



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL /
CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL CASTELL-NEDD PORT
TALBOT**

Cabinet

23rd October 2024

**Report of the Head of Early Years, Inclusion and Partnerships
/Pennaeth Blynyddoedd Cynnar, Cynhwysiant a Phartneriaethau**

Hayley Lervy

Matter: for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title: Childcare in Schools/Education Buildings:
Adoption of new rent arrangements, following pilot of changes

Purpose of the Report:

Following a successful pilot of new rent arrangements for childcare in school/education buildings, coinciding with significant development within the Neath Port Talbot childcare sector as a result of Flying Start funded childcare expansion roll out, agreement is sought to adopt a change in the way rent levels are charged for childcare within school and education buildings.

The initial pilot, that continued longer than planned due to the significant and ongoing changes within the childcare sector as a direct result of Flying Start funded childcare expansion, sought to pilot a change in the set rent charges for childcare within our schools and education buildings. Any new childcare rent agreements, including leases and heads of terms were to operate under the pilot conditions while being tested for viability and suitability. The aim to make childcare space opportunities in schools and education buildings more accessible and affordable to new external private childcare providers and work towards addressing lack of childcare sufficiency was realised.

The proposed rent payment structure aims to support NPTCBC aspirations and community need, by supporting the sustainability and growth of bilingual and Welsh childcare provision in line with our Welsh Government targets and aspirations. Our Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP), Flying Start Childcare expansion plans and Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) identify a need to increase the availability of Welsh and bilingual onsite after school club and wrap around childcare provision.

The impact of the changes will:

- Provide a fair rent rate that reflects what we need to promote and develop as a local authority in line with Welsh Government policy and reflect the community needs.
- Sustain and grow Welsh language childcare provision within schools, increasing the number of children transitioning into Welsh medium education.
- Make afterschool clubs more sustainable in schools, where schools are unable to provide the service themselves.
- Attract more interest in running bilingual and Welsh childcare provision within school and education buildings.

Childcare Setting Categories in Neath Port Talbot:

Legacy Flying Start Setting: Occupation initially established to enable sufficient Flying Start funded childcare places, at the start of the Flying Start programme. This enabled families within eligible Flying Start areas, to access childcare withing “pram-pushing” distance of their homes, in line with Welsh Government policy.

Majority Flying Start Setting: – more than 50% of childcare places available are Flying Start funded. Provider will have a service level agreement with Early Years and Flying Team, that is monitored for compliance and quality regularly via visits and quality assurance measures.

Welsh/Bilingual - the setting is registered and categorised as bilingual or Welsh with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), childcare places are available for Flying Start funded children. Provider will have a service level agreement with Early Years and Flying Team, that is monitored for compliance and quality regularly via visits and quality assurance measures.

Private/Voluntary Childcare with No Flying Start: the setting is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), childcare places are not currently available for Flying Start funded children, with the majority of children accessing private full day care that may include Childcare Offer Funded spaces. Provider will have a service level agreement with Early Years and Flying Start Team, that is monitored for compliance and quality regularly via visits and quality assurance measures.

Afterschool Club the setting is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), childcare places are usually available to the children from within the school, with the majority of children accessing other funded or privately funded childcare.

The below charging framework is proposed:

Childcare Provision Type	Service Charges¹	Base Rent	Additional Rent	Agreement Term
Legacy Flying Start setting	100%*	N/A	N/A	5 years

¹ Service charge costs are set by Estates as per a set formula, taking into account the percentage floor space occupied, the daily/weekly/yearly operational hours and services used.

Majority Flying Start setting	100%	N/A	N/A	5 years
Welsh/Bilingual setting	100%	N/A	N/A	5 years
Full Daycare	100%	£25/wk	£1/reg child/wk	5 years
Afterschool Club	100%	£1/wk	£1/reg child/wk	5 years

**Service charges for most Legacy settings are covered by Flying Start Programme budget.*

NB: Faith schools will have separate rent agreements organised by their diocese. Early Years & Flying Start Childcare Team will support the school and governors with the safe recruitment and ongoing monitoring of any childcare within NPT.

NB: Childcare spaces that reside within education buildings that are part of a complex or development may be subject to additional pre-contract charges such as service charges, and/or maintenance costs that have been pre-arranged by Estates. These costs will be made clear in any tendering or expression of interest adverts and processes and detailed in any rent agreement paperwork issued.

Executive Summary:

After a successful pilot of rent changes to charges between 2022 and 2024, Members are asked to approve a new fair and clear rent charge framework for childcare in schools that supports the ongoing and continuing development of childcare facilities on school sites. Any new agreements will be subject to these changes. Any updates will be reported to Members on an annual basis.

Background:

Delegated powers around childcare in schools falls under the responsibility of the Head of Early Years, Inclusion and Partnerships, Hayley Lervy.

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide sufficient childcare places for parents and carers that need it. This duty came into effect in April 2008 and forms part of the statutory duties imposed on all local authorities set out by the Childcare Act 2006. In line with the duty, the Early Years and Flying Start and Childcare Team have updated their Childcare Sufficiency Assessment in 2023. The

assessment identifies any areas of unmet demand for childcare and allows for the planning and preparation in line with Welsh Government.

Childcare is an integral part of our community within Neath Port Talbot, enabling children to thrive and develop to their full potential, supporting good transition to learning and enabling parents to access work, education and training. Through Welsh Government funded programmes, such as Flying Start, Childcare Offer for Wales, and Childcare and Play, the Early Years and Flying Start Childcare Team endeavour to continue to draw down much needed capital and revenue funding from Welsh Government to create sustainable learning communities for children right from the start, by providing as much childcare on school and education sites as possible. This not only enables a smooth transition for children into education from pre-school, but builds on the trusted school reputation with parents, develops early connections and partnerships between schools and families, and brings capital investment to our education estate. Working in tandem with our WESP targets, we strive to increase the number of children accessing Welsh education by placing much needed pre-school childcare within our Welsh schools as possible. Encouraging childcare providers to explore providing bilingual provision within our English Medium primary schools by offering a reduced rent cost, supports the drive for more exposure to the Welsh Language within our communities, and supports the development of the language at the heart of all schools.

During the 2022-2024 pilot, the below childcare was successfully developed within school sites:

Service Name	Service Type	Service Sub Type	Maximum Capacity	Date Of Registration
Cylch Meithrin Cwmllynfell	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	19	08/09/2022
Cylch Meithrin Teulu'r Tyle (Tyle'r Ynn)	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	19	11/11/2022
Gofal Plant Tregesles	Childrens Day Care	Full Day Care	18	24/05/2023

Cylch Trebannws	Childrens Day Care	Sessional care	16	04/09/2024
			Total new places	
			72	

Continuity of Service

To ensure continuity of the development of childcare within Neath Port Talbot, it is recommended that Members approve the above proposed rent framework of cost charged to childcare providers within schools and education buildings, to make it appealing for childcare to be school-based and bilingual or Welsh where possible.

Financial Impacts:

Financial impacts are minimal, as the pilot charging framework has been in place with no issues during the pilot period, 2022 – 2024. It is proposed that the charges for existing leases will remain the same until such time that they are renewed due to a new provider, or if the service being provided changes.

As new provisions open the proposed charging framework will be implemented which will generate minimum rental income (Approx £1,000 base rent per annum for most Private/Voluntary Childcare and £39 per year for afterschool clubs).

As new provision timescales and capacities are not yet confirmed, a financial figure cannot be estimated at this time, but this income will be **additional** to existing income budgets.

Childcare settings within schools, along with the wider childcare sector have access to revenue and grant funding via the Early Years and Flying Start Childcare team. A grant panel process will ensure that fair allocations of grants are awarded with applications screened for any contributions, support, contributions or reductions to rent.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

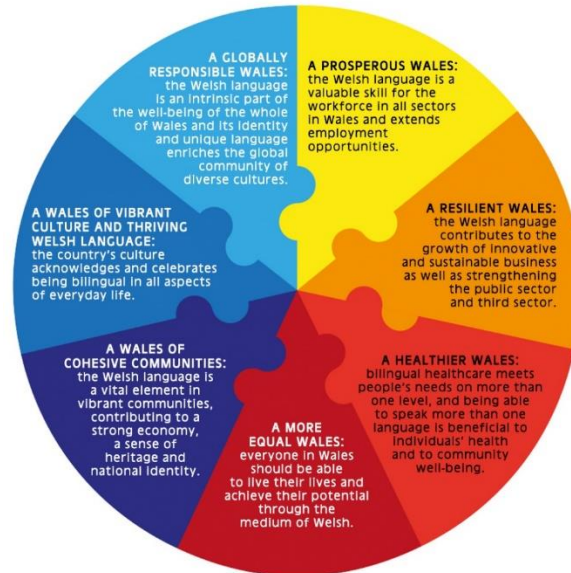
The first stage assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required.

Welsh Language Impacts:

Positive impacts are anticipated with opportunities to use and promote the Welsh language with additional Welsh language or bilingual childcare being made available.

In order to achieve the desired growth in terms of the numbers of Welsh language speakers contained within Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Language Strategy and Neath Port Talbot's own Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), looking at each of the 7 aims of the Well-being "wheel" from a Welsh language perspective provides a useful perspective of how the language is an intrinsic part of each aim, and therefore all aspects of the Council's work, not simply part of the aim in which the Welsh language is explicitly referenced.

The adapted wheel below shows how the Welsh language forms a part of, and plays a part in all aspects of education, health and social care, community cohesion, the economy and so much more.



The WESP overarching ten year target in Neath Port Talbot is to increase the number of Year 1 children taught through the medium of Welsh from 16.8% (252 pupils) in 2020/21 (PLASC 2021) to 31% (460 pupils) by 2032.

Promoting and increasing the amount of bilingual and Welsh Language childcare within education and childcare buildings should provide greater choice for families in the area and support the increase in the number of pupils being educated through the medium of Welsh, as well as having a positive impact on families and the local community through providing opportunities to improve and increase the use of the Welsh language in daily life.

Therefore, the proposal should impact positively on people's opportunities to use the Welsh language and in treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English, by expanding the Welsh-medium childcare and education provision in Neath Port Talbot.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

This local authority wide approach may include childcare opportunities in the valleys communities.

Workforce Impacts:

There are no workforce impacts or implications for the Council in relation to this report.

Legal Impacts:

There are no legal impacts or implications for the Council in relation to this report

Risk Management Impacts:

The proposed rent arrangements have been piloted and show minimal risk.

The risk of not adopting the proposed arrangements may reduce the attraction of developing new bilingual or Welsh childcare in NPTCBC buildings, impacting on our targets to increase access to the Welsh Language in childcare and schools.

This Report seeks to minimise the risk to the Council by continuing to support Governing Bodies of schools and the Local Authority in meeting the statutory duties placed on it in the Childcare Act 2006. The reduction of rent within the proposal supports the sustainability of childcare within school and education buildings and will reduce the need for such childcare to seek grant funding support from Early Years Sustainability funding to support rent payments. The plans make opportunities for childcare within school and education buildings more financially accessible to the childcare sector and supports Neath Port Talbot's vision of strong transition processes for children from pre-school childcare into foundation learning. Furthermore, the co-location of services for children and young people supports ease of access to support services for families, should they require them.

Crime and Disorder Impacts:

No impact

Counter Terrorism Impacts:

No impact

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Impacts:

No Impact

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Scrutiny Observations:

The item was considered at the Education, Skills and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the 12th September 2024. Members were complimentary regarding the work being undertaken by the service to support the childcare sector in Neath Port Talbot. Members supported the report recommendations.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members agree in principle to the changes to rent charges for childcare providers in schools and education buildings, as set out in detail above.

A report on childcare developments on school/education sites will continue to be reported to Members on an annual basis.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure the continuity of the development of childcare in Neath Port Talbot, in line with Welsh Government policies and plans. Allowing officers to strive to close the childcare sufficiency gaps identified by our Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

To support the Governing Bodies of schools in supporting the request for childcare facilities to be developed on school sites. Thus, also supporting the Local Authority in meeting the statutory duties placed on it in the Childcare Act 2006. This will in turn support the Child Poverty agenda in enabling parents the time to enter training or employment opportunities, or to access employment or training within the childcare sector.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision will be implemented after the 3 day call in period.

Appendices

Appendix A: First Stage Screening IIA – Childcare in Schools:
Change in Rent Arrangements

List of Background Papers:

- Neath Port Talbot Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022
- Childcare in Schools/Education Buildings: Temporary changes to current rent arrangements, 28th July 2022
- Flying Start Phase One Expansion Plan, 28th July 2022
- Flying Start Phase Two Expansion Plan, 25th January 2023
- Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Language Strategy (Welsh Government)
- Neath Port Talbot Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022 – 2032
- Neath Port Talbot Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Annual Review Report 2023/24
- Self Assessment of Service Statement (SASS) (Care Inspectorate Wales)
- Child Poverty Strategy for Wales 2024 (Welsh Government)

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