

Minutes of Meeting with Governing Body and Staff Members of Tonyrefail Community School

Date	21 st October 2024
Time	15:45
Venue	Tonyrefail Community School

Attendance		
Name	Initials	Title
Tim Britton	TB	Head of Achievement.
Ellen Williams	EW	Human Resources Manager.
Claire Christy	CC	School Admissions Officer.
Chantal Ferguson	CF	21 st Century Schools Support and Compliance Officer.
Kylie Lewis	KL	21 st Century Schools Support Officer.

1. Welcome and Introductions

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

2. Consultation Overview

TB 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 Tonyrefail Community School were invited to ask questions. The questions raised from the Governing Body and staff members and the responses provided are summarised in the table that follows.

Number	Question/Comment	Response
1.	How did you arrive at the numbers you have stated? This will leave no surplus places at Tonyrefail Community School and will have a detrimental effect on pupils who attend here.	<p>The primary phase of Tonyrefail Community School (nursery to year six) has a capacity for 440 pupil places.</p> <p>The primary phase of Tonyrefail Community School currently has 353 pupils on roll, plus 2 in-year transfers, meaning there are currently 85 surplus places. Tref y Rhyg Primary School currently has 86 pupils on roll.</p> <p>Should the proposal proceed, an additional 30 pupil places at Tonyrefail Community School will be created by the conversion of ancillary space to a classroom. Increasing the primary phase capacity of Tonyrefail Community School to 470 pupil places. This will mean that there would be 115 surplus</p>

		spaces in the primary phase of Tonyrefail Community School, demonstrating that there is capacity to accommodate the additional pupils transferring from Tref y Rhyg Primary School whilst also leaving capacity for any further in-year transfers.
2.	There are a significant number of housing developments planned in the Tonyrefail area, some have already started building. This means a further 356 bedrooms could be built over the next 18 to 24 months. Preference would be to have a new school in place of Tref y Rhyg Primary School and not to close it.	There are no guarantees that parents/carers from any new housing developments would choose to send their children to Tonyrefail Community School. Only 35% of in-catchment children attend Tonyrefail Community School at present. Officers from Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Councils (RCTCBC) Data Team factor in the number of new dwellings when working on school capacities.
3.	Cost of buses would be an issue for parents/carers of children coming from Tref y Rhyg Primary School to Tonyrefail Community School, meaning they would have to walk. 65.0% of pupils in Tref y Rhyg Primary School attend breakfast club, this would mean young pupils would have to be up very early in the morning to get to breakfast club in Tonyrefail Community School.	We encourage you to participate in the consultation online and make your views known. We will record your views from the meeting this evening and these will form part of the feedback written into the Consultation Report.
4.	What is the capacity of Tref y Rhyg Primary School?	Tref y Rhyg Primary School has a capacity for 157 pupils of statutory school age (reception to year six) plus 22 nursery pupils.
5.	Tref y Rhyg Primary School does not meet 21 st century school standards.	RCTCBC has invested £340,000 in Tref y Rhyg Primary School over the last four year years, the building is partially accessible with assistance but the site is not compliant with the Equality Act 2010.
6.	Tonyrefail Community School has my sympathies for having to take the additional pupils. Breakfast club is full, and it will be a logistical nightmare if any future development is needed. It will cost more in the long run. With the housing developments going to plan, it is too early to take this proposal to Cabinet, 18 months to 2 years too early.	Noted.
7.	The current situation with the car park at Tonyrefail Community School is an issue. The footpath	There is a safe walking route from Tref y Rhyg to Tonyrefail Community School. We would look at the Tonyrefail Community

	leading to Tonyrefail Community School is of poor quality and needs to be looked at so there is a safe walking route from the park to the entrance of Tonyrefail Community School. There is limited opportunity to safely park, especially for younger pupils, there is no capacity on site to do that safely. Its organised chaos at best. This is a big concern.	School site as a whole to determine whether we could increase accessibility and look at the flow of traffic to avoid congestion. We would want to encourage pupils to walk to school rather than increase car parking spaces.
8.	Being realistic, traffic on site is already at Tonyrefail Community School is an issue and needs to be looked at again; parking on the Tonyrefail Community School site needs to be increased. There are very few spaces to park. The reality is parents/carers are using it differently to what it has been designed to do.	We endeavour to do our best to ensure that site security and the safeguarding of pupils is paramount. Parking is an issue on all school sites throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf. We can't accommodate every parent/carer that uses cars.
9.	The area serving Tref y Rhyg Primary School is a very deprived area. Many families don't own cars, pupils will miss out as parents/carers won't walk them to Tonyrefail Community School.	RCTCBC's Attendance and Wellbeing Service would work with the families if this the case. We encourage all families to make their views known through the online consultation.
10.	Over the past six years, that area of Tonyrefail will have lost two schools. You're asking pupils to walk across to Tonyrefail Community School.	<p>We encourage you to express your views during this consultation process. These will be included in the Consultation Report.</p> <p>There is a safe walking route from Tref y Rhyg to Tonyrefail Community School. School Councils from both Tref y Rhyg Primary School and Tonyrefail Community School will also have their say during this process, as its important to hear the views of the pupils themselves.</p>
11.	Have any Tonyrefail Community School admission applications been turned down?	There is a waiting list for secondary-aged pupils with only a few names on, but none for primary-aged pupils.
12.	Is Tref y Rhyg Primary School closing due to its pupil numbers?	The proposal to close Tref y Rhyg Primary School is not based solely on pupil numbers, there are a number of other factors to consider which are highlighted in the School Organisation Code 2018 inc. Larger schools are educationally and financially more viable. This is outlined in full in the Consultation Document.

13.	A family has applied for a place at Tref y Rhyg Primary School and has been told the school is not admitting anymore pupils.	This is not the case. Admissions to Tref y Rhyg Primary school are still going ahead.
14.	When was Tref y Rhyg Primary School at full capacity?	It is unlikely that Tref y Rhyg Primary School has ever been at full capacity but would have to look back at records.
15.	Are parents/carers choosing other schools rather than Tref y Rhyg Primary School?	The trend data shows the number of pupils at are Tref y Rhyg Primary School are declining. There are currently 38 pupils in Tonyrefail Community School from the Tref y Rhyg Primary School catchment area.
16.	The 38 pupils attending Tonyrefail Community School from the Tref y Rhyg Primary School catchment area are aged over seven and are usually brought by car. The majority of pupils attending Tref y Rhyg Primary School don't have access to a car.	Noted.
17.	At Tref y Rhyg Primary School, pupils are taught in mixed year groups. Currently, there are no mixed year groups in Tonyrefail Community School, I wouldn't want that to change this. Is there space in the year groups at Tonyrefail Community School to accommodate the Tref y Rhyg Primary School pupils, and will there be a detrimental effect on pupils at Tonyrefail Community School?	<p>Tonyrefail Community School does have mixed year groups currently. It is very unusual these days not to have any mixed year groups. There are lots of mixed year groups throughout schools in RCT; teachers and teaching assistants use their skills to ensure appropriate differentiation of their lessons. Inevitably, class sizes will grow as schools receive in-year transfers throughout the academic year.</p> <p>In line with the Welsh Governments School Admissions Code RCTCBC has to admit pupils up to the published admission number for that school, which is based on capacity of the school.</p>
18.	What is the admissions number at Tonyrefail Community School?	The published admissions number for Tonyrefail Community School is 55.

4. Closing Remarks

The Governing Body and staff members were informed that they will be offered the opportunity over the coming weeks to reflect on the questions and responses provided and submit additional questions where required.

The Governing Body and staff members were encouraged to participate in engaging in the consultation process through completing the online survey.

All attendees were thanked for participating in the meeting.
Meeting closed at 16:45.