



## **The Governing Body of St Mellons Church in Wales Primary School**

### **Objection Report**

#### **The proposed transfer and expansion of St Mellons Church in Wales Primary School**

##### **Reason for this Report**

1. Between 3<sup>rd</sup> June and 19<sup>th</sup> July 2019, the Governing Body of St Mellons Church in Wales, in partnership with Cardiff County Council consulted on a proposal to transfer the school to a new site on the new housing development at St Edeyrn's.
2. This proposal would increase the number of places at the school from 105 places to 210 and would extend the age range of the school from 4-11 to 3-11 by establishing nursery provision at the school to allow for 48 part-time places.
3. In order to proceed with these proposed changes, the arrangements for admitting pupils to the school would also change.
4. The consultation set out the Council's proposals and the reasons for these. The consultation process followed Welsh Government guidelines and was an opportunity for stakeholders to learn about the proposals and for the Council to hear the views of all those with an interest in these.

##### **Consultation Report**

5. In accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government School Organisation Code the Governing Body published a consultation report. (A copy of the consultation report can be seen at Appendix 1).

##### **Statutory Notices**

6. At its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019 the Governing Body agreed the publication of statutory notices to:
  - Transfer St Mellons Church in Wales Primary School, Dunster Road, Llanrumney, Cardiff, CF3 5TP to new build premises on the new housing development at St Edeyrn's, Bridge Road, Cardiff, CF3 6UZ
  - Increase the capacity of St Mellons Church in Wales Primary School from 105 places to 210 places



- Extend the age range of the school from 4 – 11 to 3 – 11 by establishing nursery provision at the school to allow for 48 part-time places
7. The proposed changes would be implemented from September 2021.
  8. The statutory notice was published on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2019 for a period of 28 days to allow for objections. The statutory notice period expired on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019. (A copy of the notice can be seen at Appendix 2).
  9. The notices were published on the School website (<https://www.stmellonsprm.cardiff.sch.uk>), Cardiff Council website ([www.cardiff.gov.uk](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk)), posted at the entrance to the school, at the proposed new site and in the local areas.
  10. Copies of the notices were distributed to pupils, parents, carers and guardians, governors and staff members. All other organisations and consultees required under the School Organisation Code 2018 were either provided with a hard copy or e-mailed a link to the published notice on the Council website.
  11. Where objections are received to the statutory notices, an objection report must be published summarising the statutory objections and the proposer's response to those objections.

### **Objections to the proposals**

12. The Governing Body received one objection by the statutory notice closing date.
13. A summary of the objection and the Governing Body's response can be seen below.
14. The objector could understand the need to safeguard the future of the school and could see how the proposal supports this. They were able to see the benefits of a single form entry primary school in terms of budget and education provision and fully support the proposal of 48 nursery places.
15. There were however a number of points raised in the objection:
  - The proposed move and expansion of the school will be detrimental to the current feel and Christian ethos of the school;
  - The location choice of the new school has been selected for financial reasons and not with the best interests of the local children and families in mind;
  - The poor pavements, low railings over a major road, poor lighting and speed of vehicles and distance from parts of Old St Mellons make the walk unfeasible;



- The proposed transfer of the school will result in young children having to walk further in all weathers which will not be feasible;
- The decision has been predetermined earlier in the year.

**St Mellons CIW Primary School Governing Body's response to the objections:**

16. As set out in the Consultation Report, the Governing Body welcomes the continued support of the Diocese in ensuring that the Christian ethos of the school is maintained.
17. The Governing Body are aware that there is a concern that the faith aspect of our school would be lost if the move were to take place and we are confident that this would not be the case. Continuity of staff, leadership, Governing Body, children and families will all be huge contributors to maintaining the current Christian ethos of the school.
18. The Governing Body of St Mellons Primary School firmly uphold the view of the Church in Wales who state that, 'Our schools are inclusive by nature, serving children and young people in a range of communities. They also form a natural point of community focus, whether in the inner city or in rural villages. Our schools are committed to celebrating the rich heritage of faith, language and culture of our land, offering the very best education to the children of Wales in a safe and secure Christian context.'
19. St Mellons CIW Primary will remain a Voluntary Controlled School in the Diocese of Monmouth. Our links with St Mellons Parish Church and our Diocese would continue to be as strong. We would continue to teach the same curriculum with RE as a core subject. Christian faith and values would remain at the heart of all that we do, driving our Christian ethos and supporting the priority that we give to family and nurture. These intentions have recently been supported by the following unanimously agreed motion at the parents' meeting on 15 July 2019 that stated, "We propose that the teaching of Religious Education in St Mellons Church in Wales School continue to be in accordance with the principles and practice of the Church in Wales"
20. The Governing Body recognises the support for the school provided by the Llanrumney community following the transfer of the school to the Dunster Road site and fully appreciates the connection the local community feel toward the school.
21. The proposed transfer and expansion of the school provides an opportunity to secure the long term future of the school and the provision of a 21st Century learning environment.
22. The proposed transfer and expansion of the school provides an opportunity for a greater number of children to benefit from the education



- on offer at the school. An increased number of pupils attending the school would also allow for a stronger budget position, greater opportunities for pupils and staff and would support the school to maintain and continue to build on the excellent standards as the new curriculum in Wales is introduced.
23. The arrangements proposed by the Governing Body of St Mellons Church in Wales Primary School are that all children on roll in September 2021 are able to transfer across to the new school site in St Edeyrn"s. In addition, all siblings born at the time of the consultation (Spring 2019) will benefit from these arrangements. Future arrangements will prioritise the community of Old St Mellons and St Edeyrn"s, however pupils from Llanrumney may still apply for any surplus places at the school.
  24. In the event of the proposal being progressed pupils on the roll of the school at the time of transfer (1 September 2021) would remain on the roll unless they wish to transfer to an alternative school.
  25. Representatives of the Governing Body have met with Council Officers to consider options for improving walking and cycling routes to the new school from the Llanrumney area. The Council has indicated that the options are fairly limited in terms of improving on-road routes.
  26. The Council has confirmed that funding has been secured to introduce a footway along Bridge Road between Ruperra Close and the school site and this will be in place by the April 2020.
  27. The Council has confirmed that the feasibility of providing a crossing facility on Tyr Winch Road within the vicinity of Wern Fawr Lane will be investigated, including, whether or not this could be a controlled crossing such as a zebra crossing.
  28. The request to raise the height of the parapets of the dual carriageway overbridge will also be considered and would be subject to engineering assessment to determine feasibility and costs.
  29. The Council will also investigate the feasibility of upgrading a footpath to create a safe walking and cycle route between Llanrumney and the new school site.
  30. The school will work with the Council and the school developer to understand how pupils and parents can be supported to travel more actively for the journey to school and set out actions in an Active Travel Plan. There are a range of measures available to help support pupils and parents. These would focus on increasing confidence and skills and taking part in national walking and cycling events.
  31. The School and Council can further explore the possibility of a walking bus where pupils would be supervised to walk together along a safe



- route. This would need to be supported by both parents and school and would need to have sufficient demand to be viable.
32. The School and Council will further explore the possibility of the way in which a minibus may be used to assist travel to the school.
  33. The Council's school transport policy entitles primary school pupils aged 11 or under and who live more than two miles from the nearest appropriate catchment school to catch public transport for free. Most pupils living within the Llanrumney area are likely to live within two miles of the new school and thus are unlikely to be eligible for free transport.
  34. The option of providing a school minibus to operate a shuttle service to transport Llanrumney pupils to the school has been discussed with Council Officers. This will require the school to acquire a mini bus and to make available a trained member of staff to operate it in the mornings and afternoons. If any pupils at the new school were eligible for free home to school transport and the school minibus could provide this, the Council could contribute towards the operating costs of the minibus.
  35. The Council has confirmed that it has received a petition which requests the implementation of a 20mph limit on Tyr Winch Road. The Council is considering the feasibility and financial implications of implementing such measures.
  36. This request for Zebra crossings will be considered by the Council within the design process for the highway measures associated with the school development.
  37. Funding sources for off-site transport improvements would need to be identified by the Council. The Council will investigate external funding sources such as Welsh Government transport grants although any proposals would need to be prioritised along with other schemes requiring external funding.
  38. The Council's school transport policy in line with Welsh Government guidance, entitles primary school pupils aged 11 or under and who live more than two miles from the nearest appropriate catchment school to catch public transport for free.
  39. Most pupils living within the Llanrumney area are likely to live within two miles of the new school and thus are unlikely to be eligible for free transport.
  40. The Governing Body of St Mellons CIW Primary School have been working for many years to secure the future of our school by growing in size. The opportunity to do this by moving site is by no means a predetermined decision and is subject to the Welsh Government



guidelines with regard to consultation, statutory notice and Cabinet consideration.

<https://law.gov.wales/constitution-government/public-admin/intro-admin-law/welsh-government-guidance-on-making-good-decisions/has-any-consultation-been-carried-out-fairly-and-properly/what-are-the-requirements-for-any-consultation-that-is-carried-out/?lang=en#/constitution-government/public-admin/intro-admin-law/welsh-government-guidance-on-making-good-decisions/has-any-consultation-been-carried-out-fairly-and-properly/what-are-the-requirements-for-any-consultation-that-is-carried-out/?tab=overview&lang=en>

## Appendices

Appendix 1 – Consultation Report

Appendix 2 – Statutory Notice