



Vale School Governors' Association Cymdeithas Llywodraethwyr Ysgolion y Fro and Governor Support Unit Newsletter

Note from the Chair

In my other life, away from schools, I have just completed a research project for a national charity which works with disadvantaged young people and wants to refresh its programmes for the new normal. We talked to lots of young people who face significant challenges, which are compounded by the issues of the disruption caused by the pandemic – young care-leavers, young carers, homeless young people - and to the specialist organisations which work with them.

What became apparent is the way the pandemic has affected these young people at a critical point in their lives, when they are making choices about education or work-based training, trying to find their first jobs, and entering their first serious relationships. Covid-19 has put that on hold and cut them off from daily physical interaction with their friends. Poignantly, several spoke of the lack of fun in their lives. I fear that there will be long-term effects for years to come.

The disruption to the lives of our learners is likewise significant. The major preoccupation of secondary schools as I write is the thorny problem of making sure our learners get the grades they deserve in

these fractured times. Schools have risen to the challenge of putting fair, robust systems into place so that students can demonstrate their capabilities and get the qualifications they need to get on with their lives as we learn to live with the effects of Covid-19.

I am deeply in awe of the sheer quantity of work teachers are putting in, designing fair methods of assessment, dealing with mountains of marking, and pulling together all the evidence needed to ensure our learners get the GCSE and A level grades they have worked so hard for. We are blessed to have such a dedicated workforce.

I hope you Governors will be able to get some sort of break over the summer and return revitalised for the further challenges which the autumn will bring.

Dr Martin Price

**Chair VSGA and Vice Chair of
Governors, St Richard Gwyn
Catholic High School, Barry**

Issue 49 Summer Term 2021

Special points of interest:

- AVAGO was formed in 1996 and re-launched in 2006 as Vale School Governors' Association (VSGA)
- The Management Committee is made up of 15 elected governors together with 2 elected parent governor representatives

VSGA was set up to:

- Promote best practice in governance in schools within the Vale of Glamorgan LEA
- To promote partnership amongst schools and between schools and the LEA
- To work with stakeholders to ensure adequate resources for schools within the LEA
- To represent the Association's views on issues relating to school governance and the management and resourcing of schools to relevant authorities and organisations

In association with the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Governor Support Unit

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VSGA has an email address that you may contact us on.

It's VSGA@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

alternatively you can contact VSGA by post at:

**VSGA Governor Support Unit
Learning & Development Dept.
Vale of Glamorgan Council
Civic Offices, Holton Road,
Barry CF63 4RU**

HR UPDATE FOR SCHOOLS

We have recently sent some updated policy/procedures via headteachers to reflect new guidance/information from Welsh Government.

School Pay Policy 2020

This has been amended, following consultation with CSC colleagues/unions, to reflect the 2020 Welsh Government School Teachers Pay and Conditions document which re-introduced statutory national pay scales and a move back to automatic annual increments, unless formal capability procedures are being undertaken. The document also reverted UPR progression to every two years (teachers still need to apply to go on the upper pay range). We have asked headteachers to take this policy to governors so you can adopt for your school at your next meeting (if not already done) and note this in the minutes.

The Schools Performance Management Policy has also been amended to reflect the move away from performance related pay and this was distributed to headteachers last week, again with a request for governors to adopt at their next meeting.

Schools Disciplinary Procedure

This procedure has been updated to reflect the Welsh Government Schools Disciplinary Procedure 2019, again following full consultation at CSC. As we had reviewed the procedure in 2019 (prior to the Welsh Government guidance being issued) there were no significant changes except the procedure for appointing an independent investigator for all child protection allegations reflects the withdrawal of the Welsh Government independent investigation service and the need for governors to appoint someone.

As a reminder, the disciplinary procedure requires a number of governing body responsibilities to be delegated to individuals and for these delegations to be noted. This includes:

Delegation of lesser misconduct functions – to headteacher

Delegation of all governing body functions during the disciplinary/dismissal process (including appointing an independent investigator/child abuse allegations/lifting of suspension) – to the chair of governors

Governors are also reminded of the need to ensure they establish the two statutory committees required as part of above procedure, these being the staff disciplinary and dismissal committee and staff disciplinary and dismissal appeals committee. There needs to be a minimum of 3 different governors on each committee for a hearing and it is recommended that a sufficient pool of governors is appointed as early as possible each academic year.

Again, this has been sent to headteachers for formal adoption//noting by the governing body. The Welsh Government guidance can be accessed at:

<https://gov.wales/disciplinary-and-dismissal-procedures-school-staff>

https://llyw.cymru/gweithdrefnau-disgyblu-diswyddo-staff-ysgol?_ga=2.178334820.1561396671.1619685973-1311528072.1612796483

If you require any further information on above matters, please contact your HR Business Partner or me.

SUE ALDERMAN

Principal HR Business Partner

stalderman@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

ICT and Data Support - Providing essential support to schools during Covid 19

During the first lockdown back in March 2020 the schools closed, the team were drafted to help out Corporate ICT, providing invaluable telephone and email support for the many colleagues across the entire council who had found themselves now working from home. The type of issues addressed by the team were those where staff had connection issues with their email and to the vital systems they use on a day to day basis.

After several weeks of this, the team returned to 'Learning and Development' where a huge project was undertaken to refurbish older laptops in schools to loan or gift out to the "Digitally Excluded" children all over the local authority. As well as these devices, those with no access to internet services at home were issued with BT Mi-fi devices to provide those crucial links between home and school for distance learning.

January of this year, saw an opportunity to take on three new Kickstarter positions, to help strengthen and bolster the existing team. Since joining the team in February, their contribution has tremendously assisted the day to day provision of support that we provide to our schools, and also has allowed the team to improve on the response times to the technical issues that arise across the authority. The Kickstarters involvement with the wider team has proved invaluable to the significant large scale projects that are currently in the pipeline and are currently in the process of being rolled out.

When schools started to return after the end of the first lockdown and going into the Autumn term, work was already underway with a massive investment project with Welsh Government, towards replenishing the supplies of devices in schools. To date this has seen 854 Apple devices, 1321 Windows devices and a staggering 4385 Chromebooks all delivered and shipped out to our schools by the Schools ICT Technical team. To date this is the biggest project the team has ever had to deal with and the dedication of all involved has been incredible. The last shipment received from suppliers, saw a delivery of over 2600 Chromebooks last month, dropped off at the backdoors of the Civic Offices in Barry, where the team not only had to get that volume of kit put somewhere safe, but also delivered out to schools. It is with incredible coordination, and effort that the team did this task within 3 days of the equipment arriving. An accomplishment for all involved to certainly be proud of, and the team are now currently expecting the next mammoth amount of equipment to be delivered early this coming July.

With the changing landscape of technology always on the move, and the vast amount of kit that has been shipped out to schools, the team has seen a great opportunity also, to push forward with it's plans to enrol all devices, in all supported schools, into a revolutionary system that will make the management of technology so much more efficient.

Microsoft Intune does a lot to optimise the operations of your school's ICT. For instance, the deployment of software across all enrolled devices eliminates the need for dealing with one individual device at a time. This also allows our team to easily control updates so that all users have up-to-date software and apps. In addition, Intune can also track licensing, collect information about hardware configurations as well as software installations. All in all, this will mean that Microsoft Intune will translate to a better working atmosphere from top to bottom. We feel you get a comprehensive and secure platform that optimises the user experience without draining your resources. It enables you to streamline app use across all devices while protecting your work. This is vitally important for everyone especially with an increasing number of staff accessing school and their work remotely. Achieving greater efficiency in the cloud and improved productivity is something we feel that Microsoft Intune can do for our schools, and in conjunction with Welsh Government, we feel this gives us, as a support team, the edge over our competitors, pitching those that we support, ahead of the game!

For further information about any of this, please feel free to contact the team on [01446 709566](tel:01446709566).



CORONAVIRUS AND ME

In January 2021 the Children's Commissioner for Wales undertook a second nationwide survey, Coronavirus and Me, to capture the views and experiences of children and young people in Wales during the second lockdown period.

A total of 19,737 children and young people aged 3-18 completed the survey and a report has been published by the Children's Commissioner with the intention that all those who are decision makers and support children in Wales every day understand their experiences. In the Vale of Glamorgan, a total of 1245 children and young people responded to the survey. A local authority data report has also been made available.

The survey included questions about children's emotions, mental health, wellbeing support, education, wider services, information, play and leisure. Findings will be helpful to a wide range of services and departments across the authority including education, public health, youth work and youth support, children's services, communication teams, and play and leisure teams.

Infographics to accompany the local authority data report and the full national survey results survey have been created by the Rights Ambassadors project facilitated by the Vale Youth Service. This information has been shared with education leaders and school governors are encouraged to read the reports. Copies of the national report can be found on the children's commissioner for wales website <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/coronavirus-our-work/coronavirus-and-me-survey-results-2021/>.

BIG FRESH UPDATE

Since our last update, things have gone from strength to strength in a very unprecedented time for the hospitality industry. We, unlike so many over the last year have managed to adapt to what was being thrown at us and push the company into new directions that we could have only dreamt of a short time ago.

Our commercial side of the company is thriving as we continue to feed our loyal and new customers with our delicious sharing boxes. If you haven't already tried one, I would very much recommend you do. After the last year we have all gone though, why not treat yourself!

You may have heard that the Big Fresh Catering Company has now expanded its wings to take on its first commercial setting in the way of the Penarth Pier café. Big Fresh @ the Pier has been open for about 5 weeks now and it been amazing to

set up in this iconic building that has been part of the community for many years. It is now our time to provide the people of Penarth and the surrounding areas with a place that they can visit and experience some quality food including some amazing homemade cakes, friendly service and superb coffee whilst taking in the beautiful landscape that this art deco style building has been placed. Our doors are open 7 days a week so make sure you come and see us soon.



VALE FAMILY INFORMATION SERVICE

Hello from the Vale Family Information Service,

We are the 'go to' service for free and trusted information on what matters to families in the Vale from 0 to 18 years. Affectionately referred to as Vale FIS we are a statutory service within the Vale Council that provides information on childcare, activities, services, and family support relevant to children and young people across the Vale of Glamorgan.

Over the past year our team of 5 have worked from home to answer over 2,600 enquiries from parents, carers and professionals alike! We'd be very grateful if you could continue to encourage senior managers, teachers and support staff working across our schools to think of our service as a hub of information, not only to support the families in their care, but also to them in their role as education professionals. To find out more about us and what we do why not take a look at our brand-new [video](#) all about our service?



In the meantime, we'd like to share a few updates with you ahead of the school holidays:

HOLIDAY CHILDCARE AND ACTIVITIES

All Family Information Services (FIS) across Wales have collaborated to launch the [FIS Wales website](#); an online platform that allows the public to find childcare-related services in their locality. Whether they are searching for a childminder, a day nursery or a holiday club for example they can simply enter their postcode and find the nearest setting to them. Along with updating the FIS Wales website regularly we also curate a holiday activities programme; a comprehensive 'what's on' guide for families in and around the Vale over the 6-weeks of summer. Parents and professionals can subscribe to receive this programme via our [FIS home page](#) under the heading 'Holiday Activities Programme'.



YOUR COMMUNITY ROADSHOW

As with most things our usual summer events have had to be cancelled again this year, in an effort to try and connect with local communities as much as we can we teamed up with colleagues in the [Vale Play Team](#) to travel the Vale.

We want to find-out first-hand what opportunities and information the public would like to see for children and families in their area so we can best meet the needs of our Vale communities in a post-pandemic landscape. Our first stop on our community roadshow was in Cogan (picture attached). Keep an eye out for us in Llantwit Major and other areas of the Vale. If you would like us to come to your area, just get in touch using our contact details below.

THE INDEX FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES OR ADDITIONAL NEEDS



The Index continues to provide a valuable source of information for families who have children with disabilities or additional needs on the services, support, and activities available across the Vale of Glamorgan. **The Index** supports individuals from 0 through to 18 years and they don't need to have a confirmed diagnosis.

Parents, carers and professionals can sign a child up to The Index (with parental consent) online. At present there are over 800 individuals registered with The Index and by signing-up they benefit from a quarterly **newsletter** and regular e-bulletins keeping them informed of new groups, activities, and services local to them. The summer edition of The Index newsletter is due for release in early July. The summer newsletter will include key information on dedicated holiday playschemes and clubs, accessible information on the roll out of the new ALN system in September and an article on transition at 16 years plus. To find out more take a look at the latest **video**.

Our Index Officer, Lyndsey Richards, was delighted to attend Gwenfo Primary in May alongside a Disability Sport colleague. Together the children engaged in various scenarios that enabled them to think about how they could be more inclusive in their play with disabled friends. As you can see from the picture, everyone thoroughly enjoyed the training!



If you'd like to know more please visit our webpages or give us a follow on social media on **Facebook** and **Twitter** to see our daily updates on Vale family news. Thanks.

CONTACT DETAILS

Vale Family Information Service

01446 704704

fis@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/fis

Youth Mental First Aid goes online!

In the spring term of 2021 the Vale Youth Service has successfully trained up 28 teachers and professionals in Youth Mental Health First Aid.

Being a Youth Mental Health First Aider helps to spot the early signs of a mental health problems and encourage young people to speak to the Mental Health First Aider and seek help. This will help reduce the effects on the individual, the people around them and encourage a speedier recovery in a supportive environment.

The course was delivered online for the first time this year due to the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic. Participants completed six modules online plus two webinars over Microsoft Teams.

Feedback from participants has been very positive with some stating that "I certainly feel better equipped to deal with a situation should something arise".

For more information about the course please contact the Youth Wellbeing Service by emailing youthwellbeing@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk



Childcare Offer for Wales

Following a successful discussion with Welsh Government in 2018, the Council commenced plans to deliver the Childcare Offer for eligible children across the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Childcare Offer for Wales means that most working parents of 3 to 4 year olds can now claim funding towards the cost of childcare. The offer provides 30 hours of combined early education and childcare for eligible parents. The 30 hours in the Vale is made up of up to 12.5hrs per week nursery education which is supplemented with 17.5 hours of childcare per week.

It's available for 48 weeks of the year, meaning that the Offer can support working parents with childcare during of the school holidays.

Childcare settings must be registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and be signed up to deliver the offer.

The Council also successfully applied for Welsh Government funding to construct three childcare units to support delivery of the offer across the Vale, where a shortage of childcare was identified. In total, the Council was granted £1.8million to construct units at Gladstone Primary School, Ysgol Gymraeg Dewi Sant and Llanfair Primary School.

Colleagues from across the Council have been developing these schemes since 2019. Whilst COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the work of the Council, work has continued to progress.

Gladstone Bach childcare unit was completed on 18 December 2020. An immediate lockdown commenced on 20 December 2020 which meant plans to register the building with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and completing the finishing touches have been delayed. However, Council colleagues from the Early Years team have been able to support the school with setting up the Childcare Offer, equipment required and their application to Care Inspectorate Wales to register the Childcare Unit. It is hoped that Gladstone Bach will be registered in the summer of 2021 with a view to welcoming children in September 2021. An official launch of the childcare unit is currently being planned.



Even with all the setbacks to the development of the childcare units at Ysgol Gymraeg Dewi Sant and Llanfair Primary school, through sheer determination from those involved, both childcare units are due to be completed in the summer of 2021. The unit at Llanfair will be similar in design to Gladstone Bach. The childcare unit at Ysgol Gymraeg Dewi Sant will be constructed using modern methods of construction and will complement the existing new build school building. The unit is currently being constructed offsite and will be installed onsite over a 3-day period, limiting disruption to staff and pupils.

Applications for registration with CIW for both units will be submitted in the summer with a view to welcoming children from January 2022.

It has only been through the dedication and commitment from various colleagues, that progress has advanced as successfully as it has.



DEBBIE MAULE

Children's Partnership Co-ordinator

Update on the Additional Learning Needs system

The Minister for Education has today announced that the Additional Learning Needs Code and associated regulations have been laid before Senedd Cymru.

You can view the Code, Explanatory Memorandum and Integrated Impact Assessment **here** and the associated regulations **here**:

- The Additional Learning Needs (Wales) Regulations 2021
- The Education Tribunal for Wales Regulations 2021
- The Equality Act 2010 (Capacity of parents and persons over compulsory school age) (Wales) Regulations 2021
- The Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Management Committees etc.) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2021
- The Independent Schools (Provision of Information) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2021

Further information about the ALN transformation programme and guidance on the current SEN system is available here including our frequently asked questions and ALN transformation programme guide.

Please send any queries to **SENReforms@gov.wales**

Embedding a whole-school approach to mental health and well-being

Now more than ever, the emotional and mental well-being of our children and young people and workforce has to be our number one priority.

The new Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being is intended to support schools, including pupil referral units (PRUs) and education settings in reviewing their own well-being landscape and in developing plans to address their weaknesses and build on their strengths.

Here's a letter that has been issued to Directors of Education.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US!

You can support the campaign by:

- sharing and re-tweeting messages from our social media channels: Twitter; Education Wales Facebook and Education begins at home Facebook
- Whole-school approach - YouTube Playlist - Share our animation with learners and case studies with the workforce
- including information on your website, in newsletters, emails
- sharing with your networks / young people / stakeholders / parents/carers

TEXT FOR NEWSLETTERS

Embedding a whole-school approach to mental health and well-being

The whole-school approach is about supporting good emotional and mental well-being by making relationships stronger:

- between you and your teachers;
- and between parents, families, carers, and any professionals working with the school

Our new statutory framework supports everyone to ensure positive mental health and emotional well-being of all learners and staff is at the heart of every school

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

For stakeholders

Building stronger relationships and supporting each other is at the very heart of the new #WholeSchoolApproach to mental health and emotional well-being framework <https://bit.ly/2PTNPs7>

For learners

New animation explains how stronger relationships with your friends and teachers can help and support you <https://bit.ly/3eDXfCs> #WholeSchoolApproach

Remember to tag us in @WG_Education

And use the hashtag #WholeSchoolApproach

FURTHER HELP AND SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

You can signpost young people to our **Young Person's Mental Health Toolkit** should they need support now and in the future.

Many thanks

VALE YOUTH SERVICE



JOIN A YOUTH PARTICIPATION PROJECT TODAY

- ARE YOU AGED 11-25?
- INTERESTED IN CHILDREN'S RIGHTS?
- CARE ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY?
- WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?
- VISIT VOGBLOG.WALES FOR MORE INFO

MAKE NEW FRIENDS
LEARN NEW SKILLS
GAIN NEW EXPERIENCES
VOLUNTEER



LLANTWIT YOUTH COUNCIL

A group of young people aged 11-18 who live, work or go to school in Llantwit Major who influence what happens in the town by discussing important issues with decision-makers. Llantwit Youth Council members represent their peers, local schools, youth organisations and clubs.

Email: VALEYOUTHACTION@GMAIL.COM



PENARTH YOUTH ACTION

A group of young people aged 11-18 who live, work or go to school in Penarth who take action to improve their town and ensure the views of young people are heard by local decision-makers. Penarth Youth Action members represent local schools, youth organisations, youth clubs and their peers.

Email: VALEYOUTHACTION@GMAIL.COM



RIGHTS AMBASSADORS

The Rights Ambassadors project raises awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Children & Young People's National Participation Standards. The project gives young people across the Vale of Glamorgan the opportunity to make a positive contribution to their local community.

Email: ALEXTHOMAS@VALEOFGLAMORGAN.GOV.UK



YOUTH CABINET

The Youth Cabinet is the elected voice of young people living in the Vale of Glamorgan and represents their views and opinions to decision makers within the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Email: VALEYOUTHCABINET@GMAIL.COM

@vysvale



"YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SAY WHAT YOU
THINK IN ALL MATTERS AFFECTING YOU AND
FOR YOUR VIEWS TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY"
(ARTICLE 12 OF THE UNCRC)

VSGA Management Committee 2020-22

The Management Committee is comprised of elected governors plus the two Parent Governor Representatives (one each from the Primary and Secondary sectors).

No.	Title	Initial	Surname	School
1	Mr	R	Bailey	Peterston-Super-Ely C/W Primary
2	Dr	C	Brown	Llantwit Major Comp
3	Mr	N	Craggs	Gwenfo C/W Primary
4	Mrs	M	Gibbs	Romilly Primary
5	Mr	A	Hennessey	Oak Field Primary & Ysgol Sant Baruc
6	Mrs	S	Hodges	Ysgol Sant Baruc
7	Mrs	S	Jenkins-Welch	St Andrews C/W Primary & St Cyres Comprehensive
8	Mrs	J	Lynch-Wilson	St Athan Primary
9	Mrs	A	Males	St Cyres Comp
10	Mrs	A	Malkin	Gladstone Primary
11	Dr	M	Price	St Richard Gwyn R/C High
12	Mr	D	Treharne	Llansannor C/W Prim
13	Mrs	T	Vaughan-Taylor	Cowbridge Comp
14	Mrs	S	Williams	All Saints C/W Primary
15	Cllr Mr	M	Wilson	Fairfield Primary & Victoria Primary

Parent Governor Representatives' (PGRs) terms of office

PGR - Prim Vacant

PGR - Sec Vacant

CURRICULUM FOR WALES - Resources for Governors

<https://www.cscjes.org.uk/repository/resource/c07bf015-9b9f-48cb-8409-9a6f6594789c/en>