

Newport City Council

School Reorganisation Proposal

Consultation Report

Proposal to expand Ysgol Bryn Derw and increase the capacity of the school from 48 to 68 with effect from January 2020

**Formal Consultation Period:
1st May 2019 to 11th June 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
- Everyday Summary Version – Children & Young People
- Learner Voice
- Consultation Responses
- Estyn
- Other Considerations
- Recommendations

The Proposal

To expand Ysgol Bryn Derw and increase the capacity of the school from 48 to 68 with effect from January 2020.

Stakeholder Engagement

An invitation to take part in the statutory consultation was issued to the stakeholders outlined below, with either a link to the consultation pack on the Council's website and an electronic version of the pack sent by e-mail, or alternatively by hard copies of the consultation material being issued:

- Teachers, staff and the governing body of Ysgol Bryn Derw;
- Parents, carers and guardians of pupils attending Ysgol Bryn Derw;
- Pupils attending Ysgol Bryn Derw;
- Parents, carers and guardians of children attending Maes Ebbw School;
- Parents, carers and guardians of children attending Learning Resource Base classes across the City;
- Parents, carers and guardians of children with a diagnosis of ASD and attending placements outside the City;
- The Headteachers and Governing Bodies of all other Newport schools;
- The Headteacher and Governing Body of Maes Ebbw School;
- All Newport City Council elected members;
- All Newport Community Councils;
- The Welsh Ministers;
- Assembly Members (AMs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) representing the area served by the schools subject to the proposals;
- Other Local Authorities across the South East Wales Consortium region, including relevant Transport departments;
- The South East Wales Education Achievement Service;
- The Church in Wales, Diocese of Monmouth;
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese;
- Estyn;
- Teaching and staff trade unions representing teachers and staff at Ysgol Bryn Derw;
- The Newport Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership;
- The Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent;
- Gwent Police;
- South Wales Fire and Rescue Service;
- Aneurin Bevan University Health Board;
- Public Health Wales
- Newport Serennu Centre;
- SNAP Cymru;
- Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations;
- Preventative Services.

The following consultation events were arranged and were publicised via a letter to stakeholders. This information was also shared on the Council website and outlined throughout the consultation document:

Venue	Date and Time	Event type
Ysgol Bryn Derw, Melfort Road, Newport. NP20 3FQ	Thursday 16 th May 2019 9:45am to 11:45am	Drop-in event
Ysgol Bryn Derw, Melfort Road, Newport. NP20 3FQ	Tuesday 21 st May 2019 4.00pm to 6.00pm	Drop-in event

These drop-in events were unfortunately not well attended. No stakeholders attended the first event which was supported by the Special Education Needs (SEN) Manager, the Education Business Development Officer and an Education Information & Development Officer. Seven stakeholders attended the second event, all of which were Ysgol Bryn Derw staff members. The Education Service Manager - Resources & Planning, the 21st Century Schools Client Officer and the Adviser for Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Cognition & Learning, supported this event. The Adviser for ALN Cognition & Learning is also the Chair of Governors at Ysgol Bryn Derw. The stakeholders attending this second drop-in session raised no concerns, and all confirmed that they were supportive of the proposal to increase the capacity of the school through refurbishment of the annexe building.

Everyday Summary Version – Children & Young People

An Everyday Summary Version of the main consultation document was also published and was targeted specifically at children and young people.

Learner Voice

The Council is keen to gain the views of learners when taking forward school reorganisation proposals. However, in this instance the Headteacher and Chair of Governors felt that it would not be appropriate to engage with pupils currently attending Ysgol Bryn Derw during the consultation stage due to their specific additional learning needs. Pupils at the school, all of whom have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), have high anxiety levels, struggle with change, are confused by the unknown, and can be unpredictable. Given the fact that the proposal was only at the formal consultation stage, and in light of the considerations above pupil engagement was not undertaken. They will however be fully engaged and consulted in the refurbishment plans if the proposal is taken forward.

Consultation Responses

Eight consultation responses were received during the consultation period, all of which (100%) supported the proposal as it was consulted upon. Responses were received from four parents, three professionals and one staff member. Responses received included comments that the additional provision was needed and would benefit children and young people in Newport who are diagnosed with ASD. The comments also reflected that the proposal would make good use of an otherwise vacant building on the school site.

Estyn

The formal response from Estyn concluded that the proposal “is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education and provision in the area”

The response goes on to say that the consultation document gives a clear rationale for the proposed expected benefits in relation to offering a well-resourced environment for children aged 3 years to 19 years who have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and associated learning difficulties. There is also valid evidence that extra places are necessary in order to meet anticipated demand for provision as the school is currently operating above agreed capacity. The response also acknowledges that the additional advantages of the proposal have been noted, including the provision of additional specialist education place is an appropriate dedicated school and an opportunity for pupils who are currently attending out-of-county provision to re-integrate back into their local area to continue their education. This will also have a positive impact on learner travel, as it will reduce the number of pupil journeys to placements outside of the city of Newport.

Disadvantages of the proposal were also suitably identified, focussing on the possible disruptive impact on pupils and staff whilst building work is ongoing, and the fact that parents of pupils already in alternative provision could be reluctant to move them to an expanded Ysgol Bryn Derw.

The response from Estyn ends by stating that the Council “has considered comprehensively that this proposal will have a positive impact on the provision and quality of education outcomes in the special school sector” and “concludes reasonably that it does not anticipate any negative impacts on the quality of standards of education and wellbeing of pupils in the school”.

Other Considerations

This expansion is possible following a successful capital grant application to Welsh Government’s Integrated Care Fund (ICF). The additional capacity will allow the Council to increase specialist ALN provision within the City, therefore reducing the number of pupils attending out of county placements.

Recommendations

It is recommended that permission be sought to move this proposal forward by publishing a statutory notice. 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