set out the arrangements for charging. The Act (section 69) makes clear that local authorities may impose flat rate charges for preventative services or assistance it provides or arranges in order to help the service be viable. However, flat rate charges made **must not** exceed the cost incurred in arranging or providing for the care and support, preventative service or assistance to which they relate. Local authorities should also avoid a situation where the charge discourages take up of preventative services.

In addition, the local authority **must not** charge for Reablement services provided to people returning from hospital for the first six weeks following discharge.

The local authority **must not** charge for preventative services for children.

## A Prevention Approach

Prevention is a term that is used increasingly frequently when describing health and social care services and policy. There is no definition or consensus as to what constitutes 'preventive services'. Compounding this lack of clarity is a further haziness around the boundary between health and social care and between social care and wider community services such as housing and transport. At its simplest, taking a prevention approach means building a stronger community infrastructure in neighbourhoods/localities and providing accessible public services for vulnerable adults to reduce, delay or prevent them from becoming socially excluded and needing more intensive, costly support. Its primary focus is not personal care for those with substantial and complex needs and it is not a simple re-labelling of existing traditional low level services, e.g. laundry services, meals-on-wheels.

From a narrow perspective, a preventive service may be one that aims to prevent or delay a specific condition or outcome. An example could be a service that aims to prevent admission to hospital because of a fall, where there is a well-defined outcome. A holistic or whole-systems approach to prevention carries within it both the idea of inclusion and engagement. It adds value to the social cohesion agenda, by delivering services and support that help to create and strengthen the 'glue' that binds communities together. People are enabled and supported to maintain and improve their own wellbeing, that of their families, neighbours and local communities. Using a wider definition, prevention includes activity that enhances and extends quality of life.

The Act reinforces a partnership approach to prevention and a recognition that developing and delivering preventative services can only occur through the local authority working closely with key relevant partners. Indeed, the whole local authority, not just social services needs to have a stake, and in terms of assistance to improve well-being, people may well require input from a variety of different key sectors, community and local businesses. The Act brings in new duties to promote not for profit organisations to provide preventative services which include social enterprises, co-operatives, user-led services and the third sector. The NHS also has a key role to play in terms of preventing and managing health issues for adults and children in line with "prudent health care." The contribution to prevention made by other statutory services such as the police, the fire service and schools is also very important.

The principle of supporting families in caring for children is also emphasised by the Act with a focus on helping parents develop their own ability to identify and manage problems, keeping families together in a safe, supportive and stable environment. The Act identifies specific areas for focus when considering preventative services for children and families. These are:

- The importance of cross agency work to prevent children from suffering from abuse or neglect
- The importance of preventing or delaying circumstances that might lead to a child or young person being looked after by a local authority
- The importance in youth justice to prevent offending or re-offending by children and young people

It is clear that children and families present a wide range of areas for preventative activity and there is already considerable experience to be drawn from national programmes such as Flying Start and Families First which have developed significant local approaches and initiatives.

## A Prevention Framework

In the absence of any specific definition for prevention, it may be useful to think about a prevention framework which is broken down into three general approaches – primary, secondary and tertiary prevention. These are described in more detail below.

### 1. Prevent: Primary prevention/promoting wellbeing

These are activities and services aimed at individuals who either have no current particular health or care and support needs, or where there is some identified risk that their wellbeing or quality life isn't as good as it could be. Promoting wellbeing services are often provided outside of the scope of traditional health and social care settings and provided in the community through voluntary groups or not for profit organisations. These services are focused towards people who are basically healthy but require some form of low level support or intervention to maintain their health, to be safe or get the most out of their lives.

Delivering and driving improvements in any approach to supporting independence within social care services must be seen in the context of this wider preventative agenda. Actions to address healthy lifestyle and the determinants of health through changes in behaviour can result in better health in the longer term, reduction in disease and limiting conditions and an associated reduction in demand for health and social care services. External factors such as inadequate housing and welfare reform also need to be considered.

Adopting a universal approach to this type of prevention across all sectors can help to reduce levels of need and the associated pressure that this places upon the health and social care sector as well as improving life experience and chances for people living in Cardiff & the Vale of Glamorgan. However, it is clear that much of the activity to deal with the wider prevention operates over a significant length of time and the outcomes of such interventions are not always clear. For this reason it will be important to also think about an approach in the short term which supports independence within the services that people access.

Primary prevention includes services, activities, facilities or resources provided or arranged that may help an individual avoid developing needs for care and support, or help a carer avoid developing support needs by maintaining independence and good health and promoting wellbeing. They are generally universal (i.e. available to all) services, which may include, but are not limited to interventions and advice that:

- promote access to good quality information
- support safer neighbourhoods and safer homes
- promote healthy and active lifestyles (e.g. physical activity, health walks)
- encourage lifestyle changes (e.g. stop smoking, weight loss, health trainers)
- reduce social isolation (e.g. befriending schemes)
- provide services for parents, children and young people (e.g. health visiting, basic parenting courses, teaching lifestyle skills to young people)
- encourage early discussions in families or groups about potential changes in the future, e.g. conversations about potential care arrangements or suitable accommodation should a family member become ill or disabled.

### 2. Reduce: Secondary prevention/early intervention

These are more targeted interventions aimed at individuals who have an increased risk of developing needs, where the provision of services, resources or facilities may help slow down any further deterioration or prevent other needs from developing. Research highlights effective interventions to tackle social isolation in vulnerable people to prevent loneliness are: community navigators, befriending, social interaction through community involvement and hobbies. Social group activities included group exercise, art, therapeutic writing and aspirating activities, with different studies showing a reduction in falls and improved physical health.

Early intervention includes falls prevention, floating support to help people to live in their own homes, minor adaptations to housing which improve accessibility or provide greater assistance for those at risk of a fall, and assistive technology including Telecare services. Targeted interventions also include approaches to identifying carers, including those who are taking on new caring responsibilities. Carers can benefit from support to help them develop the knowledge and skills to care effectively and look after their own health and wellbeing. Flying Start and Families First are networks of support for children and young people which also fall within the framework of preventative services.

Maximising independence services such as reablement type activities are designed to help those who already have an illness or disability to live as active and full a life as possible and to be safe in the services that they access. These services could be traditional social care and health based interventions but they need to be tailored to give people the right sort of support and help so that they can do more for themselves and remain independent for longer. Interventions will be for a short-term defined period, rather than on-going which can inadvertently lead to a reliance on services and reduce independence. Short-term targeted care and support is support required in the short term to assist people to recover their health and wellbeing.

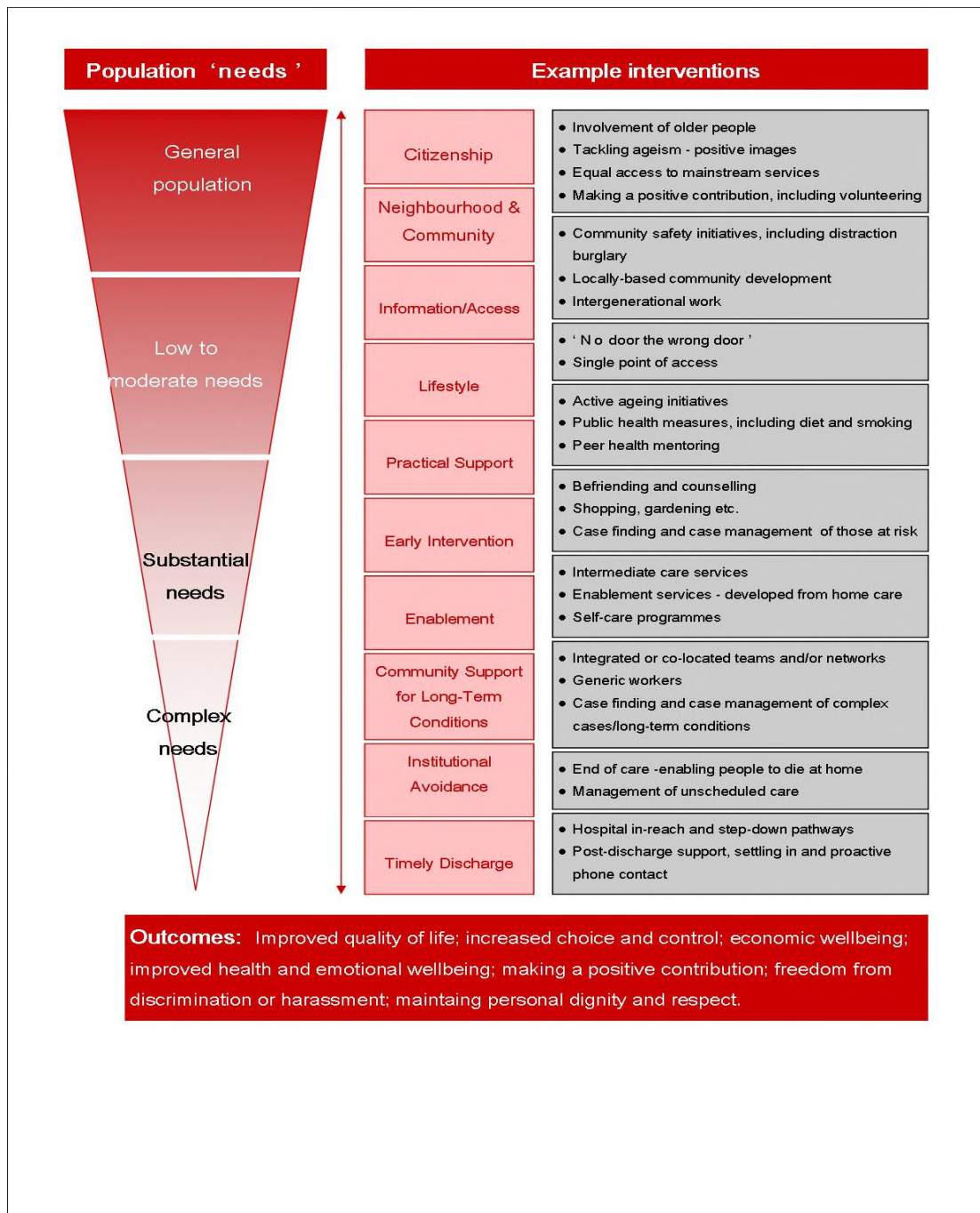
### **3. Delay: Tertiary prevention**

This is aimed at minimising disability or deterioration in people who already have an established health condition/s or complex social care need/s and are at risk of needing further or more intensive services at a further point. This could be because of normal deterioration of a progressive condition or an adverse or trigger event which if not responded to effectively could be triggered into a high cost service, emergency care or residential and/or nursing care. These interventions include supporting people to regain skills and reduce need for intensive services wherever possible and also help to manage the volatility of unscheduled or unplanned care. Examples of tertiary prevention include:

- Post discharge support to reduce the risk of someone being readmitted to hospital
- Hospital at home services to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions
- Reablement and rehabilitation services which support both prevention to hospital and post discharge arrangements
- Support to improve the quality of life of carers
- Purposeful programmes in residential, day and extra care that prevent and delay deterioration or minimise disability rather than just “contain” need
- Family support services that prevent the need for substitute care for children

## The Spectrum of Prevention

Interventions are required across all three categories of prevention set out above in order to deliver the wellbeing outcomes to which people aspire. The spectrum of prevention in relation to older people is well illustrated diagrammatically in the figure below.



*(Reference: 'Improving care and saving money: learning the lessons on prevention and early intervention for older people' DH, January 2010)*



## Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan Prevention Services Overview

### Links with Dewis project

It was agreed at the Regional Health and Social Care strategic implementation group on 23 October 2015 that Dewis Cymru would be the regional directory of choice used across health and social care service in Cardiff and the Vale. Dewis Cymru has been developed against Section 17 of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 (The Act), in terms of supporting the provision of Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) to Citizens through the development of IAA services.

*NB: Dewis Cymru will be referred to as Dewis from now on within this report. Where Dewis appears it is referring to Dewis Cymru and not the Third Sector organisation called Dewis.*

The Dewis project ( see Project Brief at Appendix 1) has been established to support the development of a comprehensive, up to date directory of services and resources available across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. It is intended that the directory will be used by local authority staff, Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan citizens, the Third Sector and Health professionals.

The Dewis Cymru website includes a resource directory (a database) to which local, regional or national resources that promote and support wellbeing can be added. The inclusion of these resources within the website will enable citizens to see what is available in a particular area that might be of benefit to themselves, their family member/friends or the people they care for. It will also be of equal use to professional when developing a support plan and when information/advice advisors need to discuss or suggest options of support or engagement.

The resource directory is supported by a sophisticated search function that can return results based on keywords and/or geographical areas. This approach is aimed at replacing the more traditional approach of simply collecting and listing services that may be available in a particular area.

Dewis is expected to have a number of benefits for professionals and citizens alike including:

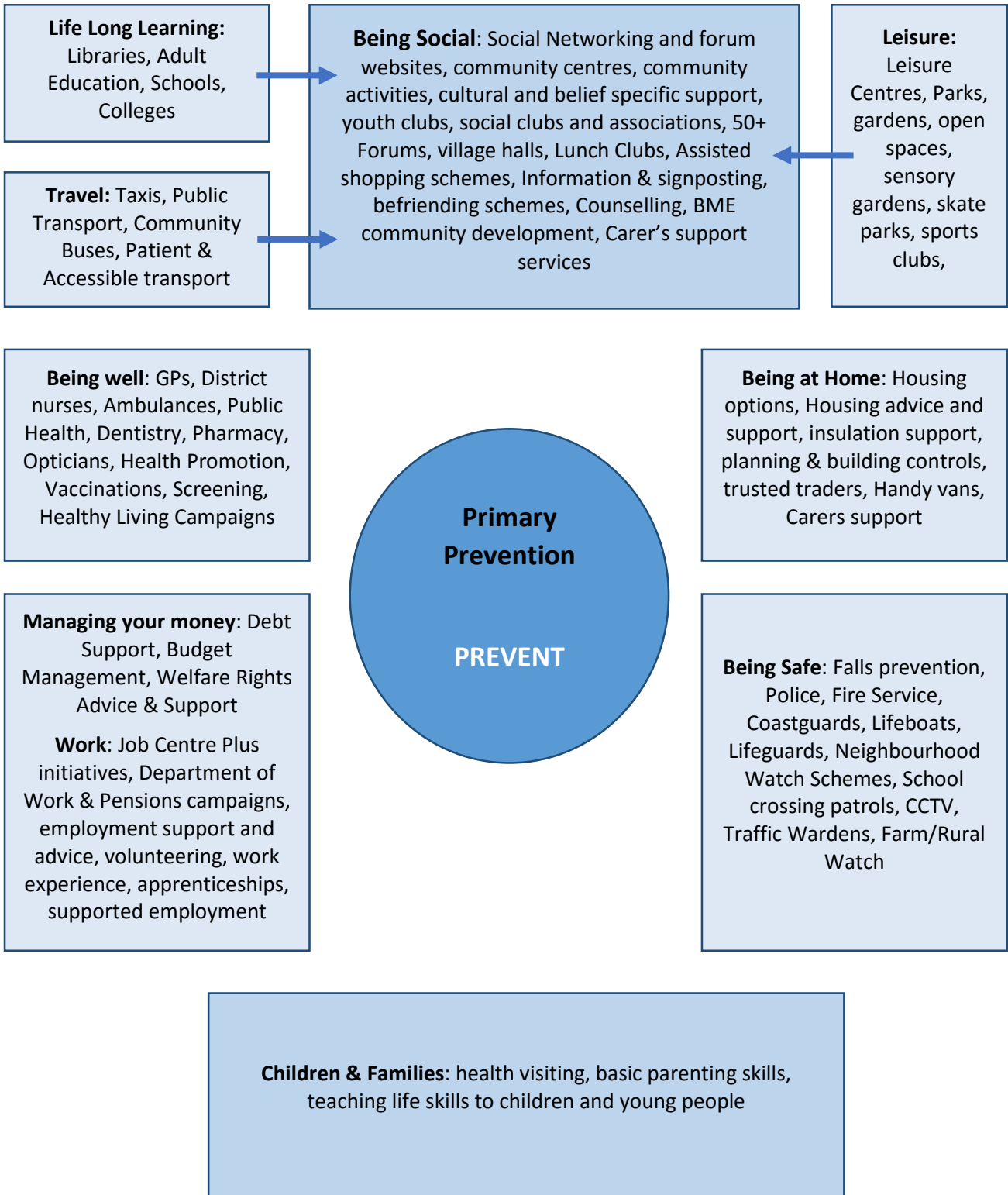
- Improved access to information and advice
- Improved access to prevention and well being services and an increase in self support
- Putting the citizen at the centre of the decision making process.
- In the longer term, Dewis is expected to support the further development and commissioning of preventative services across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan as local authorities working in partnership with the University Health Board and the Third Sector make increasing use of the database to identify how services are being utilised as well as any gaps in services.

Set out below is an overview providing an example of services, broken down into primary, secondary and tertiary prevention service categories. It should be noted that some services fall into more than one category, in that they can support people with different levels of need. Not all services will be available across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan and the intention of the Dewis project will be to map the current range of services to provide this picture.

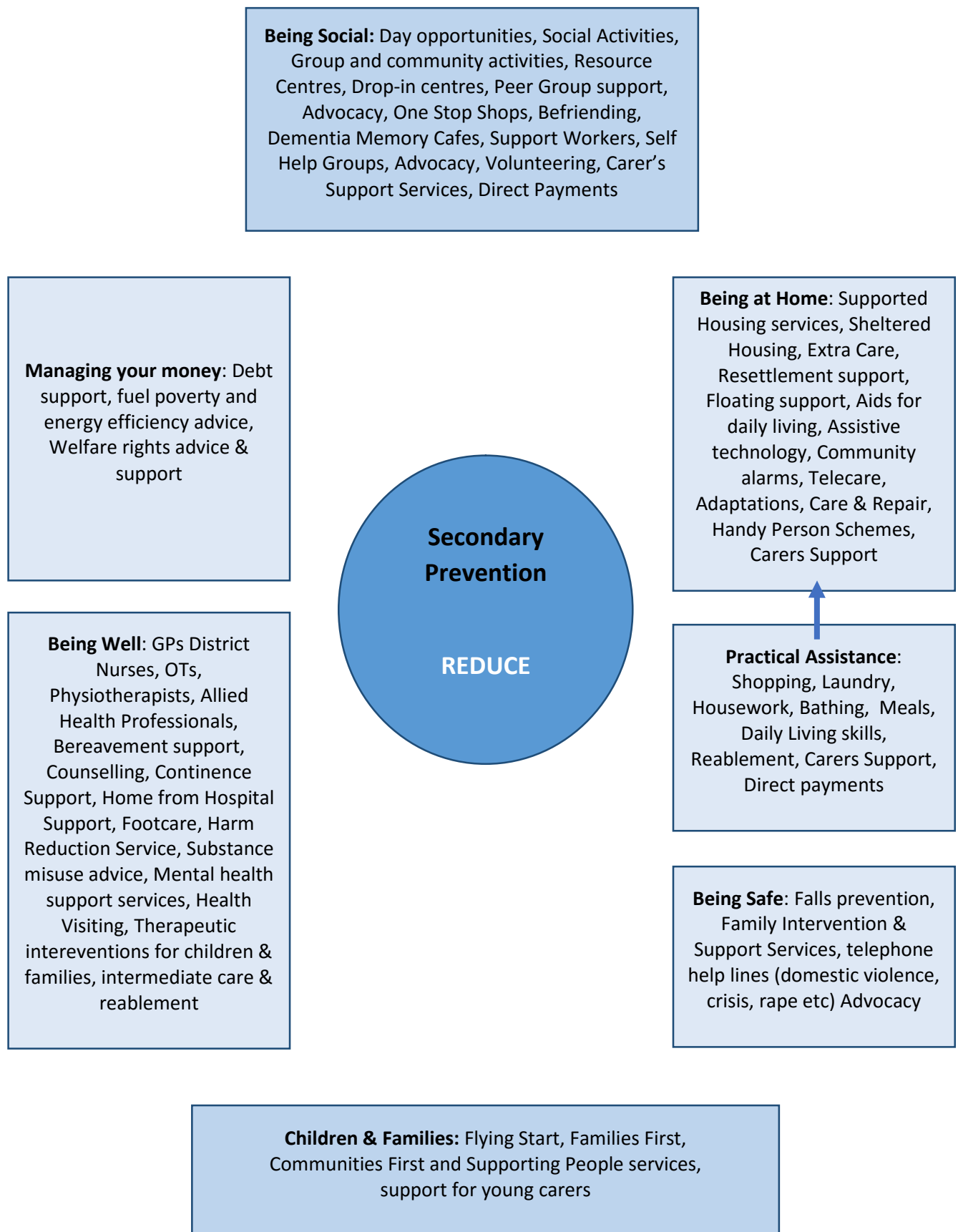
Included under each of the categories below is a diagram representing the current 'What matters to you' fields found on Dewis Cymru which may be helpful in visualising the potential scope and extent of preventative services across the region. NB: A separate section for Carers is currently under development by Dewis Cymru.



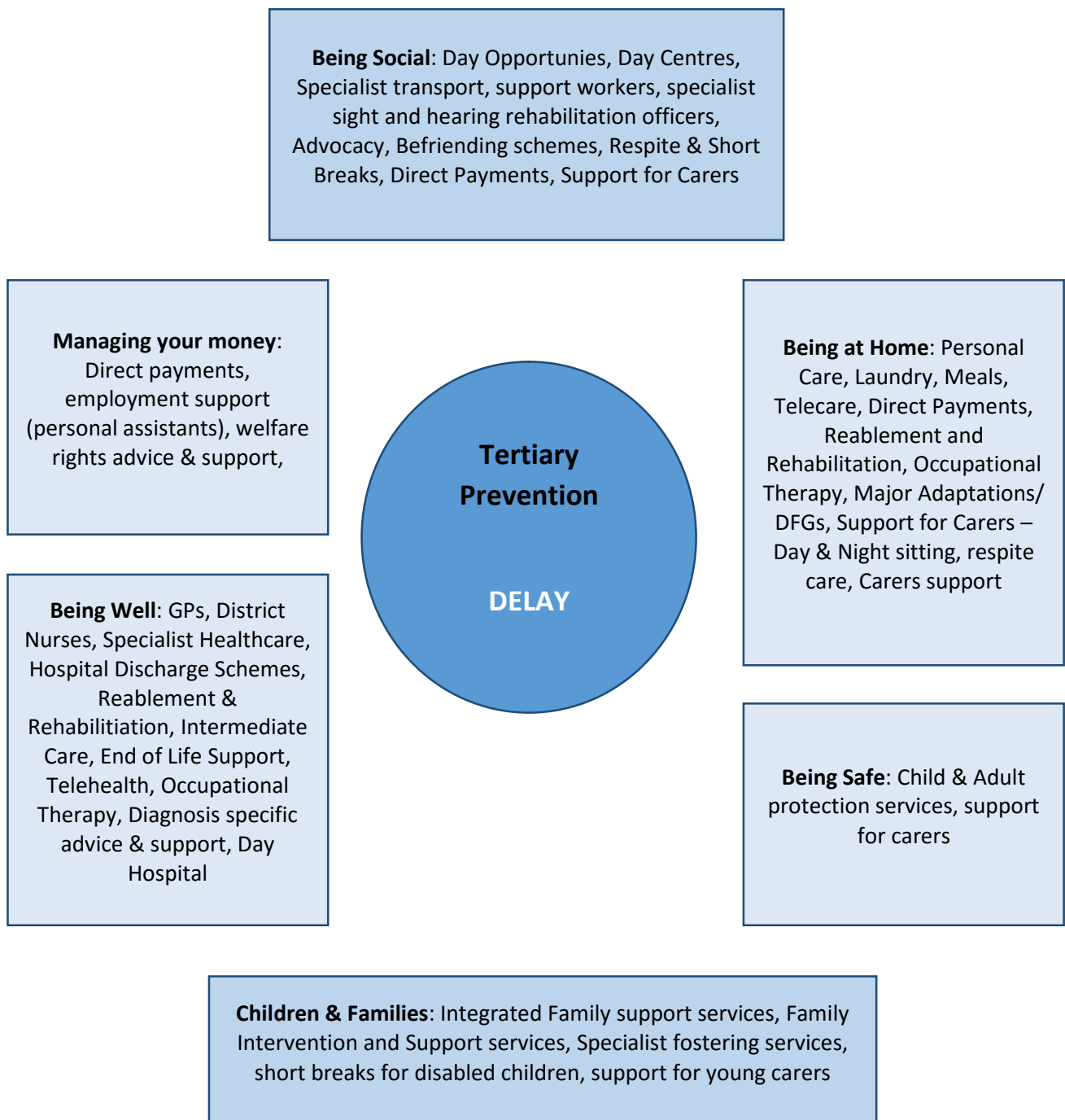
**PRIMARY PREVENTION**



**SECONDARY PREVENTION SERVICES**



## TERTIARY PREVENTION SERVICES



## Current Position re: Preventative Services across Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan

As part of the Dewis project it was agreed to undertake a scoping exercise to identify across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan:

- Directories / Databases already in existence
- What detail of information do they hold
- How and when data is being updated on them
- What programme have they been written in
- Number of organisations/ services that are held on the directory/database
- Are there paid staff to support them or are they maintained by volunteers

The results of the scoping exercise are summarised in Appendix 3 indicate that there are currently 28 known Directories/ Databases of services across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. These include the Third Sector membership directories held by the CVCs (including National organisations), Family Information Service Directories for children and families, Carers support directories, Supported Housing Directories, NHS Directories and bespoke Directories relating to Mental Health Services, Armed Forces etc.

It should be noted that there are some distinct differences between the directories and databases and the rationale for developing these. Some directories such as Cardiff & Vale Mental Health Services and “Where U stand” contain information about how to navigate the range of mental health and learning disability services, how to get and assessment, definitions of conditions etc. and provide a good resource for carers to use as a reference. Some databases such as those used by the CVCs are the mechanism used to invite members to whom they are accountable, to AGMs so that they are properly involved in the process of electing trustees, receiving information etc. Further consideration about how the information contained in these databases/ directories is captured in the future will need to be considered as part of the Dewis Cymru project and the future development of this going forward.

The scoping exercise revealed that information relating to more than 9,400 organisations/services across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan are included in the directories. There is a great deal of duplication and overlap in the information contained within the directories/databases and the detail of the information held also varies significantly. The scoping exercise also highlighted a diverse range of programmes used to hold the information – excel, access, paper based systems, word list & bespoke systems, and showed that there is currently no consistent approach to how and when the data contained within the directories/databases is updated.

The aim of the Dewis project will be to provide a single point of information for citizens and professionals across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan which avoids duplication and means that anyone with information about resources in their area can contribute to the database. The action plans and timescales for completing the upload of information on to the Dewis database from each organisation involved in the Dewis project are still being finalised, although the aim is to get all the known resources from both Councils on by 31 March 2016 ahead of the Act implementation date of 6 April 2016.

A key factor in the success of the Dewis project will be ensuring the sustainability, quality and consistency of the information held on the database. It is intended that this will be achieved through effective governance and management arrangements ensured by cooperative working between organisations and networks and adherence to clear website administrative roles and resource directory content standards.

## The role of the Information, Advice and Assistance Service (IAA) in supporting a preventative approach

Information, advice and assistance has a vital role to ensure preventative services are accessible, that they are known about and that people are supported to gain access to them. People need to be able to make informed choices about what outcomes they wish to achieve and how best to live their lives and manage their well-being. To support this, the Act requires that local authorities put in place an information, advice and assistance (IAA) service to ensure that all people within the local authority area have suitable information, advice and assistance to access the most appropriate services. The IAA service will be a preventative service in its own right and will offer a first point of contact with the care and support system. For many people this will be their first encounter with social services. The Code of Practice for Part 2 says that “The information, advice and assistance service will be easy to use, welcoming and informative” and people must have an opportunity to explain what matters to them, to explore what options are available, and to find the help that they feel is right for them to achieve their personal outcomes.

Professionals involved in the IAA service will have a key role in signposting and referring people to support services available in their locality, particularly preventative services. For the most part these preventative and early intervention services are not part of the social care or statutory sector market so the role of the IAA service will be to inform people about the options available to them through the local community and where appropriate to support them to access these services by assisting them to make contact rather than solely offering them basic contact details.

The commitment given to the development of Dewis as an online resource directory to identify the services that are available and how they can be accessed, is fundamental to ensuring that the IAA service operates effectively in both local authorities. It will be important to also link both Dewis and IAA to commissioning and procurement so that there is a robust commissioning cycle, which utilises all data, and involves all partners in the planning and development of preventative services. By delivering this approach it is anticipated that as a region, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan will build a stronger community infrastructure which is underpinned by an improvement and expansion of information, advice and assistance which is focused towards reducing health inequalities, delaying or preventing social exclusion and the need for more intensive, costly support from statutory agencies.

Further information about how the IAA service operates across Cardiff and the Vale is included at Appendix 3 together with some examples of case studies demonstrating the benefit of a preventative approach.

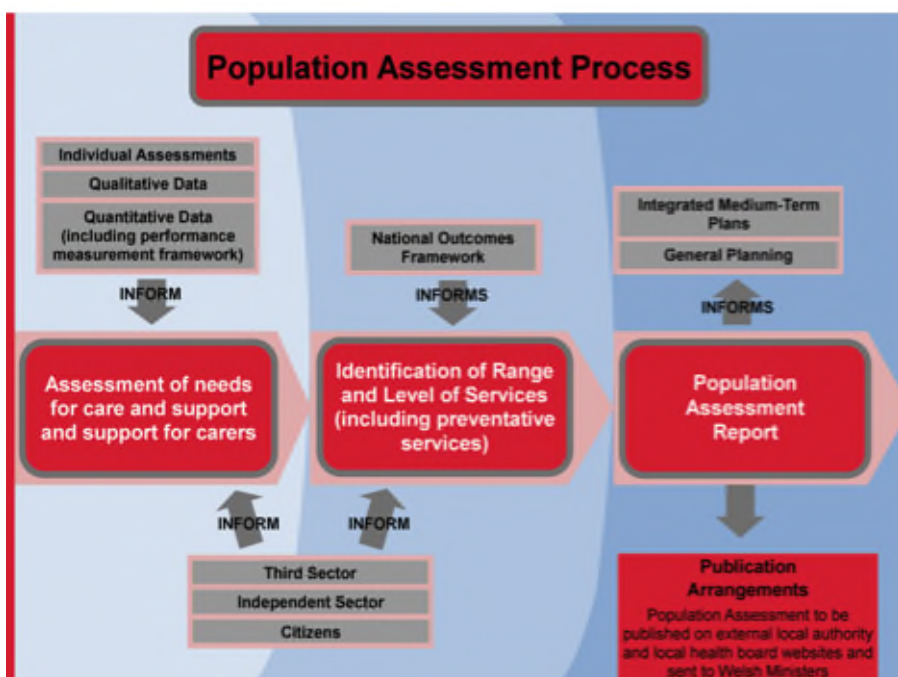
## Population Assessment

The Act requires local authorities and local health boards to jointly assess the extent to which there are people who need care and support, or carers who need support, in the local area. This population assessment links to and supports other requirements on local authority social services under the Act. For example, this assessment will inform local authorities in meeting the requirement contained within section 16 of the Act to promote social enterprises, co- operatives, user led services and the third sector. It will support the requirement to identify the care and support, and preventative services, these alternative service models should provide. It will similarly inform the nature of the information, advice and assistance service required.

In summary, the outline requirements set out in the Code of Practice are:

- That the responsible bodies (local authorities and Local Health Boards) must jointly produce a report of the outcome of the population assessment.
- That local authorities and Local Health Boards must have regard to the statement of well-being outcomes (issued under section 8 of the Act) when carrying out population assessments.
- That local authorities and Local Health Boards must engage with people (including adults and children with care and support needs, carers, and the parents of children with care and support needs) in the production of a population assessment report and establish a procedure for this engagement.
- That local authorities and Local Health Boards must engage with private sector and third sector organisations concerned with the provision of care and support or preventative services to the local population in the production of a population assessment report.
- That the first population assessment reports must be produced by 1 April 2017. Each local authority and Local Health Board must publish the relevant population assessment on its website and submit a copy to Welsh Ministers.
- That population assessment reports must be kept under review.

The following diagram is included in the Code of Practice as an illustration of what the process is all about:



It is intended that the population assessment will drive change, by enabling both local authorities and Local Health Boards to focus on preventing approaches to care and support needs. It will provide the information required to support resource and budgetary decisions; ensuring services and outcomes are targeted, sustainable, effective and efficient.

The draft Code refers to the population assessment ensuring good outcomes for people. It also refers to the Outcomes Framework and performance measurement framework in respect of how need should be assessed. In summary, the purpose of the assessment is to:

- Ensure services and strategies are based on evidence;
- Ensure a focus on prevention;
- Inform other activity such as developing social enterprises and information and advice services;
- Ensure a link with other strategic planning requirements including the Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMPT) and housing and homelessness services.

At a strategic level the population needs assessment will provide the opportunity to review not just population needs but the effectiveness of those currently being provided. The population assessment is intended to be a key tool to assist with monitoring and evaluating services to establish whether they are meeting individual and population well-being outcomes. The first population assessment reports must be produced by April 2017 and currently SSIA and PHW are working together to create a toolkit to support the development of these reports. The final content of the toolkit is in the process of being developed with an anticipated publication date of April 2016.

It is clear that the population assessment will be a vital component in assessing the current range and level of preventative services and whether these are sufficient. However, the requirement on local authorities to provide or arrange preventative services will come into force from 6 April 2016 a full year before the population assessment reports have to be completed. In the meantime it is expected that local authorities and health boards will provide or arrange services based on their current knowledge and understanding of the care and support needs and the support needs for carers and the Dewis project will have a key role to play in supporting this. Ensuring that as much information as possible about preventative services can be uploaded on to the Dewis ahead of the Act implementation date of 6 April 2016 will be vital to ensuring that the region is able to meet the requirements of the Act in this respect.

## Conclusions and Next Steps

Work already undertaken with regard to the Dewis project and the development of IAA services across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan indicate that there is already a range of provision within the community and many of the primary, secondary and tertiary preventative services identified on pages 12 – 14 already exist. However, until the population assessment has been completed, the region will not be able to identify specific services, who these services are for – whole population, specific user groups, eligible individuals etc; the geographical coverage; or whether there are any gaps in the current provision.

**In the short term** there is a need for:

- The Dewis Cymru project to deliver on its Project Brief and Plan:
  - To complete regional and local action plans
  - Upload information about resources into the Dewis database ensuring that sufficient information is available for the system to go “live” by 6 April 2016
  - Promote the use of Dewis with staff across both local authorities, the health board, the Third Sector and other providers
  - Publicise Dewis and the IAA service externally to the public across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan
- The project plans for Dewis and the IAA service to be effectively linked ensuring that IAA staff receive appropriate training to deliver the service and the requirements of the Act
- Ensure that there are effective arrangements in place to undertake the population assessment and that information uploaded into Dewis can be used to contribute to identifying the range of preventative services currently available
- Consider how the local authority and its partners will identify wider community and neighbourhood activities and groups not captured in the current range of Directories and resources to be uploaded on to Dewis.

**In the longer term** following the completion of the population assessment report, consideration will need to be given to:

- Developing a joint prevention strategy with key partners which seeks to create a culture of prevention and early intervention and supports the ethos of the Act. This would need to be developed across statutory agencies, third sector organisations and private providers in consultation with citizens and could potentially focus on the following key commitments:
  - Making enablement and prevention 'everyone's business'
  - Offering early support to all people
  - Ensuring that prevention and enablement activities reach all people
  - Enabling people to live in accommodation and access aids to daily living that support their independence, health and wellbeing
  - Delivering Public Health activities that have been proven to help people stay healthy and well, and that are targeted to people who most need that help
  - Giving people information, advice and support so they can help themselves to stay as healthy and well as possible
  - Enabling family carers to continue caring and stay well
  - Ensuring that networks of community support are built around people who are isolated
  - Developing partnerships with community organisations and groups to deliver early intervention and prevention activities across the region
  - Making sure people get more ‘joined up’ health and care support, and staff work in a more unified way around individuals with significant health and care needs



- Developing joint commissioning strategies to support the required strategic re-orientation of health and social care towards prevention and early intervention and enable a sustainable approach to offering opportunities for people across the region to stay active, healthy and independent for as long as possible in their home and community of choice.
- Agreeing with partners, priorities for investment to support the shift towards prevention and early intervention ensuring that there is a balanced investment in respect of services available for:
  - The general population (universal services) – primary preventative services and support
  - Low level preventative services for more vulnerable groups of people – secondary preventative services and support
  - People with high level, more complex needs – tertiary preventative services and support.

## Recommendations

- 1) Ensure that the Dewis Cymru project delivers on its Project Brief and Plan within the required timescales and that this is monitored and evaluated.
- 2) Ensure that there are effective links between the Dewis project plans and those required to deliver the IAA service and Population Assessment.
- 3) Ensure that staff who deliver IAA services receive appropriate training so that they are competent and skilled in accordance with the requirements of the Act.
- 4) Consider developing a joint prevention strategy with all key partners and stakeholders.
- 5) Consider the arrangements required to develop a joint commissioning approach which supports the shift in health and social care towards prevention and early intervention.
- 6) Agree with partners, priorities for investment which support a preventative approach.

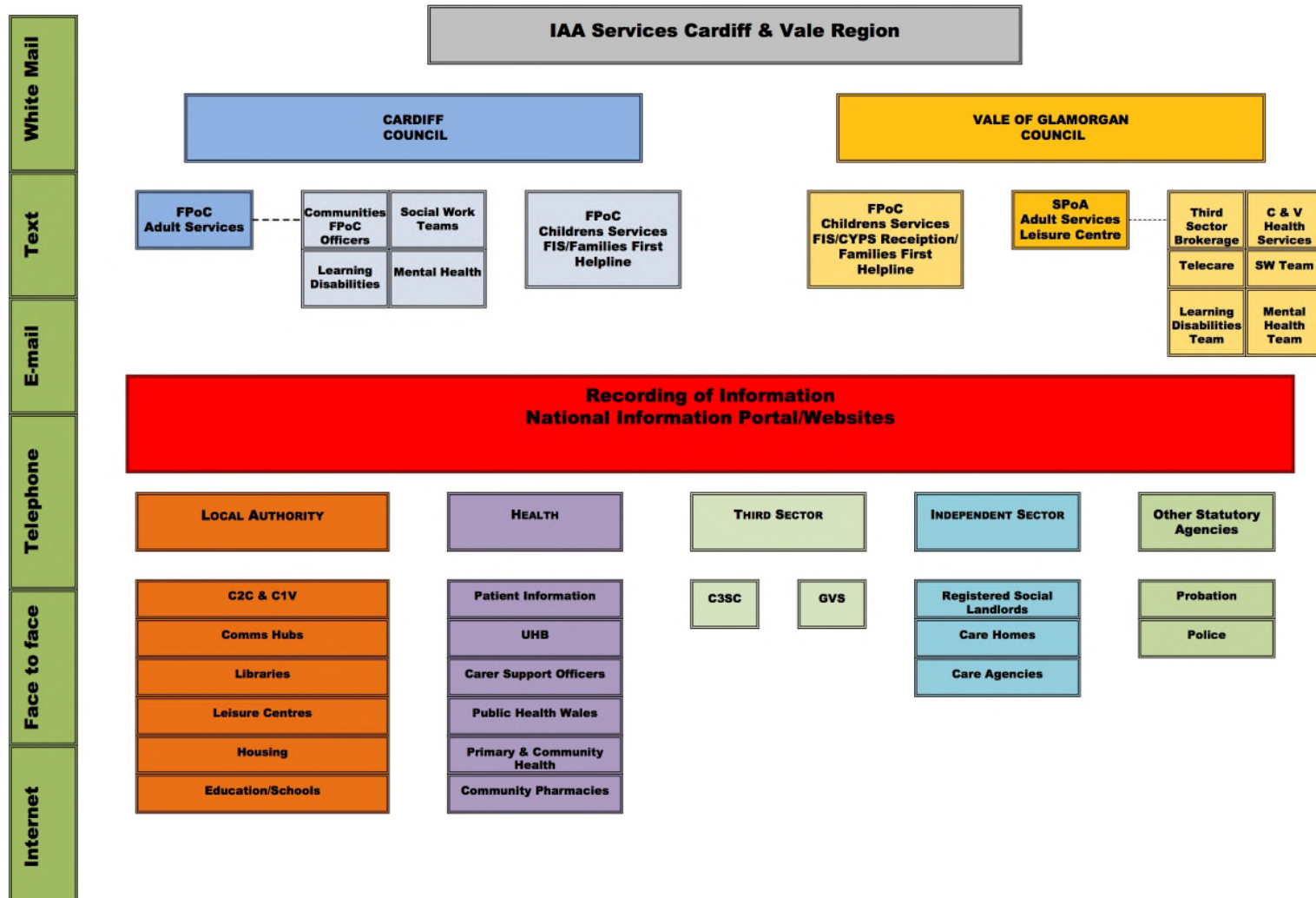
## Appendix 1

To view the Dewis Project Brief, please click on this link:

[Dewis Project Brief v0.4](#)

## Appendix 2

The diagram below sets out the approach to IAA services across Cardiff & the Vale of Glamorgan and highlights the range of different services and partners who provide these services.



## Case study examples

### Case Study 1: Care and Repair Cardiff and the Vale Casework Service

#### Background

Mr M contacted Care & Repair Cardiff as he had been sent a letter from the GP surgery offering him a 'Healthy@Home Check' from Care & Repair. Mr and Mrs M have never asked for help in the past but contacted us as were curious as to what we could offer.

#### What did we do?

- A Caseworker visited Mr and Mrs M and identified that both would be eligible for Attendance Allowance due to health conditions. A claim was put in and both received High Rate. Due to this, the Caseworker put in for Carers Allowance for both and as a result, they were then entitled to claim Guaranteed Pension Credit and full Council Tax Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance and Carers Premium.
- The Caseworker also identified the need for rails and a stair lift in the home. In turn, a referral was made to Care & Repair's Occupational Therapist who assessed and referred them for a heavy duty stair lift, two internal grab rails, an external rail and a 5" bath step.
- Due to the nature of Mrs M's health and her need for a downstairs toilet, the Caseworker sought funding via the ILG grant (Independent Living Grant) to fund a downstairs toilet extension. Care & Repair's Contractors Panel was used to source quotations and to undertake the works. Care & Repair's Occupational Therapist provided the Caseworker with a report to enable the fees for the Building Planning and Building Control to be waived.
- As a result of the Pension Credit Award, the couple were now eligible for an ECO grant for a new boiler.
- The Caseworker also referred to Care & Repair's Home Safety and Security Project for 2 smoke detectors.

#### How are they better off?

- Both Mr and Mrs M can live in dignity in respect to personal care, due to the stair lift and the down stairs toilet being provided. The stair lift cost £3,000.00 and the ILG was £6,748.00.
- Both Mr and Mrs M were at risk of falls and the stair lift has lowered that risk. The other adaptations provided may also prevent falls in the home, at a cost of approximately £120.00.
- Mr and Mrs M feel safer by having the smoke detectors in place at a cost of £50.00.
- Mr and Mrs M feel more independent and financially stable due to the extra money they have received. The couple are now better off by £272.00 extra per week.
- Due to the new boiler, Mr and Mrs M are now warmer and saving on fuel bills and due to the efficiency of the new boiler approximate value of £3,000.00. Their worries about the old boiler – numerous repairs, have now been removed.

#### What would have happened if Care & Repair did not exist?

- Mr and Mrs M may have fallen without the use of the adaptations in the home.
- Their well-being (due to personal issues) may have also suffered without the use of the stair lift and the downstairs toilet.
- Again, poor well-being could have been caused by worry over the high heating costs and the repair costs of the old boiler.

- Mr and Mrs M would have missed out on benefits and thus extra money per week helping them to stay independent.
- Should there have been a fire in the home, Mr and Mrs M may not have been able to get out of their home in adequate time, without the early detection from the smoke detectors that had been provided.

## Case Study 2: Cardiff Independent Living Service

### Background

Mr L is 51 years of age and has Necrotic Toes causing severely reduced mobility. District Nurses attend every day for wound care. Mr L requested assistance with a benefit entitlement checks and advice on somebody to help with household tasks.

### What we did and How the person is better off:

An independent living visiting officer visited Mr L and undertook a full holistic review of the service users needs in order to remain independently living in their own home.

Mr L mobilises on crutches and it became apparent that he struggled to get to back into the chair's low position. After discussing how he bathes and mobilises around the house it was agreed that I refer to the Occupational Therapy Service.

Full income maximisation review was undertaken by the visiting officer, and a referral for a new claim for Daily Living component of PIP of an additional £82.30 per week was made. Once in payment Mr L will then be eligible to the Severe Disability Premium payment within his Employment Support Allowance, which is £61.85 per week. Both benefits provided him with an additional £7,495.80 per year!

Mr L's home had no smoke alarms therefore referral made to the Fire Safety team to visit.

The visiting officer completed a Swalec Warm Home Discount Scheme application form completed to get £140 off his energy bills.

A referral to Speakeasy was made as due to his mobility he struggles to prepare food in the kitchen, which has been compounded by the fact that his microwave blew up which he said was 'his life line'. Speakeasy were able to provide Mr L with a microwave from a contact they had in a nearby church to where Mr L lives as they had a spare – the church arranged to drop the microwave to Mr L. Mr L also had arrears with his energy bills which Speakeasy also helped with.

Mr L had a leak in his bathroom which is causing a damp smell therefore referral was made Care and Repair to get assistance with this.

The visiting officer assisted Mr L to search for cleaning services and he us

### Service user/citizen feed back

Mr L was amazed at the number of things the Independent Living Visiting Officer was able to help him with. He said having his microwave back was such a relief. All this would not have been provided without this intervention. He is better equipped in his home to get around after the Occupational Therapy visit. Mr L could not believe he would be better off by £7,495.80 per year. He sent a thank you to the officer involved.

## Case Study 3: Independent Living Service Cardiff

### Background

Mr S is in his mid 70's and lives with his 16 year old granddaughter who is disabled and requires 24 hour care. Mr S lost his wife to cancer just after Christmas who had been the main carer to his granddaughter.

The telephony Contact Officer from our first Point of Contact team identified that the support from an Independent Living Visiting Officer was required.

### **What We Did**

The visiting officer checked Mr S income with the DWP to ensure that his pension was up to date since his wife had passed away as Mr S didn't know what money he had to manage with. The visiting officer made a phone call to his bank for him to check his balance and find out his payment dates. A request was also put in to set up internet banking.

The visiting officer contacted SSE due to an overdue bill and his wife was still the main account holder. The name was changed a cheaper tariff identified. She also checked they had his granddaughters oxygen tank on their system as that would reduce the bill.

The visiting officer showed Mr S how easy it was to order shopping off his smart phone which he was using and we got some quotes for an internet package. The visiting officer also connected him to set him up with an Asda shopping app via his phone.

The Visiting officer also provided Mr S with a list of clubs to meet people and be less isolated. He discussed being able will be able the clubs once assistance organised through a carers assessment was in place for his granddaughter.

### **How the person is better off:**

Mr S is very happy knowing that he will be able to take care of the essential things around the home and be self-sufficient.

### **Service user/citizen feed back**

Mr S said "I would not have managed without you, a great help, something easy to you but seemed impossible to me and now I know what I am doing. You have been a saviour today."

## Case Study 4: Putting Families First

### Background

The parent was identified by the school as being disengaged and uninvolved with her children's education. She was approached by the Learning Support Assistant who encouraged her to join the group. After much persuading, the parent attended sessions in Reading Readiness and the Parent Nurture Programme. Initially she was a quiet group member, reserved and uncommunicative; she struggled with group situations and was withdrawn, choosing not to participate due to a lack of confidence in her own abilities.

### What we did

Over a period of weeks and then months, the parent's confidence began to grow as she attended a number of other Putting Families First courses. On attending a Welsh course the parent began to help other learners struggling with their pronunciation. The parent moved on to becoming more involved with school life and supported the planting of trees within a school group activity. The parent has progressed from being completely disengaged with the school and every aspect of her children's education, to being an affirming advocate for education, and leading on several projects which benefit both herself and her family.

### How the person is better off

The parent has grown in both experience and confidence and is now re-engaging with her children's education and has reported as now having the confidence to support them with their school work. Her children regularly see their mum coming to school and taking part in school life.

The parent is now a trustee for the committee set up to improve the school café, she supports the drop in at the café every week and makes herself available to chat with other parents. She has trained to deliver Geocache sessions for forest schools, she assists with the vegetable co-op and supports and promotes all learning / school and community activities that are offered. She seeks opportunities to share what she has gained with others.

She found that she enjoyed working with children so much that she sought advice from the Putting Families First Learning Support Assistant, who guided her on the next steps to becoming a Learning Support Assistant. The parent has now enrolled on a Level 3 Childcare course and is currently undertaking a placement at Ysgol Gwaun Y Nant.

## Case Study 5: Western Vale Family Support project

### Background

The family - a single mum and her two children aged 4 and 3 months, live in the Western Vale. A referral was made for parenting support from the health visitor. There was a history of domestic violence as well as mum suffering from depression and having financial and housing issues. Both the children's names were on the child Protection register. The youngest child also had health problems and was due to have tests.

### What we did

Support initially concentrated on routines for both children as well as boundaries and consequences for the older child. This incorporated sleep and bedtime routines as well. Due to mum's financial situation a referral was also made to the local food bank, with mum engaging well with the support from Western Vale Family Support and with Social Services and Atal Y Fro. Mum was happy to take on board the advice and support given and put this into practice, she was able to acknowledge and comment on the positive changes she was noticing with the children's behaviour, especially the good behaviour demonstrated by the older child, and put this down to the more structured routine she had established.

As the support continued Mum reported that she felt more confident in her parenting, and although the children's names remained on the Child Protection register at the time of the review case conference it was acknowledged how much progress mum had made.

An incident with mum's ex-partner, and with the youngest child reaching new stages of development, resulted in a new referral being put in from the Social worker for further ongoing support, as mums confidence about going out had dipped due to the incident with her ex. Despite this, Mum continued to evidence that she was sticking with her daily and bedtime routine and was using the strategies and advice given to deal with unwanted behaviour from her oldest daughter.

The health issues with the youngest child continued, with mum having to attend a number of hospital appointments, along with two weeks stays in hospital. Despite this, mum continued to progress and gain confidence in her parenting ability. In addition to receiving the 1-1 support within her home, she now started to attend the Pop in and Play sessions at the gathering Place.

### How the person is better off

In May 2014 the children's names were removed from the child protection register with acknowledgment of the progress mum had made in respect of her parenting skills and confidence being recognised. This resulted in the 1-1 support ending. Prior to the end of the programmes support a home safety review was carried out, with equipment and advice given. Mum continues to access the pop in and play session at the gathering Place where she can access support and advice if needed on an informal basis and the children having the opportunity to enhance their social development, as well as having fun and enjoying the variety of toys and art and craft activities on offer.

Mums comment on her evaluation form stated *"I have learnt a lot from all the sessions and I have learnt to prioritise my children's needs over my own. I am extremely grateful for all the help and support I've received"*



### Appendix 3: Results of the Scoping exercise for the Dewis Project

List directories / databases already in existence	What detail of information does it hold?	How is the data updated? E.g. Role of staff member / volunteer?	When is data updated?	What programme have they been written in e.g. Excel, Access etc	Number of organisations that are held on the directory/database	Duplication?
<b>C3SC</b>						
C3SC Membership directory of Third Sector Organisations	Name, contact details and brief description of the organisation (generally not individual services)	Electronically via admin staff at C3SC	Adhoc when people contact us.	E-vol	approx 640	
<b>VALE FIS</b>						
Family Information Service (FIS) Childcare Directory <a href="https://earlyyears.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fiso_live/publicenquiry/Default.aspx">https://earlyyears.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fiso_live/publicenquiry/Default.aspx</a>	Comprehensive details of childcare settings including childminders, day nurseries, playgroups etc. Info includes: opening times, contact details, cost, age range, facilities, whether can cater for special needs, school pick up, description etc	Annual review whereby staff in the FIS Team contact the service by email and phone. Also the facility for services to update their own details on line. Childminders are updated 6	Nov - Jan annually (in preparation for the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment CSA)	External system - Tribal, hosted on Vale Council website	320	no

		monthly.				
FIS Family Support Directory <a href="https://earlyyears.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fiso_live/fsd/">https://earlyyears.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fiso_live/fsd/</a>	Comprehensive details of services that support children and young people and their parents eg. parenting, child development, health, disability, substance misuse, carers etc. opening times, contact details, cost, age range, language used, whether can cater for special needs, description, referral process, eligibility criteria, area served etc	Annual review whereby staff in the FIS Team contact the service by email and phone. Also the facility for services to update their own details on line	Annually throughout the year.	External system - Tribal, hosted on Vale Council website	327	Yes as contains information on Children & Young People Services teams and many third sector organisations
FIS Activities for Children & Young People age 0-20yrs <a href="https://earlyyears.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fiso_live/publicenquiry/Default.aspx">https://earlyyears.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fiso_live/publicenquiry/Default.aspx</a>	Details of leisure activities, parent & toddler groups, art and music groups, soft play etc. Info includes address, description, contact, age range, cost, opening times, whether cater for special needs, language used etc	Annual review whereby staff in the FIS Team contact the service by email and phone. Also the facility for services to update their own details on line	Annually throughout the year.	External system - Tribal, hosted on Vale Council website	251	Yes with leisure, sports, community centres and third sector

Sports clubs for children, young people and adults (Sports & Play Development Team)	Online - name of club, type of sport, contact name, email and tel number. Back office - age, disability friendly, area, description, child protection trained and policy, DBS check, insurance	Used to be the role of an administrator but no funding so not being updated at the moment	When they are notified of changes. Less than annually depending on resources	Access	140	some with FIS activities directory and third sector sports clubs
Community Centres in the Vale	Address, contact details, cost, facilities, all activities taking place in the community centres, including name of activity, day and time	Staff member updates when he receives an update	When notified	word list		Activities for children and young people will also be held on FIS Activities directory and duplication with third sector
Care Directory	Contact details of approved residential, nursing, domiciliary and day care services	Role of the Contract Monitoring Officer. Constantly updated	As and when changes occur	word list	44	no
Supporting People Directory (Accommodation, supported housing, floating support, services for older people)	Housing related support services funded by Supporting People that currently exist in the Vale of Glamorgan, the services that they provide, who they are for, their location and how they can be accessed.	Contracts Officer updates info as they commission the services	At least annually, usually in June (in line with tendering process)	word as lots of narrative	approx. 70	yes - housing associations, third sector support, FIS Family Support Directory

Armed Forces Directory	Contact details, who the service supports etc (lots of national organisations)					yes but most are national organisations
Adult Courses (paid courses)	details of course, venue, dates costs for all Vale	Area Development Officer updates daily	Daily	In-house IT system that links to website		no
Get Back On Track courses (free or subsidised courses)	details of course, venue, dates costs for all Vale	Adult Education Development Officer updates as and when	monthly when new courses arise	word flyer		no
Youth Engagement Directory						
<b>Other directories we are aware of</b>						
NHS Direct Wales - Health & Wellbeing services <a href="http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/localservices/">http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/localservices/</a>						
Cardiff & Vale Mental Health Services Directory <a href="http://www.cavamh.org.uk/directories/mental-health-directory/introduction">http://www.cavamh.org.uk/directories/mental-health-directory/introduction</a>	Comprehensive information about third sector, and other sector, mental health services.					

<p>Cardiff &amp; Vale Parents Federation 'Where U Stand' Directory  <a href="http://www.wherestand.org/">http://www.wherestand.org/</a></p>	<p>Extensive database of groups and organisations with information on services and how to access them. Written for carers by carers, especially those caring for a person with a learning disability. Hard copy is over 200 pages of A4. The online version is updated weekly and is far larger in content. The guide has a regional bias with much Wales-wide and UK content. It includes searchable database features by topic, region and keywords plus feedback by members. Enjoys around 2000 visits per quarter and used by social work professionals and families alike.</p>	<p>All staff maintain it but we dedicate some time per week for this</p>	<p>weekly or when information is presented</p>	<p>Joomla online content</p>	<p>350</p>	<p>Many databases have used Where You Stand as the basis for their content over the years. We have been involved in the development of several LG resources over the past two decades. In addition to around 350 groups and organisations held online a further 100 plus entries are included relating to a variety of services and opportunities including legislation and where to go to seek assistance.</p>
<p><b>Cardiff FIS</b></p>						

Directory of Childcare Provision (registered and unregistered)	A range of information about childcare provision in Cardiff required by customers to enable them to make informed choices about childcare provision along with contact details for settings. Information used to inform Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (statutory duty of Local Authority)	By FIS, By identifiable staff member	Providers regularly reminded of the need to update details especially when required due to changes to service.	In house Cardiff Council database that can be extracted to Excel/PDF.	467	
Directory of Family Support Services	A range of information about Support Services for children, young people and families in Cardiff to enable customers to make informed choices about services available to meet their needs along with contact details for services.	By FIS, By identifiable staff member	Providers regularly reminded of the need to update details especially when required due to changes to service.	In house Cardiff Council database that can be extracted to Excel/PDF.	294	

Directory of Activities	A range of information about activities and play provision in Cardiff to enable customers to make informed choices about activities and play provision with contact details for settings. Information used to inform Play Sufficiency Assessments (statutory duty of Local Authority)	By FIS, By identifiable staff member	Providers regularly reminded of the need to update details especially when required due to changes to service.	In house Cardiff Council database that can be extracted to Excel/PDF.	70	
<b>Glamorgan Voluntary Services Directories</b>						
GVS Members Directory	Contact details, area of interest, brief description, memberships related information, confidentiality option	Shared responsibility between staff	As and when an organisation joins / contacts GVS. Also verified annually	Access and Evol	487	Is specifically a members databases for purpose of charity operations.
Cardiff and Vale Carers Directory	A - Z of third sector, and other services for carers. Brief description of service and contact details	GVS. Ceri Venners and Linda Pritchard	Periodically - dependent on funding	Paper document and PDF on line	150	Some duplication, but this is specifically about carers services.
Older Peoples Directory	Brief description of service and contact details. Listed by type of service, eg. advocacy, befriending.	GVS. Ceri Venners and Linda Pritchard	Periodically - dependent on funding	Paper document and PDF on line	Approx 180	Some duplication.

Wales Council for Voluntary Action						
WCVA Directory	Broken into categories based on type and size, basic information, company house / charity number, active location, summary	WCVA contacts directly on a monthly basis (Nigel Evans)	Monthly mail outs - aim to target entire directory once per year	SQL	4196 (includes duplicates, and potentially out of date)	
WCVA National Voluntary Organisation Directory	Broken into categories based on type and size, basic information, company house / charity number, active location, summary	WCVA contacts directly on a monthly basis (Nigel Evans)	Monthly mail outs - aim to target entire directory once per year	SQL	700 (National)	
Community Database (Library Service)	Name, description, times, contact details, last updated, associated costs, other notes	Role of staff within the Library service	As and when the library service is approached	Library management system - 'V Smart'		





# Early Help Strategy

**Cardiff Partnership  
Early Intervention & Prevention Steering Group**



## Making prevention everybody's business

Cardiff Partnership is made up of organisations working together to address key issues and concerns for the people of Cardiff and to achieve our vision for the city.

**Cardiff Partnership  
Early Intervention & Prevention Steering Group**

## **Early Help Strategy**

### **FOREWORD - PREVENTION IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS**

This strategy marks the start of a new and exciting chapter in the development of services for children and families in need of support in Cardiff. This is true on a number of levels.

#### **Common Purpose - Outcome Focused**

This is the first time that Cardiff Children's Social Services has departed from a narrow focus on statutory functions and joined with its statutory and third sector partners to develop a coherently aligned strategy that is focused on prevention. This strategy aims to combine the skills, resources and commitment of all professionals in a unified way to deliver two key Outcomes.

It reflects a genuine partnership in which no one agency has primacy but in which all are committed to:

- Reducing the number of children, young people and families requiring 'remedial' support or intervention.
- 'Narrowing the gap' so that children achieve their potential.

#### **Evidence of 'What Works'**

The Implementation Plan which flows from this strategy is obviously key and sets out a wide range of initiatives to support children and families. All are based on national evidence of 'what works'. Many are services that already exist in Cardiff but which, as a result of this strategy, will be able to enhance their impact because the strategy links their offer and resources with others, into a coherent whole. Some are completely new initiatives based on the latest thinking elsewhere in the UK including Leeds (with whom we have been able to establish a 'development' relationship) Manchester, Essex, Newcastle and Blackburn and Darwen. We have taken advantage of the experience of national third sector partners - Action for Children, Barnardos and the NSPCC and their evidence of what works. All of the initiatives are designed to help children at the earliest stage of their lives when help can have a profound impact or at the earliest stage when difficulties are emerging - at the first sign of a given problem.



### **Fewer Looked after Children**

Delivering this commitment will have major implications for thousands of children over the next 5 years because it will mean fewer children's needs being met through the court arena, in the Looked After system or in the criminal justice system. More children will be able to enjoy family life in their own homes.

### **Sustainable Futures - Cost Effective Services**

It will have major implications for agencies better able not only to sustain services in the face of considerable financial pressure but to deploy a greater proportion of those resources to much greater effect for the benefit of a greater number of children. Less spending large sums on a few children with poor overall outcomes; more of spending lower cost effective sums on a wider population of children whilst securing better outcomes.

### **Empowering the Children's Workforce - Prevention is Everybody's Business**

It will potentially transform the working lives of hundreds of professionals who would much rather work with families to enable their success and to see children thrive at home, than they would spend their time in adversarial relationships using compulsory measures. More professionals will be able to work therapeutically to help children and families deal constructively with modern day pressures, rather than focusing on assessment and control. The strategy aims to break down the barriers between statutory intervention sitting within one or two agency boundaries and prevention taking place somewhere else. We all know that safeguarding is everybody's business but it must be a priority for all those working with children to make prevention their primary focus not least because effective prevention makes children safer. It also makes them healthier, better adjusted and able to learn and develop. Prevention is everybody's business too.

### **A Very Big Challenge**

I cannot think of a more challenging set of aspirations than those set out in this strategy. The devil is in the detail and the implementation. There will undoubtedly be things that just don't succeed. Many individuals or situations will defy the most determined efforts to help. Some will sustain change and others will relapse but as professionals we will need to draw on the strength of the evidence base and have the courage of our convictions that 'prevention works', if we want to make a real and lasting difference. We know that there are already many well established services in Cardiff where we can evidence transformational success. This strategy aims to multiply that success and maximise the impact of different professionals and services by combining our efforts more effectively and focusing everyone who works with children on a common goal - prevention.

This strategy has been developed as the result of the hard work of Cardiff Partnership's Early Intervention and & Prevention Steering Group. As the Chair of the Vulnerable Children and Families Board I am very grateful to the Steering Group and all of those who have contributed directly or in the course of consultation. The strategy reflects much of the latest evidence about 'what works'. It challenges us to 'Think Family' and respond to strengths and capacities rather than weaknesses and deficits. Designing services in keeping with these imperatives provides the underpinning value base that is the key to success.

**Tony Young**  
**Director of Children's Services**  
**Chair - Vulnerable Children and Families Programme Board**

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## Introduction

This document has two key functions. It sets out the strategic direction for delivering a partnership approach to **early help** and provides guidance for everyone who works with children, young people and families in Cardiff in order that the strategic approach can be successfully implemented across the Cardiff Partnership. This includes teachers, health practitioners and Third Sector practitioners such as family support, early years practitioners, youth workers, play workers and social workers.

It is about the way we can all work together, share information, and put the child and their family at the centre, to ensure that children and families receive the support they need at the right time and in the right way.

At the heart of the Strategy which seeks to make prevention everyone's business, are the following strategic objectives and outcomes:

### Strategic Objective 1

- Ensure that children & young people receive help at the lowest level or intervention that is safe and effective in promoting good outcomes.

### Strategic Objective 2

- Maximise the impact of Children's (Social) Services by strengthening the effectiveness of social work intervention and specialist / targeted family support.

Actions that address the requirements set out in the two key objectives above are detailed in the proposed summary work plan located at **Appendix A**. It is expected that these actions will contribute to achieving the following strategic outcomes.

### Strategic Outcome 1

- To reduce the number of children, young people and their families requiring support at the "remedial" end of the Cardiff continuum of support to families (i.e. statutory services). See **Appendix B – Spectrum of Need and Services** for details.

### Strategic Outcome 2

- To narrow the gaps for children, young people and families at risk of poor outcomes in Cardiff and their peers.

The approach is intended to benefit all children and young people what ever their level of need and as such it is inclusive of children with a disability.

The death of Victoria Climbié in February 2000 prompted a large and thorough review of UK child protection services, led by Lord Laming. This highlighted the importance of multi-agency working and information sharing in order to protect children and prevent them from coming to harm. As a result, a number of reforms came about as recommended in various publications and updated legislation. Organisations, both paid and unpaid, joined together to work more cooperatively towards a preventative and early intervention agenda.

We all share in the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Working alongside other agencies is extremely effective for improving outcomes for children due to the cross cutting themes that organisations are able to come together over. It's by coming together to share information and raise concerns that we can increase the likelihood of protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare so that fewer children have to face the terrible circumstances of Victoria Climbié.

In Cardiff we believe that every child and young person should have the opportunity to reach their potential. We recognise that outcomes for children are best when they are supported to grow and achieve within their own families and community as families understand their own children.

Therefore, a key element to our approach to supporting children, young people and families in Cardiff is a commitment to **early help**. Our approach supporting children and families in Cardiff outlined in this guidance is underpinned by a commitment to **early help** approach through a range of evidence based interventions.

We strive to develop a range of flexible and responsive services that meet the changing needs of the children, young people and families of our city. We recognise the need to move the focus away from managing short-term crises and towards effective intervention and support for children, young people and families and their families at an earlier stage.

This is a multi-agency approach underpinned by the following principles:

- Wherever possible all children's and families' needs will be met within universal settings (e.g. early years, health visiting, schools, GPs etc).
- As soon as any practitioner is aware that a child has any additional needs he/she will talk to that child and their family and offer advice and support to meet that need.
- Families will be empowered to identify their own problems, needs and solutions. In most cases, outcomes for children will only be improved by supporting and assisting parents/carers to make the changes identified by them with practitioners.

- Our approach will be to work with families, “doing with” rather than “doing for” or “doing to”, offering support and services that help families find their own sustainable solutions. The vehicle for delivering services in this way will be Restorative Approaches – a well evaluated approach to working with families that has been tried and tested both locally and on a national scale with positive outcomes.
- Effective interventions are dependent on doing the following steps: **See, assess, plan, do and review.**
- Once improvement is made, services will reduce or end so as not to create dependence.
- Our aim is always to build resilience in children and families and the capacity to overcome their own difficulties for the remainder of their lives.

The Cardiff Partnership is committed to working to achieve the objectives set out in this Strategy. Member agencies of the Vulnerable Children and Families Board have all signed up to the Strategy and progress regarding its implementation will be closely monitored by the Board.

The Strategy is expected to be launched in September 2015 where wider partner agencies will be asked to pledge their support to ensure that families in Cardiff receive the help they need at the time they need it. It is recognised that providing the right level of support at the right time for families, wherever they live in Cardiff is a challenge but with the support and commitment of partners, we believe that we will move closer to this goal over the next three years as the Early Help Strategy becomes embedded in practice.



## **Background**

The growing interest in early intervention and prevention reflects the widespread recognition that it is better to identify problems early and intervene effectively to prevent their escalation than to respond only when the difficulty has become so acute as to demand action. It is better for the individuals concerned, their families and society more broadly; it avoids a lot of personal suffering, reduces social problems and generally, it costs less than remedial action.

## **Messages from Research**

The most striking message coming from research is that early intervention works – when it is an appropriate intervention, applied well, following timely identification of a problem; and the earlier the better to secure maximum impact and greatest long term sustainability (both as early in the child's life as possible and/or as soon as possible after a difficulty becomes apparent). In recent years there has been a shift in policy, which is now placing greater emphasis on supporting adults in their parenting role.

## **Parenting is Key**

Parents are the most significant influence on children, and parenting has profound consequences for their future lives, so it is important to persuade parents that engaging in their child's development can make a difference, and to build positively on their existing strengths and actively involve them in decisions.

Most parents need support of some kind at some time and we know from our local experience as well as from national research that effective parenting support does help improve parenting. We also know that disadvantage is not a block to good parenting but low levels of literacy and numeracy and confidence are obstacles, and self-perception contributes to parents' motivation to change – so it is particularly important to persuade such parents to engage with support services by convincing them that they can bring real and lasting benefits to their children.

## **Think Family Approach**

Some parents have additional needs in their own right that impact on their ability to meet the needs of their children. Successful services for families with a parent with an additional need such as a mental health problem or a learning disability will:

- promote resilience and the wellbeing of all family members, now and in the future
- offer appropriate support to avoid crises and will manage them well if they arise
- secure child safety.

The Think Family approach therefore encourages the development of services that:

- offer an open door into a system of joined-up support at every point of entry
- look at the whole family and co-ordinate care
- provide support that is tailored to need
- build on family strengths.



## **The Cardiff Context: Demography**

Cardiff is a city of 350,000 people that sits at the heart of the wider Cardiff Urban Zone in the South East of Wales. Cardiff contains areas of both significant affluence in the north of the city, as well as deep and longstanding areas of social-economic disadvantage, mostly located in what is known as the “Southern Arc”. However, within less deprived areas there are also pockets of hidden deprivation. As Wales’s largest city with its diverse population, it compares more easily with other cities across the UK including Sheffield, Manchester City and Newcastle.

Whilst Cardiff’s Looked After Children (LAC) population per 10,000 children is at 84 lower than the Welsh average of 91, the population is higher than many comparable UK cities such as Sheffield which is 47 per 10,000 and Bristol which is 77 per 10,000.

At the end of 2014, Cardiff had 1576 Children in Need, 297 children subject to a child protection plan and 651 LAC. Historically, Cardiff’s LAC rate has remained relatively consistent over time. The trend suggests that in the future the rate of LAC will continue to be relatively static. Given the level of Super Output Areas which are in the 10 per cent most deprived in Wales, Cardiff has a relatively low rate of Looked After Children.

Cardiff has experienced a large increase in the proportion of lower layer super output areas that are very deprived (i.e. in the 10% most deprived in Wales) but, interestingly, a decrease in relatively deprived communities (i.e. in the 30% most deprived in Wales). Over this period of time, the LAC rate in Cardiff has remained relatively stable. The data presents mixed messages about how Cardiff compares to other local authorities. In the Welsh context, the numbers and rates in Cardiff may be lower than might be expected. In the English context, the numbers and rates in Cardiff are relatively in-line with others. This reinforces the findings from other research that there is no ‘ideal’ number or rate of Looked After Children, nor is there a ‘scientific’ approach to identifying whether numbers/rates are ‘too high’ or ‘too low’.

At the end of August 2012, almost a quarter, (24.6%) of children in Cardiff were living in low income families, which exceeded the proportions for both Wales (20.8%) and the UK (18.7%). However, this overall figure of 24.6%, ranged from just 3.2% in Rhiwbina to more than two-fifths in Ely (44.0%), with sixteen of Cardiff’s twenty-one electoral divisions exceeding the proportion for Wales (20.8%). When looking at the distribution of children of low-income families by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA), it can be seen that the highest levels were mainly concentrated within the Southern Arc of the city, in particular Ely and Adamsdown. A total of five LSOAs had more than half of their children living in low-income families: Plasnewydd 4 (55.7%), Ely 5 (55.2%), Pentwyn 3 (53.6%), Ely 2, (51.0%), and Adamsdown 2 (50.7%).



To summarise, Cardiff is a city of huge contrasts. In some parts of the city significant numbers of children, young people and families are living in relative poverty. We know from research that poverty impacts on children's physical and mental health, accident rates, education achievement and opportunities for social inclusion. Bringing children up in areas of deprivation creates additional stresses for parents and carers, with money worries and worries about children's safety coming out as the highest concerns when research was undertaken to inform the Family Support Strategy in 2008-11.

**Appendix C** provides a summary of additional key demographic data, socio-economic factors and well-being indicators that affect Cardiff's children, young people and their families

## **The Cardiff Context: Feedback from Stakeholders**

In April 2014 Cordis Bright was commissioned by the City of Cardiff Council to undertake a review of the numbers of LAC within the Cardiff area. It focused on three main aspects:

- the effectiveness of services in preventing children from needing to be looked after
- the effectiveness of services in improving the outcomes for children who are looked after; and
- the effectiveness of services in rehabilitating children out of care, The review involved a wide range of stakeholders both from within and outside the Council.

A number of stakeholders at practitioner and management levels were consulted as part of this research. This included representatives from statutory services (i.e. Health, Education & Children's Services), Third Sector providers including Families First providers, and Flying Start. Most stakeholders reported that partnership working had started to improve both within the Council and between the Council and other agencies. However, during fieldwork, there was a general agreement from stakeholders that partnership working in Cardiff is starting from a low base.

Improvements were seen to be directly connected to changes at senior leadership level within the Council but some stakeholders noted that the financial pressures felt by all agencies working with families were starting to motivate people to think about how improved partnership working could impact positively on efficiency and effectiveness (e.g. remove duplication, developing common approaches to practice, sharing resources). Other stakeholders expressed concern that growing financial pressures could jeopardise partnership working, by reducing the amount of time individuals have available to invest in partnership working and by organisations focusing on 'core business' only.

A number of stakeholders agreed that the scope and nature of partnership working was affected by not having a clear, common and shared purpose for children, young people and families (including the most vulnerable children, young people and families) across Cardiff. This lack of an explicit strategy or shared objectives was felt to result in a lack of clarity about roles, responsibilities, aspirations and expectations for children, young people and their families. There was general agreement across stakeholders that the situation was not sustainable and that greater partnership working was desirable.

Decisions made in 2013/14 to de-commission some prevention and early intervention services had left stakeholders feeling disappointed. Stakeholders involved in Families First reported that they rarely saw an explicit connection between the work of this programme and for example, reducing the numbers of LAC. A number of stakeholders (at practitioner and management levels) reported that, in the past, previous senior leaders within the Council viewed the core business of the directorate as social care and tended to minimise prevention and early intervention. As a result, it was felt that the scale and nature of prevention and early intervention services was relatively embryonic and did not appear to extend significantly beyond services funded by Families First.

However, a large number of stakeholders highlighted the importance of prevention and early intervention and that they were keen for this to be improved, radically and quickly. They saw new senior leaders as being more bought into the prevention and early intervention agenda.

In summary stakeholders:

- recognised that the relationship between statutory services and Families First needs to be improved and, in particular, the protocol and processes for step-up (to statutory services) and step-down (to Families First from statutory services) needs to be more clearly established.
- expressed concern that when prevention and early intervention support is available this tends to be time-limited and, in many cases, withdraws too soon.
- acknowledged that the ability to step-down from specialist placements is limited. In particular, social workers were concerned about a lack of highly trained, specialist foster carers that would enable looked after children to be stepped-down to less institutionalised provision. As part of this, social workers talked about some looked after children being 'stuck in the system'.

- experienced a relatively high degree of discomfort about the level of risk being held by families outside of statutory services. These stakeholders reported that thresholds and workloads are so high that a number of families who would benefit from support are not getting the interventions required at the time they need it. As a result, these families are subject to a higher level of risk than might be appropriate.
- Identified that a lack of services and support at lower tiers further exacerbate the level of risk held by families. Stakeholders highlighted that this tends to result in crisis-management and significant-event driven approach to decision-making. This, in turn, affects the nature of interventions undertaken with families (i.e. a tendency to use emergency orders and external placements when a child became looked after). It also results in some cases – especially long-term, chronic neglect – being overlooked.
- observed that once accepted by statutory social services, other agencies would tend to withdraw from the family and/or become more risk averse. In many respects, these stakeholders saw these two trends as inter-connected.

In reality there may not be such a lack of services and support at lower tiers rather than a lack of knowledge, publicity and coordination of the services that are in place. This is further made worse by the lack of an obvious front door to accessing preventative services.

However, overall there were mixed messages from stakeholders about the nature and level of the commitment to prevention and early intervention across Cardiff. Stakeholders placed considerable value on the development of an Early Help Strategy that is able to articulate a continuum of support for families and, in particular, details the contribution of prevention and early intervention initiatives.

### **The Cardiff Context: Feedback from Parents & Carers**

Engagement with parents and carers to inform the development of the early Help Strategy has been undertaken through dialogue with established parenting groups that regularly meet across the city. This has included groups of parents undertaking evidence-based programmes, and parents and carers who meet because of their special interest (e.g. parents of disabled children) or because of their specific circumstances (e.g. young parents).

Key messages that parents and carers have feedback as part of the consultation process are as follows:

- It is challenging to access information about the availability of services. Whilst some parents access the internet their experience was that it is not always easy to source the information they are looking for. Many parents / carers do not have internet access at home and do not have the time to go to community locations such as Hubs or Libraries to use public internet facilities.
- Most parents / carers who were consulted said that they preferred to receive information about services via leaflets that come straight into their home. The information is most helpful when it clearly sets out who can access services, and when and where the service is offered.
- Parents interviewed said that on the whole they preferred receiving services from centres in their local community. If they have to go outside of their local community they would prefer to access something in the centre of Cardiff rather than having to travel to other parts of the city.
- Many parents / carers said that they find it frustrating when they build up the confidence to pick up the phone and make a call to services that say they are open certain hours to find that their call is diverted to an answer-phone. Parents / carers therefore see it as important that services are responsive and available at the times they need to access them. They don't want to have to leave messages and their experience is that when they have left a message, their calls have sometimes not been returned so many do not have confidence that organisations will phone them back.
- Most parents / carers relied on professionals such as Health Visitors to provide them with information about services and assistance to link them in to services. All said it was crucial that professionals / workers were well informed about what services are available as often they are the ones that parents / carers rely on to let them know what is out there.
- Most parents / carers thought that a single pathway into services was a good idea. They liked the idea of one assessment process that sits below Children's Services that would be familiar to them. They liked the fact that this would mean that they did not have to tell their story over and over to different service providers and that the assessment had portability and could travel with them and be updated as their needs changed.
- They liked the idea of a lead worker to co-ordinate support but were concerned about what would happen when that individual is not in work for a period of time. They would like the system to recognise this and to build in appropriate cover.
- Parents / carers acknowledged that it takes a lot of confidence to pick up the phone to access a service or call into a centre. They acknowledged that some parents can't do this and so it is important that information comes to them and that they can access services in their own home if they don't have the confidence to attend a group.

- Some parents / carers were concerned that some services are only available to certain catchments / neighbourhoods and that there were gaps in provision for some areas of the city (for example, non-Flying start areas). They felt that unless access to services is clearly explained and publicised, in a way that is accessible to all parents / carers, there will be confusion regarding what services some groups of parents / carers can and can't access and this uncertainty or lack of clarity may put some parents off seeking advice or trying to access services at all.

## **Existing Programmes and Services**

Cardiff has a range of family support services, some provided by statutory agencies and others by the Third Sector. A significant number of these are funded via Welsh Government initiatives such as Families First, Flying Start, Integrated Family Support Services (IFSS) and Communities First.

The importance of agencies working in partnership to meet the needs of children and families lies at the heart of the Welsh Government's policy for Families First, Flying Start and IFSS and we have seen direct changes in approach to service development and delivery in the form of multi-disciplinary teams working with children and families and developments in the way children and their families needs are assessed (e.g. Joint Assessment Family Framework – JAFF).

## **Multi-Agency Steering Group**

The Early Intervention & Prevention Steering Group and the Team Around the Family (TAF) Interface Sub-group has developed this strategy to promote and facilitate intervening early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and their families, or with a population most at risk of developing problems. The work of the two groups aimed to ensure that families receive the most appropriate support to meet their needs at the earliest opportunity, in order to secure better outcomes and the cost effective delivery of services. The work of the Steering Group has built upon work previously undertaken within the context of the Family Support Strategy (FSS), taking account of the key priorities of the FSS whilst addressing current requirements arising from Welsh Government initiatives such as Communities First, Flying Start, Families First and IFSS.

The following over-arching actions have underpinned the multi-agency work that has laid the foundations for the development of this Early Help Strategy and its success will be measured against the establishment and effectiveness of the following features:

- development of effective local systems to identify vulnerable families and to coordinate support from a range of agencies
- the review and analysis of existing ways of working in order to strengthen and improve local arrangements for multi-agency planning and risk management.
- establishing a mechanism for measuring achievement against agreed outcomes and monitoring and reviewing impact.



- development (design and commission) of targeted prevention work and early intervention services using evidence of what works and for which children.

## Early Help

Engagement of partners in the Steering Group has been positive and work has been undertaken to develop a common language that describes preventative support as “**Early Help**” with a focus on support rather than assessment. It promotes the right conversations taking place at the right time, between the right people.

The work has embraced the approach that early help may occur at any point in a child or young person’s life and includes both interventions early in life as well as interventions early in the development of a problem. We seek to offer support early to help families solve problems or to reduce the impact of problems that have already emerged.

It also recognises that for children whose needs and circumstances make them more vulnerable a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach is usually best, and work has been undertaken to develop an **Early Help Pathway** for accessing services and an **Early Help Assessment and Planning Process** with a **Lead worker** to work closely with the child and family to ensure they receive all the support they require. The approach relies on a range of *Targeted Services* being available to support these interventions (e.g. Flying Start, Families First). The approach recognises that *Specialist Services* will be provided where the needs of the child are so great that statutory and/or specialist intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. The draft *Early Help Pathway* is located at **Appendix D**, the draft *Early Help Assessment and Planning Pathway* is located at **Appendix E** and the *Spectrum of Need and Services* is attached at **Appendix B** for information

A common approach has been designed for developing **Family Plans** and a set of principles underpinning the development of the **Family Plan** is located at **Appendix F**. It is intended that a **Family Plan** will be shaped with the family throughout the initial engagement and assessment process, drawing together information from existing assessments and making sense of the interplay between the factors affecting individuals in the family and their impact on the way that the family functions. As the assessment will be underpinned by restorative principles, so the development of the Family Plan must also be underpinned by restorative principles, identifying and building on the family’s strengths.

The Multi-agency Steering Group will continue with its work plan to support the implementation of this Early Help Strategy led by Children’s Services with contributions from key stakeholders that make up the Cardiff Partnership.

### **Children's (Social) Services Investment in Family Support**

Children's Services provide a range of Family Support Services that fall within the *Remedy* segment of the *Spectrum of Need and Services* attached at **Appendix B**. These services delivered via the Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) and the Family Intervention and Support Services (FISS) are provided where the needs of the child are so great that statutory and/or specialist intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. The IFST provide a crisis intervention service working with families where there are serious child protection concerns relating to parental/Carer substance misuse. FISS are often delivered as part of statutory intervention such as a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan with the aim of:

- preventing children's names being placed on the Child Protection Register or supporting families to enable de-registration of children whose names are on the Child Protection Register and
- reducing the need for children to be accommodated in public care and reunifying families where children have become Looked After and the form whom the plan is a return home
- prevent the need for legal intervention (e.g. Care Proceedings).

In order to strengthen the approach to Early Help across the Partnership and to secure the timeliness of progress against the key tasks required for the successful implementation of the Early Help Strategy set out in the **Summary Work Plan** located at **Appendix A** and the **Action Plan** that accompanies this Strategy. Children's Services has reconfigured existing funding to create two dedicated posts that will be responsible for progressing key elements of the Early Help Strategy.

- **Prevention & Partnerships - Improvement Project Manager** will lead on the development of Cardiff's Early Help Strategy, promoting best practice in the delivery of Early Help Services across Cardiff and facilitating effective partnership working in the delivery of Early Help Provision.
- **Social Work Services - Improvement Project Manager** will lead on the remodelling and implementation of Social Work Services to meet changing need and promote strengths based approaches. The post will contribute to the development and implementation of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding hub, promote best practice in the delivery of Children's Social Work Services across Cardiff and facilitate effective partnership working in the delivery of the new practice model.

Additionally the realignment of the **Family Intervention and Support Service (FISS) Manager's** duties will create additional capacity to provide a strategic lead for the re-alignment of Children's Services preventative services and implementation of the Preventative Strategy in relation to extending targeted interventions.

Finally, additional resources have been secured via the City of Cardiff Council, the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board to drive the agreed transformational change programme for integrated working across Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan Councils and the University Health Board, taking lead responsibility for the successful and safe implementation of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Integrated Children's Services Programme. Crucially, for the Early Help Strategy, this will include the development of a new service model for disabled children, based on the key concepts associated with a 0-25 yr old service model; encompassing an improved and effective approach to transition; single integrated operational delivery arrangements between partners; enhanced cost effectiveness particularly in relation to external commissioning for community based support and residential or similar placements; incorporating requirements arising from education led changes to the additional needs policy.

## Approach

This Early Help Strategy seeks to develop an approach that supports the effective co-ordinated delivery of early intervention and prevention family support services that addresses the interface issues between Flying Start, Families First, Children's Services (including IFSS) and the wider provision of support to families in Cardiff. The approach will,

- adopt a whole family (or **Think Family**) approach, that seeks to address the additional needs of parents that impact on their ability to meet the needs of their children, whilst keeping the child or young person firmly at the centre of any intervention.
- provide a framework that ensures that services intervene at the earliest opportunity in order to secure the best outcomes for children, young people and families
- ensure that appropriate safeguards are taken that ensure children, young people and families are effectively safeguarded by all of the agencies and staff that work with them
- work together to reduce duplication in areas such as the assessments of need and to close gaps in provision between the tiers of services that target low, medium and high levels of need / provide prevention, protection and remedy.
- ensure children, young people and families will be supported to participate in key early intervention and prevention processes
- ensure that the views and experiences of children, young people and families inform and influence the design and delivery of services
- use evidence-based practice to inform planning for future service provision
- facilitate joint working and information sharing between all agencies with an interest in integrated working to support children, young people and their families.

- ensure that arrangements put in place meet the requirements set out in the Social Service and Well-being (SS&WB) Act 2014 for the Local Authority and Health Board to ensure that the range and level of services provided locally are able to meet the care and support needs identified and that the range of preventative service available are able to appropriately prevent, delay or reduce needs for care and support of Cardiff's most vulnerable children, young people and families ;

## Key Principles

The approach to providing *Early Help* will be underpinned by the following key principles:

1. **Outcomes Based**– the approach focuses on clear and measurable outcomes for children, related to the SS&WB Act Outcomes Framework
2. **A Strengths Based Approach - Children do best at home.** The evidence base is clear that unless parenting capacity is irrevocably deficient, children do better when they are brought up by their families. The approach will focus on families' strengths and on supporting parents to achieve this wherever this is realistic and possible.
3. **Targeted Early Help & Early Intervention for the most Vulnerable –** the strategy encompasses the development of an approach that integrates support that is provided to enable growth and development of children in their early years (e.g. Flying Start) with targeted interventions that are designed to stop emergent concerns from becoming acute or entrenched (e.g. IFST, Family Group Conference, Therapeutic interventions).
4. **Commissioning & Research Methodology in Children's (Social) Services** – the approach will be developed on the basis of the commissioning cycle. It will take as its starting point the available local data that analyses need at a population level. This will be mediated by a close historical analysis of a representative Children's Services casework cohort. The purpose of this analysis is to identify patterns in the nature of decision making over the lifetime of cases; to identify opportunities to intervene that were either missed or not available to caseworkers; and to enable the strategy to target new service development at critical preventative or rehabilitative opportunities in the pathway from referral to leaving care.
5. **Evidence Based Practice** – the development of new initiatives or the re-targeting of resources will be based on robustly evaluated evidence of 'what works'.

- 6. Partnership Approach**– Partnership commitment to re-targeting available partner resources in favour of reducing demand or de-escalating intervention to the lowest point necessary will be critical to the success of the Strategy. Key characteristics of effective integrated working that need to be in place everywhere include having a shared vision, clear understanding of needs and identification of gaps, sharp focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and families, clear and consistent messages communicated to staff and families, and an underpinning integrated workforce development strategy. Time needs to be invested to build trust, strong relationships and, ultimately, to secure buy-in from all agencies.
- 7. Connectedness** – the approach will take account of wider cross-directorate and cross partnership strategies and initiatives to maximise synergy and impact (Communities First, EETS, Safer Communities, Neighbourhood Partnerships, Troubled Families).
- 8. Effective and Meaningful Engagement with Children, Young People and the Parents / Carers** – Via the use of bespoke focus groups, as well as accessing existing groups in which parents and carers, and children, young people and families will be able to actively participate in the implementation of the approach and feedback their views and suggestions for on-going review and evaluation of the related outcomes.
- 9. Effective Workforce Development** - Local evidence suggests that professionals in all kinds of settings may lack confidence and experience in working directly with parents and families, particularly if they are disadvantaged. Continuing investment in developing workforce skills and capacity is essential to effectively engage with parents. Some interventions, particularly those involving outreach or intensive support, require changes of practice to enable services to be offered out of 'normal' hours in order to meet families' needs. These often involve specialist staff working closely with colleagues from other agencies, with a lead professional or lead worker providing consistent support.

## Implementation Plan

The key actions required for implementing the strategy are set out in an **Action plan** that accompanies this Strategy. The plan identifies actions that are:

- achievable within 6 months of the strategy launch (highlighted in blue),
- actions that can be achieved within 12-18 months of strategy launch (highlighted in pink) and
- actions achievable within 3 years (highlighted in green).

The Plan also sets out the expected impact / outcomes related to each of the specified actions.

Key to delivering the strategy is partnership working and the plan sets out not only the leads for the actions but the organisations / individuals who have been identified to support the lead in achieving the action and its expected outcome.

It is intended that baseline data will be set during the first year of the plan, with progress targets being set in the second year with the expectation that annual improvements will be noted from the second year onwards.

Progress against the key actions outlined in the plan will be monitored via the Early Intervention and Prevention Steering Group with quarterly reports to the Vulnerable Children and Families Programme Board. Progress will also be reported on an annual basis to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee.

Can be achieved within 6 months of strategy launch

Can be achieved within 12-18 months of strategy launch

Achievable within 3 years

## Early Help Strategy Implementation Plan 2015 – 2018

### Objective 1

**Ensure that children & young people receive help at the lowest level or intervention that is safe and effective in promoting good outcomes**

#### 1. Improving the range and effectiveness of Early Help by:

Action	Lead	Supported By	Method	Measures	Expected Outcomes
1.1 Develop an Early Help Pathway that meets all levels of need	Improvement Project Manager – prevention & Partnerships	Members of Early Intervention & Prevention Steering group (EI&P)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus groups / workshops/EI&amp;P Steering Group meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Help Pathway (Process Map) in place.</li> <li>Impact on referrals to Children's Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families receive the support they require at the time they need it.</li> <li>Reduction in referrals to Children's Services</li> </ul>
1.2 Develop an Assessment and Planning Pathway that identifies a common assessment mechanism (e.g. Joint Assessment family Framework) for children, young people and families who do not require a statutory service.	Improvement Project Manager – Prevention & Partnerships	Members of Early Intervention & Prevention Steering group (EI&P)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus groups / workshops / EI&amp;P Steering Group meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment &amp; Planning Pathway (Process Map) in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families' needs are assessed using the JAFF unless they require Children's (Social) Services intervention.</li> </ul>



<p>1.3 Agree and implement a common approach to the <i>Family Plan</i></p>	<p>Improvement Project Manager – Prevention &amp; Partnerships</p>	<p>Members of Early Intervention &amp; Prevention Steering group (EI&amp;P)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus groups / workshops / EI&amp;P Steering group meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Family Plan template is in place and there is evidence of use by a range of agencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families' needs are met through the provision of a strength's based Family Plan</li> </ul>
<p>1.4 Strengthen arrangements for multi-agency planning and risk management and developing a <i>Lead worker</i> role for interventions that sit below Children's Services thresholds</p>	<p>Improvement Project Manager – Prevention &amp; Partnerships</p>	<p>Members of early Intervention &amp; Prevention Steering Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus groups / workshops/EI&amp;P Steering Group meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A multi-agency planning &amp; risk management tool is in place and there is evidence of use by a range of agencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All families who receive support have an identified lead worker to coordinate the support.</li> </ul>
<p>1.5 Implementing the Cardiff Parenting Framework that seeks to support the delivery of a range of Evidence-based parenting interventions for families with a range of levels of need and monitors impact.</p>	<p>Parenting Co-ordinator</p>	<p>Agencies delivering Parenting Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parenting Practitioner / Manager meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Range and level of evidence-based parenting programmes delivered across the city.</li> <li>Progress reports on tasks contained in Parenting Framework Action Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents / carers who require parenting support are able to access an evidenced-based group or individual programme at the right time in order that their needs are met in a timely way.</li> </ul>



<p>1.6 Undertake a review to Update the Family Information Service (FIS) Family Support Directory to ensure material held on services is comprehensive, accurate and up to date in order that families and professionals are able to easily access the information they need about services in their preferred format at the time they require it.</p>	<p>FIS Manager</p>	<p>Agencies delivering Family Support Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit</li> <li>• Use of questionnaires / on- line forms completed by agencies delivering services included in the directory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion rate of questionnaires</li> <li>• Feedback of users of the directory to determine its usefulness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents are able to access the information they require about the availability of services that are available to meet their needs.</li> </ul>
<p>Develop a central access point (possibly on the FIS website) for professionals to access Early Help materials such as the JAFF, Early help pathway / Assessment, Family Plan template etc</p>	<p>FIS Manager / Improvement Project Manager – Prevention &amp; Partnerships</p>	<p>Members of Early Intervention &amp; Prevention Steering Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus groups / workshops/EI&amp;P Steering Group meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web pages in place containing relevant information to support the implementation of the Early Help Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistency of approach by Practitioners resulting in Improved outcomes for families</li> </ul>

## 2. Improving the effectiveness of step up and step down pathways by:

Action	Lead	Supported By	Method	Measures	Expected Outcomes
2.1 Strengthening and / or remodelling existing services that seek to keep children, young people and families who are on the care threshold at home (e.g. IFSS, FISS, Support Care); and develop new services that have a strong evidence-base (e.g. Blackburn & Darwen model)	Children's Services Operational Manager (OM), Strategy, Commissioning & resources	Family Intervention & Support Services (FISS) Manager and Children's Services case-management OM & Team Managers (TMs)  Other Council Directorates (e.g. Communities, Education)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress reports on Project Plans</li> <li>Establishment of new services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved range of prevention services exist</li> <li>Children, young people and families on the brink of care are effectively supported within their families where appropriate.</li> <li>Reduction in the number of LAC (particularly teenagers coming into care).</li> </ul>
2.2 Reviewing and updating the Joint Working Protocol between services for children and adults which addresses additional needs of parents whose own needs impact negatively on their ability to appropriately safeguard and meet needs of their children (IFSS; Drug and alcohol services; adult mental health; services for Young Carers).	Children's Services Operational Manager (OM), Strategy, Commissioning & resources	Family Intervention & Support Services (FISS) Manager and Children's Services case-management OM & Team Managers (TMs) & Health & Social Care (H&SC) OMs & TMs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task &amp; Finish Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated Protocol agreed.</li> <li>Key actions in implementation plan achieved within agreed timescales.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children, young people and families in families where parents / carers have additional needs are appropriately safeguarded.</li> <li>Reduction in the numbers of children becoming Looked After as a result of their parents / carers being unable to meet their needs due to the parents/carers own needs not being met.</li> </ul>

<p>2.3 Using strengths-based approaches to facilitating the opportunity for families to identify their own strengths and to encourage and support the wider family to come together in a crisis to develop a plan that supports the child and prevents family breakdown or promotes family reunification(e.g. Family Group Meetings / Restorative Approaches)</p>	<p>Children's Services Operational Manager (OM), Strategy, Commissioning &amp; Resources</p>	<p>Family Intervention &amp; Support Services (FISS) Manager and Children's Services case-management OM &amp; Team Managers (TMs), Social Care Training Manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Groups</li> <li>• Training Plan &amp; Training events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress report on Project Plans</li> <li>• Attendance at training events</li> <li>• Implementation of new services (e.g. Family Group Meetings)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families are empowered where appropriate to find their own solutions to difficulties by looking within the family for support where this is available.</li> <li>• Reduction in the number of children becoming Looked After as a result of family breakdown.</li> </ul>
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## Objective 2

### Maximise the impact of Children's (Social) Services by strengthening the effectiveness of social work intervention

#### 1. Re-design the model for the delivery of social work support and intervention

Action	Lead	Supported By	Method	Measures	Expected outcomes
1.1 Eliminate bureaucracy (Lean Review) and freeing up social work time for direct work with families	Children's Services Operational Manager (OM), Strategy, Commissioning & Resources	Business Support Manager & members of the Project Group including colleagues from Enterprise Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Plan using Lean Review methodology</li> <li>Project Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress reports on the Implementation of actions arising from rapid improvement events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Workers are able to step-down families to lower-level interventions in a more timely way.</li> <li>Morale amongst Social workers improves as they achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families and experience improved job satisfaction.</li> </ul>

<p>1.2 Revise Care First (client record system) to maximise its potential</p>	<p>Service Manager- Performance Management</p>	<p>CareFirst Systems Administrator, Children's Services OMs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit of key functionality and capabilities of system</li> <li>• Project Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress reports on the implementation of actions arising from the audit and project plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social workers have more capacity to undertake direct work with children, young people and families.</li> <li>• Morale amongst Social workers improves as they achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families and experience improved job satisfaction.</li> </ul>
<p>1.3 Restructuring social work teams around 'Practice Consultant-led' models of multi-disciplinary intervention</p>	<p>Improvement Project Manager – Social Work Services</p>	<p>Children's Services Management Team (CSMT)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Group</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Training events</li> <li>• Visits to other Local Authorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress reports on the implementation of actions arising from the audit and project plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social workers have more capacity to undertake direct work with children, young people and families.</li> <li>• Social Workers are able to step-down families to lower-level interventions in a more timely way.</li> <li>• Morale amongst Social workers improves as they achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families and experience improved job satisfaction.</li> </ul>

<p>1.4 Rationalise the skill mix to enable a smaller cohort of highly skilled social workers to focus on behavioural change</p>	<p>Improvement Project Manager – Social Work Services</p>	<p>Children's Services Management Team (CSMT), case-management TMs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Group</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Training events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress reports on the implementation of actions arising from the audit and project plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See above as same applies</li> </ul>
<p>1.5 Strengthen the approach to 'permanence' where early decisions to separate infant children from their families is evidenced and justified. (Public Law Outline (PLO) process &amp; Legal Panel; Adoption Services)</p>	<p>OM Intake &amp; Assessment &amp; Early Intervention</p>	<p>OM Child In Need / Child Protection, OM LAC, OM Strategy, Commissioning &amp; Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of Legal Surgeries</li> <li>• Implementation of Regional Adoption Service (RAS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RAS is operational and performance against national indicators for adoption has improved for the region. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress reports on impact of Legal surgeries</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infants who are separated from their birth families are provided with the best opportunity to achieve their potential through the stability and security that a permanent substitute family can provide.</li> </ul>

<b>2. Promoting Kinship Care</b>					
<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Supported By</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Expected Outcomes</b>
2.1 Extend opportunities to relatives to care for children who cannot remain with their parents	OM Intake & Assessment & Early Intervention / OM Child In Need / Child Protection,	OM Strategy, Commissioning & Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of Kinship Care Policy &amp; procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A policy and procedures are in place and operational</li> <li>Increase in number of arrangements in place for relatives to care for children who cannot remain with their parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An increased number of children, young people and families who cannot remain with their parents are provided with an opportunity to remain within their extended family being cared for by relatives</li> </ul>
2.2 Extend Special Guardianship (SGOs) and Residence Order (ROs) options	OM LAC	OM Strategy, Commissioning & Resources, OM Child in Need / Child Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of Kinship Care Strategy</li> <li>Launch SGO/RO project with foster carers who have children placed long term and are deemed 'permanent'.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategy in place</li> <li>Progress report on SGO/RO project</li> <li>Increase in number of SGO / ROs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An increased number of children are given the opportunity of security and stability through the use of SGOs and Ros by their carers.</li> </ul>

<p>2.3 Explore the feasibility of realigning resources in order to support the assessments related to the aforementioned work being undertaken within the Fostering Service.</p>	<p>OM Strategy, Commissioning &amp; Resources</p>	<p>OM Child in Need / Child Protection, OM Intake &amp; Assessment &amp; Early Intervention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress report on Project Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An increased number of children, young people and families who cannot remain with their parents are provided with an opportunity to remain within their extended family being cared for by relatives</li> <li>The assessment of Kinship Foster carers are undertaken in a timely way and this work does not have an adverse impact on the capacity that is required for the Fostering Service to recruitment and assessment more mainstream Foster Carers.</li> </ul>
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3. Consolidate the Specialist Looked After Children's (LAC) Service & 'Break the Cycle'					
Action	Lead	Supported By	Method	Measures	Expected Outcomes
3.1 Maximise the effectiveness of permanence in enabling LAC to achieve their full potential.	OM LAC	OM Strategy, Commissioning & Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of a LAC Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of key actions in strategy implementation plan</li> <li>Quarterly performance Monitoring Performance Framework</li> <li>Quarterly reporting through Quality Assurance &amp; Learning Framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LAC are provided with the best opportunity to achieve their potential through the stability and security that a permanent substitute family can provide.</li> </ul>
3.2 Ensure active care plan management to promote early opportunities for return to family	OM Children in Need / Child Protection, OM LAC	FISS Service Manager, OM Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervision</li> <li>Training</li> <li>OM /TM Auditing of Case Files</li> <li>IRO reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly performance Monitoring Performance Framework</li> <li>Quarterly reporting through Quality Assurance &amp; Learning Framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where appropriate, LAC are provided with the opportunity to return home to their family in a timely way.</li> <li>There is an increase in the realisation of care plans where the desired outcome is a return home.</li> </ul>

<p>3.3 Reverse the shift towards externally purchased residential care in favour of local family placements</p>	<p>OM Strategy, Commissioning &amp; Resources</p>	<p>OM LAC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning Plan</li> <li>• In-House Fostering Recruitment strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in in-house Foster Carers</li> <li>• Turning the curve for ratio of in-house – external placements</li> <li>• Increase in external residential provision offered in local area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a reduction in the number of LAC placed in residential care and an increase in the number of LAC placed in local family placements, and wherever appropriate, LAC are placed closer to home.</li> </ul>
<p>3.4 Deliver the Payment by Results LAC themed initiative around Enhanced Foster Care.</p>	<p>OM LAC</p>	<p>OM Strategy, Commissioning &amp; Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme is operational and a larger number of children have been returned from out of area placements in line with their care plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wherever appropriate, LAC are placed closer to home in a family setting.</li> </ul>

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Work Plan

### Objective 1

Ensure that children & young people receive help at the lowest level or intervention that is safe and effective in promoting good outcomes.

#### Improving the range and effectiveness of Early Help by:

- Developing an Early Help Pathway that meets all levels of need.
- Development of an Assessment and Planning Pathway that identifies a common assessment mechanism (e.g. Joint Assessment family Framework) for children, young people and families who do not require a statutory service.
- Agreeing and implementing a common approach to the *Family Plan*.
- Strengthening arrangements for multi-agency planning and risk management and developing a *Lead worker* role for interventions that sit below Children's Services thresholds.
- Implementing the Cardiff Parenting Framework that seeks to support the delivery of a range of Evidence-based parenting interventions for families with a range of levels of need and monitors impact.
- Undertake review to Update the Family Information Service Family Support Directory to ensure material held on services is comprehensive, accurate and up to date in order that families and professionals are able to easily access the information they need about services in their preferred format at the time they require it.

#### Improving the effectiveness of step up and step down pathways by:

- Harnessing Team Around the Family as the overall framework.
- Strengthening the interface protocol between TAF and Children's Services.
- Introducing new arrangements for jointly managing front door referrals with partners using a multi-agency approach and a model that promotes consultation and advice as well as offering a referral pathway into statutory services.

## Objective 2

Maximise the impact of Children's (Social) Services by strengthening the impact of social work intervention.

### **Re-design the model for the delivery of social work support and intervention by**

- Eliminating bureaucracy (Lean Review) and freeing up social work time for direct work with families
- Revising Care First
- Restructuring social work teams around 'Practice Consultant-led' models of multi-disciplinary intervention
- Rationalising the skill mix to enable a smaller cohort of highly skilled social workers to focus on behavioural change
- Strengthening our approach to 'permanence' where early decisions to separate infant children from their families is evidenced and justified. (Public Law Outline (PLO) process & Legal Panel; Adoption Services

### **Promoting Kinship Care by**

- Extending opportunities to relatives to care for children who cannot remain with their parents
- Extending Special Guardianship and Residence Order options
- Exploring the feasibility of realigning resources in order to support the assessments related to the aforementioned work being undertaken within the Fostering Service.

### **Consolidate the Specialist LAC Service & 'Break the Cycle' by**

- Maximising the effectiveness of permanence in enabling LAC to achieve their full potential.
- Ensuring active care plan management to promote early opportunities for return to family.
- Reverse the shift towards externally purchased residential care in favour of local family placements
  - Delivering the Payment by Results LAC themed initiative around Enhanced Foster Care.

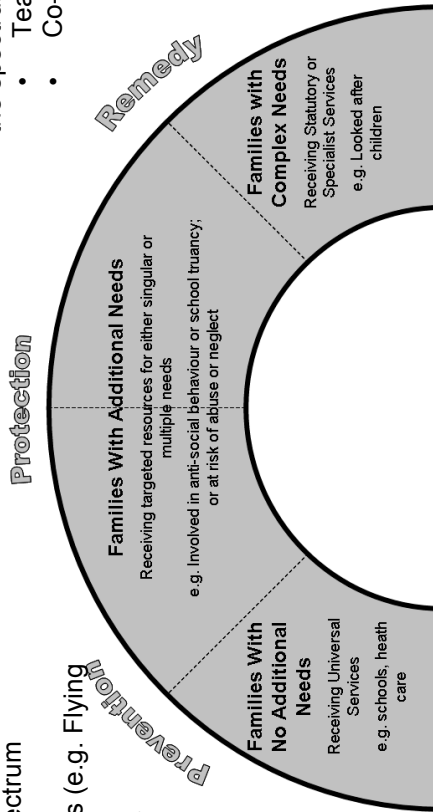
## Appendix B: Spectrum of Needs and Services

More serious and complex needs requiring a multi-agency approach. Services delivered in this part of the spectrum include;

- Team Around the Family
- Co-ordinated services for complex needs

Some additional needs requiring targeted support, any identified problems are at an early stage. Services delivered in this part of the spectrum include:

- Targeted parenting programmes (e.g. Flying Start)
- Primary Mental Health Services
- Families First Projects



The needs that all children, young people and families have. Services in this part of the spectrum include universal services accessible by all such as:

- basic parenting courses,
- informal support groups,
- money and housing advice,
- Health Visiting,
- whole-school approaches.

N.B. These universal services continue to be available to families as they move from the Protection through to Prevention & Remedy

Children, young people and families with the highest levels of need, requiring intensive, specialist support, sometimes away from home. These services are usually delivered as part of a statutory intervention and include:

- Integrated Family Support Services (IFSS)/ Family Intervention & Support Services (FISS)
- Specialist Fostering Residential Care.
- Short breaks for disabled children

### **N.B. Early Intervention sits between the Prevention and Protection segments of the**

## Appendix C: The Cardiff Context

Summary of key demographic data, socio-economic factors and well-being indicators that affect Cardiff's children, young people and their families.

### Demography

Data taken from *The Office for National Statistics (ONS)* shows that the population of Wales has risen 153,000 (5%) to more than 3.06m in the past 10 years, mostly due to migration from the rest of the UK and abroad. The 2011 Census showed the growth was the largest in any 10-year period between censuses since 1921, although slower than in England, up 3.6m (7%).

Cardiff has seen the biggest growth in Wales, up 12% (36,000) since 2001. Currently it is estimated that the population of Cardiff is 350,000.

Of local authority areas in Wales, Cardiff is the most densely populated city with 2,500 people per sq km. Except for a time of decline during the 1970s and 1980s, Cardiff's population has continually grown since 1801. Between 2001 and 2011, Cardiff grew by 46,000, which was 25% of growth across Wales, and it now represents 30% of the country's growth. 90% of the growth in the country is due to migration, not natural growth. This includes people moving from elsewhere in the UK as well as from overseas.

Interestingly, Cardiff has the smallest percentage of people over 65 in Wales at 13%, while Wales as a whole has higher percentage of 65-year-olds than almost every other area of England.

Figures show there were 11,000 more children under five in 2011 than in 2001, an increase of 7%. In mid 2013 25% of the population of Cardiff was under the age of 19 years.

Cardiff has a very diverse population with a history of trade connections, post-war immigration and foreign students who attend university. At the 2011 Census, the racial and ethnic composition of Cardiff was: White: 84.7% - Asian: 8% - Black: 2.4% - Arab: 1.4% - Mixed White and Black African/Caribbean: 1.6% - Mixed White and Asian: 0.7% - Mixed other: 0.6% - Other ethnic groups: 0.6%

More than 54,000 people in Cardiff belong to a non-white ethnic group.

At the 2011 Census, there were the following national identities:

- Welsh only: 50%
- Welsh and British: 8%
- Other Welsh combined: 4%
- English only: 8%
- English and British: 2%
- Other English combined: 1%
- British only: 21%
- Other British combined: 11%
- Other: 10%

## Socio-economic factors

Poverty impacts on children's physical and mental health, accident rates, education attainment and opportunities for social inclusion. Bringing children up in areas of deprivation creates additional stresses on parents. Within Cardiff there are areas of deprivation, particularly in the Southern part of Cardiff City. However, within less deprived areas there are often pockets of hidden deprivation.

There are 6,888 claimants of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) in Cardiff with the highest rates being in Ely (6.5) and Caerau (5.4) and the lowest rates in Radyr (0.60) and Lisvane (0.9). Rates are calculated using the mid-2013 resident population aged 16-64 (Source: *Claimant Count, Nomis*).

The Gross medium earning of people in Cardiff is set out in the table below (Source: *Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2014/NOMIS/ONS*)

Median Gross Weekly Earnings & Annual Percentage Change by Place of Residence 2014						
Workforce	Median Gross Weekly Earnings (£)			Annual Percentage Change (%)		
	Cardiff	Wales	United Kingdom	Cardiff	Wales	United Kingdom
All Full-Time Workers:	490.9	479.4	518.0	-2.5	0.9	0.1
Male Full-Time	535.6	510.6	557.8	-2.2	-0.5	0.3
Female Full-Time	441.0*	423.4	461.9	-3.0	0.5	0.6

26.2% of children in Cardiff are identified as living in low income families in 2012 (Source: *HMRC*) with the highest percentages living in Ely (48%), Butetown (44%) and Adamsdown (45%) and the lowest in Rhiwbina (4%), Lisvane (3%) and Creigiau / St Fagans (5%). Source: *HMRC*

In 2013, 15.6% of children (under the age of 15 years) lived in workless households below the All Wales average of 16.5%. (Source: *StatsWales, Welsh Government*)

## Other Well-being Indicators

- 69 young people out of a cohort of 3492 pupils aged 15 years did not achieve a recognised qualification in 2010/11 and of those young people 32 left school without achieving a recognised qualification in 2010/11(0.9%) (Source: *Stats Wales, Welsh Government*).
- 72% of pupils achieved 5 or more GCSEs at Grade A-E in 2014. This is lower than the Welsh average of 82% but it is an 8% increase on the 2012 figures. (Source: *My Local School*)
- There were 35 teenage conceptions in 2013 in the cohort of young people below the age of 15 years with 285 across the whole of Wales. This figure rises to 174 for teenagers below the age of 18 years with the All Wales figure rising to 1476 (Source: *ONS*)



## Appendix D: Early Help Pathway

N.B. This pathway should be applied to all families, irrespective of their level of need and special circumstances.

**Early Help:** Describes an approach to providing support to potentially vulnerable children and their families as soon as a problem starts. In order to prevent issues and problems becoming acute, chronic and costly to the family as a whole and the wider community. **THINK FAMILY!**

However, when practitioners are concerned that a child is **at risk of experiencing significant harm**, they must contact the Children's Access Point (CAP). Advice on Child Sexual Abuse/Sexualised behaviour can also be obtained via the NSPCC Cardiff Office.

**Early Help** may be provided through an increase in the level of universal services, or targeted services provided / commissioned.

**Conversation opportunities** are used to identify needs and appropriate support for the child and their family and a range of approaches to putting the support in place. Anybody working with a child young person or family is responsible for starting the *conversations* for children and families. **Information Sharing Protocols (ISPs)** should be developed if they are not already in place, to support this process. However, obtaining **consent** from the family to share their information with other professionals is also necessary (unless there is a safeguarding issue that does not require parental consent for a referral to be made to the CAP).

The **Early Help** approach is underpinned by the principles of Restorative Approaches, supporting the development of capacity, resilience and independence, by engaging them in a way that builds on their strengths and identify their own solutions and take responsibility for their future.

**Early Help** relies on agencies working together with the family to:

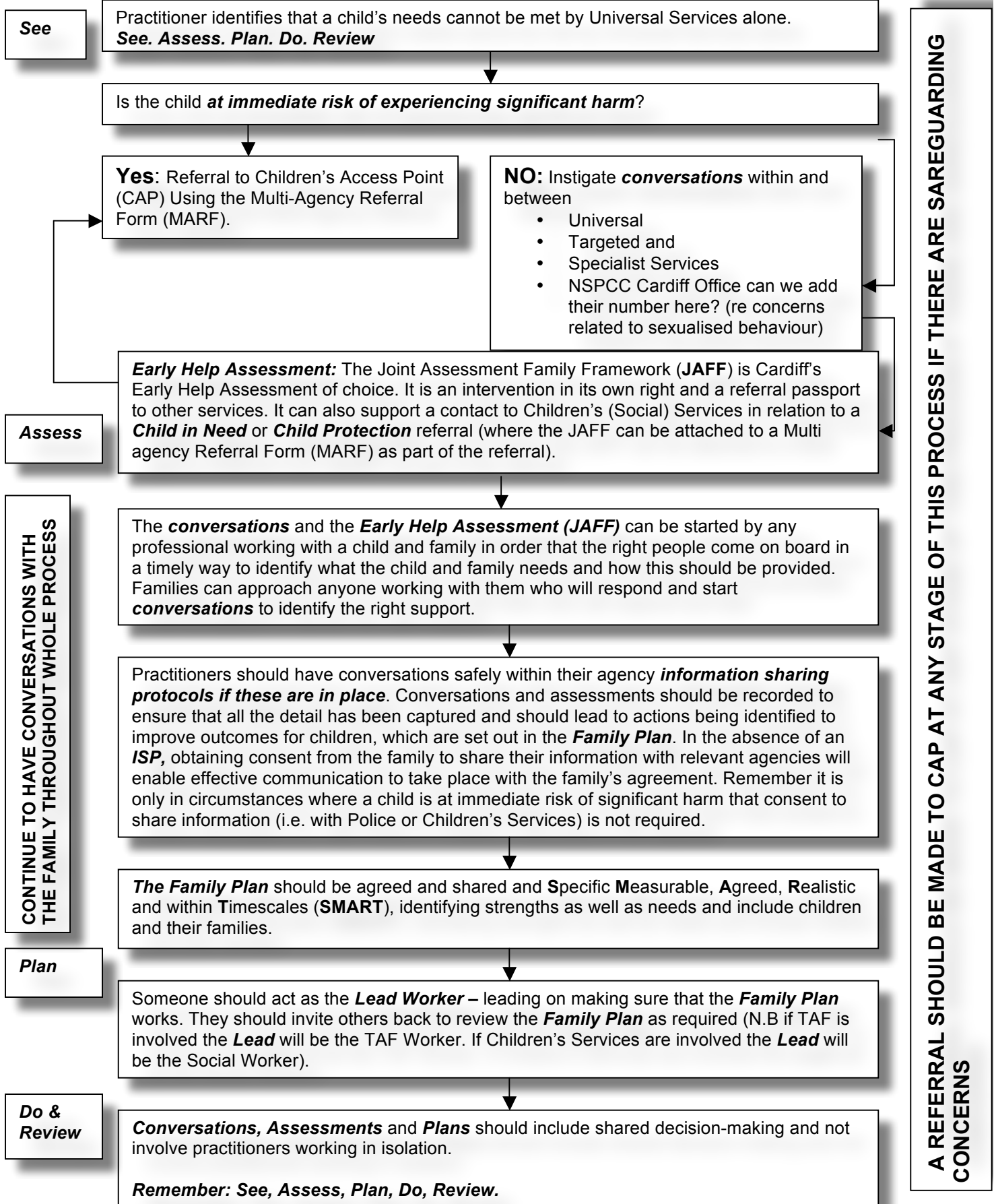
- Identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help

(See **Early Help Assessment & Planning Pathway**).

**Never do nothing.** At the very least talk to another professional to help find a way forward.

Families should be able to approach anyone working with them who will respond and start **conversations** to identify the right support

## Appendix E: Early Help Planning & Assessment Pathway



## Appendix F

### Principles Underpinning the Development of the Family Plan

- It is essential that the development of the **Family Plan** does not generate significant additional bureaucracy.
- In order to achieve this, the **Lead worker** will ensure that the **Family Plan** works to support any individual plans that might already be in place for the child or parent.
- Using these and through the engagement of the family, the **Lead worker** will develop a **Family Plan** which will be shaped with the family throughout the initial engagement and assessment process, drawing together information from existing assessments and making sense of the interplay between the factors affecting individuals in the family and their impact on the way that the family functions. As the assessment will be underpinned by **restorative principles**, so the development of the **Family Plan** must also be underpinned by **restorative principles**, identifying and building on the **family's strengths**.
- The **Family Plan** will be drawn up using existing material, including case history, risk and needs assessments and the planned outcomes (**family goals**) as agreed with the family.
- The **Family Plan** and **family goals** will be shared with other practitioners involved with the family with the family's consent.
- The detailed **objectives** in the **Family Plan** are benchmarks by which the progress of the family is monitored and the commitment of professionals involved with the family is observed.
- It is important that **goals** are realistic. The analysis, judgement and decision made in the **assessment** will form the basis of a **Family Plan** of work with the child / young person and their family. The complexity or severity of the child/ren and family needs will determine the scope and detail of the **Family Plan** and the range of interventions, and / or other services necessary to allow change to the parenting capacity (if appropriate) and family circumstances.
- The **Family Plan** must specify how organisations involved in the delivery of services to the family proposes to address the full range of the child/young person's and family needs, taking into account the child/young person and family's **wishes and feelings**.
- **Reviews** of the **Family Plan** will consider its effectiveness and should be undertaken on a regular basis, ideally by someone with a level of independence who is not directly responsible or delivering services to the family. **Effective planning and review is underpinned by careful and ongoing assessment of needs and risks.**



- The **Family Plan** provides a holistic view of the needs of the child/young person and their family building on each component part of existing individuals plans. It should endeavour to bring together in a seamless manner services that will deliver the required outcomes for the family and individual family members, strengthen capacity and change behaviour where it is appropriate to do so.
- Crucially, the **Family Plan** will clearly set out what the family can expect from practitioners and what is expected of them.

