



**CHILDREN &  
YOUNG PEOPLE**



## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE?

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The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines child as “a human being below the age of 18 unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. However, there are a number of different laws across the United Kingdom that specify age limits in different circumstances. In Wales, these include: child protection, those aged under 18; the age of consent, 16 and age of criminal responsibility, in aged 10.

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## WHO IS AFFECTED AND HOW?

Prior to the commencement of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 in April 2016, when a child or young person was referred to child and family services, they were received at the 'front door' of the service as a Child in Need, these are now known as children and families in receipt of care and support.

### ▼ The number of referrals received to children's services during the year

	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015
Western Bay	8,000	6,206	6,498	6,911	5,858	7,320	7,406	4,357	4,109
Bridgend	3,719	1,244	1,033	942	1,029	1,059	1,009	1,107	999
Neath Port Talbot	1,814	1,952	1,198	1,590	2,067	2,723	3,763	1,652	1,306
Swansea	2,467	3,010	4,267	4,379	2,762	3,538	2,634	1,598	1,804

Within Neath Port Talbot there has been a significant reduction of children and families in receipt of care and support whereas this has remained relatively stable in Bridgend. In Swansea, the number of referrals made has tended to be higher and fluctuated more than the other authorities in the region.



A re-referral is defined as a referral to Child and Family Services made within 12 months of the previous referral. As it is the aim of each authority to meet needs as early as possible and achieve sustainable outcomes, all authorities aspire to see minimal re-referrals. For each of the three authorities the numbers of re-referrals follows a similar pattern to the number of referrals.

### ▼ The number of referrals received to children's services during the year that were re-referrals

	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015
Western Bay	2,735	1,437	1,859	2,214	1,592	1,940	2,207	819	706
Bridgend	1,696	265	196	132	118	96	124	141	204
Neath Port Talbot	310	435	215	296	513	750	1,350	365	201
Swansea	729	737	1,448	1,786	961	1,094	733	313	301

Whilst it is important to acknowledge the progress achieved, the number of re-referrals still represents a high volume of cases. A re-referral suggests that a case may lack an appropriate exit strategy. It may also indicate a lack of capacity in step-down services. Moving forward it would be worthwhile to undertake an analysis of the cases closed and those re-referred to ascertain whether there is work to reduce the numbers further.

## INITIAL ASSESSMENT

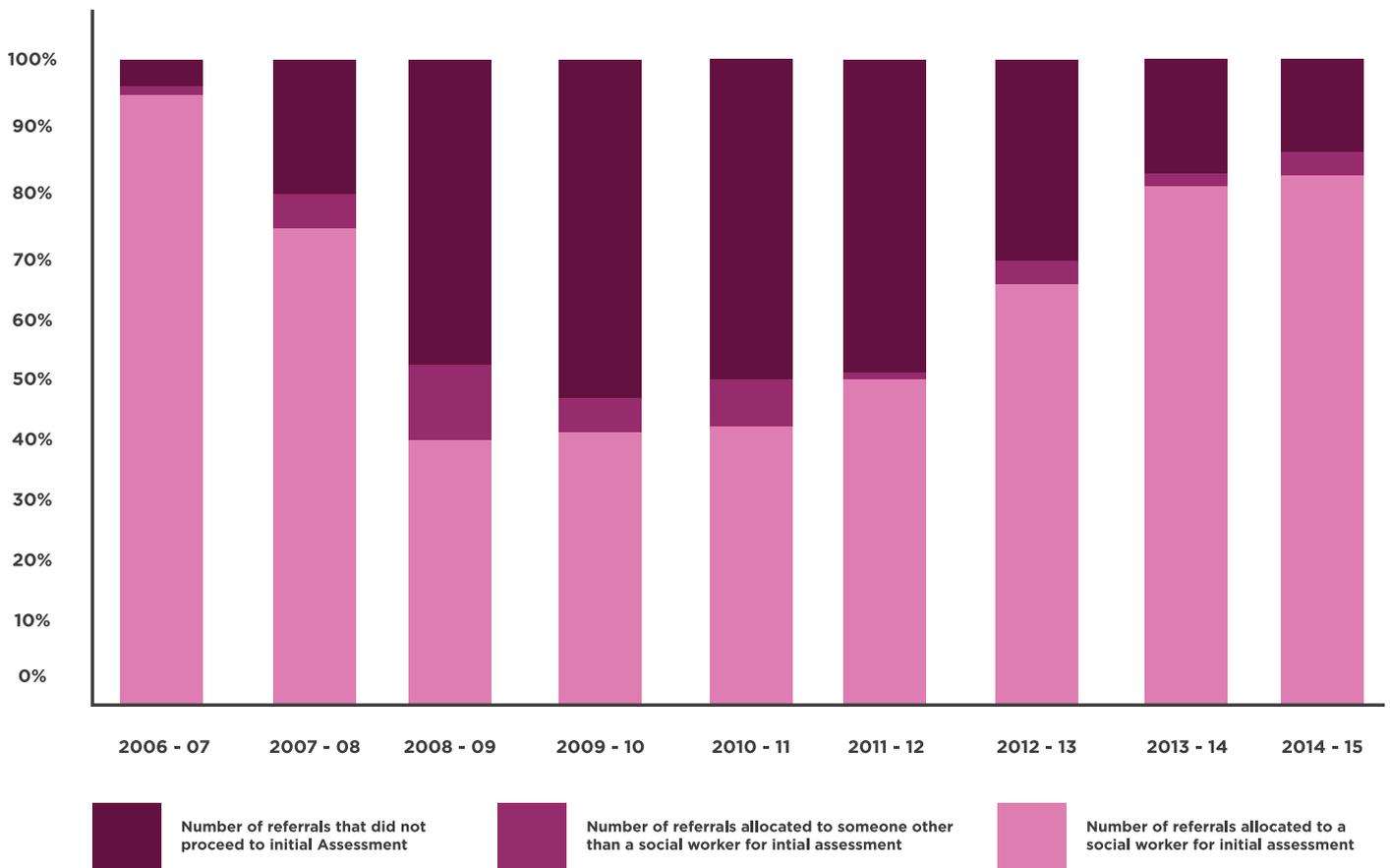
An initial assessment is a series of questions based on the child's developmental needs, parenting capacity, family and environmental factors. Once a parent, or someone with parental responsibility has given permission, or if it is thought that the child may be suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm the social worker should:



- Check with all other agencies whether they have the relevant information, and
- Consider any information obtained in light of the referral.
- The social worker must decide whether the child is 'in need' and if these needs can be met by the provision of further services. The initial assessment may indicate that a core assessment is required.

Not all referrals made to social services require a formal assessment, the needs of some families can be met in the community without intervention from social services. All initial assessments should be undertaken by a qualified social worker.

### ▼ Western Bay Initial Assessments



In Western Bay, the percentage of referrals that led to an initial assessment have increased significantly since 2012-2013. This reflects the 'screening' work undertaken to ensure only appropriate work is undertaken by the service and cases that do not meet the threshold for social services are 'sign-posted' to more appropriate support providers. It would be beneficial to understand whether families who did not meet the threshold to receive services or were assessed but their cases closed went on to access any of the services provided by other organisations that they may have been referred on to.



## CORE ASSESSMENT

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A Core Assessment provides a structured, in-depth assessment of a child or young person's needs where their circumstances are complex. The Core Assessment Record provides a structured framework for social workers to record information gathered from a variety of sources to provide evidence for their professional judgments, facilitate analysis, decision making and planning. A completed Core Assessment Record is then used to develop the plan for the child or young person. When a child or young person becomes looked after, an up to date core assessment is required and is used to inform his or her first Care Plan. A Core Assessment continues the process of collecting the information necessary to monitor the progress of children and young people who are looked after. Councils are required to complete all core assessments within 35 working days.

Since the implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 the Initial and Core Assessments have been replaced by the Proportionate Assessment, which is undertaken at the point at which children and their families receive advice or assistance from Social Services.

## CHILDREN IN NEED

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There is an obligation for councils to provide a range of services to children in need in their area if those services will help keep the child safe and well. A 'child in need' may be:

- Disabled (for a definition of a disability see the Children Act 1989)
  - Unlikely to have, or to have the opportunity to have, a reasonable standard of health or development without services from a local authority
  - Unlikely to progress in terms of health or development; or
  - Unlikely to progress in terms of health or development without services from a local authority
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## ▼ Number of children in need 2009 - 10 to 2013 - 14

	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011- 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014
Western Bay	3,550	3,860	4,280	4,310	4,330
Bridgend	965	1,035	1,140	1,185	1,285
Neath Port Talbot	1,270	1,305	1,450	1,405	1,305
Swansea	1,315	1,520	1,690	1,720	1,740

The bigger the Child in Need population, the greater the demand on local authority resources. Local authorities must identify the extent of need in their area and make decisions about the levels of service they provide, this is done through initial assessments.

The number of children in need in Bridgend and Swansea has increased by approximately 30% since 2009-2010. By contrast the numbers in Neath Port Talbot have been relatively stable with an increase of less than 10%. The increase in the numbers of children in need can be attributed to a number of different factors:

- Children being kept safe within their families for longer or child protection cases become children in need, for a time before their cases are closed.
- The increasing use of alternate Court Orders such as Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement Orders has meant that these cases are now monitored and reviewed rather than closed to social services.
- Work with partners and Early Intervention and Prevention Services has led to a better understanding of need which has also added to overall numbers of children in need.

Of the three local authorities that sit within Western Bay, Swansea has the highest number of Children in Need, which is in line with their higher population. However, when considering the rate of Children in Need per 10,000 children, Neath Port Talbot had the highest rate in 2013-2014.



### ▼ Overall children in need 2013 - 2014

	2011- 2012
Swansea	370
Neath Port Talbot	470
Bridgend	440

The general population ethnic spread at the same time (Mid-Year Census 2015) shows the number of people who say they are from a non-white background as 15,900 in a population of 502,000. This gives us a percentage of people from non-white ethnic backgrounds in the general population as 3.2%. The graph shows a figure of 6% suggesting we are working with a disproportionate number of people from non-white ethnic backgrounds. However, caution must be shown in this interpretation as the 'other ethnic group' category shown in the graph might also contain a number of white European families. There has been an increase in the number of eastern European migrants moving to and settling in the Western Bay region which would more than likely account for this disparity.

The below graph depicts the ethnicity of the Child in Need population across the three authorities in Western Bay.

### ▼ Western Bay - Child Ethnicity

	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014
Ethnicity Unknown	0	3,860	4,280	4,310
Other Ethnic Group	965	1,035	1,140	1,185
White	1,270	1,305	1,450	1,405



## CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER

If a local authority identifies in the course of the initial assessment that there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, it will determine what steps are required to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child. This may include convening an initial child protection conference to decide whether the child's name should be put on the Child Protection Register. If their name is put on the Register a group of professionals are identified to work with the family to develop and deliver a Child Protection Plan to bring about the change required.

### Western Bay - Child Protection Register by Year

	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015
Bridgend	165	130	160	180	125
Neath Port Talbot	205	260	210	220	220
Swansea	255	225	235	230	205

There has been a decrease in the number of children who are considered to have suffered or likely to suffer significant harm whose names are placed on the child protection register but this still remains high per 10,000 population. This decrease could be linked to the success of early intervention and prevention services, the implementation of the outcome based measures and more effective care planning arrangements



## LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

A child or young person is looked after if they are cared for by the local authority either under Section 76 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 or Section 31 of the Children Act 1989. Children become looked after when their birth parents are unable to provide ongoing care in either a temporary or permanent capacity. Children can be either looked after as a result of voluntary agreement by their parents or as the result of a care order. Children may be placed with kinship carers (family), network carers (extended family/friends) or foster carers depending on individual circumstances.

### ▼ Number of Children starting to be looked after per 10,000 population

	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015
Bridgend	85	70	75	110	110	110	135	145	115
Neath Port Talbot	90	100	120	205	130	190	140	115	90
Swansea	125	105	155	255	175	150	210	185	185

The rate of looked after children in Wales has remained stable between 2009 and 2014. However all three local authorities in Western Bay experienced a marked growth of looked after children from 2008-2009.

### ▼ Number of Children starting to be looked after per 10,000 population

	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015
Bridgend	98	93	87	99	112	119	134	142	134
Neath Port Talbot	93	97	100	136	144	167	176	168	156
Swansea	86	86	94	119	124	119	125	114	109



In light of the noticeable reduction in the total number being looked after during 2012-2013 and 2014-2015 a more dramatic fall in the numbers starting to be looked after could be expected. The fact this has not occurred suggests Child and Family Services has been more effective at ending 'looked after' episodes than it has been at preventing them occurring in the first place.

Capturing the number of children looked after for at least 12 months is useful for a number of purposes:

- It is considered an appropriate length of time to gauge the possible association of being looked after on certain outcomes, e.g. aspects of educational performance.
- It is also an indicator of how effectively, or not, as the case may be, a local authority is performing at concluding 'looked after' episodes by securing permanence for children and young people via other means; e.g. rehabilitation home to parents.

### ▼ Children Looked After Continuously for 12 Months at 31st March 2015

	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015
Bridgend	222	226	205	197	233	252	271	298	302
Neath Port Talbot	-	209	213	238	307	324	372	375	368
Swansea	228	343	311	339	437	436	425	407	379



## EDUCATION

Where possible, parents seek to avoid changes of schools for their children in order to promote their child's educational stability and opportunities. This principle applies equally to a local authority holding Parental Responsibility as Corporate Parent. Indeed, this principle, is often particularly important for a looked after child. Having invariably suffered considerable disruption in their family life, it is often vital that they keep the same school where there are staff and children who know them best. There are situations where it is in the child's interest to change school but it is generally important to keep any changes to an absolute minimum.

### Percentage of Children Looked After who changed school not due to transitional arrangements in the 12 months to 31st March 2015

	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015
Bridgend	13	14	15	13	9
Neath Port Talbot	17	10	16	16	11
Swansea	15	15	16	17	16

Performance by Swansea is below the Welsh average (13.5% in March, 2015). A focused piece of work is required to fully understand how the numerous reasons for changing school placements interact and how Swansea can achieve improved performance in the future.

Parents want their children to have the best start in life and to reach their full potential. As Corporate Parents, local authorities have equally high aspirations for their looked after children.



## CARE LEAVERS

Due to the high numbers of young people being admitted to care over the past number of years leaving care services in Western Bay will see a rise in young people leaving care in the next 2 years.

There are a number of possible exit routes out of Local Authority Care/Accommodation:

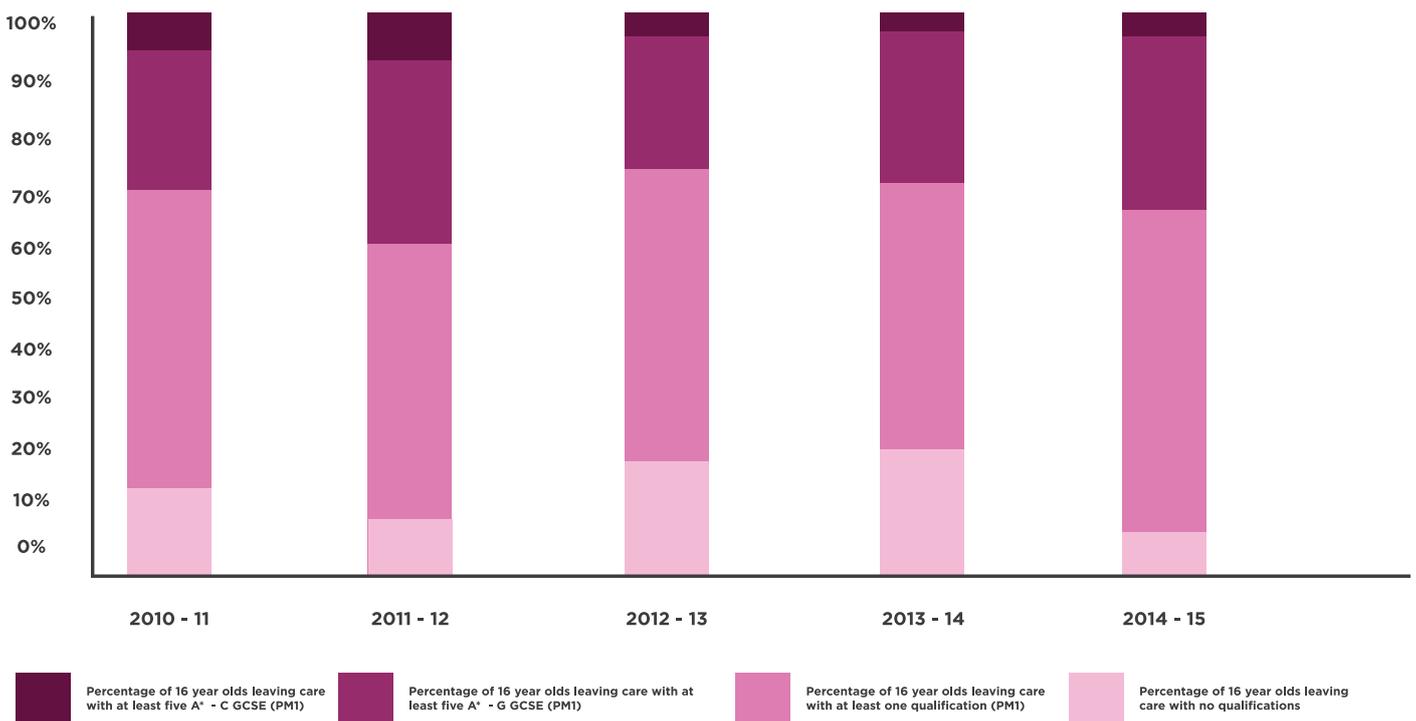
- The young person reaches the age of 18, at which point the Care Order expires.
- The young person reaches the age of 16 and is not subject to a Care Order but is accommodated under S76 of the SSWBA. At this point the young person can sign themselves out of the Looked After system. This must be ratified via the LAC review meeting. Sometimes the decision for the young person to cease to be Looked After is in relation to a planned move on to another form of placement. Placement in other types of arrangement for Looked After Children who are over the age of 16 will be made because they are the best way to meet the assessed needs and intended outcomes set out in the young person's Part 6 Care and Support Plan, and in the Pathway Plan (which subsumes the young person's Care and Support Plan at the age of 16). Generally these will be outcomes connected to preparing the young person for leaving care and helping the young person make the transition to more independent adult living. The placement options are likely to include:
  - ▶ supported lodgings
  - ▶ supported living accommodation
  - ▶ independent accommodation with floating support from housing support workers.
- A LAC review of the Care and Support plan whereby the legal status is a Care Order and Placement with Parents arrangements determines that sufficient progress has been made to enable the Local Authority to no longer need to share Parental Responsibility for the child with the parents, and a decision is then made to either go back to Court to seek a step down to a 12 month Supervision Order, or the revocation of the Care Order. Plans for ongoing support are put in place to ensure the child and family remain sufficiently supported during this process.



- An Adoption Order is granted.
- A person who has Parental Responsibility for a child who has previously consented to voluntary accommodation under S76 of the SSWB Act withdraws that consent and requests the child to return home. The Local Authority will need to determine if there are ongoing risks/eligible needs which can be safely met through the provision of services and support without the child remaining Looked After, and if not, immediate legal advice is sought with a view to issuing Care Proceedings.
- A child who is Accommodated under S76 of the SSWB Act is successfully rehabilitated to parents.
- A child is made subject to a Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangement Order.

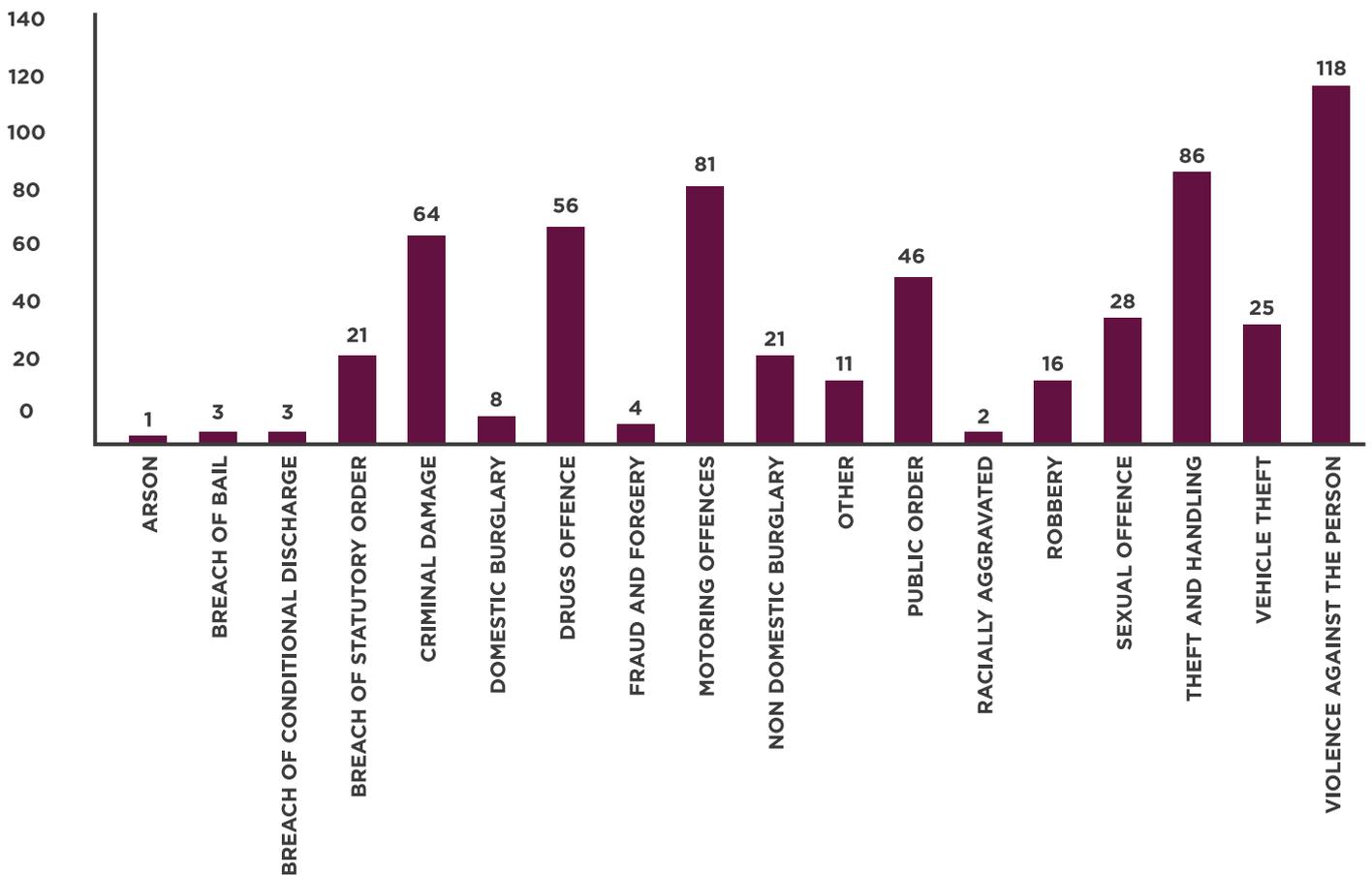
Closing the attainment gap between looked after children and their peers should therefore be a key priority for all authorities. The following graph depicts the educational attainment of young people aged 16 and over ceasing to be looked after during the year ending 31st March.

▼ **Percentage of children looked after who changed school not due to transitional arrangements in the 12 months to 31st March 2015**



## WESTERN BAY - YOUTH OFFENDING

During 2015-2016 there were 594 criminal offences committed by young people aged 10 to 17 years in Western Bay. The below table shows the different types of offences committed.



Violence against the person accounted for almost 20% of offences committed by young people during the period. The breakdown of the different types of criminal offences committed in 2015-2016 in each local authority area is shown below.

Type of offence 2015-2016	Bridgend	Neath Port Talbot	Swansea	Western Bay 2015 - 2016
ARSON	0	1	0	1
BREACH OF BAIL	3	0	0	3
BREACH OF CONDITIONAL DISCHARGE	0	1	2	3
BREACH OF STATUTORY ORDER	3	9	9	21
CRIMINAL DAMAGE	16	21	27	64
DOMESTIC BURGLARY	3	3	2	8
DRUGS OFFENCE	24	12	20	56
FRAUD AND FORGERY	2	0	2	4
MOTORING OFFENCES	28	25	28	81
NON DOMESTIC BURGLARY	1	2	18	21
OTHER	4	2	5	11
PUBLIC ORDER	19	10	17	46
RACIALLY AGGRAVATED	2	0	0	2
ROBBERY	4	3	9	16
SEXUAL OFFENCE	8	8	12	28
THEFT AND HANDLING	36	18	32	86
VEHICLE THEFT	3	6	16	25
VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON	31	24	63	118
Total	187	145	262	594



## CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND MISSING CHILDREN

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As the identification and prevention of Child sexual Exploitation is a priority within Western Bay, systems have been developed to identify and record the number of known cases. Each of the three local authorities in Western Bay hold their own database of all those children and young people who are being monitored under the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Protocol. The database is shared with the Police to ensure that the data correlates between the agencies and it is then shared with the Western Bay Safeguarding Children's Board.

In Western Bay there are currently 44 children and young people who are being monitored under the CSE Protocol.

—	Bridgend: 15
—	Neath Port Talbot: 8
—	Swansea: 21

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There has been a reduction in this number over several months, not because monitoring is less effective but as a result of a different factors. For example:

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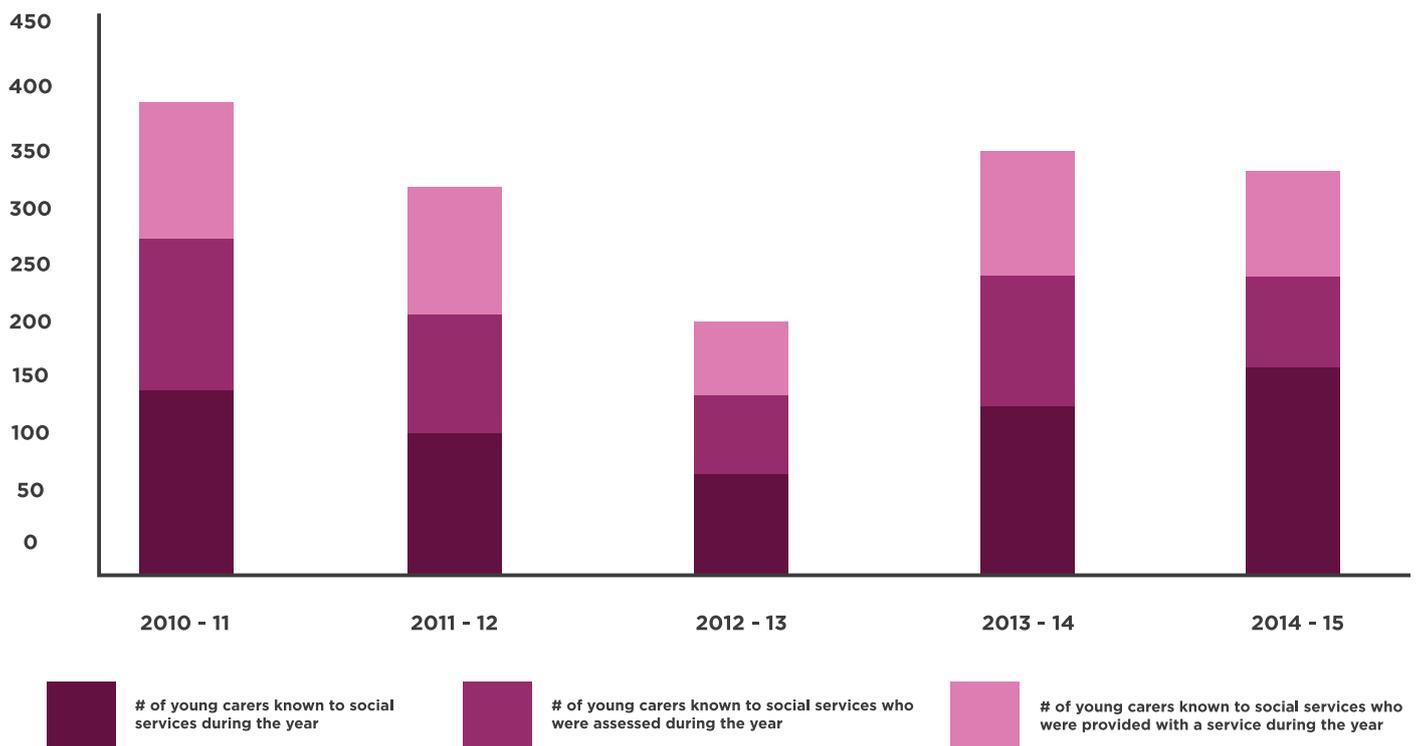
- A small reduction in numbers can be attributed to young people reaching the age of 18 years and an even smaller number of "Looked After" young people being placed out of the Western Bay area.



## YOUNG CARERS

A young carer who takes responsibility for someone who is ill, disabled, elderly, experiencing mental distress, or affected by substance misuse or who has substantial responsibility for caring for a sibling.

### Western Bay - Young Carers



The above graph shows the number of young carers known in Western Bay. Evidence suggests there are likely to be a number of young carers not accessing services that authorities and health services are not aware of.





## WHO IS AFFECTED AND HOW?

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Under the Act there is a requirement for local authorities, with the assistance of Local Health Board partners, to provide information, advice and assistance relating to well-being, care and support in their area, and (where appropriate) assistance to access these.

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### EARLY HELP

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Integrated family support services (IFSS) is a programme unique to Wales. Its work is described in detail in the Child and Family (Wales) Measure 2010 associated regulations. IFSS has been available across Wales since 2014.

Across Western Bay it is believed that Children's needs are best served in their own families if this can be safely supported. Helping families stay together is a key focus for all services and begins with early identification of need and effective early intervention. Preventative and early intervention support can promote good wellbeing outcomes for children and young people, helping them to live a healthy and fulfilled life. Strong family focused services are helping to reduce the number of children and young people reaching the threshold for statutory intervention for example, children requiring a child protection plan, care proceedings.

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## FLYING START

Some services such as Flying Start are available in all local authorities in Wales. Flying Start is part of the Welsh Government early years programme for families with children under 4 years of age living in disadvantaged areas of Wales. There are four key elements to Flying Start:

- Free, quality, part-time childcare for 2-3 year olds
- An enhanced health visiting service
- Access to parenting programmes
- Speech, language and communication support

In 2015-2016, in Western Bay a total of 6,995 children aged under 4 benefitted from Flying Start services. This represented 30.3% of the under 4 population.

### Percent of children under 4 receiving Flying start services in Western Bay (2015 - 2016)

	Swansea	Neath Port Talbot	Bridgend	Wales
% of children under 4 receiving flying start services (2015/16)	29	39	23	28

When assessed at 36 months, 62% of children receiving Flying Start services in Western Bay reached or exceeded developmental milestones. This compared to a Welsh average of 52%



## TEAM AROUND THE FAMILY

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Team around the Family is also available in all Welsh local authority areas. Team around the Family offers a means of ensuring that, where a family has multiple needs that are broader than one service can address, families are:

- identified early and effectively;
  - have their strengths and needs assessed; and
  - best use is made of all local resources to ensure that the family and community strengths are harnessed and problems are prevented from escalating.
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During 2014-2015 a total of 1,014 children and young people were referred to the Team around the Family in Western Bay:

- Bridgend: 399
  - Neath Port Talbot: 313
  - Swansea: 302
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Please note: Bridgend do not capture TAF referrals, but they do collect Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) referrals that feed into the TAF process.



## INFORMATION, ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

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As part of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, which provides the legislative basis for social services in Wales from the 6th April 2016 there is a requirement for the provision of information, advice and assistance. Local authorities, with the assistance of Local Health Board partners must secure the provision of a service for providing people with information and advice relating to well-being, care and support in their area and (where appropriate) assistance in accessing these.

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## WESTERN BAY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

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The Western Bay Safeguarding Children Board has been established since April 2013 and each year since, has developed a business and action plan which outlines the Board's strategic priorities and how they align with its core business. The strategic priorities include the following:

- Safeguarding children from neglect
  - Safeguarding children from domestic abuse and supporting them to develop healthy relationships
  - Preventing and reducing the harm associated with the use of new psycho-active substances
  - Identifying and safeguarding children at risk of sexual exploitation.
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## FOSTER CARE

The below table presents the number of approved foster carers in each of the local authorities in Western Bay. Looked after children include those on care orders and other children provided with accommodation by their local authority. Some children are also looked after because the local authority provides accommodation for respite purposes. Foster placements are invariably located in or around the relevant local authority so are generally more conducive for promoting family contact, maintaining schooling, the child's identity and efficient and effective case management. They are also more cost effective.

### ▼ Number of approved foster carers as at 31st March

	Bridgend	Neath Port Talbot	Swansea	Western Bay
2012 - 2013	161	193	223	738
2013 - 2014	171	204	233	608
2014 - 2015	175	189	223	587



## INTEGRATED FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE

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The Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) is a multi-agency service working with children and families affected by substance misuse across the Western Bay region. The service has been operational since 2013 and has established consultation surgeries in each of the three Local Authority areas. These have been designed to raise awareness of the service among social care professionals, and to assist them in identifying and dealing with potential referrals.

Between January 2016 and January 2017 the IFSS received 107 referrals (the Welsh Government target for Western Bay is 100). Of these, the main substance misuse issue was alcohol abuse.

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## **CORPORATE PARENTING**

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It continues to be a priority across Western Bay that children and young people's views are integral to service planning and delivery.

When a child is looked after by a local authority under a Care Order, the council becomes a corporate parent with legal and moral responsibility for that child. While much of the day-to-day functioning of a council's corporate parenting responsibility is delegated to childcare professionals, including social workers, its elected members (councillors) all have an important role to play.

As corporate parents all councillors have a collective responsibility to ensure that looked after children and care leavers can have the outcomes every good parent would want for their children. This means ensuring they are safe and providing opportunities to help them achieve their potential. Corporate parents have responsibility for the child's education, training and employment, health, welfare, leisure, housing and cultural opportunities.

Each council in Western Bay has a Corporate Parenting Panel or Forum made up of a group of councillors who have a lead role in promoting the role of corporate parenting within and outside their local authority and additional formal responsibilities relating to corporate parenting. Panel/Forum members have an in-depth understanding of the issues that affect looked after children and will champion their rights. They review and monitor services and support for looked after children to ensure that outcomes are met and that there is a robust planning process.

Panel/Forum members have direct contact with children and young people in order to understand their views and what matters most to them.

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## WESTERN BAY YOUTH JUSTICE AND EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICE

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The Western Bay Youth Justice & Early Intervention Service (Youth Offending Service) takes a multiagency approach to youth offending. The agency is made up of staff from the Police, Probation Service, Social Services, Health Department, Education Department, with commissioned staff from Substance Misuse Agencies. The service is funded through many sources including the Police and Crime Commissioner, Youth Justice Board and Welsh Government in addition to partner contributions. The service works with young people aged 10-17 and has 3 main areas of work:

**Preventing Offending:** A large area of work centres around preventing young people from committing an offence reducing the number of children and young people involved in the youth justice system through diversion.

**Children and young people who offend:** The service works with young people who have come to the attention of the police and the courts because of their offending. The Youth Justice Service supervises the young person throughout their order. During this time the service looks at how it can assist the young person to stop reoffending.

**Community Safety:** A small number of young people continue to reoffend and some young people commit very serious offences. Whilst custody is a final resort for very few young people, the Service is responsible for working with the young person during their time in custody and when they are released back into the community.

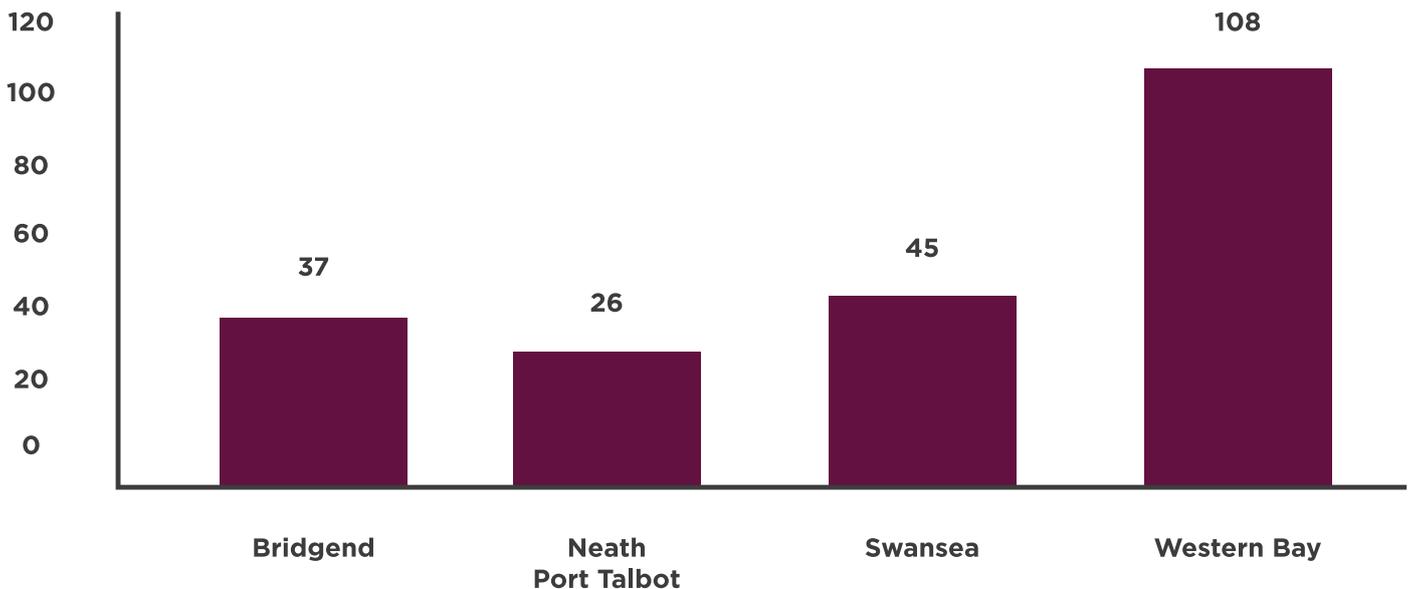
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## YOUTH JUSTICE OUTCOMES

A first time entrant is a young person who has received a substantive outcome for their offence and has entered into the justice system for the first time.

### First time entrants into the youth justice system 2015 - 2016



There are a number of possible outcomes for the young people that come to the attention of the service:

- Non-criminal disposals are delivered by the Neath Port Talbot Bureau rather than at court. These do not criminalise the young person.
- Youth Cautions are a formal out-of-court disposal that can be used as an alternative to prosecution for young offenders (aged 10 to 17) in certain circumstances. A Youth Cautions may be given for any offence where the young offender admits an offence, there is sufficient evidence for a realistic prospect of conviction but it is not in the public interest to prosecute. Youth cautions are intended to provide a proportionate and effective resolution to offending.
- Referral Orders are unique sentences directly involving the local community, by means of the volunteer youth offender panel members, in holding the young offender to account for their actions.
- Youth Rehabilitation Orders are substantive outcomes for offences given in court.





## THINGS PEOPLE TOLD US THAT MATTER TO THEM

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- Sufficient clubs, activities and events organised outside of school
  - The provision of safe local spaces to meet up with friends. Including facilities such as sports pitches and parks.
  - Support for young people to help them maintain family and personal social relationships
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## WHAT CHANGES DO WE HAVE TO PLAN FOR?

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- Development of services targeted at supporting families to reduce the risk which results in children's names being placed on the Child Protection Register
- There is an identified need to strengthen services for children who are carers
- The continued safe reduction in the number of looked after children across Western Bay.
- Improved outcomes for children, young people and their families by improvements to their wellbeing achieved through a continuum of effective prevention, early Intervention and family support services; as well as a robust front door and locality response to children in need.
- Continued improvement of the effectiveness and governance of local and regional safeguarding of our most vulnerable children and young people.
- Improvement of the quality and value for money of placements for looked after children to achieve permanence at the earliest opportunity and to enhance their life trajectory.
- Investment in the workforce to achieve excellence in practice; through signs of safety approach building the evidence base on the interventions that work and contributing to the new model of children services nationally and regionally.
- Improvement of standards of achievement and attainment for all, improve the learning environment, and making better use of physical, financial and human resources.
- There is a need for more accommodation options for children and young people leaving the care system.
- There is a need to implement the National Action Plan for Child Sexual Exploitation via the Western Bay Safeguarding Board.



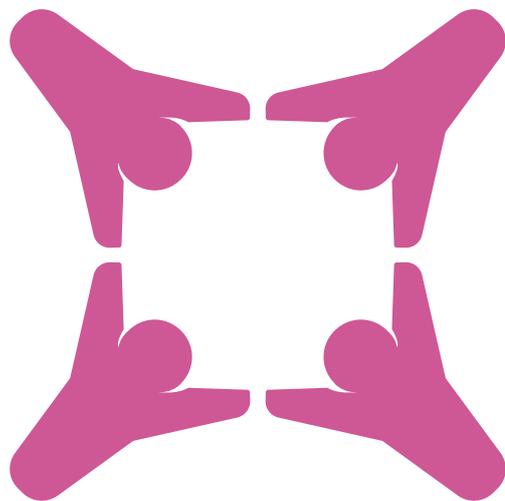
- Although overall placement stability of Looked after Children in Western Bay is slightly better than the Welsh average there has been a slight increase in the number of children experiencing 3 or more placement breakdowns. It is essential that children achieve placement stability in order to support develop positive attachments and relationships, which will help develop their resilience to become successful adults. In order to achieve placement stability it is important that the right support is provided to carers and children.
- There is a need to improve the clinical supervision of foster carers and those supporting foster carers.
- It is important that children who are assessed as having therapeutic needs are able to have those needs met whether through Primary Mental Health Services or through commissioned services.
- Family support services need to be able to continue to support the rehabilitation of children to their families where this is possible through providing family group conference services; parenting advice and support when required.
- Continued development of the links with the Education Psychology Service to support the educational performance of children who are Looked After. There is a link between placement stability and increased educational performance.
- There is also a need to ensure that there is a robust commissioning arrangement for advocacy services for all children, not just those who are looked after.

The Western Bay Youth Justice & Early Intervention Service (Youth Offending Service) takes a multiagency approach to youth offending. The agency is made up of staff from the Police, Probation Service, Social Services, Health Department, Education Department, with commissioned staff from Substance Misuse Agencies. The service is funded through many sources including the Police and Crime Commissioner, Youth Justice Board and Welsh Government in addition to partner contributions. The service works with young people aged 10-17 and has 3 main areas of work:

- ▶ The number of children starting to be looked after.
- ▶ The number of looked after children experiencing a change of school placement.

Moreover, far more focused work is required to understand, at a strategic level, the needs of the population in Western Bay. Much more work is required, for example, to further our knowledge on subjects and cohorts such as gender differences, ethnicity, young carers, mental health and disabled children and those with other additional needs.





# WESTERN BAY

## POPULATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

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