



Neath Port Talbot

LAESCYP

Self-Evaluation

2015-2016

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## **Context**

- Neath Port Talbot currently has 58 primary schools (65 at PLASC 2015), 11 secondary schools and 2 special schools. As at January 2015 (PLASC return), the number of mainstream pupils on roll was

20,670 which comprised 12,679 primary, 7,784 secondary and 207 special. Over a three year period there has been an increase in the primary pupil population of 466 (3.82 %) and a decrease in the secondary pupil population of 422 (-5.14%). The special sector pupil population has increased by 117 (130%) pupils over the last three years.

- At PLASC 2015 23.7% of pupils are entitled to Free School Meals in Neath Port Talbot (2013 - 23.2%, 2014 - 22.9%) compared with the Wales average of 18.8%. This is the second highest in Wales. This has increased over the last three years by 0.5 pp.
- From the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014, 12 of Neath Port Talbot's 91 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA's 13.2%, a decline of 2.4 pp's from 2011) are in the most deprived 10% in Wales. Only three (3.3%, a decline of 2.2 pp since 2011) are in the least deprived 10%.
- From the Children in Need Census 2015 – NPT has the sixth highest percentage of Children in Need in Wales (5.9%, a decrease of 0.4% pp from 2014) and the fourth highest percentage of Looked After Children (LAC) at 8.5% (a decrease of 0.3% pp from 2014).
- Neath Port Talbot has 26.6% Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils (2013 - 25.4%, 2014 - 28.2%) compared with only 22.5% nationally. 3.6% of pupils in Neath Port Talbot have a statement of SEN, which is above the 2.7% Wales average. In addition to the 207 pupils attending NPT two special schools, 16 schools, primary and secondary, have a Learning Support Centre (LSC), which cater for the additional learning needs of 345 pupils in a range of disabilities.
- 15.5 % of Neath Port Talbot's 20,670 pupils at the time of the January 2015 PLASC were in Welsh medium schools; 17.2% (2,180) in primary and 13.1% (1,022) in secondary. Over a three-year period, there has been a small increase in Welsh medium primary pupil population by 22 from 2013 and a small increase in Welsh medium secondary pupil population by 29.
- The number of permanent exclusions fell from twelve in 2013/14 to ten in 2014/15. (2012/13 - 11)
- The number of days lost to fixed exclusions in 2014/15 across NPT schools fell by 21.6% to 1598 days (2012/13 – 2064, 2013/14 – 2036).
- At the time of the January 2015 census 4.5% of NPT pupils had English as an Additional Language (EAL). This was 4.9% amongst primary age pupils and 4.0% in secondary. In 2014/15 there were 59 first/home languages spoken by EM/EAL learners in addition to English and/or Welsh.

## **1.1 Standards**

### 1.1.1 Results and trends in performance compared with national averages, similar providers and prior attainment

#### Strengths

- Performance at the end of statutory school provision is outstanding. This is characterised by the following key areas:
  - At key stage 4, NPT's current performance at L2 inc. E/W&M is 58.4% (2013 – 56.0%, 2014 – 55.8%), a rise of 2.6 pp and above the national average of 57.9%. There has been an improvement of 4.3 pp over the last three years. We are currently ranked 11th in Wales. This is an excellent feature of the authority's performance.
  - Similarly, L2 performance in 2015 improved by 2.6 pp to 92.0% (2013 – 87.0%, 2014 – 89.4%). This is 8.6 pp higher than the national average and NPT has been the best performing authority in this indicator for the past three years. This is an outstanding feature of our performance.
  - The average capped point score improved by 8 points to 359 (2013 – 350, 2014- 351, 2015 – 359), which is above the Wales average of 342. We are currently ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in Wales, having been ranked in the top five on four occasions over the last five years.
  - KS4 L2+ value added (actual performance minus expected performance based on levels of FSM) was the second highest in Wales in 2015, having previously been ranked first highest since Welsh Government (WG) started reporting the actual versus expected performance for this indicator in 2009. NPT's value added for the capped points score was the highest in Wales in 2015, as it has been since WG first published this information in 2013.
- In KS4 73% of secondary schools perform in the top 50% in mathematics when compared with similar types of schools. 55% of schools in quartile 1 and 18% in quartile 2. In English, schools have improved to 63%, with 45% in quartile 1 and 18% in quartile 2. L2 outcomes in both English (Best Language) and mathematics have improved consistently.
- Schools' performance at KS4 is generally consistent. During the last three years over half the schools have performed within a +/- 3 pp difference of their outcomes in 2013. Of the remaining five schools, three have secured significant improvements (+14pp / +8 pp / +9 pp), whilst the other two have seen a greater reduction in performance, Dyffryn (52% / 51% / 48%) and Ystalyfera (69% / 69% / 64%). There is a clear pattern of improvement or maintenance of standards. The local authority, in discussion with its schools, is confident that further improvement will be secured in 2016.
- The CSI at KS4 has improved by just under 2 pp over the past 3 years ((2013 – 52.6%, 2014 – 53.7%, 2015 – 54.3%), but remains below the current Wales average of 55% and has improved at a slower rate.
- In KS4, whilst the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A\*A increased (2013 – 16.2%, 2014 – 14.0%, 2015 – 15.8%), it remains below the Welsh average of 17%. There was also an increase in the percentage achieving 5+ A\*A grades including English/ Welsh and mathematics. However this is significant variation between schools in the percentage of pupils achieving A\* and A grades with Ystalyfera, Cefn Saeson and Glan Afan performing well in mathematics and Cwmtawe and Dwr y

Felin performing well in English. Cymer Afan has secured only one grade A in English and mathematics over the past 2 years.

- As expected with such high performance, the benchmarking profile is very good, with schools consistently in the two top benchmark groups for all indicators.
- Across the sectors, 17 schools were inspected during the 2014/15 academic year with 47% judged as good or excellent for current performance and 53% as good or excellent for prospects for improvement.
- At key stage 3, the CSI improved to 77.8%, a 4.7 pp increase from the previous year (2013 – 73.1%, 2014 – 73.1%). This is characterised by improvements in all core subject areas. The best improvement over the past three years is in English.
- At key stage 2, Welsh 1<sup>st</sup> Language L4+ improved by 2.4 pp to 90.1% (2013 – 91.0%, 2014 – 87.7%) with the national ranking improving from 16<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Foundation Phase LCW outcome 5+ improved by 0.8 pp in 2014/15 and ranked ninth in Wales (2013 – 87.4%, 2014 – 91.8%, 2015 – 92.6%).
- In the 2015 national tests, the percentage of pupils achieving a standardised score of 85+ and 115+ improved from 2014 in all four tests. The most significant increase was in Numeracy Reasoning with pupils scoring 85+ and 115+ increasing by 4.6 pp and 2.2 pp respectively. Since the start of the National Tests in 2013, there has been year on year improvement in both the 85+ and 115+ indicators in all four tests, with the exception of a slight fall in the English Reading 85+ percentage from 2013 to 2014.
- In the 85+ indicator of all four national tests, the percentage of schools in quartiles 1 and 2 has improved from 2013 to 2015, (standing at 52%, 59%, 52% and 48% in Eng RDG, Cym RDG, Mat PRC and Mat RSG respectively). In the 115+ indicator the percentage in quartiles 1 & 2 in 2015 indicate an improvement in both Reading (Welsh) and Mathematics Reasoning.
- As part of the national categorisation model, WG generate a judgement on standards, using a four-point scale. 56% of NPT schools were awarded a standards score of one or two. In addition, 69% of NPT primary schools and 90.9% of NPT secondary schools were categorised as Green or Yellow schools in 2014/15.
- Based on the 2015 national categorisation model, 79.6 % of NPT pupils are educated within a Green or Yellow school. This is an improvement on last year's 78.5%.
- The Year 11 NEET figure for pupils leaving in 2015 was 3.6%; this has decreased from 3.8% in 2014 and 4.4% in 2013 and is the second lowest figure achieved by NPT.
- During 2014/15 the Youth Service engaged with 593 young people and achieved a positive EET outcome of 27%. In addition, 20% of young people engaged by the Youth Service achieved a range of local and national accredited outcomes in 2014/15.
- In 2011-14, 71% of EM/EAL learners progressed at least one stage of the WG's Stages of English Language Acquisition (A-E).

- At Key Stage 5, for Wider Points Score, NPT is ranked 11<sup>th</sup>. NPT pupils achieved an average of 779 points (2013- 832 , 2014 – 865). NPT A\* - E grades of 97.6% is above the national average by 0.3 pp.
- At KS4, those pupils entitled to Free School Meals outperform the e-FSM national average in L2+ by 3% (2013 – 3.9%, 2014 – 1.4%). NPT FSM performance has been higher than the national average for the last five years in L2, CSI, capped points score and L1 indicators. This performance has been consistent for the last five years and is a strong feature of the authority’s performance.
- At KS4, the performance of girls entitled to FSM has improved by 8.9 pp in L2+ over the last three years (2013 – 34.5%, 2014 – 34.9%, 2015 – 43.4%), by 11 pp in L2 (2013 – 75.2%, 2014 – 86.6%, 2015 – 86.2%), by 6.3 pp in English (2013 – 50.3%, 2014 – 51.7%, 2015 – 56.6%) and by 12.7 pp in mathematics (2013 – 36.3%, 2014 – 40.9%, 2015 – 49.0%).
- At KS4, the performance of boys entitled to FSM has also improved consistently, but by considerably smaller margins. L2+ has improved by 1.7pp over the last three years (2013 – 24.3%, 2014 – 24.3%, 2015 – 26.0%), by 5.3 pp in L2 (2013 – 70.4%, 2014 – 70.5%, 2015 – 75.7%) and by 6.6 pp in mathematics (2013 – 35.4%, 2014 – 35.3%, 2015 – 42.0%). Improvement in English has been variable - 28.3% (2013) / 31.2% (2014) / 28.4% (2016).
- The performance of free school meal pupils has also improved significantly at key stages 2 and 3; this is characterised by a 4.1% and a 6.1% increase in the CSI respectively.
- 25.3% of SEN pupils achieved L2+ at KS4 compared with 23.3% nationally (2014/15). This is an improvement of 5.8 pp over three years (2013 – 19.5 % , 2014 – 23.0%).
- 75.0% of SEN pupils achieved the L2 indicator. This is 10.1 pp above the national average. This is an improvement of 14.2 pp over three years (2013 – 60.8%, 2014 – 71.0%).
- The performance of SEN pupils at key stages 2 and 3 is good and above the all Wales average in some aspects, particularly in the cases of those entitled to FSM.
- At KS4, girls perform consistently well compared to national averages. In 2015, 66.1% of girls achieved the L2+ indicator, a 5.5 pp improvement from 2013 (2013 – 60.63%, 2014 – 63.33%). In 2015, at L2, girls outperformed the national average by 7.5%. Girls in NPT also outperformed the national average by 2.4% in CSI, 4.2% in English and 3.6% in mathematics. The average capped score for girls is 17.2 points above the national average.
- LAC performance in KS4 has improved at L2 (2013 – 52.9%, 2014 – 65.4%, 2015 – 66.7%) and English (2013 – 23.5%, 2014 – 26.9%, 2015 – 38.1%) over the last three years. LAC in KS3 have improved in all key indicators over the last three years. The greatest improvement has been in English (2013 – 50 % , 2014 - 55.2%, 2015 - 64.7%).
- NPT EAL pupils outperform the national average in L2+ (1.8%), L2 (11.6%) and L1 (4%) at KS4.
- In FP, KS2 and KS3, EAL pupils outperformed the national average in all key indicators in 2015 as was the case in 2013 (except KS3) and 2014.
- In NPT the percentage of pupils achieving no qualifications and leaving full time education (2013 – 0.1%, 2014 – 0.2%, 2015 – 0.1%) has consistently been below the national average over a number of year. In 2015, 13.5% (209 in school) and 72.4% (1119 in college) continued in Full Time Education

(ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in Wales). 5.7% (1.4 pp above Welsh average) entered work-based training as non-employed status and 1.8% (0.3 pp above Welsh average) entered work based training employed status.

- NPT secondary schools compare well when benchmarked with similar schools with over half placed in quartiles 1 and 2 in all national tests. In Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 all NPT schools scored above the national average in English Reading.
- At key stage 2, performance in Welsh 1st Language at L4+ improved by 2.4% pp to 90.1% (2013 – 91.0%, 2014 – 87.7%) with the national ranking improving from 16<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>.
- 74% of lessons observed by Challenge Advisers were either good or excellent with regard to literacy and numeracy skills development. 56% of lessons observed had good or excellent use of ICT. 70% of lessons observed demonstrated good or excellent planning for skills development. 78% demonstrated good or excellent motivation and participation. (Jan – Sept 2015, 153 lessons in total).
- There has been a significant increase in pupils' achievement of Level 2 in Essential Skills qualifications. From 2013-2015 in all three Essential Skills qualifications, there was an overall increase in the achievement of level 2 from 46.9% to 80.47%. In each of the three qualifications, pupils have achieved a higher percentage of Level 2 qualifications in 2015 than 2013.
- In Application of Number, 73.9% of pupils in Neath Port Talbot achieved the Level 2 compared to 43% in 2013. In Communication 83.7% of pupils in Neath Port Talbot achieved the Level 2 compared to 42.2% in 2013. In ICT 83.8% of pupils in Neath Port Talbot achieved the Level 2 compared to 55.5% in 2013.
- Neath Port Talbot also saw an increase in the number of pupils achieving a Level 2 qualification in the Wider Key Skills. 24.53% of pupils achieved a Level 2 in 2013 compared to 40.87% in 2015. In each of the three qualifications, pupils in Neath Port Talbot have achieved a higher percentage of Level 2 qualifications in 2015 than 2013.
- In Improving Own Learning and Performance 16.6% of pupils in Neath Port Talbot achieved the Level 2 compared to 10.4% in 2013. In Problem Solving 51.8% of pupils in Neath Port Talbot achieved the Level 2 compared to 36.4% in 2013. In Working with Others 54% of pupils in Neath Port Talbot achieved the level 2 compared to 26.8% in 2013.
- In Neath Port Talbot there has been an increase in the number of pupils achieving the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification. This was 54.7% in 2015 compared to 36.1% in 2013. There has also been an increase in the percentage of pupils who achieved the Level 2 Intermediate Welsh Baccalaureate. In 2015, 49.9% achieved this compared to 27.9% the previous year.
- At Foundation Phase, language literacy and communication skills in Welsh have improved for the fourth consecutive year. It is now at 92.63% (2013 – 87.4%, 2014 – 91.8%), 2.29 % above the national average. NPT is ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in Wales with boys 11<sup>th</sup> and girls 3<sup>rd</sup>.



- At KS2, Welsh as 1<sup>st</sup> Language has improved by 2.35 pp, the fourth year of improvement over a five-year period. NPT ranked 13<sup>th</sup> in Wales with boys 14<sup>th</sup> and girls 3<sup>rd</sup>. (2013 – 91.0%, 2014 – 87.7%, 2015 – 90.1%)
- At KS3, Welsh as 1<sup>st</sup> Language is positioned below the national average and has been for the last three years (2013 – 85.5%, 2014 – 86.0%, 2015 – 85.0%). NPT ranked 17<sup>th</sup> in Wales with boys 16<sup>th</sup> and girls 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Welsh 2<sup>nd</sup> Language performance at key stages 2, 3 and 4 has improved but remains below the national average.
- At Key Stage 5 Welsh 2<sup>nd</sup> Language 100% of NPT pupils achieved A\*-C grades (2014 100% 7/7), the Wales average was 73%. No pupils achieved A\*A grades compared with 15% in Wales.
- Pupils progressing by three or more National Curriculum levels between FP and KS2 in Welsh 1<sup>st</sup> language has increased by 4.29 pp and is 0.55% above the national average.

### **Areas for Development**

- Improve performance in all indicators at expected levels in Foundation Phase, key stage 2 and 3 in line with national rate of improvement.
- Improve performance in all indicators at expected levels + in Foundation Phase, key stage 2 and 3 in line with national rate of improvement.
- Ensure that current rate of improvement in the performance of e-fsm pupils is accelerated, particularly for boys at key stage 4.
- Improve the performance of boys at all key stages, but particularly in English at key stage 4.
- Improve the quality of English and Welsh writing across all key stages.

## 1.2 Wellbeing

### Strengths

Significant improvements have been secured in pupil attendance and exclusion rates in recent years. These are characterised as follows:

- Primary attendance has improved for the fifth consecutive year. Since 2010/11 NPT has increased its overall attendance by 2.29 pp (2013 – 92.97%, 2014 – 94.61%, 2015 – 94.78%).
- Secondary attendance has improved for the fifth consecutive year. Since 2010/11 NPT has increased its overall attendance by 1.76 pp (2013 – 92.60%, 2014 – 93.51%, 2015 – 93.64%).
- The attendance of e-FSM pupils at the primary stage has improved by 2.76 pp over the last five years (2013 – 91.21%, 2014 – 93.01%, 2015 – 93.20%).
- The attendance of e-FSM pupils at the secondary stage has improved by 1.93 pp over the last five years. This improvement is above the national average (2013 – 88.70%, 2014 – 89.94%, 2015 – 90.07%).
- Primary attendance of SEN pupils has increased by 1.87 pp over the last three years (2013 – 91.93%, 2014 – 93.71%, 2015 – 93.80%). The attendance of pupils with a statement of SEN and those at SA+ is above the all Wales average.
- Secondary attendance of SEN pupils has increased by 1.26 pp over the last three years. (2013 – 90.40%, 2014 – 91.66%, 2015 – 91.66%). The attendance of pupils with a statement of SEN is above the all Wales average.
- The number of fixed term exclusions at the secondary stage has decreased by 10.1% from 2013/14 (2013 – 556, 2014 – 602, 2015 – 541) and the number of pupils given fixed term exclusions has decreased by 10.9% in 2014/15 (2013 – 348, 2014 – 359, 2015 – 320).
- Within secondary schools, fixed term exclusion days continued to fall in 2014/15 with a 23.1% reduction from 2013/14. This equates to a reduction of 378 days (2013 – 1557 days lost, 2014 – 1636, 2015 – 1258).
- Permanent exclusions in NPT are on a downward trend, reducing from twelve to ten in 2014/15 (2013 – 11, 2014 – 12, 2015 – 10)
- The number of days lost through fixed day exclusions for SEN pupils has decreased at both primary (2013 – 230, 2014 – 297, 2015 – 223) and secondary schools (2013 – 1050, 2014 – 1176, 2015 – 944)
- The number of permanent exclusions for SEN pupils has decreased (2013 – 11, 2014 – 12, 2015 – 6). This was a reduction of six pupils compared to the previous year.
- 99% of all primary pupils agree that they feel safe in their school, higher than the national average. Secondary pupils strongly agree that they feel safe, 11% higher than the national average. At primary, 95% felt the school deals well with bullying (3% higher than national average). At secondary 90% felt the school deals well with bullying (7% higher than national average). In addition, 98% of primary pupils know who to speak to if they feel upset, which is again above the

national average. At secondary schools, 94% agreed, 4% above the national average. (From the analysis of the Estyn questionnaires sent to pupils from 2010-2015).

- When asked whether the school teaches them how to stay healthy, 98% of primary pupils and 86% of secondary pupils agreed, both figures are above national averages. When asked about opportunities to exercise regularly, 96% of primary pupils and 94% of secondary pupils responded positively, both are higher than the national averages (from the analysis of the Estyn inspection questionnaires sent to pupils from 2010-2015).
- Participation in Youth Service provision increased consistently from 2010 to 2014 rising from 3379 to 5439. The views of young people on the services provided are analysed. The focus this year has been on clubs and currently 85.6% of members rate the service as good to excellent.
- The NPT Vulnerable Assessment Profile (VAP) is used as a tool for early identification to identify young people at risk of becoming NEET in key stage 3 and 4. Discussions are held with schools, Careers and Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator (EPC) to identify young people and where resource allows, assign a lead worker.
- The Young Ambassadors programme in primary and secondary schools (PESS) has over 200 Young Sports Ambassadors. New sustainable clubs have been developed which has resulted in an increase in participation. A whole school approach provides Young Ambassadors' with opportunities to inspire others to be active.
- Based on the Schools' Sport Survey 2013-14, 46% of pupils in NPT are "hooked" on sport, which ranks NPT first in Wales, and 63% of pupils say they enjoy PE lessons a lot, which ranks NPT fifth in Wales. 66 % of pupils enjoy sport outside of school a lot placing NPT first in Wales. From the responses, 81% of pupils took part in a sport club outside of school in the last year, which ranks NPT third in Wales.
- All Neath Port Talbot schools are engaged in the Healthy Schools scheme with 87% of schools in phase five or six. In addition, 33 childcare settings are active in the Healthy and Sustainable pre-School scheme. A Healthy Schools teacher pack has been developed to assist in embedding wellbeing in curriculum activities and is cross-referenced to the LNF.
- 96.5% of NPT primary schools provide free breakfasts daily to approximately 2940 pupils. All primary school lunchtime and breakfast club menus are compliant with the Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements) (Wales) Regulations 2013.
- Greater knowledge of children's rights and confidence in asserting them has been achieved through the creation of a network of 450 young people trained and acting as Children's Rights Champions. The Organisational Survey found 85% of professionals who responded felt confident in discharging their obligations under the UNCRC and The Young Research Report found 86% of young people felt comfortable in using their rights.
- There has been an improvement in the lives of children and young people in NPT through the adoption of a children's rights approach co-ordinated by a Children's Rights Alliance. The Young Research Report (2015) indicated that 93% of respondents felt respected in the home. To the question, 'do you feel respected in school?' 75 % answered positively in comparison to only 50% in the 2010 study.

- The Young Trustee Programme has been successful in supporting an additional 23 young people through an accredited qualification and is working with local organisations such as Swansea Ethnic Youth Support Team (EYST) and national organisations such as the WRU. The Young Trustee Programme also resulted in the development of our ‘Engaging Children and Young People in Town and Community Council’ project which is being led by our Young Trustee.
- The School Based Counselling Service provides a confidential counselling and drop in service to all pupils on roll of NPT secondary schools. Counselling in primary schools is provided in Year 6, in line with the LA’s statutory duties. The service evaluation questionnaire, which enables pupils to provide qualitative feedback on their experience of counselling evidenced that of 1760 responses received 91.2% were positive (falling in ‘Strongly Agree’ and ‘Agree’ categories).
- The YP-CORE which measures levels of psychological distress with a maximum score of 40, provides useful data regarding the level of psychological distress a young person is experiencing. It also provides outcome data regarding levels of psychological distress pre and post intervention. Data for the 3 years from 2012-2015 shows the mean pre-intervention scores as 16.8 and the mean post intervention scores as 9.0, evidencing an improvement in psychological wellbeing following receipt of counselling.
- Peer mentoring is established in all NPT secondary schools. Schools now monitor their own schemes for impact, with schools reporting that the scheme provides an additional level of support whereby low-level issues can be addressed without recourse to adult intervention. Mentors and mentees complete self-evaluation forms. Peer mentors report that they have developed skills in team working, problem solving, confidence and communication amongst others. Mentees reported improved attitude towards school, increased confidence and the development of problem solving skills. The 2015 ESTYN inspection of Cwrt Sart Community School judged the peer mentoring programme to be sector leading.
- From the analysis of the Estyn questionnaires sent to pupils from 2010-2015; When asked whether they were doing well at school, 96% of primary pupils agreed, this equals the national average. At secondary, those pupils that agree or strongly agree is 1% above the national average. When asked if the teachers and other adults in the school help them to make progress, 99% of primary pupils agreed. At secondary, 49% of pupils strongly agreed to this statement, 11% higher than the national average.
- The NPT Children’s Rights Unit also support a group of young people to be involved in ABMU Health Board business (such as interviews for the Head of Nursing), Town Councils and also a group who are actively involved in the #Vote16 campaign at the most recent Senedd Conference.
- The CRU has designed and supported the Organisational Survey and found 85% of professionals answered they felt confident in discharging their obligations under the UNCRC. 56 participants took part in the full ‘Train the Trainer’ training during autumn 2015, 29 teachers have been trained in Children’s Rights and Participation and almost 500 participants attend awareness raising sessions.
- Additional work was undertaken to raise awareness of the UNCRC through over a 100 trainings being delivered to 11 secondary, 37 primaries, one special school and the secure unit, with resources

and training materials developed for each. Specialist projects have also given the Youth Council, the Young Researchers and the Young Trustee's in-depth knowledge. The Young Researchers Report found out of 355 young people 38% knew what the UNCRC was compared to 11.5% in 2010 'Know your rights survey'

- A Young Trustee Coordinator post has been created to support the 'Young Trustee' Programme, which is a youth-led project promoting and supporting increased youth volunteering in Charitable Trustee and Governing Boards through the process of training, supporting and awareness raising. This is to provide support and direction to organisations involved in the Project and develop training for the Young Trustee Mentors.
- The Development Education Awareness Raising (DEAR) Project has developed confident global learning communities by linking with 26 NPT schools. Neath Port Talbot's project raising awareness of local and global issues linked to ESDGC is working in partnership with the Children's Rights Unit at NPT to develop some of the key actions. One of these is developing pupils to be more confident in taking action on local and global issues.

## **Areas for Development**

- Improve attendance in the minority of schools not maintaining a consistent rate of performance.
- Plan and provide more structured opportunities to take account of the views of learners and young people of the services provided.
- Monitor the impact of the revised governance arrangements for Youth Support Services.
- To reduce the number of children and young people on waiting lists for counselling through recruitment of volunteer BACP accredited staff and by providing small group and workshop session to those children and young people where this will meet their emotional health and psychological wellbeing needs in lieu of individual counselling (anger management, mindfulness, self-esteem, anxiety and exam stress).
- Develop additional training covering New Psychoactive Substances for professionals working with young people to address the issues around NPS/Legal Highs.
- Develop Mental Health support for young people, as this is an issue with very limited services available.

### **2.1 Support for school improvement**

#### **Strengths**

- Good arrangements are in place to support and challenge schools through regional working. Underperformance and risk factors within schools are nearly all identified quickly and addressed at an early stage. The proportion of NPT schools in statutory category has decreased within the current inspection cycle.
- The national categorisation system is undertaken thoroughly and consistently. As a result, there is an increased proportion of green and yellow schools with 73% of schools in these categories in 2015 compared with 68% in 2014.

- Additional risk factors within schools are considered. As a result, intensive support is provided to prevent schools from declining. There is a clear and co-ordinated response to support schools requiring follow-up visits by Estyn. The rate of improvement is either strong or very good in nearly all schools.
- Consistent challenge of standards, through data analysis and a challenging dialogue on targets, leadership and provision provides comprehensive evaluations on all schools. As a result, there is an agreed understanding and overview of schools' priority areas. The information is disseminated so that schools can develop inter school networks for improvement.
- There is a thorough evaluation of all schools' success in addressing recommendations and key performance areas. Each of these areas is monitored to measure progress against pupil outcomes. Greater challenge is provided to schools where the pace of improvement is deemed to be too slow.
- Schools fully understand that support is proportionate to need and that underperforming schools receive more support and challenge. There is clear differentiation and definition in the support, challenge and intervention given to schools as outlined in the regionally agreed Ladder of Support, Challenge and Intervention. Monitoring visits that have been quality assured during autumn 2015 indicate a high level of challenge in nearly all schools.
- Both formal and informal feedback from headteachers indicates that there is robust challenge for improvement. Samples of monitoring visits, in situ, are quality assured to further improve the consistency and quality of provision for school improvement.
- The Director of Education challenges schools that need the most support to improve. The Head of Education Improvement, the Head of Participation, and the lead Challenge Adviser accelerate improvement where required. Underperforming schools are issued with warning letters or statutory warning notices. As a result, improvement is seen in the majority of schools.
- Consistency across the Neath Port Talbot and Swansea Hub (Eastern Hub) is developing through similar approaches to improving schools as well as joint training events. The ERW school improvement service ensures that there is increased capacity to address underperformance, to broker support and share good practice. The Executive Board and Delivery Group provide a strong strategic focus on securing consistency and quality of practice. Regular regional and hub meetings ensure that improvement in underperforming schools is monitored and actions taken to accelerate improvement where needed.
- Effective support is brokered for the Foundation Phase, digital competency, literacy and numeracy, Welsh, Welsh (second language), English and mathematics, assessment and moderation, leadership development, modern foreign languages and newly qualified teachers. The menu of support available to schools is clear and is understood by nearly all stakeholders.
- Support for literacy and language in Welsh medium schools is improving. Further collaboration across the Hub would strengthen provision.
- Support for improving the quality of teaching is useful. Focussed, direct observation of teaching, to support schools with their own monitoring is provided. Sound advice on verifying existing methods within schools to improve teaching is also provided.
- Consistent, well-brokered bespoke support packages for school improvement are having an impact in schools that require frequent and intense support.

- Neath Port Talbot has four schools in Local Authority Monitoring (5.6%), seven schools in Estyn Monitoring (9.8%), no schools in need of Significant Improvement and only one primary school in Special Measures (1.4%).
- Training is targeted according to need. As a result, support for literacy and numeracy tackles key priority areas, for example, boys' writing and concrete number operations.
- Effective practice is disseminated appropriately through the identification of professional learning case studies.
- Current senior leaders work effectively across schools to monitor, advise and share best practice, as seconded challenge advisers.
- Schools receive good quality training on self-evaluation and strategic planning processes that has resulted in the improved quality of school improvement planning.
- Strengths and areas for development in leadership are clearly identified and noted during monitoring visits. This includes a strong focus on both senior and middle leaders.
- Nearly all headteachers are clear about the areas of challenge through feedback on their self-evaluation and strategic planning processes. This is becoming increasingly successful due to a more consistent approach from challenge advisers.
- Support for leadership is successfully brokered through challenge advisers who are able to access a number of local and regional programmes. This now includes an increasing level of direct school to school support. This has been particularly successful in the extended Schools Challenge Cymru programme where schools with high performing leaders support headteachers and senior leaders in other schools across the region.
- Support for new and mentor headteachers for primary and secondary colleagues provides a consistent regional approach to mentoring.
- Governors receive a full package of support and training, covering topics such as safeguarding, safer recruitment, data, financial information, categorisation, legal responsibilities, HR information. All areas of training support governors to disseminate good practice and impact on standards
- Governors receive useful support for their role in holding schools to account for standards. Governors are normally present in monitoring visits and performance management reviews and are encouraged to be involved in the professional dialogue on school improvement by challenge advisers.
- Governors receive useful advice when recruiting senior leaders within their schools from challenge advisers.

### **Areas for Development**

- Continue to ensure that value for money is achieved by having no schools or provisions in a statutory category and increase the proportion of schools that best fit A and B type characteristics for leadership and quality of teaching (using the national categorisation system.)
- Develop greater rigour in challenging schools on how they set and achieve targets, especially for pupils in receipt of free school meals.

- Further support for the development of Welsh medium provision
- Ensuring secure end of key stage teacher assessments within clusters and across the authority.
- Develop a greater system wide awareness of the role of pioneer schools in supporting the development of a new curriculum for Wales as specified within the Successful Futures document. Plan professional learning opportunities and ensure that there are regular update workshops to inform schools of curriculum developments.
- Develop a sector led school improvement strategy.
- Develop a leadership programme that meets local needs within NPT to improve the quality of middle leadership in secondary schools, to increase and improve the quality of leadership within the primary sector.
- Further develop opportunities across the Hub to develop the role of governors.

## 2.2 **Support for additional learning needs and educational inclusion**

### **Strengths**

- The LA Inclusion Service promotes early identification, assessment and intervention through a needs led training programme and a range of strategies and interventions provided to develop capacity of all settings, leading to a significant increase in the percentage of new statements issued before the pupil enters full time education. The total amount of ceasing statements for 2014 -2015 were eight (1.5%)
- The EPS Flying Start team has produced guidance for providers on the early identification and assessment of children with SEN in the Early Years and Childcare Settings. Since September 2014 and February 2016, 17 Flying Start children were put forward for a Statutory Assessment of the Special Educational Needs. This makes up 10% of the total number of children undergoing Statutory Assessment during this time. Of the 17 Flying Start children, 100% were issued with a Statement of Special Educational Needs due to the quality of evidence submitted to panel, thus ensuring improved transition and provision arrangements into schools.
- 100% of pupils in receipt of statement of SEN for sensory need (HI, VI, MSI) have their needs and provision met by the Sensory Support Service, as are those pupils with provision set by the NATSIP Eligibility Criteria for Wales.
- Following an audit of therapy provision the LA has commissioned services from ABMU Health to ensure 100% of pupils receive the Speech and Language Therapy and sensory provision as outlined in their statements. The Inclusion Service works closely with colleagues in Health to ensure any staffing issues are addressed in a timely manner to ensure there are no gaps in provision.
- There is a very high level of parental satisfaction due to the provision of comprehensive information, role of liaison officer and a positive relationship with SNAP. There is parental contribution to service evaluation, provision of early support including pre-school sensory provision and the use of early support materials. Adapted early support materials are used in close partnership with parents to improve special educational needs of learners.



- The implementation of PCP practices across the LA has ensured that pupil and parent voice is clearly recorded at review meetings and children and young people are part of the decision making process regarding their future placement and transition plans.
- Over the three-year period, 2012-2015, the number of statements drafted by the EPS within the two-week timescale has remained above 95%. The quality checking remains at 100% and the number of School Action Plus reports completed within six weeks remains high at over 98%.
- Both special schools in NPT were inspected during 2015 and both achieved 'Good' for current performance and 'Good' for prospects for improvement.
- In 2014-15, nine primary schools were inspected by ESTYN. Eight were judged to be 'Good' for key question 2.3 'How do we evaluate care, support and guidance?' which encompasses how well pupils are supported with specialist services, information and guidance and how well the needs of ALN learners are met. Of the eight judged to be good, seven had received direct involvement from the Inclusion Service to complete the ALN self-evaluation and identify areas and actions for development. Of the 8 primary schools inspected in 2013-14, all 8 were judged to be good for question 2.3.
- Of the 3 secondary schools inspected by ESTYN in 2014-15, 1 was judged to be 'Excellent' and 1 was judged to be 'Good' for key question 2.3 In 2013-14 one secondary school was inspected and was judged to be 'Good' for question 2.3.
- The Authority is well placed for Welsh Government's 'Forward in Partnership' reform. The LA has trained 55 SENCOs in Person Centred Planning; there are currently 3 accredited PCP trainers within NPT and 71% of schools have been trained to use PCP tools and approaches on a rolling programme which ensures the young person is central to the planning and decision making process.
- The local authority uses individual pupil performance and tracking data to inform panel decisions, which in turn improves the accuracy of panel decision making and provision.
- The Educational Psychology Service delivers training to SOGS (Schedules of Growth) practitioners to enable greater consistency and validity of the SOGS assessment. This helps with early identification of need and enables appropriate interventions to be put in place.
- SENCo cluster working has been established in every cluster with school staff, Educational Psychology Service (EPS) and Support for Learning (SfL) staff in attendance. Success evidenced by improved outcomes, reduction in referrals at school action plus, sharing of good practice between schools and the use of Welsh and English diagnostic materials developed and provided by the SfL Service. In 2013/14, 810 referrals were made to the SfL Service, compared to 564 referrals in 2014/15.
- In 2014-15 evaluations, 93% of schools judged the training provided by the SfL service as good or excellent.
- The quality of Special Educational Need coordinator training, new Special Educational Need coordinator training and cluster training is deemed good, as evidenced by positive feedback from stakeholders.
- ALN training for school based staff is informed by area of need and number of consultation requests from schools to the communication and Support Forum, recommendations from ALN self-evaluation process, ACVs and ESTYN reports.

- NPT is the lead LA for Multi-sensory Impairment (MSI) regional working. A regional contract with three other LA has been secured for three years, ensuring that pupils with MSI have timely access to an appropriately qualified teacher and resulting in efficient use of resources in an area of low incidence need.
- Audit of Occupational Therapy completed in collaboration with Health. Occupational Therapists commissioned to ensure the LA fulfils its statutory obligations and to develop high quality training package for schools. Positive training evaluations collated and there have been no Special Education Needs Tribunal for Wales (SENTW) challenges in this area, since undertaking these improvements.
- Occupational Therapy clinics provide advice and strategies to teaching staff across NPT on how to support pupils with physical and sensory needs. Clinics were well attended with all available slots filled. Evaluation forms evidenced 100% of attendees found the clinics 'Very Useful' and felt confident in regards to putting into place the advice and strategies provided. These clinics will continue to run on a half-termly basis.
- The ASD team have developed a transition package to support ASD pupils' transition between key stages 2 and 3. The ASD team leads this piece of work and attends all SENCo cluster meeting to coordinate. This package was also adapted to support those pupils with ASD who were in schools that were closed due to amalgamation and transferred to other schools. Positive feedback to both pieces of work has been provided by schools.
- SENCo cluster meetings assist in the preparation and support needed for children and young people to make transitions between key stage 2 and 3. Transition is a standing item on the agenda of every meeting and discussions are facilitated and supported by the representatives from the SFL and EPS service who are in attendance attend.
- Feedback from questionnaires completed by schools for the Sensory Team reported 100% for supporting schools to have better understanding of the pupils' difficulties/needs, 96% usefulness of advice and information received from the service, 94% good/excellent for impact on pupils' inclusion following advice/training
- The Youth Service Families First Prevention Team has developed a strong partnership with the Autism Youth Club run by the staff at Ysgol Hendrefelin and Afasic Cymru, a charity working with young people with Speech, Language and Communication needs. The Youth Service are able to enrich the Youth Club's programme of activities and support the achievement of accreditation

### **Areas for Development**

- To develop a NPT strategy for Autism and further develop ASD and SEBD outreach programme in collaboration with Ysgol Hendrefelin for both mainstream and learning support centre provisions.
- Ensure that the recently established Headteacher LSC group will allow for better collaboration and communication between Headteachers with learning support centres in order to inform future planning of provision.
- To review Out of County placements with colleagues in Social Services and Health through Complex Needs Panel. This should lead to an improved multi-agency strategic overview of need and improved monitoring and quality assurance of provision.
- Further develop the role of the Inclusion Service in monitoring the quality of provision provided for pupils with ALN, including occupational therapy provision and the delivery of speech and language provision.

- Reducing reliance on statutory assessments, particularly for Moderate Learning Difficulties in mainstream (PLASC data), and statements (6th highest in Wales (Stats 2 report) with 3.7% of pupils having statements compared with national average of 2.9% (Stats 2).
- Closer collaboration needed with LACES team to support LAC pupils with SEN to ensure best possible outcomes, through effective identification, assessment and provision.
- To further develop relationships and protocols with NPT Further Education College to ensure effective post-16 transition and provision for pupils with ALN in preparation for Welsh Government 0-25 years agenda and ALN reform.
- To further develop partnership working with Health and Social Services to establish a 'menu of provision and services' available for children and young people with ALN and their parent/carers. This is to ensure a clear pathway and collaborative working across services.

### **2.3 Promoting social inclusion and wellbeing**

- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council underpins its safeguarding arrangements with clear monitoring processes, policy development and training programmes that secure a culture whereby safeguarding is given the highest priority.
- Appropriate policies and procedures are in place, these are reviewed and discussed in internal fortnightly safeguarding meetings. These meetings also monitor progress in relation to all live safeguarding issues. Officers from the Directorate attend the cross service operational safeguarding group and the Director attends the corporate safeguarding group. These meetings secure a strategic and operational focus to safeguarding practices.
- Safer Recruitment is a priority; employees who work with children or adults as regulated activities are recruited in accordance with this policy. Mandatory checks are carried out in line with corporate policy. Recruitment practice is audited by Internal Audit in all schools on a rolling programme and corporately on a cyclical basis.
- Peer safeguarding reviews are programmed for all schools and impact positively on safeguarding standards across the authority. Forty reviews have been undertaken over the last three years and each review provides recommendations for improvement.
- Detailed Child Sexual Exploitation awareness raising sessions are delivered to all designated child protection teachers (DCPT's) across the authority, using the package developed by the Western Bay Safeguarding Children Board (WBSCB).
- Recruitment agencies (supply agencies) are vetted, interviewed and assessed by NPT officers, in line with safeguarding and safer recruitment policies.
- The Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer works with schools, governors and support services directly and delivers tailored training, maintaining good work in Child Protection and Safeguarding. The CPSO is a key member of the all Wales Safeguarding in Education Group (SEG).

- The authority promotes attendance through securing a strong partnership with schools, providing a consistent message regarding the benefits of good attendance. Attendance data is scrutinised monthly by schools, officers, members and senior leaders. Performance is benchmarked and formally scrutinised on a quarterly basis. The local authority has adopted ERW's Code of Conduct for fixed penalty notices. All schools benefit from EWO support. Where appropriate School Attendance Orders are sought from courts and / or prosecution is undertaken.
- 72 staff across the Local Authority have undergone recognised accredited training from the Educational Psychology service as Emotional Literacy Support Assistants, (ELSAs). In addition to primary, secondary and special school staff this has included staff from Youth Support Services, MEAS, Team Around the Family and Traveller services. From September 2015 an additional 20 ELSAs have completed their training with a focus on Looked After/Adopted children and young people. Analysis of a self-report questionnaire (Likert scale 1-8) completed by participants after the six week training revealed significant increases in skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver effective emotional literacy interventions in school.
- In partnership with schools and other key stakeholders, including elected members and parents, the Directorate has developed a behaviour support continuum, which utilises the expertise and capacity within schools. The Directorate has also reconfigured its EOTAS provision to ensure that it meets the needs of the most vulnerable pupils and, where appropriate, is in line with the behaviour support continuum.
- The current support provided for the Managed Moves protocol has resulted in a reduction in the number of pupils excluded from schools.
- Elective Home Education is supported appropriately and a dedicated officer acts as a bridge to the formal education system for parents that are in agreement. Currently there are 103 known children being educated at home by parents.
- The Traveller Education Service provides guidance for children and young people in education and supports the needs of the family/community. The service provides clear expectations to school Governing Bodies around the tracking, monitoring and appropriate intervention for Gypsy and Traveller children and young people to ensure that their needs are high profile and met
- Specialist support, professional development and training are provided by MEAS. Children and young people from ethnic minority backgrounds are fully included and achieve very high standards. The team work with schools and the college on transition arrangements and provide extensive home/school liaison support for learners and their parents/carers.
- All schools have a school based physical activity programme, which includes extra-curricular sports clubs, and Food and Fitness policy.
- A peer mentoring programme is embedded in all secondary schools and a rolling programme in peer support schemes for primary schools.
- The use of the Vulnerable Assessment Profile enables our most vulnerable learners to be targeted for direct support and intervention. This tool has proven effective in guiding schools and other stakeholders to consider the individual needs of children and young people.

- A new NEETS strategy that focuses on the engagement of young people aged 11-25 has been introduced. It reflects the requirements of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, it will be effective in continuing the success of the previous NEETS strategy, and will prevent disengagement at an earlier age. The impact of this is that six hundred young people have achieved an accredited award, national award or an ASDAN award. There has been an increase in the number of young people more positive about learning, employment and training (781 including young people under 11 that stated that they feel more positive about school or learning).
- There is appropriate education provision for all pupils not in mainstream. Young people attending “Engage” are supported to achieve a range of skills and accredited outcomes.
- Communities First covers four Clusters of the County Borough and supports deprived communities. Three themes are covered – “Learning, Prosperity, Health and Works” – and works well with other strategic programmes such as Flying Start, Families First and Supporting People. The funding also supports a welfare rights resource and youth workers.
- The Youth Service Universal Team have developed a strong partnership with South Wales Police, Dyfed Powys Police, Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service and the Youth Offending Team to provide school holiday provisions with a focus on reducing risk taking behaviour, anti-social behaviour and crime. In addition, the Youth Workers in Communities First areas provide personal and social development opportunities for young people, both in school and in their communities. Young people are supported to access services and to address barriers to their participation in education, training and employment.
- The Youth Service Families First Prevention Team is working successfully with a range of partners to ensure social inclusion across its services. The team have developed strong working relationships and bespoke projects with the Traveller Support Teacher, the Young Carers’ Service, the Speech, Language and Communication Youth Club and the Autism Youth Club within Ysgol Hendrefelin.
- Transition support and keeping in touch strategies provided by the Youth Service are proven very effective for many young people who are at risk of becoming NEET. Youth Service Keeping in Touch workers work in partnership with Job Centre Plus, they have worked with 813 young people during 2015-16 and supported 90 young people aged 18-24 providing support to NEET young people.
- Communities First cluster teams, along with LIFT in the Afan Valley also provide support to NEET young people through job clubs, developing employability skills and running employability qualifications. The KIT team regular signpost young people from Communities First areas to their services and partnership working is strong.
- Access to quality School Based Counsellor Service in all schools has a positive impact on the social interaction of learners. Feedback from the Service Evaluation Questionnaire completed by young people evidences that having access to quality School Based Counsellor Service can improve the social interaction of learners.

## Areas for Development

- To further embed the use of ELSAs, in particular in our school settings, and develop mechanism for evaluating the impact of their work in terms of C&YP's emotional health and wellbeing.
- Families need to be engaged more over time regarding the PDG Communities First process. Home working needs to be explained and understood with the families in order to further improve the children's education.
- Neath Port Talbot's Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Services will have a more co-ordinated and consistent approach to Child Sexual Exploitation awareness raising and will map the work that has been undertaken and identify future priorities.
- To continue to develop a whole authority approach to behaviour management.

### 2.4 Access and school places

- Based on the annual return to WG in 2015/16, the authority has 13,269 mainstream places in the primary sector with a total surplus capacity of 2,889 (22%) and 10,857 mainstream places in the secondary sector with a total surplus capacity of 3,204 (29%) as per September 2015 capacity calculations. On the same accommodation basis, in relation to January 2020 pupil estimates, surplus places will amount to 20% and 23%, respectively in the primary and secondary sectors. There is sufficient capacity across the county borough to meet the expected increased demand for pupil places.
- Through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band A proposals (2014 – 2020), a number of key school organisation issues will be addressed. 7 of the 11 secondary schools will be directly affected, either through closure, new build facilities or remodelling of existing buildings, further reducing surplus places to 21%.
- In the primary sector surplus places were reduced by 4% through the closure of five schools in August 2015. 96% of pupils at those schools on the point of closure transferred to other Neath Port Talbot schools. Combined with Band A proposals it is expected that surplus places in the primary sector will fall to 18%.
- Data gathered is analysed and used to inform decision making regarding school capacity and addressing surplus places. The annual return to WG in 2015/16 indicates that the authority's forecasting systems are accurate to within 0.5% for both the primary and secondary sectors.
- Following a Cabinet decision to approve the development of a structured programme for change, the need to promote primary education and to integrate all separate infant and junior schools was identified. In 2015 3 new primary schools were formed, with a further amalgamation due to take place in September 2016. This has enabled more effective deployment of resources and revenue savings for reinvestment in the general schools budget.
- Comprehensive building condition and accessibility surveys have been undertaken for every school and are continually being updated, and are used effectively to prioritise repair and maintenance works. Most recent data available has identified that currently there is in excess of £100M backlog

maintenance and accessibility liabilities across the school estate. School condition surveys are used alongside detailed information on the condition of buildings provided by experienced school surveyors to enable clear identification of investment priorities. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band A proposals will seek to address all secondary school buildings which have been classed as condition grade D through significant remodelling or through new build projects.

- Planning for school reorganisation is thorough and robust and involves gathering information and data from a range of services to help inform the process, including admissions, school improvement and inclusion sectors. The Strategic School Improvement Programme is a Tier 1 priority and as such receives high level political support, with direct involvement from Senior Managers in strategic planning.
- A number of contentious and difficult decisions have been taken with a clear focus on school improvement and raising standards. An evaluation of the impact of school closure on pupils and receiving schools is currently taking place; information gathered so far demonstrates that at point of closure 61% of pupils have attended named schools as expected and that the move has not had a detrimental effect on either standards or pupil well-being. Standards at all named receiving schools were recognised as being at least as good if not better than the closing schools in every case, with every named receiving school being placed in either the green or yellow support category. Local authority support for named receiving schools has been provided, including financial assistance to enable schools to make staffing and accommodation adjustments to meet the demands of extra pupils.
- High rates customer/client satisfaction, e.g. admission arrangements are transparent and all parental school preferences are met
- MEAS work with Admissions and schools (including induction in Nursery/Reception) to ensure appropriate access and provision is in place for new EM/EAL arrivals or siblings of existing supported learners.
- Transition support is provided between primary and secondary schools and MEAS also support post 16 (including Neath Port Talbot College Group), through 14-19 funding to ensure that appropriate learning and career pathways are identified and EM/EAL learners, previously supported in our Secondary schools.
- ALN Transfer panel considers learners with Statements needs sufficiently in advance to meet statutory requirements and enable parents/carers to plan for changes in their child's placement. This also enables the Local Authority to provide appropriate provision in terms of planned places for ALN
- A Play Sufficiency Assessment has been completed and Play Strategy Action Plan ongoing. This is being implemented to secure sufficiency in line with WG Statutory Duty. Joint training programme for Childcare and Play settings developed by the Early Years and Childcare Unit and the Play Development Team
- Strategic approach to have childcare facilities in school with surplus capacity which in turn maximises the use of Local Authority buildings as well as maximising use of the educational portfolio. This has many benefits for both the school and the children and families who use the

childcare facility. Having onsite childcare facilities in schools ensures the continuity for young children and their families, and the schools get to know the children and families earlier which means better planning for better results.

- The Early Years and Childcare Unit and the Play Development Team work with family relationships and communication, which can be strengthened through play, they help parents to be involved/actively interested in their children's learning and achievements throughout their school life.
- The Play Development Team promotes the provision of varying and challenging play experiences throughout childhood. This helps children better engage during school hours and, therefore, reduce the likelihood of them leaving education early.
- There is a well-known and agreed mechanism which is used to identify the need for separate provision for disabled children and access audits for all play provision as described in the guidance are undertaken
- The Youth Service Universal Team provides a wide range of opportunities for young people to best use their leisure time. The open access provisions include Youth Clubs, Rolling Zone mobile provision, school holiday programme, school lunch clubs, county-wide events and the Duke of Edinburgh Award.
- The Youth Service Families First Prevention Team are working successfully with a range of partners to ensure social inclusion across its services. The team has developed strong working relationships and bespoke projects with the Traveller Support Teacher, the Young Carer's Service, the Speech, Language and Communication Youth Club and the Autism Youth Club within Ysgol Hendrefelin.
- The Youth Service prepare regular questionnaires for young people which were completed by the young people in their communities. Young people were also able to access the questionnaire using Survey Monkey. The questionnaires were placed on a variety of internet and social media sites including, NPT Youth Service, NPT Youth Service Facebook and Twitter. Young people were asked to give their views on how safe they felt the areas they live in are with 26.3% stating very safe and 64.9% quite safe.

## **Areas for Development**

- Continue to reduce surplus places to no more than 10% in primary and secondary sectors in line with Welsh Government aspirations
- Continue to rationalise school building stock in order to reduce escalating backlog maintenance and repair costs currently in excess of £100M
- Secure Welsh Government 21<sup>st</sup> century school approval in order to access Band B grant funding to further support new builds in primary and secondary sectors, to ensure continued improvements in learning environments and facilities for pupils
- Continue to map pupil demand to ensure that the right schools are in the right place, including further liaison with local authority planners to identify impact of new housing developments



- Develop a strategy for managing risks associated with separate responsibilities for repair and management of school buildings
- Further develop LACES and Admissions information sharing of pupils ‘looked after’ at the point of admission to new school. This will ensure appropriate personal education targets are agreed at school admissions meetings and/or initial LAC review.
- Build on current practice undertaken by Flying Start to enable the improvement of the flow of information between all childcare settings and schools to enable transition that is more effective
- Develop ways of maximising Neath Port Talbot's range of equipment, transport, buildings and outdoor spaces that could be utilised for a range of educational, social and recreational opportunities outside of school hours by the Youth Service. This would reduce the spending within the private sector.
- The Youth Service is working towards the Youth Council becoming a more representative group of young people. Guaranteed seats are to be given to a variety of vulnerable groups in the next Youth Council Election. Groups include Young Carers, Gypsy Travellers, young people with Speech, Language & Communication needs, young people experiencing Domestic Violence and groups with Additional Learning Needs.

### **3.1 Leadership**

- Education Services benefit from strong political leadership with a clear focus on improving standards. Priorities are clear and accountability for delivering improvement in services is robust.
- The impact of this leadership has resulted in year on year improvement in key stage 4 outcomes, placing the authority significantly above expected performance, improvements in attendance and exclusion rates, improvement in the authority's categorisation profile, increase in funding to schools, the delivery of an ambitious 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools' Programme and a range of other key successes evidenced in this report.
- The Council's Deputy Leader and Cabinet portfolio holder for Education has led the focus placed on improving pupil attendance. He was also a member of the Inclusion Review Working Party that has overseen the development of inclusion services in partnership with schools and other key stakeholders. The portfolio member also actively promotes the work of the Children's Rights Unit the Council's corporate parenting role and NPT's Credit Union.
- The Council has invested an additional £1.8m into schools' budgets for 2016/17 demonstrating a clear commitment to fund education as a priority. It has taken a number of difficult decisions in relation to school closures and efficiency savings. Members recently agreed the resettlement of five Syrian families into the authority with pupils being supported in our schools. This is the largest total across Wales.
- Neath Port Talbot's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2015-18 is a robust plan, which shows a strong commitment to developing and improving Welsh in Education. It is closely monitored by the WESP forum
- The Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Directorate has a good record of managing succession with little negative impact on outcomes. The recent restructuring of the extended management team

has ensured that all areas of provision report to dedicated co-ordinator roles who in turn report to the two heads of service. The six coordinators meet with the senior management team on a monthly basis to report on the delivery of dedicated service plans and ensure that the strategic direction is progressed.

- Ambitious targets for improvement have been set and agreed. Decisions are underpinned by strong data and information analysis. Developments are costed carefully and agreed with the Director of Finance or his representative, e.g. the review of Inclusion Services.
- Partnership with schools is strong and allows the LA to act quickly to improve services. The Cabinet Member for Education and the Director meet with pupils, school staff and governors on a regular basis to discuss key educational matters, e.g. the quality of teaching and learning, standards, attendance, assessment and safeguarding.
- Plans are closely monitored and reviewed e.g. progress on the Council's corporate improvement priorities as contained within the Corporate Improvement Plan is monitored via quarterly highlight reports to senior officers and through regular meetings with associated officers. Updates are reported to elected members through the appropriate scrutiny committees.
- Forward Financial Planning is a weekly agenda item on SMT and all budget areas are closely monitored. Financial pressures are identified and reported immediately. The Directorate has reduced its overall budget by £11.2m over the past 3 years.
- The Directorate has demonstrated the prompt use of formal powers of intervention to secure improved leadership and management.
- The local authority has committed £50m into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme, realising the establishment of new primary provision in the Sandfields area including a pupil inclusion centre for the whole authority, a new 3-16 provision on Baglan Moors for 1,400 pupils, the expansion of Welsh-medium education, a primary school to serve the housing development at Coed Darcy, a new primary school in Briton Ferry and a new provision to replace Dyffryn Comprehensive School. This clearly demonstrates the Council's ambition to develop learning environments that facilitate high quality teaching and learning.
- Through officer and member leadership the Inclusion Service has and continues to be transformed, ensuring a more responsive service that promotes inclusive practices in all schools, seeks to increase local capacity and secures appropriate, high quality provision for all pupils.
- The Single Integrated Plan 2013-23 and the Corporate Improvement Plan provide a clear list of priorities including those specific to Education Services that articulate our commitment to raising educational standards and attainment for all young people so that all children and young people in Neath Port Talbot get the best start in life.
- The Directorate's Strategic plan outlines key priorities and objectives for improvement. Previous plans have delivered on the main objectives, for example realising improvements in standards, attendance, behaviour management and safeguarding.
- The Directorate's Strategic Plan is underpinned by six service plans that include appropriate targets. Where deemed necessary, the Directorate requires plans for specific service areas, e.g. Margam Park and the Library Service.

- Plans are monitored regularly and report cards, detailing both quantitative and qualitative outcomes of activities are produced on a regular basis for discussion in one to one and SMT meetings.
- Key items have been set on the senior management team agendas for the year and distributed to heads of service and coordinators, these items focus on performance issues, financial management and safeguarding.
- Scrutiny arrangements ensure that all key policy developments are scrutinised in detail. The Children and Young People Education Board have a forward work programme agreed by elected members and officers. Performance information is scrutinised on at least a quarterly basis and members frequently request reports on specific areas. Scrutiny arrangements have impacted on improvements in service delivery and outcomes, e.g. pupil attendance, Flying Start provision.
- The Council has established a School Standards Partnership Group to scrutinise the performance and quality of support offered to individual schools. The outcomes of this process are reported back to CYPE Cabinet Board.

### **Areas for Development**

- Distributed leadership, in some areas across the organisation needs to improve, including the culture of holding managers to account.
- Service areas need to be more resilient and agile in order to navigate their way through the difficult challenges of continuous budget reductions, reorganisation and capacity shrinkage.
- Commissioning role, in a minority of areas, lacks sufficient rigour and needs to be developed.
- Continue to refine and develop improvement planning processes.
- Focus on delivering the agreed objectives within the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2015-18.

### **3.2 Improving quality**

#### **Strengths**

- The authority has made good progress against most recommendations from previous inspection reports and has responded well to external reviews.
- Good arrangements are now in place to support and challenge schools because of enhanced scrutiny of standards, provision and leadership. Underperformance and risk factors within schools are now identified quickly and addressed at an earlier stage. The development of the ERW Ladder of Support & Intervention has meant that wider regional comparisons can be made on a more consistent basis
- There is monitoring of school performance through a range of functions. This includes challenge adviser visits to school, analysis of data and a bespoke plan depending on categorisation need on how schools perform across all services. This information helps form the judgement on present school performance and capacity to improve.

- On a quarterly basis, pupil performance data is subject to scrutiny by Cabinet members and elected members and support the identification of areas for action.
- Data is used well to drive forward improvements and data sets in the main are available from a single source. The data and analysis provided to officers and schools is a good feature and have directly contributed to raising standards. e.g. the Head of Participation has identified 251 pupils who did not achieve the L2+ indicator in 2015 and who were not characterised as vulnerable learners. Schools have been challenged to account for their performance.
- The excellent management information and data available in Neath Port Talbot have facilitated the identification of performance issues and other concerns. The Vulnerability Assessment Profile is a good example of a development, which has had a wide benefit for services as well as schools.
- Heads of Service (Head of Participation and Head of Transformation) have regular one to one meetings with service coordinators. These meetings are reported at weekly SMT meetings. The Director and both Heads of Service are subject to appraisal processes that acknowledge good working practices and identify professional and personal objectives. This process is now being rolled out to third tier management level.
- The Business Plans and Report Cards of each service area are shared with all managers. This provides cross-service scrutiny and areas of duplication are identified quickly. There is a clear dynamic between self-evaluation processes and development planning processes.
- The Directorate maintains a risk register that is regularly reviewed and is in line with the corporate and school improvement hub registers.
- Self-evaluation information is used to identify the Directorate's priorities. Following extensive external and internal consultation the 'Better Schools, Brighter Prospects' priorities contained within the Corporate Improvement Plan were agreed by Council.
- The Directorate undertakes effective assessment of the performance of schools. Priority is given to the weaker schools and settings and appropriate actions secured. Bespoke support packages are routinely aligned with individual priorities. School visit reports are detailed, focused and provide clear judgements on schools' performance.
- The Directorate has been proactive in addressing staff absences internally and within the school sector. It has secured a resource to support school leaders to manage sickness levels, support members of staff to return to work; and ensure that associated costs and disruption are minimised.
- Areas for development are prioritised within the Directorate's strategic planning. The Directorate has prioritised its approach to financial planning by seeking to protect provision for our most vulnerable learners, protecting provision that is statutory and provision that is subject to external regulation.
- Neath Port Talbot benefits from the school improvement support provided via the ERW regional model. The authority, through its officers and elected members, engages fully in the leadership functions of the model. The increased capacity provided through regional working has ensured that we are able to provide support for all relevant areas of school improvement.

## **Areas for Development**

- Self-evaluation processes need to draw on a wider evidence base and monitoring and survey activities need to be planned to dip test the effectiveness of specific areas of delivery. Whole Directorate training for self-evaluation needs to be delivered and a process for managing self-evaluation activities needs to be agreed and implemented.
- Make better use of our collective intelligence to identify areas of underperformance or concern.
- Develop a sector led school improvement strategy that further develops school to school support
- Establish a strategic programme of continuous professional development that will allow all staff to acquire new knowledge and skills relevant to the priorities identified by the Directorate.

### **3.3 Partnership working**

- The regional and hub based school improvement service continues to improve. It has secured greater capacity and breadth of expertise. It continues to provide greater consistency of support and challenge for schools.
- The Directorate works effectively with its headteachers, governing bodies and other stakeholders. The authority's priorities are well known and agreed providing a clear sense of purpose and direction.
- Partnership working with the Youth Offending Team is good and improves the standards and well-being of individual learners. NPT YOT has the best outcomes in Wales & amongst the very best in England & Wales. Early intervention work is very good. Regional Youth Offending Service now established in Partnership with Bridgend and Swansea.
- Collaborative working between strategic partners locally is strong which has a beneficial effect on learners including 14-19 Network, NPT College, and Third Sector. Schools and Communities First have worked well together to optimise PDG funding in Neath and Afan and Western Clusters. Member Scrutiny improved by the establishment of a Strategic Group.
- Links with schools via LLAN and NAASH are good and well established. There is an effective mechanism for communication, service redesign and improving learning outcomes. 14-19 Partnership provides clear strategic objectives and ensures that spend is linked to local and national priorities.
- New arrangements for Early Intervention and Prevention were introduced in June 2013 by adopting the tried and tested Think Family model following a challenge of the effectiveness of the Children and Young People's Partnership by the Local Service Board. The Think Family Partnership relies upon existing professionals and existing resources working in an agreed continuum where appropriate services and resources are placed around the family for a programme of intensive early help.

- In excess of 650 professionals from across all agencies, public, private and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector, participated in our Think Family programme of training. The focus has been on improving outcomes and targeted professional collaboration. At all times the Think Family Partnership has been outward looking, inquisitive and eager to learn from elsewhere about what creates success in EiP.
- Think Family currently has 434 open cases. This equates to a penetration rate of over 65%, which is comparable with the most successful EiP Authorities/Partnerships in UK, US and Australia.
- When the Think Family Partnership was established the number of Looked After Children per 10,000 was twice the Welsh average and three times the English average. This acts as an accurate proxy measure for the scale of socio economic distress and demand upon public services. This drove the need for change in our approach to EiP
- The Think Family Programme has already contributed directly to the number of Looked After Children in NPT decreasing significantly.
- After three years, there is evidence of the success of Early Intervention and Prevention. Some of this is descriptive, e.g. agencies reporting success of collaboration. There is clear evidence in the reduced number of Looked After Children and there is clear evidence of contextually low Youth Offending and Re-offending.
- The TAF regularly collates evidence based upon Intervention of Distance Travelling in terms of outcomes for families who have received an Early Offer of Help. EiP contributes significantly and effectively to Education and Lifelong Learning by helping to address barriers to learning and progression, like behavioural issues, mental health issues, disability, family dysfunction, etc.
- MEAS work with a variety of partners, stakeholders and interested groups, in order to improve outcomes for EM/EAL Learners.
- Management linkages and communication between Think Family Partnership Board HSC&WB, LSB, CSP and APB are good.
- Partnership mechanisms have been reviewed by the LSB to improve joint strategic planning and the impact of partnership working. A joint planning structure has been implemented which includes the “Think Family Partnership Board”.
- The NEET’s Multi Agency group is facilitated by the Youth Service and includes representation from a wide variety of organisations and services; it feeds into the Youth Engagement Strategy Group.
- The mapping undertaken by the Youth Support Services Liaison Officer on services for young people with NPT provides a comprehensive tool for partnership working.
- Formal Joint Committee agreement between the six regional authorities in ERW exists to deliver School Improvement. This includes joint planning to meet Welsh Government requirements on the use of PDG and the EIG.
- LACES together with Children’s Services and LAC Health staff form the well-established operational partnership, meeting the holistic needs of children and young people who are ‘looked after’.

- Communities First links with Families First, Flying Start, Team Around Family, Youth Service, Welfare Rights, Adult Community Learning (ACL) the Voluntary Sector, and many others, working in the most deprived areas of the borough. Communities First also updates the Local Members on a quarterly basis and has elements of the delivery plan incorporated into the SIP.
- The established Youth Engagement Strategy Group provides an effective partnership approach to the implementation of youth support services, the youth engagement progression framework and the Youth Engagement Strategy.
- A strong research base has been established to map at risk families in NPT and further research has been commissioned on a partnership basis to identify the most effective mechanisms for intervention. A Family Information Service has been established that identifies all provision available to support families' needs.

### **Areas for Development**

- Improve joint strategic planning in relation to our most vulnerable learners in order that resources are targeted more effectively. Build on the success of the early intervention and prevention practice to minimise the impact of deprivation on learners. Develop a cluster based support programme to target our most disadvantaged families.
- Ensure that the planning and delivery of post 16 training and adult community learning is strategic and efficient.
- Partnership commissioning arrangements require improvement specifically in terms of measuring effectiveness and impact.

### **3.4 Resource management**

- The financial position of the Directorate and individual service areas are monitored on a monthly basis and revised at regular intervals. Budget arrangements are systematic and accurate.
- Medium term Strategic Financial Planning is strong and spending decisions are based on priorities.
- The Authority has a 5 year forward financial plan (FFP), which is monitored on a quarterly basis to ensure that all the relevant savings strategies are not deviating from this plan.
- A number of different saving options are discussed at SMT level with the relevant service managers and then put forward at Corporate Director level.
- The Directorate has seen a significant reduction in areas such as library service, community centres and leisure services.
- For financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16, budgeted net revenue expenditure on education in Neath Port Talbot has been over £5.6m under the Indicator Base Assessment (IBA). At this level of funding it places Neath Port Talbot as the 20th highest funder of education in Wales.

- For financial year 2016/17 budgeted net revenue expenditure on education in Neath Port Talbot is £100,572m. The Indicator Base Assessment (IBA) for Neath Port Talbot in 2016/17 is £102,897m, a variable of £2325m.
- Over the past three years Neath Port Talbot has delegated between 82 and 83% of its available funding for education to schools. The rate of delegation has fallen from the 10<sup>th</sup> highest to the 16<sup>th</sup> highest across Wales.
- The per pupil expenditure for primary aged pupils has decreased over the last three years and currently is significantly below the all Wales average of £4,174. The current £4,069 per pupil funding places Neath Port Talbot as the 15<sup>th</sup> highest funder of primary aged pupils in Wales.
- The per pupil expenditure for secondary aged pupils has increased over the last three years and currently is marginally above the all Wales average of £4,867. The current £4,872 per pupil funding places Neath Port Talbot as the 13<sup>th</sup> highest funder of secondary aged pupils in Wales.
- The per pupil expenditure for pupils educated in a special school or learning support centre with a statement of special education needs has increased over the last three years and is currently well above the all Wales average of £20,222. The current £20,696 per pupil funding places Neath Port Talbot as the 10<sup>th</sup> highest funder of secondary aged pupils in Wales.
- There is continued success in securing Capital finance in the delivery of the Council's 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Programme. Neath Port Talbot originally secured £93M of capital funding for projects in Band A of Welsh Governments capital financing scheme. The planned cost of projects in Band A currently is £127M with the additional investment coming from an increased contribution from Welsh Government matched by Neath Port Talbot
- Home to School transport expenditure, which is a volatile budget area by its very nature, is reviewed at a corporate level with representatives from education, corporate and environmental services.
- There has been a clear focus on prioritising the delegated schools budget and pupil support services; statutory over discretionary services; efficiency and re-structuring and recovering costs from grants. Consultation has been rigorous and transparent.
- Significant income has been secured through ESF funding to support our most vulnerable learners and those at risk of becoming NEET.
- Wherever possible, grant funding streams such as Communities First and Families First are used to complement key priority areas such as the performance of our most vulnerable learners.
- All schools with excess surplus balances are consistently challenged regarding the justification for the level of reserves they choose to hold.
- No school is permitted to set a deficit budget without prior agreement with the Director of Education and the signed agreement of the Head teacher, Chair of Governors and the Finance and Data Co-ordinator following the completion of a robust recovery plan. Recovery plans are "time" limited and reviewed on an annual basis.



- Nearly all schools buy into the Authority's Service Level Agreements (SLAs), which are reviewed by a working party every two years.
- The primary PSO and bursar service is effective in supporting schools to manage their budgets with all schools buying in to either one of the services.
- The financing of schools regulations document is up to date with elected members approving a revised policy during 2015 / 16 following consultation with schools.
- All corporate and directorate risks are known and reported to elected members on a quarterly basis.

### **Areas for Development**

- The current review of schools' formula funding needs to be progressed with elected members in order that a decision is taken on future funding arrangements.
- The Directorate's funding remains significantly below IBA allocation. Staffing has been reduced in many areas; the Directorate is constantly reviewing its management, delivery and communication processes. Over time, there is a need to secure funding for the directorate's services, which is more in line with Welsh Government's IBA allocation.
- The LA must monitor value for money of support from external agencies in a consistent and robust manner, e.g. Think Families First funding.