

Public Document Pack

To: Members of the Performance
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 20 September 2024

Direct Dial: 01824 712554

e-mail: democratic@denbighshire.gov.uk

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am** on **THURSDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2024** in **COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN AND BY VIDEO CONFERENCE.**

Yours sincerely

G. Williams
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (Pages 5 - 6)

Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at this meeting.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (Pages 7 - 14)

To receive the minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting held on the 18th July 2024 (copy attached)

5 ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS TRANSFORMATION UPDATE (Pages 15 - 20)

To receive a report providing the committee with an update on the progress made to ensure the Local Authority and schools are meeting their statutory requirements under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act, 2018 (copy attached).

10:10am – 10:40am

6 PROMOTE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT IN EDUCATION
(Pages 21 - 84)

To receive a report which informs the committee on the current position with regards to School attendance and engagement in education and the response taken to address matters when concern exists at individual pupil level in Denbighshire (copy attached).

10:40am – 11:10am

BREAK 11:10am - 11:25am

7 WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN TRANSFORMATION (Pages 85 - 94)

To receive a report on the progress made to date in delivering the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) in all the county's schools in line with the Welsh Government's vision for Welsh language provision (copy attached).

11:25am – 11:55am

8 CURRICULUM FOR WALES (Pages 95 - 100)

To receive a report updating the committee on the progress made by schools since the Curriculum for Wales became statutory in September 2022. The report offers information on lessons learnt from evaluations across schools during this initial implementation phase and any impact on staff and learners (copy attached).

11:55am – 12:25pm

9 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 101 - 128)

To consider a report by the Scrutiny Coordinator (copy enclosed) seeking a review of the committee's forward work programme and updating members on relevant issues.

12:25pm – 12:40pm

10 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

To receive any updates from Committee representatives on various Council Boards and Groups

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Councillor Hugh Irving (Chair)

Councillor Gareth Sandilands (Vice-Chair)

Ellie Chard
Bobby Feeley
Martyn Hogg
Carol Holliday

Alan Hughes
Paul Keddie
Terry Mendies
Andrea Tomlin

Voting Co-opted Members for Education (Agenda Items No.5,6,7 and 8 only)

Colette Owen

Neil Roberts

COPIES TO:

All Councillors for information
Press and Libraries
Town and Community Councils

This page is intentionally left blank

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

Code of Conduct for Members

DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, *(name)*

a *member/co-opted member of

*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Denbighshire County Council

CONFIRM that I have declared a ***personal / personal and prejudicial** interest not previously declared in accordance with the provisions of Part III of the Council's Code of Conduct for Members, in respect of the following:-

*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Date of Disclosure:

Committee *(please specify)*:

Agenda Item No.

Subject Matter:

Nature of Interest:

*(See the note below)**

Signed

Date

*Note: Please provide sufficient detail e.g. 'I am the owner of land adjacent to the application for planning permission made by Mr Jones', or 'My husband / wife is an employee of the company which has made an application for financial assistance'.

This page is intentionally left blank

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Ruthin and by video conference on Thursday, 18 July 2024 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Gareth Sandilands (Vice Chair), Ellie Chard, Bobby Feeley, Martyn Hogg, Carol Holliday, Alan Hughes, Paul Keddie, Terry Mendies, and Andrea Tomlin.

Cabinet Lead Member for Health and Social Care – Councillor Elen Heaton attended for item 5 and 6 at the Committee's invitation.

ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Director: Communities, Modernisation and Wellbeing (NS), Head of Adult Social Care and Homelessness (AL), Service Manager, Community Support Service Cefndy (NB), Joint Head of Service for Education and Children's Service (RM), Scrutiny Co-ordinator (RE), Committee Administrator (KJ – Webcast), and Business Coordinator (RPJ Minutes).

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hug Irving (Chair) Councillor Diane King, along with the Lead Member for Children, Young People and Families. Apologies were also received from the Corporate Director: Governance and Business, Gary Williams. The Corporate Director: Social Services and Education, who was in attendance for business items 5 and 6, also undertook the Corporate Executive Team (CET) support role for the meeting.

In the Chair's absence the meeting's proceedings were chaired by the Vice-Chair.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No members declared interests of a personal, or personal and prejudicial nature in any of the business items to be transacted during the course of the meeting.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No items of an urgent nature had been raised with the Chair or the Scrutiny Co-ordinator prior to the commencement of the meeting.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 6 June 2024 were submitted. It was:

Resolved: that the minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 6 June 2024 be received as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Matters arising:

Page 12, 'Update on Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan for 2025/26 to 2027/28 and Review of the Council's Financial Resilience and Sustainability – Predicted Car Parking Fees Income': the Scrutiny Co-ordinator advised that the Council's Chief Financial Officer had advised that presently it was very early in the financial year to be forecasting income over the whole of the year with any certainty. For the first few months of the financial year income levels seemed to be comparable with those of the previous year, therefore it was anticipated that the Service was on track to achieve the additional income forecast. Nevertheless, external factors such as the weather and attendance levels at large events in major towns would have an impact on car parking income. A clearer picture of predicted income figures should be available towards late autumn. Members asked to be provided with an update on car park income figures and the Service's performance to date in achieving its predicted income figures before the end of the calendar year.

5 DRAFT DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care (EH) introduced the report (previously circulated), summarising the significant increase in the need for social care services, issues over recruitment and retention to the sector, thus progress being slower and performance against key indicators having dropped because of the pressures. Focus ahead would be on the transformation agenda.

Corporate Director: Social Services and Education (NS) explained the report's production was a statutory requirement and its format and contents were prescribed by Welsh Government, therefore there were limits to how Denbighshire County Council could adapt the report. However, there would be a new format soon from Welsh Government.

Corporate Director: Social Services and Education (NS) expressed her thanks to the department, partners and informal carers for their continued hard work. The team continued to operate as a blended service with Education and Social Care and had joint heads of service and a joint budget and service plan.

The Chair then opened the discussion out for questions.

Responding to members' questions the officers advised:

- Recruitment and retention throughout the report was cited as a challenge, particularly in relation to Children's Services. The difficulties faced here were not new for this reporting period the issue has been reported to scrutiny numerous times. The department had done further specific targeted work, looking at the reasons provided in exit interviews, developing the staff currently employed, and continuously promoting the flexible working offer and lobbying nationally for pay increases to the sector. However this was a national issue, Social Work was now undersubscribed and therefore not enough newly qualified entrants were coming in to the profession. Similarly with Mental Health, there was a national shortage of professionals in the service. Denbighshire was looking at the current structure within the team

- and allocating work to free up Approved Mental Health Practitioner's (AMPH's) to focus on the work they were statutorily required to undertake.
- Corporate Director: Social Services and Education advised that she and fellow members of the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) Cymru were continually lobbying the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), the Local Government Association (LGA), both UK & Welsh Governments and others with respect of better pay for care sector workers, including parity of terms and conditions with National Health Service (NHS) employees.
 - The report was onerous, Head of Adult Social Care and Homelessness (AL) was working with Welsh Government on the new format for future annual reports, however it was uncertain how much of their input would be taken onboard. The new format should hopefully be better, it would include a performance section with data and would separate Adult and Children Services information more clearly. The Case Studies provided within the report were well received and provided useful illustrations of the complexities entailed in providing the right types of services to suit the individuals.
 - Digital inclusion was discussed and the importance of reaching out to older residents and those that were digitally excluded was discussed. The 'Ageing Well in Denbighshire' scheme played a crucial role in this, especially in rural Denbighshire. 'Digital Confidence' was another scheme aimed at building digital confidence, this programme was funded by Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) monies.
 - Complex Needs, the pressures continued to increase, older population presenting to residential care now on average were 82 – 83 years old and were using these services when families could no longer provide the required support, therefore their needs were greater when entering care. In Children's Services since the pandemic there had been an increase in complex mental health and behavioural mental health. A lot of work was ongoing with partners, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Local Integrated Family Team (LIFT), Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) Mental Health Services, Police etc. focussing on early intervention and supporting families earlier. Regular Multi Agency Team (MAT) meetings with schools were held, also the Team Around the Family (TAF) approach was utilised, and lots of sharing of information and data took place to support effective collaborative working.
 - That there had been a dip in performance, this was due to the complexities of need with which individuals were presenting which meant that assessments were taking longer, however the service wanted quality driven assessments undertaken and therefore these took more time. Recruitment and retention was another factor which contributed to the decline in performance, as well as a new system of recording data which meant it was difficult to compare one year to the next.
 - The report illustrated that only six complaints had been received against the Service, which seemed an extremely low number. The complaints procedure was a statutory process defined by Welsh Government. The Denbighshire County Council Complaints Department was highly regarded and had been approached by a number of other authorities on how to deal with complaints in an effective manner. The department's response rate to complaints was extremely efficient.

- Homelessness was within the Head of Adult Social Care and Homelessness' (AL) remit, however the requirements for the Director of Social Services Annual Report did not necessitate information on homelessness to be included in the report. Within the finance section for information £4m of the £59m Adult Services budget was for the provision of homelessness services, the remainder of Homelessness Services were funded via grant funding. Aged 16-17 homeless young people formed part of the Children's Service Budget so is not included in this figure.
- Transitioning from Children to Adult Services was all about forward planning and early intervention. For children with disabilities, Denbighshire County Council had an excellent onward planning process. However, for Children with Mental Health entering Adult Mental Health services the department were experiencing some pressures. Care Leavers if in education stayed within the service until they were age 21 up to 25. There was bespoke transition, work with homelessness, onward housing and what was available could be problematic, therefore the Service was currently looking at ways to develop support within the home. For 18-year-olds in residential care there was a step-down transition out to supported accommodation. For residential and fostering there was a programme called "when I'm ready" which meant that they did not have to leave just because they had turned 18. A lot of pathway planning, managing money and budget skills were key aspects for this age group.
- Not for Profit agenda – Denbighshire's Head of Children's Services served on the All-Wales Directors of Children's Services board for this particular programme as its Chair. There were a lot of unanswered questions around this Bill, a number of questions had been submitted to Welsh Government in relation to it. Whilst the intent of the 'Not for Profit' agenda was commendable it would in reality be extremely challenging, and it was still not clear where exemptions would be made.
- Micro providers had filled a lot of gaps in domiciliary care provision in the county, it was regarded as a valued offer by Denbighshire County Council as the services provided by micro-providers stopped people requiring statutory services by helping them maintain their independence. Each micro-provider could have up to four people for whom they could provide support and care. In total micro providers provided care and support for circa 200 residents, some of which was self-funded. Denbighshire, recruited, trained and supported Micro-providers, however they were very much a private entity, self-employed individuals.
- Global Resettlement Team was funded through the Home Office via funding for specific Resettlement Programmes for citizens from Afghanistan, Syria and Ukraine. Financial support for Ukrainian citizens was diminishing, however, there were still a lot of Ukrainian families living with host families across the county and they continued to receive funding via the Home Office. The Ukrainian Welcome Hub had now closed, with all families being accommodated in more permanent housing solutions. Denbighshire had a limited number of Afghan and Syrian families coming through each year, numbers were very small. With respect of Asylum Seekers, in 2023/24 each local authority were given an allocation of homes that could be used to accommodate asylum seekers. The provider for the Home Office approached the Council with properties they were proposing to be used for

this purpose and how they would be brought up to standard. Funding for these was a one-off amount per bed space. There were currently three or four families housed in Denbighshire and the Global Resettlement Team worked closely with North Wales Police (NWP) and Denbighshire's Public Protection Department in relation to Asylum Seekers. No care funding is used for the resettlement programmes.

- Looking to the near future, the position would be challenging, Social Services were not immune from significant budget savings, performance would decline in some areas, the support offer would probably need to be less, however every effort would be made to maintain service delivery for the most vulnerable.

At the conclusion of an in-depth discussion the Committee thanked the Director for a comprehensive report which provided an honest account of the Services' performance, along with the pressures it encountered in delivering quality services to the County's residents during austere financial times.

The Committee:

Resolved: subject to the above observations -

(i) to receive the report and endorse it as a clear account of the Council's Social Care Services' performance in 2023/24; and

(ii) to acknowledge the financial and resource pressures within which the Services were currently expected to operate.

The Committee adjourned for a break at 11.20am and re-convened at 11.30am.

6 CEFNDY YEAR END REPORT 2023/24

Cabinet Lead Member – Councillor Elen Heaton introduced the report (previously circulated) and attendees for this item, Corporate Director: Communities, Modernisation and Wellbeing (NS), Head of Adult Social Care and Homelessness (AL), and Service Manager - Community Support Service Cefndy (NB).

Cefndy organised a site visit for this committee last year which was well received and therefore the majority of members well versed on what Cefndy offered, the Chair therefore opened the discussion for questions.

Responding to the questions and points raised the Lead Member and officers advised that:

- Despite the challenging financial climate there had been an increase in sales, in a competitive global market and sales were on target for next financial year.
- Cefndy had overcome significant challenges such as supply chain disruptions, heavy inflation pressures, Brexit. The management team were now looking at new products, product development being considered working through older designs first.
- with regard to the enterprise's carbon footprint, it was unable to have solar panels on the building due to the tree line, however, it had incorporated LED lights, introduced a four day working week to reduce on utility bills which had, saved 15%. All new equipment had a better carbon footprint.

- with respect of long term viability, there was a need to start looking at career progression within Cefndy. Succession planning was on Denbighshire's radar, it would support people to develop their skill sets further. The services provided at Cefndy were unique, they were not replicated elsewhere so it did present some challenges to recruit. Engineering college was now open next to Cefndy and therefore work experience and other opportunities would hopefully come through the courses on offer there.
- there were currently no plans to set up an Advisory Board, this would be reviewed as part of the Transformation Agenda, possibly look at having a Task and Finish Group which could include Councillors. However, Cefndy was a Council-run service therefore Councillors could be as involved as they wished with the service.
- Officers would be more than willing to arrange another visit for all councillors (in small groups) to Cefndy.

At the conclusion of the discussion Committee members stated that it would be beneficial to see a good news story posted on Denbighshire Today and on the Council's social media platforms about Cefndy, what it manufactured, its dedicated workforce and its benefits to the community. They also requested that future business plans be shared with them.

Following a comprehensive discussion, the Committee:

Resolved:

- (i) subject to the above observations, and having analysed the performance of Cefndy in relation to its financial, business and social well-being objectives during 2023/24, to receive the report and endorse the progress made in stabilising the enterprise and planning for its future viability;**
- (ii) that arrangements be made to invite elected members (in manageable sized groups) to visit the Cefndy facility to see the work undertaken there and how it benefits the well-being of its workforce; and**
- (iii) that a further report on Cefndy's performance during the 2024/25 financial year be presented to the Committee in twelve months' time.**

7 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator introduced the report and appendices (previously circulated) which sought the Committee to review its programme of future work.

The Committee was advised that the deferral of the presentation of the progress report on Christ the Word School from the current meeting's business agenda to November's meeting had led to the Committee having too many items listed for discussion on that meeting's business agenda to facilitate a fair airing for each subject.

As some of the items listed for November's meeting were time sensitive members suggested holding a morning and afternoon session, or two meetings on separate days, to transact the required business. However, officers advised that pressures on the Council's committee meetings timetable and staffing resources to support additional sessions/meetings would make it extremely difficult to arrange and support the holding of two meetings/sessions within the same month.

A suggestion was therefore made to enquire with the Chair of Communities Scrutiny Committee to see whether that committee could assume the role of monitoring the Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan, as members felt that the Strategy was more closely aligned to Communities Scrutiny Committee's remit than that of Performance Scrutiny Committee. If Communities Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake this role it would render Performance Scrutiny Committee's workload more manageable for the remainder of the calendar year. The Scrutiny Co-ordinator agree to enquire on the Committee's behalf.

Members were advised that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) was scheduled for 16 September and therefore any requests for items to be scrutinised should be submitted to the Scrutiny Co-ordinator on the form attached at Appendix 2 to the report well in advance of that meeting. Appendix 3 contained the Cabinet's Forward Work Programme for members' information whilst Appendix 4 gave an overview of the progress to date in relation to the Committee's recommendations from its previous meeting.

The Committee:

Resolved: subject to the above -

(i) that, with a view to alleviating pressures on the Committee's time and forward work programme, a formal request be made to Communities Scrutiny Committee to consider the forthcoming progress report on Denbighshire's Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan; and

(ii) to confirm the Committee's forward work programme as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

8 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

None.

Meeting concluded at 12.05pm.

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	26th September 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Diane King (Lead Member for Education, Children and Young People), Geraint Davies (Head of Education)
Report authors	Ruth Thackray and Joseph Earl
Title	Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transformation Update September 2024

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. The report provides a further update on the progress made to ensure the Local Authority and schools are meeting their statutory requirements under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act, 2018.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To provide information regarding the actions taken to ensure the Local Authority and schools are meeting their statutory requirements under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act, 2018 that started in September 2021 and is being implemented until 2025. ([Following Ministerial announcement on implementation timescales](#))

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. Scrutiny are invited to discuss the details of this report and to identify any aspects of the transformation work which may benefit from detailed examination in the future.

4. Report details

Context

4.1. The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act, 2018 is replacing the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (2002). The Act is supported by regulations and an ALN Code. The Act replaces the terms 'special educational needs' (SEN) and 'learning difficulties and/or learning disabilities' (LDD) with the new term 'additional learning needs' (ALN). This will replace previous plans, such as Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Statements of SEN and Learning and Skills Plans.

Progress

4.2. **The effectiveness of the funding provided to schools to meet the Act's requirements** - School Inclusion (including ALN) funding is fully delegated to schools as agreed in the school budget forum, based on a 3-year rolling average following moderation of Provision Maps from schools. This allows schools to plan more effectively and be responsive to learners who need support. Following consultation with schools, the LA has committed to reviewing the mechanism for allocating Inclusion (including ALN) funding due to the workload that completing and moderating Provision Maps entails. A Task and Finish group will be set up during this Autumn term 2024 to explore and propose funding mechanisms to the School Budget Forum.

Progress made in recruiting and supporting Educational Psychologists -

Nationally it is understood that there will be an increased workload through the introduction, implementation and embedding of the ALN reforms. Denbighshire currently employ 4 full time Educational Psychologists, which is lower than the nationally recommended ratio. The LA are in the second year of sponsoring a member of staff through the three-year course, which will result in an additional Welsh speaking Educational Psychologist from September 2026. Not having sufficient Welsh-speaking staff is a risk to key Authority legislative duties and reforms. There is a concern on the recruitment numbers of Educational Psychologists across Wales; Denbighshire have written to Welsh Government to share their concerns over this lack of training opportunities.

4.3. School-based educational practitioners' feedback on the resources and support provided to schools with a view to meeting the Act's additional requirements -

School Readiness and Training – The LA continues to provide support and guidance to schools where required, through ALN Coordinator (ALNCo) meetings, ALNCo cluster meetings and online platforms such as SharePoint. Bespoke support is given where requested or deemed appropriate. Strong collaborative working relationships with the special schools and the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) enable the LA to respond well to the increasing needs from schools and to share expertise. The LA also collaborates effectively with LAs across the region to share best practice.

Curriculum Task and Finish Group – The LA has been working on a specific project funded by the Welsh Government to look at how the Curriculum for Wales and the ALN Code for Wales can be further aligned to meet the needs of learners. Representatives from schools and across the LA teams have met and as a result, a common understanding on how schools are designing inclusive local curricula to support all learners to progress is developing.

Grant Funding - Grant funding from the Welsh Government continues to be delegated to schools and by the LA, in line with terms and conditions, to support the implementation of the ALNET Act (2018).

4.4. Staff recruitment and retention matters relating to the implementation of the Act's requirements – The LA is continuing to utilise grant funding from the Welsh Government to fund extra ALN Advisory Teachers to support the statutory duties under the Act. Whilst there is grant funding to support schools with the implementation, there is also recognition that there are still significant pressures on the school workforce, in particular ALNcos.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: The Denbighshire We Want?

5.1 This area of work contributes towards making Denbighshire a healthier and happier place where young people want to live and work and have the skills to do so. It also contributes to make Denbighshire a place where young people can learn and grow,

in a fair and safe environment and have the best start in life regardless of any additional learning needs they may have.

5. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

5.1. DCC ICT are supporting Education Services and schools with the Eclipse IT system. We will continue to use Welsh Government Online Individual Development Plan (IDP) grant funding to support the ongoing costs of housing the IT system.

5.2. The LA continues to utilise Welsh Government grants effectively to support the LA and schools in implementing the ALN reforms. Welsh Government have previously increased funding allocated for ALN implementation from £6.6m to £12m, and implementation timelines have been extended to the end of academic year 2024-25. This is in acknowledgement of the increased demands on the workforce to respond to the needs of children and move children from SEN to ALN alongside establishing inclusive education practices in the school. This level of funding will also be available in 2024-25. LA central ALN grant funding has however remained static.

Two temporary ALN Advisory teachers are in place until August 2025 to support implementation of the ALN Code and ALNET Act (2018) across the LA. Staffing discussions are ongoing to support the implementation work.

5.3 Consideration of Educational Psychology capacity is detailed in section 4.

6 What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment will generally be required for decisions or proposals for change in order to comply with the Equality Act 2010, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language Standards. Welsh Government have impact assessed ALN Transformation journey.

7 What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1 Discussions (where applicable) with trade unions and head teachers continue to provide forums for honest discussion. We work with a range of stakeholders, including parental groups, Health, Further Education Institutes to share and receive comment on the continuing implementation of the ALN reforms.

9 Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 All costs will need to be met from existing delegated budgets to schools, Education budget and also grant funding that has been made available from Welsh Government.

10 What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1 We previously reported pressures in the Educational Psychology team and Additional Learning Needs teams and mitigated the risks as highlighted in section 4 and 6.

10.2 Pressure in the ALN team due to conversions required and number of cases continues to be a risk however recruitment of extra temporary members of staff has helped.

10.3 The funding arrangements are currently being discussed at a national level with regards to the Independent Special Post 16 Institutions (ISPI). Had the first proposal been accepted, Denbighshire would be financially impacted negatively. Following the raising of concerns and a report written and delivered by the North Wales region's LAs, Welsh Government have agreed to review the processes again. We await their decision and will participate in any further discussions.

10.4 A consistent interpretation of the ALNET Act (2018) and ALN Code for Wales continues to be a priority for all stakeholders. Denbighshire have engaged regionally and nationally to gain further clarification in this area through meetings with Welsh Government. The LA have also met with Estyn inspectors to discuss ALN and to feed into the thematic report due to be published later this year.

10.5 Workload implications on schools are continuing to be a factor due to the extra responsibilities on schools under the Act and the associated administration. The LA is supporting schools with guidance, facilitating cluster approaches and providing bespoke training where needed.

11 Power to make the decision

11.1 Powers in relation to matters detailed in this report are as per:

- Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000;
- Section 7 of the Council's Constitution

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	26th September 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Diane King (Lead Member for Education, Children and Young People)
Head of Service	Geraint Davies (Head of Education)
Report author	Wayne Wheatley, Education Social Work
Title	Promote School Attendance and Engagement in Education

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. The report provides the current position with regards to School attendance and engagement in education and the response taken to address matters when concern exists at individual pupil level in Denbighshire.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. To provide information and explain the measures in place to support vulnerable pupils to re-engage with their education and provide an understanding of the regional and national context in addressing the current level of concern nationally.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1 Scrutiny are invited to discuss the details of this report and to identify any matters raised that require further clarity or examination in the future.

4. Report details

- 4.1 School attendance rates in 2018/19 pre- pandemic school year ended with primary schools achieving an overall figure of 94.8% and secondary schools 93.7%.
- 4.2 The Wales average attendance for Primary / Secondary combined for the academic year September 2023 to June 2024 was 90.6%. This is an increase from 89.2% over

the same period in 2022/23 across Wales. In Denbighshire the overall figure for Primary / Secondary combined for the academic year 2023 / 2024 was 89.9 %, which equates to 0.7 % less than the Wales average. Nationally, 10.3 % of pupils met the persistent absence threshold of 10% of sessions missed for the academic year which is again an improvement from 12.9% over the same period in 2022/23. Denbighshire figure was 15.2% for the same period 2022/23.

- 4.3 Lynne Neagle MS Cabinet Secretary for Education has recently announced plans to bring Wales in line with England where persistent absence is defined as 10% of half day sessions missed (30 sessions) rather than the current 20% absence rate of persistent absence which equates to 60 half day sessions a year.
- 4.4 Denbighshire has received additional WG funding through the Local Authority Education Grant (LAEG) to address and support education and schools. We are continuing to develop cohesive community links across the authority to address this current trend and have a strong focus on community belonging and access to services. This ensures children access their right to a full-time education entitlement but also receive access to services broader and wider than just education alone. As part of this, we have developed a pupil engagement strategy which draws upon the many services supporting this agenda and sets a clear strategic direction for the service.
- 4.5 Improving school attendance is the agreed priority for this school year for all teams within Education services, working with schools to monitor and support pupils' engagement. This forms part of the revised attendance policy of the county linked to Welsh Government guidance [Belonging, Engagement and Participation](#) and reflects the key themes and expectations of actions by local authorities. The new template attendance policy for 2024/25 (**Appendix 1**) provided to schools by Denbighshire Education ensures compliance, effective management and support.
- 4.6 Education Welfare Service has direct responsibility for school attendance in Denbighshire. Utilising Welsh Government grant funding for 2024/25, the service has increased staff capacity and appointed two family engagement officers and one attendance officer. These staff support schools and families and provide regular contact and in-depth work to promote attendance, supporting and at times challenging the "parent" through the service's statutory duties to engage and participate in their child's education. An open-door ethos and culture is promoted

across all schools in the county. Furthermore, an emphasis on the parent feeling valued and welcomed to work with schools is in place, with varying offers to participate through activities, meetings and informal chats at school; offering the chance to meet and understand how the parent can make a difference. Additional Community Focused School grant funding for 2024/25 has enabled both the School Counselling Service and Early Years family link worker to form part of the services offered to families based on referrals from schools related to attendance concerns. This additional support will assist where mental health, social anxiety and early access to education is a significant factor.

4.8 Denbighshire Education is implementing a new reduced timetable policy for schools. This addresses the local and national concerns surrounding the numbers of pupils on reduced school days for a variety of reasons including health and wider social, attendance and behavioural needs. The policy offers a consistent process for tracking and monitoring of pupils including where schools must inform Denbighshire Education when they are considering implementing a reduced timetable plan for a pupil. An audit is currently being undertaken to have an accurate position on this work with the implementation of the new policy.

There is no single solution, one group or one service that can address this issue.

4.10 The local authority is looking at the scope in which recent reforms in Curriculum for Wales, Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (ALNET) (Wales) Act 2018, and the resources and connections within the authority services can place attendance of pupils within its remit of work as a priority.

4.11 The scope of the above in turn addresses many issues children deal with daily: apathy, despondency and more worrying mental health and well-being which has increased significantly since 2018 onwards. Most if not all referrals from schools to the Education Welfare Service have a repeating theme of the above issues.

4.12 Currently the overall performance of Denbighshire is 89.9 %, the average across Wales from September to June 2024 is 90.6%. A more detailed analysis of our current position regarding authorised and unauthorised absence over the last three academic years is available in **Appendix 2**.

4.13 A whole school approach is common across Denbighshire schools where all staff regardless of role can make a difference to a child in a school setting that places

the child central to all its work with a common interest of learning, care and well-being. Schools have pastoral teams and support staff in place, working with pupils to improve learning outcomes but also understanding the care of our vulnerable learners who are subject to adverse childhood experiences, complex family issues, poverty, disadvantage and increasing mental health, anxiety and disengagement issues.

4.14 A series of guides have been created to support schools and families to understand the expectations around good attendance and also provide clarity through a series of frequently asked questions (FAQs).

4.15 Fixed penalty notices are used as a measure where all efforts to engage a parent have failed by school, this is in line with the current guidance from the Welsh Government.

Fixed Penalty Notices	School Year	Warning issued	Fines Issued
	2021/ 2022	42	7
	2022/2023	234	22
Current School Year	2023/2024	483	76

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: The Denbighshire We Want?

5.1 This area of work contributes towards making Denbighshire a place where young people want to live and work and have the skills to do so. It also contributes to make Denbighshire a place where young people can flourish and have the best start in life regardless of any issues or challenges they may be facing.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1 The local authority is supported by external grants to address the current level of concern nationally and locally regarding the impact of poor attendance and the progress to regain and surpass the levels achieved back in 2018/19. If the funding were to reduce in the future settlement from the Welsh Government a review would need to be taken to look at the strategic direction of the county relating to the future

investment to support this high priority area. Denbighshire has a clear understanding that Welsh Government's current focus is to promote engagement of all learners.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1 There is no decision or proposal for change required and therefore a Well-being Impact Assessment is not required.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. Discussions are ongoing with headteachers to inform policy changes and support. This area was discussed at Performance Scrutiny in January 2024.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 As set out within section 6 of the report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1 The risks of not achieving the WG and LA strategic objective will potentially see a lower number of children accessing school regularly in Denbighshire; this work will mitigate against those risks.

11. Power to make the decision.

11.1 Education Act 1996 – Section 444

11.2 Scrutiny's powers in respect of this matter are detailed in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Section 7 of the Council's Constitution.

This page is intentionally left blank

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25



Education, Schools & Children's Services Attendance Policy 2024/25

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'school' refers to maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, and pupil referral units (PRUs).

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Enw'r Ysgol Name of school	XX
Cyfeiriad a Chod Post Address and post code	XX
Rhif ffôn Phone number	XX
Cyfeiriad e-bost ar gyfer y polisi hwn Email address for this policy	XX
Dolwen we i'r polisi Web link to policy	XX

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Enw'r polisi / Name of policy	Attendance Policy
Rhif fersiwn y Polisi / Policy version number	February 2024
Dyddiad a gymeradwywyd y Polisi yn ffurfiol gan y Corff Llywodraethol / Date Policy formally approved by Governing Body	XX
Dyddiad daw'r Polisi yn effeithiol / Date Policy becomes effective	XX
Dyddiad Adolygu / Review Date	XX
Arwyddwyd (Pennaeth) / Signed (headteacher)	XX
Arwyddwyd (Cadeirydd y Corff Llywodraethol) / Signed (chair of governing body)	XX
Gwybodaeth am y policy hwn ar gael i rieni/gofalwyr / Information about this policy is available to parents/carers	

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Table of Contents

DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL POLICY AND PRACTICE

1. Introduction
2. Promoting Attendance
3. Authorised / Unauthorised Absence
4. Responsibilities of Schools
 - 4.1 Pupil Reintegration After Absence
 - 4.2 School Self- Evaluation Audit
5. Responsibilities of Parents
 - 5.1 Statutory Framework
6. Responsibilities of the Local Authority
 - 6.1 Responsibilities of Education Welfare Service Officers
 - 6.2 Referrals to the Education Welfare Service
 - 6.3 Local Authority Monitoring and Support
 - 6.4 Responsibilities of Children Services
 - 6.5 Policy supporting Looked After Children (LAC)
 - 6.6 Multi- Agency Networks and Partnerships
 - 6.7 School Nursing Service and Other Health Agencies
 - 6.8 Links with other Local Authorities
7. Fixed Penalty Notices
8. Family Holidays during Term- Time
9. Extended Overseas Holidays
10. Children Missing Education
11. Safeguarding
12. Elective Home Education

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Legislation and Guidance
- Appendix 2 Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart
- Appendix 3 School Attendance Support Plan
- Appendix 4 Case Management Guidance – School Use
- Appendix 5 Good Practice: Guidance for Schools
- Appendix 6 School Attendance Self Evaluation Audit
- Appendix 7 School Nursing Service Referral Form
- Appendix 8 Fixed Penalty Code Of Conduct

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

FOREWORD

This document is an operational policy for schools to adopt through their governing body each academic year.

Operational staff in school with responsibility for school attendance must also be aware of other policies including the Reduced Time-table policy, the Safeguarding Policy and Fixed Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. These must also be considered when implementing action with regards to school attendance, well-being and safeguarding of a pupil.

The engagement and entitlement of pupils to a full education which meets the education, and social needs remain the commitment of Denbighshire County Council. This is never more so than in recent years with lower-than-expected attainment levels of some pupils.

We must work together with parents, pupil's, education and schools to form lasting relationships that consolidate true and meaningful professional relations that impact positively on the outcomes of a pupil.

G W Davies

Geraint Davies

Pennaeth Addysg / Head of Education

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

1. INTRODUCTION

Denbighshire County Council is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will provide an environment where all pupils parents and carers feel valued and welcomed and are committed to the fundamental principle that early intervention and partnership working is crucial in ensuring the attendance, protection and wellbeing of all children.

Schools follow the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and Denbighshire School Safeguarding Policy as well as local protocols in relation to specific and identifiable wellbeing issues that prevent a child from accessing education, or where there are safeguarding concerns.

For a pupil to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to education law and guidance and our school attendance policy is written to reflect this legislation and guidance produced by the Welsh Government. For information relating to this legislation and guidance, see Appendix 1.

The legislation makes provision for a school day which is to be divided into two sessions with a lunch break in the middle and to be available for 190 days in any school year.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance on an annual basis to ensure that it is achieving its set goals and targets as identified by the Governors, local authority, GwE North Wales Regional School Improvement Service and Welsh Government statutory returns on attendance.

This policy will contain the procedures that the school will use to work towards meeting its attendance targets, as set by the local authority.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

2. PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents, carers and pupils.

Denbighshire is committed to ensuring that pupils are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them, both now and in the future. Schools will offer a variety of reward incentives for individual learners, classes and year groups who have high levels of school attendance, no unauthorised absence and/or have shown to significantly improve their attendance.

Schools will use a variety of strategies to intervene at an early stage to encourage improved attendance of individual pupils and assist to overcome any barriers that may be preventing the expected level of attendance. **Persistent absence in Wales is set at below 90 %** all pupils below this level are a concern for school and will require monitoring and intervention. The use of school attendance data and coding of pupils is fundamental to tracking and monitoring pupil and school performance. Strategies to improve a pupils attendance may be school-based, or involve joint working with other education services and partner agencies to ensure the most appropriate support for the pupil is in place supported by the parent/ carer. Please refer to Appendix 2 Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart, Appendix 3 Attendance Support Plan (ASP) and Case Management Guidance - School Use.

Where a school decides to implement a reduced timetable for a pupil there must be suitable reason to take such an approach and agreed with the parent, carer and local authority education together with any other services working with the pupil. A plan must be in place signed by all parties and involve a half termly review process to ensure the plan is offering an effective education. Any reduced timetable plan must outline the detail of the education to be offered each school day whilst the pupil is not in a school setting and coded correctly in the attendance register.

The focus will be on maintaining engagement, with school whilst the plan is in place to ensure a pupil has continuous learning and achieve good attendance. ***Please refer to the Denbighshire County Council Reduced Timetable Policy (2024) for more detail on the implementation process and monitoring.***

The potential consequences of not meeting the expectations of regular school attendance will be regularly communicated to parents and carers throughout the academic year in various ways such as text messages, the school website, newsletters, parents' evenings and through the local authority communication team working with education.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Statement from Welsh Government (December 2023) Threshold Change to Persistent Absence in Wales

Welsh Government in December 2023 changed the threshold for a pupil being persistently absent from previously being any pupils whose attendance was below 80% to those whose attendance is below 90%. This increased expectation underlines the importance attached to regular school attendance and the need for local authorities, schools and families to work together to achieve this outcome.

Belonging, Engaging, Participation Guidance Welsh Government Guidance 293/2023

[Improving school attendance: easy read | GOV.WALES](#)

The guidance is aimed at maintained schools, PRUs, EOTAS settings, parents/carers and local authorities. It is a practical document for leaders, teachers and other practitioners which sets out the approaches and resources that can be used by schools, PRUs and EOTAS settings to help ensure high levels of learner engagement and attendance. These approaches and resources should be adopted, developed and built upon so that they are aligned to the needs of children and parents/carers.

Attendance cannot be considered in isolation. The many interrelated and overlapping causes of absence and the varied nature of the learner experience in school, the community and at home mean that whole school strategies and strong multi-agency working arrangements are needed, designed to support all learners. There is a growing understanding that schools also need to support learners in developing a sense of belonging, connectivity and engagement with school, and to build their resilience and ability to cope with the challenges they face.

The guidance should be read in collaboration with the Denbighshire school attendance and safeguarding policy and the many themes and approaches considered and adopted by schools to further improve pupil engagement and attendance.

3. AUTHORISED / UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

It is vital to emphasise that there are two types of absence: authorised and unauthorised. Parents may need to be reminded that a letter or a phone call does not in itself authorise an absence, **only the Headteacher's acceptance of the explanation offered by the letter or phone call authorises the absence. Parents need to be made aware of these decisions so as not to confuse matters at a later stage and/or if matters are pursued through a legal process.** Schools will follow the Denbighshire Attendance Procedures in order to monitor, support and address attendance issues. It is critical schools implement an Attendance Support Plan with a pupil of concern at an early stage in the monitoring process to engage all parties and document the actions of school to manage the attendance concern. This will form part of the evidence required to refer a case to the local authority Education Welfare Service. Please refer to Appendix 2

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart, Appendix 3 Attendance Support Plan (ASP) and Case Management Guidance – School Use.

Schools should develop a close working relationship with the Education Welfare Service in order to promote regular school attendance.

Absences from school will be authorised if the parent/carer can prove any of the following statutory defences:

- by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; or
- absent on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong; or
- absent because the school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance and no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Authority. See link to Denbighshire County Council's School Transport Policy for further information: [Free school and college transport | Denbighshire County Council](#)

If a child is absent with the approval of the school, for whatever reason, no offence is deemed to have been committed, thus, the decision taken by the school to give or withhold authorisation for an absence is a critical factor in determining the Local Authority decision to prosecute.

- An explanation is required for every absence. If one is not forthcoming the absence will be treated as unauthorised.
- Unauthorised absence is absence without approval from the Headteacher of the school. Regular unauthorised absence is an offence in law.
- Parentally condoned absence is often more difficult to identify than any other form of pupil absence and is equally as damaging to the pupil's educational experience as any other form of absence. If school staff have reason to doubt that the explanation offered about a particular absence is genuine, the absence should be treated as unauthorised **and communicated to the parent/carer.**
- Since all absences are to be treated as unauthorised unless and until school agree on a satisfactory explanation, it is important that schools' procedures are consistently applied to pursue explanations and for amending registers.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOLS

Schools are primarily responsible for supporting the attendance of their pupils and for responding to difficulties and issues which might lead to non-attendance following Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart (see Appendix 2).

Schools should adopt a positive and proactive approach towards attendance matters. Schools which encourage parents to take an active role in the education of their children can play a major role in improving levels of attendance and punctuality and in reducing absenteeism.

School must have in place processes and systems that accurately record absence and place an emphasis on monitoring individual pupils causing concern. These pupils should be monitored on a weekly basis to enable school to effectively reduce absence rates. See link below for Welsh Government School Attendance Codes: [Guidance on school attendance codes](#).

Weekly Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meetings with those responsible for monitoring school absence should identify those pupils who require attendance support plans working with the parent, school staff and other agencies to engage the pupil into a pattern of regular school attendance.

It is a legal requirement that schools will:

- Maintain attendance registers in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010*.

The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. The register may be requested in a court of law as evidence in a prosecution for non-attendance, or for the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

*<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2010/1954>

- Accurately record each school session to show whether a pupil was present, or absent and whether authorised or unauthorised (according to criteria laid down by the Education Act 1996). Key to this work is the appropriate registration codes being applied by the registration staff.
- Remind parents it is the decision of the Headteacher as to whether or not an absence will be authorised.
- Ensure registers are updated daily to ensure that the data being analysed by the central data team and the Education Welfare Service is accurate.
- Set annual targets to reduce absence and submit these targets in accordance with the statutory regulations. These should be shared with education and

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

governing body of the school.

- Have an attendance policy and are therefore strongly recommended to adopt and follow the Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart. (See Appendix 2).

The following should be personalised to every school:

- Clear information regularly communicated to parents through the school website, newsletters, parents' evenings. Parents should receive accurate and detailed information from school about attendance both at child level and overall school performance.
- Opening and closing time of the school day, clear to all parents, with emphasis placed upon the need for a pupil to arrive on time.
- The attendance lead must be aware of the importance attached to monitoring of attendance data looking at progress, trends and registration codes regularly. If a school is to be effective, designated staff need to analyse data at individual pupil level on a weekly basis. Alongside this there needs to be regular monitoring of cohorts and whole school attendance data tracking patterns and trends.
- Ensure school administration staff understand the SIMS attendance procedures and can support the school management team by producing reports on attendance.
- Have in place first day contact with parents/carers.
- Where absence is authorised, the school should remain vigilant to emerging patterns of non-attendance.
- Schools must have a named Governor with responsibility for attendance who receives a termly report on performance presented by the Headteacher at Governing Body meetings.
- Schools must have in place a key senior member of staff with overall responsibility for attendance, monitoring the above activities.

'Good Practice: Guidance for Schools' is attached in the appendices of this document. (See Appendix 5).

4.1 PUPIL REINTEGRATION AFTER ABSENCE

After any period of absence, schools should consider whether the child requires support to reintegrate back into school. EBSA Emotional Based School Avoidance / Attendance Support Plan could assist with reintegration and monitoring of the pupil in school regarding both progress or decline should be used and regularly reviewed by schools to support this process and each case needs to be managed on an individual basis.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

- A named key worker with whom the pupil is comfortable should be appointed.
- Negotiate an Attendance Support Plan supported and agreed with the child, parent, school and any other relevant professional/agency.
- Support identified within the Attendance Support Plan needs to be in place in readiness for the child's return to school.
- The pupil needs to feel welcome and supported on their first day.
- The identified key worker needs to debrief with the child at the end of each day throughout the reintegration period to eliminate any problems which may contribute to the child not returning.

4.2 SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION AUDIT

The School Attendance Self-Evaluation Audit (see Appendix 6) will be undertaken by all schools on an annual basis. Key features of these audits are to record key actions and areas for improvement using the school attendance data:

- Analysing attendance data
- Examining existing procedures
- Inspecting and being aware of attendance-related documentation
- Assessing communication with parents
- Considering strategies used to promote attendance
- Evaluating the response to Local Authority enquiries
- Identify training needs in the school

The audit will form part of the work with the Local Authority to address areas identified within the School Improvement Plan. The Education Welfare Service will support schools

in this process. Copies of these documents are available electronically via the Hwb SharePoint within the Education Welfare Service pages.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

For the purposes of the Education Act 1996, 'Parent' means all natural parents/carers whether they are married or not, it includes any person who although not a natural parent, has day-to-day care of a child or young person.

Having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law.

Parents can do a great deal to support the regular and punctual attendance of their child. Parents should:

- Ensure a good home routine is in place to prepare their child for the school day (for example, school bag packed, uniform ready, an age-appropriate bedtime routine, a good early morning start including breakfast).
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day.
- Inform the school on the first day of their child's absence and keep the school regularly updated daily throughout the absence period.
- Ensure explanations for absences are a true reflection of the circumstances to enable schools to offer support to improve attendance.
- Be open to support from the school in order to improve their child's school attendance.
- Be aware that action can be taken in law to address unauthorised absence from school including the use of Fixed Penalty Notices, an Education Supervision Order (court order on the child) or Parental Prosecution. Please reference Appendix 2 Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart and Appendix 3 Attendance Support Plan.

Link to Denbighshire Website: A brief guide to Fixed Penalty Notices for non-attendance at school:

<https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/search/search.aspx?q=fixed%20penalty%20notice#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=fixed%20penalty%20notice&gsc.page=1>

- Be aware that only in exceptional circumstances will the Headteacher be in a position to consider the reasons for requesting holiday approval following the Exceptional Circumstance rule. (Welsh Government Directive).
- Be aware that if the Headteacher receives a parental request for an extended holiday absence (i.e. longer than four continuous weeks, including exceptional circumstances) the Headteacher must advise the parent that the pupil will be removed from the school roll. On return to Denbighshire, the parent would need to reapply to the Local Authority.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Please note: School places are offered based upon school numbers at the time of application. Parents may be unsuccessful in securing a school place in the same school their child was previously registered prior to the extended absence.

Applications for school places are through school admissions using the Denbighshire County Council Website Education page to complete a school admissions application.

5.1 STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his /her age, aptitude and ability and to any additional needs he/she may have either regular attendance at school or otherwise. A pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where they are registered as a pupil.

Furthermore, Section 444 states that:

“If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence.”

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/444>

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

The Education Act 1996, Local Authorities have a duty to ensure a child for whom they are responsible is receiving a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Section 436A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires that Local Authorities must make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children residing in their area who are not receiving a “suitable education”.

* <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/section/4>

* <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/437>

Implementation of the duty under Section 436A should be integrated with a wider range of duties placed on Local Authorities, including the Children’s Act 2004, Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Welsh Government’s ‘Safeguarding Children Working Together’ that aims to provide outcomes, and safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Local Authority has the responsibility of enabling pupils and parents who experience difficulty in maintaining regular or punctual attendance at school, and to enforce attendance, where appropriate, through legal proceedings. In Denbighshire, this work is u

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

undertaken by the Education Welfare Service, working with other services who regularly offer significant input in the process.

* <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/437>

6.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICES OFFICERS

The Education Welfare Service acts on behalf of the Local Authority who has a duty to provide appropriate education to all statutory school age pupils in the county. The Education Welfare Service has the strategic responsibility for the writing and implementation of policies, operational procedures and codes of conduct in relation to school attendance.

In addition to improving overall school attendance research shows that children who are not in school are more vulnerable and can be easily drawn into crime, anti-social behaviour and open to exploitation. The Education Welfare Officers, supported by Education Attendance Support Officers and Family Engagement Officers undertake individual case work as part of the service support.

The Education Welfare Service are centrally based, responding to the needs of schools and families as they arise. Schools and families can contact the Education Welfare Service through the helpline number – 01824 708064.

6.2 REFERRALS TO THE EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

Schools must evidence that they have followed the Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart (see Appendix 2) prior to referral. Referrals to the Education Welfare Service and Support Officers should be completed on the appropriate form and sent via e-mail to *inclusion.referrals@denbighshire.gov.uk. An acknowledgement of receipt will be automatically sent to schools.

Once the referral is discussed at the service weekly allocation meeting school will receive a tracking sheet advising if the referral has been accepted or not. If the case has been accepted the tracking sheet will detail the worker who will make direct contact with the referrer, the family and any identified professionals involved.

The service staff will assist in removing barriers which may prevent a child from receiving full-time education by employing a range of practices and strategies in their case work and only where necessary resorting to legal intervention.

6.3 LOCAL AUTHORITY MONITORING AND SUPPORT

The Local Authority Officers and Education Welfare Service will monitor attendance through regular inspection of centrally held data on all schools. It is the role of the Education Welfare Service to analyse and disseminate data on attendance. Continuous analysis of school data informs the Education Welfare Service's long-term strategic

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

direction.

The Education Welfare Service will provide local and national data to enable schools to act upon it with the aim of improving educational outcomes.

Thorough analysis of attendance data by both school and the Local Authority can help highlight the early indicators of disengagement, which can ultimately lead to persistent absence.

6.4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHILDRENS SERVICES

Children's Services staff undertake assessments in collaboration with other relevant professionals. The assessment will look at all aspects of the child's developmental needs, including his or her educational needs. Education Welfare Officers may bring to the attention of Children's Services, children who have been referred to them due to attendance difficulties, who in their professional opinion may require additional support in accordance with the Local Authority's eligibility criteria for 'Care and Support'.

6.5 POLICY SUPPORTING LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC)

Denbighshire County Council is committed to securing the best possible educational outcomes for 'Looked After Children' (LAC). It believes that regular, punctual, uninterrupted attendance at school is vital to help ensure that Looked After Children are able to make the most of the educational opportunities which are available to them.

*<https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/search/search.aspx?q=Looked%20after%20children%20policy%20for%20schools#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=Looked%20after%20children%20policy%20for%20schools&gsc.page=1>

Section 20 of the [Children and Young Persons Act 2008](#) states that the governing body of a maintained school must designate a member of staff as having responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of children who are looked after in the school. This duty applies regardless of whether or not there are looked after children on the school roll, as schools need to be sufficiently prepared to respond quickly to these children needs.

In discharging their duties under the Children Act 1989 and 2004 Denbighshire County Council as a designated Education Liaison Officer (ELO) to coordinate the child's education plan and address the education needs of looked after children and care leavers in the local authority area. In addition, the ELO must ensure that every child looked after by them has an effective and high-quality Personal Education Plan (PEP). They are there to make sure that looked after children get any additional support they need with education and are based within the social care or education departments of the local authority. They have a clear remit to establish and enforce joint procedures and protocols, provide information as appropriate to all involved in corporate parenting and to act as a champion for young people in public care.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

6.6 MULTI-AGENCY NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Local Authority recognises that the reasons for persistent non- school attendance are such that no single service or agency can expect to successfully address the issue. The Local Authority strives, through the development of area and locality working, to develop a multi- agency, cross-service, inter-disciplinary approach. This is characterised by the delivery of a child-centred, co-ordinated and effective response.

6.7 SCHOOL NURSING AND OTHER HEALTH AGENCIES

The School Nursing Service is accessed through a referral system. (See Appendix 7).

The School Nursing Service is offered to all parents/carers, but parents can decline the service.

On school entry and on commencing secondary school, the School Nursing Service sends parents/carers a health questionnaire. It is really helpful if the school can encourage the return of this information in order for the school nurse to link in with families at the earliest opportunity. The School Nursing Service health questionnaire, together with a handover from the Health Visitor, is used to identify any health issues likely to impact on the child's school attendance.

Where issues are identified, a referral will be made to health colleagues or other agencies. School nurses, as with school staff, are required to work in a confidential manner, therefore parents are encouraged to share this information directly with the school.

With parental consent, school nurses may have a role to play in giving advice to the staff on supporting parents and children and young people with their:

- Health & Well Being
- Exercise
- Healthy Eating
- Sexual Health
- Immunisations
- Behaviour (e.g. sleep, continence, bullying)
- Chronic long-term conditions

School nurses are unable to access GP records without the consent of parents. Schools are therefore advised to request that parents sign a consent form that the school or parent can forward to the GP for release of health information held by the surgery in order to support the family and the pupil with attendance issues at school.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

6.8 LINKS WITH OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Denbighshire has strong links with the Education Welfare Services across Wales. Regular meetings take place to share good practice and implement consistent actions that affect each Authority.

There are cross-working arrangements and developments in place linked to Welsh Government guidance and policy in the area of school attendance.

7. FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

A Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued by the Local Authority at the request of the school in relation to unauthorised absences for a child or young person of statutory school age (i.e. The school term following the child's fifth birthday of a child in Reception to the last Friday in June in Year 11).

Please refer to the following documents:

- Denbighshire County Council's Local Code of Conduct regarding Education Fixed Penalty Notices (see Appendix 8).
- Attendance Monitoring Flow Chart (see Appendix 2).

Schools may request a Fixed Penalty Notice Warning letter be issued to parent/carers by the Local Authority. A warning can be issued following 5 days of unauthorised absence.

A Fixed Penalty Notice can be requested by the school where a child has 10 or more school days recorded unauthorised absences.

(Please note that each school day is made up of 2 sessions, am/pm therefore 10 days = 20 sessions).

The Local Authority will only issue a Fixed Penalty Notice requested by a school relating to unauthorised leave of absence, when a school provides the necessary evidence to substantiate their request.

If the absence is unauthorised and recorded on the register with a combination of any of the following unauthorised codes, this can result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued:

- "U" - Lateness 30 minutes after the start of the school day or after afternoon register = 1 session am/pm unauthorised absence.
- "O" – Where the Headteacher makes the decision that the reason provided is an

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

unacceptable reason not to attend school.

- “G” – Holiday absence not agreed by the headteacher.

8. FAMILY HOLIDAYS DURING TERM-TIME

Welsh Government guidance states:

In term-time, parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils for holidays and authorisation remains at the discretion of the Headteacher.

All requests for holiday leave should be in writing, ideally four weeks before the holiday, the application can only be made by the parent/carer with day-to-day care of the child, even if they are not actually going on holiday themselves.

There needs to be consistency amongst schools on this issue. Denbighshire County Council’s position is that no term-time holidays should be approved unless there are exceptional circumstances. If a parent/carer applies for a holiday in term-time which results in the child being absent for 10 school days this may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

9. EXTENDED OVERSEAS HOLIDAY

When making judgements about extended absence for pupils from minority ethnic families, schools should ensure that full account has been taken, not only of the Regulations and Welsh Government guidance, but also of the situation of minority ethnic families in general, and the particular circumstances relating to each individual case. It is important that schools show an understanding of the parents’ perspective even though the school may not be able to comply with the request for absence.

Schools should ensure that all parents are aware of the school’s policy on absence. In the case of minority ethnic parents, special care should be taken to ensure that the regulations are fully explained and understood.

Key to this is schools communicating effectively with all their parents and carers, including those whose preferred language of communication is other than English or Welsh. Schools should contact the EAL Service Manager for guidance on good practice in using interpreters and translations.

The current Denbighshire County Council provider for translation/ interpreting services is ‘The Big Word’. The EAL Service can advise on using these services and other options.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

10. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

All agencies have a clear role to play in helping to trace children who go missing from schools in Denbighshire, or who go missing from schools from other authorities, and who may have moved into Denbighshire.

Parents/carers can support the smooth transition of their children's education provision between Denbighshire and other Local Authorities where a move is required for any reason, by notifying the child's registered school.

Schools are expected to follow corresponding procedures in relation to those pupils who are removed from school by their parents without a named-school destination being provided and confirmed. **Schools must ensure they report any child who is determined as missing on SIMS via the lost children's data base and seek advice of cases of concern with the Education Welfare Service Helpdesk 01824-708064.**

11. SAFEGUARDING

The Safeguarding Officer in Education Services provides advice, support and training to schools and Education Services staff on all safeguarding issues. Safeguarding is a consideration with all attendance concerns. Part of the Education Welfare Service roles and responsibilities involves representation at the following multi-agency forums which identify and plan support for the most vulnerable families and young people in Denbighshire:

- Multi-Agency Panel (MAP) - Education led
- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) - Police led
- Exploitation Panel - Children's Services
- ECS Panel – Education led
- Multi Agency Daily Strategy Meeting – Police led

12. ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

Parents or carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that their child receives a suitable education, and some choose to elect to home educate.

Schools must ensure that they receive the request to home educate in writing from the parents or a person with parental responsibility. On receipt of this notification, a copy must be sent by the school to the local Authority within 10 working days. If a child has a Individual Development Plan (IDP)/Statement of Special Educational Needs they cannot be removed from the school roll without the consent of the Local Authority Additional Learning Needs Department.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

For further information please refer to Denbighshire County Council's guidance on educating your child at home via the link below: Please see link to Welsh Government guidance below:

<https://www.gov.wales/home-education-handbook-home-educators-html>

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Appendix 1

Legislation and Guidance

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) to any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent means natural parents and includes any person who has parental responsibility or has day to day care of the child.

Section 444 1, 1(a) and (ZA) contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school or alternative provision arranged by the Local Authority.

For further information on please see link below.

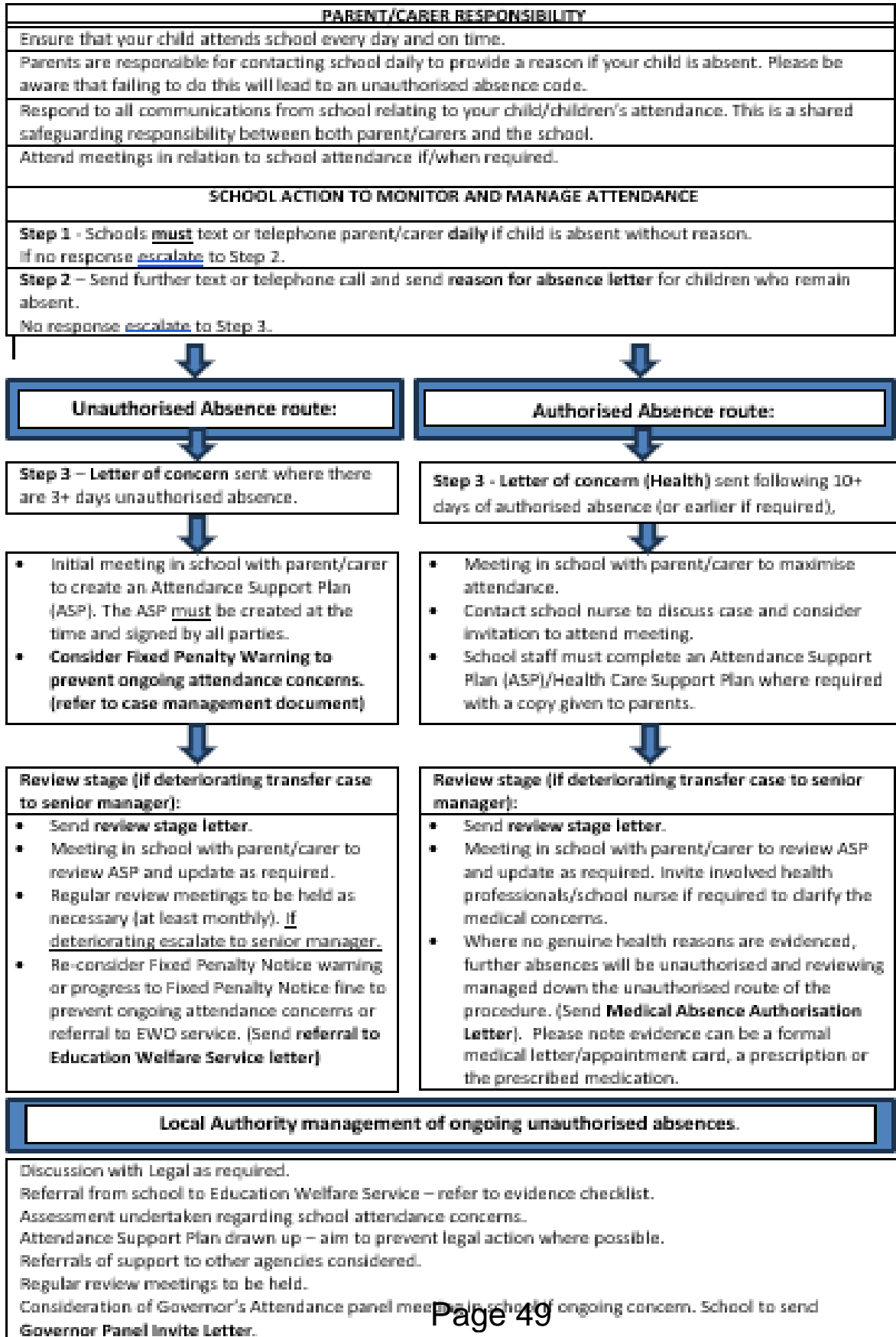
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2010/1954>

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Appendix 2 – Attendance Flow Chart For Denbighshire Schools



ATTENDANCE MONITORING IN DENBIGHSHIRE



DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Appendix 3 – Attendance Support Plan

Initial Attendance Meeting Record and Attendance Support Plan

A copy of the document should be provided for parent/carer/pupil reference. If the parent/carer does not attend the meeting a copy should be posted to the home address with a covering letter requesting written consent for any of proposed actions/referrals.

School	Pupil Name	Date of Birth	Year group/class	Date of meeting

Overall Attendance %	Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence	Punctuality (U)	Other attendance observations

Present for the meeting today	Who has offered their Apologies?	Who was invited but didn't respond?

Can the meeting go ahead today?	Yes	No*
*Secondary pupils - A meeting can be held with the pupil in the absence of parents/carers.		
If not, why not		
Next step	Reschedule at the same school level	Escalate to the next school level
	Referral to LA following FPN route	Referrals to EWS

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Identify issues impacting upon school attendance in any of the following areas School / Home / Community	Document the proposed actions agreed to address the issues raised.		Action for who	By when
	School identified support	Other Agencies e.g. CAMHS, LIFT, TAF		
Page 51				

List Pupil & Parent/Carer Strengths:

--

List any support proposed but declined for now?

Reason why it has been declined?

--	--

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

We, the undersigned, are in agreement with Attendance Support Plan		
Signature of pupil	Signature of parents/carers	Signature of school staff
Signatures of other attendees (include job title or relationship to pupil/parent/carers)		

Consent for referrals			
It has been explained what information the school would like to share about me, who they want to share the information with and why they want to share it. I understand that if I agree to my information being shared I have the right to limit how much is shared and withdraw my consent at any time.			
Page 52	I consent to sharing my information or my child's information or both on a need to know basis to the listed support services above with the aim to address the attendance concern.	Yes	No
	Name	Signature	Date

Date and time agreed to review progress	Venue

Who needs to be invited to the review meeting:		

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Attendance Support Plan Review Meeting

A copy of the review document should be provided for parent/carer/pupil reference. If the parent/carer does not attend the meeting a copy should be posted to the home address with a covering letter requesting written consent for any of proposed actions/referrals.

Date	
Present	

Overall Attendance %	Authorised Absence	Unauthorised Absence	Punctuality (U)	Improved/Declined since last meeting %

Can the meeting go ahead today?	Yes	No*		
Secondary pupils - A meeting can be held with the pupil in the absence of parents/carers.				
If not, why not				
Next step	Reschedule at the same school level	Escalate to the next school level	Referral to LA following FPN route	Referrals to EWS

Present for the meeting today	Who has offered their Apologies?	Who was invited but didn't respond?

Page 53

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Identify <u>any</u> new issues impacting upon school attendance in any of the following areas School / Home / Community	Document the proposed actions agreed to address the issues raised.		Action for who	By when	completed
	School identified support	Other Agencies e.g. CAMHS, LIFT, TAF			
List any support proposed but declined for now?			Reason why it has been declined?		

Page 54

We, the undersigned, are in agreement with Attendance Support Plan		
Signature of pupil	Signature of parents/carers	Signature of school staff
Signatures of other attendees (include job title or relationship to pupil/parent/carer)		

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Date and time agreed to review progress	Venue

Who needs to be invited to the review meeting:		

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Appendix 4 Case Management Guidance – School Use

School	Pupil Name	DOB	Year/Form

Fixed Penalty Notices

Fixed Penalty Notices are one of the sanctions available to schools/Local Authorities to address the following **criminal offence** – parent’s/carer’s failure to secure the child’s regular attendance, for unauthorised reasons, at the school at which they are registered.

Fixed Penalty Notices offer a means of suitable and effective intervention for improving levels of unauthorised absences, **before they become entrenched and persistent absences whilst reducing the need for lengthy and costly prosecutions.**

Fixed Penalty Notices will only be used where parental co-operation with this process is either absent or deemed to be insufficient to resolve the problem. They will be used as a means to support parents to meet their legal responsibilities and only where there is reasonable expectation that their use will secure improved school attendance.

Does the attendance concerns warrant a Fixed Penalty Warning?	N/A	Yes	No
Does the attendance concern warrant a Fixed Penalty Notice?	N/A	Yes	No
Is the attendance issue deteriorating despite ASP and use of Fixed Penalty Warning/Notice?	N/A	Yes	No
Is there a reasonable expectation that a Fixed Penalty is likely to secure an improvement in school attendance?	N/A	Yes	No

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Local Authority Support - Education Welfare Service			
Is a referral to the Education Welfare Service appropriate	N/A	Yes	No
Has the referral criteria been met	N/A	Yes	No

Education Welfare Service Already Involved - Escalation towards Legal Action			
Is a referral to the schools Attendance Governor's Panel Meeting required?	N/A	Yes	No
Is a Letter Before Action required due to there being no improvement /un-sustained improvement?	N/A	Yes	No
Has there been no improvement or has an improvement not been sustained following Letter Before Action necessitating escalation to court?	NA	Yes	No
Have all legal defences been ruled out.		Yes	No

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Appendix 5

Good Practice – Guidance for Schools

Analysis of Attendance Data

All schools hold a great deal of information about attendance which should be used for strategic planning and effective liaison with the Education Welfare Service and can thereby enable schools to manage attendance issues more effectively.

The link to this work is the administrative staff in schools who use SIMS relating to attendance data. Schools need to know how to use SIMS effectively to provide data for the school management teams who monitor attendance.

Schools can receive training for staff through Education Services on this matter by contacting the Education Welfare Service Team Leader.

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

- The school's commitment to achieving high levels of attendance should be explicit and clear to pupils, staff and parents.
- Pupils should constantly be reminded of the importance and value of good attendance and punctuality.
- The school must ensure the pupils' classroom experience is positive and enriching, encouraging them to take responsibility for and show commitment to their learning.
- Ensure that all school staff are trained on the appropriate use of registration codes. Training is available from the Education Welfare Service on request.
- Look at alternative curriculum options/possibilities for pupils who are hard to engage.
- Ensure that opportunities to reward attendance are scheduled into the school calendar.
- Discuss individual attendance targets with pupils; key staff need to monitor this work.
- Make clear to parents, through newsletters the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

- Use the school website and other media platforms to promote the school's performance in school attendance weekly.
- Ensure key information about pupils is shared at transition.

The Denbighshire Press Office could be contacted as a means to highlight good attendance at your school.

- Work closely with the governing body of the school and provide updates in governor meetings relating to attendance.
- Use the Attendance Audit to evaluate your school systems yearly.
- Use reward systems to celebrate success for pupils and inform parents.

INSET AND TRAINING

INSET and training can be provided and facilitated by Education Services, Customer Services and the Education Welfare Service to all schools, covering such issues as (please note this is not an exhaustive list):

- Good practice on the keeping of registers
- Strategies for promoting regular attendance
- Strategies for addressing persistent absenteeism
- Communication with parents
- Good practice in monitoring punctuality
- Reintegrating long-term absentees
- Rewards and incentives
- First-day of absence contact

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Appendix 6: SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SELF EVALUATION AUDIT TOOL

This self-evaluation checklist is an important tool to help identify issues within school and to target and prioritise action to improve attendance. A focus on understanding the school SIMS data is key to any school improvement strategy being effective.

It is important to highlight all schools will deploy varying interventions based on identified level of need, community resources, agency involvement, CFS funding and a range of support within the school setting to guarantee that improvement is secured.

Please allocate a colour – Red, Amber or Green to each of the following questions with a detail of narrative, action and improvement statements.

Red = immediate action required

Amber = satisfactory but requires further work

Green = Good; standards achieved

Where green has been allocated, please ensure that this is reviewed regularly to ensure status is maintained.

Where you have allocated either amber or red please provide a comment as to action(s) you will undertake to address issues highlighted.

This kind of approach is important in order to assess and review the school's capacity to improve and address the underlying issues outlined in your judgments. Please ensure you have clear evidence for this evaluation when shared back to education.

Please send back to education@denbighshire.gov.uk

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Denbighshire Attendance self-evaluation audit tool

School	
Headteacher Signature	
School Staff member completing the Audit	
Designation	
Date	

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Performance

				Actions/Areas for improvement
Attendance target 2024 -25				
Current Attendance % 2024-25				
Previous school year attendance 23/24 %				
Previous School Year Target 2023/24				
FSM quartile				
Is attendance a priority area for school and within your School Improvement Plan?	No		Yes	

Page 62

Strategic management

				Actions/Areas for improvement
Do you have a nominated governor with a specific attendance remit?	No		Yes	
Does the school have a designated SLT member of staff responsible for attendance? Please provide name.	No		Yes	
Does the headteacher have in place a quality assurance process to hold middle leaders accountable for improving pupil attendance?				

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25				
How is the evaluation of school attendance recorded and acted upon to improve approaches in school?				
Does the attendance lead ensure early identification of and intervention and support for pupils with attendance issues?				
Is there dedicated time and resources allocated for attendance?				
How well does the attendance lead ensure consistent application of the policy's principles throughout the school?				
How well does the attendance lead oversee the accuracy of the recording of attendance and registration practices? Is this regularly audited?				
Does the attendance lead rigorously and regularly review and analyse rates of individual pupils, groups of pupils, year groups and families of children in school ?				
Are sibling checks made with other schools within the county?				
Does the attendance lead monitor, analyse and address key issues identified in the SIMS data?				
Does the lead ensure all relevant staff with registration responsibilities are trained and practice monitored to ensure high standards of practice?				
Are all staff with registration responsibilities aware of the schools attendance codes?				

Are supply staff inducted & well prepared with regards to attendance and registration practices?

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Considering the Support for Improving Pupils Attendance

				Actions/Areas for improvement/ Comments / Evidence
How do you promote good attendance?				
How well do you work with families and the community to support pupils with low attendance?				
How well do you respond where pupils are absent because their well-being is adversely affected when they attend school?				
How effective is your work with other agencies to support pupils with low attendance?				
If any pupils are on reduced timetable are the arrangements for their education appropriate, documented, monitored and reviewed?				
Where reduced timetables are in place for a pupil is there an attendance support plan written and signed by all parties involved particularly parental agreement?				
How often are these reduced timetables reviewed to ensure they are still appropriate, effective and in the pupil's best interests?				

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25				
What action is taken where a reduced timetable is ineffective?				
Are you using the Welsh Government coding "C" Code other authorized circumstances?				
Does the school have reintegration strategies for those long-term pupil absences in which all appropriate staff follow?				
Does the school offer a balance of support and challenge to parents / carers regarding pupil attendance?				
Are Children Missing in education (CME) processes followed?				
Following an exclusion where a pupil is placed on a reduced timetable, are adjustments made to enable any interventions to continue to support the pupil?				

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Collection and analysis of data

				Actions/Areas for improvement
Do governors and SLT review attendance data on a regular basis and across identified groups?				
Are attendance related issues discussed weekly by SLT team?				
Is school data analysed to inform reasons for absence, profile of persistent absence, identification of vulnerable groups and links to standards?				
Do you plan interventions based on these findings?				
Is the correlation between exclusions and impact on attendance considered?				
Are patterns of attendance from feeder school pupils analysed and preventative strategies put in place in advance for support at transition?				
Do school contact the Education Welfare for advice on school attendance data?				
Do school contact the Education Welfare Service regarding individual pupil data concerns?				
Do school contact the EWO Helpdesk to seek clarity and advice on data concerns, registration coding?				

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Communication

				Actions/Areas for improvement
Are pupils aware of their individual level of attendance and the target they need to achieve? How is this set and communicated to them/their Parents/ carers?				
Are the Headteacher and governing body made aware of any pupil placed on a reduced timetable?				
Does the school plan the promotion of attendance throughout the year?				
Is there an awards/rewards system for good attendance?				
Are pupils consulted about the nature of rewards to ensure that they are relevant and motivating?				
Are reward systems differentiated to consider the progress and needs of all pupils?				
Do you have a named person with responsibility for liaising with off- site provision of pupils to ensure an accuracy of registration data?				

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Appendix 7 School Nursing Referral Form

Re: Child's name:	D:O:B:
Address:	Contact tel: Home..... Work..... Mobile.....
School:	Class (if known)
Name of adult with parental responsibility (P.R.)	Name
Is child aware of referral (please circle) Yes No Not applicable	Please be aware that referral <u>will not be</u> <u>accepted</u> without parental consent
Reason for referral:	
Other agencies involved:	
Name of referrer (please print):	Signature of referrer:
Designation:	Contact number:
Date of referral:	Date received by School Nurse

Appendix 8 - Fixed Penalty Notice Code of Conduct

If adopted by school, school logo must be added here, in addition to DCC logo

Local Code of Conduct Education Fixed Penalty Notice

* For the purposes of this policy, the term 'school' refers to maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, and pupil referral units (PRUs).

Enw'r Ysgol Name of school	XX
Cyfeiriad a Chod Post Address and post code	XX
Rhif ffôn Phone number	XX
Cyfeiriad e-bost ar gyfer y polisi hwn Email address for this policy	XX
Dolwen we i'r polisi Web link to policy	XX

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Yellow: For schools to edit to reflect practice

To be completed by the school:

Enw'r polisi Name of policy	Local code of conduct, Education Fixed Penalty Notice
Rhif fersiwn y Polisi Policy version number	V2.001
Dyddiad a gymeradwywyd y Polisi yn ffurfiol gan y Corff Llywodraethol Date Policy formally approved by Governing Body	XX
Dyddiad daw'r Polisi yn effeithiol Date Policy becomes effective	XX
Dyddiad Adolygu Review Date	XX
Arwyddwyd (Pennaeth) Signed (headteacher)	XX
Arwyddwyd (Cadeirydd y Corff Llywodraethol) Signed (chair of governing body)	XX
Gwybodaeth am y policy hwn ar gael i rieni/gofalwyr Information about this policy is available to parents/carers	

To be completed by Denbighshire Education and Children's Services:

Datblygwyd y Polisi gan Policy developed by	Wayne Wheatley Education Welfare Officer
Dyddiad mabwysiadwyd gan JMT y Gwasanaethau Addysg a Phlant Date adopted by Education and Children Services JMT	
Dyddiad rhannwyd y Polisi gwreiddiol gydag ysgolion Sir Ddinbych Original policy date issued to Denbighshire schools	
Ferswin rhif a dyddiad Version number and date	
Datblygwyd y fersiwn gan Version developed by	

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Dyddiad Arolygiad Blyneddol Annual review date	
Dyddiad cwblhawyd yr asesiad Lles Well-being assessment completed and date	

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

1. Legal Framework

- 1.1. The law empowers designated Denbighshire County Council Officers, head teachers, including their nominated deputies and the Police to issue Fixed Penalty Notices to the parents of children who have unauthorised absence from school. The rules governing the implementation of these powers and the factors that should be taken into account when issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice are outlined In:
- The Education Act 1996;
 - The Education & Inspections Act 2006;
 - The Education (Penalty Notices) (Wales) Regulations 2013; and
 - Guidance published by the Department for Education, in particular the “Guidance on Education–Related Parenting Contracts, Parenting Orders and Penalty Notices 2007 and Ensuring Children’s Rights to Education”.
- 1.1.1. (DCC) is responsible for developing a protocol with which all the partner agencies named in legislation will jointly work.

2. Rationale

- 2.1. Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:
- “The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”
- 2.1.1. Regular and punctual attendance at school or alternative provision is a legal requirement and is essential to enable children to maximise their educational attainments, potential and opportunities available to them.
- 2.1.2. Evidence shows that children with poor attendance are unlikely to succeed academically and they are more likely not to be in education, employment or training (NEET) when they leave school. NEET young people are likely to have a history of non attendance and persistence absences in years 10 and 11.
- 2.1.3. Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, makes it a criminal offence for a parent’s failure to secure their child’s attendance at the school at which they are registered and where absences are not authorised.
- 2.1.4. The definition of “parent” includes all natural parents, whether they are married or not and includes any person who, although not a natural parent, has the parental responsibility and/or care for a child or young person.
- 2.1.5. Targeted intervention plays a vital role in resolving issues of poor school attendance, however where this fails to have the desired effect there are a number of sanctions available to Local Authorities to try and secure improvements.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

- 2.2. Fixed Penalty Notices are one of the sanctions available for this offence and offer a means of suitable and effective intervention for improving levels of unauthorised absences, before they become entrenched and persistence absences, whilst reducing the need for lengthy and costly prosecutions.
- 2:3 Fixed Penalty Notices and other sanctions will only be used where parental co-operation with this process is either absent or deemed to be insufficient to resolve the problem. They will be used as a means to support parents to meet their legal responsibilities and only where there is a reasonable expectation that their use will secure improved school attendance.

3. Policy and Publicity.

- 3.1. School Attendance Policies will include information on the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices and this will be brought to the attention of parents.

4. Monitoring and review.

(DCC) will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of Fixed Penalty Notices every two years and amend its general enforcement strategy as appropriate. Annual reports will be made available to the Head of Service, JMT, Scrutiny Committee and the Welsh Government.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

(DCC) protocols and procedures in relation to Fixed Penalty Notices.

Issue of a Penalty Notice

- A Fixed Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence;
- Use of Fixed Penalty Notice will be restricted to one notice per parent of a pupil per academic year;
- In cases where there is more than one poorly-attending pupil in a family, Notices may be issued for more than one child;
- There will be no restriction on the number of times a parent may receive a formal warning of a possible Fixed Penalty Notice.

Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate when:

- At least 20 sessions (10 school days) are lost due to unauthorised absence during the current term. These do not need to be consecutive;
- Unauthorised absences of at least 20 sessions (10 school days) due to holidays in term time or delayed return from extended holidays; or
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed, in the current term. "Persistent" means at least 20 sessions of late arrival;

The Local Authority (LA) will only issue Fixed Penalty Notices requested by a school in response to a holiday related unauthorised absence where the school has provided the necessary paperwork and evidence. This paperwork should comprise:

- A copy of the school newsletter or letter sent to all parents during the current academic year which clearly states that parents may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice or an authorised holiday in term time. (The LA will not need a hard copy of this newsletter/letter each time a school applies for an unauthorised holiday Fixed Penalty Notice, just on the first occasion each academic year);
- A copy of the Holiday Request Form submitted by parent, and a copy of the response sent to the parent by school. In the event the holiday request is being denied the school's response should state the reason why the holiday is unauthorised and should again advise parent that they may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice if they take their child out of school;
- A copy of the letter sent by school to the parent advising that the school has referred the matter to the LA and that a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued;
- Relevant pupil Attendance or Registration Certificate;
- Signed certificate from the Head Teacher or their nominated deputy confirming that non-attendance during the period was unauthorised;

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Looked After Children (LAC)

Children looked after by Local Authorities are especially at risk of low attainment in school. Schools should be especially sensitive to issues where LAC children are concerned. Schools should try every practical means to maintain the learner in school and should seek LA and other professional advice as appropriate. LA children's services departments should in all cases be involved at the earliest opportunity in working with the school.

A Penalty Notice will not be issued in respect of Looked After Children who are subject to on-going LA intervention.

Considerations and Assessment as to whether a Fixed Penalty Notice should be issued.

Head Teachers, their nominated deputies and the Education Welfare Officers (EWO) will take into account the following when determining whether a Fixed Penalty Notice should be issued:

- Level of absence;
- Any Equalities considerations relating to the child or family (as listed in the Council's Equality Policy);
- Any statement of Special Educational Needs;
- History of the attendance issues and action taken;
- Defences which may be available;
- Welsh Government (WG) Guidance;
- Likely effectiveness of Fixed Penalty Notice as a tool for obtaining compliance;
- Level of parent engagement/cooperation.
- Any substantial adverse effect a fine will have on the welfare of the family.

Procedure for Issuing Fixed Penalty Notices

The designated EWO's within the Education Welfare Service (EWS) will be the only individuals permitted to issue Fixed Penalty Notices within the County of Denbighshire which will ensure consistent and equitable delivery and allow schools to maintain good relationships with parents and ensure that they reinforce any other enforcement sanctions. Fixed Penalty Notices will only be issued by post and never as an instant action. This will enable officers to ensure that all evidential requirements are in place and limit the health and safety risks to individuals.

Requests for issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice

Where schools, police or neighbouring local authorities request the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice, their request will be investigated and actioned by the EWS, provided that:

- The circumstances of the case meet the criteria specified in this Code of Conduct;

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

- The pupil is registered at a (DCC) school;
- All necessary evidence is provided to the EWS to establish whether an offence under Section 444(1) or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 or Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 has been committed;
- Issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice would not conflict with another intervention strategy already in place or another enforcement sanction already being processed and that there is a reasonable expectation that the use of a Fixed Penalty Notice would improve the child's school attendance or prevent further contravention of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- The EWO's will aim to respond to all requests within 10 school days of receipt, and where satisfied that all of the relevant criteria are met, will Issue a formal written warning to the parent of the possibility of a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued;

Fixed Penalty Notices for unauthorised holidays.

Where the Fixed Penalty Notice is requested from a school in response to a holiday related unauthorised absence which is 10 days or more, or is in relation to an offence under section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 an immediate fixed penalty notice will apply.

Monitoring and Review

All Fixed Penalty Notices will be entered onto a database maintained by Education Services to ensure that no duplicate Fixed Penalty Notices are issued and to evaluate the effectiveness of the process within DCC.

Excluded Pupils

The basis of the fixed penalty notice powers, do not extend to excluded pupils.

Section 108 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 came into force in October 2010 and amends section 16 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to extend Police powers for the removal of excluded pupils to designated premises if a child or young person excluded from school is found in a public place in a specified area during a specific period and during school hours.

Procedure for the Withdrawal of Fixed Penalty Notices

Once issued, a Fixed Penalty Notice can only be withdrawn if the EWS is satisfied that:

- The Fixed Penalty Notice was issued to the wrong person;
- The use of the Fixed Penalty Notice did not conform to this Code of Conduct;
- The Fixed Penalty Notice was delivered to the wrong address;
- The evidence demonstrates that the Fixed Penalty Notice should not have been issued, e.g. medical evidence; or

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

- The circumstances of the case warrant its withdrawal.

Right of appeal

There is no statutory right of appeal, but where a parent contests the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice, they can submit any complaints to the EWS and/or opt to face proceedings in the Magistrates' Court under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 where all of the issues relating to their Fixed Penalty Notice can be fully debated.

Payment of Fixed Penalty Notices

Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notice.

Payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice discharges the parent's liability for the period in question and they cannot subsequently be prosecuted under other enforcement powers for the period covered by the Fixed Penalty Notice.

If the Fixed Penalty Notice is paid within 28 days, the penalty payable is £60, or £120 if within 42 days. Payments will not be accepted from parents after 42 days has elapsed and cannot be paid either by instalments.

(DCC) will retain any revenue from the Fixed Penalty Notices, hold it separately and use it to cover enforcement costs, i.e. costs associated with the issue, collection or prosecution, in the event of non-payment, of Fixed Penalty Notices.

Non-Payment of Fixed Penalty Notices

Non-payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice may result in prosecution for the period covered by the Fixed Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Equalities and Welsh Language

The issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices must comply with other related legislation and regulations, in order to ensure that they are used in a fair and consistent manner and have paid due regard to the circumstances of the child/children and families involved. These include, but are not limited to the following:-

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Human Rights Act 1998

The Council's Equalities Policy covers the full range of issues that may need to be considered, depending on the individual case.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Fixed Penalty Notice Warning Letter Request

Appendix 2 - Fixed Penalty Notice Request

Appendix 3 - Relevant Legislation that relates to Fixed Penalty Notices

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Appendix 1

FIXED PENALTY NOTICE WARNING LETTER REQUEST (Following 5 days (10 sessions of unauthorised absence) UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE – Section 444, Education Act 1996

I request that the Local Authority consider issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice Warning letter to the parent(s)/carer(s)* of the following pupil:

Pupil Details

Registered School.....

Name of Pupil DOB Year

Address.....
.....

***Only provide details of the parent/carers to whom the FPN is to be issued.**

Parent 1 *

Full name DOB.....

Address.....

Parent 2 *

Full name DOB.....

Address.....

The expression “parent”, in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for him or her, or who has day to day care of the child.

In making this request, I confirm that such action would not conflict with other intervention strategies already in place or other enforcement measures already being processed. I can also confirm that the governing body of this school has reviewed its attendance policy and agreed that this school will request the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices in appropriate cases.

How has the parent been contacted regarding the unauthorised absences?

School Meeting Letter Telephone Call

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Is the family known to other Services, eg: Children's Services, YJS, CAMHS?

Yes / No

If yes, please give full details:

Are there any notable circumstances to consider, eg: mental health, bereavement, family dynamics/domestic violence? Yes / No

If yes, please give full details:

Signed Designation Date:.....

Please enclose an up to date registration certificate signed by the Headteacher or Deputy in their absence.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Appendix 2

FIXED PENALTY NOTICE REQUEST UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE - Section 444, Education Act 1996

Information contained in the form will be used in legal action under the above Act relating to non-attendance at school in the event that an Education Penalty Notice is issued and remains unpaid. I request that the Local Authority consider issuing a Penalty Notice to the parent(s)* of the following pupil:

Pupil Details

Registered School.....

Name of Pupil DOB Year

Address.....
.....

***Only provide details of the parent/carer to whom the FPN is to be issued.**

Parent 1 *

Full name DOB.....

Address.....

Parent 2 *

Full name..... DOB.....

Address.....

The expression "parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for him or her, or who has day to day care of the child.

In making this request, I confirm that such action would not conflict with other intervention strategies already in place or other enforcement measures already being processed. I can also confirm that the governing body of this school has reviewed its attendance policy and agreed that this school will request the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices in appropriate cases.

How has the parent been contacted regarding the unauthorised absences?

School Meeting Letter Telephone Call

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Is the family known to other Services, eg: Children’s Services, YJS, CAMHS? Yes

/ No

If yes, please give full details:

Are there any notable circumstances to consider, eg: mental health, bereavement, family dynamics/domestic violence? Yes / No

If yes, please give full details:

Signed Designation Date:.....

Please enclose an up to date registration certificate signed by the Headteacher or Deputy in their absence.

DENBIGHSHIRE ATTENDANCE POLICY V7 2024-25

Appendix 3

Relevant legislation that relates to Fixed Penalty Notices includes:

The Children Act 1989

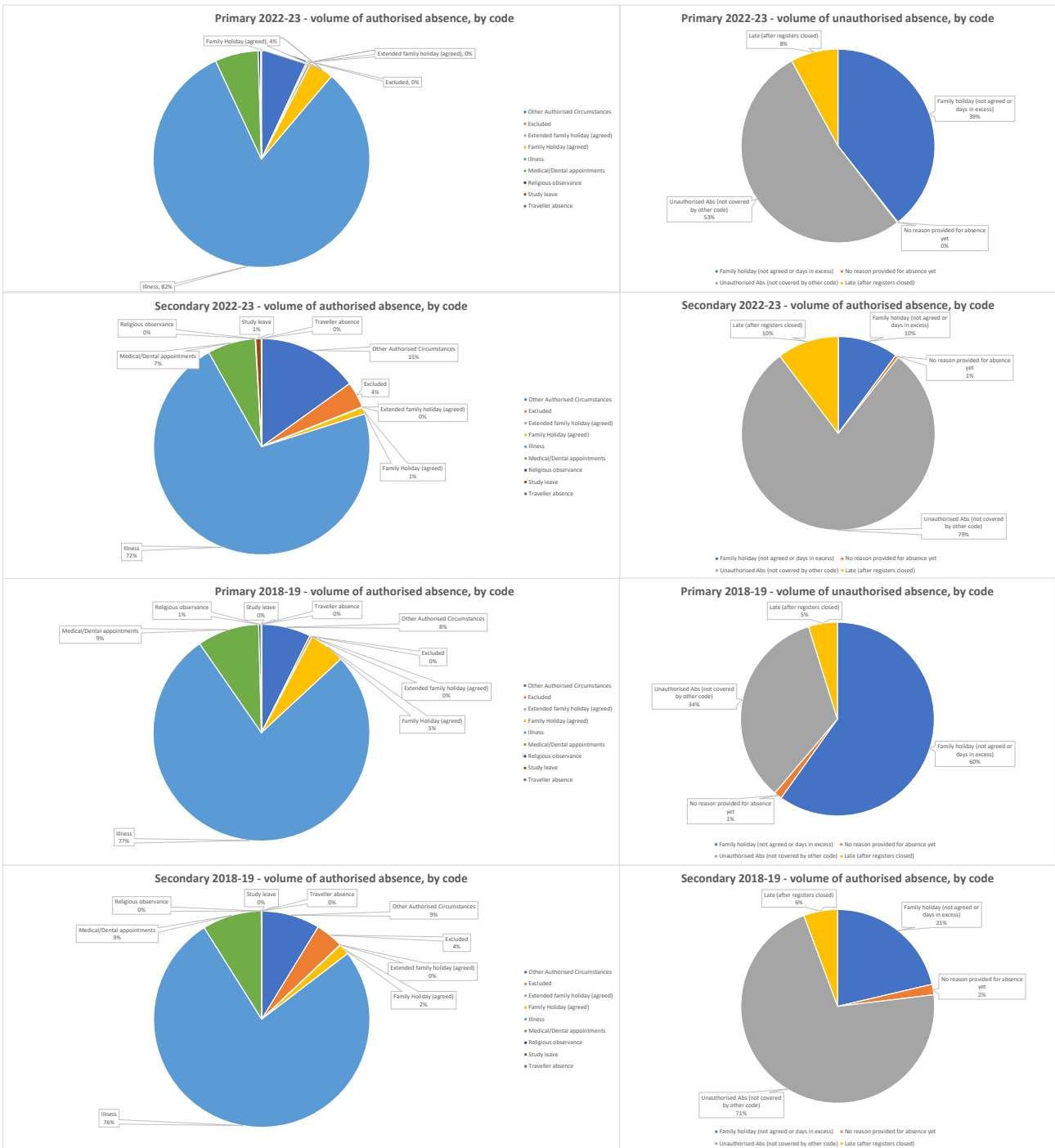
The definition of “parent” means all natural parents, whether they are married or not; and includes any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility and/or care for a child or young person.

The Education Act 1996

Section 7	Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age;
Section 8	Definition of compulsory school age;
Section 444	Offence: Failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil;
Section 444A	Penalty notice in respect of failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil;
Section 444B	Penalty notices: supplemental;
Section 444ZA	Application of section 444 to alternative educational provision
Section 576	Meaning of “parent”

Education & Inspections Act 2006

Section 103	Duty of parent in relation to excluded pupil.
-------------	-----------------------------------------------



This page is intentionally left blank

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	26th September 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Councillor Diane King, Lead Member for Children and Young People / Councillor Emrys Wynne, Lead Member for Welsh Language, Culture and Heritage
Head of Service	Geraint Davies, Head of Education
Report author	Marc Lloyd Jones, WESP Development Officer
Title	WESP Transformation

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. To report on the progress made to date in delivering the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) in all of the county's schools in line with the Welsh Government's vision for Welsh language provision

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. The report was requested by the Committee following discussion on a progress report in September 2023 in respect of the Delivery of Welsh Medium Provision.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. Scrutiny are invited to discuss the details of the report and to identify any issues that it may seek further updates on to ensure that the Council is progressing the actions of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

4. Report details

- 4.1. The Council has a ten-year vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh-medium education in our area. This is articulated in the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). By September 2032 it is our

aspiration that 40% of all seven year old pupils will attend Welsh Medium Education.

- 4.2. To achieve this vision the Plan sets out seven outcomes which will contribute towards this aspiration. The Council is required to submit an annual report to Welsh Government on the progress against this Plan and a summary of progress is provided as Appendix 1.
- 4.3. The main progress against the plan includes a clear vision and support to develop projects; a dedicated Welsh Language Support Team provide excellent support and guidance to school staff in Denbighshire; information highlighting the benefits of bilingualism and Welsh medium education is on DCC website; 6 English medium primary schools have changed their language category and become T2 schools, committed (over a period of ten years) to increase the amount of Welsh taught at school with an aspiration of teaching 50% of lessons through the medium of Welsh. The number of latecomers to Welsh medium education and receiving specialised support is increasing; close collaboration with Welsh Advisory Team in Conwy CC is in place to share good practice and this is developing well.
- 4.4. Officers have created 'Sglein ar Lein' <https://sites.google.com/hwbcymru.net/sgleinarlein/hafan> , a website hosted via Hwb containing teaching resources for all school staff to develop Welsh speaking and listening skills and to encourage the social use of the Welsh language; This has been shared with all schools following launch at the Headteachers' Conference in June 2024.
- 4.5. A Cymraeg Campus framework for Denbighshire secondary schools (English medium) has been created and well received, leading to an increase in the use of Welsh at these schools. Welsh Government have shown a very keen interest in this work.
- 4.6. The main area of concern is a reduction in the percentage of learners who received education through the medium of Welsh in year 2 during 2023-24. During and after the pandemic, the number of pupils in two of our largest Welsh medium primary schools dropped significantly. This reduction saw the number of pupils receiving Welsh medium education in Year 2 drop from 28% in the WESP plan in September 2020 to 26.3% in September 2023. Numbers in these two schools,

however, are beginning to return to pre-COVID values. There is also an increased number of children attending Welsh-medium pre-school settings with a near 100% transitioning to Welsh medium primary schools. Financial stresses in all schools mean that delivering more Welsh may be challenging. There is also a national shortage of staff who speak Welsh and specialise in Welsh as a subject in addition to a national shortage in Welsh learning materials and resources. Officers work closely with schools to ensure effective support is available to meet these challenges and to ensure that Welsh is not impacted by these factors.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: The Denbighshire We Want?

5.1. A learning and growing Denbighshire – Implementing the WESP supports the aim to promote the learning and development of our children and young people and supporting schools to deliver against new standards and national guidelines. Denbighshire’s WESP sets out targets to achieve growth in Welsh medium education and improve the standards of Welsh language teaching.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1. Since the change in funding arrangements from Welsh Government for this financial year, the Cymraeg 2050 element of the Local Authority Education Grant is a total of £383,195. This funding is shared between the regional school improvement service and the local authority’s Welsh teams. The funding retained by the authority has been used to maintain the capacity of the advisory and immersion staff to allow the plan to progress.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. As this is an update report to the Scrutiny Committee, a Wellbeing Impact Assessment has not been completed. The Impact Assessment which was completed when the Plan was approved in January 2022 identified that the WESP had the potential to positively impact on a Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, cohesive communities, a more equal Denbighshire and a more prosperous Denbighshire.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

- 8.1. The WESP Coordinator regularly reports progress to the Welsh in Education Strategic Group. The membership of this groups includes a range of stakeholders, including Councillors, whom Denbighshire work with to promote development of the Welsh Language. An annual report is also written and submitted to Welsh Government, who scrutinise it and return any recommendations or suggestions.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1 The Council is facing significant financial challenges at present that will impact on the capacity to deliver services, projects and corporate priorities. As the Council works through the impacts the overall financial position needs to be kept in mind when discussing all reports going forward. The direct funding for this initiative currently coming from WG Grant is welcomed.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

- 10.1. Strong retention of pupils in Welsh Medium schools throughout their education is key to delivery of the plan, together with the expansion of provision either via re designation of the language category of schools or the development of new Welsh-medium schools where appropriate. Financial pressures impact on professional development at schools and on their capacity to move along the language continuum and increase Welsh provision at their setting. A general lack of Welsh medium resources and Welsh speaking staff can impact progress.

11. Power to make the decision

- 11.1. The requirement to produce a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan ensures compliance with the provisions in relation to the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP) in the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 ('the Act') and the regulations made under it.
- 11.2. Scrutiny's powers in relation to the above are set out in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Section 7 of the Council's Constitution.

Summary of Progress Against WESP Outcomes

Outcome 1: More nursery children/ three year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

- Information about the benefits of bilingualism and Welsh education is prominent on the county's website and on Denbighshire's X page.
- We have collaborated with Menter Iaith Sir Ddinbych and RHAG to produce postcards to share in the community, which will contain QR codes directing parents and parents-to-be to information and events about the Welsh language and Welsh education.
- The number of Cylchoed Meithrin and the number of children attending the cylchoedd is increasing.
- The percentage of children who transfer from the Cylch Meithrin to a Welsh-medium primary school is increasing.
- The number of Welsh-medium Flying Start childcare places is increasing.
- There is now a cylch meithrin on the grounds of every school / or within close walking distance of every Welsh medium school in Denbighshire except for Ysgol Betws Gwerfyl Goch (however Cylch Ti a Fi has been established here). Cylch Rhuthun has moved to a converted building in Ruthin and therefore within walking distance of Ysgol Pen Barras. A Cylch Meithrin has reopened at Ysgol Bro Dyfrdwy.
- The authority has used a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment to identify areas for development.
- An application for funding was submitted to the Welsh Government's Childcare Capital Fund at the end of March for developments at Ysgol y Llys and Ysgol Bro Elwern. We are awaiting a response to this request from the Welsh Government.
- The development of sites in Ruthin and Ysgol Dewi Sant are long-term projects.
- Projects are underway to develop sites on the grounds of Ysgol Twm o'r Nant, Ysgol y Llys, Ysgol Gwernant, Llangollen and Ysgol Llanrhaeadr.

Outcome 2: More reception class children/ five year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

- The number and percentage of learners in the Reception Class who are taught through the medium of Welsh has been increasing, but the impact of the pandemic particularly on the two largest Welsh schools in the north of the county has seen the numbers decrease in 2023 -24.
- The number and percentage of learners in year 1 who are taught through the medium of Welsh has increased by 1.4% between 2022-23 and 2023-24.

- There are 8 Welsh-medium schools that are either full, or almost full.
- The highest number of empty places are in our largest schools. It must be noted, however, that the data does not include school nursery classes.
- DCSd, Menter Iaith and RHAG have been working together, by holding events and creating digital platforms to encourage parents in the north of the county to send their children to Welsh-medium schools.
- The numbers of learners initially registered at Y Llys and Ysgol Dewi Sant in September 2024 are significantly higher than in 2022 and 2023.
- The numbers of pupils in two of our smallest schools cause concern.
- Project developments in three schools are developing (Ysgol Bro Elwern, Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch and Ysgol Henllan) .
- Planning work is underway to build an extension to Ysgol Gwernant.
- 6 English-medium primary schools have indicated that they are category T2 schools. With the support of the authority's officers, the Welsh provision will increase in these schools over a period of time.
- The authority's officers work closely with the 6 T6 schools to map their linguistic journey and create detailed action plans to increase the use of the Welsh language.
- Denbighshire's model of supporting latecomers is evolving and developing well. Two members of staff provide outreach support to the latecomers and numbers have increased every term.

Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

- The only category 1 and 3 primary school in the county has indicated that learners from the Nursery and Reception class this year will not have the option of choosing English as the medium of their education until they are in year 3. We are in constant discussions to explore the option of changing the school into a category 3, Welsh medium school.
- 93% of year 6 learners in Welsh-medium schools in Denbighshire go to a Welsh-medium school/stream in secondary school. 200 learners.
- County officials, head teachers of primary and secondary schools meet regularly to draw up clear strategies and procedures to encourage learners to continue with Welsh education in secondary school.
- Ysgol Glan Clwyd staff and county officials work together and visit some English medium primary schools to encourage learners to go to the immersion class in Glan Clwyd.
- County officials support year 6 individuals who have chosen to go to the immersion class.
- Plans are underway to open an immersion class at Ysgol Brynhyfryd.

Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

- County officials work closely with the 6 T2 schools to map their linguistic journey, draw up detailed action plans, monitor developments and train and support staff.
- The number and percentage of learners registered for GCSE Welsh First Language and GCSE Welsh Second Language has increased.
- More learners are following an A-level Welsh (first language) course, but fewer are following an AS course.
- More learners follow a Welsh course as a second language at AS and A level.
- The two category 2 secondary schools offer more subjects through Welsh than in the previous year.
- We are in constant discussions with the two secondary schools in the south of the county to increase their offer to pupils to study more subjects through Welsh.
- Headteachers of the 3 schools that offer Welsh education are keen to look at e-ysgol as a means of offering more subjects through the medium of Welsh.
- We are in discussions with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to see how more students can be encouraged to study Welsh as a subject.
- Denbighshire's secondary networks have been created to offer support to Welsh coordinators.

Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

Siarter Iaith

- The Welsh language support officer has created a 'Sglein ar Lein' website which is a very useful resource for teachers to use to develop learners' speaking and listening skills in progression steps 1, 2 and 3.
- The county's oracy scheme has been active in the Welsh-medium primary schools since September 2023 and will continue to be used during the next year.
- There are plans in place to create a website separate from 'Sglein Ar Lein' for promoting and celebrating Siarter Iaith.
- All Welsh-medium primary schools have received the gold award and we are monitoring progress at each school to ensure that the gold standards are maintained.
- There are also plans in place to collaborate with Conwy and Gwynedd to introduce a framework similar to Siarter Iaith in the Welsh-medium secondary schools (Glan Clwyd has established 'Byw'r Gymraeg' and we are in discussions to develop this further).
- Termly visits take place at each school to meet headteachers + coordinators, to train staff, share good practice and monitor progress.
- A LA officer is part of each school's self-evaluation process as well as helping to identify priorities for each school's Development Plan.
- Effective collaboration has begun with Conwy CC.

Cymraeg Campus

- 25 English-medium primary schools have received the Cymraeg Campus bronze award.
- 7 English-medium primary schools have received the Cymraeg Campus silver award.
- Schools are targeted to aim to win the next award.
- The authority's officer supports schools effectively to introduce and use the Welsh language.
- DCC have created our own Cymraeg Campus Framework for the 7 secondary schools that deliver Welsh as a second language.
- The framework has been created and shared with the co-ordinators and management teams of the 7 secondary schools who are committed to implementing Cymraeg Campus.
- There are resources available and support for schools to receive the bronze, silver and gold award.
- Denbigh High School has received the bronze award and is being validated for the silver award in the Autumn term.
- It is anticipated that at least two more schools will receive the bronze award next year.
- The authority collaborates with the Urdd and Menter Iaith to prioritise support for schools and to draw up a schedule of visits.

Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

A detailed annual audit is made of the provision and support for ALN pupils through the medium of Welsh.

The authority's ALN departments

- All departments (apart from home schooling) are able to offer service and support in Welsh to learners who wish to do so.
- No department has refused support to any learner who wishes support through the medium of Welsh during the last three years.
- A lack of Welsh language resources is an issue.
- Recruiting staff who can speak Welsh is a problem.
- The authority has facilitated that a member of the council's staff is trained to be an educational psychologist. These individuals will work for the authority as an educational psychologist at the end of her training period.

ALN coordinators of Welsh-medium schools

- 81% of the coordinators state that their schools meet the learning needs of their ALN learners through the medium of Welsh. Main challenges – lack of resources, lack of Welsh speaking staff/assistants, learners' linguistic standard is generally low.

- 75% work together effectively as a cluster. Of the 25% who did not collaborate effectively, the school's ALN coordinator and the cluster's ALN coordinator were new to the job.
- 100% noted that there are not enough resources available through the Welsh language. Although resources are shared between schools, there are obvious gaps in assessment tests, series and reading books, resources to support spelling, intervention programmes such as Toe by Toe, checklists for disorders e.g. dyslexia, adhd and an IDL system in Welsh.
- 75% believe that the authority's ALN departments give good support to schools. 25% indicated that the main challenges here were a lack of materials, resources and Welsh speaking staff.

The heads of the three special schools

- There are very few Welsh-speaking learners in the schools.
- Although the offer and the provision are in the schools, no parent/learner has asked for aspects of the curriculum to be taught through Welsh in the last 3 years.
- Some children receive a small proportion of their education through the medium of Welsh.
- There are teachers and assistants in the three schools with the ability to support learners through the Welsh language.

Carrying out an annual audit has been very useful to stimulate conversation among the different stakeholders and to identify gaps in the provision. In general, the support through the Welsh language for ALN learners in the county is positive but we face obvious challenges, in particular the lack of Welsh language resources and the shortage of staff who can speak Welsh.

There is no pattern of pupils choosing (or moving) to English-medium education due to a lack of provision or resources in Welsh.

The most effective collaboration takes place within clusters to share resources and expertise.

There are cross-county meetings for the authority's ALN officers and we share services such as the Sensory Service with neighboring counties. Denbighshire's Educational Psychologist does some work through the medium of Welsh in other counties.

Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

- There is an increase in the number of teachers who can teach/work through the medium of Welsh.
- There is also an increase in the number of teachers who are unable to teach/work through the medium of Welsh.
- There is no significant pattern in the data, but it reflects a national challenge to recruit Welsh-speaking staff.

- The authority continues to promote the sabbatical course and is proud to say that there are 5 teachers on the course this year with one of these teachers working in a transitional T2 school.
- School staff have received presentations about Learning Welsh courses from The National Center for Welsh Learning.
- The authority has arranged for 4 teachers from our T2 schools to attend a joint pilot course with teachers from Conwy County's T2 schools.
- There are 6 members of staff in the Welsh Language Support Team, meaning that there is support for staff and teachers in the primary and secondary sectors, Welsh or English medium as well as support for latecomers.
- The support structure has facilitated training sessions, meetings and visits in order to develop the use of the Welsh language in the schools.
- Secondary school networks have been extremely useful for Welsh language coordinators to discuss ideas and share good practice.
- Meetings were held to raise awareness among the head teachers of all the authority's schools about the need to plan deliberately to develop the workforce and to increase the Welsh language provision.
- The officers of the Welsh Language Support Team have created and shared a Welsh language development plan with school leaders, indicating step by step, how to develop speaking and listening skills and how to increase the social use of Welsh.
- A comprehensive training program has been shared by the authority.
- The 'Sglein ar Lein' website is a great resource for teachers to enable them to present language patterns to learners.
- Denbighshire County Council and GwE officers identify potential leaders within the Welsh sector and develop them professionally.
- 5 Headteacher positions in a Welsh language school have been filled this year.
- Recruitment to the childcare sector is a concern as the cylchoedd cannot be open if the staff member does not have the correct qualification.
- Mudiad Meithrin provides many opportunities for staff through courses such as Step by Step and Croesi'r Bont for the staff of cylchoedd meithrin and also for the staff of English placements.
- Mudiad Meithrin work closely with schools and offers their service to school staff
- The Early Years Inclusion and Early Education Team has appointed two Welsh-speaking consultant teachers. They support cylchoedd, provide Welsh language training for the staff of the settings and work together with Mudiad Meithrin and Welsh language consultant teachers to support the promotion of the Welsh language in English speaking settings.
- The Child Care and Play Development Team works in partnership with PACEY Cymru to recruit Welsh speakers to consider a career in childcare.
- Training through Camau is promoted to support practitioners who want to develop their linguistic skills.

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	26th September 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Diane King (Lead Member for Education, Children and Young People), Geraint Davies (Head of Education)
Head of Service	Geraint Davies, Head of Education
Report author	Jacqueline Chan (GwE), Mair Herbert (GwE), James Brown (DCC) and Ruth Thackray (DCC)
Title	Curriculum for Wales

1. What is the report about?

1.1. The report provides an update on the progress made by schools since the Curriculum for Wales became statutory in September 2022. The report offers information on lessons learnt from evaluations across schools during this initial implementation phase and any impact on staff and learners.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To detail the progress made in relation to implementing and embedding the new Curriculum for Wales: in primary schools and in year 7 and 8 in secondary schools – what worked well, areas for improvement and lessons learnt by all stakeholders during the initial implementation phase; and provide an evaluation of the implementation process across all key stages, the Curriculum's impact on staff recruitment and retention, along with feedback from headteachers, teachers and school-based staff on their experiences of the implementation process and the advantages and/or disadvantages of the new Curriculum for learners.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. Scrutiny is invited to discuss the details of this report and to identify any aspects of the Curriculum for Wales work which may benefit from detailed examination in the future.

4. Report details

- 4.1. In September 2022, the new Curriculum for Wales became statutory for all learners from Nursery to Year 6. All secondary schools and settings had started their first teaching of Curriculum for Wales in Years 7 and 8 by September 2023.
- 4.2. All primary schools have designed their curriculum in line with the Four Purposes to meet the mandatory requirements of Curriculum for Wales, with a balanced curriculum offer to meet all learners' needs. The staggered rollout in secondary schools has had a different effect to the shorter implementation of rollout in primary, with leaders and practitioners in secondary schools involved in on-going and significant change every year between 2022 and 2026. Year 9 are beginning the new curriculum in September 2024. Two further stages of implementation will follow as these learners begin the new 14-16 qualifications in 2025, and the current Year 8 learners in 2026. Curriculum summary documents have been developed by each school and made available to parents and local community as required by Welsh Government.
- 4.3. The local authority has ensured that all curriculum support aligns to the expectations and principles within Welsh Government's Journey to Curriculum Roll-out, through regular professional dialogue with each school's link Supporting Improvement Adviser (SIA) and a range of professional learning opportunities at cluster, alliance (in secondary schools) and individual school level. Networks have shared their practice through GwE's support centre and a marketplace sharing event for all regional schools where practitioners from Denbighshire schools presented and shared their work. Schools are working more effectively in clusters to develop provision and understanding across the continuum. This is stronger in some clusters than others and there is still work needed to strengthen the cluster dialogue and bring about shared improvement. Transition processes are improving but this needs further development to support pupils effectively at key points.

- 4.4. Most schools have embraced the Curriculum for Wales as a positive education reform and are continuing to develop their practice. This is taking time and some schools are still finding it difficult to change. As a result, the curriculum in some schools can seem quite packed.
- 4.5. Many teachers and schools have taken a more creative approach to the curriculum with a range of new strategies such as Big Question and inquiry-based learning. Where schools are effective, they develop pupils well as independent learners and provide them with opportunities to decide how to present their work– however, this gap is wide between the best and least effective practice.
- 4.6. Many schools have taken the opportunity to review their curriculum successfully and have developed a more local curriculum that better reflects the needs of the school, community and Wales in general. Pupils are more engaged in many schools and are enjoying a broad and balanced curriculum with more authenticity and purpose. However, this still needs to be developed further in many schools.
- 4.7. Although initially challenged by the loss of the certainty of levels and outcomes, a majority of schools have adapted successfully to assessment systems that have a range of teacher assessments. A minority of schools are still very unsure about assessment and lack confidence in some aspects in case they are not ‘doing the right thing’. Schools have engaged well with Professional Learning with generally a positive impact on standards. However, schools are concerned about their ability to continue to access this with changes to funding.
- 4.8. A consequence of the new digital competence framework, significant EdTech funding, new curriculum and pandemic is that almost all schools have improved and developed their ICT provision successfully, resulting in a greater confidence and skills in both pupils and staff.
- 4.9. Health and well-being as an Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE) is one of the most significant changes in the new curriculum and nearly all schools have given it a greater focus. There has been a large increase in the number of schools who have invested in Forest Schools and outdoor learning.
- 4.10 There are a number of challenges associated with the implementation. Monitoring is needed to track and check progress but is limited by many heads needing to increase their teaching commitments due to funding challenges. This impacts on

leadership capacity. The curriculum which pupils receive is determined by what their teachers and leaders of curriculum design in their schools create, and how innovative and creative they are. The profession needs to ensure equity of experience in a system that actively promotes difference. The sector looks forward to receiving the additional exemplification and direction from Welsh Government in relation to this reform.

- 4.11 With so many concurrent and significant reforms to the sector, the continued challenges faced by schools as a result of the COVID pandemic, and the increasingly difficult funding situation, it is not possible to determine whether the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales is impacting teacher retention and recruitment. The authors of the report are not aware of any teachers leaving the profession due to this specific reform, despite the significant shift in practices it requires of many professionals. There is, however, anecdotal evidence that other factors and reforms are impacting on retention of staff in key positions in schools.

5 How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: The Denbighshire We Want?

- 5.1 This area of work contributes towards making Denbighshire a healthier and happier place where young people want to live and work and have the skills to do so as identified within the Four Purposes. It also contributes to make Denbighshire a place where young people can learn and make good progress in their skills, learning in a fair and safe environment. This will help ensure all learners have the best start in life and can realise their full potential.

6 What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

- 6.1 The Council will continue to liaise with GwE to efficiently and effectively utilise the Local Authority Education Grant to support schools implement the reform. This will have minimal impact on other services within the Council.

7 What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

- 7.1 The curriculum reform is a requirement in legislation which all schools must implement. The changes are directed by Welsh Government and not by the

Council and therefore a Well-being Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report.

8 What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1 Through liaison with GwE, there is regular discussion with colleagues across Wales and Welsh Government to collect feedback and identify aspects for further discussion and development. Scrutiny have previously received a report on the rollout of Curriculum for Wales

9 Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1 The Council is facing significant financial challenges at present that will impact on the capacity to deliver services, projects and corporate priorities. All are aware of the significant pressures schools are under including the impact of introducing concurrent reforms such as the Curriculum for Wales as referenced in para 4.11 and are committed to minimise the financial impacts on schools as much as possible, however it is not possible to protect schools completely.

10 What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1 The implementation of the Curriculum for Wales is reviewed by Estyn as part of their inspection work. The local authority and GwE are already working in partnership to monitor and support schools with their implementation, thereby reducing the associated risks.

10.2 The Welsh Government's review of middle tier services in education carries a risk to the service provided to schools through the change of model and personnel. To mitigate this risk, wherever possible, there are minimal changes to supporting improvement advisors and bespoke support plans are in place for each school.

11 Power to make the decision

11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

11.2 Sections 7.3, 7.4.1 and 7.4.2 of the Council's Constitution.

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	26 September 2024
Head of Service	Catrin Roberts, Head of Corporate Support Service: People
Report author	Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Title	Scrutiny Work Programme

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 The report seeks Performance Scrutiny Committee to review its draft forward work programme (see Appendix 1). As part of its review the Committee is asked to reflect on how Scrutiny can support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and its aim of becoming Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive by 2030, whilst also prioritising matters which the Committee deems important to scrutinise.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1 To seek the Committee to review and agree on its programme of future work, and to update members on relevant issues.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee

- 3.1 considers the information provided and approves, revises or amends its forward work programme as it deems appropriate; and
- 3.2 determines whether any key messages or themes from the current meeting should be publicised via the press and/or social media.

4. Report details

- 4.1 Section 7 of Denbighshire County Council's Constitution sets out each Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference, functions and membership, as well as the rules of procedure and debate.
- 4.2 The Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must set, and regularly review, a programme for their future work. By reviewing and prioritising issues, members are able to ensure that the work programme delivers a member-led agenda.
- 4.3 For a number of years it has been an adopted practice in Denbighshire for scrutiny committees to limit the number of reports considered at any one meeting to a maximum of four plus the Committee's own work programme report. The aim of this approach is to facilitate detailed and effective debate on each topic.
- 4.4 In recent years the Welsh Government (WG) and Audit Wales (AW) have highlighted the need to strengthen scrutiny's role across local government and public services in Wales, including utilising scrutiny as a means of engaging with residents and service-users. From now on scrutiny will be expected to engage better and more frequently with the public with a view to securing better decisions which ultimately lead to better outcomes for citizens. AW will measure scrutiny's effectiveness in fulfilling these expectations.
- 4.5 Having regard to the national vision for scrutiny whilst at the same time focussing on local priorities, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) recommended that the Council's scrutiny committees should, when deciding on their work programmes, focus on the following key areas:
- budget savings and the Transformation Programme;
 - achievement of the Corporate Plan themes (with particular emphasis on their deliverability during a period of financial austerity);
 - any other items agreed by the Scrutiny Committee (or the SCVCG) as high priority (based on the PAPER test criteria – see reverse side of the 'Member Proposal Form' at Appendix 2); and

- Urgent, unforeseen or high priority issues.

4.6 Scrutiny Proposal Forms

As mentioned in paragraph 4.2 above the Council's Constitution requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. To assist the process of prioritising reports, if officers are of the view that a subject merits time for discussion on Scrutiny's business agenda they have to submit a formal request to the SCVCG seeking Scrutiny to consider a report on that topic. This is done via the submission of a 'proposal form' which clarifies the purpose, importance and potential outcomes of scrutinising suggested subjects.

- 4.7 With a view to making better use of scrutiny's time by focussing committees' resources on detailed examination of subjects, adding value through the decision-making process and securing better outcomes for residents, the SCVCG decided that members, as well as officers, should complete 'scrutiny proposal forms' outlining the reasons why they think a particular subject would benefit from scrutiny's input. A copy of the 'member's proposal form' can be seen at Appendix 2. The reverse side of this form contains a flowchart listing questions which members should consider when proposing an item for scrutiny, and which committees should ask when determining a topic's suitability for inclusion on a scrutiny forward work programme. If, having followed this process, a topic is not deemed suitable for formal examination by a scrutiny committee, alternative channels for sharing the information or examining the matter can be considered e.g. the provision of an 'information report', or if the matter is of a very local nature examination by the relevant Member Area Group (MAG). No items should be included on a forward work programme without a 'scrutiny proposal form' being completed and accepted for inclusion by the Committee or the SCVCG. Assistance with their completion is available from the Scrutiny Co-ordinator.

Cabinet Forward Work Programme

- 4.8 When determining their programme of future work it is useful for scrutiny committees to have regard to Cabinet's scheduled programme of work. For this

purpose, a copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 3.

Progress on Committee Resolutions

4.9 A table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising members on progress with their implementation is attached at Appendix 4 to this report.

5. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group

5.1 Under the Council's scrutiny arrangements, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) performs the role of a coordinating committee. The Group met on 16 September. No items were referred by the Group at that meeting to this Committee for detailed examination.

5.2 The Group's next scheduled meeting is on 25 November 2024.

6. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: The Denbighshire We Want?

6.1 Effective scrutiny will assist the Council to deliver its Corporate Plan in line with community needs and residents' wishes. Continual development and review of a coordinated work programme will assist the Council to deliver its corporate themes, improve outcomes for residents whilst also managing austere budget and resource pressures.

6.2 Whilst the decision on the Committee's forward work programme itself will have a neutral contribution on the Council's aim of becoming Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive by 2030, the Committee by effectively scrutinising all matters examined by it can help support the delivery of this ambition.

7. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

7.1 Services may need to allocate officer time to assist the Committee with the activities identified in the forward work programme, and with any actions that may result following consideration of those items.

8. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

8.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment has not been undertaken in relation to the purpose or contents of this report. However, Scrutiny through its work in examining service delivery, policies, procedures and proposals will consider their impact or potential impact on the sustainable development principle and the well-being goals stipulated in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

9. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

9.1. None required for this report. However, the report itself and the consideration of the forward work programme represent a consultation process with the Committee with respect to its programme of future work.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1 No risks have been identified with respect to the consideration of the Committee's forward work programme. However, by regularly reviewing its forward work programme the Committee can ensure that areas of risk are considered and examined as and when they are identified, and recommendations are made with a view to addressing those risks.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

11.2 Section 7.11 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that scrutiny committees and/or the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group will be responsible for setting their own work programmes, taking into account the wishes of Members of the Committee who are not members of the largest political group on the Council.

This page is intentionally left blank

Note: Any items entered in italics have not been approved for inclusion at the meeting shown by the Committee. Such reports are listed here for information, pending formal approval.

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
28 November	Cllr. Gwyneth Ellis	1. Council Performance Self-Assessment Update (July – Sept)	To present an update on the Council's performance against its functions, including Corporate Plan and Strategic Equality objectives	Identification of areas for improvement and potential future scrutiny	<i>Helen Vaughan-Evans/Emma Horan</i>	November 2023 (RhE)
	Cllr. Julie Matthews	2. Corporate Risk Register: September 2024 Review	To seek the Committee to review the risks facing the Council and the Council's risk appetite statement.	Determination of whether the Committee is satisfied with risk management within the Council and is assured that all identified risks are appropriately managed.	<i>Helen Vaughan-Evans/Heidi Barton-Price</i>	<i>November 2023 (RhE)</i>
	Cllr. Julie Matthews	3. Recruitment, Retention & Workforce Planning	To provide details of: (i) the work underway to recruit, develop, support and retain staff (ii) interventions put in place to support and strengthen recruitment, retention & workforce planning across the Council; and identification of any hard to recruit services/positions across the authority and interim measures taken to alleviate the pressures caused within those services (Heads of Service for those services to be invited to attend to discuss the impact of staffing pressures on operational service delivery)	Identification of potential future workforce pressure areas and the formulation of recommendations with a view to alleviating those pressures and secure the Council's ability to sustainably deliver its services in future	Gary Williams/Catrin Roberts/Louise Dougal	<i>July 2023 (rescheduled May 2024 & June 2024) (RhE)</i>

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
	Cllr. Gill German	4. Christ The Word [Education]	To consider the progress made in delivering the Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP) and the joint local authority & GwE school support plan following the 2022 Estyn inspection of the school, along with the consequential impact of the plans' delivery on the school as a whole	Regular monitoring of the arrangements in place to address the recommendations contained in the Regulator's report will: (i) secure continual improvement in all aspects of the school's work to ensure that all pupils are supported to achieve their full potential; and ensure that the lessons learnt by all stakeholders are applied across all schools in Denbighshire as they introduce the new curriculum; and support the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities of a learning and growing Denbighshire as well as a fairer, safe and more equal county.	Nicola Stubbins/ Geraint Davies/James Brown/GwE/Christ the Word staff & Governing Body	September 2023 <i>(rescheduled June 2024)</i> <i>(RhE)</i>
30 January 2025	Cllr. Gwyneth Ellis	1. Medium Term Financial Strategy & Plan Update	To examine the Council's progress in delivering its Medium Term Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan.	Early identification of any slippages in delivering the Strategy and/or pressures experienced with the Plan gives Scrutiny an opportunity to make suggestions or recommendations to Cabinet with a view to strengthening the Council's financial resilience	Liz Thomas	By SCVCG May 2024 (RhE)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
	Leader	2. Economic & Business Development Strategy (TBC)	To: (i) consult with the Committee on the draft new Denbighshire Economic & Community Ambition Strategy for 2024 onwards; (ii) detail how the current and proposed new Strategy dovetail with the work of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board, Welsh & UK Governments and other economic development partners to support the delivery of a thriving economy in Denbighshire; and outline the work being undertaken to mitigate against the potential outcomes identified in Risk 36 of the Council's Corporate Risk Register	Formulation of recommendations in relation to the new Strategy that will help secure the delivery, in partnership with all stakeholders, of a more prosperous Denbighshire that provides employment and business opportunities for residents to improve the quality of lives and support thriving, cohesive communities	Emlyn Jones/ Gareth Roberts	By SCVCG November 2022 (rescheduled November 2023 & Jan 2024 & June 2024) (RhE)
	Cllr. Emrys Wynne	3. Library Service/One Stop Shop Provision (TBC)	To consider: (i) the initial findings of the Working Group established to measure the impact of the reduction in Library/OSS opening hours on residents, communities, and the authority; and alternative proposals or solutions under consideration for enhancing and/or expanding service delivery going forward	Formulation of recommendations on the best solutions for delivering a comprehensive citizen focussed service within the resources available for the future which supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan	Liz Grieve/Debbie Owen	January 2024 (reschedule June 2024) (RhE)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
	Cllr. Emrys Wynne	4. Library Service Standards 2023-24	To consider the results of the WG's annual evaluation of the Council's Library Service and receive information on how the Service has progressed and adapted its service provision during the year	Identification of any slippages in performance in order to formulate recommendations to redress the situation and ensure that the Service delivers the Council's Corporate Plan and its corporate themes in relation to a learning & growing; healthier, happy and caring; better connected; fairer, safer and more equal Denbighshire; a Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language as well as a well-run and high performing Council.	Liz Grieve/Debbie Owen	January 2024 (RhE)
13 March	Cllr. Emrys Wynne	1. Internet and Telephony Connectivity in Denbighshire Invitation to be extended to a representative from Openreach	To consider the progress made to date, and future plans for: (i) increasing and improving/upgrading internet connectivity for all areas of the county (including the latest position in relation to Fibre Community Partnerships and the UK Government's Project Gigabit roll out along with any other potential support/voucher packages that may be available for businesses and residents to access); and	Support accessibility for all businesses and residents in the county to fibre broadband/telephony speeds that meet their individual needs, that will in turn support the delivery of the Council's corporate themes of 'a prosperous' county that is 'fairer, safe and more equal' as well as a learning and growing county.	Liz Grieve/ Cath Taylor/Fran Williams/Philip Burrows	April 2024 (RhE)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
			(ii) the provision of support to communities and residents by the Council to help them access fibre/broadband and other digital communication channels with a view to making sure that vulnerable residents and rural communities aren't adversely disadvantaged			
	Leader & Cllr. Julie Matthews	2. Council processes and procedures for applying for high value grant funding (in the post-Brexit era) <i>TBC</i>	To examine current Council processes and procedures for applying for high value grant funding and maximising the benefits of all funding opportunities on offer (incl. any lessons learnt from recent Levelling Up & Shared Prosperity Fund applications with a view to improving our processes for any future funding that becomes available)	Establishment of a simple, effective and easily adaptable funding application process which can be initiated immediately funding streams are announced to enable well-evidenced applications to be submitted within tight timescales, with a view to realising maximum benefit and impact for residents from each application submitted, and wherever possible mitigate the effects of budget pressures	Tony Ward/Gary Williams/Emlyn Jones/Heleen Vaughan-Evans (with input from Liz Grieve on learning from SPF funding)	By SCVCG November 2023 (RhE)
1 May	Cllr. Gwyneth Ellis	1 Council Performance Self-Assessment Report 2024/25	To present an update on the Council's performance against its functions, including Corporate Plan and Strategic Equality objectives	Identification of areas for improvement and potential future scrutiny	Helen Vaughan-Evans/Heidi Barton-Price/Emma Horan	May 2024 (RhE)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
	Cllr. Julie Matthews	2. Corporate Risk Register: February 2025 Review	To seek the Committee to review the risks facing the Council and the Council's risk appetite statement.	Determination of whether the Committee is satisfied with risk management within the Council and is assured that all identified risks are appropriately managed.	<i>Helen Vaughan Evans/ Heidi Barton-Price</i>	<i>May 2024 (RhE)</i>
12 June						
17 July	Cllrs. Diane King & Elen Heaton	1. Draft Director of Social Services Annual Report 2024/25	To scrutinise the content of the draft annual report to ensure it provides a fair and clear evaluation of performance and clearly articulates future plans	Identification of any specific performance issues which require further scrutiny by the committee in future	Nicola Stubbins/ Ann Lloyd/Rhian Morelle/ David Soley	May 2024 (RhE)
	Cllr. Elen Heaton	2 Cefndy Performance Report 2024/25	To consider Cefndy's annual performance report for the 2024/25 financial year, including the delivery of its financial, business and social well-being objectives	To ensure the future financial and business sustainability of Cefndy in order that it effectively supports the delivery of the Council's corporate themes of learning and growing; healthier and happier, caring; and prosperous Denbighshire	Ann Lloyd/Nick Bowles	July 2024 (RhE)
18 Sept	Cllr. Gwyneth Ellis	1. Medium Term Financial Strategy & Plan Update	To examine the Council's progress in delivering its Medium Term Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan.	Early identification of any slippages in delivering the Strategy and/or pressures experienced with the Plan gives Scrutiny an opportunity to make suggestions or recommendations to Cabinet with a view to strengthening	Liz Thomas	By SCVCG May 2024 (RhE)

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered/ Updated by
				the Council's financial resilience		
	Cllr. Barry Mellor	2. Climate & Nature Strategy	To monitor the progress made with the Strategy's delivery	An assessment of whether the Council will realise its ambition of becoming a Net Carbon Zero authority by 2030, identification of any slippages with the Strategy's delivery and the formulation of recommendations in order to address performance with a view to delivering the Strategy on time.	Helen Vaughan-Evans/Jane Hodgson	June 2024 (RhE)
6 November	Cllr. Gwyneth Ellis	1. Medium Term Financial Strategy & Plan Update	To examine the Council's progress in delivering its Medium Term Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan.	Early identification of any slippages in delivering the Strategy and/or pressures experienced with the Plan gives Scrutiny an opportunity to make suggestions or recommendations to Cabinet with a view to strengthening the Council's financial resilience	Liz Thomas	By SCVCG May 2024 (RhE)
	Cllr. Gwyneth Ellis	2. Council Performance Self-Assessment Update (July – Sept)	To present an update on the Council's performance against its functions, including Corporate Plan and Strategic Equality objectives	Identification of areas for improvement and potential future scrutiny	<i>Helen Vaughan-Evans/Emma Horan</i>	May 2024 (RhE)
	Cllr. Julie Matthews	3. Corporate Risk Register: September 2025 Review	To seek the Committee to review the risks facing the Council and the Council's risk appetite statement.	Determination of whether the Committee is satisfied with risk management within the Council and is assured that all identified risks are appropriately managed.	<i>Helen Vaughan-Evans/Heidi Barton-Price</i>	May 2024 (RhE)

Future Issues

Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
<p><i>Learner Travel Measure (Wales)</i></p> <p>[Education]</p> <p>TBC – once outcome of WG Review available (review summer 2025 & report considered by CET)</p>	<p><i>To outline the conclusions of the recent Welsh Government consultation on the Measure and its implications for Denbighshire schools and pupils</i></p>	<p><i>Identification of potential changes to the Council’s learner travel policy and any associated costs and budget implications</i></p>	<p><i>Geraint Davies/Ian Land</i></p>	<p><i>January 2021 (rescheduled Sept 2022 & Jan & May 2023) (RhE)</i></p>
<p>Denbigh Health and Social Care and the Rebalancing of Social Care Agenda <i>(now widened was Dolwen Residential Care Home (now to be considered as part of the future vision for health and social care services in the Denbigh area)</i></p> <p><i>Sometime during 2024/25 (tbc)</i></p>	<p>To review the future provision of services at Dolwen to meet the growing demand and complexity of need, whilst supporting people to live in a home that meets their needs and allows them to live an independent and resilient life.</p>	<p><i>Pre-decision scrutiny of the task and finish group’s findings and the formulation of recommendations for presentation to Cabinet with respect of the future provision of services at Dolwen with a view to ensuring that everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs and are able to live independent and resilient lives</i></p>	<p><i>Task and Finish Group/Ann Lloyd/Katie Newe</i></p>	<p><i>July 2018 (delayed due to COVID-19) (RhE)</i></p>

Information/Consultation Reports

Date	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Author	Date Entered
September 2024	Medium Term Financial Strategy & Plan Update	To provide information on the Council's progress in delivering its Medium Term Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan and provide early identification of any slippages in delivering the Strategy and/or pressures experienced with the Plan to give Scrutiny an opportunity to make suggestions on how to strengthen the Council's financial resilience	Liz Thomas	May 2024 by SCVCG (RhE)
October/November 2024	Car Parking Fees	To provide information on the progress to date in achieving the estimated £700K increase from car parking fees	Mike Jones/Liz Thomas	July 2024 (RhE)
January/July	Corporate Risk Register Review – Risk Review Summary	To share with the Committee a summary of the conclusions of the 'light-touch' review of the Register	Helen Vaughan-Evans/Heidi Barton-Price	April 2024 (RhE)
Feb/May/Sept/November each year [Information]	Quarterly 'Your Voice' complaints performance to include social services complaints	To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints and identify areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses. The report to include: (i) a comprehensive explanation on why targets have not been met when dealing with specific complaints, reasons for non-compliance, and measures taken to rectify the failures and to ensure that future complaints will be dealt with within the specified timeframe; (ii) how services encourage feedback and use it to redesign or change the way they deliver services; and (iii) details of complaints which have been upheld or partially upheld and the lessons learnt from them.	Kevin Roberts/Ann Lloyd	September 2023 (RhE)

		Report to include example(s) of complaints and compliment(s) received. Consideration of the information provided will assist the Committee to determine whether any issues merit detailed scrutiny		
March 2025 [Education]	<i>Elective Home Education</i>	<i>To provide data on the number of home educated pupils in Denbighshire along with information on current trends with respect of the number of families choosing to educate their children at home and the measures in place to support those families and those wishing to return to mainstream education.</i>	<i>Geraint Davies/Ruth Thackray/Jayne Williams</i>	<i>March 2024 (RhE)</i>

Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines

Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
28 November	14 November	January 2025	January 2025	13 March	27 February

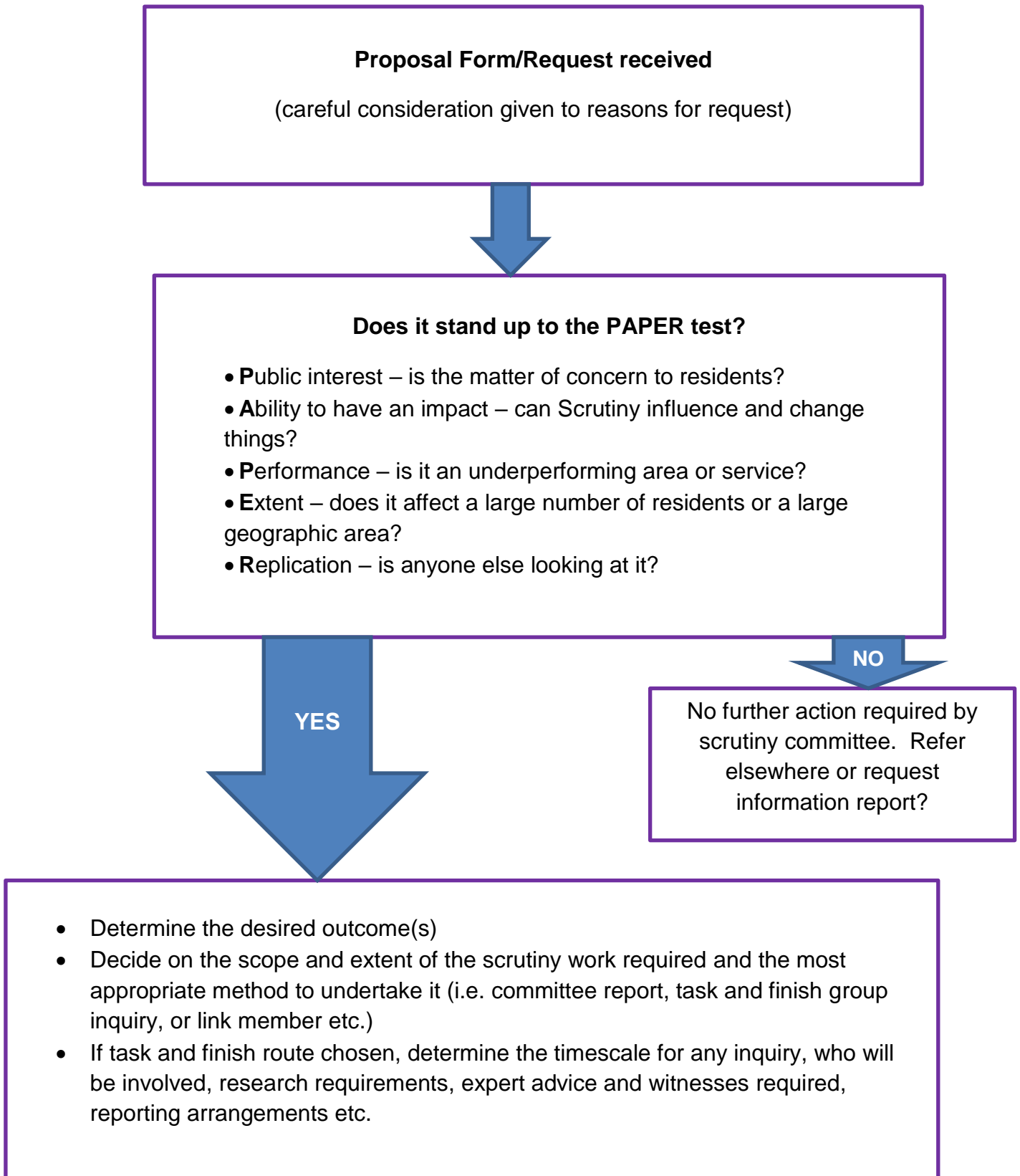
Performance Scrutiny Work Programme.doc

Updated 17/09/2024 RhE

This page is intentionally left blank

Member Proposal Form for Scrutiny Forward Work Programme	
NAME OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	
TIMESCALE FOR CONSIDERATION	
TOPIC	
What needs to be scrutinised (and why)?	
Is the matter one of concern to residents/local businesses?	YES/NO
Can Scrutiny influence and change things? (if 'yes' please state how you think scrutiny can influence or change things)	YES/NO
Does the matter relate to an underperforming service or area?	YES/NO
Does the matter affect a large number of residents or a large geographical area of the County (if 'yes' please give an indication of the size of the affected group or area)	YES/NO
Is the matter linked to the Council's Corporate themes? (if 'yes' please state which theme(s))	YES/NO
To your knowledge is anyone else looking at this matter? (If 'yes', please say who is looking at it)	YES/NO
If the topic is accepted for scrutiny who would you want to invite to attend e.g. Lead Member, officers, external experts, service-users?	
Name of Councillor/Co-opted Member	
Date	

Consideration of a topic's suitability for scrutiny



Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of Report	Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer	Date Entered / Updated By
22 Oct	1	Asset Management Strategy 2024 - 2029	To seek Cabinet approval of the updated Asset Management Strategy for formal adoption	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer – Helen Vaughan-Evans / Report Author – Bryn Williams	24.05.24 / 17.06.24 KEJ
	2	Second Home / Long-term Empty Council Tax Premium	To seek Cabinet’s approval to the timescales for delivery of the Second Home / Long-term Empty Council Tax Premium	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer – Liz Thomas / Report Author – Paul Barnes	08.07.24 KEJ
	3	Fee Charging Provisions - Mandatory Licensing Scheme for Special Procedures	To seek Cabinet approval to adopt the national agreed fees structure and delegate functions under the new scheme	Yes	Cllr Alan James Lead Officer/Report Author Emlyn Jones / Glesni Owen	01.08.24 KEJ
	4	Replacement for PARIS IT System – Tender Award	To seek Cabinet approval to award the contract for the new social care IT system	Yes	Cllrs Elen Heaton and Diane King Lead Officer/Report Author Nicola Stubbins / Dyfan Barr, Michael Jones	02.09.24 KEJ
	5	Corporate Joint Committee Governance Arrangements	To approve updated governance arrangements	Yes	Cllr Jason McLellan Lead Officer/Report Author – Gary Williams	26.04.24, rescheduled 11.06.24, 10.09.24 KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of Report	Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer	Date Entered / Updated By
	6	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual Letter	To provide an overview of Denbighshire's summary of performance from the PSOW and actions required	Yes	Cllr Julie Matthews Lead Officer/Report Author – Ann Lloyd / Kevin Roberts	10.09.24 KEJ
	7	Update on Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan 2025/26 – 2027/28	To review and approve the latest version of the MTFS / MTFP	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	15.05.24 KEJ
	8	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	9	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
19 Nov	1	Public Conveniences Savings Proposal	To consider the Public Conveniences Savings Proposal	Yes	Cllr Barry Mellor Lead Officer/Report Author – Paul Jackson/Joanna Douglass	07.06.24 KEJ
	2	Disposal of Caledfryn	To seek approval for the disposal of Caledfryn as part of the savings proposals	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Office/Report Author – Helen Vaughan-Evans / Daniel Roebuck	23.05.24 KEJ deferred from Sept to Nov 02.07.24

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of Report	Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer	Date Entered / Updated By
	3	Council Performance Self-Assessment Update – July to September (QPR2)	To consider a report by the Strategic Planning Team for Council to approve the Performance Self-Assessment July to September	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author – Helen Vaughan-Evans/lolo McGregor, Emma Horan	
	4	Housing Support Grant – Keep My Home Project	To seek Cabinet approval to award the contract for the new service	Yes	Cllr Rhys Thomas Lead Officer/Report Author – Ann Lloyd / Nigel Jones / Sharon Whalley	03.09.24 KEJ
	5	Housing Support Grant – Domestic Abuse Safety Unit	To seek Cabinet approval to award the contract for the new service	Yes	Cllr Rhys Thomas Lead Officer/Report Author – Ann Lloyd / Nigel Jones / Alison Hay	03.09.24 KEJ
	6	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	7	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
17 Dec	1	Panel Performance Assessment Response	For Cabinet to approve the Council's management response	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer – Helen Vaughan-Evans /	12.04.24 KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of Report	Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer	Date Entered / Updated By
			to the Panel Performance Assessment Report		Report Author – Iolo McGregor	
	2	Housing Rent Setting & Housing Revenue and Capital Budgets 2025/26	To seek approval for the proposed annual rent increase for council housing and to approve the Housing Revenue Account Capital & Revenue Budgets for 2025/26 and Housing Stock Business Plan	Yes	Cllr Rhys Thomas Lead Officer/Report Author – Geoff Davies	28.06.24 KEJ
	3	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	4	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
21 Jan	1	North Wales Domiciliary Care Agreement	Contract Award Agreement of the formal tender	Yes	Cllrs Elen Heaton & Diane King Lead Officer/Report Author – Nicola Stubbins / Ann Lloyd / Llinos Howatson	17.09.24 KEJ
	2	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council's current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of Report	Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer	Date Entered / Updated By
	3	Revenue Budget Setting 2025/26	To review and approve the budget proposals for forthcoming financial year 2025/26	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	15.05.24 KEJ
	4	Capital Plan 2025/26 – 2027/28	To review and approve proposals for inclusion in the Capital Plan	Yes	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	15.05.24 KEJ
	5	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet’s attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item
18 Feb	1	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the Council’s current financial position for 2024/25	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	Standing Item
	2	Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting 2025/26	To review and approve the budget and Council Tax setting proposals for the forthcoming financial year 2025/26	Tbc	Cllr Gwyneth Ellis Lead Officer/Report Author Liz Thomas	15.05.24 KEJ
	3	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet’s attention	Tbc	Lead Officer – Scrutiny Coordinators	Standing Item

Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

<i>22 October</i>	<i>8 October</i>	<i>19 November</i>	<i>5 November</i>	<i>17 December</i>	<i>3 December</i>
-------------------	-------------------------	--------------------	--------------------------	--------------------	--------------------------

Updated 17/09/2024 – KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
18 July 2024	5. Draft Director of Social Services Annual Report 2023/24	<p><u>Resolved:</u> <i>subject to the above observations –</i></p> <p><i>(i) to receive the report and endorse it as a clear account of the Council’s Social Care Services’ performance in 2023/24; and</i></p> <p><i>(ii) to acknowledge the financial and resource pressures within which the Services were currently expected to operate.</i></p>	Lead Members, Director of Social Services and senior officers informed of the Committee’s recommendations and endorsement of the report.
	6. Cefndy Year End Report 2023/24	<p><u>Resolved:</u></p> <p><i>(i) subject to the above observations, and having analysed the performance of Cefndy in relation to its financial, business and social well-being objectives during 2023/24, to receive the report and endorse the progress made in stabilising the enterprise and planning for its future viability;</i></p> <p><i>(ii) that arrangements be made to invite elected members (in manageable sized groups) to visit the Cefndy facility to see the work undertaken there and how it benefits the well-being of its workforce; and</i></p> <p><i>(iii) that a further report on Cefndy’s performance during the 2024/25 financial year be presented to the Committee in twelve months’ time.</i></p>	<p>Lead Member and officers advised of the Committee’s recommendations.</p> <p>Arrangements are underway with regards to inviting councillors to visit the Cefndy facility during November 2024.</p> <p>The 2024/25 performance report has been scheduled into the Committee’s forward work programme for presentation in July 2025.</p>

	<p>7. Scrutiny Work Programme</p>	<p><u>Resolved:</u> <i>subject to the above –</i></p> <p><i>(i) that, with a view to alleviating pressures on the Committee’s time and forward work programme, a formal request be made to Communities Scrutiny Committee to consider the forthcoming progress report on Denbighshire’s Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan; and</i></p> <p><i>(ii) to confirm the Committee’s forward work programme as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.</i></p>	<p>Communities Scrutiny Committee have agreed to scrutinise Denbighshire’s Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan. It is currently scheduled for presentation to that Committee at its December 2024 meeting.</p>
--	------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------