

# Vale of Glamorgan Council

## Consultation Report

### Proposal to: Amalgamate Cadoxton Nursery and Cadoxton Primary schools on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016

## 1. Background Information

### 1.1. Outline of the consultation

This report presents the feedback received during the consultation period from 4 January 2016 to 15 February 2016 in response to the Council's proposal to amalgamate Cadoxton Nursery and Primary Schools by;

- Extending the age range of Cadoxton Primary School from 4 to 11 to 3 to 11 years; and
- Discontinuing Cadoxton Nursery School.

The consultation process followed Welsh Government guidelines, in compliance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The consultation process gave local people and prescribed consultees the opportunity to learn about the proposal and for the Council to hear the views of all those with an interest, so that their views can be taken into account before any decision is made.

Formal consultation was conducted on the basis of a consultation document; supplementary information and an accompanying response form was distributed to prescribed consultees and published on the Vale of Glamorgan website on 4 January 2016.

The publication of a consultation document is central to the consultation process for school reorganisation and is prescribed by Welsh Government in the School Organisation Code 2013. The consultation document outlined the changes being considered, the rationale for these and the details of the consultation exercise. The consultation document also incorporated an individual response form. Consultees were advised of the availability of an online version to complete.

## 2. Consultation

### 2.1. Publication of the consultation

The bilingual consultation document was published on 4 January 2016 and distributed online, through social media, and on the Vale of Glamorgan Council's

website. The two schools included in the consultation were also provided with the documentation to publish on their websites.

The Council distributed 600 hard copies of the consultation report to parents, governors and staff of the schools included in the consultation. Other prescribed consultees were provided with an electronic version of the document and a link to the Vale of Glamorgan website.

## 2.2. Stakeholder engagement

Consultation on the proposal was undertaken with prescribed consultees as contained within the School Organisation Code 2013.

The Council consulted with the following groups:

Staff (teaching and non-teaching) at Cadoxton Primary School	Staff (teaching and non-teaching) at Cadoxton Nursery School
Governors at Cadoxton Primary School	Governors at Cadoxton Nursery School
Parents/Carers of children attending Cadoxton Primary School	Parents/Carers of children attending Cadoxton Nursery School
Pupils attending Cadoxton Primary School	Barry Town Council
Vale of Glamorgan Children and Young People's Programme Board	Vale of Glamorgan Early Years Development Partnership (EYDCP)
Communities First Partnership	Assembly Members (AMs) / Members of Parliament (MPs) / Regional Assembly Members
Local Councillors	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)
Welsh Language Commissioner	Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RHAG)
Neighbouring Primary and Secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan	Trade Unions
Central South Consortium Joint Education Service	Directors of Education - All neighbouring authorities
Estyn	Further and Higher Education institutions
Local Police and Crime Commissioner	Welsh Government Ministers

Consultees were invited to complete a formal consultation response form which could be completed in hard copy or on line via the Council's website at [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/cadoxtonschools](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/cadoxtonschools) . A response box was provided in the reception areas of both schools for parents to drop in their response forms.

### **2.3. Consultation meetings and drop in sessions**

Meetings were held with staff and governors of the two schools involved, which were attended by Council officers. The main points of the consultation document were highlighted as well as an explanation of the statutory process.

Four drop in sessions were held for all stakeholders; two at Victoria Park Community Centre and two at Cadoxton Methodist Church.

### **2.4. Consultation with children and young people**

A consultation session was undertaken with the school Senydd of Cadoxton Primary School to engage the children in the consultation process. It was decided not to undertake a consultation session with the children of Cadoxton Nursery School as it was felt that at the ages of 3 and 4, the children would not be able to fully understand the process.

## **3. Consultation Summary**

### **3.1. Consultation Questions**

Consultees were asked for their opinion on a key question:

1. Do you support the proposal to amalgamate Cadoxton Nursery and Primary schools by closing Cadoxton Nursery School and by extending the age range of Cadoxton Primary School to a 3 to 11 years school from September 2016?

Consultees were also offered the opportunity to comment further:

2. If you would like to suggest any changes or alternatives to the proposals, please detail these below.
3. Any other comments?

### **3.2. Results of the feedback from all stakeholders**

The authority received 158 individual responses by the consultation closing date and a petition against the proposal containing 416 signatures was also received. Of the 158 individual responses, 32 were in favour of the proposal, 85 were opposed, 39 did not offer an opinion either way and 2 were deemed invalid as 1 required additional information and did not give an opinion either way and 1 was

deemed void as there was no indication of a response of any kind and solely included the respondent. Both governing bodies responded to the consultation. A response form was received by the Chief Executive of Early Education (British Association for Early Childhood Education), Beatrice Merrick, whose comments have been taken into account as with all views expressed by respondents.

It has been noted that not all consultees have provided a response to each of the questions and that some forms were not fully completed. In these cases we have accept the response to the questions that they have chosen to answer.

Feedback from consultation meetings and drop in sessions are not included in this report as it was stated clearly in the consultation document that the Council would only accept responses using the official consultation response form. All who attended were advised of this at the drop in sessions. This was also confirmed in the meeting with staff and governors.

### 3.3 Profile of respondents

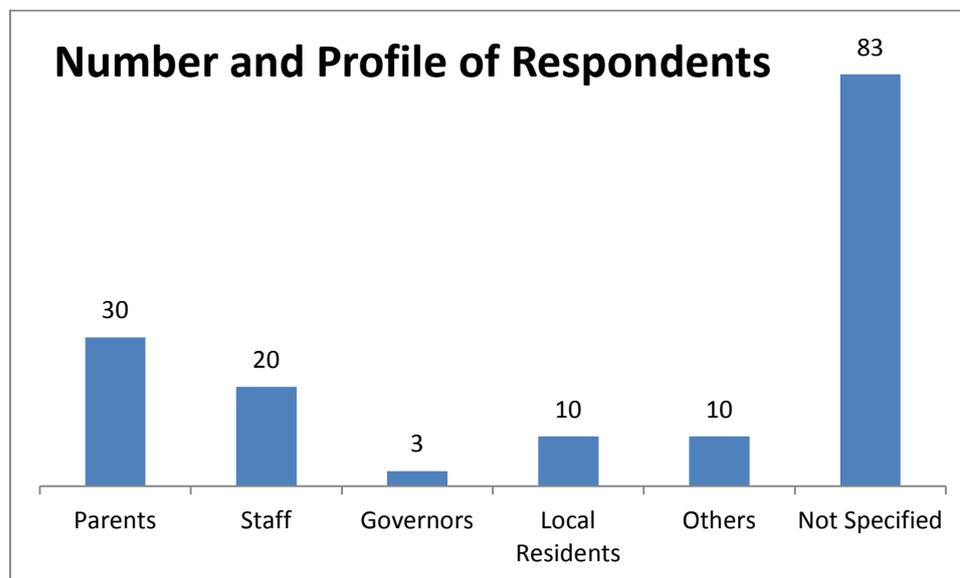


Figure 1 - Respondents Profile – valid responses

A summary of key themes and issues raised by statutory consultees and the response to those issues from the Vale of Glamorgan Council can be found at Annex A. A summary of comments received in favour of the proposal can be found at Annex B and other responses to general themes can be found at Annex C.

The consultation undertaken with young children can be found at Annex D.

The response from the two governing bodies can be found at Annex E.

In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2013, a copy of the consultation document was sent to Estyn. The response from Estyn can be found at Annex F.

## Consultation with statutory consultees

### 1. Feedback themes

The following summarises the key issues/concerns raised during the formal consultation period. The issues present an overview of responses and are not intended to be verbatim. All written responses have been made available to Cabinet members.

#### Issue 1

##### Nursery School is an important part of the community.

- The nursery school provides a homely and safe environment for the children with strong family ethics, provides support and confidentiality to both parents and children alike. It is a really, caring family atmosphere.
- The school is an important part of the community. The community ethos will be lost.
- The teachers know the local community. Thanks to this they can promote children's outcomes better.
- The first years are vital and [they] need a close and small environment.
- It is important that parents are happy and feel that their nursery is a safe place.
- Cadoxton Nursery School is an excellent example of integrated practice, bringing together education, health and social services to support all aspects of a child's development.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

In terms of the nursery's place in the community, the Council believe that there would be very little change. The same building would be used, providing the same safe, stimulating learning environment which is suited to the needs of nursery aged pupils. This would be enhanced by the opportunity to access the resources, both physical and personnel, of the primary school.

It is believed that the nursery staff would still be able to build and sustain close working relationships with parents as they do now.

The Council believe that both the nursery and primary schools have strong links within their community setting and this would continue if the two schools were to amalgamate offering a homely and safe environment for children of a nursery class age. An encompassing culture of strong family ethics, support and one to one confidentiality across the primary age years will be maintained and developed. The school may grow in size, but the small community values entrenched in the existing cultures of both schools will grow to support a wider community need.

The proposed amalgamated school would continue to work in partnership with the Communities and Families First teams to provide the 'Putting Families First programme for all parents, guardians and carers of children of all ages who attend the school. The range of interventions provided by the programme, as outlined in the Community Impact Assessment (part of the proposal documentation), would continue to be offered. If the schools do amalgamate the headteacher of the primary school has indicated that the two separate services currently offered will join together and be run through the Cadog's Café located within the grounds of the Primary school.

The primary school would continue to work in partnership with a number of agencies such as community, health, police and social services as it does now. These relationships will continue to be sustained and developed. The extensive support that is currently available to parents, pupils and extended family members will continue to support children's development and offer the best support available to families.

The Council remains confident that the proposal to amalgamate will result in the continuity in provision and cohesion for parents, while continuing to develop the sense of community and belonging that is already evident at both schools. The proposal also ensures help for families new to the area are supported in their adjustment to their new community through support to link into established networks facilitated through a single school.

## **Issue 2**

### **The proposal will have a detrimental effect on the standard of education and learning outcomes for the children at Cadoxton Nursery school.**

- The nursery wouldn't achieve a high standard if this went ahead. Stand-alone nursery schools provide better education. Stand-alone nurseries offer the best start in education. Stand –alone nurseries provide a better education.
- Cadoxton Nursery provides a high quality of early education.
- Research shows that mainstreamed nursery schools provide a higher quality of education than nursery classes

- As a stand-alone nursery in a Flying Start area the needs of each individual child is assessed and monitored carefully.
- The nursery would suffer without a permanent authoritative figure on site as difficulties arise daily.
- Adults who work in stand-alone nurseries specialise in the age group 3 – 4, these adults are best placed to help with additional needs. Staff are specialist in what they do. This early years' expertise cannot be transferred further up the primary school.
- The nursery has been a green school for four consecutive years and has been the only school from the Vale of Glamorgan to be included in the Foundation Phase Alliance Group of the Central South Consortium.
- The proposal contradicts the vision for Early years education as set out in Welsh Governments "Building a Brighter Future – Early Years and Childcare Plan" (2013).

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

The Council have reviewed the findings of research into early years' education as outlined in "The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (Eppe) Project" (2014) which was highlighted in one of the consultee's comments. The report highlights the following points:

- There are significant differences between individual pre-school settings and their impact on children, some settings are more effective than others in promoting positive child outcomes.
- Good quality can be found across all types of early years' settings; however quality was higher overall in settings integrating care and education and in nursery schools.

The Council believes that high quality learning is provided in both nursery classes as well as stand-alone nurseries. This has been evidenced through Estyn inspection reports for primary schools across the Vale of Glamorgan, which have nursery classes attached.

The Council believes that an amalgamated school would build on the strengths already present in the existing schools by further improving standards and outcomes for children. The Council believes that as the capacity of both schools to improve has been categorised as A, each phase will continue to maintain and build upon their areas of strength in teaching and learning, whilst ensuring that the children across all phases continue to achieve high learning outcomes. This will be achieved by the headteacher promoting her clear vision to improve standards and wellbeing across all stages of the primary phase.

It is anticipated that standards in the nursery class will be at least sustained at their current levels. The nursery will continue their role to offer support across the Foundation phase on behalf of the Foundation Phase Alliance Group of the Central South Consortium/

With reference to the Welsh Governments “Building a Brighter Future – Early Years and Childcare Plan” (2013) [www.learning.wales.gov.uk/resources\\_or](http://www.learning.wales.gov.uk/resources_or) [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills), the Council recognises the importance of the key aspirations in this document and are working with Welsh Government to achieve these goals across all of our school settings with the focus being on:

- improving outcomes for children through strong supportive families and communities
- supporting parental engagement in their child’s learning
- ensuring that children are safe.

In relation to the proposal and the concerns raised - specifically citing this document - the Council believes that a great deal of effort and progress has already been demonstrated by the nursery and primary schools in achieving these goals. The Council believes that amalgamation of the two schools will further progress these aspirations.

The primary and nursery schools already adopt a multi-agency working ethos, working closely with partners such as Flying Start, Families First and Communities First. This support for parents and children currently attending the nursery will not be lost, but will be co-ordinated centrally through the primary school. On-going and future initiatives will be located at the community hub – Cadog’s Corner. There would be no change in use of the existing buildings.

The “Building a Brighter Future” document identifies improvement in the flexibility of the Foundation Phase as a key driver to improve early years’ provision. The document outlines its ambition for a universal Foundation Phase with improved transition through a whole-phase and whole-school approach.

As part of a multi-agency approach, children will move from one phase of learning to the next, whilst continuing to improve standards and educational outcomes. Although the two schools currently work effectively together to manage this transition phase, the Council believes that an amalgamated, all-through primary school will further strengthen approaches to key transition times for the child and their family.

Individual children’s need would continue to be assessed, supported and monitored, but the monitoring and evaluation of a child’s progress would follow them throughout their primary schooling instead of being reassessed when the child enters the primary phase

The Council believe that reduced management costs have the potential to ensure that funding is directed to staff and their work. Staff will continue to work in partnership to secure the best possible education and learning outcomes for the children.

Estyn have responded to the proposal. This can be fully reviewed at Annex F. Estyn expressed the opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education and provision in the area. The proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on any other schools or providers of pre-school education in the area.

The Council is satisfied that there is no reason why the existing high quality provision cannot be maintained in a nursery class following an amalgamation. The same building, same resources and same teachers and LSAs would deliver the same high standards of teaching and learning. Access to the resources of the wider school has the potential to improve staff's professional development, improve the range of provision and so raise standards further.

### **Issue 3**

#### **The proposal will have a detrimental effect on the wellbeing of the children at Cadoxton Nursery school.**

- Mrs Hayward hasn't the time, [with a large number of children to manage].
- Less one on one interaction.
- It is too early [for children attending the nursery] to be in full time school.
- It would be hard for the new starters [at the nursery] to go to the big school at age 3.
- Disruptive to pupils.
- Nursery will be swallowed up into [a] larger school. Children will become lost among the problems that come with a larger primary school
- Older children would intimidate the younger, soft, unconfident kids.
- The children attending the new nursery class will no longer be amongst their peers.

#### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

If the proposal to amalgamate were to go ahead there would be a requirement for a teacher to manage the day to day running of the nursery class. This will allow the headteacher of the primary school to have overall leadership across the phases, but will ensure that a senior member of staff is always available in the nursery building as first point of contact for parents / guardians / carers of nursery aged children and manage day to day activities of the nursery class.

The Council believes that the proposal will not necessarily adversely affect pupil: staff ratios, which the governing body and the headteacher of Cadoxton Nursery school have set at 1:6. It is not envisaged that this ratio would change if the proposal amalgamation were to go ahead.

As nursery pupils will be taught in the existing nursery building, the Council believes that in many ways the children's daily routines and contact with older children will remain unchanged. Being part of a primary school has the potential to ease transition in that when ready, children can be introduced to aspects of the existing primary school building e.g. the hall, there by enriching provision and reducing anxiety associated with transition into the Reception class.

Nursery age children would continue to attend their class within their current setting. Nursery age children will attend the nursery class for a maximum of 2.5 hours per day, morning or afternoon, as they do now. The mixing of age groups would be kept to a minimum for the youngest children. It has been suggested that children in their final term in the nursery class could be invited to attend assemblies in the primary school, alongside other transitional events. This should help those children moving in to the Reception year to have experience of the primary school environment. There will be other opportunities for the nursery age children and the rest of the Foundation phase to mix, but these would be carefully managed with appropriate support.

The Council is satisfied that the wellbeing of the children attending Cadoxton Nursery School would not be negatively impacted, and that standards of wellbeing would at least be the same as they currently are as a result of the amalgamation.

#### **Issue 4**

##### **Keeping to the Status Quo**

- It works well why change it. Leave it as it is. The children are happy and settled there. Why break something that is not broken.
- Nursery has high standards and excellent Estyn reports. The Estyn report speaks volumes on how wonderful, effective and outstanding the nursery is.
- The Estyn inspection reports are consistently higher for the nursery School than the primary school.

- One of the best schools in the area and doesn't need changing.
- The school is known for its good learning qualities.
- Cadoxton Nursery is an outstanding nursery with an excellent reputation.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

Whilst recognising the high quality of provision provided by both the existing nursery and primary schools, the Council believes that the proposal has the potential to lead to improved transition, enhanced provision and savings in relation to management costs. This will help reduce the threat of cuts to teachers and LSAs in times of austerity. Maintained nursery schools face higher costs than nursery classes in schools where overheads can be reduced through economies of scale due to larger pupil numbers.

Maintaining the status quo does not provide the benefits associated with school amalgamation. One of the main benefits of moving to an 'all through' primary school is to minimise the number of transition points between schools that children currently experience. The current arrangements are expensive and limit the opportunities for teachers and support staff to work with children of different age groups if they wish to do so.

An amalgamation would build on the strengths present in the existing separate schools under a single leadership team, providing efficiency and opportunity which would not be available under separate management structures. Staff would also benefit from continuing professional development opportunities by enabling them to gain experience across the Foundation phase and key stage 2. These advantages would not be present by maintaining the status quo.

The Council believes that on balance, the benefits of an amalgamation to both Cadoxton Nursery School and Cadoxton Primary School outweigh the benefits of making no change and maintaining the status quo.

### **Issue 5**

#### **Concerns over staffing**

- Respondents were concerned about loss of jobs in the nursery.
- The staff are nursery trained, this is what we wanted to do career wise.
- We could be teaching junior children. This is not what I did all my training for.

- Staff are excellent and do a wonderful job. They are long serving. The nursery without a headteacher on site will have a huge impact for staff and parents.
- A headteacher in charge of 420 primary children and 100 nursery children could not possibly know the intricacies of my child.
- Difficulties with parents occur on a daily basis having a head on site the issues are either defused very quickly or dealt with time, and support given to individuals.
- The loss of the exceptional leadership of the headteacher would have a huge impact on the school. Nursery headteacher has done a fantastic job.
- Staff at the nursery are amazing at their jobs [and are] led by a very good headteacher.
- [There would be] less staff and less funding for the nursery. A single budget and headteacher would mean less facilities, and less staff to support the nursery age children.
- The time management and disruption which would be caused [by] having to telephone the primary school would be a nightmare for us with all the problems we deal with - parents, social services, children etc.
- Parents and families are at the centre of the nursery. Being a stand-alone nursery, staff put parents and families at the centre of their work.
- By amalgamating the school and removing the headteacher the specialist knowledge and leadership of the nursery school will be lost.

### **Council's response to the concerns raised**

In times of austerity, all budgets are under pressure. The Council believes that the proposal has the potential to reduce the risk of teachers and LSAs losing their jobs, as financial savings would be made in management costs and other costs of running of a school i.e. service contracts. The proposal does not necessarily lead to changes to the vast majority of staff in the existing nursery and the Council believes that there is no reason why this proposal should lead to the loss of their expertise or the support that they provide for children with additional needs.

There is the potential for the expertise of nursery staff and Reception staff to be shared, so facilitating transition and improving provision. The "Building a Brighter Future – Early Years and Childcare Plan" (2013) supports this workforce development initiative. An amalgamated school would offer

opportunities for all staff to develop their CPD through access and training with other age groups as part of individual's career development plans.

The skills, experience and commitment of the existing nursery headteacher is acknowledged by the Council, parents and the local community. The primary school also has an excellent headteacher. In the majority of primary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan which include a nursery class, the nursery classes perform well under the leadership of the primary headteacher, providing a quality start to a child's schooling.

It is anticipated that the staff of the nursery school would be incorporated into the staffing structure of the proposed amalgamated primary school. The staffing structure of the proposed school would be decided upon by the headteacher and governing body of the proposed amalgamated school. There would be recognition of staff's specialist expertise in certain age groups, but there would also be opportunities for staff to develop their pedagogy through working across the primary phase.

It is stated in the Frequently Asked Questions section of the consultation document that through amalgamation there will be the requirement for one headteacher of the primary school, which will be the existing head of Cadoxton Primary school, Janet Hayward.

If the amalgamation is progressed it is envisaged that the nursery class will have a teacher in charge appointed. This individual would oversee the day to day activities of the class, whilst still having a teaching role. The teacher in charge would be a first point of contact for parents/guardians/carers of Nursery age children.

Recent figures from the Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey (2014) indicate that there is a pattern of declining numbers of qualified teachers and leaders in nursery schools. Welsh Government has also indicated that since 2011 the number of stand-alone nurseries across Wales has decreased from 22 to 11 by 2014. An amalgamation would secure the future workforce and sustainability of the nursery setting.

The Council is confident that the proposed amalgamation will help avoid the risk of a reduction in teaching and support staff given current financial challenges. The planned change will ensure a single point of contact for parents and staff in relation to the day to day running of nursery provision.

On balance, the benefits of the proposed amalgamation of Cadoxton Nursery School and Cadoxton Primary School would maintain and sustain the current high standards of both schools, outweighing any disadvantages, and are sufficient to warrant Cabinet's consideration as to whether to publish a statutory public notice to amalgamate.

This section provides comments raised during the formal consultation period for those **in favour** of the proposal. The issues present an overview of responses and are not intended to be verbatim. All written responses have been made available to Cabinet members.

### Continuity of education.

- Better continuity of education provision. Children will be monitored right through from age 3 years to 11 years.
- Amalgamating could provide a more consistent roll in such things as identification of children for SEN.
- As most pupils make the transition anyway, I think will further improve communication and pupil knowledge.
- It will make the transition easier for children as they will be part of Cadoxton Primary School already.
- Valuable opportunity to develop transition between the two schools. Transition to KS1 less daunting for both parents and children. Help with transition from nursery to reception.
- One community unit. The community will benefit from one cohesive school. Better communication between phases/community and parents.
- There will be one school with [the] same policies and procedures.
- A valuable opportunity to develop transition between the two schools.
- Fewer transitions, fewer sets of uniform, more fluidity and expertise in one body.

### Education and financial sense.

- Can only benefit, makes both education and financial sense. Save money on management that can be used for school development and resources. Will improve the children's education.
- Resources can be better delegated.
- It makes sense in terms of the learner journey.

- Single leadership and commonality of goals will benefit the children and the teachers who will be able to work together.
- Cadoxton Primary school is a good school with a strong and effective leadership team.
- In the current climate the financial duplication is a luxury that we cannot afford – facilitation of two governing bodies, back office etc.

#### Same uniform and inset days.

- There would be same uniform and inset days.
- Uniform cost.
- It will be a lot easier for parents that they have the same inset days. Better attendance i.e. inset days.

#### Opportunities for staff to move between both schools.

- Opportunities would arise for staff to move between both schools. New opportunities for professional development.
- Opportunities would arise for staff to move between both schools
- Advantages for staff in being able to draw on the experience and knowledge of the wider foundation phase – good for further professional development opportunities and again sharing of resources.

This section provides comments to common issues arising from the consultation exercise on the proposal.

### **Who will be the headteacher of the amalgamated primary school?**

The headteacher will be Janet Hayward, the headteacher of Cadoxton Primary School. The nursery class will be an integrated part of the school. The headteacher will extend her remit to cover the extended age range of the school. The staffing structure will be decided upon by the headteacher and governing body of the amalgamated school.

### **Who will be the governors of the amalgamated primary school?**

The existing governing body of the primary school would formally continue to be the governing body of the amalgamated school. The governing body could choose to extend its membership from 14 members to 18 to include members from the governing body of the nursery school. This would be a decision of the governing body.

### **What will the proposal mean for children currently attending Cadoxton Nursery and Cadoxton Primary schools? Will my child be offered a place at the amalgamated school?**

All children attending Cadoxton Primary School at the time of the amalgamation will be guaranteed a place at the amalgamated school.

Children who are currently in the nursery and would continue to attend the nursery for a further year in 2016/17 would automatically be guaranteed a place in the nursery class of the amalgamated school.

All families who wish to apply for a place in the reception classes as part of the 2016/17 primary school place admissions process should follow the normal procedures as set out in the 'Parental Guide to School Admissions in the Vale 2016-17'.

### **What will the admission arrangements be for children applying for a place in the reception class of the primary school for September 2016?**

The Vale of Glamorgan Council will continue to be the admitting authority for the amalgamated school. Children can start full time education in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents who have applied for a place in the reception class for September 2016 will be informed of the outcome of their application on 18 April 2016.

These dates are set for all Local Authorities in Wales.

**Will there be any changes to the local catchment area if the proposal goes ahead**

Cadoxton Nursery and Cadoxton Primary schools currently have the same catchment areas (as illustrated in the catchment area map on page 10 of the consultation document). There will be no change the catchment area because of the proposed amalgamation.

**Will the policies of the school change to reflect the new nursery age children and their needs?**

This will be a decision of the governing body and the headteacher of the school. The school will review its policies to ensure that all children in the school are covered by the school's governance and safeguarding policies.

**Will the nursery be on the same site?**

The amalgamated school will continue to operate over the two sites, one site for nursery education and the other for primary education. Nursery provision would continue to be provided from the current nursery building. The nursery class building will not close nor will the nursery class move into the main primary school building.

**Will nursery staff remain the same?**

If the proposal goes ahead the decision about the school staffing structure will be a matter for the headteacher and governing body to decide upon. At this stage it is anticipated that the staff of the nursery school would be included in the newly primary school apart from the headteacher.

**Will there be a teacher in charge of the nursery?**

Yes. A teacher in charge of the nursery will be appointed.

**Will the name of the nursery change?**

The nursery will be incorporated into the Cadoxton Primary School. The name of the amalgamated school including the nursery would be Cadoxton Primary School.

**Will school and nursery have the same inset days?**

Yes. The primary school including the nursery unit will all share the same school inset days.

**Will the uniform change?**

The current primary school uniform of yellow/sky blue will be the school uniform

for the amalgamated school including the nursery unit. Children currently attending the nursery school and remaining in the nursery in September 2016 will be allowed to wear their present uniform, if parents wish, up until they leave the nursery.

**Will children automatically get a space in the school from nursery?**

Children attending the nursery will not have an automatic right to a place in the reception class of the school. Parents will have to apply in the normal way, as they do now, by completing an application form.

## On the proposal to amalgamate Cadoxton Nursery and Cadoxton Primary schools

### With the Senydd, Cadoxton Primary School

#### Introduction

As part of the Consultation reporting requirements as outlined in the School Organisation Code (Wales) 2013, the consulting authority is required, as a minimum, to include consultation with the school councils of the affected schools.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this consultation was to gain an insight from children of Cadoxton Primary School to ascertain:

- Their understanding of the proposal
- Their opinions on the proposal
- Whether they are or are no supportive of the proposal

The workshop took place on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and was led by Anne Brown, School Organisation Manager and the School Organisation team.

It was decided not to undertake a consultation session with the children of Cadoxton Nursery School as it was felt that at the ages of 3 and 4, the children would not be able to fully understand the process.

#### Consultation with children of Primary school age

Consultation documents can be complex and hard to digest for a child of primary school age as they may include complex information and data that might be challenging for a child between the ages of 4 to 11 to understand.

The School Organisation team

The consultation with the children at Cadoxton Primary school took place in a resource room of the school at 11:30am on Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016. The workshop took 90 minutes

#### Background and Aims

- The Consultation document on the above proposal stated that there was a need to give pupils at Cadoxton Primary school the opportunity to be part of the consultation exercise
- It was decided not to include children at the nursery as it was felt that at the ages of 3 and 4 years it is not reasonable to expect these children to understand

- The information gathered from the consultation will form part of the report which will be submitted to the Council’s Cabinet for consideration following the consultation period.

## Who Took Part

- 10 children took part, 2 from each year group, beginning at year 2. All children were members of the Cadoxton Primary School Senydd (school council)
- There was an even split of boys & girls

## Methodology

An interactive methodology was incorporated so that all pupils were allowed the opportunity to discuss, share and voice their own ideas and opinions.

The workshop started with an ice breaker where the School Organisation team introduced themselves to the children and the children introduced themselves.

### Exercise 1

The first exercise concentrated on ensuring that the children were comfortable with the meaning of key ‘wow’ words and why it was important to consult with pupils about the proposal. The three ‘wow’ words were:

- Proposal
- Consultation
- Amalgamation

**Question:** Do you understand the meaning of the three ‘wow’ words and how they are used in the consultation document.

**Response rate:** 8  (agree) 2  (unsure) 0  (disagree)

Further discussion continued on what made a good discussion/consultation.

### Exercise 2

The proposal was then explained to the children of the Senydd

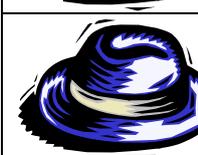
**Question:** Do you understand the proposal as we have explained it to you?

**Response rate:** 7  (agree) 3  (unsure) 0  (disagree)

### Exercise 3

Children were split into groups of mixed ages and took on the role of the 5 colours of 'Thinking Hats'. Each group took on the principles of their hat and discussed the proposal from that perspective.

For those children who said that they were unsure to the two questions above, members of the team worked with these children to help them with their understanding of the words. The children who said they were unsure of meanings were from Years 2 and 3.

	What are the facts – do you understand what you have been told?
	I am feeling..... because
	We don't think that this is a good thing because.....
	This is a good thing because.....
	Instead of doing it this way we could always.....
	Facilitator hat – bringing all points of view together

## Summary of findings

Each group shared their perspective with the other groups in the room. These included:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There will be one headteacher – Mrs Hayward</li> <li>• The nursery children will still stay in the same building</li> <li>• We will have the same holidays and inset days</li> <li>• We will all have the same rules, so the nursery children will not have to learn new rules when they move to this school</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nervous – unsure of what will happen when schools are joined together</li> <li>• Happy – Mrs Haywood will still be the headteacher</li> <li>• Pleased that the school will collaborate</li> <li>• Happy to see younger children in our family</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headteacher would have to go backwards and forwards to each school</li> <li>• Teachers in the nursery school may have to leave</li> <li>• There may be problems in the playground. The nursery children may get knocked over if they have to play with us</li> <li>• Assemblies would be too big if all the nursery children came as well. They might not behave in assembly as they are too little.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will see our little brothers and sisters more</li> <li>• We will be able to share our school hall and gym more</li> <li>• We will have one set of rules and ideas</li> <li>• We will collaborate</li> <li>• We will have the same school uniform</li> <li>• We will have the same ideas and rules</li> <li>• It will make moving to the primary school easier as the nursery children will know us and know the teachers</li> <li>• We will have one headteacher</li> </ul>



- We should stay as we are
- We should build a brand new school and have a brand new nursery class as part of the brand new school

Mike Matthews then gave a brief explanation of the time line of the consultation and the differences between the proposal consultation, the objection period and how children could object if they wished.

### Questions raised by children

**Q. Will we all have a new school uniform?**

A. All the school will wear the same uniform (Mrs Hayward).

**Q. Will the nursery children have a class room in this school?**

A: The nursery children will continue to have their classes in the nursery school. They will come up to the school and join in to school activities. In the summer term the older nursery children will join us for assemblies (Mrs Hayward).

**Q: I want to talk to other children in my class about what I have learnt today. Am I allowed to do this?**

A: That would be a great idea. We would like you all to become Consultation champions and talk to your friend in your class and in the playground about what you have been doing today.

### Evaluation

The children were asked if they understood all of the information that they have received about the proposal.

Each child put an arrow on a bull's eye to show how much or how little they had understood:

- 8 children really understood
- 2 children understood most of what they were told
- 0 children did not understand

The children were asked they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to amalgamate Cadoxton Primary and Nursery Schools.

Each child put an arrow on a bull's eye to show whether they agreed or not:

- 9 children agreed
- 0 children agreed a little
- 0 children disagreed a little
- 0 children really disagreed

1 child neither agreed nor disagreed

## Governing Body Responses

### Cadoxton Nursery School – Response to consultation

**“Cadoxton Primary School is the only primary school in Barry without a nursery class”**

This shouldn't be a reason to amalgamate schools. That decision should be informed by what is needed by local residents in the catchment area. This is a deprived area, as acknowledged in the proposal document and there is evidence to show that successful standalone nursery schools bring benefits to deprived areas. The best option for Cadoxton is a standalone nursery.

**“The nursery school has therefore been assessed only on its capacity to improve.” P16**

Although it may be true that categorisation of Nursery schools isn't published by the Welsh Government, it isn't accurate to say the nursery has only been assessed on its capacity to improve.

The Nursery has had two Challenge advisors in the last 18 months and both were impressed with our approach to data gathering and standard setting. Data gathering is embedded in the nursery and is at the core of everything we do. Estyn recognised this in their 2010 report: “standards remain a priority of the school: ‘many make outstanding progress exceeding expected levels of achievement relative to their starting point.’

Although Standards in nursery schools are not part of the report, they are taken into consideration when a category of Green is awarded.

Standards remain at the fore front of our Vision for the pupils of Cadoxton Nursery School:

**End of Nursery Yr 2 Foundation Phase Outcome Assessments**

**53 pupils 1 pupil =2%**

Curriculum Area	Working Towards	OC1	OC2	OC3	3+	Above expected Level
PSE	-----	10%	25%	61%	4%	65%
LLC	-----	-----	79%	21%	-----	21%
MD	2%	8%	72%	19%	-----	19%
KUW	-----	-----	72%	25%	-----	25%
PD	-----	-----	37%	63%	-----	63%
CD	-----	2%	98%	-----	-----	
Welsh	-----	85%	15%	-----	-----	

This is the reason why we have been judged as a green school for four years running. The challenge advisor can see the whole package; gathering data and statistics are central to everything we do at the nursery; they can see that standards are set and measured and that we have robust and thorough reporting mechanisms. They also witnessed the exceptional leadership that is in place and driving the school forward.

In the Estyn report for the nursery in 2010 the report concluded that the Nursery was **“good with many outstanding features”**. This was a very good report for the nursery and included comments relating to the Leadership and Management in place at the school:

“The head teacher leads the school with an exceptionally clear view of its future direction. The core mission is not only to educate the child in nursery, but also to reach out to the family as equal partners in the child’s early education at home as well as at school. The school’s vision of a holistic approach to early education is outstandingly reflected in every aspect of its work. The increased involvement of parents/carers in their child’s education is having a very positive impact on the standards they achieve.”

“All members of staff, under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, work extremely effectively as a knowledgeable, united team with a shared sense of purpose. In a most caring, supportive environment they provide very stimulating learning experiences that enable all children to make good, and often outstanding, progress”

Since the Estyn report the strategic leadership has brought the nursery onto further successes, the involvement in the Foundation Phase Alliance being one example of this. I believe it would be a grave mistake to remove this tier of management.

### **How would Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision be affected?**

It is a strength that the nursery school allows early identification and staff work with pupils with ALN. Estyn commented on the provision for ALN in the nursery:

- “Provision for children with additional learning needs is outstanding. There is an extremely effective identification of children with SEN due to the very close links with other agencies.”
- “Provision for children with additional learning needs is outstanding”.

It is a fact that the nursery is recommended by the LEAs Principle Educational Psychologist to parents of children with ALN.

It is crucial to understand that this level of care and provision can be provided due to the hard work and vision of the headteacher. It is crucial this role remains in the nursery.

## **The intended impact on education outcomes p16**

**“The changes should not have any negative effect on the children at any stage of their education at the school.”**

On the contrary, I think removing the person who sets the strategic direction of the school and leads by example will have a massive impact on the school, its pupils and staff.

## **The condition of school buildings and facilities p17**

“Cost of identified repairs £100,000 – condition report 2014. The condition survey report noted that there needs to be a minimum level of intervention required to ensure that the standard of high quality provision is maintained.”

Although it is reassuring to hear no work needs to be carried out it is not clear why this is included in the proposal as the building condition needs to be maintained regardless of the outcome of the proposal.

## **What are the advantages of this proposal? P18**

**“A single leadership team and governing body, supporting a headteacher who would have a ‘whole school’ responsibility”**

Although this may be an advantage from a cost saving perspective, in relation to educational achievement and provision for the community the amalgamation would be a negative step.

Cadoxton Nursery School is seen as having sector leading practice by Central South Consortium, and was recently selected by the Central South Consortium to be part of the Foundation Phase Alliance Group because of the outstanding Provision and Foundation Phase Practice. Cadoxton Nursery School is the only school in the Vale to have this recognition. This selection comes from recognition of the direction and vision of the head teacher, a role you are proposing to remove.

The 2010 Estyn report is very clear in its praise for the leadership of the nursery:

- “The head teacher leads the school with an exceptionally clear view of its future direction.”
- “The school’s vision of a holistic approach to early education is outstandingly reflected in every aspect of its work”
- “All members of staff, under the excellent leadership of the head teacher, work extremely effectively as a knowledgeable, united team with a shared sense of purpose”

As already mentioned the school has been awarded green status for 4 years running. This is due to the leadership of the head teacher.

## Specialists

The 2015 report from the British Association for Early Childhood Education “Maintained nursery schools: the state of play report” clearly states why nursery schools and their headteachers are important: “nursery schools matter because they provide high quality early education, led by specialist headteachers, and delivered by qualified teachers and nursery nurses.”.

The report goes on to say that nursery school Headteachers and staff are a unique cadre of specialist early years leaders who are highly qualified and knowledgeable about early years pedagogy. They have particular expertise in improving outcomes for disadvantaged children and supporting children with SEND. They integrate care, education, health and other services for children, so that all aspects of a child’s development can be supported.

It is important to understand that nursery staff are specialists in their field and choose to work in a nursery school environment.

One of the key differences between nursery schools and other providers of early education is the extent to which they offer integrated services to children and families, even when not designated as a children’s centre. The head teacher has first hand knowledge of children and families in her care. Nursery schools are networked at the centre of all the services which young children and their families may need to access.

I believe removal of the leadership role from the nursery would be detrimental to the early years educational provision in Cadoxton.

**“Opportunities to provide staff with continuing professional development opportunities by enabling them to gain experience within an ‘all through’ Foundation phase and key stage 2 learning environment”**

As already mentioned Nursery School staff are specialists in their field and they do not want to move into the primary school. The members of staff concerned have chosen to work in a Nursery School.

It is a considerable strength of the Nursery that staff have chosen to specialise in this age range and have a wealth of experience. ‘The quality of teaching makes the biggest difference to learning outcomes. Pedagogy matters.’ Teaching is consistently good with elements of excellent throughout the school. 29% of lessons observed during *Estyn Inspection* were outstanding with 71% good.

Have you asked the staff if they want to gain experience across the foundation phase?

All staff at Cadoxton Nursery School already experience excellent opportunities for CPD, especially through the Foundation Phase Alliance.

## What are the disadvantages of this proposal? P19

The proposal acknowledges that having one head teacher for the joint school will impact the availability of that headteacher.

It is a considerable benefit having a Headteacher on site in the Nursery. Year on year, an average 20% of our families are known to Social Services and more known to the Police. Having a Headteacher on site has defused potentially dangerous situations.

However, it fails to note that this will also impact local networks that rely on continued support from the Nursery School headteacher. These include Social Services, Flying Start, the Police and other agencies. The Nursery headteacher is in frequent contact with many of these groups in the daily running of the nursery. Removing this role will sever these connections and leave a sizeable support gap. This is a big disadvantage that should be considered.

There is also no acknowledgement that there is a risk that removing the leadership role will be detrimental to the educational provision of the nursery. The evidence is clear that the nursery has excelled in providing an exceptional standard of education, which is due to the vision, passion and exceptional leadership of the headteacher.

There is no recognition that this proposal removes choice for local parents and guardians. This will be a big disadvantage for all prospective parents and guardians in the catchment area and beyond. Many parents send their child to the Nursery School **because it is a standalone nursery** and not tied to a primary school. The figures cited in the proposal for the demand for places and forecast for future demand bear this out. Parents are prepared to travel to the nursery as they know the learning provision is so good and is better than their local nursery.

If this goes ahead it could result in a negative effect for the Primary school as amalgamating the school could actually result in a reduction in pupils going to the Cadoxton Primary. Parents are likely to choose **not** to send their children to the amalgamated nursery school as it is no longer standalone, with the knock on effect that fewer children would then transfer to the Primary.

Another disadvantage is that there is no consideration for the Welsh Government 10 year plan for the early years, childcare and play workforce in Wales which advocates a 'culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing' in order to build leadership capacity in the early years sector. They also argue that aside from building capacity, there are obvious economies of scale if settings operate as clusters to share knowledge and resources.

Perhaps most importantly, there is no recognition that amalgamation could have a negative impact on the educational provision, standards and success of the Nursery school.

The nursery school is involved directly in work to reduce the impact of poverty on children's learning. Working alongside **Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services (C4EO)** they are developing and applying

effective classroom strategies for closing the gap in educational achievement for children and young people living in poverty, including white working-class boys.

Again, it is important to understand this liaison has come about from the vision of the head teacher.

### **Risks associated with the proposals p19**

The risks included in this document only consider risks from the perspective of the primary school, post amalgamation. There is no consideration from the perspective of the nursery.

I am surprised this proposal doesn't acknowledge or consider any risks if the Nursery Headteacher post is lost.

The leadership and expertise of the Head teacher is recognised by Estyn, the Foundation Schools Alliance and Central South Consortium. Without this role in the Nursery there is a real risk the current levels of success and achievement cannot be sustained. For a small nursery it punches far above its weight.

There is a risk that removing choice from parents in the catchment area will have a negative impact on the Primary school. This proposal removes choice for local parents and guardians and, as previously stated, many parents choose to send their child to the Nursery School because it is a standalone nursery and not tied to a primary school. Parents are prepared to travel to the nursery because they know the learning provision is so good.

There is a risk that if this goes ahead then there could actually be a reduction in pupils going to the Primary School as parents choose **not** to send their children to the amalgamated nursery school as it is no longer stand alone, with the knock on effect that fewer children would then transfer to the Primary School.

### **Can standards be maintained with this new model?**

No, standards cannot be maintained with the proposed model:

#### **1. Nursery School headteachers have specialist knowledge**

The 2015 report from the British Association for Early Childhood Education "Maintained nursery schools: the state of play report":

- "Nursery schools matter because they provide high quality early education, led by **specialist headteachers**, and delivered by qualified teachers and nursery nurses."
- "Nursery school Headteachers and staff are a unique cadre of **specialist early years leaders who are highly qualified and knowledgeable about early years pedagogy**. They have particular expertise in improving outcomes for disadvantaged children and supporting children with SEND. They integrate

care, education, health and other services for children, so that all aspects of a child's development can be supported."

## **2. Availability of head teacher following amalgamation**

The proposal is clear that having one head teacher for the joint school will impact the availability of that head teacher:

The amalgamation will impact local networks that rely on continued support from the Nursery School headteacher. These include Social Services, Flying Start, the Police and other agencies. The Nursery headteacher is in frequent contact with these groups in the daily running of the nursery. It is a considerable benefit having a Headteacher on site in the Nursery. Year on year, an average 20% of our families are known to Social Services and more known to the Police. Having a Headteacher on site has defused potentially dangerous situations.

## **3. Recognition from external agencies**

Cadoxton Nursery School is seen as having sector leading practice by Central South Consortium, and was recently selected by the Central South Consortium to be part of the Foundation Phase Alliance Group because of the outstanding Provision and Foundation Phase Practice. Cadoxton Nursery School is the only school in the Vale to have this recognition. This selection comes from recognition of the direction and vision of the head teacher.

## **4. Staff development and recruitment**

As already mentioned Nursery School staff are specialists in their field and they do not want to move into the primary school. The members of staff at Cadoxton Nursery School have chosen to work in a Nursery School and to be more specific, have chosen to work in Cadoxton Nursery School because of its excellent reputation, the learning it offers and the standards it achieves.

The Head teacher and Governing Body have been responsible for recruiting staff to ensure they have the appropriate skills for the nursery. New staff are welcomed into the school family and the head teacher ensures they have the appropriate personal and professional development opportunities. To date our recruitment choices have been very successful as successes prove.

However, this proposal suggests the Head teacher and Governing Body are removed. Given the suggestions in the proposal I believe this puts a very big question mark over staff recruitment: how can a Head teacher and Governing body who have no experience of Nursery education effectively recruit staff?

It also raised a big question mark over staff development. The proposal states staff would work across the Foundation phase. Staff have chosen to specialise within a nursery environment. Rather than strengthening provision moving staff within the school for 'development' would in fact dilute the specialist skills in the nursery which would impact the standards of provision.

## 5. Leadership

The Governing Body is also dedicated to the Nursery. I believe it would be a significant risk that the amalgamated school wouldn't be able to maintain standards without the input of a Governing Body who are experienced with Nursery provision.

A Nursery School head teacher is dedicated to that one area of responsibility and can concentrate their full attention and resources to leading and developing the nursery. This focus cannot be maintained with a head teacher who is spread across all of the primary provision.

The Estyn report shows how effective the head teacher is at leading the school, setting a clear vision, and applying their knowledge and to taking the Nursery forward:

I could include many quotes from the Estyn report, but to save space here are four:

- “The school’s vision of a holistic approach to early education is outstandingly reflected in every aspect of its work”
- “The head teacher **leads the school** with an **exceptionally clear view** of its future direction.”
- “The **school’s vision** of a holistic approach to early education is outstandingly reflected in every aspect of its work.”
- “All members of staff, **under the excellent leadership of the head teacher**, work extremely effectively as a knowledgeable, united team with a shared sense of purpose”

Without this role the direction, focus and leadership will be lost.

## Conclusion

I am concerned that the key driver for this change seems to be about saving money and that improving educational provision is a secondary benefit. It is worrying that there is little reference in this document to what is best for the children.

Cadoxton is a deprived area and the Council should be thinking about the best way to serve the community, many of whom are in poverty. Research shows that a standalone nursery can bring many benefits to a deprived area.

Rather than amalgamating the school the Council should consider the recommendations included in the 2015 report from the British Association for Early Childhood Education “Maintained nursery schools: the state of play report” which includes: “The **value of nursery schools’ additional services** – including working with families and supporting vulnerable children should be recognised and funded.”.

To serve the community even further another option that may be worth exploring is to expand the nursery into a children’s centre. This would allow the nursery to take into account the holistic needs of young children and provide integrated services (education, health, social care, etc), which research shows are most effective for the under 5s. This would provide a base for specialised local services, offering the

opportunity to enhance early years education with the provision of specific care and support where it is needed most.

Potentially this could save even more money for the council, especially in the long term.

Whilst I fully appreciate we are in a difficult economic climate, I would ask you to take into consideration the 'value added' that a successful and thriving nursery brings to pupils, parents, the wider community and the Council. I appreciate it is very hard to attach a monetary value to this but I would argue that the nursery does provide considerable 'value added' through exemplary leadership, an exceptionally high standard of teaching, continued community support and vital inter agency working.

I am strongly against the proposal to amalgamate the schools. For the reasons cited above I believe Cadoxton Nursery School should remain a standalone nursery. An amalgamation would be detrimental to the pupils, to the overall school provision and quality of education, to all the nursery staff and to the wider community.

Tommy O'Neill  
Chair of Governors, Cadoxton Nursery School  
On behalf of: Cadoxton Nursery School Governing Body

Governing Body Responses

Cadoxton Primary School – Response to consultation

Consultation Response Form

Amalgamation of Cadoxton Nursery and Primary Schools

Questions

Do you support the proposal to amalgamate Cadoxton Nursery and Primary schools by closing Cadoxton Nursery School and by extending the age range of Cadoxton Primary School to a 3 to 11 years school from September 2016?

Yes

No

If you support or do not support the proposal then please explain why.

The GB fully support the proposals. They feel they will be in the best interests of the children and the Cadoxton Community.

If you would like to suggest any changes or alternatives to the proposals, please detail these below.

We are more than happy with the proposals as they stand.

Any other comments?

Anything we can do as a  
GB to endorse and support  
the LA - please let us know!

Thank you for your comments

Please tick the box below if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report



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Civic Offices  
Holton Road  
BARRY  
CF63 4RU

**Please return this form to the Vale of Glamorgan Council no later than  
Monday 15 February 2016**

## Estyn Response

### **Estyn's response to the proposal to amalgamate Cadoxton Nursery and Cadoxton Primary schools**

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.

#### **Introduction**

This consultation proposal is from the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

The proposal is to amalgamate Cadoxton Nursery and Cadoxton Primary schools by extending the age range of Cadoxton Primary School and by discontinuing Cadoxton Nursery School. If implemented, the proposal would take effect from the start of the autumn term in September 2016.

#### **Summary/Conclusion**

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education and provision in the area. The proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on any other schools or providers of pre-school education in the area.

#### **Description and benefits**

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the proposal. The proposal is consistent with the council's policy of creating a primary school model for 3 to 11 years education by amalgamating separate infant and junior schools where there has been an opportunity to do so. Cadoxton Primary School is currently the only primary school in Barry without a nursery class.

The proposer makes appropriate reference to the potential benefits of the proposal, including the financial savings that would accrue from a new staffing structure and the streamlining of management and administrative functions.

The proposer appears to have considered the potential disadvantages of the proposal, including the disruption to management of staff and resources during the restructuring process and the potential for reduced access for pupils, parents and staff to the leadership of the new school when there is a single head teacher. It also identifies that children in the nursery class may not feel confident in becoming part of a primary school

environment. However, the proposal does not evaluate these in any detail and notes only that the school and the council will need to manage these.

The proposer has identified three risks associated with the proposal. These include the potential difficulties in bringing together two sets of working practices within the one Foundation Phase, the challenge of operating across two separate buildings and possible resistance to or disengagement from the change process amongst stakeholders. It states that these are risks that the leadership of the new school will need to manage but notes that both schools already have a strong working partnership.

The proposer seems to have considered alternatives to the proposal appropriately and has given sound reasons for why it has discounted them. These include the option of doing nothing and maintaining the status quo; the option of federating the two schools; and the option of amalgamating both schools and opening a new school.

The proposer has appropriately considered the impact of the proposal on pupils' travel arrangements. The proposal states clearly that it does not envisage that there will be any changes to traffic or congestion around the school, as there will be no change to the overall capacity of the school or any extension to the current facilities.

The proposer has provided data for pupil numbers on roll for both schools from January 2011 together with projections of pupil numbers to 2020. The figures show that Cadoxton Nursery School is fully subscribed and is set to remain so until 2020, while the percentage of surplus places at Cadoxton Primary School is predicted to fall from 12.9% to 4.8% by January 2020. However, the proposer does not relate this data to the amalgamation of the two schools. The proposer appropriately considers the impact of the amalgamation on other local schools and concludes that the effect of this will be minimal.

Both schools are English medium schools, so the proposal will not affect Welsh medium provision within the local authority.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The proposal lists a number of potential benefits for provision and for leadership and management that would arise from the amalgamated school. These include the potential for a more coherent approach to curriculum planning for pupils during their time in the new school; a consistent approach to behaviour management; the development of a shared ethos throughout the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2; and a coordinated approach to planning for the needs of vulnerable pupils across the Foundation Phase. It identifies how the new school would offer greater opportunities for staff development, eliminate duplication of management, administrative and governance functions, and allow the more effective use of funding. Finally, it considers how the amalgamated school would facilitate engagement with parents.

The proposal appropriately refers to recent Estyn reports and the WG's categorisation of both schools. However, it does not provide the regional consortium's view of the schools and overall, it does not appear to link the benefits it identifies to any potential impact on school standards.

The proposer briefly identifies the advantages of the proposal in allowing more coordinated delivery of the curriculum, particularly in terms of progression within the

Foundation Phase. It claims the proposal minimises the potential for disruption to learning during the transition from nursery to the primary school, as the new single school would provide a consistent approach to learning.

The proposal only refers briefly to the impact of the proposal on children with additional learning needs in terms of a more coordinated approach to planning for their needs across the Foundation phase. The proposal does not refer to other vulnerable groups and the proposer has not yet carried out an equality impact assessment. However, the proposer has carried out a community impact assessment. This appears to consider in suitable detail the impact of the amalgamation on the extensive support that both schools currently provide to pupils, parents and extended family members. Both schools belong to the "Putting Schools First" schools and community programme, and act as drop-in centres for parents/carers who require personal support for personal issues. It concludes that these additional services will continue unaffected by the proposed amalgamation of the two schools.

The proposal appears to have ensured that disruption to pupils is minimised. It states clearly that there will be no change to existing admission arrangements for pupils.