

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

In our experience, the main group of pupils on “EOTAS” and outside of the portfolio pupil referral unit (PRU) provision are those who have been excluded from mainstream school, excluded from special school provision and those who have moved into the area and require specialised provision. A high number are children looked after (CLA). In the local authority, pupils are referred to the Access to Education Panel and a local authority officer is named as responsible for their provision or move to a school roll or to the portfolio PRU. The EOTAS group also includes pupils placed on the Junior Apprenticeship Scheme at Bridgend College.

- *How effectively parents are engaged and supported throughout the EOTAS process*

Communication with parents is via the mainstream or special school, the Vulnerable Groups Team, or the EOTAS Lead Officer. This is something we could improve on, as the group is so small and so disparate, the parents can sometimes feel isolated and alone. This may be something that the Vulnerable Groups Team could organise in a central location. Parents of pupils in the portfolio PRU are automatically members of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and can participate in activities regularly as and when they wish.

- *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 eligible for Free Schools Meals (eFSM) status is one indicator for EOTAS but not consistently. The rate in the portfolio PRU varies between 30 and 36% during the year, there are higher numbers of in work families with little money who are not captured in this data. All of the pupils who are EOTAS and in the portfolio PRU have special educational needs (SEN) that cannot be met in a mainstream school without support and/or require specialist placement. A high number have additional learning needs (ALN) which mean they need additional support, highly differentiated curriculums and access arrangements to develop their learning and achieve meaningful qualifications. The bespoke nature of the packages to allow these pupils to learn can be financially high or just not available locally

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

The portfolio PRU offsets the cost of any pupils placed by clawing back the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) and Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG) (where applicable) from the mainstream funding or a proportion in a special school. I am not aware of additional funding. The provision at the portfolio PRU is good value for money and the risk of needing out-of-authority (OOA) placements is reduced.

- *Responsibility and accountability for the education of pupils who become EOTAS*

Pupils who are in the portfolio PRU and those who are registered as EOTAS are the responsibility of the Head, portfolio PRU and their day-to-day attendance, wellbeing and engagement is overseen by a lead officer who has a specialist teacher background in this area. All concerns or issues are dealt with via the Access to Education Panel. Pupils generally remain on a school roll.

- *Attainment of children and young people EOTAS*

Pupils in the portfolio PRU achieve very well, in-line with their ability and experience. The portfolio PRU performance was way above the Wales average over the last three years in key stage 4 achievements, for example - 88% 2018-19 achieving five or more GCSE level qualifications and the Wales average was 30%. The group, which attended Bridgend College on the Junior Apprenticeship Scheme all, achieved one or more recognised qualification. The group who were part-time and had very low engagement levels had the opportunity to sit relevant qualifications and some did under the umbrella of the portfolio PRU eg. SWEET Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) and English, Maths, Numeracy GCSE. Some pupils can only engage at their level and cannot progress to working towards recognised qualifications; we always look for opportunities to engage in vocational qualifications or entry-level examinations.

- *Outcomes and wellbeing of children and young people EOTAS*

All pupils in the portfolio PRU access Careers Wales advice and support and emotional and wellbeing support from PRU staff who are trained Emotional Learning Support Assistants (ELSAs) and lead workers inside and outside school. There is also a full-time therapist in the portfolio PRU and a part-time counsellor. Pupil progress in their social and emotional skills is measured using a specific tool. Pupils who are registered as EOTAS can access Careers Wales support and limited support from lead workers during their time at provision. EOTAS pupils can also access Halo leisure cards to use leisure facilities. These are exceptionally vulnerable pupils.

- *The quality of support provided to children and young people in the range of EOTAS provision*

All pupils in the portfolio PRU access Careers Wales advice and support and emotional and wellbeing support from PRU staff, who are trained ELSAs and lead workers inside and outside of school. Pupil progress in their social and emotional skills is measured using a specific tool. Pupils who are registered as EOTAS can access Careers Wales support and limited support from lead workers during their time at provision. These are exceptionally vulnerable pupils. This portfolio PRU is a Rights Respecting School (Silver Award) and this used to support pupil-led choices and decisions.

- *Professional development support for Pupil Referral Unit staff, including those who provide home tuition*

There are no home tutors in the local authority, some supply staff (known to us) are used to tutor pupils 1:1 in the community and where the portfolio PRU has training that is accessible and appropriate, and this is offered to those staff, eg Youth Mental Health First Aid Training. All portfolio PRU staff have appropriate performance management and access to high quality continuing professional development (CPD) on INSET days eg. Trauma Informed Schools, Central south consortia (CSC) academic courses, Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) courses and mainstream school-to-school networks and hubs.

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

There is significant risk to any child who is not in school and they are vulnerable to malevolent adult influences in their community. By having a dedicated lead officer for EOTAS (for those outside the portfolio PRU) we are trying to mitigate this risk. The "team around the school" approach involves all agencies such as Early Help staff and Police so that individual concerns and needs can be shared in this forum, half-termly and the EOTAS Lead can respond. Pupils in the portfolio PRU have reviews of progress every three weeks with their families and on roll school and/or other agencies. Pupils with known mental health needs can access support in the portfolio PRU, there is a long wait to access initial appointments and/or diagnosis.

*Other issues closely linked to EOTAS, for example managed moves, and the 'off-rolling' of pupils*

Managed moves are overseen by the local authority via the Access to Education Panel and are reviewed and monitored carefully. I am not aware of any schools taking pupils off roll without following correct and legal procedures.