



## **National Assembly for Wales - Children and Young People Committee**

### **Inquiry into Attendance and Behaviour February 2013 – All Wales Police Response**

#### **Introduction**

All four Welsh Police Forces have a range of methods which provide opportunities for partnership working, specifically in relation to children and young people. The processes and working arrangements differ between Local Authority areas and Police Forces. Some Local Authority areas have adopted initiatives such as Team Around the Child/Family, or Families First, which concentrate upon early intervention, the welfare of children and provide support to families.

The PUPIL Scheme (Pupils Understanding Problems in their Locality) has been introduced in six Unitary Authority areas, in South Wales and Gwent. This approach involves Community Support Officers working in schools to enable pupils to develop their skills and improve behaviour .

The All Wales School Liaison Core Programme (AWSLCP) was launched in 2003 and extended Nationally in 2004. The Programme is jointly funded by the Welsh Government (WG) and all four Forces. The AWSLCP provides every school with a dedicated Schools Community Police Officer (SCPO) and has evolved over the years, MOSSS (Model Of Secondary School Support). Dyfed Powys has implemented MOSSS, the three other Police Forces have conducted trials and pilot sites, are in the process of doing so, or considering the new approach.

All of the above initiatives enable the Police and Partner organisations to focus on the needs of children and their families. This level of support provides opportunities for early intervention and a “case management” approach to individuals, which has a positive impact upon the children and young people they support, in relation to attendance and behavior.

## **Families First – Team Around the Child/Family**

A number of Authorities have introduced this concept. The approach could vary slightly between Local Authority Areas, however the main principles include –

- Early identification and therefore intervention for children and families
- Extensive partnership interaction, including the Police, Social Services, EWOs/Education, Domestic Abuse Organisations, Health and Youth Offending Teams
- Case management approach with one lead organization
- Support for children and families during difficult times in order to achieve a successful resolution

The main aim of these meetings is the welfare of the child, therefore attendance at school and behavior are paramount importance when reviewing the appropriate level of support for each case.

## **The PUPIL Scheme**

The PUPIL Scheme is a CVCPA (Cynon Valley Crime Prevention Association) initiative which is funded by ESF Convergence funding and supported by Heddlu Gwent Police and South Wales Police Forces, along with the six unitary authorities of Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend and Torfaen. It is a youth scheme designed to promote community involvement, community safety and crime prevention within the secondary education system.

The PUPIL Scheme is a child centred scheme designed to provide –

- Employability skills through the format of soft outcomes.
- An opportunity to raise their awareness of community issues in their area within a more flexible learning environment
- Engagement with young people in a pro-active format that allows them to express themselves and build self esteem through participation and interaction with each other and adults.
- Engagement with young people and the community around them, to provide them a better understanding of their own responsibilities within a community while facilitating them with an opportunity to develop through participation.

- Through participating in the scheme the young people will have the opportunity to gain an Open College Network Qualification that is part of the Credits and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW).

The young people are encouraged to work as a group to highlight a topic they perceive to be an issue within their own locality. This will be achieved by weekly meetings with an allocated Schools Project Officer who will facilitate the group's needs and objectives while exposing them to outside influences. The Schools Project Officer will, be accompanied by one or more Community Support Officers, who will aim to assist the group in their endeavours and break down barriers between young people and the Police.

The young people will also have the opportunity to interact in a participatory manner, empowering them to make decisions for themselves and take on new tangible responsibility through these weekly meetings

### **The All Wales School Liaison Core Programme (AWSLCP)**

The AWSLCP is a National Programme jointly funded by the Welsh Government (WG) and the four Police Forces of Wales and targets pupils aged 5 to 16 years of age and reaches 97% of all schools in Wales.

The aims of the Programme for both the mainstream and disengaged elements are:

- To work towards achieving crime and disorder reduction within our young communities, through the medium of education.
- To promote the principles of positive citizenship, in school and the wider community.

**Aim 1** is primarily achieved through the medium of education (lesson delivery) and is based on the PSE Curriculum Framework 2008. There are 3 strands to the Programme, Drugs and Substance Misuse, Social Behaviour and Community, and Safety.

**Aim 2** focuses on the School Community Police Officers (SCPOs) supportive school policing role, the operational aspect of the role, which promotes positive citizenship.

The duality of the AWSLP:

- Crime prevention - in educating young people about crime prevention issues to enable them to make informed decisions
- Crime reduction - in supporting vulnerable young people on the cusp of inappropriate behaviour through use of early intervention strategies to prevent entrance into the criminal justice system

Furthermore, the development of the AWSLP to encapsulate a variety of strategies to deal with vulnerable children has provided the Programme with additional strengths. For example as a national Programme providing such focused early intervention strategies, one would speculate, it contributes towards having an effect on the number of children and young people (first time offenders) entering the CJS. The annual figures of first time offenders entering the Criminal Justice System support this hypothesis showing at least a 50% drop in first time entrants over a 4 year period.

Table showing the number of first time entrants (young people) by Police Authority and calendar year (MOJ published data)

<b>Police Authority</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>DPP</b>	850	764	711	519	432
<b>GWP</b>	1442	1379	1027	775	593
<b>NWP</b>	1334	1323	1007	653	525
<b>SWP</b>	2068	1933	1731	1068	552

### **Inclusion Element**

Building on the work of police officers working with mainstream pupils and developing positive relationships with those who have the potential for disengagement the Programme has been extended to encompass working with pupils in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and Emotional, Social and Behavioural Difficulty units (ESBDs). This has been rolled out across fourteen Local Authorities in Wales where School Community Police Officers (SCPOs) are delivering to disengaged pupils in PRUs and ESBDs. This is

particularly advantageous with younger pupils, where longer term relationships are preferable to encourage positive behaviour.

Initial training has been provided by the Swansea Metropolitan University and supplemented by regional training from PRU staff and other professionals that work with disengaged pupils providing officers with greater understanding of local problems which helped to initiate relationships with their local PRU staff. Furthermore all officers have been trained in restorative approaches to assist staff in schools when dealing with incidents. This forms part of the Youth Justice Board's Youth Strategy to reduce the number of young people entering the criminal justice system.

### **Supportive School Policing**

This is in common with the strategic vision of the WG as PSTs seek to emphasise a child-centred, inclusive approach focusing on engagement and multi-agency partnership working.

Additionally the officers devote part of their time to supportive school policing by collaborating with the school pastoral deputy responsible for behaviour and attendance, along with other relevant personnel e.g. EWO, School Counselor, School Youth Worker etc. This includes providing advice, dealing with incidents using the School Crime Beat Protocol, restorative conferencing, assisting in policy development, accessing parents, governor training etc.

### **School Crime Beat Protocol and Restorative Justice**

The School Crime Beat Protocol has been written to provide a specific policy outlining the procedure for dealing with incidents in schools. It 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 WG guidance such as Inclusion and Pupil Support and that on exclusion. The protocol provides clear guidance on how:

- Officers should deal with criminal (or alleged criminal) occurrences on school premises.
- The boundaries in which police officers should operate

- Schools and Police can adopt approaches which help de-criminalise young people by offering them support and guidance.

Evidence suggests that restorative practices can have a significant effect and can provide a possible response to school problems. All the SCPOs have been trained in restorative approaches and can prove a valuable asset for schools utilising this approach or considering implementing it.

During the last academic year (2011 -12) Officers dealt with 3011 School Beat incidents and used restorative approaches on 777 occasions, to address a variety of issues e.g. bullying, including an increasing amount of cyber bullying (including mobile phones), Anti Social Behaviour (ASB), unacceptable behaviour in school, criminal damage, racist incidents, assault, drugs incidents etc (Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Youth Strategy 2010-13). As a result of the service provided by the SCPOs to schools, during evaluation they received a 78% satisfaction and confidence level from the school communities they serve.

### **The Model Of Secondary School Support (MOSSS)**

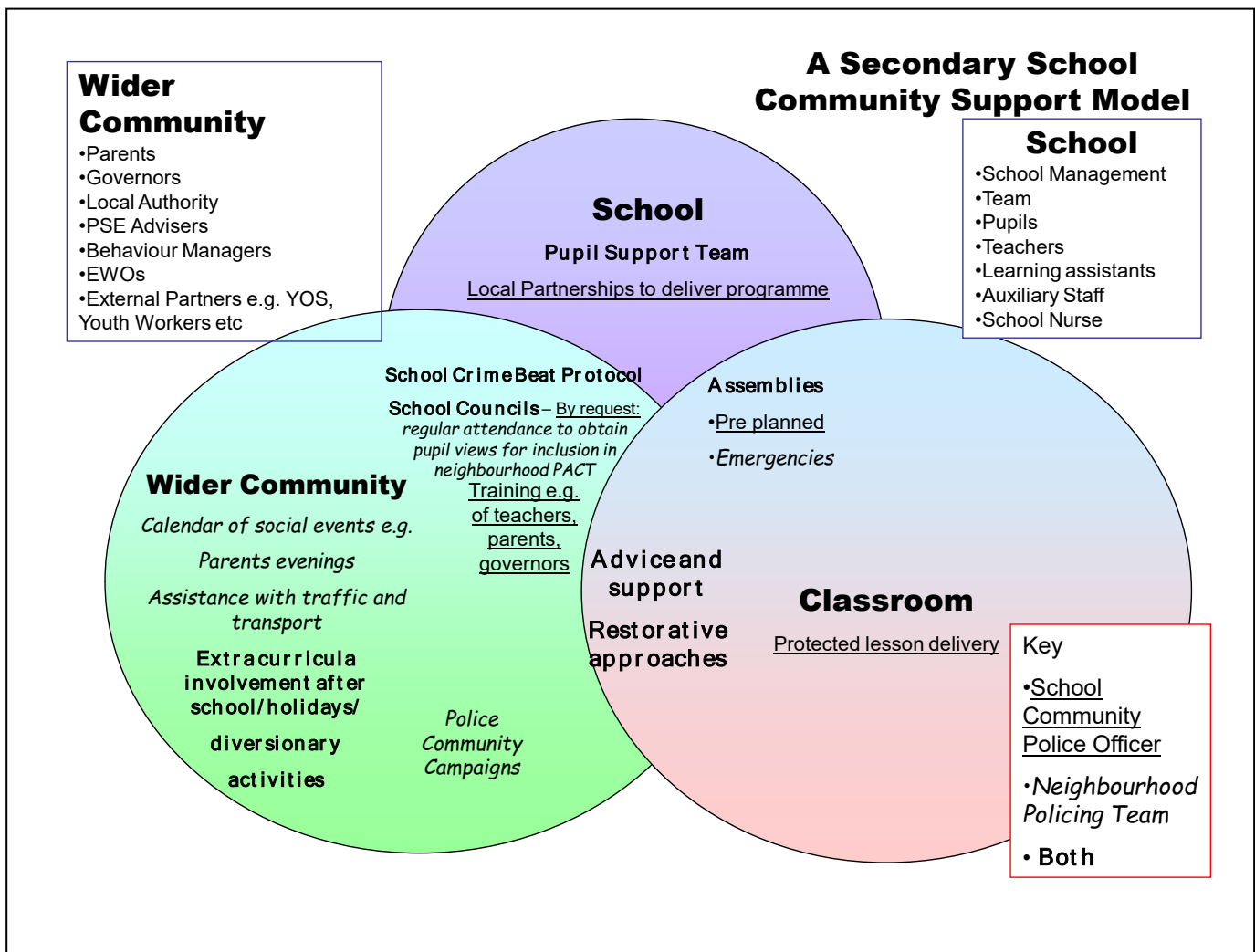
When schools work with other agencies, to deliver a wide range of Programmes that are joined-up, the full range of resources and expertise can be harnessed to deliver improved outcomes in learning and well-being. The Police are one of the key agencies working with schools. The Secondary School Support Model sets out how Police can work with secondary schools in Wales to take forward the aims of the School Effectiveness Framework.

The model aims to ensure that the distinction between the roles of the School Community Police Officer (SCPOs) and neighbourhood-based police are clearly defined to provide effective joined-up support for secondary schools across Wales. (See diagram below). By having the same goals and aspirations, the young people across Wales would receive a professional, standardised and corporate approach in the de-criminalising process.

A key feature of the Support Model is that the criminalisation of young people will be avoided as far as possible. This is reflected in the emphasis on using:

- The School Crime Beat Protocol
- Restorative Approaches as far as possible to resolve incidents
- Involvement in Pupil Support Teams as part of the model i.e. multi-agency teams to support vulnerable children

The model outlines the links between the classroom school support, the local Neighbourhood Team and the links with the wider community. It shows the areas of work to which the School Community Police Officers (SCPO) are dedicated and It highlights the potential for increased school/ wider community engagement for Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPT), clearly highlighting their areas of involvement. This would assist the aims of Partnership working, Neighbourhood Policing, as it provides a definite link between the school, the Police, Partner Agencies and the community.



To substantiate the benefits of MOSSS and the new performance indicators (PIs) a pilot was undertaken in a High School in North Wales to capture the operational aspect of MOSSS. The outcomes of the pilot were very positive and included:

1. The amount of preventative policing work the SCPO undertook in their school additional to lesson delivery was 38 incidents. The main types of incidents recorded were assault 33%, bullying 25%, disruptive behaviour 21%, sexual 8%, substance misuse 5%, harassment 5%, and theft 3%
2. 29 of these incidents were closed under the School Crime Beat Protocol, 13 requiring RJ which resulted in 33 pupils being prevented from entering the Criminal Justice System
3. The financial efficiency savings to the Criminal Justice System (CJS) of £33,594 as a consequence of the officers early intervention work which additionally supports the WG better value agenda (costings were taken from the 'Home Office Research Study 217' paper and the revised paper 30/05)
4. The valuable support provided for schools has positive educational ramifications e.g. a 19% reduction in the number of more serious school incidents and from 2010 - 12 a reduction in pupil referrals from 361 to 299, a drop of 17%

These results reflect the financial savings to the Criminal Justice System and the number of children prevented from entering the system. These results are for one term from one officer only. Therefore the capacity and saving when considering 85 officers over the span of a year is extensive.

### **Pupil Support Teams**

A Pupil Support Team (PST) is a team of professional partners in secondary schools working to support vulnerable pupils between 11 and 14 years of age. Its aims are to:

- Promote inclusion by providing targeted early intervention and support for vulnerable young people
- Try to keep children and young people out of the criminal justice system
- Address community anti-social behaviour.



The team meets regularly in the secondary school. It comprises key workers from the school and various agencies. Pupils are nominated by the school in consultation with partners. The team exchanges information, produces pupil action plans and identifies problem solving solutions, in agreement with the pupils and parents therefore providing support and advice for the young people.

### **Additional Work**

In addition to the specific aspects of the programme detailed above, SCPOs also provide the following –

- Deliver a wide variety of lessons, which directly or indirectly, assist with the education and development of young people in relation to making the right choices and their behaviour towards others.
- SCPOs are requested by individual senior management teams in schools, to attend a variety of meetings to discuss issues including behaviour and attendance.
- Close working relationships with EWOs, including truancy patrols, joint visits to homes or meetings in schools, regarding attendance or behaviour issues
- Close working relationships with Child Protection Officers in schools

### **Conclusion**

The AWSLCP has provided a structured and consistent approach for Police Forces to engage with Schools. The MOSSS pilot schemes have identified the benefits of improved working relationships between the SCPOs, the Neighbourhood Policing Teams and the local schools, which have also increased the level of partnership working, ensuring that a multi agency approach is adopted when providing support to children and their families. This early intervention, case management approach, increases the opportunities for a successful conclusion.

Information Sharing Protocols and agreed Terms of Reference, for partnership meetings and between individual schools and Neighbourhood Teams are essential, as this provide a framework under which all organisations are able to work. In some areas, partner organisations are hesitant to disclose information in fear of breaching the confidence of the families they work with.

A number of Local Authorities have meeting structures in place, such as Families First and Team Around the Family, which provides opportunities for partner agencies to raise issues and concerns regarding behaviour and attendance. In order to improve behaviour and attendance figures, it would be advisable to review the approach in any priority area, to ensure that the appropriate structures are in place.

The consideration to implement formal sanctions, such as Penalty Notices, or Court appearances, should always be considered by partners. As some families would not have the necessary funds to pay, this additional financial pressure could have an adverse impact upon the family. Whilst it is appreciated that partnership intervention and support may be ineffective with some families and therefore formal sanctions would have to be imposed, this decision should be reached after consultation with the Organisations involved in the intervention. Providing the power to Constables and Community Support Officers to issue penalty notices, could have a detrimental impact upon any on-going partnership work, if not used appropriately.