

# 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS



CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE CEFN AND CRAIG-YR-HESG PRIMARY SCHOOLS TO CREATE A NEW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL ON A NEW SITE



# RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CONSULTATION REPORT

**Proposal: to amalgamate Cefn Primary and Craig yr Hesg Primary Schools. The amalgamation will be achieved by closing the two existing primary schools and opening a new, bigger community primary school to replace them.**

### 1. Purpose of the Consultation Report

This report is prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, statutory document 011/2018. Its purpose is to inform the outcome of the consultation held during the period 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 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.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The federated Governing Body of Cefn Primary School and Craig yr Hesg Primary School.</li><li>• Parents/carers, prospective parents/carers where possible, and staff members of Cefn Primary School and Craig yr Hesg Primary School.</li><li>• Pupils of Cefn Primary School and Craig yr Hesg Primary School.</li><li>• Other governing bodies of neighbouring primary schools.</li><li>• Neighbouring local authorities.</li><li>• The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities.</li><li>• Welsh Ministers.</li><li>• Members of the Senedd for the Rhondda, Cynon and Taf constituencies and regional Members of the Senedd for the area.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Members of Parliament for the Rhondda, Cynon and Taf constituencies.</li><li>• Estyn.</li><li>• Teaching and staff trade unions.</li><li>• Central South Consortium Joint Education Service.</li><li>• Police and Crime Commissioner for the area.</li><li>• Childcare providers.</li><li>• Mudiad Meithrin.</li><li>• Menter Iaith.</li><li>• Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.</li><li>• Children and Young People's Partnership.</li><li>• Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board.</li><li>• Welsh Language Commissioner.</li></ul> |
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## The Proposal

It is being proposed that Cefn and Craig yr Hesg Primary Schools are amalgamated. The amalgamation will be achieved by closing the two existing schools and opening a new community primary school to replace them. The new school will be built on Craig yr Hesg Primary School site and the land adjacent to it (the former site of the Ty Gwyn Pupil Referral Unit).

The new school will cater for children aged between 3 and 11 years of age who require English medium education. It will have a proposed admissions number of 51 pupils per year group, and an overall capacity of 360 (plus nursery).

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:

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/CurrentConsultations/ProposaltoamalgamateCefnPrimaryandCraigyrHesgPrimarySchools.aspx>

### 3. The Consultation Process

All stakeholders identified in Section 2 overleaf were sent a link to electronic copies of our consultation documentation, and those that requested paper copies received them. The following meetings were also convened:

School(s) Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Cefn Primary and Craig yr Hesg Primary Schools	Federated Governing Body and Staff	4:30pm, Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> January	Microsoft Teams
Cefn Primary School	School Council	11:00am, Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> January	Microsoft Teams / Zoom
Craig yr Hesg Primary School	School Council	10:00am, Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> January	Microsoft Teams / Zoom

Meetings were held virtually due to Covid-19 restrictions. Notes of the above meetings were taken and are attached as Appendix 2. These notes record questions raised, comments and statements made during the meeting, with the responses provided where appropriate. Helpfully the staff and Governing Body providing questions in advance of the meeting, these and the relevant responses are also recorded.

To ensure the pupils of both schools understood the information within the proposal, a young person's version of the consultation document was created and hard copies were provided to the school to distribute to each pupil. Additionally, to further support and encourage pupil engagement, a video of the young person's consultation

document was created and played during the consultation meetings. This was also subsequently sent to the school to enable it to be shared with the rest of the pupils.

To view the video click here:

Welsh - <https://youtu.be/MstBhEWS6TU>

English - <https://youtu.be/DefGDj5jEd>

#### 4. Summary of Consultation Responses

Responses to the matters raised at the consultation meetings outlined above are, as indicated, summarised in the notes of the meetings attached as Appendix 2. In addition, 34 written responses were received during the consultation period, 32 via the online survey which was available for the duration of the consultation phase, plus 2 responses via email. Out of the 34 written responses 25 were in favour of the proposals, 6 were against the proposals, 2 were unsure and one did not provide a response to this question.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties, the Council 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 school organisation proposals, the consultation also included a question in compliance with the Council's statutory obligations asking '*how would the Council's proposal affect you?*' All those that responded to this question stated that there would be a positive or no impact on them as a result of implementing the proposals.

In addition, the consultation survey, in accordance with the Welsh Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, also included further questions in compliance with the Council's statutory obligations which asked could the proposals impact opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language (Positive or Negative) and if in any way, *they treat the Welsh Language less favourably than the English Language?* Also asked were *how positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be decreased?* All those that responded to these questions stated that there would be a positive or no impact on the Welsh Language as a result of implementing the proposals.

In accordance with the Code, a summary of the responses received are detailed in the table below and where issues have been raised, these have been responded to, where applicable, by means of clarification with supporting reasons.

#### Summary of responses and issues raised in response to the question 'Do you agree with the proposal?'

Comments/Issues	Clarification if required
It would be better for children and staff to combine. Children would have the best of both, schools and staff could be working from one site alone.	

<p>The decision to build the new school right next to a very busy road will have a negative impact on the children's health. The Cefn primary location with its opportunity of Forrest school sessions, big outdoor space would be much more in line what has been tried so hard to establish over the years.</p>	<p>The new school will be built on the existing Craig yr Hesg school site and the land adjacent to it, so there is already a school at this location.</p> <p>As referenced in the consultation document there are a number of site constraints on the Cefn Primary school, including location and topography, precluding it from accommodating a new larger school. The preferred site will house the new, larger and fully accessible school delivering all of the requirements in compliance with Building Bulletin 99 and the Equality Act 2010.</p>
<p>The proposal makes sense it will bring the community together.</p>	
<p>Both schools are old and are no longer fit for purpose. Glyncoch seems to be the forgotten area of RCT - how lovely to have a brand new school for our children.</p>	
<p>People Park everywhere down there now on pick up drop offs it will be absolutely crazy to have even more there! It's dangerous enough now without merging the schools.</p>	<p>The specific detail of the transport and traffic management of the site will be developed subject to approval and as the proposal is progressed.</p> <p>A Traffic Impact Assessment will be carried out as a part of the design process and the Highway Authority must be satisfied with the detail and recommendations that will be included within this document. All recommendations included within the report will be incorporated into the design of the new school site.</p>
<p>NASUWT Cymru expects that RCT as the employer will ensure that the jobs and livelihoods of existing teachers who wish to be employed in the new school are protected and teachers are safeguarded from detriment during the restructuring process. NASUWT will challenge "Fire and Rehire" practices which reduce morale and productivity. The consultation document identifies risks for staff in terms of employment (p.17) but it is encouraging to note on page 27 that there is reference to "slotting in". NASUWT Cymru expects teachers to be slotted into suitable roles within the school and given the forecast of increased pupil numbers and a commitment to teaching pupils in age related groups this should be a priority. We agree with the suggestion that there will be excellent opportunities for staff interaction, coordination and the sharing of expertise. Existing teachers have the skills, a proven loyalty and commitment to improve standards and build the 21st Century school ethos.</p>	

<p>I know this has got to happen but the children from the top Cefn primary school will get soaked in the wet weather.</p>	<p>This is the case for the majority of pupils that live within the County Borough. Walking to school is encouraged as this contributes to the delivery of the Active Travel Act and the health and well-being agenda. However, it is acknowledged that during the winter months appropriate wet weather clothing will be required.</p>
<p>Over the last decade community groups along with both school leaders and staff have all been playing their part in the reinvigoration of a much-maligned village. To bring the village together, not the `top` or the `bottom` but Glyncoch and to instil a passion within the next generation for learning and achievement, to make the children believe in themselves and be proud of where they come from.</p>	
<p>The plans for the layout of the building don't take into account the needs of pupils. The " Heart" is a wonderful design concept on paper, very pretty indeed, but like many flights of architectural fancy have very little basis in practicality. There will be areas for pupils with special needs, but many of the pupils in the schools, whilst falling short of the actual criteria for SEN, have complex often indefinable needs that require "timeout" in rooms that are quiet and sensory pleasing. The staff in the schools need to have a major input into the building layout plans. This requires the views of people who actually teach children.</p>	<p>The specific detail of the design of the new school will be developed subject to approval and as the proposal is progressed. Building Bulletin 99 is the industry standard and is used by the Welsh Government as the guide for determining the areas, spaces and functions required when designing a school.</p> <p>Be assured that this design process is undertaken in collaboration with the school and governing body and specialist colleagues working within Access and Inclusion.</p>
<p>I welcome the proposal to build a brand new school for Glyncoch using Welsh Government Sustainable Communities for Learning funding.</p>	
<p>Would like to see flying start joining the school, it would provide the natural progression to primary education.</p>	<p>Flying Start will remain in its current location, however links with the school are key and can be further forged with the Headteacher and Flying Start management in relation to the new school.</p>

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

In compliance with the School Standards and Organisation 2018 School Organisation Code the Estyn's response to the consultation has been provided in full in Appendix 3. 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 have produced a 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. **It is Estyn's**

**opinion that the proposals will maintain or improve the standard of education provision in the area by providing improved facilities for teaching and learning and helping the current federation's leadership to operate more effectively and efficiently.**

Additionally, in accordance with the Code, the areas of the response that require clarification are documented in the table below.

Estyn's Report	Clarification
<p>The local authority has provided a detailed description of the proposal, including the timetable for statutory procedures and for implementing the proposal. However, it is not clear enough within the proposal exactly where the new school will be built.</p>	<p>Within the consultation document it states '<i>The new school building will be built on the existing Craig yr Hesg Primary School site and the land adjacent to it (the former site of the Ty Gwyn Pupil Referral Unit)</i>'. To clarify, it is proposed that the new school building, external areas, and car park will cover both the existing school site and the vacant land next door.</p>
<p>The proposal sets out the expected benefits and disadvantages in a clear and fair way compared with the status quo. However, the only risk identified is that of parents choosing to send their children to an alternative school. There appear to be other risks which are not considered in the risk management section of the proposals. For example, the increase in traffic at the new school site is one such risk and the proposer states that a 'drop-off area' to help reduce this risk is only 'under consideration' and requires 'further surveys and transport and traffic assessments.' If the drop-off area isn't included in the final plans, there is likely to be a negative impact on traffic around the new school site at certain times of the day.</p>	<p>The specific detail of the transport and traffic management of the site will be developed subject to approval and as the proposal is progressed.</p> <p>The proposals will be subject to continued scrutiny and can only proceed if approval from all statutory consultees, including the Planning Authority, is secured. A Traffic Impact Assessment will be carried out as a part of this process and the Highway Authority has to be satisfied with the detail and recommendations included within this document.</p>
<p>An additional risk could be the potential impact on Craig yr Hesg Primary School during the build phase, which is not discussed in the proposal.</p> <p>If the school is sited near Craig yr Hesg there could be considerable disruption</p>	<p>The specific detail of the construction management plan has not yet been developed, however it is anticipated that the new school building will be built upon the unoccupied site so that the disruption to Craig yr Hesg Primary will</p>

<p>to the operation of the school. The proposal does not give sufficient consideration to the potential disruption to Craig yr Hesg Primary School during the construction phase and how this will be minimised.</p>	<p>be minimal during the construction period.</p> <p>The construction will be phased in such a way that the new school building will be constructed first, then occupied while the existing school building is demolished, allowing the external areas to be developed. RCT have successfully implemented this phased construction methodology on a number of new school builds.</p>
<p>The reasons for building such surplus capacity into the new school are not made clear in the proposals.</p>	<p>There are currently a number of pupils within Glyncoch attending out of catchment schools. Experience of delivering new schools has taught us that these developments have a 'magnet effect' encouraging a number of children to return to their in-catchment school.</p> <p>Also, additional space within the school provides the flexibility for community use allowing the school to become fully integrated within the locality. There are 2 Learning Support Classes within the school, and any surplus capacity will enhance the flexibility, space and resources to meet the needs of pupils with ALN within this mainstream setting.</p>

## 5. Assessment of Consultation

In view of the responses and comments received during the consultation period, a further assessment of the proposal, which is included within the consultation document, has been undertaken. The proposals have been revisited and the following matters have been reassessed:

- The likely impact of the proposals on the quality and standards of education;
- The likely impact on the community; and
- The likely effect of differing travelling arrangements.

After further consideration, the proposals remain to be the most appropriate and as such no amendments to the proposal have been made.



## **6. Conclusion**

No information that has been presented during the consultation period is deemed to necessitate a change to the consultation document, and so the information remains unchanged. As such it is considered that this proposal should be wholly implemented with no amendments.

The recommendation of this report is that a statutory notice be published, as consulted upon with no modifications, in order to progress this proposal.

## Appendix 2

**Consultation to Amalgamate Cefn & Craig yr Hesg Primary Schools**  
**Meeting with staff and governors of Cefn and Craig yr Hesg primary schools**  
**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022 @ 4:30pm**  
**via MS Teams**

**Present:**

Gaynor Davies	GD	Director of Education & Inclusion Services
Andrea Richards	AR	Service Director - 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools & Transformation
Lisa Howell	LH	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Business and School Organisation Manager
Non Morgan	NM	School Organisation and Governance Team Leader
Nicola Goodman	NG	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools - Lead for Strategic Planning & MIM
Catherine Williams	CW	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools - Project Officer
Richard Bowen	RB	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools - Project Officer
Sarah Nicholls	SN	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools - Graduate Officer
Bethan Davies	BD	Human Resources Manager
Ellen Williams	EW	Human Resources Manager
Mrs Sarah Haggett	SH	Executive Headteacher- Cefn and Craig yr Hesg Primary Schools
Mrs Emma Byers	EB	Cefn Primary School – Head of School
Miss Carrie Thomas	CT	Craig yr Hesg Primary School – Head of School
Staff and Governors		Staff and Governors from Cefn and Craig yr Hesg primary schools

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

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

### 2. Consultation Overview

GD 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

Staff and Governors of Cefn and Craig yr Hesg primary schools were invited to submit questions to SH prior to the meeting, which were subsequently shared with Council officers in preparation for the meeting. LH and NG read out the questions provided prior to the meeting and RCT Officers responded in turn. Attendees were also invited to interject with additional questions throughout this section of the meeting. The questions from staff / governors and responses provided by RCT officers are summarised below.

No.	Topic / Question	RCT Response
<b>Staffing Structure</b>		
1	What will the SLT structure of the new school be? i.e. what will happen to heads of school and executive headteacher roles?	<p>The structure of the new school will be proposed by the Headteacher and the temporary governing body. Once the budget is settled, the draft structure will be drawn up and then shared with governors / trade union representatives / staff through consultation meetings.</p> <p>The first stage of the process will be to appoint to the Headteacher role.</p>
2	What will staff structure look like at all levels?	As above – this will be determined as part of the managing change process. It will be determined at the time whether jobs will be ring fenced or not. All Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher jobs must go out to external advert as required in Wales.
3	Will all current staff keep their jobs? Will we be moved year groups? (And across phases)	The structure will be proposed by the Headteacher and agreed by governors. A change management process will be agreed. The structure will be shared with governors / trade union representatives / staff through consultation meetings.
4	Will staff have to re-apply for their jobs?	Staff will be expected to apply for positions on the new structure. In past processes, this has been ring fenced to internal staff in the first instance. Appointments will be made by the temporary governing body.
5	Will extra teaching staff be required?	This will depend on the number of pupils in the new school at the time of opening.

<b>6</b>	Will there be any retirement/redundancy offers/packages available?	HR will undertake individual consultation meetings with staff to consider their personal situations and the options available to them.
<b>7</b>	Are we in control of how the staff are structured?	HR would advise that a change management process is followed – to ensure fairness and consistency of approach – however it is the Governing Body’s decision as to whether they take this advice.
<b>8</b>	Will the new school have a new governing body?	A temporary governing body would be created out of current serving governors at the school, who would need to request to be part of the temporary governing body. The Local Education Authority would then appoint parent governors. This temporary body will then undertake the work on the staffing structure mentioned earlier.
<b>9</b>	When would the temporary governing body be established, and when would it become permanent?	The new permanent governing body would be appointed when the new school opens. Federated and temporary governing bodies will need to run in tandem for those governors who request to be part of the temporary governing body.
<b>School Organisation</b>		
<b>10</b>	What will be the capacity of the new school? Will it be single or two form entry?	360 plus 45 nursery places plus 2 Learning Support Classes – admission number of 51.
<b>11</b>	Will children have to apply for a place in the new school?	No, children in the existing 2 schools will automatically transfer – no application process is needed for these pupils.
<b>12</b>	Will the school have a catchment area with pupils from Glyncoch having first choice?	Catchment area will be the same as the current catchment areas for Cefn and Craig yr Hesg primary schools.
<b>13</b>	How will the name, colours and logo of the school be determined?	These will be decisions for the temporary governing body. It would be great if pupils could contribute to

		these discussions. The name will need to be submitted to the Council for approval.
<b>14</b>	Will it just be Cefn and Craig yr Hesg or will more schools be joining us?	Yes, it will be only Cefn and Craig yr Hesg primary schools.
<b>15</b>	Will there be mixed year groups or 1 form entry?)	Admission number is 51 so likely to be mixed year groups but this will be dependent on the number of children per year group within the school.
<b>16</b>	Will there be a full-time nursery setting like we have now or a morning session then an afternoon session?	The school will determine whether full or part time nursery provision is established.
<b>17</b>	What is the estimated time for opening of the new school?	No later than September 2026 but hopefully sooner.
<b>18</b>	Is the new capacity of 360 plus 45 nursery places big enough?	Based on research by the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team and the Data Team who look at pupil number projections, the proposed capacity of the new school is suitable to meet future demand.
<b>19</b>	Is the proposed capacity future proofed? Cefn site could be used for housing following its closure which would have an impact on the new school.	The new school has been scoped with future housing developments in mind. Given the sloping topography of the Cefn site this would not be attractive to developers for large scale development. To provide context, for every 100 houses built, we estimate 25 pupils requiring a school place.
<b>Transition Arrangements</b>		
<b>20</b>	How will children be placed as the development takes shape?	It is hoped that children will stay in their existing school buildings and transfer into the new building once it is complete.
<b>21</b>	How will disruption be kept to a minimum when the schools move into the new school building?	We try to target handover dates to coincide with school holiday periods with skips and packing crates being provided a while in advance to assist with early transition. A

		removals contractor undertakes the physical relocations.
<b>22</b>	Will there be money available to resource the school, do we start again or bring existing equipment and resources with us?	New furniture and ICT equipment is provided using Welsh Government funding formulae and RCT standardised furniture schedule. Curriculum materials and resources should be packed and transferred.
<b>23</b>	How much time will be given to the schools to move into the building? Will inset days be provided?	To be agreed between the schools and the Director of Education and Inclusion Services at the time. A maximum of 2 inset days has been provided in previous schemes to avoid adversely impacting the education provision offered to learners.
<b>24</b>	The proposed opening date of September 2026 suggests the summer holiday would be used for moving resources across. Even with new furniture, the new building will feel like a sterile environment. Will there be an opportunity to make classrooms homely for the children?	The use of colour in new 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools is powerful and doesn't feel sterile. The time allowed for moving across will be dependent on how well progress is going with the construction of the new school. It was suggested that recently completed 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools projects could be visited by staff. Images will also be shared with the Headteacher for wider circulation thereafter. There will need to be work done over the summer holiday to ensure the school is ready to accept children.
<b>Design of the New School</b>		
<b>25</b>	Will there be sufficient outdoor space providing forest areas together with new state of the art equipment.	Due to use of the adjoining former Ty Gwyn site, the additional land available will give lots of opportunities for outdoor activities / spaces which will be developed by a landscape architect.
<b>26</b>	How will SEBD and Nurture children be catered for? -Will staff be involved in the designing of the classes etc	SEBD and Nurture classes currently at Cefn Primary School will transfer to the new building and designs will be developed in consultation with

		the school and RCT's Access and Inclusion Service in due course.
<b>27</b>	Will each class have designated storage for resources this can be lacking for resources within the foundation phase?	All RCT 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools projects have storage walls within each classroom space, providing plentiful storage. Additional storage provision is also provided via the loose furniture budget as required.
<b>28</b>	Who will get an input into the design of the new school?	RCT does have a 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools design standard. However, there will be regular meetings with the Headteacher to discuss design proposals from the outset of the design process to ensure it captures the requirements of the school.
<b>29</b>	Will the new school be more secure? i.e., Will it be harder for unwanted people to get in and cause damage?	One of the funding conditions is Secured by Design accreditation, which requires a 2.4-metre-high fence to secure the entire perimeter of the school site. Any spaces made available for community use would be self-contained to ensure the security of the rest of the school site.
<b>30</b>	Will the new school have a CCTV system that is monitored 24 hours a day?	CCTV will be installed on site and Sardis House central monitoring office is in operation 24 hours a day - some schools have chosen to buy into this service. Procuring this service for the new school would be a decision for the new governing body.
<b>31</b>	How will issues identified in previous new schools be addressed with this school?	Lessons have been learned from previous schemes and the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools standard design has been improved over many years. This new school will be net zero carbon in operation which places emphasis on natural ventilation. Images of new schools were shared to illustrate how designs have developed.

<b>32</b>	Will each classroom have its own storage space?	All of RCT's new 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools include storage walls which are a storage solution within the classroom space that utilises fitted furniture. We no longer provide a separate storeroom per classroom. However, there will also be storage provided within the loose furniture and around the school building.
<b>33</b>	Will all classes have a door to access to the outdoors?	RCT standard design requirements request direct external access from all ground floor classroom spaces. This will be developed with the Headteacher as the design process starts.
<b>34</b>	Will there be intervention rooms for each key stage in mainstream?	RCT standard design requirements request a 'heart space' for each school which can operate as a flexible intervention space.
<b>35</b>	Where there are additional learning needs involved, an open space isn't suitable for intervention. How will children needing a quiet space be catered for in the new building?	Some children will need a quieter environment in some cases. There will be an opportunity to discuss these issues during design development. LSC provision will also offer additional support for children who require it. The use of furniture in other schools does allow for quiet areas within heart spaces.
<b>36</b>	Will the design be similar to that in Williamstown Primary School?	No, designs have developed considerably since the construction of Williamstown Primary School. We will also share images of our new schools following the meeting.
<b>37</b>	Will we have an ICT suite?	RCT standard design requirements request a 'heart space' for each school which will include flexible ICT provision. The entire building will also be Wi-Fi enabled, therefore each classroom will be able to operate as much ICT equipment as it requires. There will also be a C-Touch type provision in each classroom.



38	What sport facilities will we have?	Wherever possible, RCT 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools include a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and grass pitch. There will also be a multi-purpose main hall for dining, assemblies, and P.E. We will provide photos of these facilities at some of our new schools following the meeting.
<b>Highways / Transport</b>		
39	How will traffic and parking be managed?	This will be looked at as the design is developed. Where possible, parent pick up/drop off provision is provided.
40	I read that there will be a drive-in drop off and pick up point. How is this going to be monitored? Are school staff going to be expected to monitor the situation?	As above, where parent pick up/drop off provision is included within a school site, school staff are expected to monitor the area.
41	Will there be an entrance Glyncoch side and the main roadside?	Entrance arrangements will be looked at as the design develops.
42	How will children walking from top of Glyncoch be catered for (pupil question)? / will there be school buses for the bigger catchment area?	Transport is only provided where children live more than 1.5 miles from their catchment school (or nearest suitable school).
<b>Community Use</b>		
43	Will Sure start and Flying start be involved in the build? if yes, who will be responsible for the day to day running?	Flying Start will remain in its current location, however links with the school are key and can be further forged with the Headteacher and Flying Start management in relation to the new school.
44	If school facilities are being made available to the public who is responsible for this?	The governing body will decide on community use of the facilities and be responsible for the management of these arrangements. Risk assessments and booking agreements will need to be agreed between the governing body and any community organisations wishing to use facilities on the school site. This will create an

		opportunity for remuneration through facility hire fees.
45	Will there be any sort of wrap around childcare facility provided?	This is for the governing body to determine but a childcare facility will not be included within the design of the school.
<b>Other</b>		
46	If you are going to the expense of building a new school- on what is already a large site - why not build a swimming pool and leisure complex at the same time? It would benefit the community - plus it would save children having to spend so much time on buses going to swimming lessons!	The funding available is via Welsh Government's 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Programme which provides funding for new education provision only.
47	The school has really turned around recently, see recent Estyn report. We need to not lose sight of how the school has been turned around.	GD (Director of Education and Inclusion Services) has sat in on the progress meetings and commented that she was really pleased to see Estyn's recent report which is testament to the hard work of staff. The new school will allow the staff to go from strength to strength, creating an environment to thrive and build on progress to date.
48	When will staff be notified of processes such as the need to apply for roles in the new school?	Work will commence on developing the new staffing structure 18 months prior to the opening of the new school.
49	How involved will trade unions be in the change management process?	We have tried and tested processes in place that unions are aware of, such as appointment of new headteacher and development of staffing structure. During this process we will be able to advise the governing body but decisions rest with them. GD commented that the Local Authority does keep in regular contact with trade unions and keep them updated on our 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme, so they are fully aware of developments.

50	Will building materials be of good quality and not of the type used in Grenfell Tower?	The construction industry globally has learned lessons and flammable cladding won't be used. We will engage with the fire service as part of the secured by design process to lend their expertise.
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**4. Closing remarks**

SH informed the meeting that staff and governors will be offered the opportunity over the coming weeks to reflect on the responses provided by officers and submit additional questions where required.

AR encouraged engagement in the consultation process from staff, governors, parents/carers and the local community through completing the online survey or putting comments in writing to [schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolplanning@rctcbc.gov.uk)

GD thanked all attendees for participating in the meeting.

Meeting closed.

## Consultation to Amalgamate Cefn & Craig yr Hesg Primary Schools

### Meeting with Cefn School Council

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022 @ 11.00am

via MS Teams

#### Present:

Gaynor Davies	GD	Director of Education & Inclusion Services
Andrea Richards	AR	Service Director - 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools & Transformation
Nicola Goodman	NG	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools - Lead for Strategic Planning & MIM
Catherine Williams	CW	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools - Project Officer
Richard Bowen	RB	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools - Project Officer
Sarah Nicholls	SN	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools - Graduate Officer
Mrs E Byers	EB	Cefn Primary School – Head of School
Mrs C Reynolds	CR	Cefn Primary School – Class Teacher
Pupil 1		Cefn Primary School – Member of School Council
Pupil 2		Cefn Primary School – Member of School Council
Pupil 3		Cefn Primary School – Member of School Council

#### 5. Welcome & Introductions

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

#### 6. Consultation Overview

AR provided an explanation of the proposal being made and the consultation process to be followed, as set out in the consultation document. It was also confirmed that the pupils had all received a hard copy of the children's version of the consultation document.

#### 7. Consultation Video

RB shared a video that had been prepared to explain the proposal and consultation process further. NG agreed to forward a copy of the video, along with some photographs of recently completed new primary schools, to Mrs Haggett (Executive Headteacher) and asked that they be shared with all pupils.

#### 8. Pupil Questions

Each year group at Cefn Primary School had prepared questions about the proposal in advance of the meeting. The three School Council members asked

these questions on the pupils' behalf. The questions, and the responses provided by the RCT Officers, are summarised in the table below.

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
1.	Will there be a new kitchen for the pupils to use as part of a cookery class/club?	There will be no kitchen for the children's use at the new school, however, the new facilities and curriculum will allow for some catering related activities by the pupils. It would be possible for someone from the Council's Catering Team to come to the new school and conduct 'healthy eating' classes with the pupils.
2.	Will there be a new school logo?	A new logo will be designed with input from the pupils – they could possibly hold a competition to design the new logo. Once the Council approves the logo, the Council's Design Team will professionally design a new school logo based on the input given from the pupils and teachers.
3.	What resources will there be on the yard?	The new school will be built on a flat site, which will allow for a secure Multi-Use Games Area (used for football, netball, tennis etc.). There will also be a grass pitch, a woodland area which can be used for 'forest schools' purposes, and possibly planter beds/gardening facilities for the pupils. The play areas will be colourful and exciting and will encourage outdoor learning. As this will be a community school, some of these facilities, for example the MUGA, can be available after school hours for people who don't attend the school (with the school's permission).
4.	Will there be a library in the new school?	The new school will include a 'Heart Space'. This is an area at the centre of the school which will include furniture such as seating,

		tables, ICT equipment, bookshelves. As the 'Heart Space' is a flexible area, it can be used for many different things, and can provide quiet areas for reading. The 'Heart Space' will be designed as a modern and colourful area for all children in all year groups to enjoy.
5.	Will there be a lollipop man/woman at the new school?	A Traffic Impact Assessment will be conducted for the new school in Glyncoch. This Impact Assessment will explain what needs to be done to make sure pupils are safe when travelling to school. It is possible that a lollipop person may be needed, but it will depend on what the Road Safety team suggest as the most appropriate measures.
6.	Will the new school have a dining hall?	The new school will have a spacious hall which can be used for assemblies, PE lessons and there will be sufficient tables and chairs available for dining in the hall. The hall will be next to the kitchen so that it is easy for all pupils to have their meals in the open space of the hall.
7.	Will the pupils' timetables change after moving to the new school?	If the current timetables work for both the teachers and pupils, then this will be considered. However, the new school will include pupils from both Cefn and Craig yr Hesg primary schools, and so the timetables would need to reflect that and work for pupils from both schools. This will be decided by your teachers.
8.	In the new school, will there be room for children with difficulties?	All children will be welcome in the new school, and it will be designed so that it is inclusive and accessible for all. The new school will be designed to meet the additional needs of some pupils, and there will be two Learning Support Classes in the new school.
9.	Will the new school have an art room?	There will be no dedicated art room in the new building. Each classroom will have the necessary facilities, resources and technology

		for different types of activities and lessons, including art. There will also be enough storage in the classrooms to keep the resources and artwork safe. The flexible 'Heart Space' can also be used for things such as art lessons.
10.	Will the pupils have new teachers, or will the same teachers be at the new school?	Bringing the two schools together will mean that there will need to be some little changes, but nothing too big. There will need to be at least the same number of teachers in the new building, and there is even the possibility that some new roles will be needed. The decisions on staff will be made later by the Temporary Governing Body.
11.	Will there be any sensory rooms at the new school?	The two Learning Support Classes currently at Cefn will move to the new school. Teachers will be able to give input as to what the children will need, so that the school will be inclusive to all pupils.
12.	Will the new school have new resources?	The school will have new furniture and ICT equipment. Curriculum materials (pens / books / toys etc.) can be moved across to the new building and continued to be used in the new school, if possible.
13.	What will happen to the resources that are not transferred to the new building?	It is important that any resources that are still in good condition are re-used somewhere else – nothing goes to waste if it can be used.
14.	Where will the children store their bags and coats?	Wherever possible, classrooms will be arranged in pairs, with shared toilets and cloakrooms directly off the classrooms, so that all the coats and bags can kept safe and tidy.
15.	Will there be any after-school clubs in the new school?	The new school will have a Multi-Use Games Area and other spaces that could be used after school and by the community in the evenings. Any after-school clubs that run will be a decision for your teachers.
16.	Can people use the facilities even if they don't attend the school?	Yes, there is a possibility that some of the school facilities could be used by the community, with permission from the school. It is important that any community use is managed safely.

## 9. Meeting Close

GD thanked the pupils and staff for their valuable contributions at today's meeting. She requested that all pupils and parents/carers be encouraged to respond to the consultation, whether their feedback is good or bad, by the closing date of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022.

### Consultation to Amalgamate Cefn & Craig yr Hesg Primary Schools

#### Meeting with Craig yr Hesg School Council

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022 @ 10.00am

via MS Teams

#### Present:

Gaynor Davies	GD	Director of Education & Inclusion Services
Andrea Richards	AR	Service Director - 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools & Transformation
Nicola Goodman	NG	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools - Lead for Strategic Planning & MIM
Catherine Williams	CW	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools - Project Officer
Richard Bowen	RB	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools - Project Officer
Sarah Nicholls	SN	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools - Graduate Officer
Miss C Thomas	CT	Craig yr Hesg Primary School – Head of School
Miss C Andrews	CA	Craig yr Hesg Primary School – Class Teacher
Pupil 1		Craig yr Hesg Primary School – Head Boy
Pupil 2		Craig yr Hesg Primary School – Head Girl
Pupil 3		Craig yr Hesg Primary School – Member of School Council

## 10. Welcome & Introductions

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

## 11. Consultation Overview

AR 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. It was also confirmed that the pupils had all received a hard copy of the children's version of the consultation document.

## 12. Consultation Video

RB shared a video that had been prepared to explain the proposal and consultation process further. NG agreed to forward a copy of the video, along with some photographs of recently completed new primary schools, to Mrs Haggett (Executive Headteacher) and asked that they be shared with all pupils.

## 13. Pupil Questions

All classes at Craig yr Hesg Primary School had prepared questions about the proposal in advance of the meeting. The three School Council members asked



these questions on the pupils' behalf. The questions, and the responses provided by the RCT Officers, are summarised in the table below.

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
1.	Will the nursery class have new toys?	We will have a set budget to buy new furniture and equipment for the new school. All of the furniture and ICT equipment will be new, and there may be some new toys and equipment. The school might also decide to use some of their funds to buy new things too.
2.	How big will the school be?	The school will be big enough for up to 360 pupils, plus a nursery class. The nursery and reception classes will be 70m <sup>2</sup> , and the classrooms for the older children that have less toys and equipment in them will be 60m <sup>2</sup> . All the classrooms will be spacious, bright and colourful spaces for you to learn in.
3.	Will there be two floors?	<p>This hasn't been decided yet. We will need to use machinery to explore what the land at the site is like for us to know how much of the land can be built on.</p> <p>If we can build a single storey school, all classrooms will have direct access to the outdoors. If we need to build a two-storey school, the younger children's classrooms will be on the ground floor, and the older children's classrooms will be on the upper floor.</p> <p>The new school will be accessible and inclusive. We will make sure that everyone can reach and use all areas and facilities in the school easily.</p>
4.	Will we have new teachers?	There are already lots of good teachers at Cefn and Craig yr Hesg Primary Schools, and we will need at least as many teachers in the new school. There could be some small changes and movements, but we don't think that there will be many big changes.
5.	Will we have a park in the yard?	There won't be a park, but there will be lots of exciting play and learning opportunities in the outdoor area. These will include a colourful Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) to play lots of different sports on, a grass pitch, and forest schools areas.
6.	How many classrooms will we have?	The school will have 12 classrooms, a nursery and two Learning Support Classes.

		Not all of the classrooms will be needed when the school opens, but they will give the school room to grow if more pupils want to come to the new school.
7.	What colour will the uniform be?	This will be for the Governing Body to decide, who will discuss this with the Headteacher, staff and pupils. The new school will also need a new logo. Perhaps the school could run a competition for pupils to design this. The Council's Design Team could then produce a professional graphically design logo from your ideas.
8.	Will you make sure there are quiet reading areas, and maybe even a library?	Whilst there won't be a dedicated library, there will be a big open space in the middle of the school called a "Heart Space". This can be used for lots of different purposes. Furniture, which could include bookshelves, will be used in a clever way to create lots of different areas, including quiet areas which will be ideal for reading.
9.	How will the transition from Craig yr Hesg to the new school work, and will we be disrupted?	It will all be planned very carefully to ensure that any disruption is kept to an absolute minimum. We will use a removal company to move everything into the new school.
10.	Older pupils will have moved to high school by the time the new school is opened. Will they be able to use the facilities after school?	An important element of our new schools is that they are community schools. They will include a community room and outdoor facilities that older children and the wider community can use in the evenings. For example, in other community schools, the community facilities are used by Brownies, Scouts, choirs, sports teams and for Welsh evening classes. Community use will be agreed by and safely managed by the school.

#### 14. Meeting Close

GD thanked the pupils and staff for their valuable contributions at today's meeting. She requested that all pupils and parents/carers be encouraged to respond to the consultation, whether their feedback is good or bad, by the closing date of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022.

## **Appendix 3**

Estyn's response to the proposal by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Council to amalgamate Cefn and Craig yr Hesg Primary schools to create a new community primary school on a new site

### Introduction

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.

### Summary/ Conclusion

It is likely that the proposals will maintain or improve the standard of education provision in the area by providing improved facilities for teaching and learning and helping the current federation's leadership to operate more effectively and efficiently.

### Description and benefits

The proposer has given a clear rationale for the amalgamation of the federated primary schools based on the poor quality of the existing school buildings and the opportunities that a new amalgamated school would provide to improve teaching, learning and leadership.

The local authority has provided a detailed description of the proposal, including the timetable for statutory procedures and for implementing the proposal. However, it is not clear enough within the proposal exactly where the new school will be built. On page 1 of the consultation document, it states: 'The new school building will be built on the existing Craig yr Hesg Primary School site and the land adjacent to it (the former site of the Ty Gwyn Pupil Referral Unit).' However, on page 10 it states: 'Due to the limitations of the existing school sites, neither site is suitable to accommodate the new school in its current format. A new school is therefore required for Glyncoch which must be built on a new site.' On page 11 the document restates: 'Following this assessment, the existing Craig yr Hesg Primary School site and the land adjacent to it (the former site of the Ty Gwyn Pupil Referral Unit) was identified as the only suitable location for the new school.' The lack of clarity is around the extent to which the current site of Craig yr Hesg Primary School will be part of the new school location and what impact the building work will have on the current school during the construction phase.

The proposal sets out the expected benefits and disadvantages in a clear and fair way compared with the status quo. However, the only risk identified is that of parents choosing to send their children to an alternative school. There appear to be other risks which are not considered in the risk management section of the proposals. For example, the increase in traffic at the new school site is one such risk and the proposer states that a 'drop-off area' to help reduce this risk is only 'under consideration' and requires 'further surveys and transport and traffic assessments.' If the drop-off area isn't included in the final plans, there is likely to be a negative impact on traffic around the new school site at certain times of the day. An additional

risk could be the potential impact on Craig yr Hesg Primary School during the build phase, which is not discussed in the proposal.

The proposer has considered suitable alternatives and explained clearly why these are either not possible or less effective than the chosen proposal. The selected location for the new school on land adjacent to the Craig yr Hesg Primary School site is considered to be the 'only suitable location' within the area. The two federated schools are only 0.6 miles apart and, therefore, by locating to a site next to Craig yr Hesg Primary School, it is predicted that there will be little impact on travel arrangements for learners. The new school will be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010, whereas both current schools do not meet the accessibility requirements, especially Cefn Primary School.

The information given in the proposals about surplus places is not clear enough. Pupil projection figures for 2025-2026 suggest that there will be a significant number of surplus places at Cefn Primary School (35%) and slightly too few places at Craig yr Hesg (-2%). This projection is given as one reason why a single new school would be better than the status quo. However, the new school is being planned to have a pupil admission number of 360 (excluding nursery places), even though the total number of pupils, according to the projections given, would be 245 in 2025-2026. This would give the new school an immediate surplus capacity of over 30%, yet anything over 30% is seen as a potential reason for considering reorganisation by the local authority. The reasons for building such surplus capacity into the new school are not made clear in the proposals.

Both of the federated schools offer English-medium education, and teacher Welsh as part of their curriculum. The new school will do the same, so there would appear to be limited impact on the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. There is a commitment that the amalgamated school will undertake the Cymraeg Campus' Language Charter, aimed at developing the use of Welsh in different contexts in school.

It is clear in the proposals that there will not be a large financial saving, because the two schools have been federated since 2012 and have already made savings as a result of this. It is estimated that approximately €78,000 could be saved annually based on the current school budgets. However, there would also be other financial benefits such as writing off the substantial maintenance backlog (estimated to be in excess of €750,000), the greater energy efficiency of the new school and potential future land sales.

#### Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposer has considered well the likely impact on the quality of standards in education of the proposals. In November 2021 the federated schools were removed from Significant Improvement following a monitoring visit by Estyn. This reflected improvements in the stability and effectiveness of leadership and in the quality of teaching across the federation. There are a number of examples within the proposal about how the facilities will provide new or extended opportunities for learning and well-being, such as enhanced ICT provision, creative outdoor play areas, a forest schools area, a habitat area and a multi-use games area. The new facilities are likely to help ensure delivery of the full curriculum at foundation phase and key stage 2, including the Curriculum for Wales.

The local authority considers the impact of the proposal on vulnerable groups suitably. This includes identifying that the Learning Supports Classes currently located at Cefn Primary School will be relocated at the new school in purpose-built accommodation, which is likely to help improve those pupils' experiences and learning opportunities.

The proposal is for a new community school with all-day access to parts of the new facility for community groups as well as after-school availability. At the same time, the site will be better protected from anti-social behaviour than the current school sites by 'secured by design' fencing. These improvements are likely to increase its role in community cohesion.

If the school is sited near Craig yr Hesg there could be considerable disruption to the operation of the school. The proposal does not give sufficient consideration to the potential disruption to Craig yr Hesg Primary School during the construction phase and how this will be minimised.