

**National Assembly for Wales Children, Young People  
and Education Committee Inquiry into Education  
Otherwise than at School**

Evidence paper from the Minister for Education, Welsh Government

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# National Assembly for Wales Children, Young People and Education Committee Inquiry into Education Otherwise than at School

Evidence paper from the Minister for Education, Welsh Government

## **Introduction**

I welcome the Children, Young People and Education Committee's inquiry into education otherwise than at school (EOTAS) and the opportunity to highlight some of the positive experiences and opportunities that EOTAS delivers for some of our most vulnerable learners. I remain committed to ensuring all children and young people in Wales have an excellent education and are supported to access that education. Our National Mission is to raise standards, reduce the attainment gap and ensure we have an education system that is a source of national pride and public confidence. Our education system is predicated on providing a range of choices to meet the different needs and abilities of learners of all ages. I believe that a child's circumstances should not be a barrier to achieving positive outcomes, this is particularly important for children who are experiencing difficulties in school, are at risk of being excluded or who are in receipt of EOTAS.

EOTAS is not without its challenges, and EOTAS learners includes some of our most vulnerable children and young people. A significant number have special educational needs and can come from challenging backgrounds and we know that such circumstances can result in barriers to learning, and that EOTAS pupils are less likely to have positive outcomes compared to their peers.

However, EOTAS provision is an integrated part of the continuum of provision on offer in Wales. I am committed to strengthening the networks between EOTAS services and their local schools, local authority and regional consortium to ensure that these vulnerable learners are provided with every opportunity to fulfil their potential.

There will always be a need for EOTAS provision, and we should be proud that we are able to offer alternative educational provision which can be tailored to best suit

the needs of learners. This would not be possible if it were not for the dedication and commitment of the EOTAS workforce. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the positive impact those working in EOTAS have on learners.

## **Education otherwise than at school**

EOTAS is provision designed to meet the specific needs of pupils who, for whatever reason, cannot attend a mainstream or special school. Section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 places responsibility for arranging the provision of EOTAS on local authorities.

Whilst full-time education is not defined in law, I believe the starting point should be that EOTAS pupils should receive the same amount of education as they would receive in a mainstream school. I want learners in EOTAS to have access to an education that is broad and balanced and is appropriate to the individual learner. This should not be a unilateral decision by the LA but one taken in agreement with parents and learners.

The very reason EOTAS exists is because for whatever reason(s) the mainstream offer of education, is not suitable for everyone. EOTAS education needs to be flexible to meet the different needs and abilities of learners, helping to ensure they have equitable access to education. This complements the work we are doing on the new curriculum, ALN reform and the new evaluation and improvement arrangements - this will mean that PRUs and local authorities will be required to secure a curriculum for EOTAS pupils to support EOTAS learners with ALN, and where every child will count and provision outside of mainstream education can be captured and reported on.

This moves us away from the current situation where there is no requirement to deliver the national curriculum to EOTAS pupils. I believe that this will make it easier for EOTAS learners to reintegrate back into mainstream school, and will have a positive impact on their outcomes.

In 2018/19, there were 2,286 pupils registered as being in receipt of EOTAS provision, a reduction of 3% since 2013/14<sup>1</sup>. Of these, 1,259 were dual registered (attending a mainstream school and EOTAS provision) and 1,027 were sole registered (attending only an EOTAS setting(s)).

## **Provision outside of mainstream settings organised by schools**

Section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 gives local authorities the power to arrange or deliver EOTAS provision. Thus, in this document where reference is made to EOTAS, it is to provision other than at school funded and organised or delivered by local authorities. Maintained schools can, however, arrange or deliver education provision outside of school using the Education Act 2002. The Act has three such enabling provisions:

- Section 116G of the Education Act 2002 – places a duty upon a school governing body to deliver local curriculum entitlements during Key Stage 4 (i.e. pupils aged 14-16);
- Section 29(3) of the Education Act 2002 – provides schools with a power to direct a learner to attend educational provision elsewhere; and
- Paragraph 3 of Schedule 1 to the Education Act 2002 – allows governing bodies to do anything which appears to them to be necessary or expedient for the purposes of, or in connection, with the conduct of the school.

## **Differences between EOTAS and provision outside of mainstream settings organised by schools**

The education organised by schools using the provisions set out above differs in a number of respects from EOTAS provision, particularly in relation to the curriculum. Local authorities have a duty to ensure EOTAS pupils have a suitable education or, where a pupil attends a PRU, receives a balanced and broadly-based curriculum. In contrast, where a school funds and organises or delivers provision outside of mainstream settings using powers in the Education Act 2002, the school has a duty to ensure registered pupils are in receipt of the basic curriculum and the National

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<sup>1</sup> <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-07/pupils-educated-other-school-september-2018-august-2019-644.pdf>

Curriculum for Wales (or, at KS4, the local curricula, including other mandatory areas of study), other than where exemptions apply<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> I have not included information of provision outside of mainstream education commissioned by schools within the discussion of EOTAS. Reference is, however, made to such provision, where appropriate.



## **Section 1: reasons for and support available for children and young people at risk of education other than at school, including through their exclusion from mainstream provision**

There are diverse reasons why children do not attend a mainstream school and are in receipt of EOTAS. These include having an illness (physical and mental), refusing to attend school (school phobic), having challenging behaviour associated with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD), and being, or at risk of being excluded from school<sup>3</sup>. For some children in EOTAS, the structure of the mainstream school does not enable them to receive their education in a way best suited to their individual needs.

As a result of the difficulties they have experienced attending mainstream education, EOTAS pupils have often missed extended periods of education and have gaps in their learning, can have low self-esteem and lack confidence, and many have low aspirations for their future.

Let me be clear on this, every child in Wales has a right to an excellent education and a right to be supported to access that education – a child's circumstances should not be a barrier to achieving positive outcomes. That is why I have put in place a number of policies to ensure children facing difficulties in school have support to remain in education.

### **Adverse childhood experiences**

The Welsh Government is supporting schools to understand why children have difficulties that can result in behavior which leads to pupils being at risk of exclusion or being excluded, including our work to tackle adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

We supported the creation of an ACE Support Hub for Wales and, between 2018/9 and 2020/21, provided funding of £400,000 per year of which £100,000 per year has

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<sup>3</sup> In 2018/19, around half (1,014) of the 2,026 pupils in EOTAS had SEBD and just over half (640) of the 1,171 pupils in EOTAS provision for the first time had been excluded in 2017/18.

been specifically focused on education and, in particular, on ACEs training for schools. The training, which is available to all education settings including PRUs and EOTAS, is offered by the Hub through the regional consortia or to individual local authorities, depending on their preference. In the Education Achievement Service (EAS) consortia area<sup>4</sup>, for example, the hub has ensured PRUs and EOTAS settings have been included in invitations to attend training sessions.

A key element of the Hub's work to support education has been the development and delivery of a program of ACE awareness training, which has been rolled out across Wales. The training enables schools to understand behavior and put in place ACE informed practices to support children who are at risk of exclusion. Whilst the training has been developed for schools, it is transferrable to EOTAS, and where staff have attended from PRUs and other EOTAS settings, it has been well-received.

By the end of 2019/20, training will have been delivered across all Regional Education Consortia areas. However, training will continue to be delivered in 2020/21 to enable us to reach more youth work settings and to extend into further and higher education. This has built on previous programs of training, enabling the Hub to complete awareness training and work with professionals to apply that knowledge in schools to support pupils to remain in mainstream education and improve their outcomes.

Activity during 2019/20 has focused on:

- continuing to deliver training to primary and secondary schools to ensure those working with children and young people are ACE aware and feel confident to deliver trauma informed practice;
- producing the evaluation of activity;
- work to embed ACEs training in initial teacher training (ITT);
- supporting the creation of an ACE aware youth workforce;
- developing an integrated approach for higher education (HE) and further education (FE) to be trauma informed; and

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<sup>4</sup> Which covers south east Wales.

- supporting our whole school approach agenda.

### **Whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing**

Every child's emotional, physical and mental wellbeing is at the heart of our education system. The whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing will ensure that mental health and wellbeing becomes central to the way schools work. A key aspect of the programme of work is the development of a framework to support schools in developing their own whole school approach. The framework will provide the tools to evaluate the emotional environment of the school and to develop an action plan to address any issues. An important aspect of the framework will be the support we give schools to implement evidence-based interventions designed to support pupils experiencing poor mental health and to help them build resilience. Whilst the focus of the framework is on pupils in maintained schools, it is transferable to other settings including EOTAS, PRUs, further education (FE) and higher education (HE).

We are working with Public Health Wales (PHW) to develop a repository of evidence-based material which schools can select from and with Welsh Universities to develop training modules for new teachers on child development and on emotional and mental wellbeing. As the work develops, we will be considering the potential of making them available to existing teachers as part of continuing professional development.

I have made £2.5m available in this financial year to support the development of the whole school approach. Of this, £1.5m has been made available to local authorities to support their own local activity, including improving the school counselling service by implementing waiting list initiatives; funding teacher training on wellbeing; and instigating evidence-based interventions in schools to support pupils.

### **School counselling**

Since 2013, local authorities have had a duty to provide an independent counselling service in respect of health, emotional and social needs for children and young people in their area. Across the UK, it is estimated that three pupils in an average-size classroom will have a mental health problem.

In 2017/18, the number was 11,365 children and young people<sup>5</sup>. Of these, 37% were male and 63% female. The most common issue for referral were family issues with the second most common being anxiety.

Between October and November 2019, I consulted on the Draft School and Community-Based Counselling Operating Toolkit. The revised toolkit reflects various changes since the original guidance was published, such as changes in law and policy, increased provision of counselling for children and young people in a community setting, and the use of online counselling. The revised toolkit will make clear that exclusion should not be used as a reason to discontinue a child's counselling session. If a child or young person receiving counselling is temporarily excluded, I expect arrangements to be made for them to continue their counselling either on the school premises or at an alternative venue in the community until an alternative education placement has been found for them.

Similarly, if a child or young person is permanently excluded, I expect arrangements to be made for them to continue to receive counselling at a suitable venue in the community.

Whenever a child or young person receiving counselling (or on a waiting list to receive such provision) is temporarily or permanently excluded, the school link person or head teacher must inform the counselling service to ensure counselling provision continues to be made available for them. I expect to publish the final version of the toolkit later this spring.

As part of the £1.5m £626,000 is available to local authorities in the current financial year to address waiting lists for the service and to foster collaborative arrangements with other counselling providers and other complimentary services such as those offered by the NHS.

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<sup>5</sup> Welsh Government (2019) Statistical First Release: counselling for Children and Young People, 2017/18 <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-03/counselling-for-children-and-young-people-2017-18-494.pdf>

Local authorities have adopted a range of approaches in using the additional funding. Many have agreed to use the funding to purchase additional sessions of counselling time to address waiting lists. For instance Denbighshire County Borough Council were able to fund an additional counsellor for 18 school weeks to provide 360 additional sessions for 60 pupils, based on 6 sessions per pupil.

Others have chosen to focus funding on service improvement/expansion. For example Newport City Council previously undertook a review of data which revealed low uptake of PRU pupils attending and completing counselling sessions. The PRU received 2 days a week of counselling in 2019-20 but experienced a decrease in completed cases since the previous year. As a result, funding has been used to trial a group psycho-educational approach. This would be initially targeted at a Level 1 intervention and would identify pupils who wished to progress to either one-to-one therapy and/or required additional or more specialist support. The approach would provide a direct route to access stepped up care and support in relation to identified need.

### **Additional learning needs transformation programme**

The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 will ensure all learners aged 0-25 with additional learning needs (ALN) are supported to overcome barriers to learning and can achieve their full potential. Regulations and a statutory code will underpin the implementation and operation of the new ALN system. The Draft Additional Learning Needs Code and regulations will be laid for Senedd approval this year and implementation will commence on a phased basis from September 2021, with the statutory roles created under the Act<sup>6</sup> commencing in January 2021.

Under the new system, children and young people with ALN, including those in receipt of EOTAS, will receive an individual development plan (IDP) that sets out their needs and the support required to address those needs.

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<sup>6</sup> The additional learning needs coordinators (ALNCos), the Early Years Lead Officer and the Designated Education Clinical Lead Officer (DECLO)

Five ALN transformation leads have been in post since April 2018. Their role is to provide advice, support and challenge to local authorities, schools, PRUs, early year's settings and further education institutions, as they prepare for implementation of the new ALN system.

Eliesha Cymru have been commissioned to develop a suite of ALN implementation training and awareness raising materials, which target specific audiences. This includes:

- an e-learning package, hosted on Hwb, available to everyone<sup>7</sup>;
- a series of short animated awareness raising videos hosted on Hwb aimed at leaders with corporate or statutory responsibility related to the ALN Act; and
- training for practitioners with statutory roles and others within the sector, including practitioners with statutory roles working within EOTAS settings.

The Act will provide a system that puts pupils – including those in EOTAS - at the centre. It has been designed to ensure pupils' needs are identified, and the provision necessary to meet those needs is planned for in a more timely, collaborative, consistent and equitable way. Children, their parents and young people have a right under the Act to have their views, wishes and feelings regarded by those exercising functions under the act. This will lead to a more consensual approach to decision-making and planning to address the learner's ALN, moving away from the adversarial nature of the current system. All learners with IDPs will have a right of appeal to the Education Tribunal.

### **Healthcare needs**

Welsh Government guidance, Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs<sup>8</sup>, provides advice to local authorities, governing bodies, education settings, education and health professionals and other organisations to support learners with healthcare needs and ensure minimal disruption to their education.

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<sup>7</sup> This includes practitioners from all settings, learners and parents. No Hwb account will be required to access the information.

<sup>8</sup> <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-12/supporting-learners-with-healthcare-needs.pdf>

The guidance provides advice on supporting children and young people who have difficulties attending school or EOTAS settings due to healthcare needs. The support required will depend on the needs of the pupils. An Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP), which is agreed in conjunction with practitioners, parents and pupils, sets out the support which will be put in place.

Pupils with healthcare needs can also be supported through EOTAS placements. This would include, for example, pupils who are hospital in-patients receiving education via the hospital education service or attending a hospital PRU. Where a pupil attends EOTAS due to healthcare needs, a reintegration plan should be put in place, where appropriate.

### **Supporting pupils through a managed move**

The aim of the interventions outlined above is to have a positive impact on those pupils most at risk of being excluded and to decrease the need for pupils to be removed from mainstream school. We recognise, however, that for some pupils an alternative placement – in another school or an EOTAS setting – will be the best outcome for them. Welsh Government has published guidance<sup>9</sup> to support local authorities to establish and implement effective protocols for managed moves.

A managed move is a carefully planned transfer of a pupil from one school to another<sup>10</sup>. The aim of managed moves is to provide pupils with the opportunity to make a fresh start in a new school and can in some instances reduce the need for permanent exclusions. Welsh Government guidance is clear that managed moves should not be used merely as an alternative to permanent exclusion, as this would deny parents and pupils the right to appeal. The guidance is also clear a managed move should not be presented as the only available option, parents should not be pressured into a managed move under threat of a permanent exclusion, pupils must never be removed from the school roll to encourage a managed move, and that parents may decline a managed move.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://gov.wales/effective-managed-moves-children-and-young-people-guidance-local-authorities>

<sup>10</sup> Welsh Government (2011) Effective Managed Moves: a fresh start at school for children and young people. Available at: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/effective-managed-moves-a-fresh-start-at-school-for-children-and-young-people.pdf>

Welsh Government guidance sets out a step-by-step process for organising and supporting pupils through a managed move. This includes the role and responsibilities of the home school (original school) and the transferring local authority. The aim being to ensure the transfer to the new school is carefully planned and the pupil is fully supported during the process.

A recent Estyn review<sup>11</sup> into managed moves found that generally local authority protocols reflected Welsh Government guidance and the local context of the authority. However, it also found that, over time, local authorities have introduced new and additional practices that do not reflect the ethos or philosophy of a managed move well enough. In response, I have asked my officials to ensure our guidance is up-to-date so that local authorities, schools and PRUs can be assured they are adhering to the correct processes.

The referral and commissioning guidance for EOTAS that we are developing will provide the opportunity to clarify expectations regarding pupil registration, graduated responses to supporting learners experiencing difficulties in school, managed moves, and the use of pastoral support plans (PSPs), including reduced timetables.

### **Support for permanently excluded pupils**

Welsh Government guidance, Exclusion from Schools and Pupil Referral Units<sup>12</sup>, is clear that permanent exclusion should be used only as a last resort. Permanent exclusion is an acknowledgement by the school that it has exhausted all available strategies for supporting the pupil. Where it is clear that a pupil is continuing to experience difficulties in school, despite support being put in place, and is at risk of permanent exclusion, we expect the school to work with the local authority to find another school or an alternative placement.

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<sup>11</sup> Estyn (2018) Effective use of Managed Moves by Local Authorities and Schools. Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Managed%20moves%20-%20how%20used%20by%20LAs%20and%20schools%20report%20%28003%29.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://gov.wales/exclusion-schools-and-pupil-referral-units-pru>



Where a pupil has been permanently excluded from school, parents and pupils have a right to appeal.

Following a permanent exclusion being upheld by the school discipline committee, local authorities are responsible for assessing the needs of the pupil and how these can be met<sup>13</sup>. The school's obligation to provide education continues while the pupil is still on the school roll<sup>14</sup>. The school must inform the parents of the arrangements made for enabling the pupil to continue their education, including setting and marking work.

Following the removal of a pupil from the school roll, it is the responsibility of the local authority to ensure a suitable education is made available for the pupil. The guidance is clear that, for the majority of permanently excluded pupils, the best course of action is for them to join a mainstream or special school. To achieve this, local authorities should consider whether specialist staff are required to support the pupil.

Excluded learners should only be educated outside of mainstream education where there are significant problems that are better addressed in a different environment, or where a pupil is approaching the end of compulsory schooling and it would be unrealistic to expect them to make a successful return to school. Where a pupil has significant problems which are better addressed in EOTAS, the local authority should put in place a pastoral support plan (PSP) which sets out the actions to be put in place to address the learner's problems and ensure a smooth return to mainstream or special school, or transition into post-16 education and training.

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<sup>13</sup> Even though the exclusion might be overturned by the independent appeal panel.

<sup>14</sup> The name of a permanently excluded learner remains on the school roll until the appeals procedure is completed, or until the time for appeals has expired without an appeal being lodged.

## **Section two: How effectively parents are engaged and supported throughout the EOTAS process**

Our guidance, Inclusion and Pupil Support<sup>15</sup>, sets out the importance of engaging with parents, carers, children and young people at all stages of a pupil's education. In addition, as part of the implementation of the EOTAS Framework for Action<sup>16</sup>, our referral and commissioning guidance will set out how the process from referral to delivery of provision outside of mainstream education should work. This will include engaging with and supporting pupils and parents at all stages of the process. A version for parents and pupils will also be published alongside the guidance.

### **Supporting parents**

I am committed to supporting the needs of children, parents and families by addressing inequalities in the early years, ensuring early intervention throughout childhood to help all children realise their rights and achieve their potential. We accomplish this by enabling, empowering and facilitating delivery through supporting local programmes (such as Families First and Flying Start), through legislation (such as The Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) Act), through communications (such as Parenting Give it Time), through innovative approaches (such as Children First and to tackling adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) through mitigating and preventing ACEs and supporting children and young people to become more resilient.

Every local authority in Wales provides a range of parenting support which encompasses universally available information and advice, parenting groups and targeted and intensive support. Local Authorities have responsibility for deciding the precise nature of local service delivery depending on local circumstances and identified needs within their own areas. While parenting and family support services may look slightly different in every area, our guidance, Parenting in Wales: guidance

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<sup>15</sup> [https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-05/guidance-inclusion-and-pupil-support\\_0.pdf](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-05/guidance-inclusion-and-pupil-support_0.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/education-otherwise-than-at-school-framework-for-action.pdf>

on engagement and support<sup>17</sup>, sets out our expectations on how it should be provided.

The Family Information Service in every local authority area also provides free and impartial advice on childcare, education and training, health, finance, recreation, and parenting support. In addition, all local authorities must provide an independent and impartial parent partnership service to support parents and carers of children with SEN to understand the procedures relating to their child, which helps them make informed decisions.

### **Pastoral support plans**

Pastoral support plans (PSPs)<sup>18</sup> are put in place for learners who are not responding to a school's general approach to support pupils who are at risk of disengaging or being excluded and who are in need of longer-term intervention. The plans aim to help learners better manage their behaviour and are drawn up with engagement from pupils and parents, using a multi-agency approach and are reviewed on a regular basis.

### **Engaging and supporting parents and EOTAS pupils**

Research commissioned by Welsh Government<sup>19</sup> found EOTAS settings are engaging and supportive of parents and pupils. Parents spoke about how they had often feared contact from the mainstream school as it had so often involved problems with their child's behaviour. In contrast in several PRU settings there was daily feedback to parents by telephone, text or by written note and most settings had very strong and positive links with home. Parents noted the support provided by staff, even when young people were at their most challenging, and EOTAS pupils found staff to be helpful and available, both for academic and personal issues and

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<sup>17</sup> <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-10/parenting-engagement-and-support-guidance-for-providers.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Pastoral support plans (PSPs) are the main way that schools and local authorities plan and review the education of learners who are at risk of being excluded, have already been excluded or who have an EOTAS placement.

<sup>19</sup> <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/18415/1/130624-evaluation-education-provision-children-young-people-educated-outside-school-setting-en.pdf>

felt a sense of engagement and connectedness with the EOTAS provision that they had not felt in a mainstream school.

Before an inspection, Estyn will analyse the outcomes from parent and pupil questionnaires, and consider the views of teaching, support staff and the management committee through their questionnaire responses. During an inspection, Estyn will normally hold a meeting with parents to hear their views on the pupil referral unit (PRU) and its effectiveness.

In addition, Estyn inspections of PRUs have found some real strengths when engaging with parents. Outlined below are some examples of how PRUs have engaged and communicated with parents:

- regular and effective communication between parents and staff regarding individual pupils' achievements and development. This impacted positively on pupils' wellbeing. Parents were kept up-to-date about pupil progress, attendance and achievement through regular and informative reports covering all aspects of the PRU's work including their vocational training placements;
- daily phone calls to all parents keeping them informed of their child's progress. This was in addition to the PRU surveying annual pupil and parent as part of evaluation processes. This resulted in a rigorous self-evaluation and consultation with pupils and partners, and provided senior leaders with a more accurate view of the PRU's strengths and what it needed to do to improve;
- valuable on-site parenting programme for fostering their involvement in their child's education. This programme, which is delivered termly, is highly effective in improving family relationships as well as behaviour management in the home. All parents receive daily texts or phone calls, with a weekly report sent home, about their child's progress and relevant areas for improvement.

### **EOTAS pupils moving back into mainstream education**

EOTAS pupils will have a reintegration plan which sets out the steps to be taken for reintegration into mainstream school or transition into post-16 education and training. The plans set out the actions to be taken by the EOTAS provider to address the learner's issues and ensure a smooth return to mainstream or special school, or transition into post-16 education and training. In developing the plan, the local authority will liaise with the parents, the pupil and the receiving school.

### **Section three: 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**

Some groups of pupils are over-represented in EOTAS. This includes pupils with SEN, those entitled to free school meals (eFSMs), boys and older pupils.

Pupils with SEN are more likely than pupils without SEN to be in receipt of EOTAS provision. In 2018/19, 88% of pupils (1,571) whose main education was EOTAS had SEN compared to 12% (213) who had no SEN. Of the 2,026 types of SEN reported for pupils whose main education was EOTAS in 2018/19, 50% (1,014) were social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD).

As set out above, pupils with SEBD are at particular risk of experiencing difficulties in mainstream school. Welsh Government has put in place a number of initiatives to support pupils with SEN to remain in mainstream education. This includes the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act which will be implemented from September 2021. Under the new system, children and young people with ALN, including those in receipt of EOTAS, will receive an individual development plan (IDP) that sets out their needs and the support required to address those needs; and the named school for the purposes of admitting the pupil to a named institution.

Under the Act, all IDPs are statutory and, as such, the Act introduces a right of appeal to the Education Tribunal for all learners with an IDP. This is an extension of the right from the SEN system whereby only those with more severe and complex needs who are in receipt of a statement can appeal. This includes the right to appeal against the proposed additional learning provision (ALP) and the naming of a school/or not naming of a school for the purposes of securing admission to that school. That is, where an EOTAS setting, such as a PRU, an independent school or training provider, is set out, or not set out, in an IDP as part of the ALP, the learner (and/or their parent) will have a right of appeal to the Education Tribunal.

Pupils who are eligible for free school meals are more likely than pupils who are not eFSM to be in receipt of EOTAS provision. In 2018/19, 18% of pupils aged 5-15 years were known to be eFSM<sup>20</sup>, this compares to 36% of pupils whose main education is EOTAS being eligible for free school meals.

Although, it should be noted that whilst there was a rise in the number of pupils eligible for free schools meals between 2017/18 and 2018/19 from 17% to 18%, the percentage of pupils whose main education is other than at school who were entitled to free school meals decreased between 2017/18 and 2018/19 from 39% to 36%. As set out in section four below, the Pupil Development Grant (PDG), which aims to improve educational attainment and achievements of pupils who are eFSM, is central to breaking the cycle of poverty.

Older pupils are more likely to be in receipt of EOTAS provision than younger pupils. 60% of pupils registered as EOTAS main provision are aged 14 or 15 years. One of the reasons for this is due to complexities of reintegrating back into mainstream once year 10 has started. Moving pupils who have started vocational courses may not be appropriate as it would disrupt their education. Boys are more likely to be in receipt of EOTAS than girls, with 70% of pupils registered as EOTAS main being boys.

In terms of ethnicity, white pupils are more likely to be excluded than any other ethnic group. In 2018/19, 4.5 British white pupils per 1,000 received EOTAS provision, compared to 3.6 per 1,000 for mixed ethnicity, 1.1 per 1,000 Asian and 1.9 per 1,000 Black pupils<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-07/school-census-results-2019-764.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-07/pupils-educated-other-school-september-2018-august-2019-644.pdf>

## **Section four: 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**

### **Revenue Support Grant**

Welsh Government provides funding to local authorities for pre-16 provision in schools in Wales largely through the local government revenue settlement in the form of the Revenue Support Grant (RSG). The other main source of funding for local authority education budgets is from local taxation.

The local government revenue settlement is not hypothecated and, as a consequence, local authorities decide the how funding is allocated to the services they are responsible for, including education. Welsh Government does not set a target for expenditure on EOTAS. Rather, local authorities use a local funding formula to allocate funding to EOTAS and to services to support pupils to remain in mainstream education. Local authorities are accountable to their electorates for the funding decisions they make.

### **21st Century Schools and Education Programme**

Capital funding is also provided through the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme, which represents the largest strategic investment in the Welsh education infrastructure since the 1960s.

The first wave of the programme (band A) ran from 2014-2019 and involved an investment of over £1.4 billion across all 22 local authorities in Wales. Band A has supported 170 school or college rebuild or refurbishment projects. To date, 160 of these have been completed, with the remainder either under construction or pending.

The second wave of investment for the programme (band B) began in April 2019 and will see an anticipated investment of £2.3 billion, supporting an estimated 200 projects to rebuild and refurbish schools and colleges across Wales. Twenty-seven projects have already been approved for funding. As at February 2020, 31 band B



business cases, with a combined capital value of £248.6 million, have been agreed with another 30 projects currently working their way through the business case process. Of the 31 business cases agreed to date, only one is a PRU.

The original level of Welsh Government grant support for capital schemes was 50%. However, in November last year, I announced an increase for capital schemes from 50% to 65% of their cost. At the same time, I announced an increase to 75% for schemes supporting vulnerable pupils in facilities for those with ALN and those in PRUs. I am hopeful this will increase the number of PRU projects coming forward.

### **Specific funding**

In addition to the RSG and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools, Welsh Government provides specific funding and grants to support the provision of EOTAS. This includes the Junior Apprenticeship scheme, the PDG and funding for professional learning.

### **Junior Apprenticeship scheme**

The Junior Apprenticeship scheme is a specific type of provision for learners in year 10 and 11. The scheme provides the opportunity for learners to study full-time for a future career in a college setting from the age of 14. This scheme is particularly relevant to pupils at risk of disengaging from mainstream education.

The scheme offers a two-year programme of work-related education with work experience built in, alongside a Level 2 course that is equivalent to four or five GCSEs, in a range of vocational pathways. Each apprentice also studies GCSEs in Maths and English/Welsh alongside their chosen area.

Each Junior Apprentice has access to support with learning and behaviour management and has a designated Welfare Officer to provide day-to-day issues support and pastoral care. The aim of the Junior Apprenticeship is to improve learners' destinations at age 16, either through becoming employable or being ready to progress onto a higher level vocational course or apprenticeship.

The programme is primarily funded via a transfer from a local authority to a college but Welsh Government support the programme by contributing £2,000 per year for each placement.

The Junior Apprenticeship was initially established in 2016 and ran for one year as a pilot in at Cardiff and the Vale College. During the pilot years, Welsh Government funding totalled £200,000 and 105 learners took part in the programme with nearly all learners graduating<sup>22</sup>. Of the 36 learners that completed the full two-year programme, 33 progressed onto apprenticeships or full time courses and/or employment<sup>23</sup>.

The programme was extended in 2017/18 due to the success of the scheme. In 2017/18, the programme supported 168 learners to enrol on the Junior Apprenticeship scheme and in 2018/19 it supported 237 learners. There are currently 196 learners enrolled on the scheme. The programme is due to be evaluated to identify the outcomes and progression of those learners enrolled since 2017/18 (as these learners will just have finished their 2 year programme).

A strength of the scheme is helping to develop the talent and abilities of our young people in partnership with business and industry, so our young people are ready to do the jobs of the future. The scheme has the ability to engage young people, who for a variety of reasons, may not be engaged with mainstream education, or it is just not meeting their needs. The scheme benefits young people who want to pursue a more vocational route while still studying for GCSEs in Maths, Numeracy and English, while also benefiting from work experience.

### **Pupil Development Grant**

I am committed to breaking the cycle of poverty. The PDG aims to improve educational attainment and achievements of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. It is one of a number of programmes designed to tackle poverty. I have also

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<sup>22</sup> This includes year 11 students that studied for one year.

<sup>23</sup> The three learners who did not progress suffered with severe health issues but continued to be supported by the college.

extended the PDG to support even more vulnerable learners and as well as the free school meals element, the PDG suite now includes looked after children (LAC), those in the early years and EOTAS pupils<sup>24</sup>. To improve outcomes for our disadvantaged learners, our funding for the two years 2018/19 to 2019/20 totals over £190m. For 2019/20, the total funding for the EOTAS element of the PDG is nearly £700,000 with an allocation of £1,150 per learner (see appendix a, table 1 for breakdown by local authority)<sup>25</sup>.

### **Charging schools for EOTAS**

In addition to the funding available to local authorities to deliver EOTAS, local authorities can recover the cost of EOTAS placements from schools. Recent research<sup>26</sup> has found local authorities have diverse approaches including charging a percentage of the actual cost, cost based on the age weighted pupil unit (AWPU), and flat rate contributions.

### **Assessing value for money**

For the 2019-20 financial year, we strengthened the terms and conditions for the EOTAS element of the PDG grant by including two additional requirements in the plans submitted by regional consortia. In terms of planning provision, regional consortia are now required to set out how they will ensure practitioners monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their approach to improve the outcomes for PRU and EOTAS pupils, and how they will ensure realistic yet challenging targets are set for PRUs and EOTAS providers, including pupil outcome targets.

As set out in section five, the school self-evaluation, improvement planning and accountability arrangements will apply to EOTAS, as appropriate to the provision.

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<sup>24</sup> In 2016/17, the Welsh Government extended the PDG to EOTAS pupils – both at ages 5-15 (£1,150 per pupil) and in early years (£600 in 2017/18, raised to £700 in 2018/19). Welsh Government recently announced the intention to raise the early years element of the PDG to the same rate of £1,150 per learner.

<sup>25</sup> The EOTAS element of the PDG is issued to consortia based the number of sole registered EOTAS pupils who were eFSM and at the census point in 2016. For dual registered learners, the grant is paid to the school or setting registered as the main provider.

<sup>26</sup> Welsh Government (forthcoming) Review of Local Authority Commissioning Arrangements for Education Otherwise than at School Provision.

Options are also being explored to enable a broader scope (beyond pupil attainment/performance) for the improvement priorities schools and other settings, including PRUS, identify through their self-evaluation and continuous improvement planning, and report progress against. As part of the implementation of the EOTAS Framework for Action<sup>27</sup>, we are exploring options for collecting data about the destination of EOTAS pupils.

We are also exploring options for collecting data about provision outside of mainstream education commissioned by schools. Since provision commissioned by schools is not EOTAS, the EOTAS census does not collect data about such provision. However, we are working to improve EOTAS data which is currently available (see section 5).

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<sup>27</sup> <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/education-otherwise-than-at-school-framework-for-action.pdf>

## **Section five: responsibility and accountability for the education of pupils who become EOTAS**

Responsibility and accountability for the education of pupils who become EOTAS lies with both the local authority and with EOTAS settings.

As set out above, local authorities are responsible for providing EOTAS for learners of compulsory school age and are accountable for the suitability of that provision. Local authorities are held to account locally, by scrutiny committees, and at the national level through Estyn inspections and through the publication of EOTAS census data.

There are a number of ways settings are held to account for the provision they deliver. Where a local authority commissions provision from external providers, the local authority is responsible for holding the settings to account. This could take the form of monitoring provision against requirements set out in contracts or service level agreements (SLAs). In addition, Estyn inspect PRUs, independent schools, including training providers registered as independent schools, and FEIs.

I am determined that weaknesses in the accountability framework are addressed and that we are able to effectively hold settings to account, and to do that we must have accurate and robust data. This will be addressed as part of the implementation of the EOTAS Framework for Action. In particular, I will clarify and improve data on:

- diverse interpretations of what constitutes EOTAS;
- diverse approaches to registering EOTAS pupils;
- pupils in receipt of education provision outside of mainstream settings organised by schools.

### **Diverse interpretations of what constitutes education other than at school**

I am concerned that local authorities use different interpretations of what constitutes EOTAS. While the definition of EOTAS as outlined in section one has been used by some local authorities, other interpretations that we are aware of include:

- only full-time EOTAS provision, where pupils are not on a school roll;

- only provision delivered by PRUs, with other EOTAS provision being regarded as ‘alternative provision’; and
- provision outside of mainstream education organised and funded by schools.

This will be addressed and I am developing referral and commissioning guidance. This guidance will clearly set out what constitutes EOTAS provision, including setting out the differences between EOTAS provision and provision outside of mainstream education organised and funded by schools.

### **Diverse approaches to registering EOTAS pupils**

To inform policy development we commissioned research <sup>28</sup> which suggests data codes are not being used as intended in all cases. Specifically, in the use of sole/dual registration and main/subsidiary status. There are a number of reasons this practice is happening, including:

- lack of clarity of appropriate practice;
- using registration status to encourage good practice and prevent off-rolling; incentivising schools to arrange provision outside of mainstream education; and
- using registration status to improve school performance.

In terms of registration being used to have a positive impact on a school’s performance data, Estyn’s review of pupil registration<sup>29</sup> found schools change the registration status of pupils (in some instances pupils are ‘off-rolled’) in Year 11. I recognise the majority of schools in Wales work hard to be inclusive. However, it is clearly not acceptable for schools to ‘off-roll’ pupils or to use the registration status of EOTAS pupils to improve their key stage 4 performance data. Decisions made by schools must uphold the rights of children to an education and should be in the best interests of the learners. I would strongly urge local authorities to use the data available to them to identify trends of de-registration for the purposes of improving school performance results. Where there is evidence of schools de-registering in

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<sup>28</sup> Welsh Government (forthcoming) Review of Local Authority Commissioning Arrangements for Education Otherwise than at School Provision; Estyn (2019) Pupil registration practices. Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/pupil-registration-practices>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/pupil-registration-practices>.

order to improve performance results I expect local authorities to challenge those schools and to consider using their statutory powers of intervention.

We are currently undertaking a number of actions (discussed below) to improve the accuracy of EOTAS data, so that a pupil's registration status accurately reflects the type of provision and the setting(s) the pupil attends in practice. These actions will provide accurate data and clear lines of accountability to facilitate holding settings to account for pupil outcomes.

### **Validation checks to assure accuracy of the school year a pupil is recorded against**

More stringent validation checks when schools submit their Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) data have been introduced. This will ensure pupils are recorded against the appropriate school year, particularly at Year 10 and Year 11. The Estyn review of pupil registration practices<sup>30</sup> found, in 2018-2019, there was a reduction in the percentage of pupils repeating Year 10 - a change Estyn considers likely to have been influenced by the introduction of these more stringent checks.

### **Decreasing incentives to use registration to impact on schools' performance data**

We are developing new evaluation and improvement arrangements to replace parts of the current accountability system. In the reformed system, every child will count and schools will be evaluated according to the difference they make to every child's progress. New interim performance measures introduced for 2019 removed the emphasis from a small number of narrow threshold indicators (such as a focus on the C/D grade boundary) and shifted it towards a set of measures that capture the achievements of all learners.

I will also commission research to inform how the new arrangements will work in terms of what information should be collected, how the information will be used and reported on.

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/pupil-registration-practices>

School self-evaluation, improvement planning and accountability arrangements will apply to EOTAS. We are also exploring options to enable a broader scope (beyond pupil attainment/performance) for the improvement priorities schools and other settings, including PRUs, identify through their self-evaluation and continuous improvement planning, and report progress against.

**Guidance on what constitutes EOTAS, registering EOTAS pupils, responsibility for EOTAS pupils and the ongoing role of the school**

I have commissioned research into EOTAS panels and EOTAS referral practices<sup>31</sup>, and commissioned a review of approaches used by local authorities and schools when commissioning EOTAS and provision outside of mainstream settings. The findings from the research will be used to develop the referral and commissioning guidance. The research is expected to be published end of April.

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<sup>31</sup> An Analysis of Local Authority Referral Panels and/or Practices for Learners Accessing EOTAS Provision <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/an-analysis-of-local-authority-referral-panels-andor-practices-for-learners-accessing-eotas-provision.pdf>



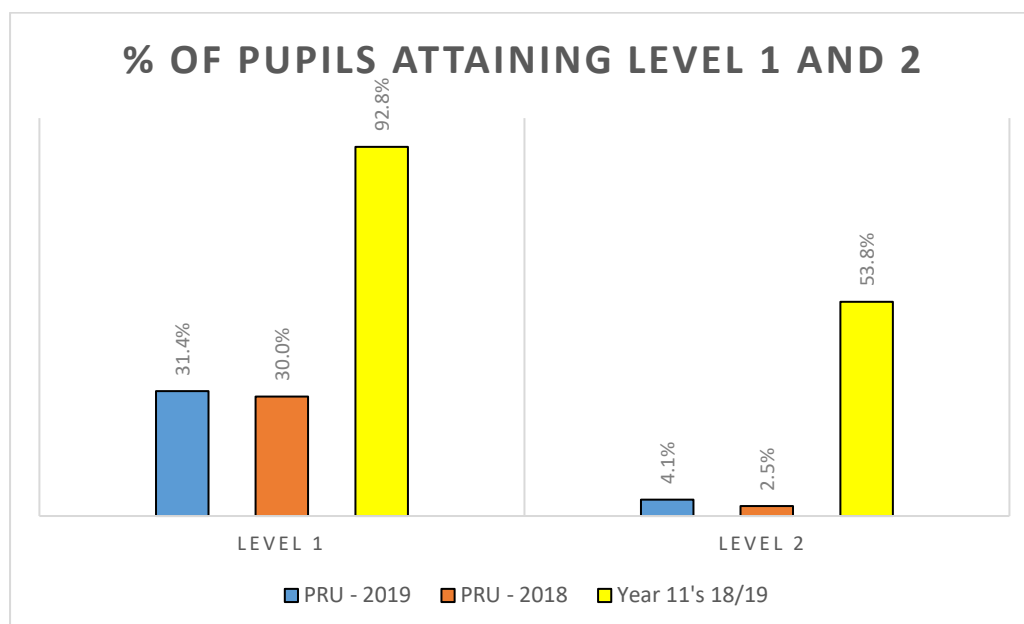
## Section six: attainment of children and young people EOTAS

Whilst the academic attainment of pupils whose main education is EOTAS has generally improved in the past year, it is not as high as pupils who are educated in mainstream education.

Graph 1 shows that in 2019, 31.4% of pupils whose main education was at a PRU achieved Level 1 and 4.1% achieved level 2<sup>32</sup>. This compares with 30% achieving Level 1 in 2018 and 2.5% achieving Level 1.

It also shows that in 2018/19, 92.8% of pupils in year 11 achieved Level 1 and 53.8% achieved Level 2.

Graph 1

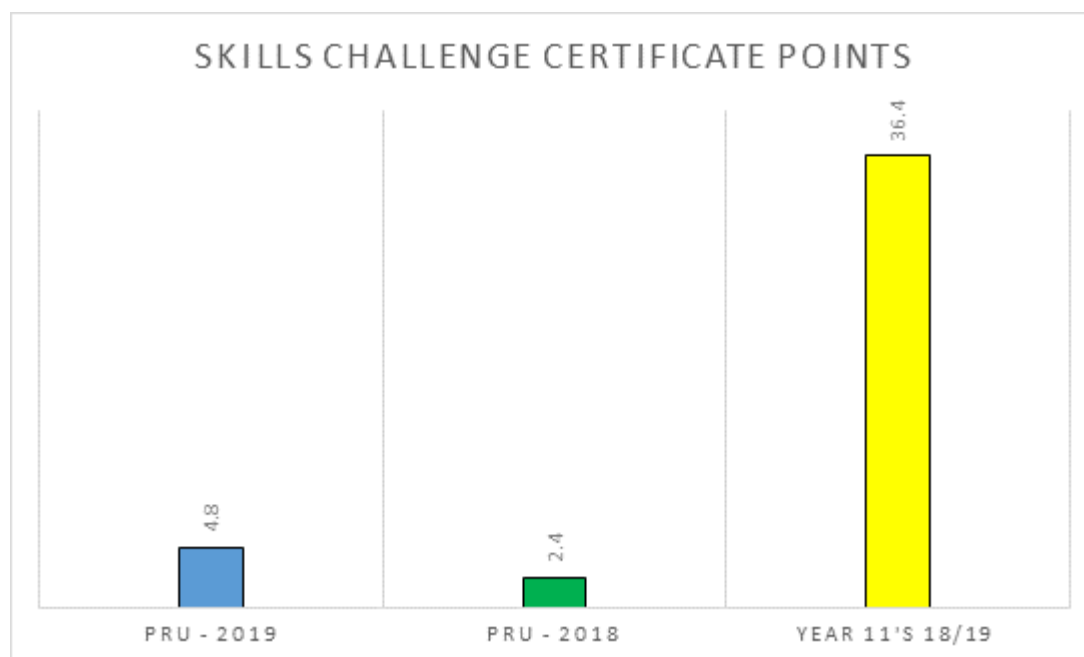


As can be seen in graph 2 there was a rise in the Skills Challenge Certificate points score which increased from 2.4 in 2018 to 4.8 in 2019. The Skills Challenge Certificate points score<sup>33</sup> was 36.4 in 2018/19.

<sup>32</sup> Level 1: a pupil achieves this if they get 5 A\*-G GCSEs or equivalent; Level 2: a pupil achieves this if they get 5 A\*-C GCSEs or equivalent; Level 2 inclusive: a pupil achieves this if they get 5 A\*-C GCSEs or equivalent including a qualification in English/Welsh (first language) and Mathematics. Note: there is a 40% cap on vocational qualifications, so pupils must get at least 3 GCSEs to achieve these measures (the other 2 can be GCSEs, BTECs or other types of qualification).

<sup>33</sup> Skills Challenge Certificate points score is taken from the pupils qualification called "WJEC Foundation/National Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Bacculaureate)" or similar. This is a part of the Welsh Bacculaureate.

Graph 2



As well as information on achievement gained, it is important that we devise a system that measures progress made and the destinations of EOTAS pupils. I believe that this will be a fairer and more representative way of evaluating the achievements of EOTAS pupils (see section four for information about school self-evaluation, improvement planning and accountability arrangements).

### **Increasing access to the curriculum**

We have been working to ensure that the Framework for Action and Curriculum reform are aligned. To that end, we will expand EOTAS pupils' access to the new curriculum.

For the new Curriculum, we are proposing to place duties on PRUs and on local authorities securing other EOTAS provision. PRUs and those responsible for securing EOTAS provision will not be required to design a curriculum in the same way as a maintained school. It is proposed that PRUs must provide learning:

- which enables learners to develop in the ways described by the four purposes<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Information about the four purposes can be found at <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/designing-your-curriculum/developing-a-vision-for-curriculum-design/#curriculum-design-and-the-four-purposes>

- is suitable for the learners' ages, abilities and aptitudes;
- which offers appropriate progression; and
- which is broad and balanced.
- It must also make provision for teaching and learning that:
  - encompasses the health and wellbeing area of learning and experience<sup>35</sup> (AoLE);
  - encompasses the mandatory elements of relationship and sexuality education; and
  - develops the mandatory cross-curricula skills<sup>36</sup>.

and it will have regard to the other components of the curriculum, which includes the other five AoLEs and the other mandatory curriculum components (Welsh, English, and religion, values and ethics) and secure provision in relation to them, so far as that is appropriate for the individual learner.

Where local authorities arrange EOTAS provision they will be required to secure provision which:

- enables the learner to develop in the ways described in the four purposes;
- is broad and balanced; and
- is suitable for the learners' ages, abilities and aptitudes and that it offers appropriate progression.

And will be required to:

- secure, as far as appropriate for the individual learner, learning in relation to the cross-curricula skills, relationship and sexuality education, and the health and wellbeing AoLE; and
- have regard to the other components of the curriculum, which includes the AoLEs and the mandatory curriculum components, and must secure provision in relation to them, so far as that is appropriate for the individual learner.

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<sup>35</sup> The new Curriculum for Wales will comprise of Six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs): expressive arts; health and wellbeing; humanities; languages, literacy and communication; mathematics and numeracy; and science and technology. Further information on AoLEs can be found at <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/>

<sup>36</sup> Information on cross-curricula skills can be found at <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/designing-your-curriculum/developing-a-vision-for-curriculum-design/#cross-curricular-skills>

To support implementation, specific guidance will be made available for key priority areas, including PRUs and EOTAS. This guidance will be developed in co-construction with stakeholders later this year.

### **The Education Business Exchange**

The Education Business Exchange (EBE) is a database facilitated by Careers Wales that is designed to give employers the opportunity to work with schools (mainstream schools, special schools and PRUs) to develop curriculum programmes for learners directly linked to business, employers and work experience. The database aims to give schools the freedom and confidence to develop employer-supported, curriculum-enhancing programmes for their learners. EBE provides support for young people to develop their careers through a range of activities, including:

- visits to industry that focus on the curriculum;
- work or business simulations, involving workshops with employers;
- work-related community participation through volunteering;
- industry days or careers fairs; and
- extended work placements for identified learners.

The project was introduced in 2017/18. By January 2020, over 13,500 employers had registered on the Exchange, and Careers Wales had trained 233 schools and PRUs across Wales to use the EBE.

## **Sections seven and ten: outcomes, wellbeing, potential risks for children and young people EOTAS such as increased barriers to accessing mental health support, increased risk of involvement with crime, such as ‘county lines’, and the criminal justice system**

We know from evidence that EOTAS provision has a positive impact on the wellbeing of pupils. Research published by Welsh Government in 2013<sup>37</sup>, found that pupils felt EOTAS had a positive effect on their self-esteem, as well as on their relationships with their school, teachers and families. Estyn<sup>38</sup> has recently reported that many PRUs deliver comprehensive programmes of personal and social education (PSE) to support and encourage pupils to develop healthy lifestyles and behaviours.

### **Improving outcomes for children and young people**

The EOTAS Framework for Action sets out the programme of work we are undertaking to improve outcomes for EOTAS pupils. With the evidence and baseline work completed, work is now taking place to implement the medium and long term actions set out in the Framework. Focus is currently being given to the following key areas:

- increasing access to the curriculum for EOTAS pupils (see section 6);
- improving referral practices and the commissioning of EOTAS provision (see section 5); and
- standardising EOTAS pupil registration practices (see section 5 above).

These actions are being undertaken simultaneously to ensure they are mutually reinforcing; and are being developed in conjunction with wider key education reform agendas, including the new curriculum and the new approach to evaluation and improvement, in recognition that EOTAS is an integral part of the education system and not a standalone education service.

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<sup>37</sup> <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/18415/1/130624-evaluation-education-provision-children-young-people-educated-outside-school-setting-en.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> Evidence to CYPE Committee inquiry into education other than at school

The Youth Engagement and Progression Framework<sup>39</sup> (YEPF), aimed at 11-25 year olds, is another means used to improve outcomes for young people, by supporting them to remain engaged with education employment or training. The YEPF provides a mechanism for identifying vulnerable young people who may be at risk of disengaging, or who are not in education, employment or training, establishing what support they need, putting the necessary support in place and tracking their progress as they make the transition into further education, employment or training.

The Welsh Government has published guidance<sup>40</sup>, linked to the YEPF, on early identification which makes clear the key indicators of attendance, behaviour and attainment should play a central role in identifying young people in need of additional support. Under the YEPF, young people identified as being significantly at risk of disengagement, or who have disengaged, are allocated a lead worker who can help ensure the support they receive is well co-ordinated and meets their needs. In 2019-20, £1.1m of the £10m youth support grant funding was allocated for funding YEPF-related activity.

## **Wellbeing**

All children and young people aged between 11 and 18 and learners in Year 6 of primary school, have access to school-based counselling or local authority counselling services within the community. Counselling is available to children and young people in education settings other than at school. The online referral route is exactly the same for settings outside of school as it is for secondary schools. To support equal access to the service, it is important local authorities emphasise that counselling is available for all children and young people to access.

In addition, our whole school approach to emotional wellbeing takes a preventative approach to improve the mental health and resilience of our children and young

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<sup>39</sup> <https://gov.wales/youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-implementation-plan>

<sup>40</sup> <https://gov.wales/youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-early-identification>

people; and Welsh Government guidance<sup>41</sup> to support practitioners, working with children and young people, to respond to issues of suicide and self-harm.

To improve our evidence about the mental health of EOTAS pupils and those who have been excluded a research project is currently being designed by academics based at Administrative Data Research Wales (ADR-W) which will link education and health data with the aim of identifying whether pupils who are excluded and/or are in EOTAS provision do have poorer mental health than pupils in mainstream provision.

### **Risk of exploitation**

In July 2019 I met with the Dyfed Powys and Gwent Police and Crime Commissioners to discuss the issue of children and young people who could be exploited and coerced into becoming involved in crime. Recognising that much of the evidence is anecdotal my officials in Knowledge and Analytical Services are taking forward research, currently being designed by academics based at Administrative Data Research Wales (ADR-W), which will link education, crime and accident and emergency data to identify variables which may indicate a child or young person is vulnerable to becoming involved in crime or to being exploited

KAS officials are also working with the Home Office, Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Department for Education (DfE) to expand their work on linking crime and education data to include Wales but this is still at an early stage.

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<sup>41</sup> Welsh Government (2019) Responding to Issues of Self-harm and Thoughts of Suicide in Young People. Available at <https://gov.wales/responding-issues-self-harm-and-thoughts-suicide-young-people>

## **Section eight: the quality of support provided to children and young people in the range of EOTAS provision**

Research <sup>42</sup> has found that generally the support provided within EOTAS is of good quality and is well received by pupils.

In 2016, Estyn<sup>43</sup> reported that for many pupils, EOTAS provides them with a second chance to succeed. Many pupils' attendance improves and they are more motivated to learn because they have interesting learning experiences, including studying vocational courses. These experiences often motivate pupils to do well, they learn skills needed to access further training or work and gain qualifications relevant to the area of work they wish to pursue. Many pupils develop good relationships, which over time help to support pupils to improve their behavior<sup>44</sup>.

The 2016 report also found many PRUs work effectively with social services and health professionals and make effective use of partnerships with a range of multi-agency professionals and services, including mental health services, advisory teachers, educational psychologists and agencies such as the NSPCC and Barnardo's, to meet the needs of pupils in a holistic way. The partnerships often provide training for staff to help them better support pupils' needs.

There is evidence that the provision delivered by PRUs is improving. In 2018/19 Estyn undertook four PRU inspections. Of these, two were rated excellent over the five areas of inspection, one was rated good over the five areas and one was rated between good and acceptable. There were no instances of unsatisfactory provision (see appendix a, table three).

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<sup>42</sup> <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/18415/1/130624-evaluation-education-provision-children-young-people-educated-outside-school-setting-en.pdf>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/EOTAS%20remit%20report.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> Estyn reiterated these findings in 2019 - in their evidence to CYPE Committee inquiry into education other than at school.



## **Section nine: professional development support for Pupil Referral Unit staff, including those who provide home tuition**

Teachers and staff working in PRUs or delivering home tuition have access to a range of professional development opportunities. These are set out below.

### **National Approach to Professional Learning**

The National Approach to Professional Learning (NAPL)<sup>45</sup> is available to the whole education sector, including all PRUs and home tuitions teachers (where they are employed by a local authority), through regional consortia. Welsh Government has made £24m available to schools for the period 2018/19 to 2019/20 for professional learning. In light of the funding made available to schools, £180,000 was made available for PRUs in 2019/20 (see appendix a, table two for breakdown of PRU funding by local authority). A further £12m will be made available to local authorities 2020/2021, for distribution to schools and all PRUs.

Officially launched in 2018, NAPL aligns with the new professional standards (see below), the schools as learning organisations approach and the professional learning model, to create a vision fit for the evolving education system in Wales for all educational practitioners, not just teachers.

I am expecting a profound transformation in the way our practitioners and leaders think about their professional learning in light of the new curriculum. I am committed to ensuring that all practitioners receive the support they need to deliver our new transformational curriculum. A key part of our national approach will be a set of new National Networks aligned to each of the AoLEs, together with a network specifically focused on pedagogy. These networks will be conduits to engage with the wider sector to ensure all practitioners have support to further develop their skills and knowledge to deliver the new curriculum. We will ensure that PRUs have input into the National Networks for Curriculum Realisation – each of the networks will have responsibility for ensuring that developments are communicated widely across the

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<sup>45</sup> <https://gov.wales/national-approach-professional-learning-napl>

sector. In addition, we will also be supporting this area of work to ensure curriculum realisation is widely communicated.

### **Wider Workforce, including PRUs**

Teaching assistants are an integral part of our education system. Last year, a consultation on new Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants was undertaken and new standards were introduced in September 2019. The standards provide support staff with a framework for reflection and professional learning and a clearer route for teaching assistants (TAs) who wish to pursue the Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) Pathway. Joint work on developing both the HLTA and the TA Learning Pathways (TALP) is continuing to ensure that the TALP and HLTA status is aligned to the new Professional Standards and is in line with the NAPL.

### **Leadership for the whole education sector**

The current range of reforms to the education system in Wales heightens the need to ensure that school leaders are well prepared and supported to lead their organisations through these changes. Our National Mission puts leadership at the centre of reforms and 'Inspiring Leadership' is a key enabling objective. To support this area of work the Welsh Government established The National Academy of Educational Leadership (NAEL) (for further information see appendix b).

### **Professional standards**

Professional standards for all practitioners, including those who teach in PRUs have been introduced. Practitioners can access the standards via the Professional Learning Passport online or using the app, to reflect on their practice and identify areas for professional development. The standards have been designed to provide inspiration for the whole teaching workforce, regardless of an individual's aspirations or where s/he is in their career.

I have commissioned a research programme to evaluate the implementation, use and impact of the standards on classroom practice. The researchers will engage with every part of the education system – teachers and leaders (including those in PRUs) regional consortia and other partners such as the Education Workforce Council, the workforce unions and Estyn. The report will provide an understanding of how

particular practitioner groups (including those in PRUs) and related organisations view and use the standards over time and will inform ongoing activity relating to supporting practitioners' professional learning needs. Initial findings from the review are expected in January 2021.

### **Statutory induction of newly qualified teachers**

Induction is a vital part of a new teacher's professional development and it is crucial that newly qualified teachers (NQTs) receive the support and professional experiences they need to grow and develop, professionally. Currently, the statutory induction arrangements do not allow NQTs to undertake induction in a PRU.

However, statutory induction in Wales is under review and as part of that, I have asked my officials to consider the feasibility of allowing NQTs to undertake induction in a PRU.

### **Training to support teachers to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils**

The Sutton Trust-Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit<sup>46</sup> is an accessible summary of educational research. It provides guidance for teachers and schools on how to use their resources to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. The toolkit<sup>47</sup> currently covers 34 topics, each summarised in terms of the average impact on attainment, the strength of the supporting evidence and the cost. The toolkit is a live resource that will be updated on a regular basis as findings from Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) funded projects and other high-quality research become available. The toolkits present approaches to improving teaching and learning, each summarised in terms of:

- its average impact on attainment
- its cost
- the strength of the evidence supporting it.

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<sup>46</sup> The Sutton Trust-Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit (2016).

Available at: <http://dro.dur.ac.uk/20987/1/20987.pdf?DDD29+hsmz78+d700tmt>

<sup>47</sup> <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/>

The Welsh Government has funded professional learning on the Education Endowment Foundation Teaching and Learning Toolkit. Seminars have been held in each region across Wales and have included practitioners from PRU settings.

### **Professional development and the additional learning needs transformation programme**

This Senedd term, I have invested £20 million in the ALN transformation programme to support the successful implementation and delivery of the new ALN system. A significant proportion of this funding will be used to support activity to develop the skills of the education workforce – including those in PRU settings - to help build capacity within the system and improve outcomes for learners with ALN<sup>48</sup>. In addition, we are continuing work to improve knowledge and awareness of autism amongst those working in education through the development of specialist training packages and guidance.

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<sup>48</sup> Funding is allocated to work streams rather than on the basis of settings.

## Appendix a: tables

Table 1: PDG allocation 2018-19 by local authority

Consortia	Name	Pupils in year groups 1-11 and eFSM January 2016	PDG allocation 2018-19
GwE	Isle of Anglesey	9	10,350
GwE	Gwynedd	18	20,700
GwE	Conwy	25	28,750
GwE	Denbighshire	36	41,400
GwE	Flintshire	71	81,650
GwE	Wrexham	18	20,700
ERW	Powys	12	13,800
ERW	Ceredigion	13	14,950
ERW	Pembrokeshire	5	5,750
ERW	Carmarthenshire	13	14,950
ERW	Swansea	94	108,100
ERW	Neath Port Talbot	13	14,950
CSC	Bridgend	22	25,300
CSC	The Vale of Glamorgan	44	50,600
CSC	Rhondda Cynon Taf	73	83,950
CSC	Merthyr Tydfil	16	18,400
EAS	Caerphilly	38	43,700
EAS	Blaenau Gwent	24	27,600
EAS	Torfaen	*	*
EAS	Newport	22	25,300
CSC	Cardiff	39	44,850
			<b>698,050</b>

Table 2: 2019/20 PRU professional learning funding, by local authority

Local authority	Allocation (£s)
Anglesey	0
Gwynedd	3,768
Conwy	14,632
Denbighshire	7,536
Flintshire	12,089
Wrexham	6,468
Powys	6,531
Ceredigion	3,140
Pembrokeshire	11,932
Carmarthenshire	10,802
Swansea	23,550

NPT	0
Bridgend	9,106
Vale of Glamorgan	4,396
RCT	10,676
Merthyr Tydfil	3,768
Caerphilly	3,768
Blaenau Gwent	0
Torfaen	4,270
Monmouthshire	4,145
Newport	5,024
Cardiff	7,285
<b>All Wales</b>	<b>152,887</b>

**Table 3: Estyn Inspections PRUs, 2018/19 and 2017/18**

Year	Standards	Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Teaching and learning experiences	Care, support and guidance	Leadership and management
2018/ 2019	E	E	E	E	E
	G	G	G	G	G
	A	G	A	G	A
	E	E	E	E	E
2017/ 2018	A	A	U	U	A
	G	A	G	G	A
	U	U	A	U	U

Source: <http://data.estyn.gov.wales/>

### Key

E	Excellent
G	Good
A	Adequate
U	Unsatisfactory

## Appendix b: the National Academy of Educational Leadership

An Academy Associates Programme has also been developed that supports setting based system leadership. NAEL is committed to drawing on the expertise of current leaders and growing the current and next generation of leaders for Wales by improving the status, morale and pride in being a Welsh leader in the education system. Its approach to leadership development will aim to empower leaders to lead the system by building strengthening partnership working within and between all parts of the sector.

Wales also has an ambition that all schools develop as learning organisations in keeping with OECD principals. Schools that are learning organisations have the capacity to adapt more quickly and explore new approaches, with a means to improving learning and outcomes for all their learners.

We are determined to use the governance structure of the programme to monitor progress in our teachers' and leaders' access to professional Learning, and to ensure that schools are ready to realise the new curriculum at the right time. To do this we are:

- Receiving termly reports from the regions on access to their national programme of professional learning
- Ensuring that schools' Professional Learning plans are signed off by their Challenge Advisers using demanding quality criteria
- Ensuring that schools publish their Professional Learning plans so that they can be scrutinised by the communities they serve and experts in the field.