

Meeting of:	Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 12 November 2020
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Learning and Culture
Report Title:	Support for Young Carers in the Vale of Glamorgan
Purpose of Report:	To update Scrutiny Committee on support for young carers
Report Owner:	Paula Ham, Director of Learning and Skills
Responsible Officer:	Martine Coles, Vulnerable Groups Manager
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	<p>Clr Lis Burnett</p> <p>Morwen Hudson, Head of Standards and Provision</p>
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This report is to make Members aware of the number of young people in the Vale of Glamorgan who identify themselves as young carers and the services and support available to them. • In January 2020, there were 102 young carers who had been identified across both primary and secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan. This number changed to 101 in March 2020 and fell slightly to 99 in October 2020. • The number of young carers in the Vale of Glamorgan is too small and the numbers are not reliable to be able to analyse differences in educational attainment and attendance with those who are not young carers. Analysis can take place on an individual level using pupil reports. 	

Recommendations

1. That Members note the support provided by the Local Authority and schools for young carers.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. That Members consider further support required for young carers.

1. Background

- 1.1 Following a presentation to Committee by Social Services, a report was requested in relation to the activities and steps undertaken to assist young carers in schools across the Vale of Glamorgan and their educational attainment.
- 1.2 The Directorate continues to develop its response to the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and manage its statutory responsibilities and local needs within its resources, making the most of collaborative arrangements and funding streams where appropriate.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 The Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 increased the rights of carers. This enabled local authorities to build on the services and support already in place.
- 2.2 Young carers self-identify and wherever possible, schools record the number of young carers on roll in schools in order that they, and the Council, can consider what support and/or assistance could be provided to young people.
- 2.3 In October 2020, 99 young carers have been identified by their 23 primary and secondary schools. Schools record young carers on their information management system (SIMS) and a local authority register is compiled. Schools are able to track and monitor the progress and outcomes for young carers as they currently do for other groups of vulnerable learners.
- 2.4 All secondary schools and most primary schools have a named member of staff with lead responsibility for young carers. This member of staff acts as a point of contact for young carers, champions their needs, and engages with specialist services to review and improve the provision to meet the needs of young carers. They will also identify how their school can raise the awareness of young carers' needs through various methods including staff and governor training. The local authority has a register of the school leads.

- 2.5** Schools are supported to evaluate their provision for young carers using available toolkits. Schools use the 'Young Carers in Schools Programme: Beyond the Basics' to evaluate their support. The programme supports the development of schools to better, 'Understand, Inform, Identify, Listen and Support' young carers. All eight secondary schools within the Vale are working to implement the Young Carers in Schools Programme and this has improved school-based support available for young carers. The next stage is to raise awareness in the primary schools.
- 2.6** There are 5 standards as part of the programme. In St Cyres Comprehensive School, the impact of the programme has led to many improvements across the school community. This is evident in the improvement in attainment and attendance. Here is an overview of what is involved in each standard in this school.
- 2.7** Standard 1: The school demonstrates an understanding of the needs of young carers. There are assigned staff members with responsibility for understanding and addressing young carers' needs. The school has a system in place to monitor young carers' attendance and attainment, e.g. flagging identified young carers on an internal management system. The Young Carers' School Operational Lead has established a working group of school staff to support the needs of young carers. This includes established links with School Nurses and local young carers' services. The operational lead for young carers and the Heads of Year have termly meetings young carers are a rolling agenda item. There are regular conversations between Heads of Year and form tutors to support the needs of young carers. The staff understand the need to ensure that students have an adult that they can trust.
- 2.8** Standard 2: The school demonstrates an awareness by sharing knowledge about disability, illness and young carers throughout the school. The school offers students access to google classroom which has support guides around the following: self harm; self-help guides; anxiety; exam anxiety; anger; sleep problems; bereavement; eating issues; sexual health, (a lot of the resources have been taken from Young Minds and Mood Juice). There are some resources available too.
- 2.9** Standard 3: Young carers are identified within the school. Teachers and school staff are trained to recognise young carers including those who may be hidden. The school provides staff with regular training about young carer awareness, identification, stigmatised illness and support provision. Staff are able to identify using SIMs data, any additional information needed around the young carer. Staff are trained to identify behaviours and changes in students. The impact of this training is evaluated and enables ongoing learning. 6th formers are receiving well-being training, to ensure the training includes information for young carers. The school gives all parents information regarding young carer issues and the support that is available to young carers and their families. A letter has been sent to parents and some young carers have been identified through this process.

- 2.10** Standard 4: Young carers in the school are listened to, consulted with and given time and space to talk if they need to. School staff, including pastoral support staff and teachers, have received specific training about the issues affecting young carers. Staff are then available for young carers to talk to and are able to signpost them to further information. There is an email address which is monitored where the young carers can contact the operational lead. There are drop-ins on for young carers. The Wellbeing area has an open door policy and support is available at all times.
- 2.11** Standard 5: Young carers are supported within the school by being signposted to other resources and services outside the school. There are support systems from CAMHS and the well-being service. The School Health Nurse is available for the students to access: Switched on drugs service; Elevate the can do project (this is around self-esteem in year 7); Counsellors; First aid PSE Programme; NSPCC for healthy relationships; and Social Services.
- 2.12** The 5 standards of the programme are RAG-rated and schools use the tool to self-evaluate their provision for young carers. The programme is effective in secondary schools and developing in primary schools. There are assigned staff members with responsibility for understanding and addressing young carers' needs. Schools raise awareness by sharing knowledge about disability, illness and young carers throughout the school. Schools are more confident and provide staff with regular training to raise the awareness around identification, stigmatised illness and available support. The impact of this training is evaluated and enables ongoing learning for staff and school governors. In schools, young carers are listened to, consulted with and given time and space to talk if they need to. This can be in the form of a regular drop in for young carers and a well-being area having an open door policy. Young carers are supported within school and signposted to other resources and services outside the school. Schools have established links with other organisations in the local community, including the Young Carers Service at the YMCA. The schools are linking with local services which are available to support students, including the well-being service, counselling, substance misuse support and the school nurse.
- 2.13** All secondary schools and most primary schools are good at monitoring the attainment and attendance of young carers. Primary schools have recorded very small numbers of young carers. In January 2020, one primary school had 2 young carers. The attendance for this one pupil in year 3 was 99% and this pupil attained Foundation Phase Outcome 6 across the curriculum at the end of Year 2, which is above expected levels. This pupil also attained above average scores in the Welsh National Tests in 2019. The attendance of the other young carer in the same primary school, in Year 6, was 93.5% and this was due to an agreed family holiday in term time. This pupil consistently attains in line with ability and in line with expected average in Welsh National Tests.

- 2.14** Secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan have also recorded small numbers of young carers. In January 2020, St Cyres had one of the highest numbers of young carers with 10 recorded. As a school, they are proactive in terms of raising staff awareness. At St Cyres, 60% (6) of the young carers are in key stage 3 and 40% (4) in key stage 4. In 2019, 90% of young carers in St Cyres achieved in line with their ability; at key stage 4, 3 out of four pupils achieved expected or above levels of attainment.
- 2.15** In January 2020, one pupil in key stage 4, who had identified medical needs, attained in line with her ability. Another pupil also had identified medical needs which resulted in this pupil receiving education other than at school (EOTAS).
- 2.16** Very few young carers are recorded as school action or school action plus. In January 2020, 60% of the young carers at St Cyres had more than 90% attendance. The attendance of the majority of the young carers at St Cyres is good, however it ranges from 27% to 96%. The school has plans in place to increase the overall attendance of their young carers.
- 2.17** In addition to the aforementioned pupils, there were a further four pupils who are young carers attending sixth form.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** The Partnership is committed to ensuring that carers are recognised within our communities and that every step is taken to ensure that the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan region is an environment that supports the highest quality of life both for those providing and in receipt of care.
- 3.2** Improving standards of education and provision is important to us and we endeavour to ensure that support is quality assured through regular meetings with schools. The process ensures we monitor the progress of learners. Monitoring is undertaken to make certain that learners are receiving value for money and that provision has a positive impact on young people's education and wellbeing.
- 3.3** We work collaboratively with internal and external partners including Social Services, the Regional Steering Group and schools to demonstrate achievements and identify risks to help meet the wellbeing objective. These partners are colleagues in education, Health, Carers Trust, and the Youth Service.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

4.1 There are no financial considerations resulting from this Report.

Employment

4.2 There are no employment implications to consider.

Legal (Including Equalities)

4.3 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 introduced new rights and entitlements for carers in Wales. It introduced a broader definition of a carer and placed stronger duties on local authorities to identify, assess and support carers.

4.4 Included in the Act is the continuation of the requirement on the NHS and Local Authorities in Wales to co-operate in relation to the delivery of preventative services, unless this is incompatible with their own duties. It also requires regional partnerships to ensure information, advice and assistance is offered across the region in a manner which is accessible and suits the needs of their population.

4.5 The United Nations Convention and the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) have relevance to a child as young carer. Article 3 includes the provision that in all actions concerning children by public or private social welfare institutions, the best interests of the child should be of primary consideration. Article 12 makes provision for ensuring that the child's views are expressed freely and given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. There are other Articles which relate to the rights of the child.

5. Background Papers

None.