

DIRECTORATE OF LEARNING AND SKILLS

Community Impact Assessment

Consultation on the proposal to establish a new 2006 place 3 - 19 all through school, with 96 part-time nursery places, from September 2022 through amalgamating Y Bont Faen Primary School and Cowbridge Comprehensive School by:

- changing the age range of Cowbridge Comprehensive School from 11 - 19 to 3 - 19;
- increasing the capacity of Cowbridge Comprehensive School from to 1586 places to 2006 places to accommodate 420 English medium primary school places;
 - constructing a new school building on the Cowbridge Comprehensive School site to accommodate the primary and nursery phases; and
 - discontinuing Y Bont Faen Primary School.



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1. Introduction

The Vale of Glamorgan Council is committed to ensuring that all pupils within the Vale have every opportunity to attain the best possible outcomes. In order to achieve this ambition it is essential that we ensure schools remain sustainable, reflect the needs of our local communities, and are equipped with the best possible learning environments.

The Council is committed to ensuring that consultations are meaningful, relevant and appropriate for the communities that are involved, and the Council has a duty of care to ensure that proposals are clear, transparent, and reflective of those affected. This is a vision that can only be realised by working in partnership with schools, governors, parents and the wider communities we all serve.

The proposal is to establish a new 2006 place 3 - 19 all through school, with 96 part-time nursery places, from September 2022 through amalgamating Y Bont Faen Primary School and Cowbridge Comprehensive School by:

- changing the age range of Cowbridge Comprehensive School from 11 - 19 to 3 - 19;
- increasing the capacity of Cowbridge Comprehensive School from 1586 places to 2006 places to accommodate 420 English medium primary school places;
- constructing a new school building on the Cowbridge Comprehensive School site to accommodate the primary and nursery phases; and
- discontinuing Y Bont Faen Primary School.

This proposal is considered under section 2.1 and 2.3 of the School Organisation Code (2018). Section 2.1 refers to the closing of a maintained school. Section 2.3 refers to Regulated Alterations of a school, which includes increasing the capacity of the school by at least 25% and extending the age range of a school by a year or more. The new school building would be within 1.609344 kilometres (1 mile) of the existing school.

2. National Context

The key statutory guidance for local authorities in developing statutory proposals for changes for school organisation is in accordance with section 42 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018. When considering proposals the Council must consider the impact on the local community, particularly in rural areas and in areas designated for communities' first programmes or successor programmes.

3. Local Policy Context.

Echoing national policy outlined in the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Council has committed as part of the Corporate Plan

2016-20 to achieving a vision of – **‘Strong Communities with a bright future’**.

The Vale of Glamorgan is committed to achieving the objective of an ‘Aspirational Vale’ raising overall standards of achievement by modernising education in the Vale to ensure children and young people receive a first class education.

We believe that in order to achieve this it is important that we support teaching and learning outcomes by providing modern and fit for purpose buildings that meet the needs of modern day education. Schools need to be able to provide the best possible learning experience to make sure that children and young people have the best opportunities available to them and that they are able to reach their full potential.

4. Current Challenges

The proposal would address a number of challenges and would:

- Streamlined primary to secondary admissions process with existing pupils automatically transferring to the secondary phase without submitting a new application.
- Ensure the Council is able to accommodate the future demand for English medium education in the area of Cowbridge.
- Provide innovative and creative learning environments which are adaptable to change and will challenge and support children to reach their full potential.
- Increase the level of community access and interaction through the use of the school’s educational facilities whilst meeting the needs of the school.
- Enable provision in Cowbridge to further improve while catering for a greater pupil population.
- Create a consistent approach from foundation to 6th form phase in terms of school ethos and learning standards.
- A consistent vision and shared values across education phases.
- Shared professional learning community.
- Consistent engagement with parents across the primary and secondary phase.

- Expertise across the full age range.
- Professional development opportunities for staff within a through school environment.
- Increased focus on the key transitions particularly between Key Stage 2 and the secondary phase ensuring that gains in learning are built upon year by year with the minimum of disruption as the child moves through the learning structure(s).
- One single accountability and inspection regime, including a single Challenge Advisor from the Consortium.
- A single budget across the school, simplifying financial management.
- Opportunity to realise cost efficiencies from co-location on a single site and rationalisation of support service contracts such as grounds maintenance.
- Removal of duplication of data returns and pupil census data.
- The new building would meet BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Excellent standards and be built to an EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) A rating.

5. Community Profile

Y Bont Faen Primary School is an English-medium community school serving 3 to 11 year olds in the Cowbridge area. In terms of admissions, there are 30 pupils per year group with a total capacity of 210 pupils. The school also accommodates 60 part-time nursery places.

Cowbridge Comprehensive School is an English-medium community school serving 11 to 19 year olds in the Cowbridge area. In terms of admissions, there are 240 pupils per year group with a total capacity of 1586 pupils.

Y Bont Faen Primary School is in the centre of Cowbridge town and Cowbridge Comprehensive School is on the edge of Cowbridge town. The town lies on a Roman settlement and some of its walls from the medieval age survive. Cowbridge hosts an annual food and drink festival, a music festival and is home to many sporting teams.

The Cowbridge 1 Ward has a population of 1,629 (Office of National Statistics, 2019). According to the 2014 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) Cowbridge 1 is ranked 1649 out of 1909 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Wales, placing it amongst the 50% least deprived. Only 6% of working age people within Cowbridge 1 are in receipt of employment-related benefits.

Housing Developments

A number of housing developments in Cowbridge have been included in the Council's Local Development Plan 2011 - 2026. The largest of these developments being the 'Land to the north and west of Darren Close' with 475 dwellings. This development has obtained planning permission and construction has begun on site.

The projected number of pupils emanating from a development is calculated using a formula derived from census data of householders in the Vale of Glamorgan. The formula is contained within the Council's Supplementary Guidance for planning purposes.

The development in total is projected to yield around 48 nursery and 132 primary school pupils.

6. Impact Assessment

This section of the Community Impact Assessment assesses the potential impact this proposal could have on the local community. The information analysed in this process represents a snapshot of the current situation. The impact assessment is an evolving document that will continue to be developed throughout the project. Feedback received during the consultation period will be used to further inform the Community Impact Assessment, which will be presented to Cabinet as part of the Consultation Report.

Eight key measures have been identified:

Ref.	Measure
CI1	Children living in the catchment are attending their local school
CI2	Services provided by the school for the local community, including extra-curricular activities
CI3	Community facilities used regularly by the school
CI4	Community facilities provided by and activity undertaken within the school premises
CI5	Impact on local businesses
CI6	Impact on local employment
CI7	Impact on local infrastructure
CI8	Transport arrangements

The eight measures were assessed to identify any negative or positive impacts on the local community, and a score was applied ranging from -3 to +3 based on the balance of the evidence available.

Measure Score	Measure Assessment
-3	Large deterioration

-2	Moderate deterioration
-1	Slight deterioration
0	No overall change
1	Slight Improvement
2	Moderate Improvement
3	Large Improvement

Impacts on the Local Community

Ref.	Measure	Score	Impact of Proposed Transfer
CI1	Children living in the catchment are attending their local school	3	<p>Recent housing developments have resulted in increased pupil numbers in the Western Vale. Within the catchment area of Y Bont Faen Primary School there are a number of new housing developments. The largest of these developments being the 'Land to the north and west of Darren Close' with 475 dwellings. The development is projected to yield around 48 nursery and 132 primary pupils. Projections indicate that Y Bont Faen Primary School would not currently be able to meet this increased demand. Amalgamating Y Bont Faen Primary School and Cowbridge Comprehensive School and increasing the capacity by 210 primary places from September 2022 would result in the school being able to accommodate the projected future demand from within the catchment area. If the proposal was not implemented, there would be a shortfall of English-medium primary school places in Cowbridge.</p> <p>All catchment and feeder arrangements in place within the Vale of Glamorgan are subject to regular review and a widespread review has taken place during the academic year 2018/19. Any proposed changes would be reflected in a future admission arrangements consultation. Following a recent consultation exercise, the Council has removed feeder arrangements for all community secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan.</p> <p>This proposal would result in a more efficient supply and demand for school places in the Cowbridge area.</p>

CI2	Services provided by the school for the local community, including extra-curricular activities	2	<p>Y Bont Faen Primary School currently offers a breakfast club. An after-school club 'Simply Out of School' is also available, providing wrap around care.</p> <p>Y Bont Faen Primary School also runs a broad range of after-school activities which include Rockin' Melodies Choir, Netball, Young Reporters Club, Multi-Sports Club, Urdd Club, Textiles Club, Code Club, Gardening Club and Dance Club.</p> <p>It is intended that all existing services for children, parents and the community would continue if the proposal was to go ahead. The proposal would result in increased pupil numbers which is likely to result in increased demand for school services, as well as providing the opportunity to expand the number of services offered. With a 3-19 all through school, there is the potential to deliver additional services across all age ranges.</p> <p>The proposal forms part of Band B of the Council's 21st Century Schools Programme. This would include the creation of new state of art facilities fit for the 21st Century. A key element of the 21st Century Schools Programme is the provision of community facilities.</p> <p>Services provided by Cowbridge Comprehensive School will remain unchanged as a result of this proposal. However, there would be an opportunity for services to be delivered across the secondary and primary phases with the implementation of a 3-19 all through school.</p>
CI3	Community facilities used regularly by the school	0	Y Bont Faen Primary School regularly uses the following community facilities:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the park, not only for recreational purposes but to study wildlife and nature, as well as for art; • the High Street for geographical purposes; • local Churches; • The Town Hall; • the wildlife pond and physic garden; • St. Quentin's Castle; • the River Thaw; • visits to the shops e.g. Fabras, Waitrose, Tesco and The Gem offices; and the Library. <p>Y Bont Faen Primary School regularly attends local community events where the choir performs. The school regularly visits local residential and nursing homes to sing, help with gardening, play games and share learning with residents.</p> <p>Currently a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) is shared between Y Bont Faen Primary School and Ysgol Iolo Morganwg which is located between these two primary school sites. The proposal reduces the need for Y Bont Faen Primary School to use this MUGA and so Ysgol Iolo Morganwg may benefit from greater access to this facility. A MUGA would be provided on the proposed primary site exclusively for the primary phase to use.</p> <p>The Council notes that the proposed site would increase the travel distance to some community facilities. However, these would still be within walking distance from the school site.</p>
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CI4	Community facilities provided by and activity undertaken within the school premises	2	<p>The running track at Y Bont Faen Primary School is available for community use, as well as the main hall, which is currently used for Karate. Ysgol Iolo Morganwg host their Sports Day on Y Bont Faen playing fields.</p> <p>Local volunteers and businesses support the schools by sharing knowledge and skills. The local community are also actively involved in fundraising for the schools.</p> <p>A key aim of the 21st Century Schools Programme is to ensure school facilities are developed to meet the needs of the local community. Members of the local community would be involved throughout the development of the plans for the new school building to ensure services meet the needs of the community and enhance the facilities available.</p> <p>Moving the school to the Cowbridge Comprehensive site could open up the existing facilities at the site to a greater proportion of the community. Current facilities available for the community to book at the Cowbridge Comprehensive site include a 3G All Weather Pitch, MUGA, sports hall, drama theatre, and meeting rooms.</p> <p>No decisions have been made in respect of the future use of the current Y Bont Faen Primary School site and buildings. If the proposals outlined in the document are implemented, all options would be considered, including designating the site as surplus or exploring alternative educational uses. Any future development of the site will be managed in accordance with the relevant council policy and its statutory and fiduciary obligations.</p>
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CI5	Impact on local businesses	0	Y Bont Faen Primary School has close links with local branches of Tesco and Waitrose. These businesses have aided fundraising activities, including supporting the development of the school's forest area. These links also provide educational opportunities and venues for carol singing at Christmas time. These links would be maintained as the proposed site is 0.689 miles from the existing site.
CI6	Impact on local employment	2	<p>The governing body of Cowbridge Comprehensive School would be responsible for developing a staffing structure for the all-through school and certain roles, such as the Headteacher of the primary phase, may be re-designated. Any proposed changes to staffing would be subject to full consultation with staff and the relevant trades unions where necessary.</p> <p>The purpose of the proposal is not to reduce the number of staff. In fact, the proposal would lead to an increase in employment opportunities at the school as additional pupil numbers would lead to growth in future staffing levels.</p> <p>There may also be professional development opportunities for staff within an all-through school environment.</p>
CI7	Impact on local infrastructure	1	Access to Y Bont Faen Primary School is currently via a cul-de-sac. This causes congestion and inconvenience to local residents at drop-off and pick-up times. Transferring the school to a new site would benefit residents around the current site. It may also have an indirect benefit to the adjacent Ysgol Iolo Morganwg site as congestion in the area would be reduced.

			<p>Increasing the number of primary school places available within the catchment area would reduce longer journeys to alternative primary schools.</p> <p>Should this proposal be implemented, traffic and transport implications at the Cowbridge Comprehensive site would be considered as part of the Transport Assessment required to achieve building works planning consent. This would ensure transport implications are factored into the design of the new school.</p>
CI8	Transport arrangements	1	<p>The Council has a statutory duty to provide free school transport for pupils of statutory school age who reside beyond walking distance to the nearest appropriate school. In accordance with 'The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008'.</p> <p><i>"This is defined as more than 2 miles to the nearest suitable school for Primary Pupils and more than 3 miles for Secondary School Pupils. Distances are measured by the nearest available walking route."</i></p> <p>Some pupils living closer to the current school site would have slightly further to travel. There are no pupils currently entitled to free school transport at Y Bont Faen Primary School. As the proposed site is 0.689 miles from the existing school, it is unlikely that entitlement to free school transport would be significantly impacted.</p> <p>The majority of pupils from Y Bont Faen go on to attend Cowbridge Comprehensive as their secondary school. The proposal may benefit families with children attending both schools as they would be</p>

			<p>transported to a single site.</p> <p>There may be traffic implications as a result of the school's increased capacity on the Cowbridge Comprehensive site. A full Transport Assessment would be undertaken as part of the planning process if this proposal progresses.</p>
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7. Scoring Summary

Ref.	Local Community
CI1	3
CI2	2
CI3	0
CI4	2
CI5	0
CI6	2
CI7	1
CI8	1
Average Score	1.375

8 Conclusions

The impact assessment identifies that the proposal would likely have a neutral impact on the local community across 2 of the 8 measures assessed. The proposal would likely have a positive impact on the local community across 6 of the 8 measures assessed. The proposal would likely have a negative impact on the local community across 0 of the 8 measures. Overall, the proposal would likely have a positive impact on the local community.

The proposal would enable Cowbridge Comprehensive School to continue its success while catering for a greater pupil population. It would provide innovative and creative learning environments which are adaptable to change and would challenge and support children to reach their full potential. The proposal would maintain and increase the level of community access and interaction through the use of the school's educational facilities whilst meeting the needs of the school.

Y Bont Faen Primary School currently offers a range of activities for pupils outside of the normal school day. It is proposed that as a minimum all existing facilities for pupil's parents and the community would continue on the proposal.

Transport implications would need to be carefully considered during the design of the new school to limit the impact of the increase pupils traveling to the site. However, it is likely congestion around the current site would be improved by the transfer.

It is concluded from the Community Impact Assessment that the proposal to amalgamate Y Bont Faen Primary School and Cowbridge Comprehensive and increase the number of primary school places would better meet the needs of the community to ensure the sustainable balance between supply and demand for school places.