

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

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Directorate: Education & Lifelong Learning

Service Area: 21st Century Schools

Responsible officer: Julie Hadley

Date: 1st March 2016

1. Name of policy/procedure/practice/project: The amalgamation of Cwmaman Infants and Glynhafod Junior Schools to create a new Community Primary School for Cwmaman

The Project is to:

Close both Cwmaman Infants and Glynhafod Junior Schools and replace them with a new purpose built Primary School, on land in Council ownership at the former Fforchaman Colliery site in Cwmaman.

2. Policy Aims, you need to consider why is the policy needed? What does the Council hope to achieve by it?
How will the Council ensure it works as intended?

In recent years, Estyn has sharpened its approach to inspection of schools and local authorities and has raised the bar in respect of what it considers to be good and excellent provision. Furthermore, Estyn has taken a very hard line on local authorities in Wales that have weaknesses in key areas such as corporate governance, educational standards, attendance levels, surplus places and safeguarding.

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

- R1 - raise standards in schools particularly in key stage 4;
- R2 - improve attendance rates in all schools;
- R3 - improve the evaluation and analyses of data across service areas and partnerships to drive improvements in outcomes for learners;
- R4 - use the full powers available to the authority to improve leadership and management in schools;
- R5 - reduce surplus places; and
- R6 - improve the rigour and the level of scrutiny and challenge across all services and partnerships.

Over the past three years the Council had focused its attention on these six recommendations, and in particular Recommendations 1, 2 & 5, which will have the greatest impact on pupil achievement in our schools. As a result, schools that, when compared with similar schools across Wales based on free school meals, are in the third and fourth quartiles are being subject to significant challenge, scrutiny and support.

The Elected Members have accepted Estyn's recommendations and have undertaken a review of our school provision. The criteria we have used for selecting schools for review is one or more of the following:

- Surplus places in excess of 25% of published capacity;
- Buildings that are beyond economic repair/not fit for purpose;
- Financially unviable (usually due to a sharp fall in pupil numbers);
- Schools considered to be 'small' schools, i.e. schools with 90 or fewer pupils of statutory school age;
- Separate infant and junior schools in close proximity;
- 'Paired' schools, i.e. where children progress from one of the schools to the other;
- Mixed aged classes where there are more than two age groups in one class;
- Schools considered to be at risk, based on their academic Key Stage data and the quality of the leadership, of meeting Estyn's criteria as a school in need of significant improvement or special measures.

Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools have been assessed against the aforementioned criteria:

- The schools are 'paired' with each other, i.e. the children usually progress from the one to the other;
- The schools are located on sites that are just one mile apart from each other;
- Cwmaman Infants School has a surplus capacity figure of 24.8%, just under the Wales Audit Office recommended 'benchmark' for review of 25%
- Both schools have mixed aged classes.

The opportunity exists to bring the two schools together to create a larger, more educationally viable Primary school in a new, purpose built, state of the art building.

Educational Considerations – School organisational change should point to the educational benefits that any change will offer, particularly in relation to overall improvements in standards, but also in terms of the social and emotional development of children, which would usually impact beneficially on their overall achievement and outcomes.

It is the Council's view that creating a Primary school for the community of Cwmaman, in a new, purpose built school will improve educational outcomes and provision for the following reasons;

- A single school vision and ethos, with a governing body and management team on a single site providing leadership across the full primary age range, using consistent policies and practices;
- Improved transition from the Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2 (Yr 2 to Yr 3) and overall progression;
- Greater consistency of teaching and learning for pupils across the key stages including:
 - Seamless curriculum planning and co-ordination;
 - Shared schemes of work, assessment and tracking of pupil progress;
 - Greater continuity in terms of expectations, behaviour, partnerships with parents and
 - Day to day organisation;
- Less change for parents and pupils;

- Greater continuity of support for vulnerable groups of pupils;
- Opportunities for staff to move between key stages and further develop expertise;
- Potential for financial savings in terms of staffing structures and purchase of services, which accrue to the single school; and
- The future capital investment benefits that would arise from the construction of a modern, state of the art purpose built school that meets all the required standards of a 21st Century learning environment.

There are opportunities for the teaching and support staff. An 'all-through' Primary school for Cwmaman could offer:

- A larger school with a bigger role;
- A more flexible organisation;
- Improved career prospects;
- Improved curriculum co-ordination;
- The opportunity to teach across a wider age range;
- An increased range of expertise;
- Improved opportunities for staff interaction /co-ordination

A new, purpose built Primary School for Cwmaman will be able to provide greater flexibility and opportunity for pupils due to an extended, more enhanced and secure financial situation. Overall, the single, larger Primary School will be more financially viable than the Infants' and Junior schools in their current form.

In making the proposed change, most things will not change for the children at all; indeed, there are several perceived benefits that can be realised:

- Being in classes with predominantly their own age group, the teacher will be better able to offer the pupils a wider and more varied curriculum to support all learners, including the least and most able;

- The teachers and teaching assistants may be different, however, providing that pupil numbers remain stable at their current levels, the large majority of the staff currently employed in Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools will simply 'slot' in to similar posts in the new Primary School, if they wish to do so;
- There will be more competition for pupils in and outside the classroom which is what children require if they are to achieve good educational outcomes;
- Being part of a larger school creates opportunity to engage in a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Build on the achievement gained at both schools by bringing together a larger team of staff to share expertise and experience.
- Being taught in a new, state of the art, purpose built school building, with sports facilities adjacent to it, which will be fit for the purpose of providing education in the 21st Century.

The principal change will be an improvement in the quality of the educational provision, and this should have a significant impact on educational performance of the pupils.

The catchment area of the new Primary School will not change, i.e. it will continue to be the same as the current catchment area of Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools. The Council's policy regarding free school transport will continue to apply.

Demand for School Places - The table overleaf sets out the capacity (excluding non statutory nursery places) of the schools in Cwmaman and the forecast pupil numbers in 2020.

	Capacity	Number On Roll 2015	Total Surplus Places 2015	Estimated NOR 2020	Total Surplus Places 2020	Surplus Places 2020 %
Cwmaman Infants	129	97	32	90	39	30%
Glynhafod Junior	109	102	7	109	0	0%
	238	199	39	199	39	16%

The new Primary school will be constructed to have a pupil capacity of 210 places plus nursery provision, which is sufficient to ensure that all children resident in this catchment area will be able to access a place in the new school when it opens and in future years.

The Current School Buildings –

Cwmaman Infants' School is an English Medium Community School located at Fforchaman Road, Cwmaman, Aberdare. The school site consists of a traditional stone Victorian building, constructed in 1880. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Cwmaman Infants is graded a B for condition and a C for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively. The current figure for the maintenance work that would be desirable to undertake at this school is £289,000.

Glynhafod Junior School is a Community School located at Glynhafod Street, Cwmaman and the school site consists of a traditional Victorian style stone and brick building, constructed in 1912 with a double mobile classroom unit on the front yard. Based on the results of the Welsh Government commissioned building survey of all schools Glynhafod Junior is graded a B for condition and a B for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building respectively. The current figure for the maintenance work that would be desirable to undertake at this school is £405,000; this includes the cost of a replacement roof and the removal of the mobile classrooms.

3. Who does it apply to? Please indicate by highlighting or deleting as appropriate

Members of the public Staff Both Other Please state: children aged 3-11 years resident in the community of Cwmaman, Aberdare, the parents and carers of these children.

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

New Review Cessation
All 3.

5. Identifying Impacts – Please choose whether the policy/practice will have a positive, negative or neutral effect on **each** issue below: Think about the key questions included in the manager's guidelines.

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Age (young and old)	Young – High		Old – low	<p>Better learning facilities for all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that all the children in the new Primary school feel safe and secure, • make the learning environments, comfortable and attractive for all children who access them. • access services to improve the lives of children and their families. • Improved facilities will enable the pupils to access learning and cultural activities which can help develop relationships within communities. • The changing curriculum, life long learning opportunities and use of ICT will provide the opportunity to enable all learners to reach their potential. • Facilities at Primary schools, in particular the Infant teaching areas are geared towards the needs of young children and are, as such not suitable for use by older persons.
Disability (remember to consider the different types of disability)	High			The new school building will be fully accessible to all persons and will comply with all current legislation in this regard.

People / issues to consider	Impact policy / practice will have			If a positive or negative impact is identified, explain why:
	Positive	Negative	Neutral (No impact)	
Gender			Low	
Gender Reassignment			Low	
Race			Low	
Religion or Belief			Low	
Sexual Orientation			Low	
Welsh Language			Low	
Carers			Low	

EVIDENCE

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

Reports of the Director of Education to Cabinet - January 2016.
Public Consultation Document on the Proposal

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

With the provision of a brand new, state of the art school building that is centrally located within the catchment area, which will have facilities suitable for the provision of education in the 21st Century, it is difficult to envisage any negative impacts.

INVOLVEMENT & CONSULTATION

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

The following consultation meetings/ open events are to be held

School Affected	Group	Time/Date	Venue
Cwmaman Infants' and Glynhafod Junior Schools	Federated Governing Body and Staff Meeting	Tuesday 15 th March 2016, 4 – 6pm	Cwmaman Infants' School
Cwmaman Infants' School	School Council	Tuesday 15 th March 2016, 2.30 – 3.00 pm	Cwmaman Infants' School
Glynhafod Junior School	School Council	Tuesday 15 th March 2016, 1.45 – 2.15 pm	Glynhafod Junior School
Both Schools and members of the local community	Parents and public drop in session and exhibition	Wednesday 27 th April 2016, 4 – 6pm	Glynhafod Junior School

Schools were also offered opportunities for consultation with pupils, via meetings of their School Councils as detailed in the table overleaf.

Details of the proposal were displayed at Aberdare Library for the period of the consultation. A consultation questionnaire was also available at the local Library and on the Council's internet site at www.rctcbc.gov.uk

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

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

e-mail schoolplanning@rctednet.net

MONITORING AND REVIEW

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

The Council's school improvement, governor support and HR teams will be fully engaged in supporting the temporary governing body to establish the new school, including offering advice and assisting with the process to appoint the senior management posts. This support will continue with the new headteacher and permanent governing body for as long as it is required.

ADDRESSING THE IMPACT

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

- Continue the Policy

Please indicate and provide reasons for your decision.

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

12. ACTION PLAN

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

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Actions	Timescale and actions for Review	Measures to be taken to evaluate effects of actions
To finalise the plans for the construction of the new school	David Powell Service Director, Corporate Maintenance and Design	By September 2018		

13. Please outline below any negative impacts that have been identified in the EIA questionnaire but not addressed in the action plan. You will need to explain your reasons for not addressing them.

None.

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

Equality, Diversity & Social Justice Team

The Pavilions

Cambrian Park

Clydach

CF40 2XX

Email: equality@rhondda-cynon-taf.gov.uk

Tel: 01443 424075

Signed: Chris Bradshaw Date: 1/3/16

Job Title: Director of Education & Lifelong Learning