



# 21st Century Schools Consultation Document

## Proposal to establish a Primary School

Amalgamation of Llancaeach Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School

20<sup>th</sup> October 2021 - 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021



This document is available electronically at

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Ysgolion a Cholegau yr 21ain Ganrif  
21st Century Schools and Colleges



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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# INTRODUCTION

## **What is this booklet about?**

Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC) has embarked upon an exciting but challenging journey of improvement and change.

Schools in Wales need to be in good condition and suitable for the delivery of education. In some cases, schools can be modernised, repaired, refurbished, extended, or partially rebuilt to meet the standards needed for contemporary teaching and learning. However, some existing schools are no longer in the right place and in such cases we might propose new schools or changes to existing schools.

We aspire to continue to raise school standards and improve the quality of the learning environment to create fit-for-purpose 21<sup>st</sup> century schools and give every child in Caerphilly the best possible start in life.

This booklet is for anyone who has an interest in education in Caerphilly and may be of particular interest to parents/guardians of children attending or expecting to attend the current Llancaeach Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School sites.

This booklet sets out the changes we are suggesting to these educational facilities in the Borough and the reasons for these proposed changes.

The consultation process represents an opportunity for people to learn about the proposal, ask questions and make comments that will be recorded and summarised in a consultation report. This report will be published on the Council's website and will be considered when Cabinet decides on the way forward.

## **What is the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Programme?**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges programme is a major, long-term, strategic capital investment programme. It is jointly funded by the Welsh Government and local authorities and aims to create a generation of 21<sup>st</sup> century schools in Wales.

The first part of the programme (Band A) ran from 2014 to March 2019.

Caerphilly has benefited greatly from investments in the initial "Band A" 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools programme with approximately £56.5 million invested in schools for both educational and community use.

Band A funding in Caerphilly was used to deliver :

 <p>Image of Islwyn High School</p>	Project Name	Band A Investment
	✓ Islwyn High School	£22.6m
	✓ Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Rhymni, Y Gwyndy Campus	£19.2m
	✓ Idris Davies School 3-18	£8m
	✓ Newbridge School extension	£2.6m
	✓ Blackwood Comprehensive improvements	£2m
	✓ Blackwood Comprehensive 3G pitch	£865k
	✓ Trinity Fields School improvements	£1.3m

Educational transformation remains a vital outcome of our investment in Band B of the Programme. The second part of this funding (Band B) started in April 2019, with the priority areas being:

- Reduce the number of poor condition schools
- Ensure that we have the right size schools in the right location
- Provide enough places to deliver Welsh and English medium education
- Ensure the effective and efficient use of the educational estate

Caerphilly County Borough Council submitted a Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) and received Welsh government approval in principle for an identified investment of £78 million, subject to individual project consultation and approval. The SOP set the strategic vision for the Band B programme within the context of the priorities and wellbeing goals of the Council.

We identified a need to invest in improving our school buildings, meeting the demand for education in both Welsh and English, reducing surplus places and developing shared and co-located facilities. Our aspiration is to provide efficient and effective educational infrastructure that will meet current and future demand for places and for all facilities that receive investment committed to optimising the use of the infrastructure and resources, making assets available for community use.

## What are we proposing to do?

We are proposing to:

- **Amalgamate Llancaeach Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School to create a new Primary School provision on the existing infants school site for those aged 3-11 years with an anticipated completion date of September 2024.**
- It is proposed that the current Llanfabon Infants School site will be reconfigured to host the new Primary School provision. A new building will be built to accommodate Key Stage 2 pupils (Junior age) and a partial refurbishment of the existing Infants School building on site with the whole Primary School provision providing accommodation for 275 pupils plus 40 nursery places, ensuring the development and delivery of an inclusive all-through primary school provision delivering the full curriculum to pupils in a modern, safe and inspiring learning environment.

- The new primary school site will have improved outside learning space and facilities that will provide a stimulating teaching and learning environment with 21<sup>st</sup> Century facilities centered on the learning, self-esteem and well-being of all pupils.
- The proposed project will take into account the desire to encourage and facilitate community use of the asset. The design will seek to include measures to enable safe 'zoning' which can be utilised by the wider community.



## CONSULTATION PROCESS

### Who are we consulting with?

Through [TeamCaerphilly - Better Together](#), the Council is committed to ensuring high quality, citizen focused services for the communities that comprise our county borough. In future-proofing public services, we recognise the need to ensure effective engagement which is central to our decision making - [Read more about our approach to Consultation and Engagement here](#)

For this proposal, our consultation process must follow the Welsh Government Statutory guidance as set out in the School Organisation Code 2018.

Proposals must be published when we make a 'regulated alteration' to a maintained school under Section 42 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

We are obligated to advise the following of our proposals by letter or email:

<b>Table 1: Consultee List</b>	
Pupils and Pupil Councils*	Welsh Ministers
Parents, prospective parents, guardians and carers*	Assembly Members and Members of Parliament representing the area served *
Headteacher, Staff and Governing bodies*	Local CCBC Members
Directors of Education for Neighbouring Authorities	Local Town and Community Councils
Teaching and Support Staff Associations	Estyn
Parent Network	Welsh Education Forum
Diocesan Directors / Boards of Education	South East Wales Consortium (EAS)
Gwent and South Wales Police and Crime Commissioners	South East Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA)
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership	Mudiad Meithrin, Menter Iaith and voluntary nursery providers

*\*of schools directly or likely to be affected by the proposal only*

**Please note:**

- All responses received during the consultation period will be recorded and summarised in a Consultation Report.
- The Consultation Report will be presented for initial review and endorsement at Education Scrutiny Committee, with final approval to proceed to the next stage sitting with Cabinet.
- Cabinet members will be provided with copies of all the responses received within the consultation period and in their original format as part of the decision making process.
- Any negative responses made during the consultation period will not be counted as objections to the proposal but as adverse comments.
- Objections to a proposal can only be registered after the publication of a statutory notice which is the second stage in the proposal, subject to approval by Cabinet.

**How can you find out more?**

The planning and development of effective school organisation proposals is crucial to the Welsh Government’s goal of transforming education in Wales and providing better educational outcomes with a commitment to increase school effectiveness, and narrow inequalities in achievement between advantaged and disadvantaged areas, groups and individuals.

The School Organisation Code 2018 states that when undertaking a consultation process in connection with a school proposal, the Council must publish information to enable transparent, balanced and open decision making.

As part of this proposal, the following documentation has been produced:

- A Consultation Document outlining the proposal (this document)
- A Children and Young People's Summary
- An Integrated Impact Assessment

Information is made available on the Council's website and all documentation is published in Welsh and English and available in other languages or formats on request.

Further details in relation to the processes and timelines can be found later in this document in the **'Next Steps'** Section.

A separate Planning Application Process will be carried out by the Authority's Property Services Department subject to the final determination being made and Cabinet approval to progress this proposal. Details of all applications can be found on the Council's Website when the process is live.

## **Views of children on the proposal**

The Council has acknowledged that the voice of young people is about involving them as active participants in the development, delivery, management and improvement of their educational and student experience and needs to be at the heart of planning, provision and evaluation.

Young people have a right to act to express their views in all matters affecting them and for their views to be heard and given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity. The Council recognises the potential of young people to enrich the decision-making processes, to share perspectives and to participate as citizens and facilitators of change.

This is also been reflected by the Estyn report 'Pupil Participation: a best practice guide', which highlights how effective participation benefits pupils and helps schools to improve.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team in Caerphilly will ensure that when bringing forward any proposal, suitable arrangements are made to consult and involve pupils throughout the process and post occupancy. A child friendly version of the Consultation Document will be produced and any feedback from pupils and School Council's will be included in the documentation forwarded to Cabinet for consideration once the consultation period has ended.

## **WHY ARE WE PROPOSING THESE CHANGES?**

### **Background Information**

Schools play a key role not only as places to inspire and educate our children but also as vibrant and dynamic learning environments in which all ages are able to learn and grow that are used not only by pupils but by families and the wider community. Our aim is to secure equality of access by promoting and supporting the development of inclusive education and giving a commitment to providing the best possible quality of education and services within available resources.

The Council is committed to providing all children and young people with high quality education, tailored to meet their needs, which will develop their potential, extend aspiration, promote social inclusion and contribute to the economic regeneration of the area. Progress has been made,

however there is still work to be done to improve outcomes and wellbeing for all children and young people.

Llancaeach Junior School (Key Stage 2 : 7-11 years) and Llanfabon Infants School (Foundation Phase & Key Stage 1 : 3-7 years) are currently operating over two separate sites within 0.5 miles distance of each other within the Caerphilly West, Nelson area.



Llancaeach Junior School



Llanfabon Infants School

Every school must provide a curriculum which is broad and balanced in content and relevant to all learners' needs. The child's learning journey should be seamless throughout their time in school, building on experiences, skills, knowledge and understanding as they progress. There is a clear link between new and improved school buildings and improved performance as highlighted by ESTYN.

The most recent Estyn inspection reports for Llancaeach Junior School (2018) and Llanfabon Infants School (2019), acknowledge that pupils make good progress and see themselves as confident and capable learners. The reports reflect that both schools create a caring environment where the pupils feel valued, safe and happy, these being notable features that encourage pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning.

Developing an all-through primary school provision in the Nelson area will build upon the strengths of each separate infant and junior school to ensure that experiences are further enhanced, enabling even higher standards of education to be provided. It will enable a whole school view of and consistent approach to learning and teaching, curriculum delivery and achievement, through a single vision with consistent ethos to benefit pupils, staff and parents/carers.

Within a primary school, all children - younger and older - have opportunities to share the outcomes of their learning and develop an enhanced understanding of the range of personal achievement across the key stages.

A primary school provides an environment where children can work and play together over a longer period of time developing a greater understanding and appreciation of one another's diverse strengths, skills and personalities. This has been shown to have a positive impact on social skills, problem solving and relationship development between all members of the community.

**Table 2: Benefits of Primary School Provision**

Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A single vision and consistent ethos to benefit pupils, staff and parents/carers</li><li>• Continuity and progression of learning</li><li>• Continuity of experience and provision</li><li>• One staff and management team giving unified leadership and management of curriculum, teaching and learning and social development and guided by a single School Improvement Plan</li><li>• Access to a greater range of staff talent and expertise with a larger staff, wider enrichment opportunities are inherent across the wider curriculum</li><li>• Efficient use of resources, both human and educational</li></ul>
Pedagogical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A suitable organisation (with single sets of learning and teaching policies and procedures) for delivering the national curriculum</li><li>• Opportunities for increased educational contact with younger and older children and the chance to share the outcomes of learning across the key stages</li><li>• Opportunities for increased social development, for example, with older pupils having some appropriate pastoral responsibility for younger children</li><li>• A greater knowledge of staff, organisation and curriculum</li></ul>
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ease of site maintenance</li><li>• Greater possibilities for the effective, efficient and flexible use of accommodation and more efficient site maintenance</li></ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More capacity to support the extended school agenda and the development of “dawn to dusk schools with breakfast childcare and after school clubs” in a more cohesive manner for parents/carers</li><li>• A focal point for the community</li></ul>
Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opportunities to gain broader professional experience from working with a wider range of ages</li><li>• The opportunity for staff to build partnerships with pupils, parents &amp; families over a longer period of time</li><li>• More effective and efficient deployment of resources which would not be possible in smaller establishments and a better alignment of resources to local priorities</li><li>• A streamlined and stronger administrative infrastructure, avoiding duplication of resources</li><li>• The capacity to meet the personalised learning agenda at the heart of the Primary Strategy and Workforce Reform</li></ul>

Staff will play an integral part in the benefits outlined above. Amalgamation can provide specific benefits for staff, both individually and as a team. Fundamental to this is the chance to gain a broader and deeper understanding of how to support and challenge children’s levels of understanding, skills and knowledge across key stages. In addition, a larger staffing structure helps to build in succession planning and therefore helps in retaining good teachers so that they can further their careers within the school and gives more opportunities to offer specialist teaching.

## Planning of school places

All Councils in Wales must make sure they provide enough school spaces for pupils of all ages in order to provide the best quality of education and ensure the funding provided by the Welsh government is used effectively. All Councils in Wales must also provide places that meet the needs of the pupils in Welsh, English or Faith medium and must be suitable for any additional learning needs.

### Llanfabon Infants School

- The site currently has a capacity for 120 pupils plus nursery
- The published admission number is 40
- There are currently 10.83% surplus places
- Current pupils on roll equate to 107 children, excluding nursery of which 85.45% are from within catchment.

### Llancaeath Junior School

- The site currently has a capacity for 188 pupils
- The published admission number is 46
- There are currently 26.60% surplus places
- Current pupils on roll equate to 138 children of which 84.17% are from within catchment.
- Llancaeath Junior School is a feeder school for Lewis Girls School / Lewis Pengam.

<b>Table 3: Actual and Projected Numbers in attendance</b>			
	<b>Llanfabon Infants School</b>		<b>Llancaeath Junior School</b>
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number on Roll</b>	<b>Excluding Nursery</b>	<b>Number on Roll</b>
2020	130	107	138
2021	123	90	147
2022	122	90	142
2023	121	89	148
2024	130	99	138
2025	131	98	132
2026	129	98	127
2027	149	120	146
2028	155	124	154
2029	155	125	156
2030	155	125	155

\*Figures take into account projected pupils from new building developments identified within the catchment area

Through pupil projections and taking into account significant new housing planning applications received (circa 380 units agreed up until 2030 with a further 90 units proposed to be built after that period), it is clear that the current configuration would be unable to accommodate demand assuming there is no loss of pupils between age groups.

## Condition and Suitability of school buildings

Educational provision for 3-11 year old's (Foundation Phase and Key Stages 1 and 2) in the Nelson area is currently delivered at two separate locations.

### Llancaeach Junior School

The site of Llancaeach Junior school opened in 1909 and occupies a total area of approximately 0.67 Hectares which accommodates 4 structures and limited outdoor play areas. The school building has a gross internal area of 1479 square metres and has a condition rating of C+ under the Faithful and Gould methodology.



Table 4: Llancaeach Junior School Site Information	
CAD Plan Designation	Facilities Provided
Main Building 95 & 1562	Assembly hall, Staff Room, 2 Offices, 4 Classrooms, pupil cloakrooms
Building 96	Library, 3 classrooms, Staff Room, pupil cloakrooms
Building 97	Dining Block and school kitchens
Out building 1825	Utilised for storage

The site is enclosed on all sides with current access to the school from a side street leading from the main B4255 which runs through the village. This provides access and parking issues as many parents utilise a local car park for pick up and drop off which means crossing the road. The school also has residential/business properties adjacent to the curtilage of the school which limits the site from further expansion.

## Llanfabon Infants School

The site of Llanfabon Infant School was formally opened in July 1992 and occupies a total area of approximately 1.0 Hectare which accommodates 4 structures and limited outdoor play areas. The school building has a gross internal area of 1189 square metres and has a condition rating of C+ under the Faithful and Gould methodology.



Table 5: Llanfabon Infant School Site Information	
CAD Plan Designation	Facilities Provided
Main building 329	6 classrooms, 1 reception, 2 offices, assembly hall, staff room, school kitchens
Double single story pre-fabricated modular building 1381 & 1382	2 classrooms
Out Building 1793	Utilised for storage

The existing site configuration lends itself to development, with good access roads and space to build, with minimal disruption, to accommodate the full cohort and projected primary provision.

As well as having the right number of school places the council must ensure that school facilities are fit for purpose. Schools must support the delivery of high quality learning. All existing Caerphilly schools have recently been subject to a Building Condition survey. Condition surveys are evidence-based auditable records and undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced personnel.

The Council's condition surveys, undertaken in 2018 have classified both schools identified as part of this amalgamation as category C+ for the condition of the educational estate and category C for suitability.



Whilst both locations have initially been considered as host sites for the new primary provision, due to the age, building type, limited access and reconfiguration options available for the existing Llancaeath Junior School location, as well as the limited outdoor play space and proximity to a busy road through the village of Nelson with no parking or drop-off options that can be developed within the curtilage of the school has been discounted. Therefore, Llanfabon Infants School site has been identified as the preferred development location.

Llanfabon Infants School is located within Nelson village, less than 0.5 miles of the Junior school. It is a newer style building and has a number of options available for internal and external reconfiguration and expansion, including the removal of the nursery and modular building as part of current plans to improve childcare provision on site and the potential to increase the curtilage of the school site. It is envisaged that the existing Llanfabon Infants School building would receive investment as part of this proposal for internal reconfiguration to create size-compliant classrooms and ensure smooth transition into the proposed new building which would accommodate 2 infant classes as well as the Junior cohort.

<b>Table 6: School Site Comparison Information</b>		
	<b>Llanfabon Infants School</b>	<b>Llancaeath Junior School</b>
Build Year / Year Opened	1992	1909
Number of Buildings on site	3	5
Number of classrooms	8	7
% of size-compliant classrooms	86%	86%
Pre-fabricated buildings	2	0
Overall Condition Rating	C+	C+
Overall Suitability	B	B
Site area	10,564 square metres 1 hectare	6,749 square meters 0.67 hectares
Access	Access via road leading off Bryncelyn	Access via narrow side road off B4255
Parking / Egress Points	Parking on site including turning bay with options to further improve.	No parking on site.
Options to expand	Yes, potential to expand school curtilage and create a community campus	Limited area to within existing curtilage with poor access for vehicles

The local community centre and a piece of redundant land in ownership of the Local Authority borders the North of the school perimeter and it is the intention of the Authority as part of this proposal to investigate utilising the land as part of a wider campus to encompass improved parking and drop off facilities and potentially shared use of the community hall. Initial discussions are being undertaken to determine the viability of this element subject to Welsh Government approval to progress.

In addition, consideration of the adjacent waste ground owned by the Council could be developed to alleviate drop off and parking congestion on the adjacent road. This suggestion will be investigated as part of the proposal going forward.

## **Illustrative Master Plan**

'A Foundation for Success' provides a framework for the future regeneration of the County Borough up to 2023. The document sets out strategic priorities for regeneration under four key themes:

- Supporting People (reducing inequality, building capacity and resilience to create healthier, prosperous, cohesive communities)
- Supporting Business (creating employment opportunities, increasing entrepreneurial activities, encouraging innovation and improving access to employment)
- Supporting Quality of Life (providing the right physical environment for our communities that encourages them to prosper)
- Connecting People and Places (improving connectivity locally, regionally and globally)

The Regeneration Strategy is supported by a suite of targeted action plans and strategies aimed at capturing regeneration opportunities and developing key sites and premises throughout the County Borough.

The Masterplan identifies a number of projects in the area that could deliver substantial economic and community benefit, and it will provide a framework for the delivery of those projects.

In addition, the number of school aged children is expected to increase within the Masterplan Area as a result of new development and it is important that there are opportunities for schools to expand to accommodate additional pupils. The Council has recently agreed in principle the provision of additional school places within the wider area subject to funding being confirmed for individual projects, business cases being approved by Welsh Government and the outcome of individual consultations will be considered as part of the 21st Century Schools programme.

This proposal forms part of that Strategy moving forward.

## **HOW WOULD OTHER SCHOOLS BE AFFECTED?**

Changes in one part of the Education sector in the County has a wider 'ripple' effect on other schools and their pupils. When considering any proposals, the sustainability and enhancement of the education network and wider area is considered. Due regard will be given to the impact of this proposal and consultation will be undertaken with any affected schools.

## **Early Years Provision and Projected Demand**

Caerphilly County Borough Council recognises the value and importance of childcare as a vital element of the anti-poverty agenda as well as providing an enriched, safe and nurturing environment in which the children and young people of the county borough can flourish and have fun. As such the Council has an Early Years' Service area that is dedicated to managing all aspects of the childcare market in a coordinated manner.

The Welsh Government awarded Caerphilly CBC £403,374 under the Childcare Offer Capital Grant to develop a 24 place bespoke childcare unit on the school site at Llanfabon Infants School, Nelson. Working with the local sessional provider we could expand the number of places offered per session enabling up to 52 potential places for Childcare Offer through a range of wraparound, after school and holiday care provision as well as offering playgroup places for 2year olds and older children. The creation of this new building bespoke for childcare would enable the local provider to have ownership of the space and develop quality provision serving the local community.

This development would continue existing provision as well as enable the creation of childcare places through longer days and greater autonomy:

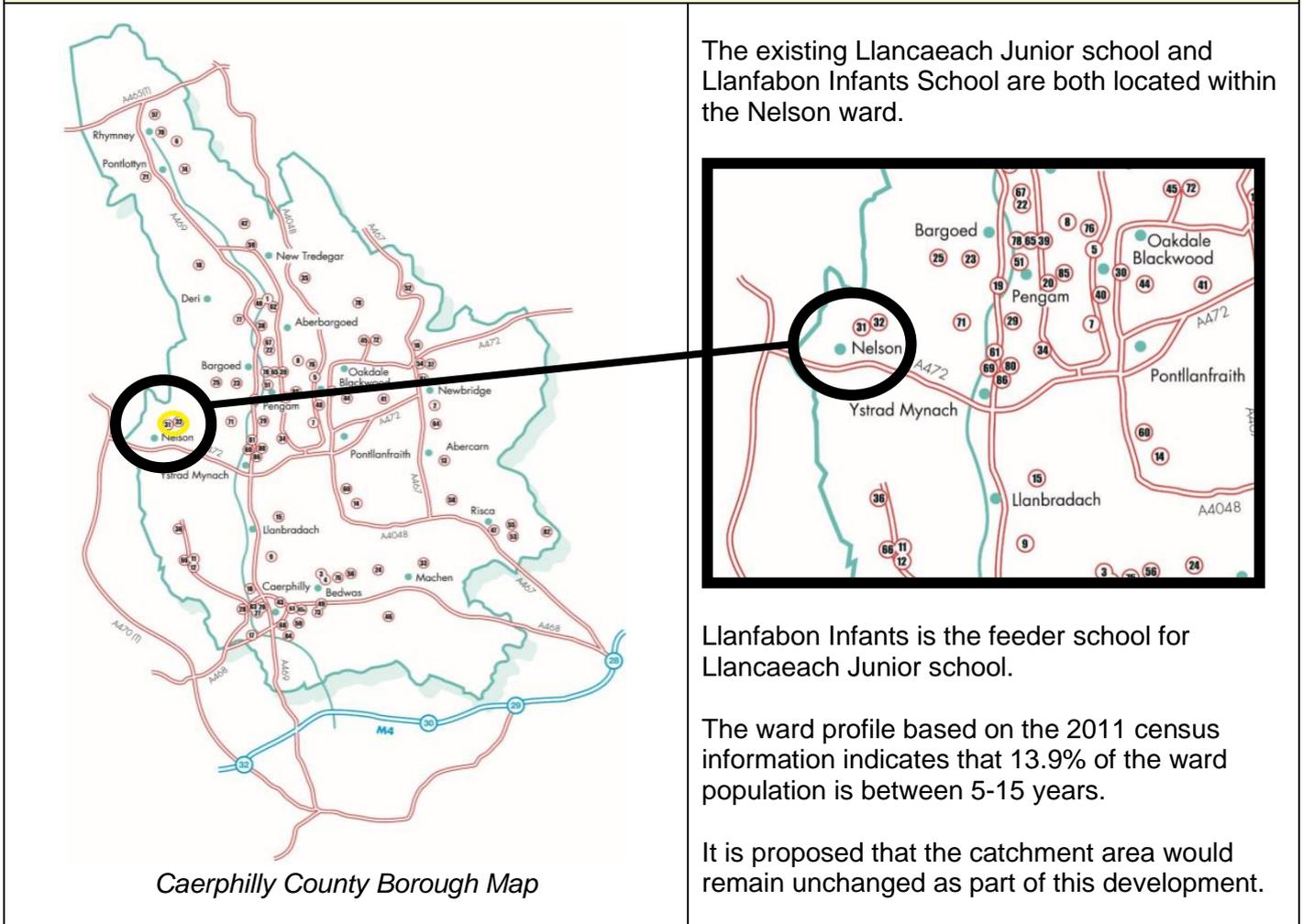
- 24 playgroup / wraparound morning and afternoon places (potential 24 childcare offer places)
- 24 after school places (potential 12 childcare offer places)
- 24 holiday places (potential 16 childcare offer places)

Our strategic development of childcare provision on the school site and adjacent to the Nursery provision will enable a smooth transition from the school nursery provision to the childcare unit. This maximises the benefits of co-location and enables the best transition for children who could be on site from 2 years old upwards.

## **Catchment Area Arrangements**

The Authority believes that this proposal represents the best opportunity to further safeguard and sustain educational standards for the future and provides a platform for improvement through significant investment in new permanent primary phase facilities at a single location. This will provide a stimulating teaching and learning environment with 21<sup>st</sup> Century facilities including improved ICT facilities, outdoor play and extended access provision for community use, centred on the learning, self-esteem and wellbeing of all.

**Table 7: Catchment Area for current schools**



### Impact on other schools

Geographically there are 2 community English medium primary schools and 2 community Welsh medium schools are within close proximity (within 3.5 miles radius) to the existing site which are:

- Greenhill Primary
- Ystrad Mynach Primary
- Ysgol Gynradd Bro Allta
- Ysgol Gymraeg Penalltau

**Table 8: Actual and Projected Numbers in attendance (Neighbouring Schools)**

	<b>Greenhill Primary</b>	<b>Ystrad Mynach Primary</b>	<b>YG Bro Allta</b>	<b>YG Penalltau</b>
<b>Capacity</b>	167	420	308	240
<b>Admissions</b>	23	59	44	34
<b>Year</b>	<b>No. on Roll (excluding Nursery)</b>			
2020	152	380	266	198
2021	162	381	274	202
2022	162	383	274	206
2023	165	383	287	210
2024	162	381	292	214
2025	156	380	293	217
2026	157	383	303	221

In addition to the consideration of schools within geographical close proximity, an analysis of catchment attendance of pupils for both schools has also been undertaken to further understand the potential impact of pupil movement.

**Table 9: Llanfabon Infants - September 2020 Attendance Information**

Year Group	Catchment pupils living in area	Catchment attending school	Out of Catchment attending school	Out of County attending school	Catchment attending elsewhere	Catchment Attending Faith School	Catchment attending Welsh School
Reception	47	32	2	3	3	0	12
Year 1	35	28	3	3	4	0	3
Year 2	48	34	1	4	3	0	11
Total	130	94	6	10	10	0	26

Catchment Pupils for this schools attending elsewhere include : Coedybrain (1 pupil), Cwm Ifor (1 pupil), Glyngaer (1 pupil), Greenhill (4 pupils), Hengoed (2 pupils), Maesycwmmmer (1 pupil), Pengam (1 pupil), Pontllanfraith (1 pupil), St Gwladys (1 pupil), Ystrad Mynach (3 pupils).

**Table 10: Llancaeath Junior School - September 2020 Attendance Information**

Year Group	Catchment pupils living in area	Catchment attending school	Out of Catchment attending school	Out of County attending school	Catchment attending elsewhere	Catchment Attending Faith School	Catchment attending Welsh School
Year 3	43	31	1	4	1	0	11
Year 4	42	28	1	4	8	0	6
Year 5	51	37	1	4	4	0	10
Year 6	40	24	1	6	4	0	12
Total	176	120	17	0	17	0	39

Catchment Pupils for this school attending elsewhere include: Cefn Fforest (1 pupil), Cwmaber Junior (1 pupil), Derwendeg (1 pupil), Glyngaer (2 pupils), Greenhill (6 pupils), Maesycwmmmer (1 pupil), St James (1 pupil), Ystrad Mynach (4 pupils).

Based on the information outlined above and the projected figures, the new primary school will be established and open at full capacity of 275. This will ensure all catchment pupils can be accommodated while not destabilising other already established educational provisions within the area.

## **Disruption to pupils**

The proposal seeks to expand the existing Llanfabon School facility. The site is in ownership of the Council and is already designated for Educational use as part of the deed package and within the designation for the purposes of the adopted Local Development Plan.

Through utilising an existing site, during the build phase, the council will work with the contractor to ensure there would be minimal disruption to the daily operations of the existing school cohort, on the Llanfabon School site. The development would have no impact on the Junior school until the site is ready to be accommodated at which time learners would be supported through the transplantation process.

## **Secondary Provision**

Llancaeath Junior School is a feeder school for Lewis Girls School and Lewis School Pengam. Whilst secondary education is being reviewed within the authority at present which includes single sex provision, until such time that a determination has been made, it is the assumption of this proposal that the current feeder configuration would remain the same. Based on current projections and available data, this proposal would have minimal impact on secondary provision.

# **WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL?**

## **Education Standards, Quality and Leadership**

Quality and standards in schools in Caerphilly are monitored by Estyn and the Local Authority (LA). Estyn is the office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales. It is a Crown body, established under the Education Act 1992. Estyn is independent of the National Assembly for Wales but receives its funding from the Welsh Government under Section 104 of the Government of Wales Act 1998. Estyn inspects quality and standards in education and training providers in Wales.

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Table 11: Estyn Judgement Scale</b>	
Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
Adequate and needs improvement	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

The most recent inspection results for the current Junior and Infants schools are outlined below. Copies of the full reports for each individual school are available from the [Estyn website](#)

### **Llancaeath Junior School Estyn Summary**

1. Standards: **good**
2. Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: **good**
3. Teaching and learning experiences: **good**
4. Care, support and guidance: **good**
5. Leadership and management: **good**

In their 2018 Report, Estyn commented that the headteacher and senior leaders have a clear vision for school improvement and share this well with all staff. There is a clear sense of teamwork and all work successfully together to ensure good quality education for pupils.

A range of qualitative comments also noted strengths in the report. This included:

- The high standard of behaviour of nearly all pupils in lessons and around the school.
- Good progress made by nearly all pupils in mathematics and the effective application of numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Polite, well behaved pupils who demonstrate respect to others.
- Pupils who work effectively in pairs or in larger groups.
- Pupils who have a very good understanding of the need to eat healthily and to take part in regular physical exercise.

### **Llanfabon Infant School Estyn Summary**

1. Standards: **adequate and needs improvement**
2. Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: **adequate and needs improvement**
3. Teaching and learning experiences: **adequate and needs improvement**
4. Care, support and guidance: **adequate and needs improvement**
5. Leadership and management: **unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement.**

As a consequence of the above judgements summarised in the 2017 Report, the school was identified by Estyn as requiring significant improvement. Additional support was provided for the school which accelerated progress across all recommendations, resulting in the school being removed from the monitoring process in April 2019.

Improvements against the recommendations were noted in Estyn's follow-up report. These included:

- Staff, governors and parents who know and understand the school's strategic priorities. Senior leaders work alongside all staff to assess progress against the strategic actions regularly. This has improved staff wellbeing and helped to create an appropriate climate for change
- An effective focus on supporting pupils to develop as independent learners.
- A robust annual monitoring and self-evaluation cycle. This provides staff with accurate and focused evidence to feed into the school's self-evaluation. Senior and middle leaders, carry out focused monitoring that includes book scrutiny, learning walks and listening to learners. Estyn commented that since the core inspection, the quality of strategic planning and school improvement has improved considerably.
- Effective opportunities, planned by senior leaders, for staff to engage in professional learning. All staff participate in well planned, suitable development activities linked to foundation phase pedagogy, practice and pupil wellbeing.
- Careful monitoring and tracking of pupils' attendance. This allows staff to identify any pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern and to follow this up appropriately.

Following removal from the Estyn monitoring category, school improvement reports indicated that the school continued to make good progress. This resulted in the school requiring lower levels of support from the Local Authority.

### **Covid-19 pandemic**

Both schools have provided good support for learners during the Covid-19 pandemic, demonstrating commitment, perseverance and resilience. Wellbeing has continued to be a priority during this period, with particular support for vulnerable families living in the community.

Both schools have also provided a programme of training for staff. This has enabled teachers to successfully utilise emerging technologies to deliver remote lessons and blended learning strategies.

### **Governance Arrangements**

The proposed changes would be planned carefully so that the schools leadership and governance are disrupted to a minimum, to minimise any negative impact on educational outcomes.

During (and after) the proposal, the newly formed Primary School will continue to receive ongoing advice and support from the local authority, school improvement service and any relevant stakeholders to help ensure that the school maintains effective leadership and provides high quality teaching and learning experiences.

### **Staff Matters**

School staff play an important role in ensuring pupils are learning in a safe and supportive learning environment. They can foster positive, trusting relationships with pupils and improve the school climate by encouraging parent and family involvement in education.

By forging strong relationships, staff can affect virtually every aspect of their pupils' lives, teaching them the important life lessons that will help them succeed beyond just academia. It is not always easy to change a pupil's life, which is why it takes a great teacher to do so.

The Council recognises that retaining the experience and support of the existing staff cohort at the school will support pupils through a period of transition although this will be at the discretion of the governing body. This proposal supports the potential to expand provision, breadth of knowledge accessible to the pupils and encourage workforce development through the sharing of best practice.

## **Financial Matters**

Funding has already been set aside for the Council's share of the capital costs of the project. The recurrent (revenue) costs will be considered as part of budget planning moving forward. Any additional costs or savings will be factored into the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Caerphilly CBC Members have already agreed to set aside an earmarked reserve for the Council's contribution to capital costs associated with the Authority's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Band B proposals. The value of this reserve is currently £6.975m.

The Authority's contribution to Phase 1 of the programme is currently estimated at £6.413m. This figure includes a contribution of £647k from a Social Services Capital earmarked reserve to support additional spend on the Trinity Fields Project, subject to full planning application approval. Consequently the balance remaining as uncommitted from the £6.975m is currently £1.209m.

The Authority's contribution towards phase 2 of the programme is estimated at £5,925,000, as detailed above. This cost will be met from the remaining funding of £1.209m already earmarked for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools, plus a figure of £4.716m from the Authority's Place-Shaping Reserve.

The proposal to amalgamate Llancaeach Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School is one of 3 projects identified in Phase 2 of the programme. Whilst there is an initial increased cost identified as part of the initial amalgamation of the provision it is envisaged that better strategic management of a single school estate and reduced backlog maintenance across 2 sites will support the sustainable schools agenda. In addition, subject to Cabinet approval, should the preferred option be adopted, the existing school premises in relation to Llancaeach Junior School site will be declared surplus to requirements by the Local Education Authority and in turn could produce a Capital Receipt that would help support future strategic plans or be offered for residential development within the Authority's Housing portfolio.

## **Impact on Welsh Language Provision**

The First Minister's programme for Government 2016-2021 Taking Wales Forward, is working towards one million people speaking the Welsh language by 2050.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Legislation (Wales) Act 2019, provides a series of standards and places a statutory duty on the Council to assess the demand for Welsh medium education in the area. One of the key standards is a requirement to develop a 5 year Welsh language strategy, with the aim of increasing the number of Welsh speakers and which will enable us to facilitate the use of the Welsh Language within the county borough.

As set out in its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan where Caerphilly County Borough Council's commitment to the promotion of Welsh language and the provision of quality, attractive educational facilities is evident. The Council is committed to developing opportunities for provision to be delivered through the medium of Welsh where possible.

The proposed new primary school will be English medium but through its curriculum, will encourage pupils to develop basic Welsh language skills which is demonstrated through the work the existing Llancaeath Junior School and Llanfabon Infants School produce. This proposal would seek to further support and promote the development of Welsh language by the pupils, supporting the recommendations of the Estyn inspection produced for Llancaeath Junior in increasing the opportunities for pupils to use their Welsh language. In addition, the internal design of the new facilities will ensure that signage is dual language as well as ensuring that as part of the recruitment process the ability to speak Welsh is desirable.

## Learner Travel Arrangements

The proposal seeks to create a new and enhanced primary facility through a new building located on the existing Llanfabon Infants school site.

The distance between Llancaeath Junior school and Llanfabon Infants school is within a 0.5 mile radius, it is anticipated that the likely effect of different travelling arrangements as a result of the proposal will be minimal, although it is acknowledged that some pupils may find themselves living closer to the new school site and conversely others finding themselves further away although the difference between the two sites is minimal.

It is also anticipated that the amalgamation to form the new primary provision will have a positive impact on traffic and travel within the area, removing high volumes of traffic and parking congestion from the main thoroughway through Nelson village and also decreasing journeys where siblings will now be attending the same location.

Caerphilly complies with the requirements of the Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008 through providing transport for pupils of statutory school age in accordance with our individual transport policy. Caerphilly's transport policy is more generous than the legislative requirement by providing transport to the 'relevant' school (i.e. catchment or nearest school) of more than a distance of 1.5 miles primary and 2 miles secondary.

The table below details the nearest available alternatives:

<b>Table 12: Geographically Nearest Alternative schools</b>			
<b>School Name, Postcode</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Distance / Travel</b>
Greenhill Primary, CF82 9EU	English	C+	2.4 miles
Ysgol Penallta, CF82 6AP	Welsh	C+	3.2 miles
Ystrad Mynach Primary , CF82 7AQ	English	C+	3.3 miles
YG Bro Allta, CF82 7XQ	Welsh	C+	3.3 miles

It is always the intention of the Council to provide a system of transport that seeks to ensure pupils can safely and comfortably access their education. As the proposed location for the new primary provision is within the curtilage of the existing Llanfabon Infants School site, a number of 'Safe Travel' routes, as far as reasonably practicable, are already established such as lighting and designated footpaths. During an initial site visit by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools team, it has been identified that the access road, parking and designated bus/taxi turning points could

potentially be improved as part of the site design process to alleviate any local traffic concerns and this will be taken into consideration at the relevant stages as the proposal progresses.

## **Equalities**

The Council recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within and between our communities.

Impact assessments help us to show that the council has due regard in the exercise of its equality duty under the Equality Act 2010. They are a tool we use to ensure the policies, practices, projects and activities which shape our work are ensuring equal access to all our services.

Impact assessments look at whether changes to how we do things (like working practices or ways we deliver services) are likely to have a positive or negative impact on the people we serve and on those who deliver our services. They help us to plan to reduce or remove negative impact – for example by making reasonable changes to how a group receives a service (perhaps providing information in a different format or providing ramped access into a building etc.).

A new socio-economic duty set out in section 1 of the Equality Act 2010, came into force on 31st March 2021. The Caerphilly Council's Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) template will be utilised to undertake an initial Equality Impact and Welsh Language Impact Assessment which will be further reviewed in the light of any additional elements highlighted through the statutory consultation processes as the proposal progresses.

The utilisation of the new IIA design will shape the Council's work in ensuring equal access to all services and further help support the Council in making informed and effective decisions whilst ensuring compliance with a range of relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Socio-economic Duty – Sections 1 to 3 of the Equality Act 2010
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Statutory Consultation v Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation and Gunning Principles

A full Integrated Impact Assessment has been undertaken. This document is available to view a part of the consultation pack on the website.

## **Specialist Facilities / Additional Learning Needs**

A key responsibility of the Council is to ensure that there are sufficient pupil places in the most appropriate locations and maintain an awareness of demographic changes (i.e. increases and decreases in the pupil population). The Council is also required to identify an authority-wide strategy for community provision in schools, as well as specialist provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disabilities.

The Authority recognises the impact of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act (2018) and the need to future proof provision. Through the Band B programme, consideration of the correct types, quantity and quality of provision to meet the future needs of the population has been considered.

This proposal will support the newly formed primary school in accommodating and supporting children with additional learning needs. The design and layout of the new building will enable improved accessibility, flexibility and multi-functional areas that can be adapted subject to demand. In addition, there will be reconfiguration and investment into the existing main building on site to create size-compliant classrooms.

## **Community Impact and Community Benefit**

The proposed project will take into account the desire to encourage and facilitate community use of the asset. Our aspiration and a pre-requisite for Welsh Government investment, is to commit to making assets available to support educational need, community use, promote community resilience and contribute to meeting several Local Authority Strategies. To optimise the use of the new infrastructure and resources, as part of the proposal, flexibility will be built into the school suited to local demand.

## **Community Provision and Community Use**

Both Llancaeath Junior school and Llanfabon Infants school currently accommodate a number of groups. These extra-curricular activities will continue to be supported moving forward and will not be interrupted as part of any build process.

The proposed project will take into account the desire to encourage and facilitate community use of the asset. To this end the design process will seek to include measures to enable safe 'zoning' of parts of the new school building, including the hall and a multi-functional classroom compliant space which could be adapted for use as well as access to outdoor recreational facilities accessible outside of school hours. Additionally, the childcare facility will be available for community use both during and outside of school hours.

The usage of sporting facilities will also be considered for the community at suitable times in keeping with the curriculum timetable. It will also strengthen and safeguard the promotion of the Welsh language, Culture and Heritage within the Community.

It is envisaged that a number of the current activities that the school supports the community in undertaking will continue at the new venue. For groups unable to travel the additional distance, the Council will mitigate lost usage of school by providing facilities at the local library based in the community or look at supporting alternative venues where appropriate.

## **Digital Inclusion**

Caerphilly Council has clear aspirations for all schools to become community learning centres as part of their Hwb Programme. As such, community use and the appropriate infrastructure required to achieve this is now one of the key elements of the project and planning process moving forward and representatives from the Local Council's Digital Services and Building Consultancy departments advise as part of the project team.

Over the next 5 year period, resources have been allocated to ensure that all schools within the borough will meet the Education Digital Standard and any new developments will have the required infrastructure built into the specifications in advance to ensure compliance which will include community wifi.

In addition to providing the physical infrastructure, the Adult Education team within the Council has developed robust operational plans to deliver the Digital 2030 Strategic Framework and

widen access to learning activities at a time and place flexible to the needs of the community, implemented in accordance with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the five principles of working.

### **Sport and Outdoor Play Facilities**

The Curriculum for Wales identifies 6 areas of learning and places a great emphasis on Health and Wellbeing above all others.

The Council recognises that children's physical development, enthusiasm and energy for movement should continually be promoted through helping them to use their bodies effectively, by encouraging spatial awareness, balance, control and coordination, and developing motor and manipulative skills across all Areas of Learning, indoors and outdoors.

Children should be encouraged to enjoy physical activity. The provision of physical education through sporting and outdoor facilities plays a vital role in encouraging pupils to explore and develop the physical and mental skills essential to taking part in a variety of different activities.

*'Our vision for sport and active recreation is to encourage healthy lifestyles and support our pupils and residents to be more active, more often'* as reflected in Caerphilly's Sports and Active Recreation Strategy 2019-2029 and the health and wellbeing priorities set in the Corporate Plan 2018-2023.

As part of the design process, this proposal will enhance the outdoor play facilities with soft/hard play areas, suitable equipment area which will be accessible to the pupils and the wider community.

### **Community Benefit**

Projects include Community Benefits as a Core Requirement and will therefore be scored as part of the Quality evaluation. It sets out a number of targets around local targeted recruitment & training, supply chains, community & education initiatives and environmental matters such as minimising waste and reducing energy consumption. Protecting habitats, biodiversity and reducing pollution is a matter of course throughout the contract period and relevant surveys will be undertaken and included within the procurement documentation.



## **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSAL?**

### **Benefits**

The principal benefits of the scheme are as follows:

- Provides an 'all-new' primary school for 275 pupils plus an additional 40 nursery places
- New school building to accommodate mainly key stage 2 pupils to replace an existing 112 year old premises with substantive restraints
- Provision of energy efficient facility
- Modern state of the art classrooms
- New outdoor activity and softplay areas
- Modern flagship primary facility in the Caerphilly West area
- Space maximisation through reconfiguration of existing Infants building and overall site
- A stimulating environment to deliver high quality learner outcomes

- Community Use subject to the requirements of the curriculum during school sessions times being met

## Disbenefits

The principal disbenefits of the scheme are as follows:

- Travel times may change for a minority of pupils dependent on their proximity to the new school location
- Community usage and accessibility of alternative provision for groups using the existing site needs to be supported and new site will offer enhanced facilities
- Removing an embedded school from a community into a different area albeit within less than 1 mile of the existing school site
- There will be a period of transition for the pupils and appropriate support for ‘Settling in’ will require consideration
- The current piece of land will need to be decommissioned and disposed of in line with appropriate guidelines
- It is anticipated there will be minimal impact on other schools through a managed and phased capacity increase

## Risks

Risks will be managed pro-actively in accordance with our risk management procedures. The programme makes an allowance for a risk contingency to cover unforeseen events, having regard to the results of the optimism bias assessments.

The Council also recognises the risks associated with construction procurement especially in light of current Covid implications on the industry.

The principal risks of the delivery of the scheme are identified as follows:

<b>Table 13: Risks and Mitigation</b>	
<b>Principal Risks</b>	<b>Mitigating Factors</b>
Planning process (this is separate to this consultation document)	The planning process will be managed by Property Services in line with legislative requirements
Impact of any planning conditions on cost	Full Tender process will be undertaken
Sufficiency of funding to deliver scope including abnormals	Contingency planning will form part of the tender process
Availability of resources/ contractors	The South East & Mid Wales Collaborative Construction Framework (SEWSCAP) framework will be accessed
Rising costs due to regional supply/demand dynamic	Will be managed through contingency planning
Design development	In house architect service will be accessed
Adverse weather conditions	Factored into project management timelines
Sufficiency of Utilities services	Factored into project management timelines
Project Governance and decision making	Full Project Board will be established

Benefits realisation (meeting end user requirements)	<p>The consultation process prescribed by the School Organisation Code 2018 applies in relation to this proposal. The identified consultees and decision making process along with the relevant publication of documentation at the appropriate stage will be utilised to ensure the appropriate level of engagement in informing and consulting stakeholders</p> <p>The principles of the Council's Consultation and Engagement Framework 2020-2025 and "Spectrum of Engagement" is synergistic with those contained within the Code. However, the code as stipulated by Welsh Government is the Statutory process that must be followed.</p>
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## Options framework

The Welsh Government's Business Case Guidance in relation to utilisation of the Options Framework approach has been followed to identify the widest possible number of feasible options, focusing on the following key dimensions: scope, service solution, service delivery, implementation and funding.

As such, in development of this proposal, an options appraisal has been undertaken to consider the relative desirability, viability and feasibility of a proposal.

A cross-departmental working group consisting of representatives from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team, Education Directorate, Sport and Leisure, Inclusion Services, Property Services, Finance and Health and Safety was established to:

- Prepare and appraise a longlist of options
- Evaluate and score each option as to the extent to which each option meets the investment objectives and critical success factors identified and weighted as priority areas by the Council.
- Discount or carry forward options for further consideration in the shortlist based on the preliminary analysis and scoring to identify viable options.
- Recommend a preferred way forward which will form the basis for the consultation exercise

## Options Longlist

The following options were considered and scored: -

<b>Table 14: Options Appraisal Longlist</b>	
<b>Option</b>	<b>Longlist Options: Description</b>
<b>Option 1 *</b>	<b>Do Nothing :</b> No change to existing schools
<b>Option 2</b>	<b>Do Minimum:</b> Internal refurbishments of both school sites
<b>Option 3</b>	<b>Do Intermediate:</b> Expansion of the existing Llanfabon site via modular buildings to become a new primary school to accommodate 275 pupil and 40 nursery provision
<b>Option 4</b>	<b>Do Major:</b> Expansion of the existing Llanfabon site via a permanent building and internal reconfiguration to become a new primary school to accommodate 275 pupil and 40 nursery provision
<b>Option 5</b>	<b>Do Maximum</b> New primary school building to accommodate 275 pupils and 40 nursery provision on a different site yet to be identified

\*Please note, Option 1 is considered the status quo option and is always included in the shortlist as a benchmark for value for money.

Each option was initially discussed between a selection of Council Officers from across multiple-department. Each option was evaluated against the investment objectives and the extent to which it met the Critical Success Factors. This results in options either being discounted, carried forward for further consideration in the short list or identified as a preferred way forward.

### **Critical Success Factors:**

- Building Bulletin compliant school
- Low carbon, low energy eco-friendly environment
- Building suited to local environment and acceptable to planning Authority
- Education facility that is acceptable to stakeholders
- Delivered within budget and within required timescales
- Agreement of the proposal by Welsh Government

As well as considering the Critical Success Factors, the Officers also considered the Strategic Fit, Educational Fit, Accessibility, Financial Fit and Environmental Impact as key Investment Objectives.

### **Investment Objectives:**

The Investment Objectives were weighted based on the current priority areas for the Council. Priority Investment areas were given a 5 (High) to 1 (Low).

Each option was then scored against the criteria outlined above

- 5 exceeds the criteria
- 4 meets the criteria
- 3 neither meets/does not meet the criteria
- 2 partially meets the criteria, and,
- 1 does not meet the criteria

The score was then multiplied by the weighting for each section and an overall total for each option.

**Table 15: Weighted Decision Matrix**

Investment Objectives		Options										
		1		2		3		4		5		
	Weight	Score	Total	Score	Total	Score	Total	Score	Total	Score	Total	
1	Strategic Fit	5	0	0	3	15	4	20	5	25	5	25
2	Educational	5	0	0	4	20	4	20	5	25	5	25
3	Accessibility	4	0	0	2	8	4	16	5	20	5	20
4	Financial	4	0	0	3	12	3	12	5	20	4	16
5	Environmental	4	0	0	3	12	3	12	5	20	4	16
			<b>0</b>		<b>67</b>		<b>80</b>		<b>110</b>		<b>102</b>	

Decision Matrix Key:

Weight: 5 is a high priority investment objective – 0 is low

(Weighting reflects current Council Priorities)

Score: 5 fully meet the investment objective criteria - 0 does not meet the needs

Total: Score x Weighting

**Table 16: Options Appraisal - Longlist scoring and ranking**

Option	Description	Appraisal Score	Appraisal Ranking
Option 1	<b>Do Nothing :</b> No change to existing schools	0	5
Option 2	<b>Do Minimum:</b> Internal refurbishments of both school sites	67	4
Option 3	<b>Do Intermediate:</b> Expansion of the existing Llanfabon site via modular buildings to become a new primary school to accommodate 275 pupil and 40 nursery provision	80	3
Option 4	<b>Do Major:</b> Expansion of the existing Llanfabon site via a permanent building and internal reconfiguration to become a new primary school to accommodate 275 pupil and 40 nursery provision	110	1

<b>Option 5</b>	<b>Do Maximum:</b> New primary school building to accommodate 275 pupils and 40 nursery provision on a different site yet to be identified	<b>102</b>	<b>2</b>
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### Options Shortlist

The outcome of the options analysis resulted in the highest 2 scoring options being taken forward to a shortlist, where the benefits if the options were considered.

For this proposal, Options 4 and 5 are outlined in more detail below:

<b>Table 17: Options Appraisal Shortlist</b>	
<b>Option</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Option 4</b>	<b>Do Major:</b> Expansion of the existing Llanfabon site via a permanent building and internal reconfiguration to become a new primary school to accommodate 275 pupil and 40 nursery provision
<b>Option 5</b>	<b>Do Maximum</b> New primary school building to accommodate 275 pupils and 40 nursery provision on a different site yet to be identified

The tables below illustrate this based on comparative analysis:

<b>Table 18: Option 4 Overview - Critical Issues, Benefits and Disbenefits</b>	
Option Overview: Expansion of the existing Llanfabon site via a permanent building and internal reconfiguration to become a new primary school to accommodate 275 pupil and 40 nursery provision	
Critical issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A new extension onto the existing school offering high quality, modern educational facilities fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</li> <li>➤ New build would be able to accommodate additional pupils</li> <li>➤ Delivery a primary provision to replace the existing split site Junior and Infant delivery</li> <li>➤ A better use of resources and economy of scale by improving the existing estate of the school and its operational cost effectiveness</li> <li>➤ Minimises any geographical displacement of existing cohorts</li> <li>➤ Maximises investment already made to a site of no more than 20 years old</li> <li>➤ Provides continuity of provision on one site for Primary provision</li> <li>➤ Increased and enhanced community use and income generation opportunities</li> </ul>	
<b>BENEFITS</b>	<b>DISBENEFITS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New extension building</li> <li>• Provides an adequate and equitable teaching environment to meet Building Bulletin requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension proposal only, existing Llanfabon building would remain in place</li> <li>• Investment would need to be factored into reconfiguration of an element of</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility with an ability to meet projected demand and community need</li> <li>• Complies with all National and Local policies</li> <li>• Improved accessibility</li> <li>• Improves the outside learning space</li> <li>• Improve the learning outcomes for pupils</li> <li>• Increases capacity within strategic allowance</li> <li>• A school building that will be more energy efficient, eliminate the backlog maintenance from 1 school site and ensure compliance with Equality Act 2010</li> <li>• Caters for the Educational needs and preferences of the Local Community and provide and provide sufficient, permanent, fit for purpose and sustainable accommodation</li> <li>• New build to be located on the existing school site</li> <li>• No additional costs linked to land purchase and minimising any delay for development</li> <li>• Current location is geographically central to the existing catchment area and within 0.5 miles of the Junior school location</li> <li>• Delivery of project within identified investment envelope</li> </ul>	<p>the existing Llanfabon School building to accommodate extension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional abnormal costs associated with the demolition / reutilisation of the Llancaeath Junior School site</li> <li>• Need to minimise any disruption to site whilst existing build is still in operation</li> <li>• Compromising access routes into the existing site would also need to be monitored and minimised</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Table 19: Option 5 Overview - Critical Issues, Benefits and Disbenefits</b></p>
<p>Option Overview: Build a new primary school building to accommodate 275 pupils and 40 nursery provision on a different site yet to be identified</p>
<p><b>Critical Issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A new school offering high quality, modern educational facilities fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</li> <li>➤ Meeting the recommendations of BB 99</li> <li>➤ Potential to achieve better educational outcomes for pupils currently at the school through enhancing their learning environment</li> <li>➤ Improved access to outdoor learning facilities</li> <li>➤ A school building that will be more energy efficient, eliminate the backlog maintenance from 2 school sites and ensure compliance with Equality Act 2010</li> <li>➤ Facility with an ability to meet projected demand and community need</li> </ul>

BENEFITS	DISBENEFITS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brand new fit for purpose building</li> <li>• Provides an adequate and equitable teaching environment to meet Building Bulletin requirements</li> <li>• Complies with all National and Local policies</li> <li>• Improved accessibility</li> <li>• Improves the outside learning space</li> <li>• Improve the learning outcomes for pupils</li> <li>• Caters for the Educational needs and preferences of the Local Community and provide and provide sufficient, permanent, fit for purpose and sustainable accommodation</li> <li>• A school building that will be more energy efficient, eliminates the backlog maintenance from 2 school sites and ensures compliance with Equality Act 2010</li> <li>• Meets projected future demand</li> <li>• Minimal impact or disruption to daily school operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New build to be located on site away from existing school site</li> <li>• Disruption to existing cohort identified as vulnerable learners through transplantation process</li> <li>• Identifying viable land in the Authority and costs and time associated with purchasing this</li> <li>• No suitable site has been identified</li> <li>• Increased capacity would be outside of strategic allowance</li> <li>• Development would require significant spend profile reconfiguration at the detriment of mainstream provision</li> <li>• Additional abnormal costs associated with the demolition / reutilisation of the Llancaeath and Llanfabon Schools</li> </ul>

### Preferred Option and Alternative options that have been discounted

On the basis of the above analysis, the preferred way forward is the Do Major Option, as this meets all the investment objectives and Critical Success Factors, strongly in most cases.

Taking the appraisals together delivers the conclusion that a new build scheme provides the best balance of costs, benefits and risks, with the limited rebuild options offering poor value for money and high risk. Option 4 is confirmed as the preferred option following the full economic appraisal.

Table 20: Recommended Preferred Option	
Option	Description
Option 4	<b>Do Major:</b> Expansion of the existing Llanfabon site via a permanent building and internal reconfiguration to become a new primary school to accommodate 275 pupil and 40 nursery provision

The remaining options do not fully meet the spending objectives and are therefore discounted.



## NEXT STEPS

### Consultation Period and key dates

#### **The formal consultation process begins on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

This consultation document and response form are available electronically on the Council website.

Further information is available on the [21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools webpages](#)

A Children and Young People's Everyday Summary Version of this consultation has also been produced. Both this and the full version are available via the Caerphilly County Borough Council website and printed copies are also available on request.

If you would like this information in any other format, for example large print, or help with interpretation in a different language, please contact us on 01443 864817 so that the necessary arrangements can be made to provide this service.

#### **The closing date for responses to this consultation is midnight on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021**

Unfortunately, we will not be able to consider any responses received after this date.

### Statutory Notices, Reporting and Decision Making

Following consultation, Caerphilly's Cabinet will receive a Consultation Report which will outline the proposal and all the comments received from the public during the consultation period. At this stage, the members can decide whether to proceed with the proposal, make changes to the proposal or not to proceed with the proposal.

Should Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal, a Statutory Notice will be published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 provides that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections must be made in writing and sent to the Council within the 28-day period.

Cabinet will then consider the outcome of the Statutory Notice at a future meeting and determine whether to implement the proposal having given due consideration to all the information provided.

In the event of objections, the Council will publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and Cabinet's response to those objections within 7 days or the day of the determination of the proposal. This report will be available for all persons to view on the Council website and paper copies will be available on request.

Should Cabinet approve the proposal, a full Business Case will be submitted to the Welsh Minister for final approval and the works will commence.

## Have your say

Your views matter and we want you to tell us what you think about the changes we have proposed in this document. We would like you to consider the information contained within the document and to hear your views as to whether or not you support the proposal. All views are welcomed in support of or opposed to the proposal. This is your chance to ask questions and make comments that will be considered when the Council decides how to proceed.

For this proposal, we will be undertaking a paper consultation exercise. Due to the current implications of COVID-19 we will refrain from undertaking any face-to-face consultation sessions to support social distancing and maintain safe working practices for all.

If you would like to comment on the proposal, you can do this by:

- Completing the online response form on the Council's website
- Complete a response pro forma attached to this document and return it to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Team at Caerphilly
- Email your comments to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team at Caerphilly

## Your views matter

Please complete the questionnaire and return via post or email to:

### Consultation Response 'Llancaeach/Llanfabon'

c/o 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team  
Directorate of Education and Corporate Services  
Caerphilly County Borough Council  
Penallta House  
Tredomen Park  
Ystrad Mynach  
CF82 7PG



[21stCenturySchools@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:21stCenturySchools@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Please note that we are only able to receive comments in writing, either via the online form, pro forma or via email. You must include your full name and postal address as part of the information provided.



## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### Frequently Asked Questions

The Council and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team have a history of delivering innovative and transformational projects as part of the Band A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme and beyond.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team will be collating a list of potential queries based on experience from leading on prior proposals in the form of an 'Frequently Asked Questions' document that will be posted on the website along with this consultation documentation.