



CONSULTATION REPORT: REVIEW OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVISION IN THE NORTH OF THE BOROUGH

September 2015



TORFAEN
COUNTY
BOROUGH



BWRDEISTREF
SIROL
TORFAEN

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1. BACKGROUND

Torfaen County Borough Council's 21st Century Schools proposals were well received by Welsh Government in 2011, which for some parts of Torfaen will result in new schools. This is not something new in Torfaen as since its inception, the council has been carrying out school reorganisation work to upgrade the estate.

The 21st Century Schools programme has been well documented, with the council taking the decision to include every school as part of it in October 2010. The council sought the views of all interested parties on its programme during a series of roadshows that were held across the county borough in March 2011.

The outcome of this public engagement was reported to cabinet in July 2011. Subsequent to this meeting, Welsh Government asked councils to revise their original Band A proposals (originally submitted in October 2010) against the following prioritisation criteria:

- The level of match funding required by the council increased from 30% to 50%
- The poorest condition of the estate (prioritisation to reside with the council although the independent school survey data will be applied)
- Surplus capacity – the key indicator being surplus places (both as a percentage and as an estimated actual reduction in a number of places)
- Running efficiencies (e.g. reduction in running costs, backlog maintenance)
- The length of 21st Century School Band's B, C and D are yet to be determined.

The revised Strategic Outline Programme was approved by Council in November 2011 with the Welsh Government confirming match funding in principle in December 2011.

Torfaen's primary school estate has some schools that:

- Are trying to operate in buildings or grounds which are not fit for purpose and have an unaffordable maintenance backlog
- Are too small to run economically in today's financial climate
- Have significant surplus capacity in their local cluster of schools
- Are not located where the demand for school places is concentrated

The Council had to reduce surplus capacity in its schools and was set targets by the Welsh Government to reach those targets by 2015 and then monitor.

The 21st Century Schools Programme in Torfaen and across Wales is intended to tackle these issues in a strategic rather than piecemeal way.

The proposals in relation to Cwmffrwdoer and Garnteg Primary Schools are those identified in Band A (2014 to 2019) of the agreed Programme. These proposals specifically refer to the extension and refurbishment of Cwmffrwdoer Primary School from its current 210 places to 315 places with the addition of a 52 Part Time Equivalent (PTE) nursery. In the case of Garnteg, the school will be extended from its current 224 places to 420 places. The existing nursery facilities at Garnteg will remain unaffected by this proposal.

2. METHODOLOGY

The consultation on these proposals was undertaken with prescribed consultees contained within the School Organisation Code 2013. A list of those consultees is attached at Appendix 1 to this report. Their views were sought on the proposals.

Consultation was also undertaken with children and young people at Cwmffrwdoer and Garnteg Primary Schools using the Torfaen Play and Short Break Services.

Consultation was conducted through a consultation document and accompanying response form distributed to prescribed consultees. A “drop in” event was organised at both schools which allowed staff, governors parents and other interested parties an opportunity to discuss and comment on the proposals.

The consultation ran from Monday 1st June 2015 to Monday 13th July 2015, with the following public engagement events held to support the consultation, which was attended by a number of council officers:

Date	Venue	Time	Intended Audience
Wednesday 10 th June 2015	Cwmffrwdoer Primary School	3.30 to 6.30pm	Teaching, non teaching and support staff, the Governing Body and Parents/carers of pupils of Cwmffrwdoer Primary School, and Other Interested Parties.
Thursday 2 nd July 2015	Garnteg Primary School	3.30 to 6.30pm	Teaching, non teaching and support staff, the Governing Body and Parents/carers of pupils of Garnteg Primary School, and Other Interested Parties.

The publication of a consultation document is central to the consultation process prescribed by Welsh Government for school reorganisation. The consultation document outlined the changes being considered, the rationale for these, details of the consultation process and incorporated a response form. Consultees were advised of the availability of an online version to complete and also contact addresses to send in comments via e-mail.

The consultation process was extensively promoted online, via the Torfaen Council website and social media channels, and also received coverage in the local press.

3. RESULTS AND COMMENTS

The Local Authority received a number of responses to the consultation exercise.

A file of all the comments and views received during the consultation period has been made available to Elected Members as part of this process and, before any decisions are made.

A list of those who responded to the consultation is summarised at Appendix 2.

Only a relatively small number of stakeholders attended the events, 13 at Cwmffrwdroer and 17 at Garnteg. Similarly a relatively small number of responses/comments were received/made in respect of the proposals and these are summarised below. The comments received were generally supportive and there was support for the proposals to proceed as soon as possible. However, some concerns were raised which along with the Local Authority responses are summarised below.

Cwmffrwdroer Primary School Proposal

COMMENT	RESPONSE
<p>Building and infrastructure matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With an extended school and more pupils the hall will need to be bigger and more storage will be required. • Existing classrooms are too small and no direct access to the outside particularly important for foundation phase aged children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in numbers will mean a larger hall is required. The proposed size of the hall will be adequate for the overall size of the school proposed. In developing the proposal the council will work closely with the school to ensure the best use is made of the available space to meet all its needs. • The additional classrooms and the refurbishment of the existing building will mean the school will be big enough to accommodate the additional pupils. The space provided will be in line with that recommended by Welsh Government guidelines. <p>In developing the proposal the council will work closely with the school to ensure the best use is made of the available space to meet</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child protection. Can security in and around school be improved? Can fobs be made available for certain parts of the building. • Waiting area for parents/carers for nursery and after school clubs etc 	<p>delivery of a 21st Century curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site security is the responsibility of the school, and the council will be happy to provide advice and expertise in that regard. In terms of this proposal, a second set of doors inside the existing entrance doors is proposed that will create a lobby. When in session, access to the school would be managed only through this entrance. • If this is a priority for the school it will be considered, once key components of the proposed development have been agreed and, if funding permits.
<p>Safe walking/cycling routes and traffic congestion/more parking spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will transport be provided? • There are no safe walking routes? What about the risks to pedestrians with the extra traffic and congestion in the area? Will there be extra parking? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport will continue to be provided in accordance with current policy and prescribed mileage criteria. Where there are no safe walking routes and the home address is under the prescribed mileage, transport will be provided as is the case now. <p>The policy was changed from September 2015 with the criteria reverting to statutory mileage (i.e. 2 miles for primary aged children).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic and parking congestion outside schools at the start and end of the day are acknowledged by the Council. As part of the planning process a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) will be carried out to identify traffic and pedestrian movements. <p>Additional parking is proposed within the site as a consequence of the establishment of a larger school. An area on Waunddu is also under consideration for possible additional parking/drop off spaces for parents/carers.</p>

	<p>The council will also work with the school on its Travel Plan and try to encourage less use of vehicles. Welsh Government policy remains not to encourage driving and transport movement around schools. Safety is paramount.</p>
<p>School grounds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What about subsidence on the school site. • Drainage remains an issue around the school site with incidents of flooding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some ground stabilisation works were undertaken circa 2003 on the site due to the old mine workings. Further topographical land surveys will also be undertaken as part of this proposal. • There are two issues around the drainage on this site both relating to surface water. The network of storm drains and also the culvert need regular cleaning and inspection especially before heavy rain as debris has been known to cause blockages in the past. <p>The clearing of blockages and repairs to drains is the responsibility of the school, but Neighbourhood Services continue to work closely with the school to reduce the risks.</p>

Garnteg Primary School Proposal

COMMENT	RESPONSE
<p>Large class numbers and negative effect on social development due to such large classes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big is not necessarily better. Some children will be “lost” in a bigger school environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the new accommodation will be clustered at one end of the existing building which will result in a minimum of problems with orientation around the building. The increase in numbers is being matched by the

	increase in accommodation (extra 5 classes) so individual class sizes will be no bigger than those currently used.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classes will be too big with all the extra children attending School ethos will be lost in a bigger setting. How will pupils be nurtured and looked after? Are there any transition arrangements? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed admission number (AN) for Garnteg is 60, a two form entry. Government infant class size legislation does not permit Key Stage 1 (Infant) classes to exceed 30 pupils. Whilst there is currently no statutory requirement for Key Stage 2 (Junior), class sizes are monitored to ensure wherever possible they are not exceeded. With an AN of 60 this would make class organisation easier to manage. Following its recent inspection (May 2015) Estyn reported that “Pupils wellbeing is outstanding” and there is a “high level of pastoral and academic support”. There is no reason to believe that this will be any different should the proposal proceed. <p>Nevertheless, as with any school reorganisation proposal, we recognise that transition will be very important for pupils and indeed staff. We have undertaken a number of school reorganisations recently and the transition plans have been implemented very successfully with little if any disruption.</p> <p>If the current proposals are approved a transition group will be established which will ensure that pupils receive support that helps their continued learning and wellbeing. Continuous and close working relationships between the staff and governors will also be developed as part of any transition arrangements.</p>
Increased Traffic/ safety of children	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be an increase in traffic as a result of a bigger school, which is situated in a built up residential area? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic and parking congestion outside schools at the start and end of the day are acknowledged by the Council. As part of the planning process a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) will be carried out to identify traffic and pedestrian movements and consider what improvements are necessary to accommodate the additional school places. <p>The council will also work with the school on its Travel Plan and try to encourage less use of vehicles. Welsh Government policy remains not to encourage driving and transport movement around schools. Safety is paramount.</p> <p>In the case of Garnteg, the council has recently secured significant Welsh Government funding which will allow local investment in “safe walking routes in the community” which will make walking to school a safer and perhaps more attractive option than using a car.</p>

General comments on Proposals

COMMENT	RESPONSE
<p>Consultation Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the true and fair public consultation regarding further school closures outlined in the 21st Century Schools strategy, a decision may be made to reject the proposed closures thus leaving a high surplus places position in the area resulting in increased running costs of the expanded schools, vacant teaching facilities associated with the expansions and failure to meet the Welsh Assembly targets on surplus places. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is accepted that there is a risk the council could end up with more places than are needed if funding approval is received from Welsh Government to extend Garnteg and Cwmffrwdroer and proposals for Victoria and Brynteg were not advanced, or advanced but not approved by Cabinet. It will be a live risk if funding is approved for the works as proposed, Cabinet will be advised accordingly on that and on the nature of any necessary mitigations.

	<p>The contents of this consultation report will therefore be considered by Cabinet and also any decision made by Welsh Government once they have responded to the Business Justification Case.</p> <p>Cabinet will have to decide at that stage if it wants to move straight into the statutory consultation period for the specific proposals as they affect Cwmffrwdoer and Garnteg Primary Schools.</p>
<p>Alternative Option(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An alternative option was put forward by a group of parents/carers of children currently attending Victoria Primary school. This would see the retention of Victoria, expanded and refurbished with nursery provision; Cwmffrwdoer expanded to provide nursery provision and Garnteg maintained in its existing buildings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council considered a number of options for schools in this cluster including the retention of the existing provision. This was dismissed as it would fail to hit any objectives for our 21st Century Programme set by Welsh Government to the council. <p>The suggestion to build a new school on the existing playing field or use of an adjacent plot of land cannot be considered because the suggested sites are too small.</p>
<p>Early Years Provision in the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the provision of additional nursery places as proposed for Cwmffrwdoer undermine registered private/voluntary early years settings in the area? Should the proposal proceed, will there be an opportunity for Cwmffrwdoer Under 5's to move back into the refurbished and extended Cwmffrwdoer Primary School and offer childcare? Was there any consideration given to other providers when the age range increase for Cwmffrwdoer was 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal if agreed would see a 26 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) nursery for 4 year olds and "rising 3's" established at Cwmffrwdoer. It is the view of the council that it would not significantly undermine any such existing provision in the area. This will be a decision for the school and its governing body as was the case when the Cwmffrwdoer Under 5's previously occupied accommodation in the school. In terms of consultation, a wide range of stakeholders, including private and voluntary early years providers, have

<p>considered?</p>	<p>been invited to comment on the 21st Century Schools Programme from its outset and launch locally, in March 2011. Every opportunity has been given therefore to comment, and where such views have been made they have been considered as the programme has developed.</p> <p>This will have included, prior to these specific proposals now being advanced, the council's overall strategic plan, which referenced each school and what was proposed for them individually.</p> <p>In terms of this specific proposal we have liaised closely with the council's 0 to 4 Provision Manager to ensure any decision is guided by the most current pre school data available, and potential impacts it may have.</p>
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4. ESTYN RESPONSE

The report received during the consultation period, and based on the consultation document is provided below in its entirety.

Estyn's response to Torfaen County Borough Council's proposals to expand and refurbish Garnteg and Cwmffrwdroer primary schools and extend the age range at Cwmffrwdroer primary school from 4 to 11 to 3 to 11.

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 and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional

Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

Introduction

The proposal is by Torfaen County Borough Council. The proposal is to expand and refurbish both Garnteg and Cwmffrwdoer primary schools and extend the age range at Cwmffrwdoer primary school from 4 to 11 to 3 to 11.

Summary/ Conclusion

The proposal has been developed in line with the borough's 21st Century Schools programme. The council aims to provide appropriate places and choices in the north of the borough through a combination of school closures and investment at other schools. The proposal also aligns with the council's policy of having 'all through' age 3 and/or 4 to 11 schools wherever possible.

It is likely that the specific proposal relating to expanding and refurbishing Garnteg and Cwmffrwdoer and extending the age range at Cwmffrwdoer from 4-11 to 3-11 would at least maintain the current standards.

The proposal is strongly linked to the separate issue of the proposed closure of other schools. These proposals are not detailed in this document as they will be the subject of a separate consultation. The proposer has considered the impact of the proposal on Garnteg and Cwmffrwdoer schools, but not the other schools affected by the proposal.

Description and benefits

The proposer has given a coherent rationale for the proposal. The proposer states clearly that it believes that the proposal is the most cost effective option in order to reduce surplus places and meet the objectives of its 21st Century Schools programme. It also states reasonably that the proposal would benefit pupils by providing improved accommodation and more 'all through' provision in the local area.

The proposer clearly defines the expected benefits of the proposal. These appear to be reasonable and include improved accommodation, an eventual reduction in surplus places, better value for money and improved provision for nursery pupils. The proposer has carried out a community impact assessment for each school which concluded that the impact on the wider community would be minimal. The proposer anticipates reasonably that the disruption caused by the proposal is likely to cause most impact but asserts suitably that the 'transition group' established by the council would alleviate this issue.

The proposer clearly sets out the expected disadvantages of the proposal, which include initial disruption for pupils, the potential for increased traffic congestion, an initial increase in surplus places and the reduction in parental choice brought about by ultimately reducing the number of schools. However, references to parental choice in the proposal contradict each other and it is possible that this will cause confusion.

The proposer has considered suitably a range of risks associated with the proposal and details counter measures for each risk. However, the counter measures for

dealing with the disruption to pupils' education and the issue of traffic congestion lack detail.

The proposer has provided clear evidence to show that it has considered other alternatives to this current proposal, such as maintaining the status quo. The proposal includes five alternatives which were considered and explains clearly why the current proposal was considered to be the best option.

The proposer has suitably considered the impact of the proposal on learner travel arrangements, which would be minimal. It recognises appropriately that the proposal could lead to increased traffic congestion.

The proposer has provided information about school capacities and tables of current and anticipated pupil numbers. It states that the proposal would eventually lead to a reduction in surplus places, though initially and in the short term it would involve an increase. However, it does not explain clearly enough how this would happen and one table shows continued surplus capacity until 2019. It should also be noted that this eventual reduction is dependent on the closure of other schools, which have not all been agreed.

The proposer has not undertaken a Welsh language impact assessment. However, it asserts reasonably that there would be no expected impact on Welsh language provision.

The proposer explains that the current accommodation would be improved and expanded. It includes detailed information about the quality of the accommodation and references the condition category of the schools as identified by the 21st Century Schools Survey. However, the terminology used could easily be confused with that for school banding and categorisation.

The proposer states clearly what the cost of the investment would be.

The proposal includes suitable arrangements for consultation. It explains appropriately that responses to consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal and that objections can only be registered following publication of the notice.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposer has considered the impact of the proposal on Garnteg and Cwmffrwdoer schools, but not the other schools affected by the proposal. It has summarised the support category for each school based on the national school categorisation system which takes into account the view of the local authority. It also makes reference to the most recent Estyn inspection reports for each school involved and other local schools. The proposer states reasonably that the proposal could bring many benefits, including more distributed leadership and improved sharing of expertise. However, the proposal does not include enough analysis of the performance of the schools affected and does not consider well enough the implications for outcomes in particular.

The proposer explains that the staffing levels would need to be increased in both Garnteg and Cwmffrwdoer schools should the proposal go ahead. It is implied that there would be no change to the existing provision for the delivery of the curriculum.

However, this is not made explicit in the report and therefore the proposer has not demonstrated clearly enough that it has considered the impact of the proposals to ensure delivery of the full curriculum at the Foundation Phase and at each key stage.

The proposer does not comment enough on the impact of the proposal on pupils with special educational needs. The proposer has undertaken an equality impact assessment which concludes that there would be no impact on many protected groups. It states reasonably that any issues relating to individual pupils or vulnerable groups would be considered during the consultation process.

The proposer has outlined briefly the transitional arrangements for the proposed changes. However, these lack detail therefore it is difficult to judge whether or not these arrangements are suitable and would minimise the disruption to pupils' education.

Local Authority response to Estyn comments

It is an expectation that any proposals impact at least equally if not better on the standards of provision and education currently provided.

It is noted that Estyn recognise that the proposal is strongly linked to the separate issue of the proposed closure of other schools and that these proposals are not detailed in this document as they will be the subject of a separate consultation. Estyn also recognise that the Council has considered the impact of the proposal on Garnteg and Cwmffrwdoer schools, but not the other schools affected by the proposal.

It is therefore important to note that these specific proposals are not about school closures, but purely about extensions to two of our existing primary schools, and what we are trying to demonstrate is that by adding to buildings we will at least maintain those current standards.

When we advance any future closures we will clearly need to demonstrate the relative performance of those schools affected and the impact it would have on neighbouring and potentially receiving schools for any displaced pupils.

However, it is pleasing to note the Estyn comment that, "It is likely that the specific proposal relating to expanding and refurbishing Garnteg and Cwmffrwdoer and extending the age range at Cwmffrwdoer from 4-11 to 3-11 would at least maintain the current standards".

Overall, the views of Estyn are welcomed, which confirm that the Authority has as a minimum adequately addressed the educational aspects of the proposal.

The Authority has also considered some of the specific comments provided by Estyn and would respond as follows:

'It is implied that there would be no change to the existing provision for the delivery of the curriculum.....'

Both Garnteg and Cwmffrwdroer Primary Schools place the child as central to their curriculum, its content and implementation. The expansion will build on this ethos continuing with the aim to nurture in both schools positive attitudes to learning which will enable them to adapt to new ideas and methods, and thereby achieve their full potential. They will continue to believe in making full use of the children's interests and provide rich first hand experiences which act as a stimulus to learning and actively involve pupils in such a way that what they learn becomes truly a part of them.

Nursery, Reception and Year 1 & 2 fully implement the principles of the Foundation Phase and will continue to do so with detailed planning for delivery and resources. This follows the principles of early education which have been utilised very successfully in both schools. The planning for this is organised under the Foundation Phase headings devised by the Welsh Government. This style of teaching for learning enables the pupils to enjoy the full benefits of structured play. However, through differentiated groupings that are based on rigorous assessment in both schools, children within Year 2 groups begin to learn in a slightly more formal way in preparation for Year 3. Again, curriculum delivery and resources will continue to be detailed and carefully planned to encompass the expansion. Detailed use of the physical space around the schools will be considered as part of the curriculum planning process to ensure effective learning opportunities are continued.

In both schools, Years 3 to 6 pupils follow a thematic approach to deliver the curriculum, where as many of the National Curriculum subjects are taught within a theme including RE. Literacy and Numeracy are taught as separate subjects during morning sessions and are applied as skills during the teaching of the Foundation subjects in the afternoon sessions. Weekly timetables are followed to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum. Delivery of the theme is as practical as possible allowing for pupils to develop their Key Skills, which include Communication, Number, ICT and Thinking. Both schools promote working with others, improving own performance and problem-solving through their approach to the curriculum. Talking is promoted to enrich learning, therefore much of the pupils' learning takes place in groups although there are times when individual and whole class learning is appropriate. Again, curriculum delivery and resources will continue to be detailed and carefully planned to encompass the expansion. Detailed use of the physical space around the schools will be considered as part of the curriculum planning process to ensure effective learning opportunities are continued.

'The proposer does not comment enough on the impact of the proposal on pupils with special educational needs.....'

There will be no adverse impact on pupils with additional educational needs. An impact assessment has been carried out which concludes that there would be no impact on protected groups, this will include ALN pupils.

Both schools have been recognised by Estyn as having developed good practice in meeting the needs of pupils with additional learning needs. The needs of ALN pupils will continue to be met by both schools in partnership with the local authority and other multi-agency partners; a continuation of current embedded practice which will support all pupils with additional learning needs within the area.

‘However, the proposal does not include enough analysis of the performance of the schools affected.....’

Garnteg Primary School

FPI

School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Garnteg	93.3	94.6	93.1	93.9
Torfaen	83.3	87.6	90.6	86.0
Wales	80.5	83.0	85.2	86.8

Steady performance over 4 years, consistently high and above both Wales and Torfaen County Borough Council.

KS2

School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Garnteg	91.7	95.7	90.0	89.3
Torfaen	85.6	89.1	91.2	84.3
Wales	82.6	84.3	86.1	87.7

Steady performance over 4 years, consistently high and above both Wales and Torfaen County Borough Council, with the exception of 13/14.

Benchmarking

Quartile 1 for FPI & KS2 CSI in all years.

Cwmffrwdoer Primary School

FPI

School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Cwmffrwdoer	78.6	75.0	88.0	66.7
Torfaen	83.3	87.6	90.6	86.0
Wales	80.5	83.0	85.2	86.8

Inconsistent performance, almost 12 percentage point decrease from 11/12 to 14/15 and below Torfaen. Below Wales with the exception of 13/14.

KS2 CSI

School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Cwmffrwdoer	94.4	94.4	95.8	87.0
Torfaen	85.6	89.1	91.2	84.3
Wales	82.6	84.3	86.1	87.7

High performance for 3 years out of the 4 years, a dip in 14/15, but still above Torfaen and in line with Wales.

Benchmarking

Below median in 3 out of 4 years for FPI. Q1 performance in 3 years for CSI, Q2 for 14/15.

5. CONSULTATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Torfaen Play and Short Break Services were contacted to carry out consultation with pupils in both Cwmffrwdroer and Garnteg Primary Schools.

Methodology

The method that was used to consult children and young people who attend these schools was to engage with a group of children of mixed ages and abilities by delivering inclusive group activities.

The first activity took the form of a question and answer session and an open group discussion. Questions were simplified in a way the children could understand and they were all given the opportunity to ask questions or add their own ideas/questions which led to livelier discussions.

The second activity attempted to capture the ideas the children had for the design of their new school. They were asked to draw and colour their ideas for what their new school would need to look like to make it appealing and accommodating for themselves and any additional pupils joining the school. These drawings have been collated within a file.

Finally, it was explained to each group what will happen with the information they have given us and how we will follow this up. During this conclusion we thanked the children for their input and explained that Torfaen Play and Short Break Services were gathering this information on behalf of the council. We reassured the children that we had no powers to make their ideas become reality, therefore ensuring no promises were made and the children had no unrealistic expectations from the exercise.

Attached at appendix 3 of this report are the outcomes of the consultation with those children and young people.

Appendix 1 - Distribution List for the Consultation Document and Consultation Report

- The Governing body of each school maintained by Torfaen LA
- The Headteacher of each school maintained by Torfaen LA
- The Diocesan Director of Education of the Roman Catholic Church
- The Diocesan Director of Education of the Church in Wales
- The Board of Mission of the Church in Wales
- Awdurdod Cynwystrau, Cwricwlwm ac Asesu Cymru (the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales)
- The Welsh Joint Education Committee
- The Welsh Language Commissioner
- The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
- Welsh Government (Welsh Ministers)
- ESTYN
- Pan - Gwent Chief Education Officers (Caerphilly, Newport, Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent, to distribute to schools in their areas as appropriate)
- The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
- Children & Young People's Partnership
- Coleg Gwent
- The Careers Service
- Torfaen Association of school Governors
- The Parent Teacher Association of Wales
- The Welsh Primary Schools Association
- The Welsh Secondary Schools Association
- Libraries; (Blaenavon, Cwmbran and Pontypool)
- Other Directorates of Torfaen County Borough Council
- Schools Library Service
- Blaenavon Community Council
- Cwmbran Community Council
- Pontypool Community Council
- Ponthir Community Council
- Henllys Community Council
- Croesyceiliog and Llanyrafon Community Council
- DCELLS (Welsh Government)
- National Council for Education and Training in Wales
- All relevant Professional Associations (NUT; NASUWT; ATL; UCAC; UNISON; GMB)
- Local AM – Lynne Neagle
- Local MP – Nick Thomas-Symonds
- AMs and MPs for other authorities in Pan-Gwent area
- All Elected Members of Torfaen County Borough Council
- Parents/Carers of all pupils affected by proposals
- RhAG (Parents for Welsh Medium Education)
- Registered Private/Voluntary Early Years Settings/Providers in Torfaen
- Torfaen Voluntary Alliance
- Communities First Partnership Board
- CYDAG (Cwmdeithas Ysgolion Dros Addysg Gymraeg)
- Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin
- Education Achievement Service (EAS)
- The relevant Regional Transport Consortium
- The Police and Crime Commissioner for the area

Appendix 2 – Summary of responses received during the consultation period

The following have responded to the consultation:

- 13 “Your views” proforma completed by interested parties at the consultation event held at Cwmffrwdoer Primary School.
- 5 interested parties commented via the council’s on line consultation tool, “My Say”.
- Estyn.
- Pupils from Cwmffrwdoer and Garnteg Primary Schools
- 1 “Your views” proforma completed by interested parties at the consultation event held at Garnteg Primary School.
- Pontypool Community Council
- Mr N Thomas-Symonds, Member of Parliament for Torfaen
- 10 written comments/e mails
- Management Board of Cwmffrwdoer Under Fives
- Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
- Letter/petition signed by 27 parents/carers of children currently attending Victoria Primary School (received 17th July 2015)

Appendix 3 – Results of consultation with pupils

Introduction

Torfaen County Borough Council has proposed to:

- 1) Expand and refurbish Garnteg Primary School.
- 2) Expand and refurbish Cwmffrwdroer Primary School and extend the age range from 4 to 11 to 3 to 11.

The proposals form part of Torfaen's 21st Century Schools programme which aims to tackle the issues of ageing buildings and surplus places across the borough by creating schools that are of the right type and size in the right place.

Torfaen Play and Short Break Service has been asked to consult with children that attend Garnteg and Cwmffrwdroer Primary Schools to gain their views and opinions on the proposals.

Due to the age of the children, questionnaires and meetings may not catch the pupils' attention and allow them to put their views across in an inclusive manner. Therefore, Torfaen Play and Short Break Service consulted with the children and young people in a way which is easier for them to understand.

Outcomes from Garnteg Primary School Pupils

1. How do you feel about more children coming to your school?

- "I feel nervous because I don't make friends easily."
- "I feel ok."
- "I feel excited because I want to make new friends and meet new people."
- "The new children might not find it easy to settle in."
- "It could lead to bullying having more children here."

2. Are you looking forward to making new friends?

- 10 children stated "yes".
- 3 children were unsure.
- 3 children are in year 6 so will not be affected by the changes.

3. How do you think the children coming in to your school will be feeling?

- “They could feel scared.”
- “They could feel nervous about making new friends.”
- “They will be ok because they have visited the school before.”
- “They might be worried about being bullied.”
- “They could be shy.”
- “They might get lost in the building because it’s a strange place.”
- “They might be used to a different style of learning to us so they might find that hard and fall behind in their work.”

4. How can you make the new children feel welcome?

- “We can show them where things are.”
- “We can be nice to them.”
- “We can talk to them and include them in our games.”
- “We can say hello and be friendly.”
- “We can make them excited to be here and help them with their work.”
- “We can tell them about school trips and after school clubs and invite them along to make friends with us.”
- “We can tell them about the teachers so they know who does what.”
- “We can teach them tricks and new games.”
- “We could have a welcome party. Like a disco where we could all play party games and stuff to get to know each other and to make them feel welcome.”

5. Are there any things you think your school might need to be able to look after extra children?

- “We could change the names of classes or colour code them. So if there’s 3 year 4 classes they could be ‘year 4 red, year 4 blue and year 4 yellow, something like that so the kids don’t get confused about which class they’re in.”
- “We need to make sure behaviour is good because some children play up.”
- “We need more games.”
- “We need to make sure they follow the same rules as us.”

- “Maybe we could put a school map at the bottom of the stairs like they do in shopping centres so everyone knows where to go and they won’t get lost.”
- “We need a bigger detention room to make sure we can fit the naughty children.”
- “It might be too loud and that will make me lose concentration on my work.”
- “We need more equipment. More digital equipment especially because we have to queue too long to use it and I never have a go. We also need more work equipment like pencils and more stuff to do outside.”
- “I like the school how it is and I don’t think we should have to change.”
- “We need a bigger outside area and get rid of the green fence between the foundation and juniors.”
- “I don’t want the new children to feel uncomfortable but I don’t want to feel uncomfortable either.”
- “I think we should have more choice of interesting subjects.”
- “We need timetables for the computers so everyone has a turn.”
- “We need a bigger main hall.”
- “We want the school to be painted bright colours so we’ll be excited to come here.”
- “We want bigger classrooms and extra space.”
- “I don’t want to change what I already know about the school, I don’t want it to change too much.”
- “We want it to be more fun. More funness is needed!”

6. The roads might get busier around the school with so many new children joining. How would you feel about walking to school?

- “I like riding my bike to school but we need a bigger bike rack.”
- “We need a bigger car park so people can be dropped off in the morning.”
- “If you live close to the school, you should walk.”
- “I want to walk to school but I live too far away.”
- “It might cause accidents having so many people going in and out of the school.”

- “Staggered times might work. Like if the infants start at 9 and finish at 3 and the juniors start at 9.30 and finish at 3.30 so the roads won’t be so busy.”
- “Maybe they can expand the roads and make them bigger.”
- “Traffic jams will cause problems and some people have to be dropped off.”
- “If we had a lollipop lady that would make it safer for us to walk to school.”
- “People who go to the school should make sure they live close enough to walk so there’s less pollution.”
- “School busses might stop so many cars being on the road.”
- “Maybe they can build a drop off bay so cars don’t stay here too long.”

Outcomes from Cwmffrwdroer Primary School Pupils

1. How do you feel about more children coming to your school? How do you feel about younger children (3 years+) joining your school?

- “Happy”.
- “Glad because we can make new friends”.
- “Excited about meeting new people”.
- “We’ll enjoy it”.
- “Nervous because they might feel left out because they’re new and I don’t want to get in trouble for that”.
- “Happy about the nursery because my little sister is 3 and that means we will be in school together. It’s nice for me to see her in the day and easier for my Mum and Dad”.
- “We’ll get to make new friends which will be good”.
- “Scared in case we don’t get on with the new children”.
- “It’s good because we’ll get more time to spend with new friends”.
- “It’s good that they will be coming to the school when they are younger because we’ll have more chance to teach them good behaviour and they’ll be less likely to break the rules as they get older”.

2. Are you looking forward to making new friends?

- All children said “yes”.
- “I’m sad because I’m in year 6 and will be leaving this school in a few weeks. I would have liked to have been here to meet the new children and see how the new school will look”.
- “I feel nervous because I already have friends and if new children come here and I want to be friend with them I might leave my other friends out and they might get annoyed with me”.

3. How do you think the children coming in to your school will be feeling?

- “Nervous in case they don’t know anyone”.
- “They’ll like it here, it’s a really nice school”.
- “They might feel scared”.
- “I think they’ll be excited”.
- “They could feel anxious”.
- “The younger children in the nursery might be upset to leave their parents.
- “The new children might feel confused because they won’t know anyone and they won’t know where anything is”.
- “They should be happy to meet the new teachers”.
- “They might be happy to meet the head teacher”.
- “They’ll be buzzing! Super happy”.
- “I think the opposite, I think they might feel terrified because they won’t know what’s happening”.

4. How can you make the new children feel welcome?

- “We can help them by showing them around the school”.
- “We can play with them and invite them to join in our games”.
- “We can introduce them to our friends and help them feel like they fit in”.
- “We should have a special assembly to welcome them”.

- “We should be polite and kind to everyone”.
- “We should comfort them if they feel upset or scared.”
- “We can give them a smile so they think we are friendly”.
- “We should explain to them that they shouldn’t feel worried or scared because we feel the same too, it’s all new to us with the school changing so everyone feels the same”.
- “We could have a welcome disco for them with games and stuff so we can all get to know each other”.

5. Are there any things you think your school might need to be able to look after extra children?

- “We need more staff”.
- “Maybe they could bring staff from the old school so at least the children would know them”.
- “More toilets”.
- “A bigger playground”.
- “A bike rack would be good. We’d like to ride our bikes to school but they’d get stolen. Nant Celyn have bike racks I saw them when we played football against them so we should have the same”.
- “More cloakrooms and pegs”.
- “Lockers would be good for the older ones to keep their stuff where it wouldn’t get stolen”.
- “We need enough space for new equipment”.
- “A bigger hall and sports hall”.
- “This school has an attic. We could convert that into science rooms or something”.
- “We need bigger everything!”
- “We had equipment from Pontymoile when it closed but we don’t use it. Like hockey sticks and stuff, we should use that more.”
- “More car parking is needed”.
- “A tech room would be good with computers and stuff”.
- “Longer break times would give us the chance to interact with each other”.

better”.

- “A quiet room so we have somewhere to go when we are stressed and need to relax”.
- “A library with books would be nice”.
- “The new pupils should be given new equipment so they feel special”.
- “The staff need a bigger staff room, it’s tiny”.
- “We need outdoor play equipment for all, not just the infants”.
- “I’d like an art room”.
- “We need extra resources in class like pencils and paper”.

6. The roads might get busier around the school with so many new children joining. How would you feel about walking to school?

- “I’d feel too unsafe to walk to school because the roads will be way too busy and the lollipop ladies have been taken from us.”
- “We need crossing ladies to make sure we are safe. George Street still have a lollipop lady so we should have one too”.
- “Children’s safety should be the most important thing for the adults to think about”.
- “There’s a big hill leading to our school and it’s too dangerous to walk”.
- “We need better parking outside the school”.
- “We need a one way system because the road is so busy.”
- “Traffic lights and a crossing might make it safer”.
- “More parking spaces are needed”.
- “Maybe we could have a parent drop off bay like at the airport”.
- “Zebra crossings would be easy to do and wouldn’t break or cost much”.
- “We need better access through the gates for people walking”.
- “We need better wheelchair access”.
- “Parents should be encouraged not to use cars”.
- “Parents move the cones outside the gates so they can park and it’s dangerous. The cones need to be fixed in place or parents should be punished”.
- “The top bus stop is dangerous with cars going past and cars parking both

sides of the street. We nearly crashed in to a bus there the other day”.

- “When we get dropped off and picked up, the parents get out of their cars and shout at each other about parking”.
- “We need bigger roads”.
- “We need a special place for a school bus”.
- “A bus lane might work like on the roads in Cardiff”.
- “The road could be extended in to the field on Waunddu to make it wider”.