

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Cabinet**

**13th November, 2024**

### **Report of the Head of Education Development - Chris Millis**

#### **Matter for monitoring**

**Wards Affected:** All

## **PUPIL EXCLUSIONS FROM SCHOOLS**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide Members with information and data in relation to pupil exclusion rates for Neath Port Talbot schools for the 2023/24 academic year.

### **Background**

2. There are two types of exclusion: permanent and fixed. Any exclusion of a pupil, even for a short period of time, must be formally and accurately recorded. Informal or unofficial exclusions, such as sending a pupil home to cool off are unlawful. Unlawful exclusion of a pupil with a disability may amount to disability discrimination under the Equality Act.
3. A decision to exclude a pupil from school permanently is a serious one. It will usually be the final step in a process for dealing with disciplinary offences following a wide range of other strategies, which have been tried without success. Examples of such reasons might include: serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff; sexual abuse or assault; supplying an illegal drug; use or threatened use of an offensive weapon.
4. Early identification of need along with early intervention should be used to support pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. This should include: an assessment of whether appropriate support is in place to support any additional learning need or disability that a pupil

may have and the use of a multi-agency assessment for pupils who require support with behavioural issues.

## **Exclusion Data**

5. For the 2023/24 academic year the number of pupils given a fixed exclusion was 717. This is a reduction of 43 pupils from the previous 2022/23 academic year, however, remains much higher than when 545 pupils were given a fixed exclusion in 2018/19 (last full year pre-Covid).
6. Members may recall from the last report that whilst there was an increase in exclusions of both boys and girls the rate of increase by girls was significant at almost doubled the exclusion rate pre-Covid. As exclusion rates improve for all pupils the rate of improvement during the year was slightly better amongst girls than boys.
7. More non-FSM pupils are excluded than FSM pupils, however, the number of incidences of exclusion are higher amongst FSM pupils than non-FSM pupils. This suggests that FSM pupils are more likely to be excluded for ongoing persistently disruptive type behaviours than non-FSM pupils.
8. Although permanent exclusion rates of FSM pupils are double that of non-FSM pupils, this is a significant reduction from the previous year when the differential rate was almost four-times higher.
9. All exclusion measures recorded against CLA (Children Looked After) pupils have reduced compared to the year previous. This includes less CLA pupils being excluded, for fewer incidents and for shorter periods of time.
10. The number of pupils with a formal SEN/ALN status (School Action, School Action+, Statemented, School or LA maintained IDP) who received a fixed-term exclusion during 2023/24 fell further when compared to 2018/19. This is likely to be a temporary reduction as schools and local authorities across Wales transition to the new requirements of the ALNET system (Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal).
11. Year's 8, 9, and 10 were the cohort year groups with the highest number of exclusions throughout the year. The same three groups had the highest number of exclusions last year and again in 2018/19.
12. Persistent disruptive behaviour was once again the principal reason for the highest number of exclusions during the year. Followed by verbal/threatening behaviour towards an adult. Persistent disruptive

behaviour has seen a significant increase since 2018/19 accounting for 597 incidences of exclusions during 2023/24.

13. 37 pupils were permanently excluded from school in 2023/24. This is a decrease from 47 the previous year, however, it is an increase from 17 pupils during 2018/19.
14. Boys are repeatedly permanently excluded more than girls, however, the ratio has reduced from 3:1 in 2018/19 to 2:1 in 2023/24 demonstrating an increase in the number of girls being excluded over the past year. Girls accounted for almost 50% of all permanent exclusions during 2023/24 whereas they accounted for just 25% of permanent exclusions in 2018/19.
15. The majority of the reasons for the permanent exclusions during the 2023/24 year related to physical violence towards a pupil or persistent disruptive behaviour.
16. While the figures present a challenging picture it must be remembered that schools are doing some excellent work to avoid exclusions and support those vulnerable learners and marginalised groups to succeed within our education system.

### **Alternatives to avoiding exclusion**

17. Exclusion should not be used if alternative solutions are available. Examples include:
  - Pastoral Support Programmes (PSPs) for pupils who are not responding to schools' general actions to combat disengagement and disaffection and are in need of longer-term intervention. PSPs are plans for learners to better manage their behaviour and should be drawn up using a multi-agency approach (including the pupil and parents/carers) and reviewed on a regular basis. NPT guidance on PSPs has recently been reviewed and issued to schools and the local authority now has in place a PSP Monitoring Group comprising of senior officers who undertake a critical oversight of individual plans to ensure suitable arrangements are in place and pupils are not on inappropriate reduced timetables.
  - Internal exclusion, which can be used to diffuse situations that occur in school that require a pupil to be removed from class but may not require exclusion from the school premises. The exclusion could be to a designated area within the school where pupils can receive the appropriate support needed and may continue during break periods.

- Managed move: if a school feels that it can no longer meet the need of a particular pupil, the school may arrange, normally through the LA, for another school to take over the pupil's education. This should only be done with the full agreement of all parties involved, including the parents/carers and the local authority. Schools are responsible for ensuring appropriate transition support is in place.
- Restorative justice, which gives pupils the opportunity to redress the harm that has been done to a victim and enables all parties with a stake in the outcome to participate fully in the process. All professionals need to be involved in the process and all parties must consent to participate.
- Access to a more appropriate alternative provisions that better meets the needs of pupils. This can include vocational training or work placements.

18. Within NPT a great deal of work is being undertaken across services to address pupils' needs more holistically, to remove barriers to learning and address their wider needs. Examples of this include:

- Creation of a new Case Assessment and Progression Team that will identify pupils at future risk of detachment from school and/or those who are struggling with behavioural problems, academic achievement, attendance and exclusion challenges that are already open to more than one service area and who would benefit from a co-ordinated and collective approach to supporting that pupil with solutions that will allow continued engagement.
- Education Transition Workers engaging directly with pupils who need support at key points of transition in order to improve engagement, reduce the risk of exclusion and ensure a successful passage into a new school/placement. The main focus are: Children/young people moving into the LA and in-year transfers with complex needs; Children/young people who have been permanently excluded from school within the LA, and Children/young people who are Looked After and movers into the LA.
- Wellbeing Behaviour Team & Cynnydd support pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD), undertaking direct work with pupils, families and schools, along with training and strategic multi-agency working around areas linked to wellbeing & behaviour. Helping schools and services understand the drivers of behaviour is the most important aspect of this.

- Multi-agency and cross service/directorate working is continually improving and developing, for example education sit on Early Intervention Panel (EIP); Social Services colleagues sit on the Education PSP Monitoring Group and Police continue to share important information regarding domestic incidents involving children via PPNs (Public Protection Notifications).

## **Financial Impact**

19. There is no financial impact associated with this proposal.

## **Integrated Impact Assessment**

20. There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for information purposes only.

## **Valleys Communities Impacts**

21. The report is for information purposes only, however, the exclusion data contained within the report covers all schools across Neath Port Talbot.

## **Workforce Impacts**

22. There are no workforce or staffing issues directly associated with this report.

## **Legal Impacts**

23. There is no legal impact associated with this report.

## **Risk Management**

24. There are no risks associated with this information report, however, Members will be fully aware of the educational risks for those pupils subject to being excluded from school and likewise, the detrimental impact disruptive behaviour has on other pupils wishing to learn.

## **Consultation**

25. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

## **Recommendations**

26. That Members note the contents of this report.

## **Appendices**

27. Appendix A: List of schools with individual exclusion rates.

## **List of Background Papers**

28. None.

## **Officer Contact**

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## Appendix A

## Academic Year - 2023/24

School Name	Number of Fixed Term Exclusions	Number of Fixed Term Exclusions per 100 pupils	No of Pupils given Fixed Exclusions per 100 pupils	No of Days per 100 pupils
Abbey Primary	3	0.7	0.7	1.5
Alderman Davies Church-in-Wales Primary	8	2.8	1.4	3.0
Alltwen Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Awel y Môr Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Baglan Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Blaenbaglan Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Blaendulais Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Blaengwrach Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Blaenhonddan Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bryncoch Church-in-Wales Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Catwg Primary	1	0.5	0.5	0.8
Central Primary	10	2.3	1.4	8.6
Cilffriw Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Coed Hirwaun Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Coedffranc Primary	2	0.5	0.3	0.5
Creunant Primary	4	3.1	0.8	4.7
Croeserw Primary	28	19.6	4.2	31.1
Crymlyn Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Crynallt Primary	36	8.9	2.0	11.9
Cwmafan Primary	4	1.0	0.7	3.0
Cwmnedd Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cymer Afan Primary	1	1.0	1.0	2.0
Eastern Primary	15	9.6	5.8	24.7
Glyncorwg Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Gnoll Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Godre'rgraig Primary	10	8.8	1.8	11.4
Llangiwig Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maesmarchog Community Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Melin Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pen Afan Primary	1	1.0	1.0	0.5
Rhos Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Rhydyfro Primary	5	3.2	1.3	5.8
Sandfields Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
St Joseph's Catholic Infant	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
St Joseph's Catholic Junior	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
St Joseph's Catholic Primary (Neath)	1	0.9	0.9	0.9
St Therese's Catholic Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Tairgwaith Primary	1	1.0	1.0	1.5
Tonnau Primary Community	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Tywyn Primary	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Wauinceirch Primary	1	0.6	0.6	1.1
YGG Blaendulais	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
YGG Castell-nedd	2	0.5	0.5	0.9
YGG Cwm Nedd	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
YGG Gwaun Cae Gurwen	7	3.8	1.1	7.9
YGG Pontardawe	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
YGG Rhosafan	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
YGG Tyle'r Ynn	1	0.4	0.4	0.7
YGG Cwmllynfell	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
YGG Trebannws	1	1.1	1.1	2.8
Ynysfach Primary	17	10.8	3.2	19.7
Ysgol Carreg Hir	6	1.5	0.7	0.9
Ysgol Bae Baglan (Yrs 1-6)	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera-Bro Dur (Yrs 1-6)	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ysgol Cwm Brombil (Yrs 1-6)	12	5.0	0.8	12.2
Ysgol Bae Baglan	360	30.8	9.1	75.1
Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera-Bro Dur	65	4.6	3.1	8.4
Cefn Saeson Comprehensive	214	25.3	9.5	32.7
Cwmtawe Community School	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dwr y Felin Comprehensive	86	7.7	4.1	13.5
Llangatwg Community School	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
St Joseph's Catholic School & 6th Form Centre	136	15.1	5.8	28.0
Ysgol Cwm Brombil	392	33.6	10.9	51.1
Ysgol Hendrefelin	228	135.7	36.3	327.4
Ysgol Maes Y Coed	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

## Permanent Exclusions

School Name	No. Permanent Exclusions
Eastern Primary	1
Ysgol Cwm Brombil (Yrs 1-6)	1
Cwmtawe	2
Llangatwg	3
Ysgol Bae Baglan	6
Dwr y Felin Comprehensive	2
St Joseph's Catholic School & 6th Form Centre	6
Ysgol Cwm Brombil	12
Ysgol Hendrefelin	4