

## In this Issue:

### Contents

A note from the Chair	2
Managing social media	3
Fixed Penalty Notices and Attendance Update	5
Supporting the Period Dignity Scheme	6
Healthy relationship (SHOT) and C-Card Scheme	9
Research Project Invitation – ALN Reform and Inclusive Education	12
Learn Welsh in the Vale	13
Learning and Skills Summer Term Update	14
About the VSGA	16
Vale of Glamorgan Governor Support Unit	17



## Note from the Chair

You can't escape Artificial Intelligence – AI. It is everywhere – on social media, in the news on paper and online. Depending on which expert you believe, AI will automate mundane clerical tasks and cause wide redundancies; destroy face to face customer service; make stupid mistakes at a greater rate than humans ever can; write execrable poetry; lead to Armageddon as the machines take over.

I have been privileged to work with some people looking at this calmly and rationally and seeing how their business can take advantage of a technical advance in a controlled way. They took three of the competing AI systems and asked it to write a blog post introducing a new Code of Practice, using only information from specific documents and not sharing anything with the wider world.

Three well-argued documents were produced instantly; however, they were subtly different in tone. One was admonishing – you have to follow this or else. Two was couched as being helpful – this code will assist you in meeting your legal and moral duties. Three was more bland and merely highlighted some key points to look out for. None of them were fit to be sent out without considerable thought and rewriting to get the right message out, although all provided a good starting point for a professional copywriter and saved a considerable amount of time.



What has all this got to do with your work in Vale schools? Much has been made of students using AI to write essays and coursework, and how this can be detected and counteracted. Is that the right reaction? Should we be teaching students to use AI in a responsible way with a critical eye? Some of them are already well down the path anyway. Let's make it something that enhances their education not creating unfair short cuts.

AI is a brilliant/awful opportunity and the young people in our care are growing up in a world with AI in it. They need to be able to do good things with AI. It is an incredibly powerful tool, but it needs proper training to make the most of it. What is your school doing to help them?

I hope you will have a good break from the worries of being a School Governor over the summer and come back revived for September's challenges, with or without the use of AI.

**Dr Martin Price: Chair VSGA and Vice Chair of Governors, St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School, Barry**

## Managing Social Media

### Handling negative online Interactions

Social media is an ongoing challenge for schools and local authorities, especially when posts are negative or critical. At best, they are a moment in time, quickly forgotten; at worst, they can lead to escalation that is difficult to control. This can then result in further unwanted attention, trolling and hostility, impacting negatively and unfairly on a school or local authorities' reputation, not just with parents' carers and pupils, but also within the local community, and even in some cases at a national level.



### What can I do as a governor?

It's important as a Governing Body to collectively support the Head teacher and staff when considering how the school communicates, what social media sites are used, and who posts? Whomever has that job should be well versed in the school's attitude to social media and have the authority to speak on behalf of the school.

Everyone should be on board to support whoever maintains the social media accounts for the school. Staff and governors should align with the school's vision for digital communication as they all have a duty to ensure the safety of everyone, which includes safeguarding adults as well as children.

It is also vital that a school ensures that their complaints policy is readily available, and that parents and carers know how to raise their concerns directly to the school and that they will be listened to. All too often, rants and negative comments from parents stem from a lack of awareness of complaints processes, or they may have concerns that they consider have been dismissed or considered unimportant.

### A comment or post has come to the attention of the school....

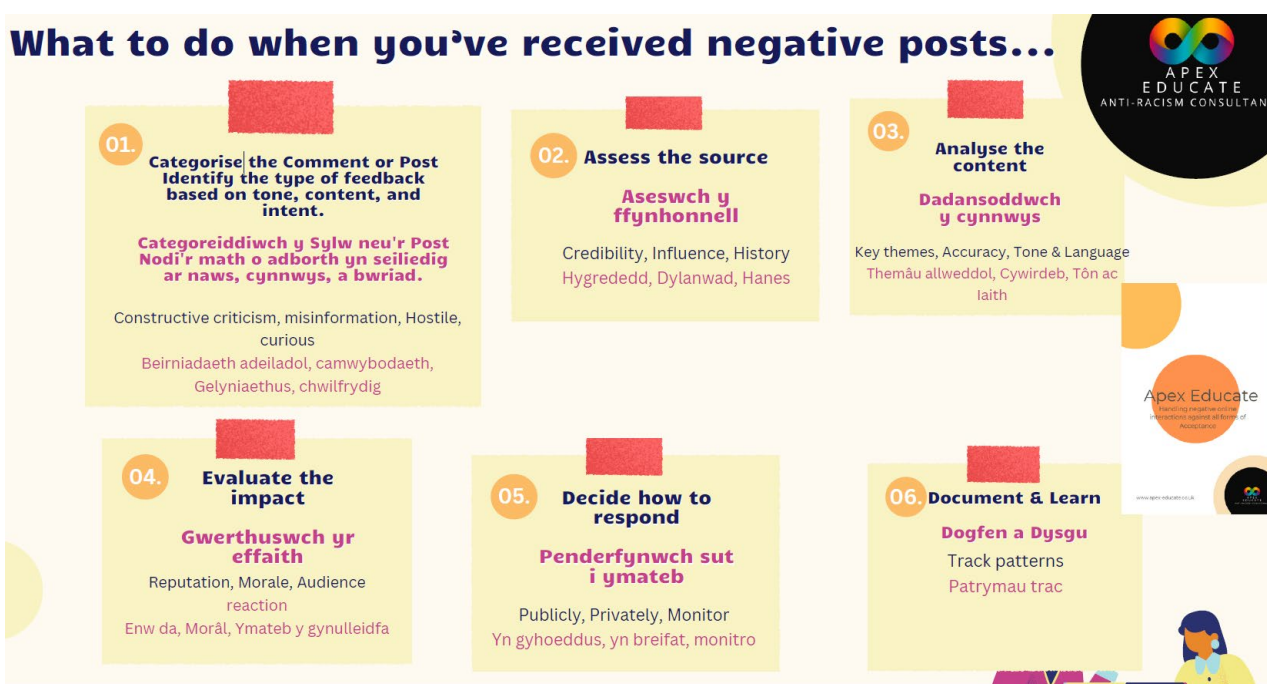
The chart below sets out a structured process which could be followed in the event of a post or comment being posted on social media. It's a good idea to designate one or two staff to be directly responsible for assessing social media posts, and whom staff and governors are clear that they need to refer any comments or posts directly to them.

The chart suggests this person should do the following;

1. **Categorise the comment or post;** is it constructive criticism? Misinformation? Hostile or Malicious, neutral or questioning feedback?

2. **Assess the source;** Are they a credible commentator who has knowledge about the situation? (eg a parent), do they have influence in the local community? Is this something they have done previously?
3. **Analyse the content;** What are the key themes? Is their claim or comment factually correct? What about tone and language?
4. **Evaluate the impact;** Does this comment damage your credibility or reputation, or relationships? Will it affect the moral of staff or governors? Are others interacting with the comment – is it gaining traction?
5. **Decide how to respond;** Are you going to respond publicly to correct misinformation or clarify policies, or will you engage privately, perhaps if the concerns are valid but the issue is complex eg: “We’d like to discuss your concerns further, please email us at....” Or are you going to do nothing, following your assessment above in the first 4 stages. You might decide not to respond, to avoid escalating the situation and instead, reinforce positive messaging elsewhere.
6. **Document and learn;** you should keep records of comments and responses for future reference. This will help to track patterns, recurring themes and comments and will also provide an opportunity to regularly review these and how successful your responses have been. You could for example categorise comments into low, medium and high risk or the likelihood of something escalating as unlikely, possibly or likely. Whatever system you decide to use, it will be a valuable tool to ensure a consistent response, to what is an ongoing issue that is unlikely to go away.

## What to do when you’ve received negative posts...





## School Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's) Training for school governors

Are you aware that Vale of Glamorgan schools are using **Fixed Penalty Notices** as their **ultimate absence management tool** for non-attendance and for unauthorised holiday absence? Whether your school is considering FPN's or currently using FPN's but you want to find out more the come along to one of our training sessions.

**Over 200 FPN Requests have been submitted in 2024-2025** alone. As a governor you should ensure your school is fully up to date on the FPN process.

FPN training sessions are held regularly, and you will leave fully informed and ready to discuss within your Governing Body as to how this attendance tool could benefit attendance levels for your school. Governors and teaching staff have already attended the training over the past two years and feedback is that it enables schools and governing bodies have a clearer understanding on when FPN's should be considered.

School attendance continues to remain a challenge, so it is important that Governors understand all the processes in place to improve pupil attendance. Register your interest to attend a FPN training session by emailing [inclusionteamreferrals@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:inclusionteamreferrals@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)



### School Attendance Campaign

As we approach the end of the summer term, we are already planning for 2025-2026. A refreshed school attendance campaign will be relaunched ready for September which will include all schools being issued a new attendance banner to display on the school gate to remind learners and parents 'Miss School, Miss out'. Please ask your Headteacher about it if you can't see one at your school.

Termly emails will be sent to all families in the VoG from myself and the Inclusion service reminding parents that a child with 90% attendance is classified as **Persistently Absent** by the Welsh Government, missing at least 19 school days if their attendance remains 90% or lower at the end of the school year. Our campaign will continue throughout the year and will align with Estyn's updated thematic report on 'improving attendance in secondary schools', of which many of the effective practices can also be embedded within primary schools. [Improving attendance in secondary schools - an update on progress](#)

We want to support all the excellent work that our schools do to challenge attendance. If you are interested in becoming an Attendance Champion Governor for your school please speak to your Headteacher, Chair of Governors or email me on [ageddes@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:ageddes@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

## Supporting The Period Dignity Scheme

The Vale of Glamorgan supports the Welsh Government's Period Dignity initiative, ensuring all learners have access to free period products. The scheme aims to break taboos, encourage open conversations, and help pupils understand periods and seek support when needed.

Products are delivered discreetly to school aged pupils via the Home delivery service and are available to all members of the public, with a focus on low-income and vulnerable students. Welsh Government requires that a minimum of 80% of funding is allocated to eco-friendly options, promoting reusable products. The Vale team partners with sustainable suppliers and is currently running a joint tender with Cardiff Council and Ardal which should come into effect within the next few months.

### Available products stocked are:-

Reusable pants	Reusable pads	Menstrual cups
Pads – Medium/Super	Pantyliners	
Applicator Tampons – Regular/Super	Non Applicator Tampons – Regular/Super	

### Ordering Period Products for Schools in the Vale

Schools within the Vale of Glamorgan can purchase period products and uniform directly from suppliers for use on their premises. Please follow the steps below to ensure the process runs smoothly:

1. Initial Approval

Contact the Vale Period Dignity Team at [perioddignity@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:perioddignity@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) to confirm that the products meet the required criteria (e.g. eco-friendly and eligible under the grant) and that the proposed order is financially appropriate.

2. Placing the Order

Once the Period Dignity Team has approved the products and quantities, the school may proceed with placing the order and await delivery.

3. Reimbursement

After the products have been delivered, the cost will be reimbursed to the school's budget by the Period Dignity Team. Please note that any orders placed without prior approval may not be eligible for reimbursement and could need to be covered by the school's own budget.

#### Education Sessions for Learners

A dedicated teacher has been appointed to deliver educational sessions across all schools, with an initial focus on primary schools. These sessions aim to inform pupils about periods, menstrual cycles, and the use of related products. Each pupil attending a session receives a complimentary bag of products to take home. Feedback from these sessions has been extremely positive from both Learners and Schools. If anyone would like to book sessions please contact [PDignityP5@Hwbcymru.net](mailto:PDignityP5@Hwbcymru.net)

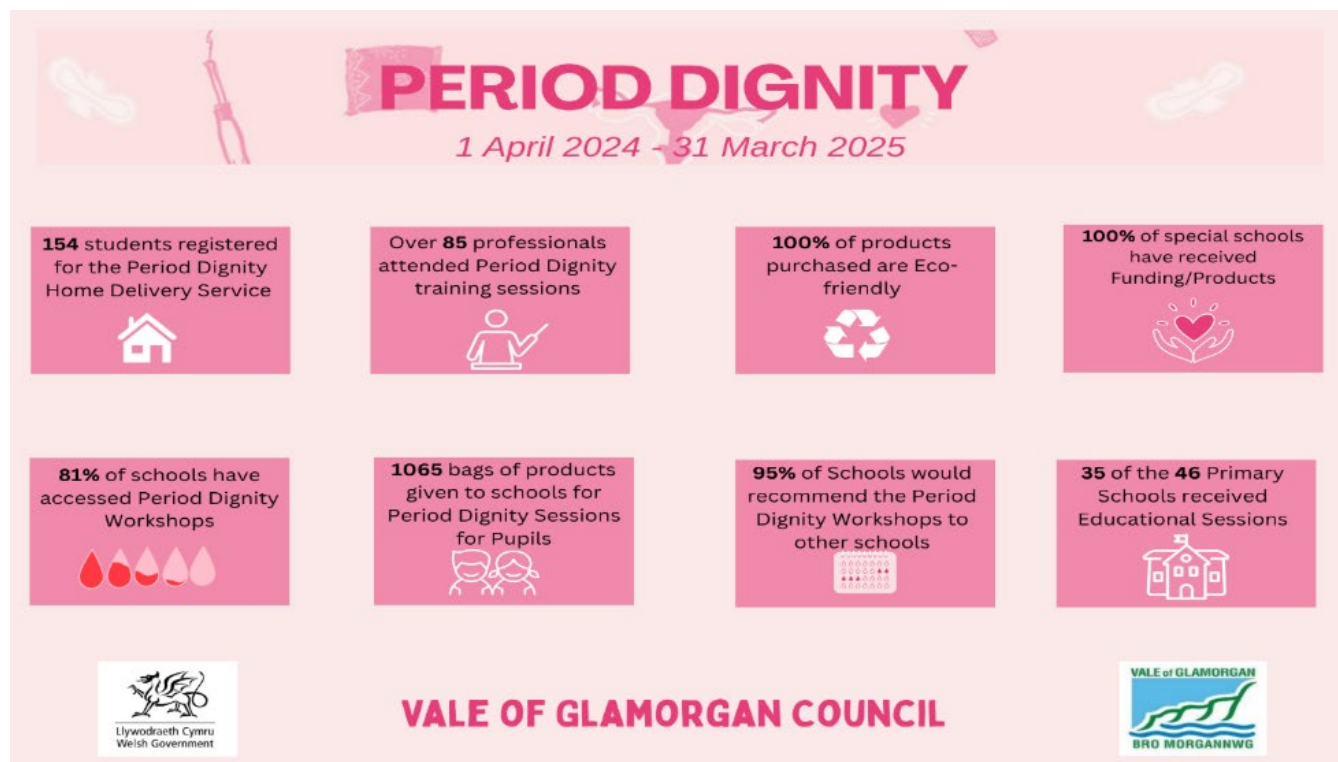
#### Free Home Delivery Service

Young people living in or attending school in the Vale of Glamorgan can get free period products delivered to their homes. The service is safe, discreet, and ensures no learner goes without essential support.

To sign up for termly deliveries, people must provide their full name, school, year group, and home address. They can request products at either:

 [Period Dignity](#)

 Email: [perioddignity@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:perioddignity@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)



#### Period Dignity Outlets/Collection Points

The Period Dignity Scheme is also available for all residents in the Vale of Glamorgan. There are approximately 70 Period Dignity Outlets, with the numbers of outlets increasing all the time due to need and word of Mouth. We also have over 30 Pick & Mix dispensers across the Vale which are proving extremely popular. If you want to signpost families to this there is a list/map of outlets on the Period Dignity webpages:-

[🔗 Period Dignity](#)

**For more information contact:**

Laura Ellis – Families First Monitoring Officer – [LPEllis@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:LPEllis@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

Debbie Maule - Strategic Childcare & Early Years Manager – [Dmaule@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:Dmaule@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)





## **YMCA Cardiff Healthy Relationship Service (SHOT) and C-Card Scheme**

The Healthy Relationship Service provides targeted, confidential support to young people from Year 7 upwards around sexual health and relationships.

We understand that some students require more personalised guidance than what's possible in large classroom settings. That's why we offer a flexible model of support, including one-to-one sessions and referral-based groups. Our sessions are tailored to the needs of each young person and may include:

- Accessing sexual health clinics
- Contraception and STIs
- Consent and Relationships
- Masculinity and misogyny
- Online safety and pornography
- Sexual risk taking

These sessions are designed to complement an existing RSHE curriculum. We can work closely with schools to identify young people who may need additional support. Sessions are always delivered in a safe, inclusive, and led by trained practitioners.

Alongside our healthy relationship work, young people aged 13-24 can access the C-Card scheme. This is a UK wide sexual health service aimed at 'reducing unplanned pregnancies and STIs, increasing the availability and acceptability of condoms, and empowering young people to access relevant services' (All Wales C-Card). This scheme offers:

- Free condoms and lube
- Access to anonymous sexual health advice
- Referrals for further support where needed

The scheme is confidential, free, and designed to remove stigma around sexual health education. It is not just about contraception – it's a vehicle for open, non-judgemental conversations that help young people make informed choices. Where schools partner with us, pupils access registration and condom distribution through trained members of staff who are continuously supported by YMCA Cardiff SHOT team. We want to work flexibly with schools to ensure the service is conducted in a way that works for each provision's specific needs.

#### Case Study 1: Building Positive Masculinity (Yr 12)

A Year 12 boys' group recently took part in sessions on Healthy Relationships, Consent, and Masculinity, led by Sarah, our Vale Project Coordinator. One student was particularly impacted and spoke to his girlfriend about whether she had ever felt pressured into intimacy. This led to an honest discussion about the sexism she experiences daily. He later shared his reflections with his wellbeing tutor, expressing surprise and empathy about the challenges faced by girls his age.

*"they are very non-judgemental and listen to everything we have to say."*

Since the sessions, he has actively challenged sexist, homophobic, and toxic behaviours among peers. Many students from the group now regularly access the C-Card service, showing increased confidence in seeking help and making informed choices.



#### Case Study 2: Safer Sex Decisions in Non-Ideal Situations (Yr 9)

Following a contraception session at the Vale Young Carers Youth Club, a 13-year-old signed up for the C-Card scheme with the YMCA project worker. Although under 16, this was deemed appropriate under the Fraser Guidelines due to her limited support at home. A month later, she returned to the youth club and confidently asked a trained staff member for more condoms. This led to an open conversation about her decision to become sexually active. Although young, she had taken appropriate precautions, and no emergency intervention was needed. The staff member encouraged her to connect with her school nurse, who is now supporting her with ongoing contraception and safeguarding needs.

*"apart from the session the [C-card assessors] are just approachable people"*

While the C-Card scheme promotes delaying sexual activity, it's crucial we provide safe, non-judgemental support for all young people – especially those in vulnerable situations.

### How Can Governors Support This Work?

Governors play a critical role in ensuring schools promote healthy development, personal safety, and wellbeing. Here's how you can help:

#### Champion Relationship Education

- Ensure schools are optimizing their use of the SHOT services to support their RSHE curriculum
- Request regular updates from school leaders on the uptake and delivery of sessions

#### Promote Staff Training and Service Use

- Encourage a range of staff to attend Sexual Health and C-Card
- Ensure there are multiple trained and active C-Card registrants in your school who are well advertised amongst the young people

#### Link with Local Services

- Invite the Healthy Relationship Service to run workshops and/or assemblies to promote local sexual health services (such as the Under 18s drop-in Sexual Health Clinic)

#### Safeguard Inclusivity

- Monitor how feedback from students is used to shape future delivery of group sessions and C-card.



By being proactive, governors can help create an environment where young people have access to the best sexual health services available to aid them in making healthy, supported, safe decisions. For more information, to arrange a service visit, or join the Vale C-Card Newsletter contact: [SHOT@ymcacardiff.wales](mailto:SHOT@ymcacardiff.wales)



**Invitation to participate in Swansea University Research Project.**

**ALN, ALN Reform and Inclusive Education of School Governors in Wales**

Dear School Governor,

You are invited to take part in a piece of research led by Dr Dai Thomas from the Department of Education and Childhood Studies at Swansea University. The study seeks to identify the understanding and knowledge of ALN, ALN reforms and inclusive education of school governors in Wales.

Your participation in this study will take approximately 25 minutes to complete an anonymous online survey. The final question of the survey will ask if you are interested in taking part in an online follow-up semi-structured online interview via Microsoft Teams. It is expected that any interview will take no longer than 30 minutes and be arranged for a time that is most convenient for you.

If you are happy to complete the online survey then I would kindly ask that this be done by 20<sup>th</sup> August 2025.

Best wishes

Dai

**Survey Link:** [Swansea University School Governor Research Survey](#)





## Learn Welsh in the Vale



Although we teach Welsh to 16+ we understand the importance of collaboration with all local schools. The history of the Welsh-medium education in the Vale goes back longer than people often realise. A few weeks ago, Siân Simpson came to give a talk on the Welsh medium education which has been on offer since 1952. We've come a long way since that when a mere 15 children attended a make-shift school in the Methodist chapel in Cadoxton.



Now we're seeing Welsh-medium education as well as teaching Welsh as a subject being introduced more and more in English-medium schools. That's one of the reasons that we don't only work with the Welsh medium schools. We also offer Welsh taster courses to parents in English medium schools. One of the tutors is currently offering an introduction to Welsh to parents, and the rest of the schools communities, of Llantwit Major working with Ysgol y Ddraig, Llantwit Major Comprehensive School, St. Illtyd Primary School, and Ysgol Gymraeg Dewi Sant. We'll be extending this to more schools through the Vale in September.

Staff have been able to access Welsh courses for several years now and many support staff have told us it that it has been great to offer the school community additional help as they use every day phrases together.

Learn Welsh the Vale is very proud to announce that all school staff will once again be able to join our classes for free. It is possible to enrol and note 'employer paying'. At this point you can say which school you work in or are a governor for. If you have any problems enrolling or choosing the correct level, contact us via email [learnwelsh@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:learnwelsh@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) You don't have to have or use a school email address.

## Learning and Skills Summer Term Update

In 2022, Welsh Government announced funding of £70m for a Childcare & Early Years Capital programme across Wales. The purpose of this capital funding is to support and improve the existing childcare and Flying Start infrastructure. The main objectives for the capital programme are to ensure that the childcare sector in Wales is strengthened and supports the programme for Welsh Government commitments.

A snapshot of some of the projects we have been developing on School sites to provide further childcare provision across the Vale include:

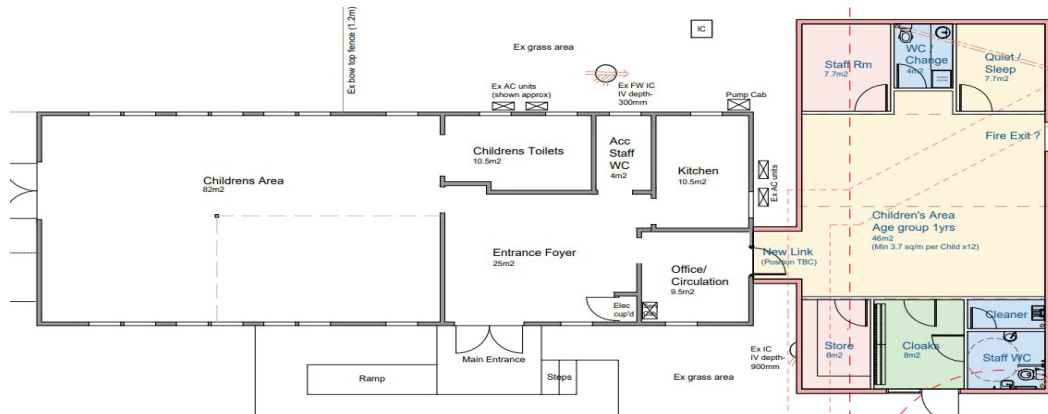
**Dragonflies Playgroup on Dinas Powys Junior School-** This was completed in May 2024 and supports the 2-year-old offer.



**Cadoxton School refurbishment-** Contractors start on site 27<sup>th</sup> June and run until October 2025. The building will accommodate 2-year-old offer and childcare offer.



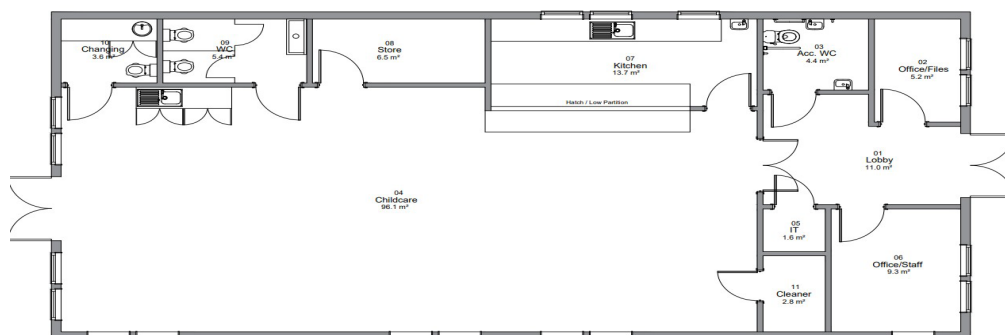
**Bumblebees extension on Colcot school site** – Informed the contractors will start on site 04 August 2025 and complete the 09 October 2025. The extension will accommodate children aged 1-2 years.



**St. Baruc School/ Ward area-** Internal discussions taking place and reviewing site options or nearby land where a childcare provision could be situated.



**Cylch Meithrin Pen-Y-Garth, Penarth-** Proposed plans agreed to accommodate 30 registered places, business case due to be submitted to Welsh Government.



For any queries on any of the above, please contact Claire on:  
[cmhaydon@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:cmhaydon@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)



#### About the Vale School Governors Association (VSGA)

##### 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

#### VGSA Management Committee 2024-26

The Management Committee is comprised of elected Governors plus the two parent Governor Representative (one each from the Primary and Secondary Sectors)

No	Name	School
1	Mr Peter Cate (Vice-Chair)	Jenner Park Primary
2	Mr John Duxbury	St David's CiW Primary School
3	Ms Jodie Evans	Gladstone Primary and Ysgol Pen y Garth
4	Mr G Griffiths	Ysgol Gwaun y Nant & Ysgol Sant Curig
5	Mrs Jackie Griffiths	St Joseph's RC Primary
6	Cllr Andrew Hennessey	Rhws Primary and St Helen's RC Primary
7	Mrs Sarah Jenkins	St Andrews Major C/W Primary and St Cyres Comprehensive
8	Mr Gordon Kemp	St Nicholas CiW Primary and South Point Primary
9	Dr Chris Lee	St Cyres Comprehensive
10	Cllr Julie Lynch-Wilson	Llantwit Major Comprehensive and St Athan Primary School
11	Dr Martin Price (Chair)	St.Richard Gwyn RC High School
12	Mr Jasper Roberts	Llantwit Major Comprehensive and St Illtyd Primary
13	Mrs Terri Vaughan-Taylor	Cowbridge Comprehensive
14	Mr Owen Williams	Ysgol Sant Baruc
15	Cllr Mark Wilson	Fairfield Primary & Victoria Primary

#### Parent Governor Representatives (PGR's)

Parent Governor Representative Primary – L Barrowclough- Llandough Primary School  
Parent Governor Representative Secondary – G van de Burgt – Whitmore High School



**Vale of Glamorgan Governor Support Unit**

**Email:** [governors@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:governors@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

**Contact Details:**

**John Sparks**  
**Head of Governor Support and School Complaints**  
**Tel; 01446 709106**  
**Email:** [JSparks@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:JSparks@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

**Francesca Wright**  
**Senior Governor Support Officer**  
**Tel; 01446 709125**  
**Email:** [fwright@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:fwright@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

VSGA has an email address that you may contact them on. It's [VSGA@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:VSGA@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) or alternatively you can contact VSGA by post at: VSGA Governor Support Unit, Learning & Skills Directorate, Vale of Glamorgan Council Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry CF63 4RU



**Wishing all governors a  
relaxing and enjoyable  
Summer Break**