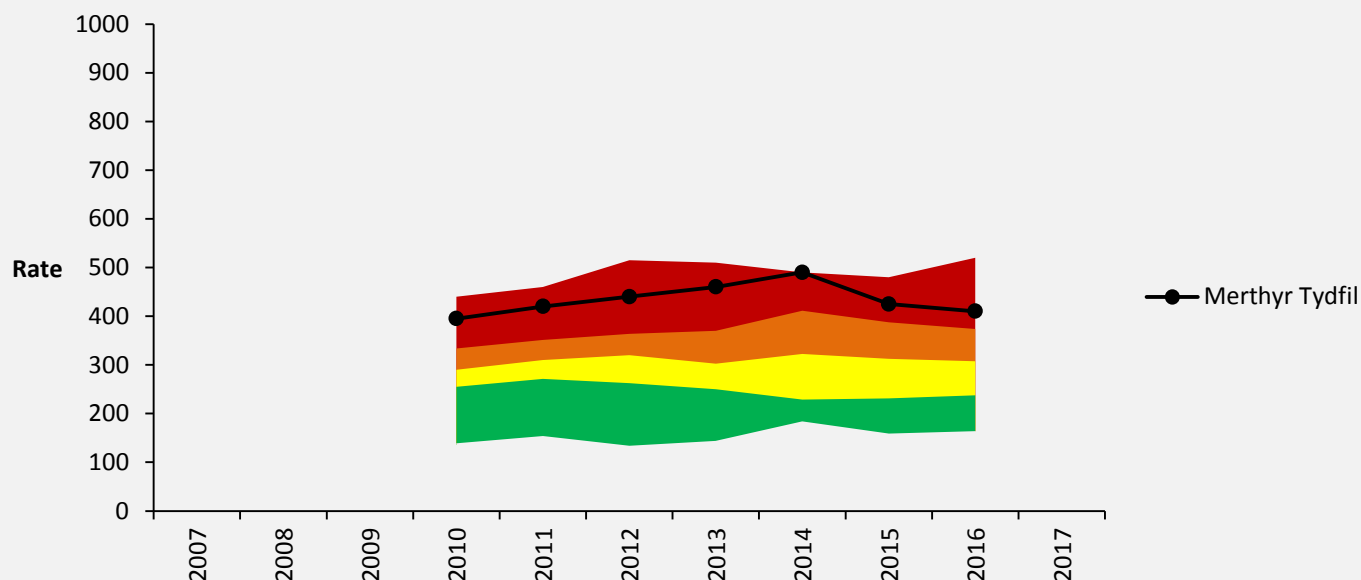


UNSATISFACTORY

The rate of children in need per 10,000 population aged under 18.



STORY BEHIND THE DATA

Latest Published Comparable Data: 31 March 2016
 Latest Local Data Period: 31 March 2016
 Data Frequency: Annual
 Source: [StatsWales](http://stats.wales.gov.uk)

The term 'child in need' had a specific meaning defined by the Children Act 1989, which placed a statutory duty on local authorities to 'safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need'. At year end 2016 there was an improvement in the rate of children in need (per 10,000 population) aged under 18 to 410; however, we remain in the lower quartile of local authorities in Wales. The figure for March 2016 was drawn from the 'CIN Census' and, March 2017 figure is not yet available.

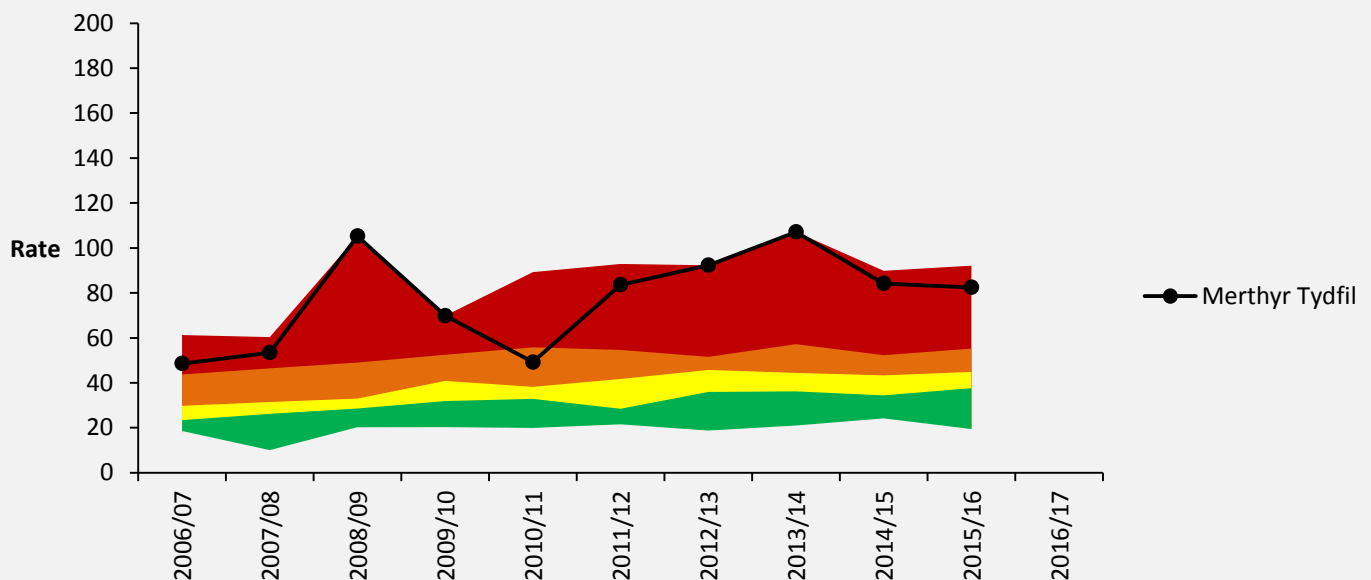
The Social Service and Well-being Act 2014 introduced the concept of Well-being and needs for care and support to replace the term 'child in need' and changed the reporting framework. The original CIN Census return no longer exists and has been replaced with 2 census returns:

- CLA – Looked After Children during the year census (due end of May 2017)
- Children receiving care and support census (due to submit by end of October 2017)

The generation and submission of data for 2016/2017 has been delayed due to the development and implementation of a national 'Health and Social Care' system (WCCIS).

UNSATISFACTORY

The rate of children on the child protection register per 10,000 population aged under 18



STORY BEHIND THE DATA

Latest Published Comparable Data: 31 March 2016

Latest Local Data Period: 31 March 2016

Data Frequency: Annual

Source: [StatsWales](http://stats.wales.gov.uk/)

Each local authority maintains a Child Protection Register to provide a record of all children in the area who professionals consider to be at risk of continuing significant harm and for whom there is a multi-agency care and support plan of work aimed at reducing risks.

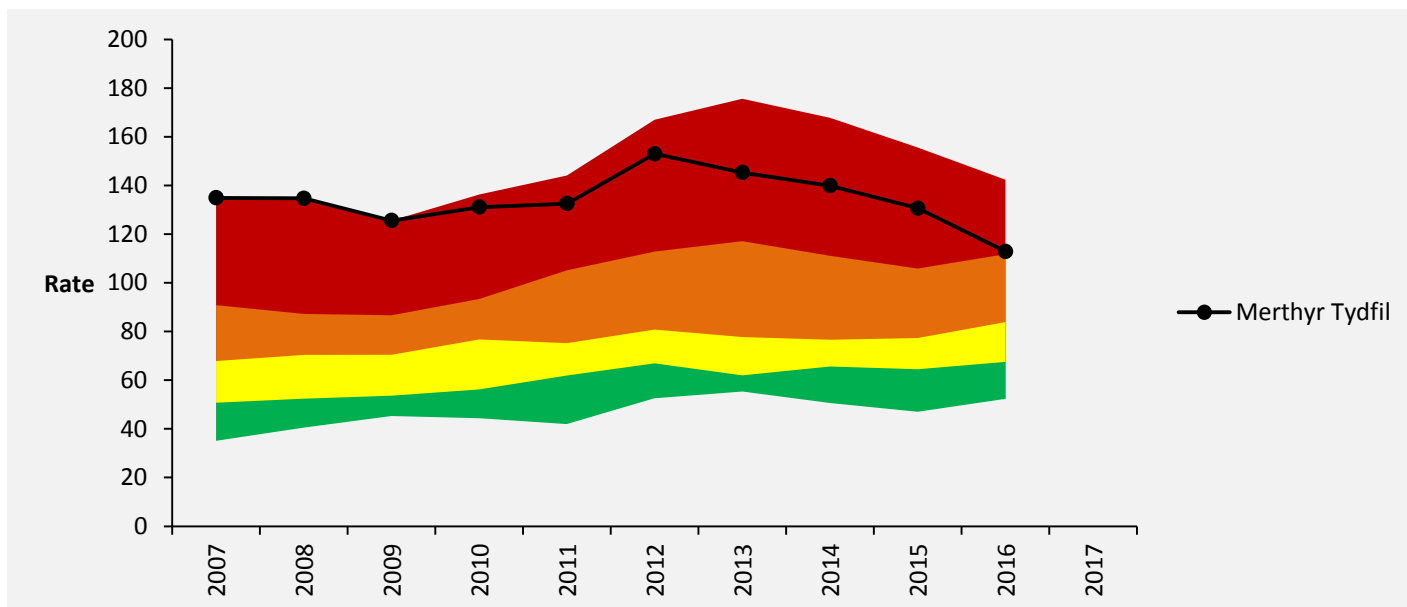
The generation and submission of data for 2016 / 2017 has been delayed due to the development and implementation of a national 'Health and Social Care' system (WCCIS). However, locally we know that:

- 31/03/2016 there were 105¹ children on the CPR
- 31/03/2017 there were 115¹ children on the CPR

¹ All numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5 to minimise the risk of unwanted disclosure of personal data.

UNSATISFACTORY

The rate of children looked after per 10,000 population aged under 18



STORY BEHIND THE DATA

Latest Published Comparable Data: 31 March 2016

Latest Local Data Period: 31 March 2016

Data Frequency: Annual

Source: [StatsWales](http://StatsWales.gov.uk)

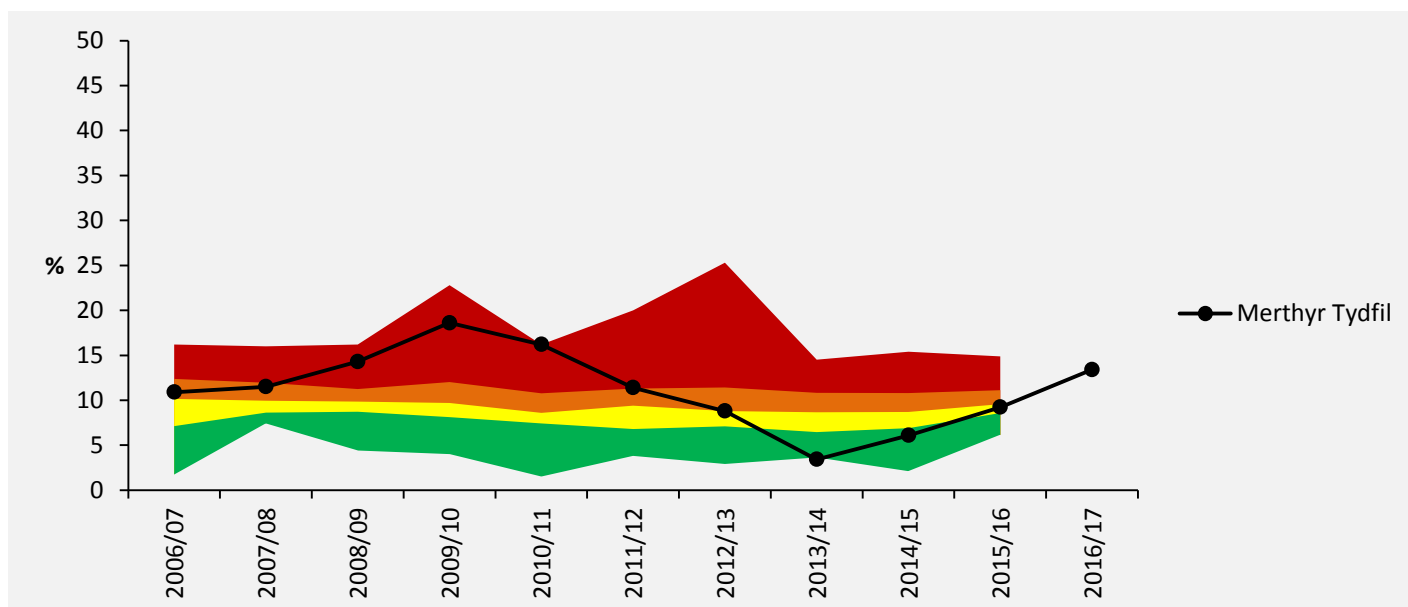
The rate of looked after children has steadily improved since 2012; however, we are still in the lower quartile with a rate of 113 (per 10,000 population). The generation and submission of data for 2016/17 has been delayed due to the development and implementation of a national 'Health and Social Care' system (WCCIS). However, we can confirm that during 2016/17, following a reduction of the number of children who are looked after, we saw a small increase in numbers of children who are looked after:

- 31/03/2016 there were 140² children looked after
- 31/03/2017 there were 145² children looked after

Evaluation of this has shown an increase in the number of occasions when the local authority has agreed with partner organisations that the only safe option is for a child to become looked after. The Council and its partners are targeting work on improving parenting with vulnerable families and reducing the impact of domestic abuse and substance misuse. These combined efforts are designed to lead to a reduced adverse childhood events and a consequential reduced demand for safeguarding and looked after services.

² All numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5 to minimise the risk of unwanted disclosure of personal data.

The % of children looked after on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year



STORY BEHIND THE DATA

Latest Published Comparable Data: 31 March 2016
 Latest Local Data Period: 30 December 2016
 Data Frequency: Annual
 Source: [StatsWales](http://StatsWales.gov.uk)

The generation and submission of data for 2016/17 has been delayed due to the development and implementation of a national 'Health and Social Care' system (WCCIS). The most recent local information indicates 20³ children (13 percent) have had three or more placements during April to December 2016. This is more than previous years and continues to be a concern. The underlying factors influencing this include:

- There are fewer placements for children nationally that we need (placement choice)
- Young people face new and additional challenges in terms of technology, new substances and complexity of care and support needs

In response to these challenges we have developed the strategy for success and stability which includes an action plan aimed at improving outcomes. The action plan includes making sure that we support looked after young people in understanding their family background to help them make new relationships in their placement and a recruitment strategy aimed at making sure that we increase the number of Merthyr Tydfil foster carers which will improve placement choice. We are also working with health board and education partners to make sure that where looked after young people have additional needs, we are able to respond effectively.

³ Figures have been rounded to the nearest five.

START DATE	April 2016	EXCELLENT
FINISH DATE	March 2017	

The Project

The purpose of these services are to work with families at an earlier stage on a voluntary basis, in order to bring about changes in parenting skills and help families put in place strategies to prevent problems escalating and entering the child protection or Looked After Children arenas. This will involve:

- Close work with the family and other agencies to develop individual action plans for the family and professionals with clear outcome goals, and
- Outline what needs to happen to achieve the outcomes, with shared responsibility between the family and key professionals and how the progress will be measured with timescales.

In addition, the some services provided at Merthyr Tydfil Family Centre will relocate to Thomas Town House and the extra space will be used to expand their preventative work opportunities.

Where are we now

This project has come to fruition with draft practice guidance available and a programme of dates set up to train staff.

START DATE

April 2016

EXCELLENT

FINISH DATE

March 2017

The Project

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Where are we now

The Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) task and finish group has developed a service with performance information showing some promising results. During 2017/18 we will review and further develop this provision, looking at evidence of what works and ensuring that IAA is well positioned to achieve success in preventing escalation of risk and need and promoting opportunities for young people and families to seek early resolution of emerging difficulties related to wellbeing.

START DATE

April 2015

EXCELLENT

FINISH DATE

March 2017

The Project

The purpose of these services are to work with families at an earlier stage on a voluntary basis, in order to bring about changes in parenting skills and help families put in place strategies to prevent problems escalating and entering the child protection or Looked After Children arenas. This will involve:

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In addition, the some services provided at Merthyr Tydfil Family Centre will relocate to Thomas Town House and the extra space will be used to expand their preventative work opportunities.

Where are we now

The newly named Early Intervention Team is fully staffed and operational. We developed a set of measures for monitoring progress and changes. Social Services Scrutiny Committee will receive an update report to monitor the impact and outcomes.

START DATE

April 2016

FINISH DATE

March 2017

ADEQUATE

The Project

The expansion of preventative services at Merthyr Tydfil Family centre will enable closer work with the Early Intervention Team and preventative work with families. This strategy will be developed to look at prevention work and map opportunities to safely reduce the numbers of children looked after in Merthyr Tydfil. This will involve work with children and parent, individual direct work, and outreach work within the family home to provide help and support to families at the earliest opportunity.

Where are we now

Despite a developing trend of progress, during summer and autumn 2016 we saw an increased number of new entries to care for safeguarding reasons, which interrupted the downward trend. However, this was back on track in by year end. Further work is under way to re-focus our process and practice, making sure that we only look after those children for whom there is no safe alternative and that every opportunity for preventative action has been fully explored.