

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Board

12th January 2018

REPORT OF HEAD OF TRANSFORMATION ANDREW THOMAS

MATTER FOR DECISION

WARDS AFFECTED: All

STRATEGIC SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME - PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH SPECIALIST PROVISION FOR PRIMARY AGE PUPILS WITH SOCIAL EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES

Purpose of report

1. To obtain approval to implement a proposal to establish specialist provision for primary age pupils with social emotional and behavioural difficulties at Coedffranc Primary School and at Crynallt Primary School.

Executive summary

2. The Council is responsible for ensuring suitable provision is made for pupils with special educational needs
3. There is an increasing demand within the primary age sector for specialist places to support pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and social emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD), and for those 'early years' pupils with identified additional learning needs who require further assessment.
4. This proposal seeks to establish a provision at Coedffranc Primary School for the assessment of up to 12 primary age pupils with SEBD, and a further provision at Crynallt Primary School where it

is intended to establish a learning support centre for up to 14 pupils with SEBD. The provision at Crynallt Primary School will be for pupils in receipt of a statement of Special Educational Needs who require longer term support.

5. The proposal seeks to complement the specialist provision and support already available within the County Borough.
6. This proposal has been the subject of external consultation and no objections were received during the statutory publication period.
7. It is recommended that Members approve implementation of this proposal, effective from 15th January 2018.

Background

8. The Council is responsible for promoting high educational standards and for delivering efficient primary and secondary education. Having the right schools in the right place and ensuring that they are fit for the 21st century learner is the challenge facing the Council. Achieving this will involve reviewing the number and type of schools the Council has in its area and assessing whether or not best use is being made of resources and facilities. This will include ensuring suitable provision and support for those pupils with additional learning needs.
9. Implementing the Council's Strategic School Improvement Programme (SSIP) involves reviewing existing provision and determining the number and type of schools needed to deliver education effectively and efficiently across the County Borough. It will most likely lead to substantial change involving opening new schools, closing existing schools, merging or amalgamating schools, federating schools and promoting new initiatives that support collaborative working between schools. It will also involve re-organising education provision to ensure pupils gain access to and benefit from the specialist support, skills and expertise available within the County Borough.
10. The Council has decided to review its provision on the basis of:
 - educational standards
 - the need for places and the accessibility of schools

- the quality and suitability of school accommodation
 - effective financial management
11. The Council provides for the pupils of Neath Port Talbot who require specialist support for their educational needs at two community special schools and at learning support/inclusion centres attached to community primary/secondary schools.
 12. Currently there are 11 specialist provisions available in NPT supporting primary pupils with ALN including those for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD), Speech Language and Communication Difficulties (SpLCD) and Severe and Profound Learning Difficulties (SPLD).
 13. NPT also provides specialist support for pupils age 3–5yrs in Abbey Primary School’s Early Years Assessment centre and for pupils age 3-11yrs at Awel y Môr Pupil Inclusion Centre (PIC) for pupils presenting with social emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) and in need of further assessment.
 14. There is an increasing demand for places in many of these provisions year on year.
 15. A review of the number and type of primary planned places and assessment provision across Neath Port Talbot has indicated that there is a need for extra places in the areas of ASD and SEBD, and for those ‘early years’ pupils with identified additional learning needs which require further assessment.
 16. Work is on-going to determine what is needed to further develop provision in these areas and support for pupils displaying SEBD is considered to be a priority area.
 17. Recent work undertaken with secondary schools has shown a need for greater support for pupils displaying SEBD. This has led to the development of a continuum of support with the aim of ensuring that pupils at all stages have their needs assessed and are appropriately supported to make progress. The continuum of support sets out a graduated response to intervention and provision for all pupils, from universal whole school approaches to meeting the needs of those pupils with more complex needs who may require intensive specialist interventions and/or longer term support. As a result, assessment centres for SEBD at Ysgol

Hendrefelin (Theodore Road campus) and at Cefn Saeson Comprehensive School (Secondary Education Nurture Centre) were established.

18. This proposal seeks to develop a similar continuum of support model for primary age pupils as that which has been established for secondary, to better address a range of needs for children with SEBD and to ensure best possible outcomes for pupils.
19. Currently for primary age pupils with SEBD who need specialist support or assessment, provision is made at Awel y Môr Pupil Inclusion Centre (12 places) and at Ysgol Hendrefelin Primary learning support centre (7 planned places for primary age pupils with a statement of SEN). The high demand for both assessment and planned places is putting pressure on current provisions which are consistently full.
20. The new wellbeing and behaviour continuum will ensure that schools and the Council work in partnership to focus on prevention and early intervention in order to meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people and to ensure the best possible outcomes.

Initial Scoping exercise

21. Approval was sought and obtained from Cabinet on 15th March 2017 to undertake scoping discussions with headteachers and chairs of governors over the establishment of a specialist facility for SEBD for the primary sector and to identify a school to host the provision.
22. Following more detailed work on identifying the need for planned places in the primary sector it was recognised that the pressure to provide support for SEBD primary pupils has increased. At this time, work was also on going to further develop a primary continuum of support to mirror that of the secondary sector.
23. Both areas of work highlighted that establishing one provision would not be sufficient to meet the varying needs of pupils who are already in receipt of a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) for SEBD, or be sufficient to cater for the numbers of pupils needing support and who are predicted to need support in the future. As a result it was recognised that an extra provision for

assessment purposes would be necessary to ensure the continuum of support is effective and that sufficient numbers of pupils can be supported without delay.

24. Following scoping discussions, Coedffranc Primary and Crynallt Primary schools were identified as being suitable for hosting SEBD provision - in particular, a Primary Inclusion and Assessment Centre (PIAC) at Coedffranc Primary School and a Learning Support Centre (LSC) at Crynallt Primary School. The head teachers of both schools have been involved in the development of this proposal and are fully supportive of this initiative. The governing bodies and staff of both schools have also shown support for the proposal.

Impact on pupils

25. The proposed new provisions will increase the opportunity for primary pupils to access support in a specialist setting based within the nurturing environment of a primary school. The provisions will enable pupils to have their needs assessed and to acquire the skills and understanding to manage their individual behaviours and learning requirements.
26. Early intervention for pupils with SEBD should help to prevent more complex and potentially costly support being necessary as a child matures, enabling pupils to return to mainstream earlier and continue their education successfully at a younger age, avoiding developing negative perceptions of school and helping to improve children's self-esteem and wellbeing.
27. Early intervention for pupils with SEBD should also provide greater opportunities to work with parents and carers as they, generally, have a greater role to play in their child's education when the child is young, often lessening as the pupil moves into secondary school and becomes more independent. Working with parents and carers at an early stage would have a significant impact on the child's progress.
28. The proposed specialist provisions will be accessible to primary age pupils from across the County Borough.

Impact on travel arrangements

29. Pupils' travel needs will be assessed in line with the Council's Home to School Travel policy. Primary age pupils living 2 miles or more from the provision deemed most suitable to address their needs, will be considered for assistance with travel.
30. Under the School Travel Plan requirements, all schools, together with the Council's Road Safety Team, are committed to:
 - improving road safety within the local community
 - raising awareness about travel issues
 - encouraging walking, cycling and public transport for the school journey where applicable
 - encouraging independent travel where applicable
31. Coedffranc Primary and Crynallt Primary are long-established schools at their present sites with established walking routes for children.
32. Both schools are relatively centrally located within the County Borough and readily accessible by vehicle.

Impact on governors

33. The governing bodies and the school leadership teams at the host schools will be responsible for the day to day management of the provisions, including the specialist staff who will become part of the school's staffing complement. The school budget will be funded accordingly.

Impact on school accommodation/capacity

34. Coedffranc Primary school has 325 full-time pupils on roll. The school has surplus capacity and the PIAC will occupy accommodation surplus to the needs of the school. The capacity of the school will be reduced from 435 to 371 full-time mainstream places. The number of nursery places at the school is unaffected by this proposal.
35. Crynallt Primary school has 418 full-time pupils on roll. The school has surplus capacity and pupil numbers are projected to fall. The LSC will occupy accommodation surplus to the needs of the

school. The capacity of the school will be reduced from 480 to 423 full-time, mainstream places. The number of nursery places at the school is unaffected by this proposal.

Impact on special needs education provision

36. As self-contained provisions, the PIAC at Coedffranc Primary and the LSC at Crynallt Primary will not have a direct impact on the SEN provision of the host schools where pupils with additional learning needs, including children with statements of special educational needs, are supported in a mainstream setting with appropriate funding for this purpose.
37. However, the specialist knowledge and skills-set of the staff employed to work at the provisions will be available to share with mainstream staff at the host schools and, as such, will indirectly benefit SEN provision at the respective schools.
38. It is also envisaged that the two host centres will be able to provide support and training for other mainstream primary schools across Neath Port Talbot, building skills, competencies, expertise and capacity of all staff working with children with SEBD.

Financial Impacts

39. To manage the provisions, each host school will receive additional funding - up to 12 pupil places at Coedffranc Primary school and up to 14 pupil places at Crynallt Primary school.
40. Meeting the special needs education of pupils in local settings, i.e. within the County Borough, avoids having to secure expensive out-of-county provision. The cost of providing education outside the County Borough for pupils with specialist needs is high and can amount to c. £80k per pupil per year. This annually presents a significant demand on the Council's education budget.
41. The provisions will be funded from the delegated schools budget and each school will receive funding for 12 & 14 places respectively which equates to c. £200k per annum for each provision.
42. Each provision will be resourced by specialist teachers and teaching assistants with the appropriate skills set.

43. Self-contained accommodation will be developed in surplus capacity at both schools. There will be a one-off capital cost for the refurbishment/conversion work for which £300k has been secured from the Council's capital programme.
44. Primary age pupils living 2 miles or more from the identified provision will be considered for assistance with travel. As such, there is likely to be an increase on transport costs as a result of this proposal. Annual transport costs are difficult to predict as this will depend on the number of children needing to be transported and on the distance they will need to travel to their allocated provision from their home.
45. There are no capital receipts or recurrent costs savings directly related to this proposal other than savings from potential home education/out-of-county placement costs.
46. There will be an indirect saving to each of the host schools accrued as a result of alternative usage of surplus accommodation.

Equality Impact Assessment

47. An equality impact assessment has been carried out and found that there is no adverse effect on any particular group and the process has checks and monitoring in place to ensure that any unmet need is identified and any potential adverse effect is fully evaluated and impact mitigated.
48. Establishing the specialist provisions within mainstream primary schools breaks down barriers and aids the elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Both the primary schools and the two provisions are inclusive for pupils of all backgrounds. The proposal will promote the understanding of the needs of different groups.
49. Having the SEBD provisions attached to mainstream schools allows the pupils attending them to have the same opportunities as their mainstream peers as all pupils will be able to access the same curriculum and facilities.
50. The proposal will have a positive effect on the staffing compliment of both schools as an increase in pupil numbers resulting from the

establishment of the provisions will require additional members of staff with specialist skills.

51. The equality impact assessment accompanies this report as appendix A.

Workforce impacts

52. The position of staff currently employed at both schools will not be adversely affected by this proposal. In fact, the increased number of pupils secures staff employment by creating additional employment opportunities by way of an increased staffing complement.
53. Additional staff posts have been identified for both provisions. These comprise specialist teachers and teaching assistants in each provision. The skills and expertise that these additional staff members will possess will be available to be utilised for the benefit of the wider, mainstream school communities.

Legal impacts

54. The proposal will establish ALN/SEN provision in a mainstream school where the pupils admitted are in addition to the admission number for the school and where the provision is recognised by the Council as reserved for pupils with ALN/SEN. As such, this constitutes a regulated alteration requiring the statutory publication of the proposal. The School Standards & Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (the Act) provides the legislative framework by which the Council may implement a proposal. The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, July 2013, imposes on the Council requirements and guidelines on matters relating to school organisation. The Council's procedures are in line with legislative requirements and related guidance.
55. Pupil travel arrangements will be in line with the requirements of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008; the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014; and the Council's Home to School Travel Policy, 2017.
56. Revenue funding will be in line with the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; the School Funding (Wales)

Regulations 2010; and the Council's approved formula for funding schools.

57. The management of staff affected by the proposal will follow the relevant school policies and procedures.
58. Estyn comments that the legal aspects of the proposal have been considered and operate within the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and that the plan confirms that proposed procedures are in line with legislative requirements.

Risk management

59. A risk assessment has been carried out under the Council's Risk Management Policy 2015.
60. Potential risk areas in implementing the proposal include:
 - educational outcomes for pupils are not improved
 - integration at a provision is unsuccessful
 - re-integration to base school is unsuccessful
 - negative response from parents of host schools
 - negative response from parents of pupils to be accommodated at the provision
 - discrimination against protected characteristics resulting in a negative impact on one or more protected groups
 - staff with appropriate skills and expertise not available
 - increased home to school travel time for some pupils leading to poor attendance.
 - Welsh language development not supported
 - early intervention does not prevent the need for further support at a later stage
61. Failing to implement the proposal will result in a range of teaching/learning benefits not being fully realised, particularly in relation to:
 - opportunities for a pupils to access specialist staff and support
 - early intervention for younger pupils, reducing the risk of more costly support at a later stage
 - host schools indirectly benefit from specialist staff on site
 - mainstream schools benefit from increased support and training in order to improve skills and build capacity

62. Given that the proposal builds on the experience, skills and expertise that currently exist at the host schools, the specialist support available at the PIAC and the LSC, and the application of specific 'entry' and 'exit' criteria, the potential effects of identified risks will be mitigated by implementation of the proposal.
63. The mitigation measures in the assessment have been updated following consultation and still maintain. Specifically on the assessment of risk Estyn notes that the Council has undertaken a risk assessment and identified appropriate actions to mitigate the risks and that Council considers all risks in relation to the establishment of both the LRC (Crynallt) and PIAC (Coedffranc) to be low or medium.
64. The risk assessment accompanies this report as Appendix B.

Impact on community usage

65. The proposal should have no adverse impact on community usage at either host school as there is no closure or reduction in community facilities as a consequence of this proposal.
66. The provisions will occupy accommodation surplus to the schools' requirements and will be self-contained provisions within each school, having no impact on either schools' operation regarding community usage.

Welsh Language Impact assessment

67. Both Coedffranc Primary and Crynallt Primary schools are categorised as English-medium schools where Welsh is taught as a second language in accordance with the National Curriculum. Provision at the PIAC and the LSC will reflect provision at each school. The Council is satisfied that the provision for Welsh language education at each provision will be sufficient to meet the language requirements of the pupils admitted. Both provisions will accommodate those pupils who speak Welsh as their first language or whose base school is a Welsh-medium school. In each provision pupils will have access to staff who can support them through the medium of Welsh.
68. The Welsh language impact assessment accompanies this report as Appendix C.

Consultation

69. This school organisation proposal is being brought forward under the Council's Strategic School Improvement Programme. Formal consultation has been undertaken in line with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, July 2013.
70. Separate consultations were undertaken on the respective provisions for Coedffranc Primary and Crynallt Primary schools. Estyn commented that the proposal is likely to improve the standard of educational provision for those pupils with SEBD.
71. A report on the outcome of consultation together with recommendations was presented to Members on 9th November 2017.

Statutory Publication

72. At the Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Board meeting of 9th November 2017 Members noted responses to the consultation and as there were no issues raised during the consultation suggesting that the proposal should be reconsidered, Members determined to move to the statutory publication of the proposal.
73. To this effect a statutory notice for each provision was published on 10th November 2017 allowing the required 28 day period for submitting objections, which ran until 7th December 2017.
74. The statutory notices for Coedffranc Primary and Crynallt Primary are attached to this report as Appendix D and Appendix E respectively.

Objections

38. No objections were received during the objection period.
39. With no objections to the proposal and with no separate requirement for referral to the Welsh Government for approval, the decision to implement the proposal falls to the Council's Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Board.

40. In reaching a decision there is an expectation that Members will have familiarised themselves with the relevant documents and Cabinet Board reports relating to this proposal. These are listed below in the appendices and background papers.

Recommendation

41. Having given due regard to the impact assessments in relation to equality, risk, community usage and Welsh language, it is recommended that, in line with Section 53 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, Members determine that:
- the proposal to establish specialist provision for primary age pupils with social emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) at Coedffranc Primary School and at Crynallt Primary School be implemented as of January 15th 2018
 - authority be delegated to the Head of Transformation to implement the proposal

Reasons for proposed decision

52. This decision is necessary to comply with the formal publication requirements imposed on the Council by the School Organisation Code and associated legislation. Implementation of the proposal will enable the Council to promote high educational standards and the fulfilment of every child's potential. It will also enable the Council to meet its duty to secure efficient education in its area.

Implementation of the decision

53. The decision is proposed for immediate implementation.

Appendices

Appendix A: Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix B: Risk Assessment

Appendix C: Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Appendix D: Statutory Notice – Coedffranc Primary School

Appendix E: Statutory Notice – Crynallt Primary School

List of background papers

- a) Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Board report November 2017 (including Consultation report)
<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/documents/g7473/Public%20reports%20pack%2009th-Nov-2017%2014.01%20Education%20Skills%20and%20Culture%20Cabinet%20Board.pdf?T=10>
- b) Consultation documents
<https://www.npt.gov.uk/media/7691/consultation-doc-crynallt-lsc.pdf>
<https://www.npt.gov.uk/media/7690/consultation-doc-coedffranc-piac.pdf>
- c) Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Board report July 2017
<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/documents/s31383/ESC%20CABINET%20BOARD%20report%20200717.pdf>
- d) Cabinet Report: March 2017
<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/documents/s28434/Cabinet%20Report%20150317.pdf>
- e) Strategic School Improvement Programme Principles Paper: September 2008
[https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/20080924/Agenda/\\$CAB-240908-REP-EL-KN.doc.pdf](https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/20080924/Agenda/$CAB-240908-REP-EL-KN.doc.pdf)
- f) Welsh Government - School Organisation Code: July 2013
<http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/130719-school-organisation-codes-en.pdf>
- g) School Standards & Organisation (Wales) Act 2013
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2013/1/pdfs/anaw_20130001_en.pdf
- h) Learner Travel (Wales) Measure: 2008 & the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance: 2014.
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2008/2/pdfs/mwa_20080002_en.pdf
<http://gov.wales/docs/det/publications/140616-ltqg-en.pdf>
- i) Home to School Travel Policy: 2017
https://www.npt.gov.uk/media/4231/npt_home_to_school_travel_policy_2017.pdf
- j) Estyn
<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection/search>