

The Index for children with disabilities or additional needs

Annual Report
April 2025 - March 2026



Understanding
Disability Awards



Flying Start Family Fun Day



Our team celebrating the achievement of
Carer Friendly status



Unpaid Carers Afternoon Tea



**CWMPAWD
TEULU BRO**
DOD O HYD I ATEBION GYDAN GILYDD



**VALE FAMILY
COMPASS**
FINDING SOLUTIONS TOGETHER

Highlights 2025-26

The Index is a trusted source of information and support for families of children and young people aged 0-18 with disabilities or additional needs. Funded by Welsh Government's Families First Grant, now accessed through the new **Vale Family Compass** and administered by the Family Information Service (FIS).

The service maintains a voluntary register of young people 0-18 years with a disability or additional need, connecting families with opportunities, activities, navigating education, financial support and local services.



What We Achieved

- **133** new children registered on The Index. **925** now on The Index and accessing support and information.
- Transitioned to the **Vale Family Compass (VFC)**, new single point of access for families.
- **16,600** views to the new website.
- Led a series of regional **Index & Health Meetings**.
- Launched a **new referral pathway** between The Index and Flying Start.
- Successful rebrand of VFC Facebook, with **4,883** followers.
- FIS hosted 2 family Christmas parties, welcoming **715** individuals and securing funding through Warm Spaces to provide healthy snacks.
- FIS achieved **Carer Friendly** accreditation and became **Dementia Friends**.
- Attended multiple NHS Community Connectors sessions and schools **outreach** sessions for pre and post diagnosis information and support.
- Issued **165** e-bulletin articles and distributed **3,660** copies of the Index newsletter across two editions.
- Developed and launched an **Inclusive Services Padlet**. Providing a centralised, easy-to-navigate directory of services for families and professionals.



Case Study - Supporting a Family

Providing personalised support, information and inclusive opportunities



ENQUIRY	OUR RESPONSE	OUTCOME
A parent of a 7-year-old child with Autism contacted the service feeling overwhelmed.	Took time to listen and understand the family's individual needs	Child successfully attended an inclusive holiday club for the first time
Struggling to find suitable holiday childcare	Asked if the child required 1 to 1 or has specific care needs e.g personal care	Parent reported feeling more confident and less isolated
Unaware of any inclusive activities locally	Asked if the family had a social worker (meaning they may meet criteria for the Families First Holiday Club or Teescheme if deemed appropriate)	Ongoing information received through The Index, reducing the need to seek help repeatedly
Concerned about their child becoming increasingly isolated	Asked if location and Welsh speaking childcare was important to the family	Ongoing support. Brighter futures. Families feel more supported, connected and empowered.
	Provided some childcare options tailored to the families' needs	
	Shared local inclusive activities suited to the child's interests	
	Signposted to a family support service for ongoing emotional and practical support	
	Supported the parent to explore applying for Disability Living Allowance (DLA)	
	Encouraged sign-up to The Index to ensure ongoing, targeted information	

What Families Tell Us

- ✓ "The Index has been a great help for me and my son while awaiting his diagnosis".
- ✓ "Very grateful for this service, good to know what is out there. I have no time to look as I'm a busy working mum".
- ✓ "Excellent information, really great to see whats out there. Successful with grant found out from you"
- ✓ "I wish I knew about you sooner, brilliant service finding it so helpful".



Every family is unique.
The right support at the right time
can make a world of difference.



Listen



Understand



Signpost



Support



Empower



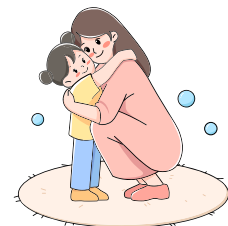
Stronger
together

Understanding Local Need

The Index Register provides valuable insight into the needs of children and young people with additional needs across the Vale of Glamorgan.

Information collected through registration helps identify patterns in location, age, gender, ethnicity, diagnosis and support needs. This data supports service planning, helps identify gaps in provision, and informs the development of services to better meet the needs of local families.

As registration with The Index is voluntary, the data provides a snapshot of need rather than a complete picture. It is likely that there are additional children and young people with a range of needs across the Vale of Glamorgan who are not registered with The Index.



Presenting need

Neurodiversity remains the most significant presenting need, representing 75% of registered children.

925 children were registered on The Index at 31 March 2026.

Of these:

 693 children (75%) had a neurodiverse condition, diagnosed or awaiting assessment.

The most commonly reported needs continue to be:

- Autism
- ADHD
- Behavioural / Emotional Difficulty

This is an increase from 2024-25, when 59% of children had identified neurodiverse needs.



Web Engagement

3,445 visits to disability webpages and the new Children with Additional Needs pages on Vale Family Compass.

 Decrease from 4,480 visits the previous year.
Possible factor: Transition to the new website platform during the reporting year.

Registrations

133 new children registered between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026

 Decrease from 175 registrations in 2024-25

Possible contributing factor: Transition to the Vale Family Compass in November 2025, introducing a single point of entry approach which required significant staff resource at a time of workforce shortages.

Age/Gender of New Registrations

Age Group	Children Registered
0-3 years	27
4-10 years	65
11-18 years	41

61% of registrations were male, reflecting the pattern seen in previous years.

Information shared with families

165 information articles shared

Although lower than the previous year, information sharing remained a significant part of service delivery.

Summer Newsletter

 **1,888 copies distributed**

Winter Newsletter

 **1,772 copies distributed**

Available digitally and in hard copy for families who are not digitally connected. Both newsletters achieved strong engagement through social media channels.

Referral Sources

The Early Help Advice Line remained the highest source of referrals during 2025-26.

Additional referrals came from:

- Health Visitors
- Social Workers
- Flying Start
- Schools
- Publicity campaigns
- Social Media



Key messages

- Neurodiversity continues to drive the majority of need across The Index.
- New registrations reduced during a significant period of service transformation & rebranding.
- Barry continues to have the highest number of children registered on The Index overall with 56% and also generated the highest number of new registrations during 2025-26.
- Partnership working remains strong, with the Early Help Advice Line continuing to be the main referral route.
- Engagement with families remains high through outreach opportunities, newsletters, information sharing and direct enquiries.
- Website traffic and enquiries should continue to be monitored following the transition to Vale Family Compass.



What the Data Tells Us



Area	Current Position	Trend	Commentary
New Registrations	● 133	↓	Lower than previous year.
Neurodiverse Needs	● 693 children	↑	Continues to be the dominant presenting need
Male Registrations	● 61%	→	Consistent with previous years
Early Help Referrals	● Highest referrer	→	Strong partnership pathway
Siblings Registrations	● 171	↑	Significant growth
Information Sharing	● 165 articles	↓	Lower than previous year
Website Visits	● 3,445	↓	Likely affected by site transition
Disability Enquiries	● 199	↓	Lower than previous year but demand remains high
Family Engagement	● Strong	↑	Newsletter and social media reach remained positive



WHERE CHILDREN ON THE INDEX LIVE

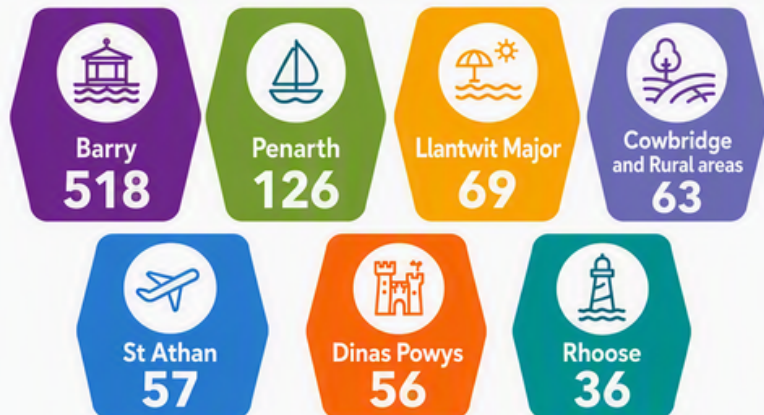
Registrations on The Index by Area



Barry accounted for the highest number of registrations on The Index, followed by Penarth and Llantwit Major.

The lowest number of registrations came from Rhose.

Understanding where families live helps identify areas of need and supports future planning and service development



Registrations are grouped into the main reporting areas.



This information helps us understand where needs are greatest and supports providers to identify gaps and plan services that better meet the needs of children, young people and their families. This information also shows us where we need to promote The Index, based on areas of low number of registrations.

1



Barry



2



Penarth



3



Llantwit Major



4



Cowbridge and Rural areas



5



St Athan



6



Dinas Powys



7



Rhose



WHY THIS INFORMATION MATTERS



Understanding communities

Helps us understand where children and young people registered with The Index live across the Vale.



Identifying need

Highlights areas where demand for information, support and services may be greatest.



Planning services

Supports partners to plan and improve services for children, young people and families.



Registration figures are based on children registered on The Index as at 31 March 2026.



What We Will Do Next

Review children with additional needs content on the Vale Family Compass website to ensure information is relevant, easily accessible and up to date.

Increase partner engagement and improve visibility across a range of channels and in person outreach.

Ensure information remains accessible and family-focused through reviewing with parents and professionals via The Index consultation group.

Launch a new referral pathway with Vale of Glamorgan schools to increase awareness and access to The Index.

Strengthen Data and Insight by trialling new approaches to data capture and reporting for The Index.

0808 281 6727 opt 2



familycompass@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk



@valefamilycompass

