

The Provision of Primary School Places To Serve  
Cathays And Parts Of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North And Plasnewydd

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## Background

The Council is committed to ensuring that every child in Cardiff receives a great education through their chosen language medium.

The Council consulted in 2021 on a proposal to provide an appropriate balance of Welsh-medium and English-medium primary school places to serve Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd and sought views on long term changes to school provision.

At its meeting on 17 June 2021, Cabinet received a report setting out the outcome of the consultation. Following consideration of the points raised, the Cabinet resolved to not progress the proposed expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 2022.

The Council has subsequently identified three options which would improve the balance in the availability of school places serving the area. Two of the options would provide an opportunity for the English-medium primary schools to formally collaborate, such as through a federation, or informally collaborate.

## Proposals

The options to expand Welsh-medium primary school provision and consolidate English-medium primary school provision are as follows:

### **Option 1**

- Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site.
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places (0.9FE) to 420 places (2FE) and increase the number of nursery places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 64 to 96.
- Amalgamate Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools:
  - Formally Close Allensbank Primary School.
  - Formally Close Gladstone Primary School.
  - Establish a new 420 place (2FE) English-medium Primary School with nursery on the current shared Gladstone Primary School / St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site.
- Transfer St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site and establish nursery provision at the school.

The proposed changes would take effect from September 2025.

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**Option 2**

- Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site.
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places (0.9FE) to 420 places (2FE) and increase the number of nursery places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 64 to 96.
- Co-locate Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools on a shared site:
  - Transfer Allensbank Primary School to the current shared Gladstone Primary School / St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site.
  - Reduce the capacity of Allensbank Primary School from 315 places (1.5FE) to 210 places (1FE).
  - Reduce the age range of Allensbank Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11 by discontinuing nursery provision at the school.
  - Increase the number of nursery places at Gladstone Primary School from 64 to 96.
- Transfer St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site and establish nursery provision at the school.

The proposed changes would take effect from September 2025.

**Option 3**

- Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site.
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places (0.9FE) to 420 places (2FE).
- Increase the number of nursery places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 64 to 96.
- Transfer Allensbank Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site.
- Reduce the capacity of Allensbank Primary School from 315 places (1.5FE) to 192 places (0.9FE).

The proposed changes would take effect from September 2025.

Options 2 and 3 would allow for consideration to be given to collaboration or formal federation between Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School. There are clear benefits to collaboration or federation for schools that are based either on the same site or in the same community as it enables them to work together on shared priorities, pool expertise, make better use of resources and explore ways of doing things more effectively.

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## Methodology

- The consultation period ran from 03 May 2023 – 30 June 2023.
- Publication of a bilingual consultation document outlining background, rationale, and implications to parents, local childcare providers, Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of nearby schools, all Members of local wards and other stakeholders.
- Publication of a bilingual summary document setting out the main points of the consultation document.
- The summary document and response form were also published in nine community languages which were distributed to parents at Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School, St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and published on the Council website.
- Posters outlining details of the proposals and meeting/drop-in dates were put up in the local area.
- Consultation meetings with staff and governors at Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School, St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.
- Consultation meetings with pupil representatives from Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School, St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.
- Public meetings at Cathays Community Centre at which the proposals were explained and questions answered. The first public meeting was through the medium of English and the second through the medium of Welsh.
- An on-line public meeting at which the proposals were explained, and questions answered.
- Drop-sessions at Cathays Library where officers were available to answer questions.
- On-line drop-in sessions on request where officers were available to answer questions.
- Drop-in sessions for parents at Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School, St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.

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- Letters setting out details of the proposals and where further information could be found were sent to local residents and businesses in the areas surrounding the school sites subject to the proposed changes.
- Letters were also sent to places of worship in the local area to make them aware of the consultation, how they could make their views known and an offer to meet with any groups, they run or that make use of their accommodation who would like to find out more about the proposed changes.
- A consultation response slip for return by post or e-mail attached to the consultation document and summary document (including nine community languages).
- A communication campaign via social media.
- An online response from at: [www.cadiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools](http://www.cadiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools)
- For stakeholders who did not have access to digital platforms the opportunity to discuss the proposed changes via telephone was available.

## Responses

- There were 188 responses received to the consultation.
- A number of formal responses were received, these can be viewed in [Appendix A](#).
- There were 5 emails received in relation to the consultation, these can be viewed in [Appendix B](#).

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## Results

Please tell us whether you are responding as:

**'Current Parent or Guardian'** (64.4%) made up the main cohort of responses to the consultation. This was followed by **'Member of Staff'** (16.0%) and **'Local Resident'** (10.6%).

	No.	%
Current Parent or Guardian	121	64.4
Member of staff	30	16.0
Local Resident	20	10.6
Governor	12	6.4
Future Parent or Guardian	8	4.3
Pupil	6	3.2
Other	17	9.0
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>-</b>

*N.B. Percentages total more than 100% as respondents could select more than one option.*

Please confirm which school/s you are affiliated with:

Respondents were asked to indicate which school they're affiliated with, results of this can be viewed below:

	No.	%
Allensbank Primary School	56	34.6
St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School	41	25.3
Gladstone Primary School	32	19.8
Ysgol Mynydd Bychan	9	5.6
Other	24	14.8
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>100.0</b>

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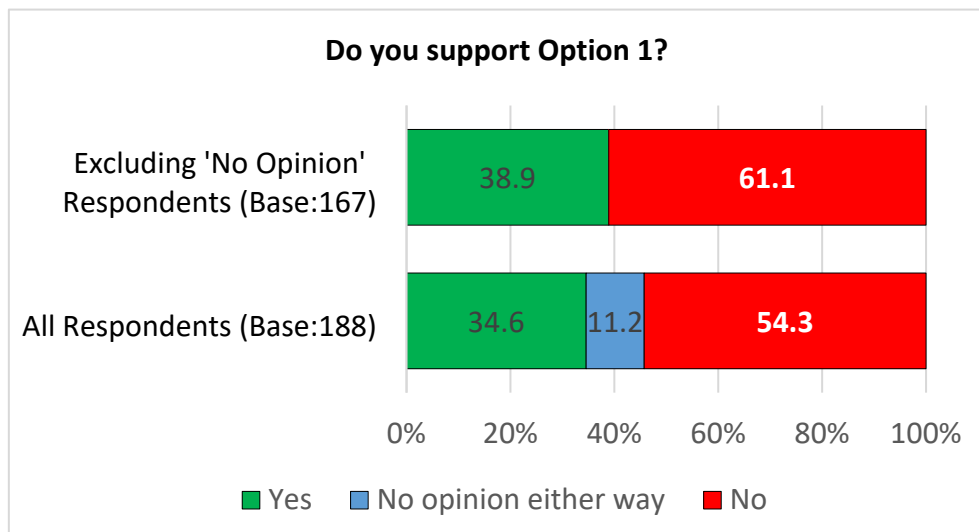
**Option 1**

***Amalgamate Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools, by***

- Formally closing Allensbank Primary School.
- Formally closing Gladstone Primary School.
- 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.
- Transfer St Monica's CiW Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site, and establish nursery provision at the school.
- Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site.
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places to 420 places, and increase the number of nursery places from 64 to 96.

Do you support Option 1?

Over a half (54.3%) of respondents stated that they didn't agree with this option. This rises to around three in five (61.1%) when 'No Opinion' respondents are excluded from the analysis.





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Please explain why:

Respondents were asked to provide more information to explain why they answered yes or no.

These comments were then grouped into themes; these themes along with example comments can be viewed below / overleaf:

Option 1 - Yes			
Theme	No.	%	Example Comments
Benefit from new and better nursery provision	26	51.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a great opportunity for our school to grow and have a nursery for all the siblings.</li> <li>• Nursery for St Monica could be beneficial for current and future parents.</li> <li>• There will be more room to accommodate younger siblings for Nursery, i love the idea of a bigger playground where the kids can explore and play creatively.</li> <li>• I would love for St Monica's to have provision for nursery.</li> </ul>
Schools benefit from improved space	23	45.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved space for Mynydd Bychan, St. Monica's can have a nursery, and amalgamating the two English County schools will allow better provision for kids from those schools.</li> <li>• St Monica's need a proper provision for an over-subscribed school, including proper playground.</li> <li>• St Monica's Primary need nursery and big playground.</li> </ul>
Benefits schools/staff/parents/children	16	31.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better suited to the children's needs.</li> <li>• It will benefit me and other families with younger siblings.</li> <li>• Best option to meet needs of children.</li> </ul>

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Combine primary schools' best option	11	21.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Falling roles have been a worry at both schools for years and have impacted negatively on budgets.</li> <li>• So the children can have more space for outdoor learning and socialising. As a parent, I would love my children to have all they need especially outdoor space for social and educational empowerment. And for Gladstone and Allensbank to be together means more space for the children as well.</li> </ul>
Benefits faith based schools	7	13.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better structure. Increase places and opportunity to nursery increase in faith school means our school is in demand. We are oversubscribed and competing in numbers with schools in bigger buildings.</li> <li>• This will be good for learning in a more effective way. The children will have more space to learn and be able to express themselves. This will also encourage faith based education and widen this to include more cultures and religions. This will be good for the children, those that settle here in Cardiff from abroad and for society in the future. This is an excellent opportunity for St Monica's (Option 1/2).</li> </ul>
Demand for Welsh places	6	11.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It will allow St. Monica's school to have a nursery and allow Welsh medium schools to grow and expand.</li> <li>• Ysgol Mynydd Bychan has far too few spaces at present, more and more people are sending their children to Welsh medium schools and it seems like this will only become increasingly popular, so more spaces are needed for people who live close by. We live within catchment, but we are over 1 mile away,</li> </ul>

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			at present it seems like we wouldn't get in if the furthest pupil from September will be 0.9 miles away, which is incredibly worrying as a prospective parent who wants to use active travel to get my child to school.
Most cost-effective option	5	9.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seems like the most cost-effective option. Keeping all 4 schools open when you don't have the number of pupils in English medium will mean that resources will be stretched over 4 sites instead of 3.</li> </ul>
Need separate schools	2	3.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two schools on the same site is not ideal so makes more sense to have separate schools.</li> </ul>
Other Reason	7	13.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>URGENT. Need to expand provision for Anglican pupils as the demand is increasing.</li> </ul>
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>-</b>	

*N.B. Percentages total more than 100% as respondent comments could fall into more than one theme.*

Option 1 - No			
Theme	No.	%	Example Comments
Negative impact on children / parents / staff	33	41.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My son is settled in his school. He is autistic and doesn't deal well with change. The school has been undergoing renovation for some time, it seems unfair that they will have that taken away from them.</li> <li>I believe this causes too much upset to too many parents. I think Allensbank and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan should just switch sites and Gladstone and St Monica's should be left where they are. This causes the least amount of disruption. It is only Allensbank Primary school who seems to have too much space for their current number on roll.</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The disruption on Allensbank staff and pupils is highly unfair when they have already been disrupted enough over the years with building work only for it to then benefit somebody else.</li> </ul>
Welsh Medium Education	22	27.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Too many Welsh medium places not enough children to fill them, YGC will be disadvantaged.</li> <li>Allensbank has had lots of disruption and to then give the renewed building to a new school is wrong. It appears that more investment is put into Welsh medium affluent schools than the English-speaking counterparts with a more diverse catchment.</li> <li>Don't agree with expanding Welsh provision and restricting parent choice.</li> </ul>
Allensbank should not be moved	19	24.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allensbank and Gladstone deserve to remain as they are! Build and open a new Welsh-medium school.</li> <li>The Allensbank school works well as it is, after a long reconstruction process it is not fair to move it.</li> <li>We don't want to close allensbank primacy.</li> </ul>
Impact on Ysgol Glan ceubal	14	17.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing capacity for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan will have a detrimental effect on Ysgol Glan Ceubal.</li> <li>You haven't considered Glan Ceubal.</li> </ul>
Equality for all languages and cultures	13	16.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why cause so much disruption to the children of Allensbank, there are so many other options that have not been considered. why doesn't YMB move to Gladstone? why are we as a multicultural school of the area, being moved out of the area.</li> <li>I'm going to talk today about why we should keep Allensbank right here. Our school has been here for 117 years. I'm sure none of us wants our school to go. My dad and his brothers and his cousins used to come here. My aunts and uncles used to</li> </ul>

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			<p>come here too. Also my neighbour. Allensbank is a diverse community of children from different backgrounds and religion, and this is a reflection of the communities we live in, it's important to be able to show children that no matter your race or background that Allensbank represents a sure haven for all children.</p>
Allensbank is an excellent school	10	12.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My grandchildren have been given a wonderful education at Allensbnk Primary School.</li> <li>• Allensbank is an excellent school, diverse, happy and representative of society as a whole. With an emphasis on all education not just Welsh.</li> </ul>
Do not want a larger school	10	12.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently the smaller classes and school at allensbank is preferable as my child can easily focus and have more support with his learning. The current site of Gladstone will also cause huge disruptions with parking and traffic and is quite some distance from my home.</li> <li>• My son is autistic and would find the move to that bigger school very difficult.</li> </ul>
Catchment area issues	9	11.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need to ensure that there will be no impairment in catchment area / numbers attending other schools, such as Glan Ceubal where intake is still low.</li> <li>• Increasing places at Mynydd Bychan so dramatically will directly negatively impact pupil numbers attracted Ysgol Glan Ceubal, which always had surplus due to the illogical catchment area. This proposal does not represent a sustainable surplus for Ysgol Glan Ceubal.</li> </ul>
Keep Gladstone as it is	8	10.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No, I dont believe this is an appropriate solution. I am against closing Gladstone Primary School.</li> <li>• I do not want Gladstone Primary School to be formally closed, My Child is currently attending that School and I as the parent</li> </ul>

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			have also attended the same school and many other close family member have attended the same School over last 30 Years.
Consider other option	8	10.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Allensbank building is large - there is no way that YMB will fill it. This is a waste of resources. It would be much better to amalgamate Allensbank and Gladstone at the Allensbank site because then the biggest building would be full straight away.</li> <li>Ysgol Glan Ceubal should have been considered along with other schools as a potential school for expansion in these proposals.</li> </ul>
Do not merge Allensbank and Gladstone Schools	7	8.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I don't believe the amalgamation of two primary schools will be best placed for the children. It will increase class sizes; the range of pupils needs within each class and require a huge adjustment for both pupils and staff. It also means a huge unsettling for the local community.</li> </ul>
Council has already made the decision	3	3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All three "options" include the same issue of moving Allensbank Primary School... if all three options are the same, that means there aren't any options! This decision has clearly already been made by Cardiff Council with no consultation of staff, parents, pupils or local residents. Why are you asking for feedback when there is no choice.</li> </ul>
Other	12	15.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I do not support any redundancies.</li> <li>Not in favour of a 2-form entry.</li> </ul>
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>-</b>	

*N.B. Percentages total more than 100% as respondent comments could fall into more than one theme.*

A Full list of comments has been passed on to the project team.

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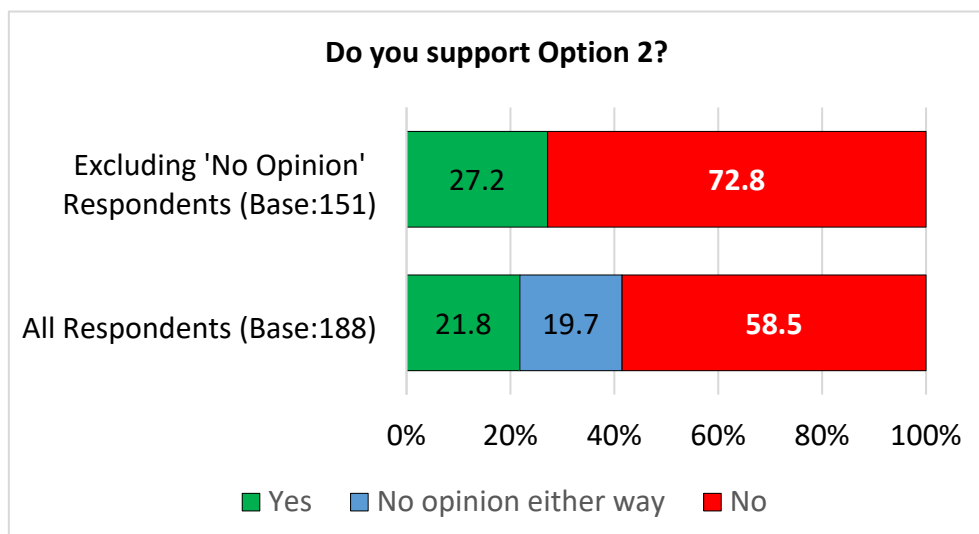
**Option 2**

***Co-locate Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools on a shared site, by:***

- Transferring Allensbank Primary School to the current shared Gladstone Primary School / St Monica's CiW Primary School site.
- Reducing the capacity of Allensbank Primary School from 315 places to 210 places.
- Reducing the age range of Allensbank Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11 by discontinuing nursery provision at the school.
- Increasing the number of nursery places at Gladstone Primary School from 64 to 96.
- Transfer St Monica's CiW Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site, and establish nursery provision at the school.
- Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site.
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places to 420 places, and increase the number of nursery places from 64 to 96.

Do you support Option 2?

Around three in five (58.5%) respondents stated that they didn't agree with this option. This rises to almost three in four (72.8%) when 'No Opinion' respondents are excluded from the analysis.



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Please explain why:

Respondents were asked to provide more information to explain why they answered yes or no.

These comments were then grouped into themes; these themes along with example comments can be viewed below / overleaf:

Option 2 - Yes			
Theme	No.	%	Example Comments
Increased space will benefit schools	10	35.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St Monica's need a proper provision for an over-subscribed school, including proper playground.</li> <li>I am a parent at St Monica's, and I am desperate for us to move to the new site. I believe it would give St Monica's a more sustainable future both in terms of funding and mental well-being. We are too big for our current site and the challenges this causes means so much time and energy is put into problem solving. We are constantly trying to figure out how to make some great vision (Like our drummathon) or just something simple (like a game of football at lunch time,) happen when there just isn't enough space. This feels exhausting and unfair on both our staff and our children. So any option where we get to move to a space that is fit- for purpose feels like a great relief! However, I wonder how fair it would be in the longer term for Allensbank to be placed in the same circumstances. Hopefully they would grow as a school, but then also hit the frustration of the small playground and that feels unjust.</li> <li>This option also makes sense because again it places schools on the correct sized site for them given current and anticipated future numbers. Personally I think Option 1 is better because of the "fresh start" opportunity it provides with a brand new school that can build on the best of Allensbank and Gladstone. Option 2 is a good option for St Monica's which is a thriving school that needs more space (particularly outside space) to continue its brilliant work.</li> </ul>
Increased nursery provision	10	35.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of nursery for st monicas.</li> </ul>



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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing st Monica's with a nursery is invaluable.</li> <li>• Because st Monica's primary school will have nursery and Welsh schools can expand.</li> </ul>
St Monicas will benefit from moving	5	17.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Monica's is a brilliant and thriving school - I support this proposal as it would provide the opportunity to extend the educational provision at St Monica's through the opening of a nursery providing a through route for children from starting their education to going to High School. By providing the school its own site it will mean more space and an opportunity for the children to have their a sense of identity of being in their own building, as opposed to sharing with Gladstone. Given the ongoing building works that have happened at St Monica's it will be good for the school to be in a building that doesn't require constant repair - and the associated disruption for children and learning. While I support this option I do not believe it to be a good as option 2 given it won't allow the Council to invest more money in educational provision as it will have to continue to fund the the running costs of 2 small English-medium schools.</li> <li>• This adds more space for St.Monica's to develop nursery provision. However, it is a slightly weaker option than 1. as it does not maximise the use of the current Gladstone/St.Monica's site.</li> </ul>
This option benefits all schools	4	14.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I support this option as well as it provides the same benefits to Ysgol Mynydd Buchan and St Monica's C.I.W primary school and would allow Gladstone and Allensbank to retain their own identities and a continuity of education to their learners.</li> <li>• Because it benefits families and also makes the children thrive in a new building.</li> </ul>
Welsh medium provision	3	10.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ysgol Mynydd Bychan has far too few spaces at present, more and more people are sending their children to Welsh medium schools and it seems like this will only become increasingly popular, so</li> </ul>

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			more spaces are needed for people who live close by. We live within catchment, but we are over 1 mile away, at present it seems like we wouldn't get in if the furthest pupil from September will be 0.9 miles away, which is incredibly worrying as a prospective parent who wants to use active travel to get my child to school.
Other Reason	12	42.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a school is under prescribed it makes sense to reduce the numbers.</li> <li>• A total mess around for parents in regard to options.</li> <li>• Better than completely closing the school.</li> </ul>
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>-</b>	

*N.B. Percentages total more than 100% as respondent comments could fall into more than one theme.*

Option 2 - No			
Theme	No.	%	Example Comments
Negative impact on children / parents / staff	22	28.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not reduce the capacity or age range at Allensbank. This will cause much upheaval to future children who may attend the school.</li> <li>• It is hard to get there and give build up lots more traffic.</li> <li>• This is not for the good of anyone involved.</li> </ul>
Allensbank should not relocate	19	25.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The community that has been established at Allensbank is wonderful, and you are risking losing it through this move.</li> <li>• The Allensbank school works well as it is, after a long reconstruction process it is not fair to move it.</li> <li>• I really like Allensbank Primary. I have lots of good friends and great teachers. My daddy went to this school and aunties and uncles. I started nursery at Allensbank and soon I will be in year 3. If the school closes in Year 4 I would have to go to a new</li> </ul>

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			school. This will make all sad. Please keep open!
Impact on Ysgol Glan Ceubal	14	18.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ysgol Glan Ceubal is a thriving school and it should have been considered as part of these proposals for expansion.</li> <li>• Increasing the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan will have a detrimental effect on Ysgol Glan Ceubal.</li> </ul>
School budget / funding issues	12	15.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The costs of running two schools are greater than one and the cost savings of leading one school can result in spending on pupils' experiences.</li> <li>• The overheads of two schools on the same site are not a good use of money.</li> </ul>
Do not merge Allensbank and Gladstone	12	15.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't want the amalgamation.</li> <li>• This Will increase pressure on teachers as class sizes will increase and potentially quality of education will reduce. also it will congest the area where gladstone is as it already is a student area so parking is a nightmare and then it will be even worse when arriving to drop off and pickup children.</li> </ul>
Welsh medium provision	11	14.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't agree with increasing Welsh provision and hence restricting parent choice.</li> <li>• Too many Welsh medium places not enough children to fill them, YGC will be disadvantaged.</li> </ul>
Nursery Provision	9	11.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quite frankly this proposal is ludicrous and doesn't in any way take into account the disruption this would have on all the pupils and staff at the four schools. There would also be no Nursery at Allensbank which would result in staff redundancies for Allensbank. Over time it feels like Allensbank would just be merged with</li> </ul>

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			<p>Gladstone anyway and cease to exist. It just feels like a slow death for Allensbank.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This option could be confusing for parents/carers/pupils with two schools having to share a site. Logistically how would this work as St Monica's currently have a very small playground - cost implication to re-arrange fencing/barriers. Timetabling for playtimes/lunches could be a challenge. At least one class would need to share Gladstone school buildings - this would not be nice for those pupils/teachers and be confusing. If St Monica's have a nursery and nursery places increase in Ysgol Mynydd Bychan will this cause more financial implications and challenge for schools as more spaces would mean more schools competing for nursery places - if birth rates are on the decline why are we opening more nurseries in the same area - this will place schools in a greater deficit budget?</li> </ul>
<p>Catchment area issues</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>10.5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You haven't considered the impact on Ysgol Glan Ceubal from the increased Welsh medium places. We already struggle from a catchment area that encompasses Bute Park where there are no homes. The catchment area doesn't even fully cover Llandaff North and instead splits the community in two on Station Rd. Our school suffers from too small a catchment area meaning many years have low pupil number which has a devastating impact on school funding.</li> <li>Increasing places at Mynydd Bychan dramatically will directly negatively impact pupils attracted to Ysgol Glan Ceubal which has always struggled with surplus places due to the illogical catchment. This proposal does not represent a sustainable surplus for</li> </ul>

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			Ysgol Glan Ceubal and will exacerbate the situation.
Equality for all languages and cultures	7	9.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neither English medium school benefits from this option.</li> </ul>
Consider other options	5	6.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I think that this option could not “recreate” Allensbank. It could lead to friction between the schools such as that witnessed following St Monica’s move to Gladstone Infants. There could be a good deal of resentment from parents/staff of Allensbank, whereas a “new” school would be a fairer option and a more productive use of the site and could be a big success, looking forward to a better future!</li> </ul>
Not enough information	5	6.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns over how this would be set out, none of which have been shared with is so because of this it doesn't seem viable as we don't have enough information.</li> </ul>
Safeguarding implications	4	5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 'new' building has rooms out of bound due to not being fit for purpose. Not fair when my son has already had to be taught on a building site. His friend told me ‘Why can't this be for us?’ I don't know what to tell him. My son deserves a lovely building to be taught in :(.</li> </ul>
Prefer smaller school/classes	2	2.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Again, better resourced buildings and investment put into Welsh language education at the expense of English. Larger schools do not necessarily mean better education. From first-hand experience in education, children often thrive educationally in smaller classes, particularly if from a more deprived background.</li> </ul>

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Other	9	11.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's an unsatisfactory halfway house that would encourage a them and us working arrangement.</li> <li>• Not the best use of resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>-</b>	

*N.B. Percentages total more than 100% as respondent comments could fall into more than one theme.*

A Full list of comments has been passed on to the project team.

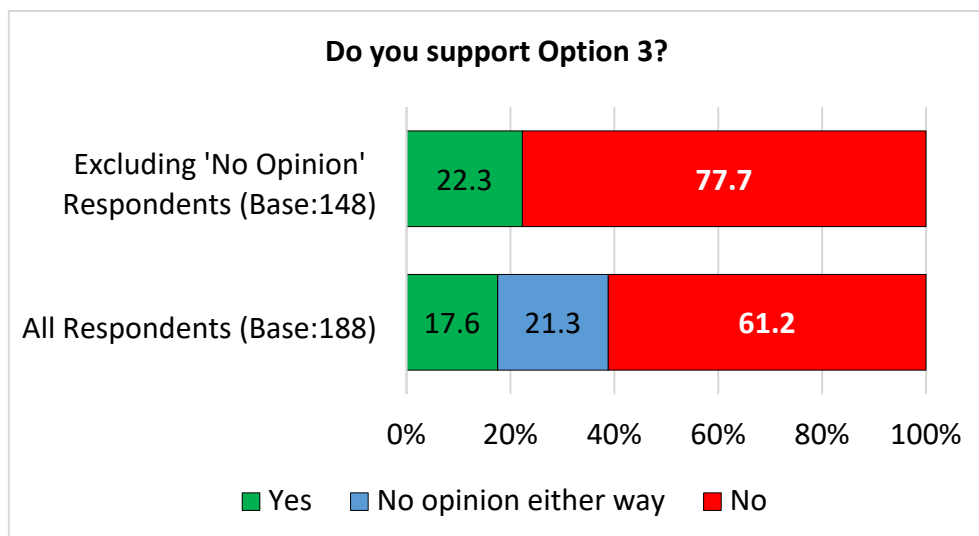
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**Option 3**

- Transfer Allensbank Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site.
- Reduce the capacity of Allensbank Primary School from 315 places to 192 places.
- 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.

Do you support Option 3?

Three in five (61.2%) respondents stated that they didn't agree with this option. This rises to over three in four (77.7%) when 'No Opinion' respondents are excluded from the analysis.



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Please explain why:

Respondents were asked to provide more information to explain why they answered yes or no.

These comments were then grouped into themes; these themes along with example comments can be viewed below / overleaf:

Option 3 - Yes			
Theme	No.	%	Example Comments
Least disruption to schools	15	60.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is more logical as it reduces the disruption for two schools' staff, children and parents. It would avoid undue stress and anxiety for everyone.</li> <li>• This option appears the most straightforward and has implications for the smallest number of students.</li> <li>• This is the best option as it causes the least amount of disruption to children, families and staff.</li> <li>• These are the only two schools who are effected by changing numbers so just disrupt these two.</li> </ul>
Job security for staff	6	24.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I feel this would be the less disruptive for all schools involved. The only school that does not benefit from this is Allensbank and it would be sad for them to move from the building where they have been for many years. The logistics is easier all around to swap between themselves rather than the options 2 moving three schools to different buildings, which will come with a bigger cost element. This would not affect the staffing or the pupils other than moving sites. Parents would still be close by and not have to travel or walk the further distance to Gladstone/St Monica's site. Staffing would not be affected in Gladstone and we would not lose a wonderful Headteacher and senior leadership staff who work so very hard for the benefit of our pupils and the staff.</li> <li>• This option seems to be the most reasonable out of the three as it involves the disruption of only two schools, meaning that ysgol mynydd bychan can increase its numbers and meet said demands for Welsh education. All four schools would still exist as they are with minimal changes to staff, pupils, parents and the local community. Myself and my colleagues would still have our jobs and our pupils would be able</li> </ul>



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			to continue to flourish in our smaller school environment.
Gladstone school will benefit	6	24.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's the least disruptive for Gladstone.</li> <li>• The quickest and easiest option causing least disruption to pupils and staff, staff well being is far better with this option, continuity of the successful provision we give as recognised in our Estyn inspection, our Gladstone family can continue to support each other, we can continue to grow, developing the strong, confident learners we do today, creating vibrant, meaningful learning opportunities that our families appreciate, to be there for our families though the hard times as well as the good times, to serve the community as they have supported us. Staff have worked at Gladstone for many years some over thirty, no one knows our community like we do and it is our desire and passion to continue to work with our fabulous families as they move along their pathways of life.</li> </ul>
Schools remain independent and keep their identity	5	20.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This feels the most reasonable option and would maintain the values and care given at Allensbank.</li> <li>• School remains on an independent site, easily accessible and child can still receive that support and learning.</li> </ul>
Increased spaces	5	20.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing spaces in mynedd bychan.</li> <li>• Least disruptive of both options. Also keeps Allensbank nursery provision as a feeder into the school and allows Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to expand which is what the council want to achieve.</li> </ul>
Better use of space for both Allensbank & Ysgol Mynydd Bychan	2	8.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensible. Allows for increased numbers at Mynedd Bychan &amp; less demand at Allensbank without disrupting and changing other schools. Gladstone &amp; st. Monicas work very well on the site they are on &amp; a at current sizes. If it ain't broke don't fix it!</li> </ul>

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Other	7	28.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reluctantly.</li> <li>• I think it's the best option.</li> </ul>
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>-</b>	

*N.B. Percentages total more than 100% as respondent comments could fall into more than one theme.*

Option 3 - No			
Theme	No.	%	Example Comments
Negative impact on children / parents / staff	20	26.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because Students And Parents Might Find It Difficult To Drive From Their Current House To Somewhere Further By 9:00AM From Allensbank To Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.</li> <li>• This is not for the good of anyone.</li> <li>• YMB was oversubscribed by 2, not enough to condone doubling provision and moving the whole of primary provision in the area. Traffic on Llanishen Street is currently awful with Allensbank school. Adding an additional 100 places... where will the parents park?</li> </ul>
Not the best option	19	25.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One and two are better suited to the needs.</li> <li>• This option doesn't benefit the children's needs.</li> <li>• Any option when you have 400 plus students at one facility with no description of increased support is never an option.</li> </ul>
Allensbank should not relocate	18	24.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leave Allensbank where it is and do not reduce the capacity.</li> <li>• Though this causes the least disruption for other schools, it enforces reduction in numbers for Allensbank which doesn't seem fair and won't help us to thrive.</li> <li>• The Allensbank school works well as it is, after a long reconstruction process it is not fair to move it.</li> </ul>

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No benefit for St monicas / Gladsone	14	18.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because staying in the current building will only hinder the children and the community as a whole. St Monica's must move, to enable positive changes.</li> <li>• This does not offer any benefit to St.Monica's or Gladstone schools and the Cathay's English language medium education, and does not take advantage of the opportunity to reshape school provision in the area. Nor does it utilise the best of the current leadership in these schools.</li> </ul>
Welsh medium provision	13	17.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YMB was only oversubscribed by 6 last year and that number is declining year or year. So unless your intention is to force people into Welsh medium education, there is no need for them to move to a larger school.</li> <li>• There are not enough Welsh teachers to support any of the options.</li> </ul>
School budget / funding issues	11	14.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This option means that the financial burden on the local authority and on individual school remains, as it retains the current status of 3 small schools (St Monica's, Gladstone and Allensbank). It wouldn't allow us to reduce our pupil mobility issues and the 3 smaller schools would continue to struggle with their budgets.</li> <li>• This would be a slow death for Allensbank Primary School as the Council will eventually close the school due to "funding". Teachers and Support staff will lose their jobs with no guarantee of redeployment.</li> </ul>
Impact on Ysgol Glan Ceubal	10	13.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan will have a detrimental effect on Ysgol Glan Ceubal.</li> <li>• Increase of such significance to Mynydd Bychan may negatively impact Glan Ceubal.</li> </ul>

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Catchment area issues	7	9.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing places at Mynydd Bychan will directly negatively impact on pupils attracted to Ysgol Glan Ceubal which has always struggled with surplus places due to the illogical catchment. This option does not represent a sustainable surplus for Ysgol Glan Ceubal and will exacerbate the situation.</li> </ul>
Nursery Provision	4	5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is my opinion that the current St Monica's site is not fit for purpose due to very limited outdoor space and inability to provide nursery spaces.</li> </ul>
Equality for all languages and cultures	4	5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each option appears to benefit Welsh language education at the expense of established communities.</li> </ul>
Impact on Ysgol Mynydd Bychan	2	2.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disruption for Allensbank Primary School: Transferring Allensbank Primary School to a new location and adjusting its capacity can cause disruptions for students, parents, and staff. It may require adjustments to the school community and a period of adaptation to a new environment. Community impact: Any changes to schools can impact the local community. Transferring Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to a different site may affect the community's connection to the school and potentially disrupt established community relationships. Capacity considerations: While increasing the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan can accommodate more students, it's important to ensure that the increased student population does not compromise the quality of education or put excessive strain on resources. When evaluating Option 3, it's crucial to consider the specific needs, preferences, and values of the affected communities, students, and stakeholders. Engaging in discussions and gathering feedback from educators, parents, students, and local community members can</li> </ul>

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			<p>help inform the decision-making process. Additionally, assessing the potential benefits, drawbacks, and implications for the educational experience, community cohesion, and resource allocation is important to make an informed choice.</p>
Other	16	21.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two schools in greater proximity makes little sense.</li> <li>• Not sure I understand why YMB is moving to the Allensbank site rather than the Gladstone/St. Monica's site which looks like it makes more sense.</li> <li>• It's not fair.</li> </ul>
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>-</b>	

*N.B. Percentages total more than 100% as respondent comments could fall into more than one theme.*

A Full list of comments has been passed on to the project team.

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Would you like to suggest any changes or alternatives to the proposed options? If so, how would these changes be of greater benefit to children and young people in these communities, than Options 1, 2 or 3?

Respondents were given the opportunity to suggest any changes / alternatives they had to the proposed options and to explain how they felt these changes would benefit the children / young people in the communities.

A list of the suggested changes / alternatives along with the benefits can be viewed below / overleaf:

Change / Alternative	Benefit
Include the implications on ysgol gynradd glan ceubel	Review the impact on this huge increase for Welsh medium schools
Option 3 Cannot Be An Option For The Kids And The Students Sake.	Closer To Their Houses/Less Travelling/More Options For Kids And Parents.
Yes, look at the current catchment area. We live within 0.5 miles of Mynydd Buchan and my children did not get a place there. Instead, we travel to the exceptional Glan Ceubal school which is under subscribed. By looking at this, perhaps more students can be taught in the existing system without reorganising the 4 schools.	Improve the allocation of funds within existing, established schools with out spending on major restructuring or closures. Students would go to the closest options for the parents/students.
Up the number of Welsh places where it actually wanted and required, where the huge new developments are , lislwane, Radyr, Ely bridge etc	Support Allensbank and encourage more people to choose it. Wales is supposed to be a sanctuary nation so why are you not supporting sanctuary school and there pupils.
Welsh & English medium should be treated equally & funded equally irrespective of whether they speak welsh or not. we are a multicultural city, we should be pushing the agenda on both parts. we need just as many places in English medium as Welsh medium. why should Allensbank, a wonderful, balanced hard working community school be pushed out. i choose that school for a reason. why should my child's education , security now be put in the balance because YMB was over subscribed by 2 students. its all unjust & not right	NONE of them. leave it as it is or swap Gladstone & YMB why hasn't that been discussed or an option. we live in a multicultural area where welsh speakers are few & far between it doesn't make sense.

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<p>Gladstone and Allensbank amalgamate on the Allensbank Site</p>	<p>Less upheaval for pupils who have already endured years of upheaval due to the current building work that is ongoing. Many of our pupils have come to our school having left their homes due to war and conflict. They are settled and happy here and moving them to another site is even more upsetting for them. Ysgol Mynydd Bychan won't fill the current Allensbank site straight away so why disrupt the lives of innocent children who have already been through enough, especially as there will be a number of empty classrooms for a period of time.</p>
<p>Leave Allensbank alone - it's a fantastic school. Your intentions are good... but strengthening one thing by destroying another thing shows clear favouritism and an agenda.</p>	<p>Allensbank will be irreversibly changed and weakened</p>
<p>Leave it alone.</p>	<p>The kids don't need to be disrupted, and you keep pushing welsh first and every else second. Is that not racism?</p>
<p>Should the changes need to happen, and it could be argued that Ysgol Mynnyd Bychan is not oversubscribed to the point of needing such large premises, an alternative option could be to amalgamate Gladstone and Allensbank at the Allensbank site, where at least the building work will have been completed. it is hugely disappointing that none of the Council proposals put Allensbank first, I would have thought the Council would be proud of the diversity and inclusivity of this school, rather than create a range of options that are all directly detrimental to it.</p>	<p>It would benefit Allensbank and Gladstone pupils as they would have a school site on which the building repairs were complete, meaning that they no longer needed to attend a school covered in scaffolding. It would benefit Ysgol Mynnyd Bychan as they would have more space on the Gladstone site and would be central for pupils from the north and south of the catchment.</p>
<p>Leave the schools as they are and merge Ysgol Mynydd Bychan with the undersubscribed welsh school in Gabalfa.</p>	<p>Because the children in Allensbank and Gladstone would not have to suffer any upheaval.</p>
<p>not to close allensbank, it has been here for years, it is very friendly with the community and the staff, pupils and parents love the school</p>	<p>I don't think these changes will benefit the children</p>

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Create a new larger site for welsh-provision.	This leaves the existing schools to remain as they are - beautiful communities where children thrive, they have had enough change throughout the pandemic. Creating a larger welsh-medium school allows the expansion of welsh language places (as they should) but allows children to not be disrupted and uprooted.
keep the schools as they are	there is not a need for a bigger Welsh Primary school as they only oversubscribed by 2 pupils last year
Put the new bigger YMB on the Gladstone/st Monica's	This reduces disruption for the children and parents and puts the Welsh school central to its catchment area
As already stated.	The only benefits will be for YMB and none for Allensbank
I understand the need to increase welsh education and I'm not against this however, increasing places at Mynydd Bychan comes to the detriment of the other schools and For that reason I don't agree with any of these options. I struggle to understand any benefit to Allensbank in any option and I feel like the school strongly represents the diverse community - for this reason I would suggest that no changes are made	Keeping the current set-up means Allensbank continues to represent and educate the diverse community it sits in. Our children are not disrupted and our teachers keep their jobs. As a local resident I can assure you that the area Allensbank sits in cannot take 420 parents dropping children off - there is no parking, narrow congested streets or public transport that will serve this area. The children and young people on this community aren't in need of a welsh langur school, they already speak multiple languages at home and would choose for their children to be taught in English
Consult all parents, not just those who are Welsh speaking. The political imposition of Welsh restricts the majority choosing English medium education.	Parental choice
One suggestion I would like to make is that there is provision made for shared playing fields between all the schools involved. These are city schools in an urban environment but they need their own green space (either grass playing fields or a decent astroturf pitch).	It would be an additional benefit and would be a good way for all these schools to be united. While change and vision is in the air, why not address the need that all these schools have for somewhere to play decent sport.
Yes - Gladstone and Allensbank merging on the current Allensbank site. They would fill the building straight away which would be good use of resources, and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would move to Gladstone site. St	It would benefit the schools in the following ways: Gladstone and Allensbank, who have some of the most disadvantaged children, would avoid further major disruption by having a recently refurbished building (current building work at Allensbank should have finished), they would be able to flourish and use resources well by filling and using the whole



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<p>Monica's move to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.</p>	<p>building immediately. Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would benefit from having the extra space at Gladstone/St Monica's and it also has the benefit of being closer to the southern part of YMB's catchment area which has traditionally had lower take up of places in the school. If the school is to grow then it seems wise to move further South because that might help to attract more pupils from that area. Staying North means that the school will almost certainly only grow in numbers of white Middle class pupils and I would be surprised if that is the vision for this new, bigger Welsh school.</p>
<p>The best option if they really want to add more spaces for the welsh school is look for a bigger premises if it is not possible to build more on the current site any other option is ridiculous with the amount of disruption</p>	<p>Benefit would be to the welsh school increasing its capacity the rest of the schools would be the same. If you choose option 1,2 and 3 the only school that is benefiting is the welsh school all the others are loosing out on space disruption number of pupils reduced</p>
<p>Yes, change ysgol for Gladstone</p>	<p>Allensbank would not move and more places would be achieved for ysgol</p>
<p>No change or something that would not just be a benefit to one of the schools.</p>	<p>Currently the plans only serve to benefit the Welsh school</p>
<p>Mynydd Bychan move to the current St. Monica's / Gladstone site, Gladstone combine with Allensbank on its current site, St. Monica's move to current YMB site.</p>	<p>Those in our community who already have SO little would not have more taken away from them;</p>
<p>Move ymb to Gladstone site and st Monica's to current ymb site</p>	<p>Allow children from a more diverse catchment to benefit from Welsh language education, whilst ensuring an evenly spread amount of English language schools.</p>
<p>Yes – A sensible fourth option would be to amalgamate pupils from Gladstone into the current Allensbank building.</p>	<p>If this fourth proposal were to be adopted, there would be more space for English medium education in the area to grow. Whilst I accept that the projected figures indicate that there will be a decline in the number of school places needed in the area (and indeed Cardiff wide), what the proposals fail to take into account or appreciate is that a high proportion of the pupils at Allensbank actually move to the school from other countries. Welsh medium provision would also have room to grow but at a slower rate, which given the fact that the Welsh schools in the area are hardly oversubscribed seems like a much more sensible option. Otherwise, surely</p>

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	Mynydd Bychan would be at risk of inhabiting a large school that they can't fill which one of the reasons given as to why Allensbank needs to move.
Funding to support the mobility factor for schools in this particular catchment area - it is very difficult for one form entry schools to manage budgets and plan for the future due to the unpredictability of pupil numbers from one month to the next - we are at a disadvantage compared to other schools in the area who are full to capacity and have pupils who start in Nursery and continue straight through to Year 6.	Extra funding to support one form entry schools would ensure that staffing is consistent and the educational offer for our pupils is not at risk of being cut each year.
Additional funding to support the challenge of pupil mobility would help the school plan more effectively and provide stability for future budgets.	Extra funding would ensure educational opportunities are more sustainable.
Stay the same	No benefits
The ideal solution would be to build a new school for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to reflect the aims of 21st Century Schools. Space is obviously an issue in such a densely populated and built-up area but the Companies House site is huge and half empty. There are also plans to reorganise Cathays High School. It would be good to hear that consideration had been given to using these sites as an alternative option.	A brand new school would offer better facilities than a Victorian school that requires a lot of maintenance and is unlikely to be big enough for 420 pupils in the long run. Scaffolding has been up on Allensbank School for a long time and although it is larger than Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, if the aim is to create a school for 420 pupils, it is hard to believe that Allensbank School will offer enough space inside and out to create good and safe learning and play experiences for our children.
I support the alternatives suggested by Ysgol Mynydd Bychan in their consultation response, namely that the expanded Ysgol Mynydd Bychan could be housed in a new building established on the current Cathays High School site (should plans go ahead to relocate Cathays High) or on vacant space on the Companies House site.	The option I have suggested could provide valuable modernisation and expansion for the new school which would be useful for attracting new pupils to YMB and their parents. I recently visited Whitchurch Primary School (unrelated to my child's education - we are happy at YMB) and was very impressed by the provisions there, including the new-build classrooms and substantial outdoor activities (fields, playgrounds, sports facilities etc.). Whitchurch Primary is a great example of what a new school could look like and a similar school would be of great

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	<p>benefit to incoming and existing pupils at YMB. The extra facilities could also be borrowed by other surrounding primary schools for particular occasions (sports days, PE lessons, after-school clubs) enhancing educational opportunities for all primary pupils in the area. The Cathays/Companies House site also remains very close in location to YMB and maintains its local links to Whitchurch Road. This option would also avoid any potential ill-feeling between the different schools and the parents, teachers, pupils involved in the current proposals (Gladstone, St Monica's, Allensbank, YMB) as no schools would need to downsize or relocate.</p>
<p>If Allensbank: and Gladstone HAVE to join the Allensbank site is preferable.</p>	<p>There is less disruption for the pupils and staff of Allensbank Primary: • Less traffic pollution for pupils as Llanishen Street is not a main road; • Allensbank Primary is a bigger school building with a newly refurbished kitchen area, new roof and new windows; • Off road parking is available; • Less disruption at drop-off and pick-up times for general road users; • The increasing numbers of "vulnerable" pupils at Allensbank Primary will not be affected by changes in routine</p>
<p>1. Ysgol Myndd bychan swapping with Gladstone then only two schools have to move and not just one. 2. Bringing the Welsh medium on site with Allensank and creatig a bilingual school, fully integrated. This would support the Welsh Governments vision or supporting and promoting Welsh language within minority ethnicities in Wales. 3. New Welsh medium site built on the current Cathays site, who are getting a new site. 4. Gladstone moving to the Allensbank site and Welsh school moving to the Gladstone site</p>	<p>1. Less upheaval for all pupils involved, only two schools moving and not 4! 2. Enriching the English medium pupils with the Welsh language and bridging the gap and divide between Welsh and English speakers, developing integration of the language more into all communities. 3. No upheaval for 3 schools and Welsh medium get new facilities 4. All the same reasons for why you would move Allensbank to Gladstone. Allensbank is also bigger so will support an instant 2 form entry school better and also all the construction works would be complete. If Allensbank go to Gladstone, then the Welsh shcool with have a gigantic number of surplus places for many years yet the two English medium, multi ethic schools have been pushed into a small space with construction and work needed to be carried out due to this.</p>
<p>Seems like political correctness gone overboard. Keep it as it is and work to create a fair system for ALL the affected schools. They need care and proper financial support it mass disruption of staff and pupils everywhere.</p>	<p>See above -</p>

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<p>Some consideration needs to be given to - merging Gladstone and Allensbank on the Allensbank school site. The merger vision would still be required but I cannot understand why the isn't in the mix of options</p>	<p>It would see YMB move to a different side of its catchment area, leading to the potential for new pupils to be found to attend this expanded school.</p>
<p>Potentially swapping buildings for Mynach bychan and Allensbank would solve the problem of space but as stated I believe that the proposed numbers are too high for Mynach Bychan and therefore, from a financial point of view, there would still be a building expensive to maintain being used by a smaller number. Maybe an area with such a high ethnic minority isn't the right place for a welsh medium school and location needs looking at again. Maybe a bilingual school on Allensbank site might be a better option. If Allensbank moved to Mynach Bychan site and Mynach Bychan to Allensbank maybe there is a way to accommodate 2 schools on the current Allensbank site (as proposed for Gladstone / Allensbank though I don't get how it works) but maybe Mynach Bychan could run alongside a bilingual school. I don't think we have a bilingual school anywhere nearby.</p>	<p>I think a bilingual school running alongside Mynach Bychan would be a compromise. If Mynach Bychan is more than doubled it reduces the English medium provision. The addition of a bilingual school to the area would perhaps give families an additional option, for those wanting welsh medium their child would be educated in Welsh and can be built on outside of school as it needs to be to make welsh the language of choice. For those wanting English medium education it would be in a bilingual school and with movement so high at Gladstone and probably Allensbank then transfer might be possible if bilingual proved too challenging.</p>
<p>Consider increasing capacity at Ysgol Glan Ceubal. The catchment area is currently very small in comparison to other schools and this could be considered for expansion, at least to include all of Llandaf North. The school continues to be at a disadvantage financially due to low pupil numbers in some classes. The schools considered in this proposal are in very old buildings, whereas Glan Ceubal is a newer more modern building so I would estimate, would be less cost in terms of overheads than much older school buildings. If the catchment area were to be extended, most pupils be within</p>	<p>The children would benefit from a more modern school building with a larger than average outdoor play area, green space and forest school. Access to nature within walking distance of the school, being close to the Taff trail. The school is thriving and going from strength to strength, with strong links to the local community.</p>

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<p>walking/cycling distance so as to promote active travel.</p>	
<p>Option 4 should've been in the consultation. Similar to option 1 but Gladstone move to Allensbank site to form a new school. There's enough room – no further building work to merge two schools in to one. YMB don't have the numbers to fill Allensbank site yet but Gladstone and Allensbank will. It makes sense to move YMB to the Gladstone site where they will be able to fill and if and when the numbers come they could expand into the st monicas site. It is still within catchment area, in fact right in the centre of YMB catchment area.</p>	<p>Far less disruption for pupils that have clearly had so much over the past few years. Children that are the most vulnerable in our community are the ones being disrupted and moved. More chance for YMB to thrive – surely if they don't fill Allensbank site straight away it will affect their budget too??</p>
<p>This consultation process is not a true and fair representation of available options. All options presented involve Mynydd Bychan and Allensbank leaving their current sites and moving to another existing site, and are not the preferred choice of either parents or governors at either school. The consultation should be re-opened to consider further options including:- Amalgamating Gladstone with Allensbank on the current Allensbank site, moving Mynydd Bychan to the Gladstone site and moving St Monica's to the current Mynydd Bychan site. This would give Mynydd Bychan a much more central location in their catchment and allow them to appeal more to increasing their intake from Cathays and further south. This would also benefit pupils from the catchment in terms of encouraging active travel (walking and cycling to school). - Seeking a location for a new building for Mynydd Bychan, or expanding onto Companies House land (the flat car</p>	<p>In these alternative options, English-speaking pupils would remain in their current situations providing vital stability in a time of great upheaval (following the pandemic). On the whole, Welsh-speaking pupils would be closer to their school, allowing more opportunities for active travel (walking and cycling). Currently welsh speaking pupils from the south of the catchment are unrealistically likely to walk to Mynydd Bychan.</p>

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<p>park to the rear of Companies House seems surplus to requirements, especially if active travel could be encouraged). - Seeking a location in Cathays or closer to the city centre, on the site of a different school for additional Welsh-medium school places. There are 7 different English-medium schools in the Roath/Adamsdown/City Centre areas of the city and no Welsh-medium schools in these areas (or Cathays except Gladstone/St Monica's) so one of these 7 could be considered. Mynydd Bychan could be retained to serve the northern part of the current catchment and the southern part served by the other new Welsh-medium school. - Further alternatives could be considered where Welsh and English-medium schooling is offered on the same site. This would give Welsh-speaking pupils and parents a better multicultural experience and experience of the true diversity of our city whilst retaining and preserving the valuable heritage of our Welsh language in an enhanced way as those who would otherwise have experienced only English speaking would then over-hear it in the school corridors and playground and would have greater opportunities to make Welsh-speaking friends.</p>	
<p>I would Suggest everything Stays as it currently is.</p>	<p>I do not see the need for change, everything staying the same will ensure the Schools and Teachers continue to provide the excellent education as they have been for many years. I feel change will disrupt everything and have a negative impact on children especially as they will be uprooted from there current school.</p>
<p>Allensbank's capacity should not be reduced because this might affect our children's from being admitted. Thank You.children</p>	<p>I do not like any of the options, let all the schools remain in their present sites and location. Thank you</p>

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<p>Leave the school as they are as the majority of the families in the area are not from British background. Families doesn't speak even English, forcing them into Welsh is not appropriate</p>	<p>Children are having a good care care and leaderships in the school, they can have enough attention in case they struggle. They won't benefit if this is provided in welsh, the Welsh is not the language of the community.</p>
<p>Yes - A fourth option. Gladstone share Allensbank site leaving Gladstone free.</p>	<p>Many benefits. In summary; we can actually benefit from the difficult, unsettling and disruptive working conditions we have endured and enjoy a building at last that is fit for purpose. Our pupils can stay put and not face anymore disruption and upheaval. Our most vulnerable pupils, will not have to go through such profound adjustment. Allensbank could possibly stay in terms of its name; history and heritage. We are a long standing school in the community with an excellent reputation. We care and have fostered exceptional relationships with families who have come from all over the world. We do not want to have to rebuild and start again. It is all incredibly worrying and stressful with what lays ahead (not just for the staff, but the pupils and the wider school community.) To know we have to reapply is also cruel and stressful. We are excellent, experienced teachers. What we can manage and deal with on a daily basis is exceptional and we are losing our jobs to make way for a school that will not be full to capacity and I know for certain will not have such a mix of brilliant, skilled, experienced teachers. We are being discriminated against. The Welsh government would rather a mediocre teacher who is a fluent Welsh speaker than someone who can confidently teach in excess of thirty children in a class, some of whom have complex needs, many EAL and newly arrived, as well as ALN and children with emotional needs. Our teaching staff have experience and skills that you do not come across easily and at least one of us will lose our job and that is a crying shame for so many children. (English and leaving school fully literate in English needs to be the priority and our staff can do that. If you lose excellent staff then standards of teaching falls, and even for that to happen in one school, there will be repercussions. If pupils cannot competently read and write in English behaviour , well being and academic potential suffers. We are already facing an embarrassing language deficit in Wales. do we also want to be known as having failing standards in</p>

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	literacy as the Welsh agenda is pushed forward at the detriment of exceptional teachers losing their jobs and children not leaving school fully literate.
Gladstone and Allensbank combine on Allensbank site.	Nature of the community served. Vulnerable pupils in terms of refugees and pupils with significant learning needs.
It would be ideal if nothing changes. I understand there is meant to be a need for more Welsh primary places. I am sure a lot of the current cohort travel in not just from the Cathays area. It was brought up in a meeting that there is no option to build a new building for the Welsh school as it serves this area. I think if a parent wants their child to be educated in Welsh they would be willing to travel. as I would as a parent.	I think the fewer children that are affected the better, they have had enough disruption over the last few years with covid. On a personal note with a child who has suffered with their mental health since covid, change does not help if they are comfortable in their current school. The children taught Welsh would benefit from a better building and environment to thrive and be taught in.
Build an appropriate sized school for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. If there really is such demand for Welsh language education then there should be the resources allocated to it. Alternatively, parents in the area could send their children to other Welsh medium schools which have space.	Mynydd Bychan would increase capacity as required and pupils in the other schools would not be disadvantaged.
A more holistic solution must be sought to prevent damage to Welsh medium education in Cardiff as a whole and the support we are able to offer our learners, especially those more vulnerable or with additional learning needs. I suggest increasing the catchment of Ysgol Glan Ceubal to include the whole of Llandaff North should feature in a more wholesale proposal on Welsh medium provision.	A holistic review and set of proposals would be far more sustainable across the whole of Cardiff, and would avoid long term damage to the whole of Welsh medium provision that a sudden and massive increase to Mynydd Bychan intake would create, both for Mynydd Bychan and neighbouring schools like Glan Ceubal. It would avoid the instability that budget deficits brings, along with the reduction in quality of provision for our learners, impact on staff wellbeing, and particularly the likely impact on our most vulnerable and disadvantaged learners, or those who have additional learning needs.
Making sure that Llandaff North, Gabalfa and Mynachdy are still in the catchment for Glan Ceubal	That Glan Ceubal doesn't lose children



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<p>Before any proposal can be mooted and accepted, the full impact on the surrounding schools and the education and funding for hundreds of children needs to be properly assessed. No man is an island and nor is any school - these decisions must not be taken in blind isolation!</p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p>Increase the catchment area of Ysgol Glan Ceubal!</p>	<p>None of them. What you are proposing does not support Welsh-medium education in the city of Cardiff. You only consider the English schools.</p>
<p>See above. Why not expand the Glan Ceubal catchment area to include the whole of Llandaf North?</p>	<p>See above. You should aim to ensure that all schools have a catchment area that ensures the same number of pupils in each school, so that all schools have the same funding to provide the same standard of education for all pupils in the city.</p>
<p>There is already a surplus of places in Welsh medium schools in the area. This surplus means a number of years in local schools are undersubscribed. This causes huge funding issues. To add the equivalent of an additional schools worth of places would disadvantage Welsh medium schools and cause more to have deficit budgets. The proposals do not consider Ysgol Glan Ceubal which already has a couple of undersubscribed classes creating a deficit budget issue for many years to come. These effects are never temporary, an undersubscribed year group carries a funding issue for 7 years. The LA will not allow YGC to mitigate by having mix year groups. The LA is failing to look holistically at Welsh Medium education. By shrinking English availability and attempting to force pupils into Welsh medium they will do more damage. The growth of Welsh medium needs to be by choice. It also won't help Welsh medium as a whole in Cardiff to have Welsh schools fail through funding issues. Creating competition among Welsh medium schools for pupils, just to remain viable,</p>	<p>There is already a surplus of places in Welsh medium schools in the area. This surplus means a number of years in local schools are undersubscribed. This causes huge funding issues. To add the equivalent of an additional schools worth of places would disadvantage Welsh medium schools and cause more to have deficit budgets. The proposals do not consider Ysgol Glan Ceubal which already has a couple of undersubscribed classes creating a deficit budget issue for many years to come. These effects are never temporary, an undersubscribed year group carries a funding issue for 7 years. The LA will not allow YGC to mitigate by having mix year groups. The LA is failing to look holistically at Welsh Medium education. By shrinking English availability and attempting to force pupils into Welsh medium they will do more damage. The growth of Welsh medium needs to be by choice. It also won't help Welsh medium as a whole in Cardiff to have Welsh schools fail through funding issues. Creating competition among Welsh medium schools for pupils, just to remain viable, is going to damage Welsh Medium, especially when it puts schools within clusters against eachother. The LA already has a funding crisis for Cardiff schools for this year and the next 2. It should be focusing on consolidating pupils into existing schools to maximise efficiencies and minimise deficit budgets. Where would the LA find funding to mitigate the deficits? Even Neil Hardee</p>

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<p>Increase current catchment areas for other welsh schools in the immediate area</p>	<p>It would lead to fair funding opportunities in other local schools, seeing all children benefit from a fully funded school, rather than an underfunded classroom effecting them for the period of time they attend that school.</p>
<p>Less places and increase Ysgol Glan Ceubal catchment</p>	<p>They will have more funding</p>
<p>Redo the consultation considering Ysgol Glan Ceubal</p>	<p>Welsh medium schools won't be fighting each other for limited pupils</p>
<p>Decrease the Mynydd Bychan catchment and transfer that area to the Ysgol Glan Ceubal catchment, i.e. Mynachdy Road area</p>	<p>A fairer catchment for Ysgol Glan Ceubal will reduce surplus at the school and improve funding and learning quality and opportunities. Mynydd Bychan would be able to stay at it current location and maintain the places available.</p>
<p>Think about Ysgol Glan Ceubal</p>	<p>Pupils at Ysgol Glan Ceubal are important</p>

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My children currently attend ysgol glan ceubal, that currently has under subscribed classes which is impacting the schools budget. By opening a larger welsh school in very close proximity will again make the numbers at glan ceubal depleay, further more effecting budget and impacting the school, pupils, teachers and the community. Glan ceubal currently cuts off its catchment half way through llandaff north. By furthering the catchment you could increase glan ceubal numbers and reduce the need for mynach bychan to be such a big site. By closing down two english speaking schools you are forcing peoples hand with the welsh laungage rather than it being choice, it being enjoyed. h

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A completely new building for the expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. I do not see why the school has to go for second best option which is refurbished 100 year old buildings which are on cramped sites surrounded by minimal green space. Other school expansions etc in Cardiff have been in the form of a brand new school buildings. The existing school building could be sold for redevelopment into housing as it sits within a mainly residential area. This money could then be used as additional funding to the new build. Also why have Companies House not been approached as there are big areas of this site which are massively under utilised i.e. the multi storey car park. The Council have shown it can buy sites from the government namely the former tax offices in Llanishen.

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Do you wish to make any additional comments?

Respondents were given the opportunity to leave any further comments they had in relation to the consultation.

These comments were then grouped into themes; these themes along with example comments can be viewed below / overleaf:

Theme	No.	%	Example Comments
Welsh medium provision	21	40.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I very much agree with the expansion of Welsh medium education. There is also a large demand for it locally. The move to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan into the Allensbank site makes a lot of sense in order to achieve this, particularly as rolls have fallen. It's sad for Allensbank and I sympathise with feelings of children, parents, staff but it should be treated as a positive, progressive move, looking to the future.</li> <li>It is my belief that this "plan" to close Allensbank Primary School has been on-going for many years. I do not believe that there is such a large demand for places in a Welsh Medium School that English Medium schools have to suffer.</li> <li>There is not enough high Welsh school nor even enough Welsh speaking teachers. Promote Welsh language through lessons but keep the school as they are.</li> <li>I'd like to know how you consider massive changes such as doubling capacity in a Welsh school without considering the implications for the Welsh school next to it? The county has a duty to support their Welsh schools, this does not support or even consider the impact on Glan Ceubal.</li> </ul>
Negative impact on school staff / pupils / families	14	26.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I hate to see my son anxious and not know what to tell him.</li> <li>I don't think it's fair for the children in Allensbank, it will be a massive disruption, they have been through alot with the pandemic, the scaffolding we have had up for years, we are nearly sorted with the school almost finished with the scaffolding and we just hand the school over to another school, not fair at all.</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I am highly concerned that these proposals adversely affect Allensbank pupils and staff above all others. Allensbank is a successful and diverse school which truly reflects the local community, and which was recognised by Estyn as being good in all areas in their most recent report. The school has also had to endure not only the challenges of Covid, but the upheaval of many years of building work which is still ongoing. To now find out that the building work will benefit another school rather than the pupils and staff who have had to live through the huge disruption this work has caused feels as if the Local Authority has a total disregard for the well-being of pupils and staff members from Allensbank, the vast majority of whom have worked at Allensbank school for at least 12 years and in many cases significantly longer. I understand that there is a political agenda to increase Welsh education, however, I feel that in this case, the proposals have been drawn up without any actual regard for the diverse community that Allensbank serves. Parents who choose Allensbank are not suddenly going to choose Welsh Education instead and in my opinion, there isn't the demand for such a significant increase in Welsh medium education that the proposals allow for. I also have concerns about the parking in the area if Mynydd Bychan moves onto the Allensbank site. The road is resident parking only and as such already gets congested at the beginning and end of the school day. If it becomes a Welsh school, pupils will come from a much wider catchment area and are therefore more likely to be driven to school causing even more congestion. Has any study been carried out into the impact that this increased traffic will have on the local residents?</li> </ul>
School subscription issues	11	21.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St Monica's children require more space - if the English-speaking provision of option 1 or 2 had that site, it would be best to open up the playground as it's not good right now.</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The issues with under populated schools in the area are longstanding. In 2004 St Monica's moved to the current site as Gladstone was under subscribed and we needed a new building. The issue was broached a few years ago but the consultation process didn't bring out any changes. It is essential that the issue of small schools struggling to balance their budgets is addressed and options 1 and 2 both ensure that this significant issue is addressed successfully.</li> </ul>
Equality for all languages and cultures	10	19.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a ridiculous idea and only benefits Welsh speakers who tend to be higher earners and pushing locals out of the area.</li> <li>Enforcing the Welsh language in people when there is no desire or apparently even enough teachers, does nothing to better Wales or improve to futures of Welsh children. Please support better education for all. All children deserve the same chance, please stop extra funding to just Welsh medium schools.</li> </ul>
School budget / funding issues	8	15.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council need to increase funding without disrupting schools.</li> <li>Fund the schools properly!!! Stop over working your teachers.</li> </ul>
Allensbank should not relocate	8	15.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no need to move or decrease Allensbank School.</li> <li>Leave Allensbank as it is.</li> </ul>
Impact on Ysgol Glan ceubal	6	11.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would like the probable negative impact of these proposals on Ysgol Glan Ceubal to be properly assessed before any proposals are agreed.</li> </ul>
Impact on Schools	6	11.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because in all these options the outcome for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan is the same, namely a move to the Allensbank School site. I do not feel I can support any option that closes or moves a school when I am not directly part of it. I support the expansion of Welsh Medium education as Ysgol Mynydd</li> </ul>

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			<p>Bychan which has been over subscribed for a number of years. Parents living more than a mile from the school are making their own decisions and assuming they won't get into the school based on the previous years experiences which should not happen. I strongly believe that the school deserves a brand new building fit for the new curriculum and the 21st Century teaching. The Allensbank site is a listed building and no-one seems to have investigated whether any adaptations to the existing building fabric are possible in order to provide the same, if not improved teaching environment as Ysgol Mynydd Bychan enjoys at present. This is a major risk element to the proposals.</p>
Catchment areas	5	9.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Glan Ceubal catchment could be expanded to include all of Llandaff North to ensure quality local provision is maintained, rather than increasing travel numbers to schools outside of local vicinity.</li> </ul>
Consultation / Proposal comments	5	9.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask via a paper survey to homes, not by assuming that everyone uses social media. This is a flawed methodology.</li> </ul>
Education opportunities must be enhanced	3	5.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the council given any thought to the risk that the increase in pupils places in YMB either a) dilutes the quality of the education in that school (how will the school adapt to going from a high performing small school to needing to be a high performing large school; b) has there been thought given to how YMB might expand not by just through additional pupils within its current demographic cohort but expanding to wider social-economic / ethnic-linguistic diversity?</li> </ul>
St Monica's would benefit from move to Mynydd Bychan site	3	5.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St. Monica's moving to Mynydd Bychan's site would be wonderful for that school community, particularly the addition of the nursery.</li> </ul>
Consider other options	2	3.8	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As I stated previously, I whole heartedly (and I am not alone) believe that there should be equal funding for both English and Welsh speaking schools and that there should be no bias in favour of Welsh speaking schools. Also, I don't see why 2 or 3 schools should suffer disruption just to accommodate this move when they could easily move into the school in Gabalfa. Furthermore, why is a direct swap between Gladstone and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan given as an option? I believe that in the council document published it mentions that it is too far for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to travel, yet it is of an equal distance (or thereabouts) as Allensbank, so therefore there are no grounds that I can see for that to be a reason.</li> </ul>
Other	8	15.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes, get in with building CATHAYS HIGH SCHOOL a new building, the kids there deserve far better than pandering to a group of 60 cyclists, most of who never actually turn up to use the death trap that is currently the velodrome as it is.....2025 isn't far away for the new build to be finished.</li> <li>Please allow all the schools to remain in their respective and present site.</li> </ul>
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>-</b>	

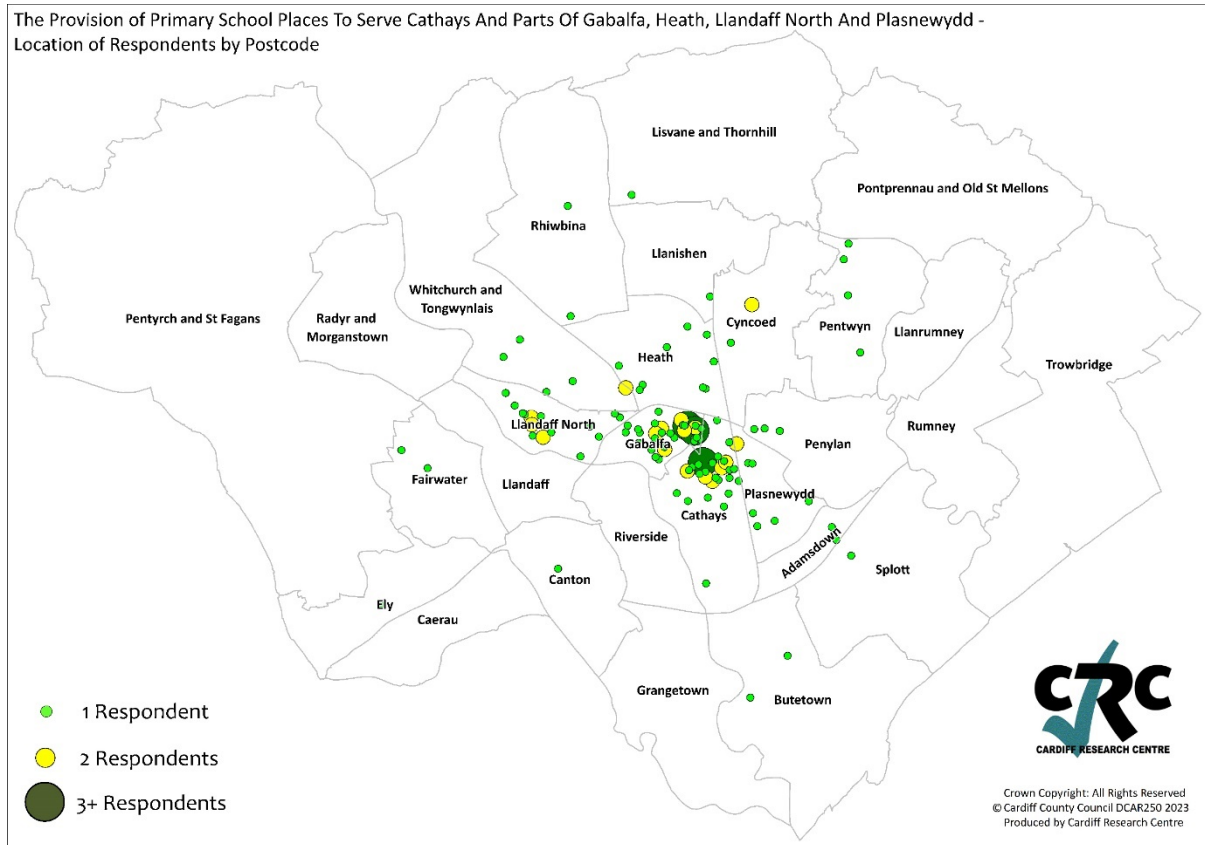
*N.B. Percentages total more than 100% as respondent comments could fall into more than one theme.*



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## About Yourself

Please provide your full postcode below (e.g. CF10 4UW) so we can be sure we hear the views of local residents:



What was your age on your last birthday?

	No.	%
Under 16	6	3.4
16-24	2	1.1
25-34	28	15.8
35-44	83	46.9
45-54	39	22.0
55-64	5	2.8
65-74	8	4.5
75+	3	1.7
Prefer not to say	3	1.7
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100.0</b>

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Are you...?

	No.	%
Female	138	78.0
Male	32	18.1
Non-binary	0	0.0
Prefer not to say	7	4.0
Other	0	0.0
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Do you identify as Trans?

	No.	%
Yes	0	0.0
No	161	94.1
Prefer to self-describe	0	0.0
Prefer not to say	10	5.9
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Do you identify as a disabled person?

	No.	%
Yes	10	5.8
No	154	89.0
Prefer not to say	9	5.2
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>100.0</b>

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Please tick any of the following that apply to you:

	No.	%
Long-standing illness or health condition (e.g. cancer, diabetes, or asthma)	8	21.6
Mental health difficulties	3	8.1
Mobility impairment	3	8.1
Deaf/ Deafened/ Hard of hearing	2	5.4
Learning impairment/ difficulties	0	0.0
Visual impairment	0	0.0
Wheelchair user	0	0.0
Other	10	27.0
Prefer not to say	15	40.5
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>-</b>

*N.B. Percentages total more than 100% as respondents could select more than one option.*

What is your ethnic group?

*Where the term 'British' is used, this refers to any of the four home nations of Wales, England, Northern Ireland and Scotland, or any combination of these.*

	No.	%
White - Welsh/English/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	97	56.1
White - Irish	0	0.0
White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0	0.0
White - Any other white background	11	6.4
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups - White & Asian	0	0.0
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups - White and Black Caribbean	2	1.2
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups - White and Black African	0	0.0
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups - Any other	0	0.0
Asian/Asian Welsh/British - Chinese	3	1.7
Asian/Asian Welsh/British - Bangladeshi	6	3.5
Asian/Asian Welsh/British – Pakistani	8	4.6
Asian/Asian Welsh/British - Indian	3	1.7
Asian/Asian Welsh/British - Any other	1	0.6
Black/African/Caribbean/Black Welsh/British - African	10	5.8
Black/African/Caribbean/Black Welsh/British – Caribbean	0	0.0
Black/African/Caribbean/Black Welsh/British - Any other	0	0.0
Arab	4	2.3
Any other ethnic group	12	6.9
Prefer not to say	16	9.2
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>100.0</b>

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## APPENDIX A - Formal Responses

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Joint Response from County Councillors for Gabalfa Ward, Cllrs Rhys Taylor and Ashley Wood

- make changes to how English-medium community primary schools are organised, retaining an equivalent number of places or a marginal reduction in places compared to the existing arrangements, and
- expand Welsh-medium primary school provision at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.

We are responding in our capacity as local members for the Gabalfa ward.

### **General comments**

We welcome the commitment to expand the provision of Welsh medium education in the community to both meet unmet demand and ensure that all families and children can access a Welsh medium education should they choose. In addition to known unmet demand, we also know that families within catchment actively seek places in other schools, due to the known capacity issues at Mynydd Bychan, as demonstrated by Table 10 in the report.

We also recognise the urgent need to address the number of surplus places in English medium primary schools and the impact that has on school budgets, and the resources available to support teaching and learning. We recognise these funding pressures are both due to the school funding formula, and ongoing pressures on public sector finances. We strongly believe that this process of re-balancing places must be done in a sustainable way that future-proofs school places, and enhances the provision that schools provide to their pupils.

We also wish to echo comments we made in our response to the consultation in 2019 regarding the process the council has taken. Whilst we acknowledge the outcome of the 2019 consultation and the feedback and solutions brought forward by the community, we remain disappointed that the council has opted to only use a statutory consultation process, rather than informally engaging with schools and their communities at an earlier stage to identify solutions. This has caused significant anxieties among parents at local schools and has again left many, particularly within the Allensbank community, feeling that their school is not valued.

### **Comments on the Options**

We do not support the formal closure of any school. The schools proposed for closure are established, respected schools that provide a distinctive education for their pupils, particularly, from our knowledge, in the case of Allensbank Primary School.

Our preference would be to explore federation of schools, allowing for the individual ethos and approaches to teaching and learning to be retained and shared, whilst still re-allocating and re-balancing school places in the English-medium sector. We

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recognise that this still poses concerns for the communities of those schools with respects to staffing and governance, but feel that protecting the identity and educational provision of those schools is important.

In respect to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, we do share concerns about the budgetary impact of transferring to a significantly larger building. Whilst we recognise data in relation to oversubscription in recent years and data in relation to pupil enrolment in comparison to their catchment area (Table 10) suggests an immediate increase in pupils on roll, there will be a period of growth for the school in reaching 2FE. This will have staffing and therefore resource implications in what is already a challenging financial environment for schools. It is essential that the council actively supports Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to increase the numbers on roll to minimise, insofar as possible, the resource implications of the relocation of the school, as part of its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

The consultation document does not outline any capital investment the council proposes to make in the fabric of the affected school buildings. This poses questions particularly in respect of the current Allensbank Primary School building and the constraints of the building as a Grade 2 listed building. More reassurance is needed about the adaptations that would be possible, but also ensuring that enhancements are made to all assets so no school inherits premises that will incur ongoing significant maintenance costs. It is also essential that construction works are completed as quickly as possible as to minimise disruption for all pupils, but particularly those at Allensbank and Gladstone who have faced prolonged maintenance works over recent years.

We support the intention of increasing nursery places and providing continuity for pupils in both Welsh medium and English medium settings as part of the re-balancing of school places in the area.

### **Other options posed to us by the community**

Once again, we share the frustration felt within the community that the council has ruled out, or failed to fully explore, the option of new-build accommodation in creating a sustainable, flexible solution for future growth. We are also disappointed that no capital investment has been indicated as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century schools programme to deliver excellence in our school buildings.

Some residents have advocated for the re-location of Mynydd Bychan on the Gladstone site and the re-location of Gladstone Primary School to the Allensbank site. They feel this would allow substantial growth for Mynydd Bychan without the same resource implications as transferring to the Allensbank site. We do however recognise that this would limit the future growth of Welsh medium education, if the current configuration of the current Gladstone building were to be maintained. It is frustrating however that the reasons for this option being discounted are not outlined in the consultation document.

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**Further comments**

More broadly, the consultation focusses on built assets, but does not appear to engage with any urgency the wider question and role of school catchments in re-balancing places prior to the re-allocation of places.

Page 80 of the consultation document suggests a phased expansion, and we would welcome clarity that means phased expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan as the sole user of the current Allensbank School site, and not that schools will be split across sites as posed in the 2021 consultation. As with the 2019 consultation, we do not feel that operating schools over multiple sites is beneficial for any school.

**Notes**

*Cllr Taylor has been a local authority appointed governor at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan since 2016 and was reappointed in 2021.*

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County Councillor for Cathays Ward, Cllr Chris Weaver

I've not selected a particular option as supported or not supported, all have benefits and opportunities as well as risks. There are a few points that I'd like to be considered as part of the decision making, based on the discussions we've had at Gladstone Primary Governing Body.

The Governing Body know that many parents really value the culture and ethos of the school and the hard work and excellence of the staff, and understandably these proposals have created some concern that this could be disrupted. We do understand the need for school organisation to provide appropriate numbers of places for both Welsh and English medium for local families, but this is obviously a sensitive and challenging time for staff, parents, and the whole school community.

I would like to emphasise that when considering the best option, the Council should refer to the aims of 'Cardiff 2030', in particular in closing the attainment gap. The EM primary schools in this area share similar demographic traits, with high levels of pupils eligible for free school meals, with English as an additional language with multiple different first languages spoken by families at the schools, and all experience a mobile and transient pupil cohort. I believe these factors should be taken into account in determining the best option, with a clear outcome from this process to be to improve even further the education offer to those pupils. This is exactly the cohort of pupils we need to be investing in to close that attainment gap, and this should be a crucial factor in deciding which option is best – and necessary resource should be made available to ensure enhancement for these pupils can be delivered. I can see that locating either one LEA school or two federated LEA schools on the Gladstone site could bring some opportunities to economies of scale and efficiency in allocating resources that could support some of this enhancement.

I'd also like to emphasise that this process is unsettling and concerning for staff at schools that may be going to federate or amalgamate, and everything possible must be done to support staff welfare during this process. I would like to see the most simple and clear process possible should schools federate or merge, to give staff the greatest and quickest certainty about their situation that is possible.

Gladstone is an excellent school, as evidenced by the most recent Estyn visit, with an inclusive and welcoming culture. Parents of children at the school have expressed their strong support for the school's culture and ethos. If federation or amalgamation are chosen as the preferred option I hope the history and ethos of Gladstone and Allensbank can be reflected in the future school(s), and acknowledged in some way, to reflect their longstanding and important presence in the lives of so many families in this area, and to reassure parents of pupils currently at the schools that the very positive, welcoming, successful cultures and practice of the schools will continue.



Estyn - His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

## **Estyn response to the proposed changes to primary school provision serving Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd**

### **Introduction**

This report has been prepared by His 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 options.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer.

### **Summary/ Conclusion**

The proposal is by Cardiff council

It is consulting on three options to reorganise schools in the area

#### **Option 1**

- Amalgamate Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools:
  - Formally Close Allensbank Primary School
  - Formally Close Gladstone Primary School
  - Establish a new 420 place (2FE) English-medium Primary School with nursery on the current shared Gladstone Primary School / St Monica's CiW Primary School site
- Transfer St Monica's CiW Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site and establish nursery provision at the school
- Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places (0.9FE) to 420 places (2FE) and increase the number of nursery places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 64 to 96

#### **Option 2**

- Co-locate Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools on a shared site:
  - Transfer Allensbank Primary School to the current shared Gladstone Primary School / St Monica's CiW Primary School site

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- Reduce the capacity of Allensbank Primary School from 315 places (1.5FE) to 210 places (1FE)
- Reduce the age range of Allensbank Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11 by discontinuing nursery provision at the school
- Increase the number of nursery places at Gladstone Primary School from 64 to 96
- Transfer St Monica's CiW Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site and establish nursery provision at the school
- Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places (0.9FE) to 420 places (2FE), and increase the number of nursery places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 64 to 96

### **Option 3**

- Increase the number of nursery places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 64 to 96
- Transfer Allensbank Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site
- Reduce the capacity of Allensbank Primary School from 315 places (1.5FE) to 192 places (0.9FE)
- Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places (0.9FE) to 420 places (2FE)

It is Estyn's view that each of the three options are likely to at least maintain the standard of education provision in the area.

### **Description and benefits**

The council has provided a reasonable rationale for suggesting the changes detailed in the three options. This is mainly to provide an appropriate balance of Welsh-medium and English-medium school places. A previous consultation showed that there was support overall for the expansion of Welsh medium education, although other issues were raised. The current options address the issues that informed the earlier consultation.

The council has provided suitably detailed descriptions of the options, highlighting the similarities and differences between each one. It has also appropriately provided key dates for the statutory procedures relating to the proposal and indicated that the proposed changes would take effect from September 2025. The council properly makes reference to the fact that the option to close two schools, and to establish a new school, would require the establishment of a temporary governing body ahead of the opening of the newly opened, larger school.

The council has clearly set out the benefits for the different parts of each option. It has also provided the common disadvantages associated with each aspect of option one and option two and separately provided the potential disadvantages of option three. The council considers that overall, the options would include the benefits of

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having a better balance between the number of places available and the number of children wanting places for both English-medium and Welsh-medium provision, support schools to become more financially sustainable making better use of their resources and allow all of the school sites to stay as school sites so there is enough space for future changes in the population. The disadvantages include possible increase in traffic congestion, closing schools valued by the local community and option 3 would result in a marginal reduction in the number of English-medium community primary school places.

The council has suitably identified the main risks associated with the options. These include the council not having enough places if there is an increased demand for English medium education, not enough demand for Welsh medium education thereby resulting in too many surplus places and potential disruption during the transition period. The council appear to have suitable mitigation processes in place to manage these risks.

The council has considered a few different options. These include considering alternative site options within the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan catchment area, locating Welsh-medium provision on the shared Gladstone and St. Monica's CIW site with English-medium provision on the Allensbank site, expansion of the existing Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site and reorganisation of provision on the Albany Primary School site. It has provided reasonable explanations as to why these options have been discounted.

The council has suitably presented information on the impact of the options on learner travel arrangements. It states that it has been committed to ensuring that every school in Cardiff has an 'active travel plan' which identifies actions by the school to support and encourage active travel where appropriate and identifies improvements needed on-site and off-site to facilitate active journeys. All four schools included in the options have active travel plans in place for their current sites. The council asserts that officers will work with these schools to develop their plans to suit any change in circumstances. The council further mentions that there are no plans to change its policy on the transport of children to and from school. Where pupils must go to school in a new location, their entitlement to free home to school transport would be re-assessed from the new location.

The council has provided a useful table showing the distances between all the schools considered in the options. It confirms the council's statement that the maximum distances between the school sites is approximately 0.5 miles and that should any of the schools be relocated to an alternative site, the maximum increase in home to school travel distance for current pupils is therefore 0.5 miles.

The council has provided a detailed analysis of data that includes the numbers of pupils on roll in each of the affected schools and also historical numbers and forecasts for the next few years. This data demonstrates that there are significant numbers of surplus places overall in the English medium schools which are forecast

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to continue over the next few years. The council states that 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. In addition, the council states that it also wants 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 accurately states that the options would have a positive impact on the Welsh language with an increase in the number of Welsh-medium primary school places available at primary age. It highlights the council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and points out that outcome 1 and outcome 2 refer to more nursery children and more reception class children receiving their education through the medium of Welsh.

The council has considered the financial costs of each option and any potential savings. It states that funding to support the reorganisation of English-medium provision would be made available from council resources. Grant funding from the Welsh Government to reorganise Welsh medium primary school provision would allow for investment in school buildings to support increased intakes. There would be no savings to the council as a result of any of the proposed changes. Any efficiency savings would allow for funding to be allocated more effectively in each school's budget.

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

The council has provided the consortium's view of quality and standards at each school as well as the most recent Estyn inspection outcomes and states that standards at the four schools included in the proposed changes are good. It affirms that it 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 council concludes that it does not expect the options to have any negative impact on the quality of standards of education, the delivery of the Foundation Phase or each key stage of education at any of the schools or the ALN provision based at Allensbank Primary School. It says that it would work with the leadership of each of the schools to make sure everyone at the school understands their responsibility for helping to improve and sustain high performance, care, support, and guidance and plan changes carefully so that leadership and governance are not disrupted. This seems fair and reasonable, however no further detail is provided to support how this would be accomplished

The council has considered the impact of the options on pupils receiving free school meals, pupils with English as an additional language, minority ethnic pupils and pupils with additional learning needs. It has presented data that shows the numbers of these pupils in each of the schools. For each of these groups of pupils, it reasonably concludes that there is no information available that suggests that the options would have a negative effect on provision. It has also provided a single

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impact assessment, an equality impact assessment and a community impact assessment which all appear to be relevant and valid

The council has suitably considered the potential disruption to pupils in implementing the proposed changes. A project lead officer would work with the governing bodies of the schools to develop an investment programme that would include transition arrangements and support the wellbeing of pupils and staff. More disruptive work would be undertaken during the school holidays wherever possible. The proposed expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would be phased and parts of the two buildings could be closed to staff whilst works are undertaken

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Julie Morgan, Member of the Senedd for Cardiff North

I am writing in response to the consultation on the plans to reorganise primary school provision to serve Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd. There has clearly been an increase in demand for Welsh language education and it is the policy of the Welsh Government to try to meet that demand and to try to reach a million Welsh speakers by 2050. It is therefore understandable that plans are being considered to allow for an increase in the numbers of children able to attend Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. It is very unfortunate that it is not possible to expand the school on the current site but it seems clear that there is insufficient space to accommodate extra classes there.

I have considered the 3 options and there are some concerns about each of them. All of them involve Ysgol Mynydd Bychan transferring to the current Allensbank Primary School site and increase from 192 to 420 places. It is to be welcomed that Ysgol Mynydd Bychan could expand to that size but there is concern that they would be moving into an older building which is listed and therefore they may be prevented from carrying out the improvements they would wish to see. I am aware that permission has not been granted in the past for doors which open to the outside area and I understand that CADW will not now consider specific plans until after the consultation ends. There is also concern that the outside space will not be adequate for the increased size of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.

All of the options also involve moving Allensbank school from its current premises. Option 1 involves Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools amalgamating to establish a new 420 place English-medium School with nursery provision on the current site shared by Gladstone primary School and St Monica's Primary School. This seems to be the option preferred by Allensbank School, if they do have to move. The Allensbank building has been clothed in scaffolding and had a huge amount of repair work going on for the last four years. Children have often had to be moved to a different site within the building as the work was going on. This has naturally been difficult for the staff and children but they had hoped that at least at the end of it , they would have benefitted from the improvements. That benefit will now be lost to them, when they move out.

Option 2 would involve Allensbank children moving to the site currently occupied by St Monica's Primary School but there are concerns that the space would not be large enough for all the Allensbank children so some may have to be accommodated in Gladstone school and this does not seem desirable.

I am aware that some parents feel that by offering the three options, the Welsh language is being preferred over English. I do support the promotion of the Welsh language and it is obvious that there is a high demand for it. However, in Allensbank school, they have successfully improved their ranking over the years and have worked very well with a large number of children from various ethnic communities

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and between them, the children speak over 30 different languages. It is important that the success of the school is not diluted by these proposed moves.

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[NEU response to the consultation on Primary school places to serve Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd](#)

## **About The National Education Union**

The National Education Union is the largest education union in Europe, and represents teachers, lecturers, leaders, and support staff across the school and FE sectors in Wales. The NEU believes we must value education by valuing educators.

## **Our response**

NEU Cardiff District welcomes the opportunity to respond to this significant schools' reorganisation consultation. As we have members in each of the schools affected by the proposals, we do not think it is appropriate for us to advocate any specific option. We consider the schools themselves and their Governing Bodies to be well placed to convey their responses to each option.

There are, however, several points we would wish to make as an over-arching response to the consultation as a whole for your consideration, especially in terms of the impact on staff and continuity of employment.

The consultation document outlines the case for change based on educational and financial grounds. We are pleased to see that the good standard of education in all schools under consideration has been recognised. While we appreciate that many of the proposals offer enhanced opportunities for collaboration and professional development for staff and potentially expanded learning opportunities for children, it has been noted by our members that these proposals for change come at a time when all of the schools have recently emerged from the COVID pandemic, and its implications for dwindling staff resilience and an increase in the needs of pupils and families are continuing. It has also been stated that staff in some settings have been on a heightened and rapid school improvement journey throughout the period, resulting in very positive ESTYN reports, in the hope that this would lead to a secure and settled future for all. These staff now report feeling very vulnerable and the work that they do, undervalued. We would expect those proposing change to be mindful of the context in which the change is being suggested, and to ensure appropriate support for staff is put in place at every stage, should plans be progressed.

We are pleased that Cardiff LA has a well-publicised commitment to no compulsory redundancies wherever possible, but we note also the fact that there is no stated possibility of the direct transfer of staff should any of the schools be closed, leaving the sustained employment of staff at risk. We will provide a more detailed response to this issue once the outcome to this current stage of consultation is known, but at this point, we would expect the employer/s to ensure that the jobs and livelihoods of existing staff who wish to be employed in any new configuration of provision are protected and staff are as far as possible safeguarded from detriment during any



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restructuring process. We look forward to working closely with the LA/Diocese/Governing Bodies to ensure this is the case.

It is also a fact that these school sites have been subject to significant and ongoing building repairs over recent years, and staff have expressed disappointment that they may not get to enjoy the improved buildings following the years working in disrupted and noisy conditions. There is also concern that if plans are progressed, this would mean further periods of prolonged disruption whilst the school accommodation is further adjusted to suit the needs of any of the proposed configurations. There is also the potential for such works to impede the further educational development of the schools in the short term.

Indeed, the impact of merely beginning a consultation on amending educational provision has been shown in the past to have the potential to disrupt the improvement journey of the schools involved, due to the creation of uncertainty. Such uncertainty may cause parents to choose to send their children to other schools where the future is known and will not be subject to the same uncertainty/upheaval. This could impact on reception intake numbers, but also on pupils who currently attend, particularly the Allensbank and Gladstone schools, where the proposals involve moving site and changes to staffing structures and school leadership.

There are fears that this would spark a negative chain reaction of decreasing pupil numbers leading to an exacerbation of the financial challenges based in the short term, leading to a less sustainable future for English Medium provision overall. If families leave the catchment area, this would lead to a period of financial instability whether there is no change or a federation or amalgamation. What protections could the LA put in place during any transition period to counter the impact of such potential difficulties?

Arrangements for any period of change/transition must be well planned and properly supported to ensure that the current educational improvements are not lost, or the future prospects for all of the schools being viewed as less positive in the eyes of external stakeholders such as the Central South Consortium or Estyn. This would be hard for all staff who have made such efforts to achieve their current good ratings.

We are pleased that the proposals retain all of the buildings currently in use, and that their future use will be as primary schools. These buildings are key not just to the education of the children they serve, but also to their families and the communities they represent. In areas where there are great degrees of linguistic and ethnic diversity such as this, the importance of welcoming in the community to schools must not be underestimated in celebrating diversity and building a sense of community cohesion. Schools such as St Monica's, Allensbank and Gladstone have generations of experience in doing this, and any proposal for change must consider how this may be impacted either positively or negatively.

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The NEU acknowledges the equal status of both Welsh and English as official languages of Wales. With regards to the proposals for expanding Welsh Medium provision in the area, we have the following observations.

We appreciate that the further promotion of WM education in this area will not be possible until a suitable site is identified, and we appreciate that additional funding will only be available and ring-fenced to the expansion of WM education as a result of National policy that Cardiff LA have committed to. The two areas that will need further consideration are around the current identified drop in birthrate that is impacting reception class entry numbers, including those at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan whose reception class currently has vacancies, and the drive towards achieving a million speakers of Welsh by 2050. NEU Cymru believes that the plans to meet the Welsh Government's target of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050 can only be met if we support the learning of Welsh for everyone in the education workforce. We would encourage the proposals to include consideration of developing any opportunities for the Welsh language skills of those beyond WM setting in this area on the use of Welsh in education, as we see the opportunities for training of the workforce as critical to Cardiff schools playing their part in helping the LA achieve their targets in this area.

We also believe that careful consideration of whether a two-form WM school rather than a 1.5 is the best in the medium term to ensure that too many surplus places are not created, leading to financial pressures being experienced, especially in light of birthrate trends. Indeed, it may be possible in the early years of any expansion, where numbers are not at full complement, any surplus spaces may be used for the development of Welsh Language skills for the wider education workforce in Wales, and the local community.

We welcome the potential for the ethnic diversity profile of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to be improved, but due to the similarity of addresses of those who attend that school and those who attend Allensbank noted in the consultation, we expect that this will not be changed merely by the relocation of the schools. Further work, such as that being undertaken with Minority Ethnic groups as outlined in the WESP will be key to any improvements.

We were pleased that the levels of pupil mobility have been included in the background to the proposals. We would expect that a sufficient amount of pupil places be provided, particularly in the case of St Monica's, to accommodate the necessary flexibility required.

Although there are potential savings identified in the option of federation/ closer collaboration between Gladstone and Allensbank, further assurance would need to be given that this proposal will not mean a 'half-way house' along the route to the potential eventual closure of one or both schools involved in a future proposal. If this assurance is given, it may make this option more attractive to consultees, as it

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retains two well-known Cardiff schools, steeped in the history and development of the community of Cathays, and allows both unique identities to persist.

Angela Jardine  
Branch and District Secretary  
Cardiff NEU  
June 2023

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Diocese of Llandaff

***Do you support Option 1? Yes***

The Christian faith ethos of the school is proving to be very attractive to both Christians and those of other faiths. Many of the current year groups in St Monica's are oversubscribed.

Parental choice should be treated equitably and therefore increasing the number of places available in a faith school is a positive move to address a demonstrably high demand for places.

The refurbished early years provision at St Monica's would be well utilised by a new school and nursery.

Current outdoor areas are totally inadequate for the size of the current school.

Current accommodation would not be able to accommodate the move to universal free school meals as the current kitchen facilities are totally inadequate.

***Do you support Option 2? No***

The current site presents too many restrictions as a split site. The current disproportionate outdoor area size restricts the provision available to children for outdoor play and learning in St Monica's which is not equitable for children.

***Do you support Option 3? No***

The current site of St Monica's is restricted by the availability of outdoor space and inadequate facilities for the provision of universal free school meals.

A demonstrably high demand for places is indicative of the need to extend the provision of places for parents wishing to choose a faith option for their child's schooling. This should be treated in a fair and equitable way and faith provision expanded as an offer for parents.

***Do you wish to make any additional comments?***

St Monica's should only be moved on condition that the new building is reviewed for, decorative condition, furnishings and facilities at no cost to the school. This would include the establishment of a suitable worship space in the school and the relocation of St Monica (statute) from the present location to the new site.

*Paul Booth, Director of Mission Llandaff Diocese*

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Allensbank Primary School – Governing Body

Firstly we have to note the distress that these proposals have caused and are still causing to the staff members of Allensbank who have worked tirelessly for many years to improve the experience of pupils in the school, continuing to work with their customary dedication through the recent strains of Covid and extensive building works.

Having endured the massive inconvenience of on-going alterations and construction works, to now be told that others will gain the benefits feels like a complete betrayal.

This is not a failing school as evidenced by the most recent Estyn report:

‘All staff at Allensbank Primary School work diligently to create a happy, caring and inclusive ethos at the school. The positive and supportive relationships between pupils and with all adults are a strength of the school. Leaders and staff work skilfully to create effective provision for pupils who need additional support. They use a range of approaches, which impact very positively on pupils’ achievement and their sense of wellbeing. The headteacher provides clear strategic direction alongside a dedicated team of staff who show a strong commitment towards supporting all of their pupils to achieve and thrive.’

To continue with less partisan objections, it is our opinion that the whole consultation exercise is flawed for the following reasons:

- There was no discussion at all with the concerned parties. i.e. Allensbank Primary School, Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, Gladstone Primary School and St. Monica’s Primary School to explore options before the document was published. This would have been a sensible preliminary process to discuss thoughts and opinions.
- The options suggested do not include all possible options, only those which result in Ysgol Mynydd Bychan being relocated to the Allensbank site with all renovation having been completed.

The most obvious and not dissimilar option omitted is that of moving Gladstone Primary School to the newly renovated Allensbank site. The number of pupils on roll at Gladstone is fewer than the number on roll at Allensbank so this would result in disruption for fewer pupils. The building would then be close to capacity, (whereas if Ysgol Mynydd Bychan were to move to the Allensbank site they would initially and for the foreseeable future have to deal with the problems of too large a building).

This would then allow Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to move to the Gladstone site which is actually more central within its catchment area

There are currently 203 pupils on roll at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan with 181 of these being from within the catchment area. Gladstone has 210 places but sufficient

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accommodation for up to 270 places, if resource rooms were to be assigned as classrooms. This would therefore allow an expansion for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan by up to nearly 90 pupils from within catchment with none of the problems of too large premises.

If, and given the decline in Welsh speakers over the last 10 years this remains a big uncertainty, there was a need for further expansion there would be the possibility of extending into the St. Monica's site and St Monica's being relocated elsewhere. This option would also have the benefit of freeing up the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site for development, possibly as a purpose built Welsh school or possibly to ease the current accommodation shortage in Cardiff.

Alternatively St. Monica's could, as proposed, be moved to the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site leaving the current St Monica's site vacant for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan's future possible expansion. Again this would avoid the difficulty for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan of an over large building in the immediate future.

Regarding the options as laid out in these proposals, (none of which are welcome):

We consider options 2 and 3 to be totally unacceptable whereas option 1 is just undesirable and ill conceived.

Finally, while we appreciate the aims of the government's Welsh language strategy and are aware of the need for extra capacity in Welsh medium schools in Cardiff we are concerned and disappointed that these proposals if implemented would be to the detriment of some of the poorer, more vulnerable and more disadvantaged children in our community.

*Kevin Jacobs,  
(Chair of Governors, Allensbank Primary School)  
on behalf of the Governing Body*

Allensbank Primary School – Headteacher

***Do You Support Option 1? No***

None of the proposals are desirable for Allensbank. Option one, however, is the only proposal put forward that provides a level of security for the majority of Allensbank staff.

Option one has caused much distress to a highly dedicated and successful staff who have worked tirelessly to bring about school improvement. With the closure of Allensbank and Gladstone and the establishment of a new school comes the potential for job losses and therefore the impact on staff well-being is not to be underestimated if this option were to be carried forward.

The main objection to this proposal is that at no point has there been any form of discussion with schools as to where it would be best to site this larger school.

The distance between the current Gladstone and Allensbank sites is minimal. Surely then, consideration should have been given to which site would be best suited for this purpose. (I refer to this further within my suggestions for alternative proposals).

***Do You Support Option 2? No***

I consider Option 2 to be unacceptable.

With Allensbank potentially being reduced to a capacity of 210 pupils, it is clear that the school would need to share buildings/outdoor space with Gladstone Primary School. Whilst Allensbank has always had very positive relationships with Gladstone Primary School and would clearly seek to maintain these, there would be concerns around co-location. The burden of sharing facilities on a site that already has a limited amount of outdoor learning space would lead to difficult to manage health and safety and pupil safeguarding arrangements.

The reduction in pupil numbers and removal of Nursery provision would also have a catastrophic impact on Allensbank Primary School in terms of funding and the ability to attract new intake within Reception classes each year.

***Do You Support Option 3? No***

I consider Option 3 to be unacceptable.

This option would lead to a large reduction in pupil numbers and therefore reduce significantly the funding received by Allensbank Primary School.

The funding for a single form entry school is currently not sufficient to make small schools financially viable. The result of this proposal would be that Allensbank would

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sustain a huge financial loss of income. This would therefore ultimately mean a lack of job security for all current staff at Allensbank.

***Would you like to suggest any changes or alternatives to the proposed options?***

None of the 3 proposals are in anyway desirable to Allensbank.

All three proposals are based on the assumption that Allensbank Primary School should move from its current building.

A clear alternative to this proposal would be to close Gladstone Primary School and Allensbank Primary School whilst accommodating a new English-Medium school on the Allensbank site.

The Allensbank building is able to comfortably accommodate a 2FE Primary School whilst also allowing provision for staff parking.

There are fewer pupils on roll at Gladstone and so there would be disruption for a smaller number of pupils in terms of them being relocated.

The Gladstone building would comfortably house Ysgol Mynydd Bychan with the option to expand further into the St Monica's site if needed. It would also position Ysgol Mynydd Bychan more centrally within its catchment area.

***If so, how would these changes be of greater benefit to children and young people in these communities, than Options 1, 2 or 3?***

The siting of Gladstone and Allensbank Primary Schools on the current Allensbank site would mean a disrupted education for fewer pupils.

The positioning of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan on the Gladstone site would allow for easier access for parents, particularly from the more southernly part of their catchment area.

This option also provides the ability for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to grow over time. It minimises the amount of unutilised space within the area until needed, as the separate St Monica's building could easily be utilised by the wider community. Some examples of potential interim use would be for EAL classes for parents within this diverse community, a support Hub for refugees and asylum seekers in need of support or simply a place for community groups to meet thus providing an income for the Local Authority.



***Do you wish to make any additional comments?***

As headteacher at Allensbank Primary School since 2013, I am proud to have led a dedicated team of staff in ensuring that the school meets the needs of pupils from this highly diverse community.

The proposals are being forced on us as a school and community that does not seek change. We would prefer instead to be appropriately funded and resourced in order to continue to meet the needs of our learners.

The school has faced huge challenges in recent years due to the impact of Covid-19 but also the significant building works which have impacted on the everyday life of our school for the past 4 years. Staff have endured all of these pressures whilst remaining steadfastly focused on pupils and the unique ethos of the school. They now face further years of disruption within the building knowing that potentially they will benefit in no way from the improvements to the building. The spending around these building works has been particularly hard to swallow given the fact that Allensbank has been working under severe financial limitations during this period. Scaffolding costs for the building (given that scaffolding was in place for years prior to work commencing) stands at a cost of well over £300,000. Allensbank can only imagine what could have been achieved as a school if this additional Council money had instead been used to address underfunding for the school.

Pupil numbers have declined on a Citywide level and so schools are left fighting to attract pupils. Making Allensbank inviting and appealing to parents is hugely challenging given that buildings have been fully scaffolded externally and the outdoor space severely limited.

Whilst pupil numbers have declined in line with many across the City, our pupil numbers at any one point do not reflect the high levels of mobility and numbers of pupils from across the globe that enter Allensbank very often for their first experience of the British Education system. We were recognised by Estyn in 2020 as being a school that “celebrates the diversity of culture and language of pupils and their families at every opportunity and uses highly effective strategies to support pupils who need to develop their English language skills.” We strongly feel that the Local Authority should be celebrating these successes of the school rather than making us subject to enforced change.

*Jenny Drogan, Headteacher of Allensbank Primary School*

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Allensbank Staff – NEU Union Members

Here is our written response from NEU Union members at Allensbank Primary School in regards to the provision of Primary School places to serve Cathay's, Gabalfa, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd.

**Option 1**

We recognise the benefits of amalgamating Allensbank and Gladstone schools and becoming a 2FE. However, we would like to raise the following comments:

- Gladstone and St Monica's will not be fit for purpose as a 2FE school by September 2025 if this option goes ahead. We feel that our school will be ready for a 2FE school for a smoother transition to amalgamation and have less of an impact on pupils and staff well-being.
- Ysgol Mynydd Bychan whilst currently full will not have a 2FE on September 2025 if current oversubscription figures and 20% drop in birth rate are anything to go by. Therefore, we feel that Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would be better suited on the Gladstone site providing them with ample space and potential room to grow.
- We feel this option would cause congestion in an already busy area with a significant amount of staff, pupils and parents needing access to parking. How would the council overcome this issue in an already notoriously bad for parking availability.
- With the current cost of living crisis, we are concerned that amalgamating schools would have a significant cost implication for families who reuse uniforms yearly and hand me down. How would the council overcome and address this issue for our families?
- There has been a huge impact on all staff's wellbeing, mental and physical health with regards to the prospect of this option as there is a huge uncertainty with regards to our futures and financial security, as even though the number of staff needed would be the same and two schools are being pushed together, we are not guaranteed our role even though the role is there in the new school. We would also like to raise the concern that pupils have been informed via the council that 'All or most of the teachers in the new school are expected to be from Allensbank and Gladstone.' We would be looking to seek clarity on the discrepancy between these two very different viewpoints both of which have been given by the council.
- We have some of the most vulnerable pupils in the LEA, who rely on the familiarity of staff and their surroundings to cope and keep them regulated on a day-to-day basis and the change of location will ultimately have an effect on these pupils.

**Option 2**

We feel strongly that Allensbank being placed on the current St Monica's site right next to Gladstone LEA maintained English medium Primary school, makes no sense and will not benefit Allensbank community as a whole. The reduction of numbers with the

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closure of our current nursery will have a detrimental effect on pupil numbers in the future. How can a smaller Allensbank compete with a Gladstone that is catering from ages 3-11 and has an abundance of space to do this and we feel that this will ultimately lead to Allensbanks full closure.

This option would also mean uncertainty for all staff and their roles due to the closure of the nursery, having a detrimental effect on the wellbeing of staff and pupils.

We have some of the most vulnerable pupils in the LEA, who rely on the familiarity of staff and their surroundings to cope and keep them regulated on a day to day basis and the change of location will ultimately have an effect on these pupils.

### **Option 3**

Whilst on paper this option seems the most straightforward option for all parties involved, we feel that this is another option to set Allensbank up for failure and ultimately close or an eventual amalgamation with Gladstone. Again, the reduction of numbers to a 0.9FE would impact the current pupils on roll at our school as well as our ability to attract potential pupils. This will then have financial consequences for our school which would be catastrophic taking into consideration our current financial situation as a school and would not be sustainable in the longer term.

We have some of the most vulnerable pupils in the LEA, who rely on the familiarity of staff and their surroundings to cope and keep them regulated on a day-to-day basis and the change of location will ultimately have an effect on these pupils.

We would like to propose a fourth option to yourselves where Allensbank remains on its school site and amalgamates with Gladstone to form a new school, as we do see the benefits of amalgamating the two schools and it would limit some of our concerns listed above, along with relieving some anxieties for our most vulnerable pupils.

In conclusion, we do not understand why pupils, staff and our community's wellbeing has not influenced an option for Allensbank to stay on their current site. All options are in favour of the other schools in the proposal and we feel that our rights to a fair proposal have been missed, especially as we have some of the most vulnerable pupils in the LEA, who rely on the familiarity of staff and their surroundings to cope and keep them regulated on a day to day basis.

Gladstone Primary School – Governing Body

***Do you support Option 1? No***

I can see the positives to solve Gladstone's deficit budget by pooling resources with another school. A wider group of staff may also offer wider opportunities for staff and more after school clubs. We may also be able to host a speech and language unit. However there are several issues which would threaten the school's ability to offer the education and support it currently offers.

1. Impact on staff and learners. Many staff are already anxious about losing their jobs. With this uncertainty lasting until September 2025, this may impact the teaching and learning experience for children. This option would also risk the headteacher's role as she too would have to apply. The headteacher has been an excellent leader, pupil numbers have grown annually since her arrival and our ESTYN inspection a success. This option risks losing the most vital resources that make Gladstone such a success.

2. Loss of identity. Gladstone holds a special place in the community and is it vital to support many vulnerable families. 36% of our children qualify for free school meals as they live in relative poverty. 65% of our pupils aged over 5 years speak English as an additional language (EAL), 48% of which are below competent in English (A-C). Our ESTYN inspection recognised our ability to help many vulnerable families to live happy and safe lives. The school supports them informally through translation and interpretation and because the school is small, staff are able to build relationships and trust with families. This is important for parents that have not had the linguistic or social confidence to engage otherwise, and is especially so for those whose children have additional learning needs. We have multiple generations of families that send their children to Gladstone because they trust their children will gain a positive and inclusive education. A loss of Gladstone as an entity would take away that role of trust the school holds locally.

3. Concern over lack of space to provide free school meals for a two-form entry school. We are constrained by the hall size and kitchen capacity; considerable investment would be needed to make it viable, as well as more midday supervisors to ensure the system functions. I also worry that this would take a long time to manage each day and could end up compromising teaching and learning time.

4. Concern over lack of space outdoors for a larger number of learners. Many of our children have limited access to safe outdoor spaces within the community. Doubling the number of children would put pressure on the available space and limit capacity to offer more outdoor activity after school clubs. The playground was described as "adequate" for a larger school by local authority staff, but I feel strongly that the needs of already-disadvantaged children should be a priority, accessing better than "adequate" outdoor space to enrich their learning experience and help to rebalance their life chances.

***Do you support Option 2? No***

Co-location of the two schools on a single site could bring complexity to practical operations. If the schools federated, it is not clear what the budget implications would be for the schools and may ultimately lead to amalgamation due to funding pressures, which would effectively be option one.

***Do you support Option 3? Yes***

The third option may be the most practical from Gladstone's perspective in many ways. It would be the least disruptive option for the staff and children and therefore limit the impact of an uncertain period of change or reconfiguration on teaching and learning and reduce the risk of loss of experienced, knowledgeable staff.

However, from a budgetary point of view, I acknowledge that this option may not benefit Gladstone and may not offer us an immediate way of setting a sustainable budget in the short term. However, I perceive this option could enable a reallocation of pupils from Allensbank to Gladstone, which might enable us to grow our pupil numbers to bring Gladstone's numbers up to capacity. This might allow us to make for a sustainable budget in the long-term with a full cohort in each class (we have capacity for around 30 more pupils currently).

As a governing body, we wish for the good work that Gladstone primary does within the community and for its learners to continue, and this option may allow us to keep the ethos and spirit of the school without compromising due to budgetary pressures. This option naturally also ensures that Ysgol Mynydd Bychan can operate in the space it needs and the community retains its schools and minimises disruption for all.

Gladstone Primary School – Headteacher

**Do you support Option 1? *Opinion not indicated***

This would be an exciting opportunity for two community schools to unite and form one larger Primary School in the Cathays area. Having one larger Primary School in the area would ensure a smooth transition for pupils from the age of 3 through to 16 years at High School. A larger school would allow for staff to share expertise and create greater collaboration/CPD opportunities. Additional staff could also provide a range of expertise and educational experiences for pupils in the school. An amalgamated school would offset any deficit budgets schools may currently have and provide a more sustainable future for the families and staff. An increase in pupil numbers would impact positively on the school budget and provide additional resources and opportunities for pupils. The whole school community would have the opportunity to contribute their ideas and thoughts to help shape their child's school for the future e.g. deciding on the school name, school uniform, branding giving them ownership of their school in their own community.

The schools building work will be completed and will hopefully provide pupils with a structurally sound building to be proud of. There was previously one school on the whole site with the infant building being located in St Monica's and the Junior school at Gladstone. This could be a possibility for a new amalgamated school with also space for an After School Club and/or a Speech and Language Unit, SRB or Nurture facility. Gladstone Primary School currently hold family learning courses for parents/carers which could continue.

Having one Primary School will also create more opportunities for families to network and support one another in the community. This would also allow the community to work together to help support raise funds for the school and support any local events/businesses. A larger school could enable the school to reach out to more people in the community and raise awareness of the Boathouse building as a potential space which could be utilised by families/businesses.

I appreciate this option would be unsettling for all staff, including myself, as we would all have to re-apply for our jobs with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher positions going national which could mean potential redundancies.

**Do you support Option 2? *Opinion not indicated***

Co-locating Allensbank and Gladstone Primary School on a shared site would allow two community schools to come together and provide greater collaboration opportunities for staff, pupils, families and governors. Having both schools on one site would allow for staff to share expertise and create greater collaboration/CPD opportunities. Staff could also provide a range of expertise and educational experiences for pupils in the school. There would be the opportunity to pool resources together which both schools could benefit from. This would also ensure

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that Gladstone and Allensbank retain their identity and ethos. If schools were to federate this would be an exciting opportunity to work closely with all stakeholders of both schools and unite them under one umbrella.

This would give families time to adjust to the schools working on one site and be a smoother transition should the schools federate in the future.

This option would have little impact on staffing with nearly all staff not having to reapply for their jobs offering more job security.

Consideration would need to be given as to how Allensbank and Gladstone would share the site as this would need to be managed appropriately to ensure families are clear on school structures etc.

***Do you support Option 3? Yes***

This option would allow us to keep our identity, history and ethos which is important to our school community. This option would have the least disruption and impact on our school.

This option would have no impact on the pupils at Gladstone which would provide continuity and stability for their future. We are proud of the recent Estyn Inspection report and would like to build on the already good practice recognized by inspectors. Families have expressed how welcoming and nurturing the school is and how they like the fact we are a small community school as it allows us to support everyone including our EAL and most vulnerable families. We are a multigenerational school and this option would allow families to continue to return to Gladstone School.

Pupil numbers have been on the increase since 2018 and are continuing to rise which will hopefully contribute positively to the budget and future of Gladstone School. Option 3 would allow us to maintain and grow our current nursery numbers.

If schools were to federate this would be an exciting opportunity to work closely with all stakeholders of both schools and unite them under one umbrella. With federation there could potentially be a staffing restructure which could create savings in the long term to the budget. There would be the opportunity for both Allensbank and Gladstone to work collaboratively and share expertise and knowledge. This would also impact positively on the learners as their educational experiences could be enhanced. There would be the opportunity to pool resources together which both schools could benefit from. Having a Federated School would create more opportunities for families to network and support one another in the community. This would also allow the community to work together to help support raise funds for the school and support any local events/businesses. A federated school could enable the school to reach out to more people in the community and raise awareness of the Boathouse building as a potential space which could be utilised by families/businesses.

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There is space at Gladstone School to house a Speech and Language Unit.

This would be a quicker and easier option to manage only impacting on 2 schools physically. This option also means that the majority of staff will not have to re-apply for their jobs which will ensure staff wellbeing is maintained.

The Local Authority have invested heavily in the restoration of Gladstone School with extensive building work being undertaken over the last few years – option 3 would allow the staff and pupils/families to enjoy and appreciate their new renovated building.

***Would you like to suggest any changes or alternatives to the proposed options?***

Extra funding to support the huge pupil mobility factor would support schools in this area and make budget planning for the future less challenging.

***Do you wish to make any additional comments?***

We have faced (as have other other schools) many challenges over the last few years which have included Covid, Building Work, Budgets, Estyn and now the Consultation of schools in the area. I appreciate that there are advantages and disadvantages for all schools involved with all options but trust that the Council will make the right decision for the future of learners and families in the Cathays area. Although Option 3 is my preferred option I have offered my opinion on Option 1 and 2 as I feel this is important. We will support whatever the outcome will be and help manage the change effectively for all parties involved.

*Paula Shipton-Jones, Headteacher of Gladstone Primary School*



## Gladstone Primary School – Staff

### ***Do you support Option 1? No***

- The two oldest primary schools in the Cathays area, lose their identity and history.
- The intimate school ethos of two smaller primary schools, would be lost. With the new families, the families who need that support, and the families with little to no English, having the support within a smaller setting has always been crucial in maintaining positive relationships, and helping those in need.
- Staff have to re-apply for their posts.
- Senior staff, i.e. HT & DHTs have to re-apply for their positions; this would be advertised nationally, not just between the schools.
- Redundancies.
- A new nursery could reduce numbers at Gladstone.

### ***Do you support Option 2? No***

- Could be confusing for parents/families if schools are having to share both buildings?
- Could be logistically challenging for schools.
- Federation could mean Senior Leaders are at risk of losing their jobs from both schools
- Possible redundancies

### ***Do you support Option 3? Yes***

This option would allow us to keep our identity, history and ethos which is important to our school community. This option would have the least disruption and impact on our school.

Parent/Carers have expressed how much they value the staff at the school and are concerned about the impact of the consultation process on staff wellbeing. They are also concerned that this could also impact on standards due to the uncertainty ahead for staff and pupils. This option would have little impact on staffing with nearly all staff not having to reapply for their jobs offering more job security.

This option would have no impact on the pupils at Gladstone which would provide continuity and stability for their future. We are proud of the recent Estyn Inspection report and would like to build on the already good practice recognized by inspectors. Families have expressed how welcoming and nurturing the school is and how they like the fact we are a small community school as it allows us to support everyone including our EAL and most vulnerable families. We are a multigenerational school and this option would allow families to continue to return to Gladstone School.

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Pupil numbers have been on the increase since 2018 and are continuing to rise which will hopefully contribute positively to the budget and future of Gladstone School. Option 3 would allow us to maintain and grow our current nursery numbers.

If schools were to federate this would be an exciting opportunity to work closely with all stakeholders of both schools and unite them under one umbrella. With federation there could potentially be a staffing restructure which could create savings in the long term to the budget. There would be the opportunity for both Allensbank and Gladstone to work collaboratively and share expertise and knowledge. This would also impact positively on the learners as their educational experiences could be enhanced. There would be the opportunity to pool resources together which both schools could benefit from. Having a Federated School would create more opportunities for families to network and support one another in the community. This would also allow the community to work together to help support raise funds for the school and support any local events/businesses. A federated school could enable the school to reach out to more people in the community and raise awareness of the Boathouse building as a potential space which could be utilised by families/businesses.

There is space at Gladstone School to house a Speech and Language Unit.

This would be a quicker and easier option to manage only impacting on 2 schools physically. This option also means that the majority of staff will not have to re-apply for their jobs which will ensure staff wellbeing is maintained.

The Local Authority have invested heavily in the restoration of Gladstone School with extensive building work being undertaken over the last few years – option 3 would allow the staff and pupils/families to enjoy and appreciate their new renovated building.

***Would you like to suggest any changes or alternatives to the proposed options?***

Extra funding to support the huge pupil mobility factor would support schools in this area and make budget planning for the future less challenging.

***Do you wish to make any additional comments?***

Our preferred option is 3 but we will support whatever the outcome will be and help manage the change effectively for all parties involved.

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St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School – Finance, Premises and Health & Safety  
Committee of the Governing Body

***Do you support Option 1? Yes***

I am writing as chair of Finance, Premises & Health & Safety Committee of St Monica's School Governing Body.

As a committee we believe option 1 to be in the best interest of our school and other schools involved. We believe the relocation of St Monica's to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site would benefit us for several reasons:

- Our school is currently oversubscribed, we have waiting lists for every year group (except for reception). Our current site isn't fit for purpose for growing demand for church school places. Site move would allow us to incorporate a nursery. We hope there is scope for us to increase to a 0.9 form entry school. Making our school more financially viable.
- Moving site would place St Monica's in new Parish Ministry area. Allowing for the first time children in that area catchment – widening choice for church schools.
- Our current building is listed and has undergone significant repairs in recent years. A financial challenge due to us being a church school and relying on CRAMP funding (Capital Repairs and Maintenance Programme).
- To have a modern, more economical building we could better use CRAMP funding for betterment of school. Relieving financial pressures.
- For all schools involved we feel it would be best use of tax payer money and most efficient distribution of finances to manage schools.

St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School – Standards Committee of the Governing  
Body

***Do you support Option 1? Yes***

Response on behalf of the St Monica's Governing Body: Standards Committee: The committee believe that St Monica's having nursery provision would support the transition from nursery to reception (albeit that parents would have to apply for places in Reception) as the transition can be tricky especially if Additional Learning Needs have been identified for individual children. So if we had our own nursery, we would already know the children well and transition would be easier.

The benefits to standards are that all the foundation phase classrooms have direct access to outdoor areas which would enhance the curriculum we were able to provide. The building is also in a better condition, so more money would be available for resources. Also, having more staff would allow responsibilities to be shared, thus reducing the workload for SLT and Headteacher and allowing them to focus on improving teaching across the school.

If option 3 is decided, there will still be 3 very small schools and less money in the system to support learning and teaching. Currently there are 4 small schools. Option 1 means that there will only be one small school - St Monica's. The funding model currently used for Nursery places would mean that St Monica's would be financially more stable, also allowing a higher percentage of the budget to be spent on learning and teaching - thus raising standards further.

***Do you support Option 2? No***

This option is in effect exactly the same as Option 1 for St Monica's, however, there would be less money in the system if there were still 3 small schools in the Cathays/Heath area.

***Do you support Option 3? No***

St Monica's is an oversubscribed primary school that is financially unviable. The only option for sustainability is for the school to be allowed to grow - which it is very capable of having waiting lists in almost every single year group.

St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School – Vision and Values Committee of the  
Governing Body

***Do you support Option 1? Yes***

Our response is based on our views as a Sub Committee of the St Monica's full Governing Body - Vision and Values - who look after the vision and values of the school, to ensure it maintains its Christian identity and complies with the Trust Deed with which the school was first formed.

We would recommend Option 1. Considering the impact Option 2 would have on the school communities involved, from our experience we know that sharing a site comes with many challenges.

Furthermore, Option 1 would enable any future children attending St Monica's to enjoy the facility of a nursery attached to the school on the Mynydd Bychan site, so they are able to be with any older siblings and benefit from a faith-based (Anglican) nursery experience which is not currently available in this area.

The ability to move site would also increase the catchment area for the school to include the Parish of St Mark's in Gabalfa. St Mark's also does not have a church primary school attached to it, and this change would further increase parents' access to a faith-based education - which is their right. This also aligns with the Diocesan vision to 'grow the Kingdom of God'.

The opportunity to have a larger building would enable us to further develop our curriculum offering, including quieter spaces for prayer and reflection. Consideration would need to be given to how St Monica's could ensure the whole learning environment is suitable for a faith-based education - this includes areas for prayer/worship and reflection both inside and outside the Mynydd Bychan site.

We are a thriving, oversubscribed school community, and are current having to turn away many children. This means that many families are not able to exercise their right to choose a faith-based education and many come to our school who have already had significant transitions, changes and challenges in life before their arrival in Cardiff. Turning away families from our community sits very uncomfortably with us as a Governing Body.

The close proximity of the proposed new site means that our existing links with St Michael's Church and The Table can continue. Travel time for families would be only marginally impacted upon. Traffic management of the Mynydd Bychan site would be easier as only one school's community will be attending and leaving at any one time.

For all of the reasons outlined above, we feel that the potential move would accord with the vision, values and Christian ethos which we have worked so hard to develop and sustain in St. Monica's CW Primary School.

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***Do you support Option 2? No***

Please see comments for Option 1.

***Do you support Option 3? No***

Please see comments for Option 1.

Rev'd Caroline Downs

St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School – Headteacher

***Do you support Option 1? Yes***

I am responding as the Head Teacher of St Monica's CW Primary School. I support Option 1 as I am aware of the huge difficulties all schools in Cardiff currently have in trying to balance budgets. I sit on the School Budget Forum and represent small schools and faith schools. The budget formula has a disproportionately negative impact on small schools as they are less economical to run. Only Option 1 significantly reduces the number of small schools. This option would mean that more money is available in the system for the education of all children in the city. This money is then available to spend on learning and teaching, rather than the upkeep of multiple buildings by small individual schools, space/school places are also used more efficiently so heating and resources are used better.

Three school buildings are listed, under Option 1 St Monica's would move into an unlisted building, enabling better use of the CRAMP fund (Capital Repairs and Maintenance Programme fund from Welsh Government for the upkeep of faith schools) so the school should be able to repair and maintain the building better. The design of the Mynydd Bychan building is also better matched to meeting the needs of pupils within the Curriculum for Wales. Each downstairs classroom has direct access to the outdoors, which would facilitate outdoor learning, supervision and alternative learning styles - meeting the needs of the St Monica's learners better.

Moving school site would also mean that we would not need to share a site with another school. Time we spend for worship activities would not be interrupted by the (understandable) noise from another school, playground space would be greatly enhanced from the area we are current able to utilise and traffic management would be easier as we would not need to stagger out start and end times to correspond with another school.

The transition from Nursery to Reception would be easier as children (once they have applied for a place in Reception) would be known to us, any ALN processes would have already been started and then continued in the same setting and any settling in periods would not need to be factored in before we requested additional support as that would have already happened in Nursery.

An additional teacher would need to be employed which would further reduce the burden held by all teachers in the school as multiple roles are held by teachers that in a larger school shared out amongst many.

The change in Ministry Area would mean that the Governing Body are likely to consult to extend the catchment area currently proscribed in our admissions policy to include the Parish of St Mark's, Gabalfa. There is no Church in Wales primary school for that Ministry Area currently, so this would also support the Diocesan mission to 'Grow the Kingdom of God'.

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***Do you support Option 2? No***

There is less financial or educational benefit to relocating 3 schools in this option.

***Do you support Option 3? No***

St Monica's is a thriving, oversubscribed primary school. Option 3 gives no room for growth and does not enable the school to become financially viable. As smaller schools, Gladstone and Allensbank are also much less likely to be financially viable under this model.



Ysgol Mynydd Bychan –Governing Body and Members of Staff

### **The consultation**

1. This consultation sets out the collective view of the Governing Body of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan (“YMB”) regarding the Council’s consultation on its proposals to:
  - make changes to how English-medium community primary schools are organised,
  - retaining an equivalent number of places or a marginal reduction in places compared to the existing arrangements; and
  - expand Welsh-medium primary school provision at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.
2. The Council is proposing to achieve these changes in numbers by identifying three possible options with the overall aim of:
  - supporting each school to continue to improve education for all of their learners
  - ensuring that the provision offered meets the diverse needs of the local community
  - supporting schools to be financially sustainable, with stable school budgets
  - supporting schools to allocate a greater proportion of budget to teaching and learning, thereby retaining and increasing opportunities for learners
  - consolidating English-medium primary school places with an appropriate level of surplus.
  - increasing Welsh-medium primary school places by one form of entry (210 primary age pupils).

### **Background**

3. Cymraeg 2050 sets the strategic, national context for these proposals. The Welsh Government’s goal is significantly to increase the number of Welsh speakers of all ages, with a specific target of 40% of all children receiving Welsh-medium education by 2050.
4. Locally, Cardiff’s ten-year target, as set out in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2030, is to increase the percentage of Year 1 children who are taught through the medium of Welsh in Cardiff by 9%. The Council also maintains its commitments to maintaining city-wide capacity in the Welsh-medium sector at 10% over the projected intake.
5. We are fully supportive of these national and local goals and stand ready to play our part, alongside the Council and the Welsh Government.
6. Given the consistent oversubscription for places at YMB over several years, and the reality that our catchment area is one of many areas within the city of Cardiff where there is scope to increase the number of children in Welsh-

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medium education, we are pleased that the Council has been proactive in seeking, and successfully obtaining, grant funding to support capital investments that facilitate growth in Welsh-medium education and use of the Welsh language at YMB.

7. While we recognise that uptake is projected to level out over the next few years, due to falling birth rates, we are mindful that an upsurge is forecasted towards the end of this decade and the beginning of the next, which requires us to think creatively now to achieve a sustainable solution and to accommodate the demand we expect in the coming years.

**Our view: new school building and site**

8. We remain of the view that the best way to achieve expansion of YMB is a new school building and site which provide the resources, infrastructure, and environment we need to deliver high-quality and enriching learning experiences to our pupils, having regard to both the Curriculum for Wales and the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme.
9. While we recognise that we are in a dense, urban area, we continue to believe that further exploration of the potential utilisation of the existing Cathays High School site, should the relocation of Cathays High School go ahead, or the vacant space at the Companies House site, would be worthwhile.
10. We encourage the Council to make further efforts to explore the possibility of delivering a new school site at either of these locations, or others in the area, including by making enquiries with HM Government in respect of the Companies House site.
11. While we appreciate the financial implications of a new building and site for YMB, and the need to utilise the Council's existing assets where possible, we presume it would be possible to dispose of an existing school site for redevelopment in the event that it became redundant.

**Our view: use of existing assets**

12. We are of the view that a suitable permanent solution is required in order both to provide for the demand which has existed for several years and to achieve the goal of expanding Welsh-medium education in the area through an additional form of entry. All three options under consultation could offer such as a solution in respect of YMB.
13. We also continue to be of the opinion that any expansion of YMB must be delivered on a whole-school basis, rather than on a year-by-year or progress step-by-progress step basis. We are grateful to the Council for listening to the concerns we expressed at the previous consultation in 2021.

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14. If the Council's preferred solution is to utilise its existing educational building stock in the form of a site swap between YMB and another existing school site within the local area, then our priority will be that the necessary investment is put in place to deliver a scheme of improvement works which ensures that YMB's new site offers the same, if not a better, level of facilities as its current site.
15. This is essential to enable YMB to continue being able to offer the level of education and opportunities to its pupils as at present, as well as to achieve the 'buy in' from YMB's parents and wider community, which will be an important factor in ensuring that YMB's sense of community continues to flourish.
16. In any case, YMB will continue proactively to seek and foster a positive relationship and a sense of community with the other schools in our area, including regular interactions between pupils to mark, for example, the Urdd's Day of Goodwill and the Eisteddfod.
17. We are also mindful of our place in the wider community and will, regardless of the outcome of this consultation, continue to engage with local businesses and groups, including by making our site accessible to the community, in line with the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.
18. We acknowledge that there are significant demographic differences between YMB and the other schools involved in this consultation. While this reflects a general trend across Wales, we will continue to work with the Council, the Welsh Government, and any other appropriate bodies to increase the diversity of our school population. We recognise our own responsibility and, in line with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, believe strongly that this must be a shared endeavour.

### **Questions and concerns**

19. We are aware that all the other existing school sites within the locality are Listed Buildings and, as such, could prove difficult to alter and adapt to meet our requirements in line with the Curriculum for Wales and the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme.
20. Officers have advised the Governing Body that they have been unable to make a substantive approach to CADW in respect of any proposed building fabric amendments at any of the sites in this consultation.
21. We are also concerned about the ongoing maintenance requirements of the other existing school sites within the locality given that all three schools have been covered in scaffolding for at least the past three years, with very little

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progress on any remedial works being undertaken. We would not want to see the school burdened by long-term outstanding maintenance works.

22. We are extremely concerned that, without further enquiry and guarantee, YMB may be relocated to a site, at which it could prove difficult or impossible to deliver a scheme of improvement works which ensures that we are able to offer the same, if not a better, level of facilities as our current site.
23. As such, we ask the Council to make appropriate further enquiries regarding the issues raised above, and to make this information available.
24. We are concerned about the energy efficiency of the school buildings under consideration. We have requested information from the Council on this matter but unfortunately this has not been forthcoming. We were told that this information was available to Council Officers but have not received anything to date.
26. We are also concerned that any move to a larger school building could cause the school major financial challenges if not properly addressed by the Council. In the future, school will be operating in a larger building with only a marginal increase in pupil numbers for a few years. School budgets are becoming increasingly challenging and there will be substantial pressure over the next few years. We would look for the Council to work with the Governing Body to alleviate the budgetary implications of a rapid expansion.

## **Conclusion**

27. Given that all three options would deliver the same outcome for YMB, and given the questions and concerns we have outlined above, we are not minded to indicate a preferred choice between the three options.
28. However, we believe that achieving expansion of Welsh-medium primary education in the north of Cardiff, as in the city more generally, which we support strongly, requires a permanent solution which enables YMB to continue to provide rich learning experiences to our pupils. All three options under consultation could provide such a solution.
29. We are grateful to the Council for listening to the concerns we expressed at the previous consultation in 2021.

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RhAG (Parents for Welsh Education)

1. RhAG wishes to thank you for the opportunity to respond to this Cardiff Council consultation on the **Primary School Places Proposal to serve Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd.**

The Welsh language education planning system through the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans must be a core part of the education provision planning of all Local Authorities. Since September 2022, Cardiff Council has been implementing a new scheme agreed by Welsh Government.

To increase opportunities for learners to be able to acquire the Welsh language so that they can use it easily is the basis of Welsh Government's ambition to reach one million speakers and the Government's own Welsh language education planning document notes

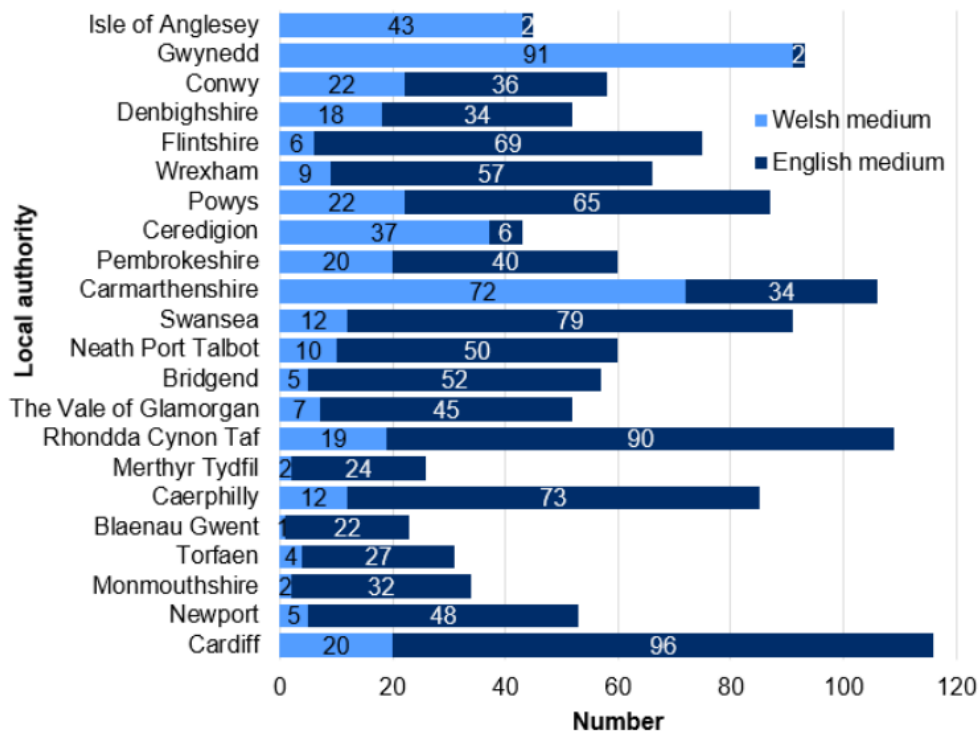
*"Cymraeg 2050 is clear that Welsh-medium immersion - which is where the medium of teaching and learning is delivered wholly or predominantly through the medium of Welsh - is the most reliable model for creating Welsh speakers with the skills and confidence to use the language comfortably in their everyday lives."*

(Page3:

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/guidance-welsh-in-education-strategic-plan.pdf>

2. We realise the amount of work that's involved in reorganizing schools in the C21st. RhAG has collaborated positively for a number of years with officers of the county and have been contributing ideas and strategies to ensure fairness for Welsh Language Education provision and for the families across the county who continue to fail to realise that the offer is available to them also. With the implementation of the 10-year plans there is a real opportunity to make a difference to the accessibility of Welsh language education within the County of Cardiff.
3. We only need to look at the figure below to see how few opportunities exist still in the county for pupils to be able to choose a Welsh language education easily and conveniently with only 20 Welsh medium schools while there are 96 English medium schools.

**Chart 1: Number of maintained schools by local authority and medium, 2022 (a)**



Source: Schools Census  
(a) Primary, middle and secondary schools (excluding nursery and special schools)

#### School Census 2022

4. A pledge has been made and money has been received from Welsh Government to increase the Welsh language education capacity of this area of the city since 2018 with pressure being felt in this area since long before then. RhAG has communicated with the county consistently since then noting the challenges that have arisen for parents as a result of failure to increase provision in this area.
5. The lack of an increase in Welsh language education provision in this area of the city has and will continue to cause challenges and other negative side effects across the county until a solution is found. There are families in this area of the city who have had to accept places in schools that are not within their catchment area, and as younger siblings applied for places in local schools, have been forced to apply to a school that is not within the catchment and therefore have had to travel further than normal, changing a journey made on foot to a journey in a car and in increasing cases of children from the same family having to go to different schools.
6. We agree of course with the principle of increasing Welsh language education provision which is a key part of this consultation, but the new provision must be suitable for education in the C21st and we are not fully convinced that this

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building will fulfil this need from the information that's been provided. The consultation sets out as follows:

" The school occupies two Grade 2 listed buildings which have been assessed as Condition category C+ (Poor with major defects) and Suitability category B (Satisfactory). The school buildings are generally in a satisfactory condition although works to external walls, windows and roofs are underway through the Council's Capital Asset programme. Some internal areas are suffering with an infestation of dry rot, and treatment will be ongoing until the dry rot is eradicated. The sanitary provision requires some refurbishment, and the site has some drainage issues to be resolved. The ongoing works at the school are scheduled to complete in Autumn 2023."

It is not clear from the consultation the details and impact of the sanitary and drainage works nor who will be responsible for funding these aspects when the reorganization takes place and therefore what will be Ysgol Mynydd Bychan's budgetary responsibility in this situation.

7. Increasing the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to 420 will mean a significant change in the area in terms of the Welsh language education offer. We see no mention of the promotion and public communication steps that will be needed for this change. RhAG would of course be able to assist with this aspect.
8. We very much hope that further and ongoing communication will take place with Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to further develop these proposals, for the benefit of the school's community. We very much look forward to the provision of Welsh language education that is fit for the C21st and which is finally increasing the opportunities for the families of this area of Cardiff to have a real opportunity for their children to acquire Welsh from a very early age. We look forward to continuing to work with you to make these exciting plans a reality.

Sincerely,

**Elin Maher**  
**National Director**  
**Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg**  
**07970 304219**  
**elin@rhag.wales**

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Allensbank Primary School – School Council

Dear Council of Cardiff,

We are writing to you in response to the previous meeting where we had discussed the three options. This letter is going to be our opinion on the three options that were available.

Option 1:

A couple of us like the option and believed that it is good to meet new friends and teachers. On the other hand, most of us didn't agree that it was the best option and their evidence against it is that some of the memories that were made in this school would not be present in the new building eliminating nostalgia.

Option 2:

Some of us are split liking the idea but not liking the lack of space and the loss of nursery. Some more evidence against this idea is that for pupils that walk to school and back would require a large route change. In addition to that we believe that the loss of nursery teachers would have a large impact on their lives because the skills that they have acquired need them to be a teacher but if the schools don't accept them then their lives would be heavily changed.

Option 3:

One of us is in favour of this idea because the route they would take to school would not change much however they are also not in favour of the loss of space. Others, however, didn't like this idea because a few children will lose their space because of the 0.9 form entry. Also, some of us are not in favour of the smaller playground. Over all this is the worst option.

In conclusion, most people think that its better if Allensbank stays in its place and we don't understand why we can't just stay where we are but every other school has an option where they can stay. IT does not feel like we all have a fair chance but we do have an alternate option. Why not have Gladstone join us as there is enough space for a 2-form entry school.

We hope that you take our opinions into consideration.

Yours sincerely,  
Allensbank primary School Council.



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St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School – School Council

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are the School Council for St Monica's CIW Primary School and we wanted to email you to give you our formal response to the consultation.

After a discussion as a council we believe that option 1 is the best option for us. The first reason being that we get to have a nursery in our school. We think this is a good idea because it will be less scary or daunting for children to then go to reception. Also, it's good for the children to be in school from a young age.

Secondly, option 1 gives us a chance to grow as a school. This is great for us because we get to make more friends! Our waiting list at the school is full and we'd love more people to join.

Finally, our playground at St Monica's is very small and has a lot of scaffolding on. Mynedd Bychan's site is much bigger, meaning we have more space to access our right to play. There'll be more opportunities to play fun sports at break time like football and basketball.

Many thanks.  
School Council

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APPENDIX B -  
Received Emails

Email 1

## **Cardiff Schools Reorganisation:**

### **The quiet injustice happening on our doorstep and a call to reconsider the options for a fairer future.**

My children have had the privilege of going to a wonderful, warm, nurturing and diverse, English Medium primary school in my local community in Cardiff. I say English Medium, and this is true, but in the course of their education they have also encountered a myriad of languages - Welsh, Arabic, Farsi, Spanish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Turkish, Hindi, Portuguese...and more! This is a school that truly and robustly reflects the diverse community it is planted in. This is a school that welcomes all, and welcomes them in extraordinary ways. This is a school whose contribution to society has been recognised with a school of sanctuary award "for its good practice in fostering a culture of welcome and inclusion."

(<https://schools.cityofsanctuary.org/become-a-school-of-sanctuary>) This is a school that really knows its stuff in the area of creating a diverse and welcoming community, both in theory and on the ground, which is after all (I truly hope) a shared goal of all who are involved in education across Wales. For all these reasons and more, this is a school whose expertise should be respected and listened to by those who are making the decisions about the future of the schools in our area . And yet, very sadly, this is a school that apparently has no voice in the conversation set by Cardiff Council about what is the best way forward for school provision in our community; a community that this school, Allensbank Primary, has been embedded in since 1905.

The need to expand the local Welsh Speaking primary school (Ysgol Mynydd Bychan), which has been oversubscribed for a number of years, has been an ongoing conundrum that Cardiff Council have been attempting to solve. This has led to the situation we find ourselves in today. On 23rd March 2023, The Local Authority announced their plans to reorganise primary school provision for our area. You can read about the three different options that are being put forward here: [Primary school proposals in parts of central and north Cardiff \(cardiffnewsroom.co.uk\)](https://cardiffnewsroom.co.uk) and the formal consultation documents are available to read here: [Cathays and Gabalfa primary schools \(cardiff.gov.uk\)](https://cardiff.gov.uk)

### **Equality or Favouritism?**

The council is aiming to achieve more of a balance between English and Welsh medium school places in the community, and rightly so. I appreciate their desire to give anyone who wants it an opportunity to be educated in Welsh. But it is hard to believe that all parties are being given equal consideration when you look at the proposals. You don't have to read the proposals very carefully at all to spot that *all three* of the options (which promise varying levels of upheaval for four different primary schools in the area) involve Allensbank School moving out of their building, and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan (YMB) moving into it.

From the moment I heard this news I have felt that something wasn't right. It has taken some time to work out exactly why, but now that I have spent some time reflecting on it all,

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this is my best attempt to summarise why these proposals are not just upsetting, but deeply unfair:

### **1. The Scaffolding Debacle!**

The Allensbank School building has been incarcerated in scaffolding since 2019 and we are finally seeing a light at the end of the tunnel with some of the scaffolding coming down...only to be told that all this upheaval that pupils and staff have lived through and put up with is actually for the benefit of another school. Is it a coincidence that all three options end up with YMB moving into *this* particular building, with its renovations completed by the time the move is proposed?

### **2. The Unspoken Fourth Option**

Something that becomes glaringly obvious by its absence when you read through the council's proposals a few times, is the fact that there is another school site that would make a lot more logical sense for the Welsh school to move to, and yet this is not being suggested for YMB. In options 1 and 2 of the council's proposals, it is suggested that Gladstone School be merged with Allensbank to create a new two form entry (2FE) school, and that this school would exist on the site where Gladstone and St. Monica's (two different schools) currently reside.

Of course I would prefer for things to just stay the same forever, but even I realise that this might not be the most sustainable option. To balance out the numbers of Welsh and English places by adding an extra form of entry is an admirable aim, and to be able to do it using buildings that already exist is both resourceful and clever. But the proposals aim to increase the number of places at YMB from 192 to 420. Clearly an increase of this scale is not going to happen overnight! This will take time, probably years and in the meantime the council wants to move them to the biggest school building that's on the table. Listen carefully to this - the only school building that is already big enough to hold a 2FE entry school immediately (Allensbank) is being given to the school with the most uncertainty about numbers and the least chance of being a full 2FE school straight away (YMB)...in *all three* of the options. In other words, the ultimate aim of the school reorganisation is to have the best outcome for the Welsh-medium school.

### **3. Yet More Scaffolding...**

So options 1, 2, and 3 have YMB moving into a ready-made, scaffolding-free 2FE school building, despite the fact that they will probably be quite a way off even being a 1.5FE school for a good few years. Meanwhile, if Allensbank and Gladstone merge, they will be a 2FE school immediately, and yet the school building that the council are suggesting they occupy is the combined sites of two separate schools (Gladstone and St. Monica's). This site will need some fairly significant building work to be done on another part of the site to make it ready to house a school with the numbers we are talking about here. More building work, more scaffolding...for the schools that have already endured *years* of maintenance works and disruption. It is truly a tragedy and injustice that the council is considering putting Welsh education first, when we know (and can see clearly from the data in the consultation

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document) that some of our community's most vulnerable children are in the English medium schools in the area. The consultation document says on p12: "The Council believes that good education is the surest route out of poverty". Well if this is what they really believe, then why pump all of the best resources into the one school in our locality where poverty is largely absent? Why not instead, put everything into helping schools like Allensbank and Gladstone to be able to do more of what they are already doing so well amongst the poor, the vulnerable and the disadvantaged? Why reward their expertise and hard work with yet more disruption and upheaval?

I have had the privilege and joy of seeing Allensbank School up close and behind the scenes, both as a parent-governor, and as a weekly volunteer in one of the classes. What I have seen behind the scenes is, quite frankly, astounding. I have seen teachers that truly care about the kids in their class and would do anything for them, I have seen teaching assistants that genuinely love working alongside these teachers and count it an honour to be involved in the lives of the precious children in their care. And I have seen a senior leadership team at work creating the culture that makes all this possible; being present, compassionate, humble, fun, full of integrity and modeling leadership that is both strong and kind. All this makes Allensbank School a place where staff and pupils want to come every day!

Allensbank School is a bright gem in this community. And yet instead of celebrating that, the council wants to reward this wonderful school with more upheaval, more uncertainty...and dare I say it, more scaffolding!

### **The Big Question...**

I suppose the main question that comes to mind, when you consider all the possibilities of sites for the reorganised schools, based on the size of the schools alone, is *why* was the option of putting the newly expanded 2FE (or more like 1.5E?) Welsh School on the Gladstone/St.Monica's site not included in the council's plans? Well, be prepared for more unfairness, because the council's reason for discounting this fourth option, quoted from page 76 of the consultation document, is that "The current take-up of places at Welsh-medium provision is concentrated in the northern part of its catchment area, in close proximity to the existing Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site and the Allensbank site." - In other words, Allensbank is a better location because it is closer to where the current families who attend YMB live.

Out of interest, I actually did the walk between all three of the schools in question myself this week and timed them. YMB to Gladstone was 6 mins 32 sec, Gladstone to Allensbank was 7 mins 39 secs and Allensbank to YMB was 3 minutes. Admittedly I probably walk faster than the average 4 year old, and it is clear that YMB to Gladstone is a slightly longer journey than YMB to Allensbank. But we are talking in the realm of *minutes* here; these are extremely short distances at stake.

And to have discounted this fourth option of Allensbank as the site of the new English school on the basis that Gladstone is too far for the YMB families to walk (only the ones in the *Northern* part of the catchment area remember) is frankly ridiculous!!

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But as ridiculous as it is, even if it was true that it was too far away for the current families, I didn't think that this was about those who are *currently* enrolled at YMB anyway? I thought the whole idea was to increase the intake of the Welsh school? So why not start by making it easier for potential pupils who live in the *Southern* part of its catchment area to get there? If you look at the catchment area map on page 16 of the consultation document it is also clear that the Gladstone site is actually more central within YMB's catchment area. So it makes no sense for this option to have been discounted before it even got to the stage of public consultation.

Discounting this option on the basis of geography is clearly ridiculous, but it is the only reason given in the consultation document. And this is what makes it very hard for those with a stake in the English schools to believe that favouritism for Welsh education is not at play here. To have *all* of the three options ending the same way for the Welsh school has been a clear communication of the council's bias. The cynic in me says that if this is about bigger ideologies at Welsh Government level then there is no point in fighting it, nothing we do will make a difference. But I don't want to believe that. There is still time to speak up and still hope that schools, like Allensbank, that seem to have no voice, will be listened to.

Failing to include the option of YMB moving to Gladstone was an error on the council's part and has communicated inequality and bias. But the bigger tragedy is that schools like Allensbank have been put in this position by years of chronic underfunding and lack of support; something which has led to the need to merge with another school in the first place. Even so, squashing the small voice of my inner cynic, my hope is that this whole thing was a genuine oversight on the part of Cardiff Council and that they really do care after all for the schools, like Allensbank, that have been safe, welcoming places for the most vulnerable children in our community. Schools that have managed to do this despite everything being against them.

Cardiff Council says that our views are important to them. Don't forget to have your say before 30th June 2023 (<http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools>). And who knows, perhaps they will go back to the drawing board and reconsider the options? For the sake of diversity, equality, and the most vulnerable in our society, I truly hope they do.

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Email 2

**Link to Wales Online Article** [Parents vow to fight plans which would see Cardiff school shut - Wales Online](#)

Parents vow to fight plans which would see Cardiff school shut

They claim the English medium school is being sacrificed in favour of a Welsh medium school down the road

Parents have vowed to fight plans which would see their children's English medium **school** close and the local Welsh medium school move in. A proposed shake up affecting four schools would see pupils from Allensbank Primary move out of their building and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan in.

**Cardiff** Council is **looking at three options** it said are aimed at getting the balance of English and Welsh medium primary provision able to meet current and future demand in Cathays, as well as parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd. But angry Allensbank parents claim the proposals are biased in favour of Welsh medium education and point to all the ways Allensbank serves its community.

One parent has posted a blog and urged people to respond to **Cardiff Council's** consultation on the proposals by opposing them. The four schools that would be affected by the potential changes are Allensbank Primary School in Heath, Ysgol Mynydd Bychan in Gabalfa and Gladstone Primary School and St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School in Cathays.

**Read more: [There aren't enough Welsh-language teachers, Senedd Members warn](#)**

Under the proposals some schools could see places cut while others may more than double in size. If agreed, the proposed changes for each of the three options could take effect from September 2025.

Angry parents say all options include shutting Allensbank, so it looks like a decision has already been made. One wrote: "It is hard to believe that all parties are being given equal consideration when you look at the proposals. You don't have to read the proposals very carefully at all to spot that all three of the options (which promise varying levels of upheaval for four different primary schools in the area) involve Allensbank School moving out of their building, and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan moving into it."

Parents fighting the plans did not want to be named, for fear of reprisals, but said in a joint statement: "Allensbank is a wonderful multicultural school offering so much to the children of the area. The headmistress and staff have worked extremely hard to make this school what it is today. Our children are going to have their best primary years potentially disrupted all because Ysgol Mynydd Bychan was oversubscribed by just two pupils this year. It is unjustified.

"We want to protect and fight for our school. We want to keep our school for the children of the future. Funding for all children should be fairly distributed regardless. This is all about



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having an equal education platform for all our children. Please help us save Allensbank Primary School.”

An anonymous blog by a parent, titled Save Allensbank, outlined reasons for opposing the plans for Allensbank. The author said they believe Allensbank and its pupils and staff are being sacrificed in favour of Welsh medium school Ysgol Mynydd Bychan adding that it’s “very hard for those with a stake in the English schools to believe that favouritism for Welsh education is not at play here”...

“...To have all of the three options ending the same way for the Welsh school has been a clear communication of the council’s bias. The cynic in me says that if this is about bigger ideologies at **Welsh Government** level then there is no point in fighting it, nothing we do will make a difference. But I don’t want to believe that. There is still time to speak up and still hope that schools, like Allensbank, that seem to have no voice, will be listened to.”

The blog goes on: “My children have had the privilege of going to a wonderful, warm, nurturing and diverse, English Medium primary school in my local community in Cardiff. I say English Medium, and this is true, but in the course of their education they have also encountered a myriad of languages – Welsh, Arabic, Farsi, Spanish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Turkish, Hindi, Portuguese and more.

“This is a school that truly and robustly reflects the diverse community it is planted in. This is a school that welcomes all, and welcomes them in extraordinary ways. This is a school whose contribution to society has been recognised with a school of sanctuary award “for its good practice in fostering a culture of welcome and inclusion.”

The parents are also angry that Allensbank has been covered in scaffolding for long periods while improvements are made, but if the changes go ahead no one at the school would benefit from the inconvenience.

**These are the three options being looked at:**

**Option One**

- Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools would amalgamate to establish a new 420 place (two form entry) English medium primary with nursery on the current shared site at Gladstone Primary School/St Monica’s Church in Wales Primary School.
- St Monica’s would transfer to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site and establish nursery provision at the school.
- Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would transfer to the current Allensbank Primary School site and increase from 192 places to 420 places with the number of nursery places increasing from 64 to 96.

**Option Two**

- Allensbank Primary School would transfer to the current shared Gladstone Primary School/St Monica’s Primary School site, and the school would reduce in capacity from 315 places to 210 places, with the age range reducing from three to 11 to four to 11 by discontinuing nursery provision at the school.

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- The number of nursery places at Gladstone Primary School would increase from 64 to 96.
- St Monica's Primary School would transfer to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site and establish nursery provision at the school.
- Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would transfer to the current Allensbank Primary School site and increase from 192 places to 420 places with the number of nursery places increasing from 64 to 96.

**Option Three**

- Allensbank Primary School would transfer to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site and reduce in capacity from 315 to 192 places.
- Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would transfer to the current Allensbank Primary School site and increase from 192 places to 420 places with the number of nursery places to increase from 64 to 96.

**Cardiff Council explains its proposals**

Announcing the proposals earlier this month Cardiff Council said they will be subject to consultation with schools, governors, parents and children. The council said the proposals support its commitment to develop Welsh medium education and deliver on Welsh Government targets of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Cllr Huw Thomas said: "At the start of 2021, an interim proposal for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and Allensbank Primary School was consulted on and having listened to the feedback, it was agreed that a long-term plan to address school places in the area was needed. Members of the public can now have their say on the new set of options, all of which have been carefully devised to ensure that there continues to be the right number of English medium places provided within improved facilities in the Cathays and Gabalfa wards, and that these are organised in a way that supports the schools in becoming more sustainable whilst addressing demand for Welsh Medium places.

"If progressed, the proposals would help to rebalance the number of Welsh and English medium school places meaning that a greater number of children will gain entry to their local school. In addition, by reusing existing assets more efficiently and through collaborative working, the schools involved would enjoy a number of benefits including improved resources and learning opportunities for pupils and staff.

"The proposals keep all the existing buildings so the school community can be reassured there will be sufficient places to respond to any future population changes."

The public consultation runs until June 30 2023. Face to face and online public meetings and drop in sessions will take place through the consultation period, the council said.

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Email 3

I am writing as a parent at Allensbank School and a recently arrived resident in Cardiff. I have read the proposal document and understand the need to reconfigure existing resources and opportunities in order to support all children in Cardiff and also consider the future needs within the city.

I wanted to draw your attention to the fact that given all three proposed options involve the children of Allensbank School losing their school site, and that two of the proposed options involve the same children losing their school community as it currently exists, there is concern amongst the community and the parent body that the children of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan are being prioritised above them. The fact that the children at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan are enrolled in Welsh medium education and that there is significantly less diversity than at Allensbank has left a feeling that the children from largely racially minoritised backgrounds are being discriminated against.

As a parent of a White child at Allensbank, I have been delighted with the multicultural presentation of the school, in fact the desire to ensure my children grew up in a diverse and tolerant community was one of the main reasons we relocated to Cardiff from Wiltshire. As new residents in Wales, we have been learning Welsh as a family, respectful of the heritage and language culture of our new home, but I have noticed that since the publication of this proposal a divide has begun to develop within the community regarding Welsh speaking and English speaking educational provision.

I am aware that the Welsh Government has a target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050 (Cymraeg 2050, 2017) and I recognise that this has impacted the proposed educational changes in terms of increasing Welsh educational provision but as a newcomer and a Welsh learner it feels as though there is discrimination against some of the children in the city, in this case children who are predominantly members of the Global Majority, many of whom speak English as a second language already.

I wanted to write to you, both in passionate defence of the incredible teaching staff and provision at Allensbank, but also to ask if you have considered a more collaborative approach to ensuring a million Welsh speakers, rather than this divisive one? The overwhelming feeling amongst the Allensbank parent body is that the children enrolled in Welsh medium education are going to have their needs prioritised over our children and this feeling of division and resentment will lead to parents in particular being less interested in learning Welsh themselves or promoting it within their families and to their children. Is there not a way that all children can be afforded the same opportunities, and that rather than the Welsh medium schools being prioritised and kept separate within the community, schools are partnered together, perhaps to enjoy events together during the year, ensuring that the Welsh language is shared and learnt by the whole community and that the children

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in predominantly White Welsh schools benefit from the diversity that schools like Allensbank enjoy.

Cardiff is a diverse and multicultural city and surely there will be a greater integration of all cultures, including Welsh, if we work together in partnership rather than providing education in silos and perpetuating a divide between both Welsh and English education and the communities in which we live.

Please accept this email in the spirit in which it is intended, we have loved our first year in Cardiff and feel that our move was the perfect decision for our family, I just wanted you to be aware that this proposal is causing division rather than unity, which in the short time I have lived here seems to be the opposite of the general culture of our city.

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Email 4

I would like to give my feedback on the consultation that affects the primary schools in the Cathays/Heath/Gabalfa area.

To set a bit of context, as a family we know only too well the frustration of the large catchment area for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. Our eldest child was unable to secure a place here, our catchment Welsh School in Sept 2020 due to the high number of applications that year. She was therefore offered a place in Melin Gruffydd. Unfortunately this year we were not able to secure a place for our second child in Melin Gruffydd due to the high number of applicants there (Sept 2022) and despite having a sibling in the school as we are out of catchment we were therefore not offered a place. Unfortunately our appeal was unsuccessful and so we have the daily difficulty and frustration of juggling two different schools. I'm sure you can appreciate how challenging this is and what impact it has on the children and us as a family every single day.

Whilst this proposal to increase the size of Mynydd Bychan would potentially reduce the risk of other families being placed in this terrible situation, I am not convinced it is the right decision and feel the council need to look at the Welsh Medium schools catchment areas as a whole. With numbers this year being lower for Mynydd Bychan (I understand it was at 26) and for the last 2 years Melin Gruffydd being heavily over subscribed. The numbers for Glan Cabul have been consistently low until this year. I would like to know if the Council has looked at the catchment areas in more detail and whether redistribution of these catchments would allow for a more efficient and fair application process or whether in fact an additional Welsh school should be considered in order to reduce the large catchment areas for Welsh education.

I also fear that the increase in Mynydd Bychan would result in a change of secondary school catchment for Glantaf to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers. This would have a significant impact on many families.

My daughter who is currently in Reception in Mynydd Bychan loves the school very much. She is very confident and loves knowing and playing with children from each year group. This is only possible because it is a small school. I suspect this close knit school community would likely be lost if the school increases to a 2 form intake which would be a huge shame. For younger children being able to play with and see what the older children are doing is aspirational. For the older children looking out for the younger children and is supporting them to learn vital caring and empathy skills. When I asked my daughter about moving site and the school becoming bigger she very clearly stated she did not think this was good idea and liked her school just how it was.

If the increase in size of Mynydd Bychan is deemed to be the best option , then I do have

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concerns about moving it to Allensbank site. I understand the site is a listed building and so Mynydd Bychan would likely lose its current ability to have outside play areas straight from the class as the building structure would likely not be able to be altered due to its listed status. This would have a significant impact upon the key aspect of foundation phase education and the school and pupils are losing something that is hugely important to younger children's education.

Another concern in the move to Allensbank is the location and increase in traffic /difficulty parking during school runs around the school. A large proportion of the children accessing Allensbank likely walk to school as they live within walking distance. However the catchment area for Mynydd Bychan is much bigger which would result in more parents driving their children to school and with the location of Allensbank being within much a narrower, residential area it is likely to increase traffic and unsafe parking which would be dangerous for the children attending the school and frustrating for the residents who are neighbouring the school.

As such if the expansion of Mynydd Bychan is the only option going forward then I strongly feel a new build on a more accessible site it by far the better option for the children's education and the community that it serves.

Diolch yn fawr.

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Email 5

To whom it may concern,

As a parent of a child who attends Allensbank Primary School, I urge you to please reconsider the options presented and consider keeping Allensbank and sharing the site with Gladstone.

My son is anxious and confused on hearing his school may close and I rather saddened and utterly bemused too.

I have three children, one of whom has already completed his education there and it really is an exceptional school. My eldest has ALN and the experienced and skilled and caring staff ensured he left at year six, having had a happy primary education, achieved above expected progress and also, but no less important, a real belief in himself that he was worthy and could succeed just like anyone else.

His friends were children who came from various parts of the country and the world and I would often marvel as to how the school could not just cater for ALN pupils but also asylum seekers and children with no or little English. The teachers take it all in their stride. I cannot quite fathom how such experienced and dedicated and knowledgeable teachers are facing job losses? It is a travesty. How they are maintaining their professionalism and positivity with so much uncertainty and stress is testament to the people they are.

I have also been in awe of how they have managed in such difficult teaching circumstances. I rang the school last week to report my son's absence and you could hear the drilling over the phone. It was incessant. Had my eldest with ALN and regulatory difficulties had to deal with the noise and disruption and classroom changes, I dread to think. I am just grateful it wasn't happening when he was there. My son who is there now has not liked it but has coped (thanks in big part to his wonderful teacher who has maintained calmness and positivity...when they have probably wanted to scream out for the workers to be quiet!!)

Why can't my son and his peers not enjoy and make use of the building? It irks me that this is all for the benefit for another school.

What will the state of the building be like that he will be moving to? I know myself and others are concerned that the building will not be fit for purpose and they may have to endure more building work. Not only have they had to endure a building site and then a school change but potentially then more building work??

If my son was moving into a fabulous state of the art new school then maybe it would be manageable - but sadly no such money or consideration is given to that and to us mere English speaking folk. We are numbers. We will make do. We will find a way to adjust and cope and manage. Surely this is unethical? Why is my son suffering and enduring all this at primary school? How is this right or fair? Imagine it was your child.

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Please consider this from a different perspective and angle. Put the Welsh speaking agenda and bill to one side and remember the children, the adults, the wider school community. The well being of so many, the potential job losses of exceptional teachers (surely it is discrimination? They cannot speak Welsh so they are not favoured. They are at a disadvantage that is acutely unfair and unethical. Surely this could be taken to the High Court?) Remember the vulnerable children and the families. Think of children like my eldest son. Real people are involved in all this.

I have an anxious and confused son. Think of that for a moment. Imagine it was your child.