

Minutes of Meeting with Governing Body and Staff Members of Coedpenmaen Primary School

Date	21 st October 2024
Time	15:45
Venue	Coedpenmaen Primary School

Attendance		
Name	Initials	Title
Lisa Howell	LH	Schools Business and School Organisation Manager.
Non Morgan	NM	Senior Manager – Governor Support and Emergency Planning.
Nicola Tilling	NT	Senior Human Resources Officer.
Catherine Williams	CW	21 st Century Schools Project Officer.
N/A	N/A	Governing Body and Staff Members of Coedpenmaen Primary School.

1. Welcome and Introductions

LH welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting. Introductions were made.

2. Consultation Overview

LH provided the meeting with an overview of the proposal being made and the consultation process to be followed, as set out in the Consultation Document.

3. Staff and Governor Questions

The Governing Body and staff members of Coedpenmaen Primary School were invited to ask questions. The questions raised and comments made by the Governing Body and staff members, and responses provided are summarised in the table that follows.

Number	Question/Comment	Response
1.	We appreciate there is capacity in Coedpenmaen Primary School for additional pupils, however if the proposal goes ahead, would any improvements be made for the benefit of all children, e.g. to the outdoor areas?	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) will visit Coedpenmaen Primary School to identify any essential works required, e.g. to ensure sufficient and suitable toilet provision and kitchen facilities. These works would be completed as a priority. Staff and Governors are encouraged to think about any other improvements they would like to see made. These will then be considered should the proposal go ahead.
2.	Would any financial savings that result from the closure of Trallwng Infants	No. Any savings would go back to the central RCTCBC Education budget.

	School be transferred to the Coedpenmaen Primary School budget?	
3.	Has money been set aside for improvements at Coedpenmaen Primary School?	RCTCBC's Education Team is allocated a 'Capital Programme' budget each year to make improvements to its school estate. Any improvements would be funded via RCTCBC's Capital Programme.
4.	What are the implications for staff of the proposal?	If the proposal goes ahead, staff at Trallwng Infants School would be offered redeployment or redundancy. RCTCBC intends to recommend to the Governing Body of Coedpenmaen Primary School that any additional posts that are created as a result of the proposal should be ringfenced to Trallwng Infants School staff in the first instance. This means that these staff would be given the opportunity to apply for posts, and would be guaranteed an interview, prior to any posts being advertised externally.
5.	The transition of pupils from Trallwng Infants School to Coedpenmaen Primary School that currently takes place in year three is difficult. It causes a lot of anxiety for pupils and parents/carers, and it takes pupils a year to settle in. It is difficult for the Coedpenmaen Primary School to build relationships with parents/carers. It has a massive impact on pupils' emotional wellbeing and can be particularly challenging for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN).	Noted.
6.	References being made in the community to Coedpenmaen Primary School being overcrowded are untrue. These relate to comments made in the 2022 Estyn Report regarding one class of year one and two pupils. Changes have since been made and a 1:30 teacher: pupil ratio is the norm. Class sizes at Trallwng Primary School, e.g. 17 pupils, give parents/carers unrealistic expectations.	Noted.

7.	A recent Wales Online article about the proposal is unhelpful and inaccurate. Comments made about the proposal on Facebook by members of the community are inaccurate and hurtful.	RCTCBC will formally respond to any comments made in this regard through the Consultation Report.
8.	Estyn recently recommended that a school from Neath Port Talbot in Special Measures visit Coedpenmaen Primary School to learn from the good practice and observe the excellent progress made.	Noted.
9.	The pupil numbers in the Consultation Document are no longer accurate. Numbers are now lower than was projected, hence Coedpenmaen Primary School would not be overcrowded in year one.	Noted. Pupil numbers are reported at a point in time, we are aware that the numbers in Coedpenmaen are now even lower than reported in the Consultation Document.
10.	What are the timescales for a decision being made?	The Consultation Report is due to be considered by RCTCBC's Cabinet in January 2025 (NB: Consultation Documents says December 2024). If RCTCBC's Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal, a Statutory Notice will be published providing a 28-day notice period for objections. RCTCBC's Cabinet will consider the outcome of the Statutory Notice and make a final decision at the next available meeting (due to be April 2025). NB: Any decision can be "called-in", which means that Elected Members of RCTCBC can ask for it to be reconsidered. Even if the decision is upheld, this would add additional time to the process.
11.	Staff at Trallwng Infants School are already looking for other jobs. If the proposal doesn't go ahead, Trallwng Infants School could be left with a staff shortage.	RCTCBC understands that this is a worrying time and is committed to ensuring that the process is concluded as quickly as possible.
12.	If the decision takes longer than expected, will there be sufficient time to complete the necessary works to enable us to take the Trallwng Infants School pupils from September 2025?	RCTCBC officers will visit Coedpenmaen Primary School to note any requirements in advance of the decision being made, in order that we can go out to tender quickly should the decision to proceed with the proposal be made.
13.	If the proposal goes ahead, could Coedpenmaen Primary School take over the Trallwng Infants School building, establish a childcare provision	RCTCBC acknowledges there is a need for childcare in the area, however where childcare provisions are based

	and locate nursery to year two classes there, with years three to six classes being located at the current Coedpenmaen Primary School site?	on school sites, private companies run these. All pupils from Trallwng Infants School and Coedpenmaen Primary School can be accommodated at the Coedpenmaen Primary School site. RCTCBC considers it beneficial for all pupils to be located on one site.
14.	What is the closing date for the consultation?	All responses must be made by 17:00 on Friday 15 th November. RCTCBC will provide Coedpenmaen Primary School with a QR code to share with staff, the Governing Body and parents/carers to take them to the online consultation response form.
15.	Are the primary departments at the new 3 to 16 schools, Ysgol Bro Taf and Ysgol Afon Wen, now full?	Ysgol Afon Wen is at capacity in the primary sector. Ysgol Bro Taf still has capacity.
16.	What will happen in terms of traffic management with more parents/carers picking up?	There are no plans to increase the Coedpenmaen Primary School's capacity and Coedpenmaen Primary School has previously operated successfully with higher numbers on roll. RCTCBC's Education team will, however, work with colleagues in RCTCBC's Highways team to identify if any improvements are required. RCTCBC's Education team will also recommend that Coedpenmaen Primary School works with Sustrans to develop an Active Travel Plan and considers participating in other current initiatives to reduce traffic near schools, such as "School Streets" for example.

4. Closing Remarks

The Governing Body and staff members were encouraged to engage in the consultation process through completing the online survey or putting comments in writing to schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk.

All attendees were thanked for participating in the meeting.

Meeting closed at 16:45.