

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee**  
**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2016- 2017**

**DATE: December 2016**

**REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

<b>Agenda Item No: 4</b>
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<b>Outcomes of Children Looked After (CLA) in RCT during the academic year 2015/2016</b>
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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with an update on the educational outcomes of Children Looked After (CLA) in Rhondda Cynon Taf during the academic year 2015/ 2016.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

2.1 Note the information contained within this report.

2.2 Scrutinise and comment on the information provided.

2.3 Consider whether they wish to scrutinise in greater depth any matters contained in the report.

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Children Looked After Team within the Access and Inclusion Service works in collaboration with schools, foster carers, Children's Services and other external agencies to promote the educational outcomes, life chances and social inclusion of children who are looked after.

3.2 Children who are looked after can be extremely vulnerable as many will have experienced adverse childhood experiences including neglect, abuse and multiple breakdowns within their families. The Welsh Adverse Childhood Experiences Study clearly highlights the impact that trauma has on the health and wellbeing of children. Children who experience stressful or poor quality childhoods are more likely to adopt health harming behaviours during adolescence which can lead to mental health and physical illnesses later on in life. Adverse childhood experiences are not just a concern for health outcomes but also means that individuals are more likely to

perform poorly in school, to not progress into further education and become involved in crime.

3.3 The adverse childhood experiences of many of our children can have a direct and immediate effect on development. Research clearly highlights the impact that traumatic stress in early life can have on brain development which can fundamentally alter nervous, hormonal and immunological system development. This can result in individuals whose systems are 'locked' into a higher state of alertness and permanently prepared for further trauma. Such physiological changes can adversely impact on the health and wellbeing as individuals remain in a heightened emotional state of anxiety as the body prepares for a potential fight or flight response. This state of anxiety can result in children and young people being unable to engage and participate in learning, which can result in poor educational attainment and progress. Children raised in environments where violence, assault and abuse are common are also more likely to develop social emotional and behavioural difficulties, and are also more likely to commit violent acts or be the victim of such acts later on in adulthood.

3.4 In view of these risk factors the need for effective early intervention and preventative approaches is critical.

3.5 The Children Looked After Team within the Access & Inclusion Service endeavours to reduce the risk of poor educational outcomes through individual, group, whole school and strategic approaches. The team consists of a Looked After Children Co-ordinator, Educational Psychologists and Education Support Workers and professionals provide:

- Consultation, advice and guidance for children/young people, schools, foster carers and external partners on suitable interventions to bring about change
- Direct and indirect delivery of interventions and programmes aimed at overcoming barriers to learning and the development of key skills
- In-depth and detailed assessment of need and psychological reports as to inform specialist interventions, placements, legal proceedings and panels (e.g. Adoption/Foster Panel; Special Educational Needs (SEN) Panel Specialist Placement Panel; Court proceedings)
- Effective communication and partnership working with school staff, foster carers and external agencies, both within and outside of the LA
- Recording, monitoring and evaluation of outcome data
- Therapeutic support and interventions, including post adoption support for families
- Systemic work and training with governing bodies, schools, carers and agencies to enhance strategic developments and the support provided for children and young people who are looked after
- Preparation, monitoring and recording of Personal Education Plans (PEP).

3.6 Every child who is looked after has a PEP and its timely completion is the focus of a performance indicator, which is monitored and reported by Children's Services. The PEP is an important educational document as it helps professionals to gain a clear understanding of the teaching and learning provision necessary to meet the educational needs of a child who is in care. It is a statutory requirement for all children who are looked after between the ages of 5-16 years to have a PEP as it is intended to be an overarching education plan, and an integral part of a child's care

and support plan. Guidance has been developed and training provided to improve the effective completion of PEPs by relevant professionals with Rhondda Cynon Taf.

3.7 In addition to the support provided by the Children Looked After Team, schools are also able to access generic support from various Access and Inclusion Services, including the Learner Support Service and the Educational Psychology Service. Schools are also able to utilise delegated additional needs funding (£2.7M) to support the inclusion of children and young people who are looked after and have significant special educational needs.

3.8 Welsh Government provides additional resources for schools in order to narrow the attainment gap between learners who are eligible for free school meals and those who are not. There is a separate element for children and young people who are looked after. The Pupil Deprivation Grant for Looked After Children (PDGLAC) is now managed and administered by Central South Consortium (CSC) and there is an agreed expenditure plan based on key priorities.

3.9 Pro-active attempts are taken to ensure that the voices of children who are looked after are heard. As a result of PDGLAC funding for 2015/16, a joint consultation event was convened with a neighbouring Local Authority to establish what the barriers to achieving positive education outcomes are. This information has been used to inform the development of resource for schools so as to further improve outcomes for this vulnerable group.

Children's Services also have the 'Blueprint Forum' and members of this group regularly contribute to Corporate Parenting Board and strategic developments within the Council.

3.10 Relevant information relating to children and young people who are looked after is shared with the Corporate Parenting Board. The joint action plan devised by Education and Children's Services as a result of two Scrutiny Committee Working Groups has been successfully implemented (please see Appendix 1 for further information).

3.11 Outcome data for children and young people across a range of measures are routinely shared with schools across Central South Consortium. These data sets are also shared with Challenge Advisers and Senior Officers within the LA, so as to inform support and challenge visits in schools.

3.12 The Local Authority has a clear strategy for supporting and raising the achievement of children who are looked after and outcome data is reviewed to inform service self-evaluation and service improvement planning. A strategic target for improving the outcomes of children who are looked after is identified in the current Education and Lifelong Learning Strategic Plan and continues to be a priority for the Local Authority.

## 4. CURRENT POSITION

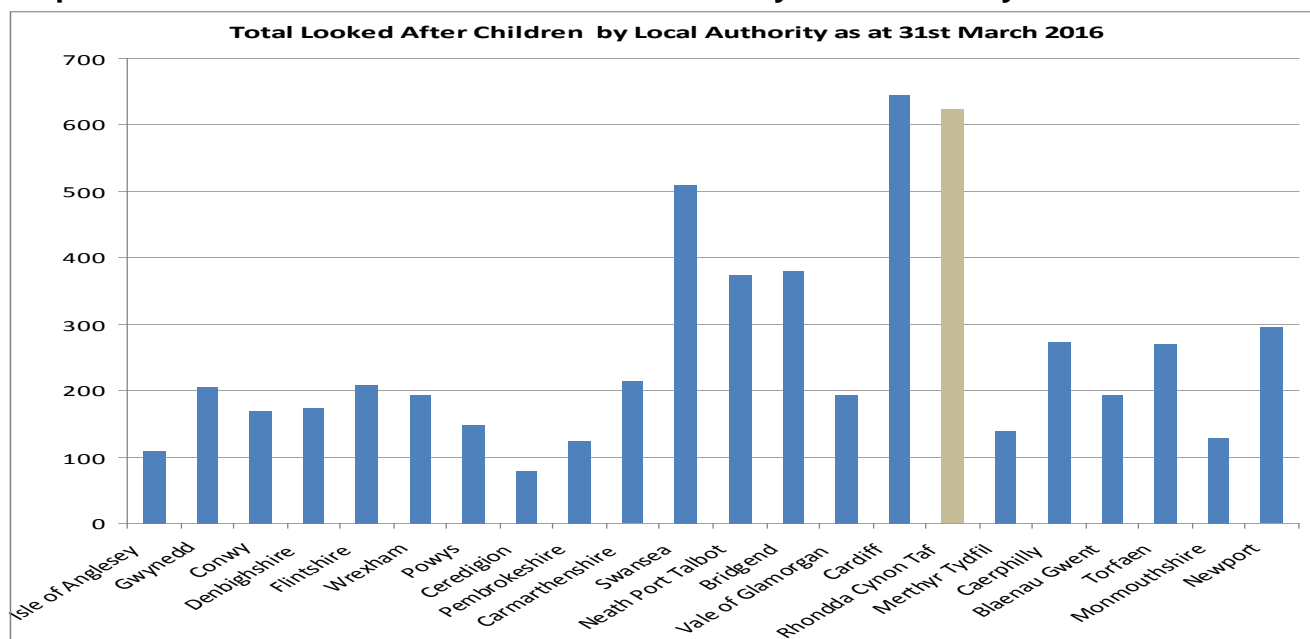
4.1 Both local and national data will be presented in this report but it should be noted that there are different reporting mechanisms for these data sets. National data considers all looked after children regardless of where they are placed in their respective care placements. The local data reports relate to children and young people who are looked after and educated in Rhondda Cynon Taf only. The scope for making direct comparisons between local and national data sets are therefore restricted.

## NATIONAL DATA

4.2 National data detailed on the Welsh Government Stats Wales website, suggests that on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2016, there were 625 looked after children and young people within Rhondda Cynon Taf. Both Table 1 and Graph 1 provides an overview of the national context and suggests that Rhondda Cynon Taf had the second highest total number of children and young people who were looked after and the highest number of statutory school aged children who are looked after within Wales.

**Table 1: Children looked after at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 by local authority**

	All Welsh local authorities	Isle of Anglesey	Gwynedd	Conwy	Denbighshire	Flintshire	Wrexham	Powys	Ceredigion	Pembrokeshire	Carmarthenshire	Swansea	Neath Port Talbot	Bridgend	Vale of Glamorgan	Cardiff	<b>Rhondda Cynon Taf</b>	Merthyr Tydfil	Caerphilly	Blaenau Gwent	Torfaen	Monmouthshire	Newport
		North Wales Education Consortia							South West and Mid Wales Education Consortia					Central South Education Consortia			South East Wales Education Consortia						
Total Looked After Children	5660	110	205	170	175	210	195	150	80	125	215	510	375	380	195	645	625	140	275	195	270	130	295
Number of LAC of statutory school age	3648	69	127	131	102	152	129	110	46	85	155	307	245	237	127	372	381	96	220	120	177	73	185

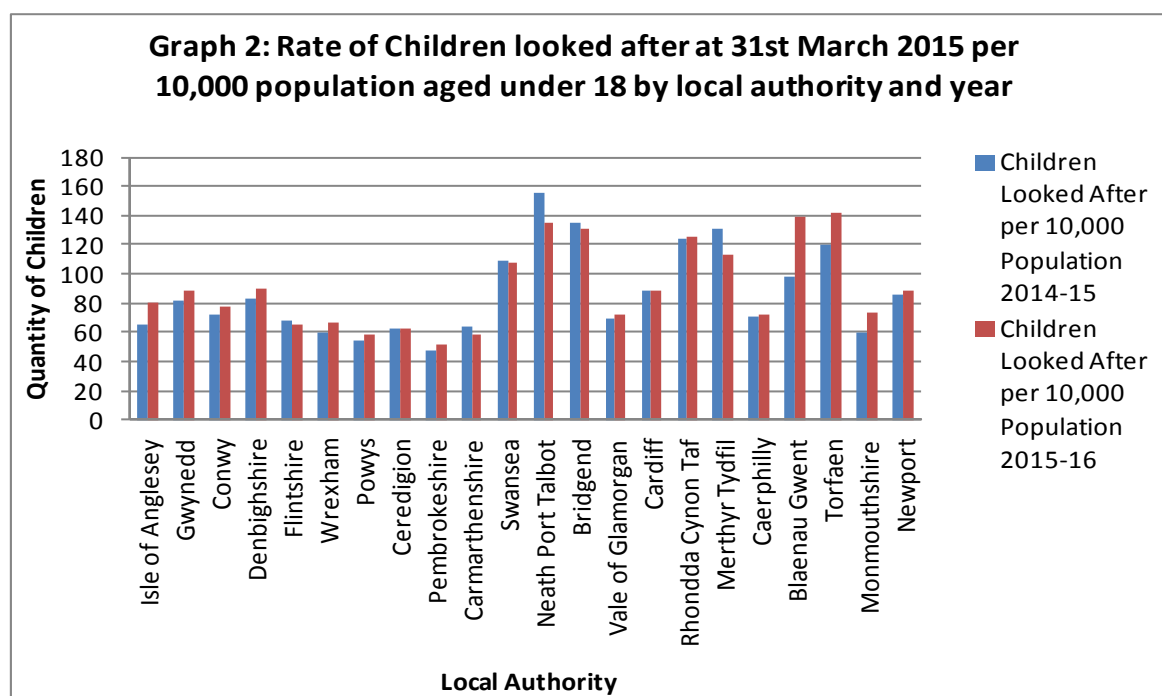
**Graph 1: Children looked after at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 by local authority**

4.3 Table 2 and Graph 2 highlights the recent growth in the number of children and young people who are looked after per 10,000 population (aged 18 and under) within Rhondda Cynon Taf. Numbers have increased by 0.81% from 2014/15 to 2015/16 but national ranking shows some relative improvement (from 19<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>) from 2014/15 to 2015/16.

**Table 2: Rate of children looked after at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 per 10,000 population aged under 18 by local authority and year**

<b>Children Looked After per 10,000 Population</b>			
<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>% difference</b>
Isle of Anglesey	65	80	23.08%
Gwynedd	81	88	8.64%
Conwy	72	78	8.33%
Denbighshire	83	90	8.43%
Flintshire	68	65	-4.41%
Wrexham	60	66	10.00%
Powys	54	59	9.26%
Ceredigion	62	62	0.00%
Pembrokeshire	47	52	10.64%
Carmarthenshire	64	58	-9.38%
Swansea	109	108	-0.92%
Neath Port Talbot	156	135	-13.46%
Bridgend	135	131	-2.96%
Vale of Glamorgan	69	72	4.35%
Cardiff	89	88	-1.12%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	124	125	0.81%
Merthyr Tydfil	131	113	-13.74%
Caerphilly	70	72	2.86%
Blaenau Gwent	98	139	41.84%
Torfaen	120	142	18.33%
Monmouthshire	60	73	21.67%
Newport	86	88	2.33%

**Graph 2: Rate of Children Looked After as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 per 10,000 population**



4.4 Table 3 highlights that the majority of children who were looked after in Rhondda Cynon Taf on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2016 were placed in foster care placements (78.4%). Encouragingly, a total of 20 children were placed for adoption (3.2%).

**Table 3: Number of children looked after at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 by local authority and placement type**

	Looked after children as 31st March 2016 by Placement Type							
	Placed for adoption	Foster placements	Local authority homes	Private or voluntary registered homes	Placed with own parents or other person with parental responsibility	Living independently	Absent or other	Total looked after children
All Welsh local authorities	260	4265	230	20	625	100	165	5660
Isle of Anglesey	*	90	*	*	10	*	*	110
Gwynedd	5	145	10	*	25	*	20	205
Conwy	5	125	5	*	20	10	5	170
Denbighshire	10	125	*	*	30	*	*	175
Flintshire	5	135	*	*	40	*	20	210
Wrexham	15	130	5	*	35	10	*	195
Powys	5	115	10	*	10	*	*	150
Ceredigion	*	60	*	*	10	*	*	80
Pembrokeshire	*	95	10	*	10	*	10	125
Carmarthenshire	10	175	*	*	20	5	*	215
Swansea	25	390	*	5	50	*	35	510
Neath Port Talbot	30	285	5	*	45	*	*	375

Bridgend	15	305	20	*	40	*	*	380
Vale of Glamorgan	10	140	*	*	25	*	15	195
Cardiff	20	440	50	*	75	40	10	645
Rhondda Cynon Taf	20	490	50	*	50	5	5	625
Merthyr Tydfil	*	125	*	*	10	*	*	140
Caerphilly	15	225	10	*	25	*	*	275
Blaenau Gwent	15	145	*	*	15	*	10	195
Torfaen	10	210	*	*	45	*	10	270
Monmouthshire	10	90	10	*	15	*	*	130
Newport	25	220	20	*	15	*	5	295

\* no pupils were recorded or numbers were too low to report on.

4.5 Table 4 suggests that the percentage of children looked after by Rhondda Cynon Taf who experienced 3 or more placements during the year equated to 6%, which was the lowest level for Wales.

**Table 4: Children looked after at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 by local authority, number of placements during year and measure**

	Number of Children with 3 or more placements during year	Percentage of Children with 3 or more placements during year
All Welsh local authorities	560	10
Isle of Anglesey	10	9
Gwynedd	15	8
Conwy	20	11
Denbighshire	15	8
Flintshire	15	7
Wrexham	25	12
Powys	15	9
Ceredigion	10	12
Pembrokeshire	10	9
Carmarthenshire	30	15
Swansea	50	10
Neath Port Talbot	30	8
Bridgend	50	14
Vale of Glamorgan	20	10
Cardiff	65	10
Rhondda Cynon Taf	35	6
Merthyr Tydfil	15	9
Caerphilly	35	13
Blaenau Gwent	25	13
Torfaen	25	10
Monmouthshire	10	9
Newport	30	10

4.6 Table 5 suggests that within RCT, there were 381 children in care on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 who were of statutory school age. Of this cohort only 14% experienced one or more change of school that was not due to transition. This places Rhondda Cynon Taf's ranking as joint 12<sup>th</sup> with two other Authorities this suggests that school placements are generally maintained where possible, particularly in Key Stage 4. However, it should also be recognised that a change in school placement can sometimes be a positive and essential change when long-term changes in care placements are planned.

**Table 5: Number of looked after children of statutory school age who have experienced one or more changes of school, during a period of being looked after which were not due to transitional arrangements as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016**

	Wales	Isle of Anglesey	Gwynedd	Conwy	Denbighshire	Flintshire	Wrexham	Powys	Ceredigion	Pembrokeshire	Carmarthenshire	Swansea	Neath Port Talbot	Bridgend	Vale of Glamorgan	Cardiff	Rhondda Cynon Taf	Merthyr Tydfil	Caerphilly	Blaenau Gwent	Torfaen	Monmouthshire	Newport
The number of children of compulsory school age looked after at 31 March who have experienced one or more changes of school, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31 March	433	12	23	5	19	19	13	18	5	7	6	44	23	35	16	34	53	15	11	21	14	15	25
The number of children of compulsory school age looked after at 31 March	3648	69	127	131	102	152	129	110	46	85	155	307	245	237	127	372	381	96	220	120	177	73	185
The percentage of children of compulsory school age looked after at 31 March who have experienced one or more changes of school, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31 March	12	17	18	4	19	12	10	16	11	8	4	14	9	15	13	9	14	16	5	18	8	21	14

4.7 National datasets detailed in Table 6 illustrate the outcomes of children who after looked after at key phases and stages in their primary and secondary education.

4.8 A total of 57% of children who were looked after in March 2015 achieved the Foundation Phase Indicator which was below the national average for Wales (64%). At Key Stage 2, 71% achieved expected outcomes which was 7% higher than the all Wales average of 64% and a 18% increase from the previous year. Only 32% achieved the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 3, which was also below the all Wales average of 48%. Key Stage 4 outcomes in 2015 included 68% achieving



Level 1 threshold (5 GCSEs A\*-G), 48% achieving Level 2 (5 GCSEs A\*-C) and 19% achieving Level 2+ threshold (5 GCSEs A\*-C, including English/Welsh and Mathematics). Performance in Level 2 threshold attainment represents a 9% increase from the previous year. Rhondda Cynon Taf's ranking for Key Stage 4 data was 8<sup>th</sup> for Level 1 threshold and 6<sup>th</sup> for Level 2. This is very positive profile.

**Table 6: Educational attainment of children looked after by local authority as at 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2015**

	Wales	Isle of Anglesey	Gwynedd	Conwy	Denbighshire	Flintshire	Wrexham	Powys	Ceredigion	Pembrokeshire	Carmarthenshire	Swansea	Neath Port Talbot	Bridgend	Vale of Glamorgan	Cardiff	Rhondda Cynon Taf	Merthyr Tydfil	Caerphilly	Blaenau Gwent	Torfaen	Monmouthshire	Newport
Percentage of children who achieved Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI)	64	*	80	*	75	*	77	*	*	*	*	69	48	60	*	65	57	82	*	*	59	*	60
Percentage of children who achieved Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2	64	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	62	75	65	64	*	56	71	55	36	*	71	*	90
Percentage of children who are looked after achieving Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 3	48	*	82	82	*	*	*	*	*	64	72	41	46	38	*	31	32	80	44	*	50	*	29
Percentage of Key Stage 4 children who achieved Level 1 threshold	71	*	*	64	*	*	70	75	*	*	67	73	62	82	*	75	68	57	41	*	69	*	71
Percentage of Key Stage 4 children who achieved Level 2 threshold	47	*	*	*	*	*	*	42	*	*	50	58	42	53	*	45	48	43	35	*	50	*	59
Percentage of Key Stage 4 children who achieved Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh and Maths	18	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	27	*	*	*	14	19	*	*	*	*	*	*

4.10 Table 7 details primary attendance data and suggests an encouraging rate of 97.31% for children and young people looked after by Rhondda Cynon Taf. This equates to a ranking of 5<sup>th</sup> within Wales.

**Table 7: School attendance of primary aged children looked after by local authority as at 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2016**

	Total number of sessions missed by looked after children in primary schools in the most recent school year whilst looked after	Total number of sessions looked after children in primary schools could have attended in the most recent school year whilst looked after	% of sessions missed by looked after children in primary schools in the most recent school year whilst looked after	% attendance by looked after children in primary schools in the most recent school year whilst looked after
<b>Wales</b>	19,223	540,423	3.56%	96.44%
Isle of Anglesey	270	10,285	2.63%	97.37%
Gwynedd	734	22,365	3.28%	96.72%
Conwy	843	17,259	4.88%	95.12%
Denbighshire	484	18,347	2.64%	97.36%
Flintshire	..	..	..	..
Wrexham	746	13,288	5.61%	94.39%
Powys	516	11,730	4.40%	95.60%
Ceredigion	269	7,663	3.51%	96.49%
Pembrokeshire	326	9,880	3.30%	96.70%
Carmarthenshire	929	24,747	3.75%	96.25%
Swansea	1,985	39,395	5.04%	94.96%
Neath Port Talbot	2,261	57,010	3.97%	96.03%
Bridgend	1,122	40,721	2.76%	97.24%
Vale of Glamorgan	1,127	19,939	5.65%	94.35%
Cardiff	1,390	42,402	3.28%	96.72%
<b>Rhondda Cynon Taf</b>	2,117	73,860	2.87%	97.13%
Merthyr Tydfil	580	18,102	3.20%	96.80%
Caerphilly	945	24,807	3.81%	96.19%
Blaenau Gwent	460	14,973	3.07%	96.93%
Torfaen	1,058	36,563	2.89%	97.11%
Monmouthshire	280	11,176	2.51%	97.49%
Newport	781	25,911	3.01%	96.99%

4.11 Rhondda Cynon Taf primary attendance rates for children who are looked after is 0.87% higher than the all Wales average.

4.12 The secondary school attendance rates detailed in Table 8 are similarly encouraging at 94.25%, which is 1.79% higher than the All Wales average. This equates to a very favourable national ranking of 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Table 8: School attendance of secondary aged children looked after by local authority as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016**

	Total number of sessions missed by looked after children in secondary schools in the most recent school year whilst looked after	Total number of sessions looked after children in secondary schools could have attended in the most recent school year whilst looked after	% of sessions missed by looked after children in secondary schools in the most recent school year whilst looked after	% attendance by looked after children in secondary schools in the most recent school year whilst looked after
<b>Wales</b>	<b>36,350</b>	<b>482,076</b>	<b>7.54%</b>	<b>92.46%</b>
Isle of Anglesey	535	8,010	6.68%	93.32%
Gwynedd	1,050	20,579	5.10%	94.90%
Conwy	2,094	27,264	7.68%	92.32%
Denbighshire	695	12,515	5.55%	94.45%
Flintshire	..	..	..	..
Wrexham	959	9,436	10.16%	89.84%
Powys	1,151	17,700	6.50%	93.50%
Ceredigion	499	8,763	5.69%	94.31%
Pembrokeshire	2,173	16,720	13.00%	87.00%
Carmarthenshire	1,366	28,034	4.87%	95.13%
Swansea	3,189	34,729	9.18%	90.82%
Neath Port Talbot	3,871	35,287	10.97%	89.03%
Bridgend	2,009	33,237	6.04%	93.96%
Vale of Glamorgan	1,406	23,474	5.99%	94.01%
Cardiff	2,943	36,084	8.16%	91.84%
<b>Rhondda Cynon Taf</b>	<b>2,317</b>	<b>40,285</b>	<b>5.75%</b>	<b>94.25%</b>
Merthyr Tydfil	609	13,213	4.61%	95.39%
Caerphilly	1,693	29,179	5.80%	94.20%
Blaenau Gwent	677	10,844	6.24%	93.76%
Torfaen	2,019	27,958	7.22%	92.78%
Monmouthshire	806	10,967	7.35%	92.65%
Newport	4,289	37,798	11.35%	88.65%

## 5. LOCAL DATA

5.1 Within Rhondda Cynon Taf, data for children who are looked after is routinely gathered, monitored and evaluated. There are a number of local performance indicators which are reported Corporately. Please note that local data relates to children and young people who are looked after and educated within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

5.2 Please note that data collated in key reporting periods relates to the previous academic year e.g. 2016/17 datasets relates to 2015/16 outcome data. Table 9 suggest that 60% of children who were looked after achieved expected outcomes in the Foundation Phase for 2016/17 reporting period. As this is a new local performance indicator there is currently no historical comparative data.

Performance within Key Stage 2 highlights that 66.7% achieved expected outcomes which is comparable to last year's performance. There has been a steady increase in the number of learners achieving Core Subject Indicators during Key Stage 3, with the exception of a slight dip in performance during the 2015/16 reporting period. An increase of 19.56% achieving expected Key Stage 3 outcomes in 2016/17 reporting period is evident.

**Table 9: Local Performance Indicators**

Performance measures	2012/13*	2013/14*	2014/15*	2015/16*	2016/17*
Percentage of children who are looked after who achieved Foundation Phase Indicator	New performance indicator				60
Percentage of children who are looked after who achieved Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2	40.74	55.56	55.17	66.7	66.7
Percentage of children who are looked after achieving Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 3	20.00	27.78	40.74	38.50	58.06
Percentage of children who are looked after achieving Level 1 Threshold	New performance indicator			35	Awaiting Data
Percentage of children who are looked after achieving Level 2 Threshold	New performance indicator				Awaiting Data
Percentage of children who are looked after local authority care and in any local authority maintained learning setting, who attain at the age of 16 during the school year and leave full time education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification	2.86	3.23	0	0	Awaiting Data

\* Please note data relates to previous academic year

5.3 With regards to Level 1 and Level 2 threshold data, no data was available at the time of reporting as the results are awaiting verification.

5.4 Table 9 suggests that despite a cohort of Key Stage 4 pupils with a range of complex needs, no young people who were looked after left full time education, training or work based learning without an approved external qualification in the 2015/16 reporting period (academic year 2014/15).

5.5 Table 10 highlights the range of specialist placements accessed by children who are looked after, both within and outside of the county. Of this cohort 82.33% (417 learners) were educated within a mainstream setting, both in and out of county. A total of 86 learners (17.17%) accessed more specialist placements due to severe and persistent special educational needs.

**Table 10: The number of statutory school aged RCT children who are looked after according to type of school placement as at 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

School Placement/ Type	RCT children who are looked after educated Out of County	RCT children who are looked after educated in RCT	Total
Mainstream	107	308	415
Learning Support Class/ Communication Disorders	0	3	3
Learning Support Class/Complex Learning Difficulties	2	7	9
Learning Support Class/Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD)	0	3	3
Awaiting placement	0	3	3
Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulty Placement (full time)	0	10	10
Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulty Placement (part time)	0	7	7
Special School	13	31	44
Education Otherwise Than In School/Tuition Service	0	7	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>501</b>

5.6 There are currently 74 pupils (14.77%) educated both within and out of county with a statement of special educational needs (Table 11), which is disproportionately high and highlights the complexity of need with this cohort. This data, coupled with the high number of learners also requiring school based intervention at either school action or school action plus, suggests that 61.08% of the cohort placed both in and out of county have SEN of some description. This is extremely high.

**Table 11: SEN of children who are looked after of statutory school age as at 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

Code of Practice	RCT children who are looked after educated out of county	RCT children who are looked after educated in RCT	Total	%
Early Years/School Action	27	89	116	23.15
Early Years/School Action Plus	18	81	99	19.76
Statement of Special Educational Needs	24	50	74	14.77
No Special Educational Needs	51	144	195	38.92
Undergoing Statutory Assessment	3	14	17	3.39
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>501</b>	

5.7 Table 12 highlights an increase in the number of PEPs completed within 20 days. This is encouraging and suggests that recent training and revised processes have been effective.

**Table 12: The percentage of children who are looked after with an up to date PEP within 20 school days of entering care or joining a new school in the year**

Academic Years	Actual
2011/12	70.89
2012/13	72.08
2013/14	63.30
2014/15	57.95
2015/16	73.10

5.8 The attendance achieved for children who are looked after within Rhondda Cynon Taf are detailed in Table 13. The data for children and young people who are looked after was better than the general attendance of the wider local population (by 0.77%). The contrary was the case at secondary level, with children looked after generally attending marginally less frequently (by 0.40%) than the wider population. Clearly this is an area for potential further development in future.

**Table 13: Primary and secondary school attendance for children who are looked after 2015/ 2016**

School	Total percentage of attendance children who are looked after	Total percentage of attendance all RCT pupils (exc special schools)	RCT attendance target (exc special schools)
Primary	95.4	94.63	95.3
Secondary	93.6	94	94.2

5.9 Exclusion rates show improved trends for children who are looked after. The rate of children and young people being excluded per 1000 pupils has decreased from 76.40 in 2011/12 to 39.26 in 2015/16. This represents significant improvement.

**Table 14: The percentage of children who are looked after pupils being excluded per 1000 pupils**

Academic Year	Male	Female	Total	Excluded cohort	Days Lost	per 1000 pupils
2011/12	59	19	78	1021		76.40
2012/13	61	13	74	940		78.72
2013/14			52	840		61.90
2014/15	15	26	41	895	256	45.81
2015/16	10	22	32	815	220	39.26

## **6. CONCLUSION**

6.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf has a significant looked after population. It is evident from the data provided that the risk factors which can adversely impact on educational outcomes remains prevalent and can be a significant and long term barrier to achievement. Nevertheless, through effective early intervention these risks can be minimised but cannot be entirely eradicated.

6.2 The outcome data for this group of highly vulnerable learners suggests that whilst there is evidence of progress in very many areas there is still scope for further improvement. However, all data sets have to be viewed within the context of the high levels of SEN evident within this cohort of learners. The data for children who are looked after children will continue to be robustly scrutinised and evaluated in order to inform key areas for further strategic development and improvement

## Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

## LAC Action Plan

<b>Recommendation 1:</b> Review the current Pupil Education Plan system and place focus on identifying barriers to the timely completion of PEPs				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. An analysis of 2014/15 (academic year PEP data to be undertaken and interrogated to identify the barriers to timely completion.	December 2015	Head of Educational Psychology/PEP Co-ordinator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis undertaken which identified areas to address. This led to a revised internal process with PEP officer visiting schools to support the completion of documentation in a timely manner to improve PI data.</li> <li>Further review of process is now needed following the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 and new guidelines on PEP/Care Plan</li> <li>Training has been provided to schools highlighting the importance of the PEP process</li> </ul>	Complete
2. Joint Education/Children's Service action plan to be devised to address the identified barriers and to improve awareness of the importance of PEPs	March 2016	Head of Educational Psychology/PEP Co-ordinator.		On going
				Complete



<b>Recommendation 2:</b> Develop a training programme for Designated Teachers for LAC, education staff and foster carers on the needs of LAC				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. Training and support for Designated LAC Teachers to be provided to improve skills, knowledge and understanding about LAC and to promote the sharing of good practice.	April 2016	LAC Co-ordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PEP training for designated teachers has been provided/attachment training provided</li> <li>• Workshop/forum planned for Autumn Term 2016 for designated LAC teachers to share good practice</li> <li>• Central South Consortium forums established</li> <li>• LAC Education Team has provided advice on an individual consultation basis to schools and foster carers in order to support pupil progress</li> <li>• Solihill training continues to be provided to foster carers by LAC EPS and Foster Support Team. Evaluations of the training has been very positive</li> <li>• LAC Education Team offer Governor training on a termly basis</li> </ul>	Complete and On going
2. Delivery of training for foster carers with a focus on increasing confidence and competence in supporting the education of RCT LAC pupils.	March 2016	Educational Psychologist for LAC (Senior Practitioner)		
3. Training for governors to be developed on the roles and responsibilities of governing bodies in relation to children and young people who are looked after.	June 2016	LAC Co-ordinator		

<b>Recommendation 3:</b> Develop a network for Designated Teachers for LAC				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. Network for Designated Teachers for children and young people who are looked after to be established	March 2016	LAC Co-ordinator, Educational Psychologist for LAC (Senior Practitioner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 planned forums (1 each term) with identified areas of discussion</li> <li>PCP training and launch of CLA resource pack and CLA consultation feedback planned</li> </ul>	<p>Completed</p> <p>On going</p>

<b>Recommendation 4:</b> Improve collation and interrogation of data to track and monitor outcomes of LAC (education)				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. Educational datasets in relation to children and young people who are looked after to be revised.	November 2015	Acting Head of Access and Inclusion/LAC Co-ordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local datasets have been expanded to include Foundation Phase, Level 1 and Level 2 results</li> <li>Agreed PIs are reported to Scrutiny on an annual basis</li> </ul>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Data will be reported in quarter 3 report</p>
2. Local PIs to be revised to ensure that agreed datasets are collated and monitored	February 2016	Access and Inclusion Co-ordinator		

<b>Recommendation 5:</b> Clear processes are put in place to enable schools to access grant funding for LAC once the submitted plan to CSC is approved				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. Costed plan to administer the Pupil Deprivation Plan for LAC is implemented	April 2016	LAC Co-ordinator / Head of Educational Psychology	Costed plan was developed and adhered to	Complete

<b>Recommendation 6:</b> Consideration is given to streamlining the data sets collated across agencies and submitting a joint report to Scrutiny on the outcomes for LAC				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALES</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. Datasets to be agreed across Education Children's Services and local PI adapted to reflect these	December 2016	Service Director of Children's Services/Acting Service Director for Access, Engagement and Inclusion	Dataset have been agreed across both service areas. Local PI datasets have been reviewed in line with discussions and the requirements within the new Social service and Wellbeing Act 2014	Complete
2. Joint report to be submitted to the C&YP Scrutiny Committee	April 2016	Service Director of Children's Services/Acting Service Director for Access, Engagement and Inclusion	Report to be presented to Scrutiny December 2016	Complete

<b>Recommendation 7:</b> The service aims for year on year reduction in LAC figures with Specific targets being set				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALES</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. Children's Services will produce a LAC Reduction Strategy as part of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014.	March 2016	Service Director of Children's Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The LAC Reduction Strategy production is monitored through the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board. The reduction in LAC will continue to be monitored through the authorities Performance Group, the Children's Services</li> </ul>	Complete

			Transformational Group and LAC Action Plan Group	
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<b>Recommendation 8:</b> Scrutiny monitors the impact of the new Regional Adoption Service				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALES</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. Reports will be provided to Scrutiny as part of their work programme	On going	Scrutiny Support Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First report to be tabled on the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2015</li> </ul>	Complete

<b>Recommendation 10:</b> Children's commissioning Consortium is supported in its aim to attract more specialist placements to Wales				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALES</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
See above			See above	Completed

<b>Recommendation 9:</b> Children's Commissioning Consortium produces annual reports for Corporate Parenting Board.				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALES</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. Reports to be provided to Corporate Parenting Board annually		Service Director Children's Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The production of the report will be included within the Corporate Parenting Board's work programme</li> </ul>	Complete on work programme

<b>Recommendation 11:</b> Scrutiny monitors the measures to maximise the occupancy levels of both in house residential and foster care placements				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALES</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. To produce an action plan that set out how the skills of Foster Carers are to be developed to care for children and young people with challenging behaviour	March 2016	Service Director, Children's Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work has already started on a draft plan of action. The progress and implementation dates are being monitored by LAC Action group.</li> </ul>	Plan developed and work on going via Confidence in Care training for teenagers and Solihill Programme
<b>Recommendation 12:</b> Children's Services consider improving supports to current foster carers, drawing on the skills of others within the service, Miskin, residential care staff.				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALES</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. To produce an action plan that set out how the skills of Foster Carers are to be developed to care for children and young people with challenging behaviour	March 2016	Service Director, Children's Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work has already started on a draft plan of action. The progress and implementation dates are being monitored by LAC Action group.</li> </ul>	Plan developed and work on going via Confidence in Care training for teenagers and Solihill Programme

<b>Recommendation 13:</b> Children's Services develop specific foster carers with the skills and training to manage children with more acute behavioural problems.				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALES</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. 1. This is a priority within for the LAC Action Plan Group and a plan is being developed to ensure that the skills of Foster Carers are being developed and that support from Miskin and residential staff		Service Director, Children's Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The LAC Action Group will monitor the progress of the plan to enhance foster carers skills and develop more appropriate in house placements for children and young people</li> </ul>	Plan developed and work on going via Confidence in Care training for teenagers and Solihill Programme

<b>Recommendation 14:</b> Executive through the Local Service Board Supports the Progression of the development of the Community Intensive Therapy Team.				
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TIMESCALES</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE LEAD</b>	<b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1. Invite to be issued in 2016 as part of the Scrutiny work programme		Scrutiny Support Officer		