



REVIEW OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVISION IN THE NORTH OF THE BOROUGH CONSULTATION DOCUMENT



TORFAEN
COUNTY
BOROUGH



BWRDEISTREF
SIROL
TORFAEN

Your re/Eich cyf:
Our ref/Ein cyf: MH/
Date/Dyddiad: 1st June 2015

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To: Statutory Consultees and Other Interested Parties

Dear Consultee,

PROPOSALS TO:

- 1) EXPAND AND REFURBISH GARNTEG PRIMARY SCHOOL.**
- 2) EXPAND AND REFURBISH CWMFFRWDOER PRIMARY SCHOOL AND EXTEND THE AGE RANGE FROM 4 TO 11 TO 3 TO 11.**

At its meeting held on 28th April 2015, Torfaen's Cabinet agreed to commence consultation on the expansion of the current Cwmffrwdoer and Garnteg Primary Schools, and in the case of Cwmffrwdoer, the establishment of a nursery unit at the school thereby extending the age range from 4 to 11 to 3 to 11.

It is proposed the works will be completed and these changes will be implemented from September 2017.

Specifically the proposals refer to the enlargement of Cwmffrwdoer Primary School from its current 210 place capacity to 315 places with the addition of a 52 Part Time Equivalent (PTE) Nursery, and the enlargement of Garnteg Primary School from 224 to 420 places.

There are no current plans to change either of the schools' catchment areas as part of these proposals.

The regulations require that consultees must be given at least 42 days to respond to the document, with at least 20 of these being school days. Taking this into account, the consultation period will begin with the issue of this letter (1st June 2015), and will close on Monday 13th July 2015.

Any comments/observations on the proposals can be made:

- By writing to Mr Dermot McChrystal, Head of Education Services (FAO Mark Horton) c/o Torfaen County Borough Council, Civic Centre, Pontypool, Torfaen NP4 6YB.
- By email: primaryreview@torfaen.gov.uk
- By attending a 'drop-in' session (details below) and completing a response proforma (attached to the Consultation document) and returning it to the above address.

Torfaen Play Service will make separate arrangements for children and young people to participate in the consultation, which will include the views of the school councils.

The 'drop-in' sessions will allow interested parties to attend at a time that is convenient for them during the late afternoon/early evening and has been arranged as follows:

DAY	DATE	TIME	VENUE
Wednesday	10 th June 2015	3.30pm until 6.30pm.	Cwmffrwdoer Primary School, Waunddu, Pontnewynydd, Pontypool.
Thursday	2 nd July 2015	3.30pm until 6.30pm.	Garnteg Primary School, Hillcrest, Garndiffaith, Pontypool.

Officers will attend these sessions to answer questions and ensure all comments/views made are recorded to allow Elected Members to make an informed decision at the appropriate time.

Further information on these specific proposals (including the consultation document) and the authority's other 21st Century Schools proposals can be found on the Council website at: www.torfaen.gov.uk.

An executive summary of this document is available in the medium of Welsh and can be obtained by telephoning 01495 766910 or by visiting the Council's website: www.torfaen.gov.uk. The document is also available in larger print upon request.

If you are unclear about anything or require further information please do not hesitate to contact me on 01495 766910.

Yours sincerely



Mark Horton
PRINCIPAL OFFICER, FORWARD PLANNING

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REVIEW OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVISION IN THE NORTH OF THE BOROUGH

Consultation Document

1. Introduction

Torfaen County Borough Council's 21st Century Schools proposals were well received by Welsh Government in 2011.

The 21st Century Schools programme has been well documented, with the council taking the decision to include every school as part of it in October 2010. The council sought the views of all interested parties on its programme during a series of roadshows that were held across the county borough in March 2011.

The outcome of this public engagement was reported to cabinet in July 2011. Subsequent to this meeting, Welsh Government asked councils to revise their original Band A proposals (originally submitted in October 2010) against the following prioritisation criteria:

- The level of match funding required by the council increased from 30% to 50%
- The poorest condition of the estate (prioritisation to reside with the council although the independent school survey data will be applied)
- Surplus capacity – the key indicator being surplus places (both as a percentage and as an estimated actual reduction in a number of places)
- Running efficiencies (e.g. reduction in running costs, backlog maintenance)
- The length of 21st Century School Band's B, C and D are yet to be determined.

The revised Strategic Outline Programme was approved by Council in November 2011 with the Welsh Government confirming match funding in principle in December 2011.

Torfaen's Primary School estate has some schools that:

- Are trying to operate in buildings or grounds which are not fit for purpose and have an unaffordable maintenance backlog
- Are too small to run economically in today's financial climate
- Have significant surplus capacity in their local cluster of schools
- Are not located where the demand for school places is concentrated.

The 21st Century Schools Programme in Torfaen and across Wales is intended to tackle these issues in a strategic rather than piecemeal way.

The proposals in relation to both Cwmffrwdoer and Garnteg Primary Schools are ones identified in Band A (2014 to 2019) of the agreed Programme.

Whilst Band A proposals have been agreed in principle by Welsh Government, the investment will not go ahead in either case until a Business Justification Case (BJC) is approved.

2. Consultation arrangements

Before any decision is made on the proposal to expand Garnteg and Cwmffrwdoer Primary Schools and at the same time in the case of Cwmffrwdoer, change the age range from 4 to 11 to 3 to 11 to accommodate a nursery unit, the council is required to hold a statutory consultation with all interested parties. The following information is therefore provided to set out the process by which consultation will be conducted.

Statutory consultation is necessary because the proposals will see the capacity of both schools increase by at least 25%, and the age range will be extended at Cwmffrwdoer to accommodate a nursery.

A list of all those being consulted is attached as an appendix (1) to this document.

A 'drop-in' session in relation to this proposal will be held as follows:

DAY	DATE	TIME	VENUE
Wednesday	10 th June 2015	3.30pm until 6.30pm.	Cwmffrwdoer Primary School, Waunddu, Pontnewynydd, Pontypool.
Thursday	2 nd July 2015	3.30pm until 6.30pm.	Garnteg Primary School, Hillcrest, Garndiffaith, Pontypool.

This will allow interested parties to attend at a time that is convenient for them during the late afternoon/early evening. Officers will attend to answer questions and ensure all comments/views made are recorded to allow Elected Members to make an informed decision at the appropriate time.

In addition, any views or comments can be made:

- By writing to Mr Dermot McChrystal, Head of Education Services (FAO Mark Horton) c/o Torfaen County Borough Council, Civic Centre, Pontypool, Torfaen NP4 6YB.

- By email: primaryreview@torfaen.gov.uk.
- By completing a response proforma (attached as an appendix to this document) and returning it to the above mentioned address.

It is important to note that any unfavourable comments made during the consultation period will not be treated as objections and that if you wish to object, you will need to do so in writing during the statutory objection period. If consultees submit a request during the objection period that a response submitted at the consultation stage should be treated as an objection this will be accepted.

The views of children and young people remain important and therefore the consultation sessions undertaken by Torfaen Play Service and the views obtained from the children will be included in the report to Cabinet.

3. The proposals

Torfaen County Borough Council propose to extend and refurbish Cwmffrwdoer Primary School (and add a nursery unit) and at the same time extend and refurbish Garnteg Primary School. Specific details on these proposals can be found below.

It is proposed the works will be completed and these changes will be implemented from September 2017.

The proposals link to the Council's 21st Century Schools programme as explained in the introduction above. The aim of these proposals is to provide appropriate places and choices in the North of the borough, through a combination of school closures and investment at other schools.

Pontymoile Primary School closed at the end of the 2013/2014 academic session, while Pontnewynydd Primary School will close at the end of the 2014/2015 academic session. These schools have previously been identified as condition D buildings and their closure has also supported the Council's plans to reduce surplus places and meet Welsh Government targets in that regard.

The developments at both Cwmffrwdoer and Garnteg Primary Schools will also allow a further rationalisation of places in the North of the borough, subject to formal consultation, at Victoria Primary and Brynteg Nursery Schools.

This consultation document relates only to the proposals as they affect Cwmffrwdoer and Garnteg and no decisions will be made at this time in relation to Victoria Primary and Brynteg Nursery Schools

In this context, the following should be noted:

Victoria Primary is a category C School and is a Band A proposal to be determined before 2019.

Brynteg Nursery is category C School and is a Band B (2020 – 2022) proposal identified for closure, but only once alternative provision is established.

Any perceived excess surplus initially identified at Garnteg would be removed as the expectation is that the majority of any children displaced from a further school closure proposal would transfer to the refurbished and extended Garnteg site.

In terms of nursery places the council has a policy of wherever possible to have “all through” 3 and/or 4 to 11 schools and the Cwmffrwdoer proposal specifically would continue to support this policy.

There are therefore three distinct elements to the proposals contained within this consultation document, specifically:

i) To extend and refurbish Cwmffrwdoer Primary School.

Torfaen County Borough Council proposes to expand Cwmffrwdoer Primary School from its current capacity of 210 to 315 places and add a 52 Part Time Equivalent (PTE) Nursery unit. It is anticipated that this new provision will be available from September 2017.

This proposal links to the Council’s 21st Century Schools programme as mentioned earlier. In particular it should be noted that this is a condition C school requiring remodelling and extending to provide appropriate places and choices in the North of the borough.

The proposal would also specifically addresses some concerns in the existing school buildings which whilst in a reasonable condition do have backlog maintenance issues.

The project will primarily provide additional classroom accommodation and the refurbishment of the existing building that will include the provision of a nursery unit to accommodate 52 PTE places. The estimated total cost of the investment is £3.7M.

ii) To establish a nursery unit at Cwmffrwdoer Primary School and thereby extend the age range from 4 to 11 to 3 to 11.

Cwmffrwdoer Primary School had until recently a Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) and ESTYN registered non maintained education setting on site. The “Pontymoile Under 5’s Playgroup at Cwmffrwdoer” vacated the classroom it was using in July 2014 in order that the school could meet its statutory age requirements because the numbers on the school roll were increasing.

This proposal would see a 52 PTE nursery unit established and located within the school in suitably adapted and refurbished accommodation. The facilities will include appropriate indoor and outdoor play areas as well as those supporting facilities necessary for nursery provision. The accommodation will be subject to CSSIW and ESTYN inspection. The cost of this element of the project forms part of the overall budget of £3.7m mentioned at i) above.

iii) To extend and refurbish Garnteg Primary School.

Torfaen County Borough Council proposes to expand Garnteg Primary School from its current capacity of 224 to 420 places. It is anticipated that this new provision will be available during the course of the Autumn/Spring Term 2016/17.

This proposal links to the Council's 21st Century Schools programme as mentioned earlier. In particular it should be noted that this is a condition B school requiring remodelling and extending to provide appropriate places and choices in the North of the borough.

The proposal would also specifically addresses some concerns in the existing school buildings which whilst in a reasonable condition do have backlog maintenance issues.

The project will primarily include additional classroom accommodation and some internal refurbishment of the existing accommodation. The estimated cost of the investment is £4.3M.

4. Background information

Building Condition

Cwmffrwdroer Primary School is in the Abersychan Secondary cluster of schools within Torfaen. The school was built in 1983 and occupies a site of 3.12 acres.

The school is a modern single storey building, constructed of brick and block elevations under a pitched bitumen slate roof. It has powder coated aluminium window panels. It is set on a landscaped site on the edge of the development boundary. It has a tarmac surfaced yard.

Although DDA access into the site is poor, access into and around school is reasonable. The buildings are generally considered to be suitable but could be improved.

Some ground stabilisation works were undertaken circa 2003 on the site due to old mine workings, and this is considered suitable for this development.

The backlog maintenance requirements for Cwmffrwdroer are estimated at £290,000. Maintenance backlog issues include:

- Replacement of roof (heavily vandalised over the last few years)
- Mechanical and Electrical Services Infrastructure (the infrastructure is now 30 years old).
- Windows & Doors

There are no significant housing developments currently identified in the school's catchment area.

Garnteg Primary School is also in the Abersychan Secondary cluster of schools within Torfaen. The school was built in 1995 and occupies a site of 6.63 acres.

The school is a modern single storey premises built on two levels over a sloping site. It is a brick and block construction (cement rendered and painted externally) under a pitched composite slate roof. The school is set on a large landscaped site, with grassed sports pitches, tarmacadam yard areas and a feature pond. The School also has a specialist climbing wall.

Although single storey it is on two levels with a stair-lift to allow DDA access.

Condition and suitability is fairly good as it is only 20 years old, but will require work over the next few years. For Garnteg, the maintenance backlog is estimated at £121,000 and backlog issues include:

- Routine and planned maintenance
- Pre paint repairs and external redecoration

There are currently no new housing developments identified in the school's catchment area.

Numbers on Roll/Pupil Projections

The English Medium Primary Schools affected or likely to be affected by the proposals are as follows. They are partner schools to Abersychan Secondary School and lie within the cluster for that school.

Name of School	Location	Category	Language	Age Range
Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary	Middle Coed Cae Road, Blaenavon.	Community	English Medium	3 - 11
Cwmffrwdroer Primary	Waunddu, Pontnewynydd, Pontypool.	Community	English Medium	4 - 11
Garnteg Primary	Hillcrest, Garndiffaith, Pontypool.	Community	English Medium	3 - 11
Pontnewynydd Primary **	Lower Leigh Road, Pontnewynydd, Pontypool.	Community	English Medium	4 - 11
Victoria Primary	Lower Harpers Road, Abersychan, Pontypool.	Community	English Medium	4 - 11
Penygarn Community Primary School***	Penygarn Road, Penygarn, Pontypool.	Community	English Medium	3 - 11

** Pontnewynydd Primary School will close at the end of the 2014/2015 academic session.

*** Penygarn Community Primary School whilst in the West Monmouth cluster of schools has a “split” catchment area for secondary school admissions, part of which is in the Abersychan cluster and is therefore also included.

We have excluded Welsh Medium and faith based schools on the assumption that demand for places will not significantly impact on these particular schools.

The following table provides details of numbers on roll for the previous four annual school census years, currently on roll (as of September 2014) and a five year forecast for those schools listed above that may be affected by these proposals.

School (current capacity)	Act Sept 2010	Act Sept 2011	Act Sept 2012	Act Sept 2013	Act Sept 2014	Proj Sept 2015	Proj Sept 2016	Proj Sept 2017	Proj Sept 2018	Proj Sept 2019
Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary (450)	372	383	424	438	444	475	491	492	477	468
Cwmffrwdor Primary (210)	144	152	155	182	189	211	230	231	236	247
Garnteg Primary(224)	155	197	206	225	233	236	251	250	245	246
Pontnewynydd Primary School (230)	143	141	128	126	117	0	0	0	0	0
Victoria Primary School (234)	229	222	215	212	207	220	224	214	213	223
Penygarn Community Primary School (475)	304	307	331	348	381	495	472	454	457	449
Total numbers on roll	1347	1402	1459	1531	1571	1637	1668	1641	1628	1633

Notes:

- 1) Numbers exclude nursery aged children and those pupils attending Special Needs Resource Bases
- 2) Capacity has been calculated using Welsh Government guidance, specifically the Welsh Government Circular No 21/2011”Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales”.
- 3) Projected/forecasted numbers are based on current admission and parental preference trends, health authority live birth data and potential pupils from new known housing developments.

- 4) From September 2015, following the closure of Pontnewynydd Primary School, projections have been added to those of Penygarn for completeness and illustrative purposes. Some parents will have opted for their children to attend other schools.

The following table provides the total numbers on roll/capacities for these schools, adjusted to show school closures and proposed capacities at the appropriate time:

	Actual Sept 2014	Projected Sept 2015	Projected Sept 2016	Projected Sept 2017	Projected Sept 2018	Projected Sept 2019
Schools Capacity	1823	1593	1894	1894	1894	1894
Numbers on Roll	1571	1637	1668	1641	1628	1633
Surplus Capacity (shortfall)	252	(44)	226	253	266	261

An analysis of parental preference undertaken in June 2014 indicated that of the 175 pupils attending Cwmffrwdoer Primary School 134 (77%) attended from within the catchment area. A further 88 residing in the Cwmffrwdoer catchment area attended other English Medium schools. Pupils attending Welsh Medium or VA (faith based) settings have been excluded on the assumption that demand for such places will not significantly impact on these particular schools.

For Garnteg of the 224 on roll 187(83%) attended from within the catchment area. A further 53 residing in the Garnteg catchment area attended other English Medium schools. Pupils attending Welsh Medium or VA (faith based) settings have been excluded on the assumption that demand for such places will not significantly impact on these particular schools.

The total “in catchment” numbers for both Cwmffrwdoer and Garnteg (as of June 2014) are:

- 222 for Cwmffrwdoer – of which 49 were attending other Primary Schools in the Abersychan Secondary Cluster and 37 attending schools in the West Monmouth Secondary cluster.
- 240 for Garnteg – of which 40 were attending other Primary Schools in the Abersychan Secondary Cluster and 9 attending schools in the West Monmouth Secondary cluster.

Therefore based on June 2014 numbers the total “in catchment” pupils for the two schools is 462. Although we are proposing extensions to both Cwmffrwdoer and

Garnteg schools with a total of 735 places any surplus is only expected to be short term and would be removed as the assumption is that the majority of any children displaced from a further school closure proposal would transfer to the refurbished and extended schools, particularly Garnteg. The proposals would also still allow an element of parental preference, giving greater choice in the North of the borough.

The expectation is however that the larger schools, would offer an opportunity to draw pupils back to their respective catchment area school, and in doing so help achieve the Council's key 21st Century Schools Programme aims and vision:

- To achieve greater economy and efficiency through appropriate sized schools, collaboration and better use of resources to improve the cost effectiveness of the education system. In doing so, ensuring that we have schools of the right type, right size in the right place.
- To develop a sustainable education system with all schools meeting national building standards and reducing the recurrent costs and carbon footprint.
- To create safe learning environments for schools and communities that will enable the successful implementation of strategies for school improvement and better educational outcomes and life chances for children and young people that are aligned to our key strategies: Corporate plan, HSCWB, SEF, Welsh Medium Education Strategy.
- To achieve inspirational settings appropriate for new educational developments and new technologies and adaptable to cater for the changing needs of the future.
- To provide an outstanding resource for the whole community where school facilities can be shared and which can offer a range of co-located facilities. e.g. Child care, Health, Social Services, Adult Education, Youth and Play services.
- To achieve inclusive settings, providing for the individual learning needs for all pupils, providing pleasant and appropriate spaces for all school users; spaces in which pupils including those with additional learning needs and disabilities feel that their needs are respected.

Early Years/Nursery Provision

The standard of nursery education and the sufficiency of accommodation and facilities offered

Prior to July 2014 Cwmffrwdor Primary School hosted a CSSIW and ESTYN registered non maintained education setting. It has therefore recently demonstrated its suitability for early years provision on site. The proposal being advanced now is to enhance the facilities further and offer purpose built facilities both in the classroom and the outdoors. In addition the facility is expected to be viable given the popularity of the playgroup that was previously located in the school (see below), by

offering an increased number of places. The increase in the size of the school overall to 315 places would also make the nursery an attractive option with the possibility of “all through” provision on a single site.

The need for additional nursery places in the area

Based on the mid year population estimates from 2014-2019 it is predicted that the number of 0-2 year olds in the north of the borough will increase by 35 with the number of 3-4 year olds decreasing by 27. There are currently 14 education providers offering a total of 853 places, 625 places were taken up in 2014. According to the population data there were 914 eligible children living in the north of the borough. There were sufficient places to meet demand.

Factoring in the proposed future closure of Brynteg Nursery and the opening of a maintained nursery on the Cwmffrwdoer Primary site, based on the figures we have for 2019, there would be a decrease of 12 places. However we do not know how many children attending Cwmffrwdoer under 5's live within the school catchment area, in addition Abersychan under 5's are registered for 24 places at present, in 2014 only 2 places were taken up, there is also space within the community hall, they are based in, to potentially increase the number of places in this setting. With the proposed changes it is predicted that there will still be sufficient education places in the north of the borough to meet demand.

The effect of this proposal on other institutions, including private and 3rd sector providers

Currently there is a sufficient supply of places to meet demand and the proposal to establish a nursery unit at Cwmffrwdoer will provide more places and choice. The 21st Century Schools Programme includes further rationalisation proposals which will however rebalance the supply and demand situation for Early Years providers in both the private and public sector. The Council is reviewing the timing of these proposals.

The extent to which this proposal will integrate early years education with childcare services or are consistent with an integrated approach.

The CSA 2014 summarised findings for the Pontnewynydd ward as follows:

Pontnewynydd has one of the smallest numbers of total children in 2011 and 2014 and of most ages in 2011, 2014 and 2017. It will experience one of the highest percentage changes of children aged 6 to 7 between 2011 and 2014; also those aged 5 to 10 and aged 15 to 17 between 2011 and 2017. This area has one of the largest proportions of females working full-time.

The CSA 2014 however summarised findings for the Abersychan ward as follows:

This locality has one of the largest numbers of economically inactive. These latter indicators may suppress demand for childcare in this locality. Abersychan ward has one the largest percentages of Welsh speakers and, therefore, the demand for Welsh language education may be higher. The Family Information Service received one of the highest numbers of enquiries from this locality for this.

The opening of a nursery on the Cwmffrwdroer Primary School site will increase the number of childcare wraparound places in the Pontnewynydd ward and could encourage more parents back into work.

5. Options considered

In developing Torfaen’s 21st Century Schools Programme, a number of options were considered which involved all the schools from within the cluster and also a school in a neighbouring cluster due in the main to the movement of pupils in and out of catchment.

The reason that these options were not taken forward is that they did not address condition, small schools or surplus places. Those alternative options are summarised below, but option 5 scored the highest to become the preferred option.

Abersychan (Secondary) School Cluster	
Options	Finding
1.0 Scope	
‘Do Nothing’ – Leave the estate as it is	Discounted - would fail to hit any objectives
‘Minimum’ – Rebuild or refurbish some schools	Possible, affordable, but may not meet many objectives
‘Intermediate’ – Rebuild or refurbish most schools	Possible, may be affordable and would meet many objectives.
‘Maximum’ – Rebuild all schools	Discounted – unaffordable under revised criteria
2.0 Service solutions	
Option 1 - Do Nothing	Maintain Status Quo and address maintenance backlog. Discounted - does not address condition and continues “patch and mend” philosophy. Goes forward for baseline comparison purposes only.
Option 2 - Reduce Primaries from 5 to 4 adjusting capacities to suit catchments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garnteg – refurbish and maintain existing capacity. • Cwmffrwdroer – refurbish and maintain existing capacity with early years. • Victoria/Pontnewynydd – New school (combined existing capacity) on British site with early years.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blaenavon – No change. <p>Discounted - does not sufficiently address surplus places, raise capital and site availability within time scale.</p>
Option 3 - Reduce Primaries from 5 to 3 adjusting capacities to suit catchments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garnteg/Victoria - on an extended and refurbished Garnteg site. • Cwmffrwdroer/Pontnewynydd - on an extended and refurbished Cwmffrwdroer site with early year provision. • Blaenavon – No change. <p>Possible but does not address surplus places.</p>
Option 4 - Reduce Primaries from 5 to 3 adjusting capacities to suit catchments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garnteg/Victoria - on an extended and refurbished Garnteg site. • Pontnewynydd - dispersed to extended and refurbished Cwmffrwdroer (with early years) and an extended and refurbished Penygarn (West Monmouth Cluster). • Blaenavon – No change. <p>Possible</p>
Option 5 - Reduce Primaries from 5 to 3 adjusting capacities to suit catchments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria dispersed to extended and refurbished Garnteg and Cwmffrwdroer with early years. • Penygarn/Pontnewynydd on an extended and refurbished Penygarn (West Monmouth Cluster). • Blaenavon – No change. <p>Preferred.</p>

The preferred option (5 above) was considered the most cost effective option as some existing buildings are in acceptable condition, and provide the opportunity to develop the existing sites, improve existing buildings by potentially bringing them into a higher condition category.

The preferred option also optimised value for money (VFM) because the proposed remodelling and extensions are to relatively new buildings, with the schools being located in the right place in terms of the communities they serve.

In the development of these proposals a number of risks and counter measures have been considered and are described below:

<u>Risks</u>	<u>Counter measure</u>
Pupils' education may be disrupted, because of building work being undertaken while the school is in session.	Transition arrangements will be agreed with the school and put in place to ensure minimum disruption.
The Minister for Education and Skills will take action if we do not address surplus places.	This proposal contributes to the overall strategic plan of reducing surplus place across Torfaen. By September 2015 we are currently projecting approximately 10% surplus places, within the target set by Welsh Government
There will be issues with traffic congestion around School, especially if more children are in attendance.	<p>Traffic and Parking congestion outside schools at the start and end of the day are acknowledged by the Council. We will be looking to carry out a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) as part of the planning process to identify traffic and pedestrian movements and consider what improvements are necessary to accommodate the additional school places.</p> <p>The council will also work with the schools on their Travel Plans and try to encourage less use of vehicles. Welsh Government policy remains not to encourage driving and transport movement around schools. Safety is paramount.</p>
Project delivered late or over-budget due to main contractor.	Ensure a contract is signed up for the project, within a Framework Agreement, holding main contractor accountable in order to be able to apply pressure to them and to make them liable for our additional costs resulting from their failure.

Public and schools opposition to change, delays or stops some or all improvements being realised. (A single objection could delay or stop the process).	Positively engage with the schools and public at appropriate times during the development of the proposal. Statutory consultation is required for these proposals because the schools are increasing in size by at least 25%.
Failure to gain planning approval for modifications to existing sites.	Ensure early engagement with Planning and Public Protection Service.
Insufficient capacity for future demand.	The Education Forward Planning team annually reviews demand for school places. This includes assessment of all future planned housing developments and takes them into account when planning school sizes. School Capacities to be actively managed and monitored throughout the programme.

As a consequence of the above, the main benefits for these projects and the overall programme would be:

Benefits

- Both schools are housed in relatively modern buildings and are therefore more accessible (DDA compliant) in and around the building/site for pupils and other users.
- Welsh Government requires LA's to reduce surplus places and these proposals help to achieve that by removing excess surplus places and ensure improved viability of remaining schools.
- The proposals support the Council's overall approach to rationalising its school building stock which therefore means there are fewer schools to maintain and fund.
- Larger schools are more viable financially and fewer, cost inefficient small

schools.

- Introduces a combined Nursery and Primary provision on a single site (Cwmffrwdroer).
- Increased continuity of provision to avoid dips in pupil achievement.
- Potential future release of sites for alternative use or for capital receipt.
- Pupils and parents can use their local school, encouraging walking and reducing traffic congestion especially with the potential to introduce safer routes to school.
- High quality buildings and facilities that inspire learners and the community. Newer buildings are also more economical to run and minimising CO2 emissions.
- Hazardous life expired buildings and facilities replaced.

There are however some potential disadvantages as follows:

Disadvantages

- Pupils will be disrupted in the short term.
- Potential for increased traffic congestion around the school site.
- The proposal will initially see an increase in capacity in the cluster, but this will only be in the short term. The Education Service will however as part of its annual review continue to measure demand for school places, and in particular in the North of the borough to ensure there is sufficient local capacity before other proposals in the area are considered and progressed.
- Reducing the number of schools ultimately reduces parental choice in where they send their children, however sufficient places will be provided for the expected in-catchment demand.

Costs

The preferred option above was prioritised within the 21st Century Schools Programme, and agreed in principle by Welsh Government in December 2011 as follows:

Band A (2014-2019)

Cwmffrwdroer Primary School	Expansion and refurbishment on	£5.2M (2011 estimated)
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	existing school site.	figure)
Garnteg Primary School	Expansion and refurbishment on existing school site.	£4.8M (2011 estimated figure)

The revised total capital costs for these projects are £8M (Cwmffrwdoer Primary School - £3.7M; Garnteg Primary School - £4.3M).

There will be revenue costs associated with these projects due to the increase in the size of the buildings and capacities and these are estimated as follows:-

Cwmffrwdoer Primary School - £48,541 in a full year.
Garnteg Primary School - £31,346 in a full year.

The Council has now submitted Business Justification Cases (BJC) on this basis to Welsh Government. A decision on the individual BJC is expected in Summer 2015 at about the same time that Cabinet will consider the outcome of this consultation exercise and determine the next steps (See “What happens next?” at section 13. below).

6. Admission arrangements

As Torfaen County Borough Council is the admissions authority for both Cwmffrwdoer and Garnteg Primary Schools, admission arrangements will remain unchanged as a result of these proposals. There are no current proposals to changes the catchment areas of either school.

7. Home to school transport

It should be noted that the current home to school transport policy will change from September 2015. The changes will be phased in meaning pupils currently receiving free transport under the current policy/mileage criteria (1 ½ miles) will continue to do so if their circumstances remain unchanged and until they complete their studies at their current school.

From September 2015 the new mileage criteria (2 miles) will apply for those children starting primary school at Reception Year when eligibility for free transport will be assessed using the new mileage criteria.

8. Human resources

It is likely that staffing levels at both Primary Schools will need to be increased as a result of the proposals as more children enter the schools. This will be kept under review by the Head teacher and Governing Body.

9. The quality and diversity of education

Estyn Reports

The most recent Estyn reports for potentially affected schools are summarised below.

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

- Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?
- Key Question 2: How good is provision?
- Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement. In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

Cwmffrwdroer Primary School

Date of Inspection: June 2011

Summary	Judgement
The school's current performance	Good
The school's prospects for improvement	Good
Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good

Garnteg Primary School

Date of Inspection: September 2010

Summary	Judgement
The school's current performance	Adequate
The school's prospects for improvement	Good
Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good

Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary School

Date of Inspection: March 2014

Summary	Judgement
The school's current performance	Good
The school's prospects for improvement	Good
Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good

Victoria Primary School

Date of Inspection: May 2014

Summary	Judgement
The school's current performance	Adequate
The school's prospects for improvement	Adequate
Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Adequate
Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Adequate

Penygarn Community Primary School

Date of Inspection: January 2009.

It should be noted that at that time, a five-point scale was used to represent all inspection judgements in the report as follows:

What the judgement means	Judgement/Grade
good with outstanding features	Grade 1
good features and no important shortcomings	Grade 2
good features outweigh shortcomings	Grade 3
some good features, but shortcomings in important areas	Grade 4
many important shortcomings	Grade 5

Table of grades awarded to Penygarn against the 7 Key Questions:

Key Question	Inspection grade
1 How well do learners achieve?	2
2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	2
3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	2

4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	2
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	2
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

Full reports can be accessed via the following links:-

Cwmffrwdroer Primary School: <http://www.estyn.gov.uk/english/provider/6782298>

Garnteg Primary School: <http://www.estyn.gov.uk/english/provider/6782315/>

Victoria Primary School: <http://www.estyn.gov.uk/english/provider/6782115/>

Blaenavon VC Primary School: <http://www.estyn.gov.uk/english/provider/6783028>

Penygarn Primary School: <http://www.estyn.gov.uk/english/provider/6782322/>

Local Authority Assessment

National Categorisation of Schools

The Welsh Government published the outcomes of the National School Categorisation System for primary and secondary schools for the first time in January 2015. The purpose of the national categorisation system is to ensure that the right support is provided to schools that need the most help and guidance. The system is also designed to enable schools to learn from each other and to share effective practice.

The system provides a clear and simple way of understanding how well a school is performing for all its pupils, how effectively it is led and managed, the quality of teaching and learning and the level of support and challenge it needs to do even better.

The system is based on a three-step process:

1. The Welsh Government uses a range of **performance data** to place each school in a standards group from 1 to 4 (1 being the best and 4 being the worst). Schools in standards group 1 demonstrate very good overall performance while those in standards group 4 demonstrate the greatest need for improved performance.
2. Starting from the school's own self evaluation, Education Achievement Service (EAS) Challenge Advisers will have discussed with each headteacher their current capacity to improve taking account of evidence about **standards, quality of leadership, teaching and learning**. Schools will be in one of four groups (improvement capacity A to D) with schools in improvement capacity A showing the most capacity to improve themselves

and those in improvement capacity D showing the least capacity. As a result of this discussion a judgement about improvement capacity from A -D is awarded.

- The Challenge Adviser will have agreed with each school its support category which is colour coded from **green, to yellow then amber and red**. This is to ensure that the use of resources is planned effectively and directed at where the need is greatest.

The colour coded support category shows, at a glance, the schools that need the most help and guidance to improve, those that are doing well but could be doing better, and those that are already highly effective and can help others to do better.

Green support category – A highly effective school which is well run, has strong leadership, and is clear about its priorities for improvement. These schools have a track record in raising the standards that pupils achieve and have the capacity to support other schools to do better.

Yellow support category - An effective school which is already doing well and knows the areas it needs to improve. By identifying the right support and taking action, it has the potential to do even better.

Amber support category – A school in need of improvement which needs help to identify the steps to improve or to make change happen more quickly. Through discussions with the EAS and local authority, the school will receive a tailored package of support.

Red support category – A school in need of greatest improvement and will receive immediate, intensive support. Progress will be closely monitored to make sure that the necessary improvements take place as quickly as possible.

The categorisation outcomes of each school are published annually and provide a snapshot of schools as at December. However the improvement capacity and support category of a school may change during the academic year. The Head teacher or Chair of Governors should be able to provide you with any updated information.

School Name	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary	2	B	Yellow
Cwmffrwdroer Primary	3	C	Amber
Garnteg Primary	1	A	Green
Victoria Primary	3	C	Amber
Penygarn Community Primary	3	C	Amber

For a guide to the National School Categorisation System and information on individual schools please use the following link:

<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/index.html?lang=eng>

The proposed expansion of both Cwmffrwdroer and Garnteg Primary Schools is considered to have the following advantages.

- The expansion of the Schools will allow for a growth in pupil numbers and in staff which will provide a greater range of expertise amongst the teachers leading to more effective distributive leadership
- Increased opportunity for staff development
- Provide more inclusive settings, both for those with any Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disabilities.
- Provide high quality environments that are conducive to teaching & learning, that are functional, and stimulating
- The refurbished and extended buildings will be both flexible and adaptable, to cope with changes in the future.
- Offers wider community use.

Teaching and learning within the school will continue to be effective as research has shown that increasing the capacity of any school comes with many benefits some of which are highlighted above.

One key benefit is the sharing of expertise and experience in determining the right mix of teaching and education support staff for the school. The encouragement of pupil to pupil learning and support is another key benefit. These benefits will impact positively on standards within the schools.

If the proposal is agreed the Council will establish transition groups to oversee the process of expanding the two Primary Schools. These groups will involve officers, Head Teachers and Chair of Governors of the schools which will meet on a regular basis up to and beyond any implementation date. A Transition Plan will be developed to address key issues/risks associated with the proposal and will identify timelines and attach responsibilities to individual group members. Parents/carers/staff and other key stakeholders will be kept informed of the transition arrangements and any support that can be offered to ensure the process is as smooth as possible for all concerned.

10. Community impact/Equality impact assessment

Community Impact and Equality Impact Assessments for the two schools are attached as appendices (2 & 3) to this document.

Should this proposal be implemented, it is likely to benefit children in accordance with the seven core aims of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically:

- 1) have a flying start in life;

- 2) have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
- 3) enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
- 4) have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
- 5) are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
- 6) have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing; and
- 7) are not disadvantaged by poverty.

11. Welsh Language Impact Assessment

As the Schools involved are English Medium, there is no expected impact on Welsh language provision.

12. Frequently asked questions

- **When would building work start?**

Subject to these proposals being approved the aim is to start building work on the existing Primary School sites in the Spring of 2016 .We anticipate the new facilities being available for occupation by no later than September 2017.

- **How big will the Schools become?**

The proposals would see Cwmffrwdor Primary School increase in size from 210 to 315 places. This would mean that for each year the admission number (AN) would be 45 (currently 30). Additional accommodation would also be created for a nursery unit.

For Garnteg there would be an increase in capacity from 224 to 420 places. The AN would increase from 32 to 60.

- **Big is not necessarily better. Some children could be “lost” in a bigger school environment.**

Small schools will have their benefits, but larger schools are able to offer significantly more. Pastoral care can be very good in bigger schools too.

- **With more children in the schools, will classes be bigger and therefore impact on my child’s education?**

No, the Admission Numbers will be higher, which will mean that more children can attend the respective schools. This will also offer parents/carers more choice of schools. However, Government Infant class size legislation does not permit Key Stage 1 classes to exceed 30 pupils. Whilst there is no statutory requirement for Key Stage 2 (Junior), class sizes are monitored to ensure wherever possible they are not exceeded.

- **How big will the Cwmffrwdor Nursery be? Will places be guaranteed in Cwmffrwdor Primary School if my child attends the nursery unit?**

It is anticipated that the nursery at Cwmffrwdor will offer facilities for 52 Part time equivalent (PTE) places.

No, as in all cases attendance at a nursery class within a primary school does not guarantee a place in the school's reception class and a fresh application will need to be made.

- **What about staff?**

We do not anticipate any impact on staff. As pupil numbers increase in the future, any new appointments to the staff structure would have to be approved by the Governing Body through the formal Human Resource (HR) arrangements.

- **What about the increased traffic in the area that the bigger schools will generate?**

Traffic and Parking congestion outside schools at the start and end of the day are acknowledged by the Council. We will be looking to carry out a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) as part of the planning process to identify traffic and pedestrian movements and consider what improvements are necessary to accommodate the additional school places.

The council will also work with the schools on their Travel Plans and try to encourage less use of vehicles. Welsh Government policy remains not to encourage driving and transport movement around schools. Safety is paramount.

- **With bigger schools will the catchment areas be changed?**

There are no current proposals to change the catchment area of either Cwmffrwdor or Garnteg Primary Schools.

13. What happens next?

The following details what happens next and sets out the statutory process:

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Comment:</u>
1 st June – 13 th July 2015.	Initial consultation on proposal (6 weeks)
June 2015	Business Justification Cases (BJC's) submitted to Welsh Government (WG).

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Comment:</u>
September 2015	Decision from WG on BJC's.
September 2015	Cabinet receive report on the outcome of the consultation and consider next steps. If Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal, Statutory Notices will be published.
October 2015	Statutory Notices published (28 day objection period; published on a school day and not less than 15 days before end of term so at least ½ of the notice period is in term time).
November 2015	If there are no objections during the Statutory Notice period local determination of the proposals will be made via report to Executive Member for Education. If objections are received, the determination of the proposals will be the function of the Local Authority's Executive.
January 2016	Construction period begins.
September 2017	Proposals fully implemented.

14. Response pro-forma

A response pro-forma for comments and suggestions of alternatives to the proposals, including an opportunity for consultees to register their wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report, is attached to this consultation document (Appendix 4).

It is important to note that any unfavourable comments made during the consultation period will not be treated as objections and that if you wish to object, you will need to do so in writing during the statutory objection period. If consultees submit a request during the objection period that a response submitted at the consultation stage should be treated as an objection this will be accepted.

15. Other information

Further information on this and other proposals can be found on the Council website at: www.torfaen.gov.uk.

Appendix 1

DISTRIBUTION LIST FOR THE CONSULTATION REPORT

- The Governing body of each school maintained by Torfaen LEA
- The Headteacher of each school maintained by Torfaen LEA
- The Diocesan Director of Education of the Roman Catholic Church
- The Diocesan Director of Education of the Church in Wales
- The Board of Mission of the Church in Wales
- Awdurdod Cynwysterau, Cwricwlwm ac Asesu Cymru (the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales)
- The Welsh Joint Education Committee
- The Welsh Language Commissioner
- The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
- Welsh Government (Welsh Ministers)
- ESTYN
- Pan - Gwent Chief Education Officers (Caerphilly, Newport, Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent, to distribute to schools in their areas as appropriate)
- The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
- Children & Young People's Partnership
- Coleg Gwent
- The Careers Service
- Torfaen Association of school Governors
- The Parent Teacher Association of Wales
- The Welsh Primary Schools Association
- The Welsh Secondary Schools Association
- Libraries; (Blaenavon, Cwmbran and Pontypool)
- Other Directorates of Torfaen County Borough Council
- Schools Library Service
- Blaenavon Community Council
- Cwmbran Community Council
- Pontypool Community Council
- Ponthir Community Council
- Henllys Community Council
- Croesyceiliog and Llanyrafon Community Council
- Welsh Government (Schools Management and Effectiveness Division)
- National Council for Education and Training in Wales
- All relevant Professional Associations (NUT; NASUWT; ATL; UCAC; UNISON; GMB)
- Local AM – Lynne Neagle
- Local MP – Nick Thomas-Symonds
- AMs and MPs for other authorities in Pan-Gwent area.
- All Elected Members of Torfaen County Borough Council

- Parents/Carers of all pupils affected by proposals
- RhAG (Parents for Welsh Medium Education)
- Registered Private/Voluntary Early Years Settings/Providers in Torfaen
- Torfaen Voluntary Alliance
- Communities First Partnership Board
- CYDAG (Cwmdeithas Ysgolion Dros Addysg Gymraeg)
- Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin
- Education Achievement Service (EAS)
- The relevant Regional Transport Consortium
- The Police and Crime Commissioner for the area
- The relevant Health Authority(Aneurin Bevan Health Board)

Appendix 2

CWMFFRWDOER PRIMARY SCHOOL – COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Community Impact Assessments are a structured way for the Council to fully understand the implications of our decisions and whether they are detrimental or discriminatory to certain groups or sections of the community. They help us to consider the impact of Council decisions and policies within and between communities more generally. The Community Impact Assessment process will ensure that our decision making process is robust and impacts on all communities within Torfaen ensuring that they are fully considered in Council business. By carrying out impact assessments, the Council is working to promote equality for all our service users, employees and the wider community that we serve.

1) The proportion of pupils from the catchment area that attend the school (as at July 2014)

134 pupils (77% of total number on roll) attend Cwmffrwdoer Primary School from within its catchment area. 107 attend other schools including 88 at other English medium Primary Schools principally in the North of the borough, and 19 at Welsh Medium or Voluntary Aided settings.

2) The proportion of pupils from outside the catchment area that attend the school (as at July 2014)

41 pupils attend Cwmffrwdoer from outside its catchment area, mainly from George Street (18) and Victoria (12).

3) Current facilities and/or services offered by Cwmffrwdoer Primary School

The following facilities are offered at Cwmffrwdoer Primary School:

- Breakfast Club
- A variety of after school clubs including Cookery, Rugby, Football, Dragon Sports, Netball, Cricket and Minecraft

4) Distance and travelling time involved in attending Cwmffrwdoer Primary School or other Primary Schools in the area

The proposal does not involve the relocation of the school or a change in its catchment area therefore there will be no impact on travelling.

It should be noted that the current home to school transport policy will change from September 2015. The changes will be phased in meaning pupils currently receiving free transport under the current policy/mileage criteria (1 ½ miles) will continue to do

so if their circumstances remain unchanged and until they complete their studies at their current school.

From September 2015 the new mileage criteria (2 miles) will apply for those children starting primary school at Reception Year when eligibility for free transport will be assessed using the new mileage criteria.

5) How would parents' and pupils' engage should the proposal be agreed?

The Council recognises the importance of an effective and smooth transition process to ensure there is little if any disruption should the proposal to expand Cwmffrwdroer Primary School be approved.

The Council will establish a transition group to oversee the process involving officers, the head teacher and the chair of governors of Cwmffrwdroer Primary School. This group would meet on a regular basis up to and beyond any implementation date. Parents/carers and pupils will be provided with relevant information to aid their understanding of the transition process and the most appropriate support they can offer their children during the period of transition. The school will also work together with other services and where necessary agencies, in identifying families who may need additional support, at the point of, and after their children's transfer.

Parental and community engagement will remain a key priority throughout this process.

6) The wider implications the changes would have on public transport provisions.

As some 77% of the current learners reside within the catchment area of the school and therefore a reasonable distance from it, the impact on public transport will be minimal. Where primary aged children are entitled to free home to school transport this is provided by a contracted vehicle.

7) Wider community safety issues.

No significant safety issues are anticipated.

An Equality Impact Assessment is also undertaken in conjunction with and as part of the Community Impact Assessment and examines the potential equality implications of Council proposals.

The following are known as the "protected characteristics" in the Equality Act 2010 and are the groups that need to be considered: age; disability; gender; Marriage and Civil partnership; Pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; and sexual orientation.

Given the nature of this proposal, many of the above groups will not be impacted and this can be demonstrated by responding to the following questions.

- 1) Is the proposal likely to damage, or improve, relations between any particular groups or between the Council and those groups?
- 2) Are there any other community concerns or risks to communities that potentially arise, or are addressed, from the proposal?
- 3) Is the proposal likely to diminish, or improve positive attitudes towards different groups or restrict broader participation in public life?
- 4) Will the understanding of issues of race, disability, gender, social inclusion/community, Welsh language, ethnicity, age, religion or sexual orientation be promoted or damaged?
- 5) Is the proposal likely to have a negative or positive impact upon groups with 'protected characteristics'?
- 6) Is consultation required with any of the groups listed? (Note: if there is an impact, consultation is a requirement)

The assumption is that in many aspects the answers will be that there is no impact. However there may be particular issues that arise in relation to the needs of the local community (ie. children).

Any issues will however be drawn out as part of the consultation process. For example if there are children at the school with individual needs, this will be addressed as part of the transition process.

The consultation will also consider if there are any vulnerable groupings of children e.g. Looked after Children, Gypsy Traveller Children or particular ethnic groups whose needs must be considered in the school.

Appendix 3

GARNTEG PRIMARY SCHOOL – COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Community Impact Assessments are a structured way for the Council to fully understand the implications of our decisions and whether they are detrimental or discriminatory to certain groups or sections of the community. They help us to consider the impact of Council decisions and policies within and between communities more generally. The Community Impact Assessment process will ensure that our decision making process is robust and impacts on all communities within Torfaen ensuring that they are fully considered in Council business. By carrying out impact assessments, the Council is working to promote equality for all our service users, employees and the wider community that we serve.

1) The proportion of pupils from the catchment area that attend the school (as at July 2014)

187 pupils (84% of total number on roll) attend Garnteg Primary School from within its catchment area. 75 attend other schools including 53 at other English medium Primary Schools principally in the North of the borough, and 22 at Welsh Medium or Voluntary Aided settings.

2) The proportion of pupils from outside the catchment area that attend the school (as at July 2014)

37 pupils attend Garnteg from outside its catchment area, mainly from Victoria (24) and Cwmffrwdroer (6).

3) Current facilities and/or services offered by Garnteg Primary School

The following facilities are offered at Garnteg Primary School:

- Breakfast Club
- After school Community First clubs including gardening, cookery, I.C.T.
- A dedicated Flying Start building that work with families from birth to 3 years old. Also used by Health Services for on site injections/immunisation.
- Extra Curricular clubs for Foundation Phase (7 clubs) and Key Stage 2 (9)
- Family Learning sessions.

4) Distance and travelling time involved in attending Garnteg Primary School or other Primary Schools in the area

The proposal does not involve the relocation of the school or a change in its catchment area therefore there will be no impact on travelling.

It should be noted that the current home to school transport policy will change from September 2015. The changes will be phased in meaning pupils currently receiving free transport under the current policy/mileage criteria (1 ½ miles) will continue to do so if their circumstances remain unchanged and until they complete their studies at their current school.

From September 2015 the new mileage criteria (2 miles) will apply for those children starting primary school at Reception Year when eligibility for free transport will be assessed using the new mileage criteria.

5) How would parents' and pupils' engage should the proposal be agreed?

The Council recognises the importance of an effective and smooth transition process to ensure there is little if any disruption should the proposal to expand Garnteg Primary School be approved.

The Council will establish a transition group to oversee the process involving officers, the head teacher and the chair of governors of Garnteg Primary School. This group would meet on a regular basis up to and beyond any implementation date. Parents/carers and pupils will be provided with relevant information to aid their understanding of the transition process and the most appropriate support they can offer their children during the period of transition. The school will also work together with other services and where necessary agencies, in identifying families who may need additional support, at the point of, and after their children's transfer.

Parental and community engagement will remain a key priority throughout this process.

6) The wider implications the changes would have on public transport provisions.

As some 84% of the current learners reside within the catchment area of the school and therefore a reasonable distance from it, the impact on public transport will be minimal. Where primary aged children are entitled to free home to school transport this is provided by a contracted vehicle.

7) Wider community safety issues.

No significant safety issues are anticipated.

An Equality Impact Assessment is also undertaken in conjunction with and as part of the Community Impact Assessment and examines the potential equality implications of Council proposals.

The following are known as the “protected characteristics” in the Equality Act 2010 and are the groups that need to be considered: age; disability; gender; Marriage and Civil partnership; Pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; and sexual orientation.

Given the nature of this proposal, many of the above groups will not be impacted and this can be demonstrated by responding to the following questions.

- 7) Is the proposal likely to damage, or improve, relations between any particular groups or between the Council and those groups?
- 8) Are there any other community concerns or risks to communities that potentially arise, or are addressed, from the proposal?
- 9) Is the proposal likely to diminish, or improve positive attitudes towards different groups or restrict broader participation in public life?
- 10) Will the understanding of issues of race, disability, gender, social inclusion/community, Welsh language, ethnicity, age, religion or sexual orientation be promoted or damaged?
- 11) Is the proposal likely to have a negative or positive impact upon groups with ‘protected characteristics’?
- 12) Is consultation required with any of the groups listed? (Note: if there is an impact, consultation is a requirement)

The assumption is that in many aspects the answers will be that there is no impact. However there may be particular issues that arise in relation to the needs of the local community (ie. children).

Any issues will however be drawn out as part of the consultation process. For example if there are children at the school with individual needs, this will be addressed as part of the transition process.

The consultation will also consider if there are any vulnerable groupings of children e.g. Looked after Children, Gypsy Traveller Children or particular ethnic groups whose needs must be considered in the school.

ABXΔE

PROPOSALS:-

- 1) TO EXPAND CWMFFRWDOER PRIMARY SCHOOL AND CHANGE THE AGE RANGE FROM 4 to 11 TO 3 to 11.
- 2) TO EXPAND GARNTEG PRIMARY SCHOOL

YOUR VIEWS

WE WOULD LIKE YOUR VIEWS ON THE ABOVE PROPOSALS. THIS IS ALSO YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO SUGGEST ALTERNATIVES TO THIS PROPOSAL. PLEASE EITHER COMPLETE THIS FORM AND RETURN TO THE HEAD OF EDUCATION SERVICES (FAO MARK HORTON) C/O TORFAEN COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL, CIVIC CENTRE, PONTYPOOL, TORFAEN, NP4 6YB, OR EMAIL: primaryreview@torfaen.gov.uk

Should you require a copy of the consultation report please provide your contact details below

Email:

Name/Address:



