

Pembrokeshire County Council's response to the following questions:

1. Reasons for and support available for children and young people at risk of EOTAS, including through their exclusion from mainstream provision.

The reasons why children and young people become at risk of EOTAS are:

- Medical reasons
- Anxiety and mental health
- Persistent challenging behaviour

The support available for children and young people at risk of EOTAS are:

- To support the child and young person in their mainstream environment
- Consultation and monitoring from LA Advisory Service and Educational Psychology Service alongside outside agency support, including Social Care, Health including CAHMs and Emotional Health Team. This programme of support is called TAPPAS (Team around the Pupil, Parent and Setting), each school has a termly meeting with all professionals and follow-up support from the individual professionals assigned to support the school.

The school could be advised to try a more flexible approach and make reasonable adjustments to support the CYP, these include:

- Alternative timetables
- Alternative lessons/teachers
- Additional support e.g. TA's, School Counselling, Youth Service, Key Worker
- Reduced timetable
- Possible move to another school

The overall aim for the School and the Local Authority is for the CYP to remain in a mainstream environment. EOTAs provision is only available

when School and LA support has not been sufficient enough to meet the CYPs needs.

Areas of Concern or Development:

A large number of mainstream Teaching Assistant redundancies throughout the county due to pressures on budgets have had a significant impact. Learners with ALN needs are the first and worst effected due to the lack of resource and support.

Pressures on mainstream Teachers and TA, the current curriculum is so tightly packed, there is very little capacity to reflect and develop.

Disaffected teachers due to current workload, poor behaviour management systems, and high exclusion rates.

Nearly all pupils accessing EOTAs provisions have additional learning needs, reintegration rates are dropping due to learners not wanting to return to mainstream schools and mainstream schools cannot meet their needs due to budget restraints.

There does not seem to be enough money in the system to support the CYP at risk of EOTAs.

2. How effectively parents are engaged and supported throughout the EOTAS process, the variation in rates of EOTAS for children and young people with particular characteristics (such as learners with special educational needs or who are eligible for free school meals) and the consequences of this.

The Parents or Carers are initially supported through the mainstream school. LA advisors, e.g. Behaviour Support Teacher or Educational Psychologist will become involved when school support has not had the impact required.

The LA has a Parent Partner Service and Team around the Family Service, which work alongside the Schools to provide family support.

Parents and carers are invited to all school meetings, they have to give signed consent for an EOTAS support. The request for an EOTAS support or placement goes to the LA Inclusion Panel for consideration. If EOTAS is agreed to be the best possible education for the CYP the Parents and carers are notified along with the school and a meeting is set up with the Teacher in Charge of the EOTAS provision.

There is a higher percentage of children and young people and/or have additional learning needs in EOTAS. The EOTAS provisions

provide a more nurturing environment with consistent staff, enable children and young people to build relationships with a smaller number of adults than a mainstream setting. Due to a higher staff to pupil ratio, additional support for learning difficulties, wellbeing and behaviour needs can be put in place.

Parents and Carers have regular meetings with the EOTAS provision and other professionals that might be supporting the CYP and the family. Teachers in Charge have regular contact with Parents and Carers via the telephone, email and social apps i.e. DOJO. This social app enables professionals and the CYP to share their working or activities with their Parents or Carers, also providing a communication on general progress and activities and events within the EOTAS provision. Since using this form of communication, engagement from Parents and Carers has increased by over 70% in the last 2 years.

Areas of Concern or Development: For the majority of pupils access EOTAs there is a need for a multiagency approach to support. This is often disjointed due to services sitting in different directorates and systems are not working or sharing information with each other to a high enough standard.

3. The levels of financial support available to support EOTAS and young people at risk of becoming EOTAS and whether this represents value for money.

The LA devolves the ALN funding to mainstream schools, the Governing Bodies and the Senior Leadership Team in the school have responsibility to provide support for pupils at risk of being EOTAs. In critical cases the LA will provide financial or professional support to the CYP or School. The LA provide an overall budget for EOTAS, additional funding is invoiced to the mainstream school as they hold the AWPU for the individual child or young person. The EOTAs provision are provided with grant funding, but often it does not reflect the need of the CYP.

The overall EOTAs budget is reviewed by the Head of Service with LA Accountants on a regular basis. The EOTAs service has a Management Committee that oversees how effective the service is and the impact it is having on CYP.

Areas of Concern or Development- budgets have been cut or stagnant. A large number of mainstream schools have deficit budgets. Again, learners with ALN are the first and worst affected. EOTAs provisions are often forgotten about through grant funding. PDG does not follow the

learner, as in the majority of cases the mainstream school will have spent the funding.

Nearly all of EOTAS funding is spent on Teachers and TAs to support the pupils, yet the funding restraints within mainstream hits these same learners the hardest.

There is not enough funding to explore alternative curriculums for CYP.

4. Responsibility and accountability for the education of pupils who become EOTAS.

The overall responsibility for children and young people educated under EOTAS is the Local Authority. In Pembrokeshire, mainstream schools remain actively involved, especially for children and young people who access part time places. Reintegration back into a mainstream setting is the overall aim for all of the CYP accessing EOTAS. The Management Committee of the Pupil Referral Unit is accountable for the running of the PRU and the members come from a cross section of professions and the community. A well-established Management Committee provide support and challenge to the PRU, alongside the Challenge Advisor and LA Education Department.

5. Attainment of children and young people EOTAS.

Most children and young people that access EOTAS have an additional learning need. Some have missed periods of education either through medical, mental health or behaviour needs, such as exclusions. Many of the children and young people have an attainment two years or more below their chronological age. EOTAS provides small groups, pairs or 1:1 education packages for those identified children and young people. Targeted interventions through regular assessment and provision mapping is key to support the children and young people to make progress academically and socially while accessing education.

EOTAS provide a highly trained workforce of professionals. From senior staff and Teachers with Master Degrees and support staff with Degrees in Inclusion, behaviour and learning difficulties. The EOTAS provision financially supports staff with further development and training. All staff have access to the LA training, school cluster training and ERW-PRU cluster training. This enables the EOTAS provision to provide the highest level of wellbeing support and education for the children and young people to make progress and achieve.

6. Outcomes and wellbeing of children and young people EOTAS.

EOTAS aims for all children and young people to gain at least one qualification at the end of the year 11 and to have a destination of further education. In reality very few pupils gain only one qualification, with nearly all gaining over 5 qualifications relevant to the next stage in their learning in FE or training. All pupils have access to English, Mathematics, Science, Welsh as a second language, ICT, RE, PSE, additional subjects and vocational courses are provided through a tailored package to the individual child or young person. Children and young people are also provided with work experience packages and taster sessions in local colleges, business and services e.g. Fire service and Army.

The health and wellbeing of the children and young people accessing EOTAS is of paramount importance. Professionals focus on health and wellbeing and building relationships with the children and young people before the academic work. All children and young people and staff 'check in' with their wellbeing rating on a daily basis. This system enables staff and senior staff to support the children and young people and colleagues when needed. Additional time or 1:1 sessions or identified strategies can be used to support the wellbeing of each other. Each EOTAS provision has at least one 'ELSA', a highly trained support assistant who has knowledge of children and young people's wellbeing and needs. They provide group, pair and 1:1 sessions for the children and young people when they need it. The ELSA has training in a range of issues, bereavement and loss, anxiety, they have regular supervision from the LA Educational Psychology department. The EOTAS provision has an Emotional & Wellbeing team based on one of the sites. This team is jointly funded by Health, Education and Social Care and is managed by CAMHS Hywel Dda Health Board. The team provide children and young people of Pembrokeshire with counsellor, Family Therapy, Art Therapy and Play Therapy. This team also provides training to EOTAS and mainstream school staff on mental health and bereavement. One provision under EOTAS has close links with the Preseli Centre (CAMHS). Professionals from CAMHS attend meetings for the children and young people for child or young person attending the anxious and phobic and mental health provision. They provide telephone support and emergency appointments for children or young people accessing this provision.

Areas of Concern or Development- we are aware that the level of support from CAMHS across Wales is not the same as in Pembrokeshire and there is generally a lack of service. There is concern for learners waiting for Child Health assessments, which is currently up to 2 years.

7. The quality of support provided to children and young people, in the range of EOTAS provision.

The aim of EOTAS is to provide the highest level of support and education for all children and young people so they can successfully reintegrate into a mainstream setting or progress onto further education, training or work placement. Each CYP has an education plan and all professionals involved with the CYP and their family work together to provide the support. The EOTAS provision has access to a wide range of professionals for example: Educational Psychologist, Youth Workers, School Counselling Service, CAMHS, Careers Advisor, Speech and Language Therapist, School Nurse, Police Education Officer, Education Welfare Officer, Healthy Schools Coordinator.

Areas of Concern or Development: The support for CYP at this level should be higher than in mainstream, but it is often less. In Wales there are a number of areas of concern that need additional support, Exclusions are increasing year on year and requests for Elective Home Education have increased and the attendance at Secondary school is decreasing. If the level of funding does not increase to provide appropriate support the number of pupils under EOTAS is going to increase.

8. Professional development support for Pupil Referral Unit staff, including those who provide home tuition.

All staff have a yearly appraisal with the focus on celebrating achievement and further professional development. Staff are encouraged to be reflective in their practice, focusing on Professional Standards. Progress is monitored during the year with 1:1 follow up meetings to review or provide further support. Targets are set by the individual member of staff and the line manager and is closely linked to the EOTAS Improvement Plan. All staff have access to national, regional, LA, school cluster and 'in house' training. Key members of staff access to national conferences run by WG or ADEW. A range of Teachers access, WJEC training and two are currently completing Degrees in Inclusion through work based learning in Trinity St Davids University. A number of staff are accessing ERW training e.g. NPSQL, Middle Leaders and HLTA qualifications. School Cluster and ERW-PRU Cluster training has focused on literacy – 'Talk for Writing', wellbeing – CBT and Trauma Awareness, Moderation and Book Scrutiny during 2018-2020.

Each provision under EOTAS has a cross section of highly trained staff, including subject based training, wellbeing, specific learning needs including delivery of interventions.

Areas of Concern and Development - PRUs are not given the same status as a mainstream school and NQTs cannot complete their training in this setting. A number of teachers have left their positions in PRUs for mainstream schools to complete their training and then return. Teachers should have the opportunity to attend a placement in a PRU or Special School, the skills developed are invaluable for any professionals working in this sector. Pembrokeshire is working with Swansea University to develop this support and placement opportunity.

9. The potential risks for children and young people accessing EOTAS such as increased barriers to accessing mental health support, increased risk of involvement with crime and the criminal justice system such as 'county line'.

The staff that work in EOTAS have strong relationships with local Mental Health Services, Social Care, Youth Justice and Police. Youth workers work within the provisions directly with the children and young people and EOTAS staff. The Police Liaison officers deliver termly workshops in EOTAs and carry out specific work when situations in the locality occur. Good communication, regular meetings and multi-agency working through the consultation programme 'Team around the pupil, parent and setting' (TAPPAS) means there is a clear programme of support in place for all children and young people accessing EOTAS.

The Secondary Advisor Teacher for the Behaviour Support Service is a member of the on the Youth Justice Board and professionals leads from Health, Social Care and Youth Service are members of the Management Committee of the PRU, this enables professionals to strategically provide preventative support for CYP accessing EOTAs.

Areas of Concern or Development: In the EOTAs provision in Pembrokeshire there is good supporting services, but this is not mirrored across all of Wales. Mainstream schools are struggling with emotional and wellbeing support. In one school they have set up a programme of Theraplay attachment principles which is delivered to targeted families and their children, whilst this is proactive, the school is using their staff and budget to deliver this, taking it away from delivering in the classroom.