

CONSULTATION REPORT

Responses from formal consultation on the proposal to establish a Learning Support Centre (LSC) for primary aged pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural difficulties at Crynallt Primary School, Afan Valley Road, Cimla, Neath SA11 3AZ

Introduction

The Council has consulted with interested parties on its proposal to establish a Learning Support Centre (LSC) for primary aged pupils with Social Emotional and Behavioural difficulties at Crynallt Primary School. If implemented, this proposal will take effect on 15th January 2018.

The consultation period ran from 6th September 2017 to 20th October 2017. A list of consultees is included at Appendix 4. The consultation document was e-mailed to all consultees and was also available on the Council's website.

Legislative Process

The consultation document invited views and opinions to be submitted in respect of the proposal. Under the Welsh Government Statutory Code for School Organisation the Council is required to publish a consultation report summarising any issues raised by consultees, the Council's response to those issues and Estyn's view of the overall merit of the proposal.

If approved, the next stage of the process is to publish a statutory notice outlining the proposal. This would need to be published for a period of 28 days and formal written objections would be invited during this time.

If objections are received, an objection report will be published summarising the objections and the Council's response to those objections. The Council's Cabinet will need to consider the proposal in light of objections received when making its decision on whether the proposal is to be implemented.

Consultation meetings

During the consultation period, the following consultation meetings were held:

School Staff:	20 th September 2017 3.30pm at Crynallt Primary School
Governors:	20 th September 2017 4.30pm at Crynallt Primary School
Pupils:	19 th October 2017, 1.00pm at Crynallt Primary School

Consultation Responses

Two written responses, one from ESTYN and one from a Governor, were received on or before the closing date for returns for the formal consultation on this proposal. Written responses were also received from pupils during their consultation meeting.

Responses received were wholly in favour of the proposal.

Consultation notes from the consultation meetings, including officer responses, are attached as appendices to this document.

Estyn response to the proposal:

The proposal is to establish a Primary Inclusion and Assessment Centre (PIAC) for up to 12 pupils at Coedffranc Primary School and a Learning Resource Centre (LRC) for up to 12 pupils at Crynallt Primary School for pupils with a statement of SEN. All places will be for those pupils identified as having social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) and is likely to improve the standard of educational provision for those pupils with SEBD.

Description and benefits

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council has presented a clear rationale for the proposals to site a PIAC at Coedffranc Primary School and LRC at Crynallt Primary School. The authority has considered provision for pupils who require specialist support for their educational needs and taken appropriate account of educational standards, school places and accessibility, the quality and sustainability of school accommodation and, effective financial management.

The proposals for both specialist centres establish that there has been an increase in demand for primary school places for pupils with ASD and SEBD, including for early years pupils.

The proposals set out clearly that there is a need to extend existing provision and establish, in the primary sector, a similar approach to that already in place in the secondary sector.

The authority has considered a useful set of criteria to guide the location of the proposed specialist provision in Crynallt Primary School and Coedffranc Primary School.

The proposals have considered the impact of the new provision on pupils with SEBD and their parents and concludes that this is not a risk. However, it has not considered any impact on existing pupils at the schools.

The plan has considered appropriately the impact on transport arrangements including the increase of vehicles on the school site. The council proposes that they will address this issue through a consultation on arrangements for traffic management and subject to planning arrangements on the school site. With the exception of the increase of vehicles on site, this proposal will have no impact on current travel arrangements for existing pupils or new pupils with SEBD who will be accessing the specialist provision.

The Equality Impact Assessment indicates that there will be no adverse effect on any particular group of pupils and proposes that the development will promote inclusivity and the needs of different groups.

The proposal will not negatively affect the provision for Welsh for pupils who will access the specialist provision. The proposal takes suitable account of the WESP and confirms that the council is satisfied that provision for those pupils who speak Welsh as a first language will be sufficient. Proposals for the provision at both schools will be at least comparable with existing provision.

The proposal is likely to have no adverse impact on community usage at either Crynallt Primary School or Coedffranc Primary School. The provision at both schools will occupy accommodation surplus to requirements within self-contained units.

The legal aspects of the proposal have been considered and operate within the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The plan confirms that proposed procedures are in line with legislative requirements.

As part of a wider strategy to improve provision and experiences for pupils with SEBD, the council has considered a series of options for this provision. The preferred options to site the provision at Crynant Primary (LSC) and Coedffranc Primary (PIAC) best fits the school assessment criteria for specialist accommodation. The proposals note that;

“Coedffranc has been identified a suitable location for the provision of a PIAC for a number of clearly identified reasons including the experience and expertise that can be provided by its staff, the nurturing and supportive ethos within the school and the effective links developed with a wide range of partners.”

“Crynallt Primary has been identified a suitable location for the provision of an LSC for a number of clearly identified reasons including the experience and expertise that can be provided by its staff, the nurturing and supportive ethos within the school and the good record the school has at partnership working with a range of agencies.”

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposal has considered appropriately outcomes, provision and leadership at Crynallt Primary School and Coedffranc Primary School. It has drawn on a suitable range of evidence to do this.

The proposal recognises that, since the Estyn inspection of Coedffranc Primary School in 2014 when outcomes and prospects for improvement were both judged adequate, the school has improved. The ERW Core Visit Report of 2016 comments that improvement actions are still to have an impact on standards.

Notably, this report comments on a period of instability due to changes in senior leadership (head and deputy). The proposal does not make clear whether the current leadership position has resulted in greater stability. It does state, though, that the school is an improving school and has a suitable nurturing and supportive environment. The school is categorised as Amber in the National School Categorisation System. However, the proposals state that end of stage data 2017 indicates that outcomes are improving, particularly at the end of key Stage 2.

Crynallt Primary School was judged by Estyn (2015) as good for both current performance and prospects for improvement. The school has been consistently categorised as green or yellow. The proposal notes that this is a highly effective school that has secured a good level of learner outcomes in key indicators and that leadership is purposeful and effective. The school already has a well-established nurture group to support pupils with SEBD. The proposal suggests that the new provision is not likely to impact negatively on the ability of the school to deliver the full curriculum at all key stages and maintain current standards.

NPTCBC response to Estyn’s comment:

There should be a positive impact on pupils in Crynallt Primary currently as the introduction of the LSC will ensure that mainstream staff will have access to specialist advice to manage and support all pupils. Additionally pupils attending Crynallt Primary Schools have been consulted on the proposal and have expressed their support for the establishment of the LSC.

**Meeting with staff of Crynallt Primary School
on 20th September 2017**

Meeting was attended by Local Authority officers and staff from Crynallt Primary School.

Questions raised:

- Will the mainstream school suffer financially as a result of this proposal?
- What are the implications if future budget settlements lead to job losses?
- What would the arrangements be for sickness cover in the LSC?
- Will mainstream SENCO workload increase because of this proposal?
- Will staff currently at this school be able to apply for positions in the LSC?

NPTCBC's Response:

- The proposed provision will be fully funded to ensure that there are sufficient resources, including staff, to meet the needs of the pupils placed there. The mainstream school budget will not be affected by the proposal.
- The LSC is funded separately and so there will be no impact on the provision if the mainstream school experiences budget difficulties. Staff employed at the provision would not be at risk if job losses were identified within the mainstream setting; equally if there was a need to decrease staff in the LSC then mainstream staff would not be at risk.
- In the event of LSC staff absence the school would be expected to manage this in the same way as they manage staff absence in mainstream, to best suit the needs of the school as a whole.
- This proposal is not intended to create extra work and bureaucracy for the mainstream SENCO or to detract from the support being provided for mainstream SEN pupils. It is expected that the staff appointed to manage the assessment centre will be sufficiently skilled to undertake the necessary paperwork involved without needing to rely on the mainstream staff. However it would be good practice to ensure that there is good communication between mainstream and the provision and that expertise as well as workload can be shared. This should then result in a positive impact on all pupils.
- The staff posts will be advertised when the agreed numbers of staff needed for the LSC has been finalised; staff from this school will be welcome to apply if they feel they have the necessary skills and experience.

**Meeting with Governors of Crynallt Primary School
on 20th September 2017**

Meeting was attended by Local Authority officers and Governors from Crynallt Primary School.

Questions raised:

- Will the mainstream school suffer financially as a result of this proposal?
- Will mainstream pupils be adversely affected by the proposal?
- What are the implications if future budget settlements lead to job losses?
- What would the arrangements be for sickness cover in the LSC?
- What will the arrangements be for integration of pupils from the LSC?
- What adaptations are planned to the building?
- Will there need to be changes to the school day?

NPTCBC's Response:

- The proposed provision will be fully funded to ensure that there are sufficient resources, including staff, to meet the needs of the pupils placed there. The mainstream school budget will not be affected by the proposal.
- The aim of this proposal is to enhance provision at Crynallt primary and it seeks to support the school in further developing its work in improving pupil wellbeing across the school. Where similar provisions have been established elsewhere in Neath Port Talbot pupil numbers have remained stable and fears over negative impacts on mainstream pupils have not materialised. In many schools the establishment of an SEN provision has in fact had a positive effect on the school.
- The LSC is funded separately and so there will be no impact on the provision if the mainstream school experiences budget difficulties. Staff employed at the provision would not be at risk if job losses were identified within the mainstream setting; equally if there was a need to decrease staff in the LSC then mainstream staff would not be at risk.
- In the event of LSC staff absence, the school would be expected to manage this in the same way as they manage staff absence in mainstream, to best suit the needs of the school as a whole.
- Integration will take place at the discretion of the school. Where it is felt to be beneficial for the LSC pupil and the mainstream pupils then it should be facilitated, where it would be detrimental for either or both then it should be avoided.
- It is planned that the LSC will be situated in a self-contained part of the school with a separate entrance, toilets and outdoor play facilities. It will consist of

two large classroom spaces and other smaller rooms if possible for nurture/intervention work.

- It is not anticipated that there will need to be any changes to the school day for mainstream pupils as a result of this proposal. It is possible that LSC pupils may need to arrive and leave at slightly different times to mainstream pupils due to the need to manage potential extra traffic on site and to ensure a calm start and finish to the day.

**Notes of a meeting with pupils from Crynallt Primary School
(19th October 2017)**

Pupils were wholly supportive of the proposal and felt that children who were having difficulty in other schools would benefit from being at Crynallt Primary. They discussed how they would make the children feel welcome and how they would support them to settle in.

Issues Discussed:

- Where will the pupils be based within the school?

Work will take place to adapt spare classrooms and outdoor areas at the school so that they will be suitable for the LSC pupils, helping to ensure that they have good spaces indoors and outdoors to play and learn.

- Where will they come from and how will they get here?

The pupils who attend the LSC could come from anywhere in Neath Port Talbot and some may need to come by taxi or minibus. This will need to be managed by the school and Governors, and will be discussed fully if the proposal is approved.

- How long will they stay?

The children who attend the LSC are likely to stay and will become Crynallt Primary pupils. Some children may return to the schools they came from if this is thought to be suitable for them.

- I think it will be hard for the children to move here away from their friends – they (their friends) could come and visit them here?

That could be an idea that we could discuss with others if the proposal is approved.

Pupils also submitted written responses all of which were supportive of the proposal. Comments received include –

- I think it is a good idea because it could help them with their behaviour and their work
- I think it is a good idea because they can spend a lot of their time with the teachers and change the way they are; they can also spend time with us.

- I think this is good idea because if they are in a small room with some more teachers they might concentrate better.
- I think it is a good idea because the children from other schools will come here and be less naughty than in their school and be more 'learnny' at this school and be happy for the rest of their life.
- I think this is a good idea because the people (staff) are highly trained and will 100% do a good job.

List of Consultees:

Crynallt Primary School

Pupils
 Parents/Carers/Guardians
 Prospective nursery/secondary transfer
 School Staff
 Governing Body
 Wider School Community

 All other NPT schools

 Bordering Authority - Swansea / Bridgend / Carmarthenshire / Powys / RCT

Diocese - Diocese of Menevia, Swansea
 CIW - Diocesan of Llandaff, Vale of Glamorgan

Trade Unions - Regional Organisers for: 3 x Non-teaching & 6 x Teaching

NAASH (Secondary Schools Forum)
 LLAN (Primary Schools Forum)

MP (for Aberafan) – Stephen Kinnock
 MP (for Neath) – Christina Rees

AM (for Aberafan) – David Rees
 AM (for Neath) - Jeremy Miles

Regional AMs (South Wales West) -
 Suzy Davies/Bethan Jenkins/Caroline Jones/Dai Lloyd

NPT Elected Members

Pelenna Community Council

WG Schools Management Division

Estyn

Regional Education Consortium (ERW)

NPTC Group

NPTCBC Integrated Transport Unit

Police & Crime Commissioner

Children & Young Person Partnership
(including Early Years Development and Childcare)

Flying Start and Early Years providers

Communities First Partnership

NPTCBC as the maintaining authority -
NPT Senior Management (Education)
NPT Admissions Officer
NPT ERW Officer
NPT Education Psychologists
NPT ALNST
NPT Governor Support
NPT Human Resources
NPT Legal Services
NPT Planning
NPT Property Management
NPT Gypsy/Traveller Officer (Education)

Rh/rvg:19.12.16