

## **AGENDA ITEM 3**

### **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

#### **CABINET**

**19<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2016**

#### **IMPROVING PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION IN LLWYNYPIA**

#### **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING IN DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING (COUNCILLOR MRS E HANAGAN)**

**Authors: Chris Bradshaw, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
Tel: 01443 744001 and Julie Hadley, School Organisation Manager Tel:  
01443 744227.**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of a proposal to close Ynyscynon Nursery School and transfer the pupils to Pontrhondda Primary School, subject to parental preference, in September, 2016. Works to refurbish and remodel Pontrhondda Primary will be undertaken prior to this date.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the attached consultation report, which includes details of items of correspondence received during the consultation exercise and notes of the various meetings held.
- 2.2 Agree to progress the proposal to close Ynyscynon Nursery School and transfer the pupils to Pontrhondda Primary School, subject to parental preference, by issuing an appropriate statutory notice.

#### **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To progress the proposal in accordance with the process outlined in Welsh Government legislative guidance (the School Organisation Code).

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting of Cabinet held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2015, approval was given to begin a process of formal consultation on a proposal to close Ynyscynon Nursery School and transfer its education provision to Pontrhondda Primary School, subject to parental preference, in September, 2016.

## **5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Equality and Community Impact Assessments were prepared in respect of this proposal and were published on the Council's website together with the consultation document that outlines the proposal in detail. Copies of both reports are attached as Appendix A to this report.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The consultation process in respect of this proposal has been undertaken under the arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013. These arrangements stipulate that a Consultation Report must be prepared prior to the publication of any statutory notices which will progress the proposal. It further states that this Report must be published within 13 weeks of the end of the consultation period, which is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 in this instance.
- 6.2 The Consultation Report prepared in respect of this particular proposal is attached at Appendix B for your attention. It contains information in respect of meetings held to discuss the proposal, with copies of the detailed notes taken at these meetings. It also contains details of correspondence received together with the responses given to the points raised in this correspondence.
- 6.3 The response to this particular consultation process was; 204 completed questionnaires, 4 e-mails and 38 persons attended the open evening held to provide further information on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015. It must be noted that there is clear evidence that multiple copies of the questionnaire have been completed by individuals; in one case 146 of them have been filled in by just one person, using the Christian names only of other people.

## **7. THE STATUTORY PROCESS**

- 7.1 The statutory notice for this proposal will refer to the:
- Closure of Ynyscynon Nursery School and the transfer of its pupils to Pontrhondda Primary School, subject to parental preference.

The Statutory Notice will, if agreed be published on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and will allow for a 28 day period for objections, ending on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016. If any objections are received, in accordance with the aforementioned Code an Objections Report will be prepared. This matter will then be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet, probably in March 2016 for Members to receive and consider the Objections Report and to make a final decision on this proposal.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 If the proposal to close Ynyscynon Nursery School proceeds, it will realise annual revenue savings of £171,000. Closing a school and transferring pupils to another local school inevitably results in the need to employ less staff, and sometimes redundancy costs may arise. The Council seeks to minimise this cost by redeploying displaced members of staff wherever possible. Therefore, it is not possible at this point in the consultation process to identify any possible redundancy costs. Recent school closures have resulted in very few compulsory redundancies.

8.2 Building improvements and remodelling works will be undertaken at Pontrhondda Primary to improve the accommodation and facilities of school for all pupils. It is estimated that the cost of this work will be approximately £200,000 and will be funded from the Council's own capital building resources.

## **9 LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/ SIP.**

9.1 This particular proposal forms part of the larger school reorganisation proposals that form our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme for Rhondda Cynon Taf.

## **10 CONCLUSION**

10.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the attached Consultation Report, to agree to its immediate publication and to give officers approval to publish an appropriate Statutory Notice to progress this proposal.

**Other Information:-**

***Relevant Scrutiny Committee:*** Children and Young People

***Appendices***

**The appendices to the report are:**

- Equality Impact Assessment
- Community Impact Assessment
- Consultation Report

***Contact Officer***

Julie Hadley, School Organisation Manager  
01443 744227

# APPENDIX A

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**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL**

**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Directorate:** Education & Lifelong Learning

**Service Area:** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools

**Responsible officer:** Julie Hadley

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015

**1. Name of policy/procedure/practice/project:** **Closure of Ynyscynon Nursery School**

The Project is to:

Close Ynyscynon Nursery School, and transfer its education provision to Pontrhondda Primary School.

### **2. Policy Aims**

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.

Rhondda Cynon Taf's education services was inspected by Estyn in March 2012, at which time the following recommendations were made :

- 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 three years the Council had 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.

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 of statutory school age;
- 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.

Ynyscynon Nursery and Pontrhondda Primary Schools have been assessed against the aforementioned criteria:

- The schools are 'paired' with each other, i.e. the children usually progress from the one to the other;
- The schools are located on sites that are only 0.6 of a mile apart;

- The average budget per pupil allocated to primary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf is £3,261. Pupils in Pontrhondda Primary School are allocated £3,579 per head, just above the County average; for Ynyscynon Nursery School this rises to £6,089 per pupil, meaning the school costs almost double that of an average primary school to run;
- There were only 37 pupils in total on roll at Ynyscynon Nursery School in January 2015, well below the small school 'threshold' of 90 pupils. This makes Ynyscynon the smallest school, pupil number wise, in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

**The opportunity exists to bring the two schools together to create a larger, more educationally and financially viable primary school.**

### **Educational Considerations**

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 a larger primary school for the community of Llwynypia will improve educational outcomes and provision for the following reasons;

- A single school vision and ethos, with a single Governing Body and management team providing leadership across the full primary age range, using consistent policies and practices;
- Improved transition from Nursery to Foundation Phase and overall progression;
- Greater consistency of teaching and learning for pupils across the Early Years phase and the statutory key stages including:
  - Seamless curriculum planning and co-ordination;
  - Shared schemes of work, assessment and tracking of pupil progress;
  - Greater continuity in terms of expectations, behaviour, partnerships with parents and
  - Day to day organisation;
- Less change for parents and pupils;
- Greater continuity of support for vulnerable groups of pupils;

- Opportunities for staff to move between Early Years and the statutory key stages and further develop expertise;
- Potential for financial savings in terms of staffing structures and purchase of services, which accrue to the single school; and
- The future capital investment benefits that would arise from the modernisation of one institution rather than two.

There are opportunities for the teaching and support staff. A primary school with extended age range for Llwynypia could offer:

- A larger school with a bigger role;
- A more flexible organisation;
- 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

The school has sufficient accommodation that can be suitably modified to provide nursery education. In addition to this internal remodeling, the Council will invest in additional improvements to the school's outdoor learning areas and off street parking provision. Coupled with other internal refurbishment works, this will ensure that the school is able to offer high quality accommodation and provision to the youngest pupils, whilst at the same time improving the school premises for all children who will attend.

An extended Pontrhondda Primary School will be able to provide greater flexibility and opportunity for pupils due to an extended, more enhanced and secure financial situation. By being larger the school can provide a greater degree of stability at all levels and provide the ability to employ more teaching and support staff. This will allow the school to cover a wider range of curriculum expertise. Overall, the single, larger primary school will be more financially viable than the Primary and Nursery schools in their current form.

This proposal will also mean that children will be able to transfer direct from their nursery provision at the age of 3 years to their reception class at the same school, subject to a successful application for a place via the school admissions process. It will mean that there will be a seamless transition for them throughout the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2, they will not have to transfer schools again until they leave

primary school for their secondary education (subject to parental preference of course). This lack of a physical transition phase (moving from one school to another) and an 'all through' primary education from the age of 3 to 11 years is considered to be one of the main educational benefits of this proposal.

## Demand for School Places

The table below sets out the capacity of Pontrhondda Primary and the forecast pupil numbers in 2020. Welsh Government guidance on capacity measurement does not give a calculation for Nursery schools, however the notional capacity of Ynyscynon is denoted as 40 pupils:

	<b>Capacity</b>	<b>Number On Roll 2015</b>	<b>Total Surplus Places 2015</b>	<b>Estimated NOR 2020</b>	<b>Total Surplus Places 2020</b>	<b>Surplus Places 2020 %</b>
Pontrhondda Primary	153	137	16	144	9	5.8

Ynyscynon Nursery had a total of 37 children in attendance in January 2015; 29 of nursery age and 8 of pre-nursery age. These numbers are not expected to change by any significant degree over the next 5 years. As part of these proposals, internal remodelling works will be undertaken at Pontrhondda Primary School to create additional capacity for new nursery accommodation which will be capable of accommodating all of the nursery aged pupils that may transfer from Ynyscynon should these proposals be agreed.

## School Buildings –

Ynyscynon Nursery School is an English Medium Community Nursery School and is located at Church Street, Llwynypia, Tonypany in a building that is shared with an Early Years Centre and Flying Start provision. The building comprises a two storey masonry building together with a timber frame stand alone single storey construction, built in 1936. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Ynyscynon Nursery School is graded a B for condition and a B for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively.

Pontrhondda Primary School is an English Medium Community Primary School located at Pontrhondda Road, Llwynypia, adjacent to the Coleg y Cymoedd Llwynypia Campus. It is a traditional, single storey Victorian style stone construction building with a slate roof, constructed in 1913. The Council has recently invested £195K of capital funding to re-wire the school, upgrade pupil toilets and replace corridor floors. This programme of investment will continue in forthcoming years, to ensure that the building is maintained to a good standard. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Pontrhondda Primary is graded a B for condition and a B for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively. As previously indicated, as part of these proposals there will be capital investment made at the Pontrhondda site to not only create dedicated accommodation for pupils of nursery age but to improve the facilities for all the pupils who will attend this school.

### 3. Who does it apply to?

Members of the public   Staff   children aged 3-11 years in the community of Llwynypia, parents and carers of these children.

### 4. Indicate whether this is a new proposal, a review or a proposed cessation:

New   Review   Cessation

All 3.

### 5. Identifying Impacts

	High	Low	Neutral (No impact)	

	High	Low	Neutral (No impact)	
Age (young and old)	Young – Yes		Old – no impact	<p>Better learning facilities for all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that all the children in the nursery feel safe and secure,</li> <li>• make the learning environments, comfortable and attractive for all children who access them.</li> <li>• access services to improve the lives of children and their families.</li> <li>• Improved facilities will enable the pupils to access learning and cultural activities which can help develop relationships within communities.</li> <li>• The changing curriculum, life long learning opportunities and use of ICT will provide the opportunity to enable all learners to reach their potential.</li> <li>• Facilities at the nursery school are geared towards the needs of very young children and are, as such not suitable for use by older persons.</li> <li>• Parents with more than one child will only have to transport their children to one building, as opposed to possibly two at the current time</li> </ul>

	High	Low	Neutral (No impact)	
Disability (remember to consider the different types of disability)	Yes			The existing facilities at Pontrhondda Primary are currently compliant with legislation and will be further improved to make them more so. Access to the Yniscynon site is more restricted and can be problematic, especially for wheelchair users.
Gender			Yes	
Gender Reassignment			Yes	
Race			Yes	
Religion or Belief			Yes	
Sexual Orientation			Yes	
Welsh Language			Yes	
Carers			Yes	

## EVIDENCE

### 6. What evidence is there to support your conclusions? Please indicate below

Reports of the Director of Education to Cabinet - October 2015.  
Public Consultation Document on the Proposal

### 7. In areas where a negative impact has been identified are there any ways that the negative effect could be reduced or removed? Please indicate below and include the evidence on which you have based your conclusion.

The only negative impact that could be identified is that the removal of the Nursery school provision from the Early Years Centre could make the Centre potentially financially unviable in the future. It is the intention for the remaining services of Early Years Centre to stay operational at the current site. Officers from the Education and Lifelong Learning Division will liaise and work closely with colleagues from the Children's Services Division in this regard.

## INVOLVEMENT & CONSULTATION

### 9. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this (or similar) policy and what are the results?

The following consultation meetings/ open events were held.

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
<b>Ynyscynon Nursery School</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2015, 4 – 6pm	<b>Ynyscynon Nursery School</b>
<b>Pontrhondda Primary School</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2015, 4 – 6pm	<b>Pontrhondda Primary School</b>
<b>Pontrhondda Primary School</b>	School Council	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2015, 2.30pm – 3.00pm	<b>Pontrhondda Primary School</b>

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
<b>Both Schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	15 <sup>th</sup> December 2015, 4 – 6pm	<b>Pontrhondda Primary School</b>

Pontrhondda Primary was also offered the opportunity for consultation with pupils, via a meeting of their School Council as detailed in the table overleaf. The Nursery School does not have a school council, this is not considered appropriate for children of such a young age.

Details of the proposal were displayed at Tonypanyd Library for the period of the consultation. A consultation questionnaire was also available at the local Library and on the Council's internet site at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk)

Interested parties were also welcome to put their views in writing to:

Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council  
Ty Trevithick  
Abercynon CF45 4UQ

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

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

### 10. What arrangements have you put in place to review the actual impact of the policy once it has been implemented?

The Council's school improvement team and the Central South Consortium will be fully engaged in supporting the head teacher and governing body of Pontrhondda Primary for as long as they require such support.

## ADDRESSING THE IMPACT

### 11. What option have you chosen as a result of your impact assessment?

- Continue the Policy

**Please indicate and provide reasons for your decision.**

The evidence outlined in our consultation document clearly recommends that this is the right approach.

### 12. ACTION PLAN

You now need to complete the EIA action plan to outline how you will act on any impacts identified. You may need to prioritise in terms of what actions you choose to take and the timescales to complete them in. In general terms, you should try to act on all negative impacts unless there is a clear reason as to why this is not possible. You could also identify actions for positive or neutral impacts where appropriate i.e. to outline and further promote a positive impact or to outline how to make something have a positive impact instead of a neutral one.

#### EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Actions	Timescale and actions for Review	Measures to be taken to evaluate effects of actions
To finalise the plans for the remodelling and refurbishment of Pontrhondda Primary and to apply for any planning permission that may be required	Colin Atyeo Director of Corporate Estates	By September 2016		

## **Proposal to close Ynyscynon Nursery School**

### **Community Impact Assessment**

This assessment is prepared in accordance with guidance contained within Annex D of statutory guidance circular 006/2013, the School Organisation Code.

This proposal is being consulted upon between 2<sup>nd</sup> November and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015. A detailed consultation document has been circulated to all prescribed consultees. Copies have already been forwarded to the WG in compliance with consultation and publication guidelines. This document clearly focuses on the education argument and case for change, which is why full details of this particular assessment are not specifically included; we are mindful that the document needs to be as concise and informative as possible, whilst at the same time being readable and 'user-friendly'.

Of the total number of pupils on roll at Ynyscynon Nursery in January 2015 (date of the PLASC return) namely 37, 29 were of nursery age and 8 of pre-nursery age. 22 of these pupils did not reside within the catchment area of this school, i.e. the percentage of pupils attending Ynyscynon Nursery that reside within the catchment area is 40.5%. The figures for Pontrhondda Primary show that 66.4% of the children in attendance reside in the school's catchment area.

Both Ynyscynon Nursery and Pontrhondda Primary offer breakfast clubs to all pupils; this provision will continue in Pontrhondda should this proposal be agreed. There are no after school clubs at Ynyscynon, which caters for school children aged 3 years old only, there is however after school childcare provision available at the Early Years Centre which shares the site, for which a charge is made. Pontrhondda Primary offers the following after school provision, which will be available to all pupils who may attend this school in the future:

- Monday – Glee Club (singing)
- Wednesday – Table tennis
- Thursday - Football

Neither school has any regular out of hours usage made of their school building by any outside organisations, except for ad hoc usage by groups affiliated to the school, such as the PTA for functions. Any outside usage made of the facilities at Pontrhondda Primary will of course continue.

Ynyscynon Nursery School is currently an integral part of the Ynyscynon Early Years Centre, all the facilities at the site are shared by the several organisations that are based there. These include Flying Start provision and a day care nursery. These proposals involve the transfer of the school provision only to Pontrhondda Primary; the remaining users of the Early Years Centre will remain operational at the current site at Church Street, Llwynypia.

This proposal seeks to enhance the accommodation and facilities of Pontrhondda Primary, to cater for all children who may attend the school in the future. It will involve the creation of facilities suitable for very young children aged 3 -4 years who do not attend this school at the current time. This is not a rural area, and the existence of so many other schools and other community facilities within a short distance means that it is not deemed necessary to consider the enhancement of other community facilities that may exist in the local area.

The distance between the two school sites is just 0.6 of a mile which takes less than 5 minutes by car or other mode of transport. It is not considered that this distance will be a barrier to any child who wishes to participate in the pre, and after school provision that will be offered at Pontrhondda Primary School in the future; all pupils will be given equal access and encouragement to participate in as many activities as they wish. It must also be noted that Pontrhondda Primary School is the school that Ynyscynon pupils would ordinarily transfer to for their statutory education at Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2. In the 2015 admissions round, 25 of the 27 children who left Ynyscynon Nursery in the Summer term transferred to Pontrhondda Primary at Reception age. It is considered therefore that it will in fact be of benefit to parents with children of both Nursery and Primary age in future, as their children's school provision will be located in the same building, as opposed to being a 0.6 mile apart as it is at present. Pontrhondda Primary School is the only Primary school in RCT that does not offer Nursery provision at the current time.

The walking routes between the two schools are considered to be available. They have pavements, several designated crossing points and street lighting along the full length of the routes, with a 30 mph speed limit in what is considered to be a built up area.

To monitor and review the day care and Flying Start provision of the Early Years Centre should the Nursery school provision transfer to Pontrhonda	Ann Batley Children's Services Division	On-going		
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**13. Please outline below any negative impacts that have been identified in the EIA questionnaire but not addressed in the action plan. You will need to explain your reasons for not addressing them.**

None.

Please keep a copy of the questionnaire and action plan and send copies to:

Equality, Diversity & Social Justice Team  
The Pavilions  
Cambrian Park  
Clydach  
CF40 2XX

Email: [equality@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk](mailto:equality@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk)

Tel: 01443 424075

Signed: Chris Bradshaw                      Date: 2/11/15  
Job Title: Director of Education & Lifelong Learning/Interim Chief Executive

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# **APPENDIX B**

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## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CONSULTATION REPORT

**Proposal : To close Ynyscynon Nursery School, with pupils transferring to Pontrhondda Primary School on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016, subject to parental preference.**

#### 1. Purpose of the Consultation Report

This report is prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, statutory document 006/2013. Its purpose is to inform the outcome of the consultation held during the period 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015 and 31st December 2015 between all stakeholders and interested parties listed below.

#### 2. Who did we consult with?

A copy of a consultation document which fully outlined and explained our proposal was sent to the following stakeholders. The document was also published on the Council website at

<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/Schoolconsultations.aspx>

- The Governing Bodies of Ynyscynon Nursery School and Pontrhondda Primary School
- Pupils of Pontrhondda Primary School
- Parents, carers, guardians, and staff members of Ynyscynon Nursery School and Pontrhondda Primary School
- Other governing bodies of neighbouring primary schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- Welsh Minister for Education & Skills
- Assembly Members for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies and regional Assembly Members for the area
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- Central South Education Consortium
- South East Wales Transport Association
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- The local Communities First Partnership
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- Independent Nursery providers in this area

Copies were also sent to all local authorities that share a boundary with Rhondda Cynon Taf.

### **3. The Proposal**

The proposal consulted upon is to close Ynyscynon Nursery School and transfer its pupils to Pontrhondda Primary School, subject to parental preference. The existing school site and building at Pontrhondda Primary will be upgraded, remodelled internally and improved in order to create Nursery provision. It is proposed that Ynyscynon Nursery would close on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016 with the pupils transferring to Pontrhondda Primary School on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016. The Early Years and Flying Start provision located within Ynyscynon Nursery School site will continue to operate and meet local childcare needs.

A programme of capital works to improve, remodel and upgrade the school site will be undertaken should this proposal be approved.

Details of the proposal and the rationale behind it are fully outlined in the consultation document that was circulated to all the stakeholders listed overleaf which is attached as Appendix 1.

### **4. The Consultation Process**

All stakeholders identified in Section 2 overleaf were sent paper or electronic copies of our consultation documentation. The following meetings were also convened:

- Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November, 4 pm – Staff and Governing Body, Ynyscynon Nursery
- Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2.30 pm – School Council, Pontrhondda Primary;
- Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November, 4 pm – Staff and Governing Body, Pontrhondda Primary.

There is no school council at Ynyscynon Nursery School, due to the very young age (3 years) of the children who attend there.

Detailed notes of all of the above meetings were taken and are attached as Appendix 2. These notes detail all questions raised, comments and statements made with responses provided where appropriate.

An open evening/exhibition was held at Pontrhondda Primary School on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015, the purpose of which was to provide further information on the proposal, answer any questions and give parents in particular the opportunity to view the proposed facilities that will be available for their children at the school. Officers from the Education and Lifelong Learning Division were in attendance. This event was attended by 38 persons, which included school staff, governors, parents and members of the local community.

A total of 4 e-mails have been received, from:

2 local residents

Assembly Member for the Rhondda

The NASUWT Trades Union

204 questionnaires have also been received, a summary of these is attached under Appendix 2. A 'message board' was provided at the consultation event held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and a summary of the comments posted is also attached at Appendix 2.

## 5. Summary of Responses to the Consultation

- **Ynyscynon Nursery has better outdoor facilities, including a woodland and an allotment area.**

It is accepted that Pontrhondda does not have these facilities and it will not be possible to replicate them completely. However, we have displayed our proposals to improve the outdoor environment at Pontrhondda Primary and this work will be done in conjunction with the school staff and governing body.

- **You have stated that Ynyscynon has no disabled parking when in fact it does.**

We have not made this statement. What we have said in our Equality Impact Assessment is that 'The existing facilities at Pontrhondda Primary are currently compliant with legislation and will be further improved to make them more so. Access to the Ynyscynon site is more restricted and can be problematic, especially for wheelchair users'. This is a true statement of fact.

- **There is insufficient space at Pontrhondda to accommodate the Nursery age pupils.**

We have clearly indicated that the capacity of Pontrhondda will be increased by remodelling and improvement works. Plans depicting how this may be achieved were displayed at the open evening held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

- **Traffic is a major problem outside Pontrhondda. How are you going to solve this issue?**

Unfortunately, this is a problem outside of most, if not all schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf and beyond and there is no straightforward solution. However, we are in discussions with the neighbouring College to provide parking on their site for school staff, in addition we will consider using a redundant parcel of land on the College site to provide a pick up/drop off facility for parents, which will hopefully alleviate this matter.

- **Why don't you federate the two schools?**

This option was considered, but our reasons for discounting it are clearly indicated in the consultation document (pages 15 and 16).

- **Why don't you build a new school on the former hospital site?**

This has not been considered as an option for several reasons, including the fact that the site in question is not in Council ownership and it has in fact been earmarked for housing development.

- **Ynyscynon has been open since 1936 and is part of the community, several generations of families have attended. The school has an excellent reputation.**

We have made no criticism of standards at Ynyscynon and recognise and understand that members of the community do not wish for it to close. Our consultation document outlines what we consider are the educational benefits of an 'all through' Primary education for children aged between 3 and 11 years, which is a key reason for consideration of this proposal. Pontrhondda Primary School has been recognised by Estyn as a good school and it is now the only Primary school in Rhondda Cynon Taf that does not have nursery class provision. Pontrhondda is also the school that pupils from Ynyscynon ordinarily transfer to for their statutory education provision; it is located just 0.6 of a mile from Ynyscynon and it shares the same catchment area.

- **Concerns expressed at the loss of the day care and Flying Start provision**

We have made it clear during consultation that this proposal relates to the Nursery School only; it is the intention that all other facilities offered at the Early Years Centre shall continue to be provided.

Responses to the matters raised at the meetings outlined above are, as indicated, summarised in the notes of the meetings attached as Appendix 2. Also enclosed as part of this Appendix are summaries of the questionnaires received (in total) and comments posted on a board provided for this purpose at the open evening. The main issues raised during consultation, with our responses to them include:

**The View of Estyn (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training in Wales) of the Overall Merits of the Proposal.**

Estyn has provided us with the following as their response to this consultation process:

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory

requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

### **Introduction**

The proposal is by Rhondda Cynon Taff Borough Council.

The proposal is to close the English-medium nursery provision on its current site of Ynyscynon Nursery School and to move the provision to the English-medium Pontrhondda Primary School, thereby establishing a 3 –11 primary school on the site of Pontrhondda Primary School.

Current calculations show Pontrhondda Primary School intake rising to 148 pupils in 2017, with fewer pupils from 2018 – 2020, leaving a surplus of 5.8% in the school in 2020. Nursery numbers are not included in this calculation, but the Council proposes offering 21 nursery places, possibly more dependent on need.

To accommodate the move, Rhondda Cynon Taff Borough Council will continue to invest in and refurbish Pontrhondda Primary School to ensure the accommodation is of a suitable quality to support both nursery and primary provision.

### **Summary/Conclusion**

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education in the area.

The Council has clearly outlined the benefits of this proposal in rationalising nursery and primary provision which currently operates on two sites onto one site for the benefit of parents, the community, the Council and the taxpayer. It has also set out a clear rationale as to the educational benefits for pupils of moving the nursery provision onto the site of Pontrhondda Primary School. The Council has taken good account of each school's outcomes and argues cogently that a 3 – 11 primary with a single school vision and ethos, with a single governing body and leadership team will result in consistent policies and practice, and that there will be improved transition arrangements from nursery to primary resulting in pupils' better overall progression.

The proposal takes good account of staffing issues which arise from amalgamating schools and the Council makes a cogent case in assuring its support of staff who wish to be considered for employment under the new arrangements.

However, the Council does not foresee any risks associated with the implementation of this proposal and therefore it has not considered any measures to manage or mitigate risks. It may be that following the consultation potential risks may emerge. In which case, the Council should undertake a risk assessment to insure that all intended and unintended outcomes have been considered.

### **Description/Benefits**

The Council has provided a clear rationale for the proposal based on the desire to raise the quality of education provision, and ultimately the impact on raising pupils' standards. It argues that this can best be achieved by putting nursery and primary school provision on one site. It points to the fact that in respect of this proposal it is acting on the recommendations from the Estyn inspection report, March 2012 and, in particular, it is acting on recommendations 1, 2 and 5.

The Council has established suitable criteria to identify schools for review in the borough. The Council points to the fact that:

- most children at the nursery progress to Pontrhondda Primary School;
- the schools are only 0.6miles apart, therefore assuming those who walk to the nursery are in walking distance of the primary school;
- the nursery school budget per pupil (£6,089.00) is nearly double that of the county average and the budget per pupil at the primary school, thereby making the nursery very expensive to run; and
- with only 37 pupils on roll in January 2015, this places the nursery school well below the number of pupils required (90 pupils) for a small school.

However, it has considered only the advantages of the proposal, but does not provide a critique of possible disadvantages or risks as it believes there to be none.

### **Educational and career benefits of the proposal**

The Council presents a well-argued case of the educational benefits for pupils and parents of amalgamating the nursery and primary provision, notably that a single school vision and ethos, with a single governing body and leadership team will result in consistent policies and practices, and that there will be improved transition from nursery to primary resulting in pupils' better overall progression.

The Council undertakes improve the provision at the Pontrhondda Primary School site to accommodate the nursery provision.

The Council states that there will be no change to the catchment area and that Pontrondda Primary School and Ynyscynon Nursery School currently share the same catchment area. It does not therefore envisage that there will be difficulties for parents with transport to school, or any additional costs associate with this.

The Council does note, however, that nursery pupils' access to Pontrhondda Primary School will not be a forgone conclusion and that parents of nursery age pupils will need to make an application for their pupils to attend the primary school.

The Council also argues that an amalgamated nursery and primary will bring benefits to staff through greater career and professional development opportunities. It envisages that the headteacher and the governing body will remain in post and it will fall to the governing body to determine the staffing needs of the school. The Council will advise the governing body that where posts become vacant, first priority should be given to the staff at Ynyscynon Nursery

School. It estimates that there will be no compulsory redundancies as displaced staff may be employed in other schools under current agreements. However, were there to be redundancies, it states that the Council will meet the costs.

In its proposal, the Council has taken on board the impact in the local community. It notes that Llwynypia is a ward in a Community First area which has secured Communities Funding to match the Pupil Deprivation Grant to support educational improvement. The Council notes that it has appropriately put in place a community impact assessment and an equality impact assessment. These will be reviewed in the light of responses received for this consultation.

The Council judges that some parents may not like the proposed arrangements, preferring instead that their nursery age child stays in smaller provision. However, the Council makes the point that even with the amalgamation of the nursery school into the primary school, Pontrhondda Primary School will be a small school when compared to other primary schools in the borough.

The Council has rejected two other options: namely, closing both schools and building a new school in the catchment area of the two schools and federating the two schools under one headteacher and one governing body. It has rejected the former option because it does not have a site available in the catchment area. It has rejected the latter option as maintaining two schools on two sites would not in the Council's judgement provide good value for money in terms of maintenance and educational provision.

## **6. Conclusion**

The recommendation to be considered at a meeting of the Council's Cabinet to be held in January 2016 is that a statutory notice be published, to progress this proposal. The statutory notice will be published on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and it will allow for a 28 day period, that includes 15 school days (to 5pm on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016 ) during which any person may lodge an objection to the proposals. At the end of the objection period, an Objection Report will be compiled, summarising any objections received, this Report will be published within 7 days of the determination of the proposal. The outcome of this part of the process will be considered by Cabinet again at their meeting to be held in March 2016, for a final decision on the proposal to be made.

**Appendix 1**



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF  
YNYSCYNON NURSERY SCHOOL, WITH THE  
ESTABLISHMENT OF NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION  
AT PONTRHONDDA PRIMARY SCHOOL, FROM 1<sup>ST</sup>  
SEPTEMBER 2016.**

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## Introduction

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Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council wishes to seek the views of a wide range of stakeholders on the proposal to close Ynyscynon Nursery School and establish Nursery education provision at its associated Primary school, Pontrhondda Primary. Pontrhondda Primary School will be remodelled, to make suitable specialist provision available for pupils aged 3 to 4 years old. It is proposed that Ynyscynon Nursery School would close on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016 with the pupils transferring to Pontrhondda Primary school on 1 September 2016. The Early Years and Flying Start provision located within Ynyscynon Nursery School buildings will continue to operate and meet local childcare needs.

### Who will we consult with?

We are seeking the views of the following stakeholders:

The Governing Bodies of Ynyscynon Nursery School and Pontrhondda Primary School	Members of Parliament for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies Estyn
Pupils of Pontrhondda Primary School	Teaching and staff trade unions
Parents, carers, guardians, and staff members of Ynyscynon Nursery School and Pontrhondda Primary School.	Central South Education Consortium South East Wales Transport Association South Wales Police and Crime
Other governing bodies of neighbouring primary schools	Commissioner
The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities	The local Communities First Partnership Cwm Taf Local Health Board
Welsh Minister for Education & Skills	The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
Assembly Members for the Rhondda Cynon Taf constituencies and regional	Independent Nursery providers in this area
Assembly Members for the area	

### What will the consultation process entail?

The consultation will start on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015 and will be completed at 5pm on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015. The feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet in January 2016. 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 addresses detailed on Page 5 of this document.

The proposal will be to close Ynyscynon Nursery School and extend the age range of pupils that may attend Pontrhondda Primary School, from 4 – 11 years (as it is presently) to 3 – 11 years. This will allow for the admission of pupils of nursery age to the school.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the report and will decide, 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 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.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the outcome of the statutory notice at the next available Cabinet meeting and determine whether to implement the proposal.

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 7 days of the day of the determination of the proposal, 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 addresses detailed on Page 5 of this document.

If the Council's Cabinet approve the proposal, the proposal will be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date. In the case of this proposal the implementation date is 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016.

### What do you have to consider?

The remainder of the consultation document sets out the rationale for the proposed change to primary education provision in this part of Llwynypia, Tonypany. 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 proposal to close Ynyscynon Nursery School and transfer its education provision to its associated school, Pontrhondda Primary. The existing school building of Pontrhondda Primary will be remodelled, refurbished and improved to benefit all of the pupils who will attend.

### 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>Ynyscynon Nursery School</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2015, 4 – 6pm	<b>Ynyscynon Nursery School</b>
<b>Pontrhondda Primary School</b>	Governors and Staff Meeting	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2015, 4 – 6pm	<b>Pontrhondda Primary School</b>
<b>Pontrhondda Primary School</b>	School Council	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2015, 2.30pm – 3.00pm	<b>Pontrhondda Primary School</b>
<b>Both Schools and members of the local community</b>	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	15 <sup>th</sup> December 2015, 4 – 6pm	<b>Pontrhondda Primary School</b>

A consultation questionnaire is attached, it 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)

The questionnaire also enables consultees to register their wish to be notified of the publication of the consultation report to the Council's Cabinet.

You are also welcome to put your views and any comments you may wish to make 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 Thursday, 31<sup>st</sup> December 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 schools affected by this proposal are English medium schools and therefore all the consultation documents are via the English language. If a Welsh language copy of the consultation document is required, please contact the above address.

## **Background to the proposal**

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### **Information on the Schools – Ynyscynon Nursery School**

Ynyscynon Nursery School is an English Medium Community Nursery School and is located at Church Street, Llwynypia, Tonypany in a building that is shared with an Early Years Centre and Flying Start provision. The building comprises a two storey masonry building together with a timber frame stand alone single storey construction, built in 1936. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Ynyscynon Nursery School is graded a B for condition and a B for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively.

The pupil numbers in Ynyscynon Nursery School over the past four years are shown in the following table and are obtained from the statutory annual pupil count (PLASC) which must be undertaken in January each year. The numbers shown are children aged between 3 and 4 years, i.e. of Nursery age only; this school accommodates children of this single age range only.

Ynyscynon Nursery School					
No on roll in January	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Nursery pupils	19	18	27	24	29
Pre-Nursery pupils	6	19	7	9	8
<b>Total pupils in school</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>37</b>

As this is a Nursery school that caters for one, non-statutory age range of pupils (3 to 4 years) only, we are not required by Welsh Government to calculate the pupil capacity of the building, neither are we required to produce pupil forecasts for the next five years. The building has been deemed to have a nominal capacity of 40 children of Nursery age only and pupil numbers are not expected to either rise, or reduce by any significant degree in the next five years.

Ynyscynon Nursery School was inspected by Estyn in October 2014 and the school's current performance was deemed good, with its prospects for improvement also good.

Estyn also set out that, in order to build upon the progress made to date, the school should:

- R1** Improve children's ICT skills
- R2** Make better use of assessment to inform planning
- R3** Ensure that the newly established leadership team is fully involved in leading and managing the school
- R4** Address the wellbeing issues identified in the report

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. Schools are rated as either Green, Yellow, Amber or Red. Ynyscynon Nursery School is rated as a Yellow school, because although there is no official standards group for nursery settings, the standards within Ynyscynon Nursery School are considered to be at least good. There are no key measures of educational performance that can be provided for this school, including attendance data, as the pupils are too young for such assessment to be undertaken, they are below statutory school age.

### Information on the Schools – Pontrhondda Primary School

Pontrhondda Primary School is an English Medium Community Primary School located at Pontrhondda Road, Llwynypia, adjacent to the Coleg y Cymoedd Llwynypia Campus. It is a traditional, single storey Victorian style stone construction building with a slate roof, constructed in 1913. The Council has recently invested £195K of capital funding to re-wire the school, upgrade pupil toilets and replace corridor floors. This programme of investment will continue in forthcoming years, to ensure that the building is maintained to a good standard. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Pontrhondda

Primary is graded a B for condition and a B for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively.

Pontrhondda is the only Primary School in Rhondda Cynon Taf that does not have designated provision for nursery age children on its site; it is however 'associated' with Ynyscynon Nursery School and currently, pupils transfer to Pontrhondda Primary School from Ynyscynon Nursery School at the start of the school year in which they turn 5 years of age, for their education at Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2, subject of course to parental preference. As an illustration, of the 27 pupils that left Ynyscynon in July 2015 to commence their education at Foundation Phase, 25 transferred to Pontrhondda, with 2 transferring to other schools in the area (Penygraig and Tonyrefail).

The pupil numbers in Pontrhondda Primary School over the past four years are shown below and are obtained from the statutory annual pupil count (PLASC) which must be undertaken in January each year.

Pontrhondda Primary School					
No on roll in January	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total statutory aged pupils	121	121	122	132	137

Over the next five years the pupil forecasts for Pontrhondda Primary School, which are calculated in accordance with guidance issued by Welsh Government, are as follows:

Pontrhondda Primary School							
Capacity of the School	2015 (Actual)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	% surplus places in 2020
153	137	143	148	140	142	144	5.8%

The overall capacity of Pontrhondda will be increased by the remodelling works to ensure that there is sufficient capacity available to accommodate all of the nursery aged pupils that may transfer from Ynyscynon. This nursery admission figure is not however included as part of the school's capacity calculation, in line with Welsh Government guidance on this issue. At least 21 nursery places will be available at Pontrhondda and this number may be expanded if there is evidenced demand, by utilising surplus capacity within the school. Obtaining a nursery place at Pontrhondda does not guarantee admission to Reception; a fresh application for a place must be made, in compliance with the Welsh Government's School Admissions Code.

Pontrhondda Primary School was inspected by Estyn in May 2012. The school's current performance was deemed to be good, and its prospects for improvement good.

Estyn also set out that, in order to build upon the progress made to date, the school should:

- R1** Raise standards in extended writing across the curriculum
- R2** Raise standards in Welsh second language at Key Stage 2
- R3** Ensure that monitoring of lesson observations is sharply focused on standards and areas for improvement
- R4** Develop the strategic role of the Governing Body and ensure that governors are more involved in the self-evaluation process
- R5** Improve attendance rates.

Since September 2012, the Council's School Improvement Services have been provided by the Central South Consortium, a regional school improvement service 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 and considers that, in the current categorisation (2014 data):

*"Pontrhonda Primary is classed as a 'Yellow' school within the National School Improvement and Categorisation Matrix (Green, Yellow, Amber, Red). This is because all performance indicators for the last two years for the expected levels and above expected levels in the Foundation Phase are in quartile 1. The one exception to this is PSD which, for 2013 was in quartile 3. Mathematical Development at the expected levels has been in quartile 1 for the last 3 years.*

The tables below and overleaf set out the performance of Pontrhonda 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. The three year average of the percentage of pupils with free school meals is 32.42%.

	2013	2013 Benchma rk Quartile*	2014	2014 Benchmar k Quartile*	2015	2015 Benchmark Quartile*
<b>Foundation Phase Indicator</b>	90.5	<b>1</b>	83.3	<b>2</b>	73.3	<b>4</b>
<b>Personal and social development wellbeing and cultural diversity</b>	90.5	<b>3</b>	100	<b>1</b>	93.3	<b>2</b>
<b>Language literacy and communication skills English</b>	90.5	<b>1</b>	88.9	<b>1</b>	73.3	<b>4</b>
<b>Mathematical development</b>	90.5	<b>1</b>	88.9	<b>1</b>	73.3	<b>4</b>

\* - benchmark quartiles – 1 being the highest, 4 the lowest.

**Percentage of pupils at the end of Year 6 who have achieved the expected level**

	2013 %	2013 Benchmark Quartile	2014 %	2014 Benchmark Quartile	2015 %	2015 Benchmark Quartile
<b>Core Subject Indicator</b>	77.8	<b>2</b>	84.6	<b>2</b>	64.7	<b>4</b>
<b>English</b>	88.9	<b>1</b>	100	<b>1</b>	70.6	<b>4</b>
<b>Maths</b>	83.3	<b>2</b>	84.6	<b>2</b>	70.6	<b>4</b>
<b>Science</b>	77.8	<b>3</b>	92.3	<b>1</b>	70.6	<b>4</b>

**Percentage of half-day sessions attended by pupils of statutory school age during the academic year**

	2013 %	2013 Benchmark Quartile	2014 %	2014 Benchmark Quartile	2015 %	2015 Benchmark Quartile
<b>% attendance</b>	92.4	<b>3</b>	93.4	<b>3</b>	92.65	<b>N/A (due December)</b>

**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.

Rhondda Cynon Taf's education services was inspected by Estyn in March 2012, at which time the following recommendations were made :

- 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 three years the Council had 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.

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 of statutory school age;  
 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.

Ynyscynon Nursery and Pontrhondda Primary Schools have been assessed against the aforementioned criteria:

The schools are 'paired' with each other, i.e. the children usually progress from the one to the other;  
 The schools are located on sites that are only 0.6 of a mile apart;  
 The average budget per pupil allocated to primary schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf is £3,261.  
 Pupils in Pontrhondda Primary School are allocated £3,579 per head, just above the County average; for Ynyscynon Nursery School this rises to £6,089 per pupil, meaning the school costs almost double that of an average primary school to run;  
 There were only 37 pupils in total on roll at Ynyscynon Nursery School in January 2015, well below the small school 'threshold' of 90 pupils. This makes Ynyscynon the smallest school, pupil number wise, in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The opportunity exists to bring the two schools together to create a larger, more educationally and financially viable primary school.

### **What is the educational case for closing Ynyscynon Nursery School and creating a larger Primary School at Pontrhondda, with an extended age range?**

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 a larger primary school for the community of Llwynypia will improve educational outcomes and provision for the following reasons;

A single school vision and ethos, with a single Governing Body and management team providing leadership across the full primary age range, using consistent policies and practices;

Improved transition from Nursery to Foundation Phase and overall progression;

Greater consistency of teaching and learning for pupils across the Early Years phase and the statutory key stages including:

Seamless curriculum planning and co-ordination;

Shared schemes of work, assessment and tracking of pupil progress;

Greater continuity in terms of expectations, behaviour, partnerships with parents and

Day to day organisation;

Less change for parents and pupils;

Greater continuity of support for vulnerable groups of pupils;

Opportunities for staff to move between Early Years and the statutory key stages and further develop expertise;

Potential for financial savings in terms of staffing structures and purchase of services, which accrue to the single school; and

The future capital investment benefits that would arise from the modernisation of one institution rather than two.

There are opportunities for the teaching and support staff. A primary school with extended age range for Llwynypia could offer:

A larger school with a bigger role;

A more flexible organisation;

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

The school has sufficient accommodation that can be suitably modified to provide nursery education. In addition to this internal remodeling, the Council will invest in additional improvements to the school's outdoor learning areas and off street parking provision. Coupled with other internal refurbishment works, this will ensure that the school is able to offer high quality accommodation and provision to the youngest pupils, whilst at the same time improving the school premises for all children who will attend.

An extended Pontrhondda Primary School will be able to provide greater flexibility and opportunity for pupils due to an extended, more enhanced and secure financial situation. By being larger the school can provide a greater degree of stability at all levels and provide the ability to employ more teaching and support staff. This will allow the school to cover a wider range of curriculum expertise. Overall, the single, larger primary school will be more financially viable than the Primary and Nursery schools in their current form.

This proposal will also mean that children will be able to transfer direct from their nursery provision at the age of 3 years to their reception class at the same school, subject to a successful application for a place via the school admissions process. It will mean that there will be a seamless transition for them throughout the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2, they will not have to transfer schools again until they leave primary school for their secondary education (subject to parental preference of course). This lack of a physical transition phase (moving from one school to another) and an 'all through' primary education from the age of 3 to 11 years is considered to be one of the main educational benefits of this proposal.

### **What will this Proposal mean for the school pupils?**

In making the proposed change, the main change for the nursery pupils is that they will be part of a larger school with older pupils, compared with being in a very small school where all children are aged 4 years or under.

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 engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Build on the achievement gained at both schools by bringing together a larger team of staff to share expertise and experience.

Young children will be able to attend the same school as their older siblings, which will also be advantageous to their parents.

Pontrhondda Primary currently delivers the full Primary age curriculum and will of course continue to do so.

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.

The catchment area of the Pontrhondda Primary School will not change, i.e. it will continue to be the same as its current catchment area which already incorporates that of Ynyscynon Nursery School. The Council's policy regarding free school transport will apply. No child resident within this unchanged catchment area will qualify for free transport, as no address within the area is more than the current limit applied by this Council for free provision, namely 1.5 miles. There are also no walking routes identified to Pontrhondda Primary that are classed as not being available. As Pontrhondda is located just 0.6 miles by road from Ynyscynon and it is the school that children ordinarily transfer to for their Primary education, the impact on pupils' journeys to school and on transportation costs is considered to be negligible and not a factor to be considered disadvantageous.

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:

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

We consider that this proposal benefits the children in the community of Llwynypia in accordance with the seven core aims set out above.

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

As with any major change, there could be some short term and possibly longer term changes in the staffing structure. The Governing Body of Pontrhondda Primary School would determine any changes.

As this is not creating a new school provision, the senior management and Governing Body of Pontrhondda Primary School will remain in post. Once the Governing Body has determined its new structure and staffing model, arrangements will be made to fill any vacant posts available, with advice given that priority consideration should be given to existing staff of Ynyscynon Nursery School, should they make applications. The Council has well established Human Resource policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change.

### **What will be the likely impact of the Proposal on the community of Llwynypia?**

The Llwynypia ward is a Communities First Area and is part of the Mid Rhondda Community cluster that has secured Communities Funding matched with Pupil Deprivation Grant funding to support educational improvement

This is a Flying Start area, and this provision is currently provided from and located on the site of Ynyscynon Nursery School, along with an Early Years Centre which provides some training and day care facilities. Both the Flying Start and Early Years Centre will remain on the Ynyscynon site and will have the opportunity to transfer to the main school building; It is important that the existing facilities for Flying Start is preserved and enhanced with no loss of amenity to the wider community. It is only the school provision that is proposed to transfer to Pontrhondda. The close links and interaction that currently exist will be retained, preserved and enhanced as appropriate. The intention is therefore for this building to remain open and operational.

A community impact assessment and an equality impact assessment have been completed for this proposal. These will be updated after the consultation has been completed to ensure that they include pertinent issues that have arisen and need to be taken into account. The community impact assessment and equality impact assessment will be presented to the

Council's Cabinet in the report that sets out the consultation feedback received in respect of this proposal. A copy of the community impact assessment and equalities impact assessment are available from the contact details at the start of this document and are also available on the Council website. The overall impact of these proposals on the local community is considered to be neutral.

### What are the financial implications of the Proposal?

The purpose of creating all through primary schools, as the principal model of school organisation is not driven by financial considerations. Savings that do arise initially benefit the remaining school, as they enable school improvements to be made, and then schools as a whole through redistribution of the savings across the County Borough.

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 head teacher 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 Pontrhondda Primary School's Governing Body, a summary of the known budgetary impacts is set out overleaf.

	Ynyscynon Nursery (Current)	Pontrhondda Primary (Current)	Pontrhondda Primary (Future)	Revenue Savings
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Annual Revenue Budget based on 2015/16 budget	225	490	544	171

Building improvements will be made to the Pontrhondda site and buildings to address the maintenance backlog, improve the accommodation and facilities at the school and ensure that there is sufficient, suitable capacity to accommodate the nursery aged children. It is estimated that the total cost of this work will be in the region of £200k, and will be funded from within existing education capital budgets.

There may be redundancy costs associated with these proposals, which are not possible to quantify at the current time. This Council has had a successful track record in the past of minimising the need for compulsory redundancies, by offering alternative placements for displaced staff at other schools in the County Borough, under a formal arrangement it has between its' schools. No redundancy costs have therefore been identified, but in the event of staff choosing this option, all such costs will be met centrally by the LA.

### What are the disadvantages of this proposal?

Some parents may feel that a smaller 'stand alone' nursery school is better for pupils rather than one larger school – in other words there could be a view that smaller schools may be more personal and less daunting, particularly for new entrants. Pontrhondda Primary School, even with the addition of a Nursery unit will still be smaller than the average Rhondda Cynon Taf

primary school, with under 200 pupils in attendance and there are many much larger, very successful primary schools in the County Borough.

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 which is why the Pontrhondda Primary School Governing Body will, as soon as possible, once the statutory processes are complete, address the staffing issues. In practice, governing bodies seek to keep as much continuity in the staffing as is possible in these situations.

The Council considers that the educational advantages of the proposal outweigh the short-term impact of the changes for pupils and parents.

The Council does not consider that there are any specific risks associated with the implementation of this proposal and has not, therefore, considered any measures to manage or mitigate such risks.

### **What alternative options have been considered other than the closure of Ynyscynon Nursery School?**

The current position is that we have two small 'paired' schools (one considered to be very small), located just 0.6 mile away from each other on sites which have surplus places at present. The nursery school currently caters for up to 40 pupils only, of just one age range.

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

Close Ynyscynon Nursery School and extend the age range of the pupils that may attend Pontrhondda Primary School to create nursery provision at that school – the current proposal;  
Close both schools and create a new primary school in a new building on a suitable site in the catchment area of the combined schools;  
Federate the two schools, maintaining the two school buildings but with one Governing Body and Headteacher.

At present, we do not have an alternative suitable site to build a brand new school for the Llwynypia area.

In respect of the option to federate the Governing Bodies, this would create a two site school under one Headteacher and one Governing Body. Two separate legal entities would continue employing two sets of staff. This option would not enable the educational benefits that accrue from deploying the teachers across both schools and improving the standards of teaching and learning that arise from creating a single school.

Therefore, the other options have been discounted and the preferred option is that proposed in this consultation document.

### What is the statutory process to close a school?

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:

The Council's Cabinet considers The Code and authorises a consultation on the changes to the schools;

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;

Consultation comments are collated and summarised by the Council. This summary together with the Council's officers own responses 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;

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;

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;

If objections are received, the Council **must** publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and their responses to them before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of its determination;

The Council's Cabinet must decide to issue its decision on the proposal within 16 weeks of the end of the objection period;

If the proposals receive approval they should be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice, or any subsequent modified date.

## 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@rctednet.net](mailto:schoolplanning@rctednet.net)*

### The Proposal

The proposal is to close Ynyscynon Nursery School and extend the age range of the pupils who can attend Pontrhondda Primary School, to allow Nursery aged pupils to attend this school. This change would be implemented on 1 September 2016.

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

Please let us know the reasons for your choice

2. Please state any additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account (attach additional sheets if necessary)

3. Please indicate who you are (eg parent of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.)

4. Name (optional)

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

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire  
Please forward completed questionnaires to the above address no later than 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

**Appendix 2****Notes of a meeting held with the members of the staff and Governing Body of Ynyscynon Nursery School, plus other staff of the Early Years Centre on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015, to consider the proposal to close Ynyscynon Nursery School.****Present**

Mrs E Thomas, Temporary Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
Mrs S Walker, Head of Primary Achievement  
Miss A Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
Mrs J Hadley, School Organisation Manager  
Ms N Pearce, HR Adviser  
Ms N Thomas, Service Manager Early Years and Family Support  
Mrs C Jones, National Union of Teachers  
Mrs R Rees, Acting Headteacher  
20 members of staff and governors of Ynyscynon Nursery School and Ynyscynon Early Years Centre (including Flying Start and the Day Nursery)

The officers present opened the meeting by introducing themselves .

Mrs E Thomas (ET) then outlined the proposal in question, namely to close Ynyscynon Nursery School and to transfer nursery education provision to Pontrhondda Primary School. She outlined the reasons and rationale behind the proposals, as advised in the detailed consultation document that had been widely circulated. The purpose of this meeting is to assist the consultation process, by affording staff and governors the opportunity to ask questions or raise comments, statements etc in respect of the proposals as outlined. Every effort will be made to answer questions if possible. The statutory process that must be followed was also outlined. It was noted that this part of the process is consultation; the receipt of objections is not appropriate at this time.

Ms N Thomas (NT) advised the meeting that since the consultation document in respect of this proposal had been placed before Cabinet, further discussions had been held in respect of the Flying Start provision remaining on this site should the proposal to close the Nursery School be agreed. This issue requires further consideration, as it is possible that there are other providers in the area that could assist with the delivery of Flying Start provision.

ET stressed to all present that this consultation process refers to the closure of the Nursery School only.

The meeting was then opened to questions and comments:

- You mentioned the school and Flying Start only. What about the day nursery and the kitchen. All staff working here are employed by the Early Years Centre, not the school. Ms Pearce (NP) responded by advising that all staff are employed by the governing body of

Ynyscynon Nursery School under generic job descriptions and contracts. Under the Council's Management of Change Policy, all staff will be treated fairly and equally.

- Parents may want places in the day nursery, we are unsure of what to tell them about its future. We cannot answer their questions. We are saddened at the way this is going to go.
- This proposal clearly impacts on Pontrhondda as well, their pupil numbers will rise and they will have to endure building work.
- What staff will be given priority consideration for jobs at Pontrhondda, is it just teachers? NP advised that this will be determined by the Pontrhondda governing body, they will firstly need to look at the staffing structure of their school and amend it is required. Any vacancies created as a result will go in to the management of change process and the governors can then consider the Ynyscynon staff for redeployment.
- Does this apply to teachers or support staff – advised both. It will be entirely dependent on the staffing structure agreed by the Pontrhondda governors.
- Many nursery classes are now led by Level 4 support staff instead of teachers. NP advised that this will again be a matter for the Pontrhondda governors to determine.
- NP outlined the management of change and redeployment process in detail.
- If a vacancy comes up at Pontrhondda in the meantime, will Ynyscynon staff have priority? NP gave information.
- Would the two governing bodies amalgamate? Mrs Hadley (JH) gave information. The Pontrhondda governing body would not change.
- NP stated that this Council has a very good track record of assisting displaced staff. Very few staff in the past in this position have failed to obtain posts. The Council is there to support you.
- The nursery unit at Pontrhondda is proposed to hold 21 pupils. Is this correct? JH gave information on the admissions process for nursery pupils and the calculation of this figure.
- Will any building work be finished before the children transfer to Pontrhondda? Advised yes.
- Pontrhondda has never had a nursery. How can you therefore develop and build expertise there? Mrs Walker (SW) gave information, she also advised that the philosophy of a nursery is the same as for the rest of the foundation phase.
- How can sending children from this specialist unit with excellent facilities improve their education. SW gave information and referred to improved transition as a particular example. ET also advised that this will give Primary school staff the opportunity to teach the full Primary phase.
- We have the early years experience here. Children have to go through transition from Flying Start to nursery here. There is no trauma experienced by the children in transferring to Pontrhondda. Children have a more enriched early years experience here, we also have a woodland area. How can a concrete yard in Pontrhondda improve on this?
- My children would have been traumatised entering a Primary school at age 3. This Centre provided them with the invaluable opportunities they needed. The Rhondda is a deprived area. The outdoor play area here is phenomenal. The closure of this Centre will have a detrimental effect on the children of the Rhondda.

- Ms Richards (AR) gave information on proposed improvements to the outdoor area at Pontrhondda. The Nursery children will be in a segregated area and will not mix with the Junior pupils.
- Pontrhondda will never have a woodland or an allotment. You cannot beat this environment.
- AR advised that there will be investment at Pontrhondda to improve the outside areas.
- Where is the money coming from to improve Pontrhondda? AR gave information.
- You are prepared to invest in Pontrhondda but not here. AR outlined the funding differences, this school receives double the sum per pupil compared to that of a Primary school. This is seen to be an inefficient use of resources.
- Our main disagreement is that we feel insulted that you consider that children need to transfer to Pontrhondda to improve standards. Standards here are excellent. ET stressed that officers have not criticised the provision here, this is not reflected in the consultation document either.
- We do not agree with the wording you have used, we do not consider that transferring pupils to Pontrhondda will improve their provision. SW gave information, there has been no criticism of Ynyscynon's standards, but all schools can improve.
- ET advised that the proposal states that Flying Start and the day nursery are to remain. This statement was correct at the time of publication of these proposals, but there have been developments since then which could change the situation, regarding possible service changes within the Council. NT advised that this issue needs to be looked at, to explore the future viability of these services remaining on this site.
- Will the day nursery stay at this site if the school and Flying Start move? NT advised that viability will need to be considered.
- We have always run as one Centre, not as separate entities.
- NP advised that all staff will be included in discussions with HR. Staff have generic job descriptions.
- We manage Penrhys Flying Start as well. What is happening to this? NT advised that this issue will require further consideration.
- NP gave information on the current staffing structure of the Centre and staff job descriptions.
- Is there one single budget for the Centre? Advised no, the different services have their own budgets and the day nursery is funded by income generated. It is difficult to separate the different services contained within this Centre.
- When the decision on this proposal is made, what will be the position regarding staff redundancies? NP and ET gave information on the Management of Change policy and how it works. Mrs C Jones of the NUT gave further information on this process.
- Mrs R Rees advised that the governors of Pontrhondda have always considered displaced staff when appointing to posts at that school.
- ET stressed that no decision on this proposal has yet been made. This is an opportunity to ask questions, but individual staff and their circumstances cannot be discussed. This will be dealt with later on should this process proceed.
- This meeting is just going through the motions. Is it worth us fighting? This is all down to money.

- What will happen to the building if the school closes? AR advised that no consideration has been given to this issue and outlined the process that will be followed in the event that the proposal is agreed.
- NT advised that support provided to families under Flying Start will remain. The catchment area for this provision will not change, but the venue at which it is delivered may change.
- In this case, the proposal is just to save money.
- Children at Pontrhondda are going to be 'squashed' in to a smaller area. AR advised that there is space and surplus capacity at Pontrhondda.
- Have you considered the parking issues? AR advised that an assessment will be undertaken.

Mrs Thomas thanked everyone for their attendance, the meeting was then closed.

**Notes of a meeting held with the members of the School Council of Pontrhondda Primary School on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2015, to consider the proposal to close Ynyscynon Nursery School and transfer its pupils to Pontrhondda.**

Present

Mr T Britton, Head of Performance  
 Mrs J Hadley, School Organisation Manager  
 Miss C Astrand, member of teaching staff  
 12 members of the School Council of Pontrhondda Primary School

Mr Britton and Mrs Hadley opened the meeting by introducing themselves and then asked the children to introduce themselves also.

Mr Britton explained that he and Mrs Hadley were here today to discuss an idea to close Ynyscynon Nursery School and transfer the pupils to this school. He then asked the children if they were aware of these plans (they confirmed they were) and what they thought of them, were they good or bad? He went around the table, speaking with each child in turn.

- It will be easier for parents and families, some of us have brothers and sisters in the nursery, they will only have one school to go to. New children won't be scared.
- It will be good to have brothers and sisters in the same school.
- It will be good for the nursery children to learn and to work the same way as us. They will know how things run in Pontrhondda.
- Nursery children can make new friends.
- We will make them welcome, say hello to them.
- They can play with their brothers and sisters, also cousins, these are things we like doing. They can see them throughout the day.
- It will be easier for working parents, they will only have to make one trip to one school.
- The children may be nervous when they start with us as they don't know the children here, we can help them.
- We will all be there for them. We have a big yard, we can help them.
- They will learn the skills that we learn on a daily basis.
- We can teach them how to sing, play nicely and be safe.
- We can play with our family and friends in the same school.
- There could be a problem if they fall, but the bigger children can help them.
- The hall may be too small.
- Where is the Nursery class going to go? Mrs Hadley advised that we are looking at the school plans to decide the best place for it.
- If they don't know where to go, they may go to the wrong place, we can help them.
- We could have assemblies outside on a sunny day.
- We could have nursery prefects to help them. Someone from the School Council could find out what the nursery children want to do. We can help them to learn to write.

Mr Britton and Mrs Hadley then thanked the children for their comments and for attending, the meeting was then closed.

## **Notes of a meeting held with the members of the staff and Governing Body of Pontrhondda Primary School on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2015, to consider the proposal to close Ynyscynon Nursery School.**

### Present

Mrs E Thomas, Temporary Director of Education and Lifelong Learning  
 Mr T Britton, Head of Performance  
 Miss A Richards, Head of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
 Mrs J Hadley, School Organisation Manager  
 Mrs E Williams, HR Adviser  
 20 members of staff and governors of Pontrhondda Primary School

The officers present opened the meeting by introducing themselves .

Mrs E Thomas (ET) then outlined the proposal in question, namely to close Ynyscynon Nursery School and to transfer nursery education provision to Pontrhondda Primary School. She outlined the reasons and rationale behind the proposals, as advised in the detailed consultation document that had been widely circulated. The purpose of this meeting is to assist the consultation process, by affording staff and governors the opportunity to ask questions or raise comments, statements etc in respect of the proposals as outlined. Every effort will be made to answer questions if possible. The statutory process that must be followed was also outlined. It was noted that this part of the process is consultation; the receipt of objections is not appropriate at this time.

The meeting was then opened to questions and comments:

- A governor commented that they thought that this was a very good idea, nursery pupils can find it a difficult transition coming from a very small school to a larger one. It is long overdue.
- Mr Britton (TB) gave feedback from the earlier meeting of the School Council.
- As long as the proposals will not have a detrimental effect on the outside environment for our children, we can see the positives.
- Miss Richards (AR) advised that officers have been looking at the school building, it is deemed to be structurally sound but it is accepted that there has not been much investment in it in recent years. We will undertake improvements if these proposals are agreed, such as a conservatory type extension, new toilets and a new entrance/admin area that is DDA compliant. Improvements to the outdoor area will be considered, the recent example of similar work at Trerobart Primary School was outlined. We will also consider general decoration and improvements to the building.
- Will the children be involved in the planning and design of this work – advised yes.
- AR advised that examples of work undertaken at other, similarly constructed schools will be displayed at the forthcoming open evening.
- Car parking is a major issue, it is a problem now. What are the proposals for this? AR advised that the Council is well aware of the issues and is looking at possible solutions,

we have some ideas in mind. It is a common problem outside every school, we will do whatever we can to assist in addressing it.

- AR advised that discussions will be held with the College to try to formalise the school usage of their grass pitch.
- Mrs Rees, Headteacher advised that the issue of parking was one of the first problems identified and discussed with officers during their recent visit to the school. The school staff will work with the LA to try to achieve a solution that is of benefit to all.
- Information on timescales was requested. When will the work be undertaken and how will it impact on the running of this school? AR gave information, preparatory work can commence now, with the majority of construction work being undertaken in the summer holidays.
- Will you consider the installation of a kitchen? Advised yes.
- The nursery pupils were brought to this school previously, when shallow mine workings were discovered on their school site. This arrangement worked well for a least a year, with no major issues identified.
- This proposal is seen as very positive.
- The management of change and staff appointment policies were discussed. Mrs Williams (EW) provided information.

Mrs Thomas thanked everyone for their attendance, the meeting was then closed.

## Summary of Questionnaire Responses

Name	Status	Agree with proposal?	Comments
Provided	Parent, Flying Start	No	Ynyscynon has so much more to offer children than Pontrhondda, such as the woodland and the fantastic facilities compared to other schools. My child has come on so well since starting here. Teachers are well trained and communicate well with the children. The facilities here will go to waste, they will just have a yard area to play in at Pontrhondda. I am upset to hear of your intentions, the nursery has much more advantages than schools and more time for the children.
Provided	Parent, Ynyscynon EYC	No	Ynyscynon Nursery is a big part of the community. It is an amazing school that ensures the children have the best start to an education. Starting school can be scary and by changing to Pontrhondda this could be far worse as it is a big school with lots of children.
Not provided	Community member	No	This nursery school has been providing more than a nursery facility, children often go to creche first and then on to the nursery afterwards.
Provided	Great grandparent	No	Ynyscynon school has and always should be a huge part of our community, a truly wonderful school. It is an important part of our children's education, it gives very young children a truly excellent start to their school years.
(undecipherable)	Grandparent	No	I feel that Ynyscynon Nursery gives our young children an excellent start to their education. Very young children settle in together much better than in a large school.

Not provided	Parent	No	Many children would not be ready to go straight from Flying Start to a school with older children up to 11 yrs especially if they are not in the school area either. I don't think the school will benefit from children as young as 3 mixing with older children of 11, some children need more time to settle in, this is why a separate nursery to prepare them for school is better.
Provided	Parent	No	It is better for my child. Don't use it for other things or close it, keep it the same.
Not provided	Parent	No	I have personally gained lots from the Centre from parenting skills to friendship. The Centre helps families and the community, it would be a big loss to many.
Not provided	Parent, Flying Start	No	There is no room at Pontrhondda to extend the building for nursery children without losing half the yard the pupils play in. Ynyscynon has been open since 1936 and is part of the community with generations of families attending it. If the Nursery closes it will have a knock on effect for Flying Start.
Provided	Parent, Flying Start	No	We want our child to attend this school as the teachers do an excellent job as we have been told by a neighbour. I think it is ridiculous that you are considering shutting a school with an excellent reputation which makes so many children happy.

Provided	Parent, Pontrhondda and Ynyscynon	No	Ynyscynon is a fantastic school with fantastic facilities where children have a lot of freedom to learn and a fantastic woodland area. Pontrhondda has a small yard that is already full of children. Children will have to be separated from school age children making the yard even smaller.
Provided	Parent governor, Pontrhondda	Yes	This will secure the future of Pontrhondda and parents will have one journey to school with children of all ages. It is obvious there will be a financial saving, at times of austerity it is time to cut a wage and premises bill into a realistic and fit for purpose building. Traffic problems - it is dangerous at the moment and alternative parking must be considered for the residents. The volume of traffic will increase and may prove to be an accident waiting to happen, this must be given priority.
Provided	Grandparent	No	Ynyscynon is a lovely start to children's education, it would be sad to see it closed, we are losing a lot of facilities in RCT already. Teachers and assistants are wonderful, the time they take with the children and quality of outdoor activities are excellent and the equipment is good quality. It would be a shame to lose this school.
Not provided	Parent, Flying Start	No	Pontrhondda has not got the room to extend without losing half the yard, which is not big enough as it is. The plan is to save money yet the Council will no doubt spend more extending Pontrhondda. The Centre has everything, it is part of the community where everyone comes together and will be greatly missed if it goes.

Not provided	Parent of children who have attended Flying Start	No	The school has been a central part of the community for years. Without Ynyscynon I would not have met other parents who have now become friends. Ynyscynon Flying Start held my children immensely with their confidence and speech. What will happen to the children when the centre is closed down?
Not provided	Parent, Ynyscynon EYC	No	The centre is a major part of our community for children and parents. If the school is taken away, how long will the centre continue to run? I don't think the children have been thought about, why take away amazing facilities from them to squeeze them in to an already overcrowded school. My daughter is due to attend the school next September, I think it is absolutely ridiculous spending our money on overcrowding another school when there are fabulous classes at the centre. If the school leaves the building won't be used to its full potential.
Provided	Parent, Flying Start	No	The Flying Start teachers do an excellent job and to do this to the young pupils and staff is ridiculous. The children won't understand why they have to change schools, this will disrupt their routine. Why this is happening is an absolute disgrace.
Provided	Grandparent	No	As a former pupil, parent and grandmother all of whom attended this school I find it such a shame to close this beautiful school.

Provided	Former pupil	No	<p>Parking and access to Pontrhondda is poor and requires development for which there is no space. Ynyscynon is in a central location for a great catchment area. Job losses at Ynyscynon of qualified experienced staff. Ynyscynon has excellent nursery and setting with woodland and allotments. Personally would look at another tried and tested facility for my next child. Experience and reputation matters of which Ynyscynon has both.</p>
Provided	Parent and user of Centre	No	<p>It doesn't make financial sense. There is a possibility of losing the other centres due to lack of funding - Flying Start, day care, wrap around care. It is an unique paradigm of foundation years setting - why lose it? It plays a key role in the community. 2 page letter attached outlining reasons to keep the Nursery open under 3 headings - making financial sense, building a community together and an unique educational setting.</p>
Provided	Parent	No	<p>As a child I attended Ynyscynon Nursery 38 years ago, the school has been an excellent school. All my children have attended and my son is still attending. My disabled child goes to the Teddy Bear Club in the holidays.</p>
Provided	Ex-pupil	No	<p>Myself, my wife, daughter, my sister and her children all attended the nursery school and we are all sad to see it close. It is a nursery school that has served the community very well over the years and could still be well used.</p>

Provided	Parent	No	Too young to attend Pontrhondda, it is unsafe, intimidating and has a lack of space. Having creche, Flying Start and Nursery together makes transition much easier. Ynyscynon is an integral part of the community.
Provided	Parent	No	I prefer for my child to not be with older children, the school will become overcrowded and the roads are dangerous for children that young.
Provided	Parent	No	I feel that it is important that young children are able to be safe and Ynyscynon is a lovely little school.
Not provided	Refused to provide details	No	I think it would be a real shame to lose such a valuable resource. The new proposed school is too far out of the area. Ynyscynon has an outstanding reputation and it would be a loss to the local children to see it close.
Provided	Community member	No	I don't think it is the best decision for the community. It is a good school that benefits a lot of families.
Provided	Parent	No	This nursery is a lovely place, the new idea is not realistic. It is a good school, if it closes it will affect a lot of families.
Provided	Parent	No	It is needed by a lot of children, will affect a lot of families.
Provided	not provided	No	It is a good nursery and convenient for parents
Provided	Grandmother	No	It's a good school and is a great help to the community.
Provided	Parent	No	The school is good for both children and parents. Not enough spaces at other schools if it was to close.
Provided	Parent	No	It's a good school for both parents and children. If this school was to close it will make more issues as there is not enough spaces at other schools.

Provided	Parent	No	It is used by lots of people, it is a lovely school, the children have come on lovely since being there.
Provided	Parent	No	It's used by lots of children who enjoy the place. Children are used to going to this nursery.
Provided	Parent	No	Provides lots of services for the community, children like it.
Provided	Parent	No	It's a good nursery and it is good for parents who can't afford.
Provided	Parent	No	The nursery has a fantastic reputation, the staff have great facilities and a fantastic reputation that shows in the school results compared to Pontrhondda. Pontrhondda is a very small school with a small yard already, with extra building work that would need to be added on, the school is already small and full.
Not provided	Staff member Ynyscynon EYC	No	All children gain so much experience from the areas in Ynyscynon. There are brilliant facilities to learn and play. Ynyscynon has been a big part of the community for many, many years. I don't think that the facilities in Pontrhondda are suitable for the children aged 3. The outdoor areas that Ynyscynon has got are fantastic for all learning abilities. The traffic by Pontrhondda is dangerous as it is now.
Not provided	Staff member Ynyscynon EYC	No	The Centre has been a big part of the community for so many years and all the children gain so much experiences with all the different areas the Centre has to offer, I don't think these experiences would be quite the same by moving to Pontrhondda, also by moving it would become dangerous due to the traffic in the street from the school and college.

Provided	Grandparent	No	The environment of Ynyscynon Nursery is outstanding for pre-school children, teaching and care is outstanding which in my opinion cannot be achieved if combined with Pontrhondda. There is not enough space there at the moment, adding a nursery I think will affect the pupils there now and definitely will affect the pre-school pupils. Myself, my children and grandchildren all attended Ynyscynon Nursery.
Provided	Parent	No	The Nursery is the highest standard and if the move is to happen the standard would be lost, along with all the facilities the children have.
Not provided	Uncle	No	I feel it is a big part of the community and should remain open.
Provided	Grandparent	No	It's an amazing nursery, there is woodland, play area and numerous other things that would be lost, which are very important to a child's early education.
Provided	Parent, Flying Start	No	The staff are fabulous, this is absolutely ridiculous. Ynyscynon is the best nursery in the area. Mixing little ones with big kids in Pontrhondda is just not a good idea.

			Summary of 2 page letter - closing the School will have a massive effect on staf as they are employed by the Centre. It is a centre of excellence, it is inclusive and accessible for the disabled. Pontrhondda does not have the space or facilities. The capacity quoted for Ynyscynon is wrong. The good data for Pontrhondda has been contributed to by Ynyscynon. Ynyscynon works hard in relation to social and emotional development. Being in one school does not guarantee consistency in teaching and learning. Ynyscynon has excellent relationships with parents and other organisations. There is no funding for teachers in nursery classes and children will be moved from an environment with experience and expertise. Moving to a large school is not necessarily a good thing. Core aims of the UN Convention on the rights of the child are promoted highly by Ynyscynon. Transition between Flying Start/ Day Nursery and school will not be easily preserved. I believe the best option would be to federate the schools. It is a great shame that Ynyscynon, the first Early Years Centre and the first nursery in Wales is to be closed.
Not provided	Staff member	No	
Provided	Parent of a holiday club pupil	No	It is a fantastic school with excellent facilities in a good location, with lots of outdoor space. If the school closes it will only be a matter of time before the holiday club and day care also close.
Provided	Aunt of pupil	No	Too much strain on teachers
Provided	Aunt of pupil	No	Too many pupils and too much strain on teachers
Provided	Grandparent	No	Too much strain on teachers

Provided	Grandparent	No	Too many pupils and too much strain on teachers
Provided	Parent	No	Too many pupils and too much strain on teachers
Provided	Parent	No	I don't think it would be a good idea to force more children in to one school
Not provided	Parent at Ynyscynon and Pontrhondda	No	Ynyscynon is a fantastic school with great facilities and staff. The children benefit from the woodland area, they will not get this at Pontrhondda. I do not like the idea of my 3 year old being in a school with 11 year olds. My eldest child blossomed at this school and was prepared for Pontrhondda at 4 years old. Pontrhondda is nowhere near big enough and the traffic is bad enough now, an accident will happen. I absolutely think this is a bad idea, the Council needs to think about the children and nothing else.
Not provided	Parent at Ynyscynon and Pontrhondda	No	Pontrhondda is poorly located for the amount of pupils it has. Numerous times they have sent letters asking parents to car share. I do not like the fact that my 3 year old will be in a school with older kids up to 11 years old. The facilities at Ynyscynon help the children acclimatise to learning through play eg the woodland area. I imagine staff will be asked to further cut costs which will also have a bearing on our children's education. Isn't it possible to build a new school on the old hospital site meaning better access all round with segregation between nursery and juniors.

<p>Not provided</p>	<p>Staff member</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Ynyscynon Nursery is part of the early years centre and should be kept as it is to show how young children develop with early continuous care from 6 weeks in the day nursery to 4 years of age in school. There are no problems with the building and it has been rewired and updated. There are no issues with damp so this cannot be justified as a reason to close. Disability access is not an issue as the only steps inside the building are small, there are no traffic problems as at Pontrhondda and I do not believe that Pontrhondda has disabled parking or easy access either. Staying at Ynyscynon would benefit working parents as nursery education is now part time only, they will be able to access childcare in the day nursery, which would help them stay in employment.</p>
<p>Provided</p>	<p>Parent</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>It is not a good idea for lots of reasons, by my main issue is putting a child of 3 in a school with 11 year olds at the nursery where they are the oldest until they are 4/5 and they are ready at that age to go to an older school. My daughter got upset over 8 year old being horrible to her, you should never put a 3 year old through that. Changing the nursery is a massive mistake and I would rather keep my youngest daughter home than put her through this. Please think of the children, Ynyscynon is amazing and needs to stay open.</p>

Provided	not provided	No	Pontrhondda is full and parking is very bad, can you imagine how much more of a bad idea it would be by adding another 30 odd children. Ynyscynon is a beautiful nursery and was wonderful with my children and grandchildren, it would be a very bad idea to close this school.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I attended the nursery myself and know it's a special place, but I also want to protest against all the cuts being made in education at present. I am an adult tutor and believe education belongs to everyone. Government needs to remember this.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My grandchildren go to this school, it is wonderful.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's a fab little school.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I think there has to be a consultation with parents so their views can be put across
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My younger brother attended prior to a primary school at 4. It was a wonderful nursery then and I'm sure it still is now.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Council cuts over childrens education is awful. This is a special setting and it needs to stay there.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I was a past pupil along with my siblings and now our children are and will be pupils. This will affect our children and future children.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It will be a great loss to the community. This is a disadvantaged area and this school is used by flying start.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My daughter went here for flying start and nursery. It is the only local place that offers flying start.

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Because my son attended this school last year and it is an excellent school, with lovely teachers. My son came on leaps and bounds here.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My daughter loved her time she spent in flying start and the nursery. This was her first school and the different things they offer the community are priceless. I have moved out of the area but my partner still lives there and it will be a loss. I still attend courses to help me not be isolated and become a better parent, and learn the things I never did growing up in care.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I have friends with children in this school.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My son attends during school holidays for holiday play and to give us respite because he has additional needs. Many different provisions have failed except this one. He has settled at Ynyscynon and has come on leaps and bounds, all his needs are met including the provision of a 1 - 1 worker for him. The closure would devastate us and our son along with other families.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's a shame to close this. It is a lovely little school. My son goes to flying start there and loves it.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This is my granddaughter's school, she loves it there and teachers are fab. They also have their own garden, the kids love it.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It was the first school I ever went to. I would be sad to see it close.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I don't want my friend to be out of a job.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Keep the school open.

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My daughter used to go there.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My 2 children have been there and I think it's an amazing school, staff are fab.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My nieces and nephews go to this school, it's brilliant.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My children go to this school and now my younger two won't get chance to. This is a brilliant school, no need to close it.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It will be a real shame for this school to close. My granddaughter attends here. What a great school
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My nieces and nephews go there.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This school is an asset to the community. My daughter would be attending if part time provision had not been brought in. Myself and my daughter have attended activities since she was a baby. I attended this nursery as did most of the community.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Amazing nursery
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Pontrhondda is overcrowded and is very dangerous for the public. Adding more will make it even worse.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	The nursery is brilliant for our young children. 3 of my children have been to the school and would love for my son to go there too, I will be choosing another school as I am not willing to send my son to Pontrhondda.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Seems a lovely nursery, family members and children go to this nursery, there's not many around.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I went to this nursery.

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My daughter uses the holiday club and I've seen what excellent facilities the school has. There should be more schools like this, not closing them.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	The school is an amazing support to the community. My son attends and I can't believe that any future children I will have will not have the chance to go to such an amazing school and have the great start my son has had.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Both my children went there and were given an outstanding start to their education. The ethos, atmosphere and learning opportunities are second to none. You simply can't put a price on everything. Very sad state of affairs if this goes ahead.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	There are not many facilities like this left in the Rhondda. Many children I know enjoy it here and all the cutbacks are targeted at our children where they should be targeted at the job centres.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My son goes here and hopefully my next.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My children went to the nursery and had a really good start in life. Staff were so lovely and helpful.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Absolutely shocking all the cuts and closures in RCT.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My little girl has started this nursery, to take it away from the community will be a tragedy.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My daughter attends and my youngest will in 18 months. This isn't just a nursery, it's a community for us parents to do groups and have coffee mornings. Without the school there everything else will stop, that will ruin the community for us all.

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I think this should stay open.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I went to this nursery 43 years ago, having smaller classes the teachers have more time to spend with the children, and to spend more time with those that don't pick up things as quickly as others. A top school, always has been.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It will be ideal when I have kids.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I'm signing this because the nursery has changed our lives as a family. It gives children opportunities no other school can offer.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My oldest daughter went to the nursery before I moved. Fantastic school, shouldn't be closed.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Amazing school, amazing staff. My daughter has been here since Sept 14.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Too many places being shut by the government we need to stop this.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I disagree with the closure
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's always been a fab nursery with lovely staff, always heard great things about it
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Closing Ynyscynon is a terrible decision. I completed a years training there as part of my childcare course. The school has fab facilities, the staff are friendly and care for the need of each child. This is by far the best school I have worked in, it would be a shame to see it close.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My daughter is in nursery here, my son will be joining flying start in September. Fab school and staff

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It was my little boy's first school, he started in creche right through to school years. It's an absolutely amazing school
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I'm signing because my niece goes to the school and she really enjoys it there. They are brilliant with the kids. I would hate to see it close.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's such a great setting and does so much for our children and community.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This is one of the best nurseries around, simple!
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My 2 boys went there and I would like my daughters to as well when they are old enough
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My nephew goes to this school, my 3 nieces went here and loved it. My nephew could hardly speak but now since going to Ynyscynon he talks a lot.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This shouldn't be happening, where are the babies of the community supposed to go? This school is a fabulous setting and it's a shame this is being considered.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This community will lose history
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I'm against young children mixing with pre-comp. The nursery is amazing, my son went there and it was brill
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My oldest son attended this school and my youngest is there now. They love it
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	School has been going years and always provides 100%. My kids plus 1 waiting to go to this school and really don't think they will benefit from shutting it.

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Ynyscynon should stay open, couldn't have asked for a better nursery for my daughter. There is no room in Pontrhondda for any more children
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This school has been open years and years and always gives 100%
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's unfair to be shut
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I think it's a terrible decision to shut a school that has been open over 50+ years. Making cuts to clear debt is being done in the wrong area.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It should not close
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	The nursery is the best in the Rhondda
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's an outstanding school. My 3 children have attended there. My son attends the nursery and hopefully the school too
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I attended the nursery as part of my work experience and was pleased with the way I was treated. All children were happy and enjoying themselves
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This is a damn good school! I went there as did my mam. The school has a well known reputation for being one of the best nurseries around this area and it would be a travesty if it were to close
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My son attends the school and he enjoys every second he is there. Moving him would upset and unsettle him
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I know how important the school is to the community
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's a very good school
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	There is not a lot for the children around, shutting this will mean there is even less. The children will lose out.

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Ynyscynon has a very good indoor learn through play environment plus a large playground, woodland area and the opportunity for children to plant and observe fruit and veg growing in the allotment next door. These are facilities schools are crying out for, yet it looks like we will lose ours
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My daughter goes here, she loves it
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My daughter attended this school, outstanding, keep it open
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's a good school, shouldn't be closed
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's needed.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Lovely school should be kept open
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This is a good school and many children will lose out. My grandson goes to the creche and if this closes my daughter won't be able to work
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My children and grandchildren attended the school. Lovely environment with a good reputation. Larger schools don't foster the atmosphere and is detrimental to the children's development
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I went there in 1974 and my son went there 30 years later. Lovely school, needs to stay open.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It would be a shame to lose something so valuable to the community
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Such a good school
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I went to school here
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's needed for children before they go to the primary
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Amazingly brilliant school, too good to lose

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Youngest went there, another example of a terrible decision about education in RCT
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I went to this school in the 1970's and have lovely memories from 3 years old. So should all our relatives and friends children, grandchildren have the chance to experience this. Too many schools closing
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This is the best nursery both my children went there
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I went to the nursery 35 years ago along with all my friends and later generations. To close it would be a travesty.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This was the first nursery in Britain, part of our heritage
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Because my friend's daughter goes there and really enjoys it
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I spent weeks of my placement here, it's a great nursery! Doesn't deserve to be closed! It's sickening how all these places are getting closed in the valleys, the kids will be left with nothing!
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It shouldn't be shut
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's a fab school and should not be shut down. Pontrhondda Road will be chaotic! There is enough traffic there as it is.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	All my children started here, I don't think it's fair to close just one group
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	The nursery was fantastic my daughter loved it and the staff are really friendly

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	The school has excellent standards and fantastic opportunities for children to experience activities over and above the curriculum. With its woodland, allotments and community interaction it will be a great shame to take this away from our future generation. I have spent time at the school for fundraising events and the commitment of the staff has always been exceptional
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My little boy attended this wonderful nursery 5 years ago and thoroughly enjoyed it. It's a fabulous place that helps ease the little ones into big school.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	While working with RCT I dealt with Ynyscynon and am aware of good work being carried out here
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I believe this school is excellent with an exemplary record. I also believe that closing this school has more to do with a spreadsheet than improving the standard of education. How can it be right that children will be moved from a beautiful school with woodland areas to a concrete yard that currently has no room to house them
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Save people's jobs
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's a lovely nursery that has provided a fantastic service to the local community. If it closes it will have a major negative effect on so many children and families within the community. Please do not close this wonderful place down.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I went to the school and it would be a huge loss to the community if it were to shut

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Cuts should not be at the cost of educational development. There are different areas where the monies can be taken from
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I am concerned with the amount of traffic it will create through my street Pontrhondda Road
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This is a great little school my daughter went here in 1979
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	A good friend's job on the line
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Always has and always will be a real community school
Not provided	not provided	No	Children deserve a good education
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Ynyscynon has been part of the community for several years and provides young children with an excellent start in life
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I went to Ynyscynon so did my niece, it's a wonderful school
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This is a lovely school and a great way to introduce children into school in a peaceful way
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My child attends the after school and holiday clubs
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This is an unique special place, loved by parents and children
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My son attended the school, the staff were fantastic with my son and every child there. The opportunities the children have are great, far greater than if it were attached to Pontrhondda as they have the woodland and allotment. They also have a lovely garden area, it will be a shame to see it go.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	There is no room at Pontrhondda to accommodate the needs of Ynyscynon Nursery. The nursery is a vital stepping stone in to Pontrhondda, providing space and facilities and most importantly brilliant teachers

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My daughter goes to this school and it's absolutely amazing, I think it is a waste of money to build another classroom. Wasting loads of money when there is a perfectly good one there
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My little boy is due to start. It looks an incredible school with lovely staff
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I worked here when sure start were granted funding, long before flying start. The nursery may be small but the quality of education and care provided is paramount in effective, emotional wellbeing of these little ones.
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I may now live in France but I am an ex-headteacher, this nursery is wonderful
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My daughter spent many days here in the holidays, it's a fantastic place, staff are wonderful
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Pontrhondda is the worse school in my area, I will not send my youngest there
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I went there myself as a child, my son is due to start in January
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My children and grandchildren have gone to that school, I always found it good with friendly staff and excellent set up. It's also good for the community
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Enough cuts, never hinder children's education and access to it
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This is the best nursery. Every town should have a nursery with the staff, provisions, education and nurturing they provide. All my children went there the oldest is 16
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My son went to this nursery and it was an excellent start to his education

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I am completely against the closure of all Primary schools in the area. We need smaller classes not bigger ones
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I am backing this all the way. Don't close
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This is an asset to the community
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	I am ashamed that RCT councillors are riding ramshod over the future choices for young children. We are in an area with pockets of high deprivation and social needs, high numbers of children in need, families using foodbanks and children on the CP register and placed in care. True councillors would be fighting tooth and nail to improve the life chances of our children to help them break the cycle of deprivation but instead they choose to see cutting education provision as an easy option to save money. Shame on you Labour councillors, how do you sleep at night?
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Because my nephew goes to this school and has come on leaps and bounds
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	There should be no more closures in RCT. Shame on you councillors
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	The school has been part of the community for many years. There are lots of children who attend the school to enable their parents to go to work giving them a more prosperous family unit. The closure of such a massive part of the community will be a massive blow to the community and individual families. Please reconsider and keep the school open.

Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Both my boys attended Ynyscynon and I cannot fault them. They gave them a fantastic start in life and the confidence to grow in to the boys they are today. The setting is fantastic with their woodland and own allotment that the children help plant. Why close such a stimulating place?
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My daughter has a wonderful time at flying start and is starting at the nursery after Christmas. She loves it there and has come on leaps and bounds since starting. It's very child friendly and the staff are excellent, it's the best nursery in the Rhondda
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	They shouldn't close the school
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My son absolutely loved this nursery. It's a beautiful place with amazing staff
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	It's a fantastic place for kids to grow and develop
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	My family go to this school and I also went on work experience there. It's a fab school and definitely shouldn't be closing
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Ynyscynon Nursery should not be shut
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	This is a fabulous facility with lovely kind staff, the children learn how to interact and develop skills at a young age
Christian name only provided	not provided	No	Lovely place, outrageous it may be closing

**Consultation Event at Pontrhondda Primary School, re proposal to close  
Ynyscynon Nursery, held on 15/12/15**

**Summary of comments posted on the message boards provided**

- What about road safety, emergency vehicles will not be able to pass.
- Amount of space children have to play. The safety of children. No time to eat as it is.
- Child safety on the road. Parents' cars are blocking neighbour's disabled parking bays at the moment.
- If toilets are moved in to conservatory area for early years, floor area for playing is reduced for the number of children 3 – 5 years.
- What about indoor/outdoor provision for early years.
- 3 toilets not sufficient for all early years pupils aged 3 to 5.