

**CABINET MEETING: 17 DECEMBER 2020**

---

**SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING: PRIMARY SCHOOL  
PLACES TO SERVE CATHAYS AND PARTS OF GABALFA,  
HEATH, LLANDAFF NORTH AND PLASNEWYDD**

**EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS (COUNCILLOR SARAH  
MERRY)**

**AGENDA ITEM: 5**

---

**Reason for this Report**

1. To enable the Cabinet to consider a recommendation to hold public consultation on proposals for primary school provision to serve Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd.
2. It is proposed to:
  - Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from c0.9 Forms of Entry (FE) (192 places) to 1.5 FE (315 places) from September 2022 and locate the additional school places at Allensbank Primary School in the first instance;
  - Consolidate Allensbank Primary School at 1FE (210 places), retaining nursery and Additional Learning Needs early intervention provision, from September 2022.
3. Consideration will also be given to a temporary increase to the Admission Number of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, from 30 places to 45 places at entry to Reception Year for the 2021/2022 intake if it is not possible to accommodate children in the area within local Welsh-medium primary schools.

**Background**

4. The Welsh Government published its Cymraeg 2050 strategy in 2017 which sets out a vision of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050.
5. By 2050, the aim is for 40 per cent of children (in each year group) to be in Welsh-medium education. Of those in English-medium education, the assumption is that half of those leaving school will report that they are able to speak Welsh.

6. The strategy assumes that, nationally, 70 per cent of 15 year olds will be able to speak Welsh by 2050, made up of 40 per cent in Welsh-medium schools and 30 per cent in English-medium schools.
7. The strategy also sets out transformational changes which include:
  - Expand Welsh-medium early years provision to facilitate a seamless transition into Welsh-medium education.
  - Increase the proportion of each school year group receiving Welsh-medium education from 22 per cent nationally in 2015/16 to 25-29 per cent by 2031, and then to 40 per cent by 2050.
8. The Bilingual Cardiff Strategy identifies priority areas to allow families, children and young people to use Welsh. It aims to increase the number of Welsh speakers and learners within Cardiff as well as increasing the use of the Welsh language in the city.
9. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is an integral part of the Councils 5-year Bilingual Cardiff strategy and supports the Welsh Government's vision of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.
10. The current WESP is for the period 2017-2020 and is based around the seven key outcomes of the previous strategic plan from 2014.
11. In recognition of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, revised WESP regulations will come into force in December 2020. The main changes include moving the draft WESP submission date to no later than 31 January 2022 with the new plan operational no later than September 2022.
12. The current WESP will remain in force until that date.
13. The Council recognises that the education system is a key element in ensuring that children are able to develop their Welsh skills, and for creating new speakers.
14. For Cardiff to achieve the Welsh Government's vision, we would need to increase the number of Welsh speakers by 15.9% from 36,375 (2011 Census) to 42,584 (2021 census); 58% of this has been achieved through increasing the numbers accessing Welsh-medium education.
15. The Council was successful in securing funds from the Welsh Government Increasing Welsh-medium Provision Capital Grant scheme. The purpose is to support capital investments that facilitate growth in Welsh medium education and use of the Welsh language.
16. The successful bid included a proposal to reorganise primary provision in the central area of Cardiff and expand the number of Welsh-medium primary places.

## Issues

### Sufficiency of Welsh-medium primary school places citywide

17. The number and percentage of children entering Welsh-medium primary education citywide fluctuated between 2009/10 to 2016/17. Consistent with the overall population, the number of children entering Welsh-medium education was on an upward trend. The number of children entering Welsh-medium reception classes city-wide peaked in 2016/17 at 744 pupils.
18. Following a fall in the birth rate in 2012/13, there was a fall in intakes to Welsh-medium primary schools city-wide. In January 2020, there were 683 pupils enrolled in Welsh-medium Reception classes city wide, compared to the 840 places available.
19. There was a significant uplift in admissions to the Reception age group at September 2020 with 764 children allocated to Welsh-medium Reception. This represents the highest intake to Welsh-medium Reception classes in Cardiff to date and also the highest percentage (c18%) of the pupil population enrolled in Welsh-medium Reception classes.
20. City-wide intakes to primary education in September 2021 to September 2023 are projected to reduce significantly as a consequence of a further fall in the birth rate and changes to migration patterns, which are evidenced in data published by the Office of National Statistics and the most recent NHS GP registration data sets. However, changes to populations are not consistent in all parts of the city.
21. In January 2020, c16% of primary age pupils and 15% of secondary age pupils in Cardiff were educated through the medium of Welsh.
22. At September 2020, c18% of Reception age primary school places available were through the medium of Welsh, in Welsh-medium or dual stream schools.
23. The Council has expanded Welsh-medium primary school places significantly in the period since 2012, including the expansion of Ysgol Gymraeg Treganna and Ysgol Glan Morfa, and new buildings for a number of schools including Ysgol Glan Ceubal and the establishment of Ysgol Hamadryad.
24. Ysgol Glan Ceubal was established in 2008 in order to meet excess demand for places from the catchment areas of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, Ysgol Gymraeg Melin Gruffydd and Ysgol Pencae. A nursery class was opened at Ysgol Glan Ceubal in September 2016 and, following consultation, a catchment area for the school was established from parts of the catchment areas of Ysgol Gymraeg Melin Gruffydd and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. Ysgol Glan Ceubal's new building opened in September 2018 and the school admitted 30 pupils in that intake.

25. Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Hamadryad was established in 2016, to serve the communities of Butetown and South Grangetown. The school was temporarily accommodated on the Ninian Park Primary School site in Grangetown, within the catchment area of Ysgol Gymraeg Pwll Coch. In the 2018/19 school year, the school transferred to its current site in Butetown which lies within the catchment area of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.
26. Following consultation, a catchment area for the Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Hamadryad was established from parts of the catchment areas of Ysgol Gymraeg Pwll Coch and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan with effect from September 2021.
27. The Council has also expanded Ysgol Y Wern and has approved proposals for new dual stream primary school provision to serve the early phases of the Plasdwr development.
28. Whilst the Welsh Government has not published targets for each Local Authority within the Cymraeg 2050 strategy, the provision of additional Welsh-medium primary school places will be needed in order to continue progress towards the one million Welsh speakers target.
29. Evidence from the previous expansion of Welsh-medium education shows that the provision of additional Welsh-medium places leads to an increase in the take up of places at Reception level.

### **Primary schools serving the area**

30. The Cathays, Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd areas are served by a number of Welsh-medium and English-medium primary schools.
31. Ysgol Mynydd Bychan serves a catchment area that includes the community of Cathays and parts of the communities of Gabalfa, Heath and Plasnewydd.
32. The catchment areas of Ysgol Y Wern, Ysgol Glan Ceubal and Ysgol Melin Gruffydd lie adjacent to the catchment area of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.
33. The combined catchment areas of Allensbank Primary School, Albany Primary School and Gladstone Primary School, which together form the secondary school catchment of Cathays High School, serve Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd,
34. St Monica's Church in Wales (CiW) Primary School and St Joseph's Roman Catholic (RC) Primary School also serve these communities.
35. Secondary Welsh-medium provision to serve the area is provided at Ysgol Glantaf with secondary English-medium community provision provided at Cathays High School. The area is also served by Corpus Christi Catholic High School and St Teilo's Church in Wales High School.

36. A map indicating the location of, and catchment areas (from September 2021) of, the Welsh-medium schools can be seen at Appendix 1.
37. A map indicating the location of, and catchment areas of, the English-medium primary schools can be seen at Appendix 2.

### **Establishing local demand for school places**

38. In order to calculate the likely demand for school places, historic trends specific to well established school catchment areas have been used.
39. The geographical units that are most suitable to analyse the demand for Welsh-medium primary school places are the discrete catchment areas of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, Ysgol Y Wern, Ysgol Glan Ceubal and Ysgol Melin Gruffydd (map attached as Appendix 1).
40. The geographical units that are most suitable to analyse the demand for English-medium primary school places are the discrete catchment areas of Allensbank Primary School, Albany Primary School and Gladstone Primary School (map attached as Appendix 2).
41. The following paragraphs give details of these catchment areas, the data used and the methodology applied. Projected demand takes account of the recent proportionate demand for places and pre-school population data supplied by the NHS. Forecast demand considers these data sets, and factors in other contextual information.

### **Current take up of places**

#### **Welsh-medium**

42. Whilst intakes to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and Ysgol Y Wern have overall remained at high levels, intakes to Ysgol Glan Ceubal and Ysgol Gymraeg Melin Gruffydd fell in 2019/20 but have increased in September 2020.
43. Table 1 overleaf sets out the recent demand for Reception places in Welsh-medium primary schools serving central/ north Cardiff, and projected demand reflecting recent take up and future populations in each area.

**Table 1: Recent and projected take up of places in Welsh-medium schools of pupils resident in the catchment areas of Ysgol Glan Ceubal, Ysgol Gymraeg Melin Gruffydd, Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and Ysgol Y Wern**

Catchment area	Places	PLASC data					Projected take-up at any Welsh-medium primary school			
		2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Ysgol Glan Ceubal	30	19	24	16	25	12	17	16	14	15
Ysgol Gymraeg Melin Gruffydd	60	46	55	61	55	37	47	39	43	33
Ysgol Mynydd Bychan	30	41	31	38	38	35	38	32	34	36
Ysgol Y Wern	90	73	73	81	90	87	94	87	83	85
Total	210	179	183	196	208	171	196	174	175	169
Surplus places		31	27	14	2	39	14	36	35	41
Surplus %		14.8%	12.9%	6.7%	1.0%	18.6%	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	<b>16.8%</b>	<b>19.4%</b>

44. The above projections are based on the most recent PLASC data (January 2020) and do not take into account the uplift in demand for Reception places in the 2020/2021 school year. PLASC data for the 2020/21 school year is not yet available. Demand indicated by the above projections in the catchment areas of Ysgol Glan Ceubal and Ysgol Melin Gruffydd is likely to be c8-12 pupils greater, when January 2021 PLASC data is available, with the wider projected surplus accordingly expected to reduce by c4-5%.
45. Whilst there is sufficient provision across the wider area to accommodate growth in Welsh-medium in the short term, the expected level of surplus places would not be sufficient to greatly increase Welsh-medium take up in the longer term to meet Cymraeg 2050 targets.
46. Whilst changes to catchment areas could improve the balance of places, this would not support long term growth.

### English-medium

47. The take up of English-medium Reception places in the catchment areas of Albany, Allensbank and Gladstone Primary School has varied in recent years.
48. Table 2 overleaf sets out the recent demand for Reception places in English-medium community primary schools within the Cathays High School catchment area, and projected demand reflecting recent take up and future populations in each area.

**Table 2: Recent and projected take up of places in English-medium community schools of pupils resident in the catchment areas of Albany Primary School, Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School**

Catchment area	Places	PLASC					Projected			
		2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Albany	60	52	45	49	46	46	44	38	35	35
Allensbank	45	41	31	40	42	37	33	34	36	39
Gladstone	30	34	27	36	25	30	33	24	26	22
Total	135	127	103	125	113	113	109	96	96	96
Surplus places		8	32	10	22	22	26	39	39	39
Surplus %		5.9%	23.7%	7.4%	16.3%	16.3%	<b>19.0%</b>	<b>28.9%</b>	<b>28.9%</b>	<b>28.8%</b>

### Summary forecasts of demand for places at entry to Reception

49. The work undertaken to establish the likely demand for Welsh-medium and English-medium primary provision shows that there will be an overall projected surplus of c6 – 19% in Welsh-medium and c19 – 29% in English-medium based on existing housing, if there is no uplift or decrease in parental preferences.
50. Appendix 3 details the current capacity and Published Admission Number at entry to each primary school, and the number of pupils enrolled in each year group.
51. At September 2020, c18% of the Reception age primary school places available were in Welsh-medium. In order to make progress towards the Welsh Government national target of 25 - 29% of pupils in Welsh-medium education by 2031, the number of pupils accessing Welsh-medium education at Reception age needs to increase.

### School Information

#### Ysgol Mynydd Bychan

52. Ysgol Mynydd Bychan is located on a 0.2 hectare site on New Zealand Road, Cardiff CF14 3BR.
53. The published capacity of the school is 192 places (Reception- Year 6) arranged over one block. The school also operates a 64 place nursery provision.
54. There is insufficient capacity on the site to allow for an expansion of the school.
55. An Estyn inspection in November 2015 judged the school's performance as good (Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement) with prospects for improvement also judged as good.

56. In the most recent Welsh Government School Categorisation at January 2020, the school was categorised as Green (a highly effective school which is well run, has a strong leadership and is clear about its priorities for improvement).

#### **Albany Primary School site**

57. The school is located on a 0.4 hectare site on Albany Road, Cardiff CF24 3RQ. The school is approximately 1.1 miles from Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.
58. The calculated capacity of Albany Primary School is 420 places arranged over three blocks. The school also operates a 64 place nursery provision.
59. There has been a consistently high uptake of places with the school currently operating at close to full capacity.
60. An Estyn inspection in November 2012 judged the school's performance as good (Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement) with prospects for improvement also judged as good.
61. In the most recent Welsh Government School Categorisation at January 2020, the school was categorised as Yellow (an effective school which is already doing well and knows the area it needs to improve).

#### **Allensbank Primary School site**

62. Allensbank Primary School is located on a 0.5 hectare site on Llanishen Street, Cardiff CF14 3QE. The school is approximately 0.2 miles from Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.
63. The published capacity of Allensbank Primary School is 315, arranged over separate infant and junior buildings. The school also operates a 64 place nursery provision and a Speech and Language early intervention class for up to 8 Foundation Phase pupils.
64. The school could however accommodate up to 420 pupils plus nursery, or up to 360 pupils plus nursery and an Early Intervention Class provision.
65. The take up of places at the school has been consistently lower than the number of places available with the school operating with c41% surplus capacity, compared to its published capacity of 315 places (January 2020).
66. The available capacity and configuration of the site would allow for additional provision to be accommodated on site.
67. An Estyn inspection in January 2020, judged the school's standards, wellbeing and attitudes to learning, teaching and learning experiences, care support and guidance and leadership and management as good.

68. In the most recent Welsh Government School Categorisation at January 2020, the school was categorised as Yellow (an effective school which is already doing well and knows the area it needs to improve).

### **Gladstone Primary School/ St Monica's CiW Primary School site**

69. Gladstone Primary School is co-located with St Monica's CiW Primary School on a 0.5 hectare site on Whitchurch Road, Cardiff CF14 3JL approximately 0.4 miles from Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.
70. Gladstone Primary School occupies the junior building with a published capacity of 210 places. Demand for places has fluctuated with the school currently operating with a surplus of c15%.
71. St Monica's CW Primary School occupies the infant building with a published capacity of 146 places. The school is currently operating with a surplus of c3.4%.
72. An Estyn inspection in February 2014 judged Gladstone's Primary School performance as adequate (strengths outweigh areas for improvement good, with prospects for improvement judged as good. A follow up monitoring visit in April 2015, judged the school to have made good progress in respect of the issues for action and the school was removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn monitoring.
73. In the most recent Welsh Government School Categorisation at January 2020, Gladstone Primary School was categorised as Yellow (an effective school which is already doing well and knows the area it needs to improve).
74. An Estyn inspection in April 2019, judged the St Monica's CW Primary School standards, wellbeing and attitudes to learning, teaching and learning experiences, care support and guidance and leadership and management as good.
75. In the most recent Welsh Government School Categorisation at January 2020, St Monica's CW Primary School was categorised as Green (a highly effective school which is well run, has a strong leadership and is clear about its priorities for improvement).

### **Balancing Welsh-medium and English-medium primary school provision**

76. The Council is committed to the development and expansion of Welsh-medium education.
77. As set out at paragraphs 31 & 32 there are four Welsh-medium primary schools serving the wider area in North/ Central Cardiff.
78. Of these, Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, has projected demand of 32-36 pupils entering Reception Year if the percentage of children within its catchment area remains at 15.6%, based on the weighted-average take up of places in census years 2018, 2019 and 2020.

79. Demand for places from within the Ysgol Mynydd catchment area for entry into Reception at September 2020 was greater than the 0.9FE provision available. Admitting all pupils from within the catchment area who had expressed a first choice preferences for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would require the school to operate at c1.3FE, although the total demand for Welsh-medium places of c1.5FE indicates an increasing demand for places in its catchment area that is not yet validated in PLASC census data.
80. A reduction in total city-wide pupil numbers entering primary education as a consequence of a fall in the birth rate is projected between September 2021 and 2023. This would allow for a greater proportion of Cardiff's pupil population to enrol in Welsh-medium primary education. The total number of Welsh-medium places available at entry to primary education city-wide could therefore accommodate approximately 22% of the projected pupil population in 2022 and 2023. There is sufficient capacity within the Welsh-medium primary sector city-wide to allow for a significant increase in take up, but in some areas of the city any further increase in demand could only be balanced by changes to school catchment areas or by increasing the number of places available.
81. Proposals brought forward must ensure that the growth of schools is sustainable, whilst the potential negative impact on other schools is minimised.
82. Table 1 indicated that there will continue to be demand for Welsh-medium reception places from within the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan catchment in excess of 1FE if the relative proportion of the population within its catchment area opting for a Welsh-medium education remains at c15.6%. Table 3 (below) sets out forecasts for this catchment area taking account of the most recent intake (17.9%), and also an annual growth in demand by one percentage point from 17.9% to 20.9%.

<b>Table 3: Projected and forecast demand for places in Welsh-medium Reception classes, of children resident in the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan catchment area, 2020 to 2024</b>				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Total population	243	203	216	229
Projected demand: 15.6%	38	32	34	36
Forecast demand: 17.9%	43	36	39	41
Forecast demand: 17.9% increasing to 20.9%	43 (17.9%)	38 (18.9%)	43 (19.9%)	48 (20.9%)

83. The scenarios in table 3 each take account of the known pre-school population in each cohort in the area. Any increase to the percentage, and number, of children admitted to Welsh-medium education would result in a relative reduction in children admitted to English-medium schools.
84. Whilst Ysgol Mynydd Bychan admits up to 30 pupils per year group allowing for efficient class organisation, the calculated capacity of the school within its existing accommodation is 192 places (18 places fewer than the 210 places for a 1FE school).
85. The immediate expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to 2FE may, at a time of reducing local primary pupil populations, represent a significant risk to sustaining the growth of other local Welsh-medium primary schools. Should Ysgol Mynydd Bychan admit more than 45 pupils, but not close to 60 pupils, this would limit the opportunities to create an efficient class structure and may have a negative impact on the school's ability to balance its budget.
86. The expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to 1.5FE in the first instance would provide an appropriate number of places to meet demand whilst minimising the impact on neighbouring Welsh-medium schools, and would enable an efficient class structure to operate whilst the school grows. A later phase of expansion to 2FE would support the Council is making progress towards the Cymraeg 2050 targets.
87. Increasing the number of Welsh-medium primary school places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would:
- meet demand for places from the local community
  - support the sustainable growth of Welsh-medium education in line with the aspirations of Cymraeg 2050
  - allow for a greater number of children to benefit from the education on offer at the school
  - provide greater opportunities for pupils and staff
  - support the school to maintain and continue to build on its excellent standards as the new curriculum in Wales is introduced

### **Expansion Options**

88. The expansion of provision on the existing Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site is not possible due to site constraints.
89. There are however a number of primary schools within close proximity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.
90. Table 4 overleaf sets out details of these school and the distances between the school sites based on safe walking routes (miles).

<b>Table 4: Distances between school sites based on safe walking routes (miles)</b>					
Primary Schools	Ysgol Mynydd Bychan	Allensbank Primary School	Gladstone Primary School	Albany Primary School	St Monica's CW Primary School
Ysgol Mynydd Bychan	N/A	0.22	0.41	1.16	0.48
Allensbank Primary	0.22	N/A	0.44	1.19	0.5
Gladstone Primary	0.41	0.44	N/A	0.82	0
Albany Primary	1.16	1.19	0.82	N/A	0.76
St Monica's CW Primary	0.48	0.5	0	0.76	N/A

91. The Council has investigated alternative site options that may be available and centrally located within the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan catchment area.
92. There is no suitable vacant site available that could accommodate an enlarged Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. Furthermore, there is sufficient capacity within existing schools serving the area to enable the reorganisation of existing provision. Reorganisation would provide an appropriate means of balancing the supply of and demand for both English-medium and Welsh-medium provision in the area, and would represent an effective and efficient use of resources.

### **Short Term**

93. There is surplus capacity within English-medium primary schools in the area, with the number of surplus places projected to increase.
94. Implementing a shared site arrangement for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan in the first instance would limit the impact on all schools and provide an appropriate local solution.
95. Allensbank Primary School is the closest school site to the site of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, at 0.3 miles from Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. Allensbank also has the highest level of surplus places, and the greatest number of surplus classrooms, not used as classbases, overall. Allensbank Primary School is also well located for families enrolled in or applying for admission to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan as many of those children reside in the northern part of its catchment area.

96. Whilst the shared Gladstone and St Monica's site also has some classrooms not used as classbases, the school is located further from the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site (0.5 miles away). Gladstone Primary School has a separate 'Boathouse' building but this is not used for classroom teaching at present and would require investment to upgrade it for this purpose. Albany Primary School is 1.16 miles from Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and has few surplus places overall.
97. Table 5 below sets out details of the number of children on roll at Allensbank Primary School from 2016 – 2020. In January 2020, 185 pupils were enrolled, compared to a maximum capacity in the school buildings of up to 420 pupils.

	<b>Rec</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>	<b>Total</b>
Jan-16	40	32	45	35	38	27	29	246
Jan-17	24	48	30	43	37	29	22	233
Jan-18	25	25	36	26	39	29	22	202
Jan-19	30	26	25	34	30	33	26	204
Jan-20	19	27	25	26	30	27	31	185

98. The high level of surplus at Allensbank Primary School is projected to continue. There is no data available to suggest that the number of pupils enrolling at Allensbank Primary School will exceed 210 places in future years.
99. Where there is a higher than necessary number of school places, resources are being deployed inefficiently that could be better used to improve the quality of education for all learners.
100. Combined with this are the difficulties associated with operating a primary school with a high proportion of its places unfilled. The size of the school and the low number of children on roll means that the school will inevitably face financial difficulties.
101. Reorganising provision would result in creating additional Welsh-medium primary provision whilst retaining an appropriate number of English-medium places to meet demand within the locality based on population projections and historic take up patterns.
102. The location of Allensbank, the level of surplus accommodation, and the site layout would allow for Reception intakes to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to increase with Ysgol Mynydd Bychan operating between its existing site, and sharing the buildings on the Allensbank site.
103. Consolidating Allensbank at 210 places (Published Admission Number of 30 places at entry to Reception) would allow for the expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to 315 places (Published Admission Number of 45 places at entry to Reception) from September 2022.
104. The consolidation of Allensbank Primary School is not subject to the requirements of the Welsh Government School Organisation Code as the

proposed capacity would be greater than the highest number of pupils on roll at the school at any time in the previous two years prior to the publication of the proposal.

105. The School Admissions Code allows for a school's Admission Number to be increased if there is a temporary shortage of a particular type of provision in an area, citing an example of Welsh medium education, while additional provision is being established.
106. An increase to the Admission Number at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, to 45 places, could be implemented for the cohort entering Reception in September 2021. However, Ysgol Mynydd Bychan could not be expanded to accommodate more than 240 primary age children without the publication of a proposal to expand the school in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code.
107. The first round of applications for entry to the Reception age group in September 2021 closes on 12 January 2021. The number of applications for Welsh-medium places at Reception in September 2021, compared to the number of places available in Welsh-medium primary schools serving the wider area, will be kept under review and consideration would be given to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan operating an Admission Number of 45 places from September 2021 if appropriate and in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

### **Long term solution**

108. The Council submitted a capital grant application to the Welsh Government to reorganise primary provision in the central area of Cardiff and expand the number of Welsh-medium primary places by 1FE.
109. The Council is committed to implementing this increase. The expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan by 0.5FE in the first instance represents the initial phase of progress towards this.
110. Engagement with the schools, parents and the wider community on a preferred long term solution as part of the statutory consultation on the proposed expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, would allow for the views of stakeholders to shape proposals that would provide an appropriate balance of Welsh-medium and English-medium primary school places to serve the area.
111. Any long term solution should seek to achieve the following:
  - Reducing English-medium surplus places to serve the combined catchment areas of Allensbank, Albany and Gladstone
  - Expanding Welsh-medium provision serving the existing catchment area of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to 2 Forms or entry
  - Provide greater certainty and stability of leadership, management, teaching and support staff, to support continued focus on teaching standards and improved outcomes for pupils

- Enable investment in school buildings to improve the learning environment.

### **Additional Learning Needs**

112. There is a Speech and Language early intervention class at Allensbank Primary School. The class admits up to 8 Foundation Phase children who were not making sufficient progress, but who have good prospects for returning to their local mainstream school.
113. Placements last 1 – 3 years, depending on progress. Pupils are dual registered at their local school and supported to return at the end of the placement. Pupils continue to attend their local school for at least one day a week, to maintain links with local friends and to prepare for a successful early reintegration to their local school.
114. There are no plans to make any changes to this provision.

### **Nursery Provision**

115. Children in Cardiff are entitled to a part-time nursery place from the start of the term following their third birthday and must attend for a minimum of five half days. Nursery places are not allocated on a catchment area basis. Wherever possible places are offered in a local community school or nursery class within two miles of a child's place of residence. If places are unavailable in local community nursery schools or nursery classes, parents may apply for nursery education place funding with an approved provider that has to demonstrate it is able to meet the relevant quality
116. There are no changes planned to the provision of nursery education places arising from this report. The number of nursery places provided within each locality is kept under review and adjusted to reflect local demand.

### **Admission arrangements**

117. The relevant changes to the Council's policy on the admission of children to schools as a result of these proposals relate to the proposed changes in the Published Admission Number of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, from 30 to 45, and of Allensbank Primary School from 45 to 30.
118. Consultation on the 2022/23 admission arrangements for community schools will take place in December 2020 – January 2021 in accordance with the requirements of the Admissions Code. This consultation would include the proposed changes to Published Admission Numbers.
119. Detailed information regarding admission arrangements is contained in the Council's Admission to Schools booklet, and this information can also be viewed on the Council's website ([www.cardiff.gov.uk](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk)).

## **Implications for secondary school provision**

120. Combined demand across the three Welsh-medium high school catchment areas is at a high level and can be accommodated within the existing school capacity.
121. The Council will consult on its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for the period 2022 – 2030 in 2021. Proposals to respond to changes in demand will be brought forward in good time to ensure that there are sufficient places to meet the demand for Welsh-medium places.
122. A proposal to increase the capacity of Cathays High School to meet demand from within its catchment and the wider area is part of the Council's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme and are the subject of a separate Cabinet report to be considered in December 2020.

## **Local Member consultation**

123. Local Members for Cathays, Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd have been consulted on the proposal. Members have been briefed on the need for additional Welsh-medium places to serve the area, the alignment of the proposal with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy, and the potential impact of the proposals on local schools.

## **Reason for Recommendations**

124. To balance provision for Welsh-medium and English-medium community primary school provision to serve Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd.

## **Impact of the proposal on the Welsh Language**

125. It is anticipated that there will be a positive impact on the Welsh Language as a result of these proposals.
126. The proposals outlined in this report seek to align with the Bilingual Cardiff Strategy and strongly support the Welsh Government's strategy for the Welsh language by contributing to meeting the targets set out in the Cymraeg 2050 strategy.
127. The Council works closely and constructively with partners on its Welsh Education Forum, which includes representatives of nursery, primary, secondary and further education, childcare, RhAG and the Welsh Government. The Forum actively informs the planning of Welsh-medium places, to continue to drive the Council's plan to sustainably increase the number of learners within Welsh-medium schools and those learning Welsh in English-medium schools.
128. The Council, and its partners on the Welsh Education Forum, are committed to driving the increase in number of pupils educated through the medium of Welsh, to meet the targets within Cardiff's WESP, and to

meet the targets set out in the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy.

129. The Council monitors birth rates, the yield from proposed housing and the patterns of take-up in Welsh-medium provision at primary and secondary age, with a view to bringing forward appropriate plans to meet any increased demand.
130. The Council must ensure that the expansion of school provision is brought forward in a strategic and timely manner, which does not compromise existing provision. Significantly or rapidly expanding Welsh-medium primary school provision would, inevitably, have an impact on the take-up of places in other schools, and in turn on the ability of schools to balance budgets and to attract or retain staff.
131. The Council's aspirations for increasing the number of Welsh speakers, and the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050, propose a significant change. Cymraeg 2050 sets national targets of educating 40% of learners in Welsh-medium schools, and a further 30% of learners being educated in English-medium schools being fluent in Welsh. At present, c17% of Cardiff children entering primary education are educated in Welsh-medium schools or classes.
132. This proposal seeks to increase the number of Welsh-medium primary school places available in the area, and seeks to implement the change in such a way that the potential for negative impact on existing schools is limited.
133. There is a risk that provision of additional Welsh-medium primary school places on the new school site may inhibit the growth at other local schools. It is intended that this impact is mitigated by implementing a phased increase in provision.
134. The provision of 105 additional Welsh-medium places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would mean that the overall proportion of Welsh-medium places city-wide is increased in an incremental and sustainable manner.

### **Learner Travel Arrangements**

135. There are no plans to change the Council's transport policy for school children.
136. Any pupils affected by the proposals would be offered the same support with transport as is provided throughout Cardiff in line with the same criteria that apply across Cardiff.
137. The Council's transport policy for school children can be viewed on the Council's website [www.cardiff.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/schooltransport).

## **Financial Implications**

138. The recommendations to this report request approval for a consultation process to be undertaken in relation to a proposed increase in pupil places for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, with the increased pupil numbers being accommodated within available space at Allensbank Primary School. Should the scheme be taken forward, any capital costs arising, through needing to make adaptations at the Allensbank site, will need to be funded from the Welsh Medium grant allocation referred to earlier in this report. The recommendations also outline a proposed stakeholder engagement exercise regarding a wider review of the balance of Welsh medium and English medium places within the locality. Any future proposals arising from that exercise will require a full financial evaluation and the necessary capital funding will need to be identified before any schemes can progress.
139. In terms of revenue implications, the resources required to fund the additional places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan will need to be met from within the existing delegated schools budget. As this report outlines, an overall decrease in numbers within the primary phase is being projected and, therefore, the additional places should be affordable within the existing overall budget. However, it is important that the impact on neighbouring schools, whose pupil numbers could reduce as a consequence of this expansion, is monitored closely and any financial impacts are anticipated and managed, as appropriate. As well as the funding directly required for the additional places, it will also be necessary to identify any additional transport requirements. Should additional transport provision be required, this will need to be absorbed within the existing School Transport budget.
140. The revenue implications of the wider review of pupil places within the locality will need to be considered once the engagement exercise has concluded and options have been determined. It will be important that the proposals ensure that surplus capacity is kept to an appropriate level and that the financial viability of individual schools is not compromised. On the basis that overall pupil numbers are currently projected to fall, there should not be a need for additional revenue funding to meet the number of places on offer, however consideration will need to be given to the way in which potential school organisational change will be implemented, with the aim of minimising the risk that any individual school could enter into a financial deficit position.

## **Legal Implications**

141. Under the Education Act 1996, the Council has a general statutory obligation to promote high standards of education and to provide sufficient school places for pupils of compulsory school age. Parents have a right to express a preference for the school they wish their child to attend under section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, but this does not provide a right to attend a certain school, as applications can still be refused where this would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

142. A local authority can make school organisation proposals, including making 'regulated alterations' to a community school or maintained nursery school under sections 42-44 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The proposals set out in the report constitute 'regulated alterations' and must be considered having regard to the provisions of the 2013 Act and the School Organisation Code 2018, which sets out factors to be considered in respect of different proposals, the statutory procedures, legal requirements and guidance.
143. Where an increase in a school's capacity is proposed, the Council must have regard to evidence of current or future need/demand in the area for additional places, with reference to the school's language category (and religious character / gender intake if applicable). In the case of Welsh medium provision this would include an assessment of the demand for Welsh Medium education (conducted in accordance with any regulations made under section 86 of the 2013 Act). Consideration must also be given to whether the proposals will improve access for disabled pupils in accordance with requirements under the Equality Act 2010.
144. The Council is required, prior to publishing its proposals, to undertake a consultation on its proposals in accordance with section 48 of that Act and the School Organisation Code 2018. The recommendations seek authority to carry out that statutory consultation.
145. Case law has established that the consultation process should:
  - (i) be undertaken when proposals are still at a formative stage;
  - (ii) include sufficient reasons and information for particular proposals to enable intelligent consideration and response;
  - (iii) provide adequate time for consideration and response; and;
  - (iv) ensure that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken.
146. The Schools Organisation Code sets out further detailed requirements and guidance in relation to the statutory consultation, including the requirement for publication of a consultation document (and the contents of that document), a minimum 42 days consultation period including at least 20 school days, and a list of statutory consultees, including parents, pupils, governing bodies, religious bodies, the Welsh Ministers and Estyn. Following the public consultation, the Council is required to issue a consultation report, setting out the issues raised by consultees and its response to those issues. At that stage, a further report is to be submitted to the Cabinet to decide how to proceed.
147. The proposals in relation to use of the land and buildings on the Allensbank Primary School site will be subject to agreement by the school governing body and any associated terms and conditions.
148. If the proposals are taken forward, the admission arrangements, including admission numbers and catchment areas, will need to be determined, following consultation, in accordance with the School

Admission Code and the Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006.

149. In considering the proposals, the Council must have regard to its public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010 (including specific Welsh public sector duties). Pursuant to these legal duties, Councils must in making decisions have due regard to the need to (1) eliminate unlawful discrimination, (2) advance equality of opportunity and (3) foster good relations on the basis of protected characteristics. The Protected characteristics are: age, gender reassignment, sex, race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality, disability, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, religion or belief – including lack of belief. An Equalities Impact Assessment should be carried out to identify the equalities implications and due regard should be given to the outcomes of the Equalities Impact Assessment.
150. The Council must also be mindful of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards and consider the impact of its proposals upon the Welsh language. The proposal to increase the Welsh medium education provision should have a positive impact on the use of the Welsh language and support the aims of the Council's approved Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and Bilingual Cardiff Strategy.
151. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires the Council to consider how the proposals will contribute towards meeting its well being objectives (set out in the Corporate Plan). Members must also be satisfied that the proposals comply with the sustainable development principle, which requires that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
152. Further legal advice will be provided as proposals are progressed.

### **HR Implications**

153. The proposals within this report represent increasing the size of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. The Governing Body and senior leadership team will need to plan for this expansion, ensuring their staffing structure is sufficient to address this. HR People Services will provide support with this and any vacancies which arise will present potential redeployment opportunities in line with the School Redeployment and Redundancy Policy.
154. Similarly, the proposal to reduce the Published Admission Number of Allensbank Primary at 30 places (1FE) from 45 places (1.5FE) will also require the Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team to evaluate the impact of the proposed reduction on their staffing requirements moving forward. This may include undertaking appropriate workforce planning to review posts where they become vacant, or evaluating training options. In the event that the Governing Body does require there to be a reduction in the overall number of staff, then it is hoped that this could be achieved through voluntary means wherever possible.

155. Where it cannot be managed by voluntary means or by workforce planning, it will need to be managed in line with the School Redeployment and Redundancy Policy, which has been adopted by the school governing body. HR People Services will work with the Headteacher and Governing Body to provide support during this period, including through the facilitation of the redeployment process.
156. It will also need to be assessed whether there are any specific staffing requirements in relation to the operation of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan across two school sites and any associated impact on Allensbank Primary. HR People Service will provide support in relation to these discussions as the project develops.
157. This report also proposes engaging with stakeholders with regards to a longer term solution. Any proposals considered as part of this will need to be assessed separately for the HR implications. HR People Services will have early dialogue with stakeholders regarding their views in order to support this engagement process.

### **Property Implications**

158. Strategic Estates will support the Education team on asset management and any future land matters required as part of the consultation process or as a result of the consultation where a land transaction will be required.
159. In the event of any land transactions, negotiations or valuations required to deliver any proposals, they should be done so in accordance with the Council's Asset Management process and in consultation with Strategic Estates and relevant service areas.

### **Traffic and Transport Implications**

160. Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and Allensbank Primary School operate on constrained sites. Each site experiences issues with traffic and parking during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times.
161. Recently, the Council introduced CCTV enforcement cameras in Llanishen Street outside Allensbank Primary School to enforce against parking Keep Clear 'Zig Zag' markings.
162. A temporary, staffed road closure was introduced outside Ysgol Mynydd Bychan on Canada Road when schools re-opened in summer 2020 following lockdown. This was to restrict vehicular access near the school in order to provide safe space for social distancing.
163. Since schools re-opened in September 2020, concerns have been raised by parents and ward members regarding traffic and parking outside Ysgol Mynydd Bychan on New Zealand Road. Officers plan to seek Welsh Government funding to create a School Street on New Zealand Road which would restrict vehicular access along the street to residents,

blue badge holders and authorised permit holders during drop off and pick up times. This would make the environment outside the school safer and more conducive to walking and cycling.

164. The expansion of capacity at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and the issues of traffic and parking at both Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and Allensbank Primary referred to above underline the need to introduce measures which discourage car travel and promote active travel to both school sites. One such measure is the introduction of a School Street. Plans are already being progressed for a School Street on New Zealand Road. There is also potential to do this on part of Llanishen Street. However, both proposals will require consultation with residents and local businesses.
165. Another instrument is the development and implementation of a School Active Travel Plan. The Council is committed to ensuring that every school in Cardiff has an Active Travel Plan by 2022. Such a plan identifies actions by the school to support and encourage active travel to school and will also identify any improvements to on-site and off-site infrastructure required to facilitate active journeys.
166. All new (including reorganised) schools need to have a plan in place from the outset of their operation. The Council's Active Travel Plans officers can support the development of the Active Travel Plans and can support with engagement on the Active Travel Plans as part of the implementation of the proposed expansion of places.
167. The Council's Road Safety Team already provides a programme of cycle and pedestrian training to further encourage take up of active travel to school. This support will continue as part of the ongoing engagement and support that will be provided by the Council's Schools Active Travel Team on Active Travel Plan development and delivery.
168. The Council has developed proposals for a segregated cycleway along Allensbank Road. This will provide a safe cycling connection to Llanishen Street which could be used by pupils travelling to Allensbank Primary School.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

169. An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out. It concluded that the proposed changes would not negatively affect a particular group in society. Where particular groups are identified as being impacted, mitigating actions have been identified. This assessment will be reviewed after the consultation.
170. A Statutory Screening Tool including Equality Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix 4.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet is recommended to authorise officers:

- to consult on proposals to increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from c0.9FE (192 places) to 1.5FE (up to 315 pupils) from September 2022.
- to undertake a stakeholder engagement exercise to shape proposals that would be taken forward to provide an appropriate balance of Welsh-medium and English-medium primary school places to serve the area.
- Note that consultation on the Admission Arrangements for the 2022/23 academic year will include a proposal to reduce the admission number of Allensbank Primary School from 45 to 30 places.
- Note that officers will bring a report on the outcome of the consultation and engagement exercise to a future meeting to seek authorisation as to whether to proceed to publish proposals in accordance with section 48 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

<b>SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	<b>Melanie Godfrey</b> <b>Director of Education &amp; Lifelong Learning</b>
	11 December 2020

*The following appendices are attached:*

*The following background papers have been taken into account*

- Appendix 1 – Welsh-medium catchment area map
- Appendix 2 – English-medium catchment area map
- Appendix 3 – School Number on Roll data
- Appendix 4 – Statutory Screening Tool