

# Pecyn Dogfennau Cyhoeddus

Penallta House,  
Tredomen Park,  
Ystrad Mynach,  
Hengoed CF82 7PG

Ty Penallta,  
Parc Tredomen,  
Ystrad Mynach,  
Hengoed CF82 7PG



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Am unrhyw ymholiad yn ymwneud â'r agenda hwn cysylltwch â Sharon Hughes  
(Rhif Ffôn: 01443 864281 Ebst: [hughesj@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:hughesj@caerphilly.gov.uk))

**Dyddiad: Dydd Gwener, 20 Tachwedd 2020**

Annwyl Syr/Fadam,

Bydd cyfarfod o'r **Pwyllgor Craffu Addysg** yn cael ei gynnal trwy Microsoft Teams ar **Dydd Iau, 26ain Tachwedd, 2020** am **5.30 pm** i ystyried materion a gynhwysir yn yr agenda canlynol. Gall cynghorwyr a'r cyhoedd sy'n dymuno siarad am unrhyw eitem wneud hynny drwy wneud cais i'r Cadeirydd. Mae croeso i chi ddefnyddio'r iaith Gymraeg yn y cyfarfod, a dylid rhoi cyfnod rhybudd o 3 diwrnod gwaith os ydych yn dymuno gwneud hynny.

Mae pob cyfarfod Pwyllgor yn agored i'r Wasg a'r Cyhoedd. Gofynnir i arsylwyr a chyfranogwyr ymddwyn gyda pharch ac ystyriaeth at eraill. Sylwer y bydd methu â gwneud hynny yn golygu y gofynnir i chi adael y cyfarfodydd ac efallai y cewch eich hebrwng o'r safle.

Yr eiddoch yn gywir,

**Christina Harrhy**  
PRIF WEITHREDWR

## AGENDA

Tudalennau

- 1 I dderbyn ymddiheuriadau am absenoldeb
- 2 Datganiadau o Ddiddordeb.

Atgoffi'r Cynghorwyr a Swyddogion o'u cyfrifoldeb personol i ddatgan unrhyw fuddiannau personol a/neu niweidiol mewn perthynas ag unrhyw eitem o fusnes ar yr agenda hwn yn unol â Deddf Llywodraeth Leol 2000, Cyfansoddiad y Cyngor a'r Cod Ymddygiad ar gyfer Cynghorwyr a Swyddogion.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



I gymeradwyo a llofnodi'r cofnodion canlynol:-

- |   |   |        |
|---|---|--------|
| 3 | Pwyllgor Craffu Addysg a gynhaliwyd ar 22 Medi 2020.                                | 1 - 8  |
| 4 | Ystyried unrhyw fater a gyfeiriwyd at y Pwyllgor hwn yn unol â'r drefn galw i mewn. |        |
| 5 | Rhaglen Waith y Dyfodol Pwyllgor Craffu Addysg.                                     | 9 - 18 |

I dderbyn ac ystyried yr adroddiadau Craffu canlynol:-

- |   |  |          |
|---|--|----------|
| 6 | Canlyniadau 2019-2020: Cyfnod Sylfaen, Cyfnod Allweddol 2, Cyfnod Allweddol 3, Cyfnod Allweddol 4 a Chyfnod Allweddol 5. | 19 - 32  |
| 7 | Rhaglen Band B Ysgolion ac Addysg yr 21ain Ganrif - Adroddiadau Ymgynghori.  | 33 - 120 |

#### **Cylchrediad:**

**Cynghorwyr** Mrs E.M. Aldworth, C. Andrews (Is Gadeirydd), P.J. Bevan, A. Collis, C.J. Cuss, W. David, A. Farina-Childs, Ms J. Gale, D.T. Hardacre, D. Havard, M.P. James, B. Miles, Mrs G.D. Oliver, Mrs T. Parry (Cadeirydd), J.E. Roberts a J. Simmonds

#### **Aelodau Cyfetholedig:**

**Cynrychiolwyr Archesgobaeth ROC Caerdydd dros Addysg** (gyda hawliau pleidleisio ar faterion addysgol)  
Mr M. Western

**Cynrychiolwyr Rhiant Lywodraethwyr** (gyda hawliau pleidleisio ar faterion addysgol)  
Mrs T. Millington and Mr G. James

**Cynrychiolwyr Cyrff Allanol** (heb hawliau pleidleisio)  
Mrs J. Havard (NEU) a Mrs P. Ireland (NEU)

**Asiantaeth Llywodraethwyr Caerffili** (heb hawliau pleidleisio)  
Mr D Davies

A Swyddogion Priodol

#### **SUT FYDDWN YN DEFNYDDIO EICH GWYBODAETH**

Bydd yr unigolion hynny sy'n mynychu cyfarfodydd pwyllgor i siarad/roi tystiolaeth yn cael eu henwi yng nghofnodion y cyfarfod hynny, weithiau bydd hyn yn cynnwys eu man gweithio neu fusnes a'r barnau a fynegir. Bydd cofnodion o'r cyfarfod gan gynnwys manylion y siaradwyr ar gael i'r cyhoedd ar wefan y Cyngor ar [www.caerffili.gov.uk](http://www.caerffili.gov.uk). ac eithrio am drafodaethau sy'n ymwneud ag eitemau cyfrinachol neu eithriedig.

Mae gennych nifer o hawliau mewn perthynas â'r wybodaeth, gan gynnwys yr hawl i gael mynediad at wybodaeth sydd gennym amdanoch a'r hawl i gwyno os ydych yn anhapus gyda'r modd y mae eich gwybodaeth yn cael ei brosesu.

Am wybodaeth bellach ar sut rydym yn prosesu eich gwybodaeth a'ch hawliau, ewch i'r [Hysbysiad Preifatrwydd Cyfarfodydd Pwyllgor Llawn](#) ar ein gwefan neu cysylltwch â Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol drwy e-bostio [griffd2@caerffili.gov.uk](mailto:griffd2@caerffili.gov.uk) neu ffoniwch 01443 863028.



Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol



## EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE REMOTE MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON TUESDAY,  
22ND SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 5.30PM

PRESENT:

Councillor T. Parry - Chair  
Councillor C. Andrews - Vice-Chair

Councillors:

E. A. Aldworth, C. Cuss, W. David, A. Farina-Childs, D.T. Hardacre, D. Havard, M.P. James, B. Miles, Mrs G.D. Oliver, J. Roberts and J. Simmonds.

Councillor R. Whiting (Cabinet Member for Learning and Achievement).

Together with:

Officers: R. Edmunds (Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services), K. Cole (Chief Education Officer), S. Richards (Head of Education Planning and Strategy), R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer), A. West (21st Century Schools Manager), J. Lougher (Sport & Leisure Development Manager), M. Jacques (Scrutiny Officer) and A. Dredge (Committee Services Officer).

Also Present:

Co-opted Members: Mr D. Davies (Caerphilly Governors Association), Mrs P.J. Ireland (NEU) and Mr M. Western (Cardiff ROC Archdiocesan Commission for Education Representative).

I. Elliott (Headteacher of Trinity Fields Special School and Resource Centre).

A. Tucknutt (Headteacher of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon).

### 1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed new and returning Members and Officers to the meeting and introduced the newly appointed Cabinet Member for Education and Achievement, Councillor R. Whiting to his first Education Scrutiny Committee meeting.

### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.J. Bevan and A. Collis.

### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

#### **4. MINUTES – 24TH FEBRUARY 2020**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Education Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Tuesday the 24th February 2020 (minute nos 1- 11) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **5. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE**

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

#### **6. EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report which outlined the draft Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme from September to November 2020. Members were asked to consider the work programme and make any amendments or propose any additional items to be included for future meetings.

Members discussed the report and questioned if the reports that were originally scheduled for Scrutiny Meetings earlier in the year that were not held due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, should be added to the Forward Work Programme for future meetings. It was suggested that some reports which have been written could be circulated to Members by way of information items and if any concerns were raised at that point they could be brought on to future agenda's for consideration. Members were asked to contact the Scrutiny Officer following the meeting to suggest which reports should be prioritised and circulated.

Following consideration and discussion, Members unanimously agreed that subject to the following, the Forward Work Programme appended to the report be published on the Council's website:

RESOLVED that the Education Scrutiny Committee scheduled for the 3rd November 2020 be moved to Thursday 26th November 2020. This will allow Officers sufficient time to prepare a report in respect of the outcome of Phase 1 of the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Band B Programme - Consultation in respect of Trinity Fields Special School and Resource Centre and Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon, as the consultation period ends on the 26th October 2020.

#### **7. CABINET REPORTS**

None of the Cabinet reports listed on the agenda had been called forward for discussion at the meeting.

#### **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

Consideration was given to the following reports.

#### **8. 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES BAND B PROGRAMME - CONSULTATION IN RESPECT OF TRINITY FIELDS SPECIAL SCHOOL AND RESOURCE CENTRE AND YSGOL GYMRAEG CWM GWYDDON**

The report sought to officially consult with and obtain the views of Members in respect of the Band B Phase 1 proposals for the expansion of provision at Trinity Fields Special School and

Resource Centre and relocation and expansion of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon onto the former Cwmcarn High site. It was noted that the consultation period for both proposals commenced on the 14th September 2020 and will end on the 26th October 2020. Both schemes were presented separately to the Scrutiny Committee.

Members were advised that the 21st 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 21st century schools in Wales. The key aims of the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Band B investment programme outlined by Welsh Government, were set out as follows:

- Reduce the number of poor condition schools;
- Ensure that the Council has the right size schools in the right location, providing enough places to deliver Welsh and English medium education;
- Ensure the effective and efficient use of the educational estate for use by both Schools and the wider Community.

The proposal in relation to Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon was outlined by an Officer. The proposal currently being consulted on, is to relocate the school to a new purpose-built Welsh-medium provision school to incorporate a primary facility with childcare, special resource base, nursery and rising 3 provision. The school is proposed to be situated on the former Cwmcarn High school site to enable inclusive delivery of the curriculum in a stimulating 21st Century environment. The new facility will support community use and promote the use of the Welsh language.

The Officer outlined the rationale for the proposal for Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon, including the condition of the existing school, projected demand, impact on other schools, Estyn inspection, catchment and the realisation of the requirements of Caerphilly's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan objectives. Full details are available in the Consultation Documentation produced as part of the consultation process and available electronically and in hard copy on request.

The proposal in relation to Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre was outlined by an Officer. The proposal is to expand the existing school through a new building extension and outdoor play space to provide additional facilities to accommodate growing demand for places, specialist intervention areas and outdoor play space. The facility will also provide additional resources available for community use. The views of the children at the school have been incorporated into the proposal.

The Officer outlined the rationale for the proposal for Trinity Fields School. The school is the only school in the Borough that caters for pupils from 3 – 19 with a wide range of special educational needs and requirements. The new facility will house flexible spaces to support pupils with unique and innovative features to enhance skills to further assist the Authority in meeting the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs Act. Full details are available in the Consultation Documentation produced as part of the consultation process and available electronically and in hard copy on request.

It was explained that as part of the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2018 and Section 42/44 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, proposals must be published when the Council make a 'regulated alteration' to a maintained or Special school respectively. A consultation must be undertaken with Members and wider Stakeholders as identified and outlined in the Code. The views of pupils are being sought through the support of the school as a key consultee group and will be incorporated into the Consultation Report. Once the consultation period concludes on the 26th October 2020, a consultation report for each proposal, summarising the views of consultees will be brought back to Scrutiny and then presented to Cabinet for consideration. Cabinet will then take the decision as to whether to proceed with the proposal, amend the proposal or not to progress with the

proposal. Should Cabinet decide to proceed, individual Statutory Notices will be published providing a 28-day notice period for objections. It was noted that the current consultation process was to provide views on the proposals, they are not objections at this stage. Members were advised that 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 notice period. Formal responses can only be registered following the publication of a statutory notice.

Members welcomed Ms A. Tucknutt (Headteacher of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon) and Mr I. Elliott (Headteacher of Trinity Fields Special School and Resource Centre) to the meeting. They both briefly outlined the proposals in respect of their Schools and the positive impact this would have on pupil wellbeing. Both Heads highlighted the excellent Estyn inspection each respective school had received across all 5 inspection areas and how the pupils have been involved in developing the proposals. Mr I. Elliott also confirmed how the additional 80 places had been identified. The Committee watched the Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon video which had been produced as part of the consultation process. Due to technical issues, the Trinity Fields School video was unable to be shown and it was agreed that it would be circulated to all members after the meeting. The videos showed enthusiastic staff and pupils introducing their schools and highlighted the benefits the Band B Phase 1 proposals could bring, in addition to statements by key partners who would also benefit from the proposals.

Members discussed the report and the consultation process and questioned if the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic had affected the plans in relation to planning for future school provision. In addition, if the consultation process had been adapted in terms of full engagement with all stakeholders, given the current constraints. Another Member queried why at least 1 or 2 face to face meetings could not be held with the community and local ward Members to allow an opportunity for engagement where people can ask questions rather than put them in writing. The Officer clarified that there are no plans to change the design of the buildings set out in the proposals as a result of Covid-19. In relation to the consultation process, Officers had intended to commence the consultation process in May 2020 so there has been a delay with this process. Whilst face to face meetings with stakeholders, including parents, governors, members of staff and the community had been considered, there is no requirement to undertake consultation in this way as per the requirements of the School Organisation Code. In light of the Covid-19 guidelines developed by Welsh Government on social distancing, the consultation has been carried out through a written process. In addition, this week the 21st Century Schools Team set up a 'Question and Answer' session for all stakeholders to access and all the Q and A's will be published on the 21st Century Schools Website. All stakeholders have previously been directed to this website to access all available information in relation to the consultation. It was also confirmed that copies of the consultation document in Welsh and English can be accessed on-line and hard copies made available on request.

A Member sought clarification regarding the position of satellite provision with classes in mainstream schools and whether the long term plans were to bring them back into Trinity Fields School following the proposed extension. The Headteacher confirmed that Caerphilly is in a unique position in that the special school is at one end of the spectrum and the satellite classroom within the mainstream school at the other end. Parents like this option and it also increases the capacity within the school and they would not be brought back into Trinity Fields School itself as this would be regarded a disservice to the pupils. The full detail is set out in the Consultation document.

A member, expressed support for the expansion of Trinity Fields School but also raised concerns about some of the arrangements proposed for Penallta Rugby Club in relation to the Trinity Fields expansion and if Penallta Rugby Club had been informally consulted prior to the publication of the consultation document. The member also queried if the consultation documentation was available in hardcopy as not everyone had online access. The Member proposed that another pitch at the site of the Rugby Club (currently used as a practice pitch) could be brought up to league standard and would require a small piece of land from Trinity



Fields to achieve this. Officers clarified that discussions started with the Rugby Club in November 2019, they met again in March 2020 and then in July 2020 when a copy of the business case was provided setting out the background of the project. Emails have also been exchanged and an ongoing dialogue with updates during the process. Officers highlighted that the majority of the first team plays at the Centre of Excellence. Officers looked at the dimensions of the practice pitch, locally known as Trinity 2 and the flooding issues with the low-lying pitch. Advice was sought about building up the pitch however this would not gain planning consent. The Council's proposal therefore is to bring the Sue Noakes pitch up to first team standard which is in walking distance of the Rugby Club. The youth team in Penallta are already using this pitch. Based on the information provided on the issue of flooding, the Member withdrew his proposed additional recommendation. Officers also confirmed that the Consultation information had been publicised widely and that on the front of the document, it states that information can be made available in Welsh, English, other languages and hard copy on request.

A Member, although supporting the expansion of Trinity Fields School raised a number of concerns in relation to the affect this will have on the community. He questioned why other sites had not been considered when the school numbers are increasing and suggested that a larger school should be built on another site to future proof the school. The member also highlighted concerns over historical building in the area and stated that there were over 1000 objections currently lodged against this proposal.

Mr I Elliott confirmed how the pupil numbers were calculated, looking at trends across Wales. It was clarified that Trinity Fields School is not only an education provision but links in very closely with health and social services. The Headteacher explained how the future proofing of numbers have been projected and why the expansion of the existing school was the preferred option. He emphasised that Trinity Fields is unique to Caerphilly and the community is the whole of the borough.

Officers provided clarification regarding the statement concerning the objections. The source of the information was not made clear. The Consultation period was still in the early stage, the Officer stated that views had been submitted both in support and opposed to the proposal, but the number quoted by the member had not been reflected in what had been received to date.

A further concern was also raised in relation to the usage and allocation of use at the Centre of Excellence and that the Sue Noakes pitch is at least a 20 to 25 minute walk from Penallta. Officers confirmed that the Centre of Excellence does have a ranked booking system, agreed by Cabinet in consultation with the Welsh Rugby Union and the Welsh Football Trust. There is criteria for the allocation and Penallta RFC have weekly bookings since the centre opened. Whilst the Sue Noakes location may not be the clubs preferred location at present, the youth team currently utilise the site.

A member queried as to whether the risk assessment carried out as part of the proposal would ensure that a sustainable drainage solution would be developed to prevent localised flooding. Officers confirmed that the planning process would incorporate a sustainable solution designed to the current SABs standards and National Resources Wales would be consulted as is the case for any development in the Borough for anything over 100 square metres.

In concluding, a number of Members referred to individual circumstances when they had attended Trinity Fields school and how fundamental and impressive this facility is within the County Borough. They reflected that whilst Penallta RFC may be affected and that further discussions were needed to seek a way forward, the proposal to extend the school as outlined is an opportunity for partnership working and in supporting the most vulnerable children.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report and discussed at the meeting, it was moved and seconded and unanimously agreed that the vote in respect of each school would be taken separately:

- i. it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in respect of Trinity Fields Special School and Resource Centre be approved and in noting there were 12 in favour and 1 against, this was agreed by the majority present;
- ii. it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in respect of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon be approved and this was unanimously agreed.

## 9. FULL RETURN TO SCHOOL SEPTEMBER 2020

The Chief Education Officer delivered a presentation which provided details on how the Education Department and schools have reacted and adapted during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The Committee were reminded that the schools' closure was announced on Wednesday, 18th March, 2020 for Friday, 20th March. Within days the FSM strategy was agreed and implemented and approximately 1,000 applications for childcare for key workers was processed. 6 mainstream hubs and 1 ALN base was established with a further 4 mainstream additional hubs and 2 vulnerable pupil hubs where over 1,700 staff contributed to this process.

Schools re-opened on Monday, 29th June, 2020, in order to check in, catch up and prepare - with a maximum of 1/3 capacity of pupils. Risk Assessments (RAs) were completed for all school sites and staff and pupils who are vulnerable. The Local Authority issued guidance and weekly meetings with headteachers continued.

Between June and September, weekly meetings were held with Internal officers to revise guidance and weekly meetings were also held with Trade Unions to consult upon any changes to the guidance. Meetings with headteachers continued through the summer into the autumn with new Local Authority guidance drafted and advice and support provided for revision of RAs for site and staff. Catering and cleaning arrangements continued to be reviewed but all pupils would bring a packed lunch until 1.10.2020.

The expectations for September 2020 were to continue the delivery of FSM until the 30th September 2020 and that Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd September 2020 be designated planning days to enable Risk Assessments to be updated. Pupils would begin to return in groups from 3rd September so that all pupils would return from Monday 14th September and Schools would establish business continuity plans.

The Officer summarised the support that has been offered to schools which included:

- Advice and support for site and individual Risk Assessments.
- LA Guidance regularly updated to include processes, e.g. test, trace and protect.
- Frequent communication and access to advice and support.
- Guest Wi-fi in all schools.
- Ed tech programme.
- Funding for text books for all pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- Face coverings policy and distribution.
- Accelerated Learning Funding.

In concluding, the Officer set out what have been the most challenging aspects for schools. These included ensuring social distancing and minimising contact between groups, the Track, Trace and Protect process and managing anxiety. Also, Catering solutions, including breakfast clubs from 1st October 2020.

The Chair expressed her enormous admiration to all the Local Authority staff, Headteachers and school staff for their hard work in the planning and preparation for all the work undertaken, including facilitating the school hubs and free school meals. Committee Members commended the Chief Education Officer and her Team for the clear guidance provided to schools throughout

and to all Headteachers who've also worked incredibly hard. A Member asked how safeguarding had been monitored during this period. Officers have worked closely with Social Services and Mr I. Elliott to identify vulnerable pupils and prioritising the needs of those pupils and arranging placements at Trinity Fields where necessary. Officers work closely with schools monitoring all vulnerable children. The Youth Service and Education Service have also maintained links with their groups throughout and the Officer confirmed there has been an outstanding team effort across the board.

The Chair thanked the Officer for delivering the presentation and responding to queries raised and the Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the presentation.

The meeting closed at 8:20pm.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2020 they were signed by the Chair.

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CHAIR

Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol



## EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26TH NOVEMBER 2020

**SUBJECT: EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK  
PROGRAMME**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND  
CORPORATE SERVICES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To report the Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

### **2. SUMMARY**

2.1 Forward Work Programmes are essential to ensure that scrutiny committee agendas reflect the strategic issues facing the Council and other priorities raised by Members, the public or stakeholder.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 That Members consider any changes and agree the final forward work programme prior to publication.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 To improve the operation of scrutiny.

### **5. THE REPORT**

5.1 The Education Scrutiny Committee forward work programme includes all reports that were identified at the scrutiny committee meeting on Tuesday 22 September, 2020. The work programme outlines the reports planned for the period November 2020 to May 2021.

5.2 The forward Work Programme is made up of reports identified by officers and members. Members are asked to consider the work programme alongside the

cabinet work programme and suggest any changes before it is published on the council website. Scrutiny committee will review this work programme at every meeting going forward alongside any changes to the cabinet work programme or report requests.

- 5.3 The Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1, which presents the current status as at 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020. The Cabinet Work Programme is attached at Appendix 2. A copy of the prioritisation flowchart is attached at appendix 3 to assist the Scrutiny Committee to determine what items should be added to the forward work programme.

#### 5.4 **Conclusion**

The work programme is for consideration and amendment by the scrutiny committee prior to publication on the council website.

### 6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 No assumptions are necessary.

### 7. **LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES**

- 7.1 The operation of scrutiny is required by the Local Government Act 2000. The Local Government Wales Measure 2011 and subsequent Statutory Guidance include requirements to publicise the work of scrutiny committees. The operation of scrutiny committee forward work programmes was agreed following decisions by Council in October 2013 and October 2015.

#### 7.2 **Corporate Plan 2018-2023.**

Scrutiny Committee forward work programmes contributes towards and impacts upon the Corporate Well-being Objectives by ensuring that the Executive is held to account for its Corporate Objectives, which are:

Objective 1 - Improve education opportunities for all

Objective 2 - Enabling employment

Objective 3 - Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people's well-being

Objective 4 - Promote a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and minimises the adverse impacts on the environment

Objective 5 - Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the sustainable Development Principle within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Objective 6 - Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being

## **8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

8.1 This report contributes to the well-being goals and is consistent with the five ways if working as defined within the sustainable development principle in that by ensuring the scrutiny function is effective when reviewing services and policies and ensure is considers the wellbeing goals.

8.2 The Forward Work Programmes contribute to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2016 by ensuring there is an effective scrutiny function and that council policies are scrutinised against the following goals:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language
- A globally responsible Wales

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising as a result of this report.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no specific financial implications arising as a result of this report.

## **11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

## **12. CONSULTATIONS**

12.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in this report.

## **13. STATUTORY POWER**

13.1 The Local Government Act 2000.

Author: Mark Jacques, Scrutiny Officer jacqu@carphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services  
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer  
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services/ Monitoring Officer  
Lisa Lane, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer,

Legal Services  
Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair Education Scrutiny Committee  
Councillor Carol Andrews, Vice Chair Education Scrutiny Committee

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Education Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme
- Appendix 2 Cabinet Forward Work Programme
- Appendix 3 Forward Work Programme Prioritisation Flowchart



| Forward Work Programme - Education |  |  |  |                   |                      |  | Appendix 1 |  |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|-------------------|----------------------|--|------------|--|
| Date                               | Title  | Key Issues                                     |  | Author            | Cabinet Member       |  |            |  |
| 26/11/20 17:30                     | Outcomes 2020  |  |  | Cole, Keri;       | Cllr. Whiting, Ross; |  |            |  |
| 26/11/20 17:30                     | Consultation response report in respect of Phase 1 of the 21st Century schools and Colleges Band B programme |  |  | Richards, Sue;    | Cllr. Whiting, Ross; |  |            |  |
| 26/11/20 17:30                     | Information - Budget Monitoring (Month 5)  |  |  | Southcombe, Jane; | Cllr. Whiting, Ross; |  |            |  |
| 11/01/21 17:30                     | Faith Schools  | Capacity/ Demand/ Admission Numbers /Transport |  | West, Andrea;     | Cllr. Whiting, Ross; |  |            |  |
| 11/01/21 17:30                     | Phase 2 – 21st Century Schools Proposals   |  |  | Richards, Sue;    | Cllr. Whiting, Ross; |  |            |  |
| 22/02/21 17:30                     | Exclusion Strategy   |  |  | Cole, Keri;       | Cllr. Whiting, Ross; |  |            |  |

Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol

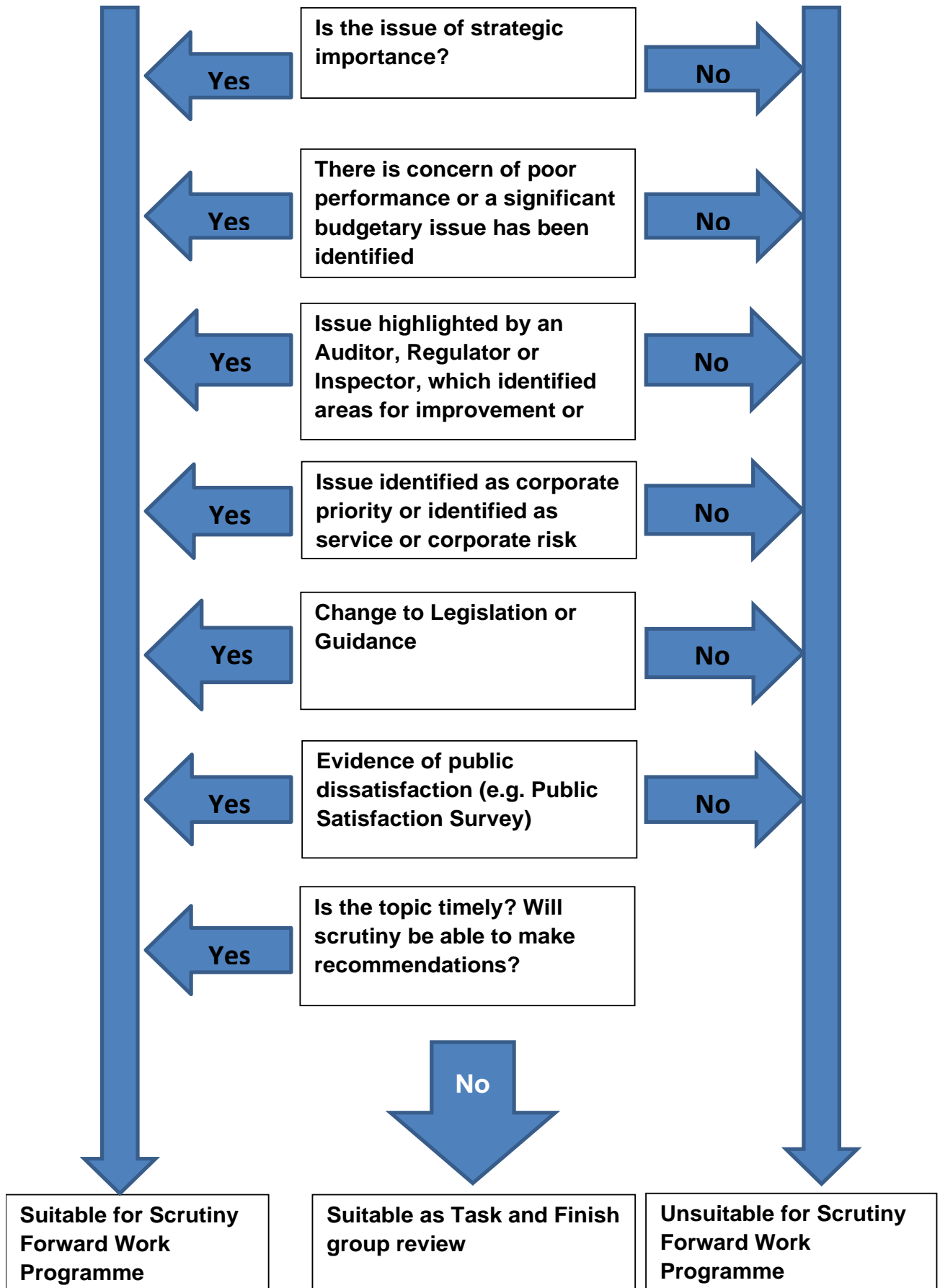
# Cabinet Forward Work Programme

# Appendix 2

| Cabinet Date   | Title   | Key Issues   | Author           | Cabinet Member                             |
|----------------|---|--|------------------|--|
| 09/12/20 10:30 | Commercial & Investment Strategy  | To discuss, agree and approve the Commercial & Investment Strategy to be implemented in support of Team Caerphilly Transformation Strategy objectives.   | Camp, Victoria;  | Cllr. Morgan, Sean; Cllr. Stenner, Eluned; |
| 09/12/20 10:30 | I.T. Strategy   | To provide an overview of the proposed direction of travel for IT infrastructure and working arrangements to transform the ICT and Digital service into a fit for purpose provision.   | Lucas, Liz;      | Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;                     |
| 09/12/20 10:30 | Phase 1 consultation report on 21st Century schools   | To consider the consultation report and recommendation on the following 21st Century Schools and Education Band B proposals<br>The expansion of Trinity Fields School<br>The relocation and expansion of YGG Cwm Gwyddon on the former Cwmcarn High site | Richards, Sue;   | Cllr. Whiting, Ross;                       |
| 09/12/20 10:30 | Council Tax Base 2021/22  | To provide details of the Council Tax base for 2021/22 for tax setting purposes and the collection percentage to be applied.   | O'Donnell, Sean; | Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;                     |
| 16/12/20 10:30 | Draft responses to the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee Regulations 2021 and the Town and Country Planning (Strategic Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2021. | To consider and comment on the response to draft regulations establishing Corporate Joint Committees and defining the Strategic Development Plan process.  | Peters, Kath     | Cllr. Marsden, Philippa                    |

Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol

**Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme Prioritisation**



Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol



## EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26TH NOVEMBER 2020

**SUBJECT:** OUTCOMES 2019-2020: FOUNDATION PHASE, KEY STAGE 2, KEY STAGE 3, KEY STAGE 4 AND KEY STAGE 5

**REPORT BY:** ED PRYCE, EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT SERVICE (EAS)

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of Welsh Government: School Performance Reporting Arrangements for 2019-2020, provide an overview of national outcomes as context and provide anonymised local data where available.
- 1.2 Outcomes are only available for key stage 4 and 5 and in line with agreements between each LA and headteachers, made prior to the collection of the data, these should not be used for school accountability purposes.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 In response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, the Welsh Government cancelled all statutory data collections that would have been due to take place in Summer 2020. This means that no end of key stage data was submitted, therefore there is no data available for this report for FP through to KS3. Concerning KS4 and KS5, due to the cancellation of summer 2020 GCSE, AS and A level examinations, the Welsh Government will not be reporting on school performance measures for 2019/20. Outcomes this year should not be used for school accountability purposes, in line with agreements between each LA and their headteachers made prior to the collection of the data.
- 2.2 The content of this scrutiny report is intended to provide a contextual view of anonymised school outcomes, rather than analyse performance at Local Authority (LA) or individual level. It cannot contain any aggregated LA data, or individual school performance data, other than anonymised school level data for key stage 4 and key stage 5.
- 2.3 For the national picture, the WJEC data reports on overall GCSE / GCE A Level pass rates. Further data is not available at individual pupil level or for more vocational qualifications. We are therefore not able to directly compare like for like, year on year progress. What is clear, however, is that at both key stage 4 and key stage 5, there have been significant increases in the percentage of A\*-C grades awarded, and even more significant increases at A\*-A and A\*.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 There are no recommendations. This report is intended to be used for information only, and not as part of any accountability process.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 Outcomes this year should not be used for school accountability purposes, which is why there are no recommendations.

### **5. THE REPORT**

- 5.1 In response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, the Welsh Government cancelled all statutory data collections that would have been due to take place in Summer 2020. This was initially announced in the Minister for Education's written statements of 18 March 2020 and 3 July 2020 and enacted in the Relaxation of School Reporting Requirements (Wales) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020. The latest update is included as Appendix 1: Welsh Government: School Performance Reporting Arrangements Important Update (10 August 2020).

#### **5.2 Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3**

The School Performance Information (Wales) Regulations 2011 has been amended to remove the duties on governing bodies and local authorities to provide data to local authorities and Welsh Ministers, respectively, on teacher assessment outcomes and authorised or unauthorised absence for the pupils registered at schools in the 2019/20 school year.

This means that no end of phase / key stage data was submitted, therefore no data is available for this report. Many schools will have made their own internal assessments of learners, but these will have been undertaken 'virtually' and there will have been no moderation processes, therefore even if submitted, would not be suitable for any form of meaningful analysis.

#### **5.3 Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5**

Outcomes this year should not be used for school accountability purposes, in line with agreements between each LA and their headteachers made prior to the collection of the data.

Due to the cancellation of summer 2020 GCSE, AS and A level examinations, the Welsh Government will not be reporting on school performance measures for 2019/20 or providing All Wales Core Data Sets. Following the provision of this year's centre estimated grades by schools, the school performance information regulations have been disapplied to remove the requirements for the usual flows of performance data between headteachers, governing bodies, local authorities and the Welsh Government. This means that schools and governing bodies should not include school performance measures in any published report. It will not be appropriate to make year-on-year comparisons of this information or consider it as part of trend data in inspection and accountability activities.



The content of this scrutiny report is intended to provide a contextual view of anonymised school outcomes, rather than analyse performance at Local Authority (LA) or individual level. It cannot contain any aggregated LA data, or individual school performance data, other than anonymised school level data for key stage 4 and key stage 5.

It is important that the information below is used sensitively during these unprecedented times. The information should be used within the context of a wider range of information and a range of regional processes that the local authority will use to evaluate individual school performance.

#### 5.4 **National Context**

The WJEC data reports on overall GCSE / GCE A Level pass rates. It cannot report at individual pupil level, as schools do, as not all the data would be available. For example, some vocational qualifications, which would be included in each individual learner's 'points scores' for some measures, may not be accessible to the WJEC. For definitions of how each measure is calculated see Appendix 2.

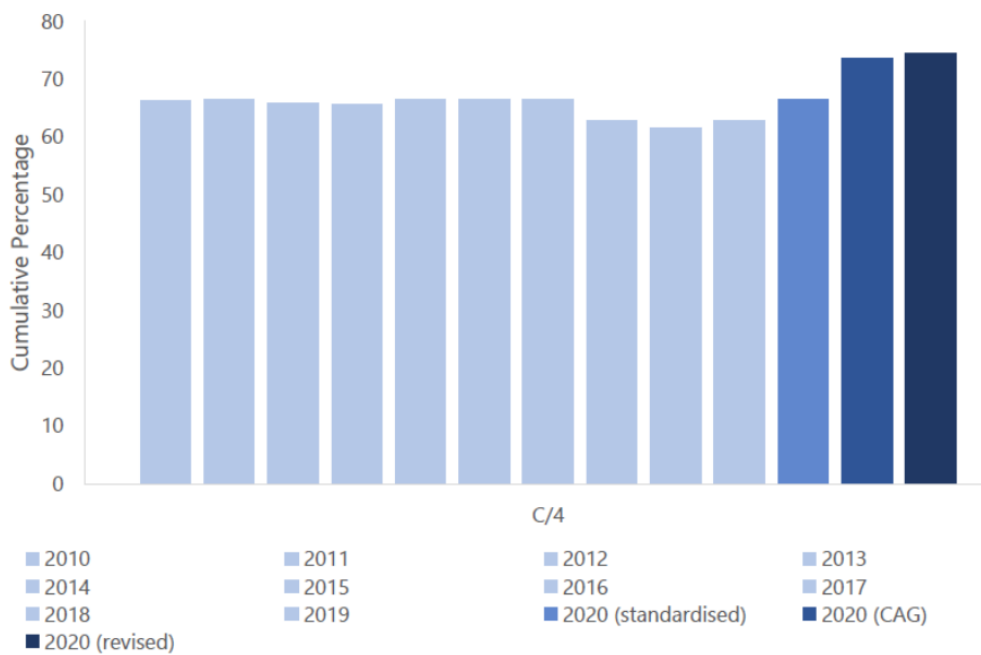
Because of these variations it is not possible to directly compare like for like, year on year progress. What is clear however is that at both key stage 4 and key stage 5, there have been significant increases in the percentage of A\*-C grades awarded, and even more significant increases at A\*-A and A\*

Despite not being able to directly compare, it is clear that within the national context this year, we would expect to see significant increases in individual school outcomes. It is not possible using outcomes alone to determine whether this represents sustainable improvement.

Qualifications Wales have provided an initial analysis of national outcomes Results for A Level, AS, GCSE and the Skills Challenge Certificate in Wales – Summer 2020. This has been included as Appendix 3, but a sample of changes for a selection of national indicators are included in the charts below.

## 5.5 Key Stage 4 – GCSE – Grade C and above

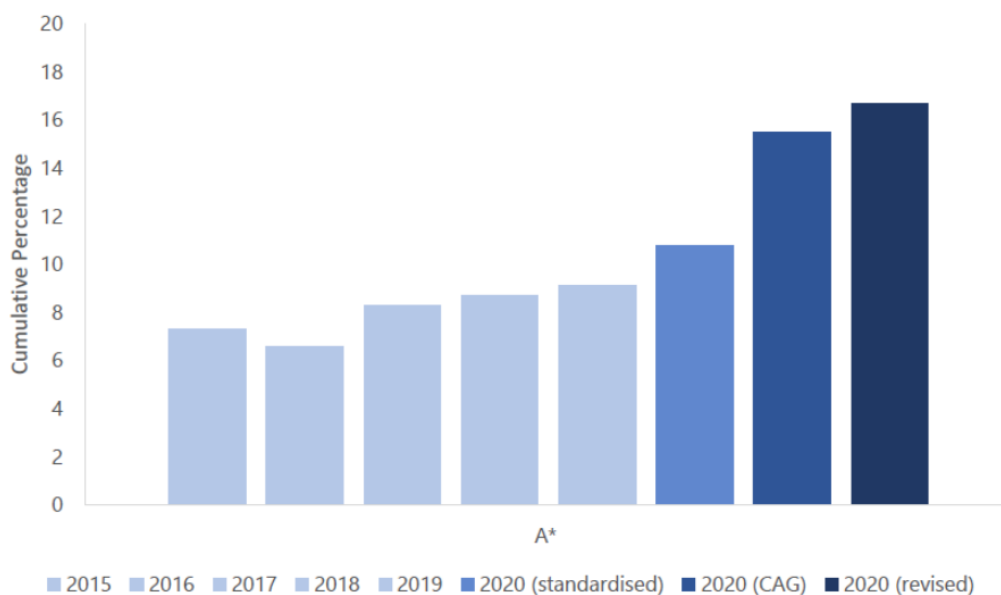
**Figure 7.2: National GCSE summer cumulative C/4 results 2010-2020<sup>1)(2)</sup>**



Between 2010 and 2016 overall grades C and above remained stable at approximately 65%. Over the next 2 years this declined to approximately 61%, before increasing to approximately 75% in 2020.

## 5.6 Key Stage 5 – A Level – Grade A\*

**Figure 5.1: National A level summer A\* results 2015-2020**

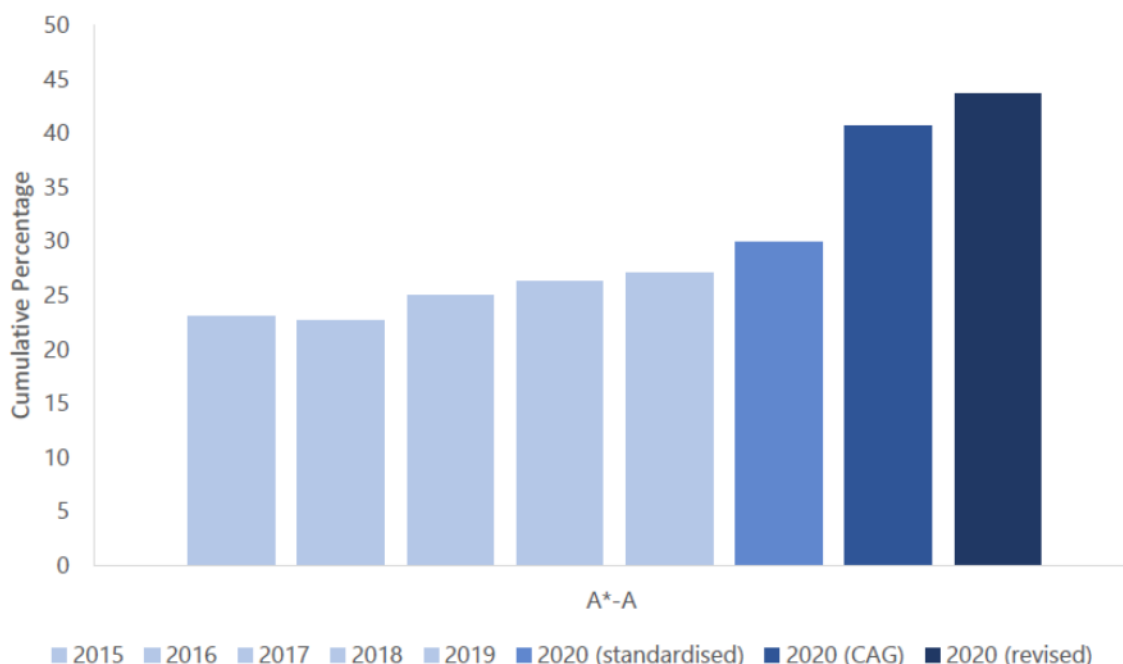


Source: 2015 to 2019 and 2020 (standardised): JCO; 2020 (CAG) and 2020 (revised): awarding bodies

Between 2015 and 2019 overall A\* grades remained stable at between approximately 6-9%. In 2020 approximately 17% of grades were A\*.

## 5.7 Key Stage 5 – A Level – Grade A\* and A

**Figure 5.2: National A level summer cumulative A results 2015-2020**



Source: 2015 to 2019 and 2020 (standardised): JCQ; 2020 (CAG) and 2020 (revised): awarding bodies

Between 2015 and 2019 overall A\* or A grades remained stable at between approximately 22-27%. In 2020 approximately 44% of grades were A\* or A grades.

## 5.8 Summary of Outcomes

### Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3

As explained in the context section, no data has been submitted.

## 5.9 Key Stage 4

Outcomes on the 5 Welsh Government measures and 2 legacy measures was requested and 5A\*-A was requested

- The Capped 9 measure
- Literacy measure
- Numeracy measure
- Science measure
- Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate measure
- Percentage of learners achieved 5 A\*-A GCSE

The reported outcomes are based on revised results, following the Welsh Government decision to award the best of 'Standardised Grade' and 'Centre Assessed Grade' for each individual learner.

## 5.10 Summary of LA Outcomes

The tables below provide an overview of performance for the schools in the LA, compared with regional lowest, median and highest for 2020 (anonymised and non-aggregated).

The first table is sorted from highest to lowest Capped 9 outcomes. Each row represents a single school.

| School      | Capped Point 9 | Average points for best of Literature or first Language Welsh or English GCSE | Average points for best of Mathematics or Mathematics - Numeracy GCSE | Average points for best Science GCSE | Average points for Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate | L1 Threshold | 5 A*-As |
|-------------|----------------|---|---|--------------------------------------|---|--------------|---------|
| School 1    | 413.2          | 43.2  | 43.0  | 44.6                                 | 40.6  | 100.0        | 27.1    |
| School 2    | 401.6          | 40.9  | 40.9  | 41.8                                 | 43.2  | 99.1         | 24.1    |
| School 3    | 393.1          | 39.5  | 39.0  | 35.8                                 | 43.3  | 98.0         | 16.2    |
| School 4    | 391.3          | 42.9  | 41.1  | 44.1                                 | 48.1  | 97.8         | 26.3    |
| School 5    | 387.0          | 41.0  | 40.0  | 41.0                                 | 44.0  | 100.0        | 25.0    |
| School 6    | 384.2          | 40.5  | 40.4  | 38.1                                 | 42.6  | 97.0         | 22.2    |
| School 7    | 376.3          | 42.7  | 40.9  | 39.6                                 | 41.2  | 93.9         | 23.3    |
| School 8    | 360.6          | 40.3  | 39.0  | 39.8                                 | 37.6  | 93.8         | 23.7    |
| School 9    | 360.0          | 37.0  | 34.0  | 34.0                                 | 37.0  | 95.1         | 13.6    |
| School 10   | 350.2          | 40.6  | 37.1  | 36.6                                 | 40.4  | 94.3         | 22.7    |
| School 11   | 343.2          | 39.9  | 38.2  | 36.4                                 | 36.0  | 96.2         | 16.3    |
| School 12   | 332.0          | 38.6  | 37.4  | 33.8                                 | 37.7  | 97.1         | 10.3    |
| Region 2020 |                |   |   |                                      |   |              |         |
| Highest     | 422            | 46  | 47  | 46                                   | 48  | 100          | 41      |
| Median      | 376            | 41  | 39  | 38                                   | 41  | 97           | 21      |
| Lowest      | 318            | 35  | 34  | 30                                   | 31  | 87           | 10      |

The second table is sorted from highest to lowest Capped 9 outcomes for FSM pupils. Each row represents a single school.

| School      | Capped 9 |     | Average points for best of Literature or first Language Welsh or English GCSE |     | Average points for best of Mathematics or Mathematics - Numeracy GCSE |     | Average points for best Science GCSE |     | Average points for Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate |     | L1 Threshold |     | 5 A*-As |     |
|-------------|----------|-----|---|-----|---|-----|--------------------------------------|-----|---|-----|--------------|-----|---------|-----|
|             | eFSM     | Non | eFSM  | Non | eFSM  | Non | eFSM                                 | Non | eFSM  | Non | eFSM         | Non | eFSM    | Non |
| School 1    | 376      | 405 | 38  | 41  | 36  | 42  | 37                                   | 42  | 41  | 43  | 50           | 38  | 6       | 10  |
| School 2    | 365      | 421 | 37  | 44  | 32  | 45  | 38                                   | 46  | 33  | 42  |              |     |         |     |
| School 3    | 360      | 391 | 37  | 41  | 40  | 39  | 38                                   | 41  | 41  | 45  | 100          | 100 | 25      | 25  |
| School 4    | 346      | 397 | 36  | 42  | 36  | 42  | 34                                   | 40  | 39  | 44  | 92           | 99  | 16      | 24  |
| School 5    | 346      | 400 | 37  | 44  | 38  | 42  | 41                                   | 45  | 44  | 49  | 95           | 98  | 9       | 30  |
| School 6    | 330      | 406 | 28  | 42  | 27  | 41  | 24                                   | 38  | 31  | 38  | 87           | 100 | 0       | 19  |
| School 7    | 320      | 380 | 32  | 40  | 29  | 37  | 29                                   | 37  | 32  | 39  | 90           | 98  | 5       | 19  |
| School 8    | 305      | 387 | 36  | 44  | 33  | 42  | 31                                   | 41  | 35  | 42  | 83           | 96  | 5       | 26  |
| School 9    | 291      | 342 | 35  | 40  | 34  | 38  | 29                                   | 35  | 34  | 39  | 89           | 100 | 9       | 11  |
| School 10   | 288      | 359 | 35  | 41  | 32  | 40  | 30                                   | 38  | 42  | 30  | 95           | 97  | 2       | 20  |
| School 11   | 277      | 371 | 30  | 41  | 30  | 40  | 30                                   | 41  | 31  | 38  | 100          | 31  | 8       | 8   |
| School 12   | 272      | 363 | 34  | 42  | 29  | 38  | 25                                   | 38  | 38  | 41  | 85           | 96  | 11      | 25  |
| Region 2020 |          |     |   |     |   |     |                                      |     |   |     |              |     |         |     |
| Highest     | 395      | 426 | 44  | 47  | 43  | 47  | 42                                   | 46  | 44  | 49  | 100          | 100 | 48      | 42  |
| Median      | 329      | 389 | 36  | 42  | 33  | 40  | 31                                   | 40  | 35  | 41  | 93           | 98  | 9       | 23  |
| Lowest      | 272      | 331 | 28  | 36  | 26  | 37  | 23                                   | 33  | 27  | 30  | 50           | 31  | 0       | 8   |

## 5.11 Key Stage 5

This analysis is based on initial data voluntarily reported by schools in August 2020 and includes Level 3 Threshold performance and A level performance.

School submissions on results day did not indicate whether a school had made any adjustment for the WG guarantee that no pupil will receive a lower grade than their AS level outcome.

Given the priority for schools to ensure a safe return of pupils, no additional requests for this voluntarily submitted data have been made.

Please Note: There were no results submitted from 6 schools for Welsh Baccalaureate and Skills Challenge Certificate.

| School        | Level 3 Threshold | %3 A*-E | % 3 A*-C | % 3 A*-A | % Welsh Bacc. SCC | % Welsh Bacc. |
|---------------|-------------------|---------|----------|----------|-------------------|---------------|
| School 1      | 100               | 100     | 79       | 17       |                   |               |
| School 2      | 100               | 81      | 31       | 6        | 75                | 100           |
| School 3      | 100               | 97      | 70       | 17       | 90                | 100           |
| School 4      | 100               | 100     | 63       | 13       |                   |               |
| School 5      | 100               | 98      | 84       | 12       |                   |               |
| School 6      | 100               | 100     | 75       | 15       |                   |               |
| School 7      | 96                | 92      | 53       | 9        |                   |               |
| School 8      | 95                | 73      | 39       | 0        |                   |               |
| Region - 2020 |                   |         |          |          |                   |               |
| Highest       | 100               | 100     | 84       | 28       | 100               | 100           |
| Median        | 100               | 94      | 62       | 13       | 87                | 99            |
| Lowest        | 88                | 54      | 26       | 0        | 64                | 63            |

## 5.12 Conclusion

As mentioned above, this report is intended to be used for information only, and not as part of any accountability process. There were no end of key stage assessments, so there is no data available for FP through to KS3. Regarding KS4 and KS5, it is clear from the national picture that there have been significant increases in the percentage of A\*-C grades awarded, and even more significant increases at A\*-A and A\*.

## 6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 There are no specific assumptions.

## 7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

7.1 This information report of School Performance reporting arrangements for 2019-20 contributes to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future

Generations Act (Wales) 2016:

- A prosperous Wales, through supporting the development of a skilled and well-educated population
- A more equal Wales, enabling pupils to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, the results reported will include those in Welsh medium Education and those taking Welsh language, arts, and sports qualifications

The information in the report considers the sustainability principles including involvement of pupils, collaboration across public bodies, long term impacts of the performance reporting arrangements on the wellbeing of pupils, integrating objectives and preventing a long-term detrimental impact of the challenges during the Summer term of 2020.

## 7.2 **Corporate Plan 2018-2023.**

This section shows how the information report content contributes towards or impacts the Corporate Well-being Objectives, which are:

Objective 1 – Improve education opportunities for all.

Action areas 2, 3, 4, 5 – raise standards of attainment, reduce the impact of poverty on attainment, supporting those who do not follow a traditional academic path, and supporting access towards employment opportunities.

## 8. **WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

- 8.1 This report content contributes to the Well being Goals in terms of securing improvement. This report does not analyse the 5 ways of working in terms of decision making but it does recognise that going forward support is put in place to improve school performance for the well-being of future generations.

## 9. **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There is no specific equalities impact in relation to the content of this report. When performance information is discussed with schools as part of the monitoring, challenge, support and intervention programme, equalities issues, such as gender and ethnicity are taken into account. Similarly the Local Authority self-evaluation considers all equalities issues.

## 10. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no specific financial implications.

## 11. **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no specific personnel implications.

## **12. CONSULTATIONS**

12.1 All comments have been reflected in the report.

## **13. STATUTORY POWER**

- 13.1 - Children and families Measure (Wales) 2010
- Schools Standards and organisation (Wales) 2013
- Education Act 1996
- Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) 2015
- Schools Causing Concern 2013

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Welsh Government: School Performance Reporting Arrangements Important Update (10 August 2020)

Appendix 2: Definitions of the 5 Welsh Government Measures

Appendix 3: Results for A Level, AS, GCSE and the Skills Challenge Certificate in Wales – Summer 2020.

Author: Ed Pryce, Assistant Director: Policy and Strategy, Education Achievement Service (EAS), ed.pryce@sewaleseas.org.uk

Consultees: Debbie Hartevelde, Managing Director, Education Achievement Service for South East Wales  
Christina Harrhy, Chief Executive  
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director of Education and Corporate Services  
Dave Street, Corporate Director, Social Services  
Mark S. Williams, Corporate Director Communities  
Councillor Ross Whiting, Cabinet Member for Learning and Achievement  
Councillor Teresa Parry, Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee  
Councillor Carol Andrews, Vice Chair of Education Scrutiny Committee  
Steve Harris, Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer  
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer  
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning & Strategy  
Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion & ALN  
Sarah Mutch, Early Years Manager  
Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement  
Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager  
Anwen Cullinane, Senior Policy Officer, Equalities, Welsh Language & Consultation  
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Service and Monitoring Officer  
Ros Roberts, Business Improvement Officer

## **Appendix 1: Welsh Government: School Performance Reporting Arrangements Important Update (10 August 2020)**

<https://gov.wales/school-performance-reporting-arrangements-important-update-0>

As set out in Written Statements dated 18 March 2020 and 3 July 2020, the Minister for Education has announced changes to the publication of qualification awards data and performance measures due to coronavirus.

In addition, The Relaxation of School Reporting Requirements (Wales) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 have been made to reduce burden on schools and local authorities for 2019/20.

### **What are the key points?**

- We have suspended the calculation and publication of Key Stage 4 and legacy sixth form performance measures for the 2019 to 2020 and 2020 to 2021 academic years.
- Qualification awards data will not be used to report on attainment outcomes at a school, local authority or regional consortium level and must not be used to hold schools to account for their learners' outcomes.
- Post-16 performance measures have also been suspended for 2019/20. We will consider the best approach for 2020 to 2021, in view of the range of providers and different types of programmes that are affected in different ways. The sector will be consulted, before any firm decision is taken, in order to consider what would be useful to help their own monitoring and quality assurance processes.
- There will be a direct impact on the usual data releases provided by the Welsh Government, with some releases suspended for one or both years and/or still to be determined for 2020 to 2021. You can find a table below showing what information, with provisional timings, will be released by the Welsh Government. Where activities are marked to continue for 2020/21 reporting, this is the planning assumption at the time of publication, which could be subject to change if these are affected by further disruption to school operations.
- All schools and post-16 providers will continue to be required to undertake effective self-evaluation to support continuous improvement. Our evaluation, improvement and accountability arrangements require consideration of a broad range of information relevant to a school's own context when undertaking self-evaluation and identifying improvement priorities. This will involve schools, with support from local authorities and regional consortia, using the learner level information they have on attainment and other outcomes to reflect on and improve their existing arrangements.
- The Relaxation of School Reporting Requirements (Wales) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 came into force on 7 August 2020. These Regulations revoke one set of Regulations and amend a number of others, which place duties on headteachers, governing bodies and local authorities to produce pupil and school reports:



| <b>Regulations</b>  | <b>Description of Regulations</b>  | <b>Impact of Amending Regulations</b>               | <b>Further details</b>  |
|---|--|---|---|
| The School Performance and Absence Targets (Wales) Regulations 2011             | Require schools to set and publish targets which are agreed by local authorities.  | Revoked   | No longer required.   |
| The Head Teachers' Reports to Parents and Adult Pupils (Wales) Regulations 2011 | Require headteachers to make a report available to all parents or adult pupils about the educational achievements of pupils, each school year.   | Amended<br><br>(to a "reasonable endeavours" basis) | Duties imposed on headteachers for reports relating to the 2019/20 school year are to be treated as discharged, if the headteacher has used reasonable endeavours to discharge the duty. The exception to "reasonable endeavours" is regulation 5(1) of the Reporting Regulations; the requirement to provide a school leaver's report, which needs to remain an absolute duty, so that this cohort of learners are not disadvantaged this year.  |
| The School Information (Wales) Regulations 2011                                 | Require local authorities to publish a composite school prospectus and schools to publish their own individual prospectus, and prescribes the school information that must be included | Amended   | Provision made to exclude data on authorised and unauthorised absences in respect of pupils registered at the school in the 2019/20 school year from being published in any school prospectus.  |
| The School Governors' Annual Reports (Wales) Regulations 2011                   | Require school governing bodies to produce an annual report, including information about school performance against published targets.   | Amended   | Modified the content of reports produced in relation to the 2019/20 academic year so that information may not be included in any school governors' report.<br>The statutory duty for governing bodies to produce a report will remain. Information to be disappplied/excluded in relation to pupils registered at the school in the 2019/20 school year:<br>*the most recent Summary of Secondary School Performance (SSSP);<br>*the number of authorised and unauthorised absences in the school year; and<br>*any information in relation to performance and absence targets, including improvements set by the |

| Regulations   | Description of Regulations   | Impact of Amending Regulations | Further details   |
|---|--|--------------------------------|---|
|   |  |                                | governing body in respect of performance of learners, or for reducing the level of absence.   |
| The School Performance Information (Wales) Regulations 2011 | Provide for the reporting of teacher assessment and examination outcomes (from schools and governing bodies to local authorities and Welsh Ministers). | Amended                        | Removes the duties on governing bodies and local authorities to provide data to local authorities and Welsh Ministers, respectively, on teacher assessment outcomes and authorised or unauthorised absence for the pupils registered at schools in the 2019/20 school year. |

## **Appendix 2: Definitions of the 5 Welsh Government Measures**

### **The Capped 9 measure:**

- Average of the scores for the best awards for all individual pupils in the cohort, capped at a specified volume of GCSEs or equivalent qualifications. In 2019, the interim measures version will remain capped at 9 GCSEs or equivalent.
- Three of the nine slots are for specific subjects and qualifications - one GCSE in size:
  - The best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs.
  - The best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs.
  - The best grade from a science GCSE (currently this is limited to awards in the WJEC suite of science GCSE qualifications: biology, chemistry, physics, science (double award) applied science (double award) and applied science (single award))
- For each learner, the remaining six slots will reflect the points attached to their best six qualifications other than those awards that are contributing towards the subject-specific slots. There is no limit to the range of vocational qualifications that can contribute, to these non-subject specific slots.
- The Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate qualification will count towards a non-subject-specific slot of the Capped 9 measure where it features in a pupil's best results.

### **The literacy measure:**

- Average of the scores for all pupils in the cohort, taking the best grade from any of the literature or first language Welsh or English GCSEs awarded to a pupil.

### **The numeracy measure:**

- Average of the scores for all pupils in the cohort, taking the best grade from either of the mathematics or mathematics – numeracy GCSEs awarded to a pupil.

### **The science measure:**

- Average of the scores for all pupils in the cohort, taking the best grade from a science GCSE awarded to a learner (currently this is limited to awards in the WJEC suite of science GCSE qualifications available to learners: biology, chemistry, physics, science (double award) applied science (double award) and applied science (single award)).

### **The Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate measure:**

- Performance measure calculating the average of the scores for the Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate awards for all pupils in the cohort, whether it is the Foundation (Level 1) or the National (Level 2) award.

**Appendix 3: Results for A Level, AS, GCSE and the Skills Challenge Certificate in Wales – Summer 2020.**

Provided as a separate .pdf document.

[Results for A Level, AS, GCSE and the Skills Challenge Certificate in Wales – Summer 2020](#)



## PWYLLGOR CRAFFU ADDYSG AM OES 26 TACHWEDD 2020

**PWNC:** RHAGLEN BAND B ADDYSG AC YSGOLION AR GYFER  
YR 21AIN GANRIF – ADRODDIADAU YMGYNGHORI

**AWDUR YR ADRODDIAD:** CYFARWYDDWR ADDYSG A GWASANAETHAU  
CORFFORAETHOL

### 1. DIBEN YR ADRODDIAD

1.1 Diben yr adroddiad yw rhoi diweddariad i'r Aelodau Craffu ar gynigion rhaglen Band B Addysg ac Ysgolion ar gyfer yr 21<sup>ain</sup> Ganrif o ran:

- **Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon**  
Adleoli Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon i ysgol ddarpariaeth Gymraeg bwrpasol newydd i'w lleoli ar hen safle gwag Ysgol Uwchradd Cwmcarn
- **Ysgol a Chanolfan Adnoddau Cae'r Drindod**  
Ehangu Ysgol a Chanolfan Adnoddau Cae'r Drindod bresennol, trwy adeiladu estyniad newydd i'r adeilad a lle chwarae awyr agored

1.2 Gofynnir i'r aelodau ystyried y wybodaeth a gynhwysir yn y ddau adroddiad a chadarnhau'r argymhellion i'r Cabinet er mwyn symud ymlaen i'r Hysbysiad Statudol mewn perthynas â'r ddau gynnig.

### 2. CRYNODEB

2.1 Mae'r cynigion Band B Ysgolion ar gyfer yr 21<sup>ain</sup> Ganrif ar gyfer Ysgol a Chanolfan Adnoddau Cae'r Drindod ac Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon wedi bod trwy ymgynghoriad ffurfiol rhwng 14 Medi 2020 a 26 Hydref 2020.

2.2 Er mwyn cyflawni dyletswydd y Cyngor o dan God Trefniadaeth Ysgolion 2018 mae nawr yn ofynnol i aelodau'r Cabinet roi ystyriaeth briodol i gynnwys pob Adroddiad Ymgynghori a phenderfynu a yw'n briodol neu beidio i symud ymlaen i gam nesaf y broses.

### **3. ARGYMHELLION**

3.1 Gofynnir i'r Aelodau wneud fel a ganlyn:

- a) Nodi'r wybodaeth a gynhwysir yn y ddau adroddiad ymgynghori.
- b) Cadarnhau'r argymhellion i'r Cabinet er mwyn symud ymlaen i'r Hysbysiad Statudol mewn perthynas â'r ddau gynnig.

### **4. RHESYMAU AM YR ARGYMHELLION**

4.1 Sicrhau bod yr Aelodau'n cael diweddariad ar sut mae'r Rhaglen Ysgolion a Cholegau ar gyfer yr 21ain Ganrif yn dod ymlaen a gofyn barn yr Aelodau ar yr argymhellion i'r Cabinet er mwyn symud ymlaen i gyhoeddi'r Hysbysiad Statudol o ran y ddau gynnig.

### **5. YR ADRODDIAD**

#### **5.1 Band B**

5.1.1 Mae nodau allweddol y rhaglen fuddsoddi Band B Addysg ac Ysgolion ar gyfer yr 21<sup>ain</sup> Ganrif, wedi'u hamlinellu gan Lywodraeth Cymru fel a ganlyn:

- Lleihau nifer yr ysgolion mewn cyflwr gwael.
- Sicrhau bod gennym ysgolion y maint cywir ac yn y lleoliad cywir, darparu digon o leodd i ddarparu addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg a Saesneg.
- Sicrhau defnydd effeithiol ac effeithlon o'r ystâd addysgol i'w defnyddio gan Ysgolion a'r Gymuned ehangach.

5.1.2 Y ddau gynllun cyntaf a bennwyd i gael blaenoriaeth ar gyfer Cyfnod 1 y rhaglen Band B yw ehangu Ysgol a Chanolfan Adnoddau Cae'r Drindod ac adleoli ac ehangu Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon.

5.1.3 Yn dilyn cymeradwyaeth gan y Cabinet ym mis Mawrth 2020, cafwyd ymgynghori ffurfiol ar y ddau gynnig, rhwng 14 Medi 2020 a 26 Hydref 2020.

5.1.4 Fe ysgrifennwyd at restr benodedig o dderbynwyr fel yr amlinellir yng Nghod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion 2018, a chyhoeddwyd dogfen ymgynghori, ar bapur ac yn electronig trwy gyfrwng gwefan yr Awdurdod. Fe hyrwyddwyd mynediad rhesymol at wybodaeth o ran Cydraddoldeb, ac roedd ar gael mewn fformatau eraill ar gais, yn cynnwys fersiwn ar gyfer plant, a fideo. Yn ogystal, ar gyfer y cynnig i Gae'r Drindod, fe gynhwyswyd Chwaraeon Cymru a Chlwb Rygbi Penallta fel rhai i ymgynghori â hwy.

5.1.5 Fe wnaeth Aelodau'r Pwyllgor Craffu Addysg a wnaeth gyfarfod ar 22 Medi gadarnhau'r ddau gynnig.

5.1.6 Roedd y cyfnod ymgynghori'n rhedeg am 42 diwrnod (gydag o leiaf 20 o'r rheiny'n ddyddiau ysgol) er mwyn rhoi amser digonol i ymateb, a chafodd yr ymatebion a ddaeth i law eu hystyried yn gydwybodol.

- 5.1.7 Cafwyd 388 o ymatebion ar gyfer Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon a 1,047 ar gyfer Ysgol a Chanolfan Adnoddau Cae'r Drindod. Mae manylion o'r rhain i'w gweld yn yr Adroddiadau Ymgynghori perthnasol.
- 5.1.8 Cafodd Adroddiadau Ymgynghori eu llunio ar gyfer y ddau gynnig ac maen nhw ynghlwm fel atodiad i'r adroddiad hwn. Mae'r adroddiadau Ymgynghori'n crynhoi pob un o'r materion a godwyd gan y rhai yr ymgynghorwyd â hwy. Cafodd unrhyw bryderon a godwyd wrth gasglu barn y rhai yr ymgynghorwyd â hwy yn ystod y broses ymgynghori ymateb iddynt trwy roi eglurhad a rhesymau i gefnogi hynny. Yn ogystal, rhoddodd Estyn ymateb ffurfiol o ran ystyried agweddau addysgol y cynnig, sydd wedi'i gynnwys yn yr Adroddiadau Ymgynghori.
- 5.1.9 Bydd yr Adroddiadau Ymgynghori'n cael eu cyhoeddi'n electronig ar dudalennau Ysgolion yr 21<sup>ain</sup> Ganrif ar wefan y Cyngor. Bydd y rhai yr ymgynghorwyd â hwy, ac a ddywedodd yn eu hymateb eu bod eisiau cael eu hysbysu, yn cael llythyr neu e-bost i ddweud bod yr adroddiadau ymgynghori ar gael. Bydd hynny hefyd yn digwydd gyda rhanddeiliad allweddol a enwir yng Nghod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion 2018. Bydd fersiwn addas i blant o'r Adroddiad Ymgynghori hefyd yn cael ei gyhoeddi.

## 5.2 Casgliad

Yn unol â gofynion Cod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion 2018, mae ymgynghori ffurfiol wedi gorffen erbyn hyn o ran y ddau gynnig. Cafodd yr adroddiad hwn ei lunio i roi'r wybodaeth angenrheidiol mae'r Aelodau ei hangen ar gyfer penderfynu a ddylid symud ymlaen gyda'r ddau brosiect i'r cam statudol nesaf, fyddai'n cynnwys caniatâd i gyhoeddi Hysbysiad Statudol. O dan Ddeddf Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru) 2013 mae cyfle i unrhyw un sy'n dymuno gwrthwynebu cynnig trefniadaeth ysgol wneud hynny ar yr adeg honno.

## 6. RHAGDYBIAETHAU

- 6.1 Ni ddaethpwyd i unrhyw ragdybiaethau mewn perthynas â'r adroddiad hwn gan ei fod ddim ond yn rhoi'r wybodaeth ddiweddaraf ar sut mae prosiectau unigol yn dod ymlaen.

## 7. CYSYLLTIADAU I BOLISIÄU PERTHNASOL Y CYNGOR

- 7.1 Stategaeth Gyrhaeddiad Caerffili: Codi Safonau a sicrhau bod ein dysgwyr yn iach, yn hyderus, yn falch ac yn uchelgeisiol a'u bod yn gallu elwa ar gyfleoedd, lleoliadau a phrofiadau addysgol o ansawdd.

### 7.2 Cynllun Corfforaethol 2018-2023.

Bydd y cynnig sydd wedi'i amlinellu yn y ddogfen hon yn cyfrannu at yr Amcanion Llesiant Corfforaethol, yn enwedig y rhain:

Amcan 1 – Gwella cyfleoedd addysg i bawb

Amcan 2 – Galluogi cyflogaeth

## 8. LLESIANT CENEDLAETHAU'R DYFODOL

8.1 Mae Deddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol (Cymru) 2015 yn ymwneud â gwella llesiant cymdeithasol, economaidd, amgylcheddol a diwylliannol Cymru. O dan y ddeddf hon mae'n ofynnol i gyrrff cyhoeddus feddwl am y tymor hir, gweithio gyda phobl a chymunedau, ceisio atal problemau a dilyn dull gweithredu cyson. Bydd hyn yn creu Cymru rydym i gyd eisiau byw ynddi, nawr ac yn y dyfodol. Mae'r ddeddf yn gosod saith nod llesiant:

- Cymru lewyrchus.
- Cymru gydnerth.
- Cymru iachach.
- Cymru sy'n fwy cyfartal.
- Cymru o gymunedau cydlynus.
- Cymru â diwylliant bywiog lle mae'r Gymraeg yn ffynnu.
- Cymru sy'n gyfrifol ar lefel fyd-eang.

8.2 Mae'r ddeddf yn gosod allan yr egwyddor datblygu cynaliadwy y dylai pob corff cyhoeddus ei ddefnyddio i asesu eu gwaith o wneud penderfyniadau. Nod y ddeddfwriaeth yw sicrhau llesiant cenedlaethau'r dyfodol trwy fod cyrff cyhoeddus yn cyfrannu gymaint ag y bo modd tuag at y nodau llesiant. Wrth ddefnyddio'r egwyddor o ddatblygiad cynaliadwy, mae angen i'r awdurdod ystyried y boblogaeth gyfan mae'n ei gwasanaethu ac ystyried effeithiau gweithredu ar genedlaethau'r dyfodol. Mae'r egwyddor hon, sydd hefyd yn cael ei hadnabod fel y pum ffordd o weithio, yn cael ei hasesu isod:

- **Tymor Hir** – Defnyddiwyd rhagolwg o niferoedd disgyblion i weld beth fydd y galw am leoedd ysgol, i sicrhau bod digon o leoedd Addysgol yn ein hysgolion. Defnyddiwyd y wybodaeth hon i flaenoriaethu ysgolion yn y Cynllun Trefniadaeth Ysgolion.
- **Atal** – Bydd gwella ansawdd yr ystâd Addysg yn gyffredinol yn cefnogi disgyblion yn eu deilliant addysgol a sgiliau yn y tymor hir, yn yr ystyr eu bod yn fwy tebygol o lwyddo os yw eu profiad Addysgol yn un cadarnhaol.
- **Integreiddio** – Mae Rhaglen Ysgolion yr 21<sup>ain</sup> Ganrif yn destun i asesiad BREEAM a bydd Buddion Cymunedol cynigion unigol yn cael eu hasesu a'u monitro ar gyfer eu heffaith ar economi Cymru. Mae'r cynigion hefyd yn rhan o strategaeth i hyrwyddo'r Iaith Gymraeg a Diwylliant Cymru.
- **Cydweithredu** – Mae Rhaglen Ysgolion yr 21<sup>ain</sup> Ganrif yn fater o gydweithrediad rhwng y Cyngor a Llywodraeth Cymru i wella ansawdd yr ystâd Addysg.
- **Ymwneud** – Trwy gydol y broses ymgynghori bydd y Cyngor yn sicrhau bod ymgysylltu llawn yn digwydd gyda'r holl randdeiliaid perthnasol e.e. rhieni, disgyblion a'r gymuned leol. Gweithio mewn partneriaeth rhwng Rhaglen Ysgolion yr 21<sup>ain</sup> Ganrif a'r Is-adran Blynyddoedd Cynnar sy'n gweithio gyda'r sector gwirfoddol.

## 9. GOBLYGIADAU CYDRADDOLDEB

9.1 Gwnaethpwyd yr holl Asesiadau o'r Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb ar gyfer prosiectau unigol cyn symud i'r cyfnod ymgynghori. Roeddent ar gael i unrhyw un a oedd yn dymuno cael copïau, yn ogystal â bod yn rhan o bob pecyn ymgynghori sy'n cael ei gyhoeddi ar wefan y Cyngor.



- 9.2 Mae'r cynigion ar gyfer Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon yn cysylltu gyda Chynllun Strategol y Gymraeg mewn Addysg a'r Strategaeth Iaith Gymraeg bum mlynedd 2017-2022. Felly byddant yn cael effaith gadarnhaol ar Addysg Cyfrwng Gymraeg ac ar hyrwyddo defnydd o'r Gymraeg yn y gymuned ehangach.
- 9.3 Bydd y cynigion mewn perthynas ag Ysgol a Chanolfan Adnoddau Cae'r Drindod hefyd yn cael effaith gadarnhaol ar y plant a phobl ifanc gydag anghenion dysgu ychwanegol sy'n mynychu'r Ysgol nawr ac yn y dyfodol.

## **10. GOBLYGIADAU ARIANNOL**

- 10.1 Cytunwyd yn gynharach i ddyrannu £6.475 miliwn i Raglen Ysgolion yr 21<sup>ain</sup> Ganrif ac arian cyfatebol y rhaglen Addysg.
- 10.2 Mae Cyfnod 1 y rhaglen, sef ehangu Ysgol a Chanolfan Adnoddau Cae'r Drindod ac adleoli ac estyn YGG Cwm Gwyddon, yn gyfanswm o £22,002,921. Cyfraniad yr Awdurdod o fewn y swm hwn yw £6.451m.

## **11. GOBLYGIADAU PERSONÉL**

- 11.1 Bydd hyn yn dibynnu ar gynigion penodol ac mae wedi cael ei ystyried fel rhan o'r broses ymgynghori.

## **12. YMGYNGHORIADAU**

- 12.1 Cafodd yr adroddiad drafft ei ddsbarthu fel gwelir isod. Cafodd yr holl sylwadau a ddaeth i law eu hadlewyrchu yn y fersiwn yma o'r adroddiad.

## **13. PŴER STATUDOL**

- 13.1 Cod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion 2018 (Llywodraeth Cymru)  
Deddf Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru) 2013

Awdur: Andrea West, Rheolwr Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif

Ymgynghorwyd â'r rhain:

Christina Harrhy, Prif Weithredwr  
Richard Edmunds, Cyfarwyddwr Addysg a Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol  
Dave Street, Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol – Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Mark S. Williams, Cyfarwyddwr Corfforaethol Dros Dro – Cymunedau  
Y Cynghorydd Ross Whiting, Aelod Cabinet dros Addysg a Chyflawniad  
Y Cynghorydd Teresa Parry, Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor Craffu Addysg  
Y Cynghorydd Carol Andrews, Is-gadeirydd y Pwyllgor Craffu Addysg  
Steve Harris, Pennaeth Cyllid a Swyddog Adran 151  
Keri Cole, Prif Swyddog Addysg  
Sue Richards, Pennaeth Cynllunio a Strategaeth Addysg  
Sarah Ellis, Arweinydd Cynhwysiad ac Anghenion Addysg Arbennig  
Sarah Mutch, Rheolwr Blynnyddoedd Cynnar  
Paul Warren, Arweinydd Strategol ar gyfer Gwella Ysgolion  
Jane Southcombe, Rheolwr Gwasanaethau Ariannol

Lynne Donovan, Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Pobl  
Anwen Cullinane, Uwch Swyddog Polisi (Cydraddoldeb, y Gymraeg ac  
Ymgynghori)  
Rob Tranter, Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Swyddog Monitro  
Ros Roberts, Swyddog Gwella Busnes  
Mark Williams, Pennaeth Dros Dro Gwasanaethau Eiddo  
Steve Pugh, Rheolwr Cyfathrebu Corfforaethol

Papurau Cefndir:

Atodiadau:

Atodiad 1 Adroddiad Ymgynghori – Ysgol a Chanolfan Adnoddau Cae'r Drindod  
Atodiad 2 Adroddiad Ymgynghori – Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon

# 21st Century Schools Consultation Report

## TRINITY FIELDS SCHOOL AND RESOURCE CENTRE



Proposal : **Expand the existing Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre, via a new building extension and outdoor play space with an anticipated completion date of September 2023**

Formal Consultation Period : 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 – 26th October 2020

This report is published in line with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018.



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



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



**Richard Edmunds**

Corporate Director for  
Education and Corporate  
Services

# FOREWORD

*“Working together to deliver the best outcomes for all our children”*

Caerphilly County Borough Council has embarked upon an exciting but challenging journey of improvement and change. We have bold ambitions to provide every learner with the best life chances and we are committed to doing this through the provision of high quality teaching, learning and leadership across our school settings as part of our ‘Shared Ambitions’ Strategy.

We have focused on improving young people’s outcomes and this is still a priority area moving forward incorporating a holistic view of education. The Council has adopted ‘Improving education opportunities for all’ as the first of its Wellbeing Objectives and has committed to an ambitious 21st Century Schools investment programme.

In collaboration with Welsh Government, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Band B Programme is supporting investment in education within the County Borough. Our aspiration is the improvement of the condition of school buildings and maximising community usage.

Our current proposals support our commitment to increase school effectiveness and to narrow inequalities in achievement across groups; to understand the needs of more vulnerable children; promote the Welsh Language, and support those unable to access traditional learning pathways to ensure that all will benefit from the richness of learning and cultural opportunities. These principles help steer our decision making and prioritise projects.

As part of this proposal a consultation exercise has been carried out in line with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2018. All stakeholders have had the opportunity to participate and make comments.

This Consultation Report has been produced to summarise the issues raised by consultees during the consultation period including Estyn’s feedback. It aims to provide a balanced, transparent document to support Cabinet in deciding whether to progress with the proposal, make changes or not to progress.

I hope you find this document informative as a reflection of the activities undertaken to date and an insight into the journey we are on, shaping delivery and placing learning provision at the heart of our communities.

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# Introduction

## Executive Summary

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.

Caerphilly County Borough Council aspires 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.

Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre has been identified as one of the first priority projects in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B programme.

For proposals relating to schools, the School Organisation Code 2018, provides clear statutory guidance as to the processes that need to be adhered to. Undertaking a consultation exercise is one of the initial stages of progressing any proposal and is subject to Welsh Government scrutiny and Cabinet approval. From the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 until the 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020, a consultation exercise was undertaken. The purpose of the consultation was to gain views on the proposal to support and invest in the expansion of Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre.

This Consultation Report is the prescribed method as outlined by the School Organisation Code 2018 for reflection, review and assessment to provide Cabinet with the information to make an informed decision as to whether to proceed with the proposal to the next stage, amend the proposal taking into account further information that has come forward through the consultation process or to close this proposal with no further actions taken.

The Report is divided into several sections with the aim to:

- Outline the consultation processes undertaken
- Provide clarification in relation to the information provided and consultee engagement
- Summarise each of the issues raised by consultees
- Set out Estyn's response to the consultation in full
- Respond to issues raised by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal or rejection of the concerns, with supporting reasons

## Statutory Obligations

This report is published in line with the requirements of the [School Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act 2013](#) and the [School Organisation Code 2018](#).

The Consultation report will be published on the Caerphilly 21<sup>st</sup> Century School website with hardcopies available on request. All information is published in Welsh and English. In addition, a child friendly summary has also been produced to ensure information is provided in an accessible format for any children and young people affected by the proposals.

## Purpose of the Consultation Report

The publication of this Consultation Report discharges the Council of its duty under the School Organisation Code 2018.

The consultation period represented an opportunity for people to learn about the proposal, ask questions and make comments. Any negative responses made during the consultation period were not 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.

The Consultation Report outlines the processes followed, provides clarity on the issues and comments received from consultees, ensures that the views of children and young people affected by the proposal are expressed and ultimately, provides Cabinet with the necessary information to take one of the following decisions:

- Proceed with the proposal
- Make changes to the proposal
- Not to proceed with the proposal

Full details of the decision making process and the stages of the proposal as outlined in the School Organisation Code 2018 have been published as part of the initial Consultation Document and is publicly available via the Council's website with hardcopies made available on request.


## 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 :

| <br>Image of Islwyn High School | 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             |

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

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



## Proposal

### What are we proposing to do?

We are proposing to:

- **Expand the existing Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre, via a new building extension and outdoor play space with an anticipated completion date of September 2023.**
  - The proposed new building will provide additional facilities to accommodate growing demand for places and provide additional classrooms, specialist intervention areas and outdoor play space
  - It is proposed the additional facility will also house a new flexible hall, hydrotherapy pool and soft play facilities to increase provision on site which will also be considered for community use at suitable times in keeping with the curriculum timetable.
- To ensure that it can cater for the changing and more complex needs of pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) across the Council, both now and in the future and ensure compliance with the new Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act.

### What is Driving this proposal?

Proposals have been prioritised based on a number of factors including building condition, pupil projection and local and national drivers, however, the delivery of the curriculum and the Educational agenda remains at the core.

In accordance with the ALN and Tribunal Act 2018 schools and local authorities have a statutory duty to identify ALN and appropriate provision to meet that need. As identified in the ALN Act and draft ALN Code the Council and schools have a responsibility to review provision available to meet need within the Borough on a regular basis

Additional Learning Needs can take a wide variety of forms and can relate to one or more different areas of learning, such as communication and cognition. There is a wide spectrum



of Additional Learning Needs that a child or young person may have, and these may change and develop over time.

All pupils across the Borough are entitled to receive high quality provision that meets their needs, no matter where they live. The Council is committed to inclusion and the principles that the majority of children will have their needs met in mainstream. Central to the identification of additional learning provision is child centred practice. However, there are circumstances where complex additional learning needs are best met, as identified through robust assessment and engagement with children and families within specialist provision with the appropriate specialist teaching, support and facilities that enables them to meet their potential. Trinity Fields is a Special school that cater for those pupils who have the most complex need.

We have identified a need to invest in improving our school building at Trinity Fields School, in meeting the demand for specialist education and building upon the excellent practice as identified by Estyn. It is this aspiration that is driving this proposal.



## Options Appraisal

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.

An options appraisal provides the opportunity to help councils make an informed and evidence based decision on how to deliver services. It does this by considering the relative advantages and disadvantages of a number of different delivery model options (including the current way in which the service is delivered).

The methodology helps decision makers to consider the relative:

- Desirability - the degree to which each option meets the strategic objectives and priorities of stakeholders
- Viability - the degree to which each option is financially viable and sustainable
- Feasibility - the degree to which each option can be implemented

As part of outlining the current proposal, an options appraisal was undertaken.

The options appraisal stage allowed for a number of different delivery model options to be explored and evaluated against a set of agreed criteria, leading to the selection of the preferred option.

The following options were considered and scored: -

| Option   | Description   |
|----------|---|
| Option 1 | Do Nothing  |
| Option 2 | Further reconfiguration of the existing school  |
| Option 3 | Build a new primary school provision on another site  |
| Option 4 | Build a new extension onto the existing school to accommodate an additional 80 places (increasing the capacity to 263)              |
| Option 5 | Build a new school on another site to accommodate all identified provision and full cohort of 260 pupils (existing plus additional) |

The process utilised was outlined in detail in the Consultation Document and resulted in

**Option 4** being the preferred option, namely, **build a new extension onto the existing school to accommodate an additional 80 places.**

This would provide 263 places in total on the existing school site, factoring in the current pupil cohort of 183 pupils and an additional 80 places to future proof the site for a number of years to come.

Through the appraisal process a final recommendation about the preferred delivery model was carried forward to the Consultation period with the view to engage with key stakeholders and identify priorities from their perspective. This stage was an important part of the process, to raise important questions at an early stage, and assist in developing proposals in greater detail to consider:

- are there better ways to achieve your objectives?
- are there better ways to use the resources available?
- is this the best way to achieve the desired outcomes?

## Benefits and Disbenefits

There are common challenges faced by all Local Authorities when adopting new proposals. The vast majority of Council policies are delivered through projects and programmes of various forms. It is therefore vital that projects are delivered successfully in order to realise their intended benefits for citizens.

Evidence shows that the best way to ensure successful delivery is by setting up projects correctly in the first place. The most common causes of failure, among others are a lack of clear objectives, insufficient resources, and over-ambitious cost and schedule that impact on the level and amount of benefit that can be realised and can be avoided if tackled in a project's early stages.

As part of the development of the proposal, a number of benefits and disbenefits were identified as outlined in the Consultation Document. The consultation process was an opportunity to consult with relevant stakeholders to understand what they see as positive outcomes and what negative consequences may be delivered.

An [Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessment](#) and a Community Impact Assessment were carried out to initiate discussion and invite comments as to whether the principles for the proposal are supported.

All comments have been recorded and will be made available for Cabinet as a separate annex to this Consultation Report.



## The Consultation Process

### Consultation Process

The consultation process has followed the Welsh Government guidelines as set out in the School Organisation Code 2018.

As the proposal relates to a 'regulated alteration' to a Special school under Section 44 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, the proposals have been published on the Council's website.

### Implications of COVID19

Due to the implications of COVID-19 at the time this consultation was due to take place and after taking advice from Welsh Government, this consultation process refrained from undertaking any face-to-face consultation sessions to support social distancing and maintain safe working practices for all.

It should be noted that there is no obligation to consult face-to-face and therefore a written paper consultation exercise was undertaken to discharge the Council of its duty under the School Organisation Code 2018.

However, a number of alternative methods were utilised for engagement including use of social media, face-time technology and the opportunity to pose questions to form part of a '[Frequently Asked Questions](#)' Document.

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

Consultees were advised of the proposal and availability of the consultation documentation when it went live on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 via letter/email and were therefore invited to take part in the statutory consultation:

The School Organisation Code 2018, prescribes those individuals/groups considered key consultees in the consultation process. The list below presents the consultees engaged with relevant to proposals of this nature for the Caerphilly Borough.

- Parents, prospective parents, guardians and carers of all pupils of schools directly affected by the proposal
- Headteacher, staff and governors of schools directly affected by the proposal
- Pupils/Pupil Councils of schools directly affected by the proposal
- Directors of Education of all bordering LAs – Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Newport, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Torfaen
- Catholic Diocesan Board of Education
- Church in Wales Diocesan Board
- Local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)
- Governing body of other schools which the proposer considers are likely to be affected by the proposal
- Local CCBC Members
- All Assembly Members and Members of Parliament representing the area served by the schools directly affected by the proposal
- Welsh Ministers
- ESTYN
- Teaching Associations
- Support Staff Associations
- South East Wales Consortium (EAS)
- South East Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA)
- Gwent and South Wales Police and Crime Commissioners
- Local Town and Community Councils
- Menter Iaith
- Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
- Parent Network
- Welsh Education Forum

This proposal does not affect Welsh Language provision, therefore there was no obligation on the Council to consult with the Welsh Language Commissioner in this instance.

Consideration of the potential impact on other schools in the area was considered, however, Trinity Fields School is the only Special school in the County Borough and also falls outside of the standard admissions arrangements for schools. The catchment area for the school covers the entire Borough.

The consultation process acknowledged that Trinity Fields acts as a hub and is intrinsic to the 'hub and spoke' model, supporting the most complex children within resource bases and mainstream schools. This includes the development of satellite provision for children.

Therefore, whilst no individual school could be identified as ‘affected’ under the remit of the School Organisation Code 2018, all schools were contacted and advised that a consultation on the proposal for Trinity Fields was active and that they could provide any responses via the prescribed methods.

The Council was aware that the proposal and preferred delivery option as outlined in the Consultation Documentation would result in the repurposing of a pay-to-use rugby pitch and would work closely with interested parties to ensure mitigation could take place should the proposal receive Cabinet approval. Therefore, in addition to advising those we were obliged to under the stakeholder criteria, the following were also contacted and advised of our proposals in writing:

- Sports Wales
- Penallta RFC

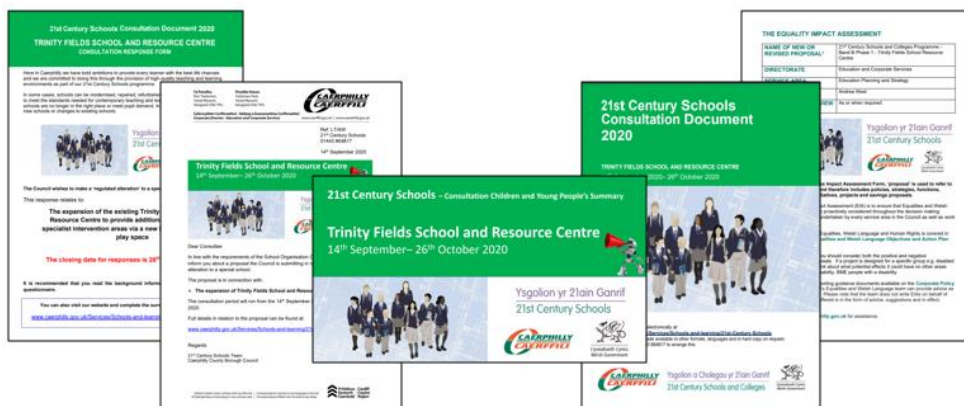
## Consultation Information

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.

The consultation document must be published on a school day and consultees must be given at least 42 days to respond to the document, with at least 20 of these being school days as defined by Section 579 of the Education Act 1996. The consultation period opened on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 (a school day) and concluded at midnight on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

As part of this proposal, the following documentation was produced:

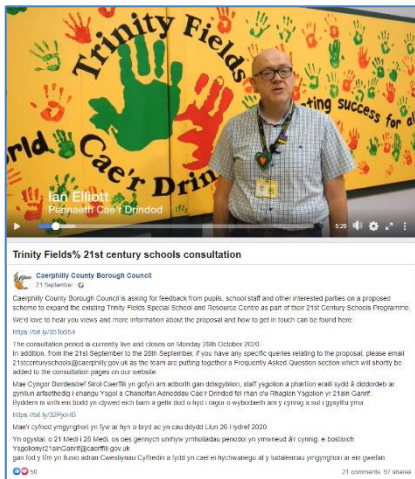
- Consultation Notification Letter
- Consultation Document
- Child Friendly Consultation Summary
- Consultation Video
- Artist’s Impression of proposed new school
- Consultation Response Form (Online)
- Consultation Response Form (Printable PDF)
- Equalities and Welsh Language Impact Assessment



A child friendly consultation summary and video was produced to support the consultation process with pupils of the affected schools and present information in a manner relevant to their likely understanding, allowing them to participate in the consultation process and reach an informed opinion. In addition to this documentation, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team and local teaching staff provided assistance to children and young people who wished to submit a consultation response, especially relevant as the children and young people attending Trinity Fields are some of the most vulnerable within the Borough and have a variety of additional learning needs.

All documentation was published in Welsh and English, complying with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. Information was also available in other languages and formats on request, however, no such requests were received as part of this process.

Hardcopies of the documentation were issued to the schools directly affected by the proposal including the child friendly summary for discussion with the pupils.



In addition to notifying the consultees in writing of the proposal, distribution of information was supported via the school text messaging service direct to parents and staff.

The Council’s Social media channels were also utilised. Messages relating to the consultation were released in phases over the first 3 weeks of the consultation to maintain public awareness and provide as far a ‘social media reach’ as possible.

Social media reach is a media analytics metric that refers to the number of users who have come across a particular content on a social platform such as Facebook, YouTube or Twitter.

|        |                        |                 |                  |
|--------|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Week 1 | YouTube Video Released | CaerphillyCBCTV | 684 subscribers  |
| Week 2 | Facebook Message       | @CaerphillyCBC  | 28,188 followers |
| Week 3 | Twitter Message        | @CaerphillyCBC  | 19.3k followers  |

## Response Methods

As outlined in the Consultation Document, anyone wishing to comment in relation to the proposal could do so in writing by:

- Completing the online response form on the Council’s website
- Completing a response pro forma and posting it to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Team at Caerphilly
- Emailing comments to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team at Caerphilly

The response forms were designed in such a way as to capture the relevant information required to discharge the Council’s obligations required under the School Organisation Code for undertaking a consultation linked to the regulated alteration of a special school.

This consultation was undertaken to capture the views of consultees in relation to the proposal to expand the school. These views have been incorporated into this document, which will be published and considered by Cabinet when determining whether to proceed to Statutory notice stage. A separate Planning Application Process will be undertaken in respect of this proposal. The separate statutory processes were outlined in the consultation document and any adverse comments received as part of this process have been recorded as such.



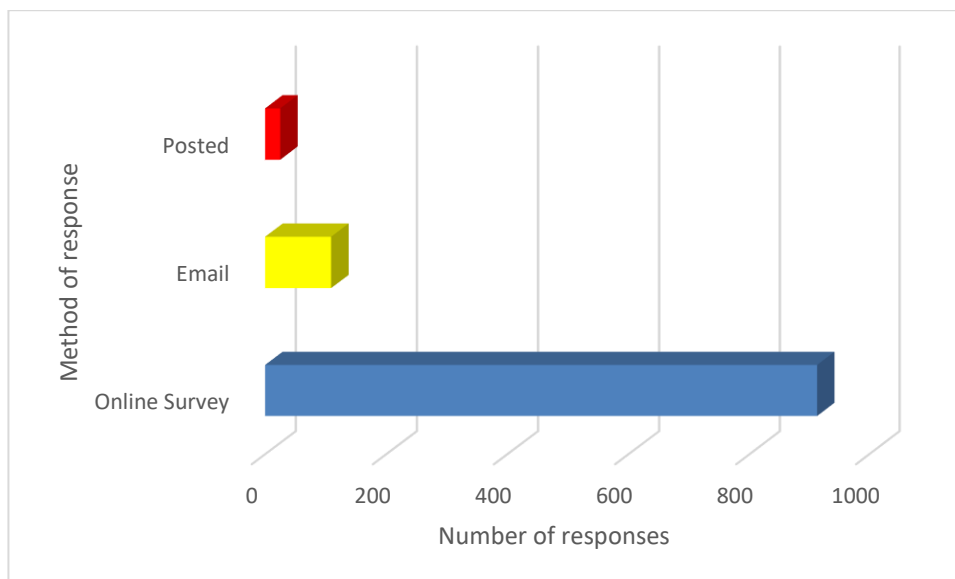
## Consultation Responses

### Consultation Responses

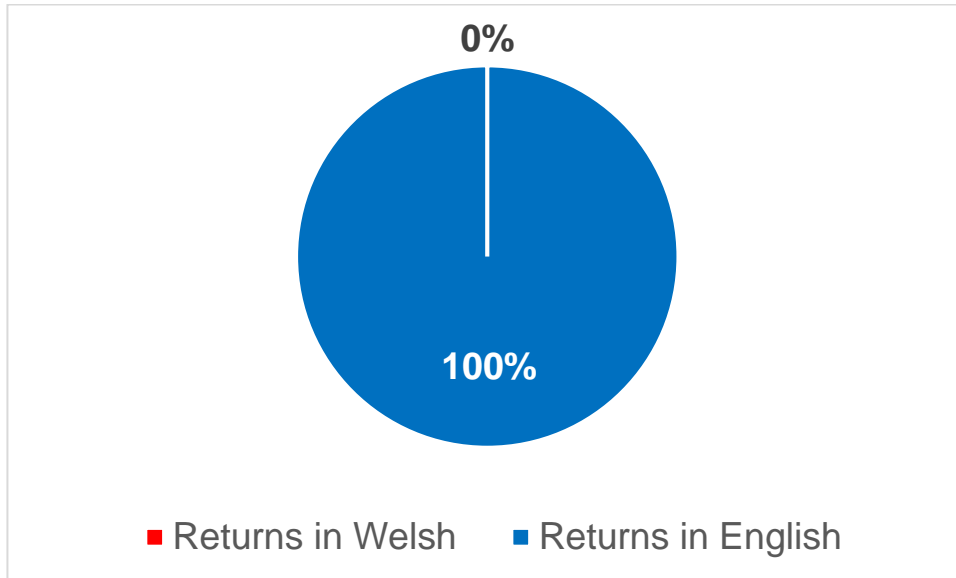
Overall a total of 1048 responses were received during the consultation process.

Of the prescribed methods for providing a response during the consultation period:

- 913 responses received via Online Survey
- 109 responses received via email
- 26 responses received via post



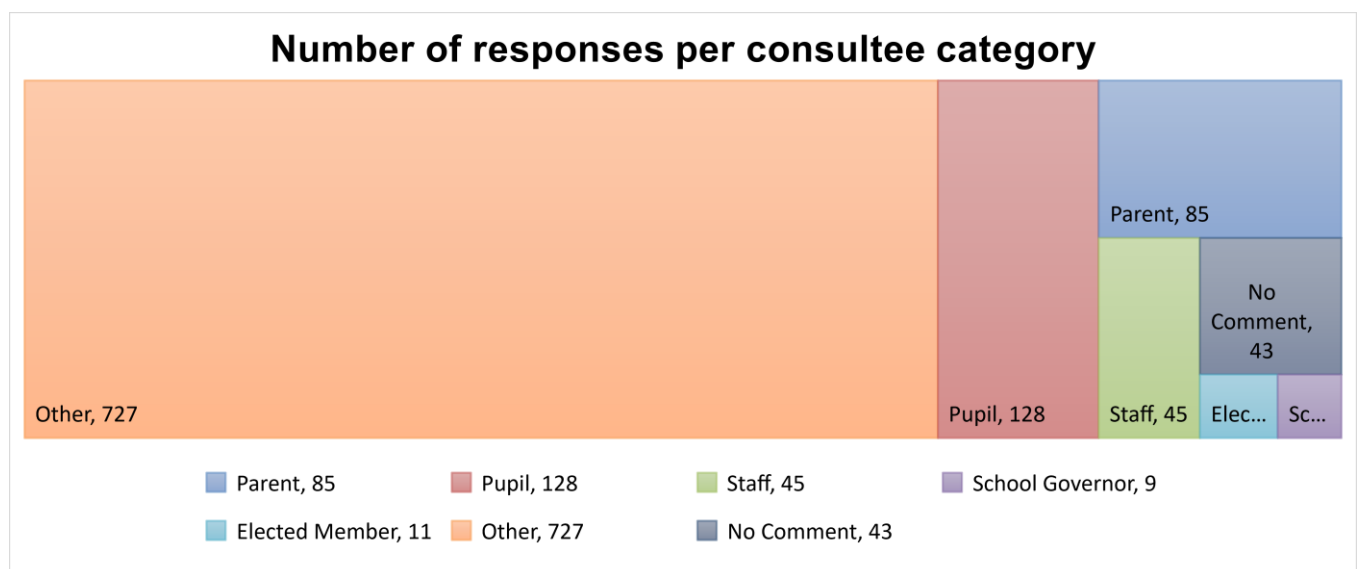
0 responses (0%) were returned in the medium of Welsh with the remaining 1048 responses (100%) in English.



The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team received no requests for the documentation to be provided in any other format or language.

**QUESTION 1**

The consultees were asked to identify a category that best described them in relation to the proposal for the school affected. The options provided were selected to demonstrate that the key consultee groups as outlined in the School Organisation Code had been engaged with.







|               |               |                        |                           |                          |                              |
|---------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 12%<br>Pupils | 8%<br>Parents | 4%<br>Staff<br>Members | 1%<br>School<br>Governors | 1%<br>Elected<br>Members | 74%<br>Other & No<br>Comment |
|---------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|

For those selecting 'other', the opportunity was given to elaborate further as they felt appropriate.

### **QUESTION 2**

As part of the consultation process, consultees were asked to provide basic contact information, including their name, address and email. This psychographic data was collected in order to help paint a picture of the consultee and enable the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools team to understand trends in response data and response groupings that would assist in compiling this Consultation Report.

As information can be collected for many purposes, the Caerphilly County Borough Council's privacy notice for consultations/surveys was referenced, which outlined the purpose and legal basis for collecting the information, data usage and data retention periods.

For the purposes of this Consultation Report, Cabinet will be provided with a separate digest of the consultation comments received. Please note that comments that are considered to be offensive or compromise anonymity have been edited or removed.

### **QUESTION 3**

As part of our duty under the School Organisation Code 2018, consultees must be given the option to request notification as to the publication of this Consultation Report. Contact information has been collected to this end and the preferred method for communication will be notification via email if this information has been made available by the respondent.



541 out of the 1048 respondents have requested notification. These individuals have been added to the notification list and will be contacted concurrently with stakeholders when this document is made publicly available through the Council's website. Hardcopies of the documentation will be made available on request.

#### QUESTION 4

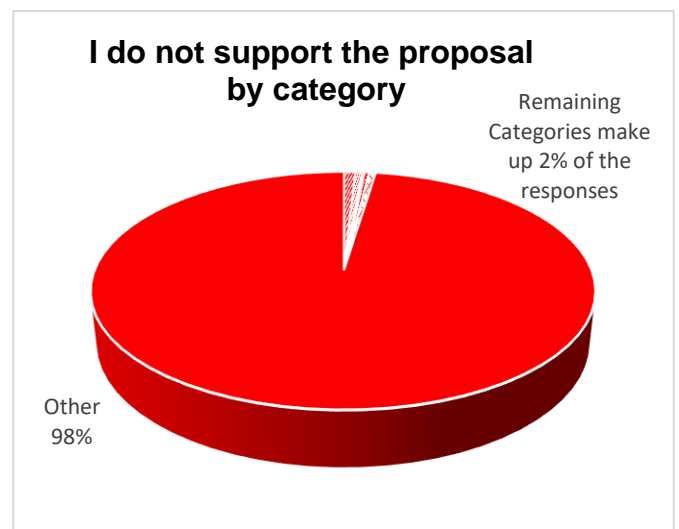
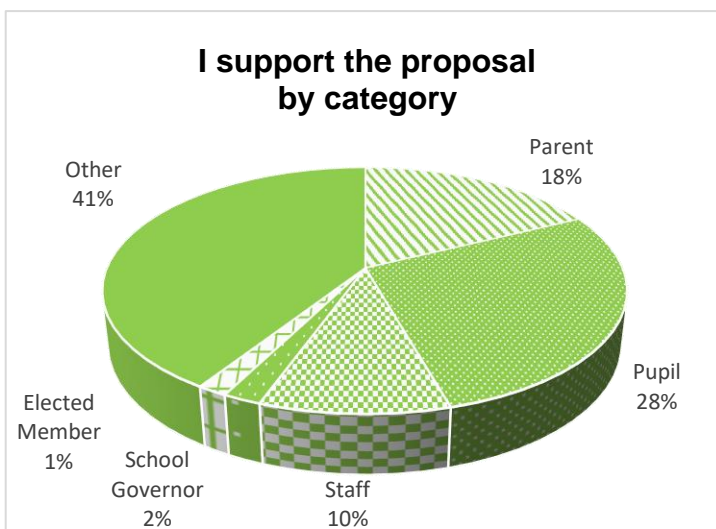
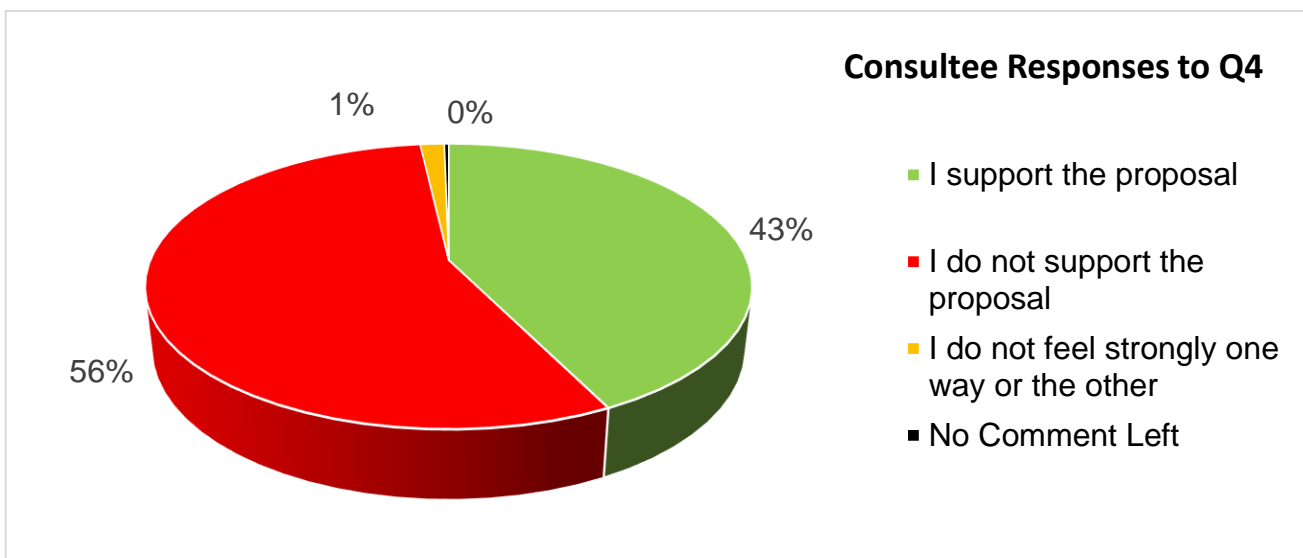
Consultees can submit their views either in favour of or against the proposals.

Consultees were asked to indicate which of the following statements most accurately reflected their views about the proposal. Consultees were reminded to read the consultation documentation prior to providing any responses during this consultation exercise and that unfavourable comments made during the consultation period will not be treated as objections at this stage.

The options available were:

- I do not feel strongly one way or the other
- I support the proposal
- I do not support the proposal

Of the responses returned, 447 support the proposal, 582 do not support it, 16 didn't feel strongly either way and 3 failed to select an option. That equates to 43% in support, 56% opposed with the remaining 1% either providing a neutral response or no comment.



It is prudent to bring to the attention of Cabinet that the commentary provided as part of Question 5 may offer additional insight into the views of the consultees and that the response provided to Question 4 should not be considered in isolation.

## Question 5

This was a free text box, enabling consultees to provide additional comments on the proposal. All comments received have been read and analysed.

General themes that emerged from the consultation:

- Acknowledgement that the current Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre provides a high standard of support and specialist intervention
- The proposal supports the increasing demand for additional learning needs provision
- Concerns over proposed use of the pitch for education not recreation
- Concerns over the impact on Penallta RFC both through loss of income and mitigation discussions to date
- Concerns over loss of green space and impact on local community
- Concerns over the loss of the green flag status for Ystrad Mynach Park
- Concerns over flooding in the local area and the impact the proposal will have
- Comments about:
  - The expansion of the site, why outwards and not upwards?
  - The impact on traffic flow in the area
  - Whether a new build at an alternative site would be a better option
  - The consultation process being followed

## Question 6

In line with the Caerphilly County Borough Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020 and the Consultation and Monitoring Guidance 2016 document, a reduced version of the Equalities and Monitoring questionnaire was included as part of the consultation response to support effective planning and to ensure that a representative sample was achieved to identify any equality issues.

The option to include information relating to the consultees Gender, Age, Disability Status, Welsh Language Skills and any influencing factors relating to their response were included but not mandatory.

From the responses received, of those that completed the Equalities monitoring section:

| Are you ... |     |                      |     |
|-------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| Male        | 418 | Other                | 133 |
| Female      | 494 | Unwilling to declare | 3   |

| Age      |     |                      |     |
|----------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| Under 16 | 25  | 40-65                | 351 |
| 16-25    | 135 | Over 65              | 60  |
| 26-39    | 303 | Unwilling to declare | 174 |

| Disability |  |  |  |
|------------|--|--|--|
|------------|--|--|--|

|                              |     |                       |    |
|------------------------------|-----|-----------------------|----|
| I am not Disabled            | 701 | Learning Difficulties | 30 |
| Physical / Mobility Impaired | 41  | Visually Impaired     | 1  |
| Hearing Impaired             | 13  | Speech Impaired       | 2  |
| Unwilling to declare         | 226 |                       |    |
| Other                        | 17  |                       |    |

| Welsh Language Skills    |          |            |                      |          |
|--------------------------|----------|------------|----------------------|----------|
|                          | A Little | Moderately | Quite Well           | Fluently |
| Speak                    | 391      | 62         | 30                   | 57       |
| Understand               | 364      | 79         | 30                   | 56       |
| Read                     | 333      | 62         | 37                   | 56       |
| Write                    | 332      | 54         | 28                   | 51       |
| No Welsh Language Skills | 639      |            | Unwilling to Declare | 47       |

## Question 7

In relation to equalities implications that respondents highlighted, 37 responses indicated that their decision was influenced as per the list outlined in the consultation response form, for example:

- 'I have a grandson who has a learning disability and understand the importance of these schools and the continuing care until these children become young adults. My grandson and my other grandchildren also use the green spaces.'
- 'I'm not sure this has any relevance to the survey?'
- 'My response has been influenced on the direct impact of community.'

## Education Scrutiny Response

The Council's Education Scrutiny Committee is a consultee for any policy or service developments in relation to Education within the Borough.

A digital meeting via Microsoft teams took place on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 at 5.30pm. 13 out of 15 Councilors were in attendance.

As part of this meeting, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Band B Programme and consultation in respect of Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre was discussed. All consultation documentation was made available to members as part of the agenda reports pack and officers linked to the proposal were available to take questions.

It was agreed that a vote in respect of the proposal would be taken and be officially recorded for inclusion in this Consultation Report. The Committee members voted 12 in favour of the proposal for Trinity Fields Special School and Resource Centre, 1 against and 0 abstention.



A recording of the session is available on YouTube:

[Education Scrutiny Committee Meeting](#)

The agenda item linked to this proposal starts 18 minutes and 50 seconds in to the recording.

The [Notice of the Decisions](#) document is also available to view on the Council's website

## Estyn's Response

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018, the Council, as the proposers, is required to send a notification with regards to the consultation to Estyn.

Estyn is the education and training inspectorate for Wales and their vision is to improve the quality of education and training and outcomes for all learners in Wales. However, Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal. The full response from Estyn is included at Annex 2 to this report. However, in summary:

*“The proposal seeks to address identified need for additional facilities to accommodate growing demand for places and provide additional classrooms, specialist intervention areas and outdoor play space for pupils with special educational needs. It is proposed the additional facility will house a new and flexible hall, hydrotherapy pool and soft play facilities to increase provision on site and enhance the lives of the pupils with provision that cannot be accommodated within the current building. This new provision would also be available for community use at suitable times.*

*The proposer has clearly defined the benefits of establishing these additional facilities and provision for pupils and young people who have special educational needs. The proposal has been developed in line with the local authority's programme to improve its educational provision and meet the needs of children and young people with SEN. This proposal offers pupils and young people with SEN the opportunity for specialist educational experiences in a setting within their county borough.*

*Funding has already been allocated for the council's share of the capital costs of the project and will be jointly funded by Welsh Government as part of their 21st century schools remit.*

*It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to improve the current educational provision for children and young people with SEN”.*

The Council welcomes Estyn's statements confirming that the proposal will have a positive impact on the educational provision for children and young people with special educational needs. The Council acknowledges Estyn's response and would like to provide the following clarification statement in relation to Estyn's observations relating to *'the risk assessment does not identify any educational considerations.'* and *'it is not clear whether the teaching and learning experiences would be fully equitable with that of English medium provision'.* The proposal for Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre is to expand the existing provision and provide additional classrooms, facilities and specialist intervention areas for use by the pupils and the wider community. We recognise that the section relating to the risk assessment in the Consultation document focused mainly on structural considerations, although educational considerations were present throughout the document and a more prominent section will be included in future project documentation based on this recommendation. There is provision to provide education through the medium of Welsh as highlighted as part of the Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

## Consultation Clarification

When analysing the consultation response comments received as part of the consultation period, a number of recurring areas of concern and those where there was a level of agreement with the proposals became evident.

To assist Cabinet in the decision making process, the following information is provided by means of response for clarification with supporting reasons.

### ➤ Areas of widest concern

| Area of concern:    | Consultee Responses included:  |
|---------------------|--|
| Loss of green space | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical development</li> <li>• Ystrad Mynach Park</li> <li>• Green Flag Status</li> <li>• Community Impact</li> <li>• Rugby Pitch</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions  | 199  |

### Council's Response

The Council acknowledges that the 'loss of green space' has been a key factor of concern for a number of consultees in relation to the proposal. It is important to stress at this stage that even though the consultees have highlighted concerns in this regard, the majority recognised the need to develop Trinity Fields School, but not in the manner outlined as Option 4 in the Consultation document.

#### Historical development

A number of consultees made reference to the historical development on 'greenfield' land in the Ystrad Mynach area, with particular focus on facilities built in close proximity to the proposed site.

Planning Policy Wales, the Welsh Government's national policy outlining guidance for making planning decisions, provides the distinction between greenfield and brownfield land:

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Greenfield | <i>'land in built-up areas which has not been developed previously, for example parks, recreation ground and allotments'</i>     |
| Brownfield | <i>'previously developed land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure and associated fixed surface infrastructure.'</i> |

The Council wishes to clarify the following:

- The current site for Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre was occupied over 22 years ago and officially opened September 1998.
- Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr officially opened in March 2012 and was constructed on an area that consisted primarily of previously developed land classified as 'brownfield' with limited 'greenfield' land that was a recreation ground.

- The Centre of Sporting Excellence officially opened May 2014 and was constructed on the area formally occupied by a permanent structure (Ystrad Mynach Hospital) and as such was designated brownfield land.

The images below show an aerial view of Trinity Fields School, Ystrad Mynach Park and surrounding area, demonstrating the level of development over a 14 year timeframe.

2006



2020



### Ystrad Mynach Park and Green Flag Status

Ystrad Mynach Park is located to the south of Ystrad Mynach off Caerphilly Road, CF83 7EP.



The Park covers approximately 11 hectares of open green spaces with a variety of facilities including rugby and football pitches, tennis court, a bowling green and a children's playground. In addition, the Centre of Sporting Excellence also falls within the boundary of the park.

The Green Flag Award is all about connecting people with the very best parks and green spaces and the Council appreciates a good quality environment can have a big impact on our communities, health and well-being, and economy.

Keep Wales Tidy judge Green Flag status against 27 different criteria divided into 8 sections:

| Section                                 | Criteria  | Section  | Criteria  |
|---|---|--|---|
| Section 1:<br>A welcoming Place         | Welcome<br>Good and Safe Access<br>Signage<br>Equal Access for All  | Section 5:<br>Biodiversity,<br>Landscape and<br>Heritage | Management of Natural Features, Wild Fauna and Flora Conservation of Landscape Features<br>Conservation of Buildings and Structures |
| Section 2:<br>Healthy, Safe and Secure  | Appropriate Provision of Quality Facilities and Activities<br>Safe Equipment and Facilities<br>Personal Security<br>Control of Dogs/Dog Fouling | Section 6:<br>Community Involvement                      | Community Involvement in Management and Development Appropriate Provision for Community   |
| Section 3:<br>Well Maintained and Clean | Litter and Waste Management Horticultural Maintenance Arboricultural Maintenance Building and Infrastructure Maintenance Equipment Maintenance  | Section 7:<br>Marketing and Communication                | Marketing and Promotion Appropriate Information Channels Appropriate Educational and Interpretational Information                   |
| Section 4:<br>Environmental Management  | Managing Environmental Impact<br>Waste Minimisation<br>Chemical Use<br>Peat Use<br>Climate Change Adaption Strategies                           | Section 8:<br>Management                                 | Implementation of Management Plan   |

This year, 224 parks and green spaces across the country have received the prestigious Green Flag Award and Green Flag Community Award from country parks and formal gardens, to allotments, woodlands and churchyards. 7 green spaces in Caerphilly have been awarded green flag status, namely Penallta Park, Cwmcarn Forest, Morgan Jones Park, Parc Cwm Darren, Waunfawr Park, Ystrad Mynach Park and Brithdir Cemetery.

Whilst the land identified for development as part of this proposal falls within the park boundary, it equates to 6% of the entire area and repurposing of this land will have a minimal impact on the variety of amenities available. Keep Wales Tidy have been contacted as part of the pre-planning process and have indicated this proposal will not impact on the Green Flag status for Ystrad Mynach Park.

### Community Impact

Consultees have also indicated the wider usage of the proposed site for recreational activities such as dog walking, socialising, play and picnics will no longer be available. This has been a consideration of this proposal.



The Council is supportive of investing in resources that can help get people active and participating in activities to enhance education and wellbeing. This is evidenced by significant investment in 3G pitches within a 5 mile radius of Ystrad Mynach and in primary education within the Ystrad Mynach Area (2 classroom extension on Ystrad Mynach Primary and development of a 4 classroom extension at Ysgol Bro Allta).

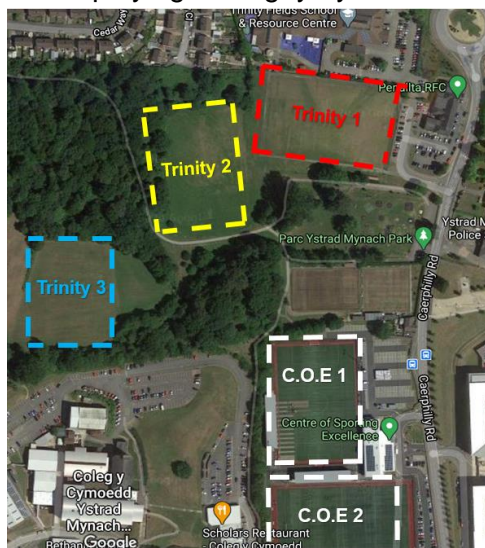
The proposal to expand Trinity Fields School incorporates facilities which will be available for wider community use for example a hall and hydrotherapy pool.

The proposal relates to 6% of the wider park area and the range of facilities available in the park will remain unaffected for activities such as dog walking, picnics and play, therefore this is a minimal reduction and impact in the space available to undertake such activities on the local community.

## Rugby Pitch

There are 116 football and rugby pitches provided by the Council and over 2,200 individual matches played on them last year. The Council recognises the importance of providing safe and stimulating locations throughout the borough and seeks opportunities to improve existing facilities and develop new provision where need is identified.

The Councils acknowledges that this proposal will impact on the removal of one Council owned pay-as-you-use sports pitch, primarily used for the playing of Rugby by Penallta RFC, locally referred to as Trinity 1.



This is one of five pay-as-you-use sports pitches available on site within the boundaries of the park.

The council is fully aware of the Planning Policy Wales guidelines relating to the protection of playing fields from development except where:

- *facilities can best be retained and enhanced through the redevelopment of a small part of the site;*
- *alternative provision of equivalent community benefit is made available locally, avoiding any temporary loss of provision; or*
- *there is an excess of such provision in the area.*

The requirements of Planning Policy Wales are echoed in Council's Local Development Plan Policy CW82, and the Council is currently working with Penallta RFC to provide an alternative replacement pay-as-you-use facility, off site and within convenient access by foot (0.4 miles / 10 minute walk) consisting of 1 enhanced existing pitch and an additional pitch to mitigate the loss of Trinity 1.

The Council has also recently invested in a number of all weather 3G pitches within a 5 mile radius of Trinity 1.

| Location of 3G facility            | Distance from Trinity Fields (T1) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Centre of Sporting Excellence      | 0.2 miles                         |
| Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni (Gelli Haf) | 2.2 miles                         |
| Lewis School Pengam                | 2.8 miles                         |
| Blackwood Comprehensive            | 3.3 miles                         |
| Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni (Y Gwyndy)  | 4.2 miles                         |
| St Cenydd Community School         | 4.7 miles                         |
| Islwyn High School                 | 5.2 miles                         |

The facilities provide local sports clubs with the opportunity to play and train all year around. The multi-use pitches can be used in all weather and are utilised by a number of different sports including football and rugby. Penallta RFC who will be impacted by this proposal has regular bookings in operation and utilises a number of locations for matches and training.

| Area of concern:                           | Consultee Responses included:   |
|--|---|
| <b>Alternative Location for the school</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand on other pitch on site</li> <li>• Build upwards</li> <li>• New build at other location</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions                         | 188   |

### Council's Response

The Council acknowledges that a number of alternative options have been brought forward by consultees as solutions to the increasing demand for specialist support at Trinity Fields but without expanding onto the pitch as the preferred option.

#### Expand on other pitch on site

The consultees refer to expanding the school onto another pitch. For ease of reference, this is identified as Trinity 2.



Trinity 2 also falls within the boundary of Ystrad Mynach Park. As part of the project planning due diligence, expansion onto Trinity 2 was considered. The Council considers this is not a viable option for a number of reasons. Firstly, the Trinity 2 pitch does not adjoin the school site as demonstrated in the image above and so it would not be possible to create the desired homogeneous 3-18 school and there would also be access and parking difficulties.

In formulating this proposal, attention was given to the Local Development Plan policy. The current Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on the 23 November 2010 and identifies where new developments such as housing, employment, community facilities, and roads, will go. It provides a framework for local decision-making and brings together both development and conservation interests to ensure that any changes in the use of land are coherent and provides maximum benefits to the community.

The LDP sets out the council's land use policies and proposals to control development in the county borough up to 2021 and provides the basis by which planning applications will be determined consistently and appropriately. The plan gives a clear indication of where development will be encouraged and where it will be resisted.

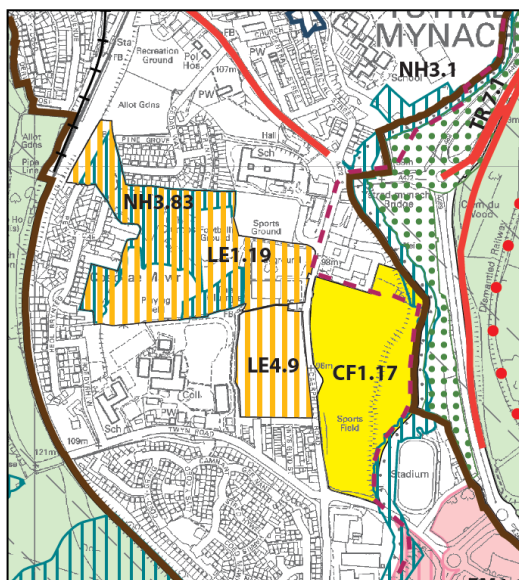


Image courtesy of the [LDP Interactive Proposal/Constraints Map](#)

The proposed site as identified as 'sports ground' on the Local Development Plan map does not have any controls indicated. However, the areas adjacent to the proposed site, including Trinity 2 is within the remit of LE1.19 and NH 3.83. These are the Formal Leisure facility (Ystrad Mynach Park) and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (Coedcae Mawr) respectively. Therefore, approval to develop this area is likely to be denied.

### **Build upwards**

Unfortunately, this is not a viable option for a number of reasons. Firstly, the school was not designed to support a first floor so a new support structure would be required. Furthermore, the school would need to close for more than a year to allow the construction to take place and the existing school building would be significantly disrupted and damaged by the process. Extending the school upwards would also not provide the access to additional external play areas that is essential for the wellbeing of pupils.

### **New build at other location**

The option to build a new school at another location was considered as part of formulating this proposal and was identified as Option 5 in the Options Appraisal undertaken.

A number of consultees have expressed concerns that the number of children and young people requiring the levels of support provided by Trinity Fields may exceed the figure outlined in the consultation document and therefore expansion would not be sufficient. In addition, the Council is aware that the BBC has recently aired a 3-part documentary celebrating the lives of those who attend Ysgol Y Deri in Penarth which is a multi-floored facility, the biggest special education needs school in Wales and this may have reflected in the support for a new facility. The Council welcomes the support received by consultees who have recognised the needs of our most vulnerable pupils must be met and would like to provide the

additional clarification as to why a new build facility was not carried forward as the preferred option in addition to the information provided as part of the options appraisal.

The Council has a responsibility to develop provision to meet need and must review this regularly in line with the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act. The Council promotes inclusion and supports the principle that the majority of children can have their needs met in mainstream settings. The Council works with schools, families and other partners to identify appropriate provision and for a small number of children this may be at a special school.

We have a well established approach to meeting complex needs with a high level of expertise. Caerphilly has a continuum of provision that includes supporting pupils with less significant needs in mainstream classes, through to Special Resource Bases, satellite classes and of course Trinity Fields School.

The needs of children who attend Trinity Fields are significant and complex and through rigorous assessment it is identified that the most suitable provision can be delivered through a special school. Understandably the needs (cognitive, behavioural and medical) of pupils on the main school site are the most complex in the county borough and are well supported by a team that includes staff from education and health (physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, speech and language therapists, dieticians, special nurses from Child and Adolescent Learning Disabilities Service (CALDS) and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) etc.

The aim of the proposal is to ensure that we continue to build on the mature leadership and expertise at the existing site, and develop this even further in ensuring collaboration with health and social care colleagues. In further expanding this model we are able to develop the outreach support to other settings without compromising Trinity Fields School. This option is highlighted in the proposal as the preferred way forward. Additionally, Trinity Fields School is at a central, accessible location and close to the hospital.

Critically this model will allow us to successfully respond to our legal duties in accordance with the ALN Act.

| Area of concern:   | Consultee Responses included:   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Flooding</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current situation</li> <li>• Impact of proposal</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions | 105   |

### Council's Response

The Council recognises that protecting life and property from the risk of flooding is an emotive subject for many. The major flooding events we have seen across the UK over the last few years serve to remind us of the devastating affects flooding can have.

During February 2020, Wales experienced four noteworthy rainfall events on the back of a very wet winter period:

- **Storm Ciara:** 8 – 9 February 2020
- **Storm Dennis:** 15 – 17 February 2020
- **Unnamed Storm:** 21 – 24 February 2020
- **Storm Jorge:** 28 February – 1 March 2020

Wales has not seen a wetter February since records began in 1862. It was also the fifth wettest month on record, resulting in some of the most significant flooding Wales has seen since the 1970s.

While it was a period that challenged and stretched the resilience of everybody involved in the response, it was also a period that galvanised communities and brought the fortitude of residents and emergency responders right to the fore.

### Current situation

The Caerphilly county borough is no different from the rest of the UK and almost every location can be prone to flooding, even if you don't live near a river.

Both Trinity 1 (the proposed site) and Trinity 2 are within Zone B on the current Natural Resources Wales Developer Advice Maps for main river flood risk.

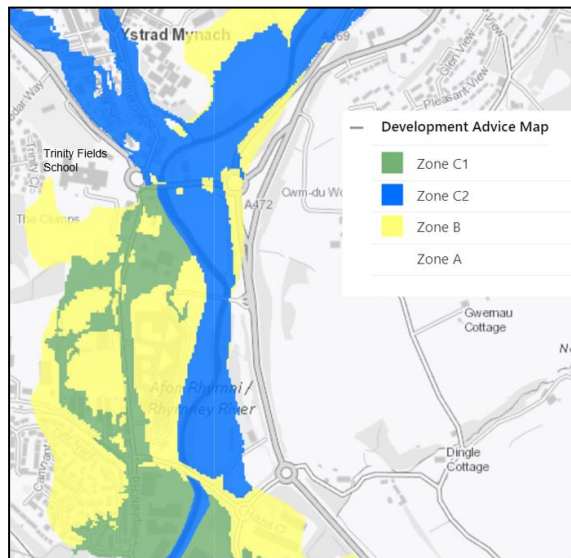


Image courtesy of [Natural Resources Wales Development Advice Map](#)

However, whereas Trinity 1 is at low risk of flooding from surface water and small watercourses. Trinity 2 is at high risk of flooding from surface water and small watercourses. This accords with the flooding history of the pitches.

The Trinity 2 pitch currently forms part of the functional flood plain for both the Rhymney River and the tributaries that run through Parc Ystrad Mynach and is at a lower level than Trinity 1. The Council upgraded the Pitch drainage in 2013 to discharge into a small watercourse (stream) that then flows into the Rhymney River. When river levels are high, it may not be possible for rainwater to leave the pitch drainage system resulting in flooding to the pitch. This reinforces why the development of Trinity 2 would not be a viable alternative as it may constitute a significant risk of exacerbating off-site flooding issues.

### Impact of proposal

The proposed extension will be designed to the current Welsh Government Sustainable Drainage Statutory Guidance (SuDS) which was introduced in January 2019. The key aims of the SuDS include *reducing damage by flooding* and *protecting and improving the environment*. In practice this means the rainwater falling on the developed area will be attenuated and off site discharge flow rates slowed down. The proposed drainage will be reviewed and will need to be approved by the SuDS Approving Body before any construction work begins. The proposed development will also require a Flood Consequences Assessment that will be reviewed by the Local Planning Authority and Natural Resources Wales prior to construction commencing to ensure the development will not exacerbate flooding on adjacent roads.

| Area of concern:   | Consultee Responses included:  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Rugby Club</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical Impact</li> <li>• Loss of income</li> <li>• Impact on players</li> <li>• Use of pitches and Centre of Excellence</li> <li>• Mitigation options</li> <li>• Sue Noakes / Walking Routes</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions | 185  |

**Council's Response**

The Council appreciates that the proposal to develop has implications for the local sporting club, Penallta RFC. A number of consultees, 185 who have identified themselves as members or linked to players of the club, have expressed their reservations.

The Council has included the club as one of the consultees for the proposal, and has engaged in discussions with the club since November 2019, looking at options to mitigate the impact as outlined later in this document.

The Council wishes to provide the following areas of comment in relation to the specific areas raised by consultees:

**Historical Impact**

The Council recognises that through previous investment in the local area, Penallta RFC was relocated. Working closely with the club, an enhanced and modern club house was provided for lease to Penallta RFC and a number of pitches were made available.

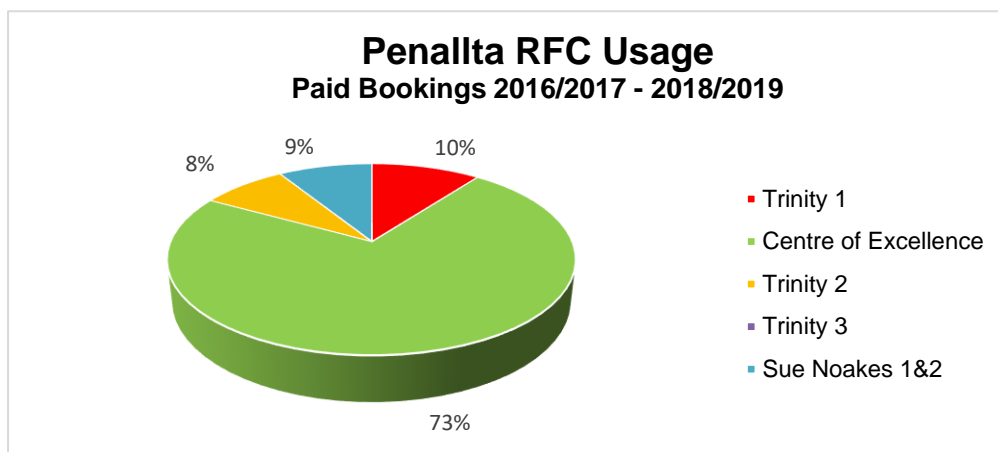


Image of Penallta RFC Clubhouse

**Loss of income**

Concerns have been raised by consultees in relation to the potential for lost income as a result of this proposal through reduced hospitality sales at the club house should matches be played elsewhere.

The removal of the proposed pitch for the expansion of Trinity Fields School should not have a significant impact on Penallta Rugby Club as the level of provision available to them is in excess of other clubs and they currently utilise a range of local facilities. Over the last 3 years, the usage of Trinity 1 has equated to 10% of recorded paid usage.



Penallta RFC believe the usage on Trinity 1 is in excess of that outlined by the Council. However, the figures quoted below have been calculated based upon records maintained by Parks Services of booked and paid usage. The bookings figures shown include a mix of training and matches.

Within the last 3 years, Penallta RFC has paid the Council to play on Trinity 1 (the proposed site):

- 2016 / 2017 = 25 bookings (2 Senior, 23 Youth, 0 Mini)
- 2017 / 2018 = 31 bookings (3 Senior, 28 Youth, 0 Mini)
- 2018 / 2019 = 17 bookings (1 Senior, 16 Youth, 0 Mini)

The Council has on record, the following bookings at alternative locations:

The Centre of excellence:

- 2016 / 2017 = 192 bookings (90 Senior, 31 Youth, 71 Mini)
- 2017 / 2018 = 222 bookings (70 Senior, 71 Youth, 81 Mini)
- 2018 / 2019 = 153 bookings (70 Senior, 13 Youth, 70 Mini)

Trinity 2:

- 2016 / 2017 = 21 bookings (1 Senior, 20 Youth, 0 Mini)
- 2017 / 2018 = 26 bookings (0 Senior, 26 Youth, 0 Mini)
- 2018 / 2019 = 15 bookings (0 Senior, 15 Youth, 0 Mini)

Trinity 3:

- No bookings have been registered

Sue Noakes 1 & 2:

- 2016 / 2017 = 9 bookings (0 Senior, 9 Youth, 0 Mini)
- 2017 / 2018 = 16 bookings (0 Senior, 16 Youth, 0 Mini)
- 2018 / 2019 = 48 bookings (0 Senior, 48 Youth, 0 Mini)

In addition, as indicated previously and through the Sports and Leisure Departments booking system, we can confirm that the club also has regular slots booked on other 3G pitches in the Borough.

### Impact on players

There are lots of ways the Council are supporting community and grassroots sport from providing grant support to clubs, investing in resources that can help get people active and measuring the latest rates of participation. As evidenced above there has been significant investment in state of the art all-weather 3G provision in the area which is being utilised by the club and the wider community.

The Council recognises the importance of keeping people of all ages active and as mentioned, is working with the club to provide enhanced facilities to ensure that the impact is mitigated.

### Use of pitches and Centre of Excellence

The Centre of Sporting Excellence is a modern all-weather facility catering for a range of sports. Opened in 2014 it is an important regional sporting asset. The Centre's facilities include an IRB 22 ratified 3G rugby pitch, a FIFA 2 star 3G football pitch, conference rooms, a strength and conditioning room and medical & first aid rooms. As evidenced by the Council in the usage graph outlined previously, the usage of the Centre of Sporting Excellence equated to hosting 73% of Penallta RFC's matches and training between 2016/17 to 2018/19.

### Mitigation options

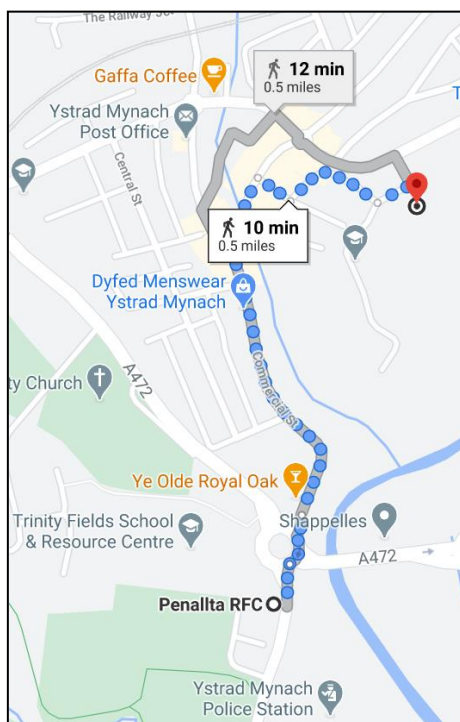
The Council has been working with the club and other stakeholders to explore physical measures to mitigate the loss of Trinity 1. Specifically, it is currently proposed that:

- Trinity 2 is fenced as is and consideration be given to adding training lighting subject to meeting statutory obligations.
- Trinity 3 is marked out as a pitch and posts erected.
- An improved senior pitch is created at Sue Noakes with spectator areas, barriers and enhanced training lighting, together with a second pitch.
- Subject to Cabinet approval, consideration will be given to establishing the viability, benefits and drawbacks of progressing Fields in Trust protection in perpetuity to the retained pitches.

### Sue Noakes / Walking Routes

As outlined above, an enhanced facility at Sue Noakes is one of the mitigating options being investigated. Consultees have raised the conflict between Rugby relocation and current football usage on the site. At present the Sue Noakes site does not have any designated football posts or markings to utilise this area in this manner and is therefore open for development.

The Council acknowledges that the proposed mitigation site at Sue Noakes is not directly adjacent to the clubhouse, however it is within 0.5 miles and closer than some of the 3G facilities the club is currently accessing. The route outlined on the map below, is accessible via pedestrian footpaths and has parking on site.





| Area of concern:          | Consultee Responses included:  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Traffic Management</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access and parking</li> <li>• Increased traffic flow at proposed site</li> <li>• Transportation of pupils and Out of catchment</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions        | 17   |

### Council's Response

As part of any development, the Council is committed to providing safe, efficient and effective traffic management. As a highway authority, we have a duty to manage the road network to ensure, as far as possible, the safe and convenient movement of traffic, which includes pedestrians and other vulnerable road users. Consideration will be given to this as part of the planning process.

**Access and parking**

The site identified for the expansion of Trinity Fields School is directly adjacent to the existing premises, so existing learner travel arrangements will still be in place should the proposal be taken forward

In addition, as part of the planning and design of the extension facility, safer routes will be established with a newly designated pick up and drop off point.

**Increased traffic flow at proposed site**

Traffic management involves the use of a range of measures to help keep traffic moving safely. These measures are provided in accordance with our policy.

This proposal will be subject to a full planning application process and a wide range of consultees will be invited to comment, including the Highways Department.

**Transportation of pupils and 'Out of catchment'**

As outlined in the Consultation Document, the catchment area for Trinity Fields School is the County Borough and this will remain unchanged as part of this proposal. Due to the specialist learning needs, all pupils are transported to site at present, 98% of which reside within the catchment area of the school.

### ➤ Areas of widest Agreement

| Area of Agreement:     | Consultee Responses included:  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>Growing Demands</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projections</li> <li>• Specialist intervention</li> <li>• Standards of support</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions     | 227  |

### Council's Response

The Council appreciates the level of support shown from consultees in relation to this proposal and the general consensus that there is growing demand for specialist provision.

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 which includes places that meet the needs of the pupils with any additional learning needs. The Council works closely with schools, families and other partners to promote inclusion and support the principle that the majority of children can have their needs met in mainstream settings.

However, with increasingly sophisticated medical interventions children are surviving longer and are coming into school at 3 with increasingly complex learning and medical needs. The needs of vulnerable children with the most significant and complex needs are likely to be best met through specialist provision that is not available through mainstream.

The Council works closely with multiagency professionals in the field as well as with the school, Flying Start and Health Visitors. Utilising data from the Integrated Service for Children with Additional Needs (ISCAN), a fortnightly placement panel convenes to calculate the number of places that are required on site.

Reviewing historic data linked to Statutory processes, growth has been identified as an area requiring action. There is a similar picture across Wales in terms of increasing numbers of pupils accessing special schools.

In addition, admissions are decided via a Specialist Placement Panel, where a statutory process is followed to discuss pupils' individual needs. This applies to all pupils. The panel gives consideration to recommendations for placement taking into account the following criteria:

- Availability of places
- Pupils' needs
- Parents/carers view on the placement

This information has supported the proposal for expansion and indicates that the additional 80 places will be filled over a number of years and sufficient to future proof the school for years to come.

The proposal to expand Trinity Fields builds upon the school's exceptional experience and commitment in supporting a spectrum of needs and developing a highly inclusive and supportive ethos for all. This is reflected in the 2019 Estyn inspection report whereby Trinity Fields received an 'Excellent' rating across all 5 inspection areas.

| Area of Agreement:           | Consultee Responses included:   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Additional Facilities</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for more facilities</li> <li>• One location</li> <li>• Multiple Services</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions           | 69  |
| <b>Council's Response</b>    |   |
|                              |   |

The Council is committed to ensuring that all learners have equality of opportunity no matter where that education may be delivered (as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 28)).

The Council is committed to focusing on what is important for the individual, and what will work best for them. This proposal recognises that there is a need to ensure facilities are provided that can support and deliver high quality education for these most vulnerable pupils. The proposed expansion will provide facilities that can be utilised by the school, partners in health and social care and the community.



*Note: The image above is used for illustrative purposes and the design is draft at this stage and subject to project approval, planning and site investigations.*

Facilities will include a new entrance, classrooms, multi-function rooms that could be used by colleagues from Health and Social Care together with a small number of hot desks, new Family Room, Rebound, Soft Play and new Hydrotherapy Pool and Hall.

In addition, in order to ensure that all children at Trinity Fields School can access the widest range of educational opportunities available the Council works in partnership with Health Services and Social Care to provide a range of services that support the development of wellbeing (physical and emotional) in a holistic manner from a single, centralised location in the Borough.

| Area of Agreement:   | Consultee Responses included:  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Community Use</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to facilities for families</li> <li>• Wider Community use</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions   | 40   |

### Council's Response

The Council acknowledges that consultees recognise the importance of access to facilities for families and wider community use.

#### **Access to facilities for families**

The school is open 51 weeks of the year, 6 days a week. As part of the proposal, the Council has demonstrated the need to integrate external agencies and promote wider usage of a selection of facilities at Trinity Fields school. The school currently supports the respite and youth leisure holiday scheme, water baby sessions and a spondylitis group.

Families do not stand in isolation but are connected to schools. Families are the foundation of communities and play a critical role in the wellbeing of all family members.

Many families with children with intellectual disability find it hard to get the life others take for granted.

This proposal will further enhance and build relationships with families, to provide them with a sense of wellbeing and better equip them to lead happy and healthy lives. To illustrate this point further, one consultee stated:

*'As a parent I would be able to access the pool and rebound therapy rooms out of school hours which would be fantastic! I am limited where I can take my son as places which have proper disability equipment are few and far between. This would be such a bonus and enrich our whole family's life.'*

### **Wider Community use**

One of the key aims of the Welsh Government's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Band B programme and a pre-requisite for investment is the need to *'ensure the effective and efficient use of the educational estate for use by both schools and the wider community'*.

The Consultation document highlighted that at present, community usage is limited due to the current design and the need for appropriate safeguards and security to be in place.

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. It will also strengthen and safeguard the promotion of inclusivity and wellbeing within the Community.

### **Reasonable Alternatives Identified**

As outlined in the Consultation Document, the proposal under consideration is to expand the current provision at Trinity Fields School. This was the preferred option as identified through the options appraisal process and scored against the critical success factors of Strategic fit, Educational fit, Accessibility, Financial fit and Environmental impact.

Through the consultation process and the comments returned, there has been an acknowledgement of the need to invest in the school.

Following the consultation period, the Council is required to carry out a further assessment for the proposal. The purpose of this further assessment is to take account of any further information that has come forward through the consultation or otherwise.

In its consultation report, the Council is required to explain its assessment of the proposal and the reasonable alternatives identified, how this assessment differs from their earlier assessment (if at all) and its assessment of any further reasonable alternatives. Finally, the Council is required to confirm whether it considers the implementation of the proposal, (wholly or partly) to be the most appropriate response to the reasons it identified for the proposal and give reasons for its conclusion including an assessment of the likely impact on Quality and Standards in Education, the community and effect on different travelling arrangements.

The following alternative options have been raised via Consultees:

|   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| <b>Alternative Option raised by consultees</b>  |                            |
| <i>Expand the school at the current location but expand upwards instead of outwards making it a multi-story facility</i>  |                            |
| <b>Council's Response</b>   |                            |
| <p>The Council welcomes consultee acknowledgement that the existing Trinity Fields School requires investment and that the current building would not be suitable to accommodate the growing demand.</p> <p>The structural reasons outlined previously in this document provide the basis for discounting this as an option.</p> <p>The Council has also considered the impact on quality and standards, community and travel arrangements.</p> <p>Any works undertaken to develop the existing building as suggested would cause disruption to daily school operations, requiring re-location of the existing cohort, this would significantly slow the progress pupils will make in their learning. There is no alternative accommodation within the borough that would be able to cater for the needs of these pupils.</p> |                            |
| Council's Assessment of Reasonable Alternative:   | Option has been discounted |

|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| <b>Alternative Option raised by consultees</b>   |                            |
| <i>Expand the school onto an alternative pitch at the current location</i>   |                            |
| <b>Council's Response</b>  |                            |
| <p>As outlined earlier in this Consultation Report, the Council is dedicated to providing educational facilities that meet the needs of our pupils and local communities.</p> <p>The consultee suggestion to expand onto an alternative pitch (Trinity 2) has been explored. The Council has also considered the impact on quality and standards, community and travel arrangements in relation to this option.</p> <p>As evidenced above, the physical feasibility as to why Trinity 2 is not a viable option is outlined and would be unlikely to gain planning consent.</p> |                            |
| Council's Assessment of Reasonable Alternative:  | Option has been discounted |

| <b>Alternative Option raised by consultees</b>  |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| <i>Build a new Trinity Fields school at an alternative location within the borough</i>  |                            |
| <b>Council's Response</b>   |                            |
| <p>A number of consultees have made the suggestion that a new school build would be a preferable option for Trinity Fields School.</p> <p>As part of the options appraisal undertaken for this proposal, a new build facility at an alternative location was considered as Option 5.</p> <p>The following disbenefits have been identified, which include consideration of the impact on standards, community and travel arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disruption to existing cohort identified as vulnerable learners through relocation process</li> <li>• Demolition of a school building that has already received 21<sup>st</sup> Century School investment money and is suitable to deliver education for a number of years to come.</li> <li>• Identifying viable land in the Authority and costs and time associated with purchasing this</li> </ul> <p>A whole new school development is unlikely to be approved by the Welsh Government 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Scrutiny and Investment panel as it would not meet their aims and objectives e.g. duplication of existing provision and financial implications</p> <p>The current proposal has been framed in such a way as to minimise the impact on the existing cohort, build upon the 'excellence' achievement as highlighted through the Estyn inspection, whilst ensuring the identified demand for Specialist education is met.</p> <p>In addition, the existing school has received significant investment to improve the existing site in preparation for the proposed extension and there is no evidence to support that a whole new school build on an alternative site is required.</p> <p>Therefore, this alternative option has already been discounted.</p> |                            |
| <b>Council's Assessment of Reasonable Alternative:</b>  | Option has been discounted |



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.

### **Everyday Summary Version – Children and Young People**

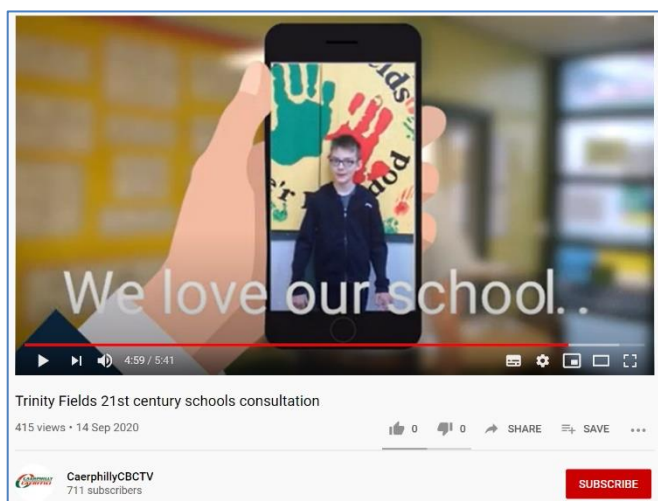
The Council acknowledged that the voice of young people is about involving them as active participants in the development, delivery, management and improvement of their educational and student experience and needs to be at the heart of planning, provision and evaluation.

A summary version of the main consultation document was also prepared, published and targeted specifically at children and young people. This summary version was released online as part of the consultation pack and hardcopies were made available on request.

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p><b>21st Century Schools – Consultation Children and Young People’s Summary</b></p> <p><b>Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre</b><br/>14<sup>th</sup> September– 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020</p>  <p>Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif<br/>21st Century Schools</p>   |  <p>Hi, I'm Vision and this is my dog K9-2.1<br/>We're here to talk to you about an exciting project and we want to know what you think!</p> <p>Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif<br/>21st Century Schools</p> | <p><b>What we'll talk about:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What this presentation is about?</li> <li>• What is the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme?</li> <li>• What is the project being proposed?</li> <li>• Who else are we talking with?</li> <li>• How can you tell us what you think?</li> <li>• Why is it important for us to know your views?</li> <li>• Why do we want to carry out the project?</li> <li>• Will other schools be affected?</li> <li>• How will the project impact on things like...             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Education and Quality</li> <li>✓ Governance and Staffing</li> <li>✓ Finance</li> <li>✓ Welsh Language</li> <li>✓ Travel and the Environment</li> <li>✓ Equality</li> <li>✓ Specialist Facilities and Additional Learning Needs</li> <li>✓ The Community</li> </ul> </li> <li>• What will the benefits and disadvantages be?</li> <li>• Are there any risks?</li> <li>• Why this project and not something else?</li> <li>• How long are we gathering views?</li> <li>• What will happen next?</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|

## Consultation Video

The Council recognises the potential of young people to enrich decision-making processes, to share perspectives and to participate as citizens and facilitators of change.



As such, in preparing the Consultation Packs, pupils from the school contributed to the content and participated in the consultation video.

Pupil participation enabled the children to have a chance to make their voice heard and get involved in influencing decisions that affect their learning and well-being.

A recording is available on YouTube:

[Trinity Fields 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Consultation](#)

## School Council / Pupil Engagement

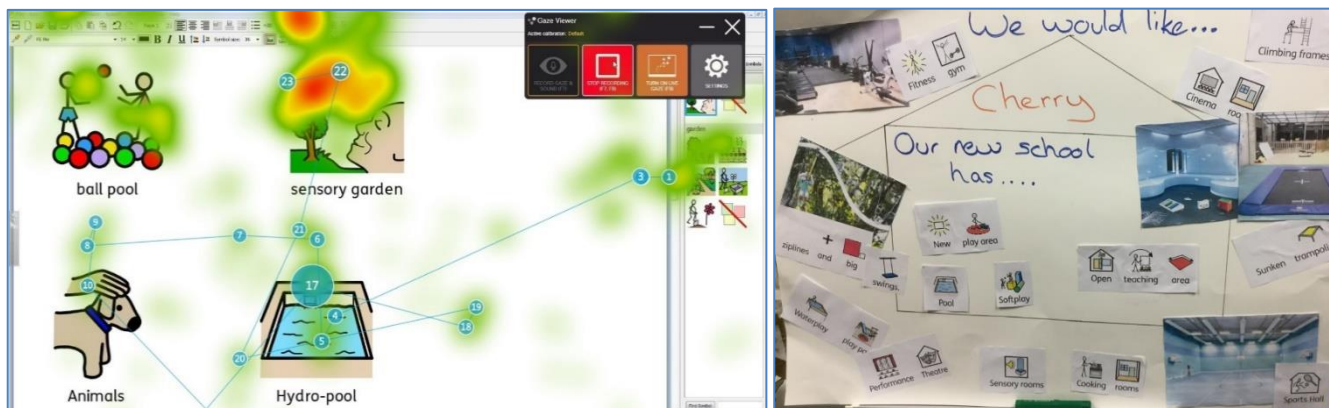
The 21st Century Schools Team in Caerphilly will ensure that when bringing forward any proposal, suitable arrangements are made to consult and involve pupils throughout the process.

As identified in the Consultation Document, nearly all the pupils attending Trinity Fields School have a statement of special educational needs for severe learning difficulties, physical and medical difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders. Trinity Fields School has a very active school council and is a highly inclusive community where all pupils feel safe and valued. Pupils play an active and influential role in shaping the life and work of the school.

It was acknowledged at an early stage that in order to provide the opportunities for the young people to express their views in relation to this proposal, engaging with staff at the school would be vital. The school's exemplary levels of care, support and guidance and through utilising the child friendly version of the consultation document and the accompanying video, children were

engaged in a familiar environment, at the appropriate comprehension level and in the format of their preference.

Many of the children provided comments on what they would like to see in the future and how they felt about the proposal. Many pupils utilised verbal communication, however, evidence of what the pupils felt they wanted were also captured via heatmaps using eye recognition cursor movement, symbols and braille.



Images above were responses provided as part of the Consultation Sessions with pupils at Trinity Fields School

Notes from each session were recorded and have been included as part of the consultation responses which will be made available to Cabinet. Where answers were provided in other formats, these have been transcribed ad-verbatim. Original copies are being retained centrally at the school and electronic copies are available for Cabinet members on request.

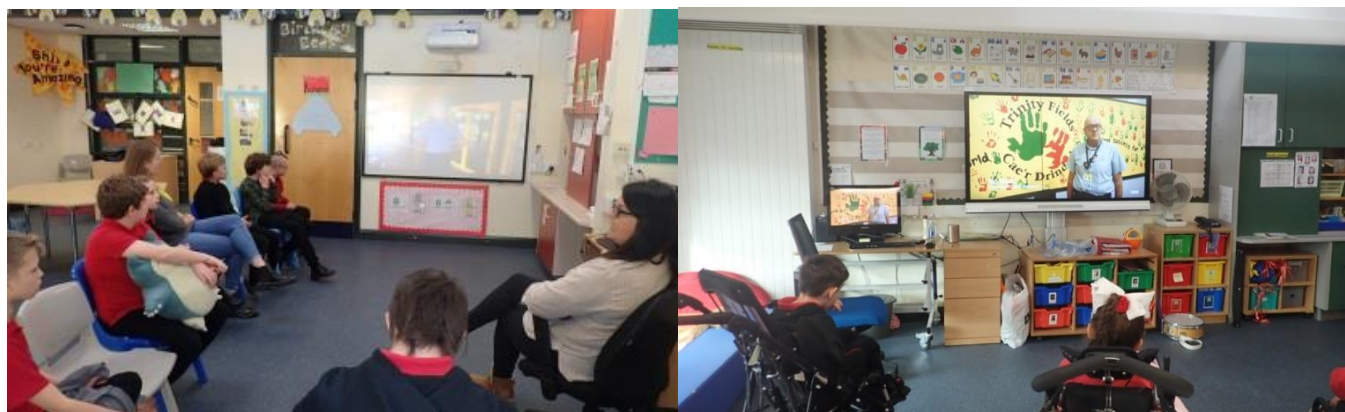
The questions raised by pupils during these sessions are outlined below:

➤ School directly affected by Proposal

| Trinity Fields School   |   |
|---|---|
| Questions   | Council's Response  |
| When will it be ready?<br>How long will it take?<br>When will be able to move in? | The proposal is for the new section of the school to open in September 2023.  |
| Will it be the same as our school?  | The proposal is to expand the existing school so the new section will be new.   |
| Where will the new school be?   | The proposal is to expand the school out onto the car park area and rugby pitch so the school will still be where it is now, just larger. |
| Would the new building replace the school that we are in now?                     | No, the proposal is to expand onto the existing school.   |
| Will it be big?   | The new building will make the entire school bigger, almost double what it is now.  |



|  |  |
|--|--|
| How many classes will there be?                      | Final arrangement in relation to internal design of the new school are still to be finalised. We are working on a figure of 10 at present. |
| Will there be a library?                             | Yes, there will be a library   |
| Can we have more computers and laptops?              | There will be more IT facilities in the new classrooms.  |
| Can we have a waterbed?                              | There isn't one planned at present but , the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team will feed these comments back to the designers          |
| Will the memorial garden and allotment area be safe? | That will be the head teacher decision   |
| Will we be able to keep the allotments?              | That will be the head teacher decision   |
| Will we have more spaces to play and be active?      | Yes, there will be a new courtyard area  |
| Where will the rugby pitch be moved to?              | An alternative provision is proposed to be provided at the nearby Sue Noakes site.   |
| Will the rugby boys be ok?                           | We are working with the rugby club to look at how we can find alternative places to play.  |
| Can we visit the new school?                         | If you want to visit the new school if you have already left, that will be the head teachers decision.                                     |



*Images from a Consultation Session undertaken with pupils at Trinity Fields School*



*Images from a Consultation Session undertaken with pupils at Trinity Fields School*

➤ Other schools identified as being affected

Due to the nature of the provision at Trinity Fields, no individual schools were identified as being 'affected' by the proposal. Regardless, the Head Teachers of every school in the borough were contacted during the consultation period whereby the consultation proposal was discussed and the pupils, governing body and staff at the school invited to provide their responses as part of the consultation process. Where information has been submitted, responses are included as part of the separate annex available to Cabinet.



## Other Considerations



"Our national mission is to raise standards, reduce the attainment gap and deliver an education system that is a source of national pride and confidence."

*Kirsty Williams AM  
Cabinet Secretary for Education*

As Wales embarks on a renewed vision of success for all learners, we can reflect on our rich heritage and proud history for promoting access to education in Caerphilly. Our transformational reforms are taking place within a challenging environment. This includes the uncertainties associated with Brexit, the technological transformation and the divergence in the qualification systems across the home nations. These are all challenges and opportunities for the Council.

There are a number of local and national strategies that drive Educational reform and underline the rationale for the proposals being considered as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Band B programme in Caerphilly.

- [Welsh Language Act 1993 / Welsh Language \(Wales\) measure 2011](#)
- [Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal \(Wales\) Act 2017](#)
- [The Childcare Act 2006 \(Local Authority Assessment\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)
- [Welsh Government - Education in Wales: Our National Mission](#)
- [Welsh Government - Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy Action Plan 2019- 2021](#)
- [Welsh Government - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Programme](#)
- [Caerphilly - 'Shared Ambitions' Education Attainment Strategy 2019 - 2022](#)
- [Caerphilly - #Team Caerphilly: Better Together Transformation Strategy](#)
- [Caerphilly - Welsh Education Strategic Plan](#)
- [Caerphilly - Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022](#)
- [Caerphilly - Corporate Plan \(including Wellbeing Objectives 2018-2023\)](#)
- [Caerphilly – Education Other Than at School \(EOTAS\) Strategy 2020](#)
- [Caerphilly - Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024](#)
- [Caerphilly - Communication and Engagement Strategy 2019-2022](#)



## Next Steps

### Recommendation

In reviewing the proposal to take account of further information that has come forward through the consultation and in consideration of the likely impact on quality and standards in education, the community and travelling arrangements, it is the recommendation of this report that the proposal is progressed as outlined in the Consultation Document, namely:

**Expand the existing Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre, via a new building extension and outdoor play space with an anticipated completion date of September 2023**

### Decision Making

To deliver our reforms across the entire system, we will need a bold commitment to effective collaboration along with integration of services where appropriate. This will include Welsh Government, the teaching profession and the wider education workforce, our key partners in local authorities, diocesan authorities, regional services, Estyn and others. Successful implementation of any proposal will require effective and honest engagement between all facets of the education system and our local communities and we are committed to providing the conditions to enable this to happen.

Cabinet Members are asked to note the information contained within this Consultation Report and to seek members views as to whether to proceed, make changes or not to proceed with the proposed expansion of the existing Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre.

### Reporting, Notification and Publishing of Information

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.



## Supporting Information

### Annex 1 :

[Consultation Response Form](#)

[Consultation Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Consultation Video](#)

[Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessment](#)

### Annex 2:



16.09.20 Estyn  
response Trinity Field:

**Estyn response to the proposal by Caerphilly County Borough Council to expand the existing Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre, via a new building extension and outdoor play space with an anticipated completion date of September 2023.**

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales. Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However, Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals. Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer.

#### Introduction

The proposal is by Caerphilly County Borough Council.

The proposal seeks to address identified need for additional facilities to accommodate growing demand for places and provide additional classrooms, specialist intervention areas and outdoor play space for pupils with special educational needs. It is proposed the additional facility will house a new and flexible hall, hydrotherapy pool and soft play facilities to increase provision on site and enhance the lives of the pupils with provision that cannot be accommodated within the current building. This new provision would also be available for community use at suitable times.

#### Summary / Conclusion

The proposer has clearly defined the benefits of establishing these additional facilities and provision for pupils and young people who have special educational needs. The proposal has been developed in line with the local authority's programme to improve its educational provision and meet the needs of children and young people with SEN. This proposal offers pupils and young people with SEN the opportunity for specialist educational experiences in a setting within their county borough. Funding has already been allocated for the council's share of the capital costs of the project and will be jointly funded by Welsh Government as part of their 21<sup>st</sup> century schools remit.

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to improve the current educational provision for children and young people with SEN.

### **Description and benefits**

The proposer has given clear rationale for the proposal. The proposer clearly states that the proposal has been made in order to meet the identified changing and more complex needs of SEN pupils living in Caerphilly with the aim of ensuring the best possible outcomes for pupils. The local authority aspires to improve the environment to create fit for purpose 21<sup>st</sup> century schools. The proposal appears to indicate that there is room to accommodate the new buildings. The proposed site for the location of the works is an adjacent piece of land to the current site owned by the local authority and utilised for recreational use. The land in question is currently configured as a rugby/football pitch available on a "pay as you use" basis. The local authority will however, work closely with the club to look at potential options for the remaining 2 pitches on site and any other actions considered appropriate. The design and management of the works will have a minimum impact on the main teaching facilities. The proposer clearly defines what the proposal means in practice and the expected benefits of the proposal. The proposed new building will provide additional facilities to accommodate growing demand for places and will provide specialist indoor intervention and outdoor play spaces. This provision will enhance pupils' provision and experiences.

A risk assessment regarding implementing the proposal has been carried out which lists as potential risks for example, the planning process itself, the impact of any planning on cost and project governance and decision making. However, the risk assessment does not identify any educational considerations.

The proposer has also considered the disadvantages within the proposal when compared with the status quo. Maintaining the status quo would not realise the opportunities of specialist provision within the county neither would it alleviate the current pressure to address demand for places for pupils with complex SEN.

The proposer has provided appropriate evidence to show that it has considered other alternatives to the current proposal and has given good reasons why these have been discounted.

The proposer has duly considered reasonable travelling distances for pupils likely to attend. Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre is the only special school within Caerphilly local authority and therefore the catchment area for the school remains unchanged. Therefore there is no impact to current journey time. Free appropriate transport is provided to all pupils who attend specialist provision within Caerphilly.

The proposer appears to have considered the extent to which the proposal would support the targets in the approved Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. It notes that there is currently no evidence of demand from parents for Welsh medium provision as no requests for such provision have been received by the school. The school understands its responsibility to record the home language of all the pupils and actively offer Welsh provision if the home language is Welsh. The school employs a number of teachers and teaching assistants who are Welsh speakers, and as such the headteacher and the local authority are confident that an effective SEN provision through the medium of Welsh could be provided is necessary. However, it is not clear whether the teaching and learning experiences would be fully equitable with that of English medium provision.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The proposer has considered suitably the impact of the proposal on the quality of the outcomes, provision and leadership and management. The proposer appropriately notes that Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre was last inspected by Estyn in 2019. The school received a judgement of excellent in all inspection areas. The report highlights a very effective setting, with strong leadership, providing excellent learning experiences and provision to all pupils. The proposer suggests that the implementation of this proposal will ensure that the school continues to build on its current excellent practice. The proposer also makes reference to the fact that Trinity Fields School and Resource Centre has consistently been a green school under the Welsh Government school categorisation process. Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, national categorisation has been suspended.

The proposed provision will ensure specialist continuity for pupils from 3 -19 years old that have severe learning difficulties, physical and medical difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders and will further complement and support SEN mainstream provision within

the county borough. In turn, this will develop expertise and capacity of staff working with children with SEN and will benefit their standards and provision.

The design and management of the work should ensure that there is minimal disruption to pupils and provision.

It is envisaged that the provision will also provide greater opportunities for working with and providing support for parents and carers. The proposed project will also facilitate community use of the building. It appears that this provision will safeguard the promotion of inclusivity within the community.

It seems that staff at Trinity Fields School and Resource base will not be adversely affected by this proposal. Increased number of pupils would appear to secure staff employment. This proposal supports the potential to expand provision and support further professional learning and development.

### **Annex 3:**

#### Consultation Responses

A separate Annex to this report will be made available to Cabinet which will include the full details of the commentary provided by consultees during the consultation process. Any identifying information will be removed as detailed earlier in this document.

Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol



# 21st Century Schools Consultation Report

YSGOL GYMRAEG CWM GWYDDON



Proposal : **Relocate Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon to a new purpose built Welsh medium provision school to be situated on the vacant site of the former Cwmcarn High School**

Formal Consultation Period : 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 – 26th October 2020

This report is published in line with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018.



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



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



**Richard Edmunds**

Corporate Director for  
Education and Corporate  
Services

# FOREWORD

*“Working together to deliver the best outcomes for all our children”*

Caerphilly County Borough Council has embarked upon an exciting but challenging journey of improvement and change. We have bold ambitions to provide every learner with the best life chances and we are committed to doing this through the provision of high quality teaching, learning and leadership across our school settings as part of our ‘Shared Ambitions’ Strategy.

We have focused on improving young people’s outcomes and this is still a priority area moving forward incorporating a holistic view of education. The Council has adopted ‘Improving education opportunities for all’ as the first of its Wellbeing Objectives and has committed to an ambitious 21st Century Schools investment programme.

In collaboration with Welsh Government, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Band B Programme is supporting investment in education within the County Borough. Our aspiration is the improvement of the condition of school buildings and maximising community usage.

Our current proposals support our commitment to increase school effectiveness and to narrow inequalities in achievement across groups; to understand the needs of more vulnerable children; promote the Welsh Language, and support those unable to access traditional learning pathways to ensure that all will benefit from the richness of learning and cultural opportunities. These principles help steer our decision making and prioritise projects.

As part of this proposal a consultation exercise has been carried out in line with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2018. All stakeholders have had the opportunity to participate and make comments.

This Consultation Report has been produced to summarise the issues raised by consultees during the consultation period including Estyn’s feedback. It aims to provide a balanced, transparent document to support Cabinet in deciding whether to progress with the proposal, make changes or not to progress.

I hope you find this document informative as a reflection of the activities undertaken to date and an insight into the journey we are on, shaping delivery and placing learning provision at the heart of our communities.

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# Introduction

## Executive Summary

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.

Caerphilly County Borough Council aspires 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.

Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon has been identified as one of the first priority projects in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B programme.

For proposals relating to schools, the School Organisation Code 2018, provides clear statutory guidance as to the processes that need to be adhered to. Undertaking a consultation exercise is one of the initial stages of progressing any proposal and is subject to Welsh Government scrutiny and Cabinet approval. From the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 until the 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020, a consultation exercise was undertaken. The purpose of the consultation was to gain views on the proposal to support and invest in the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon.

This Consultation Report is the prescribed method as outlined by the School Organisation Code 2018 for reflection, review and assessment to provide Cabinet with the information to make an informed decision as to whether to proceed with the proposal to the next stage, amend the proposal taking into account further information that has come forward through the consultation process or to close this proposal with no further actions taken.

The Report is divided into several sections with the aim to:

- Outline the consultation processes undertaken
- Provide clarification in relation to the information provided and consultee engagement
- Summarise each of the issues raised by consultees
- Set out Estyn's response to the consultation in full
- Respond to issues raised by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal or rejection of the concerns, with supporting reasons

## Statutory Obligations

This report is published in line with the requirements of the [School Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act 2013](#) and the [School Organisation Code 2018](#).

The Consultation report will be published on the Caerphilly 21<sup>st</sup> Century School website with hardcopies available on request. All information is published in Welsh and English. In addition, a child friendly summary has also been produced to ensure information is provided in an accessible format for any children and young people affected by the proposals.

## Purpose of the Consultation Report

The publication of this Consultation Report discharges the Council of its duty under the School Organisation Code 2018.

The consultation period represented an opportunity for people to learn about the proposal, ask questions and make comments. Any negative responses made during the consultation period were not 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.

The Consultation Report outlines the processes followed, provides clarity on the issues and comments received from consultees, ensures that the views of children and young people affected by the proposal are expressed and ultimately, provides Cabinet with the necessary information to take one of the following decisions:

- Proceed with the proposal
- Make changes to the proposal
- Not to proceed with the proposal

Full details of the decision making process and the stages of the proposal as outlined in the School Organisation Code 2018 have been published as part of the initial Consultation Document and is publicly available via the Council's website with hardcopies made available on request.


## 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 :

|  | Project Name                                 | Band A Investment |
|--|--|-------------------|
|  <p data-bbox="121 1845 363 1868">Image of Islwyn High School</p> | ✓ Islwyn High School                         | £22.6m            |
|  | ✓ Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Rhymini, 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             |

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

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



### What are we proposing to do?

We are proposing to:

- **Relocate Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon to a new purpose built Welsh medium provision school to be situated on the vacant site of the former Cwmcarn High School (Cwmcarn, NP11 7NG) with an anticipated occupation date of September 2023**
- It is proposed that the new building will incorporate a primary facility with Childcare, Special Resource Base (SRB), Nursery, Rising Threes and main school classrooms, main assembly hall, food technology space, a library and IT space
- The identified site will have sufficient accommodation to facilitate a new building that will provide accommodation for approximately 420 pupils plus 60 nursery places and 16 SRB places and ensure equality of access by promoting and supporting the development and delivery of inclusive education through delivery of the full curriculum to pupils in a modern, safe and inspiring learning environment
- The new building will provide a stimulating teaching and learning environment with 21<sup>st</sup> Century facilities including improved ICT facilities. The design will be centered on the learning, self-esteem and well-being of all pupils and improve lifelong learning opportunities for members of the community to strengthen and safeguard the promotion of the Welsh language, culture and heritage across Caerphilly East
- The new building will improve the outside learning space offering external play areas, a tarmac MUGA area and access to a grass pitch. The usage of sporting facilities will also be considered for the community at suitable times in keeping with the curriculum timetable
- The proposed project will take into account the desire to encourage and facilitate community use of the asset. 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 community use.

## What is driving this proposal?

Proposals have been prioritised based on a number of factors including building condition, pupil projection and local and national drivers, however, the delivery of the curriculum and the Educational agenda remains at the core.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Legislation (Wales) Act 2019, provide 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.

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) sets out Caerphilly's commitment to the Promotion of Welsh language and the provision of quality, attractive educational facilities. Within the WESP we are striving to stimulate demand for Welsh medium education, which we know is more sustainable for families if education provision is expanded in line with childcare available.

We identified a need to invest in Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon, meeting the increasing demand for education through the medium of Welsh and developing shared and co-located facilities. It is this aspiration that is driving this proposal.



## Options Appraisal

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.

An options appraisal provides the opportunity to help councils make an informed and evidence based decision on how to deliver services. It does this by considering the relative advantages

and disadvantages of a number of different delivery model options (including the current way in which the service is delivered).

The methodology helps decision makers to consider the:

- Desirability - the degree to which each option meets the strategic objectives and priorities of stakeholders
- Viability - the degree to which each option is financially viable and sustainable
- Feasibility - the degree to which each option can be implemented

As part of outlining the current proposal, an options appraisal was undertaken.

The options appraisal stage allowed for a number of different delivery model options to be explored and evaluated against a set of agreed criteria, leading to the selection of the preferred option.

The following options were considered and scored: -

| Option   | Description  |
|----------|--|
| Option 1 | Do Nothing   |
| Option 2 | Refurbish existing school which has already met the 60-year life expectancy                |
| Option 3 | Build new school same size school on the existing site                                     |
| Option 4 | Build a new school, same size school on a new site with childcare                          |
| Option 5 | Build a new, larger school on a new site with nursery, childcare and Special Resource Base |

The process utilised was outlined in detail in the Consultation Document and resulted in

**Option 5** being identified as the preferred option, namely, **build a new, larger school on a new site with nursery, childcare and Special Resource Base**

Through the appraisal process a final recommendation about the preferred delivery model was carried forward to the Consultation period with the view to engage with key stakeholders and identify priorities from their perspective. This stage was an important part of the process, to raise important questions at an early stage and assist in developing proposals in greater detail to consider:

- are there better ways to achieve your objectives?
- are there better ways to use the resources available?
- is this the best way to achieve the desired outcomes?



## Benefits and Disbenefits

There are common challenges faced by all Local Authorities when adopting new proposals. The vast majority of Council policies are delivered through projects and programmes of various forms. It is therefore vital that projects are delivered successfully in order to realise their intended benefits for citizens.

Evidence shows that the best way to ensure successful delivery is by setting up projects correctly in the first place. The most common causes of failure, among others are a lack of clear objectives, insufficient resources and over-ambitious cost and schedule that impact on the level and amount of benefit that can be realised and can be avoided if tackled in a project's early stages.

As part of the development of the proposal, a number of benefits and disbenefits were identified as outlined in the Consultation Document. The consultation process was an opportunity to consult with relevant stakeholders to understand what they see as positive outcomes and what negative consequences may be delivered.

An [Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessment](#) and a Community Impact Assessment was carried out to initiate discussion and invite comments as to whether the principles for the proposal are supported.

All comments have been recorded and will be made available for Cabinet as a separate annex to this Consultation Report.



## The Consultation Process

### Consultation Process

The consultation process has followed the Welsh Government guidelines as set out in the School Organisation Code 2018.

As the proposal relates to a 'regulated alteration' to a Maintained school under Section 42 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, the proposals have been published on the Council's website.

### Implications of COVID19

Due to the implications of COVID-19 at the time this consultation was due to take place and after taking advice from Welsh Government, this consultation process refrained from undertaking any face-to-face consultation sessions to support social distancing and maintain safe working practices for all.

It should be noted that there is no obligation to consult face-to-face and therefore a written paper consultation exercise was undertaken to discharge the Council of its duty under the School Organisation Code 2018.

However, a number of alternative methods were utilised for engagement including use of social media, face-time technology and the opportunity to pose questions to form part of a '[Frequently Asked Questions](#)' Document.

## Stakeholder Engagement

Consultees were advised of the proposal and availability of the consultation documentation when it went live on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 via letter/email and were therefore invited to take part in the statutory consultation:

The School Organisation Code 2018, prescribes those individuals/groups considered key consultees in the consultation process. The list below presents the consultees engaged with relevant to proposals of this nature for the Caerphilly Borough.

- Parents, prospective parents, guardians and carers of all pupils of schools directly affected by the proposal
- Headteacher, staff and governors of schools directly affected by the proposal
- Pupils/Pupil Councils of schools directly affected by the proposal
- Directors of Education of all bordering LAs – Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Newport, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Torfaen
- Catholic Diocesan Board of Education
- Church in Wales Diocesan Board
- Local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)
- Governing body of other schools which the proposer considers are likely to be affected by the proposal
- Local CCBC Members
- All Assembly Members and Members of Parliament representing the area served by the schools directly affected by the proposal
- Welsh Ministers
- ESTYN
- Teaching Associations
- Support Staff Associations
- South East Wales Consortium (EAS)
- South East Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA)
- Gwent and South Wales Police and Crime Commissioners
- Local Town and Community Councils
- Menter Iaith
- Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
- Parent Network
- Welsh Education Forum

In the case of proposals affecting Welsh Language provision, the Welsh Language Commissioner is also considered a consultee and was contacted in relation to this proposal.

The schools identified as being affected by the proposal are listed below:

| School                   | Reason   |
|--------------------------|--|
| Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Derwen | Proximity - Nearest alternative community Welsh Medium school in Borough<br>Impact on projected numbers, demand and learner travel as a result of the proposal requires consideration. |

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Abercarn Primary | English Medium Primary School<br>Proximity of 1.8 miles from current site<br>Impact on projected numbers and demand as a result of the proposal requires consideration. |
| Cwmcarn Primary  | English Medium Primary School<br>Proximity of 0.7 miles from current site<br>Impact on projected numbers and demand as a result of the proposal requires consideration. |
| Waunfawr Primary | English Medium Primary School<br>Proximity of 1.5 miles from current site<br>Impact on projected numbers and demand as a result of the proposal requires consideration. |

In addition to advising those we were obliged to under the stakeholder criteria, the following were also contacted and advised of our proposals in writing:

- All Headteachers in the Borough

### **Consultation Information**

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.

The consultation document must be published on a school day and consultees must be given at least 42 days to respond to the document, with at least 20 of these being school days as defined by Section 579 of the Education Act 1996. The consultation period opened on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 (a school day) and concluded at midnight on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

As part of this proposal, the following documentation was produced:

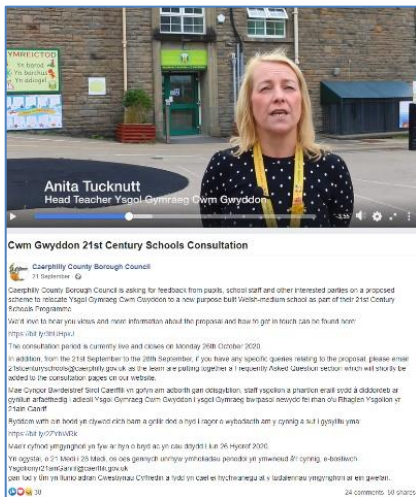
- Consultation Notification Letter
- Consultation Document
- Child Friendly Consultation Summary
- Consultation Video
- Artist's Impression of proposed new school
- Consultation Response Form (Online)
- Consultation Response Form (Printable PDF)
- Equalities and Welsh Language Impact Assessment



A child friendly consultation summary and video was produced to support the consultation process with pupils of the affected schools and present information in a manner relevant to their likely understanding, allowing them to participate in the consultation process and reach an informed opinion. In addition to this documentation, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team and local teaching staff provided assistance to children and young people who wished to submit a consultation response in their preferred format and language, especially relevant as the children attend a Welsh medium school.

All documentation was published in Welsh and English, complying with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. Information was also available in other languages and formats on request, however, no such requests were received as part of this process.

Hardcopies of the documentation were issued to the schools directly affected by the proposal including the child friendly summary for discussion with the pupils.



In addition to notifying the consultees in writing of the proposal, distribution of information was supported via the school text messaging service direct to parents and staff.

The Council's Social media channels were also utilised. Messages relating to the consultation were released in phases over the first 3 weeks of the consultation to maintain public awareness and provide as far a 'social media reach' as possible.

Social media reach is a media analytics metric that refers to the number of users who have come across a particular content on a social platform such as Facebook, YouTube or Twitter.

|        |                        |                 |                  |
|--------|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Week 1 | YouTube Video Released | CaerphillyCBCTV | 684 subscribers  |
| Week 2 | Facebook Message       | @CaerphillyCBC  | 28,188 followers |
| Week 3 | Twitter Message        | @CaerphillyCBC  | 19.3k followers  |

## Response Methods

As outlined in the Consultation Document, anyone wishing to comment in relation to the proposal could do so in writing by:

- Completing the online response form on the Council's website
- Completing a response pro forma and posting it to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Team at Caerphilly
- Emailing comments to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team at Caerphilly

The response forms were designed in such a way as to capture the relevant information required to discharge the Council's obligations required under the School Organisation Code for undertaking a consultation linked to the regulated alteration of a maintained school.

This consultation was undertaken to capture the views of consultees in relation to the proposal to relocate the school. These views have been incorporated into this document, which will be published and considered by Cabinet when determining whether to proceed to Statutory notice stage. A separate Planning Application Process will be undertaken in respect of this proposal. The separate statutory processes were outlined in the consultation document and any adverse comments received as part of this process have been recorded as such.

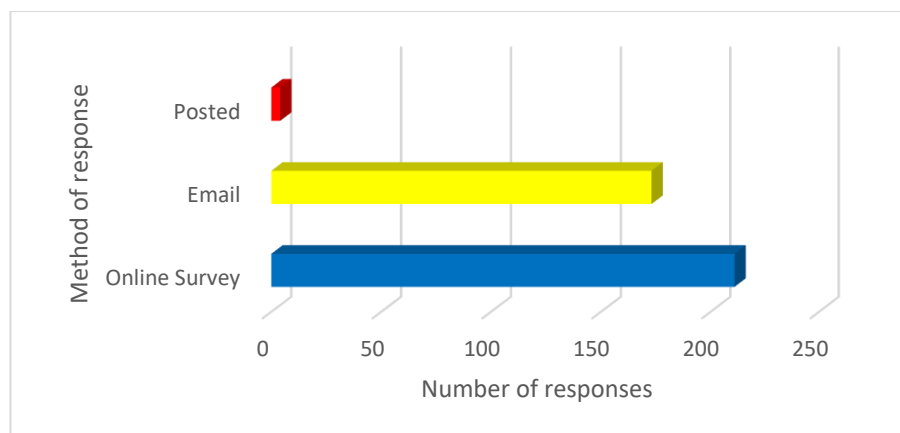


## Consultation Responses

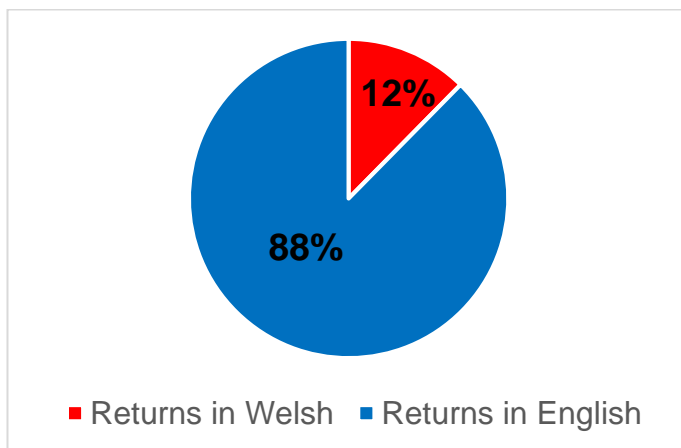
Overall a total of 388 responses were received during the consultation process.

Of the prescribed methods for providing a response during the consultation period:

- 211 responses received via Online Survey
- 173 responses received via email
- 4 responses received via post



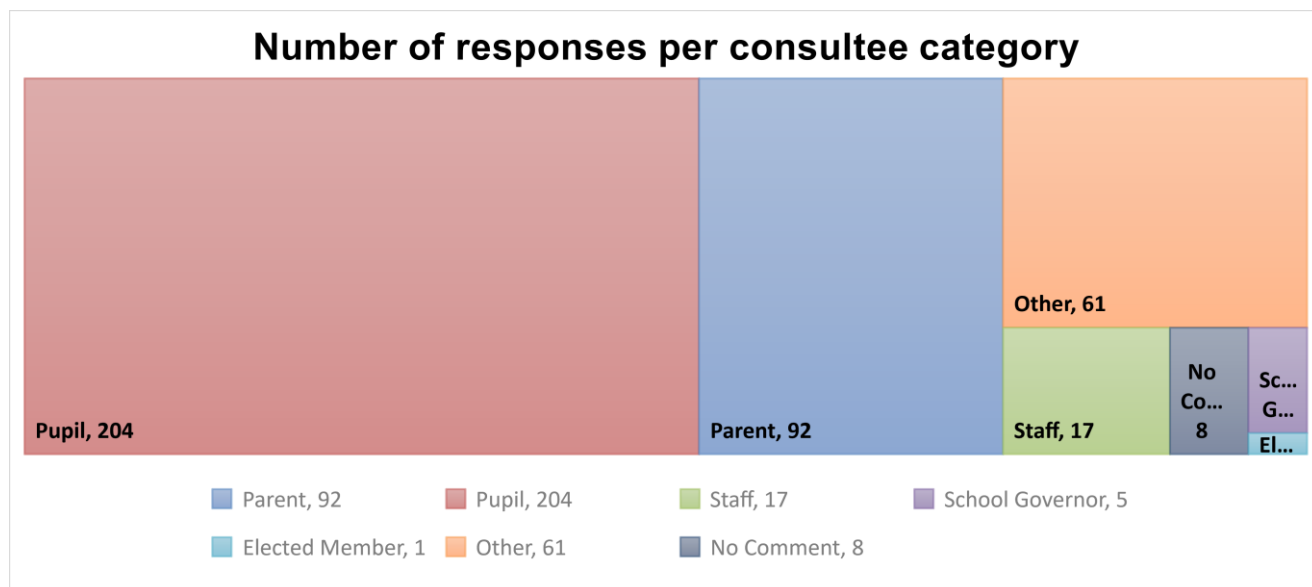
48 responses (12%) were returned in the medium of Welsh with the remaining 340 responses (88%) in English.



The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team received no requests for the documentation to be provided in any other format or language.

### QUESTION 1

The consultees were asked to identify a category that best described them in relation to the proposal for the school affected. The options provided were selected to demonstrate that the key consultee groups as outlined in the School Organisation Code had been engaged with.



|               |                |                        |                           |                            |              |
|---------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| 53%<br>Pupils | 24%<br>Parents | 4%<br>Staff<br>Members | 1%<br>School<br>Governors | 0.2%<br>Elected<br>Members | 18%<br>Other |
|---------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|

For those selecting 'other', the opportunity was given to elaborate further as they felt appropriate.

## **QUESTION 2**

As part of the consultation process, consultees were asked to provide basic contact information, including their name, address and email. This psychographic data was collected in order to help paint a picture of the consultee and enable the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools team to understand trends in response data and response groupings that would assist in compiling this Consultation Report.

As information can be collected for many purposes, the Caerphilly County Borough Council's privacy notice for consultations/surveys was referenced, which outlined the purpose and legal basis for collecting the information, data usage and data retention periods.

For the purposes of this Consultation Report, Cabinet will be provided with a separate digest of the consultation comments received. Please note that comments that are considered to be offensive or compromise anonymity have been edited or removed.

## **QUESTION 3**

As part of our duty under the School Organisation Code 2018, consultees must be given the option to request notification as to the publication of this Consultation Report. Contact information has been collected to this end and the preferred method for communication will be notification via email if this information has been made available by the respondent.



126 out of the 388 respondents have requested notification. These individuals have been added to the notification list and will be contacted concurrently with stakeholders when this document is made publicly available through the Council's website. Hardcopies of the documentation will be made available on request.

## **QUESTION 4**

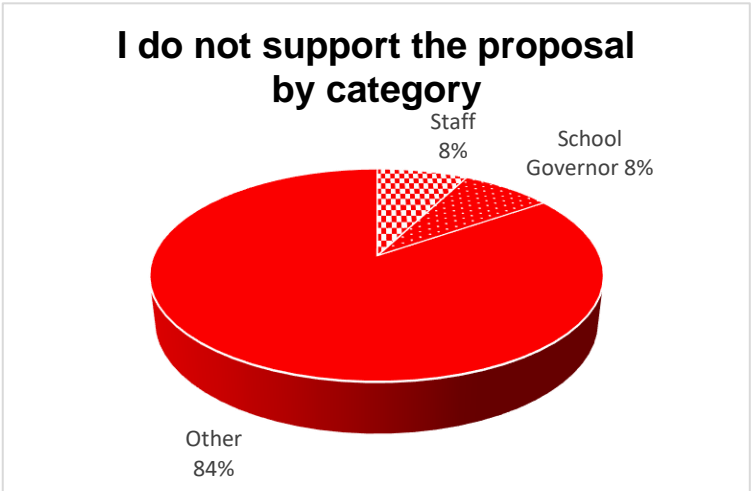
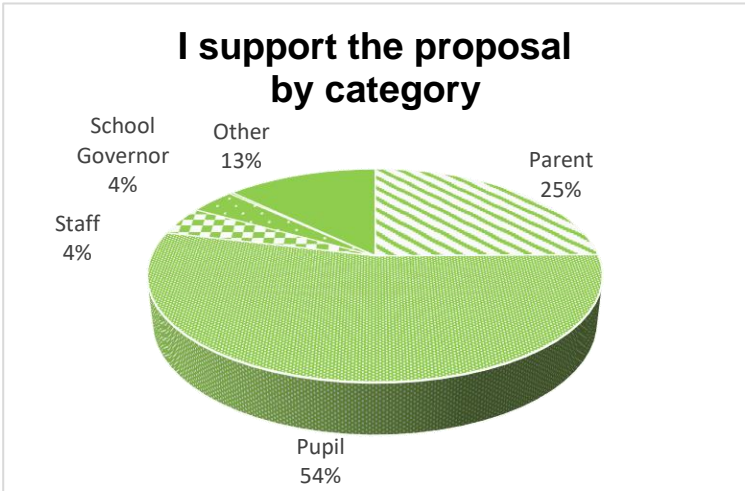
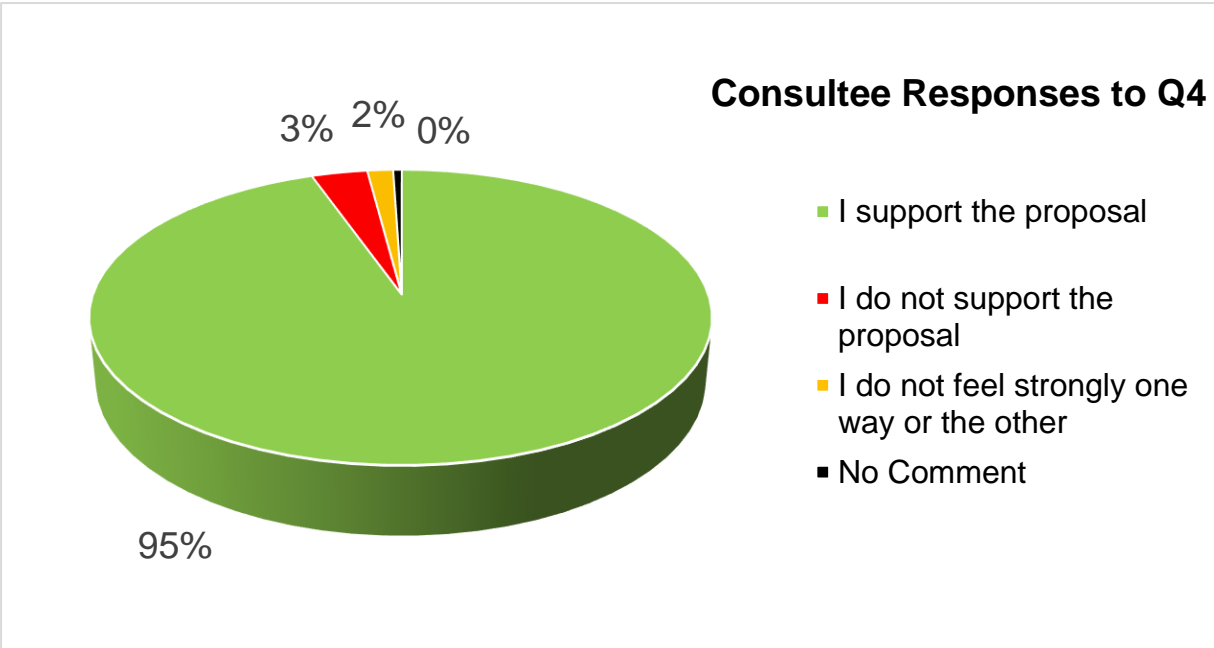
Consultees can submit their views either in favour of or against the proposals.

Consultees were asked to indicate which of the following statements most accurately reflected their views about the proposal. Consultees were reminded to read the consultation documentation prior to providing any responses during this consultation exercise and that unfavourable comments made during the consultation period will not be treated as objections at this stage.

The options available were:

- I do not feel strongly one way or the other
- I support the proposal
- I do not support the proposal

Of the responses returned, 367 support the proposal, 13 do not support it, 6 didn't feel strongly either way and 2 failed to select an option. That equates to 95% in support, 3% opposed with the remaining 2% either providing a neutral response or no comment.



It is prudent to bring to the attention of Cabinet that the commentary provided as part of Question 5 may offer additional insight into the views of the consultees and that the response provided to Question 4 should not be considered in isolation.

**Question 5**

This was a free text box, enabling consultees to provide additional comments on the proposal. All comments received have been read and analysed.

General themes that emerged from the consultation:

- Acknowledgement that the current Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon site is restrictive, developed to 'its full potential' and has 'outgrown current site'
- The proposal supports the increasing demand for Welsh Language provision in the area
- Concerns over proposed use of the large site in Cwmcarn for a Primary School only
- Concerns over safety and traffic management at current and proposed site
- Concerns over impact proposal will have on English medium provision in the area
- Preference for utilisation of the site for a new building English medium comprehensive



## Question 6

In line with the Caerphilly County Borough Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020 and the Consultation and Monitoring Guidance 2016 document, a reduced version of the Equalities and Monitoring questionnaire was included as part of the consultation response to support effective planning and to ensure that a representative sample was achieved to identify any equality issues.

The option to include information relating to the consultees Gender, Age, Disability Status, Welsh Language Skills and any influencing factors relating to their response were included but not mandatory.

From the responses received, of those that completed the Equalities monitoring section:

| Are you ... |     |                      |     |
|-------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| Male        | 63  | Other                | 0   |
| Female      | 156 | Unwilling to declare | 169 |

| Age      |    |                      |     |
|----------|----|----------------------|-----|
| Under 16 | 39 | 40-65                | 67  |
| 16-25    | 8  | Over 65              | 7   |
| 26-39    | 81 | Unwilling to declare | 186 |

| Disability                   |     |                       |   |
|------------------------------|-----|-----------------------|---|
| I am not Disabled            | 188 | Learning Difficulties | 0 |
| Physical / Mobility Impaired | 1   | Visually Impaired     | 0 |
| Hearing Impaired             | 2   | Speech Impaired       | 0 |
| Unwilling to declare         | 166 |                       |   |
| Other                        | 30  |                       |   |

| Welsh Language Skills    |          |            |                      |          |
|--------------------------|----------|------------|----------------------|----------|
|                          | A Little | Moderately | Quite Well           | Fluently |
| Speak                    | 71       | 13         | 8                    | 84       |
| Understand               | 62       | 17         | 10                   | 84       |
| Read                     | 58       | 17         | 9                    | 83       |
| Write                    | 58       | 12         | 8                    | 81       |
| No Welsh Language Skills | 71       |            | Unwilling to Declare | 133      |

## Question 7

In relation to equalities implications that respondents highlighted, 8 responses indicated that their decision was influenced as per the list outlined in the consultation response form, for example:

- 'Wishing for my children to get the best out of the Welsh language and their education'
- 'As a bilingual person living in Wales, I believe the Council should provide Welsh medium education that meets the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> Century education'

## Education Scrutiny Response

The Council's Education Scrutiny Committee is a consultee for any policy or service developments in relation to Education within the Borough.

A digital meeting via Microsoft teams took place on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 at 5.30pm. 13 out of 15 Councillors were in attendance.

As part of this meeting, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Band B Programme and consultation in respect of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon was discussed. All consultation documentation was made available to members as part of the agenda reports pack and officers linked to the proposal were available to take questions.

It was agreed that a vote in respect of the proposal would be taken and be officially recorded for inclusion in this Consultation Report. The Committee members voted unanimously in favour of the proposal for Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon.



A recording of the session is available on YouTube:

[Education Scrutiny Committee Meeting](#)

The agenda item linked to this proposal starts 18 minutes and 50 seconds in to the recording.

The [Notice of the Decisions](#) document is also available to view on the Council's website.

## Estyn's Response

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018, the Council, as the proposers, is required to send a notification with regards to the consultation to Estyn.

Estyn is the education and training inspectorate for Wales and their vision is to improve the quality of education and training and outcomes for all learners in Wales. However, Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal. The full response from Estyn in included as Annex 2 to this report. However, in summary:

*"The proposer has provided an appropriate rationale for the proposal. It is to replace the current school which is on a site with buildings in a poor condition. It is also to meet the rising demand for Welsh medium education in the local authority. In addition, the proposer intends to provide a Welsh language resource for those children who require specialist provision outside of a mainstream school."*

*“It is Estyn’s view that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education and provision in the area. However, the proposer has not provided enough clarity regarding mitigation against the risk of the proposal generating a significant number of surplus places at the new school site.”*

The Council acknowledges Estyn’s response and would like to provide the following clarification statement in relation to Estyn’s observation relating to ‘mitigating against the risk of the proposal generating a significant number of surplus places at the new school site.’ The proposal for Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon is to relocate the existing provision and provide additional capacity on site to accommodate up to 420 places plus additional nursery and special resource base provision. We recognise that this proposal will initially create surplus places at the school and this has been identified and considered an acceptable low level risk. The process of managing admissions over a number of years as outlined in the consultation document, whilst playing a contributing factor to surplus places initially, will ensure the impact on surrounding schools is mitigated as far as reasonably practicable. The places have been calculated to support increased demand in the area and continue to support the Council to stimulate demand for Welsh medium education to meet the aspiration of Welsh Government to achieve a challenging target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050, as outlined in Caerphilly’s Welsh Education Strategic Plan.

### Consultation Clarification

When analysing the consultation response comments received as part of the consultation period, a number of recurring areas of concern and those where there was a level of agreement with the proposals became evident.

To assist Cabinet in the decision making process, the following information is provided by means of response for clarification with supporting reasons.

#### ➤ Areas of widest concern

| Area of concern:   | Consultee Responses included:  |
|--|--|
| <b>Use identified for proposed relocation site</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size of site</li> <li>• Why Primary provision?</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions   | 8  |
| <b>Council’s Response</b>  |  |
| <p>The Council acknowledges that the proposed site for re-location has a far larger footprint than the current Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon. The planned footprint of the new primary school will also allow for future expansion, including the potential for secondary Welsh medium education, which will also support the requirements of the Council’s Welsh Education Strategic Plan and in supporting the Welsh Government’s Cymraeg 2050.</p> <p>As demonstrated throughout the Consultation Document, the current site for Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon has reached its full potential. There is growing demand for Welsh medium primary provision and this proposal aims to address that issue.</p> |  |

| Area of concern:           | Consultee Responses included:  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Secondary Provision</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New English medium Build</li> <li>• Demand for English medium</li> <li>• Newbridge/Risca Comprehensive school capacity</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions         | 9  |

### Council's Response

The Council is dedicated to providing educational facilities that meet the needs of our pupils and local communities.

As demonstrated by the figures below, there is no requirement identified for an additional English medium secondary provision. Both local English medium secondary schools have been identified as having adequate provision at their current locations for their catchment pupils.

| School    | Capacity | Number on Roll Sept 2020 | % Catchment pupils on roll | % Out of Catchment | % Out of County |
|-----------|----------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Newbridge | 1017     | 991                      | 65.59%                     | 17.46%             | 16.95%          |
| Risca     | 729      | 661                      | 82.45%                     | 12.56%             | 4.99%           |

In addition, as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band A programme, Newbridge School received an investment of £2 million to provide an additional 9 classrooms and ancillary facilities.

| Area of concern:             | Consultee Responses included:   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Investment in Schools</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English Medium Schools</li> <li>• Other Primary Schools in the area</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions           | 4   |

### Council's Response

The Council is dedicated to providing all learners with quality learning opportunities. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools programme is only one mechanism for infrastructure investment in our Schools. The Council continuously improves the quality of school buildings through the Capital Investment Programme. Schools are invited to submit applications annually to support improvement works. Any works that are identified via the Health and Safety team are also undertaken.

The proposal for Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon has been prioritised as the school at its current location has reached its capacity in relation to any further developments on the existing grounds, whereas the local English medium provisions have that opportunity moving forward should the demand be required.

| Area of concern:          | Consultee Responses included:   |
|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Traffic Management</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation of pupils</li> <li>• Increased traffic flow at proposed site</li> <li>• Access and parking</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions        | 6   |

**Council's Response**

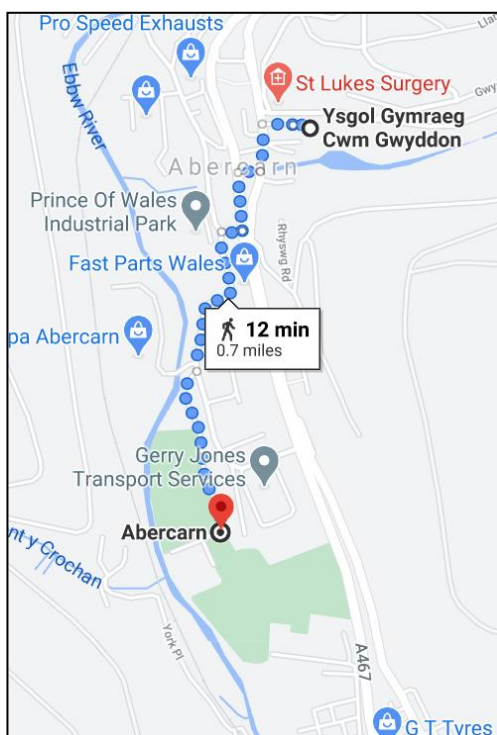
As part of any development, the Council is committed to providing safe, efficient and effective traffic management.

The site identified for the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon is the former Cwmcarn High School site. The former secondary school had the capacity to accommodate in the region of 1000 pupils. The proposal for the primary provision is less than half of that figure.

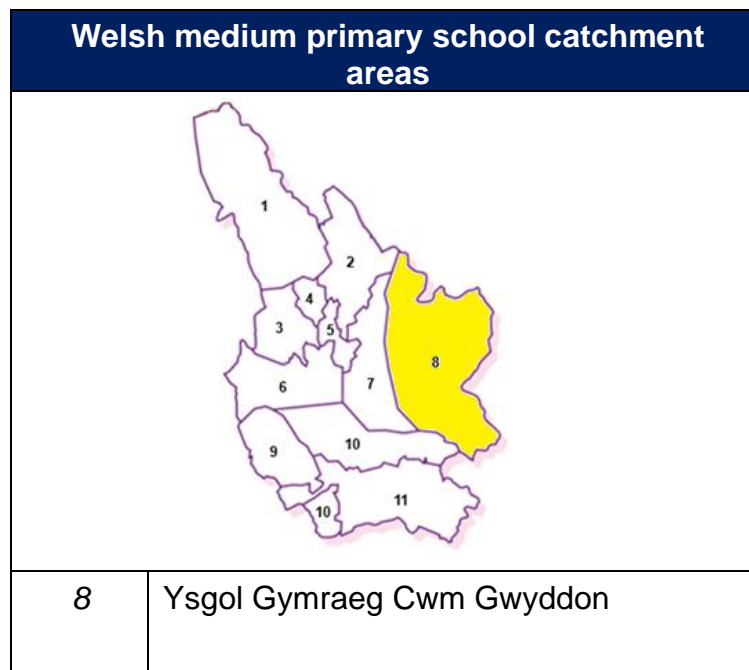
The Consultation Document acknowledges the importance of the Learner Travel. The safety of children is of paramount importance and the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 requires local authorities to assess the suitability of travel for learners between home and places of education and training.

It is also important to secure the views of children and young people in accordance with the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011. The views and perceptions of children can inform the local authority officers who have responsibility for assessing home to school travel provision. This is why children and young people formed one of the key consultee groups as part of the consultation process.

It is anticipated that a status quo will be maintained as the relocation is less than 1 mile from the existing site.



The catchment area for the pupils remain unchanged.



In addition, as part of the planning and design of the new facility, safer routes and access will be established with designated pick up and drop off points. This proposal will be subject to full planning application process and a wide range of consultees will be invited to comment, including the Highways Department.

➤ **Areas of widest Agreement**

| Area of Agreement:  | Consultee Responses included:   |
|---|---|
| <b>The condition and suitability of the existing site occupied by Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current Capacity</li> <li>• Maximum site developed</li> <li>• Standards / Quality</li> <li>• Site accessibility</li> <li>• Parking / Drop Off</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions  | 257   |
| Council's Response  |   |
| <p>The Council appreciates that the consultees have acknowledged and reiterated that the current Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon site has reached its maximum build potential whilst maintaining high quality teaching provision.</p> |   |



Image of existing Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon site

The capacity of the school does not lend itself for full school activities e.g. concerts / assemblies / dining facilities. The original building presents restrictions in relation to full accessibility and a split level site. The location of the existing school also provides daily challenges linked to access via a main road and restricted walkway between 2 public houses.

This proposal would address these issues.

| Area of Agreement:  | Consultee Responses included:  |
|---|--|
| <b>There is Growing Demand for Welsh medium provision</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh medium demand increasing in the identified area</li> <li>• Parental Choice</li> <li>• Bilingualism</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions  | 90   |

### Council's Response

The Council is heartened that the responses provided by the consultees have recognised the increasing demand for Welsh medium education in the area and also the wider benefits of enabling parental choice, bilingualism and future prospects when it comes to their children's education.

It has also been acknowledged through the responses that this proposal would provide the vehicle for addressing the growing demand for additional places at Welsh medium primary level.

| Area of Agreement:                        |     | Consultee Responses included:   |
|---|-----|---|
| <b>The need for Additional Facilities</b> |     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor facilities</li> <li>• Health, wellbeing and learning experiences</li> <li>• Community Use</li> </ul> |
| Number of mentions                        | 222 |   |

## Council's Response

The consultees have identified that the additional facilities outlined in the proposal would benefit the pupils and wider community.

The consultees have also recognised that additional facilities will have benefits to education, recreation and general wellbeing which will support the Council in meeting its Wellbeing and Future Generations aspirations.

One of the key aims of the Welsh Government's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Band B programme and a pre-requisite for investment is the need to '*ensure the effective and efficient use of the educational estate for use by both schools and the wider community*'.

The Consultation document highlighted that, at present a number of community groups utilise the existing site but are limited due to the current design.



*Note: The image above is used for illustrative purposes and the design is draft at this stage and subject to project approval, planning and site investigations.*

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. It will also strengthen and safeguard the promotion of inclusivity and wellbeing within the Community.

## Reasonable Alternatives Identified

As outlined in the Consultation Document, the proposal under consideration is to relocate Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon. This was the preferred option as identified through the options appraisal process and scored against the critical success factors of Strategic fit, Educational fit, Accessibility, Financial fit and Environmental impact.



Through the consultation process and the comments returned, there has been an acknowledgement of the need to invest in the school.

Following the consultation period, the Council is required to carry out a further assessment for the proposal. The purpose of this further assessment is to take account of any further information that has come forward through the consultation or otherwise.

In its consultation report, the Council is required to explain its assessment of the proposal and the reasonable alternatives identified, how this assessment differs from their earlier assessment (if at all) and its assessment of any further reasonable alternatives. Finally, the Council is required to confirm whether it considers the implementation of the proposal, (wholly or partly) to be the most appropriate response to the reasons it identified for the proposal and give reasons for its conclusion including an assessment of the likely impact on Quality and Standards in Education, the community and effect on different travelling arrangements.

The following alternative options have been raised via Consultees:

| <b>Alternative Option raised by consultees</b>  |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| <i>Relocate Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon school to another location such as Ty Sign</i>  |                            |
| <b>Council's Response</b>   |                            |
| <p>The Council welcomes consultee acknowledgement that the existing Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon school requires investment and that the current location is no longer suitable.</p> <p>If Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon was to be located to another site as suggested, such as Ty Sign, this would mean the disruption to an existing English medium primary school that has not been identified as requiring additional accommodation, which could also impact on the quality and standards of the current education provided. The suggested site of Ty Sign primary would not lend itself to this proposal as the capacity of the school is greater than the capacity required for Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon, therefore creating additional surplus places.</p> <p>Ty Sign primary school would no longer be located in the 'heart' of the community. It would fall outside of its present catchment area resulting in potential reconfiguration, impact on a wider range of schools and additional transportation distances for their pupils. In addition, it would result in the displacement of a larger cohort requiring a larger school at greater cost to that of the proposal.</p> <p>Whilst the Council welcomes feedback from the consultee in this matter, it is recommended that this option is not a suitable alternative to the current proposal.</p> |                            |
| <b>Council's Assessment of Reasonable Alternative:</b>  | Option has been discounted |

**Alternative Option raised by consultees**

*Build an English Medium Secondary school on Cwmcarn*

*Variations include:*

- New school to replace Cwmcarn high
- New school to accommodate Newbridge School pupils
- New school to amalgamate Newbridge and Risca

**Council’s Response**

As identified earlier in this Consultation Report, the Council is dedicated to providing educational facilities that meet the needs of our pupils and local communities.

A number of consultees have made the suggestion that the proposed build site in relation to the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon is utilised for English medium secondary provision. Whilst a number of variations on this theme have been raised, from providing a new secondary provision to replace the former Cwmcarn High School, Relocation of Newbridge School, or amalgamation of Newbridge School and Risca Comprehensive onto a single site, the merits of each option have been considered prior to this proposal taking into account the likely impact on quality and standards, community, surplus places and travelling arrangements. As outlined previously, there is no requirement identified for an additional English medium secondary provision. Both local English medium secondary schools have been identified as having adequate provision at their current locations for their catchment pupils.

In addition, there has recently been significant investment of £2 million through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Band A programme at Newbridge School.

Whilst the Council welcomes feedback from the consultees in this matter, it is recommended that the option is not a suitable alternative to the current proposal.

Council’s Assessment of Reasonable Alternative: Option has been discounted

**Alternative Option raised by consultees**

*Build a new co-located Welsh and English Medium Primary provision on the Cwmcarn site*

**Council’s Response**

The Council recognises that the consultees have provided this alternative option to reflect practice undertaken in other authorities. Prior to the current proposal being drawn up, consideration was given to this option but at this stage it was felt that it wasn’t an option to be explored further due to the existing English medium infrastructure in the area and as outlined previously to meet the needs of the pupils and the community.

The current proposal has been framed in such a way as to minimise the impact on English medium schools whilst ensuring the identified demand for Welsh medium education is met. Co-location of existing English and Welsh medium provision would result in disruption to a wider cohort of pupils and travel arrangements. No evidence at this stage is available to comment on the impact this would have on the quality and standards of provision.

Whilst the Council welcomes feedback from the consultees in this matter, it is recommended that the option is not a suitable alternative to the current proposal.

Council's Assessment of Reasonable Alternative: Option has been discounted



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.

### Everyday Summary Version – Children and Young People

The Council 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.

A summary version of the main consultation document was also prepared and published, and was targeted specifically at children and young people. This summary version was released online as part of the consultation pack and hardcopies were made available on request from the school.

**21st Century Schools – Consultation Children and Young People's Summary**

**YSGOL GYMRAEG CWM GWYDDON**  
14<sup>th</sup> September – 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif  
21st Century Schools

CAERPHILLY  
COUNTY OF PEMBROKESHIRE  
CAERFFILI

Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Hi, I'm Vision and this is my dog K9-2.1  
We're here to talk to you about an exciting project and we want to know what you think!

Ysgolion yr 21ain Ganrif  
21st Century Schools

**What we'll talk about:**

- What this presentation is about?
- What is the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme?
- What is the project being proposed?
- Who else are we talking with?
- How can you tell us what you think?
- Why is it important for us to know your views?
- Why do we want to carry out the project?
- Will other schools be affected?
- How will the project impact on things like...
  - ✓ Education and Quality
  - ✓ Governance and Staffing
  - ✓ Finance
  - ✓ Welsh Language
  - ✓ Travel and the Environment
  - ✓ Equalities
  - ✓ Specialist Facilities and Additional Learning Needs
  - ✓ The Community
- What will the benefits and disadvantages be?
- Are there any risks?
- Why this project and not something else?
- How long are we gathering views?
- What will happen next?

## Consultation Video

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.



As such, in preparing the Consultation Packs, pupils from the school contributed to the content and participated in the consultation video.

Pupil participation enabled the children to have a chance to make their voice heard and get involved in influencing decisions that affect their learning and well-being.

A recording is available on YouTube:

[Cwm Gwyddon 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Consultation](#)

## School Council / Pupil Engagement

The 21st 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.

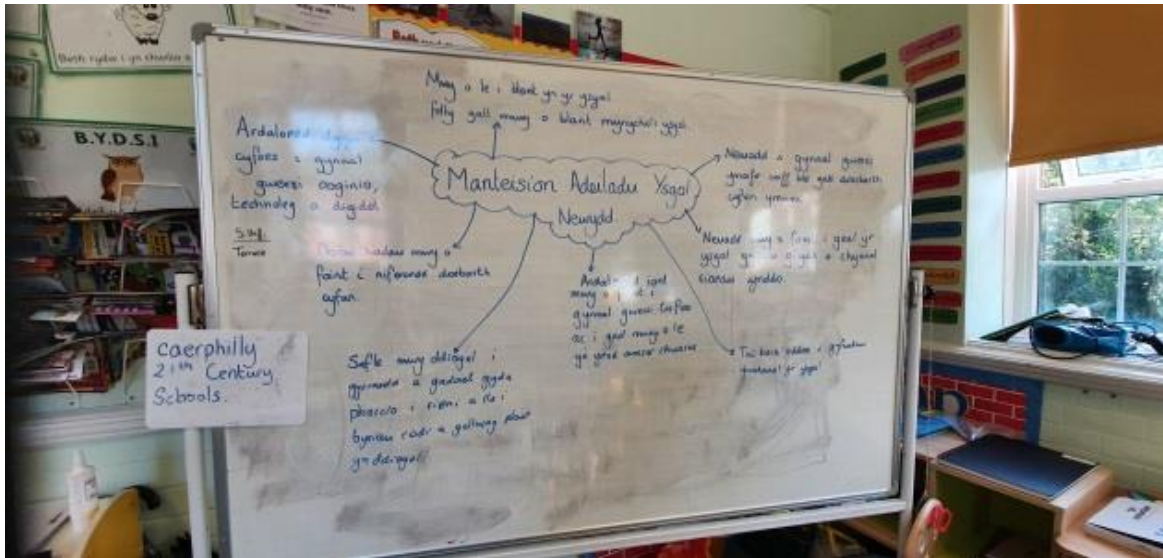
In the initial consultation document, consideration was given to hosting a virtual consultation session with representatives from the schools affected. However, through discussions with the relevant head teachers and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools team, the decision was taken for the local teaching staff to engage with all year groups and not just a representative sample. Utilising the child friendly version of the consultation document and the accompanying video, children were engaged in a familiar environment, at the appropriate comprehension level and in the language of their preference. It was felt that due to the current 'bubble' situation in schools, this was the best way to ensure the fullest return possible to capture the learner voice.

Many of the children provided comments on what they would like to see in the future and how they felt about the proposal. Notes from each session were recorded and have been included as part of the consultation responses which will be made available to Cabinet. The questions raised by pupils during these sessions are outlined below:

- School directly affected by Proposal

| <b>Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon</b>            |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Questions</b>                            | <b>Council's Response</b>  |
| When will the project be ready?             | The proposal is for School to open in September 2023   |
| What extra facilities will the school have? | the new building will incorporate a primary facility for 420 pupils, 60 nursery places and Special Resource Base. The main school will have classrooms, a main assembly hall, food technology space, a library and IT space. |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Will it be called Cwm Gwyddon?  | Yes, we are not proposing to change the name as part of this proposal.  |
| Will the school uniform change?   | This will be subject to a governing body decision by the school.  |
| Will the new school have older children like the age group at Cwm Rhymini there ?   | No, this proposal is to accommodate children of the same age range (3-11 years old).  |
| Will we have to share toilets with younger children?  | The design of the new school will have toilets throughout and relevant to the age range in school.  |
| Will we have to eat our sandwiches in the classroom?  | That will be the head teachers decision.  |
| Can we have a cooking room so we can have cooking sessions and learn about healthy food like we do when we have visitors like Richard Shaw from Cooking Together Wales? | Final arrangements in relation to internal design of the new school are still to be finalised, but the proposed design currently has a Food Tech space included similar to the one we've put in at Idris Davies School. |
| Can we have a dance studio and music studio for us to be able to have dance lessons and take part in dancing competitions like the Urdd ?                               | No, this isn't part of the design, but there will be a larger fit for purpose hall available.   |
| Will there be a designated yard for each year?  | No, not for each year, but there will be in relation to keystages.  |
| Will the new school be nearer to playing fields?  | Yes, there will be playing fields in close proximity.   |
| Will the new school have a football/rugby pitch?  | There won't be one specifically for the school but you may have access to one.  |
| Will the new school have changing rooms?  | The new school will have individual class cloakrooms and the proposed design does include two small changing rooms off the Hall.  |
| Will it be easier to park outside the school?   | Yes, there will be a designated parking and drop off area.  |
| Will we be able to come back and see the new school?  | That will be for the head teacher to decide.  |



Images from a Consultation Session undertaken with pupils at Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon

➤ Other schools identified as being affected

The 4 other schools identified as 'affected' in relation to this proposal were, Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Derwen, Abercarn Primary, Cwmcarn Primary and Waunfawr Primary.

The Head Teachers of these schools were contacted during the consultation period whereby the consultation proposal was discussed and the pupils, governing body and staff at the school invited to provide their responses as part of the consultation process. Where information has been submitted, responses are included as part of the separate annex available to Cabinet.



## Other Considerations



"Our national mission is to raise standards, reduce the attainment gap and deliver an education system that is a source of national pride and confidence."

*Kirsty Williams AM  
Cabinet Secretary for Education*

As Wales embarks on a renewed vision of success for all learners, we can reflect on our rich heritage and proud history for promoting access to education in Caerphilly. Our transformational reforms are taking place within a challenging environment. This includes the uncertainties associated with Brexit, the technological transformation and the divergence in the qualification systems across the home nations. These are all challenges and opportunities for the Council.

There are a number of local and national strategies that drive Educational reform and underline the rationale for the proposals being considered as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Band B programme in Caerphilly.

- [Welsh Language Act 1993 / Welsh Language \(Wales\) measure 2011](#)
- [Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal \(Wales\) Act 2017](#)
- [The Childcare Act 2006 \(Local Authority Assessment\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)
- [Welsh Government - Education in Wales: Our National Mission](#)
- [Welsh Government - Cymraeg 2050: Welsh Language Strategy Action Plan 2019- 2021](#)
- [Welsh Government - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Programme](#)
- [Caerphilly - 'Shared Ambitions' Education Attainment Strategy 2019 - 2022](#)
- [Caerphilly - #Team Caerphilly: Better Together Transformation Strategy](#)
- [Caerphilly - Welsh Education Strategic Plan](#)
- [Caerphilly - Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022](#)
- [Caerphilly - Corporate Plan \(including Wellbeing Objectives 2018-2023\)](#)
- [Caerphilly – Education Other Than At School \(EOTAS\) Strategy 2020](#)
- [Caerphilly - Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024](#)
- [Caerphilly - Communication and Engagement Strategy 2019-2022](#)



## Next Steps

### Recommendation

In reviewing the proposal to take account of further information that has come forward through the consultation and in consideration of the likely impact on quality and standards in education, the community and travelling arrangements, it is the recommendation of this report that the proposal is progressed as outlined in the Consultation Document, namely:

**Relocate Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon to a new purpose built Welshmedium provision school to be situated on the vacant site of the former Cwmcarn High School to include Childcare and Special Resource Base provision**

### Decision Making

To deliver our reforms across the entire system, we will need a bold commitment to effective collaboration along with integration of services where appropriate. This will include Welsh Government, the teaching profession and the wider education workforce, our key partners in local authorities, diocesan authorities, regional services, Estyn and others. Successful implementation of any proposal will require effective and honest engagement between all facets of the education system and our local communities and we are committed to providing the conditions to enable this to happen.

Cabinet Members are asked to note the information contained within this Consultation Report and to seek members views as to whether to proceed, make changes to or not to proceed with the proposal in relation to the proposal to relocate and expand Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon.

### Reporting, Notification and Publishing of Information

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.





## Supporting Information

### Annex 1 :

[Consultation Response Form](#)

[Consultation Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Consultation Video](#)

[Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessment](#)

### Annex 2:



14.10.20 Estyn  
response to YSGOL G

### [Estyn response to the proposal by Caerphilly County Borough Council to relocate Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon to a new purpose built Welsh medium provision school to be situated on the vacant site of the former Cwmcarn High School](#)

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales. Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However, Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer.

#### **Introduction**

This is a consultation proposal from Caerphilly County Borough Council.

The proposal is to relocate Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon to a new purpose built Welsh medium provision school to be situated on the vacant site of the former Cwmcarn High School. The new provision to include childcare facilities, a nursery and a specialist resource base (SRB).

#### **Summary/ Conclusion**

It is Estyn's view that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education and provision in the area. However, the proposer has not provided enough clarity regarding

mitigation against the risk of the proposal generating a significant number of surplus places at the new school site.

### **Description and benefits**

The proposer has provided an appropriate rationale for the proposal. It is to replace the current school which is on a site with buildings in a poor condition. It is also to meet the rising demand for Welsh medium education in the local authority. In addition, the proposer intends to provide a Welsh language resource for those children who require specialist provision outside of a mainstream school.

The proposer has reasonably considered the potential benefits of having a new build school. These include the provision of modern classrooms, IT facilities and external play areas.

The proposal aims to provide accommodation for approximately 420 pupils plus 60 nursery places and 16 SRB places. However, the projected demand for places in 2025 on the current school site is only 212 pupils excluding the nursery. This leaves a significant number of surplus places in the school. The proposer has sought to mitigate against this by including revised projections for the new site which appear to show that by 2025, the school will have 420 pupils. It is not clear how the proposer has calculated this number and it appears to be over-ambitious. The proposer has not mitigated against this risk of having a significant amount of surplus places in the school.

The proposer has suitably considered five different options and scored these against a variety of critical success factors. The option that scored the highest is the current preferred option for the local authority. The proposer appropriately determined that this proposal provided the best balance of costs, benefits and risks.

The proposer has determined that the new provision is less than one mile away from the current site. It anticipates that the likely effect of different travelling arrangements as a result of the proposal will be minimal. Some pupils may find themselves living closer to the new school site and others may be further away. It refers to Caerphilly's transport policy which provides transport to the 'relevant' school of more than a distance of 1.5 miles for primary pupils.

The proposal supports the targets in Caerphilly's WESP, specifically to develop sufficient Welsh medium places in the Islwyn East area. This proposal is linked to the Islwyn East area.

The proposer has provided suitable community impact and Welsh impact assessments as part of the proposal. The proposer considers 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 proposer intends to provide facilities at the local library based in the community or look at supporting alternative venues where appropriate. The proposer also maintains that the proposal will strengthen and safeguard the promotion of the Welsh language, culture and heritage within the community.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The proposer has considered the school's most recent Estyn inspection report and compared this with other local schools in the area. It reasonably concludes that it does not expect the standards of provision and attainment will be adversely affected. It also suggests that the information outlined in the proposal will indicate how the school can continue to develop and build on their current excellent practice.

The school received all excellent judgements in its inspection report of March 2020. The proposer maintains that during the implementation of the proposal, the 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 for pupils. This seems to be a reasonable and assertion.

The proposer has provided an equality assessment document which appears to cover all the relevant areas including making the new premises an accessible facility which is able to cater for anyone with additional needs.

The proposer reasonably asserts that, as the proposal is to build a new school facility on an alternative location to that of the current school, there will be no disruption to pupils during the build phase. In addition, there will also be no transportation or access related issues as construction will be off the current site.

### **Annex 3:**

#### Consultation Responses

A separate Annex to this report will be made available to Cabinet which will include the full details of the commentary provided by consultees during the consultation process. Any identifying information will be removed as detailed earlier in this document.

Gadewir y dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol