

21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS

The provision of primary school places to serve Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North And Plasnewydd

SUMMARY DOCUMENT

CONSULTATION PERIOD:
3 MAY 2023 – 30 JUNE 2023



This document can be made available in Braille.

This is not the consultation document .

The consultation document is available at
www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools
Please contact us on 029 2087 2720 to arrange this.





Introduction

What is this booklet about?

Cardiff Council is suggesting changes to primary school provision in Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd.

This booklet is a summary version of the consultation document on these changes. You can find the full consultation document at www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools

The schools that may be affected by changes are Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School, St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.

We are proposing changes to how the English-medium primary schools are organised. Local English-medium schools have a high number of surplus places overall. The number of English-medium community primary school places would stay the same or slightly decrease. There would still be enough places serving the area for children who currently attend or want to attend the English-medium schools in the future.

We also want to increase the number of Welsh-medium primary school places in the area by expanding Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. This school is full at present.

The Council would retain all of the current buildings and sites. This would allow for flexibility in future, if populations increase.

We want everyone to understand what is being proposed, so you can tell us what you think about the changes.

What are we proposing to do?

The Council is suggesting three options to reorganise schools in the area.

The Options table shows the proposed changes. These changes would take effect from September 2025.

Option	Schools	Proposal
Option 1	Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School	Amalgamate Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools, by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Formally closing Allensbank Primary School o Formally closing Gladstone Primary School o Establishing a new 420 place English-medium Primary School with nursery on the current shared Gladstone Primary School / St Monica's CiW Primary School site
	St Monica's CiW Primary School	Transfer St Monica's CiW Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site Establish nursery provision at the school
	Ysgol Mynydd Bychan	Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places to 420 places Increase the number of nursery places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 64 to 96

Option	Schools	Proposal
Option 2	Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School	Co-locate Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools on a shared site, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Transferring Allensbank Primary School to the current shared Gladstone Primary School / St Monica's CiW Primary School site o Reducing the capacity of Allensbank Primary School from 315 places to 210 places o Reducing the age range of Allensbank Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11 by discontinuing nursery provision at the school o Increasing the number of nursery places at Gladstone Primary School from 64 to 96
	St Monica's CiW Primary School	Transfer St Monica's CiW Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site Establish nursery provision at the school
	Ysgol Mynydd Bychan	Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places to 420 places Increase the number of nursery places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 64 to 96

What are we proposing to do?

Option	Schools	Proposal
Option 3	Allensbank Primary School	Transfer Allensbank Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site Reduce the capacity of Allensbank Primary School from 315 places to 192 places
	Ysgol Mynydd Bychan	Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places to 420 places Increase the number of nursery places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 64 to 96



How can I find out more?

This document gives a summary of the changes we are suggesting. It explains the reasons for the proposal and what would happen if the decision were made to close.

Full details of the proposed changes can be found in the Consultation Document here:

www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools

We have organised public meetings and drop-in sessions that you can attend if you would like us to explain the suggested changes to you and for you to ask us questions. These are listed below.

Consultation Meeting Dates		
Nature of Consultation	Date/Time	Venue
Drop-in session	Monday 15 May 2023 2:30pm – 4:30pm	Cathays Branch and Heritage Library
Drop-in session	Thursday 25 May 2023 9am – 11am	Cathays Branch and Heritage Library
Drop-in session	Wednesday 07 June 2023 5pm – 7pm	Cathays Branch and Heritage Library
On-line drop-in session	Tuesday 09 May 2023 9:30am – 12 noon	Microsoft Teams
On-line drop-in session	Wednesday 17 May 2023 9:30am – 12 noon	Microsoft Teams
On-line drop-in session	Monday 05 June 2023 1.30pm – 4pm	Microsoft Teams
On-line drop-in session	Thursday 08 June 2023 1:30pm – 4pm	Microsoft Teams
Public meeting (through the medium of English)	Thursday 18 May 2023 6:15pm – 7:40pm	Cathays Community Centre
Public meeting (through the medium of Welsh)	Thursday 25 May 2023 6:15pm – 7:40pm	Cathays Community Centre
On-line public meeting	Thursday 08 June 2023 6pm – 7:30pm	Microsoft Teams

The Council will also meet with the staff and Governing Bodies of each of the schools.

How can I give my views?

You can provide your views by

- attending a public meeting or drop-in session. If you would like to attend an online drop in session/online public meeting, please contact us via e-mail to schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk confirming which session you would like to attend, and we will provide a link and instructions on how you can access the meeting.
- completing the electronic response form which you can find at www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools
- printing and completing the consultation response form, which you can find at www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools and returning the form by post to Room 401, County Hall, Cardiff, CF10 4UW
- writing to the School Organisation Planning team by e-mail to schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk or by post to Room 401, County Hall, Cardiff, CF10 4UW. This can include requesting an officer call back if you have a specific question that you feel you would like further information about.

Please note that all comments sent in writing or by e-mail must contain the full name and postal address of the person making the comments.

The closing date for responses to this consultation is **Friday 30 June 2023**.

Unfortunately, we will not be able consider any consultation responses received after this date.



Why are we proposing these changes?

Cardiff's 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' commitments to learners

The Council's 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' document commits the Council to supporting Cardiff's most vulnerable learners. This includes children in care, those educated other than at school and children from the most deprived communities. The Council is developing a Community Focused Schools programme and is promoting the benefits of bilingualism. The programme looks to expand uptake in Welsh-medium education in line with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy.

- The Council must ensure that there is an appropriate balance in the number and different types of school places serving each area.
- There must also be a sustainable level of surplus places.
- Each school provision offered must meet the diverse needs of the communities they serve.
- The Council must also maximise the potential of its teaching and learning staff to ensure best use of their talent for the greatest impact on learner opportunities and outcomes for all.

City-wide population changes

Since 2017/18, there has been a sustained fall in the birth rate and changes to migration patterns in the city. This means that city-wide intakes to primary education are projected to reduce significantly until at least September 2025. However, changes to populations are not the same in all parts of the city.

As parents are able to state a preference for schools, some schools would continue to have high intakes. For other schools the impact on pupil numbers will be far greater than the city-wide average.

Schools receive most of their funding based on the number of pupils on roll at the school. Falling pupil numbers will greatly impact on some schools' budgets. This affects the teaching and learning opportunities those schools can offer.

The Council is proposing to better balance the number of pupils schools can admit with the forecast take up of places. This would therefore support a more effective use of the schools' budgets. This would allow schools to use a greater proportion of their budget for teaching and learning.

Cardiff's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

'Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers' is the Welsh Government's strategy for the increasing the use of the Welsh language. It sets out the long-term approach to reaching a target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

All Local Authorities in Wales are required to publish a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. Within their plan, they must set a ten-year target for the expected increase in Year 1 children who are taught in Welsh. The target set for Cardiff by the Welsh Government is between 25 % and 29 % of Year 1 learners are educated in Welsh by 2031. At present, this figure is around 18 %.

Providing sufficient English-medium and Welsh-medium school places

The Council has previously held a consultation on changes to school provision to provide an appropriate balance of Welsh-medium and English-medium school places in the area.

The outcome of the consultation showed that there was support overall for the expansion of Welsh-medium education, although other issues were raised.

The current proposals address the issues that informed the earlier proposals. The proposals take account of the issues raised during the earlier consultation. More information on this can be found in the consultation document at www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools

Which schools are included in the proposals?

The schools included in the proposals are:

- Allensbank Primary School
- Gladstone Primary School
- St. Monica's CiW Primary School
- Ysgol Mynydd Bychan

There are no changes proposed to other schools in these proposals.



More detailed information on school sites, walking routes and distances can be found in the full consultation document at www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools

What does primary education in the area look like now?

English-medium

When taken together, the combined catchment areas of Allensbank Primary School, Albany Primary School and Gladstone Primary School, form the secondary school catchment of Cathays High School. This catchment serves Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd.

St Monica's Church in Wales (CiW) Primary School, St Joseph's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School in Gabalfa and St Peter's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School in Plasnewydd also serve these communities.

The existing combined capacity of Albany Primary School, Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School has provided enough places for any pupils wanting English-medium education from within the three catchment areas in recent years, when intakes to schools were at high levels city-wide.

Welsh-medium

Ysgol Mynydd Bychan serves a catchment area that includes the community of Cathays and parts of the communities of Gabalfa, Heath and Plasnewydd.

The catchment areas of Ysgol Y Wern, Ysgol Glan Ceubal and Ysgol Melin Gruffydd lie adjacent to the catchment area of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.

Ysgol Mynydd Bychan has been fully subscribed for entry to Reception in each of the past five intakes. In each year, there were enough places in schools in neighbouring catchment areas for the pupils who were unable to gain admission to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. However, for children within the catchment area of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, other Welsh-medium school places were often significantly further from their home address.

The projected level of surplus places between all four schools would not be enough to significantly increase Welsh-medium take up in the longer term. Changes to catchment areas could improve the balance of places, but would not support long term growth. This would not be a sufficient contribution towards meeting the growth target set in Cardiff's WESP.

More information on supporting long term growth in Welsh-medium education can be found in the consultation document at www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools

Other provision

Cardiff's wider education community includes a number of independent schools. Cardiff Muslim Primary School and Kings Monkton are located in Cathays and Plasnewydd communities respectively.

Were other options considered?

Albany, Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools have enough English-medium primary school places between them for the projected demand for places. There is a high number of surplus places overall.

There is not enough space on the existing Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site to allow the school to expand. There is no suitable vacant site available in the area to locate a larger Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. The Council has looked at alternative site options within the existing Ysgol Mynydd Bychan catchment area.

There are no changes proposed at the Albany Primary School site. This site is a greater distance from the home addresses of pupils who currently go to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. The school also has a relatively low level of surplus overall and has no surplus classrooms.

Moving Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the shared Gladstone Primary School and St. Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site and English-medium provision on the Allensbank site is not proposed. These changes would have a greater impact on families currently attending local schools and possibly on future intakes.

More details on the options set out and why other options were not considered can be found in the consultation document at www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools

How would the changes affect school budgets and staff?

School budgets are largely based on the number of children who are on the roll of each school. Schools also receive a number of grants as part of their budget. Smaller schools with surplus places have greater difficulty in balancing their budget than larger schools.

As the number of children entering primary education is falling, the number of staff needed in Cardiff schools is likely to reduce, even if no changes were made to schools.

The Governing Body of each school decides how best to use its budget to support teaching and learning in the school. Any decisions to be taken with regards to staffing are a matter for the Governing Body of each school.

The number of teaching and learning staff required for a two form entry primary school (Option 1) is similar to the number required for two one form entry primary schools. However, the type and number of roles required would be dependent on the number of pupils on roll and on the school budget position.

If Option 1 were progressed, it is expected that there would be a reduction in the number of staff needed in some roles e.g., one fewer Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher.

Closing Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School and opening a new two form entry primary school places staff at a possible risk of redundancy. This would need to be managed in line with the School Redeployment and Redundancy Policy.

The Council is committed to making best use of opportunities for school staff to secure employment in other schools in Cardiff through redeployment into vacancies in other schools in Cardiff.

These arrangements would also be considered should the decision be taken to relocate the Speech and Language class from Allensbank Primary School to another school.

How would the changes be funded?

These proposals allow for the Council to invest in school buildings serving the area. The Welsh Government has agreed to provide grant funding to support changes to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. If changes were not made, the Council would not be able to access this funding. Funding to support other changes to schools buildings would be made available by the Council.

There would be no savings to the Council as a result of the proposed changes. The changes would not lead to a reduction in school budgets. Any efficiency savings from reduced leadership costs and other costs would allow for funding to be allocated more effectively in each school's budget. Should Option 1 be taken forward, the changes to the school budget formula would be approximately £98,000 per year. This would be ringfenced to the new school for a three year period and distributed between all schools' budgets in future years.

How would pupils who go to the schools be affected?

If Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School close and a new English-medium school is opened (Option 1), all pupils who go to Allensbank or Gladstone would be offered the opportunity to transfer to the roll of the new primary school unless they wish to transfer to an alternative school.

If Allensbank Primary School moves to the shared Gladstone Primary School and St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site (Option 2), pupils who go to Allensbank would still go to the school at its new site, unless they wanted to move to another school.

If St Monica's CiW Primary School moves to the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site, pupils who go to St Monica's would still go to the school at its new site, unless they wanted to move to another school.

If Ysgol Mynydd Bychan moves to the Allensbank Primary School site, pupils who go to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would still go to the school at its new site, unless they wanted to move to another school.

The Council has significant experience in the successful delivery of building projects on the sites of occupied schools.

If any of the proposed changes go ahead a project lead officer would work with the relevant governing bodies at each school. They would oversee the development of a detailed investment programme. This would include planned works, transition arrangements, pupil and staff health and wellbeing and timescales. Wherever possible works would be undertaken during the school holidays to minimise any potential impact on teaching and learning.

As part of the consultation the Council will ask for the views of pupils at the schools and any issues raised will inform any future work plans.

Additional Learning Needs provision

There is a Speech and Language early intervention class hosted by Allensbank Primary School. This is a city-wide class for learners who would normally attend other schools but need additional support.

If Allensbank Primary School closed, and a new school opened (Option 1) the Council and Governing Body of the school would need to consider whether to include the Speech & Language class within the new school or locate it in another school.

If Allensbank Primary School moved to share the Gladstone site (Option 2) the Council and Governing Body of the school would need to consider whether to keep the Speech & Language class within the school or locate it in another school.

If Allensbank Primary School moved to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site, the Council would locate the Speech & Language class in another school.

If Ysgol Mynydd Bychan moved to the Allensbank Primary School site, the Council could consider opening a Welsh-medium specialist resource base. This would need separate proposals, at a later date.

Standards

The Council works closely with the governing bodies of schools to make sure that standards in schools are high, that teaching is good, and that leadership and governance is strong.

The standards at the four-schools included in the proposed changes are good.

Opening a new two form entry English-medium primary school, the proposed expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to two forms of entry and the opening of nursery provision at St Monica's provides the opportunity for educational benefits. The schools could build on existing progress, ensuring a positive impact on the quality and standards of education for current and future pupils.

Having Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School as two separate schools on a shared site would not give the benefits of a two-form entry school. However, some of these educational benefits at Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School could be achieved if the schools were to agree to formally collaborate or federate.

What are the benefits of the proposal?

The benefits of the proposals depend on which option is progressed.

Overall, the proposed changes would:

- Keep, or only very slightly reduce, the current number of English-medium primary school places serving the local area.
- have a better balance between the number of places available and the number of children wanting places for both English-medium and Welsh-medium.
- lead to fewer children being refused admission to a local school.
- ensure that each school provision offered meets the diverse needs of the local community
- as a minimum keep the current standards of education and allow each school to continue to improve education for all of their learners
- allow all of the school sites to stay as school sites so there is enough space for future changes in the population.
- support progress towards the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and Cymraeg 2050 targets.
- support Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to maintain and continue to build on its excellent standards
- allow for a greater number of children to benefit from the education on offer at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan
- support schools to become more financially sustainable, making better use of their resources

Opening a new two form entry English-medium primary school and increasing Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to two forms of entry would:

- provide a more economically sustainable pattern of school provision over the long term
- support schools to be financially sustainable in an improved pattern of provision
- support schools to allocate a greater proportion of budget to teaching and learning, thereby retaining and increasing opportunities for learners
- two form entry primary schools allow greater flexibility and opportunity for pupils than smaller schools
- a two form entry school can provide a greater degree of stability at all levels of leadership
- the school could employ more teaching and support staff with a wider range of knowledge and expertise
- there would be greater opportunities to professionally develop staff e.g., newly qualified teachers who can observe the other teacher in the year group.
- opportunities for staff to teach to their strengths so learners have the best education experience possible
- a greater number of teachers to lead on Areas of Learning, plus RE, RSE and Digital Competency
- greater opportunities to offer a broader range of extra-curricular activities
- greater opportunities for distributed leadership

Moving Allensbank Primary School to the current shared Gladstone Primary/St Monica's CiW Primary School site would:

- support schools to be more financially sustainable through collaboration/federation

Nursery provision at St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School would:

- provide continuity of provision which reflects the ethos and culture of the school
- support the development of strong parental links with the school from the earliest possible opportunity
- ease transition for a nursery-aged child when going into to Reception class (where Reception admission application has been successful)
- allow for the early identification of vulnerable groups. This would mean that the needs of children can be identified as early as possible
- give an opportunity for children to attend nursery at the same site as their older siblings. This should be positive for parents and reduce the difficulties of sending siblings to another childcare provider.
- provide continuity and progression between Early Years and Foundation Phase, enhancing the opportunity to appropriately address individual developmental and cultural needs



What are the possible disadvantages of the proposals?

- there is potential for increased traffic congestion around the current Allensbank Primary School site and the current shared Gladstone Primary/St Monica's CiW Primary School site at the start and end of the school day. However, the Council would work with the Governing Bodies of the schools to develop a Travel Plan to minimise any potential disruption
- the proposal in Option 1 to close Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School would result in the loss of two historic institutions which are valued by their communities
- the proposal in Option 3 to reduce the capacity of Allensbank Primary School would result in a marginal reduction in the number of English-medium community primary school places

What are the risks of the proposals?

- there is a risk that there could be a rise in demand for English-medium places in the future. However, the Council will monitor demand over the coming years to ensure that there are enough places for those who would like English-medium education. As the proposals keep all the existing sites and do not reduce the space available in the school buildings, there is flexibility for any future changes.
- there is a risk that an increase in the number of pupils who would like Welsh-medium places does not happen. The Council will keep its projections under review and would respond to any such changes in demand if required.
- there is a potential impact on neighbouring Welsh-medium schools. However, this is expected to be short term as the number of pupils attending Welsh-medium provision grows as part of the development of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).
- there is a risk of potential disruption to pupils during the transition period. However, the Council has significant experience in the successful delivery of building projects on the sites of occupied schools. Any building work carried out would be managed effectively to make sure the full curriculum continues to be delivered and that high education standards and safety standards are continued.
- if Option 2 goes ahead the Governing Bodies of Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School may decide not to proceed with collaborative working or federation.

What happens next?

The Council will collect and summarise the feedback from this consultation. Council officers will then report this to the Council's Cabinet and to St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School Governing Body.

If any of the proposed options are agreed to proceed following consultation, there are a number of further stages that the Council and St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School Governing Body would have to go through before a final decision is made.

If the Cabinet and the St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School Governing Body each decide to continue with the changes, they must each publish a 'statutory notice'. This is an official statement saying how the changes would go ahead.

The statutory notice sets out the details of the proposals and asks anyone who wants to object to do so. Objections must be written. They must be submitted within the dates given on the notice.

The Cabinet may decide to approve or reject the proposals for Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, or they may approve the proposal with some changes (modifications). The Cabinet would take any objections received in the Objection Period into account when making their decision.

If there are no objections to the proposal for St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School, the Governing Body would decide the proposal for their school.

If there were objections to the proposals for St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School, the proposal would be decided by the Council.

Where can I find more information?

Full details of the proposals can be found at www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools