



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

## Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning Service Strategic School Improvement Programme

# CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

**Proposal to establish an English-medium  
3-11 school to replace:**

**Alltwen Primary School**

*Alltwen Hill, Pontardawe SA8 3AB*

**Godre'rgraig Primary School**

*Graig Road, Godre'rgraig, SA9 2NY*

**Llangiwg Primary School**

*New Road, Ynysmeudwy SA8 4PJ*

**all of which will close**

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## **Introduction**

### ***What is this report about?***

This document is for pupils, parents/carers, school staff, school governors and others who have an interest in education in the Swansea Valley and Neath Port Talbot.

The Council has produced this consultation document as it is proposing to establish a new build, 21<sup>st</sup> century English-medium 3-11 school to replace Alltwn Primary, Godre'rgraig Primary and Llangiwg Primary, all of which will close on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

It is proposed to also include a new Learning Support Centre (LSC) for up to 16 primary aged pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN).

It is proposed that the school will be built on Council owned land at Parc Ynysderw, in close proximity to Cwmtawe Community School and Pontardawe Leisure Centre. It is expected to open on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

Additionally as part of the new build scheme it is proposed to build a new 25m pool and teaching pool on the site to replace the existing Pontardawe Swimming Pool. The pool will provide an additional facility alongside Pontardawe Leisure centre, revitalising and increasing the health and well-being facilities in the area.

The combined new build school, specialist ASD provision and leisure facilities will form part of a learning, health and wellbeing community campus at the Parc Ynysderw site.

### ***The background to the proposal***

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 for those pupils with special educational needs/additional learning needs.

Implementing the 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.

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

On October 21<sup>st</sup> 2020 the Council's Cabinet gave permission to consult on the proposal to establish an English-medium 3-11 school to replace Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwg primary schools. The Council wishes to receive the views of pupils, parents, staff, Governing Bodies and other key stakeholders.

### ***The proposal and why change is being proposed***

The Council is proposing to build a new, 21<sup>st</sup> century primary school for the Swansea Valley to replace Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwg Primary schools, all of which will close on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

It is proposed that the new school will be built on land in Parc Ynysderw, Pontardawe and that it will form part of a learning, health and wellbeing community campus made up of Cwmtawe Community School and Pontardawe Leisure Centre. The campus will be further enhanced by the addition of a new build 25 metre, 6 lane swimming pool with additional learner pool on the site to complement current provision and enhance the health and wellbeing offer for pupils and the wider community.

The new English-medium primary school for boys and girls aged 3-11 years will accommodate 630 full-time pupils and 140 part-time (70 a.m./70

p.m.) nursery age pupils in a new build 21st century facility which will provide a stimulating teaching and learning environment in state of the art facilities.

The new school will serve the combined catchment areas of Alltwn, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwg Primary schools and will have sufficient capacity for pupils from the area. Pupils from the three existing schools will automatically transfer to the new school subject to parental preference. It will be managed with one head teacher and one governing body and will have one budget allocation and one group of staff.

Additionally the new school will provide a learning support centre (LSC) for up to 16 pupils with statements for Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It will also provide the opportunity to become a community hub for the area, building on the work already being undertaken by other well established primary school LSCs.

The new build will be funded jointly from Welsh Government 21st century School Programme capital grant monies and from the Council's prudential borrowing capacity.

The combined new build school, specialist ASD provision and pool will form part of a learning, health and wellbeing community campus at the Parc Ynysderw site, complementing the existing Cwmtawe Community School and Pontardawe Leisure Centre provision. In locating the new build facilities close to Cwmtawe Community School the development will enable pupils and staff from both schools to benefit from increased partnership working, made easier due to their close proximity.

The school building stock is ageing and the Council is facing increasing backlog maintenance and repair costs. As money and opportunity becomes available the Council will seek to replace existing schools with new builds and state of the art teaching and learning facilities. This proposal will remove circa.£2m of backlog maintenance costs across the three schools, and will also remove a split site arrangement at Llangiwg Primary School.

Currently the three schools are separate establishments, on sites some distance apart. Creating a single larger primary school can lead to

increased benefits for staff and children, as well as enabling a more efficient and effective use of resources.

### **Details of the schools affected by this proposal**

#### **Alltwen Primary School**

Alltwen Primary School is an English-medium community school serving boys and girls aged 3-11 years. It is situated in the village of Alltwen approx. 0.7 miles from the possible site of the proposed new school.

#### **Pupil Numbers**

As at January 2020 there were 200 full-time and 31 part-time (nursery) pupils on roll. With the physical capacity to accommodate 239 full-time and 30 (30a.m/ 30pm) part-time (nursery) pupils, the school has a surplus capacity of 16% (39 full-time pupil places). Forecasts, based on current school admission trends, from January 2020 to January 2021 suggest a slight increase in pupil numbers.

Table 1

<i>Alltwen Primary School</i>				
		<i>Jan 2020</i>		<i>Jan 2021</i>
	School capacity	Actual Pupil Numbers	Surplus places	Projected Pupil Numbers
<i>Full-time</i>	239	200	16% (39)	203
<i>Part-time (Nursery)</i>	30	31	-3% (-1)	33

The table below shows pupil numbers over a 5 year period:

Table 2

<i>Alltwen Primary School</i>						
<i>School Census Jan 2016 – 2020 + Sept. '20 roll</i>						
<i>Year</i>	16	17	18	19	20	<i>Sept.20</i>
<i>Pupil numbers</i>	215	223	234	240	231	211
<i>Full Time</i>	184	179	197	208	200	203
<i>Part Time</i>	31	44	37	32	31	8

Notes:

- Capacity: Taken from 19-20 Capacities
- Actual Pupil numbers: Taken from PLASC Report Jan 2020
- School Census Data '16-'19: Taken from PLASC – Actual.

#### **Quality and standards in education**

Alltwen Primary School was last inspected in October 2018 and Estyn reported that it was a school with many good features, awarding good

judgements in the 5 inspection areas. The school has shown further improvement and the National Categorisation System placed the school in the yellow support category in 2016/17 and 2017/18, with an upward move in 2018/19 and 2019/20, which recognises it as an effective school which has secured good levels of learner outcomes in key performance indicators.

### ***Standards***

The All Wales Core Data '*Academic-Achievement-pupils-aged-4-14-core-subjects-2019*' indicates that the Alltwen Primary school has a lower than average number of children in receipt of free school meals (15%) when compared to other schools in Neath Port Talbot (23%). There are also a higher than average number of children who have been identified as having additional learning needs (39%) when compared with Neath Port Talbot (24%).

Standards at the end of Foundation Phase are adequate in all areas of learning over three years, with 56% of pupils attaining the Foundation Phase indicator in 2019 (outcome 5 or higher in all three core areas of learning). This is lower than schools across Neath Port Talbot at 68% and all Wales at 80%.

At Key Stage 2 pupil outcomes are deemed to be adequate with all subjects over three years, with 76% of pupils attaining level 4 or higher in all three core subjects in 2019. This was lower than schools across Neath Port Talbot at 82% and all Wales at 88%.

### ***Wellbeing and attitudes to learning***

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning of pupils was judged to be 'good' in the recent Estyn report (October 2018) which states: 'Pupils' wellbeing is a very strong aspect of the life of Alltwen School. Nearly all pupils feel safe, happy and secure in school.'

Attendance has been consistent, with current data showing a percentage of 94.7% for 2019/20, where nearly all pupils and their parents understand the importance of regular attendance at school. (Estyn October 2018).

### ***Teaching and Learning***

Estyn, in 2018, report that across Alltwen Primary School effective teaching promotes pupils' good progress and as a result, relationships are

positive and respectful, many classrooms are productive and orderly, and most pupils want to learn.

The quality of teaching and learning experiences in Alltwn Primary was judged to be good overall and there are well-planned opportunities to develop pupil's oracy and reading skills in a wide range of contexts across the curriculum. There are also carefully-thought-through opportunities to develop pupils' ICT skills and Welsh language skills effectively, although numeracy skills need to be developed through other subjects.

### ***Care, Support and Guidance***

Estyn also reported that care, support and guidance were good, noting that the Headteacher has established an inclusive and caring ethos that permeates the daily life of the school. This has improved pupils' wellbeing very effectively.

Estyn also report that there is a wide range of valuable provision to meet the needs of pupils who have additional needs.

Alltwn Primary currently has skilled teaching assistants providing high quality care and support to ensure that pupils with a range of additional needs integrate seamlessly into the daily life of the school, this led Estyn to report that, 'Adults know and care for their pupils well, particularly those who may be vulnerable to underachievement.'

### ***Leadership and Management***

In 2018, Estyn judged Alltwn Primary school's leadership and management to be good, reporting that: 'The Headteacher is a well-motivated leader who provides a clear, shared and strategic vision for the school.'

In 2019, the Autumn Core Visit report also found that: 'The headteacher is a well-motivated leader who provides a clear, shared and strategic vision for the school. This focuses on ensuring the wellbeing of pupils and staff in a supportive and positive learning environment.'

The most recent Estyn inspection report can be viewed at:

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection-reports>



### **Quality of accommodation**

Alltwen Primary school occupies a prominent elevated position on Alltwen Hill, Alltwen, Pontardawe and whilst contained within a single enclosed site, operates between two separate buildings (a short distance apart within the site boundary).

The most recent building condition survey (November 2018) reports that the building is overall in a fair condition, with investment needed internally and externally.

Overall the site is graded C+ for condition i.e. the building is operational but major repairs or replacement will be needed including a heating distribution system which is old and inefficient and has exceeded its practical and recommended life span.

Backlog maintenance and accessibility costs amount to £611,000.

Plans for the vacated site have not yet been developed. The site is owned by the Council and any future use will be considered within the context of the Council's corporate asset management process.

### **Godre'rgraig Primary School**

Godre'rgraig Primary School is an English-medium community school serving boys and girls aged 3-11 years. It is situated in the village of Godre'rgraig approx. 3.2 miles from the possible site of the new school.

In July 2019 Godre'rgraig Primary was relocated temporarily from Godre'rgraig to Parc Ynysderw, adjacent to Cwmtawe Community School after geological experts found there was a potential landslide risk to the school's playground.

Earth Science Partnership (ESP), the experts commissioned by Neath Port Talbot Council, reported a medium level risk from a quarry spoil tip near the school after the Council asked them to extend their extensive landslide risk investigation work carried out in nearby Panteg, Ystalyfera.

Further work reported in 2020 has revealed that the risk remains and that it would be unsafe for staff and pupils to return to the school. The new build school provides the opportunity for Godre'rgraig Primary pupils to be permanently relocated and to benefit from the 21st century facilities provided.

## Pupil Numbers

As at January 2020, there were 135 full-time and 18 part-time (nursery) pupils on roll. With the physical capacity to accommodate 162 full-time and 19 (19 am/ 19 pm) part-time (nursery) pupils, the school has a surplus capacity of 17% (27 full-time pupil places). Forecasts, based on current school admission trends, from January 2020 to January 2021 suggest a slight increase in pupil numbers.

Table 3

Godre'raig Primary School				
		Jan 2020		Jan 2021
	School capacity	Actual Pupil Numbers	Surplus places	Projected Pupil Numbers
Full-time	162	135	17% (27)	134
Part-time (Nursery)	19	18	5% (1)	22

The table below shows pupil numbers over a 5 year period:

Table 4

Godre'raig Primary School						
School Census Jan 2016 – 2020 + Sept. '20 roll						
Year	16	17	18	19	20	Sept.20
Pupil numbers	138	147	156	159	153	144
Full Time	114	122	134	134	135	136
Part Time	24	25	22	25	18	8

Notes:

- Capacity: Taken from 19-20 Capacities
- Actual Pupil numbers: Taken from PLASC Report Jan 2020
- School Census Data '16-'19: Taken from PLASC – Actual.

## Quality and Standards in Education

Godre'raig Primary School was last inspected in June 2017 and Estyn reported that it was a school with many good features, awarding good judgements in the three inspection areas and awarded a good for current standards and a good for prospects for improvement. The school is showing improvement and the National Categorisation System continues to place the school in the Yellow support category since 2015/16 through to 2019/20, which recognises it as an improving school which is securing good levels of learner outcomes in key performance indicators.

## Standards

Godre'raig Primary school has 159 pupils on roll. The All Wales Core Data 'Academic-Achievement-pupils-aged-4-14-core-subjects-2019' indicates that the school has a lower than average number of children in

receipt of free school meals (21%) when compared to other schools in Neath Port Talbot (21%). There are also a higher than average number of children who have been identified as having additional learning needs (35%) when compared with Neath Port Talbot (24%).

Standards at the end of Foundation Phase are adequate in all areas of learning over three years. 68% of pupils attained the Foundation Phase indicator in 2019 (outcome 5 or higher in all three core areas of learning). This is equal to schools across Neath Port Talbot at 68% but below Wales at 80%.

At Key Stage 2 pupil outcomes are deemed to be adequate with all subjects over three years. However, in 2019, 93% of pupils attained level 4 or higher in all three core subjects which was above the local authority at 82% and all Wales at 88%.

### ***Wellbeing and attitudes to learning***

Wellbeing was judged to be 'good' in the latest Estyn report (June 2017) in that: 'Pupils are confident that all staff care for them and will sort any issues quickly and fairly;' and '.....a real strength of pupils, throughout the school, is the way that they work collaboratively and interdependently'.

Attendance has steadily improved. Current 2019/20 data is at a five year high showing a percentage of 94.7%. Estyn in June 2017 stated that, 'staff promote the importance of good attendance thoroughly. Pupils benefit from a range of strategies and rewards to encourage good attendance.'

### ***Teaching and Learning***

Estyn in 2017 report that Godre'rgraig Primary School provides adequate learning experiences across the school. The quality of teaching in Godre'rgraig Primary was judged to be good overall with nearly all teachers matching work well to the wide range of needs and abilities in their class. This is a strength of teaching across the school.

Care, support and guidance were also judged 'good' with Estyn (June 2017) stating that, 'the school promotes a caring environment that develops pupils' health and wellbeing effectively,' with 'the school's attention to ensuring that pupils attain high levels of emotional wellbeing is central to its caring ethos. New pupils to the school settle quickly and feel secure. This is a strength of the school.'

Provision for pupils who have additional learning needs at Godre'rgraig Primary School is strong. Effective procedures enable staff to identify pupils' needs at an early stage. The school makes successful use of the expertise of staff to implement a wide variety of useful intervention strategies. As a result, pupils with additional learning needs make good progress against their targets.

### ***Leadership and Management***

In 2017, Estyn judged Godre'rgraig Primary school's leadership and management to be good, reporting that: 'The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and she shares this effectively with all stakeholders. All staff work together successfully to ensure that standards and pupils' wellbeing improve continually.'

In 2019, the Autumn Core Visit report also found that, 'The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher provide strong leadership for the school. The school development plan is a detailed, useful document. There is an appropriate balance between development and monitoring activities.'

The most recent Estyn inspection report can be viewed at:

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection-reports>

### ***Quality of Accommodation***

Godre'rgraig Primary school occupies a prominent elevated position on Graig Road, Godre'rgraig and whilst contained within a single enclosed site operates between two separate buildings (a very short distance apart within the site boundary) for Foundation Phase and KS2

The most recent building condition survey (November 2018) reports that the buildings are in poor to fair condition and are categorised as condition grade C-.

The school is circa 100 years old. Externally hard play surfaces require resurfacing and works are required to the covered play area. Internally the building requires general refurbishment to lift the dated appearance. The school kitchen also requires upgrading and refurbishing whilst the boiler and heating distribution systems have reached the end of their lifespan and require renewal.

The combined total backlog maintenance and accessibility costs for Godre'rgraig Primary School amount to £740,050.

Plans for the vacated site have not yet been developed. The site is owned by the Council and any future use will be considered within the context of the Council's corporate asset management process.

### **Llangiwg Primary School**

Llangiwg Primary School is an English-medium community school serving boys and girls aged 3-11 years. It is situated in the village of Ynysmeudwy approx. 1.3 miles from the possible site of the new school.

#### ***Pupil Numbers***

As at January 2020, there were 119 full-time and 17 part-time (nursery) pupils on roll. With the physical capacity to accommodate 147 full-time and 53 (53 am/ 53 pm) part-time (nursery) pupils, the school has a surplus capacity of 19% (28 full-time pupil places). Forecasts, based on current school admission trends, from January 2020 to January 2021 suggest a slight decrease in pupil numbers.

Table 5

<i>Llangiwg Primary School</i>				
		<i>Jan 2020</i>		<i>Jan 2021</i>
	School capacity	Actual Pupil Numbers	Surplus places	Projected Pupil Numbers
<i>Full-time</i>	147	119	19% (28)	109
<i>Part-time (Nursery)</i>	53	17	68% (36)	16

The table below shows pupil numbers over a 5 year period:

Table 6

<i>Llangiwg Primary School</i>						
<i>School Census Jan 2016 – 2020 + Sept. '20 roll</i>						
<i>Year</i>	16	17	18	19	20	<i>Sept.20</i>
<i>Pupil numbers</i>	152	150	136	138	136	127
<i>Full Time</i>	130	124	120	124	119	109
<i>Part Time</i>	22	26	16	14	17	18

Notes:

Capacity: Taken from 19-20 Capacities

Actual Pupil numbers: Taken from PLASC Report Jan 2020

School Census Data '16-'19: Taken from PLASC – Actual.

#### ***Quality and standards in education***

Llangiwg Primary School was last inspected in January 2019 and Estyn reported that it was a school with many good features, awarding good judgements in four out of five inspection areas. The school has shown

continued improvement. The National Categorisation System placed the school in the Red category in 2015/16 moving it to the Amber support category in 2016/17 through to 2018/19, with a further upward move in 2019/20 to the Yellow support category. ERW recognise it as an effective school which has secured good levels of learner outcomes in key performance indicators.

### ***Standards***

The All Wales Core Data Data *'Academic-Achievement-pupils-aged-4-14-core-subjects-2019'* indicates that the school has a slightly lower than average number of children in receipt of free school meals (22%) when compared to other schools in Neath Port Talbot (24%). There are also a slightly lower than average number of children who have been identified as having additional learning needs (22%) when compared with Neath Port Talbot (24%).

Standards at the end of Foundation Phase are adequate in all areas of learning over three years, with 57% of pupils attaining the Foundation Phase indicator in 2019 (outcome 5 or higher in all three core areas of learning). This is lower than schools across Neath Port Talbot at 68% and all Wales at 80%.

At Key Stage 2 pupil outcomes are deemed to be adequate with all subjects over three years, with 71% of pupils attaining level 4 or higher in all three core subjects in 2019. This was lower than schools across Neath Port Talbot at 82% and all Wales at 88%.

### ***Wellbeing and attitudes to learning***

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning of pupils was judged to be 'adequate and needs improvement' in the recent Estyn report (January 2019) but stated that, 'Most (pupils) show high levels of engagement and approach tasks with enthusiasm..... and engage constructively with other pupils.'

Attendance has shown a steady improvement with current data for 2019/20 displaying a percentage of 94.5%. Estyn (January 2019) stated that 'most pupils are aware of the importance of attending school regularly and punctually.'

### ***Teaching and Learning Experiences***

Estyn in 2019 report that Llangiwig Primary School provides a broad, balanced curriculum enhanced by a range of experiences, activities and visits that consolidate and enrich learning.

The quality of teaching and learning experiences in Llangiwig Primary was judged to be good overall (Estyn January 2019). Estyn state that, 'most teachers set appropriate expectations for pupils' achievement and motivate them to work hard.'

### ***Care Support and Guidance***

Estyn also reported that care, support and guidance were good, noting that, 'The school is a happy, inclusive and caring community, where pupils and staff show high levels of respect for each other.' Estyn also report that all staff responded sensitively to the social and emotional needs of pupils.

Estyn commented that, 'the school's provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good .... with well-focused learning plans with clear targets for pupils' development.'

The school has effective links with parents and carers and 'parents feel that the school's inclusive ethos nurtures all pupils and builds their confidence and self-esteem well.' (Estyn January 2019)

### ***Leadership and Management***

In 2019, Estyn judged Llangiwig Primary school's leadership and management to be good, reporting that: 'Leaders at all levels plan appropriately for the strategic development of the school and bring about worthwhile improvements.'

The Autumn Core Visit report, in 2019, also found that: 'The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership for the school and sets a clear strategic direction for improving the school. Senior leaders use an effective range of self-evaluation activities to evaluate the school's performance and plan for improvement.'

The most recent Estyn inspection report can be viewed at:

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/inspection-reports>

### ***Quality of accommodation***

Llangiwg Primary School holds a prominent kerbside position on New Road, Ynsymeudwy and operates across two distinct sites approximately 100m apart along the same road.

The main teaching block is constructed of stonework with concrete detailing and concrete cladding to the front whilst the separate nursery is housed in a demountable type building.

The most recent building condition survey (November 2018) reports that the nursery block has received moderate investment over recent years and is categorised as condition grade B, i.e. the building is sound, operationally safe and exhibits only minor deterioration.

The main block overall is in poor to fair condition and is categorised as condition grade C. The boiler system and distribution has reached the end of its practical and economic lifespan and needs to be replaced. Internally, timber floor coverings and kitchen areas require upgrading.

Overall the combined total condition and accessibility costs for Llangiwg Primary school across both sites amount to £701,550.

Plans for the vacated site have not yet been developed. The site is owned by the Council and any future use will be considered within the context of the Council's corporate asset management process.

### ***Other schools that might be affected by this proposal***

#### **Cwmtawe Community School**

Cwmtawe Community School is an English medium, 11-16 school situated at Parc Ynysderw, in close proximity to the suggested site of the proposed new school and swimming pool. This school is not a subject of the proposal and is not considered to be directly affected, however it is expected that the new and improved facilities on the site will be of benefit to pupils attending Cwmtawe Community School. It is also the secondary school to which pupils from Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwg currently transfer at the end of year 6, and this would also be the case for pupils in the proposed new school.

In locating the new build facilities close to Cwmtawe Community School the development will enable pupils and staff from both schools to benefit



from increased partnership working, made easier due to their close proximity. It will also enhance and improve the sporting facilities currently enjoyed by Cwmtawe Community School pupils.

A new build 3-11 primary school at this site can offer opportunities for achieving many of the benefits of a 3-16 all through school model including continuity across the key stages, access to a wider range of expertise and specialist facilities, removal of transition performance dip, single management and leadership structures, shared vision and common purpose, and cost efficiencies.

### ***What options have been considered?***

***Option 1 – Status quo: maintain Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwg Primary Schools, maintain the pool in its current position, do not establish a new ASD provision.***

The Council has the responsibility for ensuring that it is making the best use of resources and facilities in order to deliver the very best educational opportunities for children and young people.

Maintaining the three schools at their present sites is not considered to be the best use of resources or facilities.

Llangiwg Primary is currently located over two sites and has combined total backlog maintenance and accessibility costs of £701,550. The main school has terraced, hard surface playgrounds and is on a confined site.

Alltwen Primary has a number of demountable buildings and requires backlog works for condition and accessibility amounting to £611,000.

Maintaining these schools on separate sites would lead to cost inefficiency and would mean that the potential benefits afforded by a new school build would not be realised. Increasing pupil numbers on one site by combining the three schools in a brand new purpose built facility would provide a far more effective use of public money as well as addressing surplus places and providing a 'state of the art' 21st Century teaching and learning environment delivering a positive impact on pupil outcomes.

As a result of the landslide risk Godre'rgraig Primary is currently housed in temporary demountable classrooms which are leased to the local authority, adjacent to Cwmtawe Community School. Maintaining status quo is not an option in this situation as although the temporary buildings are of a good standard and suitable for the purpose of accommodating primary aged pupils, the school could not remain in temporary, leased buildings indefinitely.

There is no direct capital cost associated with this option currently, although Godre'rgraig Primary would not be able to remain in temporary accommodation and a more permanent solution would be needed. It is likely that any permanent solution would incur significant capital costs.

If all three schools were to remain on their current sites the opportunity for a new, purpose built LSC would not present itself. It is unlikely that any of the three schools currently could accommodate the extra provision in the space available.

It is also the case that if the pool remains in its present position the opportunity to create a complementary facility alongside the leisure centre would be lost. Without the pool the vision of a community learning and wellbeing campus would also not be realised.

This option is not recommended as a basis for consultation

***Option 2 – Establish a federation of Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwg Primary schools, maintain the pool in its current position, do not establish a new ASD provision***

In a federation schools are managed by a single governing body which takes decisions about matters such as staffing structures and expenditure. Under a single leadership and governance there are potential teaching and learning benefits, staff development opportunities and efficiencies that can arise from a federated arrangement. A single governing body will be able to pool resources, maximise staff expertise and share facilities.

A federation also presents the opportunity to co-ordinate curriculum provision and employ whole school teaching/learning strategies that will improve school performance and enhance educational experiences. In a

federation schools remain separate legal entities retaining their name, registered pupils and budget, and can retain their existing sites.

Because of this, the federation would not necessarily achieve efficiencies through removing duplication, for example all three schools would be inspected separately by Estyn and there would be separate expenditure trails to manage and audit.

This option would also not resolve the need for Godre'rgraig Primary to be permanently relocated from the temporary buildings it currently occupies.

There is no direct capital cost associated with this option, although a permanent location would need to be found for Godre'rgraig Primary School which is likely to incur capital costs.

Whilst there is a significant cost to building a new primary school, the benefits of a purpose built 21st Century school outweigh any potential teaching and learning benefits and modest funding efficiencies that can arise from a federated arrangement between the three schools. In addition, federation would not remove the issues of surplus capacity, confined and restricted sites and significant repair and maintenance costs, or remove the need for a permanent solution to Godre'rgraig Primary School's need for relocation.

A federation does not provide the opportunity for a new, purpose built LSC. It is unlikely that any of the three schools currently could accommodate the extra provision in the space available.

It is also the case that if the pool remains in its present position the opportunity to create a complementary facility alongside the leisure centre would be lost. Without the pool the vision of a community learning and wellbeing campus would also not be realised.

This option is not recommended as a basis for consultation.

***Option 3 – Close two of the schools and transfer all pupils to the remaining school, maintain the pool in its current position, do not establish a new ASD provision.***

This option would prevent pupils and staff from benefitting from a new, purpose built school, meaning that recognised advantages from a modern learning environment would not be realised.

Additionally Llangiwg and Alltwen Primary schools are on confined and restricted sites and have significant repair and maintenance costs.

There is insufficient space at Llangiwg Primary school site to accommodate all the pupils from Alltwen and Godre'rgraig primaries.

Llangiwg Primary is located over two sites and neither site would be able to accommodate the necessary additional buildings and external areas that a larger school would require.

There is insufficient space at Alltwen Primary School to accommodate all the pupils from Llangiwg and Godre'rgraig Primary schools.

Godre'rgraig Primary has been relocated from its original site due to the risk of landslide and so would not be a suitable choice for accommodating pupils from any of the schools. It would also not be feasible to consider accommodating extra pupils from Llangiwg and Alltwen in Godre'rgraig Primary School's temporary building.

There is no direct capital cost associated with this option.

This option does not provide the opportunity for a new, purpose built LSC. It is unlikely that any of the three schools currently could accommodate the extra provision in the space available.

It is also the case that if the pool remains in its present position the opportunity to create a complementary facility alongside the leisure centre would be lost. Without the pool the vision of a community learning and wellbeing campus would also not be realised.

This option is not recommended as a basis for consultation.

***Option 4 – Close one of the three schools and transfer pupils to the remaining two schools, maintain the pool in its current position, do not establish a new ASD provision.***

This option would prevent pupils and staff from benefitting from a new, purpose built school, meaning that recognised advantages from a modern learning environment would not be realised.

Additionally Llangiwg and Alltwen Primary schools are on confined and restricted sites and have significant repair and maintenance costs.

Godre'rgraig Primary has been relocated from its original site due to the risk of landslide and so would not be a suitable choice for accommodating pupils from any of the schools. It would also not be feasible to consider accommodating extra pupils from Llangiwg or Alltwen in Godre'rgraig Primary School's temporary building.

There is insufficient space at Alltwen Primary School to accommodate all the pupils from Godre'rgraig Primary School. PLASC 2020 data indicates that combining Alltwen and Godre'rgraig Primaries on the site of the current Alltwen Primary would require 335 pupil places (R-Yr6) which is 97 pupils over capacity.

There is insufficient space at Llangiwg Primary school site to accommodate all the pupils from Godre'rgraig Primary. PLASC 2020 data indicates that combining Llangiwg Primary and Godre'rgraig Primary pupils on the site of Llangiwg Primary would require 254 pupil places (R-Yr6) which would be 107 pupils over capacity.

Currently the majority of pupils attending Godre'rgraig Primary School are from its catchment area. It could be possible to close Godre'rgraig Primary and split the current catchment area so that pupils could be allocated to either Llangiwg Primary or Alltwen Primary, but this could be potentially divisive for the pupils and the Godre'rgraig community as a whole.

There is no direct capital cost associated with this option.

This option does not provide the opportunity for a new, purpose built LSC. It is unlikely that any of the three schools currently could accommodate the extra provision in the space available.

It is also the case that if the pool remains in its present position the opportunity to create a complementary facility alongside the leisure centre would be lost. Without the pool the vision of a community learning and wellbeing campus would also not be realised.

This option is not recommended as a basis for consultation.

***Option 5 – Close Alltwen, Godre’rgraig and Llangiwg Primary schools and build a new replacement primary school on one of the existing school sites, maintain the pool in its current position, do not establish a new ASD provision***

There is a significant capital investment cost associated with this proposal for which Welsh Government grant funding would be needed.

All three schools are on confined and restricted sites which would not allow the benefits of a new school build and facilities to be fully realised, including access to grant funding. The potential cost of temporary accommodation to house pupils during the construction phase would incur further costs.

Additionally Godre’rgraig Primary school site is deemed unsafe due to the risk of landslide which would further rule out the possibility of building on this site.

This option does not provide the opportunity for a new, purpose built LSC. As the three schools currently are on restricted or temporary sites it would not be desirable to increase the footprint of the school in order for it to accommodate the extra provision.

It is also the case that if the pool remains in its present position the opportunity to create a complementary facility alongside the leisure centre would be lost. Without the pool the vision of a community learning and wellbeing campus would also not be realised.

This option is not recommended as a basis for consultation.

***Option 6 - Close Alltwen, Llangiwg and Godre’rgraig Primary schools and build a new school in Parc Ynysderw to accommodate 630 pupils (plus 140 nursery pupils) from the catchment areas of Alltwen,***

***Llangiwg and Godre'rgraig, establish a new LSC provision and build a new pool.***

Whilst there is a significant cost to building a new primary school, the existing schools on their current sites are hindered through lack of space for implementing improvements. Land is available at Parc Ynysderw which will enable the new school to have access to large outdoor play areas and improved physical activity and wellbeing opportunities, and will offer far more space to accommodate a greater number of pupils in a purpose built school appropriate to the requirements of the modern curriculum.

The new 21<sup>st</sup> century school will accommodate 630 full-time pupils and 140 part-time (70 a.m. /70 p.m.) nursery age pupils and will create significant teaching and learning benefits for pupils, staff and the community. New builds have been shown to have a positive impact on standards and pupil wellbeing, and can improve many aspects of curriculum delivery. Combining the three schools can deliver more effective curriculum provision and greater teaching and learning opportunities.

Increasing pupil numbers at a single site school by combining the three schools in a brand new purpose built facility would provide a far more effective, long-term use of public money, addressing surplus places and providing a purpose built 'state of the art' 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning environment which will improve pupil outcomes.

The new build will be funded jointly from Welsh Government 21<sup>st</sup> century School Programme capital grant monies and from the Council's prudential borrowing capacity.

The new build will also remove existing maintenance and repair liabilities at the three current sites.

Including an LSC provision in the new build will ensure that pupils are provided with purpose built, 21<sup>st</sup> century standard facilities, with the aim of ensuring best possible outcomes for pupils, and will address identified need for further provision for primary aged pupils with ASD.

The pool will provide an additional facility alongside the leisure centre, revitalising and increasing the health and well-being facilities in the area. The pool is currently used by some schools in the area but this scheme aims to increase usage by schools and by the wider community due to its improved location.

This option is recommended by officers.

***Option 7 - Close Alltwen, Llangiwg and Godre'rgraig Primary schools and build a new school on another site to accommodate 630 pupils (plus 140 nursery pupils) from the catchment areas of Alltwen, Llangiwg and Godre'rgraig Primaries, establish a new LSC provision and maintain the pool in its current location***

The benefits of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century school teaching and learning environment would be realised and significant backlog maintenance and repair liabilities would be removed.

However identifying a second site which would be large enough to accommodate all the requirements of a 21<sup>st</sup> century school in an area within reasonable travelling distance for all pupils is very difficult as there is very little suitable land available.

Additionally the benefit of being in Parc Ynysderw with the improved leisure offer and close proximity to Cwmtawe Community School would not be realised if the school was built elsewhere.

If a large enough site could be identified then it would be possible to include an LSC for primary aged pupils with a statement of ASD. Including this provision in the new build will ensure that pupils are provided with purpose built, 21<sup>st</sup> century standard facilities, with the aim of ensuring best possible outcomes for pupils, and will address identified need for further provision for pupils with ASD, specifically primary aged pupils.

If the pool was not to be located at Parc Ynysderw then the opportunity to create a complementary facility alongside the leisure centre would be lost. The vision of a community learning, health and wellbeing campus would also not be realised if the Parc Ynysderw site is not utilised.



This option is not recommended as a basis for consultation

***Option 8 - Build 3 new, replacement primary schools on the existing sites of Alltwen, Llangiwig and Godre'rgraig Primary schools, maintain the pool in its current position, establish a new ASD provision on one of the sites***

All three schools are on confined and restricted sites which would not allow the benefits of a new school build and facilities to be fully realised, and could increase costs significantly. Building three schools rather than one would not be cost effective and access to grant funding is unlikely to be successful. There are potentially significant additional costs associated with the need to provide temporary accommodation to decant pupils whilst the construction phase progresses.

Additionally a new site would need to be identified for Godre'rgraig Primary, and suitable land of the appropriate size is not available within the catchment area.

This option does provide the opportunity for a new, purpose built LSC on one of the sites, should a space large enough be found in the area. However including this provision would further increase the costs of the option.

It is also the case that if the pool remains in its present position the opportunity to create a complementary facility alongside the leisure centre would be lost. Without the pool the vision of a community learning and wellbeing campus would also not be realised.

This option is not recommended as a basis for consultation.

***Preferred Option – Option 6***

Having considered all the information gathered to date, it is the view of officers that closing Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwig Primary schools and establishing a new community school for 630 pupils and 140 nursery pupils in a 21<sup>st</sup> century new build will deliver the greatest benefits to pupils, staff and the wider community as a whole.

The inclusion of an LSC for primary aged pupils with ASD gives an opportunity to provide pupils with a purpose built facility with the aim of ensuring best possible outcomes for pupils,

Additionally establishing the school on the identified site of Parc Ynysderw and creating enhanced learning, health and wellbeing facilities to include the leisure centre, new swimming pool and Cwmtawe Community Comprehensive, will provide opportunities to develop and improve primary education in the area.

### ***Information about the proposed new primary school***

The proposed new, 21<sup>st</sup> century build primary school will provide for up to for 630 full-time pupils and 140 part-time (70 a.m. / 70 p.m.) nursery pupils, and 14 pupils in the LSC. This will deliver sufficient accommodation for the total combined forecasted pupil number of the existing three primary schools and for growth in pupil population. For the purpose of consultation, the proposed admission number for the primary school will be 90.

The table below shows a five year forecast of pupil numbers.

*Table 7*

School	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023	Jan 2024	Jan 2025	Jan 2026
Alltwen Primary (exc. nursery)	203	199	191	193	187	189
Alltwen Primary nursery only	33	32	32	32	32	32
Godre'rgraig Primary (exc. nursery)	134	131	120	119	118	119
Godre'rgraig Primary nursery only	22	22	20	21	21	21
Llangiwig Primary (exc. nursery)	109	107	93	90	87	89
Llangiwig Primary nursery only	16	16	16	16	16	16
New Primary (exc. nursery)	446	437	404	402	392	397
New Primary nursery only	71	70	68	69	69	69

Alltwen Primary, Godre'rgraig Primary and Llangiwig Primary schools have a combined surplus capacity of 17.1% (94 full-time pupil places). Based on a three form entry new build and forecasted pupil numbers at 2020, the new school would have approx. 7% surplus capacity (43 full-time pupil places).

Table 8

<i>New Primary School Swansea Valley</i>			
<i>Jan 2024</i>			
	School capacity	Forecasted Pupil Numbers	Surplus places
<i>Full-time</i>	<b>630</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>7% (43)</b>
<i>Part-time (Nursery)</i>	<b>140places (70am/70pm)</b>	<b>138 (69am/69pm)</b>	<b>1% (2)</b>

The new build school will be an exciting place for pupils and staff both internally and externally. It will have spacious, light and airy classrooms, with access to a range of high quality and appropriate spaces for social interaction

The new buildings will facilitate easier delivery of the new curriculum for Wales, and will provide greater opportunities for an inclusive, skill based approach to teaching and learning.

With a new school comes more choices and improved opportunities because there is more space and better facilities. In the Estyn report of 2007, ‘An evaluation of performance of schools before and after moving into new buildings or significantly refurbished premises’, it is reported that the attainment and achievement of pupils improves significantly when they move into new or significantly refurbished buildings, particularly when schools are in areas with high levels of social and economic deprivation. The 2015 report, ‘Clever Classrooms’, found that well designed schools can significantly boost children’s academic performance in reading, writing and maths.

The new school will ensure that pupils have adaptable ICT facilities, suitable for learning in the 21st century. Mobile technology will be integrated with a sound pedagogical base to provide pupils with enhanced learning experiences, equipping them with the key skills and motivation needed to raise standards.

### **Information about the proposed LSC**

The new school will include an LSC which will provide learning support for pupils with ASD for up to 16 pupils who are in receipt of a Statement of SEN.

The provision will be managed by the school and be under the school's governance. However it will be a provision recognised by the Council as reserved for pupils with ALN and pupils admitted to the provision would be in addition to the admission number of the school. Admission to the provision would be via a special admission panel of the Council and specific entry and exit criteria would apply.

Pupils at the proposed provision will benefit from being taught by specialist staff, experienced in working with pupils with ASD needs. There is also the possibility that mainstream pupils with ASD could also benefit from the expertise available.

The provision will alleviate the current pressure to address demand for places for pupils with more complex needs, avoiding potential costly out of county placements and allowing opportunities for children to access learning within their local community and will complement the specialist provision and support already available within the County Borough.

### **Information about the proposed pool**

In addition to the new build primary school and specialist ASD provision it is also proposed to include as part of the scheme a new build 25 metre, 6 lane swimming pool, with additional learner pool to replace the existing Pontardawe Swimming Pool. The pool will provide an additional facility alongside the leisure centre, revitalising and increasing the health and well-being facilities in the area.

The combined new build school, specialist ASD provision and leisure facilities will form part of a learning, health and wellbeing community campus at the Parc Ynysderw site, complementing the existing Cwmtawe Community School and Pontardawe Leisure Centre provision. The pool is currently used by some schools in the area but this scheme aims to increase usage by schools and by the wider community due to its improved co-location.

Pontardawe Swimming Pool was built in 1974. The latest condition survey from August 2014 indicated that while the building was in reasonable condition, the core building services have exceeded their recommended anticipated lifecycle. Given the relative poor condition and age of the current facilities, aligned with the space available at the proposed Parc Ynysderw site, the Council are presented with an opportunity to integrate

the pool and school facilities creating a new sustainable school and community asset. Inclusion of a pool at the school will further enhance the physical activity and wellbeing opportunities open to pupils who will attend the new school as well as those at Cwmtawe Community School, and those of other nearby schools including YGG Trebannws and YGG Pontardawe.

The facility will also provide sustainable opportunities for swimming lessons and participation to residents of all ages within the nearby communities. This campus will provide modern leisure facilities where people can enjoy physical activity, and where physical, mental health and wellbeing is positively promoted throughout local communities.

### ***The expected benefits of the proposal***

The proposal seeks to provide the Swansea Valley community with improved educational and health and wellbeing facilities, through creating a learning, health and wellbeing community campus for children and adults of all ages.

The proposal will lead to the more efficient and effective use of resources, resulting in revenue savings for reinvestment in the education budget - similarly, for any capital receipts accruing. In this regard, the proposal supports the Council's effective management of its education budget and promotes the more equitable distribution of funding across local schools.

Creating a primary school with a larger pupil population can:

- enable more effective delivery of the whole curriculum
- prevent the need for mixed age classes over more than 2 year groups
- provide greater opportunities for peer interaction and the development of social skills
- reduce teacher workload through the wider sharing of responsibilities
- provide more opportunities for extra-curricular activities
- provide more targeted support for children with additional learning needs through wider expertise and greater numbers of support staff
- allow for better staff development, greater opportunity for curriculum development and career opportunities through broader experience and enhanced continuing professional development options

- enable more efficient and effective use of resources, including saving money through economies of scale
- give the head teacher and governing body greater flexibility in the organisation of classes and deployment of staff

### ***Potential Risks and Risk Management***

A risk assessment has been carried out under the Council's Risk Management Policy 2018.

The potential risks associated with the proposal comprise the Council's reputation, educational standards, financial management, staff employment and service delivery.

Potential risk areas in implementing the proposal include:

- resistance to change leading to lack of pupil, parent and staff support
- educational standards not maintained
- less effective support for pupil well-being in a larger school and in a different location
- increased home to school travel time for some pupils
- staff anxiety about job security and new management arrangements
- loss of school identity from closure of existing establishments
- forecasted pupil numbers do not materialise
- budget allocation insufficient to meet needs
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century School capital funding opportunity not realised
- Welsh language not developed further
- discrimination against protected characteristics
- loss of community facilities
- increased governance and staff responsibilities

Failing to implement the proposal will result in the following teaching/learning and financial benefits not being fully realised, particularly in relation to:

- providing a stimulating and innovative teaching and learning environment that will impact positively on the self-esteem and well-being of all pupils and staff
- pupils accessing a wider range of staff expertise
- opportunities for wider peer group interaction

- staff having greater opportunity for curriculum development and career opportunities through broader experience and enhanced continuing professional development options
- a more efficient and effective use of resources, and savings from economies of scale
- reducing the number of surplus pupil places and improving the school building environment
- creating a learning and recreational campus promoting community cohesion

The benefits of implementing the proposal will mitigate the effects of identified risks. A new school provides greater prospects for improving educational attainment for pupils. Estyn (Jan 2007) reported on the performance of schools before and after moving into new buildings, stating that ageing school buildings which are in a poor state of repair cannot meet modern teaching and learning needs. The report also states that inadequate buildings make improvements in standards more challenging and that in nearly all schools with new or refurbished buildings, pupils attainment and achievement have improved and in some cases the improvement has been significant.

### ***What is the impact on pupils and parents?***

The new primary school will serve the combined catchment areas of Alltwn, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwig Primary schools. The proposed new school will provide a stimulating teaching and learning environment in state of the art, 21st Century facilities that will impact positively on the self-esteem and well-being of pupils and will aim to improve the learning outcomes for all children across the ability range. The new school will have sufficient playing fields and green space available on site which is not the case with the existing schools and which can be made available for community use.

The arrangements for admission to the new primary school will allow full-time pupils on roll at Alltwn, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwig Primary schools at the point of closure to transfer to the roll of the new school, subject to the wishes of parents or unless pupils are transferring to secondary education. Prospective pupils (including nursery pupils transferring to full-time education) will need to apply for a place at the primary school, in line with the Council's school admissions policy.

Class sizes at the new primary school will be set by the head teacher and governing body. When setting the class sizes the relevant Welsh Government legislation and guidelines will be followed, including the recommendation that classes are no larger than 30 pupils.

Admission to the proposed LSC would be via a special admission panel of the Council and specific entry and exit criteria would apply.

### ***What is the impact on the workforce?***

The proposal will mean changes that impact on the employment of school staff. All of the existing schools will close on 31st August 2024. Upon closure all staff will cease to be employed at their respective schools. The new school will set a new staffing structure appropriate to its needs and budget.

A temporary governing body will be established before the opening of the primary school. The temporary governing body will have the responsibility of appointing a head teacher. Specifically in relation to the posts of head teacher and deputy head teacher, the Council's policy is for these to be advertised nationally. Once the head teacher has been appointed that person will, together with the temporary governing body, be responsible for determining the staffing structure for the new primary school.

The primary school will open on 1st September 2024 and school staff will be employed by the new governing body for the primary school (albeit appointed by the temporary governing body).

As part of the process all school based staff will be supported by the relevant school policies and procedures which will include full consultation. Previous experience has shown that some staff wish to secure employment in the new school but others take the opportunity to take on new challenges elsewhere. Employees identified at risk of redundancy will be given access to the Council's prior consideration register. The Council is committed to supporting staff at risk of compulsory redundancy and has secured the support and goodwill of the teacher associations/trade unions and governing bodies across the Council, via an employers' pledge. The Council has a good track record for supporting staff in such situations.



### ***What is the impact on governors?***

If the proposal goes ahead a temporary governing body will be established prior to the opening of the primary school. The temporary governing body will take important decisions about the new school including the appointment of a head teacher, agreeing a staffing structure and adopting operating procedures. The temporary governing body will also resolve other issues including school uniform which, in line with good practice, will be determined following consultation with pupils and parents.

The temporary governing body is likely to be made up of existing governors from Alltwen Primary, Godre'rgraig Primary and Llangiwg Primary schools as this ensures continuity that will place the new school on a sound footing.

Each school will continue to exist, managed by their respective governing bodies, until all three schools are closed. During this period the existing and temporary governing bodies will undertake their duties in parallel.

When the new school is opened, it will be managed by the temporary governing body until a permanent governing body is established. The governing bodies of Alltwen Primary, Godre'rgraig Primary and Llangiwg Primary schools will cease to exist once the new school is opened.

### ***What is the impact on travel arrangements?***

For many of the primary aged pupils the proposed location of the new school on the site at Ynysderw remains within 2 miles travel distance for homes in the catchment area. Home to school journey times from within the catchment area fall within reasonable limits for primary age pupils. Prior to the new school opening suitable walking routes will be assessed.

Support with home to school travel will be made available in line with the Council's Home to School Transport policy. This means that primary school aged pupils living 2 miles or more from their nearest suitable or designated school will be considered for transport assistance.

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

Both the School Admissions Policy and Home to School Travel Policy are available on the Council's website: [www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk)

### ***What is the impact on special educational needs provision ?***

There are no specialist units for children with statements of special educational needs at either of the three schools, i.e. provision recognised by the Council as reserved for pupils with SEN. 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. The new school will continue to offer this level of support.

Data analysis suggests that a number of pupils within the Swansea Valley travel to gain additional learning support in specialist units elsewhere within Neath Port Talbot. The data also shows increasing demand for specialist support at primary age for pupils in NPT with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Pupils attending the proposed LSC provision within the new school will benefit from being taught by specialist staff, experienced in working with pupils with ASD needs. There is also the possibility that mainstream pupils with ASD could also benefit from the expertise available as the specialist knowledge and skills-set of the staff employed to work at the proposed LSC will be available to share with mainstream staff and, as such, will indirectly benefit SEN provision at the new school.

It is also envisaged that the LSC provision 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 ASD.

## ***What is the financial impact?***

The cost of the new build is estimated at c.£22,705,000 apportioned as per table 6 below.

Table 9

Project	NPT Investment	WG Investment	Total Investment
Ysgol Newydd Swansea Valley	7,946,750	14,758,250	22,705,000

Welsh Government 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme capital grant funding has been approved, in principle. The full business case will be considered by Welsh Government in due course.

Combined backlog maintenance and accessibility costs for the existing schools amounts to circa. £2m which would be removed by this proposal, along with the ongoing need to fund the associated costs of Godre'rgraig Primary School's current off site leased accommodation. Additionally backlog maintenance costs for the current pool amounting to £1,221,783 would also be removed by this proposal

Revenue funding for schools is distributed on an annual basis by means of an approved formula. This ensures school budget shares are allocated on a simple, objective and measurable basis.

Most of the revenue budget allocation to Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwg Primary schools is generated by pupil numbers. Similarly, the new primary school's budget will be based mainly on the combined pupil roll. Savings will occur as the new school will have one head teacher and one management structure. Revenue savings will be re-invested in the education budget. In this regard, the proposal supports the Council's effective management of its education budget and promotes the more equitable distribution of funding across local schools.

The proposed new school will receive additional funding to manage the provision for up to 16 pupils. 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 circa £80k per pupil per year. This annually presents a significant demand on the Council's education budget.

Additional recurring revenue costs associated with this proposal such as potential additional transport costs may be incurred. Similarly there will be revenue efficiency savings associated with this proposal.

Based on the money delegated to schools in the 2020/2021 financial year, per pupil funding for Alltwen Primary school is £3,685 whilst for Llangiwig Primary school per pupil funding is £3,965 and for Godre'rgraig Primary school £ 3,886. This compares with the average for NPT primary schools at £3,941.

Prior to the primary school opening on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024, Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwig primary schools will receive their annual school budget shares for the 5/12<sup>ths</sup> of the financial year 2023/2024. When the new school opens on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 it will receive a budget share based on the number of pupils on roll at that time.

### ***Impact on community usage***

The proposal for the new build school also includes the creation of a learning, health and wellbeing community campus through the addition of a new build pool on the Parc Ynysderw site, with the aim of providing opportunities for all members of the Swansea Valley community to benefit from modern, fit for purpose facilities. The new build school and pool's co-location alongside the existing Cwmtawe Community School and Pontardawe Leisure Centre will provide opportunities to further develop and integrate community provision with delivery partners for indoor and outdoor sporting activities. The pool is currently used by some schools in the area but this scheme aims to increase usage by schools and by the wider community due to its improved location

Cwmtawe Comprehensive School has a range of facilities that can be used by community groups including hard tennis courts, meeting spaces, specialist facilities and performance spaces. These facilities will continue to be available and can be fully utilised by the community, and the primary school facilities will complement and extend these, providing a wide range of activities, services and experiences for pupils, families and the wider community.

Early years and childcare facilities are already available within walking distance of the new school, and it is expected that wrap around care will be easier to facilitate due to the location.

Additionally Pontardawe has a rich cultural heritage, and is known for promoting and developing the arts both through the medium of Welsh as well as English. The close proximity of the new learning campus to the heart of Pontardawe town would ensure pupils and families are able to both benefit from and contribute to this heritage.

This proposal will help to deliver the Council's aim of improving the health and wellbeing of all people living in Neath Port Talbot and reducing the gap between the least and most healthy.

A more detailed community impact assessment will be undertaken during the consultation period and the findings reported following the end of the consultation process.

### **Fields in Trust**

The playing fields at Parc Ynysderw are one of 471 King George Fields established as a memorial to King George V.

Fields in Trust is the sole trustee of the King George's Fields Foundation and as such its consent is needed for any disposals or changes of use. Fields in Trust works to protect parks, playing fields and other spaces and as part of the planning process supports Sport Wales in its role as the statutory consultee on developments affecting playing fields.

Fields in Trust has stated that it is responsive to local change and flexible in its dealings with landowners and will be happy to consider a possible exchange of land to accommodate the new school.

### ***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 required if the proposal proceeds as it is likely to have an impact on pupils, staff and other potential users of the school. The proposal may also impact on opportunities to use the Welsh language. It is unknown whether the proposal would impact on biodiversity. Further consideration of how the proposal embraces the sustainable development principle is needed.

In response to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 the Council has set three strategic objectives which contribute to the seven national well-being goals that the Welsh Government requires all public bodies in Wales to contribute to, in order to achieve 'the Wales we want'. This proposal directly supports wellbeing objective 1 – 'to improve the wellbeing of children and young people' through the provision of a 21st century school for current and future generations of primary aged pupils and also supports wellbeing objective 2 – 'to improve the wellbeing of all adults who live in the county borough' and wellbeing objective 3 'to develop the local economy and environment so that the wellbeing of people can be improved', through the creation of jobs during the construction phase and beyond.

Following full consultation where views of all stakeholders will be gathered, greater information will be available which will further help to inform the full assessment.

A fully completed IIA will be considered by the Council before any final decision is taken on whether or not the proposal is to be implemented.

### ***What is the impact on the Welsh Language?***

The Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) details how it intends to support and further develop Welsh language education in schools.

Alltwn, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwg primaries teach Welsh as a second language and this will also be the case for the new school. Currently 25% of staff across the three schools are fluent or fairly fluent Welsh speakers. By combining the three schools Welsh language provision could be

improved as there could be greater impact on having a more concentrated group of Welsh speakers able to support pupil and staff language development skills through the medium of Welsh.

The WESP objective ‘ To ensure that second language provision across all schools provides pupils with the skills and ability to become confident and sustained speakers of Welsh and that the provision develops a meaningful relationship between the language and the learner’ is of particular relevance to this proposal.

The Swansea Valley area is a linguistically significant area as it contains the highest number and percentages of Welsh speakers in Neath Port Talbot, and is amongst the highest in Wales as a whole.

Primary education through the medium of Welsh is available at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontardawe and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Trebannws. Additionally Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera –Bro Dur, which is approximately 5 miles from the proposed site, provides all through 3-19 education through the medium of Welsh.

Significant investment has taken place at Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera –Bro Dur through projects in both Band A (circ. £17.5m) and Band B (circ. £9m) of 21st Century Schools Capital Funding Programme.

In addition funding of £1.6m has been secured to improve provision at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontardawe, including extended and enhanced childcare and Foundation Phase facilities. Work is expected to be completed in 2021.

It is not expected that this proposal would reduce Welsh language provision in the area, however a Welsh language impact assessment will be undertaken during consultation.

### ***Legal process and Consultation Timetable***

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, November 2018, made under Sections 38 and 39 of the Act, imposes on the Council

requirements and guidelines on matters relating to school organisation. The Council's procedures are in line with legislative requirements.

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.

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.

The management of staff affected by the proposal will follow the relevant school policy and procedure requirements.

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council is the proposer and the Council wishes to hear the views of all interested parties before deciding whether to progress its proposal. All responses to this consultation will be considered when making its decision and a consultation report will be published following the end of the consultation period. The consultation report will summarise the issues raised by consultees and include a response. The consultation report will also set out Estyn's view on the proposal.

Having considered the views expressed by interested parties, if the Council decides to proceed with its plan it will publish a statutory proposal. Once the statutory proposal is published there will be a 28 day period to respond in writing, known as the 'objection period'. Only objections submitted during this period will be considered. If objections are received, an objection report will be published following the end of the objection period. The report will summarise objections raised and provide a response.

***Please note that only written objections submitted during the statutory notice period will be considered. Comments submitted as part of the consultation period will need to be re-submitted in writing during the statutory notice period if they are to be considered as objections.***



Following the conclusion of the objection period the Council is required to determine the proposal and the matter will go before the Council’s Cabinet for decision. In its decision making the Council’s Cabinet will give due consideration to any objections raised alongside the case for the proposal. The proposal will be determined in line with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and associated School Organisation Code 2018.

***Process Timetable***

The main activities and actions, and the dates/periods that they are scheduled to take place is set out below

What	When
Consultation period	3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2020- 19 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
Consultation Report published	26 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
Decision to publish proposal (Cabinet)	7 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
Publication of Statutory Notice	13 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
Period for submitting objections	13 <sup>th</sup> April – 11 <sup>th</sup> May 2021
Determination	Within 16 weeks of the end of the objection period
Objection Report published and decision notification	At the same time as the determination decision is published and within 7 days
Proposed Implementation Date	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2024

***Consultation with children and young people***

It is important that when bringing forward proposals, suitable arrangements are made to consult with pupils. The Council will consult with pupils in Alltwen, Godre’rgraig and Llangiwig Primary schools and the information gathered in these sessions will be included in the final consultation report.

## ***Making comment on the proposal***

The purpose of this consultation document is to provide information and to invite views on the Council's proposal to open a new 3-11 school to replace Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwig primary schools.

Formal consultation will take place during the period: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 to 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Comments on the proposal must be submitted in writing by letter, e-mail or on the comment form attached to this document.

Consultation responses can also be submitted using the Consultation Portal on the Council's web site or by email to [SSIP@npt.gov.uk](mailto:SSIP@npt.gov.uk).

Due to the ongoing public health situation there will be no face-to-face consultation events arranged for this consultation. Questions concerning the proposal can be submitted to [SSIP@npt.gov.uk](mailto:SSIP@npt.gov.uk).

**The closing date for responses to this consultation is 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 12.00pm.** Unfortunately we will not be able consider any consultation responses received after this date.

Responses should be sent to the following address: **Aled Evans, Director of Education Leisure and Lifelong Learning, (marked for the attention of the SSIP Team), Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ** or e-mail to: [SSIP@npt.gov.uk](mailto:SSIP@npt.gov.uk)

A full list of those being consulted can be seen below:

<b>List of Consultees</b>	
Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwig Primary Schools: Pupils Parents / carers Staff Governing Body Wider School Community	NAASH (Secondary Schools Forum)
	LLAN (Primary Schools Forum)
	Bordering authorities – Swansea/ Bridgend/ Carmarthenshire/ Powys/ RCT

All other NPT schools	Pontardawe Town Council Cilybebyll Community Council Cwmllynfell Community Council Gwaun Cae Gurwen Community Council Ystalyfera Community Council
NPT Elected Members	WG Schools Management Division
Diocesan Directors of Education	MP (for Neath) – Christina Rees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diocese of Menevia, Swansea</li> <li>- Diocese of Llandaff, Vale of Glamorgan</li> </ul>	AM (for Neath) – Jeremy Miles
Trade Unions	Regional Assembly Members
Estyn	SEN Partners
Regional Education Consortium (ERW)	Children and Young Person Partnership (inc. Early Years Development and Childcare)
NPTCBC Integrated Transport Unit	Police and Crime Commissioner
Communities First Partnership	NPTCBC Officers

## Comment Form

## Consultation on a proposal to establish an English-medium 3-11 school to replace Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwg primary schools.

Your views matter. Please tell us what you think about the proposal by completing this questionnaire. The closing date for the submission of responses to this consultation is midday on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021. If additional space is needed comments can be sent to [SSIP@npt.gov.uk](mailto:SSIP@npt.gov.uk)

***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.***

**Please indicate how you are associated with the schools affected by this consultation:**

(Required)

- Parent, carer or guardian
- Prospective parent, carer or guardian
- Governor
- Member of staff
- Member of the community
- Other

If other please specify

**Please indicate which school you are associated with**

- Alltwen
- Godre'rgraig
- Llangiwg
- Other

If other please specify

**Do you support the proposal to establish an English-medium 3-11 school to replace Alltwen, Godre'rgraig and Llangiwg primary schools?**

Yes

No

**If Yes,** please use the box below to provide comments or explain which part of the proposal you support.

**If No,** please use the box below to provide comments or explain which part of the proposal you do not support.

**Do you have any alternative options that you would like us to consider?**

Please use the box below to provide comments

**Possible Impacts on the Welsh Language**

**Do you believe that the proposal will have a positive, negative or neutral impact on opportunities to use the Welsh language?**

Positive       Negative       Neutral

Please provide details of the impact and what steps we consider to lessen, reduce or remove this and

improve positive impacts?

**Do you believe that the proposal will treat the Welsh and English languages equally?**

Yes       No       Neutral

Please use the box below to provide comments

**Possible Impacts on the Protected Characteristics**

**Will the proposal impact on the protected characteristic/s under the Equality Act 2010?**

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation

Positive       Negative       Neutral

**Please provide details of the protected characteristic/s you consider will be affected by the proposal in the box below**

**Please provide details of the positive or negative impact you have identified as a result of the protected characteristic/s**

**If you have identified a positive impact based on the protected characteristic/s please provide details of how we could consider improving that impact.**

**If you have identified a negative impact based on the protected characteristic, please provide details of what we could consider to improve reduce or remove that negative impact.**

**At the end of the Consultation Period, the Council will publish a Consultation Report, summarising the issues raised in the consultation responses received and providing the Council's response to these issues.**

The report will be published on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021

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

Name:

Email address:



Postal address:

Additional comments/suggestions

## About You

The Council operates equality policies that aim to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and equally. To make sure that people are not discriminated against when accessing our services we carry out monitoring and therefore would be grateful if you could answer the following questions. The information you provide is strictly confidential.

**Age:** (please ✓one answer)

- |                                   |                                |                                |  |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 | <input type="checkbox"/> 60-74 | <input type="checkbox"/> 86+               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16-24    | <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75-85 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25-29    | <input type="checkbox"/> 50-59 |                                |  |

**Welsh Language** – are you: (please ✓one answer)

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fluent speaker & writer        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fluent speaker        | <input type="checkbox"/> Learner                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly fluent speaker & writer | <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly fluent speaker | <input type="checkbox"/> Little or no knowledge |

The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term (i.e. has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months) adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Do you consider yourself to have a disability?** (please ✓one answer)

- |                              |                             |  |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|

**Ethnic origin:** (please ✓one answer)

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White British                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed: White & Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Black: African    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Irish                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian               | <input type="checkbox"/> Black: Caribbean  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed: White & Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi          | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed: White & Black African   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani            | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):        | <input type="text"/>                          |  |

**Sex** (please ✓one answer)

Male                       Female                       Transgender                       Prefer not to say

**Religion/Belief:** (please ✓one answer)

Christian       Buddhist       Hindu                       Jewish                       Muslim  
 Sikh                       No religion                       Prefer not to say                       Any other religion

Any other religion (please specify):

**Sexual Orientation** (please ✓one answer)

Heterosexual       Lesbian                       Gay                       Bisexual                       Prefer not to say

**Nationality** (please ✓one answer)

Welsh                       Scottish                       English                       British  
 Irish                       Prefer not to say                       Other

Other (please specify):

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME**