

Meeting of:	Start Well Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 10 November 2025
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Start Well Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Governor Training Report for the 2024/25 Academic Year
Purpose of Report:	To report on governor training for the 2024/25 academic year
Report Owner:	Elizabeth Jones, Director of Learning and Skills
Responsible Officer:	John Sparks, Head of Governor Support
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Consultation is not applicable
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for noting by the Start Well Scrutiny Committee
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This report provides commentary and a statistical summary of the attendance and evaluations received for online governor training courses held during the 2024/25 academic year. • The 2024/25 academic year continued to see a very high number of Vale governors attending a record number of training sessions/courses. A summary of attendance over the last 11 years is provided within the report. • 99 virtual courses/sessions were held and 740 Vale governors attended during the 2024/25 academic year. 	

Recommendations

1. That the Start Well Scrutiny Committee consider the report and specifically the suggestions within paragraphs 2.7-2.21 for future versions.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. This report was previously requested by the Chairman of the former Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning) and is now an annual item. It will be presented annually to report on governor training for the preceding academic year but suggestions are made in paragraphs 2.7-2.21 to ensure that it remains relevant going forward due to the changing circumstances highlighted within it.

1. Background

- 1.1 There are approximately 850 governors managing 53 schools within the Vale of Glamorgan. Governors play a key role in school improvement. Welsh Government has made legislation that introduced mandatory training for school governors for certain elements from September 2013. The mandatory elements cover induction, data, chair and clerk training and as such are a major focus of our governor training programme.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 During the 2024/25 academic year we were able to provide 99 virtual courses/sessions which is the highest number ever offered and in total 740 Vale governors attended, the third highest ever total (756 in 2022/23 is the record).
- 2.2 The completion of evaluation forms was slightly up on last year at 53% although it continues to be lower than pre-Covid years. This is a pattern reflected with other virtual training courses run by both the Central South Consortium (CSC) and other local authorities across the region and despite the fact that the Vale virtual evaluation form (Appendix A) is only a few questions and one page long. Although Appendix A appears as 2 pages that is due to the print layout, it is only 1 page online.
- 2.3 Another factor in the reduced number of evaluations received is that CSC significantly changed their evaluation form in 2020 to match the evaluation form used for all their Professional Learning opportunities for Headteachers, teachers etc. CSC's form had previously mirrored the Vale's evaluation form. We also did not circulate evaluation forms for the 2 Education Update & Briefing Sessions held in December 2024 and June 2025 where a total of 83 governors attended

because these are specifically update sessions that cover topical issues for governors.

- 2.4** In terms of consistency with this report in previous years, 65 evaluations were received from 151 governors attending 14 Vale run courses during the 2024/25 academic year and a summary table of the data from these evaluations is included below. These percentages remain very high as they all still well exceed 90% of governors saying the courses were either good or very good. The actual number of attendees per course is provided at Appendix B.

Question	% of good or very good evaluations
How well did the course meet its stated aims and objectives?	99.00
How useful was the course content to your needs?	93.40
How effective were the course providers?	99.50

- 2.5** In conclusion, a record number and range of training sessions/courses were provided for governors during the 2024/25 academic year and attendance levels continue to be very high. Over the past 5 academic years we've had attendance figures of 682, 753, 756, 676 & 740 (721 average per academic year).
- 2.6** Going forward, governor training opportunities will continue to be held virtually but we will continue to monitor the situation to inform future governor training provision and a number of new courses will be provided during the 2025/26 academic year.
- 2.7** Although this report is positive in terms of the number and range of training course provision and the resultant take up by Vale governors, in its current format it has lost its impact due to the dwindling number of evaluations being completed. Measures will be taken to increase governor engagement with evaluations but this report needs to widen its scope in future to remain relevant in these changing and challenging times.
- 2.8** Last year's report referenced changing the focus of future versions due to the diminishing number of evaluations received so the focus of this report are the changes taking place from September 2025. These changes are following the transfer of the school improvement function from the former Central South Consortium (CSC) to the Local Authorities that comprised that region, namely Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr, RCT and the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 2.9** CSC previously provided around 80% of our governor training provision with the remaining 20% delivered by Council Officers. As referenced at paragraph 2.3 the evaluations that this report references apply to LA run courses only and not those provided by CSC. However, from September 2025 all training for Vale governors will be provided by the Local Authority so we will have data on

evaluations for all governor training courses in next year's report and going forward.

- 2.10** Governor training course provision will be aided by 5 (3FTE) Vale specific School Improvement Officers (SIOs), formerly known as Improvement Partners (IPs) when employed by CSC.
- 2.11** Although we have the statistical data on the number of training sessions attended by the governors of each Vale School during the 2024/25 academic year (Appendix C) there are no discernible trends or patterns to report on this occasion but we will continue to monitor this data and highlight any significant trends.
- 2.12** Given the significant financial challenges faced by the Council and schools we will continue to be flexible in targeting future training provision to upskill governors to enable them to both challenge and support schools to do better.
- 2.13** Recent evidence suggests that Estyn are increasingly looking at the school's best use of their financial resources during their Inspection process when considering their judgements on the school's performance so schools need to be prepared.
- 2.14** In line with this, significant work has already been undertaken in the setting up of School Business Manager networking meetings to share good practice and work together to secure vastly improved procurement terms for school purchases such as photocopying contracts, utilities, cleaning and waste disposal contracts etc using economies of scale.
- 2.15** Stand alone Finance training is always included within our governor training programme plus it has been covered in depth at the Education Update & Briefing Sessions held twice yearly in June and December as one of the key areas to keep governors apprised of the recent critical position.
- 2.16** Analysis of any trends identified in training attendance data could also be extended to other key areas of expertise for example Safeguarding, Human resources etc with the specific aim of making governor training more targeted and effective to achieve the best outcomes for schools and their pupils.
- 2.17** Although Welsh Medium course provision will continue to be available, as it will be provided by the new LA based School Improvement Officers from September 25, we will now ask governors to express an interest in this area and then arrange courses to suit their availability rather than just schedule dates as has previously been the case. The reason for this is that these courses traditionally attract very low numbers so we need to balance availability with viability.
- 2.18** Following this committee's discussion around this report in October 24, clarity has been provided on which governors need to do what safeguarding training and particularly in relation to Members who were previously required to do safeguarding for a number of roles i.e. as a Member, governor etc. The current policy is attached at Appendix D.
- 2.19** This year some courses will be available asynchronously as well which means that governors will be able to access them online at their convenience. This is being introduced to enable those governors with limited availability due to

childcare issues, work patterns etc to enable them to access training when it suits them. We are also looking at the possibility of making recordings of some courses available to governors who are unable to attend at the scheduled times for the reasons outlined above.

2.20 In summary, governor training provision is changing for the reasons outlined above and whilst it is unrealistic to expect the same number of courses to be provided as in previous years due to the reduction in personnel it is certainly hoped to maintain the same breadth of provision in a more streamlined programme.

2.21 There may also be difficulties in recording the attendance of governors at asynchronous and recorded sessions due to technical issues that will also impact governor attendance numbers for future versions of this report. However, we will continue to develop our strategy of making governor training courses as widely available and accessible to as many governors as possible in order to maximise their role in school improvement.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Courses held	Governors attended	Evaluations received
2014/15	97.20%	94.30%	95.80%	29	457	359 (78.6%)
2015/16	97.60%	96.30%	97.30%	31	490	437 (89.2%)
2016/17	98.50%	97.30%	98.60%	30	437	397 (90.8%)
2017/18	98.10%	97.60%	97.80%	39	565	484 (85.7%)
2018/19	96.30%	95.80%	97.80%	32	535	465 (86.9%)
2019/20	98.60%	96.90%	98.80%	15	289	251 (86.9%)
2020/21	92.76%	90.45%	91.49%	51	682	+140 (49.5%)
2021/22	93.81%	92.67	93.61	81	753	*160 (60.4%)
2022/23	94.28	94.84	95.34	87	756	#127 (59.1%)
2023/24	93.19	93.19	95.41	89	676	"70 (43.2%)
2024/25	99.00	93.40	99.50	99	740	^80 (53%)

+This figure relates to 140 evaluations received from 283 governors attending 16 Vale courses during the 2020/21 academic year.

*This figure relates to 160 evaluations received from 265 governors attending 21 Vale courses during the 2021/22 academic year.

#This figure relates to 127 evaluations received from 215 governors attending 20 Vale courses during the 2022/23 academic year.

“This figure relates to 70 evaluations received from 162 governors attending 15 Vale courses during the 2023/24 academic year.

^This figure relates to 80 evaluations received from 151 governors attending 14 Vale courses during the 2024/25 academic year.

These figures are considerably lower than in previous pre-Covid years but is attributable to far less governors completing virtual evaluations as explained at paragraph 2.3.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 (“the 2015 Act”) requires the Council to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.
- 3.2** The Council has committed as part of the Corporate Plan 2020-2025 to achieving a vision of ‘Working Together for a Brighter Future’. This plan is reflective of the Welsh Government’s Well-being of Future Generations Act and is comprised of four Well-being objectives to deliver this vision:
- Objective 1 - To work with and for our communities
 - Objective 2 - To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth
 - Objective 3 - To support people at home and in their community
 - Objective 4 - To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment
- 3.3** Governor training is an essential component of the school improvement agenda and it is a statutory requirement that all Local Authorities provide it. It enables governors to fulfil their roles effectively by supporting and challenging schools to improve and contributes to the Council's Wellbeing Objective 2: To support learning, employment and sustainable growth by raising overall standards of achievement.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** With all training being held virtually during the 2024/25 academic year the environmental impact has been reduced due to governors and trainers no longer needing to drive to venues.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1 All training was delivered by Council or Consortium employees online so there were no additional costs for delivery.

Employment

- 5.2 There are no employment implications arising from this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.3 All Local Authorities must provide training for governors in accordance with The Education Measure (Wales) 2011 to enable them to fulfil their roles. Mandatory elements for induction, data, chair and clerk training are required by The Government of Maintained Schools (Training Requirements for Governors) (Wales) Regulations 2013.
- 5.4 Governor training opportunities within the medium of Welsh will continue to be available during the 2025/26 academic year.

6. Background Papers

[The Education Measure \(Wales\) 2011.](#)

[The Government of Maintained Schools \(Training Requirements for Governors\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2013.](#)

APPENDIX A

Evaluation form of Safeguarding virtual governor training - Thu 8 Jul at 5.30pm

1. Name

2. School

3. How well did the course meet its stated aims and objectives?

- Very good
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory

8/2/2021

4. How useful was the course content to your needs?

- Very good
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory

5. How effective was/were the course provider(s)?

- Very good
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory

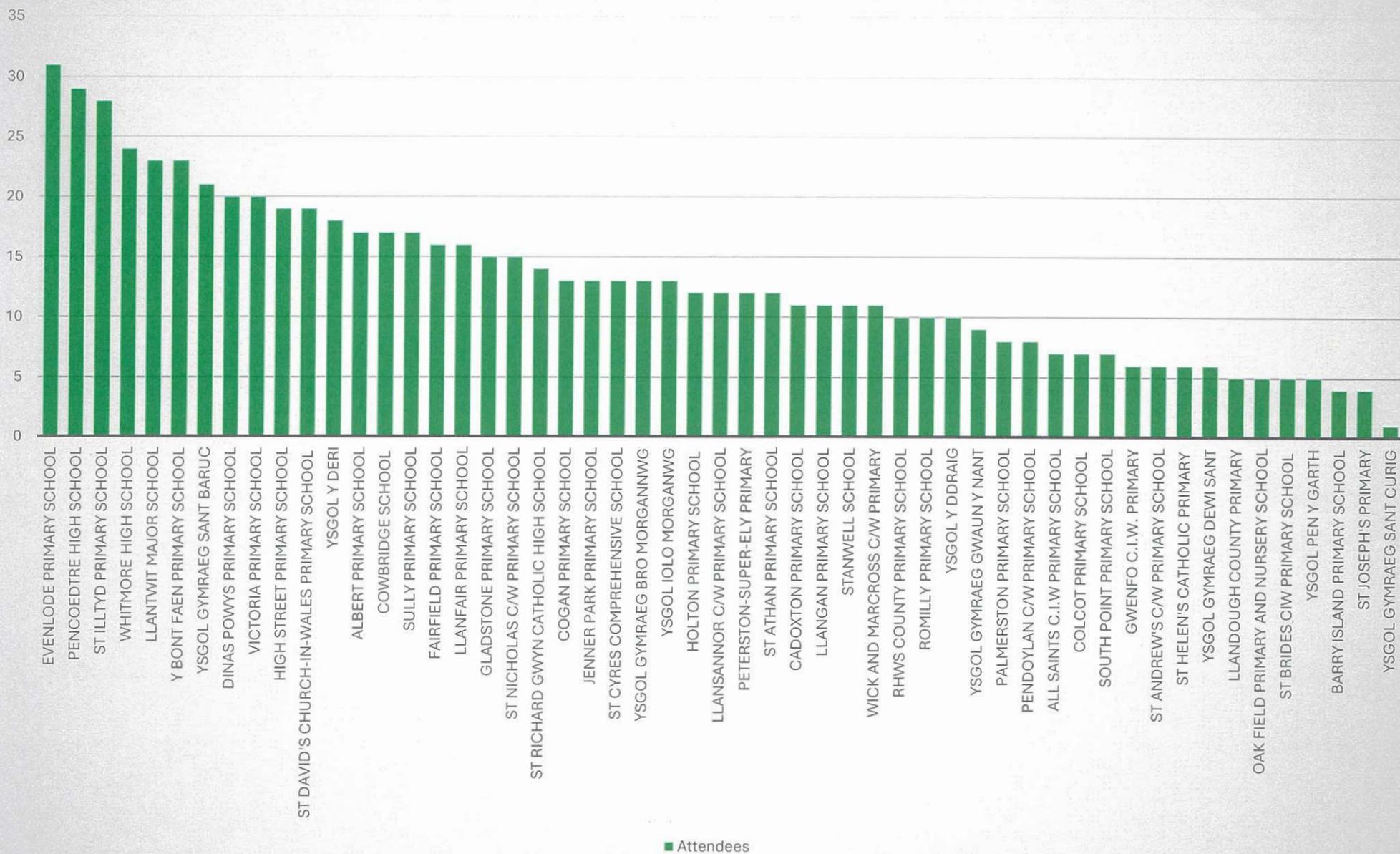
6. Additional comments?

Appendix B

Date	Course	No. attended	Evaluations rec'd (% completed)	Q1 good or very good	Q2 good or very good	Q3 good or very good
AUTUMN TERM 2024						
17 Sep	Clerk	2	2 (100%)	100%	100%	100%
22 Oct	Internet Safety	8	4 (50%)	100%	100%	100%
13 Nov	Disciplinary Procedures	8	4 (50%)	100%	100%	100%
28 Nov	Information Governance	4	2 (50%)	100%	100%	100%
5 Dec	DSG's	15	4 (26.6%)	100%	100%	100%
Totals	5 courses	37	16 (43%)	100%	100%	100%
SPRING TERM 2025						
29 Jan	Finance (in person)	14	14 (100%)	100%	100%	100%
11 Feb	PSP's	10	4 (40%)	100%	100%	100%
20 Mar	Equality	11	4 (36%)	100%	100%	100%
27 Mar	Health and Safety	6	2 (33%)	100%	50%	100%
1 Apr	Attendance, FPN's and Exclusion	17	7 (41%)	100%	86%	100%
3 Apr	DSG's	12	4 (33%)	100%	100%	100%
Total	6 courses	70	35 (50%)	100%	89.3%	100%
SUMMER TERM 2025						
17 Jun	Information governance	18	14 (78%)	86%	71%	93%
30 Jun	Pupil Exclusions	13	9 (69%)	100%	100%	100%
7 Jul	DSG's	13	6 (46%)	100%	100%	100%
Totals	3 courses	44	29 (65.9%)	95.3%	90.3%	97.7%
2024/25 totals	14 courses	151	80 (53%)	99%	93.4%	99.5%

Appendix C

Governor Training Attendance by School 24-25



APPENDIX C

Appendix D

Safeguarding training and Vale governors - Spring Term 2025 update

Which governors are supposed to do what Safeguarding training?

The LA's position is that all governors should undertake the Welsh Government Safeguarding elearning modules available via the links below and that all Designated Safeguarding Governors (DSGs) should attend the DSG specific training for that role when it is included within the termly governor training programme that is emailed regularly direct to all governors.

<https://hwb.gov.wales/repository/resource/65cf3917-fe44-4f34-9dfd-ff7eba11e6f6/en>

(Introduction - Module 1)

<https://hwb.gov.wales/repository/resource/0b7409c9-3dce-4d43-80ea-36ee57c28535/en> (Roles & Responsibilities - Module 2)

What about the other Safeguarding training module that has recently appeared on the termly training programme?

This training has been developed by the Central South Consortium (CSC) as one of 4 modules for all newly appointed governors as part of their Empowering Governors Programme. The 4 modules are Induction, Data, Safeguarding and Enabling Equity and Excellence. Induction and Data are mandatory but the other 2 are not. The idea is that these 4 modules enable new governors to develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and confidence to successfully undertake their role in supporting school improvement and promoting the highest standards and aspirations for all learners. Experienced governors can also attend one or more of these sessions to remain updated for their role. The Safeguarding element focuses on understanding and promoting a culture of vigilance and these sessions offer governors the opportunity to attend a virtual session if that is their preference over elearning. The key factor is that all governors should attend some form of Safeguarding as it is such an important area.

Is Safeguarding training mandatory for governors?

No, it is not one of Welsh Government's mandatory training modules for governors but Safeguarding is a very important area that all governors should be aware of.

Do Designated Safeguarding Governors need to attend DSG training?

Yes, it is a reasonable expectation that governors who take on this important role should remain updated for it. It is also Council policy that all DSGs should attend training for the role. If they are not prepared to attend training then it is reasonable that the governing body should appoint someone else to the role.

How often should DSGs attend training for the role?

At least every 2 years to remain up to date for the role. Expiry will be on the 2nd anniversary of the previously attended DSG training session.

Can Chairs of governors also be the DSG?

There is nothing to prevent Chairs also being the DSG however we strongly advise that it is another governor because it ensures a different voice can be heard. It also

avoids Chairs becoming overburdened with roles as being Chair already involves a significant amount of time and work for a volunteer.

Can staff governors also be the DSG?

There is nothing to prevent staff governors also being the DSG however we strongly advise that it is another governor for the same reasons as above and it brings neutrality to the role if it is undertaken by someone who is not employed by the school.

Do governors need to be DBS checked?

There is currently no legal requirement for governors to be DBS checked because they should not have unsupervised access to pupils in their role as a governor. However, it is Council policy that all DSG's undertake a DBS check for that role.

Do staff governors still need to undertake the Safeguarding training referenced here even though they will have undertaken Safeguarding training for their day job?

No, as long as staff governors have completed their annual Level 1 Safeguarding training as part of their employed role within the Vale of Glamorgan Council (school or Local Authority) they will no longer need to complete safeguarding training via HWB as part of their governor role.

Do Vale of Glamorgan Council Elected Members still need to undertake the Safeguarding training referenced here even though they will have undertaken Safeguarding training in their role as a Councillor?

No, as long as Vale of Glamorgan Council Elected Members have completed safeguarding training as part of their initial induction programme as a Member of the Vale Council following each Local Government Election they will no longer need to complete safeguarding training via HWB as part of their governor role.

Who monitors which governors do what Safeguarding training?

Clerks should monitor what Safeguarding training their governors have done and to assist with this, all Chairs, Headteachers and Clerks will each term be provided with the actual training attendance of their governors for the previous term. It is good practice for Clerks to regularly check in and remind their governors of Safeguarding training opportunities and to maintain their records accordingly. This information will be useful when schools are inspected by Estyn.

What if I still have any queries or questions regarding what Safeguarding training I should be undertaking?

Please contact the Governor Support Unit via email at governors@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk or by 'phone on 01446 709107/125 or the Safeguarding Team at SafeguardingEducation@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk or by 'phone on 01446 704828.