

Record of Drop In Sessions:

- Microsoft Teams (11th March 2021)
- Microsoft Teams (12th March 2021)
- Microsoft Teams (18th March 2021)



Schools Programme
Record of Virtual Drop in Session
Allensbank Primary School/Ysgol Mynydd Bychan
11 March 2021



Present: Rosalie Phillips (RP), Hibah Iqbal (HI), Ysgol Mynydd Bychan parent

Please note: The following is not a transcript but a contemporaneous note of the meeting

The parent had a number of queries/concerns as set out below

What is the long term plan; the current plans seems short sighted

RP - the consultation has two aspects, proposed interim arrangements and also seeking views on a long term solution. There are many schools in the area and we're seeking views on the best way forward. The intention is for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to be 2FE in the long term and we will consult on this at a later date.

It seems the long term options are limited

RP – site sharing arrangements have been done before and proposing this ahead of finalising a long term solution e.g. Ysgol Hamadryad utilised accommodation at Ninian Park Primary school prior to moving to their new school building.

How did they manage integration of Welsh? There are a lot of English speaking children and this would impact immersion

RP – it has worked successfully and Welsh language acquisition has not been affected.

There would be difficulties managing a split site

RP - there is demand for places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. We are consulting on a proposed change and are seeking views on this; we are listening to concerns being raised and will consider how these could be addressed.

What is stopping a school swap from happening?

RP – this has been suggested by a number of people and we will consider whether this is viable.

The lack of a long term solution is what is causing concern

RP – it is in no one's interest to retain a split site arrangement. The engagement exercise is seeking views on a long term solution which the community can buy into.

It has been a difficult year for children and being separated from Ysgol Mynydd Bychan will be a lot for them to cope with.

RP – consulting on a proposal. All the views expressed will be presented to Cabinet and inform the decision taken.

We definitely want to increase capacity but it is about finding the right way to do this

RP – We are also going to meet with pupils regarding their views on the proposed changes which will be central to the way forward. It is difficult but seeking views that will inform a long term solution.



Schools Programme
Record of Virtual Drop in Session
Allensbank Primary School/Ysgol Mynydd Bychan
12 March 2021



Present: Brett Andrewartha (BA), Hibah Iqbal (HI), Ysgol Mynydd Bychan parent

Please note: The following is not a transcript but a contemporaneous note of the meeting

The parent had a number of queries/concerns as set out below

Troubled and anxious with this proposal, regarding splitting on two sites. I'm a Welsh speaker and my children have a good level of Welsh too. When we send children to Welsh primary schools it's so they become fluent in Welsh but also to participate in Welsh culture and life.

Aware you don't need to speak Welsh to be Welsh but need to acknowledge that speaking helps with culture and life and getting jobs.

Splitting the site will weaken provision and children won't be fluent in Welsh. I have seen how Ysgol Mynydd Bychan works, they are fluent by age 11. Covid has already impacted this. Reception pupils haven't been able to interact, even though the parent may speak Welsh, not speaking in school has an impact, and it's about educational attainment too.

Have read the consultation document and spoken to the Councillor, heard you talk about other successes. But this will have detrimental impact on those segregated in ABPM. My six year-old is sad about potentially being segregated. I'm not convinced you've considered the detrimental impact on welsh-medium provision.

BA - we will be meeting YR 6/School Council and/or older learners because they would understand and be best equipped to how it makes them feel, what is good and bad. We have a lot of experience working with pupils on many proposals. Year 6 will be able to speak on a whole school perspective and they won't be affected either. We try not to cause them distress.

What about the detrimental impact on Welsh-medium provision and Welsh life?

BA – site sharing has been done at Gabalfa Primary School/Ysgol Glan Ceubal with 2FE building like Allensbank Primary School. The plan was to have a starter class but as the school grew, we brought in additional accommodation on site in demountables which were very good, not porta cabins. The new build opened in autumn 2018 following work with both governing bodies around the design.

There is also a shared site in Pentwyn (Bryn Celyn Primary School/Ysgol Pen y Groes). The school was refurbished with an EM on one corridor and WM on the other.

I know Ysgol Mynydd Bychan began as a starter class in Albany Primary School. The difference is under this proposal you have Allensbank Primary School plus a satellite of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. It is not the same thing.

BA – It would be up to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan how they choose to organise, they could just have a standalone nursery class, a couple of foundation phase classes, or KS2. It is up to them regarding what is appropriate. You can have a split site with separate entrance and yard. With Ysgol Mynydd Bychan it may appear more daunting because it is new. This is a consultation and we are asking for thoughts on what is being proposed. This is a way of growing the school and also need to consider how it should be taken forward in the area. Ysgol Mynydd Bychan parents, staff and governing body may have different views but we need to know. Asking about the interim but also about the long term. We can ask the open questions, how you feel, what's best for the community.

Keen to see Welsh-medium grow but unsure this is the way to go but there is demand for it and we have a grant. Is it true it will be from September 2021?

BA - If we had to make temporary arrangements the Council can introduce temporary measures and that's what we've explained to both governing bodies. If Ysgol Mynydd Bychan said they don't want it and numbers tell us the extra class isn't needed then it wouldn't need to be taken forward. There is the public perception that the school is very full but actually there are spaces in other schools. We need to see admissions data. Welsh-medium has been growing but with the changes in population, it's not growing as fast as we'd like in line with Cymraeg 2050. We want to stimulate demand. Unlike other parts of Wales, the standard in Cardiff is 100% Welsh in WM schools and complete immersion in primary. If in a site sharing arrangement they want to work together than they can choose to but it doesn't need to be assimilation, only if they want.

I don't think splitting a school is the best practice immersive experience. I've no issue with a shared site if they were two full schools. I see the segregation of St Monica's and Gladstone with the fence through it. Local councillor asked how I felt about segregation. It will be said to have separation but the English language is dominant. It is two schools, it's a satellite.

BA - don't need to split play times. The Allensbank Primary School site has one long playground, we wouldn't be proposing a barrier. If Ysgol Mynydd Bychan think having a small offshoot of the school is beneficial then that's up to them.

That puts the GB in difficulty. If the consultation is completely rejected then how would you define or quantify that? What would happen next? What about swapping? If rejected would you look at a more permanent solution?

BA – in the next stage we would consult on a permanent solution in the near future.

What does near future mean?

BA - we can have a breathing space. We could look to change catchment area but we're in a situation where we want to increase Welsh-medium provision. Speaking to parents and governing bodies; we have had feedback about swapping sites but not sure on the interim measure, if so we need to do something quickly to fulfil capacity.

The grand funding was for a 2FE school but you are proposing 1.5FE.

BA – we could secure more monies if needed from capital funding.

If the proposal is approved, I would want to see something about long term because there's nothing here now. My fear is that it falls down the priority list. In my consultation response I only agree to the proposal if you address the long term issue.

BA – your response should reflect how you feel.

Why isn't there a guide time in the document? If I'd seen that then I'd be so much further along putting up with the disruption. The temporary nature means nothing without a long term commitment. The short term seems permanent. Why isn't it there?

BA - we're trying to be flexible. We don't want to be held to it but we also don't see any reason to delay when we get answers from the consultation. The grant is there.

Is the grant for short term or long term?

BA – long term, but if we need additional funding for the temporary phase, it will be from capital funding. The grant is only for Welsh-medium, we cannot use it for anything else.

Money is tight so it's a real anxiety without commitment to address the permanent solution. Michele Duddridge Friedl said a minimum of two years which was helpful to know.

BA – if you have fears, please include these in your response and these will be reported to Cabinet.



Schools Programme
Record of Virtual Drop in Session
Allensbank Primary School/Ysgol Mynydd Bychan
18 March 2021



Present: Brett Andrewartha (BA), Rosalie Phillips (RP), Ysgol Mynydd Bychan parent

Please note: The following is not a transcript but a contemporaneous note of the meeting

The parent had a number of concerns relating to the proposed changes at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan which would see the school running across two sites in the short term ahead of proposals being brought forward to permanently expand the school to 2FE.

The concerns/queries raised related to:

- Welsh language ethos
- The practicalities of operating across two sites
- Potential unease between two sets of pupils
- Alternative options

The parent also queried the extent of any work around looking at other options particularly with regard to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and discussions around suitable sites.

BA – recognised the challenges around working around two sites and provided an example of a school successfully managing across two sites. Split site arrangement can be managed well but appreciated that in this case it would mean a school changing from one site to two and this was not the case when people had applied for places. There had been initial discussions with the school prior to the consultation starting and need to look at this carefully.

The layout of Allensbank lends itself to sharing (infant and junior buildings). The Advisory Service had previously been accommodated at Allensbank and the layout of the school allows for something else. There were options around how the site could be configured and the Council would work with both governing bodies to identify the best way forward.

Welsh-medium primary schools work on the basis of full immersion in the Foundation Phase with the introduction of English in KS2. It is not uncommon to have shared school sites in Cardiff e.g. Bryn Celyn Primary School and Ysgol Pen y Groes share a site/building on a permanent basis. Gabalfa Primary School and Ysgol Glan Ceubal also share a site/building. Previously Ninian Park Primary School in Grangetown has shared its site with Ysgol Tan yr Eos (prior to its amalgamation with Ysgol Treganna) and Ysgol Hamadryad (prior to the school moving to a new site). Operating across sites has been done successfully and site sharing arrangements have been successfully managed.

There is limited space available in the local area. Other sites had been investigated however no viable options were identified. With regard to the Cathays High School site there is not sufficient land available for a primary school on that site. The level of surplus available in local schools is also an issue and focusing on existing sites and

how many places are needed now and in the future. There is not only one option and seeking view on potential ways forward; have met with governing bodies also and seeking their views also to help shape any proposal taken forward.

Query re why the Companies House site had not been considered.

BA – the Companies House site sits outside of Education. Strategic Estates Department look at sites on an ongoing basis and have been advised that there are no sites available.

Query re whether the proposed new Cathays High School would take up the whole of the site.

BA - the configuration of the site had not been agreed and would be informed by design/traffic implications etc. The new Cathays High School will need outside areas, sports facilities and looking at how best the design could be achieved in the context of the consultation e.g. the commitment to maintain BMX track, parking, public open space and recreational areas.

Query re what the position would be if the proposal was not progressed, does this then mean that nothing happens?

BA - the options to meet demand in the short term include doing nothing because of the projected reduction in pupil numbers in the short term. Looking at a staged proposal in order to generate growth in demand for Welsh-medium in line with Cymraeg 2050.

Query re commitment to Cymraeg 2050 and the desire to bring forward growing the demand.

BA – the Council is committed to the growth of Welsh-medium provision in line with Cymraeg 2050. Provision has already been expanded at Ysgol y Wern with the Welsh Government advising that there will be further funding available to develop provision.