



CABINET 12TH APRIL 2017

SUBJECT: CLOSURE OF THE KEY STAGE 3 SPECIALIST RESOURCE BASE FOR CHILDREN WITH EMOTIONAL, BEHAVIOURAL AND SOCIAL DIFFICULTIES AT NEWBRIDGE SCHOOL, CONSULTATION REPORT.

REPORT BY: CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the formal consultation process and to determine whether to proceed to Statutory Notice in respect of the above proposal

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 A consultation on the above proposal took place between 23rd January 2017 and 15th March 2017. This report summarises the responses to the consultation and makes a recommendation that Members agree to proceed to issuing a Statutory Notice.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 SEN Policy and Inclusion Strategy
- 3.2 SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002)
- 3.3 Draft Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Bill
- 3.4 The report contributes towards the Well-being Goals within the Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, specifically:
- A prosperous Wales as this is about developing a skilled and well educated population;
 - A healthier Wales as this is about maximising peoples physical and well-being;
 - A more equal Wales, as this is about enabling people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances are.

4.0 THE CONSULTATION REPORT

- 4.1 Cabinet, at its meeting on 18th January 2017, agreed to proceed to a formal consultation process in relation to the above proposals. (See background papers)
- 4.2 A formal consultation process took place between 23rd January 2016 and 15th March 2017 (Appendix 1)

- 4.3 Three responses to the consultation were received. Responses were received from the Headteacher of Newbridge School and the Governing Body of Newbridge School which supported the proposal. Estyn also responded to the consultation. Estyn's response indicated that *'Most aspects of the proposal receive appropriate consideration and the proposer makes sound arguments to demonstrate how the closure would result in improved provision both for pupils attending the specialist resource base and those attending the mainstream school.'*
- 4.4 The consultation responses and the LA's response to any issues raised in these are included in Appendix 2

5.0 WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 5.1 The proposal in this report contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act and more specifically for the principles noted below:
- Long Term – The report recognises the importance of balancing short-term needs with the needs to safeguard meeting long-term needs
 - Prevention – We are acting to prevent problems occurring by running a consultation with a view to alternative provision
 - Involvement – The consultation recognises the importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the outcome and those people reflect the diversity of the area which the report addresses.

6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 A community and equality impact assessment has been completed in relation to the proposal in accordance with the School Organisation Code. This is included in Appendix 3

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Where the LA maintains a SRB additional funding is allocated to the school. In the case of Newbridge School £257,048.41 is allocated for the Inclusion Centre provision. The current cost per pupil attending the Inclusion Centre is approximately £16,000 per annum. This is based on full capacity of 16 pupils. Alternative provision identified for the current cohort of pupils would range from approximately £13,000 - £18,000 per annum, depending on the individual needs of the pupils. Therefore there are no savings associated with this proposal. Closure of the Inclusion Centre will mean that the funding will be retained and redirected to enhance alternative BESD provisions within the local authority or where necessary utilised to fund placements with external providers. The proposal does not involve any transfer or disposal of land and capital funding is not required to implement the proposal.

The proposed closure of the class will not impact on overall capacity of Newbridge School to deliver an appropriate curriculum.

8.0 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 In Caerphilly Local Authority schools hosting specialist resource bases are allocated a sum of money to run and manage the provision. Staff for the SRBs are appointed and employed by the school and paid for via this funding allocation. If a SRB provision is closed this results in the allocated SRB funding being withdrawn. Staff employed by the school within the SRB would then move onto the main school staffing structure. Should the proposal to close the Inclusion Centre progress this would be the case for the permanent members of staff currently working there. This includes one full time teacher and three teaching assistants.

If the school's budgetary position requires the governing body to consider staff losses in due course, staff of the Inclusion Centre would be considered alongside all other staff at

Newbridge School in line with its adopted workforce flexibility

9.0 CONSULTATIONS

9.1 All responses from consultations have been incorporated in the report

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the outcome of the consultation process and to determine whether to proceed to Statutory Notice.

11.0 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 The School Organisation Code (2013) indicates that procedure to Statutory Notice has to be considered following an initial consultation period.

12.0 STATUTORY POWER

12.1 School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, The School Organisation Code (section1.13) 2013.

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Consultees:

- Mr C Burns, Interim Chief Executive
- Mrs Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services & S151
- Mr Dave Street, Corporate Director – Social Services
- Mrs Christina Harry, Corporate Director - Communities
- Cllr D Havard, Cabinet Member, Education
- Mrs K Cole, Chief Education Officer
- Mrs S Richards , Interim Head of service: Planning Strategy and Resources
- Mrs Lynne Donovan, Acting Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
- Mrs Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
- Mrs Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
- Mrs Lesley Perry, Head Teacher, Newbridge School.
- Mr Michael Gray, Chair of Governors, Newbridge School
- Mrs Kathryn Peters, Corporate Policy Manager
- Cllr L Ackerman, Newbridge Ward Member
- Cllr K R Baker, Newbridge Ward Member
- Cllr G Johnston, Newbridge Ward Member

Background Papers:

- Report to Cabinet 18th January 2017
- Report to Scrutiny 14th March 2017

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Consultation on the proposal to close the specialist resource base for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties at Newbridge School
- Appendix 2 Responses to Consultation and LA response
- Appendix 3 A community and equality impact assessment

**Consultation on the proposal to
close the specialist resource base
for pupils with behavioural,
emotional and social difficulties at
Newbridge School**

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Introduction

The Local Authority (LA) wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on a proposal to close the key stage 3 (KS3) Specialist Resource Base (SRB), (known in Newbridge School as the 'Inclusion Centre') for children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD)

Newbridge School is funded by the LA to accommodate two KS3 classes for pupils with BESD with a capacity of sixteen; there are currently nine pupils on roll although taking into account pupils who do not attend the Inclusion Centre on a fulltime basis the number of children attending the Inclusion Centre at any one time is eight.

It is proposed that these changes will come into effect from 31st August 2017.

For clarity throughout this document the SRB will be referred to as the 'Inclusion Centre'.

Who will we consult with?

Before a decision can be made the council is required to undertake a statutory consultation with all interested parties. 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 a way forward. Caerphilly County Borough Council will be seeking the views of a wide range of stakeholders, organisations and other interested parties. A list of all those being consulted can be found in Appendix 1.

The consultation process

The consultation will start on 23rd January 2017 and be completed at 5pm on 7th March 2017. Feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised and a report presented to the LA's Cabinet on 12th April 2017.

The LA's Cabinet will consider the report and decide, based on the feedback, whether to proceed with the proposal, make changes to the proposal or not to proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed the proposal will not be progressed. If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal a Statutory Notice will be published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The statutory notices will be published on the 24th April 2017 for a 28 day statutory notice period until 22nd May 2017.

The Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections must be made in writing or by email and sent to the council within 28 days of the date of the proposal.

If there are objections the LA's Chief Education Officer will publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and her response to them before the end of seven days beginning with the day of the LA's decision as to whether to proceed with the proposal. The LA's Cabinet will consider the objection report at the next available cabinet to determine the outcome of the statutory notice.

If the LA's Cabinet approve the proposal, the proposal will be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date. In the case of this proposal the implementation date is 31st August 2017.

What do you now have to consider?

The remainder of the consultation document sets out the rationale for the closure of the Inclusion Centre at Newbridge School. It is proposed that the closure will take place on 31st August 2017.

How can you make your views known?

A consultation questionnaire is attached and is also available on the Local Authority's internet site <http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/My-Council/Consultations/School-consultations>

The questionnaire also enables consultees to register their wish to be notified of the publication of the consultation report to the LA's Cabinet. You are welcome to put your views in writing to:

The Chief Education Officer, Penallta House, Tredomen Park, Ystrad Mynach, CF82 7PG

Email: schoolconsultation@caerphilly.gov.uk

All correspondence should be received no later than 5pm on 7th March 2017.

Please note that responses to the consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal. Objections can only be lodged following publication of the statutory notice.

As Newbridge School is an English medium school all the consultation documents have been produced in English. If a Welsh language copy of the consultation document is required, please contact the address above.

Background to the proposal

The number of children on roll at Newbridge School has increased in recent years. The governing body and Headteacher report that the numbers on roll at the school has increased by 160 pupils since 2012, this is the equivalent of an additional five classes and the school is oversubscribed. In view of the increasing number of pupils and subsequent pressure on available teaching space around the school, the Headteacher and governing body of Newbridge School have made the request to the LA that the Inclusion Centre is closed. Additionally as part of the LA's ALN review, specialist resource base provision for children is being evaluated with a view to developing more cohesive and streamlined opportunities for children and young people with complex additional learning needs. The fact that the Inclusion Centre provision at Newbridge School is limited to KS3 pupils is not considered entirely satisfactory by the LA as this means vulnerable pupils have to move to other provisions at the end of year 9.

Details of affected schools

The only school directly affected by this proposal is Newbridge School. However as pupils who attend Newbridge Inclusion Centre remain on the roll of their catchment school, headteachers from all secondary schools in Caerphilly will be included in the consultation process.

Of the nine pupils attending the Inclusion Centre,

- three pupils are on the roll of Lewis School Pengam (one pupil attends alternative provision for two days a week);
- two pupils are on the roll of Blackwood Comprehensive School (one of these pupils already attends Blackwood School for four days a week);
- one pupil is on the roll of St Cenydd Community Comprehensive School;
- one pupil is on the roll of Rhymney Comprehensive School;
- one pupil is on the roll of Newbridge School;
- one pupil is on the roll of Risca Community Comprehensive School.

Information on Newbridge School

Newbridge School is a mixed 11-16 community school serving the town of Newbridge and its surrounding area in the County Borough of Caerphilly. There are currently 1015 pupils on roll. Information from the previous five school censuses and the five year forecast of pupil rolls at Newbridge School is included in **Appendix 2**.

The intake number for Newbridge School is currently 203 although due to oversubscription several groups are now 215 learners each. Newbridge School has up to 260 pupils wishing to join them in September 2017, more than 50 over their intake numbers. Whilst the table in Appendix 2 projects a slight decline to the school population in future years, based on projected catchment school numbers, in reality Newbridge School will continue to take up to their maximum of 203 pupils and are likely to continue to do so through the projected years shown in Appendix 2. Therefore in real terms Newbridge School is highly unlikely to go down in number as is suggested by the inclusion only of the local catchment school projections. The Inclusion Centre is designated to support a total of 16 Key Stage 3 aged pupils with BESD. These pupils remain on the roll of their catchment school. The condition category of the school as identified by the 21st Century Schools Survey is B. Newbridge School was last inspected in March 2015. The school's performance was judged as good, the prospects for improvement were judged as adequate. Currently nine pupils attend the SRB/ Inclusion Centre. Pupils attending the Inclusion Centre are registered at their catchment school. At the end of KS3 pupils attending the Inclusion Centre move on to appropriate KS4 provision. Depending on the needs of the pupil and progress made, provision at KS4 could include the pupils returning to their mainstream catchment school or placement with an alternative education provider.

Quality and Standards in Education

Pupils attending the Inclusion Centre remain registered on the roll of their catchment school. Only one pupil currently attending the Inclusion Centre is also on the roll of Newbridge School.

Outcomes

Based upon the National Categorisation for standards Newbridge School is judged to be: 1 with an overall support category of yellow (2015-16)

- The CSI at KS3 has improved over time, significantly so since 2012-2013, placing the school consistently in the first quartile against FSM benchmarking group, and above Family, LA and national comparisons.
- Strong performance over time, in English and in mathematics at L5+ and L6+, places the school first within its family of schools and in the top 25% of similar schools based on free-school meal eligibility. Performance is also well above the national average.
- Performance against the L2+ indicator for pupils eligible to free school meals has been strong, over time, and well above the national floor targets.
- The school has had an upwards trajectory of improvement in recent years against nearly all indicators culminating in the above Step 1 judgement

Provision

The most recent Estyn Inspection Report indicates that Newbridge School offers a broad and balanced curriculum that successfully meets the needs of the pupils and the community. The two year key stage 3 builds appropriately on pupils' experiences at key stage 2. The recently

introduced key stage 4, which starts at the beginning of Year 9, provides a comprehensive selection of general and vocational courses suitable for progression into further education or training. In addition to the taught curriculum, pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including well-attended sporting, drama and music clubs. The Inclusion Centre provides a safe environment, which supports the needs of the most vulnerable pupils very well and enables them to make significant progress, for example in their attendance, social development and basic skills.

Leadership and management

The most recent Estyn Inspection Report indicates that the Headteacher and senior leaders have communicated their vision for school improvement consistently and effectively during a challenging period. They provide purposeful leadership and have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The school's aims are clear and understood by all. They focus well on meeting the needs of pupils, align well to school and national priorities, and have had an impact on raising standards. The Deputy Headteacher currently has oversight of the Inclusion Centre.

What is the basis for this proposal?

At the request of the school's governing body it is proposed that the Inclusion Centre at Newbridge School is closed from 31st August 2017. The governing body and Headteacher report that the numbers on roll at the school has increased by 160 pupils since 2012, this is the equivalent of an additional five classes and the school is oversubscribed.

The Inclusion Centre occupies a suite of four rooms on the ground floor of Newbridge School. This includes three classrooms, an office and a break out area. This area was originally part of the main school space and not a separate centre. Increase on the numbers on roll over recent years has put significant pressure on the accommodation available in the school for mainstream teaching and administration. Closure of the Inclusion Centre will allow the Headteacher and governing body to improve teaching and administrative space, which will be more conducive to the learning and wellbeing of pupils and the wellbeing and capacity of staff for quality teaching and delivery. In addition it is considered that the Inclusion Centre space is not adequate for increasingly complex and vulnerable learners who present with significant behavioural difficulties.

Numbers attending the Inclusion Centre fluctuate throughout an academic year. For the academic years 2013 -14 and 2014-15 the Inclusion Centre was running at full capacity (16). In view of the notice given by Newbridge School's governing body that they no longer wished to host the provision the Local Authority has not used the provision to its full capacity since September 2016 in order to avoid unnecessary disruption to pupils. The setting currently has nine children on roll.

What is the educational case for closing the Inclusion Centre in Newbridge School

The governing body has made the request to the LA to close the Inclusion Centre. The space the Inclusion Centre currently occupies is part of the main school space, not a discrete or purpose-built annexe. The Inclusion Centre was created at a time when the overall Newbridge School roll was smaller and it occupied space that the main school did not need at that time. Now that the situation is reversed the governing body is of the view that it cannot lose main school space to house a separate provision.

As the school has grown, its need for additional toilet facilities has increased. The Inclusion Centre houses toilets that were part of the toilet facilities originally of the main school. These

are not currently accessible to our pupils in the main school as they only service the Inclusion Centre which is run separately to the main school. The closing of the Inclusion Centre will mean these toilets become available to our main school learners, increasing our overall toilet capacity in the school.

The increase in numbers on roll at Newbridge School has led to a simultaneous growth in literacy, numeracy and ICT provision and staffing, in line with the LNF (literacy and numeracy framework 2013) and latterly the DCF (digital competence framework, 2016). The school has converted classrooms to ICT teaching bases to meet the needs of the DCF, whilst literacy and numeracy intervention provision currently takes place in converted storage rooms, not conducive to effective learning for these pupils and not spaces large enough for this purpose. Because of the pressure on space there are a number of staff who do not have designated teaching classrooms and there is an overall lack of administrative space. The SENCo currently does not have administrative or teaching facilities commensurate with her role. Newbridge School has a large team of teaching assistants who have no separate staff space available to them.

If the closure of the Inclusion Centre is agreed, the Inclusion Centre space will be used to accommodate a designated office for the SENCO and provide discrete teaching and management spaces for the school's SEN and ALN provision as well as its additional literacy and numeracy provision within the school. These designated learning spaces will lend themselves as a more conducive learning environment for this work and the many pupils who access it. The breakout space in the current Inclusion Centre will become a break and lunch space for the school's large team of teaching assistants. The closure of the Inclusion Centre will therefore have a significant, positive impact on the current school arrangements for SEN.

Whilst the lack of space for mainstream provision is an issue the accommodation in the Inclusion Centre for potentially sixteen young people is also a concern. Young people on the roll of the Inclusion Centre have significant behavioural difficulties and frequently find it difficult to mix with other pupils in the school. Whilst staff are very proactive in arranging external activities for Inclusion Centre pupils, Inclusion Centre learners usually remain housed in the centre for the majority of their learning time and during their free time. In making their decision to ask for the Inclusion Centre to be closed the governing body also took into consideration that the Inclusion Centre space was no longer fit for purpose and provided some of the LA's most vulnerable pupils a cramped and confined space.

LA specialist provision for children and young people with complex special educational needs including BESD is described in **Appendix 3**. Inclusion Centre provision at Newbridge School is limited to KS3 pupils. This has been identified through an ALN review as a cause for concern as vulnerable pupils have to move to other provisions at the end of year 9. This causes disruption to their education and, more importantly for pupils in this vulnerable group, means they are not able to continue working with teachers and support staff with whom they have developed a trusting, working relationship. Whilst every effort is made to involve pupils in their transition, for some pupils disruption at this stage of their education can have a negative impact on their ability to settle in other settings as they can struggle to adjust to a new environment and teaching and support staff.

As part of the LA's ALN review, provision for children with BESD is being evaluated with a view to developing more cohesive and streamlined opportunities for children and young people with BESD from the Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. Proposals include extending provision at the Learning Centre (Pupil Referral Unit) to include KS4 pupils and identifying through a robust procurement process alternative education providers for young people with complex BESD. In addition the LA is working collaboratively with secondary school

headteachers to develop regional Learning Pathway Centres (LPCs), which will provide small, nurturing environments for young people with BESD whilst maintaining strong links with mainstream provision.

What will be the likely impact of the proposal on school pupils?

There are nine pupils on roll at the Inclusion Centre at the current time. One pupil has a split placement between their mainstream school and the Inclusion Centre.

An Educational Psychologist and Behaviour Support Officer have been working with the Inclusion Centre staff and pupils to identify alternative provision for pupils currently on roll at the centre. The views of the pupils on their future educational placements were gathered at individual meetings with the pupils in November 2016. Pupil views have been taken into account with regard to the recommendations that have been made regarding a future placement. At meetings held in the autumn and spring terms agreement on the proposed placements for each pupil was discussed and agreed by their respective parents / carers. Travel arrangements for pupils were discussed as part of the consultation meetings. Transportation will be provided in line with the Council's Learner Travel policy.

Alternative EOTAS provision has been identified for seven out of the nine pupils attending the Inclusion Centre. These provisions will accommodate the pupils up to the age of sixteen. One year 9 pupil will transfer to his catchment mainstream school. The recommendation for one year 7 pupil is for a one day a week link with a mainstream secondary school with the aim that by the end of the academic year he will be in a position to transfer to that mainstream school on a full time basis.

What is the likely impact of the proposal on the staff of the Inclusion Centre at Newbridge School?

In Caerphilly Local Authority schools hosting specialist resource bases are allocated a sum of money to run and manage the provision. Staff for the SRBs are appointed and employed by the school and paid for via this funding allocation. If a SRB provision is closed this results in the allocated SRB funding being withdrawn. Staff employed by the school within the SRB would then move onto the main school staffing structure. Should the proposal to close the Inclusion Centre progress this would be the case for the permanent members of staff currently working there. This includes one full time teacher and three teaching assistants. If the school's budgetary position requires the governing body to consider staff losses in due course, staff of the Inclusion Centre would be considered alongside all other staff at Newbridge School in line with its adopted workforce flexibility procedure. The support opportunities that are included in the workforce flexibility procedure would be exhausted before progression of a redundancy consultation at the school in any capacity. Staff in the Inclusion Centre would be afforded the opportunity to transition into the mainstream school and receive training opportunities as appropriate.

What are the financial implications of the proposal?

Where the LA maintains a SRB additional funding is allocated to the school. In the case of Newbridge School £257,048.41 is allocated for the Inclusion Centre provision. The current cost per pupil attending the Inclusion Centre is approximately £16,000 per annum. This is based on full capacity of 16 pupils. Alternative provision identified for the current cohort of pupils would range from approximately £13,000 - £18,000 per annum, depending on the individual needs of the pupils. Therefore there are no savings associated with this proposal.

Closure of the Inclusion Centre will mean that the funding will be retained and redirected to enhance alternative BESD provisions within the local authority or where necessary utilised to fund placements with external providers. The proposal does not involve any transfer or disposal of land and capital funding is not required to implement the proposal. The proposed closure of the class will not impact on overall capacity of Newbridge School to deliver an appropriate curriculum.

What will be the likely impact of the proposal on the local community?

This proposal will not have any significant impact on the local community. Community impact assessment

The following points have been considered as part of the community impact assessment:

- As this proposal is related to the closure of the Inclusion Centre it will not have an impact on any activities provided by the mainstream school.
- The Inclusion Centre does not have any specific community activities linked to it.
- The Inclusion Centre admits pupils from across the Caerphilly County Borough area, pupils attending the Inclusion Centre are provided with transport from their home to Newbridge School. Transport arrangements will continue to be in place for pupils if they transfer to another educational setting. It is not anticipated that pupils will have to travel longer distances to school. However further analysis of this will take place when the pupils' next placements are confirmed.
- There would not be any wider community safety issues or any implications on public transport.
- The Inclusion Centre admits pupils from across the Caerphilly County Borough area; they will be encouraged to participate in all extra-curricular activities within their next placement.

The community impact assessment will be updated after the consultation has been completed to ensure that it includes pertinent issues that have arisen and need to be taken into account. The community impact assessment and equality impact assessment will be presented to the Council's Cabinet in the report that sets out the consultation feedback received in respect of this proposal. A copy of the community and equalities impact assessment is available on request

What are the disadvantages and risks associated with this proposal?

Closure of the Inclusion Centre will mean that the local authority has 16 less places for young people requiring specialist BESD provision in the Local Authority. The disadvantages of this could be that

- Parents of children with significant BESD would not have the choice of a specialist setting;
- Parental demand for a specialist secondary BESD setting could lead to the LA having to find an out of county provision at additional cost.
- If children have to attend out of county provision they will be separated from their local community

The LA is mitigating the risk of closing the Inclusion Centre by enhancing additional BESD provision, such as extending the Learning Centre (PRU) to accommodate pupils in KS4 and developing Learning Pathway Centres (LPCs). Two Learning Pathway Centres (LPCs) are already operational in Heolddu Comprehensive School and Lewis School Pengam, adding

capacity to provision for young people with BESD. Plans for one further LPC are well advanced and it should be operational by the end of the academic year.

Description of any alternatives considered and the reasons why they have been discounted

No alternatives to this proposal have been considered.

What is the statutory process to close the Inclusion Centre at Newbridge School?

The Code on School Organisation ("The Code") is made under Sections 38 and 39 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The Code came into force on 1 October 2013 and applies in respect of all school proposals published by way of a statutory notice after that date. Proposals to discontinue SEN provision have to follow the following process:

1. The Local Authority's Cabinet considers the Code and authorises a consultation on the changes to the schools;
2. At the start of the consultation period the Local Authority **must** provide consultees with a consultation document and give them at least 42 days in which to respond, with at least 20 of these days being school days.
3. Consultation comments are collated and summarised by the Local Authority. This summary together with the Local Authority's officers own responses is published in a consultation report within 13 weeks of the end of the consultation period and presented to the Local Authority's Cabinet for consideration;
4. The Local Authority's Cabinet decide whether to proceed with the changes within 26 weeks of the end of the consultation period. If the decision is to proceed, Step 5 is taken. If a new option emerges during the consultation which the Local Authority's Cabinet wish to consider, then Steps 1-3 are repeated;
5. Statutory notice is published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The notice **must** be published on a school day and with 15 school days (not including the day of publication) in the notice period;
6. If objections are received, the Local Authority **must** publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and their responses to them before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of the Local Authority's decision as to whether to proceed with the proposal;
7. The Local Authority's Cabinet must decide on whether to implement the proposal within 16 weeks of the end of the objection period;
8. If the proposals receive approval they should be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice, or any subsequent modified date.

Timescales

Key stages	Date
Formal Consultation Process	23 rd January 2017 – 7 th March 2017
Cabinet Considers the results of the consultation	12 th April 2017
Publication of Statutory Notice	24 th April 2016 – 22 nd May 2016
Final decision of Cabinet	5 th July 2017

Questionnaire

In order to help the Local Authority reach a decision, it would be very helpful if you could answer the following questions. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

The Chief Education Officer, Learning, Education and Inclusion Services Penallta House, Ystrad Mynach, Caerphilly CF82 7PG

or by e-mail to: schoolconsultation@caerphilly.gov.uk by no later than 5 pm on the 7th March 2017

The Proposal

The proposal is to close the Key Stage 3 Specialist Resource Base at Newbridge School

1. Do you agree with the proposal? (Please tick one of the options below)

Yes

No

Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

2. Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

3. Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

4. Name (optional)

5 Would you like to be notified of the publication of the consultation report to the Local Authority's' Cabinet?

Yes

No

If you have answered 'yes' please provide either your email or home address

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Appendix 1

List of Consultees

- The Cabinet Member for Education, Caerphilly Borough Council
- All current serving Caerphilly County Borough Council Councillors
- Chief Education Officer, Newport City Council
- Director of Education Monmouthshire County Borough Council
- Chief Education Officer, Torfaen County Borough Council
- Chief Education Officer, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
- Church in Wales, Llandaff
- Roman Catholic Diocesan Authority, Cardiff
- The Governing Body of Newbridge School
- Parents and Carers of all pupils attending Newbridge School
- Staff at Newbridge School
- Headteachers of Secondary Schools in Caerphilly.
- Governing Bodies of all Secondary Schools in Caerphilly
- Education Achievement Service
- The Welsh Minister for Education and Skills
- The constituent Assembly Member for Caerphilly
- The regional Assembly Members
- The Member of Parliament for Caerphilly
- Estyn
- Teaching and Trades Unions
- The South East Wales Education Achievement Service
- Caerphilly Transport Department
- The Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner
- Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
- SNAP Cymru

Appendix 2

Five year forecast of pupil rolls Newbridge School Newbridge Pupil Forecast

Name of setting	Type of Provision	Number	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Total
2016	203	210	209	203	175	1000
2017	187	203	210	209	203	1012
2018	202	187	203	210	209	1011
2019	203	202	187	203	210	1005
2020	203	203	202	187	203	998
2021	199	203	203	202	187	994

Previous five school censuses. Previous Pupil Census

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Total	
2016	203	210	209	203	175	1000	(Actual as at 9/11/16)
2015	198	197	181	203	203	982	(As Jan Pupil Count)
2014	194	178	199	202	180	953	(As Jan Pupil Count)
2013	175	193	204	182	171	925	(As Jan Pupil Count)
2012	180	177	180	174	140	851	(As Jan Pupil Count)
2011	177	177	169	140	178	841	(As Jan Pupil Count)

Appendix 3

Specialist Resource Base Provision in Caerphilly.

Name of setting	Type of Provision	Number
Cefn Fforest Primary (KS2)	Complex Learning Difficulties	8
Cefn Fforest Primary (FP)	Complex Learning Difficulties	8
Coed y Brain Primary (KS1 &2)	Speech and Language	16
Cwm Ifor Primary (satellite provision)	Complex Learning Difficulties	8 (Trinity Fields)
Cwmcarn Primary(KS2)	Complex Learning Difficulties	8
Deri Primary (KS1)	Complex Learning Difficulties	8
Behaviour Management Group at Glan Y Nant (KS2)	Behavioural, Emotional & Social Difficulties	8
Greenhill Primary (KS1&2)	ASD / Social and Communication	16
Pantside Primary (KS1&2)	ASD / Social and Communication	16
Pontllanfraith Primary (KS1&2)	ASD / Social and Communication	16
St James Primary (KS1 &2)	Complex Learning Difficulties	16
Tir y Berth Primary (KS1&2)	Speech and Language	16
Ty Isaf Infants (KS1)	Complex Learning Difficulties	8
Tyn y Wern (Yr 3/4)	Social Inclusion	8
Tyn y Wern (Rec/ Yr1)	Nurture Class	8
Ty Sign Primary (KS2)	Behavioural, Emotional & Social Difficulties	8
Ynysddu Primary School (Rec/ Yr1)	Nurture Class	8
Ynysddu Primary School (Yr 3/4)	Social Inclusion	8
Ysgol Ganolfan Cwm Derwen (KS1&2)	Complex Learning Difficulties	8
Newbridge School (KS3)	Behavioural, Emotional & Social Difficulties	16
Pontllanfraith Comprehensive (KS3 &4)	Complex Learning Difficulties	50
Risca Comprehensive (KS3 & 4)	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	14
St Cenydd Comprehensive (KS3 & 4)	Speech & Language, Sensory and Physical Difficulties	50
Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymney	Resourced to meet the needs of children and young people with complex needs	

Special School Provision /PRU

Name of setting	Type of Provision	Number
Trinity Fields School & Resource Centre	PMLD/SLD/ASD	140
The Learning Centre	BESD Y5-8	16

Appendix 2

Summary of responses to the consultation relating to the closure of the SRB at Hendre Junior School

Response received	Method of response	Response to Proposal to Close SRB	Responder	LA Response
1. Questionnaire & letter	Email to Chief Education Officer	The responder supported the proposal	Headteacher of Newbridge School	Response acknowledged
Summary of responses & issues raised	In supporting the proposal the Headteacher reiterates the points made in the consultation document relating to the growing numbers of pupils in the school and need for additional space. Reference is also made to the Inclusion Centre being an inappropriate environment for young people with complex behavioural needs			
Response received	Method of response	Response to Proposal to Close SRB	Responder	LA Response
2. Questionnaire & letter	Email to Chief Education Officer	The responder supported the proposal	Governing Body of Newbridge School	Response acknowledged
Summary of responses & issues raised	In supporting the proposal the Governing Body reiterates the points made in the consultation document relating to the growing numbers of pupils in the school and need for additional space. Reference is also made to the Inclusion Centre being originally part of the school facilities and the need for the toilet facilities to be available to the whole school population			
Response received	Method of response	Response to Proposal to Close SRB	Responder	LA Response
3. Formal report	Email to WWW. School Consultation	The responder broadly supported the proposal	Estyn	Response acknowledged
Summary of responses & issues raised	<p>Estyn comment that the proposer has provided a clear rationale for its proposal to close the specialist resource base in Newbridge School. Most aspects of the proposal receive appropriate consideration and the proposer makes sound arguments to demonstrate how the closure would result in improved provision both for pupils attending the specialist resource base and those attending the mainstream school. The Estyn report makes the point that the Local Authority Consultation document</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. does not provide an analysis of outcomes for pupils attending the specialist resource base or indicate how the proposals may affect outcomes for these pupils in the future; 2. does not reflect fully the findings of its most recent Estyn inspection report, which indicated that leadership and the school's capacity to improve were both adequate; 3. does not consider its impact on a range of groups including those with disabilities, those from various ethnic backgrounds or differing genders. Similarly, the proposer does not outline sufficiently how any disruption to pupils would be minimised should the proposal be successful. 			

<p>LA response to issues raised in Estyn report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to point 1 above, the Local Authority has completed an analysis of outcomes of pupils attending the SRB, which shows whether the individual achieved CSI at KS1 and KS2. This showed two pupils attending the SRB achieved CSI at the end of KS1 and KS2. End of KS3 data was not able to be included due to the age / stage of the pupils attending the SRB. In relation to how the proposal may affect outcomes for these pupils in the future, pupils returning to mainstream education (two pupils) will have access to a full school curriculum and opportunities, as appropriate, to undertake a range of GCSE or vocational qualifications. Pupils transferring to alternative providers such as Military Prep., Innovate and ACT will have the opportunity to undertake GCSEs in a limited choice of subjects to include English and Maths and a range of accredited vocational qualifications. The view of the Local Authority is that pupils will not be disadvantaged by the proposal and for many pupils the opportunity to have increased access to vocational studies/ qualifications will have a positive impact on their self-esteem and be beneficial to their transition to adulthood. • The comment in point 2 is noted and is included in this consultation report as a matter of record. • In relation to point 3 the Local Authority consultation document included an extract from the community impact and equalities assessment, the full assessment included as an appendix to the consultation report addresses the issues raised.
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Full responses from the Headteacher of Newbridge School, the Governing Body of Newbridge School and Estyn can be found below.



The Closure of Newbridge Inclusion Centre Response of the Headteacher, Newbridge School



As the longstanding Headteacher of Newbridge School, I am and continue to be proud of my school and our work on behalf of the young people in our community. Over many years this has also included the work of the Inclusion Centre.

Newbridge School has faced significant change in recent years due to factors locally. This continues with the unprecedented events underway in our community with regard the closure of Cwmcarn High School.

I have worked tirelessly to respond to, work with and support the community and its young people in this local context, as has my staff. Indeed we have taken children into the school over the past five years and continue to do so. In this current school year my Governors and I have agreed to admit children up to our total capacity in order to support and manage the needs of parents and young people urgently seeking placement from Cwmcarn High School. We have endeavoured to meet all admission requests and work closely with the Local Authority in this regard.

I urge the cabinet of Caerphilly County Borough Council to note that in meeting and managing local needs, in becoming full to our maximum capacity, space has become stretched in terms of teaching, administrative and toilet space.

The school has also needed additional space to meet the requirements of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework, introduced in 2013 and to facilitate learning activities as a result of Welsh Government grant funding. We have been stretched to accommodate these needs.

I have been extremely creative in space creation over the past five years, for example creating offices out of a workshop, teaching space out of a cupboard and doubling up a small staffroom as a teaching space. We have halved our main staff room to create additional computer teaching facilities and are using a part of our library as an office. However there are only so many spaces we can convert for alternative uses and we have now run out of and exhausted our scope. Further space is required. We require the Inclusion Centre space to be returned to the main school. This concern was first presented to my Governing Body in late 2015.

The Inclusion Centre itself is no longer conducive to the needs of 16 young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. For these young people, their space is confined within this centre and this creates its own challenges in terms of meeting and managing their needs. We have not in fact housed the necessary 16 young people for the past two years and could not envisage doing so again.

The Local Authority, in its review of overall provision for inclusion, is of the view that the centre no longer sits well with its broader aim of creating continuity of provision for these young people. I echo this from our experience of working with these young people. A separate Key Stage 3 centre is not appropriate. These young people must have scope for continuity of provision and corresponding continuity of personnel.

Through the proposed closure of the Centre, the school gains additional space to meet its needs. Its 3 small teaching classrooms will facilitate the small special needs teaching classes we have in the school. This is a much better facility for this purpose. The office in the Inclusion Centre will provide the school with much needed office space. The school will gain back additional toilet facilities for the current 1,009 young people in the main school.

Cabinet members are very welcome to visit the school prior to making its final decision, should a visual understanding of the issues support this. The Chair of Governors and I will be pleased to personally show any member of cabinet the facilities I have described and the associated issues.

Mrs. L.J.Perry, Headteacher
Newbridge School
February 2017

Questionnaire

In order to help the Council reach a decision, it would be very helpful if you could answer the following questions. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

*The Chief Education Officer
Learning, Education and Inclusion Services
Penallta House,
Tredomen,
Ystrad Mynach,
Caerphilly CF82 7PG
or by e-mail to schoolconsultation@caerphilly.gov.uk*

The Proposal

The proposal is to close the Key Stage3 Specialist Resource Base at Newbridge School

1. Do you agree with the proposal? (Please tick one of the options below)

- Yes
No
Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

- **See response attached**

2. Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

- **See response attached**

3. Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at Newbridge School, governor at Newbridge School, member of staff etc.)

- **Headteacher**

4. Name (optional)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than 5 pm on the 7th March 2017.



The Closure of Newbridge Inclusion Centre Governing Body Consultation Response



The Governing Body of Newbridge School has sought the closure of the Inclusion Centre for all the reasons specified in the consultation document. The views of the school and Governing Body are inherent in the document.

It should be noted the Governing Body first made this request to the Local Authority as long ago as December 2015. The needs associated with the request are therefore longstanding.

The school has an urgent and pressing need for additional classroom space, administrative space and pupil toilets.

We cannot continue to have any teachers who have to walk around the school using the occasional spare room in which to work, as we do now. This is not conducive to effective teaching or learning. Freeing up the Inclusion Centre space for the main school will create additional space for the smaller classes that work in the main school. This will in turn facilitate more teaching space in the main school for larger, examination classes once the smaller classes have been able to move into that space.

The school runs extensive small group work for literacy and numeracy. Two of these groups work in a space that doubles up as a staff room and one working space has been created out of a storage area off a classroom. These are unacceptable working conditions for both staff and pupils.

The school has a pressing lack of administrative and office space. Mr. Hopkins, recently retired Assistant Director has provided detailed information in this regard and in comparison to other local schools of similar size, such as Blackwood and Islwyn High School, Newbridge has a significant lack of administrative space. Most recently, a part of the school library has been taken over to create a temporary office. This is not an acceptable long term solution. The Inclusion Centre houses a much needed additional office that will support the work of the main school.

The school requires much needed, additional toilet facilities. The Inclusion Unit houses much needed toilet facilities that the main school cannot access until the Inclusion Centre is closed.

It must be noted that all the spaces taken up by the Inclusion Centre were originally part of the whole school's facilities. The housing of the Inclusion Centre was manageable when the school roll was less than it is now and will continue to be. The Inclusion Centre was first adopted by the school over twenty years ago, when its roll was around a much smaller 600 pupils in the main school.

The Inclusion Centre itself lacks the space conducive to the social, emotional and behavioural needs of the pupils who are based there and is significantly and seriously overstretched. As a result the Local Authority agreed a temporary reduction in its numbers in 2015.

The numbers have never returned to full capacity because it is clear the centre is no longer feasible either for the school or as the Local Authority's provision for these learners. The consultation clearly states the Local Authority is already developing a different sort of provision for these young people in order to meet their needs and to provide them with a better experience of educational continuity, conducive to their needs. Newbridge School Governing Body welcomes and fully supports this.

These factors are all central to the decision made by the Governing Body when it sought closure of the Inclusion Centre in December 2015.

In summary, the school is currently pressed for space on a daily basis across a broad spectrum of its operation and staff and pupils, in both main school and Inclusion Centre; operate in conditions that are not sufficient to be conducive to learning or wellbeing. Governors urge that the serious and pressing nature of teaching, administrative and toilet space for the main school is taken note of by the Caerphilly County Borough Cabinet in making its final decision, alongside recognising in its decision making the needs of young people in the Local Authority who have social, emotional and behaviour difficulties who also require appropriate facilities.

Members of the cabinet are welcome to meet with Governors and visit the school to understand first hand these issues, should this be helpful in finalising decisions.

**Newbridge School Governing Body
February 2017**

Questionnaire

In order to help the Council reach a decision, it would be very helpful if you could answer the following questions. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

*The Chief Education Officer
Learning, Education and Inclusion Services
Penallta House,
Tredomen,
Ystrad Mynach,
Caerphilly CF82 7PG
or by e-mail to schoolconsultation@caerphilly.gov.uk*

The Proposal

The proposal is to close the Key Stage3 Specialist Resource Base at Newbridge School

1. Do you agree with the proposal? (Please tick one of the options below)

- Yes
No
Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

- **See response attached**

2. Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

- **See response attached**

3. Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at Newbridge School, governor at Newbridge School, member of staff etc.)

- **Governing Body**

4. Name (optional)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than 5 pm on the 7th March 2017.

Estyn response to the proposal by Caerphilly County Borough Council to close the specialist resources base for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties at Newbridge School.

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

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

Introduction

This is a consultation proposal from Caerphilly County Borough Council. The proposal is to:

- Close the key stage 3 specialist resource base for children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, in Newbridge School from 31st August 2017.

Summary/Conclusion

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for its proposal to close the specialist resource base in Newbridge School.

Most aspects of the proposal receive appropriate consideration and the proposer makes sound arguments to demonstrate how the closure would result in improved provision both for pupils attending the specialist resource base and those attending the mainstream school. For example, it outlines clearly how the proposal would result in an improved learning environment for mainstream pupils. In addition, the proposer argues effectively that the current provision lacks continuity as pupils attending the base are required to move to other provision at the end of key stage 3 and that this is disruptive to their education. However, the proposer does not consider adequately the standards being achieved by pupils attending the base currently and the effect of the closure on these in the event of the proposal being successful.

Overall, as a result of the improvement to the learning environment for mainstream pupils and the potential improved continuity of provision for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, it is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the present standards of provision in this area.

Description and benefits

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the proposal. The proposer appears to centre its argument for the closure of the base on the view that the current provision is cramped, confined and no longer fit for purpose. Furthermore, the proposer asserts that the current key stage 3 based provision leads to a disruption to pupils' learning as they move to new provision at the start of Year 10. The proposer argues that pupils will have developed trusting, working

relationships with teachers and support staff and the cessation of these at the end of key stage 3 is detrimental to pupils' wellbeing and educational progress. The proposal aligns with the local authority's wider plans to develop more cohesive and streamlined provision for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties from Foundation Phase to key stage 4.

The proposer considers appropriately the rise in pupil numbers for the mainstream school over the last six years and the recent decline in the number on roll for the specialist resource base. It identifies that the mainstream school is currently oversubscribed and that the proposal will assist in addressing issues associated with this. It argues that the closure of the base will provide additional space for the mainstream school to improve its provision for pupils with additional learning needs, address the need for increased toilet facilities and provide additional staff room space for teaching assistants. The proposer identifies that the specialist resources base contains a significant number of surplus places.

The proposer acknowledges appropriately the disadvantages to its proposal when compared with the existing arrangements. It acknowledges the lack of choice for parents of pupils with significant behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Furthermore, it identifies the potential for the separation of pupils from their communities if they are required to attend out of county provision and the additional cost for the local authority that this would entail.

The proposer outlines appropriate and sufficient measures to mitigate risks associated with the closure of the resource base. These include extending the provision at the Learning Centre Pupil Referral Unit at Glan y Nant to accommodate pupils in key stage 4 and the provision of an additional learning pathway centre by the end of the 2016-17 academic year. The proposer identifies clearly how funding previously allocated to the running of the base will be retained to fund enhanced provision at alternative centres within the local authority or, where necessary, fund placements with external providers. Overall, the identification of risks and counter measures seem fair and balanced.

The proposer considers appropriately the impact of the changes of travel arrangements for learners. It reasonably anticipates that pupils will not be required to travel further distances as a result of the proposals.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposer provides a concise and clear outline of the current standards achieved by pupils attending the mainstream school in key stage 3. However, it does not provide an analysis of outcomes for pupils attending the specialist resource base or indicate how the proposals may affect outcomes for these pupils in the future.

The proposer makes useful reference to the school's most recent Estyn inspection report which indicates that the quality of provision within the specialist resource base is good. It has sufficiently considered the impact of the proposal on the support for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and provides an appropriate rationale for how their needs will continue to be met. The proposer considers the current standard of leadership and management at the school and reflects its national categorisation as a yellow school. However, the proposer does not reflect fully the findings of its most recent Estyn inspection report, which indicated that leadership and the school's capacity to improve were both adequate.

The proposer has carried out a Community Impact Assessment that gauges the proposal's effect on issues such as community safety, public transport and the mainstream school's engagement in community activities. However, the proposal does not consider its impact on a range of groups including those with disabilities, those from various ethnic backgrounds or differing genders. Similarly, the proposer does not outline sufficiently how any disruption to pupils would be minimised should the proposal be successful.

Appendix 3

Newbridge 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 Caerphilly 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. Information on the proportion of pupils from the catchment area that attend the school

The proportion of children from the catchment area that attend Newbridge School is 57.42%

2. Information on the proportion of pupils from outside the catchment area that attend the school

The proportion of children from outside the catchment area that attend Newbridge School is 19.51% (Children who live in Caerphilly but out of Newbridge School catchment), 23.07% (Children who live out of county)

3. Current facilities and /or services offered by Newbridge School

The following after school clubs are provided all year round

- A range of sporting activities take place after school on Newbridge School's sports pitches, AstroTurf and netball courts

4. If accommodation, facilities or services are provided by a school where would they be provided in event of a school closure?

Closure of the SRB at Newbridge School would have no impact on any facilities or services provided by the school

5. Whether other facilities available in the immediate local or wider community will or could be enhanced in event of a school closure

Closure of the SRB at Newbridge School would have no impact on any facilities or services provided by the school so it will not be necessary to enhance other facilities in the local or wider community.

6. Information about the facilities and services provided at any alternative school

Closure of the SRB at Newbridge School does not necessitate the use of facilities and services at any alternative school.

7. Information about the distance and travelling times involved in attending an alternative school of the same language category.

Of the nine pupils on roll at the Inclusion Centre, the distance and travelling times to the new alternative settings for five pupils are less than the distance or travelling times to Newbridge School. For one pupil the distance travelled is less (15.1 miles compared to 19.6 miles) but the time travelled is marginally greater (35 minutes compared to 31 minutes). For two pupils the distance and travelling times to the new alternative settings are more than the distance or travelling times to Newbridge School. For Pupil A the distance travelled increases from 9.3 miles to 14.8 miles and the time travelled increases from 20 minutes to 35 minutes. For Pupil B the distance travelled increases from 7.5 miles to 13.3 miles and the time travelled increases from 16 minutes to 28 minutes.

8. How parents and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils, and particularly any less advantaged pupils will be helped to participate in after school activities.

Closure of the SRB at Newbridge School would have no impact on pupil engagement as pupils in the school will continue to benefit from facilities offered there.

9. Information about any wider implications the changes would have on public transport provisions

The proposal is not expected to have any significant implications for public transport provision in the area.

10. Information on wider community safety issues.

No significant safety issues are anticipated

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?

The proposal to close the SRB at Newbridge School will not have a negative impact on relations between any particular groups or between the Council and these groups. Children with disabilities who live in the catchment for Newbridge School or who attend the school through parental choice will continue to be treated equally and with respect.

2) Are there any other community concerns or risks to communities that potentially arise, or are addressed, from the proposal?

There are no concerns or risks associated with this proposal.

3) Is the proposal likely to diminish, or improve positive attitudes towards different groups or restrict broader participation in public life?

Pupils attending the SRB have relatively limited inclusion into the mainstream environment at Newbridge School. The proposal provides pupils with the opportunity to access provision more suited to their needs, which will promote their 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?

The closure of the SRB will mean that a group of young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties no longer attend Newbridge School. However Newbridge School has 16 pupils with statements of special educational needs on roll with a range of special

educational needs plus 87 pupils at School Action plus and 30 at School Action . The understanding of issues around disability and social inclusion will continue to be promoted in Newbridge School through their SEN and Inclusion Policies.

5) Is the proposal likely to have a negative or positive impact upon groups with 'protected characteristics'?

The proposal is likely to have neither a positive or negative impact on groups of children with protected characteristics.

6) Is consultation required with any of the groups listed?

No consultation is required with the group listed other than the opportunity all groups will have to respond the formal consultation process. An Educational Psychologist and Behaviour Support Officer have facilitated individual meetings with the young people attending the SRB and their parents/ carers.