

Newport City Council

School Reorganisation Proposal

Consultation Report

**Proposal to establish a Welsh-medium primary school and to relocate
Pillgwenlly Primary School**

**Formal Consultation Period:
4th July 2019 to 13th September 2019**

Purpose

This report is published in line with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code, November 2018. This consultation report includes the following sections:

- The Proposal
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Consultation Responses
- Estyn's Response
- Everyday Summary Version – Children & Young People
- Learner Voice
- Other Considerations
- Recommendations
- Appendices

The Proposal

This consultation report concerns a proposal to:

- establish a Welsh-medium seedling primary school on the vacant site of the former Caerleon Lodge Hill Infant School from September 2020;
- to relocate Pillgwenlly Primary School from its existing site to a new build on the Whiteheads development, and in doing so to increase the capacity of the school for mainstream pupils from 546 to 630 and its Learning Resource Base (LRB) from 10 to 20 from January 2022, and;
- to subsequently transfer the seedling school to a permanent location on the site of the current Pillgwenlly Primary school from September 2022.

Stakeholder Engagement

An invitation to take part in the statutory consultation was issued to the following stakeholders, with a link to the consultation pack on the Council's website and/or an electronic version of the pack sent by e-mail:

- Parents, carers and guardians of pupils attending all affected schools¹;
- Pupils attending all schools affected by this proposal¹;
- Members of staff currently employed at all schools affected by this proposal¹;
- The Church in Wales, Diocese of Monmouth;
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese;
- Neighbouring Local Authorities across the South East Wales Consortium area;
- The Headteacher and Governing Bodies of all Newport schools;
- All Newport City Council elected members;
- All Newport City Council Heads of Service;
- All Community Councils across Newport;
- The Welsh Ministers;
- Assembly Members (AMs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) representing the area served by the school's subject to the proposals;
- Estyn;
- Teaching and staff trade unions representing teachers and staff employed at all schools affected by this proposal;
- The South East Wales Education Achievement Service;
- The Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent;
- Newport's Welsh in Education Forum;
- The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership;
- Any independent early years' providers in the Caerleon and Pillgwenlly areas;
- Aneurin Bevan Health Board;
- Public Health Wales;
- Newport Serennu Centre;
- SNAP Cymru;
- Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations;
- Preventative Services;
- The Welsh Language Commissioner.

¹ The schools identified as being affected by the proposal are listed on p.3

Hard copies of the full consultation document and the Everyday Summary Version for Children and Young People were available at the Information Station and from the Civic Centre, and were provided bilingually in Welsh and English.

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

School	Reason
Pillgwenlly Primary	Due to the change of school location and the increase in school capacity.
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Teyrnnon	As parents may choose to send or transfer their child to the new primary school for convenience of location, and therefore there could be a risk that their pupil numbers could decrease.
Ysgol Gymraeg Casnewydd	
Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael	
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed	The number of pupils expected to progress to Year 7 admission for this school will be greater from September 2027 than the current admission number.
Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School	The seedling school will be located within close proximity to this school and possibly reduce the number of applications to the school. There may be a small impact on transport routes.

Distribution of Information

Initially 50 hard copies of the full consultation document and 50 hard copies of the Children and Young People's Everyday Summary Version were provided to all six affected schools to be available for staff, pupils and parents. Further copies of the document were available to be delivered to schools when they were requested.

Additionally, Pillgwenlly Primary School was provided with sufficient Everyday Summary Versions for every pupil at the school and the document was translated into eight community languages: Bengali, Urdu, Arabic, Slovakian, Kurdish – Sorani, Kurdish – Bhadini, Somali, and Romanian.

Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed and Ysgol Gymraeg Casnewydd provided an electronic link to the consultation pack on the Council's website to all parents/carers via text message or email. Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School, Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Teyrnnon, Ysgol Ifor Hael, and Pillgwenlly Primary issued a letter from the Council to all parents/carers via pupil post.

In early July 2019, a letter was issued to the parents of 2,000 children living in Newport and born between 1st September 2016 and 31st August 2017, to make them aware of the proposal at the point when they would be making their application for a nursery place for September 2020. In addition, the Newport Youth Council promoted the proposal at Maindee Festival and the Big Splash, two events which took place over the Summer. This included having copies of the Everyday Summary Version available at both events.

Drop-in Events

The Council also facilitated a series of drop-in events as outlined below, and these were publicised via the Council's website and in all correspondence and documentation relating to the proposal. The drop-in events were arranged with the support of the Council's Connected Communities team, whose officers attended the events and provided cultural and translation assistance. Additional translation services were arranged to ensure that language would not be a barrier to stakeholder engagement, particularly in the Pillgwenlly area.

Location	Date & Time	Session	Translation available
Pillgwenlly Primary School, Capel Crescent, NP20 2FT	10 th July 2019 15.00-17.00	Drop-in event	Welsh Bengali Punjabi Arabic Urdu Kurdish Somali
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed, Duffryn Way, Duffryn, NP10 8BX	11 th July 2019 15.30-17.30	Drop-in event	Welsh
Pillgwenlly Primary School Capel Crescent, NP20 2FT	16 th July 2019 09.00-11.00	Drop-in event	Welsh Romanian Slovakian Czech
Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School Roman Way, Caerleon, NP18 3BY	5 th September 2019 15.45-17.30	Drop-in event	Welsh
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed, Duffryn Way, Duffryn, NP10 8BX	12 th September 2019 08.30-10.00	Drop-in event	Welsh

There was a mixed attendance at these events. The first drop-in session, held at Pillgwenlly Primary school, was attended by approximately 50 stakeholders and was supported as follows:

- 21st Century Schools Manager;
- Education Transformation Officer;
- Two Education Information and Development Officers;
- School Admissions Officer (providing Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi interpretation);
- Welsh Language Policy Officer (providing Welsh interpretation), and;
- Newport City Council Connected Communities team members to support Arabic, Bengali, Czech, Polish, Punjabi, Slovak and Urdu translation.
- Two independent interpreters providing Kurdish and Somali translation

A number of the stakeholders attending this drop-in session raised concerns about the proposed relocation of the school to the Whiteheads site, particularly in relation to the traffic flows on Mendalgief Road, and questioned the need for a Welsh-medium school in this area. A small number of stakeholders also raised concerns over the proposed realignment of the Welsh-medium school catchment areas. However, the proposed capacity increase at Pillgwenlly Primary School was seen as a positive benefit to the community, increasing the chances of siblings being able to attend the same school local to their home. Overall the responses from stakeholders at this drop-in session was mixed. Fifteen written responses were also received during the session.

The second drop-in session, held at Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed, was supported by:

- Education Transformation Officer;
- Two Education Information and Development Officers;
- Welsh Language Policy Officer (providing Welsh interpretation).

This event was attended by just one family who, as a result of their particular circumstances, raised questions around the proposed changes to Welsh-medium primary school catchment areas.

The third drop-in session, held at Pillgwenlly Primary School, was attended by approximately 30 stakeholders and was supported by:

- Service Manager – Education Resources & Planning;
- Education Transformation Officer;
- Education Information and Development Officer;
- School Admissions Officer (providing Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi interpretation);
- Welsh Language Policy Officer (providing Welsh interpretation);
- A member of the Welsh in Education Forum;
- Newport City Council Connected Communities team members to support Arabic, Czech, Polish, Slovak and Somali translation.
- One independent interpreter providing Romanian translation.

Some of the stakeholders attending this third drop-in had also attended the previous session at Pillgwenlly and raised similar concerns in relation to traffic flows on Mendalgief Road, safe routes to school, revised catchment areas and whether there was a need for a new Welsh-medium primary school in the area. The discussions which took place reassured some of the stakeholders present and overall there was a positive response to the information that was shared. Eight response pro-formas were also received from stakeholders during this event.

The fourth drop-in session, held at Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School, was not attended by any stakeholders but was supported by:

- 21st Century Schools Manager;
- Education Transformation Officer;
- Education Information and Development Officer;
- Welsh Language Policy Officer (providing Welsh interpretation);
- Equalities Officer (providing Welsh interpretation).

The fifth drop-in session, held at Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed, was also not attended by any stakeholders but was supported by:

- Service Manager – Education Resources & Planning;
- 21st Century Schools Manager;
- Education Information and Development Officer;
- Welsh Language Policy Officer (providing Welsh interpretation);
- A member of the Welsh in Education Forum.

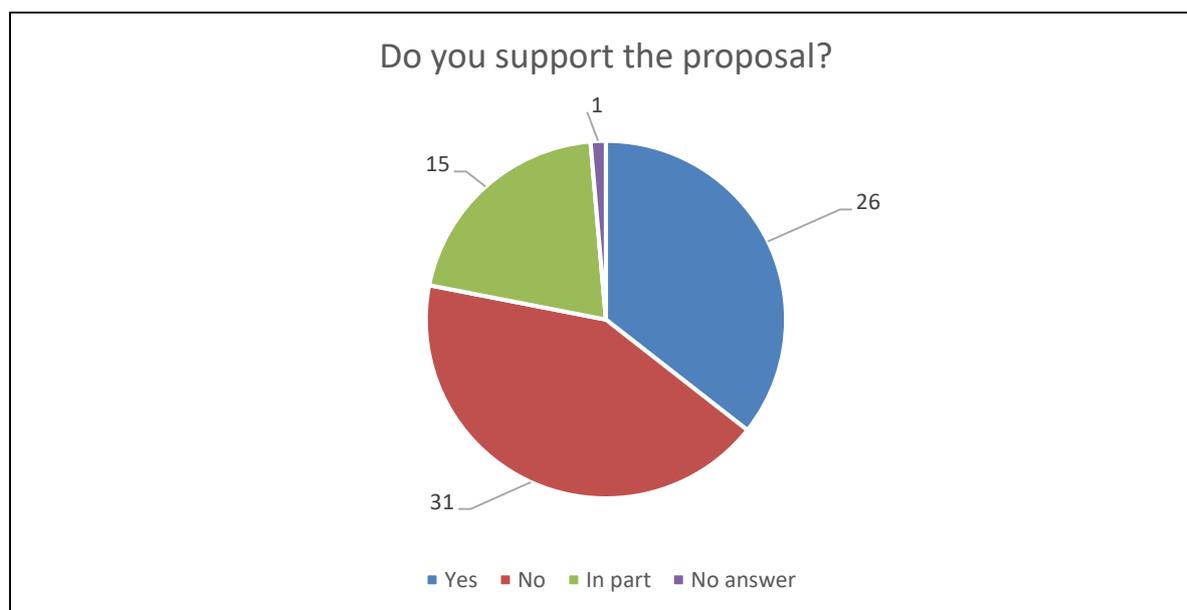
Consultation Responses

Overall, a total of 75 responses were received during the consultation process, 73 of which were made via the response pro-forma (see Appendix A). There were also two responses by email, one from a parent and one from Estyn (*Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales*).

The 73 pro-forma responses were received from a variety of stakeholders including parents, carers and pupils of affected schools, teachers and Chairs of Governors from across Newport schools, employees of the Council and local community members and residents. 38 of these responses were made on-line, with 35 being received at the various drop-in events and pupil voice sessions.

The following charts provide a breakdown of responses against each of the questions:

Question 1 – Do you support the proposal to establish a 2FE community maintained Welsh-medium primary school (ages 3-11) with LRB facility and to relocate Pillgwenlly Primary School from its existing site to the new build on the Whiteheads development, and in doing so to increase the capacity of the school for mainstream pupils from 546 to 630; and LRB provision from 10 to 20 pupils?



26 out of the 73 respondents (36%) stated that they supported the proposal, with additional views provided as follows:

- The proposal will support parental choice;
- The proposed location for the new school offers a site in the South West of the city, close to Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed;
- The expansion of Pillgwenlly Primary will create additional school places in an area of high demand;
- There will be increased opportunities for children to learn another language;
- The proposal provides an opportunity for growth over a number of years.

A further 15 of the respondents (21%) supported the proposal in part, and offered a variety of reasons to support this view:

Comment / Question	Number of Similar Comments	Council's Response
<p>Whilst the proposal to increase the number of Welsh-medium primary school places is supported, why is the Council proposing to change Welsh-medium primary school catchment areas?</p>	<p>5</p>	<p><i>It is not possible to open a fourth Welsh-medium primary school without changing the existing catchment areas, as otherwise the new school would be without a catchment area. Due to the city of Newport being small, there is limited land available to build new schools. Newport City Council do their best to split the catchment areas equally throughout Newport taking into consideration how many houses and pupils are in each area against the number of places available at each school. Parents who are affected by the re-defined catchment areas can still make an application for their preferred school. Where a school is oversubscribed the Council's over-subscription criteria will be applied to determine priority. This gives a higher priority to children whose siblings are already attending the preferred school.</i></p>
<p>Whilst the proposed growth to Welsh-medium provision is supported, why has Pillgwenlly Primary School been chosen as the permanent location rather than the new school at Whiteheads?</p>	<p>4</p>	<p><i>There is very little available and suitable land across Newport to support a new school build. Alongside this, the Council's 21st Century Schools Programme includes a commitment to expand Pillgwenlly Primary School, and this is not achievable on the current site.</i></p> <p><i>The new school at Whiteheads will enable Pillgwenlly Primary to move to a larger site to support the required growth. As a result, the current building will become empty offering the opportunity for the new Welsh-medium school to be established in an existing Education Service asset, thus reducing the capital expenditure costs.</i></p> <p><i>This proposed location will also meet demand for Welsh-medium school places across the Centre and West of the city.</i></p>
<p>Whilst the proposed growth to Welsh-medium provision is supported, why is the seedling school being located in Caerleon?</p>	<p>2</p>	<p><i>A number of alternative options were considered for the location of the seedling school before identifying the vacant Caerleon Lodge Hill Infant building as the most suitable site.</i></p> <p><i>Primarily, this offers the opportunity to use a vacant school building rather than utilise temporary accommodation. In addition, locating the seedling school here could assist in promoting Welsh-medium education in an area of low take-up.</i></p>

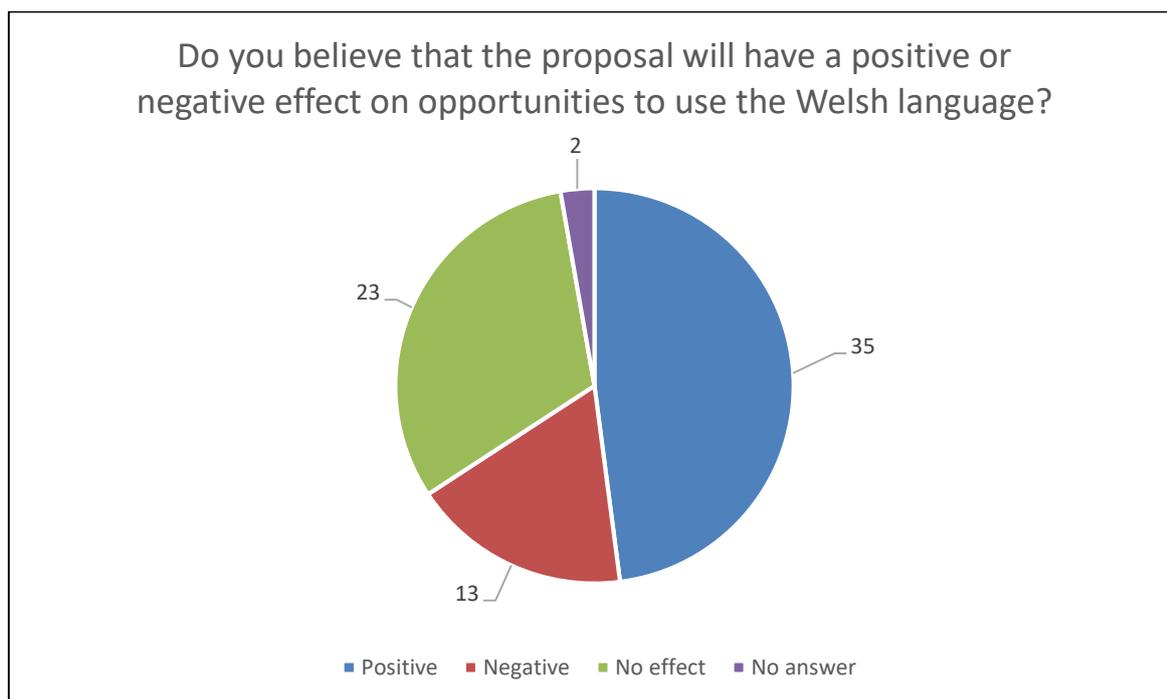
The lack of demand for Welsh-medium school places could have a detrimental impact on other schools across the City.	2	<i>Currently there are three Welsh-medium primary schools in Newport and all are almost full. Welsh Government is committed to increasing the number of Welsh speakers across Wales, and a fourth Welsh-medium primary school in Newport is key to supporting this. Opening a new school in the West of the City will ensure that Welsh-medium education is available locally for more families. Currently 5% of pupils across Newport access Welsh-medium primary education. In a recent parent survey however, 16% of respondents stated a preference for their child to attend a Welsh-medium primary school.</i>
The proposed site of the new school on the Whiteheads development is too far away from the current Pillgwenlly Primary school building.	2	<i>The proposed new school site is located just off Mendalgief Road, approximately half a mile away from the current Pillgwenlly Primary school building. The farthest edges of the catchment area are just over 1 mile from the proposed school site.</i>
How will the new school be funded as some schools are already struggling financially?	2	<i>The capital funding required to establish the new Welsh-medium primary school is being provided by Welsh Government, through a specific Welsh-medium Capital Grant. This funding is only available to support expansion in Welsh-medium education provision.</i> <i>In terms of running costs, the Council has committed the required revenue funding to support the establishment of the new school and this is reflected within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. This will be taken from the overall Individual Schools Budget (ISB) for Newport schools.</i>

Finally, 31 of the 73 respondents (42%) did not support the proposal and raised a number of points in support of their views:

Comment / Question	Number of Similar Comments	Council's Response
Why is this funding being used on a new Welsh-medium primary school and not on existing schools across Newport?	8	<i>The funding required to establish the new Welsh-medium primary school is being provided by Welsh Government, through a specific Welsh-medium Capital Grant. This funding is only available to support expansion in Welsh-medium education provision.</i>
Does Newport need another Welsh-medium Primary School as there does not appear to be a huge demand for Welsh-medium education?	5	<i>Currently there are three Welsh-medium primary schools in Newport and all are almost full. Welsh Government is committed to increasing the number of Welsh speakers across Wales, and a fourth Welsh-medium primary school in Newport is key to supporting this.</i>

		<i>Opening a new school in the West of the City will ensure that Welsh-medium education is available locally for more families. Currently 5% of pupils across Newport access Welsh-medium primary education. In a recent parent survey however, 16% of respondents stated a preference for their child to attend a Welsh-medium primary school.</i>
The proposed site of the new school on the Whiteheads development is some distance away from the current Pillgwenlly Primary school building, and it will be too far for children to walk.	5	<i>The proposed new school site is located just off Mendalgief Road, approximately half a mile away from the current Pillgwenlly Primary school building. The farthest edges of the catchment area are just over 1 mile from the proposed school site.</i>
Mendalgief Road is very busy and is not safe to cross with children.	3	<i>As part of this proposal, officers from the Education Service and City Services will consider appropriate measures to ensure Mendalgief Road is safe for pedestrians to cross.</i>
Why can't Pillgwenlly Primary School remain as it is, and the new Welsh-medium school be opened on Whiteheads site?	2	<i>There is very little available and suitable land across Newport to support a new school build. Alongside this, the Council's 21st Century Schools Programme includes a commitment to expand Pillgwenlly Primary School, and this is not achievable on the current site.</i> <i>The new school at Whiteheads will enable Pillgwenlly Primary to move to a larger site to support the required growth. As a result, the current building will become empty offering the opportunity for the new Welsh-medium school to be established in an existing Education Service asset, thus reducing the capital expenditure costs.</i>
Why is the Council proposing to change Welsh-medium primary school catchment areas as part of this proposal?	1	<i>It is not possible to open a fourth Welsh-medium primary school without changing the existing catchment areas. Due to the city of Newport being small, there is limited land available to build new schools. Newport City Council do their best to split the catchment areas equally throughout Newport taking into consideration how many houses/pupils are in each area against how many places are available at each school.</i> <i>Parents who are affected by the re-defined catchment areas can still make an application for their preferred school. Where a school is oversubscribed the Council's over-subscription criteria will be applied to determine priority. This gives a higher priority to children whose siblings are already attending the preferred school.</i>

Question 2 – Do you believe that the proposal will have a positive or negative effect on opportunities to use the Welsh language?



35 out of the 73 respondents (48%) stated that they believed the proposal would have a positive effect on the use of the Welsh language, with additional comments provided that:

- Additional jobs would as a result be created in both the Welsh-medium and English-medium sectors, and;
- This would offer the opportunity for young people to use an additional language.

However, 13 of the respondents (18%) stated that they believed the proposal would have a negative effect on the use of the Welsh language, providing the following comments to support this:

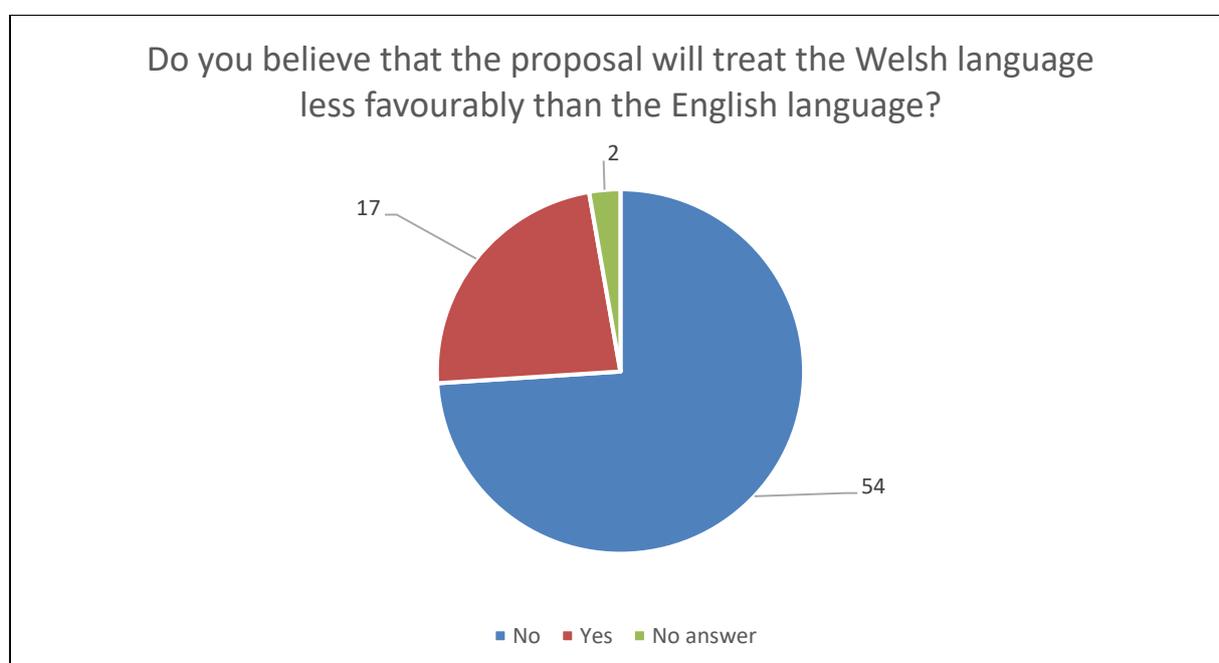
Comment / Question	Number of Similar Comments	Council's Response
Newport is not currently nor likely to be in the future a Welsh speaking region and as a result there is not a huge demand for Welsh-medium education in this area.	3	<i>Currently there are three Welsh-medium primary schools in Newport and all are almost full. Welsh Government is committed to increasing the number of Welsh speakers across Wales, and a fourth Welsh-medium primary school in Newport is key to supporting this. Opening a new school in the West of the City will ensure that Welsh-medium education is available locally for more families. Currently 5% of pupils across Newport access Welsh-medium primary education. In a recent parent survey however, 16% of respondents stated a preference for their child to attend a Welsh-medium primary school.</i>

<p>The new school should be established in a more appropriate location.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p><i>There is very little available and suitable land across Newport to support a new school build. Alongside this, the Council's 21st Century Schools Programme includes a commitment to expand Pillgwenlly Primary School, and this is not achievable on the current site.</i></p> <p><i>The new school at Whiteheads will enable Pillgwenlly Primary to move to a larger site to support the required growth. As a result, the current building will become empty offering the opportunity for the new Welsh-medium school to be established in an existing Education Service asset, thus reducing the capital expenditure.</i></p> <p><i>Opening a new school in the Pillgwenlly area will also ensure that Welsh-medium education is available locally for more families and supports the demand for Welsh-medium school places across the Centre and West of the city.</i></p>
<p>Families will be reluctant to choose the seedling school given its location.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p><i>A number of alternative options were considered for the location of the seedling school before identifying the vacant Caerleon Lodge Hill Infant building as the most suitable site. Primarily, this offers the opportunity to use a vacant school building rather than utilise temporary accommodation. In addition, locating the seedling school here could assist in promoting Welsh-medium education in an area of low take-up.</i></p>
<p>The proposed change to catchment areas will impact on families, specifically in relation to siblings being forced to attend different schools and eligibility for home to school transport.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p><i>There is no guarantee of admission to a chosen school, even if it is the catchment school. If this proposal is approved, applications for admission from September 2020 onwards will be considered against the revised catchment areas. Parents who are affected by the re-defined catchment areas can still make an application for their preferred school. Where a school is oversubscribed the Council's over-subscription criteria will be applied to determine priority. This gives a higher priority to children whose siblings are already attending the preferred school. Whilst the Council's Home to School Transport policy is based on pupils meeting the distance criteria from the catchment or nearest available school, there is a possibility that non-eligible pupils could apply for a concessionary seat. There is however a cost associated with this that must be borne by parents.</i></p>

Another 23 respondents (31%) stated that they believed the proposal would have no effect on the use of the Welsh language, offering the following comment:

Comment / Question	Number of Similar Comments	Council's Response
There is not a large demand amongst parents for their children to speak Welsh, nor is there a demand from employers for Welsh-speaking staff.	5	<i>Welsh Government approved Newport's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) in 2018. This includes a commitment to expand primary provision across the City so that the proportion of seven-year-old pupils taught through the medium of Welsh is increased from 3.9% to 5% by 2022/23. The proposal will assist and support Welsh Government's charter of achieving 1 million Welsh speakers across Wales by 2050.</i>

Question 3 – Do you believe that the proposal will treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language?



In total, 54 out of the 73 respondents (74%) stated that they believed the proposal would not treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language. Additional comments were provided as follows:

Comment / Question	Number of Similar Comments	Council's Response
The proposal is likely to treat the Welsh language more favourably than the English language and could be perceived as discriminatory towards English-medium schools.	1	<i>The Council aims to treat the Welsh-medium and English-medium sectors as equally as possible. There are currently a number of projects ongoing which are focussed at improving school buildings across both sectors.</i>

Establishing the new primary school close to Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed will assist in increasing awareness of Welsh-medium education and give parents increased choice.	1	<i>Opening a new school in Pillgwenlly will ensure that Welsh-medium education is available locally for more families and also supports the demand for Welsh-medium school places across the Centre and West of the city.</i>
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However, 17 respondents (23%) stated that they believed the proposal would treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language, offering the following comments to support this view:

Comment / Question	Number of Similar Comments	Council's Response
It is disappointing that the permanent location is an existing school building, rather than a new school build.	5	<p><i>There is very little available and suitable land across Newport to support a new school build. Alongside this, the Council's 21st Century Schools Programme includes a commitment to expand Pillgwenlly Primary School, and this is not achievable on the current site.</i></p> <p><i>The new school at Whiteheads will enable Pillgwenlly Primary to move to a larger site to support the required growth. As a result, the current building will become empty offering the opportunity for the new Welsh-medium school to be established in an existing Education Service asset, thus reducing the capital expenditure.</i></p> <p><i>Opening a new school in the Pillgwenlly area will also ensure that Welsh-medium education is available locally for more families and supports the demand for Welsh-medium school places across the Centre and West of the city.</i></p>
The proposed catchment areas mean that some children who elect Welsh-medium education will still be unable to walk to a local school.	1	<p><i>The proposed catchment areas have been defined to consider the number of properties in each area against the number of places available at each school.</i></p> <p><i>The Council's Home to School Transport policy is designed to support access to school, and any child who lives two miles or more from their catchment or nearest available school will be eligible for this assistance.</i></p> <p><i>The establishment of a new school in a new location will undoubtedly mean that more children will have the opportunity to attend a school within walking distance of their home.</i></p>

The proposed catchment areas could have an impact on families whose older children have already started school.	1	<p><i>There is no guarantee of admission to a chosen school, even if it is the catchment school. If this proposal is approved, applications for admission from September 2020 onwards will be considered against the revised catchment areas.</i></p> <p><i>Parents who are affected by the re-defined catchment areas can still make an application for their preferred school. Where a school is oversubscribed the Council's over-subscription criteria will be applied to determine priority. This gives a higher priority to children whose siblings are already attending the preferred school.</i></p>
People are starting to resent the way that the Welsh-language is being constantly pushed.	1	<p><i>The Council is committed to promoting access to Welsh-medium education to align with the Welsh Government's charter of achieving 1 million Welsh speakers across Wales by 2050. As a result, parents have the choice to send their children to either English-medium or Welsh-medium schools.</i></p>

As previously outlined, one further parental response was received by email. This outlined some concerns in relation to the proposed catchment areas, specifically in relation to the potential for siblings having to attend different schools and the associated implications of home to school transport eligibility. The response also indicated a view that the new school might not succeed as families living in the Pillgwenlly area could be reluctant to travel to the temporary site in Caerleon.

In response, and as previously outlined, it is not possible to open a fourth Welsh-medium primary school without changing the existing catchment areas, as otherwise the new school would be without a catchment area. Parents who are affected by the re-defined catchment areas can still make an application for their preferred school. Where a school is oversubscribed the Council's over-subscription criteria will be applied to determine priority. This gives a higher priority to children whose siblings are already attending the preferred school. The Council's Home to School Transport policy is designed to support access to school, and any child who lives two miles or more from their catchment or nearest available school will be eligible for this assistance. Any child who currently benefits from this assistance will continue to do so following implementation of the proposal.

The response from Estyn is referred to in the following section.

Estyn's Response

The full response from Estyn is included at Appendix B of this report. However, in summary, the response outlines that the proposal:

- Corresponds with the Welsh Government's objective of a million Welsh speakers by 2050 by increasing the use of the Welsh language in education in Newport;
- Is in keeping with the objectives of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, and;
- Addresses the need to provide more English-medium spaces reasonably by relocating Pillgwenlly Primary School to a new building.

In conclusion, the response states that the Council has given appropriate consideration to a range of options in advance of taking forward the proposal, and the proposal will result in the current standards of education being at least maintained.

Everyday Summary Version – Children & Young People

An Everyday Summary Version of the main consultation document was also prepared and published, and was targeted specifically at children and young people. This summary version was available on request from the Information Station and the Civic Centre. Copies were also shared with the Newport Youth Council who as a result were able to promote the proposal at Maindee Festival and the Big Splash.

Learner Voice

The Council was keen to gain the views of learners, and this was facilitated by members of the Education Service who attended a series of consultation meetings with groups of pupils attending the affected schools. The main points and questions raised during these sessions are outlined on the following pages:

Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary School

Question / Comments	Council's Response
School pick up and drop off times are already busy and the new seedling school will add to this problem. Has this been considered?	<i>The seedling school will only be used for two academic years and at most will accommodate a maximum of 60 full-time pupils, plus 48 nursery pupils attending either a morning or afternoon session. The proposed building is some distance from your school and will have a separate drop off/pick up area so there shouldn't be much disruption.</i>
Will the seedling school need to use our field?	<i>Possibly yes as there will be limited outdoor space available for the seedling school. This will be discussed between the two Headteachers who will ensure that the two schools do not use these facilities at the same time.</i>
What colour will the uniform be?	<i>The Headteacher of the new school will decide this, but will probably want to ensure that there is no clash with other local schools.</i>
What will happen to the building after the seedling school moves out?	<i>The Education Service will look at an alternative permanent use for the building.</i>
Is there a chance that the school might stay in the old infant building permanently?	<i>No, the vacant building is not big enough to host the new school permanently.</i>
Will children leave our school to go the new school?	<i>The new school will only be available for children in nursery and Reception to start with and therefore this is unlikely. However, children who live in Caerleon and are starting school may choose to go to the new school rather than either Caerleon Lodge Hill Primary or Charles Williams Church in Wales Primary.</i>

Pillgwenlly Primary School

Questions / Comments	Council's Response
How many children will there be in our school when it moves and how many will be in each class?	<i>The new building will be able to fit 762 pupils in total, which is 94 more than at present. There will be up to 30 children in each class, although the classrooms will be bigger than those in the current school.</i>
Will the school start and end times change?	<i>Not necessarily, but this will be for the Headteacher and governors to decide.</i>
Will the school uniform change?	<i>Not necessarily, but this will be for the Headteacher and governors to decide.</i>
What facilities will be in the new school? Will there be a swimming pool, games room, library, art room and music room?	<i>Unfortunately, there will not be a swimming pool in the new school. However, there will be lots of flexible spaces, and the school will help decide what these are used for.</i>
What outdoor facilities will we have?	<i>A sports pitch will be provided, and we are considering whether this will be an artificial pitch which can be used all year round. There will also be a hard play area and a nature area.</i>
It is good that this building is being used for another school and that more children will be able to go to a Welsh-medium school.	<i>There are very few spare buildings belonging to the Council, so we are lucky that Pillgwenlly Primary is in good condition and can be used for the new school. Having a Welsh-medium school and an English-medium school in Pillgwenlly will give parents more choice when picking a school for their children.</i>
The new school will be closer to my house.	<i>Yes, some families will have less distance to travel to the school.</i>
Having an extra class for children with additional learning needs is a good idea.	<i>Some children need additional help with learning and the proposal is to have an extra class for this.</i>

Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed

Questions / Comments	Council's Response
How many children will be able to attend the new Welsh-medium primary school?	<i>Once the school moves to its permanent site and is fully grown, it will be able to accommodate 478 pupils in total.</i>
What will happen if the new school becomes full?	<i>Longer term, a 5th Welsh-medium primary school in Newport may be a possibility but this is not anticipated for a long time.</i>
Where will the seedling school be located and how far is this from the permanent site in Pillgwenlly?	<i>The seedling school will be located in Caerleon, at the vacant Lodge Hill Infant school. This is approximately 5.7 miles from the permanent site in Pillgwenlly.</i>
How long will the seedling school be open?	<i>The intention is that the seedling school will only be open for two years. However, the building is large enough to host the school for an additional third year if necessary.</i>
Will children living in Pillgwenlly get free transport to the seedling school?	<i>Yes, it is likely that children who live in Pillgwenlly who apply to attend the Reception class at the seedling school will receive free home to school transport.</i>
Is there enough space in Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed for the children who will attend the new school?	<i>Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed is able to accommodate a maximum of 900 pupils, and therefore the Council is considering longer-term secondary provision. This will not impact until September 2027 at the earliest.</i>

Why has Pillgwenlly been chosen as the permanent location for the new school?	<i>Opening a new school in Pillgwenlly will ensure that Welsh-medium education is available locally for more families and also supports the demand for Welsh-medium school places across the Centre and West of the city.</i>
Will an increase in Welsh-medium provision eventually mean a decrease in English-medium provision?	<i>The population of Newport is growing but it is certainly possible that if the number of pupils in Welsh-medium education increases, then the number in English language schools could decrease over time. Many of our primary schools are full however and therefore we believe this proposal will enable additional choice for families.</i>
What will be the impact on Pillgwenlly Primary school staff when they move to the new building?	<i>There will be no impact on staff. In fact, as the new building will be bigger than the current school, additional staff will be needed.</i>
Do you think the Council will ever open a Welsh-medium special school?	<i>As part of the proposal, Newport's first Welsh-medium Learning Resource Base will be established. Provision for children with additional learning needs will continue to be monitored by the Education Service.</i>

Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Teyrnnon

Questions / Comments	Council's Response
What will happen to our school when the new school opens?	<i>There should be no adverse effect on any of the existing Welsh-medium primary schools, although typically some children will be likely to apply for the new school if it is closer to their home address.</i>
Will any children currently attending this school be forced to move to the new school?	<i>No. Children can continue to attend their existing school if that is their choice.</i>
What will happen if the new school at Whiteheads doesn't open as planned?	<i>The intention is that the seedling school will only be open for two years. However, the building is large enough to host the school for an additional third year if necessary.</i>
What is a Learning Resource Base?	<i>A Learning Resource Base is a class specifically for children who need extra help with their learning. Many English-medium primary schools already host these classes.</i>
How much will it cost to open the new school?	<i>The Council has received a grant of £5.8 million from Welsh Government to open the new school.</i>
Is there enough space in Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed for the children who will attend the new school?	<i>Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed is able to accommodate a maximum of 900 pupils, and therefore the Council is considering longer-term secondary provision. This will not impact until September 2027 at the earliest.</i>
Will the new school have any effect on the existing Welsh-medium schools?	<i>Not intentionally, but inevitably some children will apply for places at the new school and some staff could also move jobs.</i>
How will the classes be arranged at the new Welsh-medium primary school?	<i>The proposal is for the school to operate straight-age classes. At the seedling school, there will be one class per year group, although this will increase to two classes per year group when the school moves to the permanent site.</i>

Do you think the location of the seedling school will have an effect on applications for the new school?	<i>This is a possibility. Moreover take-up of Welsh-medium education from families living in Caerleon is currently low, and therefore hosting the seedling in this area could actually promote this.</i>
What is a temporary governing body and what do they do?	<i>The temporary governing body is a group of people who will work together to appoint the new Headteacher and ensure that the new school opens as planned.</i>
How many children do you think will be in Welsh-medium schools?	<i>We think that by 2026, up to 1000 pupils will be attending Welsh-medium primary schools across Newport.</i>
Is there a risk in opening the seedling school before the permanent site is secured?	<i>Yes, this is a risk and is something that the Council is working hard to avoid.</i>

Ysgol Gymraeg Casnewydd

Questions / Comments	Council's Response
How long will it take to build the new school at Whiteheads?	<i>The new school build programme will take approximately 18 months.</i>
Why can't Pillgwenlly Primary be expanded on its current site?	<i>There is very limited outdoor space at the school to enable us to build an extension, and as it is already on two floors it can't grow any taller.</i>
How will the new school be designed and why are you only creating 3 classes per year group?	<i>We haven't agreed the design yet, but again it is likely to be a two-storey building. The available land means that we couldn't build the school any bigger than a 3 classes per year group arrangement. This is in line with the biggest schools we currently have across Newport.</i>
How much will it cost to build the new primary school at Whiteheads?	<i>The new school will cost around £12 million to build and furnish, and the money has been set aside to pay for this.</i>
What will be the name of the new Welsh-medium primary school?	<i>This will be decided by the Headteacher and the temporary governing body once the proposal has been approved.</i>
How far is the seedling school from the permanent location?	<i>The seedling school will be located in Caerleon, at the vacant Lodge Hill Infant school. This is approximately 5.7 miles from the permanent site in Pillgwenlly.</i>
Is there enough space in Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed for the children who will attend the new school?	<i>Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed is able to accommodate a maximum of 900 pupils, and therefore the Council is considering longer-term secondary provision. This will not impact until September 2027 at the earliest.</i>
How many pupils will be able to go to the new Welsh-medium primary school?	<i>Once the school moves to its permanent site and is fully grown, it will be able to accommodate 478 pupils in total.</i>

Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael

Questions / Comments	Council's Response
Why is the catchment area for our school being made smaller?	<i>It is not possible to open a fourth Welsh-medium primary school without changing the existing catchment areas. Due to the city of Newport being small, there is limited land available to build new schools. The proposal splits the catchment areas equally throughout Newport taking into consideration how many houses/pupils are in each area against how many places are available at each school.</i>
Will the amended catchment area mean that less children will attend our school?	<i>This is a possibility, however in denoting the new catchment areas we have taken into consideration how many houses/pupils are in each area against how many places are available at each school. In addition, opening the new school as a seedling means that it will grow slowly and thus the impact on existing schools is lessened.</i>
Why was Pillgwenlly chosen as the permanent location for the new school?	<i>Opening a new school in Pillgwenlly will ensure that Welsh-medium education is available locally for more families and also supports the demand for Welsh-medium school places across the Centre and West of the city.</i>
Why couldn't the new school at Whiteheads become the fourth Welsh-medium primary school?	<i>There is very little available and suitable land across Newport to support a new school build. Alongside this, the Council's 21st Century Schools Programme includes a commitment to expand Pillgwenlly Primary School, and this is not achievable on the current site. The new school at Whiteheads will enable Pillgwenlly Primary to move to a larger site to support the required growth. As a result, the current building will become empty offering the opportunity for the new Welsh-medium school to be established in an existing Education Service asset, thus reducing the capital expenditure costs. This proposed location will also meet demand for Welsh-medium school places across the Centre and West of the city.</i>
Will home to school transport be provided for the children attending the seedling school? What will happen when the school moves to the permanent location?	<i>Yes, it is likely that children who live in Pillgwenlly who apply to attend the Reception class at the seedling school will receive free home to school transport. Whilst the catchment area for the new school is not proposed to extend into Caerleon, the seedling school is likely to be attractive to families in the Caerleon area. In order to support the establishment of the new school, any pupils from Caerleon who elect to attend the seedling school will be entitled to free home to school transport to Pillgwenlly from September 2022 when the school moves to its permanent location. This discretionary assistance will be awarded to this specific group of pupils only, and unfortunately cannot be extended to include siblings.</i>

Other Considerations

Page 28 of the published consultation document lists the key risks to the proposal and notes that any delays in the construction of the new school on the Whiteheads development could impact on the proposed move of the new Welsh-medium school from the temporary site to the permanent location. A pre-requisite for the construction of the new school building is the transfer of the land on which the school will be sited to Newport City Council ownership, and this in itself is dependent on the commencement of the adjacent housing development. This was initially expected to take place in spring 2019.

Since the public consultation was launched however, the land developer has confirmed that the relevant planning conditions have not been discharged to enable commencement of the scheme and the resultant transfer of the school site. Until these issues are resolved the development will be delayed, and therefore there is currently some uncertainty over when this land transfer will occur. The most recent correspondence indicates that this will not be before December 2020 at the earliest.

Recommendations

In light of the uncertainty over the timeframe for the site being made available, it is recommended that the Council moves forward with the proposal through publication of a statutory notice, albeit with a deferred implementation date of one full academic year. This would mean that:

- The seedling school would open in September 2021;
- Pillgwenlly Primary School would be relocated to the new school on the Whiteheads development at the start of the Spring term 2023, and;
- The new Welsh-medium primary school would move to its permanent site in Pillgwenlly from September 2023.

This decision will be referred to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and taken through the Council's agreed democratic process.

In accordance with the School Organisation Code (2018) this report is published electronically on Newport City Council's website at www.newport.gov.uk

To request a hard (paper) copy of this document please contact Newport City Council by telephoning 01633 656656 or emailing school.reorg@newport.gov.uk

Appendix A: Consultation Response Pro-forma

This response relates to:

- The establishment of a Welsh-medium seedling primary school from September 2020
- The relocation and subsequent expansion of Pillgwenlly Primary School for January 2022 and
- The transfer of the seedling school to a permanent location on the site of the current Pillgwenlly Primary School from September 2022.

Your views matter. Please tell us what you think about the proposal by completing this questionnaire and returning it to the Education Information and Development Officer, Newport City Council, Room 425W, Civic Centre, Newport NP20 4UR. Alternatively, you can complete this form online at www.newport.gov.uk/schoolreorganisation or email your response to school.reorg@newport.gov.uk. **The closing date for the submission of responses to this consultation is midnight on Friday 13th September 2019.** Please note that negative responses made to this consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal, they will be recorded as adverse comments. Objections can only be registered following the publication of a statutory notice.

1) Do you support the proposal to:

To establish a 2FE community maintained Welsh-medium primary school (ages 3-11) with LRB facility and to relocate Pillgwenlly Primary School from its existing site to the new build on the Whiteheads development, and in doing so to increase the capacity of the school for mainstream pupils from 546 to 630; and LRB provision from 10 to 20 pupils.

Yes No In part

Please use the box below to provide comments or explain which element of the proposal you do not support

2) Do you believe that the proposal will have a positive or negative effect on opportunities to use the Welsh language?

Positive Negative No effect

3) If you think it will have a negative effect, what steps could we take to lessen or remove this and improve positive effects?

4) Do you believe that the proposal will treat the Welsh language less favourably than the English language?

Yes No

Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent/carer of a child attending a local nursery)

Please select your Ethnic group			
White British		Asian-Bangladeshi	
White Irish		Asian-Indian	
Any other White background (please state): _____		Asian-Pakistani	
		Any other Asian background	
Gypsy or Irish Traveller		Black Caribbean	
White and Asian		Black African	
White and Black African		Any other Black background	
White and Black Caribbean		Arab	
Any other Mixed background (please state): _____		Chinese	
		Any other ethnic group (please state): _____	
Asian-Bangladeshi		Prefer not to say	
Asian-Indian			
Asian-Pakistani			

Welsh language			
Do you consider yourself a Welsh speaker?			
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>

Caring Responsibilities			
Do you care for children of school age?			
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you care for children of pre-school age?			
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you care for a dependent adult or child above school age?			
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>

If you wish to be notified of the publication of the consultation report, please supply your contact details:

E-mail: _____

Postal address: _____

Appendix B: Estyn's full response to the proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium school and relocate Pillgwenlly Primary School

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

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

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

Introduction

This is a proposal by Newport City Council.

The proposal is as follows:

- To establish a Welsh-medium seedling primary school on the vacant site of the former Caerleon Lodge Hill Infant School from September 2020;
- To relocate Pillgwenlly Primary School from its existing site to a new building on the Whiteheads development, thereby increasing the capacity of the school for mainstream pupils from 546 to 630 and its Learning Resource Base (LRB) from 10 to 20 places from January 2022; and
- Subsequently transfer the seedling school to a permanent location on the site of the current Pillgwenlly Primary School from September 2022.

Summary/Conclusion

The proposal corresponds with the Welsh Government's objective of a million Welsh speakers by 2050 (Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers) by increasing the use of the Welsh language in education in Newport.

The proposal is in keeping with the objectives of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

The proposal addresses the need to provide more English-medium spaces reasonably by relocating Pillgwenlly Primary School to a new building.

The Council has given appropriate consideration to a range of options and has chosen the above proposal.

Estyn is of the opinion that this proposal is at least likely to maintain the current standards of education.

Description and benefits

The proposer provides a clear and detailed rationale for the proposal. It identifies fairly that this proposal corresponds with the objectives of Newport City Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, in addition to the Welsh Government's objectives to increase the number of Welsh speakers. It refers validly to the results of the parental demand survey, which shows a potential increase in the demand for Welsh-medium education in Newport.

The proposer shows clearly that the English-medium school, Pillgwenlly Primary School, is fully subscribed and has a waiting list for each year group.

In addition, the demand for places is likely to increase following new housing developments in the area. It states validly that there is not enough space on the current site to expand the school, and that doing so would mean building on the outdoor play areas.

The proposer has given valid consideration to other options. These include locating the Welsh seedling school on other sites, including on the grounds of the Welsh-medium secondary school. They identify the advantages, disadvantages and risks associated with the proposal and the different options clearly. The proposer states clearly why it favours the proposal and refers to the benefits of opening a Welsh-medium seedling school. It asserts fairly that relocating Pillgwenlly Primary School to a new site will create additional English-medium capacity. The proposer also asserts in a balanced way that opening the Welsh-medium seedling school, in the Caerleon area initially before moving it to its permanent site, may lead to an increase in demand for Welsh-medium education in that area.

The proposer draws relevant attention to that fact that the facilities on the new site of Pillgwenlly Primary School will provide an opportunity for the school to create better community engagement by ensuring access for members of the local community.

The proposer has given suitable consideration to the effect of the proposal on Welsh-medium provision within the authority. It asserts fairly that the proposal would have a positive effect on the number of places that are available in Welsh-medium education in the Newport area.

The proposer has given sufficient consideration on the effect of the proposal on learners' travel arrangements and the accessibility of provision. It states firmly that pupils who are currently eligible for free home to school transport will not lose this provision as a result of establishing the new school and the associated revision of catchment areas. It states fairly that the fact that there will be a new Welsh-medium education facility in the heart of the city is likely to reduce the distance that pupils will have to travel to access Welsh-medium education.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposer has given detailed consideration to the effect of the proposal on the quality of outcomes, provision and leadership at the school.

It refers validly to the outcomes of the most recent Estyn inspections of the Welsh and English-medium schools in the areas concerned, their categories and support bandings.

It comes to the reasonable conclusion that it does not anticipate any negative effects on the quality of educational standards, wellbeing, learning experiences or leadership. It asserts strongly that the proposal will have a positive effect on pupils' education. This is because buildings on both sites will include appropriate resources to deliver a full curriculum to mainstream pupils and those with additional learning needs.

The proposer states firmly that locating specialist provision for pupils with additional learning needs at both sites would strengthen such provision through the medium of Welsh and English. As a result of the proposal, there would be an increase of 100% in the capacity of the Learning Resource Base (LRB) on the grounds of Pillgwenlly Primary School. The proposal would also create an LRB with 10 places on the grounds of the new Welsh-medium primary school, which is provision that does not exist currently across the Welsh-medium primary sector in Newport.

The proposer has conducted an equality impact assessment and claims reasonably that the proposal should not have a detrimental effect on any specific groups. It states clearly that the proposal would ensure better provision for pupils with additional learning needs in both languages.

The proposer asserts fairly that including nursery provision at the new Welsh-medium primary school would increase the number of part-time places that are available through the medium of Welsh in Newport. It states in a balanced manner that the proposal could lead to additional pressure on places at Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed due to the increasing number of children who receive primary education through the medium of Welsh.

The proposer has given appropriate consideration to the possible disruption for existing pupils.