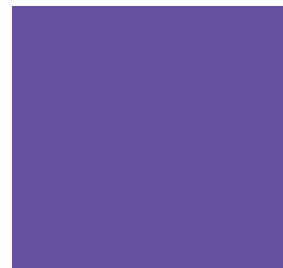
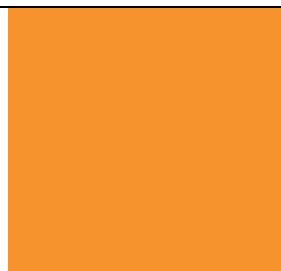
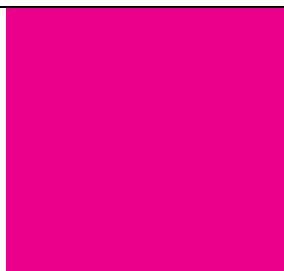


21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS**CONSULTATION REPORT**

CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSAL TO CLOSE TRALLWNG INFANTS' SCHOOL WITH PUPILS TRANSFERRING TO COEDPENMAEN PRIMARY SCHOOL BY NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 2025

The Consultation Report and Appendices are also available on the 'Get Involved' page on Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's website.

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg/This document is available in Welsh.

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1. Proposal

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) wishes to seek the views of stakeholders on the proposal to close Trallwng Infants' School with pupils transferring to Coedpenmaen Primary School by no later than September 2025.

The proposal is made in accordance with the Welsh Government's (WG's) School Organisation Code (2nd Edition) (011/2018). Section 2.1 of the WG's School Organisation Code (2nd Edition) (011/2018) refers to elements of school organisation that require the publication of proposals, including:

- The closing of a maintained school.

Details of the proposal and the rationale behind it are fully outlined in the Consultation Document and Impact Assessments that were circulated to all the stakeholders. The link to these documents is below:

[Proposal to close Trallwng Infants' School with pupils transferring to Coedpenmaen Primary School | Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council \(rctcbc.gov.uk\)](https://rctcbc.gov.uk)

2. Purpose of the Consultation Report

This Consultation Report is prepared in accordance with the WG's School Organisation Code (2nd Edition) (011/2018). Its purpose is to inform the stakeholders listed below of the outcome of the consultation held between Monday 30th September 2024 and 17:00 on Friday 15th November 2024.

3. Who Have We Consulted With?

A copy of the Consultation Document, which fully outlined and explained the proposal, was sent to the following stakeholders. The Consultation Document was also published on RCTCBC's website.

We are seeking the views of the following stakeholders:

- The Governing Bodies of:
 - Trallwng Infants' School.
 - Coedpenmaen Primary School.
- Parents/carers, prospective parents/carers (where possible), and staff members of:
 - Trallwng Infants' School.
 - Coedpenmaen Primary School.
- Pupils of:
 - Trallwng Infants' School.
 - Coedpenmaen Primary School.
- Neighbouring Councils.
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities.
- Welsh Ministers.
- Members of the Senedd for the Rhondda, Cynon and Taf constituencies and regional Members of the Senedd for the area.
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda, Cynon, and Taf constituencies
- Estyn.
- Teaching and staff trade unions.

- Central South Consortium Joint Education Service.
- Police and Crime Commissioner for the area.
- Childcare providers.
- Mudiad Meithrin.
- Menter Iaith.
- Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.
- Children and Young People's Partnership.
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board.
- Welsh Language Commissioner.
- Pontypridd Town Council.

4. **Consultation Process**

All stakeholders identified in section 3 were sent a link to electronic copies of the Consultation Document and Impact Assessments, and those that requested paper copies received them. The table that follows also outlines the meetings that were convened with the Governing Body and staff members and School Council of Trallwng Infants' School and Coedpenmaen Primary School.

Making your Views Known			
School(s) Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
School Council			
Trallwng Infants' School.	School Council.	Monday 4 th November 2024 at 14:00.	Trallwng Infants' School.
Coedpenmaen Primary School.	School Council.		Coedpenmaen Primary School.
Governing Body and Staff			
Trallwng Infants' School.	Governing Body and Staff	Wednesday 23 rd October 2024 at 15:45.	Trallwng Infants' School.
Coedpenmaen Primary School.	Governing Body and Staff	Monday 21 st October 2024 at 15:45.	Coedpenmaen Primary School.
Public Drop in Session			
Parents/carers and members of the local community.		Monday 4 th November 2024 at 15:30 to 17:30.	Trallwng Infants' School.
			Coedpenmaen Primary School.

All meetings outlined in the previous table were held face-to-face.

Notes of the meeting with the Governing Body and staff members of Coedpenmaen Primary School on Monday 21st October 2024 at 15:45 and Trallwng Infants' School on Wednesday 23rd October 2024 at 15:45 were taken and are attached at Appendix 1A – Minutes of Meeting with Governing Body and Staff Members of Coedpenmaen Primary School and Appendix 1B – Minutes of Meeting with Governing Body and Staff Members of Trallwng

Infants' School. These notes record questions raised, comments and statements made during the meeting along with the responses provided where appropriate.

Notes of the meeting with the School Councils of Coedpenmaen Primary School and Trallwng Infants' School on Monday 4th November 2024 at 14:00 were taken and are attached at Appendix 2A – Minutes of Meeting with School Council of Coedpenmaen Primary School and Appendix 2B – Minutes of Meeting with School Council of Trallwng Infants' School. These notes record questions raised, comments and statements made during the meeting along with the responses provided where appropriate.

Two drop-in sessions were also arranged so that members of the public could discuss the proposal with officers from RCTCBC's Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services and provide any feedback at the session. The sessions were held face-to-face at Coedpenmaen Primary School and Trallwng Infants' School on Monday 4th November 2024 at 15:30 to 17:30. At the drop-in sessions all attendees were requested to sign in so that the level of attendance could be recorded. The attendance register indicates that one person signed in at Coedpenmaen Primary School and 27 people signed in at Trallwng Infants' School. Where appropriate, attendees were asked to complete and submit a Consultation Response Form. A record of the verbal comments made at each public drop-in session was made and has been included within the themes of this Consultation Report.

5. Summary of Consultation Responses

Responses to the questions raised at the Governing Body and staff meetings and School Council meetings are summarised in the minutes of the meetings attached at Appendix 1A and 1B and 2A and 2B, respectively.

In total, 160 responses were received. One was received in writing and 158 were received via the online survey. In addition, 1,150 signatures were added to an online petition, this has been classed as one response for the purpose of this Consultation Report. Of the responses received, 16 (10.0%) agreed with the proposal, 136 disagreed (85.0%) with the proposal and 8 (5.0%) were not sure about the proposal. This is summarised in the table that follows.

Summary of Consultation Responses		
Determination	Number	%
Agree	16	10.0
Disagree	136	85.0
Not Sure	8	5.0
Not Answered	0	0.0
Total	160	100.0

In compliance with the WG's School Organisation Code (2nd Edition) (011/2018), a summary of the written responses received during the consultation period are detailed in the table that follows along with clarification (where required).

To confirm, all responses received during this consultation have been made available and reviewed by RCTCBC's Cabinet Members.

Summary of Written Responses	
Theme	Clarification

<p>Ability for staff to build relationships with parents/carers of children from nursery rather than year three.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>“Parents/carers of year two pupils [from Trallwng Infants’ School] who transfer to year three at Coedpenmaen Primary School have a heightened level of anxiety about change and they put this onto their children - it also takes staff a long time at Coedpenmaen Primary School to build trust and relationships with parents/carers”.</i></p>	<p>The continuity of educational experience offered within one primary setting will promote an increase in feelings of stability, security and confidence for both parents/carers and children due to the provision of education in one setting.</p>
<p>Children who move from Trallwng Infants’ School to Coedpenmaen Primary School will have to adjust to larger class sizes with lower staff: pupil ratios.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>“For pupils transitioning from Trallwng Infants’ School to Coedpenmaen Primary School, there is a significant change in class size, moving from a teacher-to-pupil ratio of 1:17 to 1:30. This increase can be daunting for both pupils and parents/carers, creating a sense of unfairness, especially considering that many schools in Wales operate with a similar 1:30 ratio”.</i></p>	<p>RCTCBC funds primary schools for reception to year six for a teacher for every block of 30 pupils, based on an average of 3 counts i.e. January, June and September e.g. for a school with 212 pupils on roll, the school will be funded for 8 teachers.</p> <p>RCTCBC considers that providing education for pupils attending Trallwng Infants’ School in Coedpenmaen Primary School, amongst other benefits, would offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater flexibility and opportunity for pupils in which they can learn and grow. • Potential for financial savings in terms of services which accrue within a larger school, which can be reinvested for the benefit of all pupils. • More opportunities for extra-curricular activities. • Greater opportunities for pupils to socialise and interact with a larger number of peers from their own year group.
<p>Could Trallwng Infants’ School become a school that delivers primary education for nursery to year two and Coedpenmaen Primary School become a school that delivers primary education for years three to six.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p>	<p>This is not an option that was consulted upon. In accordance with the WG’s <u>School Organisation Code (2nd Edition) (011/2018)</u>, alternative options were identified and consciously considered. Some of the benefits and disadvantages of each of the discounted options are listed in the Consultation Document.</p> <p>It is RCTCBC’s view that closing Trallwng Infants’ School with pupils transferring to Coedpenmaen Primary School could</p>

<p><i>“Trallwng Infants’ School should be Infants and Coedpenmaen Primary School just a junior school”.</i></p> <p><i>“Is there not the possibility to bring some of Coedpenmaen Primary Schools infant years down to Trallwng Infants’ School to have a separate infants and junior school that both work to feed into each other”.</i></p>	<p>potentially bring improved investment into the educational opportunities and provision for the pupils of Trallwng Infants’ School due to the enhanced resources accessed by larger schools.</p>
<p>There is capacity at Coedpenmaen Primary School to accommodate pupils from Trallwng Infants’ School.</p> <p>Is there capacity at Coedpenmaen Primary School to accommodate pupils from Trallwng Infants’ School.</p> <p>Concerns that there is space in reception, year one and year three to accommodate all pupils from Trallwng Infants’ School at Coedpenmaen Primary School.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>“Coedpenmaen Primary School has enough places to take Trallwng Infants’ School pupils, and more”.</i></p> <p><i>“I’d argue that Coedpenmaen Primary School isn’t actually fit for purpose for extra pupils at the moment.”</i></p>	<p>Should the proposal to close Trallwng Infants’ School with pupils transferring to Coedpenmaen Primary School proceed, the live data demonstrates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At year one of opening (2025/2026) Coedpenmaen Primary School will have a surplus capacity of 25 statutory aged pupils. • All pupils transferring from Trallwng Infants’ School can be accommodated. <p>Should the proposal proceed, there is space across all year groups to accommodate the additional pupils from Trallwng Infants’ School at Coedpenmaen Primary School. In order to facilitate this, Coedpenmaen Primary School could look to restructure its classes or provide additional teaching staff within classes.</p>
<p>Condition of building at Trallwng Infants’ School cannot be improved.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>“I cannot see how the school can be brought up to the required standards for accessibility and safety.”</i></p>	<p>As a result of some concerns raised surrounding the detail included within the condition survey RCTCBC have reviewed the information. During the period of time between the condition survey site visit being undertaken and the quality assurance process that takes place prior to the condition survey being signed off (which includes an assessment of the cost of required works by specialists), certain works were completed which were not reflected in the backlog maintenance figure published in the Cabinet report and consultation document.</p> <p>In light of this new information, and to ensure full transparency, in November 2024, RCTCBC undertook new property condition</p>

	<p>surveys of both Trallwng Infants and Coedpenmaen Primary School.</p> <p>According to the latest property condition surveys carried out by RCTCBC, Trallwng Infants' School is graded B for condition whilst Coedpenmaen Primary School is graded B for condition, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building, respectively. According to the previous property condition survey carried out by RCTCBC Trallwng Infants' School was graded C for condition whilst according to the previous property condition survey carried out by RCTCBC Coedpenmaen Primary School was graded B. It should be noted that further investment since the building condition survey was completed in 2022 has contributed to the recategorisation of the condition of Trallwng.</p> <p>According to the latest property condition surveys carried out by RCTCBC, the backlog maintenance figure for Trallwng Infants' School is circa. £182,701, whilst the backlog maintenance figure for Coedpenmaen Primary School is £282,775. According to the previous property condition surveys carried out by RCTCBC, Trallwng Infants' School had a backlog maintenance figure of circa. £227,760, and the backlog maintenance figure for Coedpenmaen Primary School was circa. £122,842.</p> <p>In accordance with the School Organisation Code, there is a duty placed upon the Council to include information in the Consultation Document relating to the quality of accommodation at all existing schools likely to be affected by a proposal, including reference to the local authority's most recent condition survey.</p>
Estyn has quality-assured the leadership team at Coedpenmaen Primary School and acknowledged the effectiveness of the leadership provided by the headteacher.	<p>Estyn has quality-assured the leadership team at Coedpenmaen Primary School and acknowledged the effectiveness of the leadership provided by the headteacher. In their most recent evaluations, Estyn noted that "The headteacher provides effective and determined leadership" and that "the headteacher has prioritised professional learning for individuals and teams, setting high</p>

	<p>expectations for pupils' learning." Coedpenmaen Primary School's journey out of special measures has been a testament to the significant improvements made over the last two years, driven by robust accountability and ongoing scrutiny of both the school and the senior leadership team. Coedpenmaen Primary School has consistently received positive feedback, with separate reports issued after each interim visit.</p> <p>Additionally, Estyn has identified Coedpenmaen Primary School as an example of good practice to be shared, with other schools invited to visit and observe their work. Furthermore, Estyn has requested Coedpenmaen Primary School's curriculum work to be used in training sessions for peer inspectors, further validating the progress made.</p>
<p>Parents/carers should be offered a choice.</p> <p>I will not send my children to Coedpenmaen Primary School.</p> <p>I will not send my child to Coedpenmaen Primary School, so will incur home to school transport cost of getting me child to and from school.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"I think it's disgusting that we are expected to send our children to Coedpenmaen Primary School."</i></p> <p><i>"If I had wanted my little girl to go to Coedpenmaen Primary School I would've chosen that school as my first option."</i></p> <p><i>"Even if Trallwng Infants' School closes I would never send my child to Coedpenmaen Primary School due to all the negative comments I hear about it."</i></p>	<p>The purpose of the consultation is to seek the views of stakeholders on the proposal to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to have their say and engage in the consultation process.</p> <p>Choosing a school is parent / carer choice. Applications will be dealt with in accordance with the WG's <u>School Admissions Code 2013 (05/2013)</u>.</p> <p>There is a statutory duty placed on all Councils in Wales to provide pupils with free transport to their nearest suitable school if they reside beyond safe 'walking distance' to that school. The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh, dual language or voluntary aided mainstream primary school, secondary school or special school/class as appropriate. The law relating to safe 'walking distance' is defined as two miles for pupils of statutory school age receiving primary education and three miles for pupils of statutory school age (year 7 to 11) receiving secondary education.</p> <p>RCTCBC has exercised the discretionary powers afforded to it under the provision of the <u>Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008</u> to make a more generous provision to pupils. Following</p>

	<p>a recent public consultation exercise initiated by RCTCBC's <u>Cabinet</u>, in relation to a proposed new Home to School Transport Policy for RCTCBC, the information set below is the relevant information in relation to Trallwng Infants' School and Coedpenmaen Primary School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The eligibility criteria for walking distance for pupils of statutory school age receiving primary education at their nearest suitable school has been set at 1½ miles, instead of 2 miles as required by the <u>Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008</u>. • Free transport to their nearest suitable school, where places are available, is provided to pupils who meet the 1½ mile eligibility criteria from the start of Foundation Phase, rather than from the start of statutory school as required by the <u>Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008</u>. • The term suitable school applies to the catchment area English, Welsh, dual language or voluntary aided (faith) mainstream school or special school/class as appropriate.
<p>Impact on community.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"This is a local school that acts more like a family...it has been the centre piece of Trallwng for so long."</i></p> <p><i>"Trallwng Infants' School has been a pivotal part of the local community for years! Generations of families have attended the small community based school."</i></p> <p><i>"It is a staple in the community and has been for many, many generations. No one in the community wants this."</i></p>	<p>A Community Impact Assessment for the proposal has been prepared in line with the requirements of the WG's <u>School Organisation Code (2nd Edition) (011/2018)</u>.</p> <p>However, as advised in the published Community Impact Assessment, this document has been revisited and updated following a review of the comments received throughout the duration of the consultation process. The updated version of the Community Impact Assessment will be available on RCTCBC's website once the Consultation Report is formally published.</p>
<p>Impact on parents/carers.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p>	<p>It is anticipated that the proposed changes will not have a long term, adverse impact and it should be noted at this point in the statutory school organisation consultation process that RCTCBC considers the overall impact of the proposal to be positive.</p>

<p><i>"[RCTCBC] seems hell bent on closing things without understanding the impact on the parents/carers."</i></p>	
<p>Impact on pupils.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"I believe that Trallwng Infants' School offers an opportunity for children to thrive in an environment that focuses on the individual child and promotes emotional wellbeing as well as educational needs. Trallwng Infants' School has a proven track record of excellence that should be recognised and promoted not taken away. Pontypridd is recognised as an area of deprivation and as such the children benefit from a school such as Trallwng Infants' School."</i></p> <p><i>"The proposal to close Trallwng Infants' School does not put the needs of pupils...first and [RCTCBC] should be ashamed of this."</i></p>	<p>The well-being of all pupils has been considered and is paramount to RCTCBC. The transition arrangements that will be delivered, ensure there will be lots of opportunities to help the pupils navigate the change and happily settle into their new school as quickly as possible.</p> <p>Further information is included within the Equality Impact Assessment. In addition, RCTCBC considers that the proposal benefits the children and young people in accordance with the seven core aims set out within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p>
<p>Impact on staff.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"Staff at [Trallwng Infants'] School are left in a very precarious situation regarding any sort of job security."</i></p>	<p>Should the proposal proceed, it is our intention to recommend to the Governing Body of Coedpenmaen Primary School that any additional posts required as a result of increased pupil numbers, below senior leadership level, are ringfenced to the existing staff employed at Trallwng Infants' School, in the first instance. This process means that staff at Trallwng Infants' School would be given the first opportunity to apply for additional posts in Coedpenmaen Primary School, prior to any posts being advertised externally. If they are successful, they would then simply transfer to Coedpenmaen Primary School when the proposal is implemented. RCTCBC has well established HR policies and procedures that give reassurance to staff and employers about the management of organisational change. RCTCBC's HR Team will visit all staff in Trallwng Infants' School and make them are aware of the processes that may follow and the operational and personal support that is on offer.</p> <p>RCTCBC considers that providing education for pupils attending Trallwng Infants' School in</p>

	<p>Coedpenmaen Primary School, amongst other benefits, would offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater opportunities for progression and professional development for all staff which are created within a 3 to 11 primary school environment. • Less demand on staff as responsibilities for developing the Areas of Learning and Experience, as part of the Curriculum for Wales, and ALN statutory obligations, will be shared.
Less transitions for children.	Coedpenmaen Primary School is the associated primary school that provides year three to six education provision for the catchment area of Trallwng Infants' School. Relationships between the two schools are well established and, should the proposal proceed, this should help to ensure a seamless transition.
<p>Please don't close Trallwng Infants' School.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"I absolutely disagree with Trallwng Infants' School closing."</i></p>	<p>RCTCBC understands that a statutory school organisation consultation proposal such as this is sensitive, and that there are many factors that need to be considered before coming to a final decision.</p> <p>It is important to reiterate that no decision has yet been made on this statutory school organisation consultation proposal, and stakeholders now have an important opportunity to have their say on the proposal. It is anticipated that the proposed changes will not have a long term, adverse impact and it should be noted at this point in the statutory school organisation consultation process that RCTCBC considers the overall impact of the proposal to be positive.</p>
<p>Prefer separate age phases for primary education.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"I believe that separating very young learners to junior learners would help these young minds prepare themselves in big schools like Coedpenmaen Primary School."</i></p> <p><i>"Transitioning to a primary school in year three presents numerous challenges for pupils...the</i></p>	<p>A 3 to 11 primary school will allow all pupils to share the outcomes of their learning over time and access to a nurturing environment where pupils can learn and play together over a longer period of time. This will assist in developing a greater understanding and appreciation of each another's diverse strengths, skills and personalities which should impact positively on social skills and relationship development.</p>

<p><i>shift to a new school environment can be disruptive to children's education, as they must adapt to unfamiliar surroundings, new staff, new peers, and different expectations. Children may struggle to adapt to a new environment, which includes different routines, expectations, and social dynamics. This adjustment period can lead to anxiety and stress."</i></p> <p><i>"Joining a primary school at year three when friendships are already established is difficult, socially and emotionally, for all children involved".</i></p>	
<p>Pupil numbers in the area may grow in the future.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"Trallwng Infants' School may have small numbers now, but no one can say with any certainty that the numbers won't increase...Pontypridd is now a much more attractive place to live for people working in Cardiff... the Metro will make this possible."</i></p> <p><i>"Pontypridd is fast becoming a 'satellite' town for Cardiff, and this will accelerate with the Metro."</i></p>	<p>in line with the requirements of the WG's <u>School Organisation Code (2nd Edition) (011/2018)</u>, the Consultation Document outline pupils numbers at Trallwng Infants' School and Coedpenmaen Primary School over the previous five years and future five years.</p> <p>Based on current and projected pupil numbers there will be sufficient capacity to accommodate all of pupils currently on roll at Trallwng Infants' School and Coedpenmaen Primary School.</p>
<p>Smaller schools are better.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"We need small schools so the children can have the best start to their education."</i></p> <p><i>"Smaller schools offer a far higher level of nurture which is essential during the formative years of a child's education."</i></p>	<p>There is a duty and responsibility placed on all Councils to ensure that all pupils receive the support they need regardless of the size of the school.</p> <p>Creating larger schools can build capacity within staffing structures and enable opportunities for developing more specialist wellbeing and/or family liaison posts which will clearly benefit more vulnerable children and families.</p>
<p>Will make financial savings.</p> <p>Smaller schools struggle financially.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"Financially doesn't make sense to keep two schools open so close to each other."</i></p>	<p>The financial implications of the proposal are outlined within the Consultation Document. It should be noted that the reasons for the proposal are multi-faceted and are not based solely on making financial savings alone.</p> <p>As all schools are allocated funding based on the number of pupils they have on roll, larger schools have greater financial flexibility and</p>

<p><i>"A small school will struggle to remain financially viable."</i></p>	<p>economies of scale. As Trallwng Infants' School is a small school, it will also face additional pressures as they are not able to benefit from the efficiencies that are often generated in larger schools e.g., a greater number of staff to share the wide range of roles required i.e., Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCO), curriculum leads, attendance, behaviour and safeguarding leads etc.</p> <p>Larger schools have more potential for economies of scale and financial efficiencies which can accrue and be reinvested for the benefit of all pupils, including the most vulnerable.</p>
<p>Why has RCTCBC not invested in improving the condition of Trallwng Infants' School.</p> <p>The building at Trallwng Infants' School has recently had many improvements undertaken.</p> <p>A significant amount of money has been spent on Trallwng over the last few years which will be wasted.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"Why is Trallwng Infants' School not worth investing in?"</i></p> <p><i>"[Why did RCTCBC] invest in [Trallwng Infants] School last summer by installing the cooking facilities?"</i></p> <p><i>"Recent spend at [Trallwng Infants' School i.e. kitchen is a waste of money."</i></p>	<p>RCTCBC has an obligation to ensure that its buildings are safe, watertight and warm, and that's what it has done. Trallwng Infants' School has received regular visits by RCTCBC's Corporate Maintenance Team and its contractors, and it also undertakes cyclical maintenance checks and surveys of its mechanical and electrical equipment.</p> <p>All schools in RCTCBC buy into a Building Maintenance Service Level Agreement (SLA) and work is undertaken and managed through this Maintenance Service SLA.</p> <p>Yes, we acknowledge that funding has been invested in the school over the last 2 financial years to upgrade the school kitchen to facilitate the roll out of the new Welsh Government Universal Free School Meals' initiative. A statutory responsibility was placed on all Local Authorities to implement this new WG policy, and as such grant funding was made available by WG to enable this new policy to become operational. It was this grant funding that was utilised to make these essential improvements in order that the Council complied with the new statutory obligations placed upon it.</p> <p>In addition to this, work undertaken at the school this financial year delivered a new sensory room which was a provision welcomed by the school and is of great benefit to the pupils there.</p>

<p>The reasons outline in the Consultation Document for the closure are flawed and inaccurate.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"[The proposal] is flawed no actual savings projected."</i></p> <p><i>"Current proposals and reasoning for closure are fundamentally flawed and inaccurate."</i></p>	<p>The data presented within the Consultation Document is in compliance with the WG's <u>School Organisation Code (2nd Edition) (011/2018)</u>.</p>
<p>There is already a safe walking route.</p> <p>Would result in an increased number of cars on the road as parents/carers would have to transport their children to school in a car rather than walk.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"Coedpenmaen Primary School is within a safe walking distance for all pupils already accessing Trallwng Infants' School."</i></p> <p><i>"I will have to drive my children to school if this change happens and there will be more cars on the road."</i></p>	<p>There is approximately 0.2 miles between Trallwng Infants' School and Coedpenmaen Primary School which is under the 1.5 mile distance allowed within the home to school transport eligibility criteria listed above.</p> <p>Should the proposal proceed, there is an available walking route for the pupils of Trallwng Infants' School to walk to Coedpenmaen Primary School. As such, no pupils in the catchment area of Trallwng Infants' School will be entitled to free home to school transport.</p>
<p>Trallwng Infants' School has a better Estyn Inspection.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"I think it's disgusting that we are expected to send our children to Coedpenmaen Primary School when they have been in desperate measures for a long time while Trallwng Infants' School has excelled in every Estyn report and has been called exceptional."</i></p> <p><i>"The quality of education offered at Trallwng Infants' School is excellent, unlike the struggling Coedpenmaen Primary School."</i></p>	<p>Trallwng Infants' School was inspected by Estyn in July 2022. The school did not require any follow up following the inspection. Estyn set out recommendations for Trallwng Infants' School to implement in order to make improvements to the quality of education provision on offer.</p> <p>As a result of the Estyn inspection in July 2022, Trallwng Infants' School drew up an action plan to demonstrate how it was going to address the recommendations set out by Estyn.</p> <p>Coedpenmaen Primary School was inspected by Estyn in May 2022. Estyn set out recommendations for Coedpenmaen Primary School to implement in order to make improvements to the quality of education provision on offer.</p>

	<p>As a result of the Estyn inspection in May 2022, Coedpenmaen Primary School was placed in the statutory category of special measures. Following termly monitoring by Estyn, in April 2024, Coedpenmaen Primary School was judged to have made sufficient progress in relation to its post inspection action plan and was removed from Estyn's list of schools requiring special measures.</p> <p>It is RCTCBC's view that the proposal to close Trallwng Infants' School, with pupils transferring to Coedpenmaen Primary School by no later than September 2025, could have a major positive impact on all five Estyn inspection areas, as detailed in the Consultation Document.</p> <p>Estyn's full response in relation to this proposal is included as an appendix to this Consultation Report.</p>
<p>Will deliver a consistent education provision.</p> <p>Will deliver an enhanced education provision.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"[Will] provide consistency with learning for the benefit of the children."</i></p> <p><i>"I believe one school will enhance the education."</i></p>	<p>Should the proposal proceed, there could be greater flexibility for pupils due to an extended, more enhanced educational environment in which to learn and grow, and there will be greater opportunities for pupils to socialise and interact with large numbers of their year group peers.</p> <p>Moving pupils from Trallwng Infants' School, a small school, to the larger Coedpenmaen Primary School will increase opportunities for interaction, coordination and the sharing of expertise and experience. Smaller schools may find it more difficult to deliver all Areas of Learning and Experience of the Curriculum for Wales as they have fewer staff to specialise and to lead on curriculum and strategic developments. Larger schools can provide greater flexibility for pupils due to an extended, more enhanced educational environment in which to learn and develop. There is also more opportunity for staff to develop specialisms and more bespoke interventions, which is important for pupil progression and the achievement of good educational outcomes for all.</p>
<p>Will the additional learning needs (ALN) support provided to children at Trallwng Infant School continue.</p>	<p>All pupils with ALN will continue to be supported. The Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal (ALNET) Act provides</p>

<p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"[Trallwng Infants'] School helped our son [who has ALN] every single step of the way."</i></p> <p><i>"Trallwng Infants' School has sensory room where Coedpenmaen Primary School doesn't."</i></p>	<p>detailed guidance on the duties and responsibilities of Councils in meeting the ALN of children and young people. Children and young people have ALN if they have a learning difficulty which calls for an additional learning provision to be made for them.</p> <p>The ALN Code for Wales (2021) recommends that Early Years and school settings adopt a graduated response to meeting ALN. A graduated response means that progressively greater expertise and support can be brought in to address the difficulties a child or young person may be experiencing. Additional or different provision should be made depending on the severity of the child/young person's level of need.</p> <p>This duty and responsibility in this regard will be met regardless of which school a child attends.</p>
<p>Younger children will benefit from interactions with older children.</p> <p>Comments received in relation to this theme included:</p> <p><i>"In a primary school, younger children often benefit from observing and interacting with older peers."</i></p>	<p>A small school inevitably provides less opportunities for pupils to interact with a wide range of children and young people of the same age and to develop extended friendship groups. Should the proposal proceed, there will be greater opportunities for pupils to socialise and interact with a larger number of peers from their own year group.</p>

In accordance with the Welsh Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015 and in compliance with RCTCBC's statutory obligations, the consultation included the following questions:

1. Do you think the proposal could impact opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language (Positive or Negative)?
2. Do you think the proposal in any way treats the Welsh Language less favourably than the English Language?
3. How positive effects on the Welsh Language could be increased, or negative effects be decreased?

The table that follows provides a summary of the responses received from those respondents that answered the questions. As a result of the responses received, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal will be updated accordingly.

Welsh Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015: Summary of Consultation Responses			
Questions	Responses		
	No	Yes	Not Sure

	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Do you think the proposal could impact opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language?	65	41.1	15	9.5	78	49.4
Do you think the proposal in any way treats the Welsh Language less favourably than the English Language?	56	35.4	8	5.1	94	59.5
How positive effects on the Welsh Language could be increased, or negative effects be decreased.	Positive Effects Increased		Negative Effects Decreased		Not Sure	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would be more opportunity for pupils to speak Welsh with older pupils and more staff. • There will be consistent and progressive approaches to the teaching and learning of the Welsh language when pupils are in one school for their primary education. • The continual progression in one school for primary education will only increase positively on pupils building upon their knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trallwng Infants' School already uses a lot of Welsh with their teaching. My son who is four often comes home and sings Welsh songs. I don't think you wouldn't get that in another school. • Smaller classes give more options for direct learning and identifying issues earlier than in bigger over filled classrooms. <p>By hiring Trallwng Infants' School staff and moving them to Coedpenmaen Primary School.</p>		N/A.	

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties, RCTCBC has a legal duty to look at how its decisions impact on people because they may have particular characteristics. So as part of seeking views on the proposal, the consultation also included the following question:

1. How would the proposal affect you because of your:

- Sex.
- Age.

- Ethnicity.
- Disability.
- Sexuality.
- Religion/Belief.
- Gender Identity.
- Relationship Status.
- Pregnancy.
- Preferred Language.

Of those respondents that answered this question, the majority, 94.3% said the proposal would have no impact on any of the characteristics listed. Whilst 2.6% commented that the proposal would have an impact on the 'Disability' characteristic, 1.3% commented that the proposal would have an impact on the 'Age' characteristic and 0.6% commented that the proposal would have an impact on the 'Pregnancy', 'Preferred Language' and 'Relationship Status' characteristics.

Of those respondents that commented that the proposal could negatively impact them due to their disability. Comments received in relation to this characteristic included:

- Trallwng Infants' School supported me well with my ALN.
- It would affect my son who has ALN.
- I suffer from arthritis and living further distance away the school will make walking there will be more difficult. Trallwng Infants' School is only five minutes from my house so is manageable.

As a result of responses received, the Equality Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal will be updated accordingly.

6. Response from Estyn

In compliance with the WG's School Organisation Code (2nd Edition) (011/2018) the response to the proposal from Estyn has been provided in full at Appendix 3 – Estyn Response. Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the WG's School Organisation Code (2nd Edition) (011/2018) and the School Standards and Organisation Act 2013 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 considered that the proposal is likely to maintain the standard of education provision for pupils who attend Coedpenmaen Primary School, however the impact of the proposal on the learning of pupils who would have attended Trallwng Infants' School is less clear.

In accordance with the WG's School Organisation Code (2nd Edition) (011/2018), the areas of the response from Estyn that require clarification are documented in the table that follows.

Response from Estyn	
Estyn Response	Clarification
The proposal does not make clear how admissions arrangements may impact on the 40.0% of pupils currently attending Trallwng Infants' School from outside of its	At present Coedpenmaen Primary School has two PAN. One for nursery to year two, which is 25, and one for years three to six, which is 49. Should the proposal proceed, the PAN for Coedpenmaen

catchment area or provide an unequivocal assurance that all affected pupils will be able to transfer to Coedpenmaen Primary School if they choose.	<p>Primary school will be amended to 40 for all year groups (nursery to year six).</p> <p>Based on current and projected pupil numbers there will be sufficient capacity to accommodate all of pupils currently on roll at Trallwng Infants' School and Coedpenmaen Primary School.</p>
The Local Authority does not detail the potential financial savings that may be made from the proposal, nor does it demonstrate how these will be reinvested, other than to note that, should the proposal proceed, Coedpenmaen Primary School, will receive an increase in its funding as a result of the additional pupils on roll.	Should the proposal proceed, the financial saving will be £105,000. This saving is primarily made up of the cost of headteachers lump sum plus premises costs.
The proposal does not clearly detail the scope of financial implications of the proposed change for staff currently employed in either school.	<p>RCTCBC funds primary schools for reception to year six for a teacher for every block of 30 pupils, based on an average of 3 counts i.e. January, June and September e.g. for a school with 212 pupils on roll, the school will be funded for 8 teachers.</p> <p>RCTCBC uses an individual school average salary and not a RCTCBC wide average, to ensure that schools are able to appoint on a merit basis and not a financial basis.</p> <p>Should the proposal proceed, it could result in pupil's numbers in neighbouring schools increasing which may result in teachers moving to a higher teacher band in a neighbouring school, which would be required to appoint additional teachers, plus learning support staff.</p>
The Local Authority gives limited consideration in its proposal to the impact of the changes on the quality of standards in education. For example, it summarises the perceived benefits for pupils and for staff, including a more seamless transition for pupils between years two and three and greater opportunities for staff to develop professionally and to distribute responsibilities within a learner team. However, its consideration of the impact on standards of learning focuses on 'economies of scale' and not on the likely impact of the proposal on pupils' standards and progress. Similarly, it does not address well the impact on leadership and management well.	<p><u>Impact on Leadership and Management</u></p> <p>At Coedpenmaen Primary School there is a stable and coherent leadership structure, and all staff are clear about their roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability. Should the proposal proceed, the headteacher of Coedpenmaen Primary School, who provides effective and determined leadership, would ensure that any new staff appointed at the Coedpenmaen Primary School would be robustly and comprehensively inducted into the Coedpenmaen Primary School's systems and processes to sustain effective teaching and learning.</p> <p>Additionally, in partnership with the Governing Body and the Senior Leadership Team, the</p>

	<p>headteacher of Coedpenmaen Primary School would ensure that all new staff would be supported through structured professional learning opportunities and their current staff “buddy” system to understand their leadership and management roles at Coedpenmaen Primary School.</p> <p>In the April 2024 Estyn report for Coedpenmaen Primary School, it states that there is “now a culture of learning in Coedpenmaen Primary School with a strong willingness amongst staff to share their practice and learn from others” and “the wide-ranging opportunities leaders have provided for staff to collaborate have contributed strongly to improvements in pupils’ learning and staff’s own sense of belonging”. Therefore, any potential changes to the current staffing structures at Coedpenmaen Primary School, as a result of the proposal, would provide the headteacher and the Governing Body with strategic opportunities to develop and enhance the current leadership and management structures. In addition, any new pupils that join Coedpenmaen Primary School would also have opportunities to be part of the pupil leadership groups which “have a clear focus and impact positively on key areas of the Coedpenmaen Primary School work”.</p> <p><u>Impact on the Quality of Standards in Education and on Pupils’ Standards and Progress</u></p> <p>Should the proposal proceed, it is the view of RCTCBC that there would be no adverse impact on the standards of education for the pupils whose parents/carers would choose to continue their child’s education in Coedpenmaen Primary School. Since its core inspection Coedpenmaen Primary School has been on a strong journey of improvement, over twenty-three months, against all of its recommendations, which culminated in its removal from Special Measure in April 2024. Coedpenmaen Primary School has made particularly good progress ensuring that teachers match teaching and learning opportunities closely to pupils’ needs. In the Estyn monitoring report, April 2024, Estyn recognised that the headteacher has prioritised professional learning for individuals and teams and that high expectations are set for</p>
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	<p>pupils' learning. As a result "teachers plan and deliver engaging learning experiences for all pupils that support most to make strong progress".</p> <p>Additionally, Coedpenmaen Primary School foundation learning practice was also identified as strong. The Estyn monitoring report highlights that the staff in these classes use "their observations of pupils to carefully inform their planning to take account of pupils' developing strengths". Similarly, teachers in older classes "focus well on developing pupils' understanding of what they are learning and why". This quality assurance by Estyn gives RCTCBC confidence that there will be no detrimental impact on pupils' standards and progress. In addition, Coedpenmaen Primary School has a robust and detailed Monitoring, Evaluation and Review cycle that effectively demonstrates how the Coedpenmaen Primary School strategically monitors the progress and standards of all pupils.</p> <p>Finally, any new pupils moving into Coedpenmaen Primary School would be part of this highly effective and impactful system and RCTCBC's expectation is that all new pupils would build upon and further develop their skills, knowledge and understanding and as a result make strong progress.</p>
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7. Assessment of Consultation

In accordance with WG's School Organisation Code (2nd Edition) (011/2018), a further assessment of the proposal has been undertaken. This involved a review of the same matters assessed in formulating the proposal, in conjunction with giving consideration to the responses received during the consultation period.

After further consideration of the proposal, and consciously considering the responses received to the proposal, the conclusions that can be reached are below.

8. Conclusion

Following consideration of the consultation report, associated information and the contents of this report, Cabinet are required to determine whether, and if so how, they wish to proceed with the proposal.