

Appendix 9

Option 3

Site Organisation



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)

This option would allow for further consideration to be given to formal federation / collaboration between Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School.

The proposed changes would be implemented from September 2025.

Nursery Provision

The number of nursery places at Mynydd Bychan would be increased from 64 to 96 to support its growth to a two-form entry school.

There would be no change to the number of nursery places at Allensbank Primary school. The school is currently funded for 48 nursery places, reducing to 32 next year.

Additional Learning Needs provision

There is a Speech and Language early intervention class hosted by Allensbank Primary School. The Council admits up to 8 Foundation Phase children to this city-wide provision who were not making sufficient progress, but who have good prospects for returning to their local mainstream school.

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.

Consideration would be given to the relocation of the city-wide Speech and Language class hosted by Allensbank Primary School should Option 3 be progressed.

The proposed expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to two forms of entry, and transfer to the Allensbank Primary School site could provide the opportunity for consideration to be given to the establishment of specialist resource base provision. Separate proposals would have to be developed for this.

Collaboration/Federation

The close proximity of Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School provides opportunities for the schools to work in partnership to maximise opportunities for all pupils at the schools either through collaboration or federation.

Should the schools consider implementing a formal collaboration or federation this would be led by the Governing Bodies and supported by the Council.

What are the benefits of the proposal?

The proposed changes would:

- provide an improved balance between the availability and take up of both Welsh-medium and English-medium primary school places
- support progress towards the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and Cymraeg 2050 targets
- support Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to maintain and continue to build on its excellent standards
- allow for a greater number of children to benefit from the education on offer at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan
- result in fewer children being refused admission to a local school

- as a minimum maintain the current standards of education
- ensure that each school provision offered meets the diverse needs of the communities they currently serve and are able to serve in the future
- support schools to be financially sustainable in an improved pattern of provision through collaboration/federation
- allow for the retention of school sites to future proof against changes in the population cycle

The expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to 2FE would support teaching and learning by allowing for:

- the school to increase to two forms of entry. When compared with smaller schools, the scale of a two form entry primary school permits greater flexibility and opportunity for pupils due to an extended, more enhanced and secure financial resource base
- a two form entry school can provide a greater degree of stability at all levels of leadership including maintaining a full and stable complement of school governors
- the ability to employ more teaching and support staff would allow the two form entry schools to cover a wider range of curriculum expertise
- a greater number of teachers to share workload
- greater opportunities to professionally develop staff e.g. NQTs who can observe their parallel teacher
- opportunities for staff to teach to their strengths ensuring learners have the best education experience possible
- a greater number to teachers to lead on Areas of Learning, plus RE, RSE and Digital Competency
- greater opportunities to offer a broader range of extra-curricular/enrichment activities
- greater opportunities for distributed leadership

The establishment of a federation between Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School would:

- support raising standards by sharing curriculum delivery, school leadership and joint action to tackle key issues such as inclusion
- allow for the sharing of good practice, preparation materials and resources
- enhance opportunities for pupil activities leading to improvements to the quality of learning for staff and pupils
- enhance opportunities for staff professional development
- increase opportunities for middle management development
- provide School Council and pupil development opportunities
- improved social opportunities for pupils
- allow for cross phase arrangements
- allow for streamlining of policies and structures
- support school improvement by enabling schools to draw on the resources of other schools to tackle problems, share expertise, raise expectations and address the needs of particular groups of pupils.
- provide opportunities to exploit economies of scale and sharing services across the schools

- allow for the possible easier recruitment of governors with fewer governor vacancies.
- allow for sharing of expertise and resources
- facilitate organisation of professional development
- ease arrangement of joint pupil activities

Standards

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

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

The proposed expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to 2FE provides the opportunity to realise a range of educational benefits that would allow for the school to build on existing progress ensuring a positive impact on the quality and standards of education for current and future pupils.

The proposal would not however allow for the establishment of nursery provision at St Monica's CiW Primary School and the associated benefits.

Maintaining Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School as two separate provisions would not allow for the benefits of a 2 form entry school to be realised or for the reduction in formula funding that would be released in Option 1 to be made available for ring-fencing nor for distribution to schools city wide through the funding formula.

Additionally, the potential for educational benefits at Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School to be realised would be subject to the implementation of a collaboration/formal federation arrangement.

Potential disadvantages of the proposal

- there is potential for increased traffic congestion around the current Allensbank Primary School site at the start and end of the school day. However, the Council would work with the Governing Bodies of the schools to develop a Travel Plan to minimise any potential disruption.
- the proposal to reduce the capacity of Allensbank Primary School would result in a marginal reduction in the number of English-medium community primary school places.

Risks

- there is a risk that an increase in the number of pupils requiring Welsh-medium places does not happen. The Council will keep its projections under review and would respond to any such changes in demand if required.
- there is a potential impact on neighbouring Welsh-medium schools. However, this is expected to be short term as the number of pupils attending Welsh-medium provision grows as part of the development of the WESP.

- there is a risk that there will be a rise in demand for English-medium places. However, the Council will monitor demand over the coming years to ensure that there are sufficient places for those requiring English-medium education. As the proposals retain all existing sites and do not reduce accommodation available, they would retain flexibility for future changes that may be identified as appropriate.
- there is a risk of potential disruption to pupils during the transition period however the Council has significant experience in the successful delivery of building projects on the sites of occupied schools as a result of progressing a large and growing school organisation programme. Any building work carried out would be managed effectively in consultation with the schools to ensure the full curriculum continues to be delivered and that high education standards and safety standards are maintained.
- the Governing Bodies of Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School may decide not to proceed with collaborative working or federation.

Human Resources and Finance Matters

Welsh-medium

Proposals to relocate a school would require high levels of staff and trade union consultation, clear communication plans and arrangements for the transition from one school site to another. Staff involvement in the development of building specifications or designs should be secured.

The proposed expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would require the Governing Body to consider the workforce requirements in readiness for the expansion. The Governing Body would be encouraged to undertake this work in line with the School Organisation Planning HR Framework. HR People Services would provide advice, support and guidance to the Governing Body for the workforce planning process and consequential recruitment processes.

Where the Governing Body has adopted the Council's School Redeployment and Redundancy Policy, any new vacancies arising as a consequence of an increase in the numbers on roll would provide opportunities for any school-based staff on the school redeployment register.

The Council was successful in securing £1.8m grant funding from the Welsh Government to reorganise primary school provision in central Cardiff and expand Welsh medium places by 1 Form of Entry (210 places). The purpose of the Welsh Medium Capital Grant is to support capital investments that facilitate growth in Welsh-medium education and use of the Welsh language.

The funding allocated to Cardiff Council is ring-fenced to support expansion in Welsh-medium education provision and would allow for investment in school buildings to support increased intakes.

English-medium

Proposals to relocate a school would require high levels of staff and trade union consultation, clear communication plans and arrangements for the transition from one

school site to another. Staff involvement in the development of building specifications or designs should be secured.

This option would allow for the Governing Bodies of Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary school to consider collaborative working or the establishment of a formal federation.

Federation could result in a reduction in the number of leadership roles overall across the two schools depending on the model taken forward.

Any decisions taken with regards to staffing would be a matter for the relevant Governing Body.

Funding to support the reorganisation of English-medium provision must be made available from Council resources. There would be no savings to the Council as a result of the proposed changes. Any efficiency savings arising out of a formal federation would allow for funding to be allocated more effectively within the Education budget.

The proposal to transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the Allensbank site, and to transfer Allensbank to the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site (Option 3) would not result in the displacement of an existing Headteacher and restructuring of leadership although this could be considered at a later stage by the Governing Body. Should the Governing Body pursue a federation in future, the federated schools could reduce leadership costs by c£43,000 and c£77,000 per year plus on costs.

The formula funding to these schools is £98,000 greater each year, compared to amalgamation of Allensbank and Gladstone in Option 1, as each school would still receive lump sum allocations. These lump sums would not be available for ring-fencing to the schools nor for distribution to schools city-wide through the funding formula as per Option 1.

Travel to school

The Council has been committed to ensuring that every school in Cardiff has an Active Travel Plan by 2022. Such plans identify actions by the school to support and encourage active travel to school and identify any improvements to on-site and off-site infrastructure required to facilitate active journeys. The Council's Active Travel Plans officers have been working with schools to develop these and all four schools already have Active Travel Plans in place for their current sites.

All new (including reorganised) schools need to have an Active Travel Plan in place from the outset of their operation.

The Active Travel Plans officers will continue to work with the schools in the review and further development of their current Active Travel Plans as appropriate to suit any change in circumstances. They can support with engagement on the Active Travel Plans as part of an implementation of a proposed expansion of places and any changes in location of school cohorts to alternative sites.

Following a reorganisation of the schools, the Council will monitor conditions outside the schools post-completion to see if any further measures such as parking restrictions are required. The scope for introducing parking restrictions will be investigated and put in place where appropriate as a low-cost measure to help discourage short distance car travel, make the environment outside each school safer and more conducive to walking, scooting and cycling and maximise active travel to school.

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.

The construction of the new Cycleway 1.2 along Cathays Terrace, Whitchurch Road and Allensbank Road will provide a new cycling facility directly linking to Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School and St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School.

Where it is identified that some pupils will be eligible for school transport due to their additional learning needs (e.g., for SRB pupils), the facilities for drop-off and pick-up of pupils will be reviewed to identify any necessary improvements.

The maximum distances between the school sites is c0.5 miles. Should the schools exchange sites the maximum increase in home to school travel distance is therefore 0.5 miles.

The impact of transferring Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the Allensbank Primary School site would be an average travel distance increase of 0.04 miles for current pupils of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.

The impact of transferring Allensbank Primary School to the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site would be an average travel distance increase of 0.04 miles for current pupils of Allensbank.