

Proposal to Establish a Rhydney 3-18 School

(Incorporating Abertysswg/Pontlottyn Primary
and Rhydney Comprehensive)

Consultation Document



Directorate of Education & Lifelong Learning

January 2017

A greener place
Man gwyrddach



Changing Lives, Building Futures • Newid Bywydau, Creu Dyfodol

Table of Contents

Heading	Page
Cover	1
Table of Contents	2
Foreword	3
The Consultation Process	4 - 6
Background	7
Educational Issues	8 – 11
Other Issues	12 – 17
Frequently Asked Questions	18
Response Pro Forma	Enclosed

Foreword

I am pleased to present this consultation document setting out the Rhymney 3-18 all-through school proposal which it is hoped to introduce from 1 January 2018.

The Council is committed to developing and establishing innovative approaches to teaching and learning. This includes securing better outcomes through increased continuity in pupil learning and a joined-up strategy to learning, pastoral care and support.

A meeting took place in March 2016 with representatives of the following:

- Governors of Abertysswg Primary, Pontllytyn Primary and Rhymney Comprehensive
- Local Council Members
- Senior officers of CCBC

Those present supported the proposal of establishing the Rhymney 3-18 school.

To progress this proposal, the Council is required to carry out a statutory consultation process. This consultation document provides an opportunity for stakeholders to contribute to this process. It is your opportunity to present your comments for the Council to consider before deciding whether to proceed further. .

The consultation process will take place over a 6 week period between 3 January and 16 February 2017. There are a number of consultation events where the proposal will be explained and allow you to ask questions. These details are included within the consultation document.

You may respond via the response form enclosed, by e-mail, or in writing, as follows:

e-mail: spragj@caerphilly.gov.uk , or

in writing to: Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Ty Penallta, Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed, CF82 7PG.

Please indicate if you wish to receive a copy of the consultation report produced following the consultation process.

I believe that the communities in the vicinity of Abertysswg and Pontllytyn will benefit from the creation of an all-through Rhymney 3-18 school.

This consultation document is seeking your views and I look forward to receiving your comments on this exciting proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Keri Cole

Keri Cole
Chief Education Officer
Caerphilly County Borough Council.

The Consultation Process

The Council has agreed to seek to establish a Rhymney 3-18 school by extending the age range of Rhymney Comprehensive from 11-18 to 3-18. The new 3-18 school will incorporate the new Abertysswg/Pontlottyn Primary School.

The name of this school has yet to be decided and so we will refer to the new school in this document as the “Rhymney 3-18 school”.

The consultation process represents an opportunity for people to learn about the proposal, ask questions and make comments that will be recorded and considered when the Council decides on the way forward. You may also provide your views in writing.

In order to seek to implement this change the Council will follow the process laid down in The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 in accordance with the School Organisation Code published by the Welsh Government in July 2013.

The consultation will involve a public meeting and drop-in sessions with those most directly affected by the proposal, where Council officers will be on hand to explain the proposals in more detail and answer any questions.

Who will we consult with?

- 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
- Headteachers of all Rhymney Comprehensive feeder schools
- Local CCBC Members
- Welsh Ministers
- Local Town and Community Councils
- All Assembly Members and Members of Parliament representing the area served by the schools directly affected by the proposal
- Directors of Education of all bordering LAs – Blaenau Gwent, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Newport, Powys, RCT, Torfaen
- Principals of Coleg Y Cymoedd & Coleg Gwent
- CCBC Youth Forum
- Communities First Local Partnership
- Families First Board
- Teaching Associations
- Support Staff Associations
- Welsh Government – Schools & Post-16 Divisions
- ESTYN
- Catholic Diocesan Board of Education
- Church in Wales Diocesan Board
- Local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)
- Regular community users of schools directly affected by the proposal
- Education for Life Scrutiny Committee
- South East Wales Consortium (EAS)
- South East Wales Transport Alliance (SEWTA)
- Gwent and South Wales Police and Crime Commissioners
- Local Independent Nursery Providers

How do you make your views known?

Consultation events will be held and you are welcome to attend the appropriate meeting / drop-in session.

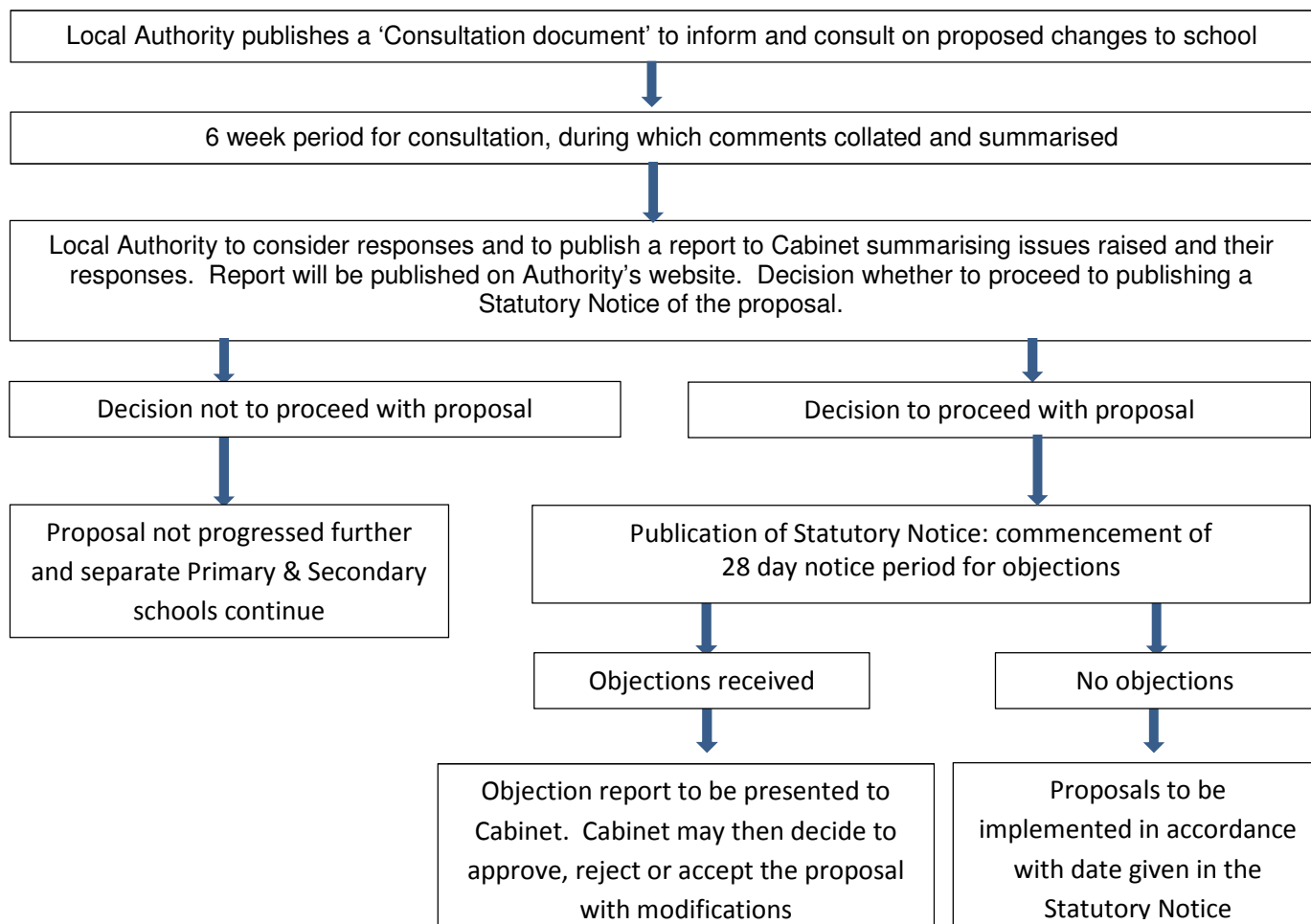
Consultation meeting	Date/Time	Venue
Rhymney Comprehensive School Drop-In Session for pupils and staff Drop-In Session for parents/carers Governing Body Meeting Public/Community Meeting	Monday 16 January 1.00p.m. – 3.00p.m. 3.00p.m. – 5.00p.m. 5.00p.m. – 7.00p.m. 7.00p.m.	Rhymney Comprehensive School
Pontlottyn Primary School Drop-In Session for pupils and staff Drop-In Session for parents/carers Governing Body Meeting	Wednesday 18 January 1.00p.m. – 3.00p.m. 3.00p.m. – 5.00p.m. 5.30p.m.	Pontlottyn Primary School
Abertysswg Primary School Drop-In Session for pupils and staff Drop-In Session for parents/carers Governing Body Meeting	Monday 30 January 1.00p.m. – 3.00p.m. 3.00p.m. – 5.00p.m. 5.30p.m.	Abertysswg Primary School

A response pro forma is attached, it will also be available at the drop-in sessions detailed above and on the Council's internet site at <http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk> and it should be returned to Jennifer Spragg, Senior Officer (Admissions, Exclusions & Planning of School Places), Directorate of Education & Lifelong Learning, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Penallta House, Tredomen Park, Ystrad Mynach, CF82 7PG. Alternatively comments can be forwarded electronically by e-mail to spragj@caerphilly.gov.uk. The deadline for responses is 16th February 2017. Social media facilities such as Twitter and Facebook will also be available.

Following consultation, CCBC's Cabinet will consider the views expressed and then decide whether to proceed with the proposal. If the decision is taken to proceed, a statutory notice will be published in the media, on our website and displayed at schools affected by the proposal. The statutory notice will last for 28 days from the date of publication and enables people to express their views in the form of supporting or objecting to the proposals.

CCBC's Cabinet will make the final decision whether to proceed, unless the decision is called in for review by the Welsh Government.

Consultation Process



Proposed Timescales:

WAY FORWARD	DATE
Formal Consultation Process	3rd January 2017 to 16 th February 2017
Cabinet consider the results of the Consultation and decide on way forward	15 th March 2017
Publication of Statutory Notice (in the event that Cabinet agree this on 15 th March 2017)	24 th April 2017 to 21 st May 2017
Final Decision by Cabinet	21 st June 2017
3-18 All Through School established	1 st January 2018

What do you have to consider?

The remainder of the consultation document sets out the rationale for the proposed change.

Background

An all-through school may be defined as:

‘A school that comprises multiple phases of Education provision (usually primary and secondary) in a single institution’.

An all-through school can offer a positive environment for learning in which all staff work together to ensure that young people make successful transitions between the different stages in their education. Such schools are well placed to ensure that their young people experience challenge and progression through consistent, well-planned teaching which is flexible and responsive to their distinctive geographical, cultural and social contexts.

There is a growing body of evidence to support the benefits of all-through schools. Importantly, in England the Department for Education and Skills identifies that new school leadership/management arrangements, curriculum design and improved delivery that results from working within an all age institution leads to:

- Raised attainment in all Key Stages throughout the school, by reducing performance ‘dips’ that occur when pupils transfer from one school to another;
- Improved teaching and learning opportunities for personalised learning;
- Enhanced opportunities for the recruitment, retention and deployment of all staff;
- Improved pastoral care for pupils, in challenging circumstances through offering a ‘joined-up’ strategy for additional and behavioural needs;
- Improved continuity for multi-agency involvement across phases; and,
- Effective sharing of resources and economies of scale.

The all-through schools agenda is gathering momentum in Wales, driven by a need to raise standards across the board and to modernise the school estate. The Welsh Government’s ‘Successful Futures’ report produced by Professor Donaldson lays the foundation for a 21st Century curriculum for Wales, based on a continuum of learning from the ages of 3-16/18. Donaldson identifies 4 ‘enablers’ that underpin the new curriculum in Wales:

- Working in partnership and the development of ‘Pioneer Schools’;
- Strong school to school working across all ages and year groups to plan for progression;
- Inspiring leadership; and,
- Inclusivity.

In a similar context the UK’s National College of School Leadership (NCSL) suggests that there are five main drivers for all-age schools:

- Personalisation (raising achievement)
- Pedagogical (sharing expertise – cross-phase)
- Care and support (Every Child Matters and shared ethos)
- Community (engagement in learning)
- Organisational (shared expertise and resources).

Educational Issues

ESTYN Inspections

	Pontlottyn	Abertysswg	Rhymney
	Primary	Primary	Comp.
Date of last inspection	Mar 2011	Oct 2013	Apr 2015
Current performance (at inspection)	Good	Adequate	Adequate
Prospects for improvement (at inspection)	Good	Adequate	Adequate
KQ1 : How good are outcomes ?	Good	Adequate	Adequate
KQ2 : How good is provision ?	Good	Adequate	Adequate
KQ3 : How good are leadership & mgmt. ?	Good	Adequate	Adequate
Standards	Good	Adequate	Adequate
Wellbeing	Good	Adequate	Good
Learning Experiences	Good	Adequate	Adequate
Teaching	Good	Adequate	Adequate
Care, support and guidance	Good	Good	Good
Learning environment	Good	Good	Good
Leadership	Good	Adequate	Adequate
Improving quality	Good	Adequate	Adequate
Partnership working	Good	Good	Good
Resource management	Good	Adequate	Adequate
Categorisation support category	Amber	Yellow	Amber

Abertysswg Primary School is judged to have made good progress in respect of the key issues for action following the Estyn visit in January 2015. The school has been removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring. There will be no further Estyn monitoring visits in relation to this inspection.

Whilst the 3 schools concerned are improving schools which are continuing to develop in all aspects , there are clear advantages to all learners in the 3-18 proposal The overwhelming benefit of the arrangement would be the increased opportunities for an uninterrupted education where skills can be taught and embedded without the jarring of the transition between key stages.

Whole school policies and approaches will allow pupils to have the clarity required for a high quality learning environment.

Pupil tracking systems and access to critical information will be more reliable, allowing for increased ambition and expectation.

Use of grants will be more effective as it will be much easier to meet longer term objectives.

It is vital that cluster schools who are not included in this proposal work closely with this school to ensure cross cluster policies and schemes of work so that variance in transition experience is reduced.

Successful Futures

Professor Graham Donaldson's Successful Futures report into the curriculum in Welsh schools was adopted by Welsh Government as policy soon after its publication. It is Welsh Government's position on curriculum reform in Wales.

The key recommendations from Successful Futures for all-through schools are :

- The curriculum 3–16 should be organised into Areas of Learning and Experience.
- The new national curriculum in Wales should have six Areas of Learning and Experience: Expressive arts; Health and well-being; Humanities; Languages, literacy and communication; Mathematics and numeracy; and Science and technology.
- Children and young people should have their learning developed across the curriculum through three cross-curriculum responsibilities that should be the responsibility of all teachers: literacy; numeracy; and digital competence.
- A digital competence framework and an accompanying 'Routes to Learning Digital Competence' should be developed and be included as a cross-curriculum responsibility.
- The expectations for the three cross-curriculum responsibilities and wider skills should be embedded within the Areas of Learning and Experience.
- The new national curriculum should be organised as a continuum of learning from 3 to 16 without phases and key stages.
- Progression should be described in relation to a continuum of learning in each Area of Learning and Experience from when a child enters education to the end of statutory schooling.
- Progression should be signalled through Progression Steps at five points in the learning continuum, relating broadly to expectations at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16.
- All teaching and learning should be directed to achieving the four curriculum purposes.
- Teachers should apply the pedagogical principles identified in this report when planning their teaching and learning, to ensure that the activities relate directly to the curriculum purposes.
- Children and young people should have opportunities to learn from expertise and experience from outside the school.

The first and most obvious change to the curriculum is the reorganisation of what pupils learn into six Areas of Learning and Experience and three Cross-Curriculum Responsibilities.

Adopting this approach at national level will give schools more freedom to teach a wider range of things in different ways. Letting teachers make more decisions about what is taught will give schools and teachers much more freedom to work on subjects and topics that are relevant to their learners, so it will be possible for any two schools in Wales to teach and assess different things to measure progress of learners. This will affect how schools can be organised, so that all-through schools will be able to organise a wider range of staff to do things in different ways.

The removal of phases and key stages will give teachers more freedom to work with the needs of their pupils. This breaks down the distinctions between what happens in a primary and secondary school and especially between the key stages – clearly this puts an all-through school in an advantageous position when thinking about deciding what pupils learn and how they learn it across a whole-school continuum. In turn, this ability to work with a wider range of colleagues will help all teachers develop their practice. A single workforce in a school reflecting on and jointly developing and designing what works for five-year olds, teenagers and young adults is capable of a wider range of points of reference and a wider range of practices that a smaller group of teachers with a one-phase window to consider.

These changes to what pupils learn and how they learn it are easier to manage in an all-through environment than in a single-phase school or group of schools. They do, though, bring significant challenges as well as opportunities to leadership and practice. The more flexible workforce with greater capacity and flexibility, and the ability to play a role as part of a professional learning community are all likely to be enhanced by the all-through model. Simply by increasing the number and widening the variety of staff, the all-through model enjoys an advantage over the single-phase in the Successful Futures vision of learning.

Similarly, there are implications of the new reforms for buildings, for spaces within building for working, teaching and learning, and for access to technology across the whole learning age-range. All-through schools provide a wider range of physical spaces for teaching and learning, and a better range of specialist spaces, resources and materials that can be accessed by a wider age-range than in a single-phase setting. This includes digital, information and learning technology, which is critical to several of the recommendations and which is difficult to afford, maintain and refresh in single-phase schools.

Finally, all-through schools and the reforms in the curriculum carry implications for the role of parents, the local community and the local economy in supporting pupils' progress. Successful Futures is very clear that not all learning that happens to young people happens in a classroom and because of a teacher. What an all-through school gives us is a deeper, wider and richer range of people in the school to develop learning together, and a single community focus where people who do not spend all of their time in the school can spend some of it to support and widen learning experiences for all the young people of their community.

When taking into account the key recommendations from the report, and the key characteristics of an effective all-through school, it is clear that the two reforms can add significant value to each other. Professor Donaldson wrote this about all-through schools when he was HM Senior Chief Inspector of schools in Scotland :

All-through schools, schools which include at least two stages of a young person's education within the one establishment, can provide positive environments for learning in which all staff work together to ensure that young people make successful transitions between the different stages in their education. Such schools are well placed to ensure that their young people experience challenge and progression through consistent, well-planned teaching which is flexible and responsive to their distinctive geographical, cultural and social contexts. The cross-sectoral working which is essential to

support the learning of all children in Scotland should be a natural aspect of the work of all-through schools.

In all-through schools, joint working across the sectors should be built into the life and work of the school.

Other partnerships too are of particular importance to all-through schools. These include partnerships with other schools, both local pre-school centres and primary schools from which some of their children transfer, and local secondary schools to which their older students may move on for their senior years. Of particular importance are partnerships with parents, local employers and community groups. All-through schools, many of which are in relatively remote rural areas, have significant responsibilities to work with local partners in nurturing, supporting and educating their young people to be productive members of sustainable local communities, as well as confident citizens ready to step out into the wider world. All-through schools, like all schools, educate their young people to plan and make choices for the future, whether they remain within their local community or move elsewhere. To make these choices, young people need a broad awareness of all the possibilities, and high aspirations for what they can achieve. They must also develop the resilience to deal positively with the challenges of moving into what may be very different geographical, social and cultural environments, as many of them will.

Other Issues

Schools Directly Affected by the Proposal

Rhymney Comprehensive School, Mill Field, Abertysswg, Rhymney NP22 5XF is an 11-18 English Medium Community Secondary School with a capacity of 1185 and admission number of 209. There were 697 pupils on roll as at September 2016. This number includes 78 6th form pupils. Similar numbers are projected to 2021.

The new Abertysswg/Pontlottyn School also NP22 5XF will be a 3-11 English Medium Primary School with a capacity of 240 and admission number of 34, plus a 30 place nursery.

School Characteristics

	<u>Rhymney Comprehensive</u>	<u>Abertysswg / Pontlottyn</u>
Overall Condition	B	A (Presumed)
25 Year Maintenance	£6,692,910	TBC
Capacity	1185	240
Number on Roll	697 (Sept 2016)	TBC

Details for Rhymney Comprehensive and each of its feeder schools are as follows :

Actual Pupil Numbers

School	Capacity	Academic Year (including nursery)				
		12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17
Abertysswg Primary	131	117	126	129	125	126
Bryn Awel Primary	173	149	148	156	155	140
Fochriw Primary	120	100	102	110	104	114
Phillipstown Primary	143	109	127	127	122	121
Pontlottyn Primary	131	120	115	112	107	113
Upper Rhymney Primary	190	191	202	193	182	190
Whiterose Primary	317	300	311	299	284	272
Rhymney Comp.	1185	869	843	810	777	697

Projected Pupil Numbers

School	Academic Year				
	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Abertysswg Primary	118	110	100	98	90
Bryn Awel Primary	154	153	150	156	153
Fochriw Primary	101	93	75	68	64
Phillipstown Primary	111	111	112	121	115
Pontlottyn Primary	113	111	112	109	114
Upper Rhymney Primary	187	182	180	171	167
Whiterose Primary	294	275	261	246	242
Rhymney Comp.	700	712	720	718	719

School Admissions - How Do I Access the Provision?

All pupils on roll at the 2 schools (Rhymney Comprehensive and Abertysswg/Pontlottyn Primary) as at 1st January 2018 from reception to year 13 will be guaranteed a place at the new school from that date. Parents/guardians of nursery aged children in the 2017/18 academic year will need to apply for a reception place at the new school for September 2018, as part of the application for school places, which will commence during the 2017/18 academic year and further information will be publicised at this time.

The catchment areas for the remaining 5 feeder Primary schools will not change as part of this proposal.

There are significant surplus places at Rhymney Comprehensive and there are no problems envisaged in admitting all in catchment pupils for the foreseeable future.

Home to School Transport

The Council's Home to School Transport policy states that free school transport is provided as follows:

- Primary age pupils living over 1.5 miles from their 'relevant' school, i.e. catchment or nearest school
- Secondary age pupils living over 2 miles from their 'relevant' school, i.e. catchment or nearest school.

In addition, transport can be provided if the route between home and school has been identified as hazardous to warrant such provision.

It is not envisaged that this proposal will result in any policy changes.

Links with the Community

The schools have a close relationship with young people and the community in Rhymney and the vicinity. Examples include PTA activities, Family Learning and sport. The all through school will be better able to encourage children and young people to take part in more activities.

Size and Composition of the Governing Body

One governing body will be responsible for the 3-18 school. As a guideline the Assembly recommends that schools with more than 600 pupils should have 20 governors. The governing body membership would be established as follows:

Category of Governor	Number
Parent	6
Local Authority	5
Community	5
Teacher	2
Staff	1
Principal/Headteacher	1

Impact Assessment

An impact assessment has been developed which considers Community, Welsh Language and Equality issues.

In this regard the likely benefits to children and young people have been considered in accordance with the core aims of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and include :

- A flying start in life, in particular in the context of a new, modern integrated childrens centre for pre school activities
- A comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities, as evidenced with the benefits of a single 3-18 school on the same campus
- Access to play, leisure and sporting activities, particularly in comparison with the existing facilities at Pontllynn and Abertysswg Primary schools.

Staffing Issues

There will likely be some changes to the staffing of the all through school but these are expected to be minimal. This process will be followed in accordance with the Council's HR policies.

Joint activities

There is potential for some joint activities for all pupils in the schools, for example a joint sports day. Any joint activity days will be appropriately supervised by teachers from both the primary and secondary school.

See also the FAQ's section for further questions and answers to this proposal

How will the proposal affect the organisation of the School ?

School Management

The head teacher will be an executive head teacher who will be accountable for a wider age range of students than is currently the case. The executive headteacher will be supported by a management team.

School Buildings

The Welsh Government has approved funding for the new Abertysswg/Pontlloftyn Primary school which has been match funded by CCBC on a 50/50 basis. This new school is anticipated to open from the commencement of the spring term (January 2018).

As the proposed 3 – 18 school is also planned for January 2018 the existing Abertysswg and Pontlloftyn Primary schools will continue as separate schools until that date. There are no current plans to dispose of the existing Abertysswg and Pontlloftyn school sites but this will be reviewed nearer the date of closures.

The scheme has also resulted in other site improvements, including provision of an integrated childrens centre. Based on the most recent school condition surveys completed in 2014, Rhymney Comprehensive is the highest (best) category (condition B) of the 12 secondary schools surveyed.

School Funding

The Rhymney 3-18 school will have a single budget for the whole campus. This will allow the funding to be used more efficiently and make better use of the monies available to achieve economies of scale.

It is envisaged the budget of the campus school will be an amalgam of the Primary and secondary school and hence would have a neutral budget effect.

How will the proposal improve teaching, learning and educational standards?

Schools across Wales report that there is a blip in performance as pupils move from primary school to secondary school, with pupils ages 11-14 making slower progress. The proposal should mean that a pupil's progress is not affected as much by the transfer from key stage 2 to key stage 3.

Primary and secondary school teachers will be able to plan the curriculum together in certain subjects. This means that pupils can make more effective progress as they progress from age 3 to 16/18.

There is potential to share staff rooms, training events and ideas and methods to develop stronger teaching practices for both primary and secondary school pupils.

Creating a 3-18 school will also help the school to better track pupil progress between starting school at 3 years old and leaving school at 16/18.

How will the proposal meet the needs of pupils in the Early years?

A new Integrated Children's Centre has been incorporated into the Abertysswg/Pontlottyn Primary school design which will benefit pupils in the early years as they are prepared for school.

The facilities will include wraparound care and after school provision, subject to funding, with links to parenting groups and health professionals.

How will the proposal meet the needs of pupils with Additional Learning Needs?

The 3-18 school will be expected to meet CCBC's Inclusion strategy which highlights a commitment to an effective and inclusive education system in which all children and young people are :

- Valued equally
- Treated with respect and
- Given equal opportunities

The children and young people will be expected to have access to an appropriate and high quality education, which will inspire them to participate in life long learning.

For children and young people with more complex additional learning needs, specialist provision provides continuity and stability for pupils in this vulnerable group.

There are no current plans to establish a specialist unit at the 3 – 18 campus. If this were to be considered, this would be subject to a separate statutory process.

CCBC also has a Physical Access Strategy for Schools.

These aspirations will be fulfilled by :

- raising achievement and attainment by removing barriers to learning.
- increasing physical and curricular access for all children and young people with special educational needs
- building on existing expertise and enhance the professional development of all staff working with children and young people with special educational needs.

Will the primary and secondary pupils be mixing on the site?

Young children will not share playgrounds or break times with much older pupils. Primary school aged pupils will receive the majority of their lessons in the new primary school. The pupils will usually only be taught in the secondary school when they need to use rooms with specialised facilities. There are already clear practices in place when any primary aged pupils visit the secondary site.

Secondary school aged pupils will usually only visit the new Primary school to take part in planned supervised activities, for example year 12 and 13 pupils assisting primary school pupils with their reading.

Primary school aged pupils and secondary school aged pupils will not usually share playing areas. Exceptions could be, for example secondary school pupils have obtained permission to help with supervision.

Why are we proposing change?

There are a number of potential benefits envisaged with this proposal, including:

- Both schools share the same site.
- Shared philosophy and ethos, including the quality of relationships.
- Enhances partnerships with parents and the local community.
- Meeting the needs of young people with additional support needs.
- Different phases work together to raise standards.
- Share specialist staff and curriculum expertise.
- Increase opportunities for collaborative and cost-effective professional development.
- Share specialist accommodation and learning resources.
- Consistency of teaching styles.
- Reduces effect of learning dip on key stage transition.
- Improve transition arrangements between primary and secondary phases.
- Share good practice, including ideas for effective curriculum planning and delivery.
- Deliver more cost effectively a broader curriculum that respond to pupils' needs – possible to restructure the key phases 3-7, 8-14, 14-19.
- Access to secondary specialist resources at a younger age for (Primary) pupils.
- Take joint action to tackle inclusion in relation, for example, to pupils with EAL, disabilities or additional learning needs, which individual schools might find difficult to sustain alone.
- Reduce planning and administrative costs by exploiting economies of scale (fewer headteachers, centralising support services).
- Enable the employment of shared staff
- Joint management and implementation of common systems for assessing, recording and tracking pupils' progress
- Unified governance and efficient use of financial and human resources.

What challenges would the proposal present?

A number of challenges would need to be considered, namely:

- Cultural: establishing a single school – not just two schools under a single roof.
- Creating a unified vision for the school.
- School leaders having equal familiarity with primary and secondary phase practice.
- Shared planning of the curriculum and delivering learning.
- Shared understanding of standards and expectations.
- Exploiting the flexibility afforded by shared staffing, accommodation and resources.
- Enabling pupils of different ages to work together.
- Recognising and raising pupil achievement within each phase.
- Relationships with other feeder primary schools
- Creation of a two-tier approach.
- Schools become too large.

If this proposal proceeds, the intention would be to develop a risk matrix to effectively manage these challenges.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who would be the headteacher of the 3-18 all through school?

The headteacher post (vacant at present) at Rhymney Comprehensive School would be the headteacher of the 3-18 all through school. There is no current substantive headteachers in post at the 3 schools (Rhymney Comprehensive, Abertysswg Primary and Pontlottyn Primary). The 3 current substantive deputy headteachers at these schools would be expected to lead 3 separate age phases (nursery – year 4, years 5 – 8 and years 9 – 13) at the 3 – 18 school, subject to agreement by the Governing Body.

Who would be the governors of the school?

The governing body of the all through school would be established to comply with Welsh Government governance regulations.

What would the proposal mean for children currently attending Abertysswg/Pontlottyn Primary and Rhymney Comprehensive?

These are outlined in the ‘**School Admissions – How do I access the provision?**’ section of the consultation document.

Will the school operate over the two existing school sites?

The existing sites of Abertysswg/Pontlottyn Primary and Rhymney Comprehensive will be used for the all-through school, albeit greater pupil integration and co-ordination.

What will the local catchment area be if the proposal goes ahead?

The all-through school would incorporate Abertysswg/Pontlottyn Primary. No change is proposed to existing catchment areas, albeit there will be changes to the admission arrangements for the new Primary School pupils as outlined in this document.

What would the admission arrangements be for the 3-18 all through school?

These are outlined in the ‘**School Admissions – How do I access the provision?**’ section of the consultation document.

What about other primary schools that feed the Rhymney Comprehensive School?

There is no plan to change any other feeder primary school as part of this proposal.

Rhymney Comprehensive will continue to support other feeder primary schools by enabling access to the more specialised facilities and supporting transition events for pupils as they move from primary school to secondary school.

Older pupils in the feeder primary schools also benefit from curriculum links in certain specialised subjects and from opportunities to use the hall and sports facilities.

What will the uniform be?

Uniform arrangements would be decided by the Governing Body of the all-through school. A common uniform would benefit a sense of a common identity.