

National Behaviour and Attendance Review (NBAR) Report

An Independent Review conducted on behalf
of the Welsh Assembly Government, chaired by
Professor Ken Reid
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Swansea Metropolitan University



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2006, the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills made a commitment to undertake a National Review of Behaviour and Attendance (NBAR) to support existing activity and to shape and develop the future approach to these challenging issues.

The Steering Group was formed to take forward the Review, to establish a true picture of the situation in Wales, to consider good practice in tackling attendance and behaviour issues and to produce clear recommendations to the Welsh Assembly Government. The Steering Group was comprised of representatives of key stakeholder groups across Wales, supported by colleagues from Estyn and the Office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

The Review was undertaken in accordance with the Welsh Assembly Government's vision for the future development of policy and provision for children and young people in Wales as set out in *The Learning Country: Vision into Action*. At the same time, the Review Team were conscious of the ever-changing societal demography within Wales; not least the disproportionate number of pupils from low income families when compared with much of the rest of the UK and the growth of a multi-ethnic culture and the rise in single parent families.

Specifically, the Review Group were given four specific tasks by the Minister. These were:

- 1 To explore ways in which parents, children and young people and the community as a whole can be more effectively supported and engaged in the promotion of positive behaviour and attendance in school.
- 2 To identify effective practice in promoting positive behaviour and attendance and ways in which this practice could be embedded and disseminated in schools and local authorities across Wales.
- 3 To identify the effective use of multi-agency partnerships in tackling issues of poor attendance and behaviour in schools in Wales, including consideration of regional models.
- 4 To identify potential new legislation, in the form of National Assembly for Wales Measures for which legislative competence orders should be sought under the Government of Wales Act 2006 that would assist in promoting positive behaviour and improving school attendance, including specific consideration of the provision of education for excluded pupils.

In September 2008, our Interim Report was produced which focused upon the ideas and evidence generated during the first six months of the Review. The Interim Report was, to a large extent, generated from the ideas of four working groups established during the first stage of the Review. These groups of invited and nominated professionals and stakeholders (including colleagues from the voluntary sector) met at venues throughout and across

Wales. The first group considered issues affecting the behaviour and attendance of all children and young people in school. The second group focused on children and young people who cause low-level disruption. The third group considered children and young people at risk of exclusion. The final group concentrated on children who were being educated outside school settings because they had histories of disruptive behaviour, non-attendance or both.

Between July 2007 and March 2008, the evidence for stage two of our work was collected and analysed from a wide variety of sources. These included:

- (a) Convening two focus groups on school attendance; the first to examine the use of school attendance codes in Wales, the second to consider a wide range of attendance issues including the National Review of the Education Welfare Service in Wales, the prosecution of attendance cases and the use of truancy sweeps.
- (b) Convening a special two-day seminar with senior education officials from England, Scotland and Northern Ireland in September 2007.
- (c) Commissioning a literature review of attendance and behaviour which analysed reports and guidance issued by government and government agencies throughout the British Isles.
- (d) Receiving presentations and holding discussions with key Welsh Assembly Government officials on such issues as the Children and Young People's Partnership Framework for Local Authorities, Learning Pathways for 14-19 year-olds, the Pedagogy Initiative and approaches to reduce the number of children and young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), amongst several others.
- (e) Establishing five key sub-groups looking at behaviour including exclusion and unofficial exclusion, out-of-school provision and the alternative curriculum; school attendance; parents; training and development; and participation including multi-agency collaboration.
- (f) Convening specialist practitioner working groups in North and South Wales to consider: the challenges facing the teaching profession on behaviour and attendance; the role of professional training and development; the use of physical intervention; violence in schools; and finally, the future role of the Welsh Assembly Government and from local authorities in providing support.
- (g) Gathering evidence on the views and opinions of children and young people about school behaviour and attendance. This evidence was gathered from selected primary-aged pupils and those either in out-of-school units, or from certain specific categories (eg traveller children) throughout Wales by Cazbah, an organisation contracted to undertake the research on behalf of the Review Group.
- (h) Sending out a questionnaire using the Children in Wales database, to 536 individuals, statutory agencies, private and voluntary bodies on parenting.

- (i) Collecting specific evidence on a range of core issues. These included: meeting the needs of pupils who have additional learning needs (ALN), looked after pupils, the curriculum, the role of pupil referral units (PRUs), emotional health, school councils, the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales, multi-agency working, School Crime Beat, the learning coaches initiative, personal and social education, early intervention, transition arrangements, and rights-based approaches to improving behaviour.
- (j) Commissioning a rapid evidence review conducted by the People and Work Unit on effective interventions for improving school attendance and behaviour.

The Review Group acknowledges that the majority of schools in Wales are orderly and well-managed. There is widespread good practice in managing pupils' behaviour and attendance in most schools and local authorities with a large number of innovative initiatives in place. Despite this, managing behaviour and attendance, both in and out-of-school, are becoming increasingly complex issues which require prioritisation by the Welsh Assembly Government. As a result of all this evidence and our deliberations, the findings suggest that there are eleven particular issues that warrant much greater consideration by the Welsh Assembly Government.

First, the position on behaviour and attendance is not helped by the significant numbers of pupils at primary or secondary school whose literacy and numeracy levels are well below the average attainment targets for their chronological age. All the evidence suggests that more pupils with low levels of literacy or numeracy have a greater tendency to develop into pupils who develop behavioural and/or attendance problems during either the primary or secondary phase. Earlier identification and support for pupils with literacy and/or numeracy difficulties at the primary phase might help to prevent some pupils from becoming non-attenders or developing behavioural problems. Such a policy would eventually help to raise standards. The Welsh Assembly Government may wish to consider further whether these earlier curricular interventions should be achieved through group or one-to-one approaches and how these should be funded and best organised.

Second, it is evident that large numbers of existing professionals have received little or no training for their roles in managing attendance or behaviour. This includes senior staff in schools, middle managers, classroom teachers and classroom assistants, education social workers, education welfare officers, learning school mentors, as well as members of the voluntary sector, health, social services and other local authority staff most notably, many parents and/or carers who may need extra support in managing their children's behaviour.

Third, it has become equally clear that whilst there has been adequate guidance on managing exclusions from the Welsh Assembly Government, in practice, the implementation processes have varied considerably from authority to authority. Significant school variations in the policy and practice of managing actual and potential exclusions also exist. It is also apparent that a number of unofficial exclusions are taking place entirely contrary to Welsh

Assembly guidelines. Some of these involve ‘unofficial’ arrangements being in place condoned by schools, local authorities and sometimes, parents alike. We agree with the findings of the Children’s Commissioner for Wales Office that the practice of unofficial exclusions may be more widespread than hitherto has been appreciated. There are related issues too, over the issue of managed moves or managed transfers which also need some further exploration given the differential practice which exists.

Fourth, and in addition, it has become clear to the Review Group that there are a number of pupils who are out-of-school for a variety of reasons, whose educational provision is not being properly monitored and who are not receiving an appropriate education. It is for these reasons that we suggest some key changes to existing school exclusion guidance and legislation which should be considered by the Welsh Assembly Government in order to tighten up and improve existing practice. It is particularly important that the learning needs of excluded pupils continue to be met. We also consider that local authorities should be required to make 25 hours of appropriate or equivalent learning (at key stage 4) available within 10 days of the permanent exclusion taking place. We also urge the Welsh Assembly Government to introduce guidance to local authorities on convening and managing a meeting of all key professionals and agencies involved in the excluded pupil’s life within the same ten day period.

Fifth, although some excellent alternative curriculum and out-of-school provision exists, this too, tends to vary from authority to authority. In some parts of Wales, there are presently too few, if any, places available. This is one of the difficulties involved in dealing with 22 different-sized local authorities in Wales. This is why we recommend that all local authorities in Wales should establish a behavioural support section and/or collaborate with neighbouring local authorities’ behavioural support teams in seeking solutions to help those pupils with specific behavioural difficulties. We see this as an important part of the Welsh Assembly Government’s School Effectiveness Framework. Equally, all local authorities in Wales should designate an officer responsible for inclusion who should not only be appropriately experienced but also become the central point of contact for all exclusion enquiries and practice.

Sixth, our evidence suggests that pupils’ and young people’s opinions and views could be utilised to greater effect in helping our understanding of behaviour and attendance. Increasing numbers of children and young people could also be much better involved in influencing their learning environment. The role and better involvement of parents and/or carers has also considerable potential. It is clear that the vast majority of parents wish their children to behave and attend school regularly. Some parents however, lack the necessary skills to ensure that this happens.

Seventh, we also consider that better inter-agency and multi-agency co-operation would be significantly beneficial to improving standards within Wales, although evidence of existing good practice in this field is limited.

Eighth, we are conscious of the changing nature of behaviour and attendance over time. For example, we have noticed that girls are now as likely as boys to manifest both poor behaviour and non-attendance traits. We are concerned at the perceived rise in the numbers of pupils with social and emotional needs and

other additional support needs as well as the large number of pupils with special or additional learning needs. As a nation, Wales also has higher numbers of pupils from deprived and low socio-economic backgrounds by comparison with many other parts of the UK. Whilst schools, teachers, local authorities and the Welsh Assembly Government are doing much good work to improve school attendance, unauthorised absence is proving a stubbornly difficult phenomenon to reduce. Equally, we are mindful of the variations in practice and in rates of attendance and exclusion between schools and local authorities, even those located in similar socio-economic areas (see Tables 1-11 in main Report).

Ninth, the Review Group is concerned about the number of children whose histories of poor behaviour and non-attendance start before Key Stage 3 at primary school. It is becoming all too obvious that many interventions with pupils who exhibit behaviour and/or attendance problems occur much too late, often after a situation has reached the persistent or crisis stage. Much earlier intervention is therefore, required as envisaged in the Welsh Assembly Government's Rights to Action (2004) agenda, the Flying Start Initiative and the Foundation Phase Curriculum. At present, many resources are invested at the post-14 years' stage. More thought needs to be given to applying some of these scant resources to the earlier preventative stage in the hope of stopping non-attendance and poor behaviour from reaching the persistent phase.

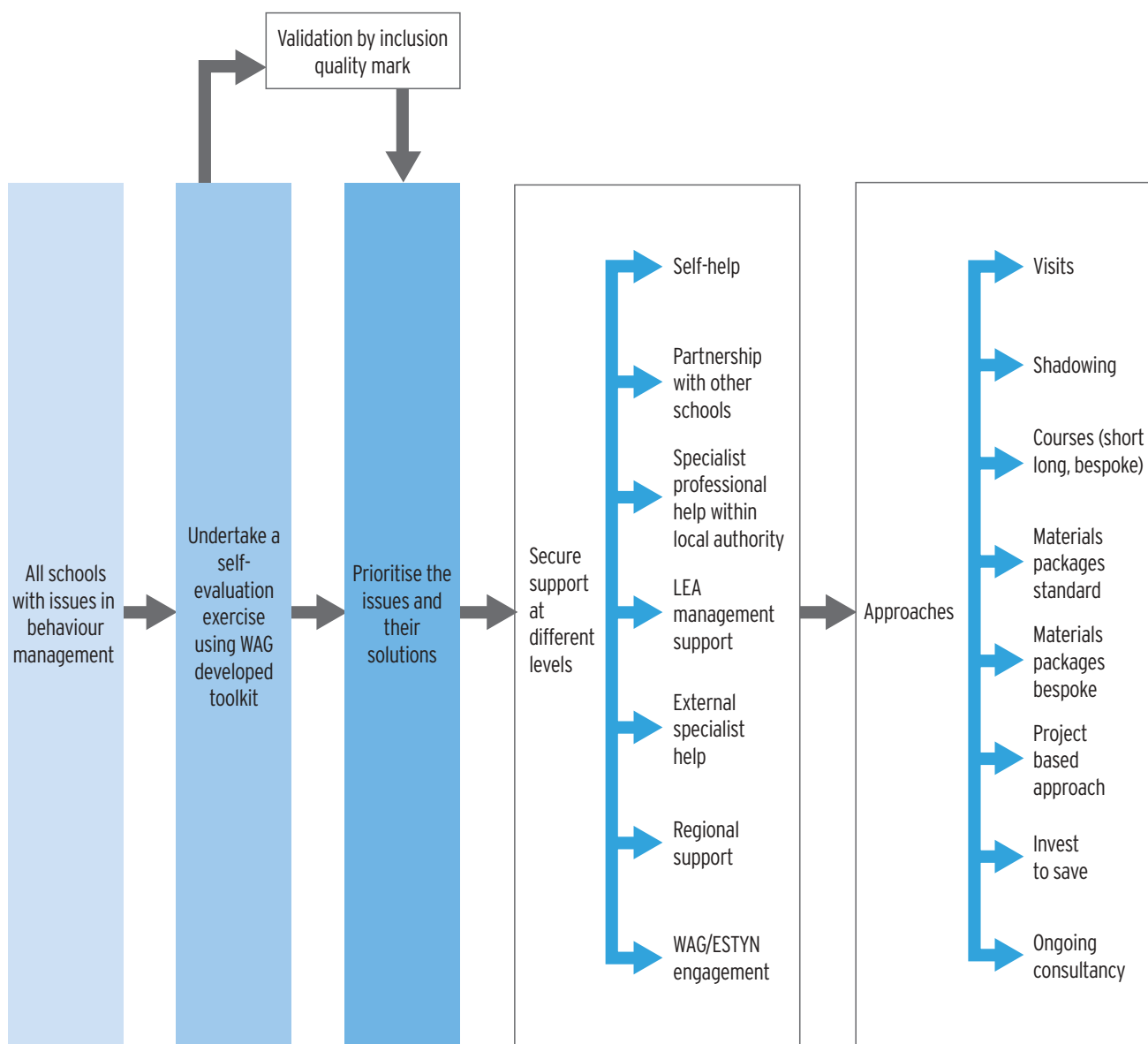
Tenth, we consider that all secondary schools in Wales should have a named senior manager designated as lead professional to deal with behaviour, attendance and participation with children, parents, carers and the local authority. This professional should be given sufficient dedicated time in order to fulfil this role.

Eleventh and finally, following deliberations on the content and recommendations in this Report, we believe the Welsh Assembly Government should develop an Action Plan on an immediate, short-term and long-term basis in order to re-shape overarching policies and guidance on behaviour and attendance throughout Wales and to implement the recommendations in this Report.

This Report is a major comprehensive overview. It has drawn together opinions from stakeholders at every level. The agenda for improvement is huge. The focus for improvement is schools, their staff, pupils and parents. Within this complex picture, schools need to be able to self-evaluate, reflect and prioritise their areas for improvement.

Through our Review we learnt to appreciate that this will be different in each school. However, a common process as outlined in Figure 1 will provide schools with the opportunity to utilise a range of resources, materials, skills and initiatives developed by the Welsh Assembly in response to this Review.

Figure 1: A National Strategy for all Schools Facing Issues in Managing Behaviour



As a result of our deliberations, the Review Group has made a significant number of core recommendations for the Welsh Assembly Government to consider. These are presented below. The full list of full supporting recommendations can be found in the main body of the Report.

Core Recommendations

- 1 The Welsh Assembly Government should, through implementing the revised curriculum and assessment arrangements from September 2008 in schools in Wales, provide a clear lead that no child (within the mainstream ability range) should leave primary school without the functional ability to read and write.
- 2 The Welsh Assembly Government should prioritise early intervention strategies on work with attendance-related and behavioural-related problems amongst children and young people.

- 3** The Welsh Assembly Government should promote an understanding across Wales that violence against staff will not be tolerated.
- 4** The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that all schools and local authorities rigorously adhere to Circular 1/2004 on 'Exclusion from Schools and Pupil Referral Units' with particular regard to tackling unofficial (illegal) exclusions.
- 5** The Welsh Assembly Government should introduce legislation on new exclusion regulations in Wales.
 - (a) For fixed-term exclusions of under 10 days.

Schools should be required to immediately provide the fixed-term excluded pupil with a learning programme, which maintains curriculum continuity for the individual.
 - (b) For fixed-term exclusions of more than 10 days:
 - In order to maintain curriculum continuity schools should be required to provide adequate learning, undertake marking and provide feedback on work completed.
 - Schools should have a duty to convene a meeting within 10 days in order to determine the young person's needs, to plan to meet them and to act together in an inter-agency approach to attempt to prevent permanent exclusion.
 - (c) For permanent exclusions

Local authorities should be required to make 25 hours of appropriate or equivalent learning available (at KS4) to commence within 10 school days of the permanent exclusion and to convene a meeting of all key professionals and agencies involved in the pupil's life within the ten day period.
- 6** The Welsh Assembly Government should consider:
 - Giving parents and pupils the opportunity to access an advocacy support service similar to that provided to those with SEN in the event of permanent exclusion or where there is a threat of permanent exclusion.
 - Putting into place an additional national point of appeal following the independent appeal panel. The national panel will be overseen by the Welsh Assembly Government and this should include headteacher representatives to test whether this brings greater objectivity in a more neutral setting.
- 7** The Welsh Assembly Government should introduce guidance on the use of managed moves and transfers as an alternative to exclusion. This protocol should include guidance on:
 - (a) the removal of pupils from school sites
 - (b) pupils' rights
 - (c) promoting positive behaviour and early intervention
 - (d) the role of the headteacher
 - (e) re-inclusion following the move
 - (f) funding arrangements for managed moves
 - (g) the wishes of the young person and those of parents.

- 8** The Welsh Assembly Government should actively follow-up schools who are excluding pupils at a rate which is significantly higher than average. This situation should also be closely monitored by individual local authorities.
- 9** All local authorities in Wales should establish a behavioural support team and/or collaborate with neighbouring local authorities' behavioural support teams.
- 10** The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that school attendance and behavioural strategies are at the centre of its school effectiveness framework especially at the school level.
- 11** The Welsh Assembly Government should commission studies which examine:
 - The extent and number of pupils who are out-of-school and not enrolled on any school roll throughout Wales (including those that are in PRUs, home tutored and home educated).
 - The link between low levels of numeracy and literacy and unidentified additional learning needs with low attendance and behavioural problems in primary and secondary schools and the link between additional educational needs and poor behaviour, the number of exclusions, incidences of bullying and pupils' non-attendance.
 - The consequences of transition with the perceived increase in school exclusions, poor behaviour and non-attendance.
 - How PRUs are funded, the purpose of PRUs and their strategies for the management of pupils, securing their attendance and changing their behaviour and how they enable pupils to achieve and reach their full potential.
- 12** All local authorities in Wales should designate an officer responsible for inclusion who should be appropriately experienced. Some authorities may wish to collaborate with neighbouring local authorities on this matter. The inclusion officer would be the central point of contact for tracking all exclusion queries and practice. This post should be at a senior level in order to drive multi-agency approaches and to be able to liaise with parents, headteachers, governors and other involved parties.
- 13** The Welsh Assembly Government should clarify and strengthen its guidance for schools on physical intervention and the use of restraint.
- 14** All secondary schools in Wales should have a named senior manager designated as lead professional to deal with behaviour, attendance and participation with parents and carers. In terms of participation, this manager should play a key role in induction meetings, parents' evenings and other after-school and out-of-school events and be given sufficient dedicated time to conduct these functions.
- 15** The Welsh Assembly Government should prioritise and increase funding significantly for training programmes on behaviour and attendance not only for school-based staff but for all those professionals and local

authority staff engaged in promoting positive behaviour and improving attendance, more especially the education welfare/education social work staff.

- 16** The Welsh Assembly Government should develop an Action Plan which will implement and monitor the recommendations in this Report and to draft overarching policies on behaviour and attendance throughout Wales on:
 - an immediate
 - a short-term
 - a long-term basis.
- 17** The action plan agenda should include further engagement with children and young people on behaviour and attendance to encourage and continue the dialogue started through the NBAR process.
- 18** The Local Children's Safeguarding Board in each local authority should have a standing item on school behaviour and attendance.
- 19** Children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, those at risk of exclusion and those permanently excluded from school are amongst our most vulnerable children in Wales. Therefore, the level of staffing in the Support for Learning field within the Welsh Assembly Government should be significantly increased to provide a robust service and to recognise that additional learning needs straddles all fields of the Assembly's and DCELLS' work.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In March 2006, the Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills made a commitment to undertake a national review of behaviour and attendance to support existing activity and to shape and develop the future approach to these challenging issues.

The Steering Group was formed to take forward the Review, to establish a true picture of the situation in Wales and to produce clear recommendations for the Welsh Assembly Government.

Our Group is made up of representatives from key stakeholder organisations across Wales, supported by colleagues from Estyn (in an observer capacity) and the Children's Commissioner for Wales. A list of Group members is attached in **Annex A**.

We believe that the Review is vital in order to respond to an ever-changing society and to investigate further, the need to adopt different and alternative approaches for promoting good behaviour and tackling poor behaviour. The persistently low levels of attendance in Wales compared with other developed countries are also of prime concern to the Welsh Assembly Government and we wish to explore how we might make headway in this challenging area.

This Review is undertaken in accordance with the Welsh Assembly Government's vision as set out in *The Learning Country: Vision into Action, Narrowing the Gap, Rights to Action* and *One Wales*. Members of the Review Group recognised that parts of Wales are among some of the most disadvantaged communities in Europe.

The recommendations made at the end of this Report are the result of group consensus. Clearly, some of our Group would have liked to have developed some of the issues further but to retain the whole group's agreement, have accepted the consensus position.

The Group was also mindful of the extent of change that is taking place within schools in Wales at the present time and in the foreseeable future. Therefore through publishing this Report and offering recommendations, the Group has attempted to assist the profession and not to add to its burden. If less change had been taking place, the Group would have made more radical suggestions which, it believes, in the long-term, may well be necessary.

The specific evidence that was gathered for the National Behaviour and Attendance Review (NBAR) Report will be placed on our website **www.nbarwales.co.uk** by the end of July 2008. A list of key Welsh Assembly Government documents referred to in the text is presented in Annex B. The references can be found in Annex C.

1.1 Our Remit

Our Group was tasked with key actions to:

- Explore ways in which parents, children and young people and the community as a whole can be more effectively supported and engaged in the promotion of positive behaviour and attendance at school.
- Identify effective practice in promoting positive behaviour and attendance and ways in which this practice could be disseminated and embedded in schools and local authorities across Wales.
- Identify effective use of multi-agency partnerships in tackling issues of poor attendance and behaviour, including consideration of regional models.
- Identify potential new legislation, in the form of National Assembly Wales Measures for which competence orders should be sought under the Government of Wales Act 2006 that would assist in promoting positive behaviour and improving school attendance, including specific consideration for the provision of education for excluded pupils.

1.2 Our Principles

Our areas of focus were guided by the results of a consultation with key stakeholders including teachers, parents, children and young people, voluntary organisations, and representatives from local authorities, who had suggested the following principles to guide us in our work:

- Be realistic - don't just focus on targets and statistics.
- Examine behaviour and attendance issues within the context of other needs.
- Be consistent in approaches with pupils and their parents.
- To promulgate for much earlier intervention using the spirit of the Children Act 2004.

1.3 Our Values

In working together, we found that there was a need to clarify and set out the values we shared. These values have been tested and refined and have influenced our thinking and reporting. These are our shared values:

Safeguarding and protecting the child through considered management of behaviour and attendance is paramount.

All children have a right to full-time education, meeting their social, emotional and educational needs.

Social inclusion should be at the centre of provision with children, young people, parents and carers fully involved.

Behaviour and attendance is everyone's business.

Child-centred positive outcomes should be the paramount consideration in any activity.

Evidence-based interventions with the highest research quality and rigour should be considered first for funding.

Ideally, interventions should be preventative-focused and made as soon as possible rather than being curative whilst, at the same time, recognising the need for major interventions with deeply troubled pupils.

Intervention should have a positive cost benefit analysis.

There should be equality of opportunity for all children and young people.

Everyone's rights must be respected.

1.4 Our Context

In taking the Review forward, we are highly aware of the need to ensure that any recommendations and approaches are consistent with and build upon Welsh Assembly Government initiatives. In particular, the Review aims to support the implementation of inclusive education practices as set out in the Assembly for Wales Guidance Circular: 47-2006 *Inclusion and Pupil Support*. The guidance sets out that:

“Inclusive education is an ongoing process concerned with ensuring equality of educational opportunity by accounting for and addressing the diversity present in schools. It requires the commitment of schools and LEAs to develop policies and practices that ensure equality of educational opportunity and access; safeguard vulnerable pupils; and focus on raising the achievement of all learners and increasing their participation in their schools and local communities.”

A key concept within the Guidance is that of ‘additional learning needs’ which is defined as follows:

“The term ‘additional learning needs’ includes those learners who require additional support either due to their circumstances or because they have a longer-term disorder or condition. In many cases, for example through sickness or where a family is experiencing temporary difficulties, children and young people may have additional learning needs for a short period only.”

Other key Welsh Assembly Government policies identified to date (which are by no means exhaustive) are as follows:

- participation of children and young people as set out in *Children and Young People: Rights to Action, Stronger Partnerships for Outcomes* and the *Guidance on Local Co-operation* under the Children Act 2004
- the development of children and young people's plans under the Children Act 2004 as part of collaborative local and regional practices as set out in *Making Connections*

- Flying Start
- the Foundation Phase curriculum for 3-7 year olds
- the review of special educational needs
- improvements in the collection of information on children educated outside schools
- the Pedagogy Initiative
- the Parenting Action Plan
- specific approaches being developed for specific groups of pupils with additional learning needs (for example looked after children, pupils with English as an additional language and young offenders)
- anti-bullying approaches
- plans for primary to secondary school transition
- the development of community-focused schools
- Learning Pathways 14-19 (including the learning coaches initiative)
- the review of the National Curriculum for 2008, particularly Personal and Social Education
- the School Effectiveness Framework
- the NEET Strategy
- RAISE.

We are also highly aware of the need to ensure that the following overarching considerations inform all our work:

- human rights
- children's rights as expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- the ten entitlements for 11-25 year-olds set out in *Extending Entitlement*
- safeguarding children and young people
- a recognition that Wales is a bilingual country.

The seven core aims of the Welsh Assembly's vision for children and young people in Children and Young People: Rights to Action based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The vision states that all children and young people should:

- have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities
- enjoy the best possible health and be free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation
- have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities
- be listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised
- have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional well-being
- not be disadvantaged by poverty.

The remainder of the Report is written with these aims in mind. We also attempt to relate the relevance of our own work to the new and developing strategies which are in the process of being implemented by the Welsh Assembly Government.

1.5 Our Final Report

Our Final Report is the result of the endeavour and evidence collected between September 2006 and March 2008. During this period, we have involved a variety of key stakeholders in evidence gathering field work. These included parents, teachers, voluntary agencies and a range of other professionals including staff from local authorities who work with children and young people.

The Final Report represents the Group's synthesis of the ideas generated from the evidence and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all those children, parents, teachers and professionals for participating and sharing their views with us. One of the highlights of this Review was the openness and enthusiasm that was demonstrated by all participants in the Wales-wide consultation and data-gathering phase. A full list of those who took part will be placed on our website **www.nbarwales.co.uk** by the end of July 2008, together with additional evidence data.

2.0 CONTEXTUAL ISSUES

2.1 General Matters

The brief for the work of the Review Group was set out in section 1 of this Report. However, the Group raised a range of concerns that warranted consideration when undertaking its work. Some of these issues repeatedly recurred during our consultative and evidence gathering exercises. We are setting out some of these issues here in order for readers to understand that we have undertaken our analysis and made our recommendations in the context of the real world and everyday situations in which professionals find themselves:

Schools are busy, industrious settings and many schools are challenged by the implementation of new ideas and can suffer from 'initiative overload'.

The Group is mindful that any proposals it makes must ensure that they add value to the work of schools and do not cause unnecessary burden.

The problem of resources

The disparity in the level of funding and resources made by different local authorities is an issue. The Group acknowledged how problematic this becomes in terms of ensuring children and young people's entitlement to resources.

Schools and local authorities are faced with increased workloads in completing the process of bidding for short-term grants to fund activities to improve attendance and behaviour.

The Group recognised that bidding for short-term initiatives, for one, two or even three years requires substantial investment of time and energy by those framing their bids. On occasions, the funding available is so small that the investment in making the bid becomes a marginal activity.

The bid → grant → implement → evaluate → close cycles are far too brief to be able to develop sound evidence-based practice for securing good attendance and positive behaviour.

The Group appreciated that there are a considerable number of short-term initiatives, within and beyond Wales that have an 'effect' or 'impact.' All too often, these initiatives have only limited outcomes due to short funding duration.

The effects of the quality of the environment in which some pupils receive their education.

The Group acknowledged that it is far more difficult to secure good attendance, positive behaviour and to promote respect and regards for one another in an environment that is drab and demeaning. The quality of some mainstream school settings and alternative curriculum provision remains a significant concern. The Group is aware that considerable variation exists between schools in terms of their disabled access facilities, out-of-school-hours provision and capacity to meet their disability equality duties.

The importance of regular attendance and good behaviour.

Most children attend school regularly, behave well in school and achieve in education. Some children do however, for a whole range of reasons require additional or specific support. Our own research for NBAR conducted by Cazbah (see section 4.4) clearly indicates that most children have a good understanding and perception of the issues related to attendance and behaviour and have some good ideas to contribute to the search for realistic solutions.

The growing importance of literacy and numeracy.

The Group were mindful of considerable research evidence dating as far back as the influential National Children's Bureau Longitudinal Studies (eg Davie et al, 1972; West and Farrington, 1973; West, 1982; Fogelman, 1976) which found that pupils who were two or more years behind their peers in terms of their literacy and numeracy scores at the age of seven, fell increasingly further behind by the ages of 11, 14 and 16. These pupils were more likely to become truants, misbehave and lead 'problem' lives as adults. As an example, these early studies were recently endorsed by KPMG (2008) in its Foundation Report on the Long-term Costs of Literacy Difficulties which was undertaken in England. The Report's brief was to:

- review the research on the long-term consequences of literacy difficulties for individuals and for society
- estimate the costs to the public purse
- estimate the return on investment of early intervention to address literacy difficulties.

The reviewed research shows that literacy difficulties are linked to costly special educational needs provision, to truancy, exclusion from school, reduced employment opportunities, increased health risks and a greatly increased risk of involvement with the criminal justice system. These increased risks operate over and above those associated with social disadvantage in general, and those associated with lack of qualifications (see Figure 2).

Costs were attached to each of these risks and summed over the life course to the age of 37 (the last point at which reliable survey data is currently available). The total resulting costs to the public purse to age 37 arising from failure to learn to read in the primary school years are estimated at between £44,797 (lower bound figure) and £53,098 (upper bound figure) for each individual. This works out at a total of £1.73BN to £2.05BN every year.

Figure 2: Literacy and Its Costs



The savings that would be made up to the age of 37 as a result of providing early intervention (at around aged 6) would be considerable. By providing reading recovery programmes to 38,700 pupils per year who currently leave primary school in England with very low literacy skills the costs were estimated to be between £1.37BN and £1.62BN. A similar costing exercise could be undertaken for Wales.

These estimates are conservative. They do not include savings that are not readily quantifiable, such as the economic effects of reduced spending power, social housing costs, the costs of generally poorer health, the costs of substance abuse over the age of 18 and the costs of intergenerational effects on literacy skills.

Employment-related costs form the largest category of savings, at nearly £800M. Costs to the education system and the costs of crime provide the next largest categories.

Within education, the costs of literacy failure are greater in the secondary phase than they are in the primary phase. The costs to primary schools of providing intervention outweigh the immediate benefits. This suggests that in economic terms it may be difficult to persuade primary schools to shoulder the full costs of intervention without targeted top-up funding.

The Welsh Assembly Government is in the process of implementing a new revised curriculum for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales as from September 2008, which we strongly support. The new Wales Curriculum 2008 sets out a national curriculum that is learner-centred, skills-focused and relevant to the needs of society in the twenty-first century. It is designed to drive up attainment in literacy, numeracy and other skills that all learners need for life and work. The Welsh Assembly Government has also issued a Skills Framework for 3 to 19 year-olds in Wales, which underpins every subject and gives guidance on achieving continuity and progression in developing communication, number, ICT and thinking skills.

The new curriculum is learner-centred. Teachers will use 'assessment for learning' to identify individuals' learning needs which, coupled with clearly defined objectives for teaching, learning and assessment, will help motivate learners to achieve their potential and reach higher standards. Optional skills assessment materials for use with Year 5 pupils (10 year-olds in their penultimate year of primary education) from 2010 are also under development to support better teaching, learning and assessment. It is anticipated that this will impact significantly on teachers' capacity to identify and meet children's learning and behavioural needs in primary schools.

2.2 The Welsh Context

The Welsh Assembly Government is increasingly setting out its own policies and agenda for education. These affect everyone from local authorities (LAs) and schools to parents, pupils and teachers. The Review Group is fully behind the Welsh Assembly Government's objectives as set out in *Learning Country 1* and *2*. In particular, the Review Group believe the introduction of the Foundation Phase, the School Effectiveness Framework, 14-19 Learning Pathways and the development of children and young people's plans under the Children Act, 2004 as part of collaborative local and regional practices, will be of considerable benefit to all those engaged in education in Wales.

Wales however, does have special features of its own. These include the promotion of the Welsh language, the rural dimension and the extent of deprivation and poverty in some parts of the country, especially in South-East Wales, the Valleys and some coastal areas North Wales. Some of these issues are outlined in detail in David Egan's Report (2007) for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on *Combating Child Poverty in Wales*. Another key feature of Welsh policy is its adoption and commitment to implement children's rights and the UNCRC.

Historically, Wales has always experienced levels of non-attendance far higher than the average for the UK (Reid, 2003c). Of particular concern is that rates of unauthorised absence amongst primary-aged pupils in 2005/06 were much higher than those for England although the criteria used to collect the data differ. Similarly, rates of exclusion are much too high from some schools and LAs in Wales and, in some

areas, are continuing to rise. For example, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Training and Education in Wales has expressed concern over the significant increase in fixed period exclusions in recent years. Estyn has also produced a number of reports on behaviour and attendance. These include *Improving Attendance* (Estyn, 2006a), *Improving Transition Provisions* (Estyn, 2004a), the *Report on Caerphilly LEA School Improvement Service* (Estyn, 2007c) and *How LEAs Can Challenge and Support Schools with Weaknesses* (Estyn, 2005), the *Report on Good Practice in Managing Challenging Behaviour* (Estyn, 2006b), *How to Improve Behaviour Management Training* (Estyn, 2004b) and finally, the *Evaluation of the Impact of the GEST Programme on School Attendance and Behaviour* (Estyn, 2003).

In England, the impact of Ofsted inspections on attendance in schools has been analysed in detail (Reid, 2005c, d, 2006e, 2007d) although no similar research has been undertaken in Wales.

Equally, there are concerns about the incidence and use of the term 'bullying' by some schools. 'Bullying' is a generic term and can signify a lot of different practice from serious to minor incidents. Within the media, some incidents of bullying have also developed into high profile cases. The Assembly, LAs and most schools (but not all) are mindful of this issue. We found that there are a range of anti-bullying initiatives in use and much good practice in schools and LAs throughout Wales.

The issue of unofficial exclusions was brought to the forefront by the Children's Commissioner's Report in 2007. Estyn have also expressed concern about the numbers of pupils who appear to be out-of-school but not included on any school roll and not receiving any education as the schools have not followed exclusion processes and informed the local authority. It is difficult without further research to be clear about precisely how many pupils are out-of-school on a daily basis. Like Estyn, delegates to our various focus groups held throughout Wales indicated that this number is larger than is currently recorded in official statistics.

This is also an area of concern recognised within the Assembly's developing NEET (Not in education, employment or training) Strategy. The Strategy (2008, paras 1.7 and 1.8) stated that:

"If we are to target our strategy effectively to reduce the size of the NEET cohort in Wales, we need to know more about the size and make up of the Group. This is more complicated than it sounds. None of our existing sets of data will allow us to put together a comprehensive picture of the people who make up the NEET group. The measure used nationally to report the number of young people NEET is not able to provide us with any detail on who those young people actually are. Neither does it allow for the production of local area statistics, limiting the extent to which the data can be used to target interventions or to measure their impact."

At the present time, the Welsh Assembly Government is therefore, developing an annual school census for pupils receiving education outside schools.

As 14-19 Learning Pathways develops (WAG, 2006), pupils will have more options and more choices. This trend has many advantages as it attempts to engage learners in more appropriate courses so they do not dropout, fail or become excluded.

Finally, the culture of Wales is changing with increased diversity from inward migration including pupils from succession countries. This is proving a challenge for schools and LAs to manage and is taking up significant resources. One of these challenges is to keep track of newly settled pupils who may start their schooling in Wales at almost any point and who should be entered onto official school registers as soon as possible.

2.3 The Way Forward

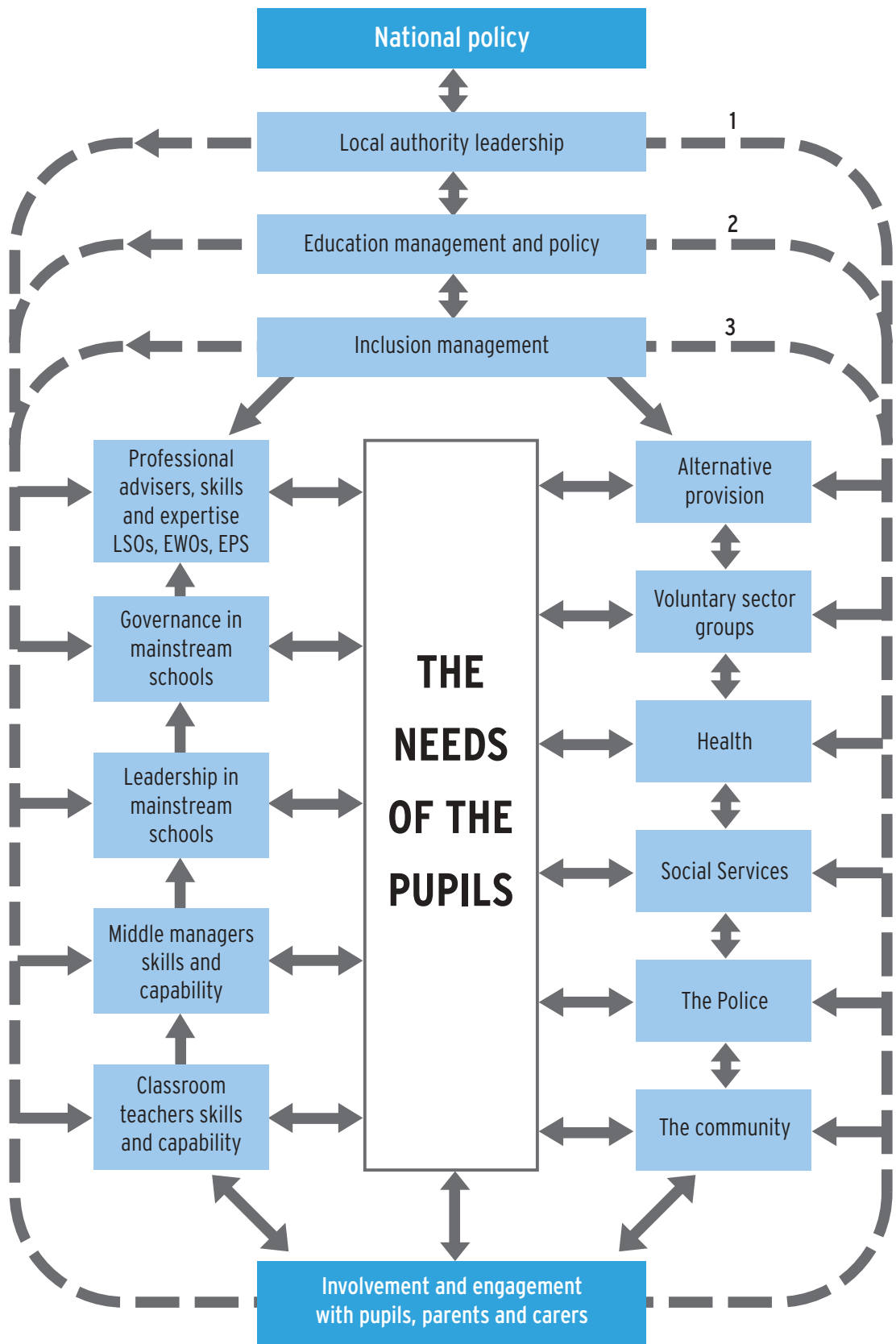
The Group is conscious therefore, that our final recommendations and proposals for change should be seen within the context of our understanding of the wider societal position within Wales and the rest of the UK. The complexity of managing behaviour and attendance in Wales is illustrated in Figure 3 which shows the wide range of services and professionals involved in the process. Change in one area of the system is likely to have an impact upon other elements in this system. For example, an improvement in middle managers' skills in working in partnership with parents is likely to raise the level of parental involvement and improve pupil behaviour. However, it may also raise parental expectations of the quality of schools' responses to difficulties and generate an expectation that schools will work in partnership with all parents. This raised expectation is likely to place significant time and cost demands upon schools by:

- increasing the workload of managerial and pastoral-support staff
- raising expectations of their skills and capability
- triggering the need for more training and professional development.

Given these concerns, the Group recognised the need for schools to be able to create the time, opportunity and resources to be able to extend, redevelop and revitalise their work in the key areas of attendance and behaviour.

We accept that any proposals for change made by the Group need to be considered in terms of both their intended consequences (ie the self-evident case for improvement) and unintended consequences (ie the ways in which the planned change in one area can impact and cause change in other areas of the system).

Figure 3: Systems Map for Attendance and Behaviour



2.4 Review of the Literature

The review of the literature focused on seven themes. These were:

- lessons from studies on educational leadership
- training for teachers and pupils on behaviour and attendance
- lessons from anti-bullying initiatives
- findings on school transitions
- results from studies into school organisational issues
- findings from work on parental involvement
- the role of the education welfare/social work service.

Much of the literature emphasised the importance of 'whole school' and 'holistic' approaches and the link with school effectiveness and school improvement. Several studies reiterated the crucial role of headteachers and senior managers as being one of the "key elements for success" (Ofsted, 2007). Engaging parents successfully and meeting the academic, social and emotional needs of children and young people were two other consistent themes. A third emphasised the quality of learning and teaching and the role of the school in meeting pupils' curricular needs. A fourth strand emphasised the need for schools to have effective strategies in place to improve behaviour and attendance and to prevent bullying. Finally, many studies emphasised the requirement for good inter-agency practice, although few studies on effective multidisciplinary involvement on behavioural and attendance interventions currently exist in the literature (Sims, Bowen and Halton et al, 2008).

2.5 Statistical Background

This section presents data on:

- absenteeism from primary schools in Wales, 2007
- absenteeism from secondary schools in Wales, 2006/07
- exclusions from schools in Wales, 2005/06
- pupils aged 15 leaving full-time education without a recognised qualification, 2007
- young people aged 16-18 not in education, training or employment (NEET).

This was the latest set of statistical data which were available at the time of drafting this Report. Only key tables are presented here. Further tables can be found by reference to the appropriate Welsh Assembly Government websites.

2.5.1 Absenteeism from Primary Schools

The results now presented emanate from the survey on absenteeism by pupils of compulsory primary school age during the 2006/07 academic year. Table 1 shows the overall rate of absenteeism by pupils of compulsory primary age for 2006/07 and for 2003 onwards. Table 2 provides further details of absenteeism by pupils of compulsory school age in maintained primary schools by LEAs including rates of unauthorised absence. By comparison with previous

years, rates of absenteeism from many of the metropolitan and valley LEAs have improved upon previous years, although remaining higher than the rest of the UK.

The key results are:

Overall Absenteeism

- In 2007, 6.9 per cent of half-day sessions were missed through overall absence, a decrease from 7.5 per cent in 2006.
- The percentage of half-day sessions missed through overall absence in 2007 was lower in primary schools than secondary schools (6.9 per cent and 9.3 per cent respectively).

Unauthorised Absenteeism

- In 2007, 0.9 per cent of half-day sessions were missed through unauthorised absence, a decrease from 1.0 per cent in 2006.
- The percentage of half-day sessions missed through unauthorised absence in 2007 was lower in primary schools than secondary schools (0.9 per cent and 1.8 per cent respectively).

Table 1: Overall Absenteeism by Pupils of Compulsory Primary School Age

(per cent)				
2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
7.0	6.8	6.9	7.5	6.9

Absenteeism and Deprivation (measured by free school meal (FSM) entitlement)

- The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the rate of absenteeism is positively correlated. In this data set, as the level of FSM entitlement increases, the level of absenteeism increases.

Table 2: Absenteeism by pupils of compulsory school age in maintained primary schools by Local Education Authority (a)

Local Authority	Number of maintained primary schools responding to attendance survey	Number of maintained primary schools in January 2007 (b)	Percentage of maintained primary schools responding to survey	Percentage of sessions missed due to all absence	Percentage of sessions missed due to unauthorised absence
Isle of Anglesey	52	52	100	5.7	0.6
Gwynedd	105	106	99	6.0	0.4
Conwy	63	63	100	6.2	0.7
Denbighshire	52	52	100	6.4	0.8
Flintshire	75	75	100	6.3	0.4
Wrexham	71	71	100	6.2	0.9
Powys	106	106	100	5.9	0.2
Ceredigion	72	72	100	6.5	0.3
Pembrokeshire	68	68	100	6.4	0.3
Carmarthenshire	121	121	100	7.6	0.5
Swansea	88	88	100	7.5	0.8
Neath Port Talbot	72	73	99	7.7	0.3
Bridgend	58	58	100	6.8	0.8
The Vale of Glamorgan	47	47	100	6.2	1.6
Rhondda Cynon Taff	118	118	100	7.8	1.7
Merthyr Tydfil	25	27	93	7.8	1.0
Caerphilly	73	74	99	7.6	1.5
Blaenau Gwent	29	29	100	7.8	0.5
Torfaen	35	35	100	6.8	1.2
Monmouthshire	36	36	100	5.5	0.3
Newport	53	53	100	7.2	1.3
Cardiff	104	104	100	7.3	1.9
Wales (c)	1,593	1,631	98	6.9	0.9

Source: Pupils' Attendance Record, Welsh Assembly Government

(a) Some schools may have provided information for all primary pupils regardless of age.

(b) Number of maintained primary schools with pupils of compulsory primary school age in 2006/07.

(c) Includes independent and special schools.

2.5.2 Absenteeism from Secondary Schools

Table 3 presents the results on absenteeism by 11 to 15 year-olds in Wales in 2006/07. Table 4 presents the rates of unauthorised absenteeism by pupils of compulsory school age since 1998. Table 5 shows the overall absenteeism by pupils of compulsory school age by sector. Table 6 presents absenteeism by pupils of compulsory school age in all maintained secondary and special schools by LEA. These indicate a slight increase in unauthorised absence from previous years with 'mixed' results between LEAs in rates of all absences and unauthorised absences.

Key Findings

Overall Absenteeism

- In 2006/07, 9.3 per cent of (half-day) sessions were missed through authorised and unauthorised absence, a decrease from 9.8 per cent in 2005/06.
- Absenteeism in maintained secondary schools decreased to 9.4 per cent of sessions in 2006/07.
- 30.6 half-day sessions per pupil were missed through authorised and unauthorised absence, equating to over 15 days per child between September and May.
- The highest level of all absence in 2006/07 was in Isle of Anglesey LEA (11.0 per cent of sessions), with the lowest rate in the Vale of Glamorgan LEA (7.9 per cent).

Unauthorised Absenteeism

- In 2006/07, 1.8 per cent of (half day) sessions were missed through unauthorised absence, 0.1 per cent higher than in 2005/06.
- 5.4 half-day sessions per pupil were missed through unauthorised absence, or nearly 3 days per pupil between September and May.
- The level of unauthorised absence in individual LEAs varied from 0.7 per cent in Flintshire and Carmarthenshire to 3.7 per cent in Cardiff.

Absenteeism and Gender

- For those schools that returned data by gender, girls had a higher rate of both overall absenteeism and unauthorised absenteeism.

Absenteeism and Deprivation (measured by free school meal entitlement)

- The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the rate of absenteeism continue to be correlated.

Table 3: Overall Absenteeism by Pupils of Compulsory School Age

(per cent)									
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
10.4	10.6	10.1	10.4	10.1	9.5	9.4	9.4	9.8	9.3

Table 4: Unauthorised Absenteeism by Pupils of Compulsory School Age

(per cent)									
1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8

Table 5: Overall Absenteeism by Pupils of Compulsory School Age by Sector (a)

Percentage of school sessions missed								
	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007
LEA maintained secondary schools	10.1	10.5	10.1	9.6	9.5	9.5	9.9	9.4
Special schools	14.1	14.9	13.2	13.1	12.9	11.7	13.7	13.9
Independent schools	5.2	5.5	5.8	4.6	5.1	5.2	5.6	5.5
Total	10.1	10.4	10.1	9.5	9.4	9.4	9.8	9.3

Source: Pupils' Attendance Record, Welsh Assembly Government

(a) Figures do not include data for two independent schools that did not respond to the survey.

Table 6: Absenteeism by Pupils of Compulsory School Age in all Maintained Secondary and Special Schools by Local Education Authority (a)

Percentage of school sessions missed due to:								
Local Authority	All absences				Unauthorised absences			
	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 07	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007
Isle of Anglesey	10.3	10.6	10.8	11.0	1.8	1.9	1.6	1.3
Gwynedd	8.4	8.6	9.5	9.0	0.9	0.8	1.2	1.1
Conwy	9.5	8.7	9.5	9.7	1.3	2.3	2.0	2.2
Denbighshire	10.5	10.1	10.6	10.1	1.9	2.1	1.6	2.2
Flintshire	8.7	7.3	8.1	8.2	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.7
Wrexham	9.7	9.6	8.7	8.8	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.9
Powys	8.0	8.4	8.8	9.4	1.0	0.9	0.8	1.0
Ceredigion	8.6	9.5	10.2	9.2	0.8	1.3	1.7	1.2
Pembrokeshire	8.6	9.1	9.6	8.2	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.3
Carmarthenshire	8.7	9.0	10.0	9.1	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7
Swansea	10.0	9.9	10.3	9.7	2.4	2.2	2.4	2.3
Neath Port Talbot	7.7	8.6	9.3	8.5	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8
Bridgend	8.7	8.5	9.9	9.0	1.5	1.4	1.9	1.9
The Vale of Glamorgan	8.4	8.3	8.7	7.9	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.0
Rhondda Cynon Taff	10.1	10.9	10.6	10.2	2.4	2.7	2.5	2.5
Merthyr Tydfil	10.0	10.8	11.0	10.4	0.5	0.7	0.7	1.5
Caerphilly	10.6	10.3	10.9	9.9	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4
Blaenau Gwent	9.9	9.5	10.3	9.3	2.3	1.5	1.8	1.8
Torfaen	9.4	8.5	9.3	9.0	2.1	1.8	1.8	2.5
Monmouthshire	8.8	7.8	8.4	8.4	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.9
Newport	10.6	10.0	10.4	9.8	2.2	2.1	1.9	2.3
Cardiff	11.0	10.7	11.1	10.6	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.7
Wales (b)	9.4	9.3	9.8	9.3	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8

Source: Pupils' Attendance Record, Welsh Assembly Government

(a) Figures do not include data for two independent schools that did not respond to the survey.

(b) Includes independent schools.

2.5.3 Exclusions from Schools in Wales, 2005/06

Table 7 presents the data on permanent exclusions for Wales by sector and gender, since 1996/97. Table 8 provides information on permanent exclusions from maintained secondary schools by LEAs since 1996/97. Table 9 shows the number of fixed-term exclusions of five days or fewer from maintained secondary schools by LEAs since 1999/2000. Table 10 provides the reasons given for permanent and fixed-term exclusions in 2005/06. Table 11 presents the exclusions by school year, 2005/06.

Key Results

- In 2005/06 there were 451 permanent exclusions, 14 less than in 2004/05.
- The 2005/06 figure, 451 was 5 per cent lower than the 473 permanent exclusions in 1996/97.
- There continues to be a higher rate of exclusion amongst boys than girls. Boys accounted for over 7 out of 10 of all the permanent exclusions in 2005/06.
- The rate of permanent exclusions for boys decreased from 1.6 per 1,000 in 2004/05 to 1.4 in 2005/06; the rate for girls increased from 0.4 per 1,000 in 2004/05 to 0.5 in 2005/06.
- The total number of fixed-term exclusions has fallen from 20,242 in 2004/05 to 20,121 in 2005/06. The number of longer fixed-term exclusions has fallen but the number of shorter fixed-term exclusions has increased.
- Of the 451 pupils permanently excluded from a school, over a quarter were provided with home tuition as the alternative provision and 17 per cent were transferred to another mainstream school. 2 per cent were reinstated on appeal.
- Permanent exclusions vary by a factor of four between LAs (eg Flintshire to Conway).
- Fixed-term exclusions vary by a factor of 1 to 7.4 between LAs (eg Carmarthenshire to Cardiff).
- A detailed study of the exclusion evidence shows major practice differences between schools even within the same LA. Some of these data suggest a postcode lottery may be taking place although, even this, does not fully explain some of the individual school differences.

Table 7: Permanent Exclusions by Sector and Gender

	1996/ 1997	1997/ 1998	1998/ 1999	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/2006 Number	Rate (a)
Primary schools	87	78	68	38	78	73	65	56	53	45	0.2
Secondary schools	370	401	308	286	339	357	356	352	401	396	1.9
Special schools	16	24	14	13	13	15	13	9	6	7	1.8
Pupil Referral Units (b)	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	3	5	3	-
Of whom were											
Boys	390	417	334	269	375	384	359	346	374	330	1.4
Girls	83	86	56	68	55	61	80	74	91	121	0.5
All exclusions	473	503	390	337	430	445	439	420	465	451	1.0

(a) Rate per 1,000 pupils. Full-time pupil numbers as at January 2006

(b) Exclusions data was first collected from Pupil Referral Units in 2002/03. Rate not given due to dual-registration of pupils.

It is noticeable that there are a few schools that consistently seem to have considerably more fixed, permanent or unofficial exclusions than their counterparts. We wonder why this is the case. We also wonder whether the Chief Inspector for Schools in Wales should be asked by the Welsh Assembly Government to investigate this trend and provide a report or alternatively, undertake 'spot checks' on persistently high-excluding schools and issue a report on their findings.

Another aspect shown in Table 11 is that the peak for exclusions in Wales occurs in Year 10 rather than in Year 11. This is a different pattern from England. One possible explanation for this trend is that more unofficial exclusions may take place in Year 11 and are therefore, not included in official statistics. Another concern is that the use of managed moves or transfers may be removing children from mainstream schools ahead of permanent exclusion. The result of this is that the true level of behavioural difficulties in Wales is not reflected in the exclusions data. There is a need to address these issues in order to fully understand the real scale of the challenge.

Table 8: Permanent Exclusions from Maintained Secondary Schools by Local Authority

Local Authority	1996/ 1997	1997/ 1998	1998/ 1999	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/2006 Number	Rate (a)
Isle of Anglesey	*	11	11	*	15	8	20	15	12	18	3.9
Gwynedd	12	8	15	17	23	23	33	30	23	32	4.0
Conwy	15	15	15	9	12	12	15	19	31	34	4.4
Denbeighshire	27	22	7	*	9	11	11	6	15	18	2.3
Flintshire	20	24	13	7	14	15	10	24	12	10	0.9
Wrexham	18	16	16	19	20	13	*	11	7	8	1.1
Powys	19	18	7	7	16	13	12	15	21	19	2.0
Ceredigion	10	10	12	5	*	6	5	10	7	*	*
Pembrokeshire	6	*	*	*	*	0	*	*	0	*	*
Carmarthenshire	6	11	*	11	14	19	15	8	21	35	2.8
Swansea	29	38	30	27	18	25	22	15	27	16	1.1
Neath Port Talbot	19	23	16	17	11	16	36	12	23	21	2.2
Bridgend	16	20	16	14	15	27	9	21	19	18	1.8
The Vale of Glamorgan	25	15	18	*	6	10	7	7	8	*	*
Rhondda Cynon Taff	28	27	25	33	15	*	*	*	*	*	*
Merthyr Tydfil	13	8	*	6	9	10	13	7	7	*	*
Caerphilly	28	33	22	26	48	39	43	45	52	49	3.8
Blaenau Gwent	5	7	9	*	12	8	13	12	*	*	*
Torfaen	9	18	16	14	11	10	*	*	*	*	*
Monmouthshire	*	*	*	*	*	6	5	*	6	*	*
Newport	21	21	13	17	20	25	24	24	35	31	2.8
Cardiff	39	52	39	40	45	57	53	63	67	66	3.0
Wales	370	401	308	286	339	357	356	352	401	396	1.9

(a) Rate per 1,000 pupils. Full-time pupil numbers as at January 2006.

* Results not shown where their inclusion may be disclosive.

Table 9: Fixed-term Exclusions of Five Days or Fewer from Maintained Secondary Schools by Local Authority

Local Authority	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/2006 Number	Rate (a)
Isle of Anglesey	178	229	175	227	260	333	314	67.7
Gwynedd	110	201	189	254	140	171	153	19.2
Conwy	326	543	390	356	464	801	950	121.6
Denbighshire	58	95	108	204	246	393	550	70.4
Flintshire	98	90	144	337	408	602	675	63.0
Wrexham	132	327	481	562	899	765	689	96.3
Powys	135	140	216	269	355	519	459	49.5
Ceredigion	193	145	173	220	221	182	254	49.2
Pembrokeshire	284	295	241	454	294	672	589	67.5
Carmarthenshire	243	374	212	244	290	259	219	17.6
Swansea	461	611	933	1,161	1,317	1,315	1,316	87.7
Neath Port Talbot	319	444	517	349	421	543	596	63.6
Bridgend	353	539	373	415	568	725	695	71.0
The Vale of Glamorgan	181	285	332	334	464	332	247	25.5
Rhondda Cynon Taff	550	700	753	983	906	999	1,075	56.8
Merthyr Tydfil	113	152	166	177	232	273	264	61.3
Caerphilly	279	379	531	676	767	955	962	73.8
Blaenau Gwent	158	245	221	229	308	397	298	60.8
Torfaen	182	200	185	239	228	402	360	44.6
Monmouthshire	111	220	204	254	298	443	332	58.4
Newport	268	427	551	622	1,074	1,140	1,215	111.5
Cardiff	1,058	1,806	2,044	2,133	1,978	2,745	2,849	131.6
Wales	5,790	8,447	9,139	10,699	12,138	14,966	15,061	70.7

(a) Rate per 1,000 pupils. Full-time pupil numbers as at January 2006.

Table 10: Reasons Given for Permanent and Fixed-term Exclusions, 2005/06 (a)

(per cent)			
	Permanent exclusions	Fixed-term exclusions	
		5 days or fewer	6 days or more
Assault /violence towards staff	10.2	4.1	8.3
Assault /violence towards pupils	10.6	17.1	18.5
Defiance of rules	27.1	19.9	17.5
Disruptive behaviour	15.7	17.3	16.3
Bullying or theft (b)	1.8	3.9	4.0
Racial or sexual harassment (b)	1.3	1.1	1.8
Verbal abuse	5.8	16.9	10.9
Threatening or dangerous behaviour	12.0	9.2	10.9
Possession/use of weapon	2.7	0.5	1.2
Damage to property	2.0	3.1	3.7
Substance misuse	8.4	1.8	3.5
Other	2.4	5.0	3.3

(a) Comparable data for 2004/05 can be found in SDR 32/2006, Exclusions from Schools in Wales, 2004/05.

(b) Categories have been combined to ensure data is not disclosive.

Table 11: Exclusions by School Year, 2005/06

	Permanent exclusions		All Fixed-term exclusions	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Reception	*	*	41	0.2
Year 1	*	*	56	0.3
Year 2	*	*	88	0.4
Year 3	7	1.6	175	0.9
Year 4	7	1.6	350	1.7
Year 5	12	2.7	472	2.3
Year 6	17	3.8	715	3.6
Year 7	21	4.7	1,853	9.2
Year 8	59	13.1	3,390	16.8
Year 9	111	24.6	4,758	23.6
Year 10	136	30.2	4,968	24.7
Year 11	77	17.1	3,105	15.4
Year 12	*	*	123	0.6
Year 13	0	0	27	0.1

2.5.4 Pupils Leaving School Aged 15

The number of pupils leaving full-time education without a recognised qualification in 2007 is a relatively new and developing field of study.

Key Results

- In 2007, 682 15 year-olds left full time education with no recognised qualification. This is lower than the 2006 total of 807.
- Expressed as a percentage of the cohort 1.7 per cent of pupils left full-time education with no recognised qualification in 2007, lower than in 2006.
- A greater percentage of boys than girls left with no qualification: 2.1 per cent and 1.4 per cent respectively.

For historical comparison with previous years:

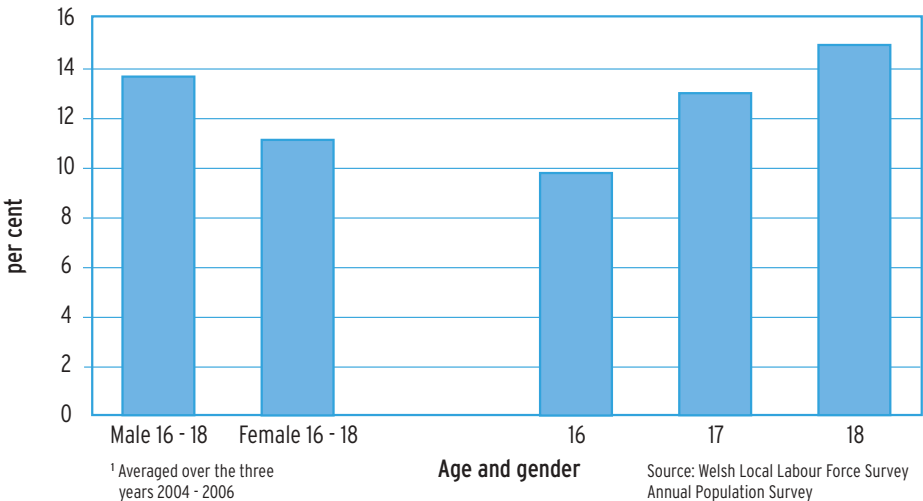
- In 2007, 782 15 year-olds left full-time education without a recognised qualification. This is lower than the 2006 total of 997 and 36 per cent less than the 2000 figure of 1,226.
- Expressed as a percentage of the cohort, 2.0 per cent of pupils left full-time education without a recognised qualification in 2007, lower than in 2006.
- A greater percentage of boys than girls left without a qualification: 2.4 per cent and 1.6 per cent respectively.

2.5.5 NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) 2004/06

Table 12 presents related data on the number of 16-18 year-olds not in education, training or employment (NEET) between 2004/06. This is also a developing field and the reliability of this data is improving all the time.

The percentage of 16, 17 and 18 year olds NEETs averaged over the three years 2004/2006. It shows us that the percentage of young people NEET at 17 and 18 is significantly higher than at 16. This suggests that the sustainability of post-16 destinations is at least part of the problem, along with the transition from compulsory education itself (WAG, 2008).

Table 12: 16-18 Year Olds Not in Education, Training or Employment: Wales¹



Characteristics of young people who become NEET

NEET young people are likely to have a history of not attending school and to report higher rates of persistent truancy during Years 10 and 11 (15.4%) than young people in general (3.3%). In addition, young people NEET are over three times more likely to have been excluded from school than young people overall.

Research has shown that in some areas young people NEET are up to eight times more likely to have a statutory statement of special educational needs (SEN) and up fourteen times more likely to have school action plus status.

NEET young people are much more likely to have no or low qualification levels than the population as a whole. Indeed, 32% of young people in the NEET cohort have no qualifications in comparison with only 7% of the non-NEET population. Similarly, 35% NEET young people have only low-level qualifications (below NVQ level 2) compared with 20% of the non-NEET population.

3.0 OUR APPROACH

The Review Group used a wide range of approaches to gather its evidence and consult with stakeholders. In the first stage of our work, the Group used four themes whilst considering the needs of children and young people.

3.1 The Detail - Stage One

3.1.1 Workshops on the Needs of Children and Young People

In the first stage of our work, the Group considered the needs of children and young people. We focused on four themes and 'sets' of children and young people and reviewed issues concerned with their attendance and behaviour. The four sets were:

- all children and young people in school who may be affected by the behaviour of their peers
- children and young people displaying low-level misbehaviour
- children and young people at risk of exclusion
- children and young people being educated outside of school.

During this work, we invited a wide range of practitioners to participate in working groups to consider each of the four different aspects of young people's needs. The participants in the working groups were drawn from across Wales. Workshops for the working groups were held in both the North and South. In the vast majority of cases we used a carousel approach for the workshops. Each theme comprised four tasks. The participants were allocated to one of the four sub-groups. Each sub-group:

- developed a view of strengths of practice in this area
- moved to a new task and looked at the weaknesses in practice
- moved onto a third task and challenged what had been developed by the other sub-groups
- considered the fourth task and reviewed the outcomes.

This approach:

- enabled all participants to actively contribute to all of our work
- generated timely and highly participative discussion
- produced a wealth of ideas
- provided a clear picture of practice within and across Wales
- delivered a rich source of evidence for the second stage of our work.

An analysis of the wealth of material generated by the consultation workshops demonstrated that there were many issues and concerns that surfaced repeatedly. Our Interim Report published in August 2007 encapsulates these issues and concerns (see section 4.1).

3.2 The Detail - Stage Two

The collection and analysis of the data throughout Stage One influenced our thinking about the type of evidence required for Stage Two.

In the second stage evidence was obtained in the following sequential ways:

- (a) By consulting with two specially-convened attendance sub-groups.
- (b) By convening a special two-day seminar with senior officials from England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- (c) By commissioning a review of attendance and behaviour which analysed reports and guidance issued by government and government agencies throughout the British Isles.
- (d) By receiving presentations and holding discussions with key Welsh Assembly officials on such issues as: The Children and Young People's Planning Framework for Local Authorities, the 14-19 Learning Pathways programme, the Pedagogy Initiative, NEET and the School Effectiveness Framework.
- (e) By establishing five key sub-groups on:
 - behaviour, exclusion, unofficial exclusion, out-of-school provision, and the alternative curriculum
 - school attendance
 - participation
 - training and development
 - parents.
- (f) By consulting with practitioner working groups in North and South Wales.
- (g) By commissioning field work into the perspectives of children and young people.
- (h) By undertaking consultation exercises with parents and parental support groups.
- (i) By undertaking a rapid evidence review on effective interventions for improving attendance and behaviour.

Throughout the fieldwork and evidence gathering exercises, we were mindful of the need to:

- adopt a child-friendly approach
- consider the Children Act 2004 agenda
- consider the introduction of the Foundation Phase and revised 14-19 Learning Pathways Curriculum and revised National Curriculum (to be introduced in September 2008)
- establish the need for good practice to be established
- consider the 'Welsh-based' perspective.

We were also keen to consider the evidence from the perspective of teachers, trade unions and governors as well as parents and children and young people.

3.2.1 Attendance Sub-groups

Two attendance sub-groups met in Mid Wales during the summer of 2007. The first sub-group considered the effectiveness of existing attendance codes and their usage. The second sub-group deliberated on a range of attendance-related issues. These included:

- the legislation
- the role of magistrate courts
- the effectiveness or otherwise of truancy patrols
- the needs of education welfare staff
- the NFER (Wales) Reviews on:
 - electronic registration
 - the effectiveness of the education welfare service/education social work in Wales.
- the wider role of professionals and paraprofessionals on behaviour and attendance including voluntary bodies, health care and social services staff, youth workers, educational psychologists et seq
- the role of parents or carers in attendance cases.

3.2.2 Two-day Seminar

A two day seminar was held in Cardiff in September 2007 with senior officials from the key government departments in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. During this time, a full range of presentations were made on the latest policy and guidance in use on attendance and behaviour throughout the rest of the UK. Evidence was presented on key research and relevant reviews undertaken in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Consideration was given by the Review Group into the possible relevance and value of these policies for Wales. Examples of the wide range of documentation considered included the use of restorative practices in Scotland, the National Strategy for School Improvement in England, the implementation of the National Strategy Fieldforce for Behaviour and Attendance in England, the use of the SEAL materials (social and emotional aspects of learning) and the practice of data analysis techniques in Northern Ireland.

3.2.3 Review of Approaches to Attendance and Behaviour in the British Isles

In preparation for the two day seminar held in Cardiff, and to facilitate the Review Group with an understanding of the issues, Dr Ted Cole of SEBDA (the Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Association) was commissioned to prepare a report on *A Review of Attendance and Behaviour: Reports and Guidance Issued by Government and Government Agencies in the British Isles*. This 165 page report provided a useful background document which enabled

Review Group members to be in a position to question key UK-wide officials on their evidence and presentations and will be made available on the NBAR website as from 31 July 2008 as part of the evidence report.

3.2.4 Welsh Assembly Government Policies

In October 2007, a one-day event was held in Cardiff to consider, in detail, key related policy initiatives which were in the process of being implemented by the Welsh Assembly Government.

3.2.5 Formation of Sub-groups

Following the evidence collected (see section 3.2 A, B, C and D) it was decided to take forward the main issues by creating five working groups within the aegis of the Review Group to consider, in more detail, the key issues. These five working groups were on:

- attendance
- behaviour, unofficial exclusions and out-of-school and alternative curriculum provision
- participation (including inter-agency and multi-disciplinary practice)
- professional development and training
- parents.

They presented their findings in December 2007 with summary recommendations in early January 2008.

3.2.6 Practitioner Working Groups

In December 2007 and January 2008 two meetings took place in North and South Wales using a carousel approach to gather evidence from key school-based practitioners. Meetings were held in Newport and Conway. The Practitioners Group included headteachers, deputies, middle managers, experienced teachers, new teachers, classroom assistants, learning school mentors, LEA staff (eg educational psychologists, behaviour support managers, social inclusion officers), amongst others. Issues considered included:

- the key challenges in behaviour and attendance and the potential solutions as identified by workshop members
- professional development needs
- the use of physical intervention
- how to deal with and prevent acts of violence from happening in schools
- the support professionals need from:
 - the Welsh Assembly Government
 - local authorities.

3.2.7 The Perspective of Children and Young People

The Review Group commissioned an analysis of children and young people's views on behaviour and attendance, which took place between September and December 2007. Cazbah Marketing and Events were able to speak to a series of focus groups of young people from:

- primary school pupils (7-10 years)
- secondary-aged pupils (11-16) years in the following specific groups:
 - alternative provision - covering pupil referral units (PRUs) and alternative pathways
 - children and young people in the secure estate or working with young offending service (YOS)
 - pupils with additional learning needs
 - disabled pupils
 - gypsy and traveller pupils
 - minority ethnic pupils
 - looked after children
 - young carers.

Young carers, in particular, often feel unfairly penalised or disadvantaged for arriving late or not attending at all when it is the result of needing to care for someone else.

This research is unique as it was the first all-Wales study to investigate the views of children and young people from primary school and out-of-school backgrounds regarding behaviour and attendance and was very much in keeping with the aims and philosophy of the Review Group and this Report.

In addition, the Review Group had access to data from the Extending Entitlement survey results. (The Welsh Assembly Government has a strategy for promoting opportunity and choice for young people in Wales aged 11 to 25 to help improve the services which they receive. This is known as 'Extending Entitlement'). The Welsh Assembly commissioned a company called Interactive Feedback to undertake a study to measure the impact and effectiveness of their strategy which was conducted by a company called Interactive Feedback. The data accessed by NBAR from this online questionnaire included the sections on rights and evaluating entitlements, the family, education, the neighbourhood, lifestyle and behaviour. These details will also be placed on the NBAR website www.nbarwales.co.uk by the end of summer 2008.

3.2.8 Parents and Parental Groups

The Review Group undertook a questionnaire and interview approach with selected parents drawn from all parts of Wales. The fieldwork was sub-divided into two sections namely parents' perceptions of issues relating to pupils' behavioural problems, and parents' views on school attendance.

The Review Group was mindful of selecting a representative sample of parents across Wales. It was therefore decided to use the database of Children in Wales, which is a national umbrella with contact networks for individuals, voluntary, private and statutory bodies throughout Wales. A questionnaire was devised to elicit parents' and carers' views about exclusions, behavioural difficulties and attendance issues. Respondents were not asked to give any identifying information but some details about gender, ethnicity, local authority of residence and relationship to their child/ren was requested.

Although there was a limited response to the questionnaire, it remains one of the few surveys to gain information about the extent of illegal exclusions from schools.

3.2.9 External Contract

An external contract was awarded on a specification for 'the rapid evidence review of interventions that attempt to improve behaviour and attendance in schools and other learning settings.' The 76-page report on this work was received at the end of February 2008. A copy of the Report and its findings will be lodged on the NBAR website by the end of 2008 and includes key sections on: leadership school transitions, pastoral support, training, school structure and organisation, parental involvement, pupil voices, early intervention, multi-agency working and the role of education social work/welfare services.

3.2.10 Meetings with Officials from the Welsh Assembly Government

The Chair of NBAR held one-to-one meetings with key officials from the Welsh Assembly Government on policy matters that impact on pupils' behaviour and attendance. These included staff from the children and young people's rights and entitlements team, partnerships and the multi-agency team.

This enabled an examination of existing and new initiatives to take place. For example, detailed packs for use by school councils in Wales were examined. These included such materials as Whose Voice? Your Choice and eight Blast Off guides amongst others.

3.2.11 Additional Work

In addition to the above, and following the publication of the Children's Commissioner for Wales Report into unofficial school exclusions, the Minister asked the Review Group to consider this Report as part of its deliberations. This was specifically undertaken in November 2007 and considered at various meetings thereafter. The Minister also asked for evidence on the quality of provision and use of pupil referral units in Wales.

Throughout the evidence gathering process, members of the Review Group made a wide range of presentations on specific topics as requested by the Chair at NBAR meetings. These included papers on such issues as an analysis of the Welsh Assembly Government, guidance and legislation on exclusions, the role of the education social work/education welfare service, the curriculum in schools and managed moves. In addition, the Review Group undertook an analysis of resource materials made available by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and of their current website information on attendance and behaviour.

Responses to the Interim Report from official bodies were also presented at meetings to members.

4.0 THE EVIDENCE

This section focuses on providing summative evidence of some of the most important findings obtained during the review process. A full outline of all the evidence collected during the review process will be placed on the NBAR website, in stages and as soon as possible, after the publication of this Review. We aim to complete this process by the end of July 2008.

4.1 Stage One

The evidence collected from Stage One of the Review was presented in the Interim Report in September 2007 and can be summarised as follows:

4.1.1 All Children and Young People in School

Is behaviour in school worse than say, twenty years ago? This is a key question that the Group found difficult to answer. There is little doubt that standards in schools have risen and along with these higher standards have come raised expectations. The development of a national curriculum has brought coherence to what children and young people are taught. It may at the same time have reduced flexibility in terms of what is taught to children. Work by professionals such as Fullan (2007) seems to suggest (within the context of a national curriculum) that staff feel less able to approach the delivery of the curriculum as flexibly and creatively as they otherwise might.

The Group has a clear view that an inappropriate curriculum can act as a trigger for undesirable behaviour and non-attendance, particularly amongst some adolescents.

We recognised that society is changing and has become much more multi-cultural and diverse. Concurrent with all of this is the sense of loss of social cohesion within many communities and the breakdown in extended family relationships. Within this context we are encouraging children and young people to participate more readily in discussion and decision making which may include, on occasions, more readily challenging adults' opinions, requests and instructions. It is therefore, very difficult to undertake a direct comparison between pupils' behaviour now and twenty years ago. In fact, young people's behaviour has been a concern to mature adults for more than a century, at least. Therefore, making direct comparisons over time is never easy. We could argue that every generation has been worried about the 'antisocial behaviour' of adolescents and youths. Some adults soon seem to forget their own behaviour when they were younger.

Whilst children and young people are now raised in different types of family units, all the evidence seems to point to the fact that parents and carers want the best outcomes for their youngsters.

There seems to be a widely held perception that behaviour is worse but there remains a lack of truly objective evidence for making this assertion partly because definitions and specific surveys utilise different methodologies and data. Exclusion rates from schools in Wales continue to be lower than those in England, with reductions in both permanent and fixed period exclusions recorded during 2005-2006. However, concern has been raised by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Training and Education in Wales, over the significant increase in fixed period exclusions in recent years. Whilst some local exceptional cases of misbehaviour are reported in the media, it appears that, within Wales, the vast majority of our schools continue to be well-ordered learning communities.

Despite this, there are some worrying trends. These include the recent spate of young people and young adult suicides in Bridgend. Also, the effects of inappropriate internet sites which feature violent or abusive games or pornography. We need also to recognise the influence and growth in social networking websites and chat rooms. In addition, the proliferation of local nightclubs offering for example, Monday evening special reductions for under 18s is putting adverse social pressure on young people, especially girls. Finally, the proliferation of alcohol amongst the school-age population (whether consumed at home or externally) often discourages a culture of learning, good behaviour and regular school attendance. Equally, we were conscious of the use of some illegal drugs amongst a rising proportion of school-aged pupils. More importantly, Estyn's report in 2007 on substance misuse noted that the latest UK research indicated that 20-25% of 15-year-olds use illegal drugs, mostly cannabis, at least once a week.

Equally, some pupils are not very physically or socially active. An increasing number of pupils are becoming more reliant on new technologies including the internet and personal music players such as MP3s.

There remains a strong concern at the incidence of bullying in schools. Some incidents of bullying have also developed into high profile cases including suicides. However, schools are mindful of this issue and there are many good examples of anti-bullying initiatives to address this. Nevertheless, pressure groups such as the Swansea Bay Racial Equality Council (2008) are concerned at the growing incidence of bullying amongst ethnic minority pupils. There is also increasing concern amongst some teachers and within the media about the tendency for young people to carry knives and/or other weapons into school, often with the excuse of needing them for self-protection, sometimes because of bullying. Our Group unanimously deplores this trend and believes that Welsh Assembly Government should do everything possible to prevent this unwarranted behaviour.

4.1.2 Children and Young People who Display Low Level Misbehaviour/Disruption

Low level misbehaviour can occur in any class at any time. There was a view that in a school with a strong ethos and culture of managing attendance and behaviour, the impact of low level misbehaviour was likely to be markedly reduced.

The range of low level misbehaviour/disruption includes:

- noisy entry into class
- marginal lateness for lessons
- lack of material or equipment
- failure to do homework
- calling out across the classroom
- teasing and provoking other pupils
- insisting upon a teacher's immediate response
- moving out of seat without permission
- failing to listen to instructions
- talking unnecessarily.

The level at which such behaviours occur seems to depend upon the ethos and culture of the school, the individual teacher's skills and the composition of the class.

With all our work to date, there emerged a view that it is continuous low level disruption that can have a serious cumulative effect upon both school staff and children. Tired, over extended staff, can at times, respond to situations in ways they would never choose if they were relaxed and confident in the classroom. The cumulative effects of pupils displaying:

- attention-seeking behaviour
- poor classroom survival skills
- limited social skills

can all add to the pressures upon school staff and make the daily task of teaching a challenging one.

4.1.3 Children and Young People at Risk of Exclusion

We recognise that the majority of young people attend school and behave. This is reflected in the fact that the vast majority of schools are orderly, well-run, supportive environments as indicated in the Chief Inspector for Schools in Wales Reports for 2005-2006 and 2006-2007. Nevertheless, the Chief Inspector for Schools in Wales in her Annual Report for 2005-2006 commented on the fact that absenteeism from schools and some pupil referral units was too high in parts of Wales.

Some children and young people find school to be an unrewarding environment. In some cases, this may stem from unmet and, worse

still, unidentified additional learning needs. There is good evidence from Howe and Mercer (2007) that many children and young people who misbehave in school lack the literacy skills to engage in the curriculum at the level at which it is being presented to them. This can result in disaffection and ultimately lead to disengagement. When this occurs within the context of an inflexible curriculum (ie one that does not match their interest, enthusiasms and aspirations), it is likely that they will feel that:

- they cannot be successful
- no one cares
- they do not fit in
- they are to blame in some way.

When this experience is compounded by a peer-pressured 'try not to succeed' attitude or a lack of parental involvement and disinterest in the young person's learning, it is likely that the young person will become disaffected and disengaged from education. Evidence from the juvenile secure estate suggests that many young people who have become disaffected, often become disengaged from education because their additional learning needs have never been assessed, diagnosed or met.

When considering a child's problematic behaviour, the Group defined this in terms of the needs of the child as:

"Any child with emotional, social, behavioural or learning needs, where behaviour and/or attendance adversely affects their learning and/or the learning of others."

It is clear that the definition of need is a complex one and both our collective understanding and our capacity to meet such need formed one of the key foci of the Review.

Children with emotional difficulties may turn inwards and withdraw from others. Their problems may only really become evident in their reduced socialisation and disengagement from their peers. Some children and young people lack the social skills to cope effectively within a classroom setting.

It is becoming evident that better detection skills and screening techniques are required. Screening needs to be able to detect changes and differences in pupils' behaviour and demeanours, depression and withdrawal. While one pupil may for example, be able to cope with the sudden and unexpected ending of a first relationship, another may not be able to do so and view it as a catastrophe.

For these reasons the availability of advice, support and contact from appropriate professionals is a pre-requisite in and out-of-schools. The presence of pastoral staff will have protected and helped inordinate members of pupils with their difficulties. Pastoral care provides an essential safety net in some of our schools, especially at the secondary phase. Professionals too, need to learn from critical case reviews including disseminating learning across all agencies.

Other children and young people have emotional and social difficulties that they act out in classrooms and it is their overt behavioural difficulties that often trigger our concern.

In addition, there are children and young people who have additional learning needs and cannot readily engage in learning at the level at which it is being delivered. In frustration, these pupils too can act out their frustration in ways that cause behavioural difficulties in the classroom.

The Group also highlighted its concerns for those children and young people who became disengaged from learning because they lacked the personal resilience to cope with school life in its current form. These children and young people may find that the existing structures within school contribute to and can even be one of the sources of their anxiety. At the extreme end, this may take the form of a phobia. Such individuals may need help and support from services like CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) educational or clinical psychologists or possibly, peripatetic counselling services. The Welsh Assembly Government has recently introduced a School-Based Counselling Services Strategy. At present, low-level funding has been given to some LEAs from 2006-2008 but this is due to significantly increase in the near future following the announcement by Edwina Hart (Health Minister) about the Suicide Prevention Plan.

4.1.4 Troubled Children and Young People

We differentiated between those troubled children and young people ie those who experience personal difficulties and turn inward, close down, and withdraw from engagement with others, from those children and young people who overtly act out their difficulties in school. We recognise the particular problems associated with those pupils who turn inward with their difficulties. As they are often not acting out their difficulties they may go unnoticed unless all teachers in school are able to scan and screen for such difficulties. There is a need to ensure that appropriate attention is paid to this vulnerable group of pupils who may not cause staff difficulties but who may be at significant risk.

We appreciate that many troubled children are managed effectively in well-run, well-organised, interesting classrooms with teachers who have empathy, insight and the skills needed to secure control without seeking confrontation. In other words, to a great extent, the way in which individual troubled pupils act out their difficulties is often linked with the skill levels of those responsible for teaching them. This question of skill levels was raised repeatedly in our consultative workshops and is an issue that permeates discussion of all types of pupils with behavioural difficulties.

4.1.5 Children and Young People Being Educated Outside of School (Education Otherwise Than at School, EOTAS)

A key concern is one of precise definition of who is being educated outside of mainstream schools. Our work suggests that there are many more children and young people placed outside schools than official figures for exclusion suggest for a whole variety of different reasons.

Clearly there are children who are educated outside school because they have long-term health needs and there are some whose parents elect to home educate. However, even in this latter group, there are pupils being home educated because parents have come to believe that their child is not receiving sufficient support for their needs and unless they withdraw their child s/he will be excluded from school. There is also a group of parents who elect to home educate when they feel threatened by prosecution for their child's non-attendance. Finally, some parents and carers decide to educate their children at home for a number of other different reasons, both as a positive statement about the education of their children as well as possibly, a reaction to what may have happened to them within the school system (eg bullying).

There is a serious challenge to face in accurately identifying the true number of children and young people who have been moved out of mainstream school. The Group recognised that there were:

- Pupils formally excluded from schools.
- Pupils who have been subject to a move, ahead of exclusion, into an off-site centre, a unit, an FE college, or some other alternative provision.
- Pupils who have been 'unlawfully excluded' ie whose parents have been advised that should their child attend school again, s/he will be formally excluded.
- Pupils who are dually registered at a school and pupil referral unit (PRU) but who are unlikely ever to return to mainstream school.
- Pupils who are dually registered and for whom there is active intervention and planning to secure their return to a mainstream setting.

The Group agreed that a common reason for pupils being placed outside mainstream schools was due to their school's inability to manage or change their behaviour. These pupils have not necessarily been formally permanently excluded from school but in practice, they are all 'excluded' from mainstream learning. There is a need for research to determine this 'real' number. At present, it is difficult to plan for, fund and resource the learning needs of these children and young people. The Welsh Assembly Government is currently developing a national database of those pupils educated outside schools. This will need careful development and promotion in order for it to find and meet the needs of its target groups.

There is a need for the Welsh Assembly Government to work with schools and LAs on a clear, unambiguous definition of pupils outside of mainstream schooling. This will assist the accurate tracking of pupils. It will also assist in more accurate data gathering exercises.

Furthermore, there is data on the costs to individuals and the costs to the community at large of exclusion from school. There is a need to determine the true level of 'exclusion' from schools in Wales, in order to assess the real overall costs to individuals and to communities in Wales. The scale of these costs is likely to justify far greater investment in prevention, early intervention and intensive intervention with children and young people at risk of 'exclusion'.

Establishing these real costs will also not be easy. Local authorities across Wales respond to the needs of pupils at the point of exclusion in very different ways. Some have far more out-of-school provision than others. However, there is some evidence that making more specialist placements available in off-site provision results in higher levels of removal from school. Schools, too, manage their behaviour policies very differently. In some schools exclusion policies are implemented to send out a strong message to non-conformist pupils and their parents. In other schools, exclusion is perceived to be a last resort in line with Welsh Assembly Government guidance in inclusion and pupil support. In reality, the majority of schools implement policies between these two extremes on an incident-led basis. In some cases, the use of permanent exclusions provides a true measure of a school's frustration with pupils' behaviour, whilst other schools in partnership with their local authorities respond ahead of permanent exclusion and organise a move to another school or alternative or out-of-school provision for such children and young people.

There is a need to establish a consistent funding mechanism for pupils not attached to mainstream schools. There is also a necessity to secure a complete picture of practice in Wales and to develop a resource base to reflect the true level of need.

4.1.6 Key Issues from the Interim Report

The Interim Report also highlighted the need for much earlier intervention in cases of both non-attendance and behaviour. On behaviour, challenges within schools and the classroom were not getting any easier. Despite this, according to Estyn, the overwhelming majority of schools in Wales were well-managed and only a handful had significant behavioural problems. Rates of exclusion varied considerably between individual schools and LAs. Some schools appear to exclude difficult pupils more readily than others. Although clear evidence on the use of unofficial exclusions exist, it is difficult at present to accurately quantify this issue and to be certain of the data because of the extent of unofficial exclusions of various kinds.

Existing guidance on exclusions from the Assembly was felt by the Group to be adequate but variations in practice abound. However, providing full-time education (defined as 25 hours for KS4) of equivalent learning for a pupil outside of a mainstream class is an expensive business. There needs to be detailed consideration as to:

- (a) the true cost of adequate, specialist small class provision
- (b) how these costs can be met
- (c) auditing and monitoring processes and the review of this provision.

The extent and type of out of out-of-school and alternative curriculum provision varies between LAs in Wales. Whilst the Assembly is keen to take forward the Children Act 2004 agenda, and the Group can understand the advantages of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary working, there is too little evidence at the moment of good practice in this field (Reid, 2005e). More work within LAs needs to take place on implementing collaboration, strategic networking, and partnerships which involves middle as well as senior management and front line practice.

Possibly the strongest evidence we received was that professionals considered that there were training and development needs at almost every phase and career level. Many professionals also believe that more parents need help in managing their children's behaviour and attendance.

4.2 Stage Two

The data for stage two was collected between June 2007 and February 2008 (see section 3.2). This data was collected from discussion at specially-convened focus groups or from key points emanating from discussion within the Review Group at meetings or are the result of reports and/or evidence gathered from commissioned reports.

Attendance

The Review Group wishes to acknowledge how successful many schools throughout Wales are in managing attendance. Nevertheless, rates of non-attendance from some secondary and primary schools remain disproportionately high when compared with other schools in Wales and the rest of the UK. There already exists a great deal of evidence on the link between schools and non-attendance (Reid, 1985, 2002). There is considerable evidence of the best short and long-term strategies to use to combat truancy and other forms of non-attendance (Reid, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2004a, 2006a). A practical manual for how primary and secondary schools can best tackle truancy and non-attendance has also been produced (Reid, 2000).

4.2.1 Attendance Codes

The evidence emanating from key stakeholders (such as the principal education welfare officers or inclusion officers) in the 22 Welsh local authorities on the use of attendance codes stressed the importance of accuracy especially when data was being used for

comparative proposes. The evidence suggests that some codes are being used inconsistently between schools. For example, the use of coding for holidays being taken during term time (with or without the prior consent of the headteacher). The use of the 'study leave' code can also be problematic as it appears to be used differently by LAs and/or schools. Some schools and LAs were encouraging the use of marking pupils on study leave as 'being present' rather than marking an 'authorised absence' as required by the Welsh Assembly Government. Therefore, there is an argument for focusing more upon attendance rather than absence. Perhaps too much energy is currently expended in attempting to discern what constitutes an authorised or unauthorised absence. This is an issue upon which the Welsh Assembly Government may wish to reflect further.

Schools and local authorities arranging different term and half-term dates and different start and finish times can create difficulties for parents and/or carers living and working within different LA boundaries.

There are particular issues around the use of codes with gypsy traveller pupils, with periods of 'extended holidays', and with those heritage visits undertaken by ethnic minority groups with days set aside for religious observance. The Attendance Codes' Focus Group were collectively of the opinion that the Assembly could helpfully redraft the attendance guidance and regulations. There was a view that the attendance guidance and regulations could be revised so as not to penalise schools for issues beyond their control (eg traveller pupils, young offenders etc).

There should be much more emphasis on earlier intervention. This would involve more analysis and intervention of pupils' attendance data at the foundation/primary stage by schools and the EWS/ESW service. At present, too many interventions in cases of pupil non-attendance occur much too late, often after a pupil's non-attendance has reached the persistent stage, and often at the later stages of secondary schooling. Improving school attendance is a critical part of raising standards and implementing the Welsh Assembly Government's School Effectiveness Framework. Prevention of non-attendance should be the first guiding principle. Again, we acknowledge the vital part schools play in attracting pupils to attend on a regular basis and we must always remember that the vast majority of pupils are consistent regular attenders. Whilst more emphasis should be given to earlier interventions in individual cases, there will be occasions when whole school interventions may be required to enable schools to refocus their strategies for improving school attendance. Implementing earlier interventions will require effective multi-agency practice, better training, more targeting of resources onto the primary and foundation phases and Flying Start will involve closer work with parents and/or carers.

At the same time, it needs to be remembered that many of the most serious and persistent cases of absenteeism occur post-13. Statutory agencies, especially the ESW/EWS have a duty to intervene in all cases of non-attendance. The problem at the moment is that adolescent crisis cases often take precedence over the needs of younger pupils and the implementation of early intervention strategies.

4.2.2 Attendance Issues - The NFER Reports

The Reports undertaken by the NFER (Wales) into the Use of Electronic Registration Systems and on the Effectiveness of the Education Welfare Service in Wales were both generally welcomed. All fifteen recommendations in the latter Report were endorsed by delegates.

A number of key issues did however, arise in the focus groups. These included the fact that IT systems between some schools and LAs were not always readily transferable. The Assembly has however, already provided £6M to improve the use of electronic registration schemes. Whilst electronic registration is available in most secondary schools, there is too little systematic analysis of the data for patterns, links, clusters and risk factors. Comparative data between schools needs to be made available to headteachers and senior staff in schools.

Some supply staff appear to have particular difficulties using attendance codes. Some LAs use attendance data better than others, especially for comparative purposes between schools and for audit and challenge purposes. The use of attendance support officers, electronic registration schemes and having a senior school manager in charge of attendance is proving successful good practice in many settings. Delegates considered that the use of lesson-by-lesson electronic registration checks does help to reduce post-registration truancy and specific lesson absence in some schools.

Some attendance targets given to schools by LAs were considered 'unrealistic.' Equally, some delegates questioned whether the attendance targets in Learning Country 2 were achievable, such as the attendance targets for secondary schools which should be at least 92% by 2007, and at least 93% by 2010. It is worrying that professionals in this field do not feel confident about raising standards and that some appear not to understand the nature of these targets. Rather, the target is a national one. The Welsh Assembly Government provides schools with realistic targets (ie. higher or lower than 92%) depending on the free school meals data.

Some delegates considered that school governing bodies should receive a full annual report on attendance and related issues. Some stakeholders even thought there should be one school governor nominated to oversee attendance acting in a critical friend capacity.

At present, there is little evidence of good attendance practice in Wales appearing in academic and professional literature. This is an area where the Welsh Assembly Government can give a lead through the implementation of a suitable attendance (and behaviour) website.

4.2.3 Prosecution of Attendance Cases

The evidence suggests that prosecuting parents for their children's non-attendance rarely works (Zhang, 2004). There is a clear relationship between poverty and the prosecution of non-attendance (Zhang, 2003). Nevertheless, most professionals believe that the potential prosecution of parents has a deterrent value. Recent evidence suggests however, that few professionals have confidence in the court outcomes of attendance cases (Reid, 2004b, 2006b, 2006d, 2007a).

The views put forward by the Focus Group included:

- An increasing number of cases of non-attendance are due to domestic abuse and children being kept home or wanting to stay home to protect a parent from violence. Speed was key with these cases as they needed to be processed before the victim lost their nerve.
- ASBOs were not considered appropriate for non-attendance cases.
- The setting-up of protocols between magistrate courts and local authorities was an important way of ensuring effective joint-working and prosecution.
- In many cases an initial sentence was not imposed by magistrates but the case was returned to in 6-8 weeks to give the opportunity for improvement in attendance. It was made clear in the first hearing that if there were no improvement then a sentence would be imposed in subsequent hearings.
- The maximum fine was never imposed as it was highly unlikely that this could be paid. Frequently, even small fines remained unpaid or were eventually remitted.
- Imprisonment was very much used as a last resort as it would not generally resolve the underlying attendance problem as the parents would not be around to encourage the children to attend given the shortage of women's prisons in Wales.
- The magistrates do not request children to attend court but if they do they would normally take the opportunity to address them if they were over the age of 14 and present with their parent(s) to ensure that they all received the necessary background information. Children under 10 are not allowed into a live courtroom.
- It was felt to be key to the effectiveness of prosecution cases that local authority officials should talk to the justice clerk. In many areas the magistrates provide training to others, including the EWS, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and local authority legal services on the prosecution process. Magistrates also work with the local

community to encourage groups of people to know more about the working of the courts.

They can also visit schools and run workshops for the pupils.

- The outcome of cases is very often related to the way in which they are organised. The evidence of the focus group suggested that grouping together a number of prosecution cases is generally more effective than hearing them in an ad-hoc fashion. Most courts should be able to make arrangements to rearrange the hearing of cases in order to block attendance cases together.
- Prosecutions towards the end of term or year were generally felt to be of less value as there is little scope for making any improvements, particularly if the child is coming towards the end of compulsory schooling.
- Legal departments of local authorities need to clarify cases before they are presented to courts.
- Recently, there have been a number of legal cases taken out against authorities for failing to educate children and young people. This may have meant perhaps that authorities are tending to prosecute for non-attendance more than in previous years.
- The problem of taking three court sessions to get an appeal is due to be reduced shortly as there will be a move to get a plea within two court sessions. This is being piloted at a number of courts from 1 August 2007.
- Whilst the process of prosecution is often time-consuming and very often does not lead to an improvement in attendance, most delegates still felt that it was a necessary final deterrent and prosecutions had a value in sending out messages to the general population.
- Some delegates wondered whether the Scottish Children's Hearing System would be a better model for dealing with attendance cases than the existing English and Welsh format.

Another key related issue was the socio-economic differences between schools in terms of catchment area and pupil intake. Schools with more needy pupils from disadvantaged family backgrounds often had disproportionate and higher numbers of parents and carers taken to court for their children's non-attendance. Equally, the evidence from the academic literature (Reid, 1999, 2002) is that once some pupils fall behind with their school work and are unable to catch up, they become increasingly likely to drop out again and move from the occasional to the persistent stage of absence. This is why individualised support and learning coaches should be so helpful to these pupils. It is also why a more relevant secondary curriculum is regarded by professionals as being the most important change needed to improve school attendance Reid (2004b, 2005a, 2006b, 2006c, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c). Research suggests that the 'push' and 'pull' factors are also important in understanding the causes of pupils' absenteeism (Croll and Moses, 2005; Reid, 2008a).

4.2.4 Truancy Sweeps/Post-Registration Truancy

There were mixed views on the usefulness of truancy sweeps. The Group broadly agreed that truancy sweeps were not effective at catching hard-core truants as they would generally not be in the areas where sweeps were being undertaken. Many felt that truancy sweeps had little effect but were useful for generating publicity in the media. A minority however, considered that truancy sweeps were important in promoting the message that missing school was not acceptable. In addition, sweeps often picked up those children and young people who might be on the edge of truanting more regularly or those who were out-of-school for a range of potentially serious reasons (drugs, alcohol abuse, family conflicts, vulnerable children) and who may need referring to other agencies such as social services.

There were also mixed views on the best timing for sweeps. Some felt that the lead up to Christmas was a good time as the pick-up rate was then generally high - usually of children accompanied by their parents - others however, disagreed.

On the issue of post-registration truancy, lesson-by-lesson registration was suggested as a powerful deterrent but there was also talk of the need for schools to cover exits and the need to ensure that there are a limited number of exit points for pupils.

4.3 Practitioner Working Groups

This next section is based on the views of selected professionals who attended specially-convened focus groups held in North and South Wales. The evidence presented reflects their views and may not be the total picture or the views that would be obtained from a more detailed research study.

The Practitioners' Working Groups provided evidence on five key issues including the challenges facing schools and teachers on attendance and behaviour; professional training and development, the use of physical intervention, violence in schools, and additional support required from the Assembly and LAs in Wales.

4.3.1 The Challenges

Practitioners consider that the lack of (effective) parental support is the main inhibitor in behaviour and attendance cases. This is followed by the fact that too many children and their parents have little or no respect for authority or authority figures. Our concept of 'respect' in society has changed and it is now about being earned rather than a position being taken for granted.

Changes within society are making the management of pupils' behaviour increasingly time consuming, especially as English may not be the first language for some parents and Wales is a bilingual country. Interestingly, migrants tend to do well academically and be well-behaved. Some staff believe that existing aspects of the curriculum are

largely irrelevant for less able pupils although, it is hoped that the development of 14-19 Learning Pathways with its re-emphasis on vocational learning will prove beneficial in the near future.

Practitioners consider that behavioural and attendance issues that were largely the pre-requisite of KS4 have moved downwards and increasingly involve KS3, KS2 and even KS1 pupils. The fact that so many primary-aged pupils are perceived to have either or both attendance and/or behavioural difficulties is a worrying trend for the future of the teaching profession and Welsh education. This is a markedly different phenomenon to the position thirty years ago when very few primary-aged pupils were involved in unauthorised absence or were considered to be disruptive. This is an aspect of managing schools, which is different today from twenty or thirty years ago. Many more primary headteachers are having to cope with attendance, behavioural, bullying, exclusion and safeguarding issues than their predecessors. Equally, the nature of some of these issues is different (eg. cyber bullying, the use of internet chat rooms etc).

Staff consider that much earlier intervention is required along with more and better inter-agency and multi-disciplinary work. More research on good practice is needed in this field.

On attendance, many staff consider that home visits and other intervention techniques often occur much too late, frequently, once a pupil has reached the persistent stage. The same is true for pupils who manifest behavioural disorders.

Professionals are concerned with the perceived increase in bullying. This includes physical, verbal and cyber bullying. The nature of bullying in and out-of-school has changed markedly over recent years. Moreover, coping with bullying is complicated by a series of further issues. For example, some staff believe that too many pupils are vulnerable because they are unable to cope with ribald behaviour rather than intentional bullying. Teachers especially are concerned by the trend amongst some parents to make allegations against staff. When allegations are justified, staff believe professionals should pay the price. Some professionals believe that their colleagues require better listening skills and should be able to take more empathetic approaches towards their pupils. Many professionals believe they have received insufficient help and training in behaviour management, especially in terms of managing disruptive pupils or groups. It is important therefore, that professionals receive more and better training in behavioural management in order for schools and LAs to implement the improving behaviour agenda based on research evidence and good practice.

Staff vary in their perception of the use of fixed-term and permanent exclusions. The majority of professionals consider that the provision of alternative education for permanent excludees is grossly inadequate. They also think that both fixed-term and permanent

exclusions should be used sparingly. By contrast, they also consider that local authorities and headteachers should adopt zero-tolerance approaches in cases of violence towards staff. This even extends to out-of-school incidents as well as those that take place on school premises.

Some delegates were particularly concerned by a number of other key issues, all of which could be discussed at length in their own right. These include the number of pupils with low self-esteem, the perceived rise in the number of pupils with mental health problems and social and emotional difficulties, the low career aspirations and the perceived rise in special educational needs in all its various manifestations. Raising the competence levels of some parents and carers should be made another priority.

4.3.2 Professional Training and Development

Practitioners consider that the lack of funding for professional development and in-service training is inhibiting good practice in the management of behaviour within schools. Better training on behavioural management is needed at almost every level. This includes initial teacher training (ITT) where it is considered that a module on behavioural management should be mandatory. It is also essential for NQTs and for staff taking up middle management posts. Classroom assistants and learning support assistants (LSAs) too, need this help. In fact, teaching assistants are often the first point of contact in schools and need to be aware of their rights and responsibilities and of the best ways to manage potentially difficult pupils. Whole school training as well as individual support is necessary in most establishments. As training and development is such a key issue we will address it at much greater length in sections 5 and 6.

4.3.3 The Use of Physical Intervention

Practitioners consider that an all-Wales policy on the use of physical intervention with pupils in schools is urgently needed. Many staff think that the use of physical intervention is a potentially 'grey' area. Therefore, any guidance needs to be both clear and consistent with appropriate training being given to staff in all schools. The same message needs to be given to all stakeholders involved in the education process including pupils, parents and governors. At present, some staff feel either cautious or negative towards using restraining procedures because of a perceived lack of clarity over guidance and subsequent potential litigious action.

Staff believe that a central reporting system and audit book should be introduced by schools and LAs to account for each incident in which physical intervention has been exercised to make a situation safe.

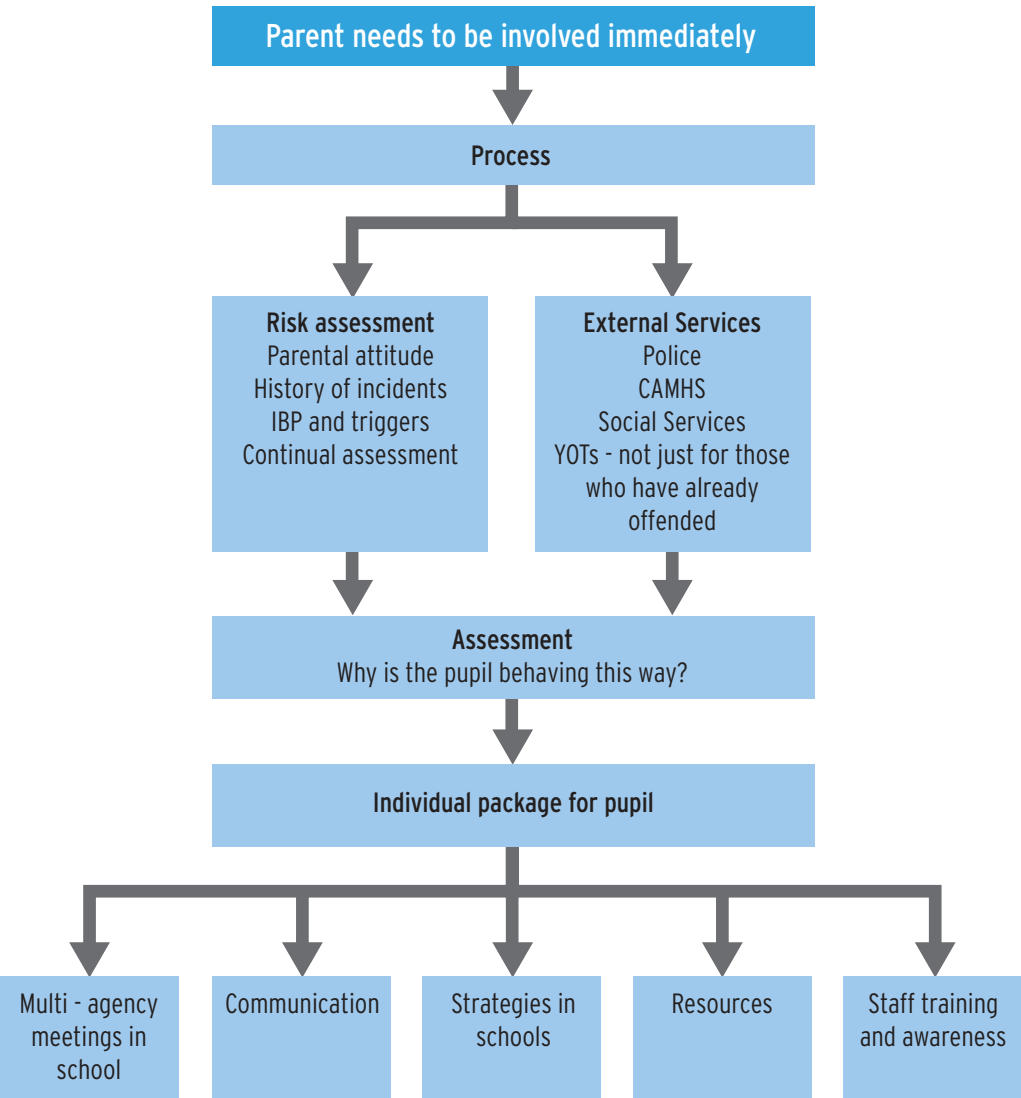
4.3.4 Violence in Schools

Figure 4 diagrammatically shows a possible model of how professionals think cases of violence should be managed based on data collated from the event in Conway.

Fortunately, acts of violence in schools in Wales are at this point in time strictly limited. Nevertheless, some delegates especially mature staff reported that they feel potentially more ‘threatened’ than at any previous time in their careers. It was not clear whether this was an issue about teachers’ skills and confidence or whether it was related to changes that have taken place within society. How for example, is a teacher to know whether one pupil may be carrying a knife in school when another is not?

For these reasons, better early identification of potential offenders is needed along with more multi-agency solutions that involve parents and/or carers.

Figure 4: Dealing with Cases of Violence - Process Diagram



It was believed that some pupils feel 'frustrated' in school and by the inflexible nature of some parts of the 3-16 curriculum. Staff believe that the use of alcohol and drugs amongst a small minority of pupils is a growing and disturbing phenomenon and some staff feel that they are coming into contact with more potentially difficult and confrontational situations that used to be the case say, twenty years ago. Staff consider that far too many underage pupils are being allowed to consume alcohol out-of-school - many in their early teens and even younger. This is having a marked deleterious affect on the behaviour and attendance of a small minority of pupils.

The rise of urban gangs and a gang culture is being highlighted by the media based mainly on events in other parts of the UK. This is affecting girls as well as boys and is influencing some cases of bullying, including the 'bullying' of staff. Nevertheless, in Wales, staff believe that few pupils presently carry knives or other weapons for protection. They are however, aware of the publicity given to these areas by the media mainly from incidents which have taken place either in or within the proximity of schools and within the local community and understandably, teachers' unions and their members are concerned by this development as are parents, governors and other pupils.

Staff consider that the lack of parenting skills of some parents and carers is contributing towards making life more difficult for teachers in schools. The Review Group were interested in the recent research undertaken by Gordon Harold (2007) on Promoting Family and School-Based Support Programmes Aimed at Improving Outcomes for Families and Children in Wales and considered at length the seminal study of Desforges (2003, see pgs 23-29) on the lessons from research on parents and schools. This found that the impact of parental involvement on children's attainment and behaviour was greater than the impact of school quality.

4.3.5 Support from the Assembly

The majority of professionals consider that some of the initiatives in the process of being introduced by the Assembly will, in the future, be of considerable help to teachers, schools and parents. These initiatives include the 14-19 Learning Pathways together with the learning coaches concept, the introduction of the Foundation Phase and better multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary working, although it was noted that these developments are in their early stages.

Managing pupils' attendance and behaviour in Wales is a complex task. Issues which need to be managed include the curriculum, cultural diversity and urban-rural dimensions, more and better out-of-school provision and alternative (appropriate) curriculum opportunities, transport, changing societal and habitation trends, the need for better restorative justice systems, the Year 6-7 transition, bullying, the requirements of looked after and traveller pupils the role of governing bodies, ADHD needs and several others. This is why it is

important for the Support for Learners area of the Welsh Assembly Government to be managed and appropriately staffed by high calibre personnel. Some considered that it was better to have an all-Wales policy on key issues introduced centrally by the Assembly rather than relying on 22 different LA documents as this can cause both confusion and differential practice.

4.3.6 Support from LAs

Professionals consider that all LAs should have appropriately staffed and qualified behaviour teams, EWS, social inclusion and alternative curriculum support staff. Every LA should ensure that all teachers including para-professionals such as classroom assistants, learning coaches and governors should be trained in attendance and behavioural issues including exclusion and physical intervention. Other areas where further training might be required include group-work, classroom management and positive strategies for engaging pupils.

Amongst professionals, the lack of availability of LA support staff time is often an issue, especially the need for more and quicker response times from educational psychologists. Delegates noted the perceived rise in the number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and additional learning needs (ALN) who had behavioural or attendance problems or both. The size of LAs and therefore, of the incapacity to support schools in some fields can be an issue in some parts of Wales. Therefore, delegates welcome the move towards regionally-based and interdisciplinary practice.

Some professionals believe that social workers should be attached to large secondary schools where there is a need. Some staff consider that police should have more involvement in schools, particularly in cases of violence. It was widely recognised that providing ideal support to schools on behaviour and attendance requires considerably more manpower, training, estate, equipment and resources, way beyond the existing means of many LAs at the present time. It was agreed that combating poverty and low attainment should be endorsed as key priorities by the Assembly as these are key related issues as considered in the *Egan Report* (2007) for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on combating child poverty in Wales.

4.4 The Voice of Children and Young People

The evidence presented in this section emanates from the research undertaken by Cazbah which was specially commissioned by the Review Group for this Report. These findings are unique and the first such data collected from children and young people on behaviour and attendance from primary-aged pupils, from those in out-of-school units, and from certain specialist categories. These included:

- pupils with additional learning needs
- disabled pupils

- gypsy and traveller pupils
- minority ethnic pupils
- looked after children
- young parents
- pupils in pupil referral units and alternative pathways
- children and young people in the secure estate or working with the Youth Offending Service (YOS).

In total, 149 children and young people were interviewed. Of these, 78 were in primary schools and 71 were in secondary settings. Primary schools where children were interviewed included schools in Denbighshire, Carmarthen and West Wales, Powys, Cardiff and Swansea. Secondary settings included locations in Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Gwynedd, Barry and Swansea.

At the outset, it must be said that all the views recorded emanated from the children and young people themselves, with no input from teachers or other youth workers, as this was the remit for this exercise. They were all pleased to be included in the research and felt it was important that their views have been sought. All the pupils are to be given feedback on their final collated responses.

4.4.1 Summary of Findings

The development and delivery of the children and young people focus groups as part of the National Behaviour and Attendance Review has been an enlightening process. We have gathered a wide range of views from a diverse group of children and young people across Wales. Throughout the process many common themes and interesting ideas about how to tackle the important issues of attendance and behaviour emerged from a group of children and young people who were engaged in the review process.

Nearly every child and young person that took part in these focus groups - in practically every setting - had a good awareness of the benefits of attending school and exhibiting positive behaviour. All were also acutely aware of the consequences of non-attendance and poor behaviour both within their current setting and the affect on a pupil's later life chances. They understood the law regarding school attendance and were aware of the rules at their own school/setting.

The quality of teaching was an important factor in both attendance and behaviour: nearly all young people in the secondary settings, and a few in primary schools, criticised the use of supply teachers. These were seen as ineffective and powerless. They disrupted routine, didn't know the children and were an easy target for bad behaviour.

There were strong views also about schooling styles, with criticism of 'boring' lessons involving just copying out facts. Some wanted more practical or vocational learning and there was a view among some in alternative provision that mainstream schooling was not right for everyone and that this should not be a 'one size fits all' system.

Bullying was a common theme, with nearly every group citing this as a reason for non-attendance.

Rewards for good attendance and behaviour were used in most settings and the young people said that responded well to these. School trips and activities, 'golden time', and certificates and prizes were the most used. The sanctions they found most effective were to miss out on these, to be separated from friends and to face isolation. Discipline systems using yellow and red cards were used in many schools. Young people in alternative provision said exclusion was ineffective in combating non-attendance as it rewarded someone who didn't want to go to school anyway, with days at home.

A number of interesting ideas for tackling poor attendance and behaviour came out of the 'graffiti board' exercise at the end of the sessions. One recurring idea was to punish offenders with tasks they wouldn't want to carry out a second time for example, picking up litter or removing chewing gum from the underside of tables. Many well-thought through opinions were offered. There were mature attitudes from some of the young people in alternative provision with for example, advice about not mixing with the 'wrong crowd', taking responsibility for yourself and getting enough sleep.

There were however, views that were common to all groups, though with expected variations dependant on the kind of establishment, and between those in primary, and those in secondary settings. There were also differences in understanding of the levels of individual responsibility and school accountability.

4.4.2 Pupils' Views on Attendance

The key findings were:

- There was a definite understanding that missing school or choosing not to attend regularly adversely affected your long-term life chances.
- Some older pupils felt they did not learn this in time and that work should start at an early age with 'at risk' children.
- Bullying was a common concern and a reason given for non-attendance.
- Most pupils were aware of the legal requirements of attending school and the consequences of persistent non-attendance. Many of the older children felt parents were powerless to make them go into school and the young person must take responsibility themselves.
- School is seen as a social as well as an education setting, with friendships valued highly.
- Nearly all young people criticised the use of supply teachers. These were seen as powerless and ineffective.

- There appears to be a fear of raising the school leaving age to 18, though an allowance like the EMA would encourage more to stay. Others said it would be acceptable if the school regime or style was changed at 16 to reflect more adult learning.
- Younger pupils accept, enjoy and appear to respond to school-based rewards systems - school trips and certificates or prizes seem to work well.
- Some young people in the more disenfranchised groups felt school was boring and irrelevant.
- The most common reasons for non-attendance (apart from illness and holidays) were bullying, tiredness, dislike of the teachers/lessons and boredom (Reid, 2008a).

4.4.3 Pupils' Views on Behaviour

The main findings were:

- There was a general respect for discipline as long as it was fair. They were scathing about inconsistency and teachers acting on a students' reputation without checking the facts.
- Many felt discipline needed to be clearer, consistently applied and harsher. A few of the older students suggested teaching 'the army way' with stricter discipline and respect.
- Behaviour is clearly influenced by teachers in class, with the relationship they develop with the pupils critical to engaging them. They are damning about the use of supply teachers. They see these as 'fair game.'
- Many feel that lessons are boring, with too much copying. They want more active, practical, skills and vocationally based learning. Some support the use of mentoring and buddy systems in developing good behaviour.
- Some felt rebellious about studying things for the sake of it - modern foreign languages came up consistently.
- Many in alternative settings felt that they wanted to improve their behaviour and get back to mainstream school society but were unable to sustain levels of behaviour when challenged.
- Anger management seemed to be an issue for many of the young people from out-of-school settings.

4.5 Young People's Views Aged 11-16

NBAR utilised the Welsh Assembly Government commissioned survey report entitled Evaluation of Young People's Access to their Entitlements undertaken by Interactive Feedback. The sample technique used was a multi-stage stratified random sample of all secondary schools in Wales. Ultimately, 31 schools throughout Wales participated and 2043 pupils aged 11-16 completed the questionnaire. 1,043 of the respondents were female (51.1%) and 1,000 were male (48.9%). 18,441 were English speakers (90.3%) and 199 (9.7%) completed the questionnaire in Welsh.

The results considered by the NBAR Group included those findings which related to attendance, behaviour, bullying and exclusions. In addition, we looked at data relating to young people's feelings about themselves, their lifestyles, friends, educational establishments, life outside school and habits. The latter included their views on alcohol, drugs, crime and antisocial behaviour.

Ten specific issues were used in the survey. These were:

- rights and entitlements
- being heard
- feeling good
- education and employment
- participation (taking part, getting involved)
- being individual
- easy access
- health and wellbeing
- access to information and guidance
- safety and security.

The full results from this survey will be posted on the NBAR website by the end of July 2008.

4.6 Parents

The NBAR questionnaire to parents was sent out to 536 individuals, statutory agencies, private and voluntary bodies using the Children in Wales database. Approximately, two thirds of the recipients were from voluntary bodies. Although a comparatively small opportunity sample, the findings raise some interesting issues and are in line with other research carried out amongst parents (eg. Parentline Plus). Much more research is needed however, using a stratified sample before making firm conclusions.

Amongst the respondents were thirteen cases of unofficial (illegal) exclusions, fifteen fixed-term exclusions and five permanent exclusions. This small study, therefore, suggests that the ratio between unofficial and permanent/fixed term exclusions may be high but further research to clarify this issue is needed. If this study was to prove representative, it would raise serious concerns about the level of unofficial exclusions in Wales.

Some of the reasons given by parents for pupils' exclusion seemed trivial. These included a girl who was excluded 'for dyeing her hair.' Another pupil was excluded because her one-to-one school support worker was away on sick leave.

A parent indicated that her child was repeatedly being unofficially excluded from school on many occasions (which she called 'voluntary exclusion') because the school was unable to cope with her needs. As a new issue arose, her child was 'excluded' until the school found a solution.

Thirty-seven parents or carers said that 52 of their children showed behavioural difficulties. Of these, 75% had behavioural problems at both home and school with 20% stating the issues were only apparent in school. The average age when the parents or carers considered the behavioural problems to start was as young as 5.1 years of age. Difficulties started from as young as 18 months to 15 years of age.

Parents contacted a range of professionals and individuals for help and support. These included classroom teachers, headteachers, heads of year, relatives, friends, colleagues, health visitors, nurses, GPs, paediatricians, voluntary bodies, educational psychologists, social workers, CAMHS staff, education welfare officers and Youth Offending Service, amongst others. Parents said that they tended to receive the most effective help (in rank order) from voluntary bodies, relatives, partners and friends rather than from other professionals.

Of the parents who answered the survey, twenty-one had children with attendance problems. Of these, nearly all (95%) of the children also experienced behavioural problems. The average age for attendance problems to start was 8.1 years of age with an age range between 3-14 years. This was an unexpected result as research tends to suggest that school attendance problems are mainly associated with secondary-age pupils. It also suggests that for many secondary-age pupils, the issue is longstanding, even if it has only been recently identified by the school.

Both the findings for behaviour and attendance suggest that much earlier intervention with 'at-risk' children and their parents is needed.

On attendance issues, parents tend to contact a similar list of professionals for help as those already mentioned for behaviour. Equally, parents and carers consider that the most help on attendance issues came from voluntary bodies, friends, colleagues and relatives.

Parents and carers advised us that they had to cope with their children's behaviour or attendance problems over a long period of time. On average, parents had asked eight individuals or professionals for help with behavioural problems. They also asked approximately six individuals or professionals for help with school attendance matters. It may well have been that some of the advice offered was both confusing and conflicting, hence the large number of contacts.

The attitudes of school staff were often markedly contrasted to those in the voluntary sector, who were highly valued. Therefore, when planning services and support for parents it is important to include partners, relatives and friends who were seen as being very significant to our respondents. This supports the view that many educational staff need further training on how best to interface with parents and/or carers, especially on behavioural and attendance matters.

From our small parent survey, the overall findings were:

- (a) That unofficial exclusions are used more widely than anticipated and could be used in conjunction with fixed-term procedures.
- (b) The use of exclusions appeared to have no positive effects on their children's subsequent behaviour. No parent/carer considered that their child's behaviour improved as a result of exclusion.
- (c) Behavioural and attendance problems for our respondents started at a much earlier age than much previous research suggests. This suggests the growing importance of the Assembly's early intervention policies at the Foundation Stage and Rights to Action.
- (d) Parents and carers tend to have to cope with their children's behaviour and/or attendance difficulties over a long period of time. On average, parents or carers ask for help from between six to eight different professionals/organisations/people.
- (e) Parents and carers did not consider that school staff had been appropriately trained to respond empathetically to their needs. The attitudes of school staff often markedly contrasted with those in the voluntary sector although it should be remembered that at primary level, non-attendance is predominantly a parenting issue and many school staff are not directly involved in attendance and behaviour-related issues.
- (f) Although parents or carers often desperately seek help or support for their children, a number experience communication difficulties in their attempts to access this help and support.

4.7 Core Issues

4.7.1 Meeting the Needs of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Pupils

The Group were mindful of the considerable number of low ability pupils and those with either special educational needs (SEN) and/or additional learning needs (ALN) who manifest either or both behavioural or attendance difficulties and who may be subjected to either bullying or exclusions. Some further research in this field would be of considerable value.

In considering special educational needs (SEN) there are two initial fundamental issues. First, the number of pupils with one form or another of special educational needs continues to rise. Second, a large percentage of pupils with special educational needs have either attendance or behavioural difficulties or both. A key area of concern has to be the proportion of young people who enter the secure estate as a result of their criminogenetic behaviour and who have literacy difficulties and often have undiagnosed special educational needs. It raises the question that if the child's learning and behavioural needs had been identified and met in school, then some may have been diverted away from the criminal justice system.

As another example, the Welsh Assembly's Autistic Spectrum Disorder Strategy (ASD) will help develop training and support for a targeted group of pupils some of whom display the most challenging behaviour. There is an increase in the number of pupils identified on the ASD spectrum as well as those with speech and language difficulties who manifest behaviour problems.

4.7.2 Looked After Pupils

Looked after children are doubly vulnerable. They have lost their home and may have little or no contact with their parents. Equally, due to the shortage of reliable placements they may also have lost their school and the support and friendships therein.

The LA and its schools acting as 'corporate parent' need to be highly sensitised to the needs of their children and young people and plan carefully for their emotional, social, behavioural and learning needs and be prepared to support them unreservedly in their new placements. The Assembly Government's RAISE grant for meeting the learning needs of looked after children has promulgated different approaches to meeting the needs of these pupils.

Evaluation might properly focus on the level of personal comfort and support each looked after child has received from this grant.

Clearly for those local authorities still making poorly planned placements, in distant settings, far from the home authority, with no complementary education plan, it is difficult to see how the RAISE monies can be used effectively to provide any level of meaningful support.

The fact that only two per cent of looked after pupils achieve five or more GCSEs should be of concern especially as many of these children also have social, emotional behavioural and/or attendance difficulties. There may be a need for a special project to identify the learning and support needs of looked after pupils not only in the mainstream but also in pupil referral units (PRUs) and other out-of-school provision. At this point in time, the Welsh Assembly Government's RAISE Project is in the process of being evaluated.

Therefore, the plight of many looked after pupils is a serious issue. They are coping with being away from their home and the loss of parents, friends, family and local schools. They live 'disrupted' lives. Often, they are placed in locations too far away from their natural home. Very few looked after children have 'planned' educational routes prepared for them. At a corporate level, schools and LAs are still coming to terms with coping well with looked after pupils.

4.7.3 The Curriculum and Meeting Learners' Needs

Specific challenges for education in Wales include: skills shortages and the numbers of pupils who manifest literacy and numeracy difficulties, underachieving pupils and those who drop out from schooling, those who leave school with few or no qualifications, boys underperformance at the secondary phase and inequality linked to attainment.

Key principles for meeting pupils' needs include:

- (a) ensuring that there is more and better tailored support available for pupils
- (b) implementing individual learner support plans
- (c) improved involvement of the local community and parents in tailor-made decision-making
- (d) establishing appropriate professional partnerships and networks including better multi-agency and collaborative working.

As part of this process, schools too, need to be transformed. Learning and teaching strategies need to be reinvigorated using the latest IT and e-learning strategies and distance-learning techniques. Staffing, leadership and managerial responsibilities need to take account of not only institutional imperatives and curricular needs but also the requirements of pupils and parents. This may mean more collaboration and partnerships between schools, more community-focused schools and the better use of technology, staffing and buildings.

The Group consider that the Foundation Phase, the revised curriculum Learning Pathways 14-19, the Welsh Baccalaureate and the Welsh Assembly Government's Play Strategy will be especially helpful in this process.

At KS4, the Group support the view that pupils need:

- (a) more and better entitlement to a range of options
- (b) more vocational and applied courses
- (c) local reviews on pupils' needs to include the establishment of common timetables, restructuring and collaboration between schools and/or other local providers.

The Review Group were strongly of the view that a lack of access (or equality of access) to a reasonable range of worthwhile courses of study can lead to frustration and possibly to bad behaviour, poor attendance and disengagement from education.

Some members of the Review Group felt that school size was related to both attendance and behaviour. There is evidence from Scotland, Canada and the United States that some less able and disadvantaged pupils achieve significantly better in smaller-sized schools and, in some cases, smaller-sized class groupings. The attendance and behaviour of these pupils has also been found to improve in smaller schools

There is a case for the Welsh Assembly Government and LAs together to consider:

- Allowing more flexibility to pupils and parents to be allowed to transfer from large schools (especially in metropolitan areas) to smaller ones (eg. Managed Moves Protocol).
- Exploring the concept of dividing up large comprehensive schools under one executive headteacher into a series of small schools of say, 300 to 350 pupils thereby achieving much closer personal relationships between pupils and staff.
- Establishing some smaller school mainstream units for pupils who suffer from disadvantage, behaviour and/or attendance problems. These would also facilitate other pupils who feel 'uncomfortable' in large schools.
- Experimenting with 'second chance' schools especially in metropolitan regions for pupils who have been unsuccessful or disaffected during their secondary-level careers. This would help them become useful adult citizens.
- Reinforcing the guidance that some pupils with learning difficulties are not inadvertently sent to PRUs in the absence of other available alternative provision.

For all these reasons, the NBAR Group wishes to reinforce its support for existing Assembly curriculum-led schemes and believes that the sooner some of these are implemented, the better the chances of improving pupils' individual and collective needs will be met. In turn, this will help to improve pupils' behaviour and attendance and reduce the need for some potential exclusions.

4.7.4 Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)

PRUs were created following the 1993 Education Act. The Steering Group noted the low level of academic ability of many, if not most, pupils being educated in PRUs. This included particularly low levels of literacy. There also appears to be a disproportionately high level of looked after children in PRUs in Wales.

Previous research by Daniels et al (2003) has reported on the many benefits of using pupil referral units (PRUs) with disengaged and disaffected pupils. In England, Reid (2007c) found considerable differences exist in attendance rates between those PRUs currently in operation. His findings revealed that unauthorised absence rates in some PRUs were more than ten times those reported for primary and secondary schools and for the average rates for LAs. In fact, in England in 2003, unauthorised absence rates exceeded authorised rates of absence throughout a majority of PRUs inspected by OFSTED in that year; the exact opposite position to schools. While the use of PRUs can have many advantages, it was of concern that considerable variations in rates of both authorised and unauthorised absence occurred between PRUs within the same LA and even within the same town or city. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that many (often

most) pupils relocated to PRUs have particularly low levels of attendance in mainstream streams and as Daniels et al indicate, some actually improve their attendance in this setting.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector for Education and Training for Wales (Estyn) has reported that little has changed in PRUs since 2005 when Estyn conducted a survey of registered and unregistered units. Estyn then found that there were some shortcomings in the management of PRUs by LAs. Two PRUs in Wales have been placed in special measures since the first cycle of inspections. These shortcomings impacted upon standards of achievement for pupils with behavioural difficulties. Estyn and the Welsh Assembly Government have continued concerns about the number of unregistered PRUs in Wales.

Initially PRUs were created to provide a 'revolving door' form of provision. Students would attend for short periods and would be set clear 'behaviour targets.' The idea was to ease pressure upon staff and schools operating in mainstream or special schools. This concept has not functioned very well as too few pupils from PRUs return to regular schooling within the mainstream.

Therefore, the nature and purpose of many PRUs is different from their original function. Facilities and the quality of premises and resources in some PRUs could be considerably improved. Some PRUs experience long and short-term staffing needs. Specific training for PRU-staff in behavioural management is a clear requirement. Some LAs do not have EBD special schools and so many resort to PRUs for placements. Therefore, some PRUs currently accept pupils for a whole variety of different reasons which may be outside their normal mission or function.

PRUs, however, cope with the most needy pupils. They often have some of the poorest facilities (including poor estates/buildings), least well-trained staff, poor monitoring and most severe crises to deal with on a daily basis. For some PRUs, daily interaction with the police is a norm.

At their best, PRUs will have a clear sense of purpose, be well-managed and offer high quality education. PRUs can offer specialised support for the most difficult pupils. This support can be individually-tailored to the needs of pupils. PRU staff can interact well with multi-agency teams and with parent/s or carers. Some pupils can improve their GCSE performance at KS4. Some pupils benefit from working in smaller teams with specialist staff. However, the diversity of categories for admission can militate against some PRUs and their pupils achieving their maximum potential as staff have to cope with and cater for a variety of learning needs and forms of behavioural support. The funding of PRUs needs some further consideration. This should be a future project to be included in the action plan which is established following publication of this Report as at present a number of anomalies exist. The good practice of some PRUs in Wales is noted in some Estyn reports which describes some individual PRUs as excellent and having many outstanding features.

In the opinion of the Review Group, there is a need for the Welsh Assembly Government to establish a Working Party on PRU provision in Wales and to move towards establishing best practice.

4.7.5 Emotional Health

There is a need to develop the self-esteem of many school-aged pupils through the development of pupils' social and emotional intelligence and an emphasis upon rights and respect for rights. The Review Group were impressed by the early evaluation of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials in England (Hallam, Rhamie and Shaw, 2007) and believe these could be adapted with a Welsh dimension added.

The Rights Respecting Schools initiative in Hampshire and the Restorative Practices in Schools in Scotland (SEED, 2007; McCluskey, 2008) along with the Welsh Assembly Government's Pupils' Advocacy Scheme were also of great interest to the Group.

4.7.6 Participation

The philosophy behind the establishment of the Children and Young People's Rights and Entitlements Team within the Welsh Assembly Government is that if children and young people are engaged in the decision-making process in schools and in the wider community, there is much greater likelihood that they will learn to use their influences in a positive rather than in a disaffected way.

Raising the children's rights agenda poses some fundamental issues which impinge upon attendance and behaviour. Should we, for example, teach children's rights as a theme? If so, when and to whom? How can we expect teachers to use the rights agenda when they themselves have not been prepared for the task?

It seems to us therefore, that, initial teacher training, INSET and headteachers' training should include developmental programmes on children and young people's rights. Hopefully, such programmes may facilitate an improvement in pupils' behaviour and attendance. Whole school training events could facilitate better practice on understanding and implementing pupils' rights. The rights agenda needs to be built into the culture of schools. Equally, as part of the school effectiveness initiative, there is a case for implementing a module on pupils' rights.

Early evidence from for example, the pioneering Swansea YOT on its Extending and Improving Behaviour in Schools Programme has found that by raising staff awareness of pupils' rights and by implementing a rights agenda, behaviour and attendance improved. Further research on the benefits of young people's participation is currently being undertaken by the York Consulting Agency.

Teaching children and young people's rights may provide a future path for professionals to explore. Ideally, it would help to involve children and young people better if they understood what was

happening to them. Such approaches may also be preventative. Therefore, it could help prevent and/or stop some absenteeism and misbehaviour occurring in the first place.

4.7.7 School Councils

The Welsh Assembly Government School Councils'/ Pupil Participation Project

(1) Background

As part of its commitment to ensuring that all children and young people have opportunities to contribute to decisions that affect them, the Welsh Assembly Government introduced a statutory requirement (in December 2005) that all primary, secondary and special schools in Wales should have a school council up and running by 1 November 2006. Wales is the only country in the UK where such legislation is currently in place. The School Councils' Project based in the Children and Young People's Strategy Division has worked with a broad range of partners, including Funky Dragon and children and young people themselves to provide practical information and support to schools to help them develop effective school councils based on the legislative requirements.

(2) Pilot Phases I and II: November 2005 - February 2007

The main focus of the School Councils Project in Pilot Phases I and II was to develop support and training materials to be used by adults and/or children and young people in schools in the process of setting up and developing school councils and participatory processes. In Pilot Phase I, the training materials were piloted in 12 schools, and in Phase II in a further 17. The materials were piloted in a sample of primary, secondary and special schools from across Wales.

(3) The School Councils' Website

All the information, support and training materials developed so far are available on the designated School Councils' website. This is available at **www.schoolcouncilswales.org.uk** **www.cynghorauysgolcymru.org.uk**. The site contains sections for professionals, primary and secondary schools and aims to be fully bilingual. A special schools site is being developed. Apart from providing information, advice and support, the site will be used and owned by children and young people. Disappointingly, Estyn's Report (2008) on *Having Your Say - Young People, Participation and School Councils'* found that the website had, to date, had very little impact.

(4) Phase III: February 2007 Onwards

Project staff have aimed to consult with children and young people on a regular basis concerning the direction and focus of the project, and to act on their suggestions and concerns. Following consultations with pupils, some initiatives have been undertaken to ensure that the website is more attractive and accessible to children and young people. The main ones are:

- Running a School Councils' Competition to encourage pupils to contribute case studies and ideas for interactive games and activities for the website. This competition ran until 13 July 2007, giving pupils the opportunity to win materials or equipment worth up to £1,000 for their school.
- Developing a School Councils DVD and accompanying pack to go to all schools in Wales, including a storyline developed by young people, clips of pupils running training activities with their peers, a good practice section and young person-friendly version of favourite training activities selected by young people. The DVD and accompanying pack was launched in January 2008.

(5) Longer Term Aims

Ultimately, the Pupil Participation Project is about changing cultures in schools. Looking beyond Phase III, one of the main aims of the Project is to make work done so far sustainable, and to link it to wider participation at local and national levels. To start this process, the Assembly is:

- Running training the trainers courses to establish a network of trainers throughout Wales who can support schools in developing pupil participation. These courses were held in June and July 2007 throughout Wales.
- Working with stakeholders. Work has been started to raise awareness amongst school governors. A text about pupil participation has been produced for the new Governors Wales Handbook. A module on school councils and pupil participation has been developed and will be piloted in Rhondda Cynon Taff.

(6) The Estyn Evaluation

In February 2008, Estyn produced their evaluation on school councils in a report entitled *Having Your Say - Young People, Participation and School Councils*. The Estyn Report found that school councils made up of pupil representatives are well-established in most secondary schools in Wales and have had some influence on deciding how their schools are run. However, the impact of the school council is significant in only a few schools. In the majority of schools, the impact of the school council is limited to influencing decisions about practical arrangements, such as matters about school uniform, toilet

facilities and meal options. Looking beyond school councils, schools need to engage all pupils more broadly in decisions about teaching and learning. In a few schools, where the impact of the school council is significant, pupils have been involved in the appointment of senior staff, influencing how money is spent and developing policies such as substance misuse, recycling and anti-bullying. Only a minority of the schools that Estyn surveyed have appointed pupils to be members of the governing body, in accordance with the statutory regulations. Most schools are in the early stages of developing links between school councils and governing bodies. Estyn's report recommends that the Welsh Assembly Government should provide schools with further guidance on the role of associate pupil governors.

4.7.8 Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales

Funky Dragon as part of its work with the Young People's Assembly for Wales has produced core documents on children's views on key issues. These were published in November 2007. They include the views of 12,500 11-18 year-olds in a publication entitled *Our Rights and Story* and the views of 2,500 7-10 year-olds in *Why do Ages not go Down?*

In addition, the Welsh Assembly Government's initiative 'Flying Start' is helping to develop ideas and strategies for early intervention. It also hopes to outline evidence of what can be achieved by intervening early with pupils with problems such as behaviour and attendance.

The Non-Government Organisations (NGO) Report in Wales (2007) in response to UNCRC entitled *Stop, Look and Listen* gives an indication of how far the Welsh Assembly Government has adhered in meeting its targets on children's rights to date.

4.7.9 Multi-agency Working

(1) The Children Act 2004 and Children and Young People's Partnerships and Plans

The Welsh Assembly Government is improving outcomes for all children and young people in Wales, a priority set out in guidance on Children and Young People's Plans (CYPPs) under the Children Act 2004 entitled *Shared Planning for Better Outcomes*. This requires local Children and young people's partnerships to work together to plan how they will work together to improve outcomes.

The CYPP is a powerful plan. It is the single strategic plan for all children and young people and has to be taken into account by all other plans. It requires partners to give a greater degree of attention to all children especially those who will need it if they are to realise their potential. It targets children and young people who are marginalised, who have particular needs or who find it hard to reach services. The Plan is an important opportunity to ensure that service providers share responsibility, direct their resources effectively towards meeting need and give due priority to the vulnerable.

The 2004 Act attempts to bring coherence for children and young people to what was formerly a somewhat messy planning system. Each CYPP has a basis in children's rights as expressed in the Assembly Government's seven core aims. The Plan sets out the actions local partners will take, working together in a coordinated way, to address the needs of all children and young people, giving the highest priority to those in greatest need and those who find it hard to reach services.

Under the 2004 Act, duties to co-operate are placed on local authorities and a range of partners to improve the well-being of children and young people in each local authority area. Assembly Government guidance *Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes* issued in July 2006 sets out the duties of local authorities to take the lead in driving forward partnership working that puts in place effective integrated services for all children and young people.

The 2004 Act requires local authorities to work with their partners and publish a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), setting out how they will improve the well-being of children and young people. It enables specified partners to pool budgets and other resources in support of these arrangements.

The CYPP is a three year strategic plan that will provide strategic vision, state the agreed priorities to direct the work of all partners, set agreed joint targets and provide a basis for the joint commissioning of services. It is the key statement of planning intent for children and young people to which all other plans must have regard. The single plan will mean that LAs have a responsibility for co-ordinating behavioural policy to ensure consistency of response.

Figure 5 shows how the implementation of the children and young people's plans and partnerships will operate at a local authority level as from September 2008. Figure 6 provides the community strategy for improving multi-agency and inter-agency work.

Figure 5: The Implementation of the Children and Young People's Plans and Partnerships at Local Authority Level

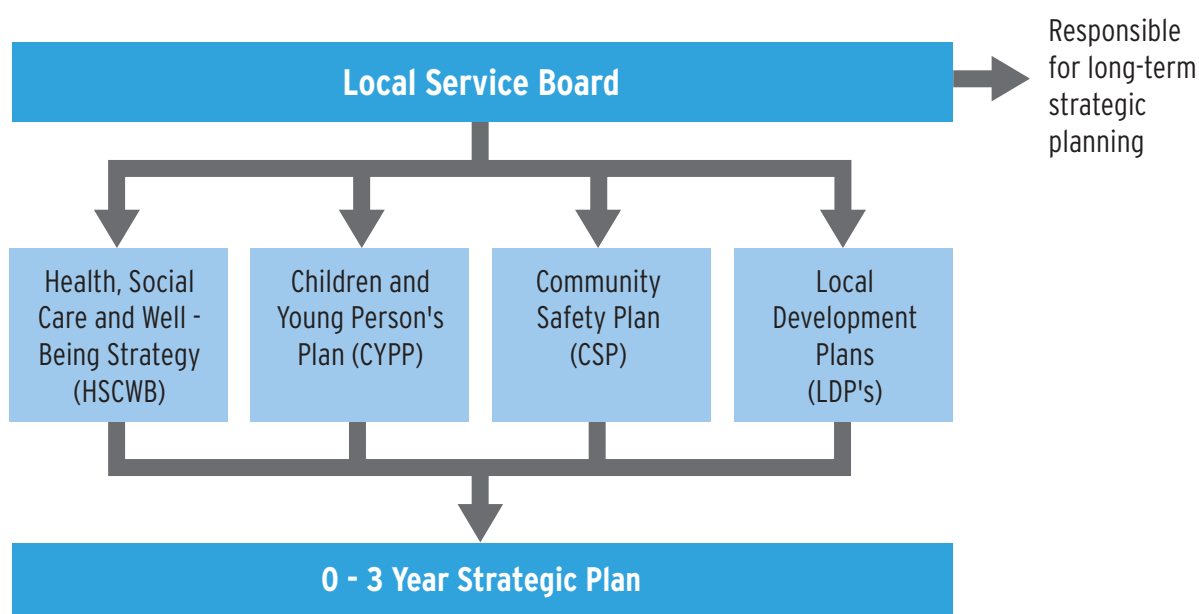
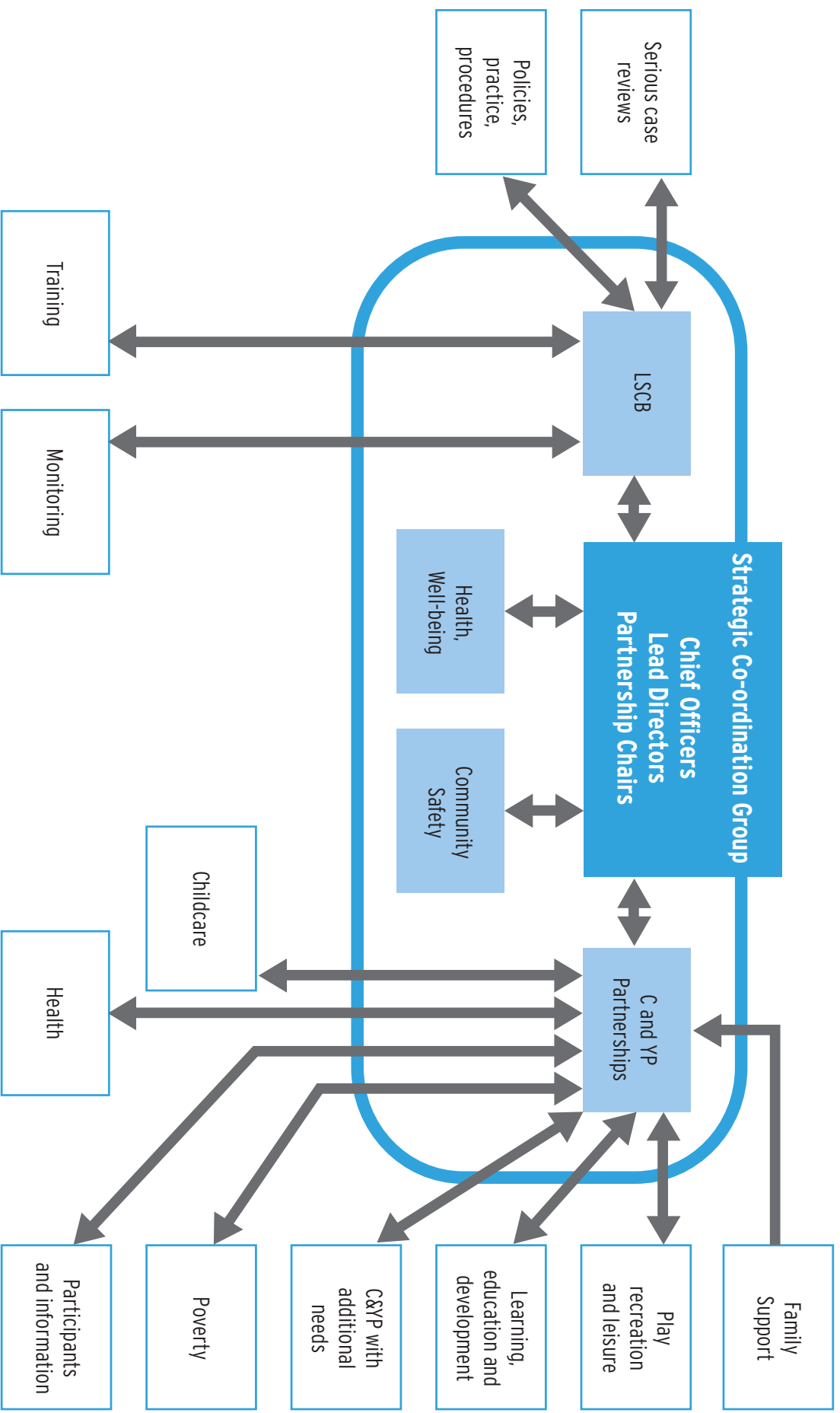


Figure 6: Community Strategy



(2) Joint Commissioning

The Assembly Government wishes to see increased use of joint commissioning to provide services for children and young people. Section 25(6) of the 2004 Act gives the local authority and its main statutory partners the power to pool funding and share resources. Chapter 4 of the guidance on local duties to cooperate – *Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes* (WAG, 2006), sets out the background for the development of such arrangements.

Each CYPP provides a basis for joint commissioning locally. *Shared Planning for Better Outcomes* (WAG, 2007) reinforces the requirement to consider opportunities for use of pooled funding (paragraphs 2.24-2.26). Pooled funding can be particularly valuable in providing services for children and young people with complex needs who require packages of care from a number of agencies and partners.

(3) Vulnerable Children and Young People

The CYPP requires partners to give a greater degree of attention to those who need additional support if they are to realise their potential, that is to children and young people who have particular needs or who find it hard to reach services. The evidence is that without particular attention to the needs of groups such as looked after or disabled children their outcomes will not improve.

The Assembly Government wishes to see improvement in outcomes for all children and young people, and to ensure that all providers and those receiving services cooperate effectively to achieve this. It also wishes to ensure that children and young people who have particular needs or who find it hard to reach services, such as disabled children and those looked after, receive a greater degree of attention, without which their outcomes will not improve. These principles underpin the actions set out in this framework, particularly the central importance of the arrangements for working in partnership and the NBAR Review Group support these aspirations.

(4) Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

For partnership working to be successful, there is a need to develop integrated systems around planning and partnerships that support multi-agency working. A number of systems, including needs assessment, service mapping, inspection, outcome measures, workforce planning, joint commissioning, common terminology and effective early assessment of individuals, form part of this broader agenda. The context for the CAF is provided by the Beecham 'Making the Connections' vision of partnership in public services, improvement of service delivery and better outcomes for children and young people.

As part of this developing field, the 22 LAs in Wales either on their own or in collaboration with partner authorities will have statutory responsibilities to:

“Promote social inclusion and high standards through policies for preventing and tackling bullying; child protection and well-being; support for attendance at school; support for positive behaviour in schools; and for pupils with special educational needs.”

(Para 5.4 of Shared Planning for Better Outcomes, p35).

Under section 5.7 of the same document (p38) all key strategic services are listed (including details of services that will be jointly commissioned). This includes the partner(s) responsible, the name of the local operation plan(s) through which change will be delivered, the planned completion dates and the finance involved in driving the change process. Key areas relevant to the NBAR Report include:

- school improvement
- investment in school buildings linked with planning and supply of school places
- action needed to match supply of school places to the number of pupils in the locality, taking account of parental preference and pupil need, including preference for Welsh medium education
- anti-bullying strategies and strategies to promote positive behaviour
- school attendance and monitoring the whereabouts of children and young people not attending school for any reason
- the contribution of schools working with the police, health and voluntary sectors to health education, including tackling substance misuse, the promotion of healthy lifestyles and access to confidential advice and information
- development of 14-19 provision as set out in the local 14-19 Annual Network Development Plan
- youth support services, provided in accordance with Extending Entitlement and the Youth Service as set out in the Wales Youth Service Strategy
- contribution to the work of the Youth Offending Teams' management boards
- assessment of and provision for the additional learning needs of children and young people
- programmes of non-formal learning.

We need to remember that these plans for better integrated and multi-agency work are still being fully developed. However, the NBAR Group believe they have considerable potential for helping to facilitate and improve services for pupils with behaviour and attendance difficulties and liaison with their parents and/or carers. However, there are a number of challenges ahead. The ideas have to be translated into effective, joint front-line practice, which includes the notion of:

- a single access point
- a key worker (and what this means)
- a leads professional
- increased collaboration between LA services.

4.7.10 School Crime Beat

In consultation with key agencies, the Welsh Association of Chief Police Officers has been promoting the guidance set out in the document School Crime Beat. This outlines the partnership working arrangements between the four Welsh police forces and schools. It describes how professionals should respond to incidents and how positive working arrangements can be best facilitated between schools and police services. This document builds on previous Welsh Assembly Government guidance. It is supported by the Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW).

Despite this, our evidence is that the guidance and practice is being implemented unevenly by schools and LAs in Wales. There is some good practice. Yet the School Crime Beat initiative is not being applied in some other LAs and some schools may not even be aware of its existence. The School Crime Beat initiative is particularly important because of the long established link between truancy and crime (Reid, 1999) and between unruly and disruptive behaviour with criminal activities (Cole and Visser, 2003; Cole, 2007).

4.7.11 Learning Coaches

Learning Coaches are an integral element of the Welsh Assembly Government's ambitious 14-19 agenda and a key part of the Learning Pathways Initiative (WAG, 2004). Coaches are intended to provide impartial support, guidance and mentoring to learners, bringing together the traditional pastoral and tutor roles performed by school teachers, with elements drawn from other fields including those of mentoring, educational counselling and youth work (Egan, 2005).

The evaluation of the Welsh Assembly Government's Learning Coaches pilot is very encouraging (People and Work Unit, 2007), although further research needs to be undertaken. The potential for learning coaches to support and facilitate less able pupils and those with attendance and behaviour problems in schools is considerable whether in a one-to-one or group capacity.

4.7.12 Personal and Social Education

The role and importance of Personal and Social Education (PSE) was another issue to feature prominently in our discussions with professionals as well as the advantages of including it in the core curriculum. Providing effective PSE is about whole school approaches and is a crucial link to the School Effectiveness Framework and the work of School Councils. PSE needs to be embraced by all staff within schools.

The revised PSE Framework for the revised curriculum for 3-19 year-olds in Wales, which starts in September 2008, includes changes on skill development relevant to the twenty-first century. Core themes are on active citizenship, health and emotional well-being, moral and

spiritual development, preparing for lifelong learning, and sustainable development and global citizenship.

It is hoped that as part of the Action Plan to be developed following the presentation of the NBAR Report, a tool kit on behaviour and attendance will be produced for use by schools in their PSE programme (see recommendation).

4.7.13 Early Intervention

The need for much earlier intervention featured strongly throughout both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of our work. Early intervention is also a key part of the Welsh Assembly Government's current policies and practice as incorporated within Flying Start, the Foundation Phase, the revised 3-19 curriculum, and the various inter-agency and multi-disciplinary initiatives. Earlier intervention should help prevent some non-attendance, behavioural difficulties (including exclusions) from reaching the persistent stage. Early intervention also requires better curriculum and one-to-one support and links to and with parents and/or carers.

We were mindful of the important research conducted by Kathy Sylva and her colleagues (2003) on the effectiveness provision of pre-school education which was carried out in England and included evidence on the importance of home learning.

4.7.14 Transition

The Group received considerable evidence that transition arrangements varied not only from LA to LA but from school to school. Due to the flexibility of parental choice and admission requirements/arrangements, it was becoming increasingly difficult for some secondary schools to plan their Year 7 induction arrangements with complete certainty. Teachers, LEA staff and other professionals all considered that there should be more flexibility and cohesion about transition arrangements between Years 6 and 7. Schools should be encouraged to consider flexible and imaginative transition plans for pupils identified as being a behaviour and/or attendance risk. Better use should be made of existing Welsh Assembly guidance and planning on transitions.

One idea suggested was to keep the family and pupil-friendly atmosphere engendered by primary schools through to the early years of secondary schooling. Such ideas could include for example, reducing the number of Year 7 teachers engaged in contact time with vulnerable pupils from ten or more to perhaps three or four. Another was the better use of 'buddy' and mentoring schemes. It was considered that some pupils 'assimilate' better than others into secondary schools. Some pupils with poor histories of attendance and behaviour at primary schools are amongst the most difficult to readjust to secondary schools' organisational changes. This also applies to pupils with a range of special educational needs or those deemed to be 'at risk' of being excluded.

5.0 KEY ISSUES FROM NBAR SUB-GROUPS

Building on some of the issues presented in sections 1-4, this section will focus on some of the key points of discussion from the five sub-group activities on attendance, behaviour, exclusion, participation and training.

5.1 Attendance

Attendance-related issues vary in nature and type over a broad spectrum. The Review's starting point was the Assembly's Task and Finish Group's recommendations on attendance and their subsequent progress. These were further elaborated upon by the Focus and other evidence gathering groups.

The key discussion points focused upon:

5.1.1 History and Statistics

- the disproportionate levels of poverty and deprivation in Wales and its historical link to pupils' non-attendance since as long ago as 1870
- Wales's disproportionate levels of non-attendance and rates of unauthorised absence over a consistent period of time, more especially in South East Wales and the Valleys and along parts of the North Wales coast
- the rising phenomenon of non-attendance in primary schools in some parts of Wales
- the inconsistent use of attendance codes in some schools leading to inaccurate attendance data in official Welsh Assembly Government-published statistics.

5.1.2 Pupils

- the link between actual and perceived bullying and pupils' non-attendance
- the social and emotional needs of some pupils
- the need for all pupils to feel safe in schools and on-the-way to and from their schools
- the role of school councils on attendance issues
- the needs of gay and lesbian pupils
- the potential within the Children Act 2004 and Rights to Action Agenda for combating and reducing pupils' non-attendance
- the link between non-attendance and some of the most vulnerable groups in the community including travellers' children, ethnic minority children and the children of migrant workers as well as those with specialist mental health and behavioural disorders.

5.1.3 Parents

- the need to use more parents constructively in a voluntary capacity within schools and other educational settings
- the need for early support for parents/carers whose children have attendance difficulties. This could involve a number of professionals and should include the offer of parenting skills training either at home or in groups
- the taking of family holidays in term time.

5.1.4 Curriculum and Schools

- the perceived lack of relevance of the national curriculum for some less able pupils, the need for more and better vocational options, and the need to ensure that vocational education is given the same status as academic routes
- the inconsistent provision of out-of-school and alternative curriculum provision in Wales at the present time with some LAs having well-established portfolios and with others having none or very few
- the need for more learning coaches and classroom assistants in schools to provide better support
- the use of out-of-school-hours clubs, breakfast and homework clubs and ICT
- the need to 'narrow the gap' between high and low attendance schools
- the link between school improvement and non-attendance in Wales.

5.1.5 Administration/Organisation

- the variations in numbers and duties of ESW/EWS staff in Wales throughout the 22 LAs as outlined in the NFER (Wales) Report of 2006
- the use of inconsistent referral practices between schools, parents, EWS and LAs on attendance-related cases
- the lack of available evidence on good practice in managing attendance cases, despite abundant potential material
- the fact that at the transition stage, some pupils do not have their attendance and behavioural records forwarded to their new secondary establishment
- the phenomena of post-registration truancy and specific lesson absence
- the introduction and use of electronic registration schemes
- the link between cultural diversity and attendance.

5.2 Behaviour

Three inter-related aspects of behaviour impact upon children and young people.

School-related issues include: the role of governors, leadership and management; whole school ethos, whole school policies, practice and attitudes, pupils' needs and pupils' voices, parents, learning coaches, teaching and learning support staff, school improvement practice and schools' development plans, the curriculum, the early years and Foundation Phase, social inclusion policies and practice, and whole school training, amongst others.

Family-related issues and initiatives include: family structure, stability and resilience, Flying Start, the Strengthening Families Initiative, the role of parenting groups (both in-and-out-of school), the use of the voluntary sector, parenting orders, CAMHS, the Youth Offending Service, neighbourhood renewal schemes and, finally, local initiatives including inter-agency and multi-disciplinary schemes.

In addition, other 'external' cognitive or non-cognitive features can have an influence on pupils' behaviour. These include bullying, peer group pressure, low levels of self-esteem, poor parental or carer support (especially amongst adults who do not value education), special educational needs not being appropriately met, substance misuse, alcohol, drugs and pupils' boredom.

Evidence from research indicates that there are three issues that can significantly influence pupils' behaviour. These are:

5.2.1 School

School factors, which can adversely impact upon behaviour, include:

- poor school ethos
- poor leadership of headteacher and/or senior management team
- poor teacher-pupil relationships
- poor teaching and learning delivery in the classroom
- poor pupil-pupil relationships (eg. bullying is rife)
- disliked curriculum choices in which pupils have little or no interest
- poor parental support for the school/pupil
- inadequate/inappropriate/unworkable school rules
- low teacher expectations
- poor classroom management
- high incidence of internal bullying
- having unapproachable staff.

5.2.2 Teachers

Features about poor teachers:

- teachers who are 'detached' and interpret their role too literally. 'Stand-offish approaches' are unlikely to work with pupils
- teachers who treat pupils as if they were anonymous. Pupils like to be treated as individuals
- teachers who are soft and/or inconsistent in their relationships with pupils and in implementing standards in the classroom
- teachers who are perceived as being 'unfair', 'unreasonable' and who do not treat all pupils equally
- teachers who are perceived as being boring, out-of-touch with young people and uncomfortable in one-to-one discussions.

Good teaching and successful schools are associated with such issues as:

- teachers who like and understand children
- teachers who promote warm, empathetic relationships with pupils
- teachers who treat children with respect and as equals
- teachers who are consistent and fair
- teachers who are able to 'have a laugh' with pupils
- teachers who manage to create a sense of fun and freedom in the class
- teachers who teach their subjects well, with enthusiasm and in interesting ways
- teachers who teach all the time rather than indulge in aimless activities
- teachers who maintain control in the classroom at all times.

5.2.3 The Home

Research evidence suggests that the 'psycho-social' correlates of classroom misbehaviours and home circumstances include:

- lax or inconsistent home discipline
- poor-parental child relationships including indifference and hostility
- a disunited/dysfunctional family
- disagreements between adults about child rearing
- poor relationships between adult partners
- parents who criticise/bully children
- parents who overtly criticise other people's children
- parents who struggle.

It is interesting to compare how closely the research evidence supports substantially, the direct evidence obtained from pupils questioned in our own child-friendly survey and presented earlier in section 4.4.

Evidence presented to our Review Group emphasised the need for appropriate behavioural management training for all school staff, often using a whole school approach. There was also an identified need for more and better inter-agency and multi-disciplinary practice and training (that includes parents) and more flexibility and choice within the Welsh curriculum. At present, the overly heavy compulsory core of the secondary school curriculum may be militating against flexibility and choice in some schools.

A particular concern of the Group is the issue of new and inexperienced teachers (as well as some experienced staff) who are unable to manage classrooms properly and maintain good order and discipline. Weak and under-confident staff who fail to manage classes adequately can thereby undermine pupils' learning. Their inability can also cause themselves disproportionately high stress levels. Some pupils, parents, professionals as well as other teachers are concerned at the 'damage' caused by teachers who repeatedly cannot manage pupils' behaviour in the classroom. This is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Therefore, if after appropriate training, support and guidance on good teaching performance, a teacher cannot change and adapt and remains unable to manage a classroom and pupils' behaviour, the Welsh Assembly Government should introduce guidelines to make it easier for governors and headteachers to enable staff to leave the profession with dignity. This applies to newly qualified staff as well as more experienced staff.

5.3 Exclusion

This section considers exclusion (permanent and fixed-term), unofficial or illegal exclusions and managed moves. Before commencing this discussion, we asked ourselves some fundamental questions/issues:

- Why exclude?
- What for?
- What does exclusion really mean?
- What is the difference between fixed term and permanent exclusion?
- How does exclusion fit in with natural justice and pupils' rights?
- Should schools have an Exclusions Code of Practice?
- Why do some schools exclude more pupils than others?
- Why do reasons for exclusions vary between schools?
- What does exclusion practice say about fairness and equality?

In January 2008, the Review Group specifically considered in depth, the new guidance in England on Exclusions. The NBAR Group decided that existing guidance on exclusions in Wales is adequate but that certain sections could be revised and possibly, re-emphasised for the sake of clarity. However, exclusion practice and policy varied

considerably between the 22 LAs and schools (even within the same LA). Since then, we have formed a view that the regulations need to be further tightened. This will involve new legislation as we are increasingly concerned about the outcomes for excluded pupils on a short and long-term basis.

England currently provides additional funding to LAs and schools to manage exclusions. This is not presently available at the same level in Wales as it is included as one element of the Better Schools Fund.

The Review Group also consider that too many pupils are being excluded for inappropriate reasons. We strongly support pupils being excluded from school for acts of violence (or related issues) against staff and peers. In general terms however, we feel that exclusion should be seen as a last line of resort rather than being used for example, for acts of a minor nature (ie. those related to dress codes).

The evidence relating to the usefulness of exclusion as a means of improving behaviour or attainment is strictly limited. Existing evidence (Sims, Bowen and Holtom, 2008) seems to suggest that excluded pupils are more likely to offend, be sent to jail and to commit serious crimes in later life.

We feel that it is essential that excluded pupils continue to receive their education. Research evidence suggests that at present too many excluded pupils drift aimlessly and, in too many cases, commit criminal offences (Social Inclusion Report, 1999). Therefore, we consider that all excluded pupils should receive a full-time education from the eleventh day onwards following the exclusion and this should be the focus of new legislation.

We feel that in preparation for this, schools and LAs (in conjunction with parents or carers) should be given a statutory responsibility to consider and assess the needs of each excluded pupil within a maximum of ten days from the date of their first exclusion. At present, too few excluded pupils are receiving appropriate schooling within or following the 16-day rule. The Welsh Assembly Government should provide funding to facilitate LAs with this role to help bring the timescale down to ten days. We believe this is entirely possible with the support of ADEW and the goodwill of headteachers and LAs.

In addition, each LA should have a named and permanent inclusions officer to provide advice and training on all matters relating to exclusions. LAs without the need for a full-time official should collaborate with neighbouring authorities to provide a consistent service. Inclusion officers throughout Wales should meet periodically to develop good practice and discuss key issues and then feedback to the Welsh Assembly Government accordingly.

The spirit of the existing guidance from the Welsh Assembly Government on exclusions seems commendable. However, the implementation of the guidance by some schools and LAs has been inadequate. We therefore recommend that the Welsh Assembly

Government introduces new legislation to secure consistency in the management of exclusions throughout Wales. To achieve this consistency, we will consider the issues involved in fixed-term, permanent and unofficial exclusions.

5.3.1 Fixed-Term Exclusions

We recognise that the decision to interrupt a pupil's contact with the curriculum is not taken lightly. The use of short, purposeful, focused sanctions to define a school's stance is understandable. Where schools make extensive use of fixed-term exclusions, there is a case for the LA engaging with the school to determine whether it is experiencing particular and/or unusual and/or exceptional difficulties. This may result in the need for additional support and/or training and development.

The repeated use of fixed-term exclusions with a particular pupil is less readily understood. The repeated use of fixed-term exclusions with an individual pupil without a behaviour-change management plan being developed alongside is unacceptable.

(a) Fixed-term exclusions of less than 10 days

Fixed-term exclusions of less than 10 days should be managed by the school through the provision of study materials to be used at home. This will enable the excluded pupil to sustain contact with the curriculum and reduce the risk of negative teacher attention upon his or her return to school.

(b) Fixed-term exclusions of more than 10 days

In the view of the Group, lengthy fixed-term exclusions should be used extremely rarely. In this situation, the loss of the learning momentum to the pupil is very high as he or she starts to become disengaged from the curriculum. To reduce this risk, we believe schools should provide the learning materials equivalent to the time lost in school. The providing school should also make arrangements to mark any completed work and to provide feedback to the pupil. Schools must appreciate that some vulnerable children will require tuition to maintain this momentum.

A fixed-term inclusion of ten days or more or indeed, the accumulation of ten days of exclusion, should result in the school convening a multi-agency Pathways Finder meeting to ascertain the excludee's needs and full personal profile.

5.3.2 Permanent Exclusions

The decision to permanently exclude a pupil is never taken lightly. We sympathise with staff engaged in this process. Nevertheless, the consequences for the excluded child (and family) are severe. Breaking the continuity of schooling presents a major risk to the child with potentially lifelong consequences. We therefore, recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government develops legislation requiring LAs to

make the provision of 25 hours (for KS4 pupils) of full-time equivalent learning compulsory. The learning provision needs to be closely matched to pupils' needs and should start on day eleven of a permanent exclusion.

5.3.3 Challenging Exclusions

(a) First stage

We recognise that it is a principle of natural justice and fair play that both pupil and/or parent/carers should have the right and opportunity to appeal in order to test the exclusion decision. At present, appeal practice tends to vary between schools and LAs contrary to existing guidance.

The first-level appeal to the governing body should be friendly, supportive and objective. It should be convened by the Clerk to the Governing Body. For the pupil to present his or her case, access to an advocacy service should be forthcoming. Similarly, parents unused to making representations should have access to a parent-partnership service to enable them to present their case.

The panel of the governing body should have training in how to conduct this appeal in a supportive manner that enables both pupils' and parents' views to be heard. All governors participating in appeal hearings should have received appropriate training. We believe that better training should also be provided for senior staff for their role in the initial consideration of exclusions by schools' pupil discipline committees. This training could be provided under the aegis of the inclusion officer within LAs.

(b) Second stage

The second stage appeal against a fixed-term or permanent exclusion is conducted through the LA. This should be organised by the inclusion officer. The appeal panel should be drawn from a standing group of trained and experienced individuals.

(c) Third and final stage

In exceptional circumstances, there may be a small number of pupils and/or parents who would seek to make a third and final appeal. We support the notion of a small all-Wales central panel to be established to consider these final appeals operating on a regional basis. This will help to establish consistency of practice, give pupils/parents/carers confidence in the system and start to establish consistency. This aspect will also need to be incorporated into the new legislation.

We see this revised third stage appeal operating in the same way as existing complaints and appeals to higher education establishments. Here, the first and second stages follow internal procedures. Thereafter, students have the right in England and Wales to make a final appeal to the Office of the Independent

Adjudicator (OIA). This conforms with the requirements of natural justice and fair play and fits in well with human rights legislation.

We suggest that the third and final appeal stage is overseen by the Welsh Assembly Government with appeals convened on a regional basis.

(d) The Pathway Finder Meeting

We strongly recommend that each excluded pupil's case and circumstances are considered at a Pathway Finder meeting. This will consider the excludee's needs, the risks, possible solutions and opportunities. The Pathways Finder meeting should be highly prioritised. It should involve all key professionals involved with the pupil. This might include, for example, parents or carers, advocates, school staff, learning mentors, social services, youth offending teams etc as appropriate. The Pathway Finder meeting should take place within ten days of the start of exclusion and would consider the re-inclusion strategy from day eleven onwards. The provision of appropriate teaching and learning should also be discussed.

5.3.4 Unofficial (Illegal) Exclusions

The Review Group considered that the Welsh Assembly Government's guidance Circular 1/2004 on exclusions should be followed in all cases involving a potential exclusion. Schools should not practice unofficial or illegal exclusions. We were advised that the Welsh Assembly Government should consider introducing statutory guidance on unofficial exclusions to outlaw the practice. This, in fact, is already the case and it is interesting to see that some professionals appear not to be aware of the specific regulations or decide to introduce their own entirely illegal practice.

From our research with parents, unofficial exclusions appear to be strongly correlated with unwanted behaviours and attendance difficulties. It is not clear to us why some headteachers appear to ignore Welsh Assembly guidance on exclusion practice. It is always important that schools follow the formal procedures for excluding pupils otherwise it may weaken their case when an appeal is heard. Equally, from some pupils' perspectives, unofficial exclusions may be seen as bringing a reward for their unsatisfactory behaviour and giving them unwarranted kudos amongst their peers.

The Chief Inspector's Report for Education in Wales for 2007 (published in February, 2008) and the Report from the Children's Commissioner for Wales Office (2007) on Unofficial Exclusions both criticised the fact that so many illegal exclusions were taking place. We feel therefore, that Estyn reports should comment on the use of exclusion practice in schools and, where appropriate, on the use of unofficial exclusions.

5.3.5 Unofficial Arrangements

It has become apparent that a series of unofficial arrangements are taking place and involve some schools, LAs and/or parents. These arrangements include allowing pupils to attend school for only one day a week, part of the school week or for one or two hours a day. We cannot support these practices and we advise caution in making any such unofficial arrangements.

To describe this practice further and to highlight the potential difficulties, we present a brief case study on a recent ruling by the Ombudsman in England in April 2008.

For three years S Metropolitan Borough Council failed to provide appropriate educational provision for a boy with special needs. The boy was allowed to attend school for only one day a week through an unofficial arrangement in which both the school and LA complied. The boy's mother, Ms C, could not appeal against her son's exclusion because the school had not formally excluded him.

Ms C's son had a statement of special education needs. After doing well at a special primary school he moved to his local mainstream secondary school where his behaviour caused problems. In Years 8 and 9 he was excluded for fixed periods. After this, the school severely restricted his attendance. A modern apprenticeship course and a work placement both broke down.

The LA did nothing despite knowing that the boy was only allowed to attend school part-time as the school felt it could not meet his needs. Although an educational psychologist and a consultant psychiatrist recommended that the boy should be reassessed, the LA refused on the grounds that he was entering Year 11. At this point, Ms C asked the LA to place her son at a specialist independent school. The LA refused as it believed that the mainstream school could meet his needs. By now the boy was only allowed into school for one day a week.

The actions of the school were outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction. She noted however, that by not making the exclusions either formal or permanent the school had effectively circumvented:

- (a) Ms C's rights of appeal
- (b) the governors' obligation to meet with her
- (c) the LA's statutory obligation to provide full-time education for her son.

The Ombudsman found maladministration by the LA for failing to:

- refer the boy for support in accordance with government practice
- act in accordance with its own behaviour support plan
- listen to Ms C's concerns about her son's restricted attendance and to consider the implications of this for its own duties

- actively consider his annual review reports as required by the Special Education Needs Code of Practice, 2001
- respond to requests to reassess the boy's needs as required by the Code.

The Ombudsman was also concerned that there was no evidence that the LA had considered its general duties under the Disability Discrimination Act of 2005.

As a result, the Ombudsman concluded that the boy's education needs were not met throughout his last three years at secondary school. He was assessed as being 'able' and 'intellectually bright' but was deprived of the opportunity to reach his full potential, to be included in the school community and to make a successful transition to adulthood. His mother suffered frustration and distress in trying to support her son whilst he was out-of-school for long periods and in trying to get the LA to fulfil its duties.

The Ombudsman recommended that to rectify the injustice the LA should:

- (a) Create a special fund equivalent to three years' basic wages for a 16/17 year-old, plus three years' college fees.
- (b) Make these available to the boy to meet his living costs and fees if he returns to education in the next ten years.
- (c) Pay Ms C £1,000 compensation to reflect the impact on her of its failings.

There is considerable potential for further legal challenges to be made against schools and/or LAs in cases of both unofficial exclusions and unofficial arrangements. This is another reason why we believe existing Welsh Assembly regulations on exclusions should be tightened and why we believe schools and LAs should follow the exclusion guidelines assiduously.

5.3.6 Managed Transfers (and Managed Moves)

The terms 'managed transfers' and 'managed moves' are often used interchangeably although they may not always mean the same thing. Managed moves or transfers occur when pupils are enabled to change from one education setting to another in a voluntary manner. However, different definitions of managed moves abound as does practice. The definition of managed moves tends to vary between England and Wales. Managed moves are mostly used as an alternative to permanent exclusion. They may also be used to bring children from special or alternative settings into mainstream schooling. Managed moves are sometimes known locally as 'Fresh Starts.' Research suggests that the most successful managed moves occur when facilitated by an impartial agent. For the purposes of this Report, we generally understand a managed move to mean changes between schools resulting in a fresh start. Managed transfers we take to mean the movement from the mainstream to an alternative setting.

Managed transfers are one strategy presently used by schools and LAs in Wales to oversee permanent exclusions. Some counties such as Rhondda Cynon Taff and Pembrokeshire have developed a protocol in line with Exclusions from Schools and Pupil Referral Units (WAG, 2004). The NBAR Group feel that these and other protocols could be considered to develop national guidance which would include the removal of pupils from the school site, parents and pupils' rights, the promotion of positive behaviour and early intervention the role of the headteacher, pupil discipline committees and independent appeal panels.

The lack of reintegration back into schools is a key issue in cases of fixed-term exclusions, permanent exclusions, unofficial exclusions and even managed moves.

The Welsh Assembly Government needs to review existing funding arrangements for excluded pupils. Placement in a small group setting is very expensive and there is a need to ensure that each placement is adequately funded to enable an effective curriculum to be developed. It was suggested that money should follow pupils post-exclusion. The need is for clear funding arrangements for those not on mainstream school rolls.

A recent survey by Abdelnoor (2007) found that around 100 managed moves are being implemented in England and Wales every week. Of these, between half to three-quarters are managed successfully. The survey also found that there are currently no national regulations on managed moves. Managed moves appear to operate most successfully when a wide range of parties are consulted on the process. Consultation should include inter-agency practice and assess the child's full list of needs not just his or her educational needs.

Successful managed moves ensure a child is placed in safe supervised surroundings where his or her educational, social and developmental needs are met. Such practice has the capacity to reduce offending and antisocial behaviour. Subsequent issues, such as crime, suicide, dysfunctional relationships and an inability to engage with the world of work are less likely to occur when managed moves are implemented successfully.

5.4 Participation

Within the participation remit, we considered such issues as pupils and young people's rights, parental needs and multi-agency developments.

5.4.1 Pupils' Rights

The NBAR Group welcomes the Welsh Assembly Government's initiative on pupils' participation and pupils' advocacy. We also support the varied moves towards helping pupils through the concept

of individualised learning plans mapping particular needs and developmental pathways.

Evidence from the Cazbah Report suggests that some pupils become confused because disciplinary processes in schools are not applied consistently and evenly. Different standards of discipline are applied by staff in different classrooms. Some young people become easily confused by the use of inconsistent disciplinary practices even more so when applied differently by the same teacher at different times to different pupils.

The relationship pupils develop with teachers is critical for positive engagement. This 'partnership' is social as well as being a learning tool. We were struck by the repeated comments from some pupils that some teachers' lessons are 'too boring,' often with too much copying up time.

Whilst most pupils wish to improve their behaviour, some lack the skills to be able to do so and may need professional help and support to achieve this goal, perhaps through training.

In cases of exclusion and managed moves, involving an out-of-school or PRU placement, the majority of pupils wished to return to mainstream schooling.

5.4.2 Parental Needs

Almost all parents wish their children to behave well, attend regularly and achieve in schools. When their children manifest behavioural or attendance difficulties, they welcome focused, consistent professional help and support. They feel particularly vulnerable when their child is either being bullied or victimised or is excluded from school.

The evidence suggests that at present some parents are receiving different and inconsistent advice from a variety of sources. In particular, some parents receive different advice from schools when contrasted with voluntary organisations and social care.

According to parents, behavioural problems that arise in the primary years are likely to be long lasting. In some cases these behavioural difficulties can become more entrenched than those which begin during the adolescent and later secondary years.

Some parents also feel that the self-esteem of their children often reduces following transition to a secondary school. It is interesting that many first time exclusions happen in Year 7. Some parents feel that good primary pupil-focused practice could be continued into the secondary arena in Years, 7, 8 and 9. Parents consider that the Community-focused Schools Initiative (eg. homework clubs) has potential but such a development would need adequate resourcing.

All parents seem to feel that better school-parental communication is a pre-requisite to improved practice. Some parents are disillusioned by poor communication between schools and themselves. Dealing

with a range of different people within the same school is often not perceived as being unhelpful by parents. A number of parents also feel that whilst their children behave normally in certain lessons at school, they cannot understand why they are regularly allowed to misbehave by certain staff in other lessons. This causes 'confusion' in the minds of pupils and parents alike. Parents feel that all teachers should be able to manage and control classes at all times and that this is a pre-requisite for successful learning and teaching to take place.

5.4.3 Multi-disciplinary and Inter-agency Practice

We believe that there is a great deal to be achieved through barrier-free, multi-agency working, where each agency understands the role of the others and knows how to engage with them effectively. The delivery of conjoint, concurrent interventions is much more likely to achieve successful change with pupils in difficulty and their parents. We believe that schools need to engage in multi-agency working. To achieve this, there is a need to remove the barriers to support schools in order to help them engage in multi-agency working more effectively.

We appreciate that this is easily stated and less readily achieved. It requires commitment at local board level, through local authorities, then down from senior to middle management and on to front line staff. Equally, it needs the expertise of experienced frontline practitioners to be shared with strategic managers to secure lasting improvements.

We consider that effective multi-agency working requires the:

- protection of time to work together and engage in joint training
- pooling of resources
- use of consistent jargon free communication
- sharing of information and data
- use of joint action planning
- recognition of the different attitudes and cultures within the range of organisations.

The great challenge of working together is investing in effective joint practice whilst still delivering each service's statutory role.

The Group set out some views as to how multi-agency or inter-agency working in the fields of attendance and behaviour might be improved. These included:

- developing and further implementing a common assessment framework for professionals who intervene with young people in difficulty
- providing guides, signposting maps and a local directory to each others' services and to the key individuals within those services at local level

- developing an understanding of each others' roles and responsibilities
- appreciating the resource constraints within which each service operates
- recognising the limits of the roles of professionals in other agencies
- avoiding the temptation to scapegoat another agency when services fail to respond to needs at the margin of their remit
- offering opportunities to shadow practitioners in each others' services
- creating cross-agency, short-term secondments
- establishing role and post-exchange opportunities between services
- delivering joint training
- building joint teams around schools and communities
- developing smooth transition between children's and young people's services and adult services.

There seems to be a strong case for investment in the development of multi-agency models that can achieve all of the above. The Group's caveat was that any such development needs should focus on joint action whilst keeping joint meetings to a minimum.

5.4.4 Linking Communities with Schools

Whilst school leadership was seen as a key issue, the Group recognised the necessity for good school leadership to include involvement of and engagement with the community.

We recognise that as schools do not have balanced catchments, in terms of attendance and behaviour, some schools faced greater challenges in involving their community simply by the nature of their intake.

Where it is not possible to achieve a balanced, mixed socio-economic intake, the group questioned whether there was a case for compensatory or additional funding to enable schools with more challenging catchments to reach out, involve and engage their communities. The Group took the view that these schools faced a harder task in striving to achieve qualifications for all.

The concept of the community-focused school was warmly endorsed together with a recognition that there were resource implications in striving to create a truly community focused school. Some parents can find schools to be intimidating settings and significant time and energy may be needed to engage with them and to secure their involvement in the community-focused approach. At present, it appears that some communities do not feel that they have 'ownership' of their schools. If schools are to be at the hub of their local community then they will need to meet local adults' social and educational needs.

We recognised the contribution of a range of initiatives including:

- Flying Start
- breakfast initiatives
- developing the extended school day
- extending the school curriculum
- providing adult learning
- offering adult learning alongside pupils
- making schools more parent friendly
- providing a within school base for parents
- developing a wide range of volunteers to extend what the school offers
- giving specific responsibility to staff to develop and promote community links
- drawing down sponsorship or private sector funding for extended school activities
- enabling the school library to become the community's library
- linking with both community education and further education colleges to enrich the curriculum on offer.

These and many more ideas can be used to embed the community in the school and the school within its community. We recognised that there are risks and constraints in achieving this, such as insurance and necessary CRB checks (as set out in the Safeguarding and Vulnerable Children's Act) but agreed that with good management, a robust level of adult involvement could be achieved. When this happens, a climate of positive adult learning adds to the school's culture of providing engaging learning and securing positive behaviour.

Developing a community-focused school depends upon the school implementing an effective communication strategy. This needs to ensure that the school reaches out inclusively to all of the people in its community. This may involve the use of:

- newsletters
- taped messages
- e-mail
- a website
- adapted communication
- briefings
- posters
- focus groups
- meetings in community settings
- community contacts
- local radio.

These need to be used in planned ways to ensure that a school maximises its community contact, secures optimum involvement and engagement with its community, thereby securing positive gains in terms of attendance and behaviour.

The Group acknowledged that as a school made the transition towards becoming a truly community-focused setting, attention would need to be given to those pupils who had been disaffected or even disengaged to enable them to become re-included alongside some of the new adult learners.

5.5 Training

Research indicates that many professionals receive too little training on behaviour and attendance (Reid, 2004c, 2005b, 2006b). We agree. Some of the strongest evidence obtained during Stage One of our Review and presented in the Interim Report revolved around the need for more and better training, especially on behavioural management, at almost every level. The Group reported its concern with the lack of a clear qualifications framework and a linked development programme for a range of practitioners who work with attendance and behaviour issues in school. These include governors, mid-day and play supervisors, teaching assistants, youth workers, learning school mentors or learning coaches, education welfare officers and education social workers, police officers who work in school, youth offending service practitioners, magistrates, and practitioners from the voluntary sector. The NFER (Wales) Report (2007) on the role of the education welfare/social work service in Wales took the view that given recent complex legislation, and an extension of their duties and responsibilities, this training should be at a graduate or graduate-equivalent level to improve the calibre and skills of new entrants and existing practitioners. The same argument could be applied to related disciplines.

The Group was particularly concerned that most governors receive very little or no training on the understanding of challenging behaviour or school absenteeism. The Group developed the view that to provide effective services for securing good attendance and positive behaviour, it was essential that all those involved received adequate training on how to deliver their role and how to work effectively with each other. The Group acknowledged that there is a great deal of commitment shown by the range of practitioners trying to make a difference to the lives of children and young people experiencing attendance and/or behavioural problems. The Group wondered how much better this might be if all of these practitioners had the right to receive training, development and appropriate qualifications.

The Interim Report went on to detail the perceived training needs of staff during their initial teacher training phase, while working as newly qualified teachers (NQTs), as experienced teachers, in middle management and pastoral care positions as well as for those operating in specialist settings in schools, the voluntary sector in health or social services.

During the second stage of our Review, these training needs were reinforced in event after event. Approximately one quarter of the time spent during the practitioners consultation exercise was taken up by the issue of training needs. Staff at almost every level considered they had been inadequately trained or received no training on behavioural management. This was especially true for many young and recently engaged teachers, NQTs, classroom assistants and learning mentors. These findings were reinforced by the evidence obtained from the parents' survey and through the operation of our five sub-groups.

The Group formed a clear view that staff operating in educational settings with potentially difficult pupils needed to be properly trained and this should be a priority. There was much discussion on the merits of Wales introducing the medical or Canadian model for professionals. In other words, giving staff a right and entitlement to be properly trained on managing behaviour.

Such training programmes will need to be appropriately funded by the Welsh Assembly Government at school, local authority and inter-agency levels. Some of the programmes or issues that need to be covered include:

- improving the behavioural climate within a school
- how to engage pupils and raise their self-esteem
- improving teachers' classroom management skills
- facilitating staff who are experiencing difficulties managing classroom behaviour
- how to engage effectively with parents and carers
- working with troubled individuals
- securing change in an individual's behaviour
- engaging the support of parents in working for change
- supporting colleagues and guiding them in ways of dealing effectively with individual pupils
- involving external agencies and using them effectively to support children and young people in difficulty
- dealing with violent incidents
- the use of restraining
- reducing the cost of exclusion through better intervention and management techniques
- how to implement the children and young people's rights agenda and how to make school councils effective.

This list is by no means extensive or complete. Rather, the list embodies the wide range of wide needs and skills required for managing pupils and classrooms in the modern age.

One of the keenest issues in managing INSET is how to develop staff expertise whilst, at the same time, not taking too many front line teachers away from the classroom for too long. Our view is that in any long-term staff development plan for Wales, managing behaviour must be made a key priority area.

6.0 OUR REVIEW OF BEHAVIOUR

We as a group wish to recognise the challenge of teaching a group of up to thirty children and young people, the challenge of doing this in an age where there is so much stimulus, excitement, and competition provided by a wide range of media. We believe that teaching is a highly skilled profession that requires continuous learning and skills acquisition by its practitioners. We wish to pay tribute to all teachers for their commitment to their profession. In doing so, we wish to advocate the need for an enthusiastic focus upon enskilling professionals throughout their careers and the need for school leadership to sustain and support such development. Leadership and management need to focus on the continuous support for the development of teachers' skills so that children and young people are positively engaged in learning and less likely to misbehave. It is in this context that we developed our views on school behaviour policies.

Having gathered so much information, ideas and knowledge from so many sources the Review Group's major challenge has been to use its collective expertise to draw out a coherent view of pupil behaviour in Wales and how best this issue can be managed.

The Group spent many hours discussing and synthesising the information it received. Inevitably, when dealing with such a sensitive subject, it received contrasting, and at times conflicting opinions from different sources. The Group has reviewed all of this material thoroughly and carefully analysed it to develop a series of findings.

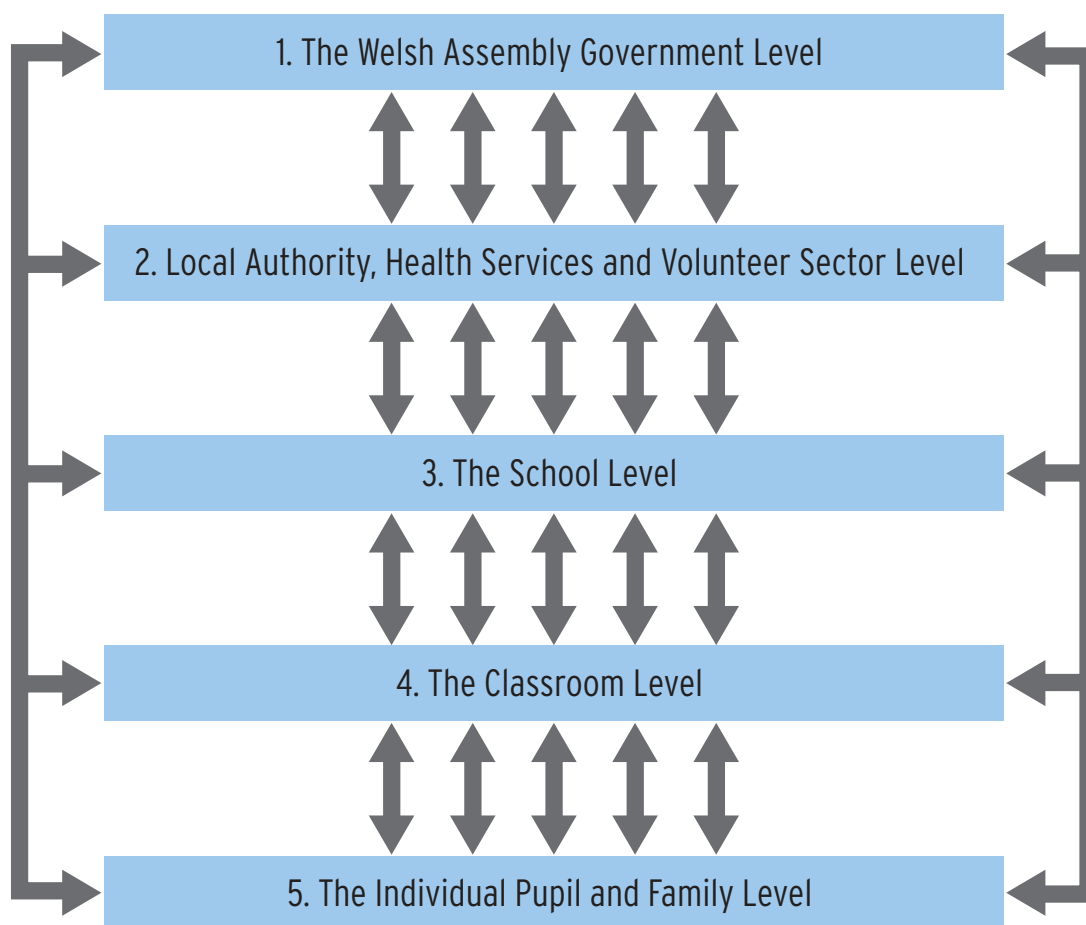
The Group recognises that the scope of the subject is so great that it could only deal with a proportion of the issues raised in depth. Some matters are to be the subject of further work and or research.

A major challenge has been how to present these findings in a coherent, accessible way. After some discussion we agreed to adopt and extend the tri-level reform model of school improvement as recommended by Michael Fullan. This is now being promoted through the School Effectiveness Strategy by the Welsh Assembly Government. We have extended the tri-level concept - the **Welsh Assembly Government**, the **local authority** (to include other providers such as the health and the voluntary sector) and the **school** - by adding two further levels. These are:

- (1) **The classroom teacher** whose skills we recognise as being pivotal to the effective management of behaviour in schools.
- (2) **The child and family** in order to reflect that the child is at the centre of our thinking while at the same time, highlighting the significance of parents **and** the importance of targeted services such as Children's Social Services in responding to individual children's behavioural difficulties.

The framework set out in Figure 7 provides the structure for our report on behaviour and its management.

Figure 7: Five Levels at Which to Address Behaviour



The diagram aims to illustrate the ways in which each level interacts in a dynamic way with each of the others and how events at the frontline in schools and homes need to influence and shape national policy.

The Group's highly consultative approach has sought to capture some of this dynamic relationship in delivering change in Wales.

The next section sets out our thinking at each of these five levels. Inevitably, there will be some themes that appear at several if not all five levels of the framework.

6.1 At Welsh Assembly Government Level

The Group recognises that in terms of the drive towards a single children's and young people's planning framework, the Welsh Assembly Government has pushed forward a more unified approach to meeting the needs of children as we have acknowledged elsewhere in sections 4 and 5. These extensive policy initiatives have the capacity to improve matters for school age young people in Wales. Many of these have a positive effect on young people's behaviour.

At the same time, the group felt that there was still more that the Assembly Government might achieve in terms of creating a more coherent approach to promoting positive behaviour in schools in Wales and to address ways to improve our management of troubled behaviour.

6.1.1 At a Strategic Level

We considered that the Assembly Government could work through its acquisition of primary legislative powers to reconcile the differing priorities and demands placed upon services for children in Wales. By developing coherent legislation we might in Wales be able to:

- Develop a national strategy for improvement in attendance and behaviour management in schools. This could include an emphasis upon schools' capacity to shape and change young people's behaviour together with an expectation that they will acquire the skills to work for change in behaviour of troubled children and young people.
- Establish a framework for effective inter-agency practice in responding to pupils with emotional social and behavioural difficulties.
- Devise common standards for all systems that encourage strategic managers to measure success by the extent to which its frontline practitioners engage in effective, complementary practice in responding to the needs of children and young people with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.
- Devise standards for agency practice in meeting the needs of children and young people with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. Standards need to be set in a great many areas including:
 - how to ensure that all school staff have an appropriate level of training in behaviour management
 - how to minimise the use of exclusions as a means of coping with unwarranted behaviours
 - the right to full-time equivalent learning for a pupil 10 days after his/her permanent exclusion
- Instigate the establishment of nationally accepted criteria for the level of behaviour/difficulty at which pupils with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties have their needs statutorily assessed and met under the Special Needs Code of Practice for Wales. This may require developing criteria that differentiates between:
 - those pupils who simply believe they are now too old to learn as pupils (*these pupils' needs can best be met through 14-19 Learning Pathways options*)
 - those pupils who have ongoing emotional, social and behavioural difficulties that seriously impair their capacity to learn in a mainstream classroom without significant levels of support.

These measures would ensure that the most vulnerable pupils with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties have their needs statutorily determined and their rights to access levels of support and resources protected.

This would be especially true for the vast majority of children and young people whose behavioural difficulties have become entrenched to such an extent that they have been permanently removed from the roll of a mainstream school.

This would ensure that the group of pupils who are least likely to have articulate, supportive parents have their needs assessed, understood and properly met.

This measure would go a considerable way towards addressing the postcode lottery, at least in the area of emotional, social and behavioural special educational needs. It would also provide highly vulnerable children and their families with a right of appeal regarding the level of resources made available to them. Further measures would include:

- Promoting increased regional collaboration between local authorities and other agencies in meeting pupils' emotional, social and behavioural needs, across a wide spectrum of activity but particularly in the area of meeting the needs of the most vulnerable and challenging children and young people.
This will address the issue of small authorities lacking the necessary financial and human resources to develop both capacity and capability in meeting some of the most exceptional levels of need.
- Developing detailed, practical guidance on a range of key issues that includes examples of excellent practice. There is a range of key areas that the Group would suggest need best practice guides. These include:
 - dealing with bullying including sexual bullying and cyber bullying
 - meeting the needs of Looked After Children
 - physical intervention to make pupils safe
 - alcohol misuse
 - drug misuse and abuse
 - ADHD and medication for behaviour
 - ADD
 - ASD
 - weapons in schools
 - engaging parental support and parents' representatives
 - developing literacy.

A key area for inclusion in this list is guidance on the Effective Use of Physical Intervention to make a pupil or others safe. We were repeatedly told that past guidance has not been clear

enough and in this litigious age teachers have become anxious as to what might be deemed a 'reasonable response' to any troubled situation. This uncertainty is causing difficulties in schools as some teachers, due to their lack of certainty as to what is and is not acceptable in terms of physical intervention, are often responding in under confident ways in troubled situations or at the very worst, failing to respond at all. This is clearly not a healthy situation for pupils, teachers or parents. The fact that there seems to be so much confusion and uncertainty out in schools about the issue means that clarification is needed urgently. It would be helpful if the Assembly Government could establish a small task and finish working group made up of:

- education representatives (from local authorities and schools)
- social care representatives
- health service representatives
- police service representatives
- Youth Offending Service representatives
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- the Children's Commissioner representative
- voluntary sector representatives
- trade union representatives.

This Group should be charged with:

- re-examining current guidance
- highlighting its strengths and weaknesses
- setting out the extent to which it 'conflicts' with guidance to other agencies
- learning from case law on the judgements made of the 'reasonableness of an adult's behaviour when s/he physically intervenes with a pupil in difficulty'.

Having reviewed this information, the group then needs to prepare guidance - for all professional practitioners involved with children in school, the voluntary sector, the legal profession, parents and the pupils. Such guidance is likely to bring greater certainty to an area where ambiguity impairs some professionals from making the required confident response in a troubled situation. We understand that the Welsh Assembly Government may already be planning to consult on some of these issues during the summer of 2008. The outcomes from this work need to be widely promoted across communities in Wales so that pupils, parents and teachers have a shared understanding of what is acceptable practice.

6.1.2 At the Enabling Level

A. Website

The Assembly Government provides the key reference point for practitioners in Wales. It would be helpful if the Assembly Government could bring together all of its information, advice, guidance and support on the positive management of pupil behaviour into one user-friendly, accessible website.

Some of this is already lodged within the Department for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning and Skills but other key information is currently lodged with other Departments within the Welsh Assembly Government and needs to be brought together in one coherent unit. Teachers are extremely busy professionals and need a user-friendly website containing good, summative information on key issues and effective hyperlinks that enable them to pursue an issue in depth should the need arise.

B. Linked Publications

There are already many Assembly Government and Estyn publications that relate to aspects of managing pupil behaviour that are useful at local authority and school level. It would be helpful to establish signposting and indexing of each of these publications so that interested professionals can use their scarce time effectively to access this valuable information.

C. Training and Development

The recurrent theme throughout the evidence gathering phase of the Review was the need for training and development for all staff, at all levels, irrespective of their levels of experience.

The point was repeatedly made that initial teacher training courses provided little information on behaviour management as a professional issue for teachers. Yet without the skills and capacity to manage a class of around 30 pupils, some of whom may have behavioural difficulties, the teacher who has invested heavily in his/her lesson preparation may still fail to teach the class effectively.

Furthermore, there is evidence that there is insufficient specific focus for the development of behaviour management skills for teachers in their initial or immediately post-qualifying phases of their careers. Across Wales there were recurrent concerns expressed regarding the lack of capability and capacity in providing continuous professional development for teachers in the area of positive behaviour management at all stages of their careers, including at a senior management level

As a group we accepted the often reiterated demand that there needs to be a step change in training and development in behaviour management for:

- classroom assistants
- teachers in initial training
- newly qualified teachers
- form tutors
- qualified teachers
- staff working in specialist setting such as behaviour support centres, pupil referral units and special schools
- newly promoted middle managers in schools (heads of year/heads of department/heads of Key Stage)
- participants in the national professional qualification for headteachers
- LA inclusion and additional learning needs officers.

The relative lack of training and development in this area is a cause for concern at many levels.

The Assembly Government might use its levers of influence to address this issue by:

- (a) Setting an expectation that school-based and linked practitioners will train in positive behaviour management.
- (b) Establishing this expectation at every level of career development.
- (c) Encouraging local authorities and higher education providers to form partnerships to meet their well-identified needs.
- (d) Providing seed monies to foster the growth of such partnerships.
- (e) Hypothecating a greater proportion of the Better Schools Fund to ensure that this is addressed as a major priority.
- (f) Ensuring that the issue of CPD in positive behaviour management, for all school-based and specialist setting personnel, is embedded within the Estyn inspection framework.
- (g) Tasking every framework partnership to establish a training programme across agencies to ensure a consistency of approach for the framework partnership's behaviour policy.

D Evidence Gathering and Evaluating

The Review heard of many claims for effective local projects and practice in addressing emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. It was difficult to disentangle whether the approaches described were intrinsically successful methodologies or whether they relied upon the exceptional drive and commitment of the individuals leading them to deliver success. There has been evidence from elsewhere of innovations having been seized upon and promoted heavily prior to any sound evidence base having been established for such practice. These two aspects were reinforced by the Rapid Evidence Assessment review of research specifically undertaken for this Review.

It would be helpful if the Assembly Government commissioned work to engage in an in-depth evaluation of such projects to provide a firm evidence for 'what works in Wales' and whether it is cost effective. This would ensure that in a relatively small country, with limited resources, we would be more confident about which methodologies provide the best options for investment.

E Development Funding

In the areas of positive behaviour and effective behaviour change management, when the Assembly Government sponsors projects or new initiatives it was agreed that it would be helpful if funding streams could be for five years duration.

Short-term grants lead to too tight a cycle of bid - implement and bid again. By the time a project is beginning to acquire expertise and deliver success, say in its second year, key staff already have to look for new posts ahead of the projects closure at the end of year three. This is counter productive. By extending the period across which grants run the Assembly Government would secure more stable projects and more reliable enduring results. From such outcomes it could then promote its evidence-based models of effectiveness.

F Exclusions

This proved a much discussed and contentious area. One suggestion made to the Group was that each authority designates an inclusions officer who would act as the key contact point for schools, parents, pupils, advocates and other professionals on all matters relating to exclusion.

There was much discussion about issues such as:

- the stigma of the term 'permanent exclusion'
- the problem of definitions of exclusion
- whether the term was useful in understanding the scope and scale of need in Wales
- the challenge of planning and resourcing an appropriate response to the true level of need in Wales.

Equally, there was concern expressed that a school through the use of fixed term or permanent exclusion could remove a poorly performing pupil or pupils from its roll. If this happened several times a year, it might have a significant effect upon a school's measured performance. By failing to attribute the performance of the permanent excludees to a school's overall achievement, we may be inadvertently creating a perverse incentive to exclude. This seems to be an issue for further reflection and guidance from the Assembly Government especially as all unofficial exclusions are illegal.

Clear exceptions to this rule are when there is an act of violence against staff and when there is a serious pupil on pupil assault. These acts of violence should never be tolerated.

The problem of determining the accurate numbers of young people being taught outside mainstream schools may be exacerbated by the development of a diverse range of Learning Pathways at 14-19. The Group agreed that it was essential that young people with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties were appropriately identified in the system. Therefore, they would not contribute to the numbers of young people post-16 who were categorised as not in education, training or employment (NEET). This is one of the strong advantages envisaged by the Learning Pathways 14-19 initiative.

However, schools need to sustain their duty to monitor the progress of young people who access their learning in a range of settings. This is especially important for young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties as they may fade out of engagement in learning altogether.

The Group agreed it would be helpful if data on all pupils educated outside mainstream schools due to their emotional, social and behavioural difficulties were collected rather than simply the number of pupils permanently excluded. This data would provide a much more realistic measure or indicator of the levels of difficulty experienced by children and young people in schools and the challenge schools face in meeting their needs.

Once more accurate data becomes available through the Education Otherwise Than at School (EOTAS PLASC) initiative the Assembly Government will be in a better position to:

- understand overall need
- establish the true level of spend on pupils outside mainstream school
- monitor the quality of the provision for pupils outside mainstream through the work of the inspectorate - Estyn
- determine which forms of provision secure effective outcomes for young people.

We recognise that this forms a substantial amount of work for the Assembly Government but believe that investment in understanding what works with these most vulnerable children and young people will provide an excellent long-term return. By investing in what works the Assembly Government is more likely to meet the needs of these young people and equip them to:

- amend their behaviour
- enable them to achieve qualifications
- equip them to participate in post-school opportunities
- improve their chances of participating successfully in the wider life of the community
- ensure their parents acquire the skills to successfully adopt behavioural strategies in support of the schools.

We agreed that for the vast majority of pupils removed from school due to their emotional, social and behavioural difficulties the alternative curriculum and provision should be very well-resourced, with qualified staff, high adult pupil ratios and high quality resources and should be housed in premises that signal to these pupils that they are valued and significant.

We believe that there is a need for some further research to be undertaken on the outcomes of pupils educated outside the mainstream in for example, PRUs and alternative curriculum centres. The evidence suggests that not only do these pupils often leave education without formal qualifications but many of them end up living off the state and becoming engaged in criminal activities (Social Inclusion Report, 1998).

G Re-inclusion

The evidence received by the group on re-inclusion was disappointing. The level of return to mainstream schools by excluded pupils remains disappointingly low. It may be that the provision made for them best meets their needs but equally it may mean that the specialist provision too has failed to enable the young people to change their behaviour. We recognise that many young people whose lives deteriorate to the point where they are permanently excluded from school may go on experiencing difficulties at home and in the wider community. The level and intensity of these difficulties may make securing positive change in their behaviour particularly challenging. Nevertheless, we would advocate that all such additional provision focuses on enabling the young person to change and to manage his or her emotional, social and behavioural needs more effectively.

Research has shown that when a troubled young person is well-supported and enabled to change his/her behaviour s/he will maintain the momentum of his/her effort and secure a prompt return to mainstream school. When this occurs it is essential that the returning school provides a 'champion' at middle management level who will support the pupil's transition and enable him/her to address any initial difficulties. We heard anecdotal evidence of small scale initiatives that were making a difference, achieving success and securing pupils' sustained return to mainstream schooling. There is much to be learned from these successful initiatives and the Group would welcome the Assembly Government sponsoring further research into this issue.

One particular challenge that needs to be addressed is the provision of prompt education for the small number of young people who return from secure provision having been caught up in the criminal justice system. Whilst this is a relatively small number of young people, this group is particularly vulnerable and likely to experience further problems and difficulties throughout their lives. The provision of timely advice, guidance, support and learning opportunities to these young people immediately at the point of their return to the

community is essential in diverting them away from re-offending. Where such people are left out of education their presence in the community can draw out other young people from attendance in school and may, in extreme cases, lead to the formation of gangs and antisocial behaviour. The failure to provide such support leaves them unoccupied during the school day and vulnerable to re-engaging in risk-taking behaviour. The cost of their re-offending is very high to them as individuals and to the community as a whole. Investment in appropriate learning opportunities will secure major saving to society in the longer term.

The Group questioned whether the Assembly Government might require the designated local education authority's Inclusions Officer to attend the planning meeting for the young person held one month prior to his/her release. This would reduce the risk of such young people not being re-included in full-time learning of some kind.

6.2 At Local Authority and Other Service Levels

The innovation of the single Children and Young People's Plan seems to have already contributed to an enhanced dialogue amongst Education, Health, Mental Health, Social Care, Police, Youth Offending services and the Voluntary Sector about improving their joint approach to their work with children and young people. The first Children's and Young People's Plans are out to consultation and there is a sense of joint ownership and activity.

However, this remains at a relatively embryonic stage. The Assembly Government has committed itself to achieving coherence in the local delivery of services through a partnership approach. The Children's and Young People's Plan represents the high level, strategic statement of intent to work together to achieve better outcomes for children and young people. There is still much to do in terms of turning this commitment into a reality at the front line of service delivery.

In terms of the management of behaviour in schools, the local authority, with its partners provides the policy framework and support system in which schools can thrive and flourish. Local authorities have a direct and distinct role in supporting schools through their policies, procedures and practices. The framework partnership through a collegiate approach with other agencies should provide consistency and coherence across their area to encompass all bodies that are involved with children and young people.

6.2.1 Prevention

The Group heard of many positive approaches taken by local authorities to reduce the likelihood of behavioural difficulties in school. We recognise that effective teaching and learning is the key factor in keeping the level of behavioural difficulties to a minimum. Interesting, thought provoking, well-differentiated lessons are less

likely to be disrupted by difficult pupil behaviour. Local authorities, through their school improvement strategies, have a key role to play in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning across all our schools.

Clearly some smaller authorities are struggling to provide both the full spectrum of advisory support and challenge services and continuous professional development opportunities. The emergence of regional consortia to work together and build capacity and capability seems a positive development that warrants vigorous promotion and development. Such initiatives can focus properly upon the promotion of effective teaching and learning but also have the potential to enable a shared approach to be taken on behavioural issues

The recurrent theme throughout all the evidence that we heard was the need for substantial investment in continuous professional development. This was required at every level and should be available to and be a requirement of practitioners throughout their careers. The range of training and development needed is very wide indeed and no one local authority is likely to have the capacity to provide all of this from within its own resources.

The list of personnel requiring continuous professional development in managing behaviour **and** in securing effective behavioural change is a long and complex one as indicated in Figure 8.

As Figure 8 illustrates, each practitioner has much to learn and understand in developing both his/her own practice and in working effectively with those around their particular schools. However the overwhelming message from our evidence gathering was the need for greater investment in developing skills and expertise in managing behaviour. As stated earlier this needs to begin with initial training but should continue throughout the careers of all professionals.

The range of training required is extensive and may include the following.

For teaching assistants:

- understanding behaviour
- ways to provide support
- how to intervene.

For teachers:

- understanding behaviour
- prevention
- classroom management
- positive behaviour management
- responding effectively to troubled children and young people
- differentiation for pupils with behavioural difficulties.

For middle managers (especially heads of year and/or departments):

- engaging with the troubled pupil
- working for change in pupils' behaviour
- engaging with the parents of a troubled pupil
- working for change with a troubled pupil and his/her parents
- incident management
- working with local authority specialists
- working with other agencies.

For senior managers:

- managing pastoral systems
- supporting middle managers in working with troubled pupils
- working with other agencies
- working with local authority specialists.

For headteachers:

- providing leadership in conduct, discipline and behavioural issues in school
- building a whole school ethos
- developing whole school behaviour policies
- engaging with parents and the community at large
- working in partnership with the local authority
- forging strong links with other agencies.

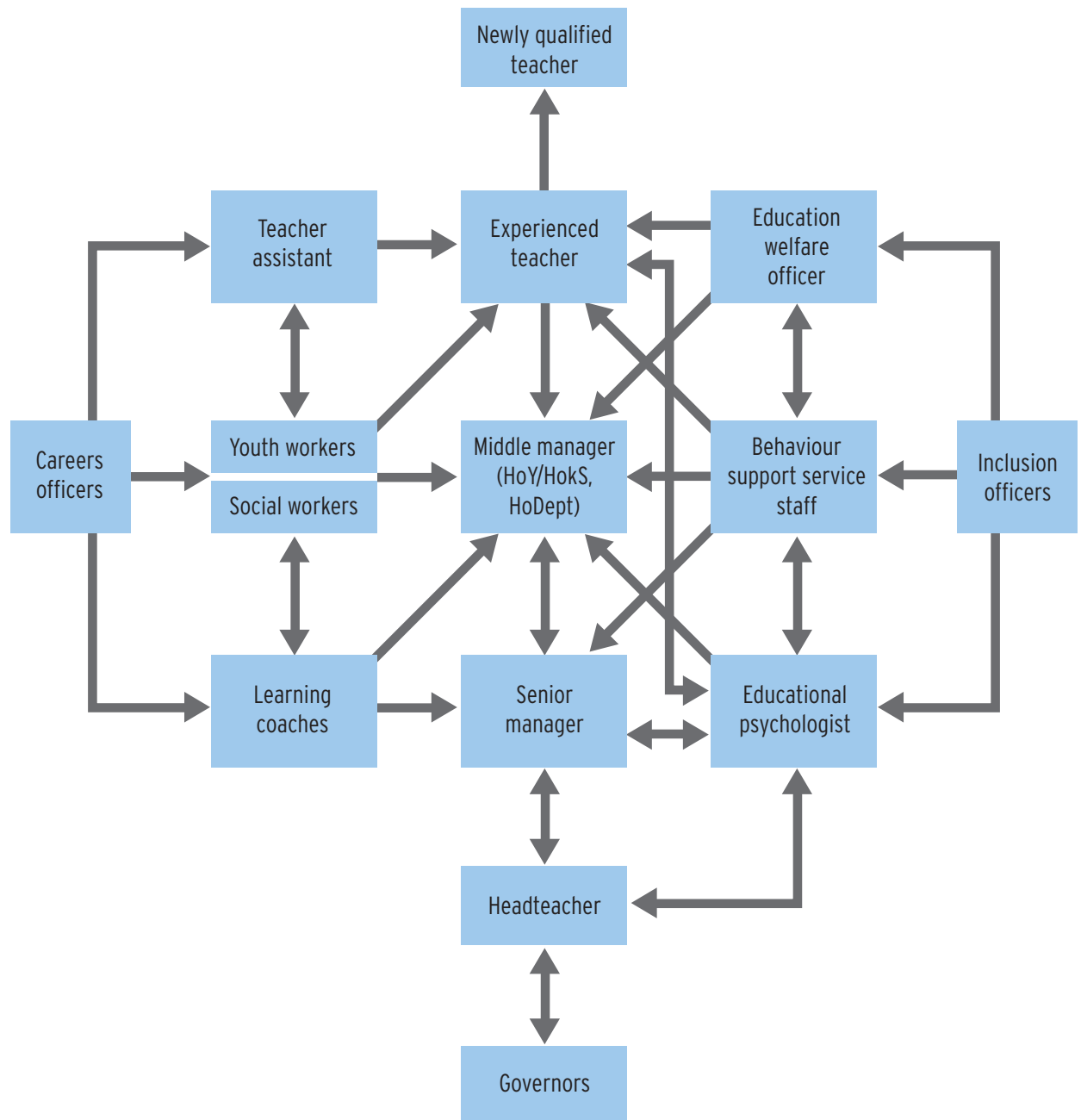
Each of these broad headings includes a range of skills and techniques that would be helpful to professionals in their day-to-day management of pupils' behaviour.

Beyond this general menu there are many specific skills, techniques and approaches that would be helpful in managing behaviour in schools eg. solution-focused thinking for pastoral managers.

Equally, the Group heard a strong case made for the development of a targeted menu of training for those who work in specialist behavioural settings such as learning centres, pupil referral units, specialist projects and special schools.

Given the budgetary and resource constraints upon local authorities the Group developed the view that it is essential for authorities to use their collective strength as regional consortia to begin to deliver this demanding menu of development and address the most consistent concerns raised in our evidence gathering.

Figure 8: The Range of Practitioners Needing Targeted Training and Development



6.2.2 The Critical Friend

Local authorities gather both qualitative and quantitative data on a wide range of performance issues in schools. In terms of behaviour, the Group developed the view that the benchmark indicators are:

- the level of attendance
- the level of parental participation in parents evenings etc
- the number of fixed-term exclusions
- the number of permanent exclusions
- the number of managed transfers or managed moves
- the number of children getting poor or no qualifications

taken together provide a good measure of the difficulties a school may be experiencing in managing behaviour.

The role of the critical friend provided by the local authority needs to be one of enabling the school to consider this data, analyse its significance for the school's practice and address any arising issues.

To be truly effective, this role needs to be implemented alongside a similar investment in parenting education. In this way, children and young people would receive a consistent message about acceptable behaviour and how to achieve it.

6.2.3 The Provider of Services

The Group discussed and agreed upon the need for each local authority or local authorities as consortia, to develop a continuum of provision to meet the needs of pupils with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.

Such a continuum may extend from providing training and visiting specialist behaviour teaching support to schools, through to developing highly specialised off-site provision for the small number of children and young people with severe and ongoing emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. Ideally, staff in schools should be able to respond to parents' need for advice and support by initially involving them in the school's intervention. They should also be able to direct parents and carers to a parenting provider who can offer specialist help to change behavioural practices in the home.

At one end of the continuum visiting specialist behaviour teachers might:

- observe pupils
- assess pupils
- provide advice and guidance to class teachers
- engage directly with the pupil
- engage with the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Such work might be complemented by the work of the educational psychologist and ideally reinforced by the guidance of an educational psychologist specialising in managing and changing pupil behaviour.

At the more challenging end of this continuum the local authority may provide a highly specialised centre, offering an alternative curriculum, personalised learning and a range of supportive approaches to enabling a young person to address his/her emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.

There was concern expressed that there has often been too little investment in developing the capacity and capability of staff working in such provision. Given the nature of the needs and level of difficulty experienced by young people in such provision the Group agreed that investment in staff development should be seen as a priority. The need to prioritise this issue was further highlighted within the context of budget limitation being experienced by many education departments.

6.2.4 Inter-agency and Multi-agency Practice

In all of our work we heard a great deal about the importance of effective inter-agency or multi-agency work with children and young people. However, often this was expressed as a concern that this simply did not happen much of the time. There may be many reasons for this but there is clearly an issue to address here. Many of those with whom we consulted were confused about inter-agency working. Some were unaware of what other services could and could not do; some had unreal expectations of the role of some services others had too little understanding of the caseload pressures on professionals in other services and many had too little awareness of the access and referral pathways to services.

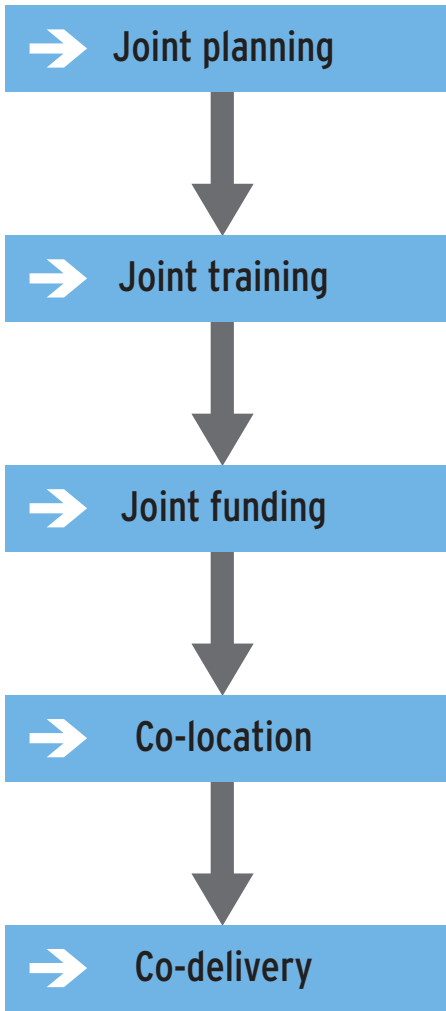
Children with behavioural problems in schools frequently display these in the wider community. It has too long been the common practice for one agency to concern itself solely with its own field of responsibility. Therefore, for example, a PRU may only consider the behaviour of pupils within its own boundaries. This lack of joined up practice has seriously undermined efforts to provide a consistently effective service for troubled young people and their families.

The Group took the view that there is much to be done here. The Framework Partnership as it encompasses all local providers is a key player in enabling and developing effective inter-agency practice in working with children and young people experiencing emotional, social and behavioural difficulties in school. There seems to be a sequence of development in securing effective inter-agency practice as indicated in Figure 9.

At the strategic level, as evidenced by the emerging Children and Young People's Plans, there is evidence of significant improvement in joint planning of services. There were however too few examples of further steps taken in the development of inter-agency joint practice.

At the same time, there was much anecdotal commentary upon the joined up practice of individuals at frontline level, sometimes in spite of, rather than as a result of the service frameworks in which they operate.

Figure 9: **Securing Effective Inter-agency Practice**



The Group agreed on a number of initiatives that authorities working in conjunction with the Welsh Assembly Government could take to improve inter-agency practice in dealing with pupils with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. This would involve working with other agencies to develop:

- (a) A directory of services setting out what each agency does and does not do, the criteria for referral to each agency, together with the capacity of each agency to respond. This will enable schools, pupils, parents, teachers and other professionals to understand the range of services available in their locality.

- (b) An approach to inter-agency information sharing that is mindful of the Data Protection Act but enables information exchange wherever appropriate and relevant. The effect of this will be to reduce the number of times professionals seek to secure information that is already known and understood by one of the agencies.
- (c) A joint approach to assessment, planning, intervention and review as this will reduce the pressures on parents and carers to have to attend multiple meetings. Currently, the professionals with whom they are linked act independently of each other and prioritise the needs of their service rather than the needs of the child and family.
- (d) An approach to assessment, planning, intervention and review that brings coherence to the work done with pupils and parents in- and out-of-school ie. 24-hour or waking day curriculum planning for children and young people with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.

This will help to bring consistency to the work done with children and their families both in and out-of-school.

- (e) A joint approach to performance management that ensures that professionals are appraised not only for the successful delivery of their own duties but for their capacity to join up with and work effectively with others.

By ensuring managers and team leaders measure staff performance in terms of their engagement and co-working with colleagues from other services there will be a growing focus on joint working.

- (f) A conjoint approach to commissioning services for that tiny number of young people whose emotional, social, behavioural and perhaps mental health needs are so great that they cannot readily be met by the existing resources of any one agency.

Such an approach may lead to a development of more local, accessible resources reducing the need to make placements in distant expensive settings, with all the attendant risks and costs this can involve.

- (g) A shared understanding and protocols for the implementation of the roles of lead professional and key worker.

The need for this development was flagged during the consultation exercise but it has also emerged in the Assembly Governments' Pre-consultation exercise with parents of pupils with additional learning needs. The concern has been repeatedly expressed that the burden of having to contact a multiplicity of professionals is an onerous experience for many families. This is likely to be particularly true for those parents and carers whose children experience emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.

The Group heard of developments such as Wrexham's approach to working the team around the child, which has gone some considerable way towards addressing the issues outlined above. We see merit in the Assembly promoting a best practice approach and learning from the experience of those authorities that are driving inter-agency practice forward.

6.3 The Whole-School Level

The Review Group heard evidence that across Wales, whilst behaviour is an ongoing concern, most schools manage the behaviour of their pupils and provide effective, safe settings for children and young people to learn. In listening to evidence and representations from so many quarters and in drawing upon research, we agreed that there are approaches that make a difference to the behaviour of pupils in schools. In particular, pupils value consistent and fair approaches from staff. The Estyn remit report, *'Values and Education'*, found:

- that in a quarter of schools, headteachers have a clear sense of the values they wish to encourage
- that they consult pupils and involve the wider community in considering these values
- that they recognise that pupils' social responsibility develops best when their classroom learning reflects the values that are present in all other aspects of school life
- that in these schools, standards, attendance and behaviour often change for the better.

6.3.1 Governance

We endorse the view that the governing body of a school should be actively engaged in the development of the school's behaviour policy. It provides key voices for and within the community that help to set the climate of expectation as to what the school can achieve academically and what it contributes to the overall development of its pupils. We would wish to encourage the active engagement of the whole governing body in the development of their school's behaviour policies and support the formal review of such policies at regular intervals eg. every five years.

Governors need to know and agree to the school's behaviour policy and the expectations it sets of pupils, parents and teachers. Effective policies are those written in plain language and that are succinct and accessible to all of the school and its community.

Governors in many schools are aware of their school's expectations of pupils and understand the rewards and sanctions used by the school. However, governors also need to know and understand:

- the reasons why some pupils struggle to manage their behaviour
- ways in which schools can achieve change in pupils' behaviour using their own resources

- ways in which schools can achieve change in pupils behaviour through the involvement of other agencies.

Governors need such knowledge to be able to support their schools in the implementation of their behaviour policy.

We took the view that the publication of a brief guide for governors on these issues might prove highly informative and support their role in behaviour management in schools.

6.3.2 Leadership

We recognise that the governing body is likely to be in receipt of highly robust advice, guidance and support of the headteacher and that his/her leadership is pivotal to its success. Much was said to the Review Group and a great deal has been written about the significance of effective leadership to whole school performance. This seems especially true of managing behaviour in schools.

Headteachers who are positive and optimistic about what their school as a whole community can achieve are likely to have developed a vision of how the school can be taken forward and can work with others to construct and sustain a positive whole school ethos. These headteachers are likely to work in schools that manage the behaviour of all pupils effectively. Schools are complex learning and social systems and headteachers need to develop distributed leadership across the school to create a positive climate in the school and a coherent approach to managing behaviour. Distributed leadership involves giving responsibility to key members of the team, making clear the expectations that come with such responsibility, providing development and support to fulfil these expectations and holding the individuals to account for their delivery. Setting expectations of pupils and staff is important but holding both pupils and staff accountable for these is essential.

6.3.3 Developing School Behaviour Policy

Whilst we recognise the significance of managing both behaviour and attendance in our schools, the key issue has to be a relentless focus on the quality of the teaching and learning being provided by the school.

Where teachers are enthusiastic, positive and deliver well-prepared and well-differentiated lessons, the potential for misbehaviour is markedly reduced. When the majority of the class are positively engaged and enthused by their learning, it is difficult for an individual to disrupt or spoil the lesson.

This is even truer when class teachers take a pro-active approach to managing behaviour in their classrooms by anticipating and heading off misbehaviour rather than reacting to disruption. The Group would wish to see within the NPQH training, a stronger emphasis on developing behaviour and attendance policy and practice to a high standard as well as an emphasis on developing leadership skills.

The recurrent message from our work is that behaviour policies are best developed through the involvement of the whole school community including:

- pupils
- parents
- ancillary staff
- teaching assistants
- teachers
- governors.

Whilst requiring significant investment of time and energy the resulting policy is likely to be well tested, workable and most importantly owned by the whole community.

Effective policies are couched in positive language, emphasise positive expectations and provide recognition for positive behaviour amongst pupils. They set out the rules and responsibilities in the school and include the reward and sanction systems that are used.

However the development of the policy is really only the first step. It is its implementation that is crucial. A recurrent theme in our consultation was that pupils and their parents found the inconsistent use and application of a school's behaviour policy confusing and unfair. All pupils, parents, carers and staff need to know and understand what the policy means for them in practice. It is the effective dissemination, implementation and monitoring of the policy that is so important.

6.3.4 The School Environment

We learned that some schools and some alternative provision strive to provide effective teaching and learning and to manage behaviour in less than satisfactory buildings. We acknowledge that it is very difficult to promote respect for each other, both pupils and staff, in an environment that signals neglect. Estyn's (2007a) Report on the state of school buildings is helpful in this respect (see [www.estyn.gov.uk/publications/school buildings](http://www.estyn.gov.uk/publications/school_buildings)).

We appreciate the need for urgent investment to improve the quality of the teaching and learning environment in some of our schools. Working in difficult and demanding settings can be exhausting and can contribute to poor morale and lowered expectations. The cumulative effect of this is that such settings can sometimes promote negativity as we fail to see the things that are in our control and the things that we can change and improve. A really useful exercise can be to try to visit one's own setting as a 'stranger'. By seeing it through a stranger's eyes (eg. a parent of a pupil who may be deciding whether this is the school for their child) we can look at the setting afresh and consider:

- all the positive messages it conveys about the expectations of learning and behaviour

- all of the negative message it is sending.

This can be undertaken on a walk from the car park to the classroom. This can prove a salutary exercise and reveal a number of negative messages inadvertently being given to pupils, parents and staff.

The important thing is to then develop an action plan to strengthen the positive messages and dispose of the negative ones.

6.3.5 The Significance of Parents

Research has repeatedly shown that parents are a major influence upon children's success in school both academically and behaviourally. We would like to emphasise the need for positive engagement by schools with all of their parents. This begins with meeting parents before their children come to the school and developing a positive relationship with them from the outset. This needs to be sustained through planned contact with parents that reports positively on their children's efforts, progress and achievement. Such positive communication draws parents into support for the school. Furthermore, this history of positive contact makes it much more likely that the school can build a positive partnership with parents if and when a pupil exhibits emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.

Through our consultations we heard about the diverse and creative ways in which schools set out to engage their parents in the life of the school. However, we also heard representations that some schools, particularly at secondary level, struggle to secure parental support and involvement even for the Year 7 entry meeting.

We view this as a serious issue and would encourage all schools to secure one hundred per cent involvement of parents in their children's schooling. We acknowledge that some parents struggle to engage with authority figures, may have had their own poor experiences at secondary school, or may feel they lack the skills to communicate effectively with professional educators.

Even so we would advocate that schools deploy a range of strategies to secure parental engagement and involvement in their pupils' learning. We appreciate that it may be necessary to repeatedly invite the hard to reach parents, to offer them personal individual meetings and ultimately to home visit if all else fails.

We cannot overemphasise the importance we attribute to securing parental involvement from the very start of a child's career in school and the significance of sustaining this relationship throughout their time in school. The evidence shows that this will have positive benefits for both pupils' learning and behaviour. Indeed for many schools it may represent the most productive avenue for achieving further sustained school improvement. Where parents feel they lack the skills to support their children's learning the school can provide the conduit to enabling them to access learning for the adults and the whole family.

6.3.6 Transition into School

The transition into school is now becoming quite challenging for some children. We heard concerns expressed that many very young children lack attention, communication and the social skills needed to participate effectively in the reception year in schools. This raises key questions about what can be done to address this in terms of engagement with parents in pre-school activities that will enable them to equip their children to prosper in the early years in school. Once again, Estyn (2007b) have produced a useful report in this field (see www.estyn.gov.uk/publications/aimingforexcellenceprogramme).

We anticipate that there is much to be learned from the exciting innovations taking place in the Flying Start projects and hope that any positive outcomes will be widely disseminated. Similarly, we expect the new Foundation Stage curriculum to provide a better fit for the full range of children starting school and through its developmental approach to equip pupils for effective learning throughout their schooling. Again, we see a need to monitor this development closely to ensure that the learning from it is shared with all key stakeholders.

A particular cause for concern, and one shared by the Assembly Government, is the transition between primary and secondary schools. For those pupils used to working with one teacher in a primary school, the shift to working with ten or twelve teachers at secondary school can be traumatic.

Furthermore, for those children vulnerable to emotional, social and behavioural difficulties the loss of a single, supportive professional who knows them and understands their needs can be the factor that results in them becoming confused, disaffected and ultimately disengaged at secondary level.

We heard of some excellent examples of good practice by schools in:

- secondary staff visiting primary schools and informing pupils about their new school well ahead of time
- enabling pupils to visit the new school one or even two terms before they actually transfer
- offering participation for pupils in a series of taster days to begin to equip them for their new school career
- taking would-be pupils on a residential event ahead of their transfer to school so that they meet and learn about their new teachers
- taking would-be pupils on a residential event with an older year group from the school who then act as coaches and mentors when the new pupils arrive in the school
- targeting pupils who are known to have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties in primary school and key staff building a relationship with them to bridge them into school

- adjusting the secondary timetable so that in their entry year, pupils are taught by a small team of three or four teachers who come to know them well as individuals and provide higher levels of personal support.

We applaud these and other school initiatives and suggest that a best practice guide is developed and distributed to all headteachers and governing bodies.

6.3.7 Partnership with Parents in Addressing Problems or Difficulties

When a school has developed a positive relationship with its parent community it is in a position to engage in partnership with parents of pupils should particular emotional, social and behavioural difficulties occur. Should a pupil be repeatedly sanctioned for misbehaviour then schools can begin to explore what is sustaining his or her misbehaviour and how it can be changed.

One key factor may be that the pupil lacks the skills needed to access the curriculum. However, when a child is repeatedly misbehaving a key question has to be what is driving this behaviour and how can we change it?

It is likely that the child's difficulties do not relate solely to his or her experience in school but impact on his or her life beyond school. It makes sense to engage with his/her parents to work together to try to address his/her difficulties. Most parents, if engaged in a positive no-blame partnership with the school, will work with teachers to try to change their child's behaviour.

We were told from multiple sources that middle managers in schools, heads of year, heads of department and heads of key stages had received little or no training and development in how to engage and work with parents and pupils to secure change in a pupil's behaviour. We believe that this needs to be addressed as a matter of some urgency to equip professionals at secondary and primary level with the skills to work for change in behaviour with both pupils and parents. Investment in such training and development will reap significant benefits for pupils, parents and teachers, contribute to school improvement and reduce the likelihood of pupils losing their place in a mainstream school.

We propose that headteachers are encouraged to ensure that all their middle managers are given the opportunity to improve their behaviour management skills, their skills in working for change with pupils and parents, and their capacity to support their colleagues in dealing with pupil's behaviour.

As well as equipping key staff with the skills to work with pupils and parents for change, schools also need to create the space, time and opportunity for these staff to work effectively. Such work cannot be

done in corridors and classrooms where there is the risk of constant interruption and no possibility of confidentiality.

We considered suggestions that each school designate a lead professional for managing behaviour. Those proposing such a role felt that this person could be the access point for training and development, cascade learning and provide an advice point for teachers. The risk in making such an appointment would be that the post-holder might become perceived as the holder for all behavioural issues in school when, in reality, all staff share responsibility for behaviour. Defining the lead professional's role for behaviour would therefore, be important.

We believe that managing behaviour is the responsibility of **all** staff in schools. Therefore, part of the lead professional's role is to develop higher order behaviour management skills across the middle management team, thereby enhancing a school's ability to work preventively, intervene early and enhance their capacity to make prompt and skilled responses to significant problems as they emerge.

6.3.8 Schools and Inter-agency Engagement

During the Review a significant level of concern was expressed about the limited or late response from other services – particularly social care and CAMHS to pupils referred for emotional, social and behavioural difficulties in schools. At times we heard expressions of frustration and exasperation with this situation. At its worst some respondents stated they had virtually given up making referrals to agencies due to their failure to respond. To our astonishment this included some child protection matters that clearly required a same day response from the school in securing help for the child. In these instances the schools concerned had the opportunity to contact the police in the absence of a response from any other service.

This is a complex issue that needs further exploration and consideration. However, it was evident that in some instances schools had:

- (a) too little knowledge of the range of support available in their areas both from the statutory agencies and the voluntary sector
- (b) too little understanding of the capacity of local services and their need to prioritise their casework
- (c) made too many inappropriate referrals that:
 - showed too little evidence of the work already done by the school
 - failed to secure the pupil's or parent's consent to the referral
 - made a referral that lay outside the agency's remit.

This issue can be addressed through better inter-agency signposting, referral route-ways and the local directory we proposed earlier in this report. Even when schools are successful in referring pupils to other agencies and in drawing them into work in school, there is a need for schools to learn how to work effectively

and collaboratively with the visiting professionals and to understand the constraints of their professional roles.

6.3.9 Risk Assessment and Incident Management

The Group take the view that risk assessment and incident management play an important part in describing how well a school manages behaviour. Where there are clear, coherent, practices, which are adopted and made explicit to pupils, parents and staff, the management of behavioural incidents is placed on a secure foundation. Such practices adopted by the school should be described in the school behaviour policy and followed up by staff training.

We have already discussed the key role that the Framework Partnership should play in ensuring that there is an interagency approach to the Single Children's Plan. It is essential that a strategic behaviour policy for the whole local authority area is agreed at the Framework Partnership meeting in order to underpin the work of all participating agencies involved with children in the locality. These include youth offending teams, community safety teams, schools, youth services, social work, voluntary groups and other local organisations. All of these should be consulted over risk assessment strategies and incident management. This co-ordinated and concerted effort outside the school environment will have a beneficial effect on teachers, pupils and staff within every education setting. It should also help to reduce incidents and reduce local risks.

6.4 At Classroom Level

In our work together, it became clear that classroom teachers and teaching assistants manage the bulk of emotional, social and behavioural difficulties experienced by pupils in school. We take the view that continuous investment in enhancing teachers' and teaching assistants' classroom management skills forms a key area for attention in the coming years.

Too many teachers told us that they were under prepared and ill-equipped by their training to manage the pupils that they encountered in their first jobs. Furthermore, they had few opportunities post-qualification, to undertake training and development in effective classroom management and effective ways to respond to troubled behaviour.

The majority of teachers have developed their own survival skills in the classroom. By that we mean that they have pieced together skills that enable them to manage the pupils they teach. We applaud their commitment to their chosen profession but also regret losing those practitioners who qualified but then quit the profession because they found it a struggle to deal with behaviour in the classroom and around the wider school.

We take the view that all teachers, whatever stage they may have achieved in their careers, should have the right and duty to engage in training and professional development in behaviour management and this should remain available to them throughout their careers. Indeed, headteachers and the teaching profession at large should have an expectation that they should engage in refresher and extension activities in classroom and behaviour management at regular five-yearly intervals.

We believe that this would strengthen the profession, give teachers a much wider repertoire of skills in responding to pupil behaviour and improve the climate for teaching and learning in many classrooms. Furthermore as a profession, confident in its capacity to manage behaviour, practitioners are much more likely to engage in professional dialogue on how to extend and enhance their behaviour management skills with classes as a whole and with particular pupils or groups of pupils.

We recognise that there is no single way of dealing with behaviour difficulties. We have previously noted those qualities that are evident in successful teaching. We do not presume to prescribe a list of skills and knowledge that all teachers need. We have however, set out some ideas relating to the areas that behaviour management training for class teachers might cover in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Preventing Behavioural Difficulties in the Classroom

☐	Understanding behaviour
☐	Organising the classroom to support effective learning
☐	Understanding the effective use of rules and routines in the classroom
☐	Developing pupils' responsibility for their own learning and behaviour
☐	Creating a rewarding classroom
☐	Adapting the curriculum to meet the preferred learning style of pupils
☐	Effective lesson planning to match pupils' capability and needs
☐	Differentiating and personalising learning for pupils with attentional difficulties
☐	Involving children and young people.

This might be complemented by a second programme covering issues in effective classroom management as set out in Figure 11.

Figure 11: [Effective Classroom Management](#)

☐	Controlling entry to class
☐	Using seating plans
☐	Effective teacher positioning in class
☐	Gaining pupils' attention
☐	Setting the tone for the lesson
☐	Lesson delivery
☐	Providing explanations
☐	Giving timely support
☐	Managing transition between activities
☐	Offering praise and recognition
☐	Positive lesson ending
☐	Self-management
☐	Effective impression management
☐	Modelling desirable behaviour
☐	Using inclusive language
☐	Movement - the use of space and teacher authority
☐	Screening for difficulty
☐	Using positive prompts for behaviour
☐	Ensuring children and young people's participation.

The next element in a programme may look at the range of skills and techniques teachers can use in the classroom in response to a pupil or pupils beginning to misbehave or move off task.

Figure 12: [Effective Responses to Troubled Behaviour](#)

☐	Giving recognition for effort
☐	Rewarding positive behaviour
☐	Catching pupils 'being good'
☐	The use of low-key confident responses
☐	Recalling past good performance
☐	Catching others being good
☐	Reinforcing what is required
☐	Giving notice of a question
☐	Acknowledging difficulties
☐	Offering choices
☐	The use of deferred injunctions
☐	Seeking better for both solutions
☐	Moving pupils
☐	Removing the audience
☐	Following up and following through

The range of techniques set out in Figure 12 form just some of the skills teachers can use in response to the onset of behavioural difficulties in their classrooms. We include these as exemplars of the types of training and development that would be of value to class teachers.

An area where we take a firmer view is the need for all teachers to have the opportunity to learn to understand incidents, how they develop and how to manage them effectively. This is illustrated in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Understanding Incidents and Incident Management

☐	Understanding the potential for an incident to occur
☐	Risk assessment in the classroom
☐	Risk mitigation and management
☐	A five-stage model for understanding an incident
☐	Ways to respond effectively at each stage of an incident
☐	Post-incident management
☐	Notifying parents and carers
☐	Reporting an incident
☐	Record keeping

Participation in a programme like the one illustrated in Figure 13 would help teachers anticipate, prepare and plan for the management of an incident with a pupil or pupils in their classroom. Many teachers may be fortunate enough not to need such insight, understanding and skills but for those who may be involved in a serious incident in their day-to-day work, participation in such a programme would help them to cope with the stress of such an event.

It is important to note that we see continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers in its broadest sense including:

- observation of peers
- observing best practice
- shadowing
- role exchange
- participation in an action learning set, etc.

However, the emphasis always needs to be on the applied and practical application of this learning in the classroom. We affirm our commitment to supporting teachers in their professional development to enable them to manage behaviour confidently in the classroom. Confident, skilled teachers are less likely to be challenged by pupils and this forms the foundation for effective management of behaviour in schools.

Confident, skilled teachers are much more likely to be relaxed in the classroom. They are therefore, more able to scan the room, recognise changes in the appearance, self-presentation, stance, posture, attitude and behaviour of their pupils. Classroom teachers are likely to be the first line professionals who identify a pupil in trouble or difficulty. They may be the only people outside of the home in a position to see and recognise the change in a young person. If the problems or difficulties that resulted in the change in the young person are due to

events within the home, the class teacher forms the first and perhaps sole initial link in enabling the child or young person to access appropriate support.

Class teachers are therefore pivotal first line screeners for children and young people in difficulty. We wish to stress not just those troubled pupils who act out their difficulties but also, importantly those children who act inwards and experience withdrawal from others, depression and even self-harm.

This is a very responsible role for the class teacher and the Review Group believes that teachers are entitled to significant guidance, training and support, if they are to genuinely act as first tier practitioners within the National Service Framework.

Clearly, teachers can only be realistically expected to scan and screen for difficulties in their pupils and secure them appropriate forms of help within a supportive framework that responds to the needs they identify. We see this responsibility of class teachers only being realistically delivered when:

- (a) senior and middle managers in schools have the necessary skills to address the needs of pupils referred to them
- (b) senior and middle managers have the understanding and awareness as to how best to help the pupil with a particular difficulty
- (c) senior and middle managers have the knowledge and capacity to secure support for the child or young person from the agency best placed to provide it.

6.5 The Child and Family Level

At the outset, in our values statement we made clear that:

- Safeguarding and protecting the child through considered management of behaviour and attendance is paramount.
- All children have a right to full-time education, meeting their social, emotional and educational needs.
- Child-centred outcomes should be the paramount consideration in any activity.

We have carried these forward into this section on the child and family level.

The individual pupil has the right to feel welcomed, safe and able to learn in school. He or she needs to receive a clear message as to what is expected of him/her in school. Most importantly, the individual pupil needs to know to whom s/he can turn for help and support.

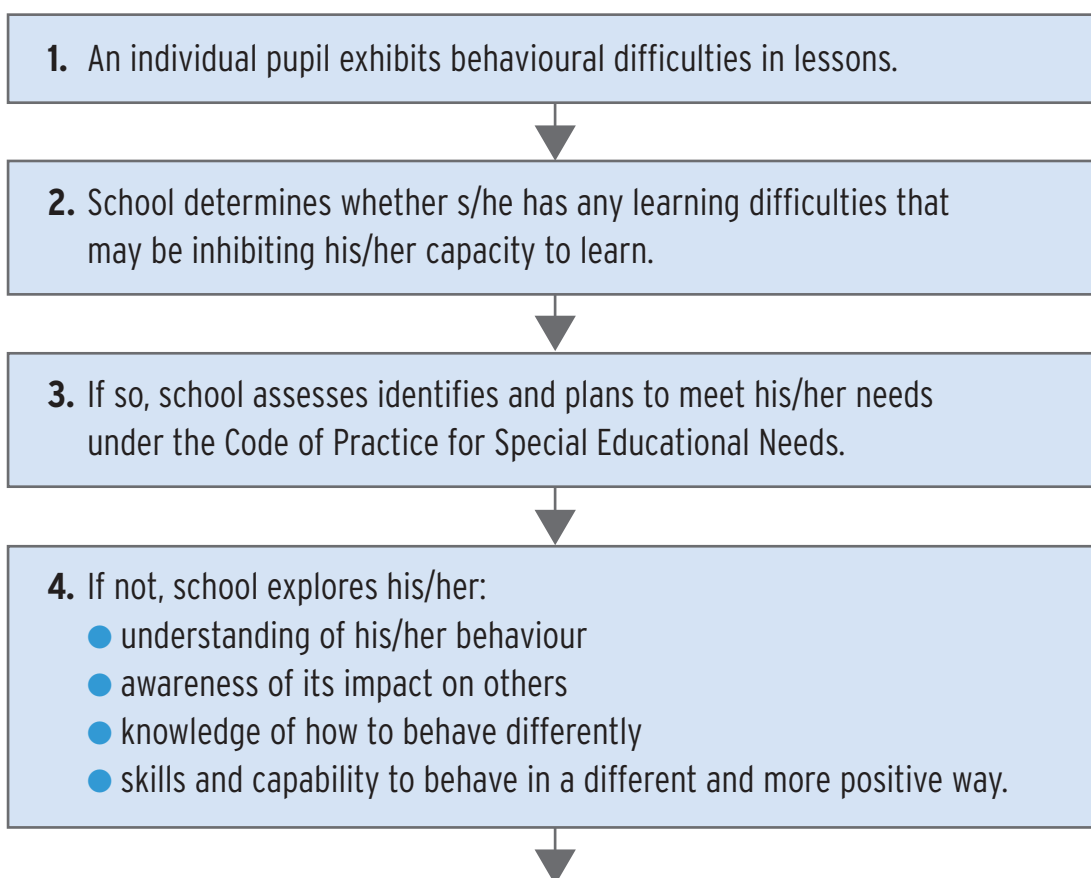
It is well-known and replicated in our evidence gathering that children and young people like to learn in a well-ordered safe environment, managed by a class teacher who is consistent in his/her response to individual pupil behaviour.

We have already commented on the need for children to have the support of their parents with their schooling from the outset and throughout their time in school. We need to recognise that those pupils who lack such support from their own parents or from substitute carers are already placed at a massive disadvantage in terms of their capacity to thrive in school. We have set out our view that schools need to invest heavily in securing parental involvement for all children.

The tension in our child-centred approach emerges when we strive to reconcile the needs of the majority to learn in calm, stimulating classroom environments with say the attention-seeking demands of a very needy pupil who is ill-prepared for school and lacks support at home. Do we protect the learning of the majority and reject the troubled individual? Or, do we ensure that the majority of pupils can learn effectively and compound the difficulties of the troubled child by exposing him to still further rejection?

We found no easy answer to this dilemma. Through discussion and debate we determined that the best child-centred practice would mean a well-resourced and well-skilled school attempting to do all that it possibly could to address an individual's needs. We set out to define this as a stepwise sequence in Figure 14:

Figure 14: **An Exemplar Stepwise Approach to Addressing an Individual Pupil's Needs**



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5. Dependent upon the outcome school may need to:

- talk through with him/her the behaviour that is unacceptable
- provide the opportunity to understand the impact of his/her behaviour upon others
- describe and if necessary model the desirable behaviours
- coach him/her in these new behaviours
- ensure all those who engage with him/her recognise and encourage his/her attempts to behave differently
- provide him or her with a buddy, mentor or ongoing coach.

↓

6. When the unwanted behaviour either:

- occurs in school, at home and in the wider community
- seems resistant to change in school

the school involves the parents/carers in working for change with the child.

↓

7. Involving parents may require:-

- exploring the problems they are experiencing with their child.
- enquiring about what they have done to deal with this to date **and** how they have done it
- testing their understanding of the impact of their child's behaviour on the learning and behaviour of other pupils
- acknowledging that they cannot be happy with this situation
- inviting them to work in partnership to change their child's behaviour
- developing a Pastoral Support Programme and/or a Behavioural Contract about how the school, the parents and the pupil will work together to secure a lasting change in behaviour
- providing them with parenting courses to modify or change their response to unwanted behaviour.

↓

8. Should this not succeed schools may:

- secure a parent's agreement for the involvement of appropriate other agencies in striving to enable the child or young person to change
 - issue a behavioural contract about how the school, the parents and the pupil will work together to secure a lasting change in behaviour.
- ↓



9. Should this also fail and the unwanted and undesirable behaviours continue unchanged then the school has a legitimate concern that the long-term adverse effect of the individual's behaviour on the rest of the class is too severe to continue. At which point, short-term placement in a behaviour setting or a managed transfer to a longer term placement may be the only reasonable option. Ideally however, a placement in a school's own 'learning unit' should be tried first if one is available.

Our concern is that at the present time too few schools have had the opportunity to acquire the skills to work for change in behaviour with troubled children and even fewer have had chance to acquire the skills to work with parents. We take the view that investment in developing schools' capability and capacity to secure positive change in pupils' behaviour provides an earlier form of intervention, one that is cost effective, that contributes to school improvement, and reduce reliance upon out-of-school provision.

We do however, appreciate that there will always be a small number of pupils whose life circumstances are so adverse that they simply have little trust in adults and cannot commit to changing their behaviour.

We strongly endorse the work of the Assembly Government in ensuring that children are listened to and the voice of the individual child is heard. In the case of troubled children they may struggle to get their voice heard and may lack the self-control and communication skills to get their voice heard effectively.

In the event that a school's efforts to work for change with a troubled child and his/her parents breaks down we are attracted to the idea that the pupil has access to advocacy to ensure his/her voice is properly articulated in any decisions about his/her future education.

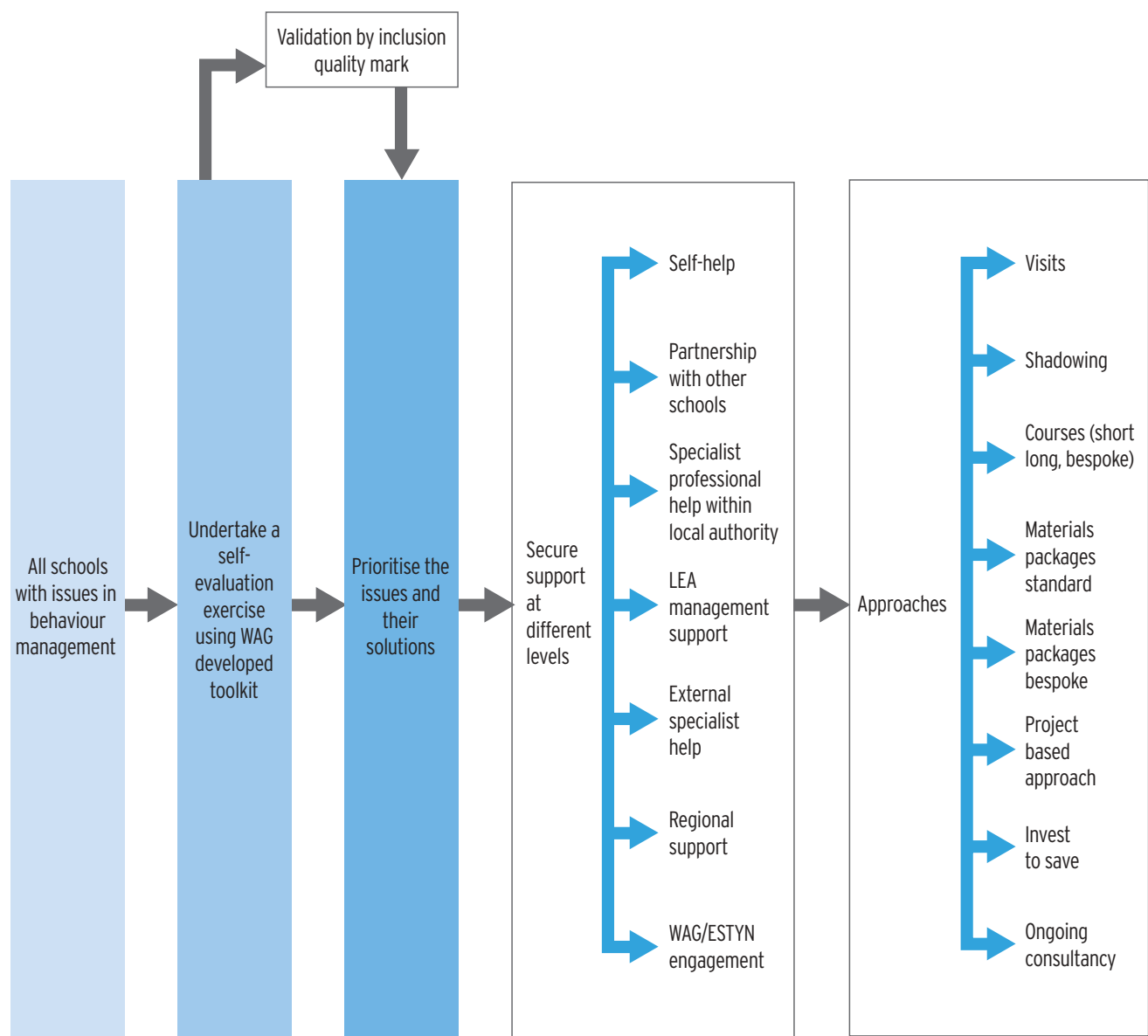
In reporting upon this section of our discussion we feel it is important to say that for the vast majority of children and young people in Wales, learning in school seems to be a positive experience. Most children come to school and are ready and willing to learn and to co-operate with each other.

6.6 Conclusion

This Report is a major comprehensive overview. It has drawn together opinions from stakeholders at every level. The agenda for improvement is huge. The focus for improvement is schools, their staff, pupils and parents. Within this complex picture, schools need to be able to self-evaluate, reflect and prioritise their areas for improvement.

Through our Review we learnt to appreciate that this will be different in each school. However, a common process as outlined in Figure 1 will provide schools with the opportunity to utilise a range of resources, materials, skills and initiatives developed by the Welsh Assembly in response to this Review.

Figure 1: A National Strategy for all Schools Facing Issues in Managing Behaviour



7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides a summary of the main recommendations arising from our Review. In keeping with the remainder of our Report, these recommendations are sub-divided into the same key areas as those discussed earlier.

7.1 Core Recommendation

- 1 The Welsh Assembly Government should, through implementing the revised curriculum and assessment arrangements from September 2008 in schools in Wales, provide a clear lead that no child (within the mainstream ability range) should leave primary school without the functional ability to read and write.
- 2 The Welsh Assembly Government should prioritise early intervention strategies on work with attendance-related and behavioural-related problems amongst children and young people.
- 3 The Welsh Assembly Government should promote an understanding across Wales that violence against staff will not be tolerated.
- 4 The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that all schools and local authorities rigorously adhere to Circular 1/2004 on 'Exclusion from Schools and Pupil Referral Units' with particular regard to tackling unofficial (illegal) exclusions.
- 5 The Welsh Assembly Government should introduce legislation on new exclusion regulations in Wales.

(a) For fixed-term exclusions of under 10 days.

Schools should be required to immediately provide the fixed-term excluded pupil with a learning programme, which maintains curriculum continuity for the individual.

(b) For fixed-term exclusions of more than 10 days:

- In order to maintain curriculum continuity schools should be required to provide adequate learning, undertake marking and provide feedback on work completed.
- Schools should have a duty to convene a meeting within 10 days in order to determine the young person's needs, to plan to meet them and to act together in an inter-agency approach to attempt to prevent permanent exclusion.

(c) For permanent exclusions

Local authorities should be required to make 25 hours of appropriate or equivalent learning available (at KS4) to commence within 10 school days of the permanent exclusion and to convene a meeting of all key professionals and agencies involved in the pupil's life within the ten day period.

- 6 The Welsh Assembly Government should consider:
 - Giving parents and pupils the opportunity to access an advocacy support service similar to that provided to those with SEN in the event of permanent exclusion or where there is a threat of permanent exclusion.
 - Putting into place an additional national point of appeal following the independent appeal panel. The national panel will be overseen by the Welsh Assembly Government and this should include headteacher representatives to test whether this brings greater objectivity in a more neutral setting.
- 7 The Welsh Assembly Government should introduce guidance on the use of managed moves and transfers as an alternative to exclusion. This protocol should include guidance on:
 - (a) the removal of pupils from school sites
 - (b) pupils' rights
 - (c) promoting positive behaviour and early intervention
 - (d) the role of the headteacher
 - (e) re-inclusion following the move
 - (f) funding arrangements for managed moves
 - (g) the wishes of the young person and those of parents.
- 8 The Welsh Assembly Government should actively follow-up schools who are excluding pupils at a rate which is significantly higher than average. This situation should also be closely monitored by individual local authorities.
- 9 All local authorities in Wales should establish a behavioural support team and/or collaborate with neighbouring local authorities' behavioural support teams.
- 10 The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that school attendance and behavioural strategies are at the centre of its school effectiveness framework especially at the school level.
- 11 The Welsh Assembly Government should commission studies which examine:
 - The extent and number of pupils who are out-of-school and not enrolled on any school roll throughout Wales (including those that are in PRUs, home tutored and home educated).
 - The link between low levels of numeracy and literacy and unidentified additional learning needs with low attendance and behavioural problems in primary and secondary schools and the link between additional educational needs and poor behaviour, the number of exclusions, incidences of bullying and pupils' non-attendance.
 - The consequences of transition with the perceived increase in school exclusions, poor behaviour and non-attendance.

- How PRUs are funded, the purpose of PRUs and their strategies for the management of pupils, securing their attendance and changing their behaviour and how they enable pupils to achieve and reach their full potential.
- 12 All local authorities in Wales should designate an officer responsible for inclusion who should be appropriately experienced. Some authorities may wish to collaborate with neighbouring local authorities on this matter. The inclusion officer would be the central point of contact for tracking all exclusion queries and practice. This post should be at a senior level in order to drive multi-agency approaches and to be able to liaise with parents, headteachers, governors and other involved parties.
 - 13 The Welsh Assembly Government should clarify and strengthen its guidance for schools on physical intervention and the use of restraint.
 - 14 All secondary schools in Wales should have a named senior manager designated as lead professional to deal with behaviour, attendance and participation with parents and carers. In terms of participation, this manager should play a key role in induction meetings, parents' evenings and other after-school and out-of-school events and be given sufficient dedicated time to conduct these functions.
 - 15 The Welsh Assembly Government should prioritise and increase funding significantly for training programmes on behaviour and attendance not only for school-based staff but for all those professionals and local authority staff engaged in promoting positive behaviour and improving attendance, more especially the education welfare/education social work staff.
 - 16 The Welsh Assembly Government should develop an Action Plan which will implement and monitor the recommendations in this report and to draft overarching policies on behaviour and attendance throughout Wales on:
 - an immediate
 - a short-term
 - a long-term basis.
 - 17 The action plan agenda should include continuing engagement with children and young people on behaviour and attendance to encourage and continue the dialogue started through the NBAR process.
 - 18 The Local Children's Safeguarding Board in each local authority should have a standing item on school behaviour and attendance.

- 19 Children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, those at risk of exclusion and those permanently excluded from school are amongst our most vulnerable children in Wales. Therefore, the level of staffing in the Support for Learning field within the Welsh Assembly Government should be significantly increased to provide a robust service and to recognise that additional learning needs straddles all fields of the Assembly's and DCELLS' work.

7.2 Supporting Recommendations

7.2.1 Attendance

- A1** The Welsh Assembly Government should redraft its school attendance guidance and the use of attendance codes to ensure greater consistency of practice. As part of this work, the Welsh Assembly Government should be asked to draft one overarching school attendance policy document for implementation by schools and LAs throughout Wales to minimise duplication of effort and increase consistency across Wales.
- A2** School councils should be asked to consider how their schools could improve attendance. It would be useful for school councils not only to discuss the issue of improving school attendance but to have their ideas assessed and where appropriate, implemented. Examples of good practice could then be added to the Welsh Assembly Government's Inclusion and Pupil Support website.
- A3** A national strategy should be introduced in Wales to train all members of the EWS/ESW and those multi-disciplinary, inter-agency and school staff who are engaged in work with disaffected pupils with appropriate professional and qualification recognition and funding support from the Welsh Assembly Government.
- A4** There should be consistent guidelines and practice introduced in Wales to advise schools on how and when to refer non-attendance cases to the EWS and other external agencies. Consistent referral practice could form part of the one-Wales policy document on attendance referred to earlier in A1 and be part of the good practice website AB(1).
- A5** LAs should move resources into early intervention strategies to encourage pupil attendance. This will encourage EWS/ESW and school improvement services to be proactive rather than reactive and also to work more closely with primary schools.

7.2.2 Behaviour

- B1** The early identification of pupils with behavioural needs should be prioritised. The Welsh Assembly Government should empower LAs to develop early intervention and multi-disciplinary services that could intervene as soon as problems develop.
- B2** There should be regular meetings of LAs' inclusion officers with the Welsh Assembly Government to reinforce good practice as well as to ensure that the recommendations in this Report are being met.
- B3** The Welsh Assembly Government should stipulate that all schools and LAs in Wales should introduce performance indicators on their social inclusiveness which would be subjected to a formal assessment by Estyn as part of the inspection process. This would include the measurement and effectiveness of managed moves, exclusions, school improvement strategies on behaviour (and attendance) and whole school strategies that fit in with the Welsh Assembly Government's school effectiveness framework. As part of this work, the Welsh Assembly Government should closely monitor the exclusion practices of individual schools and LAs.
- B4** The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that information on all young people at the point of transfer (especially between Key Stage 2 and 3) should be passed effectively from school to school, including full behaviour, exclusion and attendance records.
- B5** Schools should attempt, wherever appropriate and possible to introduce individualised learning plans for pupils with behaviour and/or attendance problems.
- B6** The Welsh Assembly Government should consider legislation to introduce a more robust inspection of home educators including an assessment of whether learners' needs are being met and the curriculum being followed.
- B7** The Welsh Assembly Government should consider how best to resource realistic support for children and young people who have been excluded.
- B8** The Local Authorities Behavioural Support Teams should focus on changing pupils' behaviour thereby attempting to reduce the numbers of exclusions by supporting schools in the management of individual pupil behaviour.
- B9** Schools and LAs should be encouraged to experiment with their provision of alternative schooling on a LA or a collaborative LA basis. On-site centres (mainstream), 'small schools', 'second chance schools' or different settings to reduce pupil disengagement should be explored.

- B10** The Welsh Assembly Government should move towards establishing a central/or regional tribunal for third stage final appeals. This would not only address concerns of lack of independence and consistency but allow officials to gain and develop expertise and establish good practice and incorporate natural justice requirements.
- B11** Where incidents of illegal exclusion are identified, schools need to be advised and supported in establishing the correct procedures. This is a role for the LA inclusion officer.
- B12** Estyn should request exclusion data for the last 3 years prior to inspections and the destination and achievements of these excluded pupils and comment on the school's analysis of this data in their report.
- B13** The Welsh Assembly Government should encourage Estyn to undertake 'spot-check' inspections and to issue reports on those schools which consistently exclude pupils at disproportionately higher rates than their peers whether on a permanent or on a fixed-term basis or those which routinely use unofficial (illegal) exclusions.
- B14** The Welsh Assembly Government should set standards for the funding, referral, admissions and management of pupil referral units and EOTAS for those pupils who are not on a school's roll.
- B15** The Welsh Assembly Government should improve the way data is collected annually on how many permanent excluded pupils are readmitted and re-included into the mainstream and include these statistics as a regular agenda item on inclusion officer meetings.
- B16** The Welsh Assembly Government should provide guidance for schools on how to deal with pupils bringing weapons into schools and ensure that schools liaise with the police as appropriate. The 'School Crime Beat' Partnership Guidelines should be adopted by LAs.
- B17** The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that Estyn places more emphasis in its reports upon the ways in which schools' Disability and Equality schemes include responding to the needs of pupils with significant emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- B18** The Welsh Assembly Government should require LAs to ensure that all pupils excluded from mainstream schools are entered for and achieve nationally recognised qualifications in Year 11.
- B19** The Welsh Assembly Government should promote a school leadership model that includes:
 - promoting a positive whole school ethos
 - developing a whole school behaviour policy

- winning community and parents' support for a behaviour policy
- enabling headteachers to lead teams that target inappropriate pupil behaviour and work for change in that behaviour
- developing headteachers' understanding of the benefits of multi-agency intervention and the ways to:
 - understand the remit
 - recognise the role
 - comprehend the limitations
 - access the resources of other agencies appropriately.

B20 The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure its Framework Partnerships through the single plans for children and young people develop effective inter-agency practice in responding to the needs of children and young people with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties and through effective use of the Common Assessment Framework. Therefore, every Framework Partnership should develop a policy for statutory and voluntary agencies in responding to children and young people with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties to ensure that there is an effective service for pupils and parents.

B21 The Welsh Assembly Government should monitor successful provision of individual learning pathways for young people aged 14-19 exhibiting troubled behaviour and disseminate these best practices approaches to LAs, schools and colleges and include them on the behaviour and attendance website.

B22 The Welsh Assembly Government should publish guidance for schools and LAs on understanding and managing major 'incidents' effectively. Major 'incidents' should be defined by the Welsh Assembly Government but must include all serious pupil/teacher and pupil(s)/pupil(s) assaults.

B23 The Welsh Assembly Government should commission a study on the most effective approaches to parenting programmes including the promotion and sharing of good practice.

B24 The Welsh Assembly Government should include guidance and provide support to parents on children and young people's attendance and behaviour within the Parenting Action Plan.

B25 The Welsh Assembly Government should consider providing guidance for schools on effective ways to work in partnership with parents and particularly on ways to engage parents who are less confident in engaging with schools.

B26 The Welsh Assembly Government should collate best practice in the inter-agency work of:

- (a) youth work services
- (b) Careers Wales
- (c) the police

- (d) YOS
- (e) social care
- (f) CAMHS
- (g) the voluntary sector

in managing and supporting pupils' behavioural difficulties. This includes advice on such related issues as medication for behaviour, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder and oppositional defiance disorder, amongst others.

- B27** The Welsh Assembly Government should promote best practice in anti-bullying approaches in all its forms.
- B28** The Welsh Assembly Government should strengthen its guidance on the development by schools of Pastoral Support Programmes for all pupils at risk of exclusion by working in partnership with parents and carers to engage with schools in working together for change in the young people's behaviour.

7.2.3 Attendance and Behaviour

AB1 The Welsh Assembly Government should establish a good practice section on an Improving School Attendance and Behaviour website for use by schools and LAs across Wales. The website could include comparative data on schools' and LAs' attendance and behavioural performances. It could illustrate how the Welsh Assembly Government and Estyn monitor attendance and behaviour. It could establish good practice in casework with pupils and young people, parents and carers, both in and out-of-school. There should be a link with learning outcomes. The Improving School Attendance and Behaviour website should also include a section on good practice provided by out-of-school units. The website should also help to raise awareness amongst parents and pupils of their rights, particularly relating to unofficial exclusions. There will also need to be information sub-sections for different audiences including governors, schools, parents, children and young people.

AB2 Schools should be encouraged to provide support whenever possible (eg. learning coaches) as soon as pupils are identified as having attendance and/or behavioural difficulties.

AB3 The Welsh Assembly Government should:

- (a) Fund LAs to provide coaching and mentoring programmes for teachers in the management of classrooms and pupil behaviour. This should be linked to performance management and the work of the lead professional for behaviour and attendance in schools.
- (b) Enhance the helpline for teachers who find themselves in difficulty managing behaviour and attendance in their classrooms and wish to seek appropriate professional advice.
- (c) Also, commission a confidential coaching service for teachers who are experiencing difficulty in managing behaviour and who feel unable to ask for local support.

AB4 Consideration should be given to the lessons learned from the English practice of creating consultants for behaviour and attendance so that LAs can draw on their experience and good practice and determine whether in Wales this might be done at a regional level.

AB5 The Welsh Assembly Government should consider adapting the Social Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials for use in primary and secondary schools in Wales.

AB6 A new guide for school governors should be produced on the Welsh Assembly Government's policy on:

- (a) school attendance regulations
- (b) behaviour policies
- (c) fixed-term, permanent and unofficial exclusions
- (d) anti-bullying strategies.

AB7 School governing bodies should receive a **full** annual report on attendance and behaviour-related issues and consider the implications with senior staff present for the agenda item.

AB8 There should be more flexibility and cohesion about transition arrangements between Years 6 and 7. Schools should be encouraged to consider flexible and imaginative transition plans for pupils identified as being a behaviour and/or attendance risk. Use should be made of existing WAG guidance and planning on transitions. For example, one idea might be to keep the family and pupil-friendly atmospheres engendered by primary schools through to the early years of secondary schooling.

7.2.4 Parents

- P1** As part of the new Children and Young People's Plans all agencies should collaborate to produce a directory of their services for all schools and parents or carers.
- P2** Small group and exceptionally individual tutors should be appointed to work with pupils and parents together in school and/or at home to seek to ensure that all pupils in Years 6 can read and write at a level necessary to participate effectively in secondary education.
- P3** The Welsh Assembly Government should ask the Basic Skills Agency and Fforwm Magu Plant to jointly look at how family learning programmes and parenting programmes can be enhanced so that those parents who want additional support for parenting and learning can be most effectively engaged, whether in the home, the school or the community.
- P4** Evidence-based parenting programmes should be available to all parents who request help in Wales. Initially this provision should be for parents and carers with children up to 11 years of age.
- P5** The Welsh Assembly Government in conjunction with three or four pilot local authorities should promote the use of more applications for parenting orders for those parents or carers whose children have longstanding histories of behavioural and/or attendance compliance and who may have refused or not engaged with an offer of a voluntary parenting programme. The results of these pilots should be collated and monitored by the Welsh Assembly Government over a three to five year period with a view to extending the scheme throughout Wales if it proves successful.
- P6** The Welsh Assembly Government should pilot a joint approach to assessment, planning, intervention and review to help parents and carers and ensure that this is a single event activity rather than a multi-event exercise as currently occurs.

7.2.5 Children and Young People's Participation

- C1** Following this Review, school councils and LAs' school parliaments should be further developed with extra resources from the Welsh Assembly Government. School councils should be invited to participate in school decision-making processes wherever possible and should be consulted on behaviour, bullying, exclusion and attendance.
- C2** Following this Review, a toolkit on attendance and behaviour should be produced by the Welsh Assembly Government for use with children and young people in schools through for example, PSE programmes.
- C3** Schools should agree guidelines with school councils on behaviour and attendance and comply with Schools Council (Wales) Regulations 2005. In addition, the Welsh Assembly Government should:
- provide schools with guidance on the role of associate pupil governors
 - make sure that any advice, guidance and resources provided for schools including the **www.schoolscouncilwales.org.uk** website meets the needs of well-established school councils.
- Schools should:
- comply with the regulations on associate pupil governors
- Engage pupils more in:
- planning for school improvement
 - school self-evaluation
 - decisions affecting teaching and learning.
- C4** The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that all schools make it clear to children and young people that there is a named person to whom they can turn should they encounter difficulties in schools.

7.2.6 Inter-agency Approaches

- IA1** The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure and promote a coherent policy direction across Government on all aspects of children and young people's attendance and behaviour. Policy and guidance from the Welsh Assembly Government should give consideration to impacting positive changes upon pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- IA2** The Welsh Assembly Government should direct LAs to strengthen their guidance and training for all agencies, services and schools to ensure they are aware that troubled behaviour and erratic attendance may be indicative of safeguarding concerns.
- IA3** There is a need for all agencies to map their roles and responsibilities, to set out who does what in terms of managing behaviour and attendance at each stage in children's careers in schools. The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure all of this is brought together in a single accessible core directory for pupils, parents, teachers and inter-agency practitioners supported by LA guidance for specific local needs.
- IA4** As attendance and behaviour is everyone's concern as emphasised by the Welsh Assembly Government through its Community-Focused Schools Initiative, there is a need for the local authority to:
 - Encourage community-focused schools to lead on the recruitment of parent volunteers to work alongside teachers and others in school. (For some parents this might follow a progression from service users to school volunteer to teaching assistants and onwards).
 - Ensure peer mentoring and school-based counselling services are offered to disaffected young people.
- IA5** The Welsh Assembly Government's Common Assessment Framework needs to be developed as a fully effective inter-agency assessment tool and needs to include sections on attendance, exclusion, bullying and behaviour.
- IA6** There should be a requirement placed upon Framework Partnerships to develop general protocols on support for children and young people. This support for young people with difficult behaviours needs to be planned and implemented through the Single Children's Plan.

7.2.7 Training and Professional Development

- T1** All ITT students should have significantly greater training on the skills of effective classroom management as set out in the QTS standards.
- T2** The Welsh Assembly Government should require initial teacher training providers to ensure that trainee teachers are given a good understanding of child development and the causes of emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.
- T3** The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that all newly qualified teachers have the opportunity for mentoring and support in ways to manage troubled pupil behaviour in class.
- T4** The Welsh Assembly Government should significantly increase its ring-fenced funding for training programmes on behavioural management and the promotion of positive behaviour and attendance management at the school, LA, inter-agency, parent and pupil level.
- T5** The Welsh Assembly Government should promote more CPD on behavioural management to help support:
- new teachers
 - experienced teachers
 - learning coaches
 - classroom assistants
 - pastoral staff
 - senior staff
 - supply teachers
 - school support staff
 - educational psychologists
 - governors
 - youth workers
 - police officers who work in schools
 - pupil referral staff
 - youth offending service practitioners
 - magistrates
 - practitioners from the voluntary sector.
- T6** On a regional basis, LAs in Wales should 'pool' their resources in order to provide regional/national training programmes/conferences on behaviour management, utilising the expertise available from HE, FE, schools and other sources.
- T7** The Welsh Assembly Government should invest significantly in funding training on issues relating to behaviour and attendance which:
- provide opportunities for individuals and schools to develop expertise in specific fields

- provide opportunities for staff to visit centres of expertise and good practice
 - provide a routeway for gaining applied qualifications in this field
 - prepare staff for promotion and leadership within these fields within schools, LAs and amongst other support agencies, including voluntary bodies.
- T8** The Welsh Assembly Government should ensure that there are local, regional and national training opportunities for LA staff at all levels engaged in raising attendance and improving behaviour and learning.
- T9** There should be whole school CPD programmes on behavioural management for every school in Wales at five-yearly intervals. The Welsh Assembly Government should develop a system where all classroom and supply teachers are expected to undertake refresher training in behaviour management at least every five years. Local authorities and HE institutions should work alongside schools in providing suitable training programmes.
- T10** Senior managers responsible for behaviour, attendance and participation in schools should be trained to:
- co-ordinate behavioural strategies
 - develop effective channels of communication
 - ensure staff in schools receive ongoing support and training and maintain and improve relations with pupils, parents and carers
 - co-ordinate inter-agency responses for children in line with the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004.
- T11** The Welsh Assembly Government should provide funding and direction for training modules for school staff to be implemented on understanding and upholding children and young people's rights through:
- initial teacher training programmes
 - INSET and professional development programmes
 - middle and senior manager programmes
 - headteachers' training
- In addition, funding for whole school programmes on understanding and implementing the children and young people's rights agenda should be increased. Short programmes on managing school councils effectively would also be of value.
- T12** Higher education providers should be encouraged to start planning for and validating diploma-level, undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in social inclusion. These courses

should be aimed at all those professionals and LA staff engaged in this field. Funding should be given to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) for this purpose. Guidance should be given on effective inter-disciplinary practice.

- T13** Staff teaching in PRUs, alternative education centres and out-of-school units should be given the same opportunities as mainstream staff for training.
- T14** Staff teaching in PRUs, alternative education centres and out-of-school units should be provided with specialist training in behaviour management, crisis management, physical intervention and working with troubled pupils and their parents.
- T15** There should be a national qualification and funding made available for EWOs/ESWs and for all those professionals engaged in promoting social inclusion in Wales to allow greater opportunity for career development and professional practice to develop.
- T16** There should be more multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary training events for all those professionals engaged in the attendance and behaviour field, particularly focused on Welsh Assembly Government initiatives such as the Foundation Phase.

ANNEX A: Membership of the Steering Group*

Professor Ken Reid	Deputy Vice Chancellor, Swansea Metropolitan University (Chair)
Norman Cooke	Inclusion Manager, Cardiff County Council
Ann Griffiths	Education Social Worker, Denbighshire County Council NASWE/Education Welfare/Social Work Service Rep.
Peter Hosking	Senior Policy and Service Evaluation Officer, Children's Commissioner for Wales (observer status)
April May Kitchener	Headteacher, KS4 Education Centre, City and County of Swansea President of the National Organisation for PRUs
David Messum	Social Inclusion Manager, Conwy County Borough Council
Nic Naish	Headteacher, Newton Primary School, Bridgend
Mark Provis	Inclusion Manager, Carmarthen County Council Association of the Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW) Inclusion Representative
Meilyr Rowlands	Estyn (observer status)
Linda Roberts	National Co-ordinator for the All Wales School Liaison Core Programme, Gwent Police
John Sayce	Assistant Director, Barnardo's Cymru
Debra Thomas	Deputy Headteacher, Llantwit Major School, Vale of Glamorgan
Eleri Thomas	Interim Programme Director, Save the Children, Wales

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ANNEX B: Bibliography

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Cazbah see also: Cazbah@workingword

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