National Behaviour Summit 22.05.25
Behaviour in schools and colleges in Wales

Final report

Welsh Government

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Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

OGL

Contents

Introduction

1. The National Summit on Behaviour in Schools and Colleges was held on 22 May at the Temple of Peace in Cardiff and was hosted by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and the Minister for Further and Higher Education.

2. This event brought together 118 participants to share insights and drive positive change. Attendees were drawn from local authorities, the education workforce unions, representatives from schools and colleges and a range of key stakeholders representing early years, schools, colleges, youth work, child development, health, additional learning needs and behavioural psychology.

3. All attendees were committed to fostering positive behaviour and well-being amongst all children and young people and ensuring the safety of school and college staff and learners in education settings.

4. The Summit created a collaborative environment for stakeholders and practitioners to share experiences and solutions, promote positive behaviours and explore and share effective approaches which already exist in Wales.

5. This event is part of a wider programme of engagement on behaviour in schools including:
   - the Roundtable on violence and safety in schools and colleges
   - a forum to look at issues around exclusions and detentions
   - a forum to look at issues relating to mobile phones and social media usage
   - a series of future events with schools, colleges, parents and learners.

6. The Roundtable was held on 8 May, with an interim report shared with attendees in advance of the Summit. The Summit discussion sessions were directly informed by the key outputs from the Roundtable, along with the findings of a national workforce survey, reports from the education workforce unions and research completed by Estyn and Bangor University.

7. This summary report synthesises immediate actions arising from the Summit and highlights the synergies with considerations during the Roundtable.

8. Insights from the National Behaviour Survey, the Roundtable, and the Summit will contribute to the growing body of evidence to inform the development of clear, actionable strategies to improve behaviour in schools and colleges.

9. A copy of the event programme is at **Annex A** and a list of final attendees is at **Annex B**.

10. Feedback on the day of the Summit was highly positive, with strong enthusiasm for future engagement events with practitioners, learners and parents.

Recent research

11. In advance of the Summit, the Senedd Petitions Committee published a report focused on 'A ban on smartphones in schools in Wales' (March 2025). The report recommended enhanced guidance for schools, rather than an outright ban of mobile phones. The Cabinet Secretary for Education welcomed the recommendations set out in this report to enhance support and guidance for schools on this issue and committed to accelerate the establishment of a new forum focused on mobile phone and social media usage. The impact of mobile phones on behaviour was also a pertinent issue during discussions at the Summit.

12. A comprehensive evidence pack was shared with attendees in advance of the Summit, including links to:

   - Estyn Thematic Review - Fostering mutual respect-promoting positive behaviour in Secondary Schools (report and associated resources).
   - Case Studies – A selection of best practice exemplars from Estyn.
   - Estyn Thematic Review - Learner behaviour in Further Education colleges.
   - Bangor University Research - Behaviours that challenge and disrupt in schools across Wales: effective strategies and mitigations
   - Behaviour survey - An information bulletin relating to the outcomes of the behaviour survey
   - Behaviour survey - PowerPoint presentation of findings
   - Interim Report - Roundtable on violence in Schools and Colleges 08.05.25
   - NASUWT Cymru - Violence and aggression in schools report
   - University of Roehampton, London - Violence towards teaching/classroom assistants in mainstream UK schools
   - ASCL Cymru – Note on factors driving inappropriate behaviours in schools

13. The reports shared by education unions, focused on some of the specific issues practitioners are currently facing including the impact of physical assaults on teachers, teacher wellbeing and mental health (NASUWT Cymru) and the factors driving inappropriate behaviours in schools (ASCL Cymru).

14. In advance of the Summit, Estyn published two thematic reports focused on learner behaviour. The first, published on 1 May, considered behaviour in further education settings, and the second, published on 8 May, looked at promoting positive behaviour in secondary schools.

15. Estyn's further education report was informed by visits to 7 colleges, national surveys of staff and learners, and consultations with key stakeholders, including union representatives. Lateness, absenteeism, inappropriate use of social media, and vaping were cited as commonly reported issues. Key recommendations for colleges focused on sharing practice to refine behaviour management practices, guidance for learners on social media use and providing tailored support for learners and supporting the well-being of staff. There was

also a recommendation for the Welsh Government on a national vaping strategy, and a recommendation for Medr to consider long-term funding models.

16. Estyn findings in relation to schools were based on visits to 24 secondary and all-age schools, discussions with officers from 10 local authorities and findings from surveys for pupils, staff, and headteachers. Survey results revealed that most pupils described behaviour in a positive manner, however, staff and headteachers express concerns about a rise in low level disruption. Estyn recommendations included strengthened behaviour management systems, consistent approaches to family engagement, professional learning on managing disruptive behaviour, including initial teacher training and induction programmes and a national campaign on positive behaviour.

17. Both reports outline the learner behaviour challenges and explore strategies to promote positive conduct, manage negative behaviour, address dysregulation and communication challenges and enhance support for learners and staff.

18. <u>Further research</u> into classroom behaviour conducted by Bangor University was published the day prior to the Summit, focusing on effective strategies to tackle challenging and disruptive behaviour in schools.

19. This study provided practical, evidence-informed solutions to inform policy and impact on practice. The presentation delivered by Professor Carl Hughes at the Summit provided powerful insights into the impact of fostering positive relationships between learners and teachers on behaviour, as well as investing in supporting learners to build psychological flexibility to manage their feelings.

20. Presentations by Estyn and Bangor University at the Summit offered valuable research insights to enrich subsequent discussion sessions.

Summit themes

21. 118 partners, stakeholders and practitioners attended the Summit. To ensure discussions remained focused and that everyone had an opportunity to share their views, attendees were seated on tables of 8-10. Discussions were held on tables, supported by a table-based facilitator and scribe, ensuring all points were captured.

22. Discussions were grouped around three themes, with a key focus on current learner behaviour issues and root causes, effective practice and actions needed.

    - Discussion 1: Leadership and teaching - creating effective policies and practices to support relationships and positive behaviour.
    - Discussion 2: Approaches to inclusion and well-being – meeting the emotional and mental health needs of learners as well as learners with additional learning needs.
    - Discussion 3: Families and communities – consideration of the impact of societal changes and approaches to support improvements in this area.

23. Facilitators were invited to feedback following each discussion session. An overarching snapshot of high-level themes is provided below:

    1. **Leadership & workforce**: Need for strong, visible leadership, consistent implementation of robust behaviour policies, tailored to the school's context, to ensure staff at all levels are supported and promote a positive, respectful learning environment.
    2. **Inclusive, holistic education**: Schools should strive to meet educational, emotional, and developmental needs of learners, through inclusive practices and trauma-informed approaches. This includes a clear focus on speech, language and communication needs.
    3. **Funding & resources**: A requirement to prioritise enrichment and well-being, with flexible, long-term funding to support staff, services, and interventions.
    4. **Family & community engagement**: Strengthening relationships with families and communities is vital, with ALNCos and family engagement officers playing a key role in bridging support.
    5. **Systemic change & collaboration**: A national approach with clear priorities, cross-agency collaboration, and shared best practice is needed to address complex societal challenges. Consistency in recording and reporting incidents is needed to ensure patterns can be identified and actions taken.
    6. **Respect & relationships**: Rebuilding respect for the profession and fostering positive relationships among staff, learners, and families are crucial elements.

24. Specific actions arising from each discussion session will now be explored in more detail.

Discussions in relation to behaviour in schools

Discussions raised issues regarding the **deterioration in the relationship between parents and schools** post-pandemic, with a decline in respect for the profession and increased parental skepticism and hostility. Negative past experiences of parents with education, especially in secondary schools, make it more difficult to build relationships. Social media amplifies complaints and misinformation, often undermining school efforts. Learners and their families have high expectations in terms of the support which schools can provide, which can lead to frustrations when they feel they are not heard, understood or supported.

Discussion 1: Leadership and teaching

The session opened with the following Slido question:

Current issues
Key concerns raised included **a noticeable rise in behavioural issues**, particularly anti-social, defiant, and disruptive behaviours, influenced by post-pandemic challenges, social media, and home environments. It should be noted that while there is a tendency to refer to matters having declined post-pandemic, there is some evidence of declines taking place over a longer period of time.

Inconsistencies in leadership, behaviour management, and multi-agency collaboration were highlighted as contributing to **inconsistent experiences for both learners and staff**. Attendees also noted that staff burnout, strained parent-school relationships, and **limited time for building positive relationships** are impacting on the school ethos and learner engagement.

Discussions also addressed the **focus on academic outcomes** to the detriment of social-emotional development and vocational pathways. There was a consensus regarding the need to focus on reading as a way of enabling learners to access the curriculum. Broader challenges included funding, staffing pressures, and **access to timely early intervention in the classroom and specialist support** such as additional learning provision, mental health, and speech and language services. This

highlighted the importance of improving the integration and collaboration with health, social services and education.

A consistent message highlighted the **need for systemic reform**, including clearer societal expectations around behaviour, enhanced professional learning, and stronger early years practice and early intervention and family engagement.

Effective practice
- **Swansea local authority** has implemented a unified set of principles across all schools, centred on respect for peers and children's rights, with clearly defined expectations for pupils, parents, and staff.
- Opportunity to build on the successful work led by **<u>Charlotte Clarke</u>** focused by developing a practical **toolkit or training programme for teachers**.
- **<u>Monmouthshire local authority</u>** has worked with parents to ask them not to allow children to have smart phones until at least Year 10.
- **Ceredigion local authority** is applying a triangulated model of support to strengthen behavioural interventions.
- Effective **transition arrangements** are in place in some areas, ensuring that learner information is shared meaningfully between settings.
- Behaviour policies that are **co-created with staff, parents, and learners**—rather than imposed, foster shared ownership and align with school values.
- **Cardiff's Learning Partnership Boards** exemplify a multi-agency approach, bringing together services to address the specific needs of individual schools.

Suggested actions

1. **Support schools to implement coherent behaviour policies** – Ensure clear articulation of behavioural expectations and defined sanctions to enable timely and appropriate responses, in line with statutory duties to safeguard and promote the well-being of staff and pupils.
2. **Establish a national approach** - Develop a pan-Wales behaviour framework with clear expectations and shared definitions to ensure consistency across schools and local authorities.
3. **Prioritise relationships and well-being** - Invest in building strong learner-staff relationships, support emotional development, and promote thriving classroom environments with both staff and learners feeling supported.
4. **Strengthen professional learning** - Provide national training, toolkits, and ongoing professional development focused on behaviour management and de-escalation, trauma-informed practice, and neurodiversity.
5. **Funding and resource allocation** - Increase and stabilise funding to support early intervention, staffing (including pastoral staff), and external partnerships.
6. **Enhance early intervention and collaboration** - Prioritise early diagnosis and strengthen multi-agency collaboration to support learners holistically.

7. **Support transition and curriculum access** - Improve learner transition and enhance curriculum access through improved data sharing and inclusive practices.

8. **Empower leadership and school culture** - Support school leaders and staff with incentives, well-being measures, and collaborative decision-making structures.

9. **Promote evidence-based practice** - Invest in Welsh research, share effective practices, and recognise neurodivergence as a strength.

10. **Foster system-wide collaboration** - Strengthen partnerships across schools, services, and sectors to improve consistency and learner support.

Discussion 2 – Approaches to inclusion and well-being

The session opened with the following Slido question:
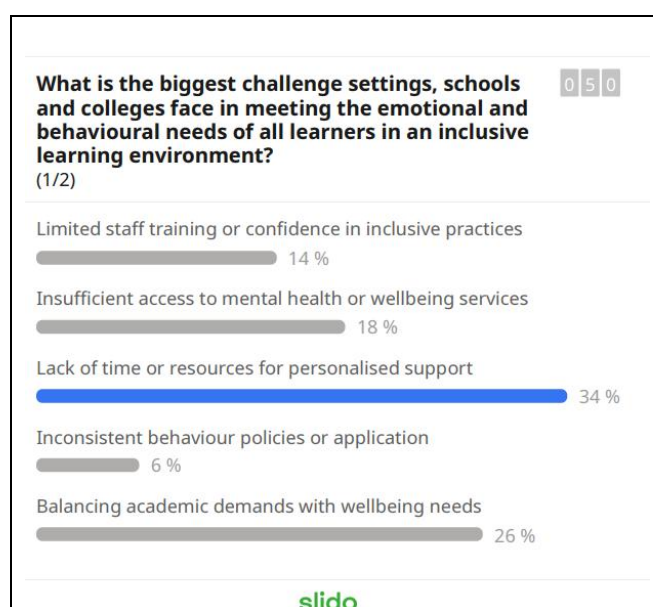
Current issues
Discussions focused on **the impact of wider systemic and societal issues** on learner behaviour including poverty, trauma, social media, discrimination and marginalisation. Schools feel they are increasingly expected to act as the fourth emergency service, meeting deficits in wider public service, specifically health and social services.

Significant concerns were raised regarding **emotional and physical challenges faced by staff,** with limited training, supervision, and support. Recruitment, retention, and capacity issues are widespread, coupled with gaps in professional learning provision, particularly for support staff. This was further highlighted in the Slido comments, as participants highlighted a lack of time, capacity and skills to identify and respond to learners' individual needs.

Specific neurodivergence, ALN and mental health challenges were raised. More learners and families are self-identifying neurodivergence but face long waiting lists for a medical diagnosis or arrange private assessments. A medical diagnosis is not required for learners to be identified with ALN, the first step is to contact the school ALNCo however, this can put pressure on the school.

Concerns were raised regarding the **challenges to identify and respond to learners' needs, including additional learning needs,** which can lead to insufficient support being put in place. This can be compounded by workforce and financial pressures impacting on the resources available to manage the ALN process, deliver support and meet learner needs.

It was also noted that the needs of ALN learners are now more complex, requiring different interventions and health services which are not readily available in all settings. CAMHS and mental health services are already overstretched. **The need to improve national consistency of multi-agency collaboration and strengthen the integration of health, education and social services** was a common theme. There is also a need for a shared understanding of inclusion and what is expected to be delivered in most schools across Wales. Multi-agency collaboration was considered inconsistent and fragmented. This can mean that accessing support services for children can become reactive not proactive, as interventions can be too late.

In terms of the curriculum and learning environment, emotional education is prioritised in some areas, but **academic outcomes still dominate**. Delivery of the health and well-being AoLE is inconsistent due to a lack of training and clarity. Interventions often disrupt learning; play and wellbeing are undervalued. Issues were also raised regarding teaching and learning skills gaps for practitioners, in areas including mental health and neurodivergence to identify and respond to learner needs, coupled with an inconsistent understanding of inclusion.

Young people's voices are often missing in decision-making. UNCRC Article 12 [1]is not consistently applied. **Relationships** between staff and pupils, and across agencies are crucial, but often evolve informally rather than being a key part of system design.

Effective practice
- *Anglesey* – no PRU, hubs based within secondary schools – same expectations in place for all hubs to ensure consistency.
- Work **led by CYDAG** to establish a cross regional system to support early intervention in Welsh medium schools.
- Ceredigion County Council has adopted the work of **Paul Dix**, focused on transformational relational behaviour practice.
- FE colleges support students with mental health exceptionally well and offer in between support.
- **Specialist staff host INSET** to impart knowledge and experience.
- Royal College – training on speech and language, but not known across Wales.
- Cardiff outreach working with elective home education learners, run by Cardiff Youth Service in Caerau and Ely.

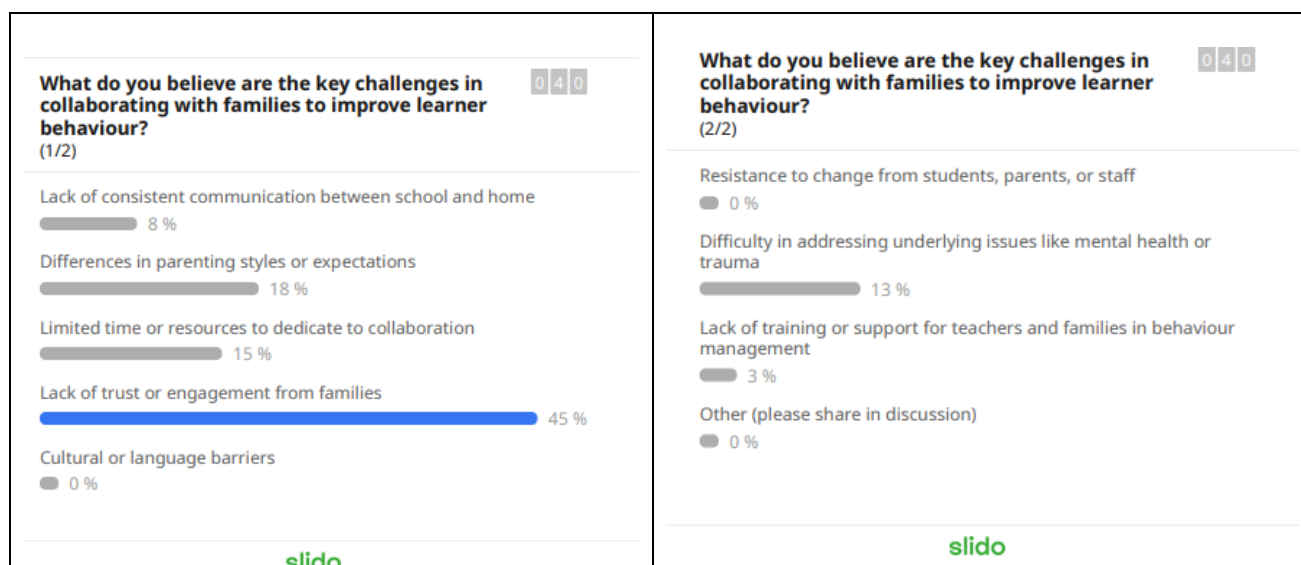[1] UNCRC - Conventions on the rights of the child

- <u>Alberta Family Wellness Initiative</u> – provides access to free resources on the science of early brain development and the connection to adult mental health.
- Health and wellbeing cluster model being used in some areas e.g. Cardiff South West Primary Care Cluster.
- Restorative work e.g. <u>Wales Restorative Approaches Partnership (WRAP).</u>
- Use of SHRN data to develop curriculum provision focused on healthy relationships, communication, attendees also referenced <u>Thrive training</u>.

Suggested actions

1. **Develop a national dashboard** to improve data sharing and coordination across education, health, and social services, coupled with. Explore opportunities via the School Improvement Partnership Programme.
2. **Clarify roles and responsibilities –** the boundaries between different services and what they provide are currently unclear. Establish a memorandum of understanding across stakeholders (schools, local authorities, health, parents).
3. **Leaders to foster an inclusive culture in schools,** based on resilience and belonging. This should take full account of the needs of staff and learners and provide support for wellbeing.
4. **Invest in national professional learning for all staff,** including non-teaching roles, with a particular focus on trauma-informed approaches, neurodivergence, child development, ALN and building relationships; provide emotional support for staff, especially in high-need settings. Invest in sharing good practice/success across clusters.
5. **Continue to drive a whole-school approach mental health and wellbeing**. Use early identification and mapping tools to track and tailor interventions. Improve access to CAMHS and multi-agency support.
6. **Improve funding flexibility and policy clarity**, in relation to inclusion, EOTAS, and vocational pathways. Exploring the options to support pupils who find mainstream difficult and do not need special school provision.
7. **Prioritise person centred approaches** including the ALN process**,** meaningful engagement beyond student councils, promoting digital literacy and core life skills, implement UNCRC Article 12 across schools and embed a sense of belonging, clear communication to ensure learners are aware of the support available from schools.
8. **Upskill and support parents**, especially in relation to neurodivergence and anxiety (Emotionally Based School Avoidance), strategies to support neurodivergence and digital safety. Strengthen community school models. Improve communication strategies to share success and build trust.
9. Ensure **parity between academic and non-academic routes**. Broaden curriculum options to include vocational, outdoor, and community-based learning. Promote literacy and life skills as foundational to long-term success.

Discussion 3: Families and communities

The session opened with the following Slido questions:

What do you believe are the key challenges in collaborating with families to improve learner behaviour? (1/2)

- Lack of consistent communication between school and home — 8 %
- Differences in parenting styles or expectations — 18 %
- Limited time or resources to dedicate to collaboration — 15 %
- Lack of trust or engagement from families — 45 %
- Cultural or language barriers — 0 %

What do you believe are the key challenges in collaborating with families to improve learner behaviour? (2/2)

- Resistance to change from students, parents, or staff — 0 %
- Difficulty in addressing underlying issues like mental health or trauma — 13 %
- Lack of training or support for teachers and families in behaviour management — 3 %
- Other (please share in discussion) — 0 %

Current issues

Discussions raised issues regarding the **deterioration in the relationship between some parents and schools** post-pandemic, with a decline in respect for the profession and increased parental skepticism and hostility. Negative past experiences of parents with education, especially in secondary schools, make it more difficult to build relationships. Social media amplifies complaints and misinformation, often undermining school efforts. A minority of parents often have unrealistic expectations of schools. This is highlighted in the Slido results above, which indicate that participants felt that there was a lack of trust and engagement from parents with education staff.

Issues were raised regarding **delayed or ineffective communication** about learner behaviour or issues. Digital tools like ClassCharts are underused or ignored by some parents. There is a need for proactive, positive contact, such as celebrating success and providing regular updates. Barriers to engagement include language, trauma, poverty, experiences of discrimination and marginalisation and lack of trust.

Short-term funding cycles impact on long-term planning and staffing. Family Engagement Officers (FEOs) are effective but underfunded and often on short-term contracts. The **loss of ancillary and pastoral roles** due to budget cuts increases pressure on teachers.

The **cost-of-living crisis** is affecting both families and school staff. Parents working multiple jobs have less time to engage. There is a rise in elective home education (EHE) and attendance issues, especially around holidays. Mental health strain on families and learners is exacerbated by limited external support.

Mobile phone use is linked to behavioural and health issues. There are **inconsistent policies on phone bans and behaviour management**. Children often mirror parental behaviour, including aggression and mistrust.

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There are challenges in transitions from primary to secondary education and from further education (FE) to higher education (HE) or employment. There is a lack of support for neurodiverse learners and their families. Cultural and linguistic barriers exist for multilingual families.

Effective practice

- **Coffee mornings/social events** involving parents, learners, and staff strengthen school-family bonds.
- **Regular positive contact with parents** (e.g. Friday phone calls, postcards home) boosts relationships and morale.
- Family Engagement Officers (FEOs) provide **consistent support for families** but need secure, long-term funding.
- **SHEP (School Holiday Enrichment Programme)** uses school facilities during holidays for enrichment and meals.
- **Healthy Community** and **Walk with Me** (London charity) offer outreach and support beyond academics.
- Cardiff local authority provides **extra-curricular learning for parents** to learn about issues such as drugs/alcohol/sexual health, awarding certificates for participation.
- Special schools use **positive restrictive support** to help children manage challenging behaviour constructively.

Suggested actions

1. **Strengthening school-family partnerships** - Through formal agreements to secure parental commitment to supporting and enforcing behaviour expectations, complemented by informal gatherings, and restorative practices to ensure a consistent home/school approach.
2. **Parental support and education** - Empower parents with learning opportunities, parenting guidance, and support during key educational transitions.
3. **Community-focused schools** - Transform schools into community hubs offering wraparound services, extended use of facilities, and holiday programs.
4. **Workforce development -** Invest in and professionalise roles that support family engagement, promote workforce diversity, and enhance staff development.
5. **Early intervention and inclusion** - Focus on early identification of needs, inclusive planning, and expanded mental health support for families.
6. **Communication and technology** - Improve and diversify communication methods to better connect with and understand parent communities.

Discussions in relation to behaviour in colleges

There were a number of consistent themes across schools and colleges regarding both current challenges and examples of effective practice. These included shared concerns around behaviour management, staff well-being, and parental engagement, as well as common strategies that have proven successful, such as restorative approaches, clear communication of expectations, and collaborative working with families and external partners.

Discussion 1: Leadership and teaching

Current issues
Key issues were raised regarding the **underdevelopment of vocational skills** and curriculum gaps. Feedback highlighted the prioritisation of academic development over social/emotional learning.

Concerns were raised regarding the **negative impact of learned behaviours from home and social media** on students, with acceptance of poor behaviour as the new norm i.e. bad language. Comments raised also reflected that parental work patterns can affect levels of attendance.

Discussions also focused on the **impact of limited learning contact** i.e. 3-day college weeks and complex timetables on behaviour, coupled with the limited non-academic post 16 options. Concerns were also raised regarding financial pressures in ALN to fund and support, with inconsistent multi-agency collaboration and challenges in securing speech/language support.

Professional learning for practitioners was raised as a key issue, in failing to evolve with behavioural challenges. Specific gaps were also identified in professional learning focused on social and emotional well-being.

Effective practice
- **Investment in relational approaches –** practitoners avoid publicly calling students out and focus on understanding them to improve engagement.
- **Strong pastoral care models** e.g. Bridgend College to support student well-being.
- **Support from a "key named contact"** (not necessarily a parent) provides additional emotional support for students.
- **Visible and collaborative leadership** helps to build a supportive and positive learning environment.
- **Natural learning environments** e.g. a forest schools style programme positively impact on well-being and engagement.
- **Positive role models** encouraging students to accept failure and grow from it builds resilience.
- **Inclusive behaviour policies** developed with input from staff, parents, and students are more effective and positively received.

Suggested actions

1. **Communication/Key messaging** - Emphasise the importance of attendance as foundational to academic success.
2. **Re-evaluate funding models**, particularly in relation to ALN and support services.
3. **Build a culture of trust**, to equip learning organisations to make decisions about teaching and support.
4. **Professionalise and fund specialist roles (**e.g. well-being officers, pastoral staff).
5. **Extend professional learning provision** to include social/emotional development and trauma-informed practices.
6. **Create active wellbeing and nurturing environments,** where students can safely and positively express themselves.
7. **System wide co-ordination –** develop a pan Wales system, to transfer learner data especially for ALN students.
8. **Research-Based Strategies:** Align strategies across local authorities using evidence-based approach

Discussion 2 – Approaches to inclusion and well-being

Current issues
Group members highlighted that many students enter FE with negative prior experience of education.

Key concerns were raised regarding the **transition post CAMHS**, due to extended waiting times to access adult services, creating a support vacuum. Issues regarding the **limitations of some mental health approaches** were also raised, noting that cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is not suitable for all mental health needs, especially trauma-related issues.

Feedback also reinforced that **FE institutions are not equipped to handle complex trauma or deep psychological needs**—this is a health sector responsibility. Practitoners are often expected to support mental health issues without the necessary training. Concerns were also raised regarding the **increasing numbers of students self-diagnosing mental health conditions,** further complicating support pathways.

Social media was regarded to be a key contributor to mental health issues and social isolation, yet for some students, it is their only social outlet.

Effective practice
- FE colleges often provide **strong interim mental health support**, bridging the gap between CAMHS and adult services.
- **Some colleges employ counsellors** and offer drop-in services. However, this support ends when students leave FE.

- **Designated Person (DP) roles**, are recognised as an effective approach to support student wellbeing.
- **Proactive Engagement**: Colleges that actively support students' mental health see better outcomes.

Suggested actions

1. **Introduce essential life skills into the curriculum**, such as online safety, mental health awareness and emotional regulation to impact on long-term well-being and resilience.
2. **Provide emotional support for all**: staff as well as students.
3. **Clearly define expectations for practitoners** in terms of their responsibilities in supporting mental health.
4. **Ensure support reaches those in the "middle tier"** who are often overlooked.
5. **Balanced regulation of social media use** - it can also be a vital space for self-expression and connection.
6. **Shift in leadership style** —more inclusive, empathetic, and focused on wellbeing.
7. **Provide green spaces**: Include more natural environments and wellbeing-focused activities as part of the learning experience.
8. **Investment in improving literacy** to enhance life skills, employability, and mental health outcomes.

Discussion 3: Families and communities

Current issues
Engagement with the wider community was flagged as a key issue for FE in regard to ensuring consistency of approach, as colleges do not serve the local community in the same way as primary and secondary schools.

The **lack of parental involvement** was highlighted as a key issue, some parents are disengaged or indifferent toward their child's education. In addition, it was noted that parental engagement in FE is often limited as colleges cannot contact parents/carers without the student's consent.

A number of issues were raised in relation to the **broader financial crisis and economic instability**, with some families relying on their child's attendance in FE to maintain benefit eligibility. It was also highlighted that many students have part-time jobs, impacting on attendance and engagement.

Post FE concerns focused on the **difficulties experienced by students when transitioning from FE** to higher education or employment, with limited support.

Key resource issues were also raised, in terms of the lack of dedicated staff or volunteers focused on family engagement and wellbeing.

Effective practice

- **Positive messaging**: Contacting parents to share good news about their child helps build trust and engagement.
- **Pastoral and engagement coaches**: These roles in FE settings help maintain attendance and support student wellbeing.
- **Family learning initiatives**: These programmes help build a sense of community and shared responsibility for learning.
- **Involving a key named contact**: Engaging influential figures in a student's life (not just parents) can enhance support.
- **Educating parents**: Helping parents understand how to support their child, especially around social media use, is effective.
- **Community outreach and family learning programs** foster engagement.
- **Events like "Success Together" evenings** and open days build support networks
- **Supportive internships and charity involvement** enhance learner experience.

Suggested actions

1. **Rebranding further education:** Shift public perception of FE as a pathway to employability and success, not a fallback option.

2. **Host summits involving learners and families** to shape future strategies.

3. **Introduce roles like family engagement officers** to strengthen home-college links.

4. **Life skills education:** Include financial literacy and other essential life skills in the curriculum, delivered by specialists rather than practitoners.

5. **Integrate community services into colleges** to create a "community hub" model.

6. **Positive media representation:** Use media to highlight the value and success of FE, countering negative stereotypes.

Synergies with Roundtable outputs

The Roundtable took place two weeks before the Summit. Key findings from the Roundtable were summarised in an interim report shared with Summitt attendees in advance. Roundtable findings also informed discussions sessions at the Summit. Consistent calls for action at both the Roundtable and the Summit are as follows:

National consistency and frameworks
- Both called for a national, consistent approach to learner behaviour, with standardised expectations across Wales.
- Emphasis on shared definitions, data collection, and reporting standards to ensure clarity and comparability across settings.

Trauma-informed and preventative practice
- Strong alignment on the need for trauma-informed approaches, understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and early intervention.
- Both highlighted the importance of preventative strategies over reactive measures, including staff training in de-escalation and safe restraint.

Professional learning and workforce development
- Shared focus on a tailored approach for practitioners and non-teaching staff.
- Emphasis on ongoing training in behaviour management, neurodiversity, and emotional wellbeing.
- Recognition of the need to support staff wellbeing and address recruitment and retention challenges.

Multi-agency collaboration and data sharing
- Both stressed the importance of multi-agency working, particularly between education, health, and social care.
- Call for improved data sharing to support transition, early identification, and the provision of holistic learner support.

Community and family engagement
- Strong synergies linked to community-focused schools and wraparound services.
- Emphasis on parental engagement, including support for parenting, digital safety, and emotional wellbeing.
- Recognition of the role of schools as community hubs.

Learner voice and inclusion
- Both highlight the importance of pupil voice, including establishing working groups with young people.
- Emphasis on inclusive practices, belonging, and recognising neurodiversity as a strength.

Curriculum and pathways
- Shared interest in broadening curriculum options, including vocational and community-based learning.
- Focus on core life skills, digital literacy, and literacy/numeracy foundations.

Funding and resource allocation
- Common messaging on the need for increased and sustained funding, especially for support staff, specialist training, and preventative services.
- Call for flexible funding models that support long-term planning and local autonomy.

Immediate actions

25. Immediately after the Summit, the Cabinet Secretary for Education released a <u>press notice</u> and <u>written statement</u> focused on 'five immediate actions' to tackle pressing behaviour issues and support staff to act quickly to start to make a difference.

26. A brief update on the latest position is outlined below:

   - **Creating structures to support multi-agency working**
     Following the Roundtable, the Cabinet Secretary will be meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales to discuss the Wales Police Schools Programme.

   - **Updating guidance for schools**
     Initial work to develop the guidance will be taken forward by two new forums focused on mobile phones in schools and exclusions and detentions. Both forums launched before the end of the summer term and includes stakeholder and practitioner representatives. Plans for a national conference, specifically focused on practitioner participation during the autumn term will provide further opportunities to co-construct new guidance in partnership with the profession.

   - **Establishing a system for sharing best practice**
     Insights from the Roundtable and Summit highlighted a range of approaches to share best practice. Officials are currently exploring existing protocols and guidance e.g. Cardiff Local Authority's Weapons in Schools and Education Settings (WISES) protocol, as a potential blueprint to support an adaptable version for other Local Authorities across Wales.

   - **Developing professional learning opportunities on behaviour**
     Officials will explore opportunities to align with the work of the new National Professional Learning and Leadership Support Body to ensure all practitoners can access consistent and high-quality professional learning provision, particularly in relation to behaviour management techniques, de-escalation and intervention.

   - **Ensuring consistent definitions/reporting of incidents and a clear data set at local authority and national level**
     This commitment will directly align with national priorities underpinning the School Improvement Partnership Programme.

27. In response to strong feedback at the Summit to accelerate learner involvement in the behaviour work programme, early engagement is already underway with the Welsh Youth Parliament and Children in Wales.

28. The Roundtable and the Summit are the beginning of a partnership-based process to tackle behaviour issues in schools and colleges.

29. Following publication of this report, officials will conduct a further in-depth analysis to synthesise key findings from the national behaviour survey, the Roundtable, and the Summit, to develop a detailed plan to deliver the five immediate actions on behaviour in schools.

Annex A
National Behaviour Summit - Agenda
22.05.25, Temple of Peace, Cardiff

10:10	Croeso a chyflwyniad Dr Glenda Jones	Welcome and introduction Dr Glenda Jones
10:15	Gair o groeso, gan gynnwys diweddariad ar y Gyfarfod bord gron ar drais a diogelwch a'r camau nesaf. Lynne Neagle AS Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg	Welcome remarks, including an update on the Roundtable on violence and safety and the next steps. Lynne Neagle MS Cabinet Secretary for Education
10:25	Fideo dysgwyr	Learner video
10:30	Cyflwyniad Adolygiad Thematig Estyn Catherine Evans, HMI	Presentation Estyn Thematic Review Catherine Evans, HMI
11:00	Cyflwyniad Ymchwil Prifysgol Bangor Yr Athro Carl Hughes	Presentation Bangor University Research Professor Carl Hughes
11:20	Sesiwn holi ac ateb Ymchwil Estyn/Prifysgol Bangor	Question and answer session Estyn/Bangor University Research
11:30	Lluniaeth	Refreshments
11:40	Trafodaeth 1 - Arweinyddiaeth ac Addysgu	Discussion 1 - Leadership & Teaching
12:30	Adborth	Feedback
12:50	Cinio	Lunch
13:30	Croeso'n ôl Vikki Howells AS Y Gweinidog Addysg Bellach ac Uwch	Welcome back Vikki Howells MS Minister for Further & Higher Education
13:35	Trafodaeth 2 - Dulliau o gynhwysiant a lles	Discussion 2 - Approaches to inclusion and well-being
14:20	Adborth	Feedback
14:40	Lluniaeth	Refreshments
14:50	Trafodaeth 3 – Pontio'r bwlch, gweithio gyda theuluoedd a chymunedau	Discussion 3 - Bridging the gap, working with families and communities
15:40	Adborth	Feedback
15:55	Sylwadau i gloi Lynne Neagle AS Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg	Closing remarks Lynne Neagle MS Cabinet Secretary for Education
16:00	Cloi	Close

Annex B
National Behaviour Summit – Attendee List

Surname	First name	Organisation
Akmal	Batool	St David's College
Amos	Kane	St David's College
Bailey	Rob	UNISON Wales
Beddoe	Rachel	Children in Wales
Bennett	Lorna	Public Health Wales
Biggs	Gail	Bridgend County Borough Council
Boxall	Kirsty	Welsh Government
Britton	Chris	Executive Headteacher Ysgol y Deri Penarth
Brookmyre	Andrew	Welsh Government
Brown	Louise	Welsh Government
Buckley	Viv	Colegau Cymru
Butler	Neil	NASUWT
Callaghan	Linda	Flintshire County Council
Chicken	Sarah	UWTSD
Churm	Alice	Coleg Cambria
Cifuentes	Rocio	Children's Commissioner for Wales
Clarke	Lisa	Welsh Government
Cole	Keri	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Connolly	Samantha	Ceredigion council
Cooper	Jonathan	Welsh Government
Cooper	Sarah	Welsh Government
Davies	Gaynor	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Davies	Huw	Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni
Davies	Sharon	WLGA
Davies	Simon	Ysgol Bryn Tawe
Davis	Christopher	Powys LA
Deane	Gail	Welsh Government
Doel	Laura	NAHT
Duff	George	Welsh Government
Durbridge	James	Dyffryn Aman High School
Edwards Ellis	Ffion	Anglesey and Gwynedd Council
Edward	Cathrin	Ceredigion County Council
Edwards	Kelly	Colegau Cymru
Edwards	Nicola	Welsh Government
Ellis	Sarah	Caerphilly Council
Evans	Catherine	Estyn
Evans	Owen	Estyn
Fennessy	Marc	Monmouthshire LA
Fitzgerald	Noel	Ysgol Pen Coch

Fitzpatrick	Nicola	NEU
Fordwhalley	Scott	Conwy County Borough Council
Furminger	Sarah	Welsh Government
Griffiths	Rebecca	Welsh Government
Gunter	Martyn	Welsh Government
Haarhoff	Georgina	Welsh Government
Hackett	Lynne	UNISON
Haithcock	Richard	Welsh Government
Hoey	Claire	Ysgol Ifor Hael, Newport
Hooson	David	Welsh Government
Hopkin	Lloyd	Welsh Government
Hopkins	Joanne	Public Health Wales
Hopper	Lauren	Welsh Government
Houlston Clarke	Julia	WRAP
Houston	Jane	Welsh Government
Howells	Vikki	Welsh Government
Hughes	Carl	Bangor University
Hutchinson	Hugo	Monmouth Comprehensive School
Hywel	Gareth	Flintshire County Council
Ifans	Dafydd	Wrexham County Borough Council
Jenkins	Julie	Pencoed Primary School
Jenkins	Karen	Powys County Council
Jermin	Sara	Children's Commissioner for Wales
Johnson	Ilona	Public Health Wales
Jones	Ceri	Rhondda Cynon Taf Council
Jones	Donna	Coleg Y Cymoedd
Jones	Hannah	Rachael's Playhouse, RCT
Jones	Liz	Vale of Glamorgan Council
Joyner	Michelle	The Bridge Alternative Provision Portfolio PRU
Lear	Adam	Fitzalan High School
Lester	Ben	Education Workforce Council
Lewis	Sioned	Welsh Government
Lloyd	Gareth	UCU
Lloyd	Owain	Carmarthenshire County Council
Lloyd Hughes	Lowri	Welsh Government
MacDonald	Kim	Tremains Primary School
Marsh	Kate	Ysgol Gymraeg Abercynon
McAvoy	Mathew	CYDAG
McLean	Will	Monmouthshire County Council
Meadows	Ruth	Welsh Government
Midgley	Lucy	Idris Davies
Morgan Rees	Helen	Swansea City & County Council
Munro-Morris	Luisa	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Neagle	Lynne	Welsh Government
Normanton-Davies	Lynsey	Pen y Cwm Special School
Norton	Phil	Cardiff Council

Osbourne	Helen	Neath Port Talbot
Pearce	Michelle	Aberdare Community School
Phillips	Karin	Youth Justice Board
Phillips	Rebecca	Glanhowy Primary School, Blaenau Gwent
Pollard	Jason	Welsh Government
Powles	Andrew	Torfaen County Borough Council
Rees	Katy	Newport County Council
Rees	Kieron	Medr
Reynolds-Feeney	Freya	Children's Commissioner for Wales
Rhys Jones	Ioan	UCAC
Richards-Downes	Steven	Pembrokeshire County Council
Rider	Helen	Bryn Castell Special School
Roberts	Nicola	Denbighshire County Council
Rowlands	Ellen	Isle of Anglesey County Council
Sargeant	Deb	Welsh Government
Sarjent	Suzanne	Welsh Government
Saunders	Zenny	Welsh Government
Savage	Nicola	GMB
Shivington	Mark	Community TU
Sullivan	Hannah	Crickhowell High School
Tate	Mike	Cardiff West Secondary School
Taylor	Adele	Welsh Government
Thomas	Andrew	Neath Port Talbot Council
Thomas	Hayley	Bridgend College
Trott	Jo	Welsh Government
Walker	Sue	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Walsh	Lorraine	Welsh Government
Warner	Chris	Welsh Government
Whiting	Greg	Welsh Government
Williams	Dave	Queen Elizabeth High School
Williams	Trystan	ALN - Carmarthenshire Council
Wools	Emma	South Wales Police
Yeoman	Claire	Cardiff Council