

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**2<sup>nd</sup> OCTOBER 2014**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

**Author: Chris Bradshaw  
Tel: 01443 744001**

**CONSULTATION ON THE REORGANISATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS,  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE RHONDDA  
VALLEYS AND TONYREFAIL**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval to begin the relevant, and required statutory consultation for the proposals to:

- Create two sixth form centres of excellence, based at Treorchy and Tonyrefail;
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Porth and Tonypany, and one 3-19 school, in Tonyrefail, which will take a radically different approach to education in the areas, by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources;
- Increase the availability of Welsh medium primary provision in Porth and Tonyrefail;
- Improve the learning environment of primary aged pupils with additional learning needs.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members note the information contained within this report and give formal approval to commence consultation on the proposals to:

- Close the sixth forms of Ferndale Community School, Porth County Community School and Tonypany Community College and transfer the sixth form provision to Treorchy Comprehensive School and a new 3-19 school in Tonyrefail;
- Close Porth County Community School, Llwynceilyn Infants' School, Porth Infants' School, and Porth Junior School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Porth County Community School;
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llwynceilyn by approximately 100 places, utilising the site of the existing Llwynceilyn Infants' School;
- Close Tonypany Community College, Penygraig Infants' School, Penygraig Junior School, Tonypany Primary School and Ysgol Yr Eos Primary School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Tonypany

Community College. Relocate the specialist primary pupil referral provision at the Tai Centre, Penygraig to the site of the existing Ysgol Yr Eos Primary School;

- Close Tonyrefail Comprehensive School and Tonyrefail Primary School and create a new 3-19 middle school on the site of the existing Tonyrefail Comprehensive School. Relocate Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail to the site of the current Tonyrefail Primary School;
- Change the catchment areas of Treorchy Comprehensive School and, Ferndale Community School, and set new catchment areas for the new middle schools for Porth, Tonypandy and Tonyrefail;
- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Ysgol Yr Eos, and the three Learning Support Classes at Porth County Community School to the new 3-16 school at Porth, to create specialist provision for the four key stages;
- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Tonyrefail Comprehensive School to the new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail.

All the proposals will be implemented by 2018.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

3.1. The rationale for the proposal for change in the primary and secondary schools in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail is set out in the Consultation document attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

3.2. Over the past few years secondary schools have sought to collaborate to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure and to offer a good quality post 16 learning experience to their pupils. Despite the best efforts of the headteachers, schools and Council:

- There are too many small sixth forms and a rationalisation would better meet the educational needs of the students by strengthening management arrangements, improving the effective and efficient use of resources, and better ensuring a quality educational experience. Only one sixth form in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail area, Treorchy Comprehensive School, will have greater than 250 pupils in September 2014;
- The delivery of post-16 education is inefficient and for many the educational experience could be considerably better. There is still unnecessary post 16 duplication of provision between schools and colleges, choice for many learners is restricted, class sizes are too small, and secondary school surplus places in the County Borough are projected to be over 4,000 by 2018 and over 1,400 in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail area (English medium schools) by 2018. This leads to valuable education funds being directed at additional staff costs and infrastructure when they would be better directed at the learners and the learner experience. Currently, across Rhondda Cynon Taf funds amounting to £300 per pupil that were originally provided to educate 11-16 pupils are redirected at sixth form learners, to subsidise loss making courses due to small class sizes;
- Small class sizes found in many sixth forms leads to limited student interactions, which diminishes the effectiveness of learning. Where providers have made the greatest progress in collaborating to reduce inefficiencies and improve effectiveness, learner opportunities and student

interactions increase. However, travel between providers is seen by some students as a barrier to access a wider choice of courses.

- Choice is often dependent upon learner postal code. There is no equitable post 16 options entitlement;
- The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 4 (in relation to the Average Capped Wider Points Score) & Key Stage 5 (in relation to the Average Wider Points Score) in the County Borough are below Welsh averages and among the lowest in Wales. A step change is still required to raise the number of young people participating in education post 16 and improve the quality of learning outcomes by raising attainment, retention and progression.
- In 2013, in 4 of the 5 Rhondda schools, less than 50 students were entered for 2 or more A Levels or equivalent. While this improved slightly in 2014 only 2 schools entered more than 60 pupils. Providing an educationally and financially viable curriculum in a number of the schools is difficult.

3.3. Creating two sixth forms of approximately 500 students creates the capacity and economies of scale to be able to improve:

- **Standards and Achievement** – raising standards of success and achievement and increasing progression to Higher Education and employment.
- **Choice** – improving the breadth and depth of curriculum creating greater choice for all young people to choose learning pathways that best enable them to mix and match vocational, academic and occupational qualifications and experience.
- **Participation** – increasing participation and attendance rates.
- **Equality** – to ensure every sixth form student in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail is able to access the curriculum of choice.
- **Ability to respond to future learners, community and business needs** – Re-skilling and up-skilling, the population of Rhondda Cynon Taf as the commercial environment changes, to allow people to compete effectively in the job market.
- **Financial viability and effectiveness** – providing a cost effective and efficient model for delivery, removing unnecessary duplication, aligning capacity with demand (in light of demographic change), generating economies of scale and expanding economies of scope. This will result in the removal of surplus places, the reduction in the number of small sixth form classes, and the duplication of provision between providers.

3.4. The 9 primary schools and 5 secondary schools subject to closure or significant investment within this proposal have significant issues that need to be tackled:

- 7 primary schools and 3 secondary schools have surplus places in excess of 25%;
- 2 schools are “small” schools with less than 90 mainstream pupils;
- The combined maintenance backlog of the 14 schools is £18.7m, which equates to £2,690 per pupil;
- 7 primary schools have mixed aged classes;

- The educational performance and pupil attendance of 4 of the 5 secondary schools is consistently in the third and fourth quartiles when compared to similar schools in Wales;
  - 3 of the secondary schools for the past three years have been in Band 4 & 5 of the Welsh Government national banding;
  - 4 of the 5 secondary schools have small sixth forms, less than 250 pupils, and with mixed educational performance.
- 3.5. The opportunity exists to reconfigure the primary and secondary schools to create educationally and financially viable schools that serve the local communities. This proposal seeks to achieve this.
- 3.6. The Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, will invest £75m in building new or refurbishing/remodelling existing buildings to ensure the pupils have a high quality 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment.
- 3.7. This investment will include:
- A new sixth form block and improved facilities at Treorchy Comprehensive School;
  - A new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail;
  - New and refurbished buildings at the Porth and Tonypandy secondary school sites to create two 3-16 schools;
  - Extending, remodelling and refurbishing YGG Llwynceilyn;
  - Relocating YGG Tonyrefail to a refurbished and modern primary school site;
  - 21<sup>st</sup> Century improvements to a number of other schools in the area, including Treorchy Primary School and Cymmer Infants' and Junior Schools.
- 3.8. To achieve this, the Council is seeking to:
- Close the sixth forms of Ferndale Community School, Porth County Community School and Tonypandy Community College and transfer the sixth form provision to Treorchy Comprehensive School and a new 3-18 school in Tonyrefail;
  - Close Porth County Community School, Llwynceilyn Infants' School, Porth Infants' School, and Porth Junior School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Porth County Community School;
  - Increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llwynceilyn by approximately 100 places, utilising the site of the existing Llwynceilyn Infants' School;
  - Close Tonypandy Community College, Penygraig Infants' School, Penygraig Junior School, Tonypandy Primary School and Ysgol Yr Eos Primary School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Tonypandy College. Relocate the specialist primary pupil referral provision at the Tai Centre, Penygraig to the site of the existing Ysgol Yr Eos Primary School;
  - Close Tonyrefail Comprehensive School and Tonyrefail Primary School and create a new 3-19 middle school on the site of the existing Tonyrefail

Comprehensive School. Relocate Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail to the current Tonyrefail Primary School;

- Change the catchment area of Treorchy Comprehensive School, Ferndale Community School, and set new catchment areas for the new middle schools for Porth, Tonypandy and Tonyrefail;
- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Ysgol Yr Eos, and the three Learning Support Classes at Porth County Community School to the new 3-16 school at Porth, to create specialist provision for the four key stages;
- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Tonyrefail Comprehensive School to the new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail.

3.9. The proposal is focused on raising educational standards at all key stages and ensuring that the limited financial resources are targeted at improving the learning environments for the pupils. The proposal will remove 2,000 surplus places, remove a maintenance backlog in excess of £15m, and release seven sites for housing or other development.

3.10. The draft timetable to implement the proposed changes is set out below. The timetable is not set in stone as there are a number of factors that could significantly increase or decrease elements of the timetable. For example, as the proposals are changes to sixth form education and the other proposed changes are related to the proposal to amend sixth form provision the Welsh Government Minister for Education and Skills will determine the outcome of the statutory notice. We have no influence over the time it will take for the Minister to determine the proposal.

Project	Indicative Start Date	Indicative Completion Date
Porth 3-16 middle school	July 2017	September 2018
Tonypandy 3-16 middle school	August 2017	September 2018
Treorchy 11-19 secondary	April 2017	September 2018
Tonyrefail 3-19 middle school	August 2016	September 2018
YGG Tonyrefail 3-11	October 2017	September 2018

#### **4 TIMESCALE, CONSULTATION AND THE PROCESS OF DECISION MAKING**

4.1 The process for closing schools has changed due to the new Code.

4.2 The Code on School Organisation (“The Code”) is made under Sections 38 and 39 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The Code came into force on 1 October 2013 and applies in respect of all school proposals published by way of a statutory notice after that date. Proposals to close a school have to follow the following process:

1. The Council’s Cabinet considers the Code and authorises a consultation on the changes to the schools;
2. At the start of the consultation period the Council **must** provide consultees with a consultation document and give them at least 42 days in which to respond, with at least 20 of these days being school days. If the Council considers it appropriate meetings are held with stakeholders during the consultation period;

3. Consultation comments are collated and summarised by the Council. This summary together with the Council's officers own responses and Estyn's views of the proposal is published in a consultation report within 13 weeks of the end of the consultation period and presented to the Council's Cabinet for consideration;
  4. The Council's Cabinet decide whether to proceed with the changes within 6 months of the end of the consultation period. If the decision is to proceed, Step 5 is taken. If a new option emerges during the consultation which the Council's Cabinet wish to consider, then Steps 1-3 are repeated;
  5. Statutory notice is published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The notice **must** be published on a school day and with 15 school days (not including the day of publication) in the notice period;
  6. If written or e-mailed objections are received, the Council **must** publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and their responses to them within 28 7 days of the end of the objection period;
  7. As the proposals are changes to sixth form education and the other proposed changes are related to the proposal to amend sixth form provision the Welsh Government Minister for Education and Skills will determine the outcome of the statutory notice;
  8. If the proposals receive approval / the Council determine to implement them, they should be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice, or any subsequent modified date.
- 4.3 The consultation will start on the 20 October 2014 and will be completed at 5pm on 30 January 2015. The feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet in February 2015.
- 4.4 The Council's Cabinet will consider the report and will consider, based on the feedback, whether to proceed with the proposal, make changes to the proposal or not proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal for the foreseeable future.

## **5 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 This is a very ambitious proposal that seeks to transform education provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail, with an investment of £75m in new and improved facilities. Education standards in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail are improving but there are too many small schools and small sixth forms that limit educational opportunities for children.
- 5.2 This is the largest ever investment in education in the County Borough, in an area with a high number of pupils on free school meals, and seeks to provide learning environments and learning experiences that are as good, if not better than those experienced across the best schools in the UK.
- 5.3 Members may have already seen the results of the Council's investment in new and improved schools in the Cynon Valley, with the new secondary school on the Sobell site, and new primary schools in Abercynon, Cwmbach and Ynysboeth. Welsh Government has recently approved £24m of funding for a new school for Y Pant Comprehensive in Pontyclun.

- 5.4 The proposed £75m investment in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail provides the opportunity for nearly 7,000 children to benefit from improved educational facilities.
- 5.5 It is recommended, therefore, that Members give approval to officers to commence the consultation processes necessary to achieve the proposal outlined in this report.

**APPENDIX  
CONSULTATION ON THE REORGANISATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS,  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE RHONDDA  
VALLEYS AND TONYREFAIL**





**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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PRIMARY SCHOOLS, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND  
SIXTH FORM PROVISION IN THE RHONDDA  
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## Introduction

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposals to:

- Create two sixth form centres of excellence, based at Treorchy and Tonyrefail;
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Porth and Tonypany, and one 3-19 school, in Tonyrefail, which will take a radically different approach to education in the areas, by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources;
- Increase the availability of Welsh medium primary provision in Porth and Tonyrefail;
- Improve the learning environment of primary aged pupils with additional learning needs.

To achieve this, the proposal is to:

- Close the sixth forms of Ferndale Community School, Porth County Community School and Tonypany Community College and transfer the sixth form provision to Treorchy Comprehensive School and a new 3-19 school in Tonyrefail;
- Close Porth County Community School, Llwynycelyn Infants' School, Porth Infants' School, and Porth Junior School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Porth County Community School;
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llwynycelyn by approximately 100 places, utilising the site of the existing Llwynycelyn Infants' School;
- Close Tonypany Community College, Penygraig Infants' School, Penygraig Junior School, Tonypany Primary School and Ysgol Yr Eos Primary School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Tonypany Community College. Relocate the specialist primary pupil referral provision at the Tai Centre, Penygraig to the site of the existing Ysgol Yr Eos Primary School;
- Close Tonyrefail Comprehensive School and Tonyrefail Primary School and create a new 3-19 middle school on the site of the existing Tonyrefail Comprehensive School. Relocate Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail to the current Tonyrefail Primary School;
- Change the catchment area of Treorchy Comprehensive School, Ferndale Community School, and set new catchment areas for the new middle schools for Porth, Tonypany and Tonyrefail;
- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Ysgol Yr Eos, and the three Learning Support Classes at Porth County Community School to the new 3-16 school at Porth, to create specialist provision for the four key stages;
- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Tonyrefail Comprehensive School to the new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail.

To achieve these changes, the Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, is planning to invest £75m in new or refurbished/remodelled school buildings and facilities.

The proposals are inter-dependent projects and it is proposed that the changes will be implemented over the period to 31 August 2018. Given the number of schools affected by the proposals, the consultation document has been set out in the following five sections, encouraging consultees to provide feedback on specific school proposals:

- **Section 1** – Overview of the Proposals;
- **Section 2** – The proposed changes to sixth form provision and changes to 11-16, and 16-19 catchment areas;
- **Section 3** – The proposed changes to primary and secondary provision in Porth;
- **Section 4** – The proposed changes to primary and secondary provision in Tonypanyd; and
- **Section 5** – The proposed changes to primary and secondary provision in Tonyrefail.

### Who will we consult with?

We are seeking the views of the following stakeholders:

- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of the following schools: Abercerdin Primary; Aberllechau Primary; Alaw Primary; Bodringallt Primary; Cwmclydach Primary; Cwmlai Primary; Cymmer Infants'; Cymmer Junior; Darren Park Primary; Ferndale Infants'; Gelli Primary; Hafod Primary; Hendreforgan Primary; Llwyncelyn Infants'; Llwynypia Primary; Maerdy Primary; Parc Primary; Penpych Community Primary; Penrhys Primary; Pentre Primary; Penygraig Infants'; Penygraig Junior; Pen-yr-englyn Community Primary; Pontrhondda Primary; Pontygwaith Primary; Porth Infants'; Porth Junior; Rhiwgarn Infants'; SS Gabriel & Raphael RC Primary; Ton Pentre Infants'; Ton Pentre Junior; Tonypanyd Primary; Tonyrefail Primary; Trealaw Primary; Tref-Y-Rhyg Primary; Treorchy Primary; Tylorstown Primary; Williamstown Primary; Ynyshir Primary; Ysgol Yr Eos; YGG Bodringallt; YGG Bronllwyn; YGG
- Other Governing Bodies of neighbouring primary and secondary schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- The Governing Body of Coleg Y Cymoedd
- The Governing Body of the University of South Wales
- Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Assembly Members for all constituencies and regional areas serving Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda, Pontypridd, Ogmore and Cynon Valley
- Estyn
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- Teaching and support staff trade unions
- Central South Education Consortium
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- South East Wales Transport Association
- The local Communities First

- Llwyncelyn; YGG Llyn y Forwyn;  
YGG Tonyrefail; YGG Ynyswen.
- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of Ferndale Community School, Porth County Community School, Tonypandy Community College, Tonyrefail Comprehensive School, Treorchy Comprehensive School and Ysgol Gyfun Y Cymer
  - The Management Board of the Tai Centre
- Partnerships
- Tonyrefail Community Council and Gilfach Goch Community Council
  - Neighbouring local authorities
  - Mudiad Meithrin
  - The Welsh Language Commissioner

### **What will the consultation process entail?**

The consultation will start on the 20th October 2014 and will be completed at 5pm on 30th January 2015. The feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet in February 2015. This consultation report will be available for all persons to view on the Council internet site and copies can be obtained on request from the address detailed on page 7 of this document.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the report and will consider, based on the feedback, whether to proceed with the proposal, make changes to the proposal or not proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal for the foreseeable future.

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal a Statutory Notice is published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections **must** be made in writing or by email, and sent to the Council within 28 days of the date on which the proposal was published.

As the proposals are changes to sixth form education and the other proposed changes are related to the proposal to amend sixth form provision, the Welsh Government Minister for Education and Skills will determine the outcome of the statutory notice.

If there are objections, the Council's Director of Education & Lifelong Learning will publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and his response to them within 28 days of the end of the objection period. This report will also be available for all persons to view on the Council's internet site and copies can be obtained on request from the address detailed on page 7 of this document.

If there are any objections to the statutory notice, within 35 days of the end of the objection period the Welsh Government Minister for Education and Skills will be provided with the objection report, copies of the objection(s) and the relevant correspondence. The Welsh

Government Minister for Education and Skills will determine the outcome of the statutory notice.

### **What do you have to consider?**

The remainder of the consultation document sets out the rationale for the proposed changes to primary, secondary and post 16 education provision in the communities within the catchment areas of Ferndale, Porth, Tonypandy, Tonyrefail and Treorchy secondary schools. We would like you to consider the information contained within this document and to hear your views as to whether or not you support the proposals to:

- Create two sixth form centres of excellence, based at Treorchy and Tonyrefail;
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Porth and Tonypandy, and one 3-19 school, in Tonyrefail, which will take a radically different approach to education in the areas, by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources;
- Increase the availability of Welsh medium primary provision in Porth and Tonyrefail;
- Improve the learning environment of primary aged pupils with additional learning needs.

To achieve this we will have to:

- Close the sixth forms of Ferndale Community School, Porth County Community School and Tonypandy Community College and transfer the sixth form provision to Treorchy Comprehensive School and a new 3-19 school in Tonyrefail;
- Close Porth County Community School, Llwynceilyn Infants' School, Porth Infants' School, and Porth Junior School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Porth County Community School;
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llwynceilyn by approximately 100 places, utilising the site of the existing Llwynceilyn Infants' School;
- Close Tonypandy Community College, Penygraig Infants' School, Penygraig Junior School, Tonypandy Primary School and Ysgol Yr Eos Primary School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Tonypandy Community College. Relocate the specialist primary pupil referral provision at the Tai Centre, Penygraig to the site of the existing Ysgol Yr Eos Primary School;
- Close Tonyrefail Comprehensive School and Tonyrefail Primary School and create a new 3-19 middle school on the site of the existing Tonyrefail Comprehensive School. Relocate Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail to the site of the current Tonyrefail Primary School;
- Change the catchment areas of Treorchy Comprehensive School and, Ferndale Community School, and set new catchment areas for the new middle schools for Porth, Tonypandy and Tonyrefail;
- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Ysgol Yr Eos, and the three Learning Support Classes at Porth County Community School to the new 3-16 school at Porth, to create specialist provision for the four key stages;
- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Tonyrefail Comprehensive School to the new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail.

**How do you make your views known?**

Consultation events will be held and you are welcome to attend the appropriate meeting.

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
<b>Ferndale Community School</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	4 <sup>th</sup> November 2014, 4 – 6pm	Ferndale Community School
<b>Porth County Community School</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Porth County Community School
<b>Tonypandy Community College</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Tonypandy Community College
<b>Tonyrefail Comprehensive</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Tonyrefail Comprehensive
<b>Treorchy Comprehensive</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Treorchy Comprehensive
<b>Llwynycelyn Infants'</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Llwynycelyn Infants'
<b>Porth Infants'</b>			
<b>Porth Junior</b>			
<b>Penygraig Infants'</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Penygraig Junior
<b>Penygraig Junior</b>			
<b>Tonypandy Primary</b>			
<b>Ysgol yr Eos</b>			
<b>Tonyrefail Primary</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	Tonyrefail Primary
<b>YGG Tonyrefail</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	27 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 4 – 6 pm	YGG Tonyrefail
<b>Ferndale Community School</b>	School Council	4th November 2014, 2 – 3pm	Ferndale Community School
<b>Porth County Community School</b>	School Council	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 2 – 3 pm	Porth County Community School
<b>Tonypandy Community College</b>	School Council	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2014; 2 – 3 pm	Tonypandy Community College
<b>Tonyrefail Comprehensive</b>	School Council	11th November 2014; 2 – 3 pm	Tonyrefail Comprehensive
<b>Treorchy Comprehensive</b>	School Council	13th November 2014; 2 – 3 pm	Treorchy Comprehensive
<b>Llwynycelyn Infants'</b>	School Council	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Llwynycelyn Infants'
<b>Porth Infants'</b>	School Council	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Porth Infants'
<b>Porth Junior</b>	School Council	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Porth Junior
<b>Penygraig Infants'</b>	School Council	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Penygraig Infants'
<b>Penygraig Junior</b>	School Council	19 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Penygraig Junior
<b>Tonypandy Primary</b>	School Council	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Tonypandy Primary
<b>Ysgol yr Eos</b>	School Council	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Ysgol yr Eos
<b>Tonyrefail Primary</b>	School Council	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Tonyrefail Primary

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
<b>YGG Tonyrefail</b>	School Council	27 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	YGG Tonyrefail
<b>Sixth Form Changes All Schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	12 <sup>th</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Treorchy Comprehensive School
		13 <sup>th</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Tonyrefail Comprehensive School
<b>Porth County and Porth Primary Schools – all Porth schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	20 <sup>th</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Porth County Community School
<b>Tonyrefail Comprehensive and Tonyrefail Primary Schools – all Tonyrefail schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	21 <sup>st</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Tonyrefail Comprehensive School
<b>Tonypandy Community College and Tonypandy Primary Schools – all Tonypandy schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2015, 2 – 6pm	Tonypandy Community College

Consultation questionnaires are attached. These will also be available at the drop-in session detailed above and on the Council's internet site at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk)

You are also welcome to put your views and any questions you may have in writing to:

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
School Organisation and Planning Unit  
Ty Trevithick,  
Abercynon CF45 4UQ Telephone (01443) 744227 Fax (01443) 744201

E-mail [schoolplanning@rctednet.net](mailto:schoolplanning@rctednet.net)

All correspondence should be received no later than 5pm on Friday 30th January 2015.

Please note that responses to the consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal. Objections can only be forwarded following the publication of the Statutory Notice.



All but two of the schools affected by this proposal are English medium schools and therefore all the consultation documents are via the English language. Welsh Language copies of the consultation document have been provided to the Welsh medium schools. If a Welsh language copy of the consultation document is required, please contact the above address.

## SECTION 1 – Overview of the Proposals

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposals to:

- Create two sixth form centres of excellence, based at Treorchy and Tonyrefail;
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Porth and Tonypany, and one 3-19 school, in Tonyrefail, which will take a radically different approach to education in the areas, by sharing both primary and secondary sector resources. It offers opportunities for cross-age learning, shared teaching practices and access to excellent facilities for all age groups;
- Increase the number of Welsh medium primary places in Porth and Tonyrefail;
- Improve the learning environment of primary aged pupils with additional learning needs.

To achieve these changes, the Council, in partnership with Welsh Government, will invest £75m in building new or refurbishing/remodelling existing buildings to ensure the pupils have a high quality, viable and sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment.

This investment will include:

- A new sixth form block and improved facilities at Treorchy Comprehensive School;
- A new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail;
- New and refurbished buildings at the Porth and Tonypany secondary school sites to create two 3-16 schools;
- Extending, remodelling and refurbishing YGG Llwynceilyn;
- Relocating YGG Tonyrefail to a refurbished and modern primary school site;
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century improvements to a number of other schools in the area.

### What is the basis for this proposal?

In recent years, Estyn has sharpened its approach to inspection of schools and local authorities and has raised the bar in respect of what it considers to be good and excellent provision. Furthermore, Estyn has taken a very hard line on local authorities in Wales that have weaknesses in key areas such as corporate governance, educational standards, attendance levels, surplus places and safeguarding.

Estyn's conclusion in March 2012 on the quality of education services for children and young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf was:

- **Overall Judgement – Adequate** (Strengths outweigh areas for improvement);
- **Capacity to Improve – Adequate.**

In addition Estyn made the following recommendations for the Council:

- R1 - raise standards in schools particularly in key stage 4;
- R2 - improve attendance rates in all schools;

- R3 - improve the evaluation and analyses of data across service areas and partnerships to drive improvements in outcomes for learners;
- R4 - use the full powers available to the authority to improve leadership and management in schools;
- R5 - reduce surplus places; and
- R6 - improve the rigour and the level of scrutiny and challenge across all services and partnerships.

Over the past two years the Council has focused its attention on these six recommendations, and in particular recommendations 1, 2 & 5, which will have the greatest impact on pupil achievement in our schools. As a result, schools that, when compared with similar schools across Wales based on free school meals are in the third and fourth quartiles are being subject to significant challenge, scrutiny and support. Where there is little evidence of significant progress, the Council is intervening using a range of its powers. One of the powers is to close schools that over an extended period continue to under-perform providing an education to children that is not good enough.

Estyn also highlighted that the Council had the highest number of surplus places in Wales and that action had to be taken to address this issue. This was followed up by a letter from the Welsh Government Minister for Education and Skills in November 2012 that instructed the Council to take action in respect of surplus places or the Welsh Government would take responsibility for removing the surplus places.

The Elected Members have accepted Estyn's recommendations and have undertaken a review of our school provision. The criteria we have used for selecting schools for review is one or more of the following:

- Surplus places in excess of 25% of published capacity;
- Buildings that are beyond economic repair/not fit for purpose;
- Financially unviable (usually due to a sharp fall in pupil numbers);
- Schools considered to be 'small' schools, i.e. schools with 90 or fewer pupils;
- Separate infant and junior schools in close proximity;
- 'Paired' schools, i.e. where children progress from one of the schools to the other;
- Mixed aged classes where there are more than two age groups in one class;
- Schools considered to be at risk, based on their academic Key Stage data and the quality of the leadership, of meeting Estyn's criteria as a school in need of significant improvement or special measures.

The 9 primary schools and 5 secondary schools included within this proposal have been assessed against the aforementioned criteria:

- 7 primary schools and 3 secondary schools have surplus places in excess of 25%;
- 2 schools are "small" schools with less than 90 mainstream pupils;
- The combined maintenance backlog of the 14 schools is £18.7m , which equates to £2,690 per pupil;
- 8 primary schools have mixed classes with more than two age groups;

- The educational performance and pupil attendance of 4 of the 5 secondary schools is consistently in the third and fourth quartiles when compared to similar schools in Wales;
- 3 of the secondary schools for the past three years have been in Band 4 and 5 of the Welsh Government national banding;

In addition 4 of the 5 secondary schools have small sixth forms of less than 250 pupils, and with mixed educational performance.

The opportunity exists to reconfigure the primary and secondary schools to create educationally and financially viable schools that serve the local communities. This proposal seeks to achieve this.

### **What is the educational case for the proposals?**

School organisational change should point to the educational benefits that any change will offer, particularly in relation to overall improvements in standards, but also in terms of the social and emotional development of children, which would usually impact beneficially on their overall achievement and outcomes.

It is the Council's view that creating larger sixth forms and 3-16 schools will:

- **Improve educational outcomes;**
  - Create larger Foundation Phase, KS2 and sixth form departments that will promote the sharing of skills and expertise across more viable teams;
  - Provide teaching and support staff with more opportunity to develop professionally;
  - Enable greater opportunities for staff to move between key stages and further develop expertise;
  - Provide a more appropriate curriculum and wider extra-curricular opportunities which will improve attendance and educational outcomes;
- **Improve educational provision;**
  - Provide the conditions that will enable a broader and more diverse curriculum to be developed to better meet the needs of the school's young people and in ways that will be viable and sustainable over the longer term;
  - Improve the range and quality of facilities and learning resources available to the benefit of all pupils;
  - Enable greater continuity of support for vulnerable groups of pupils;
  - Allow for the potential for financial savings in terms of staffing structures and purchase of services, which accrue to a larger school;
  - Broaden the range of extra-curricular and out-of-school activities and develop them in ways that are sustainable over the longer term;
  - Deliver the future capital investment benefits that would arise from the modernisation of a small number of institutions rather than many;
  - Create schools of a sustainable size for their catchment area by removing surplus capacity, providing greater educational and financial stability;

- Release significant resources that will be reinvested in improving the buildings and in improving standards of teaching and learning, which otherwise would not have been available;
- **Improve leadership and management;**
  - Provides the opportunity for the headteacher to distribute key leadership tasks such as child protection, literacy, numeracy, special educational needs etc to a greater number of staff. Often in a small school, the headteacher takes responsibility for the vast majority of these tasks;
  - Creates leadership opportunities for other staff, and for others to specialise in key areas, which will enhance educational provision and outcomes;
  - Allow teaching and support staff access to a wider range of responsibilities:
    - Improved career prospects;
    - Improved curriculum co-ordination;
    - The opportunity to teach across a wider age range;
    - An increased range of expertise;
    - Improved opportunities for staff interaction /co-ordination.

These benefits apply equally to the mainstream and the Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils in the schools. This argument is supported by Estyn in its recent report "School Size and Educational Effectiveness" (Dec 2013), which stated:

- *"Pupils' standards are good or better in a higher proportion of large primary schools than small and medium-sized primary schools. This may be because large schools tend to have more expertise and capacity to address the needs of more vulnerable pupils and the more able and talented pupils."*
- *"Examination results for large secondary schools are better than those for small and medium-sized secondary schools for nearly all measures";*
- *"In general, curriculum provision is broader and better balanced in large secondary schools. Nearly all large secondary schools provide good or better learning experiences for their pupils. Large secondary schools are able to offer a wider range of options due to economies of scale".*

Furthermore, in Estyn's report "Tackling child poverty and disadvantage in schools" (2010), the inspectors identified Neath Port Talbot as a local authority where disadvantaged learners achieved well, 60% better than the Welsh average. Estyn stated that:

*"One structural factor that has helped to raise the performance of disadvantaged pupils in Neath Port Talbot has been the existence of mainly 11-16 schools. The heads in most of these schools feel that this has made sure that their full attention is given to the 11 to 16 age range and that resources are not deflected towards the sixth form".*

## What is the educational case for creating larger sixth forms?

Over the past few years secondary schools have sought to collaborate to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure and to offer a good quality post 16 learning experience to their pupils. Despite the best efforts of the headteachers, schools and the Council:

- There are too many small sixth forms and a rationalisation would better meet the educational needs of the students by strengthening management arrangements, improving the effective and efficient use of resources, and better ensuring a quality educational experience. Only one sixth form in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail area, Treorchy Comprehensive School, will have greater than 250 pupils in September 2014;
- The delivery of post-16 education is inefficient and for many the educational experience could be considerably better. There is still unnecessary post 16 duplication of provision between schools and colleges, choice for many learners is restricted, class sizes are too small, and secondary school surplus places in the County Borough are projected to be over 4,000 by 2018 and over 1,400 in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail area (English medium schools) by 2018. This leads to valuable education funds being directed at additional staff costs and infrastructure when they would be better directed at the learners and the learner experience. Currently, across Rhondda Cynon Taf funds amounting to £300 per pupil that were originally provided to educate 11-16 pupils are redirected at sixth form learners, to subsidise loss making courses due to small class sizes. This amount increases to an average of £740 per pupil across the 5 English medium secondary schools in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail area;
- Small class sizes found in many sixth forms leads to limited student interactions, which diminishes the effectiveness of learning. Where providers have made the greatest progress in collaborating to reduce inefficiencies and improve effectiveness, learner opportunities and student interactions increase. However, travel between providers is seen by some students as a barrier to access a wider choice of courses.
- Choice is often dependent upon learner postal code. There is no equitable post 16 options entitlement for the County Borough;
- The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 4 (in relation to the Average Capped Wider Points Score) and Key Stage 5 (in relation to the Average Wider Points Score) in the County Borough are below Welsh averages and are amongst the lowest in Wales. A step change is still required to raise the number of young people participating in education post 16 and improve the quality of learning outcomes by raising attainment, retention and progression.
- In 2013, in 4 of the 5 secondary schools included in this proposal, less than 50 students were entered for 2 or more A Levels or equivalent. While this improved slightly in 2014 only 2 schools entered more than 60 pupils. Providing an educationally and financially viable curriculum in a number of the schools is difficult.

Creating two sixth forms of approximately 500 students creates the capacity and economies of scale to be able to improve:

- **Standards and Achievement** – raising standards of success and achievement and increasing progression to Higher Education and employment.

- **Choice** – improving the breadth and depth of curriculum creating greater choice for all young people to choose learning pathways that best enable them to mix and match vocational, academic and occupational qualifications and experience.
- **Participation** – increasing participation and attendance rates.
- **Equality** – to ensure every sixth form student in the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail is able to access the curriculum of choice.
- **Ability to respond to future learners, community and business needs** – Re-skilling and up-skilling the population of Rhondda Cynon Taf as the commercial environment changes, to allow people to compete effectively in the job market.
- **Financial viability and effectiveness** – providing a cost effective and efficient model for delivery, removing unnecessary duplication, aligning capacity with demand (in light of demographic change), generating economies of scale and expanding economies of scope. This will result in the removal of surplus places, the reduction in the number of small sixth form classes, and the duplication of provision between providers.

### **What is the educational case for creating 3-16 schools?**

In bringing schools together whether that is through amalgamation, federation or informal clustering, the purpose has to be to improve teaching and learning and pupil outcomes. The benefits of 3-16 schools can be summarised as follows:

- A common ethos means pupils do not have to adapt to a new culture on moving schools;
- Coherent and consistent styles of teaching and learning progressing through the years gives stability to pupils' learning experiences;
- A comprehensive and common system for assessing, recording and tracking pupil progress throughout his/her schooling;
- Flexibility to provide the appropriate curriculum for individuals regardless of age;
- Increased access for pupils to a range of specialist accommodation, facilities and learning resources;
- Pupils with additional needs can maintain relationships with supporting agencies throughout their school career if required;
- A common attendance and behaviour policy means that routines are established and values understood from an early age;
- Parents may remain more involved in their children's education as they do not have to establish new relationships with staff.

The great strength of all-through education is the continuity of educational experience which negates the transition "dips" in pupil performance. A 3-16 school provides the opportunity to provide a "bridge" between key stages in order to create a seamless transition for pupils in terms of curriculum planning, learning and teaching. It can allow for a significant sharing of subject expertise and primary pedagogy in particular across key stages 2 and 3.

A study of the pilot 3-19 school in Lampeter has highlighted the scope provided by an all-through school for establishing a single unified team of specialist support staff and learning support assistants working closely with professionals from health, social care, and family

services. This has the potential to further enhance the already high standards of care provided for pupils with a wide range of additional learning difficulties, social and emotional needs. For many children with specific needs, the continuum of care and support provided by the school is more important than the particular age of the pupil concerned and there are obvious advantages in prolonging the relationships between teachers and other adults with support roles and individual pupils across the period of transition.

Another important benefit of all-age schooling is being able to achieve greater effectiveness through the sharing of resources, and being able to target these resources, whether financial, physical or human, at key areas of school improvement. Some reported benefits include:

- Provision of specialist teaching in KS2 or extending literacy and numeracy programmes into KS3;
- Access for primary phase pupils to the facilities of secondary phase;
- Providing scope for acceleration programmes;
- Joint Professional Development;
- Directing resources at early intervention;
- Planning a joint curriculum;
- Sharing equipment, hardware and accommodation;
- Increasing the range and capacity for extra-curricula/after school learning;
- Creating common administrative appointments.

#### **Will primary and secondary pupils have to share facilities and resources?**

It needs to be stressed that a 3-16 school would not result in young children sharing playgrounds or break times with much older pupils. There are already strict safeguarding protocols which are observed when any primary aged pupils visit a secondary site (walking in pairs in line with teachers or adult helpers at the front and rear).

The primary aged pupils will receive the majority of their lessons in a specialist remodelled primary school building. Nevertheless, the pupils will have the opportunity to be taught in the secondary school to develop their curricular skills through the use of specialised facilities e.g. science and technology. Secondary phase pupils will also be able to have learning opportunities in the primary phase especially around any care related vocational activities and meeting some of the requirements of the Welsh Baccalaureate. These learning opportunities will also provide support to the primary phase staff through such activities, for example year 12 and 13 pupils assisting primary school pupils with their reading. This is the case in Ysgol Llanhari, the first 3-19 school in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

#### **What will be the impact on the other “partner” primary schools in the community?**

Other partner/associated primary schools in each community will also benefit from the proposal. In Lampeter, where there is a similar arrangement, the pilot evaluation has highlighted that these primary schools have sought to further strengthen their relationship and transition arrangements with the primary and secondary phase of the 3-19 school, in



order that their pupils might benefit fully from the future all-through developments and to ensure that they will not be disadvantaged when they join the new school in Year 7.

### **What is the likely impact of the proposals on the school pupils?**

In making the proposed changes, many things will be different for the pupils from the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail, depending on parents' exercising their right of choice, but some things will remain the same:

- Some may have a longer or a different route to school, and some may be transported to school by bus;
- For the primary aged children, the pupils in their classroom are more likely to be in the same year group and there will be more opportunities to make friends with children of a similar age;
- Being in classes with predominantly their own age group, the teacher will be better able to offer the primary pupils a wider and more varied curriculum to support all learners, including the least and most able;
- The teachers and teaching assistants may be different, however, the majority of teachers and teaching assistants should be able to transfer between the schools, if they wish to do so;
- For sixth form students there could be less travelling during the school day to access the curriculum and therefore there will be greater opportunities for more unstructured/informal interaction between students and teachers during the school day. The time saved from not travelling can also be used to focus on studying or completing course work;
- There will be more competition for pupils in and outside the classroom which is what children require if they are to achieve good educational outcomes;
- Being part of a larger school creates opportunity to run school sports teams, debating team etc. The children attending the SEN Classes will also have the opportunity to engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities.

The principal change will be an improvement in the quality of the educational provision, and this should have a significant impact on educational performance of the pupils.

There is a statutory duty placed upon the local authority (LA) to provide learners with free transport to their nearest suitable school if they reside beyond safe "walking distance" to that school. The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh or dual language mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate. The law relating to safe "walking distance" is defined as two miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving primary education and three miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving secondary education.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has exercised the discretionary powers afforded to it under the provisions of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 to make a more generous provision to learners as set out below:

- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory primary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 1½ miles, instead of 2 miles as required by the Measure;
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school, where places are available, is provided to children who meet the 1½ mile eligibility criterion from the start of the Foundation Phase (the start of the school term after their third birthday), rather than from the start of compulsory education (the start of the school term after their fifth birthday) as required by the Measure.
- The eligibility criterion for walking distance for learners receiving compulsory secondary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 2 miles instead of 3 miles as required by the Measure.
- Free transport is provided to post 16 learners who meet the 2 mile eligibility criterion for two years after the end of compulsory education, rather than until the end of compulsory education as required by the Measure. This provision applies to full time attendance at the nearest school or college to the learner's home at which the approved course of study that they wish to pursue is offered.
- Free transport to their nearest suitable school is provided to learners (as set out above) in accordance with their preferred religious denomination.
- The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh, dual language or voluntary aided (faith) mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate.

Many local authorities across Wales have reviewed the discretionary elements of their Home to School Transport Policy and often only provide the statutory minimum transport provision or require a contribution from post 16 learners to the cost of their travel. As with other local authorities, Rhondda Cynon Taf's policy may be subject to review in the future. Any proposed changes will be subject to consultation with learners and parents having regard to the relevant Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance. Clearly, if the Council's Home to School Transport Policy was to change in the future this could impact on the views of the consultees of this proposal to reorganise primary schools, secondary schools and sixth form provision in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail. **In providing feedback, consultees may wish to consider the impact such a change could have on their response to this consultation.**

At present, for all the proposed changes the Council's policy regarding free school transport will continue to apply. The Council has already taken steps to assess the safety of a number of the change in routes to school, for example the primary changes and the increased distances to sixth forms that are within the qualifying distance to access free home to school transport. For the vast majority of the routes, the Council consider the routes to be a safe route to school. Nevertheless, the Council will seek to further improve the safety of a few routes through additional crossing points, wider pavements, and measures to reduce the speed of the traffic. Pupils that attend SEN Classes will continue to be transported from their home to the classes relocated to the new proposed Porth 3-16 School.

The Welsh Government and the Council has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people:

1. have a flying start in life;
2. have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
3. enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
4. have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
5. are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
6. have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
7. are not disadvantaged by poverty.

We consider that this proposal benefits the children in the communities of the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

### **What is the likely impact of the proposal on the staff of the schools?**

For the school changes in Treorchy Comprehensive School, YGG Llwyncelyn, YGG Tonyrefail, and the Tai Centre the governing bodies and staffing arrangements will remain the same, except that the staffing structure for Treorchy would have to reflect an increase in the sixth form students.

For the school change in Ferndale Community School, the staffing structure will need to be developed for the 11-16 school taking into account a curriculum for a secondary school without a sixth form provision.

For the school changes in Porth, Tonypandy and Tonyrefail, all the schools involved in the proposal will close and new schools will be opened with a new governing body. Should the proposal proceed, the proposed new schools for Porth, Tonypandy and Tonyrefail will need to appoint temporary governing bodies for the interim period until the new schools open.

The temporary governing bodies will need to appoint new headteachers, who will then formulate and propose the leadership, management and staffing structures for the new schools. The staffing structure for Porth and Tonypandy 3-16 schools will need to be developed for the 3-16 school taking into account a number of factors, including delivering a curriculum for a secondary school without sixth form provision. Whilst, the staffing structure for Tonyrefail will need to be developed for the 3-19 school taking into account a number of factors, including delivering a curriculum for a secondary school with an enhanced sixth form provision

The Council recommends that if the proposal is accepted that the temporary governing bodies of new schools and the governing bodies of those schools increasing in size through pupil transfers “ring fence” all teaching and associated staff posts to staff within the existing schools in the first instance.

The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change, as illustrated by the recent school organisation changes in Aberdare.

### What are the disadvantages of this proposal?

School reorganisation will inevitably cause some disruption and uncertainty for a period of time, although experience shows that this can be kept to a minimum and the children's education does not suffer. The disadvantages of the proposal and how these risks can be managed by the Council and the schools are as follows:

Disadvantages	Risk Management
Sixth form students will be required to travel further for sixth form provision.	Sixth form students already study courses at alternative establishments as part of the Rhondda Post 16 Consortium of schools and have to travel at the beginning, middle or at the end of the school day.
There will be increased costs of home to school transport.	The increased costs of transport due to the need to transfer sixth form students to the two sixth form centres will be significantly less than the cost of continuing the inefficient post 16 provision in the five secondary schools. Furthermore, the increased costs of travel are also less than the cost to upgrade all of the primary schools proposed for closure.
Some parents may prefer to send their child to two or three schools rather than to one all through school. 3-16 and 3-19 schools are a new concept of education provision to many parents and there may be concerns.	Factors such as the appeal of a modern 21 <sup>st</sup> Century School with the latest education facilities and the availability of free transport (where eligible) could be important considerations for many in making their choice. The 3-19 pilot in Lampeter has been independently evaluated and it is considered to be a success. Ysgol Llanhari is also a 3-19 school and the feedback from parents has been very positive. Other local authorities are adopting a similar approach across Wales, England and Scotland.
There will be staffing implications in that, for example there will be need for only one Headteacher. Staff will be concerned about the security of their jobs.	The respective governing bodies will, as soon as possible, once the statutory procedures are completed, address the staffing issues. In practice governing bodies seek to ensure as much continuity in the staffing as possible in these situations.

Despite these disadvantages, the Council considers that the educational advantages of the proposals outweigh the short-term impact of the changes for pupils and parents.

### What alternative options have been considered ?

The current position is that we have too many schools, too many schools with small sixth forms, too many surplus places, and too many schools housed in Victorian buildings that are expensive to maintain, with limited specialist and outdoor facilities, all of which result in

educational standards being too low and limited financial resources not being used efficiently and effectively.

The options available to the Council to improve educational performance and ensure the provision represents value for money are as follows.

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
(i) - Retain the status quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No capital investment required by the Council;</li> <li>• No disruption to the pupils, parents and the staff;</li> <li>• No impact on home to school transport;</li> <li>• The schools have a strong tradition and are well supported in the local communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not address the need to reduce the high number of surplus places in accordance with Welsh Government requirements;</li> <li>• Does not address the need to improve the school buildings to meet 21<sup>st</sup> Century School standards;</li> <li>• Financially unviable in the future due to the high on-going maintenance costs of the school building estate;</li> <li>• Post 16 funding is insufficient to support the post 16 curriculum offered in 4 of the 5 secondary schools which further drains resources that should be spent on 11-16 aged pupils;</li> <li>• Educational performance continues to be at best adequate in some schools.</li> </ul>
(ii) – Federate groups of schools, maintain the school buildings but with fewer headteachers and governing bodies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education provision would continue on each school site;</li> <li>• Opportunities for sharing staff expertise and good practice;</li> <li>• Minimum disruption to pupils, parents and staff;</li> <li>• No impact on home to school transport.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not address the need to reduce the high number of surplus places in accordance with Welsh Government requirements;</li> <li>• Does not address the need to improve the school buildings to meet 21<sup>st</sup> Century School standards;</li> <li>• Financially unviable in the future due to the high on-going maintenance costs of the school building estate;</li> <li>• Post 16 funding is insufficient to support the post 16 curriculum offered in 4 of the 5 secondary schools which further</li> </ul>

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Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
		<p>drains resources that should be spent on 11-16 aged pupils;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post 16 provision will continue to be limited in 4 of the 5 schools.</li> </ul>
<p>(iii) – Further development of the Rhondda post 16 Consortium working through greater collaboration between schools and the Further Education College, including better use of video conferencing facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education provision would continue on each school site;</li> <li>• No capital investment required by the Council;</li> <li>• No disruption to the pupils, parents and the staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timetabling highly difficult-possible permutations may arise whereby a pupil might study 3 or more subjects on 3 or more sites;</li> <li>• Increased transportation of learners during the school day, which is difficult to manage and a poor experience for the pupils;</li> <li>• Post 16 funding does not pay for travel between school sites. As a result, the travel is paid for by resources allocated to 11-16 provision;</li> <li>• Limited personal, social and educational interaction between the pupil cohorts.</li> </ul>
<p>(iv) - Retain the secondary school sixth forms but close one or more secondary schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removes a significant number of surplus places;</li> <li>• Increases the size of other secondary schools and other sixth forms;</li> <li>• Increases the educational and financial viability of the secondary schools and the sixth form provision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post 16 funding is insufficient to support post 16 curriculum offered in 3 of 4 remaining secondary schools which further drains resources that should be spent on 11-16 aged pupils;</li> <li>• Post 16 provision will continue to be limited in 3 of the 4 schools.</li> <li>• Significantly increases the home to school transport costs;</li> <li>• Insufficient savings generated to invest in new buildings to accommodate additional pupils with improved facilities;</li> <li>• Issues with high surplus places, high maintenance costs and unsuitable school buildings in the primary sector not addressed.</li> </ul>

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Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>(v) – Merge the primary schools onto existing or new sites, refurbishing existing or building new primary schools. This could include building new primary schools on the sites of secondary schools but the primary schools would be under the control of a separate governing body.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removes a significant number of surplus places;</li> <li>• Increases the size of some primary schools;</li> <li>• Increases the educational and financial viability of the primary schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited space in some communities to build new primary schools or to expand existing schools;</li> <li>• Issues with high surplus places, high maintenance costs and unsuitable school buildings in the secondary sector not addressed;</li> <li>• The educational and financial viability of the school sixth forms is not addressed.</li> </ul>
<p>(vi) – (iv) &amp; (v) above combined</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removes a significant number of surplus places;</li> <li>• Increases the size of other primary and secondary schools and other sixth forms;</li> <li>• Increases the educational and financial viability of the primary schools, secondary schools and the sixth form provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The educational and financial viability of the school sixth forms is not fully addressed;</li> <li>• Significantly increases the home to school transport costs;</li> <li>• Insufficient savings generated to invest in new buildings to accommodate additional pupils with improved facilities.</li> </ul>
<p>(vii) – Model being Proposed –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create two sixth form centres of excellence;</li> <li>• Create two new 3-16 schools, and one 3-19 school;</li> <li>• Increase the availability of Welsh medium primary provision in Porth and Tonyrefail;</li> <li>• Improve the learning environment of primary aged pupils with complex needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removes a significant number of surplus places;</li> <li>• Increases the size of sixth form provision and included primary schools</li> <li>• Retains local schools in the community;</li> <li>• Increases the educational and financial viability of the primary schools, secondary schools and the sixth form provision;</li> <li>• Enables the primary and secondary pupils to share specialist facilities, such as sporting facilities;</li> <li>• Improves the transition between KS2 and 3;</li> <li>• Better enables schools to provide an appropriate curriculum to all pupils;</li> <li>• Financially the most cost effective approach and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-16 and 3-19 schools are a new concept in Rhondda Cynon Taf, and parents will have concerns;</li> <li>• Many sixth form students will have further to travel to access the provision;</li> <li>• Increases the home to school transport costs.</li> </ul>

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
	<p>enables the Council to fund 50% of the £75m investment required;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimises the increase in home to school transport costs.</li> </ul>	

The options (i) – (vi) above have been considered by the Council and have been discounted and the preferred option, (vii), is that proposed in this consultation document.

## Community, Equality and Welsh Language Impact Assessments

As set out in the Welsh Government School Organisation Code, it is a requirement to publish Community Impact, Welsh Language Impact and Equality Impact Assessments. These have been produced as separate documents and are available on the Council's website. The overall impact of all the proposals outlined in this document will be neutral; any facilities currently offered in the schools, such as after school and breakfast clubs will be retained in the new provisions and hopefully enhanced and extended.

With regard to the Welsh Language proposals contained within the document, although an appropriate Impact Assessment has been prepared, it must be noted that the two proposals involve expansion of existing facilities, one of which involves a transfer to a new site, only. It is not the establishment of new provision.

### The Timetable for the proposed changes

Project	Indicative Start Date	Indicative Completion Date
Porth 3-16 middle school	July 2017	September 2018
Tonypanyd 3-16 middle school	August 2017	September 2018
Treorchy 11-19 secondary	April 2017	September 2018
Tonyrefail 3-19 middle school	August 2016	September 2018
YGG Tonyrefail 3-11 Welsh medium primary	October 2017	September 2018

## Admissions Arrangements

Admissions to all schools, for pupils aged between 3 – 16, outlined in this document will be managed by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, as the Admissions Authority in accordance with the Welsh Government School Admissions Code. The Council's Admissions Policy for all maintained schools is outlined in the Council produced "Starting School" admissions booklet. Admissions to sixth forms are managed by the individual schools. All schools included in these proposals are Community schools, maintained by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

Admission numbers for the proposed new schools will be calculated and published once the design and planning work for the buildings is completed. It must be stressed that admission



numbers will ensure that sufficient school places are made available to meet the current and forecasted demand for school places in the catchment areas of the schools included in these proposals.

### **Land and Buildings**

If the proposals outlined in this document are implemented, there will be several redundant school sites and buildings. As this is a consultation document, no decisions have yet been made in respect of the future of these sites and buildings. This issue will be managed in accordance with the agreed Council Policy on Surplus Land and Buildings.

### **Accommodation**

It must be stressed that this is a consultation process and that all design and planning work for the new school buildings is at an early stage of development. However, all works planned are included as part of the Council's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools proposals and any work undertaken, whether this is new build accommodation or refurbishment/remodelling of existing school buildings will be of a high quality, with flexible and sustainable learning environments fully conforming and complying with the standards outlined by Welsh Government for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools.

## **Section 2 - The proposed changes to sixth form provision and changes to 11-16, and 16-19 catchment areas**

### **Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council proposes to:**

- Create two sixth form centres of excellence, based at Treorchy and Tonyrefail;
- Create two new 3-16 schools, in Porth and Tonypandy, and one 3-19 school, in Tonyrefail.

To achieve this, the proposal is to:

- Close the sixth forms of Ferndale Community School, Porth County Community School and Tonypandy Community College and transfer the sixth form provision to Treorchy Comprehensive School and a new 3-19 school in Tonyrefail;
- **Porth** - Close Porth County Community School, Llwyncelyn Infants' School, Porth Infants' School, and Porth Junior School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Porth County Community School;
- **Tonypandy** - Close Tonypandy Community College, Penygraig Infants' School, Penygraig Junior School, Tonypandy Primary School and Ysgol Yr Eos Primary School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Tonypandy Community College;
- **Tonyrefail** - Close Tonyrefail Comprehensive School and Tonyrefail Primary School and create a new 3-19 middle school on the site of the existing Tonyrefail Comprehensive School;
- Change the catchment area of Treorchy Comprehensive School, Ferndale Community School, and set new catchment areas for the new middle schools for Porth, Tonypandy and Tonyrefail.

This will create two sixth forms of approximately 500 pupils each. To achieve this change the Council is proposing to invest £ 75m across the programme, an estimated breakdown is indicated below:

- £8.5m in Treorchy Comprehensive School, expanding the sixth form facilities and other infrastructure;
- £7.4m to improve the buildings at Porth County to ensure they meet the learning and safeguarding requirements of a 3-16 school;
- £8.6m to improve the buildings at Tonypandy Community College to ensure they meet the learning and safeguarding requirements of a 3-16 school;
- £44.8m to build a new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail, including relocating YGG Tonyrefail to a 21<sup>st</sup> Century School building;
- £5.7m to be invested in other schools to ensure the pupils have a high quality 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment.

### **Background to the Proposed Post 16 Provision Changes**

On 18<sup>th</sup> November 2009, Cabinet approved the Strategic Outline Case to Transform Education and Training in Rhondda Cynon Taf and set out to secure financial support from

Welsh Government to establish three bilingual tertiary centres to replace existing sixth forms and the full time vocational provision at the Further Education College (Coleg Y Cymoedd, formerly Coleg Morgannwg). In July 2011, the Welsh Government announced that 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools funding was over committed and that no new funds were to be available until April 2014. Furthermore, the capital funding available across Wales was to be reduced by 40% and local authorities were expected to fund 50% of any investment.

At its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2011, Cabinet determined that Welsh Government financial support was essential to deliver the preferred tertiary model. However, the Welsh Government was unable, for the foreseeable future, to set out indicative levels of funding it will be able to provide to support the delivery of the Post 16 Transformation Programme. It was determined that the achievability of delivering fundamental change to Rhondda Cynon Taf's Post 16 education provision could not be assessed until the Council was able to make an informed decision on what is affordable.

Therefore, at the September 2011 meeting, Cabinet agreed a way forward which was accepted by the secondary schools that sought to:

- Improve the quality of provision;
- Improve the education outcomes; and
- Be financially viable.

The agenda for the next three years was as follows:

- Enhance the 14-19 post 16 consortia of schools, by consolidating the consortia, from 5 to 4 from September 2012. The Welsh medium schools will remain as a separate consortium, but only due to the geographical difficulties of sharing minority subjects/courses;
- All the post 16 funding, including the 14-19 Grant, will be delegated to each school and/or consortium, with specific targets being set and agreed between the parties;
- Each consortium will have a separate governance structure, with a consortium manager;
- The consortium governors will determine the curriculum offer and where the curriculum is delivered;
- Quality of provision is of paramount importance. Schools in each consortium will only be able to offer sixth form provision for those subjects where the quality of teaching and learning is high;
- The Council will ensure the consortia produce the relevant management information for consortia governors to make informed decisions. This information will also be used by the Council to ensure each consortium complies with agreed objectives and meets agreed targets;
- Specialist vocational provision will be provided by FE Colleges.

Progress has been made against many of the key actions such as:

- The consolidation of the consortia from 5 to 4;
- Delegation of all 14-19 funding to the consortia;

- A clear consortium offer for all 4 consortia, removing duplication and reducing the number of similar courses within each school;
- Improved quality control and monitoring arrangements in place;
- Post 16 managers appointed/nominated in each consortia;
- Cardinal Newman, Coleg Y Cymoedd and St David's College have entered into a formal shared post 16 governance arrangements. However, the falling rolls and competition for students has also not helped in increasing collaboration between schools and colleges.

Despite the best efforts of the headteachers, schools and the Council:

- There are too many small sixth forms and a rationalisation would better meet the educational needs of the students by strengthening management arrangements, improving the effective and efficient use of resources, and better ensuring a quality educational experience. Only one sixth form in the Rhondda area, namely Treorchy Comprehensive School, will have more than 250 pupils in September 2014;
- The delivery of post 16 education is inefficient and for many the educational experience could be considerably better. There is still unnecessary post 16 duplication of provision between schools and colleges, choice for many learners is restricted, class sizes are too small, and secondary school surplus places in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail area are projected to be over 1,400 by 2018. This leads to valuable education funds being directed at additional staff costs and infrastructure when they would be better directed at the learners and the learner experience. Currently, across Rhondda Cynon Taf funding amounting to £300 per pupil that was originally provided to educate 11-16 aged pupils is being redirected at sixth form learners, to subsidise loss making courses due to small class sizes. This amount increases to an average of £740 per pupil across the 5 English medium secondary schools in the Rhondda and Tonyrefail area;
- Small class sizes found in many sixth forms leads to limited student interactions, which diminishes the effectiveness of learning. Where providers have made the greatest progress in collaborating to reduce inefficiencies and improve effectiveness, learner opportunities and student interactions increase. However, travel between providers is seen by some students as a barrier to access a wider choice of courses.
- Choice is often dependent upon learner postal code. There is no equitable post 16 options entitlement across the County Borough;
- The educational achievement and success at Key Stage 4 (in relation to the Average Capped Wider Points Score) and Key Stage 5 (in relation to the Average Wider Points Score) in the County Borough are below Welsh averages and among the lowest in Wales. A step change is still required to raise the number of young people participating in education post 16 and improve the quality of learning outcomes by raising attainment, retention and progression.
- In 2013, in 4 of the 5 secondary schools included in this proposal, less than 50 students were entered for 2 or more A Levels or equivalent. While this improved slightly in 2014 only 2 schools entered more than 60 pupils. Providing an educationally and financially viable curriculum in a number of the schools is difficult.

Three years have passed since the Council's Cabinet agreed the way forward, and the financial position for post 16 provision has significantly worsened and the foreseeable future, if the provision is left unchanged, looks bleak. Therefore, in the best interests of the

students of the Rhondda Valleys and Tonyrefail, we need to ensure the schools and college provide a suitable post 16 curriculum offer that meets the needs of the students, the local community and the needs of employers.

### Information on the Schools

The schools included within the proposal and the pupil numbers over the past five years are shown below. The pupil numbers are obtained from the statutory annual pupil count (PLASC) which must be undertaken in January each year.

School	Type of School	Age Range	School Capacity	Jan 2010	Jan 2011	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Jan 2014	% Surplus Jan 2014
Ferndale Community	Secondary	11-19	903	679	680	653	634	625	30.8%
Porth County	Secondary	11-19	1,465	1,251	1,200	1,128	1,076	1,024	30.1%
Tonypandy Community	Secondary	11-19	1,016	976	965	880	845	809	20.4%
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	Secondary	11-19	1,370	1,089	1,107	1,003	990	955	30.3%
Treorchy Comprehensive	Secondary	11-19	1,682	1,563	1,600	1,583	1,599	1,610	4.3%

The sixth form pupil numbers are shown below.

School	Jan 2010	Jan 2011	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Jan 2014
Ferndale Community	132	96	92	103	130
Porth County	273	263	235	209	222
Tonypandy Community	233	195	184	179	185
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	179	145	155	163	170
Treorchy Comprehensive	337	336	342	353	353
Total	1,154	1,035	1,008	1,007	1,060

### Pupil projections

Over the next five years the pupil projections for the five schools, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows. The projections take into account previous trends together with predicted demographic changes. It is important to note that this cannot take account of any unforeseen deviations in local trends.

School	School capacity	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	Jan 2019	% surplus in Jan 2019
Ferndale Community	903	633	610	617	620	618	31.6%
Porth County	1,465	983	954	947	944	930	36.5%

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School	School capacity	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	Jan 2019	% surplus in Jan 2019
Tonypandy Community	1,016	761	737	709	703	684	32.7%
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	1,370	942	921	930	936	956	30.2%
Treorchy Comprehensive	1,682	1,652	1,654	1,704	1,771	1,836	-9.2%

The sixth form projections are as follows.

School	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	Jan 2019
Ferndale Community	118	108	106	92	95
Porth County	202	186	182	181	166
Tonypandy Community	185	179	169	149	128
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	158	149	138	138	137
Treorchy Comprehensive	366	374	365	359	372
	1,029	996	960	919	898

Schools manage their own admissions for sixth form provision and determine the entry criteria. The Council sets the catchment areas for the sixth form provision in order to determine which students will be eligible for home to school transport. If the proposal was to be implemented in the future and students opted for their catchment sixth form school the three year forecasts from the first year of the new sixth form provision will be as follows.

School	Jan 2019	Jan 2020	Jan 2021
Tonyrefail Sixth Form	401	398	419
Treorchy Sixth Form	494	538	540
Total	895	936	959

*Difference in Jan 2019 total above due to rounding*

The 11-16 forecasts for the first year of the new school provision will be as follows:

School	Jan 2019
Ferndale Community	542
Porth County	753
Tonypandy Community	605
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	798
Treorchy Comprehensive	1351

Ferndale Community School will be the only 11-16 school in the Rhondda and the School will initially have 363 surplus places. It is proposed that Ferndale will be refurbished, with surplus accommodation being utilised for other community services such as Flying Start and

Youth Work. The surplus places in Porth and Tonypany will pre-dominantly be utilised by the transfer of the primary pupils.

### Current condition of the existing schools

Building condition surveys were commissioned by Welsh Government on all five schools and undertaken by EC Harris in January 2010. They have subsequently been updated by the Council to reflect any changes or improvements to the buildings. The results of the survey are as follows:

School	Building Condition Survey Result	Suitability Survey Result
Ferndale Community	B (Satisfactory)	B (Satisfactory)
Porth County	C (Poor)	B (Satisfactory)
Tonypany Community	B (Satisfactory)	B (Satisfactory)
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	C (Poor)	B (Satisfactory)
Treorchy Comprehensive	C (Poor)	B (Satisfactory)

### Quality and standards

As part of a national programme of school inspection, Estyn inspects all schools in Wales. A comparison between the quality and diversity of education provided at the five secondary schools during their last inspections is as follows:

The Estyn inspection framework changed in 2010. Accordingly, the inspection outcomes are presented here in two tables

School	Date Inspected	Key Question (KQ) Outcomes						
		KQ1	KQ2	KQ3	KQ4	KQ5	KQ6	KQ7
Porth County	Dec 2009	2	2	1	1	1	2	1
Tonypany Community	Feb 2009	2	2	2	1	2	2	1
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	Mar 2010	3	2	2	1	2	2	2
<b>Key: Grade 1</b> good with outstanding features; <b>Grade 2</b> good features and no important shortcomings; <b>Grade 3</b> good features outweigh shortcomings; <b>Grade 4</b> some good features, but shortcomings in important areas; <b>Grade 5</b> many important shortcomings								

School	Date Inspected	Judgement - Current Performance	Judgement - Prospects for Improvement
Ferndale Community	Nov 2010	Adequate	Adequate
Treorchy Comprehensive	Mar 2012	Excellent	Excellent

Since September 2012, the Council's School Improvement Services have been provided by the Central South Consortium, a regional school improvement services for the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. The Consortium categorises the performance of each school in the region based on its system of categorisation of effectiveness (A-D). The table below sets out the categorisation of the five secondary schools and the rationale for the Consortium's judgement.

School	Categorisation	Rationale for the Judgement
Ferndale Community	C	This is because comparative performance against similar schools in its benchmarking group is not consistently good. The quality of teaching in some areas is also inconsistent.
Porth County	C	There is not yet a strong record of continuous improvement, there is too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching and the capacity of leadership is not yet proven in key areas to ensure continuing significant improvements in performance. The school is currently in band 5.
Tonypandy Community	D	This is because: overall performance, especially in mathematics, does not compare well with that of similar schools; there is too wide a gap between the performance of some groups of pupils; senior and middle leaders do not yet demonstrate a strong enough impact on improving the outcomes achieved by the college's pupils.
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	C	This is because there is not yet a strong enough record of continuous improvement and there is too much inconsistency in performance between different subjects and in the capacity of middle leaders.
Treorchy Comprehensive	A	This is because it is recognised as a high performing school with many examples of good and sector leading practice. The school does not, therefore, require additional support from the Local Authority (LA) or Consortium (CSC). Leadership has a positive impact on pupil performance. Self-evaluation and improvement planning systems are highly effective. There is a relentless focus on standards, with high expectations and challenging targets.



### Key Stage 5 Outcomes

The following tables set out the KS5 results for 2013 and 2014:

School	2013				2014*			
	No on Roll	No entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels	% entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score	No on Roll	No entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels	% entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score
Ferndale Community	32	23	87	618	42	30	83	N/A
Porth County	80	48	92	495	89	75	96	N/A
Tonypandy Community	67	46	93	739	83	58	93	N/A
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	66	59	98	986	71	60	98	N/A
Treorchy Comprehensive	155	135	97	863	141	126	100	N/A

NB - \* - provisional unverified data from schools

The Level Three Threshold is achieved by pupils through passing the equivalent of two or more A Levels and this includes BTEC qualifications. The tables below set out the performance of the sixth form pupils over the past two years for each of the main qualifications undertaken in KS5.

Of those sixth form students who studied A Levels, the examination performance over the past two years is set out below:

School	2013				2014			
	No of entries	%A*-E	%A*-C	%A*-A	No of entries	%A*-E	%A*-C	%A*-A
Ferndale Community	32	93.8	56.3	3.1	55	96.4	69.1	16.4
Porth County	67	85.1	59.7	14.9	73	98.6	76.7	9.6
Tonypandy Community	32	96.9	65.6	18.8	42	90.5	66.7	9.5
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	75	100	88.0	38.7	94	98.9	89.4	27.7
Treorchy Comprehensive	200	98.0	72.5	9.5	171	98.2	65.5	10.5
RCT Average	104	96.9	70.7	16.2	106	97.0	70.4	15.6
Central South Average	7705	97.8	76.4	23.0	7737	98.1	76.5	23.2

WJEC results only

The previous table shows that in a number of schools the number of students entering A Levels is very low. For example, if you assume a sixth form student would be expected to enter 2 A Levels, in 2013 4 of the 5 schools had less than 50 students doing so. While this had increased slightly in 2014 there were still only 2 schools where more than 60 pupils entering. If you then consider that most schools provide greater than 10 A Level courses, it is evident that class sizes are very small, ineffective and inefficient.

Of those sixth form students that studied BTEC qualifications the performance over the past two years is set out below:

School	2013		2014	
	No of BTEC entries	% Pass Rate	No of BTEC entries	% Pass Rate
Ferndale Community	15	100%	14	100%
Porth County	53	100%	68	100%
Tonypandy Community	55	100%	101	98%
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	42	100%	52	100%
Treorchy Comprehensive	162	100%	101	100%
RCT Average	31	99%	31	99%

*Provisional data supplied by schools*

Of those sixth form students that studied the Welsh Baccalaureate (WB) the performance over the past two years is set out below:

School	2013		2014	
	No of WB entries	% Pass Rate	No of WB entries	% Pass Rate
Ferndale Community	20	85%	23	91%
Porth County	32	97%	45	100%
Tonypandy Community	37	92%	54	98%
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	56	84%	57	100%
Treorchy Comprehensive	104	96%	115	100%
RCT Average	28	93%	32	97%

*Provisional data supplied by schools*

**Key Stage 4 Outcomes**

Subjects	Ferndale		Porth		Tonypanydy		Tonyrefail		Treorchy	
	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014
Level 1 Threshold	96.09 (1)	100	90.36 (4)	90	91.97 (3)	95	90.81 (4)	99	97.31 (1)	96
Level 2 Threshold	83.59 (1)	98	62.94 (3)	63	80.29 (2)	85	77.30 (2)	83	94.62 (1)	94
Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh & Maths	38.28 (2)	47	42.64 (2)	47	29.2 (4)	31	35.14 (4)	51	57.69 (1)	47
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	36.72 (2)	43	42.13 (2)	48	29.2 (4)	30	35.14 (3)	50	58.46 (1)	46
Average Capped Wider Points Score	333.5 (1)	N/A	283.41 (4)	N/A	326.79 (2)	N/A	318.80 (3)	N/A	354.07 (1)	N/A

*The 2014 figures are provisional based on data from schools.*

*The figures in brackets in the table above compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

The Welsh Government has banded the five schools as follows:

School	2011	2012	2013
Ferndale Community	4	5	1
Porth County	4	5	5
Tonypanydy Community	4	4	4
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	5	4	5
Treorchy Comprehensive	1	3	2

The attendance of the pupils at the five schools over the past three years is set out below:

Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year						
School	2012	2012 Benchmark Quartile	2013	2013 Benchmark Quartile	2014	2014 Benchmark Quartile
Ferndale Community	87.96	4	89.95	3	91.25	3
Porth County	88.30	4	90.78	4	92.61	3
Tonypanydy Community	88.92	4	90.49	4	92.88	3

Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year						
School	2012	2012 Benchmark Quartile	2013	2013 Benchmark Quartile	2014	2014 Benchmark Quartile
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	88.74	4	91.02	4	91.85	4
Treorchy Comprehensive	93.39	1	93.61	1	93.95	1

### Financial Information

Secondary schools have two main sources of funding. 11-16 pupils are funded by the Council based on pupil numbers, and post 16 provision is funded by Welsh Government based on Programmes of Study being undertaken by the students. The table below sets out the 2014/15 budgets, for the five secondary schools:

School	11-16 Funding	Post 16 Funding	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Ferndale Community	2,733	481	3,214
Porth County	3,906	823	4,729
Tonypandy Community	2,814	701	3,515
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	3,527	636	4,163
Treorchy Comprehensive	5,321	1290	6,611

*\* the sixth form budgets are set by Welsh Government based on Programmes of Study and are outside the control of the Council. Therefore, only those budgets within the Council's responsibility have been included.*

If the proposal was to proceed, the post 16 funding would be removed from Ferndale, Porth and Tonypandy secondary schools. Revised funding would be provided to the sixth forms in Tonyrefail and Treorchy according to the Programmes of Study being undertaken by the students.

### Proposed Changes to the Catchment Areas

Secondary schools are responsible for admissions to their sixth forms and can accept students from across the County Borough. However, the Council applies notional catchment areas for post 16 provision for the purpose of managing home to school transport. Students that attend sixth form outside their catchment area are not eligible for home to school transport unless the Programme of Study of their choice is not available in the catchment school. For example, some students travel to Bridgend College to study Agricultural Studies which is not available locally and the Council provides suitable transport.

The proposed catchment areas for the sixth forms in Tonyrefail and Treorchy are as follows:

- **Tonyrefail** – this includes the existing Tonyrefail Comprehensive School catchment area, the Porth County Community School catchment area, and Tonypandy Community College catchment area excluding the catchment areas of Aberllechau, and Pontygwaith Primary Schools.
- **Treorchy** – this includes the existing Treorchy Comprehensive School catchment area, the students that reside in the existing Ferndale Community School catchment, plus the catchment areas of Aberllechau and Pontygwaith Primary Schools.

It is proposed that the 11-16 catchment areas of the following schools will also change:

- **Ferndale** – this will be expanded to include the catchment areas of Aberllechau and Pontygwaith Primary Schools;
- **Porth** – this will be reduced to exclude the catchment areas of Aberllechau and Pontygwaith Primary Schools;
- **Tonypandy** – this will include the catchment area of Williamstown, and exclude the catchment areas of Gelli and Bodringallt Primary Schools;
- **Tonyrefail** – this will exclude the catchment area of Williamstown;
- **Treorchy** – this will include the catchment area of Gelli and Bodringallt Primary Schools.

It is proposed that these changes will take effect from September 2018.

#### **The timetable for the Sixth Form changes and the management of the transition**

In September 2018 it is proposed that the sixth forms in Ferndale, Porth and Tonypandy will close. Prior to September 2018, the Council will ensure that the Year 12 students, who will be most affected by the change, will be undertaking Programmes of Study that will be continued in the new sixth forms. This approach has been adopted by the Council recently in Aberdare, where three secondary schools were closed and pupils across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 have been combined.

## **Section 3 – The proposed changes to primary and secondary provision in Porth**

### **The proposal for primary and secondary schools in Porth**

#### **Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council proposes to:**

- Close Porth County Community School sixth form and transfer the sixth form provision to Treorchy Comprehensive School and a new 3-19 school in Tonyrefail;
- Close Porth County Community School, Llwynceilyn Infants' School, Porth Infants' School, and Porth Junior School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Porth County Community School;
- Provide a 1,140 capacity 3-16 School for Porth, for 330 pupils aged 3-11 and 810 pupils aged 11-16;
- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Ysgol Yr Eos, and the three Learning Support Classes at Porth County Community School to the new 3-16 school at Porth, to create specialist provision for the four key stages.
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Llwynceilyn by approximately 100 places, utilising the site of the existing Llwynceilyn Infants' School.

To achieve this change the Council is proposing to invest £7.4m to improve the buildings at Porth County to ensure they meet the learning and safeguarding requirements of a 3-16 school. It is proposed that a further £0.4m will be invested to improve the school buildings at the YGG Llwynceilyn site.

### **What are the reasons for the proposed changes?**

Across Wales there is a recognition that educational standards are too low and need to be improved and quickly. In this environment of rapid change and increasing pressures on schools and local authorities to improve learning standards, the sustainability and performance of the present educational provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf is being challenged and reviewed.

The Welsh Government sets the overall policy and legislative framework for school organisation however, local authorities have a responsibility for the planning and management of school places and must secure efficient and effective provision so as to focus resources on improving educational outcomes for young people.

The Council has been considering the way forward for education in the County Borough and in Porth for some time and the reasons for change are both educational and financial:

- Porth County has 441 (30.1%) surplus places and this is forecast to rise to 535 places or 36.5% by 2019;
- The costs of providing the sixth form provision in Porth County are very high, with an average of only 8 pupils per class (level 3 courses), including those classes shared with other schools;

- The small sixth form classes are partially funded by the financial resources which were intended and should be made available to pupils in Key Stage 3 (11-14 years old) and Key Stage 4 (14-16 years old). This has an adverse impact on the quality of the education provision for Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils;
- A further consequence of the financially inefficient sixth form is that Porth County has a financial deficit in excess of £400,000;
- All three primary schools in Porth have in total 73 (24.4%) surplus places. Llwynceilyn Infants' has 25 (30.9%) surplus places, Porth Infants' has 25 (31.3%) surplus places, and Porth Junior has 23 (16.7%) surplus places;
- There are significant shortcomings in the suitability of primary school buildings, in particular Porth Infants and Porth Junior schools. This has an adverse impact on the quality of the education provision and the curriculum provided.
- The demand for Welsh medium primary provision in the area has increased and YGG Llwynceilyn is at capacity, making use of space that is not suitable for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment.

## Background to the proposal

### Information on the Schools

The schools included within the proposal and the pupil numbers over the past four years are shown below. The pupil numbers are obtained from the statutory annual pupil count (PLASC) which must be undertaken in January each year. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as we are required to exclude these from the table by the Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code, however we have shown the nursery numbers separately.

School	Type of School	Age Range	School Capacity	Jan 2010	Jan 2011	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Jan 2014	% Surplus Jan 2014
Llwynceilyn Infants'	Primary	3-7	81	42	43	49	55	56	30.9%
Porth Infants'	Primary	3-7	80	48	56	52	43	55	31.3%
Porth Junior	Primary	8-11	138	103	106	98	107	115	16.7%
YGG Llwynceilyn	Primary	3-11	272	264	251	252	272	271	0.0%
Porth County	Secondary	11-19	1,465	1,251	1,200	1,128	1,076	1,024	30.1%

Nursery numbers

School	Jan 2010	Jan 2011	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Jan 2014
Llwyncelyn Infants'	24.5	26.5	23	27	25
Porth Infants'	25	17	22	36	26
YGG Llwyncelyn	39	38	46	46	39

**Pupil projections**

Over the next five years the pupil projections for the four schools, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows. The projections take into account previous trends together with predicted demographic changes and average birth rates. It is important to note that this cannot take account of any unforeseen deviations in local trends.

School	School capacity (excluding nursery)	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	Jan 2019	% surplus in Jan 2019
Llwyncelyn Infants'	81	61	60	63	61	61	24.7%
Porth Infants'	80	60	77	72	74	69	13.8%
Porth Junior	138	121	123	139	149	162	-17.4%
YGG Llwyncelyn	272	270	268	266	265	265	2.6%
Porth County 11-19 – No. 11-16 – No.	1,465	983 782	954 768	947 765	944 764	930 763	36.5%

If the proposal was to be implemented in the future and parents/carers choose to transfer their children to the new Porth 3-16 School the forecast for the first year for the new school will be as follows:

School 3-16	School capacity (excluding nursery)	Jan 2019	Surplus in Jan 2019
Primary 3-11	288	292	-4
Secondary 11-16	810	753	57
Total	1,098	1,045	53



### **Proposed Primary Education provision**

Plans for the primary education provision on the Secondary school site are still at a formative stage (RIBA Stage A), but it is planned that the accommodation will be in a self contained block on the school site, which will be completely remodelled and refurbished, with separate and segregated outdoor play facilities. It will have at least 10 classrooms of approximately 60 square metres, able to accommodate 30 pupils per class, plus a Nursery unit with facilities to cater for up to 50 pupils.

The primary education provision will also have accommodation for two dedicated SEN classes, for pupils in the Foundation Phase and KS2. The Foundation Phase class will be the facility to be transferred from Ysgol yr Eos, with the KS2 class being a new provision. The classes will cater for pupils with autistic spectrum/communication disorders and will 'link' with the two classes already in operation in the Secondary school provision, to create inclusive and accessible 'all through' specialist provision for pupils aged 3 to 16 years on the one site.

The primary aged pupils will also have supervised and timetabled access to the specialist facilities available in the Secondary school, including the science and sporting facilities and the main hall.

### **Current condition of the existing schools**

Building condition surveys were commissioned by Welsh Government on all four schools and undertaken by EC Harris in January 2010. They have subsequently been updated by the Council to reflect any changes or improvements to the buildings. The results of the surveys are as follows:

<b>School</b>	<b>Building Condition Survey Result</b>	<b>Suitability Survey Result</b>
Llwyncelyn Infants'	B (Satisfactory)	B (Satisfactory)
Porth Infants'	B (Satisfactory)	C (Poor)
Porth Junior	B (Satisfactory)	C (Poor)
YGG Llwwncelyn	B(Satisfactory)	B(Satisfactory)
Porth County	C (Poor)	B (Satisfactory)

### **Quality and standards**

As part of a national programme of school inspection, Estyn inspects all schools in Wales. A comparison between the quality and diversity of education provided at the four schools during their last inspections is as follows.

The Estyn inspection framework changed in 2010. Accordingly, the inspection outcomes are presented here in two tables:

School	Date Inspected	Key Question (KQ) Outcomes						
		KQ1	KQ2	KQ3	KQ4	KQ5	KQ6	KQ7
Llwyncelyn Infants	May 2010	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Porth County	Dec 2009	2	2	1	1	1	2	1
YGG Llwyncelyn	March 2010	2	2	1	1	2	3	2
<b>Key: Grade 1</b> good with outstanding features; <b>Grade 2</b> good features and no important shortcomings; <b>Grade 3</b> good features outweigh shortcomings; <b>Grade 4</b> some good features, but shortcomings in important areas; <b>Grade 5</b> many important shortcomings								

School	Date Inspected	Judgement – Current Performance	Judgement – Prospects for Improvement
Porth Infants	Jun 2011	Good	Good
Porth Junior	Jul 2014	Good	Good

Since September 2012, the Council's School Improvement Services have been provided by the Central South Consortium, a regional school improvement services for the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. The Consortium categorises the performance of each school in the region based on its system of categorisation of effectiveness (A-D). The table below sets out the categorisation of the four schools and the rationale for the Consortium's judgement.

School	Categorisation	Rationale for the Judgement
Llwyncelyn Infants'	A	This is because: standards continue on an upward trajectory, teaching is good and leadership is continuing to have a positive impact on standards and provision which are high.
Porth Infants'	B	This is because: standards continue on an upward trajectory, teaching is very good and leadership is having a very positive impact on standards and provision. In the light of the outcomes and judgements made in this report, the system leader recommends a move to category A.
Porth Junior	B	This is because: standards continue on an upward trajectory and teaching is generally good or better. ICT and numeracy across the curriculum, however, are variable with some staff demonstrating very good practice. Leadership is very strong and

		having a positive impact on standards and provision.
YGG Llwyncelyn	C	This is because: although standards are improving gradually, the school's percentages in the Foundation Phase are consistently below the family average, and fall below the median in the Free School Meals [FSM] Benchmarking Table. In key stage 2 results in Welsh and in mathematics have risen, but on average, school percentages for the last three years have fallen below the median in the [FSM] Benchmarking Table. The leadership team gives direction to the school and has a positive impact on raising standards and improving provision.
Porth County	C	This is because there is not yet a strong record of continuous improvement, there is too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching and the capacity of leadership is not yet proven in key areas to ensure continuing significant improvements in performance. The school is currently in band 5.

### Primary School Standards

The tables below set out the performance of the three primary schools for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals:

Subjects	Foundation Phase Outcomes					
	2012 %		2013 %		2014 %	
	Llwyncelyn Infants'	Porth Infants'	Llwyncelyn Infants'	Porth Infants'	Llwyncelyn Infants'	Porth Infants'
Foundation Phase Indicator	81.25 (3)	85.71 (2)	94.12 (1)	88.89 (1)	82.35 (3)	86.67 (3)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	93.75 (2)	90.48 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)	88.24 (4)	86.67 (4)
Language literacy and communication skills English	93.75 (1)	90.48 (1)	94.12 (1)	88.89 (2)	82.35 (3)	86.67 (3)
Mathematical	81.25	85.71	94.12	88.89	82.35	86.67

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	Foundation Phase Outcomes					
	2012 %		2013 %		2014 %	
development	(3)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(4)	(3)

The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.

	Key Stage Two Outcomes		
	2012	2013	2014
Subjects	Porth Junior	Porth Junior	Porth Junior
English	84.62 (2)	85 (3)	86.96 (2)
Maths	80.77 (4)	90 (2)	86.96 (3)
Science	80.77 (4)	90 (2)	91.3 (2)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	76.92 (3)	85 (2)	86.98 (2)

The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.

### Secondary School Standards

	Key Stage Three Outcomes		
	2012	2013	2014
Subjects	Porth County	Porth County	Porth County
English	70.76 (4)	77.71 (3)	84.15 (2)
Maths	70.18 (4)	75.90 (4)	84.15 (2)
Science	73.10 (4)	81.33 (3)	84.76 (4)
Welsh (second language)	64.91 (3)	71.08 (3)	82.32 (1)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	60.82 (4)	66.87 (4)	76.22 (3)

The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.

	Key Stage Four Outcomes		
	2012	2013	2014*
Subjects	Porth County	Porth County	Porth County
Level 1 Threshold	88.5 (3)	90.4 (4)	90.0
Level 2 Threshold	66.5 (3)	62.9 (3)	63.0
Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh & Maths	36.8 (3)	42.6 (2)	47.0
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	36.8 (3)	42.1 (2)	48.0

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Capped Points Score	Average	Wider	285 (4)	283 (3)	N/A
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*\*Provisional data from schools*

*The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

Porth County Community School has been graded as a Band 5 school according to the Welsh Government national banding for secondary schools having also been graded Band 5 in 2012.

The Key Stage 5 data (sixth form data) is set out in Section 2 of this consultation document.

The attendance of the pupils of the four schools over the past three years is set out below:

Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year						
School	2012	2012 Benchmark Quartile	2013	2013 Benchmark Quartile	2014*	2014 Benchmark Quartile
Llwynceilyn Infants'	93.21	2	92.88	3	95.75	N/A
Porth Infants'	94.24	1	94.59	1	95.74	N/A
Porth Junior	93.49	2	93.40	2	94.43	N/A
Porth County	88.30	4	90.78	4	92.61	3
<i>*2014 data for primary schools is provisional</i>						

### Financial Information

A move from a position with, 'four schools - four budgets', to a single school with a single budget does result in a number of budgets being removed, or reduced, for example, there will only be one budget for a headteacher not four, but conversely the new single school is able to make significant savings from which it benefits. Although it is not possible to be precise about figures related to savings, as much would depend on future decisions of the Governing Body of the new Porth 3-16 School, a summary of the known budgetary impacts is set out below:

	Llwynceilyn Infants'	Porth Infants'	Porth Junior	Porth County (excluding sixth form budgets)	New Porth 3-16 School	Revenue Savings
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Annual Revenue Budget based on 2014/15 budget	299	296	398	3,906	4,576	323

*\* the sixth form budgets are set by Welsh Government based on Programmes of Study and are outside the control of the Council. Therefore, only those budgets within the Council's responsibility have been included.*

Savings that do arise initially benefit the new school, as they will enable the school building improvements to be made, through use of Prudential Code Borrowing, and then schools as a whole will benefit through redistribution of the savings across the County Borough.

An investment of £7.4m will be made to the existing Porth County buildings to accommodate the primary aged pupils in 21<sup>st</sup> Century facilities and to improve the 11-16 facilities at the School.

Any capital receipts from the future sale of vacated school sites will be used by the Council to invest in capital projects across the County Borough.

Porth County as at 31st March 2014 had a deficit balance which is being reduced each year in accordance with a deficit recovery plan agreed with the Council. The three primary schools have combined reserves of £40,000 which will transfer to the new 3-16 School. The Governing Body of the new 3-16 School will determine how the reserves will be utilised.

### **Catchment Area of the New Porth 3-16 School**

The catchment area of the New Porth 3-16 School will be as follows:

- Admission for 3-11 pupils – the combined existing catchment areas of Llwynycelyn Infants', Porth Infants', and Porth Junior Schools;
- Admission for 11-16 pupils – the existing Porth County catchment area excluding the catchment areas of Aberllechau and Pontygwaith Primary Schools, which will be included in the catchment area of Ferndale Community School from September 2018.

The catchment area change is proposed to ensure Ferndale Community School and the 11-16 section of the new Porth 3-16 School are educationally and financially viable for the foreseeable future. It also allows the Council to utilise the vacant space at Ferndale Community School and remove a greater number of the Porth County buildings that are in a poor condition and not fit for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning. This will also free up more space at the Porth County site for play/communal and sporting areas for the younger pupils of the new 3-16 school.

### **Welsh Medium Education Proposals**

This proposal will mean that the current Llwynycelyn Infants School building will become surplus to requirements. This building is located immediately adjacent to YGG Llwynycelyn and the two sites can easily be merged into one. The two schools already share the same site boundary and some facilities and access points, so it will be relatively straightforward to make this a single school site that has two adjacent buildings.

Both school buildings are currently graded B for condition, but it must be noted that YGG Llwynycelyn has a mobile classroom on its site which is not in a good condition; it also has a

small extension to the main building which accommodates Nursery aged pupils which again is not in a good condition. Utilising the site of Llwynceilyn Infants School will allow for both of these structures to be removed from the site thus improving the teaching and learning environment for all pupils. As part of these proposals, both buildings will be improved and upgraded to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools standard.

At the present time, YGG Llwynceilyn has an occupancy level of 99.63%, with just 1 surplus place. Current and future forecasted demand for places at the school remains high, so utilising the adjacent school building, which will add approximately 100 places will allow for the expansion of this popular school. It will also assist the Council in achieving its target, outlined in our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, of increasing the percentage of 7 year old pupils taught through the medium of Welsh to at least 23% by 2017.

## **Section 4 – The proposed changes to primary and secondary provision in Tonypanyd**

### **The proposal for primary and secondary schools in Tonypanyd**

#### **Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council proposes to:**

- Close Tonypanyd Community College sixth form and transfer the sixth form provision to a new 3-19 school in Tonyrefail;
- Close Tonypanyd Community College, Penygraig Infants' School, Penygraig Junior School, Tonypanyd Primary School, Ysgol Yr Eos and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Tonypanyd Community College;
- Provide a 1,260 capacity 3-16 School for Tonypanyd, for 480 pupils aged 3-11 and 780 pupils aged 11-16;
- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Ysgol Yr Eos, and the three Learning Support Classes at Porth County Community School to the new 3-16 school at Porth, to create specialist provision for the four key stages;
- Relocate the specialist primary pupil referral unit provision at the Tai Centre to the site of the current Ysgol Yr Eos.

To achieve this change the Council is proposing to invest £8.6m to improve the buildings at Tonypanyd to ensure they meet the learning and safeguarding requirements of a 3-16 school.

#### **What are the reasons for the proposed changes?**

Across Wales there is a recognition that educational standards are too low and need to be improved and quickly. In this environment of rapid change and increasing pressures on schools and local authorities to improve learning standards, the sustainability and performance of the present educational provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf is being challenged and reviewed.

The Welsh Government sets the overall policy and legislative framework for school organisation however, local authorities have a responsibility for the planning and management of school places and must secure efficient and effective provision so as to focus resources on improving educational outcomes for young people.

The Council has been considering the way forward for education in the County Borough and in Tonypanyd for some time and the reasons for change are both educational and financial:

- Tonypanyd Community College has 207 (20.4%) surplus places and it is forecast to rise to 332 (32.7%) by 2019;
- The costs of providing the sixth form provision in Tonypanyd Community College are high, with an average of only 7 pupils per class (level 3 courses), including those classes shared with other schools;



- The small sixth form classes are partially funded by the financial resources which were intended and should be made available to pupils in Key Stage 3 (11-14 years old) and Key Stage 4 (14-16 years old). This has an adverse impact on the quality of the education provision for Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils.;
- The four primary phase schools in Tonypany have in total 216 surplus places. Penygraig Infants' has 44 (30.6%) surplus places, Penygraig Junior has 37 (26.8%) surplus places, Tonypany Primary has 89 (45.6%) surplus places and Ysgol Yr Eos has 46 (33.1%) surplus places;
- There are significant shortcomings in the suitability of primary school buildings and this has an adverse impact on the quality of the education provision and the curriculum provided.

## Background to the proposal

### Information on the Schools

The schools included within the proposal and the pupil numbers over the past four years are shown below. The pupil numbers are obtained from the statutory annual pupil count (PLASC) which must be undertaken in January each year. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as we are required to exclude these from the table by the Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code, however we have shown the nursery numbers separately.

School	Type of School	Age Range	School Capacity	Jan 2010	Jan 2011	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Jan 2014	% Surplus Jan 2014
Penygraig Infants	Primary	3-7	144	82	82	87	90	100	30.6%
Penygraig Junior	Primary	3-7	138	75	77	87	104	101	26.8%
Tonypany Primary	Primary	3-11	195	116	119	113	108	106	45.6%
Ysgol Yr Eos	Primary	3-11	139	114	112	95	98	93	33.1%
Tonypany Community College	Secondary	11-19	1,016	976	965	880	845	809	20.4%

### Nursery numbers

School	Jan 2010	Jan 2011	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Jan 2014
Penygraig Infants	38	38	54	53	52
Tonypany Primary	20	22	17	25	23
Ysgol Yr Eos	23	17	17	17	9

## Pupil projections

Over the next five years the pupil projections for the five schools, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows. The projections take into account previous trends together with predicted demographic changes and average birth rates. It is important to note that this cannot take account of any unforeseen deviations in local trends.

School	School capacity (excluding nursery)	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	Jan 2019	% surplus in Jan 2019
Penygraig Infants'	144	106	112	115	112	102	29.2%
Penygraig Junior	138	107	108	115	125	137	0.70%
Tonypandy Primary	195	109	110	110	107	103	47.2%
Ysgol Yr Eos	139	80	76	73	68	65	53.2%
Tonypandy Community College							
11-19 – No.	1,016	761	737	709	703	684	32.7%
11-16 – No.		576	557	540	555	557	

If the proposal was to be implemented in the future and parents/carers choose to transfer their children to the new Tonypandy 3-16 School the first year forecasts will be as follows:

School 3-16	School capacity (excluding nursery)	Jan 2019	Surplus in Jan 2019
Primary 3-11	420	407	13
Secondary 11-16	810	605	205
Total	1230	1012	218

## Proposed Primary Education provision

Plans for the primary education provision on the Secondary school site are still at a formative stage (RIBA Stage A), but it is planned that the accommodation will be in a self contained block on the school site, which will be completely remodelled and refurbished, with separate and segregated outdoor play facilities. It will have at least 14 classrooms of approximately 60 square metres, able to accommodate 30 pupils per class, plus a Nursery unit with facilities to cater for up to 60 pupils.

The primary aged pupils will also have supervised and timetabled access to the specialist facilities available in the Secondary school, including the science and sporting facilities and the main hall.

### Current condition of the existing schools

Building condition surveys were commissioned by Welsh Government on all five schools and undertaken by EC Harris in January 2010. They have subsequently been updated by the Council to reflect any changes or improvements to the buildings. The results of the surveys are as follows:

School	Building Condition Survey Result	Suitability Survey Result
Penygraig Infants'	B (Satisfactory)	B (Satisfactory)
Penygraig Junior	B (Satisfactory)	B (Satisfactory)
Tonypandy Primary	B (Satisfactory)	B (Satisfactory)
Ysgol Yr Eos	A (Good)	A (Good)
Tonypandy Community College	B (Satisfactory)	B (Satisfactory)

### Quality and standards

As part of a national programme of school inspection, Estyn inspects all schools in Wales. A comparison between the quality and diversity of education provided at the five schools during their last inspections is as follows.

The Estyn inspection framework changed in 2010. Accordingly, the inspection outcomes are presented here in two tables:

School	Date Inspected	Key Question (KQ) Outcomes						
		KQ1	KQ2	KQ3	KQ4	KQ5	KQ6	KQ7
Penygraig Junior	Jun 2009	2	1	1	1	1	2	2
Tonypandy Community	Feb 2009	2	2	2	1	2	2	1
<b>Key: Grade 1</b> good with outstanding features; <b>Grade 2</b> good features and no important shortcomings; <b>Grade 3</b> good features outweigh shortcomings; <b>Grade 4</b> some good features, but shortcomings in important areas; <b>Grade 5</b> many important shortcomings								

School	Date Inspected	Judgement – Current Performance	Judgement – Prospects for Improvement
Penygraig Infants	Sep 2010	Good	Good
Tonypandy Primary	Nov 2013	Good	Good
Ysgol Yr Eos	Feb 2014	Adequate	Good

Since September 2012, the Council's School Improvement Services have been provided by the Central South Consortium, a regional school improvement services for the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. The Consortium categorises the performance of each school in the region based on its system of categorisation of effectiveness (A-D). The table below sets out the categorisation of the five schools and the rationale for the Consortium's judgement.

School	Categorisation	Rationale for the Judgement
Penygraig Infants'	B	This is because: standards are good and on an upward trajectory; free school meals (FSM) benchmarking is consistently above the median; teaching is good overall; and attendance shows significant improvement.
Penygraig Junior	B	This is because: standards are good; vulnerable groups perform well; teaching is generally good; and leadership is having a positive impact on standards and provision. Attendance is an area for improvement.
Tonypandy Primary	B	This is because whilst there is good value-added in the Foundation Phase and key stage two (KS2) and teaching is generally good, although outcomes at KS2 in 2013 do not compare favourably with similar schools.
Ysgol Yr Eos	B	This is because: the school has improved standards of achievement for all pupils with particularly good outcomes in the Foundation Phase; teaching is good and some excellent; leadership is having a positive impact on standards and provision.
Tonypandy Community College	D	This is because: overall performance, especially in mathematics, does not compare well with that of similar schools; there is too wide a gap between the performance of some groups of pupils; senior and middle leaders do not yet demonstrate a strong enough impact on improving the outcomes achieved by the college's pupils.

### Primary School Standards

The tables below set out the performance of the four primary schools for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals:

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Subjects	Foundation Phase Outcomes								
	2012			2013			2014		
	Penygraig Infants'	Tonypandy Primary	Ysgol Yr Eos	Penygraig Infants'	Tonypandy Primary	Ysgol Yr Eos	Penygraig Infants'	Tonypandy Primary	Ysgol Yr Eos
Foundation Phase Indicator	76.67 (2)	81.25 (3)	71.4 3 (1)	83.33 (1)	78.57 (3)	100 (1)	75.86 (3)	70.59 (4)	83.33 (2)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	90 (2)	100 (1)	90 (2)	100 (1)	92.86 (3)	100 (1)	89.66 (3)	100 (1)	100 (1)
Language literacy and communication skills English	76.67 (2)	87.5 (2)	71.4 3 (2)	83.33 (2)	85.71 (3)	100 (1)	79.31 (3)	76.47 (4)	83.33 (2)
Mathematical development	83.33 (2)	87.5 (2)	100 (1)	87.5 (2)	92.86 (1)	100 (1)	82.76 (3)	88.24 (2)	100 (1)

The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.

Subjects	Key Stage Two Outcomes								
	2012			2013			2014		
	Penygraig Junior	Tonypandy Primary	Ysgol Yr Eos	Penygraig Junior	Tonypandy Primary	Ysgol Yr Eos	Penygraig Junior	Tonypandy Primary	Ysgol Yr Eos
English	78.57 (2)	100 (1)	70 (4)	85.71 (2)	80.95 (3)	76.47 (3)	85 (2)	94.44 (1)	94.12 (1)
Maths	78.57 (3)	100 (1)	70 (4)	85.71 (2)	80.95 (4)	70.59 (4)	90 (1)	100 (1)	94.12 (1)
Science	78.57 (3)	100 (1)	70 (4)	85.71 (2)	80.95 (4)	76.47 (4)	90 (2)	94.44 (1)	94.12 (1)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	76.92 (2)	100 (1)	70 (3)	85 (2)	76.19 (4)	70.59 (3)	86.96 (1)	94.44 (1)	94.12 (1)

The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.

## Secondary School Standards

	Key Stage Three Outcomes		
	2012	2013	2014
Subjects	Tonypandy Community College	Tonypandy Community College	Tonypandy Community College
English	71.62 (3)	76.69 (3)	78.26 (4)
Maths	72.30 (4)	84.96 (1)	83.33 (3)
Science	81.76 (2)	87.97 (2)	89.68 (2)
Welsh (second language)	62.84 (3)	59.40 (4)	74.64 (3)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	57.43 (4)	73.68 (2)	74.64 (3)

*The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

	Key Stage Four Outcomes		
	2012	2013	2014*
Subjects	Tonypandy Community College	Tonypandy Community College	Tonypandy Community College
Level 1 Threshold	91 (3)	92 (3)	95
Level 2 Threshold	86 (1)	80 (2)	85
Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh & Maths	28 (4)	29(4)	31
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	28 (4)	29 (4)	30
Capped Average Wider Points Score	328 (2)	327 (2)	N/A

*\*Provisional data supplied by school*

*The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

Tonypandy Community College has been graded as a Band 4 school according to the Welsh Government national banding for secondary schools having also been graded Band 4 in 2012.

The Key Stage 5 data (sixth form data) is set out in Section 2 of this consultation document.

The attendance of the pupils of the four schools over the past three years is set out below.

Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year						
School	2012	2012 Benchmark Quartile	2013	2013 Benchmark Quartile	2014*	2014 Benchmark Quartile
Penygraig Infants'	91.89	3	94.53	1	94.47	N/A
Penygraig Junior	93.7	1	92.63	2	94.07	N/A
Tonypandy Primary	92.91	3	93.49	2	94.08	N/A
Ysgol Yr Eos	92.35	2	92.95	2	92.96	N/A
Tonypandy Community College	88.92	4	90.49	4	92.88	3

*\*2014 data for primary schools is provisional*

### Financial Information

A move from a position with, 'five schools - five budgets', to a single school with a single budget does result in a number of budgets being removed, or reduced, for example, there will only be one budget for a headteacher not five, but conversely the new single school is able to make significant savings from which it benefits. Although it is not possible to be precise about figures related to savings, as much would depend on future decisions of the Governing Body of the new Tonypandy 3-16 School, a summary of the known budgetary impacts is set out below:

	Penygraig Infants	Penygraig Junior	Tonypandy Primary	Ysgol Yr Eos	Tonypandy Community College (excluding sixth form budgets)	New Tonypandy 3-16 School	Revenue Savings
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Annual Revenue Budget based on 2014/15 budget	513	397	481	475	2,814	4,042	638

*\* the sixth form budgets are set by Welsh Government based on Programmes of Study and are outside the control of the Council. Therefore, only those budgets within the Council's responsibility have been included.*

Savings that do arise initially benefit the new school, as they will enable the school building improvements to be made, through use of Prudential Code Borrowing, and then schools as a whole will benefit through redistribution of the savings across the County Borough.

An investment of £8.6m will be made to the existing Tonypandy buildings to accommodate the primary aged pupils in 21<sup>st</sup> Century facilities and to improve the 11-16 facilities at the School.

Any capital receipts from the future sale of vacated school sites will be used by the Council to invest in capital projects across the County Borough.

The five schools have combined reserves of £280,000 which will transfer to the new 3-16 School. The Governing Body of the new 3-16 School will determine how the reserves will be utilised.

### **Catchment Area of the New Tonypandy 3-16 School**

The catchment area of the New Tonypandy 3-16 School will be as follows:

- Admission for 3-11 pupils – the combined existing catchment areas of Penygraig Infants', Penygraig Junior, Tonypandy Primary and Ysgol Yr Eos;
- Admission for 11-16 pupils – the existing Tonypandy catchment area including the catchment area of Williamstown but excluding the catchment areas of Gelli and Bodringallt Primary Schools, which will be included in the catchment area of Treorchy Comprehensive from September 2018.

The catchment area change is proposed to ensure the 11-16 section of the new Tonypandy 3-16 School is educationally and financially viable for the foreseeable future.

### **Special Educational Needs Provision.**

Under these proposals, Ysgol yr Eos would become surplus to requirements. The school building is in a good condition overall, having only been constructed in 1995 and then refurbished and remodelled just 10 years later. The Tai Centre is a pupil referral unit located in Penygraig, just a short distance from Ysgol yr Eos. This PRU caters for primary aged pupils, with a small Year 7 transition class which prepares pupils of this year group for placement in to mainstream Secondary education provision.

The Tai Centre is located in the former Dinas Junior School building, which originally closed in the mid-1990's when the pupils relocated to the building now known as Ysgol yr Eos. The building is in a relatively poor condition overall and is located on a busy main road, with very limited outdoor play facilities.

Transferring the PRU provision to the Ysgol yr Eos site would greatly improve and enhance the facilities available to the children attending the Tai Centre; it would mean that they will be educated in a modern building with purpose built facilities for pupils aged 3 to 11 years.



## **Section 5 – The proposed changes to primary and secondary provision in Tonyrefail**

### **The proposal for primary and secondary schools in Tonyrefail**

#### **Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council proposes to:**

- Close Tonyrefail Comprehensive School and Tonyrefail Primary School and create a new 3-19 middle school on the site of the current Tonyrefail Comprehensive School;
- Provide a 1,490 capacity 3-19 School for Tonyrefail, for 300 pupils aged 3-11, 690 pupils aged 11-16 and 500 post 16 students;
- Transfer the Learning Support Class at Tonyrefail Comprehensive School to the new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail.
- Relocate Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tonyrefail to the site of the current Tonyrefail Primary School.

To achieve this change the Council is proposing to invest £44.8m to build a new 3-19 school at the Tonyrefail Comprehensive School site, and upgrade the existing Tonyrefail Primary School site to ensure they are 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environments.

#### **What are the reasons for the proposed changes?**

Across Wales there is a recognition that educational standards are too low and need to be improved and quickly. In this environment of rapid change and increasing pressures on schools and local authorities to improve learning standards, the sustainability and performance of the present educational provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf is being challenged and reviewed.

The Welsh Government sets the overall policy and legislative framework for school organisation however, local authorities have a responsibility for the planning and management of school places and must secure efficient and effective provision so as to focus resources on improving educational outcomes for young people.

The Council has been considering the way forward for education in the County Borough and in Tonyrefail for some time and the reasons for change are both educational and financial:

- Tonyrefail Comprehensive School has 415 (30.3%) surplus places;
- The costs of currently providing the sixth form provision in Tonyrefail Comprehensive School are high, with an average of only 8 pupils per class (level 3 courses), including those classes shared with other schools;
- The small sixth form classes are partially funded by the financial resources which were intended and should be made available to pupils in Key Stage 3 (11-14 years old) and Key Stage 4 (14-16 years old). This has an adverse impact on the quality of the education provision for Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils;

- There are significant shortcomings in the suitability of YGG Tonyrefail's buildings and this has an adverse impact on the quality of the education provision and the curriculum provided.

## Background to the proposal

### Information on the Schools

The schools included within the proposal and the pupil numbers over the past four years are shown below. The pupil numbers are obtained from the statutory annual pupil count (PLASC) which must be undertaken in January each year. The numbers shown exclude nursery age pupils, as we are required to exclude these from the table by the Welsh Government's Statutory School Organisation Code, however we have shown the nursery numbers separately.

School	Type of School	Age Range	School Capacity	Jan 2010	Jan 2011	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Jan 2014	% Surplus Jan 2014
Tonyrefail Primary	Primary	3-11	330	214	225	237	243	230	30.3%
YGG Tonyrefail	Primary	3-11	273	199	215	233	214	216	20.9%
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	Secondary	11-19	1,370	1,089	1,107	1,003	990	955	30.3%

#### Nursery numbers

School	Jan 2010	Jan 2011	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Jan 2014
Tonyrefail Primary	49	49	40	42	54
YGG Tonyrefail	33	35	28	30	28

#### Pupil projections

Over the next five years the pupil projections for the two schools, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows. The projections take into account previous trends together with predicted demographic changes and average birth rates. It is important to note that this cannot take account of any unforeseen deviations in local trends.

School	School capacity (excluding nursery)	Jan 2015	Jan 2016	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	Jan 2019	% surplus in Jan 2019
Tonyrefail Primary	330	222	215	211	214	206	37.6%
YGG Tonyrefail	273	212	203	187	181	184	32.6%
Tonyrefail Comprehensive School	1,370	942	921	930	936	956	30.2%
11-19 – No. 11-16 – No.		785	772	792	798	819	

If the proposal was to be implemented in the future and parents/carers choose to transfer their children to the new Tonyrefail 3-19 School the first year forecasts will be as follows:

School 3-19	School capacity (excluding nursery)	Jan 2019	Surplus in Jan 2019
Primary 3-11	262	206	56
Secondary 11-18	1190	1199	-9
Total	1452	1405	47

### Proposed Primary Education provision

Plans for the primary education provision on the Secondary school site are still at a formative stage, but it is planned that the accommodation will be in a new build self contained block on the school site, with separate and segregated outdoor play facilities. It will have at least 9 classrooms of approximately 60 square metres, able to accommodate 30 pupils per class, plus a Nursery unit with facilities to cater for up to 40 pupils.

The primary aged pupils will also have supervised and timetabled access to the specialist facilities available in the Secondary school, including the science and sporting facilities and the main hall.

### Current condition of the existing schools

Building condition surveys were commissioned by Welsh Government on the three schools and undertaken by EC Harris in January 2010. They have subsequently been updated by the Council to reflect any changes or improvements to the buildings. The results of the survey are as follows:

School	Building Condition Survey Result	Suitability Survey Result
Tonyrefail Primary	B (Satisfactory)	A (Good)
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	C (Poor)	B (Satisfactory)
YGG Tonyrefail	C (Poor)	C (Poor)

### Quality and standards

As part of a national programme of school inspection, Estyn inspects all schools in Wales. A comparison between the quality and diversity of education provided at the two schools during their last inspections is as follows.

The Estyn inspection framework changed in 2010. Accordingly, the inspection outcomes are presented here in two tables:

School	Date Inspected	Key Question (KQ) Outcomes						
		KQ1	KQ2	KQ3	KQ4	KQ5	KQ6	KQ7
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	Mar 2010	3	2	2	1	2	2	2
<b>Key:</b> <b>Grade 1</b> good with outstanding features; <b>Grade 2</b> good features and no important shortcomings; <b>Grade 3</b> good features outweigh shortcomings; <b>Grade 4</b> some good features, but shortcomings in important areas; <b>Grade 5</b> many important shortcomings								

School	Date Inspected	Judgement – Current Performance	Judgement – Prospects for Improvement
Tonyrefail Primary	Dec 2010	Adequate	Adequate
YGG Tonyrefail	Mar 2012	Good	Good

Since September 2012, the Council's School Improvement Services have been provided by the Central South Consortium, a regional school improvement services for the five local authorities of Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan. The Consortium categorises the performance of each school in the region based on its system of categorisation of effectiveness (A-D). The table below sets out the categorisation of the two schools and the rationale for the Consortium's judgement.

School	Categorisation	Rationale for the Judgement
Tonyrefail Primary	C	The 'direction of travel' for the school is towards a category B. This is due to the clear focussed leadership that has correctly identified the priorities at Tonyrefail Primary and taken very effective action to address them. Although at an early stage strong systems are emerging. These systems will under-pin the school's improvement. At an appropriate time, the recruitment of the new headteacher will be crucial to enable the progress to continue.

YGG Tonyrefail	C	This is because: the leadership provides direction for the school's development, and has a positive impact on improving provision. Standards do not currently compare favourably with similar schools, and the strategies that are in place as a means of raising standards in 2013 – 2014 have not yet had time to become embedded within the school;
Tonyrefail Comprehensive	C	This is because there is not yet a strong enough record of continuous improvement and there is too much inconsistency in performance between different subjects and in the capacity of middle leaders.

### Primary School Standards

The tables below set out the performance of Tonyrefail Primary school for the key measures of educational performance over the past three years and compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals:

Tonyrefail Primary	Foundation Phase Outcomes		
	2012	2013	2014
<b>Subjects</b>			
Foundation Phase Indicator	70 (3)	72.73 (3)	63.41 (4)
Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity	73.33 (4)	90.91 (3)	90.24 (3)
Language literacy and communication skills English	76.67 (2)	84.85 (2)	73.17 (4)
Mathematical development	76.67 (3)	75.76 (3)	65.85 (4)

*The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

Tonyrefail Primary	Key Stage Two Outcomes		
	2012	2013	2014
<b>Subjects</b>			
English	74.36 (3)	84 (2)	72.5 (4)
Maths	87.18 (1)	88 (2)	72.5 (4)
Science	84.62 (2)	88 (2)	82.5 (3)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	71.79 (3)	84 (1)	65 (4)

*The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the schools to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.*

## Secondary School Standards

Tonyrefail Comprehensive	Key Stage Three Outcomes		
	2012	2013	2014
Subjects			
English	69.01 (4)	74.71 (4)	79.58 (4)
Maths	81.29 (1)	87.65 (1)	90.14 (1)
Science	85.38 (1)	87.06 (2)	93.66 (1)
Welsh (second language)	83.04 (1)	75.29 (2)	88.73 (1)
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	66.67 (2)	71.18 (2)	78.87 (2)

The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.

	Key Stage Four Outcomes		
	2012	2013	2014
Subjects	Tonyrefail Comprehensive	Tonyrefail Comprehensive	Tonyrefail Comprehensive *
Level 1 Threshold	85.4 (4)	90.8 (4)	99
Level 2 Threshold	67.4 (2)	77.3 (2)	83
Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh & Maths	40.4 (2)	35.1 (4)	51
Core Subject Indicator (CSI)	39.3 (2)	35.1 (3)	50
Capped Average Wider Points Score	301 (3)	319 (3)	N/A

\*Provisional data supplied by school

The figures in brackets in the table above, compare the school to similar schools across Wales based on free school meals. The performance is compared using benchmarked quartiles, with 1 being the highest and 4 the lowest.

Tonyrefail Comprehensive School has been graded as a Band 5 school according to the Welsh Government national banding for secondary schools having been graded Band 4 in 2012.

The Key Stage 5 data (sixth form data) is set out in Section 2 of this consultation document.

The attendance of the pupils of the two schools over the past three years is set out below.

Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year						
School	2012	2012 Benchmark Quartile	2013	2013 Benchmark Quartile	2014*	2014 Benchmark Quartile
Tonyrefail Primary	92.47	2	92.64	2	93.03	N/A
Tonyrefail Secondary	88.74	4	91.02	4	91.85	4
<i>*2014 data for primary schools is provisional</i>						

### Financial Information

A move from a position with, 'two schools - two budgets', to a single school with a single budget does result in a number of budgets being removed, or reduced, for example, there will only be one budget for a headteacher not two, but conversely the new single school is able to make significant savings from which it benefits. Although it is not possible to be precise about figures related to savings, as much would depend on future decisions of the Governing Body of the new Tonyrefail 3-19 School, a summary of the known budgetary impacts is set out below:

	Tonyrefail Primary	Tonyrefail Comprehensive (excluding sixth form budgets)	New Tonyrefail 3-19 School (excluding sixth form budgets)*	Revenue Savings
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Annual Revenue Budget based on 2014/15 budget	879	3,527	4,321	85

*\* the sixth form budgets are set by Welsh Government based on Programmes of Study and are outside the control of the Council. Therefore, only those budgets within the Council's responsibility have been included.*

Savings that do arise initially benefit the new school, as they will enable the school building improvements to be made, through use of Prudential Code Borrowing, and then schools as a whole will benefit through redistribution of the savings across the County Borough.

An investment of £44.8m will be made to build a new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail and to accommodate YGG Tonyrefail pupils in 21<sup>st</sup> Century facilities.

Any capital receipts from the future sale of vacated school sites will be used by the Council to invest in capital projects across the County Borough.

The two schools have combined reserves of £84,000 which will transfer to the new 3-19 School. The Governing Body of the new 3-19 School will determine how the reserves will be utilised.

### **Catchment Area of the New Tonyrefail 3-19 School**

The catchment area of the New Tonyrefail 3-19 School will be as follows:

- Admission for 3-11 pupils – the existing catchment area of Tonyrefail Primary School;
- Admission for 11-16 pupils – the existing Tonyrefail Comprehensive School catchment area excluding Williamstown Primary School, which will be including in the catchment area of new 3-16 Tonypandy school from September 2018;
- Admission for post 16 – this includes the existing Tonyrefail Comprehensive School catchment area, Tonypandy Community School catchment area, and Porth County Community College catchment area excluding the catchment areas of Aberllechau and Pontygwaith Primary Schools, which will be included in the catchment area of Ferndale Community school from September 2018.

The catchment area change is proposed to ensure the 11-16 and post 16 section of the new Tonyrefail 3-19 School are educationally and financially viable for the foreseeable future.

### **Welsh Medium Education Proposals**

This proposal will mean that the current Tonyrefail Primary School building will become surplus to requirements. This building is located a very short distance from YGG Tonyrefail and can be accessed from the current site by means of a footpath.

Tonyrefail Primary School is currently graded B for building condition and A for suitability. The school was extended and extensively refurbished just five years ago, in addition the outside play areas were also improved. These external works included the installation of a multi use games area (MUGA).

YGG Tonyrefail is currently graded C for both condition and suitability and is considered to be in a relatively poor condition overall. There are several buildings on the site, which is steeply sloping; these include mobile classrooms and other classrooms which are of similar type construction to mobiles (wooden framed HORSIA type buildings). The outside play facilities consist of tarmaced yards only; the school utilises the games facilities of Tonyrefail Primary School when necessary.

Capacity is not at present an issue at YGG Tonyrefail; the school has a surplus places level of 20%. Transferring provision to the larger Tonyrefail Primary School building will increase the capacity of this school, which at first glance would appear to be unnecessary. However, as indicated previously this Council has set itself a target of increasing the percentage of 7 year old pupils taught through the medium of Welsh to at least 23% by 2017. An increase in the capacity of YGG Tonyrefail will assist us in achieving this target, which is outlined in our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.



## Consultation Response Pro-forma

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In order to help the Council reach a decision, it would be very helpful if you could answer the following questions. Completed questionnaires should be returned to:

*Director of Education and Lifelong Learning*

*School Organisation and Planning Unit*

*Ty Trevithick*

*Abercynon*

*CF45 4UQ*

or by fax to 01443 744201, or e-mail [schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk)

### The Proposals

**Proposal 1:** Create two sixth form centres of excellence, based at Treorchy and Tonyrefail; create two new 3-16 schools, in Porth and Tonypany, and one 3-19 school, in Tonyrefail.

1. Do you agree with proposal 1?      Yes       No       Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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**Proposal 2:** Close Porth County Community School, Llwyncelyn Infants' School, Porth Infants' School, and Porth Junior School and create a new 3-16 middle school on the site of the current Porth County Community School; transfer the sixth form provision to a new 3-19 school in Tonyrefail; transfer the Learning Support Class at Ysgol Yr Eos, and the three Learning Support Classes at Porth County Community School to the new 3-16 school at Porth, to create specialist provision for the four key stages.

2. Do you agree with proposal 2?      Yes       No       Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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**Proposal 3:** Close Tonypany Community College, Penygraig Infants' School, Penygraig Junior School, Tonypany Primary School, Ysgol Yr Eos and create a new 3-16

middle school on the site of the current Tonypandy Community College;  
transfer the sixth form provision to a new 3-19 school in Tonyrefail.

3. Do you agree with proposal 3?      Yes       No       Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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**Proposal 4:** Close Tonyrefail Comprehensive School and Tonyrefail Primary School and create a new 3-19 middle school on the site of the current Tonyrefail Comprehensive School; Transfer the Learning Support Class at Tonyrefail Comprehensive School to the new 3-19 school for Tonyrefail.

4. Do you agree with proposal 4?      Yes       No       Not sure

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

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5. Please state any alternative views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)
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6. Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)
- 

7. Name (optional)
- 

8. Please provide contact details if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report
- 

***Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire***

*Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015.*