Service Report Card Quarter 2

2016-2017

School Based Counselling Service

Section 1:   Brief description of the service
The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 became law in Wales on 4 March 2013. The purpose of the Act sets out proposals to strengthen school standards, enhance local determination and reduce complexity. Under Section 92 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, local authorities are required to make reasonable provision of independent counselling services for children and young people aged between 11 and 18 and pupils in Year 6 of primary school.   The School Based Counselling (SBC) service is a statutory service and has a core team of 4.3fte counsellors (1 fte senior and 3.3 fte maingrade).   **What We Do**   We provide a confidential counselling and drop in service to all pupils on roll of our secondary schools whether they are in school or receiving their education elsewhere. Larger secondary schools (8), including those with sixth forms and those with split sites,

receive 2 days per week core service counselling input and the smallest secondary school (1) one day per week.

Work with the primary schools is now organised on a geographical, rather than cluster, basis with a smaller number of counsellors focusing on this work. Counselling in primary schools can now only be focused on Year 6 pupils in line with our statutory duties as set out in the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. This is a consequence of the efficiency savings applied to the counselling budget over a 2 year period and a consequent reduction in staffing.

We also support schools with: Transition from primary to secondary; anger management group work; mindfulness workshops; raising self-esteem workshops; exam stress and anxiety workshops; supervision of Peer Mentors in secondary schools; Peer Support programmes in primary schools; and school level data regarding the emotional health and wellbeing of its pupils and the impact of the work of the SBC.

We also provide counselling:
- Outside the school setting/in alternative venues
- For those not on a school roll but eligible for SBC
- During school holidays

Who We Work With

The SBC Team continues to be available to all pupils on roll of our secondary schools and those in year 6 of their primary school whether they are in school or receiving their education elsewhere. The same applies to those not on a school roll but eligible for SBC.

As well as direct work with children and young people, we work with staff in all schools in NPT: mainstream secondary, mainstream primary and special as well as Learning Support Centres and Pupil Inclusion Centres. We also work in conjunction with parents & carers; other LA staff outside and within the Inclusion Service; other agencies such as Social Services and Health partners as well as third sector staff.

Section 2:
Overall Summary of Performance for 2015-16 Financial Year

Service: (2015 – 2016 Academic year targets): We continue to record improved mental health and psychological wellbeing in those receiving counselling. In line with the Welsh Assembly Government's preference that young people engage willingly, and are consenting partners in the counselling process by referring themselves, we have maintained a high level of self-referral to the SBC service (65%). We have recruited appropriately trained volunteers and delivered small group and workshop sessions resulting in more pupils having their needs addressed earlier, leading to improved outcomes. We did not manage to evaluate the impact of these on the waiting lists for counselling. This will be one of the priorities for this coming year.

Financial: The SBC service had a slight underspend on its budget for this financial period (-£418).

Employee: The average FTE working days lost due to sickness was 17.7 days. 62% of the absences were due to one member of staff having a long term absence and 31% attributable to another long term absence. No staff left due to unplanned departures. One (0.8fte) member of staff has been absent for other reasons from January 2016. This accounts for 18.6% of the core SBC service. Consent was given from Head of Service to cover this absence.

Customer: We have continued to ask our young people for feedback on the service and they continue to rate it highly, 88.4% responding positively. (Please also see Section 7 below).

Section 3:
Service Priorities 2016-17

Priority	Actions to deliver priority	Officer Responsible	Timescale	What will be different? Measures and/or Outcomes
1: Through service delivery to: a. Improve mental health and psychological wellbeing of pupils b. Maintain a high level of	Provide a quality SBC service that is professional, well regarded by service users and makes a difference.	Principal EP/Senior SBC / SBC Team	Sept 2016 – August 2017	Improved mental health and psychological wellbeing of pupils A high level of self-referral to the SBC service

self-referral to the SBC service c. Be evaluated positively by those receiving counselling				Positive feedback on pupils' experience of receiving counselling Measured through the Service Evaluation Questionnaire, YP – CORE measurement and other data collated for the annual Welsh Government survey return
2:To increase the number of boys accessing counselling	Promotion of SBCS in school assemblies Recruit even numbers of boys and girls into the Peer Mentoring and Peer Support Programmes Lunch time drop in sessions and activities	PEP/Senior SBC / SBC Team	Sept 2016 – August 2017	More males attending counselling Reduction in stigma attached to attending counselling
3: To implement a robust recording system for the measurement to record waiting times for counselling	Implement and embed the newly created data capture system	PEP/Senior SBC / SBC Team	Sept 2016 – August 2017	Data will be available regarding waiting times for counselling This data will determine future work focus and priorities in schools for the SBCS from September 2017 onwards
4: To establish the role of the SBCS within the behaviour and wellbeing continuum to ensure	Work in partnership with newly appointed staff in the Wellbeing / Behaviour service to identify	PEP / Senior SBC/ Manager	Sept 2016 – August 2017	Provide better support for pupils with wellbeing/behaviour needs resulting in reduced risk incidents

best possible outcomes for pupils with SEBD	common client group and promote joint working Wellbeing manager to attend targeted SBC team meetings Collaborative working between SBCS and Wellbeing service in school settings	Wellbeing / SBC TEAM		and/or exclusions from school Reduced risk of work duplication
5: To support the development of a cluster ALN planning tool to facilitate collaborative planning with schools.	Collaborative working between SBCS and other Inclusion Service teams to address service demand Coordinated and collaborative approach to the planning and delivery of services to schools on a cluster basis Share 'School Level Reports' produced by each counsellor across Inclusion Service teams	Co-ordinator for Support for Inclusion / service area managers / Senior SBC	Sept 2016 – August 2017	Efficient use of resources through reduced duplication of service delivery Improved data across all inclusion service team identifies areas of strength and areas of development within each cluster, ensuring schools receive appropriate support and challenge Effective links across service areas established resulting in improved outcomes for children

Section 4:
Service Performance Quadrant 2016-17

Under the **Corporate Improvement Plan 2016 – 2019**, Objective 2, Better Schools, Brighter Prospects, aims to raise educational standards and attainment for all young people. In particular to:

- Ensure literacy outcomes are improved.
- Ensure numeracy outcomes are improved.
- Improve the performance of pupils entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) in literacy & numeracy.
- Improve pupil attendance.
- Provide better support for pupils with behaviour needs.

The Inclusion Service Business Plan 2016 – 2017, under Principle 2, identifies the need to establish and embed a behaviour and wellbeing continuum of support for pupils with Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties at each Key Stage.

Priority 1 of the **Inclusion Service Business Plan** aims for:

- Improved early identification and intervention – evidenced by referrals, consultation requests and requests for statutory assessments.
- Improved and consistent use of data to monitor outcomes for children and young people and identify future areas for development.
- Improved and consistent use of data across all service areas to ensure that schools receive appropriate support and challenge

It is well researched and recognised that pupils with poor mental health engage less and achieve poorer outcomes than those who are mentally healthy. Through counselling we have a positive impact, in terms of mental health and psychological wellbeing, on our learners and consequently all of the SBC Service priorities ultimately aim to contribute to the improved outcomes for learners as detailed in the Corporate Improvement Plan. These SBC Service priorities also support, and make explicit reference to, the achievement of the aims detailed in the Inclusion Service Business Plan 2016 – 2017.

Priority1: Through service delivery to: a. Improve mental health and psychological wellbeing of pupils; b. Maintain a high level of self-referral to the SBC service; c. Be evaluated positively by those receiving counselling

Measure	2014-15 Actual (Full Year)	2015-16 Actual (Full Year)	Comparative Performance	2015-16 Qtr. 2 (cumulative)	2016-17 Qtr. 2 (cumulative)
Service Measure 1: % Improvement in mental health and psychological wellbeing of pupils (Priority 1a)	Please see Table 1 below		See narrative below	Yearly collection as required by Welsh Government	
Service Measure 2: % level of self-referral to the SBC service **(Priority 1b)**	Please see Table 2 below		See narrative below	Yearly collection as required by Welsh Government	

Improve mental health and psychological wellbeing of pupils

The tool used by the SBC service to measure the impact of counselling is the YP – CORE, (Young Person - Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation), which measures level of psychological distress in various domains. It consists of 10 questions which are rated on a scale of 0 – 4, with 0 being 'Not at all' and 4 being 'Most or all of the time'. A maximum score possible is therefore 10 x 4 = 40. Young people are asked to complete a YP - CORE questionnaire at each counselling session, this provides feedback to the counsellor regarding the level of psychological distress the young person is experiencing. It also provides useful outcome data regarding levels of psychological distress pre and post intervention.

Whilst there will be individual variations around the mean scores, there is clear evidence, as detailed in Table 1 below, for improved mental health and psychological wellbeing year on year following receipt of counselling. The use of the YP – CORE not only helps the counsellor in evaluating the effectiveness of their intervention but, when used as a therapeutic tool during counselling, also helps the client to see their journey, so that even if their score peaks again during a life event it can help them remember that they have been in a healthier place during the counselling process and helps them to develop resilience. We will continue to report on the effectiveness and impact of counselling on the emotional health and psychological wellbeing of pupils accessing counselling. This data is required by Welsh Government on an annual basis.

		Average YP – CORE score
2013 – 2014	Pre intervention	18.1
	Post intervention	9.0
N = 340	Difference	9.1
2014 - 2015	Pre intervention	15.9
	Post intervention	8.3
N = 369	Difference	7.6
2015 - 2016	Pre intervention	18.5
	Post intervention	10.7
N = 328	Difference	7.8

Table 1 YP-CORE pre and post intervention

In 2014/15 the average YP Core score for children and young people who received counselling in Wales was 19.7 prior to counselling, this average score reduced to 11.2 after counselling and is an improvement of 8.5 in the average YP Core score. As each individual will bring different issues and different levels of concern to counselling we do not feel it is appropriate to directly compare our YP-CORE scores with those of Wales. There will be variations and fluctuations each year but the aim must always be to show a reduction in those YP-CORE scores and therefore improved mental health and psychological wellbeing.

Maintain a high level of self-referral to the SBC service

In terms of referring into the SBC Team, we continue to have solely two ways to access face-to-face counselling in the comprehensive schools which reflect our commitment to the Welsh assembly Government's preference that young people engage willingly, and are consenting partners in the counselling process by referring themselves: Self-referral and School staff referral. We acknowledge self-referral as usually the most person-centred method of requesting counselling. However our figures also demonstrate that counsellors have developed good working relationships with school staff to support pupils to make referrals and to make appropriate referrals on a pupil's behalf.

In addition to a paper system in schools, young people continue to self-refer via an automated on-line system via their school website, or via QR codes on the posters and our information leaflets. The SBC Team is available to those not on a school roll,

including electively home educated pupils, via the on-line referral system and by paper forms on request.

The most common form of referral across Wales was by school-based staff (including teachers, support staff and school nurses), which accounted for nearly half of all referrals (46% in 2014 - 2015). Self- referral was the second most common form of referral (37% in 2014 - 2015). The trend for different types of referrals was similar for both 2013 - 2014 and 2014 - 2015.
As detailed in Table 2 below, we have maintained a much higher level of self-referral to the SBC service of just below 65% over the 3 period 2013 – 2016. We will continue to report on this indicator. This data is required by Welsh Government on an annual basis.

2013 - 14	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
13/14 Total Self	82	18.5%	215	48.4%	297	66.9%
13/14 Total Staff	74	16.7%	73	16.4%	147	33.1%
2014 - 15						
14/15 Total Self	117	22.2%	210	39.8%	327	62%
14/15 Total Staff	98	18.6%	102	19.4%	200	38%
2015 - 16						
15/16 Total Self	98	19.1%	236	45.9%	334	65%
15/16 Total Staff	96	18.7%	84	16.3%	180	35%

Table 2 Source of referral for counselling by gender

In line with the statutory requirement to provide Welsh Government with data on completed counselling work, the following information reflects the number of pupils who completed counselling. It is important to note that this work may have originated in the previous year although is completed during this current year. This data is required by Welsh Government on an annual basis.

Table 3 below provides information not only on the number of pupils accessing counselling but also the number of counselling sessions provided. Whilst there will be individual variations around the average number of sessions, there is clear evidence, as detailed in Table 4 below, that pupils are requiring more sessions before they complete their counselling. This reflects the increasingly complex issues being brought to counselling. The pre-intervention score detailed in Table 1 confirms this with the highest ever recorded average start score of 18.5 on the YP-CORE.

From Table 3, we can also see there was a decrease in the number of pupils seen for counselling in 2013 – 2014. This coincides with a reduction in staffing due to 2 maternity leaves. There would also have been a decrease in the number of sessions delivered as both counsellors would have been winding down their work and forming endings with clients prior to starting their maternity leave.

The number of counselling sessions provided in 2015 – 2016 is the highest in the past 4 year period.

Academic Year	2012 - 13	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016
Total Clients	556	444	527	514
Total Sessions	2428	1561	2372	2480
Average number of sessions	4.4	3.6	4.5	4.8

Table 3 Average number of counselling sessions received per pupil accessing counselling

In 2015 – 2016 a total of 14 Looked After children and young people (LAC&YP) received counselling. This represents 2.7% of the total numbers in receipt of counselling for that time period. Using the PLASC, (Pupil Level Annual School Census), data provided by schools, for the same time period there were a total of 9509 pupils in years 6 to 14 who would have been eligible to access counselling of whom 135 were LAC&YP. The proportion of LAC&YP in this school population is therefore 1.4%. Although LAC&YP are also eligible to access other therapeutic services proportionally more, amounting to almost double in terms of their prevalence in the school population, accessed counselling

Priority 2:To increase the number of boys accessing counselling

Measure	2014-15 Actual (Full Year)	2015-16 Actual (Full Year)	Comparative Performance	2015-16 Qtr. 2 (cumulative)	2016-17 Qtr. 2 (cumulative)
Service measure 3: % increase the number of boys accessing counselling (Priority 2)	Please see Table 4 below		See narrative below	Yearly collection as required by Welsh Government	

Nationally, we know that girls access the Counselling Service in greater numbers. In Neath Port Talbot, we have seen a percentage increase of male clients in comparison to the 2013 level, but this year the percentage number of male clients accessing the service decreased. We have used a range of methods to improve on this figure. Together with the traditional assemblies to promote the service to the whole school, we have also encouraged schools to recruit even numbers of boys and girls into the Peer Mentoring and Peer Support Programmes. Receiving training from their School Based Counsellor, the mentors learn basic active listening skills. Being able to 'see the process from the inside', and to experience the impact on their mentees has raised the profile of the Counselling Service within the whole school community. We also aim to lessen any residual stigma from attending counselling: people are more likely to ask for help if they have had the experience of helping others. Boys are traditionally more sensitive to the possible stigma of attending counselling, which we aim to continue to lessen in future. We will continue to report on the gender split in accessing counselling, however, the average gender split across Wales in 2014 – 2015 was 64% female and 36% male and has been the same since 2012 - 2013. Our counselling service is therefore performing favourably with the all Wales figures (see Table 4 below).

Academic Year	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016
Total Clients	444	527	514
% Male Clients	35.1%	40.8%	37.7%
% Female Clients	64.9%	59.2%	62.3%

Table 4 Gender of pupils accessing counselling

Priority 3: To develop a robust recording system for the measurement to record waiting times for counselling

All pupils continue to be offered a counselling assessment appointment shortly after a referral has been received. This is in line with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy, (BACP), research on clients on waiting lists and has proved to increase resilience for those waiting in allowing them to feel 'part of the system'. All pupils are able to access the drop-in service at break and lunch times and are more likely to do so having received an assessment appointment. This also allows counsellors to sift out any child protection issues at an early stage.

We have worked with the Data Unit of the LA in developing a spreadsheet to record our counselling data which automatically populates the WG return form. This will prove more efficient for both the counsellors in collating the data and for the Senior Counsellor in checking the accuracy of the information provided.

One of the priorities detailed in our 2015 – 2016 report card was to: *"address and reduce the number of children and young people on waiting lists for counselling"*. Following further work within the SBC team, we identified seasonal fluctuations in the numbers of pupils requesting counselling. This had a direct impact on waiting lists resulting in variance throughout the year. There was also variance in how long pupils had to wait for counselling. The new counselling spreadsheet will calculate the number of weeks waiting time for each counselling client. This will give us a more meaningful figure in looking at waiting times, rather than the number of pupils waiting for counselling.

From September 2016, we will implement and embed the newly created data capture system to record waiting times for counselling. Once a baseline has been established, over the next academic year, new service level targets will be set on an annual basis. We will, through the school level reports, identify school and school cluster level concerns and issues. We will also report on how this will result in improved collation and analysis of data across all inclusion service areas to ensure that schools receive appropriate support and challenge. This will also contribute to the development of the cluster ALN planning tool detailed in Priority 5 and the Inclusion Service Business plan.

We will also, once a baseline has been established, evaluate whether the recruitment of volunteer counsellors is having an impact on waiting times. We will also apply this measure to the provision of small group and workshop sessions to those C&YP where this will meet their emotional health and psychological wellbeing needs in lieu of individual counselling.

Priority 4: To establish the role of the SBCS within the behaviour and wellbeing continuum to ensure best possible outcomes for pupils with Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

Once we have established our role within the behaviour and wellbeing continuum, in addition to the data we currently collect, we will report on how pupils with wellbeing/behaviour needs have improved outcomes through measurement of attendance and exclusion rates from school and reference them to targets set within the Corporate Improvement Plan 2016 - 2019.

Priority 5: To support the development of a cluster ALN planning tool to facilitate collaborative planning with schools.

Led by the Co-ordinator for Support for Inclusion, and as detailed in the Inclusion service Business Plan, the SBC service will also support the development of a cluster ALN planning tool to facilitate collaborative planning with schools which will be introduced from the Autumn term 2016.

Measure	2014-15 Actual (Full Year)	2015-16 Actual (Full Year)	Comparative Performance	2015-16 Qtr. 2 (cumulative)	2016-17 Qtr. 2 (cumulative)
Corporate measure (CM01): **a)** Number of transactional services fully web enabled	N/A	N/A	If available	N/A	N/A
b) Number of transactional services partially web enabled	See below	See below		See below	See below

In addition to a paper system in schools, the SBC Team is available to young people through self-referral via an automated on-line system via the school websites, or via QR codes on our posters and information leaflets.

In addition to the core service provided by the Local Authority which is detailed above, some schools have started to approach the service for an enhanced service for additional hours counselling. Under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act schools cannot directly employ a counsellor themselves and therefore, under a service level agreement, have secured additional time through the SBC service. This way we ensure that counsellors are appropriately qualified and adhere to the code of ethics required in the post. Currently Ysgol Bae Baglan has contracted for an additional three days per week for the academic year 2016 – 2017. Ysgol Hendrefelin has also contracted for a day per week for 2016 - 2017, where specialist skills within the SBC team were identified, to provide for work to be undertaken with its pupils who exhibit internalising social emotional and behavioural difficulties, including those who have become disengaged and/or school phobic.

Measure	2014-15 Actual (Full Year)	2015-16 Actual (Full Year)	2016-17 Qtr. 2 (projected to year end)
Corporate Measure (CM02): % revenue expenditure within budget	1.58% overspend	0% underspend	0% over/underspend
	£3,152	-£418	£0
Revenue Budget £	£200,000	£178,172	£182,963
Corporate Measure (CM03): Amount of FFP savings at risk	n/a New	£25,000	£0

Section 6:
Employee Quadrant 2016-17

Measure	2014-15 Actual (Full Year)	2015-16 Actual (Full Year)	2015-16 Qtr. 2 (cumulative)	2016-17 Qtr. 2 (cumulative)
Corporate Measure (CM04): Average **FTE** (full time equivalent) working days lost due to sickness absence				
School Based Counselling Service	18.2 days	17.7 days	14.2 days	1.2 days
Total Service FTE days lost in the period	91	76	61	5
ELLL Directorate	9.4 days	9.0 days	3.9 days	3.8 days
Council	9.4 Days	9.7 Days	4.2 Days	4.6 Days

The average FTE working days lost due to sickness was 17.7 days for 2015 - 2016. 62% of the absences were due to one member of staff having a long term absence and 31% attributable to another long term sickness absence. Significant improvements have been achieved these first and second quarters with sickness levels falling below both Directorate and Council levels. No staff left due to unplanned departures. One (0.8fte) member of staff has been absent for other reasons from January 2016. This accounts for 18.6% of the core SBC service. Consent was given from Head of Service to cover this absence.

	2015-16 Actual (Full Year)	2015-16 Qtr. 2 (cumulative)	2016-17 Qtr. 2 (cumulative)
Corporate Measure (CM11): Staff engagement Measure	New	New	
Corporate Measure (CM05): % of staff who have received a performance appraisal during 2016-17 (Target 100%) Number of staff who have received a performance appraisal during 2016-17	100	0	0
Corporate Measure (CM06): Number of employees left due to unplanned departures	0	0	0

Section 7: Customer Quadrant 2016-17

Priority1: Through service delivery to: c. Be evaluated positively by those receiving counselling

We have continued to ask our young people for feedback on the service in order that we can continue to develop the service in ways which are appropriate and useful to them. This feedback is anonymised and made available to schools' SMT, EPs and the Challenge Advisor Team within the authority. It will be shared more widely as detailed in Priority 5. We had seen an increase in the number of responses between 2012 and 2015, however there were fewer this year. Participation in service evaluation is voluntary however we will be seeking to reverse this downward trend in response rate.

The feedback questionnaire is standard to all secondary schools within Wales with questions and a section included enabling to pupil to provide qualitative feedback on their experience of receiving counselling. There are a total of 14 questions:

1.   I was able to talk about my thoughts and feelings with my counsellor
2.   The counsellor helped me to understand my situation and my feelings
3.   I understood that what I said to the counsellor would be confidential unless I was at risk
4.   I would ask to see the counsellor again if I needed to
5.   I would recommend counselling to my friends
6.   It was easy to contact the counsellor
7.   I feel more able to cope at school since having counselling
8.   My relationships with friends have improved since going to counselling
9.   My relationships with teachers have improved since going to counselling
10.   I have received enough counselling sessions
11.   Since I had counselling I am more able to concentrate on tasks in and out of school
12.   I feel more positive since going to counselling
13.   I think counselling is a good way to deal with problems
14.   I would consider going to counselling again even if I were no longer in school

As can be seen from Table 5 below, of the 1484 responses received in the most recent questionnaire 88.4% were positive, (falling within the 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' categories), 1.3% were negative, (falling within the 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' categories), and 10.2% were 'Don't Know' responses.

78 responses, 5.3% overall, of responses in the 'Don't Know' category relate to questions 8, 9 and 11 and therefore may simply reflect that those responding did not have, and therefore were not attending counselling for, difficulties in their relationships with their teachers or their friends or difficulties with their concentration. 10 responses, 50%, of the in the negative categories were also in relation to questions 8, 9 and 11. Some services in other LAs no longer report on these 3 questions as many pupils have confirmed that this is in fact the case and that these questions do not apply to them. Ongoing discussions are taking place at the national Leads' meetings regarding the continued inclusion of these specific questions in this survey.

% responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree	Total Responses
2012 - 2013	62.0	28.4	8.3	0.9	0.4	1231
2013 – 2014	69.2	24.3	5.7	0.7	0.0	1608
2014 - 2015	58.2	33.0	8.0	0.8	0.0	1760
2015 - 2016	56.7	31.7	10.2	1.2	0.1	1484

Table 5 / Service Evaluation Questionnaire completed by young people 2012 – 2016

Measure	2015-16 Actual (Full Year)	2015-16 Qtr. 2 (cumulative)	2016-17 Qtr. 2 (cumulative)
Corporate Measure (CM07): Total number of complaints	0	0	0
Internal	0	0	0
External (from the public)	0	0	0
Corporate Measure (CM08): Total number of compliments	0	0	0
Internal	0	0	0
External (members of the public)	0	0	0
Corporate Measure (CM09): customer satisfaction measure/s + Priority 1c	Please see Table 5 above	Yearly collection as required by Welsh Government	