

Free School Meals Strategy Drafting Session CYP Select

Children and Young People Select Committee
11th February 2021



How do we define poverty in Monmouthshire?

- Poverty is not the same as having a low income.
- People and families have different pressures on their finances.
- People and families have different levels of personal and financial resilience.
- The impact of Covid-19 has been felt differently by different groups of people.
- The potential future impact of Covid-19 will be felt by many more people and families the longer the pandemic continues.

In recognition of all of the above, Monmouthshire has adopted the Joseph Rowntree definition of poverty

‘When a person’s resources (mainly their material resources) are not sufficient to meet their minimum needs(including social participation)’



How do we define child poverty in Wales?



In Wales, this equates to around 7 pupils in a class size of 25



Who does child poverty effect?

Any child can experience poverty, at any stage in their childhood



What is the impact of poverty on children and young people?

There is a wealth of research evidencing that poverty has a huge impact on children's learning at school and consequent educational attainment levels. Pupils from low income and disadvantaged families are more likely to:

- Have poorer physical health
- Experience mental or emotional health problems
- Have a low sense of well-being and life satisfaction
- Underachieve at school
- Have poorer prospects in work
- Experience social deprivation
- Feel unsafe
- Experience stigma and bullying at school

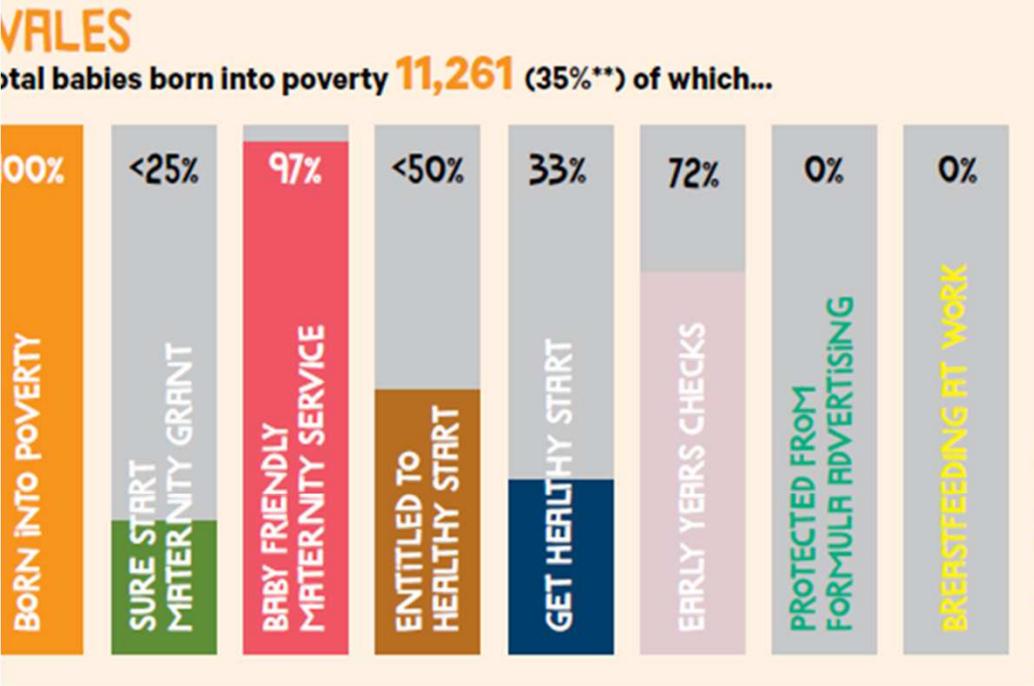


Child Poverty in Monmouthshire

- There are comparatively low levels of deprivation in Monmouthshire compared to other local authorities in Wales. However, this does not fully reflect the pockets of significant deprivation we know exists in areas within the county.
- In 2020, 12.1% of Monmouthshire pupils of statutory school age on school roll are in receipt of free school meals (FSM) ranking the authority second lowest out of twenty-two local authorities in Wales. This is an increase of 1.8 percentage points compared to 2019.
- The distribution of FSM pupils is not linear across our schools. FSM pupils range between 2.5% up to 36.5% in primary schools and 8.1% to 12.6% in secondary schools.
- There are several large residential pockets in Monmouthshire with over 25% of children living in poverty, a large area with 20-25% of children living in poverty and the rest of the county with between 15 -20% of children living in poverty

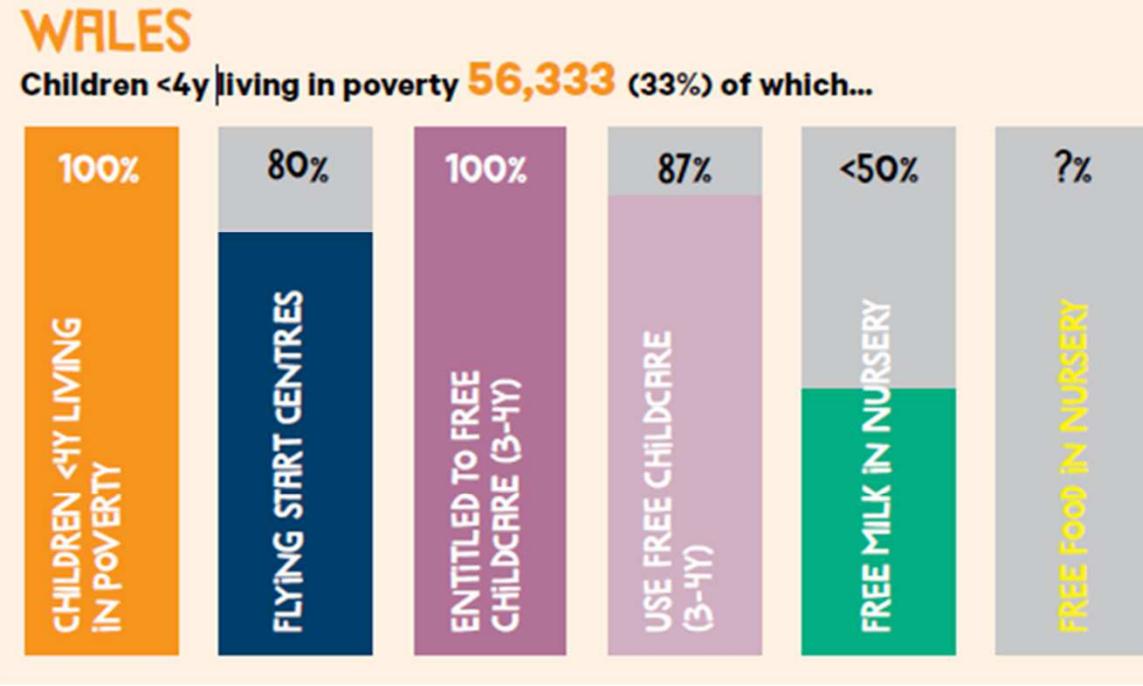


Early Years and Parenting



data on only 0-year-olds in Wales due to small sample size
5% of <2-year-olds live in poverty in Wales.

5% of babies in Flying Start areas in Monmouthshire receive breast milk within 10 days

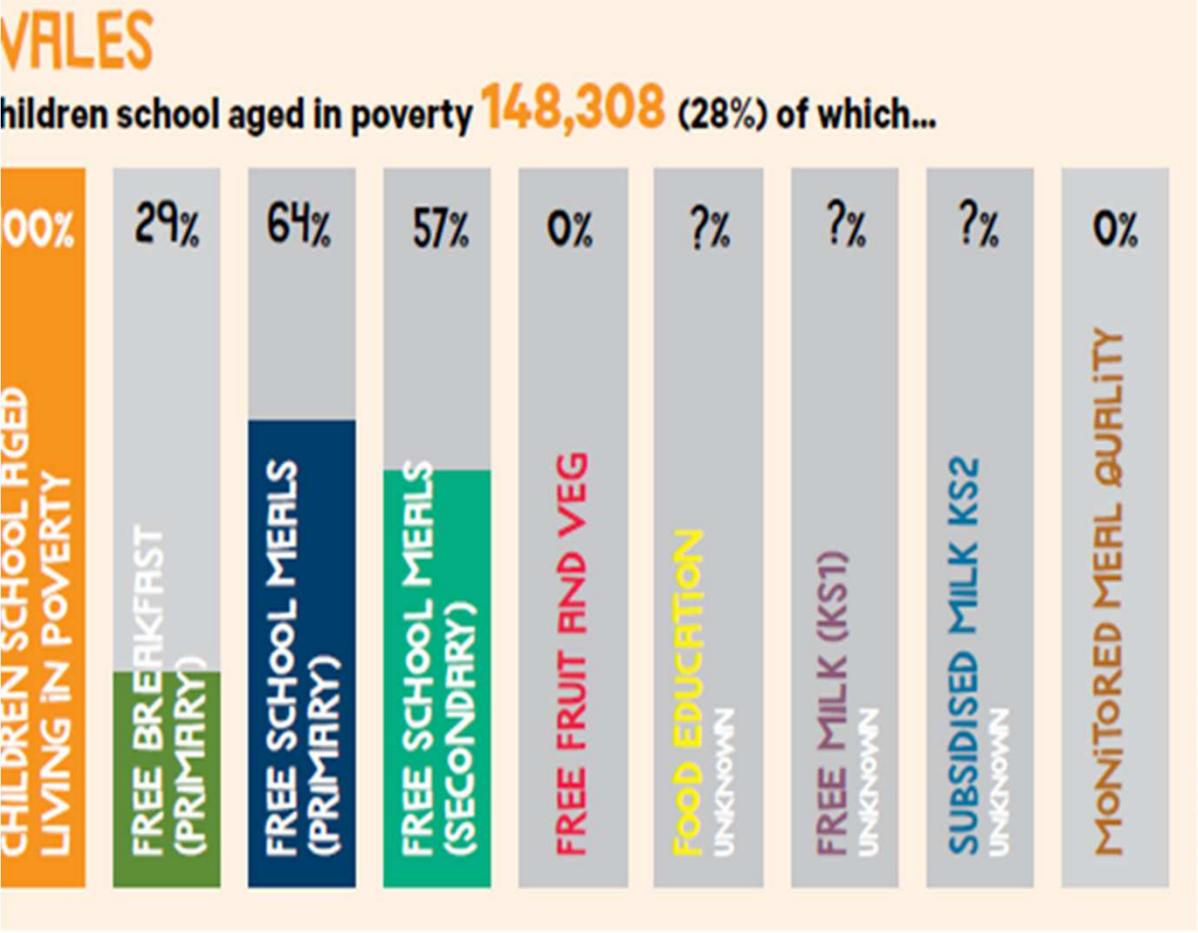


In Flying Start areas in Monmouthshire:

- 100% of parents take up free childcare
- 59% of parents complete formal parenting courses and 86% complete informal courses
- 91% of children are immunised by their 4th birthday



Food and hunger



Free school meals carry a stigma

The free school meal allocation is not enough

People don't always even apply for free school meals even though they'd be entitled to them. It's about people's pride

Meal times are not a valuable part of the school day

If you don't eat enough at lunch it makes you tired, it messes with your brain as you've not been fed.

Fatty, unhealthy foods are way cheaper – burgers and paninis. People think that it's just the rich kids who go for salads.



Participation in the life of the school

Percentage of learners whose academic performance affected by low income*



* The Children's Commission on Poverty, The Children's Society, 2014

There was a history trip to the Big Pit, I didn't go on that. It was too expensive to go, mum couldn't afford it at the time, it was twenty-something pound. I come home and talked to mum about it and we couldn't afford it. It felt bad when everyone come back and said how much [of] an amazing time they had.⁵

"Research has shown that in recent years there has been an increase in the scale and scope of schools charging for activities, including in areas such as educational equipment and visits. One fifth of parents they surveyed said they have been charged for field trips that are a compulsory element of a course. A quarter of parents said they have been charged for text or reference books."⁴

"For design we have to pay £6 to make our models and take them home. So if we don't pay for it then we can't use it so we have made it for no reason."



School Uniform and Clothing

Uniform Item	Examples of school shop cost	Examples of supermarket cost
 Shirts x 5	£40.00	£7.50
 Jumpers x 2	£25.00	£12.00
 Trousers x 2	£35.50	£10.00
 Tie	£4.00	£4.00
 PE Kit socks	£5.75	£5.75
 PE Kit outdoor top	£17.00	£4.00 (pack of 2)
 PE Kit shorts	£10.00	£8.00
 PE Kit Polo shirt	£12.75	£3.50 (pack of 2)
Total:	£150.00	£52.75

The average cost of a primary school uniform in Wales is around £110 and £150 for secondary schools (including sports kit).

Research undertaken by the Children's Commissioner for Wales found the examples of school uniform costs in Wales.

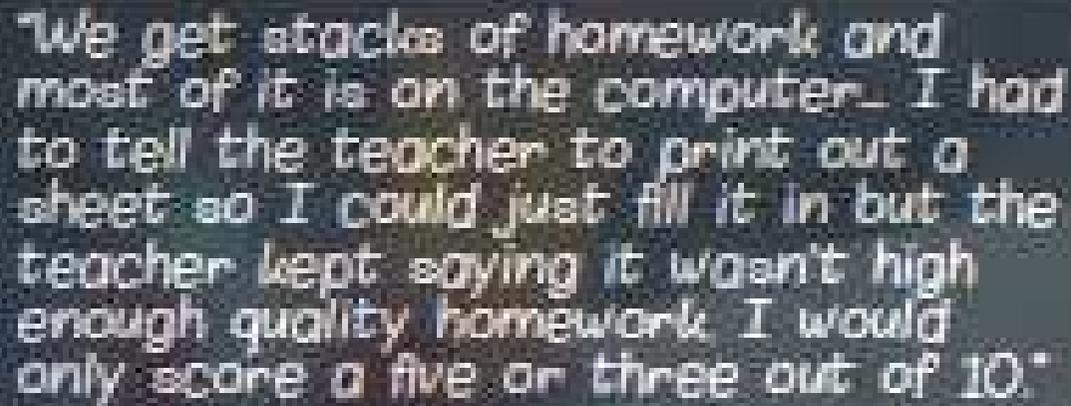
For children living in families who struggle to afford a school uniform, school can be a source of worry and anxiety.

50% of school staff said their school was having to provide essential services to low income families (clothing bank, laundering facilities on school premises)



Home Environment

Computers and an internet connection at home are increasingly necessary for children to access and complete their homework.



"We get stacks of homework and most of it is on the computer. I had to tell the teacher to print out a sheet so I could just fill it in but the teacher kept saying it wasn't high enough quality homework. I would only score a five or three out of 10."

The home environment can be a significant enabler or barrier in determining how children relate to and perform in school.

Homelessness, housing insecurity, overcrowding and living in sub-standard housing can all negatively impact on a pupil's achievement levels.

74% of school staff said they know of pupils who don't have access to IT resources at home to complete their home learning



How does this link to our corporate priorities?

Our purpose

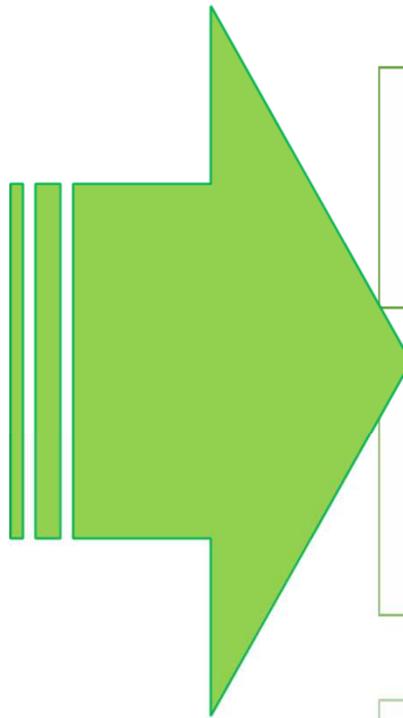
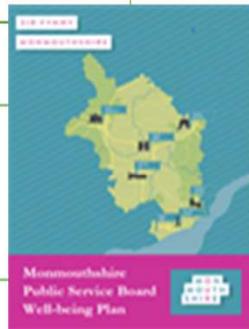
- 'To build sustainable and resilient communities'

Monmouthshire's Wellbeing Plan

- 'Giving children the best start in life'

Monmouthshire's Corporate Plan

- Children have the best start in life



The Chief Officer's Report

- Reviews the past year and identifies priorities for the coming year

The EAS Business Plan

- Captures the regional ambition and aligns to Monmouthshire's priorities for the year

Service Improvement Plans

- Sets out the delivery of the priorities



Contextual Free School Meal Information

January 2020 PLASC Data

	FP				KS2				KS3				KS4			
	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
	20	19	18	17	20	19	18	17	20	19	18	17	20	19	18	17
II FSM*	120	110	96	89	119	96	89	77	80	99	85	78	91	85	71	58
FSM Only	85	68	63	62	69	50	57	49	45	44	44	34	46	32	34	28
FSM /GTR	0	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FSM/EAL	4	0	4	3	5	4	2	0	2	1	1	2	0	3	0	1
FSM/SA	15	9	12	15	13	15	8	10	14	20	18	17	19	23	11	13
FSM/SA+	14	26	15	9	16	18	9	13	11	16	12	9	14	8	9	5
FSM/ST	3	6	2	1	9	2	6	2	5	11	5	14	8	16	12	11
FSM/YC	0	0	0	0	0	14	12	5	2	13	13	5	1	11	9	6
FSM/forces	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0

* Numbers may not tally with individual groups as some pupils meet multiple categories



Chief Officer Plan

Our Pillars to give children and young people the best start in life

Be ready for school

Flying Start

Acorn Project

Early Years Team

Early Years ALN Team

ABUHB

Early Help Panel

Educational Psychology Service

Be in school

Education Welfare Service

Pupil Referral Unit

Corporate Parenting Panel

Youth Service

ABUHB

Acorn Project Parenting Support

Parents/ Carers

Be well behaved and ready to learn

Behaviour Support

Pupil Referral Service

ALN Statutory Team

Healthy Schools SEAL/Thrive

Educational Psychology Service

Sports Development

Gwent Police ACEs

Be well taught

Schools

Education Achievement Service

ALN Statutory Team

Healthy Schools

Public Health Wales

South Wales Fire and Rescue

Melin homes



What are our aspirations for FSM pupils?

Ambition 1

- Our individual and collective expectations of FSM learners will be equally as high as those for learners who are not disadvantaged.

Ambition 2

- All key partners will prioritise FSM learners through the deployment of their resources, the provision of enhanced opportunities and all relevant funding streams.

Ambition 3

- The aspirations our FSM learners have for themselves are just as ambitious and attainable as for learners who are not disadvantaged.

Ambition 4

- Our curriculum offer will ensure that FSM learners have access to an enhanced range of rich learning experiences, evidenced based interventions and opportunities so that they can achieve their full potential.

Ambition 5

- There will be no gap in attainment between FSM learners, compared to learners who are not disadvantaged.



What will we do to improve?

Ambition 1

Our individual and collective expectations of FSM learners will be equally as high as those for learners who are not disadvantaged.

Local Authority

- Provide an enhanced level of training and support to priority schools to develop and implement strategies to improve engagement and develop resilience
- Provide 'Compass for Life' training for School Leaders, Teachers and learners in all schools

Schools

- Raise the profile and expectations of FSM pupils using engagement and aspirational tools such as Raising the Achievement of Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY)

EAS

- Continue the 'Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Leader Lead' programme
- Continue to support the expansion of the RADY project across Monmouthshire clusters.



Ambition 2

All key partners will prioritise disadvantaged learners through the deployment of their resources, the provision of enhanced opportunities and all relevant funding streams.

Local Authority

- Target Local Authority support services to schools with the highest FSM population.
- Redesign services so that they can provide greater support to a wider number of FSM pupils in priority areas.
- Improve the co-ordination of wider external partnerships to focus resources and support to the schools with the highest FSM population.
- Maximise funding streams to promote engagement in extra-curricular activities and enrichment programmes such as SHEP, Duke of Edinburgh.
- Target FSM as a priority when determining funding allocations wherever possible.
- Prioritise the provision of digital and resources and connectivity for disadvantaged learners.

Schools

- Prioritise FSM pupils in school planning for improvement.
- Target grant funding to improve provision and outcomes using evidenced based interventions and increased staffing capacity
- Provide a programme of professional learning to enable practitioners to effectively support disadvantaged and other vulnerable learners.

EAS

- Provide advice to schools on the effective use of grants to support disadvantaged learners



Ambition 3

The aspirations our disadvantaged learners have for themselves are just as ambitious and attainable as for learners who are not disadvantaged.

Local Authority

- Support the delivery of an enhanced 'Compass for Life' programme for learners and parents in our schools with the highest number of disadvantaged learners
- Provide an enhanced offer of support for parents, particularly at key points in the learning journey
- Re-organise family support services such as Acorn to provide on-going points of contact and support for families living in poverty to support children between 4 and 14 years.
- Create an FSM panel to identify need and determine support for high priority FSM families.
- Strengthen existing multi-agency work to include high priority FSM families

Schools

- Raise the profile and expectations of FSM pupils using engagement and aspirational tools such as Raising the Achievement of Disadvantaged Youngsters (RADY)

EAS

- Continue the 'Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Leader Lead' programme
- Continue to support the expansion of the RADY project across Monmouthshire clusters.



What will we do to improve?

Ambition 4

Our curriculum offer will ensure that disadvantaged learners have access to an enhanced range of rich learning experiences, evidenced based interventions and opportunities so that they can achieve their full potential.

Local Authority

- Target existing resources in secondary schools to support FSM pupils for example pupil engagement officers, Youth Support Workers and EWS.

Schools

- Deliver high-quality teaching to meet the needs of FSM pupils in line with evidenced-base strategies
- Provide/support enhanced enrichment experiences where appropriate
- Employ a multi-agency approach towards improving provision

EAS

- Provide professional learning opportunities to enable schools to meet the needs of FSM pupils
- Provide a programme of professional learning to support the leadership of teaching and learning through a distance and blended learning approach



What will we do to improve?

Ambition 5

There will be no gap in attainment between FSM learners, compared to learners who are not eligible for FSM.

Local Authority

- Introduce enhanced early identification and intervention activities in priority schools such as Wellcomm and early school entry and early school transfer support for year 6 into year 7
- Increase the level of challenge to schools in relation FSM pupils through an enhanced SDP sign off process and regular reviews of pupil progress.

Schools

- Provide an enhanced level of pupil progress tracking for FSM pupils

EAS

- Support secondary schools to develop effective internal target setting systems
- Track the progress of FSM pupils on a termly basis through CA work
- Focus on FSM provision and outcomes as a regular feature of school improvement scrutiny activity



How will we measure our progress?

- Percentage of babies in Flying Start areas receiving breast milk within 10 days
- Percentage of parents taking up free Flying Start childcare
- Percentage of parents completing parenting courses
- Percentage of FSM pupils taking a free breakfast
- Percentage of FSM pupils having free school meals
- Number of FSM pupils participating in holiday childcare provision
- Number of schools participating in the 'Cost of the School Day' initiative
- Number of schools offering school uniform recycling events
- Number of pupils without digital equipment at home
- Number of FSM pupils making a successful transfer into secondary school
- Number of FSM pupils participating in DofE at all levels
- Number of FSM pupils are the first in their family to go to university
- Number of FSM pupils receiving enhanced 'Compass for Life' programme
- FSM and non- FSM Attendance
- FSM and non-FSM Exclusions



Next steps?

- Reflect on the feedback from the meeting today.
- Review our Draft FSM strategy.
- Present our Draft Strategy to CYP Select early in the spring term for consideration.

