

**CARDIFF COUNCIL  
CYNGOR CAERDYDD****CABINET MEETING: 19 OCTOBER 2023**

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**SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING: PRIMARY SCHOOL  
PLACES TO SERVE CATHAYS AND PARTS OF GABALFA,  
HEATH, LLANDAFF NORTH AND PLASNEWYDD****LEADER (COUNCILLOR HUW THOMAS)****AGENDA ITEM: 2**

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**Reason for this Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the responses received following consultation on proposals regarding the provision of primary school places to serve Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd and to seek authorisation to proceed, where appropriate to publish proposals in accordance with section 48 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
2. The proposals considered in this report relate to maintained community provision. The responses received following public consultation on proposed changes to St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School will be considered by the governing body of the school.
3. The proposed organisational changes would utilise secured Welsh Government capital grant funding to expand Welsh-medium provision and subject to funding, additional Council capital to support the establishment of a new English-medium primary school.

**Background**

4. At its meeting on 23 March 2023, the Council's Cabinet agreed a recommendation to hold public consultation on options to expand Welsh-medium primary school provision and consolidate English-medium primary school provision as follows:

Option 1

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

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

The proposed changes would take effect from September 2025.

### Option 2

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

The proposed changes would take effect from September 2025.

### Option 3

- Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site.
- Increase the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places (0.9FE) to 420 places (2FE).

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

The proposed changes would take effect from September 2025.

5. Options 2 and 3 would allow for consideration to be given to collaboration or formal federation between Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School. There are clear benefits to collaboration or federation for schools that are based either on the same site or in the same community as it enables them to work together on shared priorities, pool expertise, make better use of resources and explore ways of doing things more effectively.
6. The Cabinet noted the proposal for the extension of the age range of St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to include a nursery class of 32 part time places and transfer to the school to the site presently occupied by Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from September 2025 and instructed officers to provide all reasonable assistance to the Governing Body of the school who would be consulting on the proposal.

## Issues

7. The consultation period ran from 3 May 2023 – 30 June 2023.
8. The consultation process involved:
  - Publication of a bilingual consultation document outlining background, rationale, and implications to parents, local childcare providers, Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of nearby schools, all Members of local wards and other stakeholders (a copy of the consultation document can be seen a Appendix1);
  - Publication of a bilingual summary document setting out the main points of the consultation document;
  - The summary document and response form were also published in nine community languages which were distributed to parents at Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School, St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and published on the Council website (a copy of the summary document can be seen at Appendix 2);
  - Publication of a Community Impact Assessment which is available to view at [www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools)
  - Posters outlining details of the proposals and meeting/drop-in dates were put up in the local area;
  - Consultation meetings with staff and governors at Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School, St Monica's Church in Wales

Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan (notes from the meetings can be seen at Appendix 3);

- Consultation meetings with pupil representatives from Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School, St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan (notes from the meetings can be seen at Appendix 4);
- A workshop session with the Cardiff Influencers (notes from the meeting can be seen at Appendix 5);
- Public meetings at Cathays Community Centre at which the proposals were explained and questions answered. The first public meeting was through the medium of English and the second through the medium of Welsh (notes from the meetings can be seen at Appendix 6);
- An on-line public meeting at which the proposals were explained, and questions answered (notes from the meeting can be seen at Appendix 6);
- Drop-sessions at Cathays Library where officers were available to answer questions (notes from the drop-in sessions can be seen at Appendix 7);
- On-line drop-in sessions on request where officers were available to answer questions (notes from the on-line drop-in sessions can be seen at Appendix 8);
- Drop-in sessions for parents at Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School, St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan (notes from the parents' drop-in sessions can be seen at Appendix 9);
- Letters setting out details of the proposals and where further information could be found were sent out to c600 parents/guardians of 0 – 3 year-olds living within the catchments areas of Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan;
- Letters setting out details of the proposals and where further information could be found were sent to local residents and businesses in the areas surrounding the school sites subject to the proposed changes;
- Letters were also sent to places of worship in the local area to make them aware of the consultation, how they could make their views known and an offer to meet with any groups, they run or that make use of their accommodation who would like to find out more about the proposed changes;
- A consultation response slip for return by post or e-mail attached to the consultation document and summary document (including nine community languages);
- A communication campaign via social media;
- An online response form (including versions in nine community languages) at: [www.cadiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools](http://www.cadiff.gov.uk/CathaysGabalfaPrimarySchools)

9. For stakeholders who did not have access to digital platforms the opportunity to discuss the proposed changes via telephone was available.

10. The views expressed at Council organised meetings, drop-in sessions, telephone calls, and on paper or electronically through the appropriate channels, have been recorded.
11. Views were sought from interested stakeholders via an online survey and a hard copy version of the survey within the consultation document and summary document.
12. The details presented in this report represent the views expressed during the consultation process. These include the wider stakeholder survey, formal responses, e-mail responses, views expressed at public meetings, drop-in sessions, telephone calls and pupil consultation meetings.
13. The views expressed in the wider stakeholder surveys reflect those raised in the e-mail responses received.

### **Responses received regarding the proposed changes during the consultation period**

14. In total 213 responses were received including 188 online/hardcopy responses, 18 formal responses, 2 school council responses and a further 5 email responses.
15. Formal responses were received from:
  - Joint response from County Councillors for Gabalfa Ward, Cllrs Rhys Taylor and Ashley Wood
  - Response from County Councillor for Cathays Ward, Cllr Chris Weaver
  - Estyn
  - Julie Morgan, Member of the Senedd for North Cardiff
  - National Education Union (NEU)
  - The Diocese of Llandaff
  - Allensbank Primary School Governing Body
  - Allensbank Primary School Headteacher
  - Allensbank Primary School NEU Union Members
  - Gladstone Primary School Governing Body
  - Gladstone Primary School Headteacher
  - Gladstone Primary School Staff
  - St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School Finance, Premises and Health & Safety Committee of the Governing Body
  - St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School Standards Committee of the Governing Body
  - St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School Vision and Values Committee of the Governing Body
  - St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School Headteacher
  - Ysgol Mynydd Bychan Governing Body and Members of Staff
  - RhAG (Parents for Welsh Education)

16. The response from Estyn set out its view that each of the three options are likely to at least maintain the standard of education provision in the area.
17. Full copies of the formal responses can be seen at Appendix 10.
18. Views were sought from interested stakeholders via an online survey and a hard copy version of the survey within the consultation document.
19. Of the 188 responses to the wider stakeholder survey, 121 responses (64.4%) were received from stakeholders who identified themselves as current parents/guardians. This was followed by 'Member of Staff' (16.0%) and 'Local Resident' (10.6%). Of the 188 responses, 56 (34.6%) were affiliated with Allensbank Primary School pupils, 41 (25.3%) with St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School pupils, 32 (19.8%) with Gladstone Primary School and 9 (5.6%) with Ysgol Mynydd Bychan. The remaining responses were from a range of stakeholders including staff, governors, future parents/guardians and other interested parties.
20. Of the five e-mail responses received, three were from stakeholders who identified themselves as parents. Of these, two were parents of Allensbank Primary School pupils and one a parent of Ysgol Gymraeg Melin Gruffydd and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan pupils.
21. A summary of the responses received from all stakeholders, and an appraisal of the views expressed, can be seen at Appendix 11.
22. A summary analysis of the responses received can be seen at Appendix 12.

## **Views Expressed**

### **Wider Stakeholder survey**

23. Views were sought from stakeholders on three options as set out in paragraph 4 and submitted to the online response form on the Council's website and consultation response forms.
24. Over half (54.3%) of the respondents stated that they didn't agree with Option 1. This rises to around three in five (61.1%) when 'No Opinion' respondents are excluded from the analysis.
25. Around three in five (58.5%) respondents stated that they didn't agree with Option 2. This rises to almost three in four (72.8%) when 'No Opinion' respondents are excluded from the analysis.
26. Three in five (61.2%) respondents stated that they didn't agree with Option 3. This rises to over three in four (77.7%) when 'No Opinion' respondents are excluded from the analysis.
27. Positive views expressed during the consultation included:

- The parents of all of the schools included in the proposed changes were supportive of their children's school and content with the standard and quality of education and the support provided by each school.
- All three options allow for the expansion of Welsh-medium education.
- All three options retain the buildings currently in use, and that their future use as primary schools.
- Option 1 would allow for the Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School deficit budget positions to be resolved and for resources to be invested in teaching and learning.
- Amalgamating the two English-medium primary schools and establishing a new 2 form entry primary school (Option 1) would be the most cost-effective solution allowing for more resources to be made available for teaching and learning and an improved pupil experience; keeping all four schools open with falling pupil numbers would mean that resources are stretched over four sites instead of three.
- Option 1 reduces the number of small schools allowing for more financial resources to be invested in education for all children in the city.
- Option 1 would be an exciting opportunity for two English-medium community schools to form one larger primary school in the Cathays area which would ensure a smooth transition for pupils from the age of three through the high school.
- Option 1 would allow for staff to share expertise and support greater collaboration/continued professional development (CPD) opportunities. Additional staff could also provide a range of expertise and educational experiences for pupils.
- Option 1 would allow for the whole school community to contribute their ideas and thoughts to help shape their children's school for the future e.g., deciding on the school's name, school uniform, branding giving them ownership of their school in their own community.
- Having one larger English-medium primary school (Option 1) would create more opportunities for families to develop links, allow the community to work together to raise funds for the school and support any local events/businesses.
- Option 1 would provide a level of security for the majority of Allensbank Staff
- The proposed changes would provide the opportunity for St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to grow and develop (Option 1 & Option 2) allowing for increased provision for a faith-based education to meet demand.
- There would be the opportunity for St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to have nursery provision which would allow for children to start benefiting from the good work of the school at an earlier stage (Option 1 & Option 2).
- The close proximity of St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site would allow the school to maintain its existing links with St Michael's Church and The Table (Option 1 & Option 2).

- The transfer of St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site (Option 1 & Option 2) would place the school in a new Parish Ministry area and provide scope for the school to increase to a 0.9 form entry school and improve financial viability.
- A shared site has challenges and the option of its' own large site for St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School would be advantageous.
- The opportunity for improved facilities for St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School e.g., improved early years accommodation and a larger outdoor area (Option 1 & Option 2).
- The refurbished early years provision at St Monica's would be well utilised by a new school and nursery (Option 1).
- Co-locating Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School (Option 2) on a shared site would allow two community schools to come together and provide greater collaboration opportunities for staff, pupils, families and governors. Having both schools on one site would allow for staff to share expertise and create greater collaboration/continued professional development (CPD) opportunities. Staff could also provide a range of expertise and educational experiences for pupils in the school. There would be the opportunity to pool resources together which both schools could benefit from.
- Option 2 would allow Gladstone Primary School and Allensbank Primary School to retain their identity and ethos. If schools were to federate this would be an exciting opportunity to work closely with all stakeholders of both schools and unite them under one umbrella.
- Option 2 would give families time to adjust to the schools working on one site and be a smoother transition should the schools federate in the future.
- Option 2 would have little impact on staffing with the majority of staff not having to reapply for their jobs offering more job security.
- Maintaining Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School as separate schools (Option 2) would allow for both schools to retain their identities and a continuity of education for their learners.
- Option 3 would reduce the disruption for two schools' staff, children and parents avoiding undue stress and anxiety. It would allow for all four schools to continue, schools to remain independent and keep their identity. It would also have implications for the smallest number of pupils.

28. Concerns raised during the consultation included:

- All of the options result in Allensbank Primary School moving from its current building which was perceived as being unfair. This suggests that a decision has already been made by the Council.
- The perception that there is investment in Welsh-medium education at the expense of English-medium education.
- The lack of evidence to support the expansion of Welsh medium provision. It was felt that in the context of falling pupil numbers and the likelihood of families from an English as an Additional Language (EAL) background not opting for Welsh-medium that there would not



be sufficient demand to justify the expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to 2 forms of entry.

- Disappointment at what was seen as a lack of engagement with schools to identify solutions ahead of the proposals being brought forward.
- The range of options put forward for consultation should have included the option for English-medium provision to be located on the current Allensbank Primary School site and Welsh-medium provision on the Gladstone Primary School/St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site.
- Concern regarding the listed status of Allensbank Primary School and the potential for the site to be adapted.
- The potential financial impact on Ysgol Mynydd Bychan of occupying a larger site whilst the school grows.
- The needs of vulnerable children and families for whom English is a second language, the impact on pupil wellbeing particularly children with additional learning needs who may find change very difficult and ongoing disruption to education.
- The impact on staff at Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School.
- The challenges around a shared site arrangement as proposed in Option 2.
- The impact of additional nursery places on existing provision with more schools competing to fill places a time when the birth rate is falling (Option 1 & Option 2).
- There were concerns regarding the availability of Welsh-medium teaching and support staff that would be needed to support the expansion of Welsh-medium education.
- The potential for the expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to impact negatively on Ysgol Glan Ceubal; increasing places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would directly impact Ysgol Glan Ceubal.
- The potential for increased traffic around school sites.
- Would there be a corresponding increase in the number of secondary Welsh-medium places to meet demand as larger cohort transfer?
- The potential loss of two schools with a long history of serving the local community. Multiple generations of families have sent their children to Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School because they trust that their children will receive a positive and inclusive education.
- There were concerns around potential conflicts of interest with queries raised regarding whether Councillors have to declare a conflict of interest.
- Concerns regarding community cohesion; were decision makers representing the views of the actual community of Cathays, rather than the views of the white, middle class voting community of Cathays. There is a danger of the community perceiving that white, middle-class children are getting treated better than other children, which could cause division.

29. Several alternative suggestions for the provision of primary school places to serve the area were put forward.

30. These included:

- Do nothing; keep the schools as they are.
- Amalgamate English-medium provision on the current Allensbank Primary School site with Welsh-medium on the current shared Gladstone Primary School/St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site.
- Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School could share the current Allensbank Primary School site with Welsh-medium provision on the shared Gladstone Primary School/St Monica's Church in Wales School site.
- The best way to achieve the expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan is a new school building which provides resources, infrastructure and environment needed to deliver high quality and enriching learning experiences. Potential locations include the current Cathays High School site or on vacant space on the Companies House site. The existing school building could be sold for redevelopment into housing with this money used for the new build school.
- Seeking a location in Cathays or closer to the city centre, on the site of a different school for additional Welsh-medium places; there are seven different English-medium schools in Roath/ Adamsdown/ City Centre areas of the city and no Welsh-medium schools in these areas so one of these could be considered.
- Realign Welsh-medium catchment areas. The growth of Welsh medium needs to be by choice. It also won't help Welsh medium as a whole in Cardiff to have Welsh schools fail through funding issues. Creating competition among Welsh medium schools for pupils, just to remain viable, is going to damage Welsh Medium.
- Increase the number of Welsh-medium places where it is needed e.g., LDP developments.
- Amalgamate Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and Ysgol Glan Ceubal.
- There should be shared playing field provision for all on the school included in the consultation; these are city schools in an urban environment, but they need their own green space (either grass playing fields or a decent astroturf pitch).
- Additional funding to support the challenge of pupil mobility to help with planning and provide financial stability.
- Transfer Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the Allensbank Primary School site and create a bilingual school.
- Increase capacity at Ysgol Glan Ceubal.
- Explore the options around federation which would allow for individual school ethos and approaches to teaching and learning to be retained and shared, whilst still re-allocating and re-balancing places in the English-medium sector.
- Develop opportunities for the Welsh language skills for those beyond Welsh-medium settings in the area on the use of Welsh in education.
- A new school for the youngest children whilst allowing for current Gladstone Primary School and Allensbank Primary School pupil to remain separate.

- Locate Welsh-medium primary school provision on the Albany Primary School site.
- Improve the teaching of Welsh in English-medium schools.

### **Pupil representation**

31. Officers met with pupils at Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School, St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to seek their views on the proposed changes.
32. The sessions were run using the interactive presentation programme 'Mentimeter' which allowed for pupils to provide their thought/views using live polls, word clouds, questions etc. Notes from the sessions can be seen at Appendix 4.

### **Allensbank Primary School**

33. Officers met with a group of 20 pupils at Allensbank Primary School to discuss the proposals and gather their views; not all pupils answered every question.
34. The points raised by the pupils included the following:
  - Option 1 – 47% said they did not like this compared to 16% who said they did. 21% partly liked it, 16% had no opinion.
  - Option 2 – 57% said they did not like this option, 14% said they did, 29% partly liked it.
  - Option 3 – 94% said they did not like this option, 6% said they did.
35. The comments made relating to Option 1 were mixed and included the following:
  - Positive - Get to meet more friends, good for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan pupils, easier for the Council to manage one big school, good as it will create more school places.
  - Less Positive and concerns - Increased travel, not fair for Gladstone and Allensbank pupils to share the space, not necessary as English is a universal language, sad that younger students won't have the same experience as previous Allensbank pupils, might lose friends if classes are mixed with Gladstone pupils.
36. The comments made relating to Option 2 were generally negative and included the following:
  - I do not want to move.
  - Less space to play could affect the mental health of Allensbank pupils.
  - Why move just to have a Welsh school when Welsh is only spoken in one country.
  - Younger pupils won't get to experience the same things.

37. Option 3 was the least preferred outcome. The comments made relating to this option included:
- The reduced size of the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan buildings and playground compared to the Allensbank site.
  - It was unfair that a smaller number of pupils currently at Ysgol Mynydd would inherit the larger space at Allensbank.
  - Whilst they did not like this option, it would be less disruptive for students in the other schools.

### **Gladstone Primary School**

38. Officers met separately with year groups 4, 5 and 6, totalling circa 70 pupils at Gladstone Primary School to discuss the proposals and gather their views; not all answered every question. The summary below is a collective response across these year groups.
39. The points raised by the pupils included the following:
- Option 1 – 48% said they liked this compared to 33% who said they did not. 16% partly liked it, 3% had no opinion.
  - Option 2 – 47% said they did not like this option, 36% said they did, 10% partly liked it and 7% had no opinion.
  - Option 3 – 57% said they liked this option with 31% saying they did not. The remaining 12% were split evenly between having no opinion or partly liking it.
40. The comments made relating to Option 1 included positive feedback regarding the opportunities to make more friends, whilst less positive feedback included concerns around a name change or just wanting things to stay the same.
41. The comments relating to Option 2 were similar to Option 1 but included numerous comparative answers such as: I prefer Option 1; or I like *this* better than Option 1.
42. This group of pupils were quite conflicted about whether Option 1 or Option 2 would be better for their school.
43. Comments relating to Option 3 were mainly good or bad type statements. However, the overall sentiment was mixed with some feeling that they would not be affected by any changes, which they liked, whilst others felt that this would be unfair.

### **St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School**

44. Officers met with a group of 50 pupils from years 4,5 and 6 pupils at St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to discuss the proposals and gather their views; not all answered every question.
45. The points raised by the pupils included the following:

- Option 1 – 62% of pupils liked this option compared to 6% who said they did not; 12% partly liked it, 20% had no opinion.
  - Option 2 - 38% said they liked this option, 16% said they did not; 31% partly liked it, 15% had no opinion.
  - Option 3 – Over half of the respondents were opposed to this option, with 56% stating they did not like it; only 12% stated they did like it, 20% liked parts of it, 12% had no opinion.
46. Most comments made relating to Option 1 were positive, such as I think it is a good idea, I think it would be good to have a bigger playground, more pupils would get to come to St Monica's, we would get a bigger school, would be nice to have a nursery, we would get a better education.
47. There were other comments that whilst they liked the idea, they would miss their school and they felt some people may have further to travel which would be unfair on them.
48. The comments for Option 2 were generally less favourable than Option 1 with several respondents stating that Option 1 was better. Lots of comments stated that it was 'ok' rather than good and quite a few responded that they weren't sure. Only 2 of 50 answers stated that Option 2 would be better than Option 1.
49. Option 3 was not liked by the pupils because they felt it was only fair that everyone should swap, and that St Monica's would not benefit from increased numbers for nursery or a bigger school and playground.

### **Ysgol Mynydd Bychan**

50. Officers met with pupils at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to discuss the proposals and gather their views. A group of 20 pupils took part in the session which was held through the medium of Welsh.
51. The points raised are set out below:
- Option 1 – 35% said they liked this compared to 10% who said they did not like this option, 40% partly liked it, 15% had no opinion.
  - Option 2 – 35% said they did not like this option, 20% said they did, 40% partly liked it, 5% had no opinion.
  - Option 3 – 95% said they did not like this option, 5% said they did.
52. The comments made relating to Option 1 were mixed and included the following:
- Positive – It is a great opportunity for more children to receive Welsh-medium education if Ysgol Mynydd Bychan is of a greater size. All schools will have more space which will be fair in terms of Welsh and English places. I think this will help develop the Welsh language in our area as every child will have the opportunity to go to a Welsh language school.

- Less Positive - Increased travel time, we like this building. Ysgol Mynydd Bychan should stay in the same place.
53. Many pupils didn't have an opinion with regards Option 1 and noted that 'I don't have an opinion'.
54. The comments made relating to Option 2 were generally mixed, many of the pupils began comparing both Options 1 and 2 and included the following comments:
- Option 2 is a good option for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan but not for the other schools, if we want to be fair then option 1 is better.
  - I like this option but perhaps some of the children in the other schools won't like it.
  - I hate this option.
  - I like this option.
  - I like that more children will have the opportunity to speak Welsh.
  - Without a shred of doubt, I don't agree with Option 2 because it's too complicated and there's not enough room for all schools.
  - Perhaps parents from English speaking schools will like option 2 because the schools will keep the same name and uniform.
55. Many pupils didn't have an opinion with regards Option 2 and noted that 'I don't have an opinion'.
56. Option 3 was the least preferred outcome. Many of the pupils began comparing all 3 options. The comments made relating to this option included:
- Option 3 is not a good idea because the only school that is going to take advantage is our school, which is good for us but not for any other school.
  - Without doubt option 3 must be thought about but I think this change will be unfair for Allensbank children as not many children can go to Allensbank.
  - I'm contemptuous of this option because Allensbank's playground is the same size as Ysgol Mynydd Bychan's playground and in my opinion that's all that matters.
  - In my opinion I think option 3 won't have much impact.
  - In my opinion I don't think it's fair for St Monica's because they can't have a nursery
  - In my opinion we should have a brand-new building with a big yard and more people to speak Welsh, and a big hall.
57. Nearly all pupils felt that Option 3 wasn't fair to either Allensbank Primary School or St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School.

## **School Council responses**

58. In addition to the engagement sessions with pupils, two School Council responses were received, one from Allensbank Primary School and the other from St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School.
59. The School Council of Allensbank Primary School felt that it was unfair that there wasn't an option for the school to remain on its existing site and suggested that Gladstone Primary School join them as there is enough space for a two-form entry primary school.
60. The School Council of St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School supported Option 1 as this would allow for the school to have nursery provision with the associated benefits and for the school to grow. They also felt that the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site would provide a range of better facilities.
61. Copies of the full School Council responses can be seen at Appendix 4.

## **Cardiff Influencers**

62. The Cardiff Influencers are a secondary age stakeholder group of learners from Cardiff schools who inform decision-making on school organisation planning.
63. Twelve members of the group met on 01 June 2023 to discuss the proposed changes to primary school provision serving Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd.
64. The session included a presentation of the proposed options, a community walk (beginning at the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site, walking to the Allensbank Primary School site and walking from there to the Gladstone Primary School/St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site before returning to City Hall).
65. This was followed by a discussion on who would be affected by the proposed changes and the pros and cons of each option. The Influencers then worked in groups to prepare statements setting out their views on the proposed changes.

## **Cardiff Influencers feedback on proposed changes**

66. The information below is a summary of the feedback from the group. Copies of the Cardiff Influencers feedback statements are included at the end of the summary.
67. Nine of the twelve Influencers preferred Option 1.
68. The comments made included:
  - *All the schools would have nursery provision which is beneficial to the community.*

- *Establishing nursery provision at St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School may increase the likelihood of parents sending their children to the school.*
- *The budget deficit positions of the two English-medium primary schools (Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School) would be addressed.*
- *Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would grow to two forms of entry allowing for more children to access Welsh-medium education.*
- *The expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would support the aims of Cymraeg 2050.*
- *It was appreciated that there was an emotional attachment to both Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School, however amalgamating the two schools would allow for the sustainable provision of English-medium primary places to serve the area and an opportunity to blend the cultures of both schools, strengthening connections within the local community.*
- *Larger schools can attract quality and experienced headteachers however it is understood that the existing headteachers could potentially be made redundant.*
- *Larger school can offer more specialisms as there are more staff available and a greater range of extracurricular activities available.*
- *Larger schools would provide greater value for money, money can be spent toward effective equipment, teachers etc.*
- *Closing Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School would result in staff being made redundant losing their experience and teaching ability however redeployment offered by the Council is an opportunity that staff with interviews at the newly formed English-medium school or for other available position within the city.*
- *Closing Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School places the Headteachers at risk of redundancy.*
- *There may be a lack of continuity for some of the children as a new school would organise staff differently which may be unsettling.*

69. Option 2 was not supported by any of the Influencers, and they thought there were few benefits to maintaining the cost of running two schools on one site; additionally, the deficit position of Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School would remain with no clear way to recover.

70. Option 3 was supported by three of the twelve Influencers.

71. The comments made on Option 3 included:

Pros:

- *Allows Allensbank Primary school to become a one form of entry school (currently two forms of entry with more supply than demand) meaning they would stop losing money. Allensbank primary school is losing money because they are paying for the facilities of a 2 form of*



*entry building whilst only having students for 1 form of entry each year.*

- *Option three causes less disruption than option one whilst still having benefits for both schools including:*
  - *No teachers would lose their jobs.*
  - *Allensbank and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan are the closest to each other between the four schools. (Today we walked from Allensbank to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and it took us two minutes).*
  - *There would be no negative changes in pay for any staff and the head teacher in Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would gain a significant increase in pay. Furthermore, there would be new job opportunities which also require Welsh with this option.*
  - *Finally, some parents, students and the community members around the four schools may not want them to shut down and make a new school. Community members may hold those schools very close to them and would fight against the schools being closed as proposed in option one.*

Cons:

- *The debt of Allensbank will remain. However, the smaller building will allow them to recover eventually, although this may take some time.*
  - *Additionally, Ysgol Mynydd Bychan will face some difficulties at the start due to the lower number of students compared to the space available. However due to demand for spaces in Ysgol Mynydd Bychan the learner deficit would fill.*
72. The proposed changes aim to increase the number of Welsh-medium primary school places serving the area. The changes also reflect the budget challenges faced by Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School. Whilst there could be challenges for Ysgol Mynydd Bychan in the short term in having to maintain a larger building whilst number grow, the school is in a good financial position.

**Response to views expressed during the consultation**

73. The Council welcomes the positive views submitted by parents, pupils, schools and wider stakeholders for in respect of each of the schools subject to proposed changes.
74. The Council is committed to supporting Cardiff's most vulnerable learners, including children in care, those educated other than at school and children from the most deprived communities and that every child receives a great education through their chosen language medium.
75. Ensuring funding for education is targeted towards learning experiences and opportunities alongside support for families is critical. The Council is

investing in schools and must also support each school to continue to improve education for all of their learners.

76. To achieve this, the Council must ensure that there is an appropriate balance in the number and different types of school places serving each area, with a sustainable level of surplus places. Each school provision offered must meet the diverse needs of the communities they serve. The Council must maximise the potential of its teaching and learning staff to ensure best use of their talent, thereby securing the greatest impact on learner opportunities and outcomes for all.
77. It is acknowledged that there were concerns regarding each of the options. However, the Council must ensure that the available funding is used to maximise benefits for all learners. Retaining the existing pattern of school provision serving the local area does not provide the most appropriate pattern of provision in a small geographical area.
78. Intakes to Reception classes in primary schools city-wide peaked at approximately 4,370 pupils in 2015/16 and 2016/17. This corresponds with peak birth rates recorded five years earlier. At the time of the peak intakes, Cardiff retained approximately 8% surplus places.
79. Since 2017/18, there has been a sustained fall in the birth rate and changes to migration patterns in the city. This means that city-wide intakes to primary education have reduced significantly and will remain at low levels until at least September 2025. However, changes to populations are not the same in all parts of the city.
80. As parents are able to state a preference for schools, some schools would continue to have high intakes. For other schools the impact on pupil numbers will be far greater than the city-wide average.
81. Schools receive most of their funding based on the number of pupils on roll at the school. Falling pupil numbers will greatly impact on some schools' budgets. This affects the teaching and learning opportunities those schools can offer.
82. The funding formula for schools is driven by per pupil funding and a number of lump sum allocations per school. Funding per pupil is generally higher in smaller schools due to the costs of the headteacher and other fixed costs absorbed over a low number of pupils.
83. A reduction in the number of schools in Cardiff would therefore allow for a reduction in the number of lump sum allocations to schools, and these funds would be redistributed to schools through the funding formula.
84. Larger schools are also generally able to secure better value for money through economies of scale in a number of areas including managing contracts and potentially in their staffing structure. Some of the benefits of a single larger school can be realised through formal federation of governing bodies or collaboration agreements between schools, with more efficient staffing structures.

85. 'Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers' is the Welsh Government's strategy for the increasing the use of the Welsh language. It sets out the long-term approach to reaching a target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.
86. All Local Authorities in Wales are required to publish a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. Within their plan, they must set a ten-year target for the expected increase in Year 1 children who are taught in Welsh. The target set for Cardiff by the Welsh Government is between 25% and 29% of Year 1 learners are educated in Welsh by 2031. At present, this figure is around 18%.
87. The Council has discounted making no changes to English-medium provision as this would not realise the education or financial benefits to the relevant schools, and it would now allow for a local solution to oversubscription at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.
88. The existing number of English-medium primary school places at Albany, Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools is sufficient to accommodate the projected demand for places at schools and retains a high margin of surplus to respond to any potential fluctuation or sustain increase in demand, and the high levels of pupil mobility in the area. The number of places available at entry to English-medium primary schools would be unchanged under Option 1 or Option 2.
89. Proposals brought forward must ensure that the growth of schools is sustainable whilst the potential negative impact on other schools is minimised.
90. Concerns have been expressed regarding the potential impact on Ysgol Glan Ceubal from the proposed expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.
91. An increase in the take up of places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan by children from within its catchment area would mean that the take up of places in local English-medium schools by children from the area would reduce. An increase in the take up of places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from outside its catchment area would mean that the take up of places in other Welsh-medium schools in other parts of the city would likely reduce.
92. Changes to catchment areas could provide a balance between the number of places available, and the projected demand for places, and would allow for a limited increase in take up.
93. However, the projected level of surplus places would not be sufficient to significantly increase Welsh-medium take up in the longer term, in order to meet Cardiff's targeted growth as set out in the Cardiff's approved Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).
94. There is insufficient space on the existing Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site to allow for expansion on-site. The Council has investigated alternative site options that may be available and centrally located within the Ysgol

Mynydd Bychan catchment area and there is no suitable site available in the area local to the school that could accommodate an enlarged Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.

95. There is sufficient capacity within existing schools serving the area to enable the reorganisation of existing provision. The Council has invested significantly in the Allensbank and shared Gladstone/ St Monica's sites in recent years. Reorganisation of provision on existing sites would present an appropriate means of balancing the availability and take up of both English-medium and Welsh-medium provision in the area and would represent a more effective and efficient use of resources. This would also retain flexibility in the schools estate to respond to any future population changes affecting the area.
96. The Council consulted previously on proposals to provide an appropriate balance of Welsh-medium and English-medium primary school places to serve Cathays and parts of Gabalfa, Heath, Llandaff North and Plasnewydd.
97. The Council also sought views on long term changes to school provision to provide an appropriate balance of Welsh-medium and English-medium school places to serve the area. The outcome of the consultation showed that there was support overall for the expansion of Welsh-medium education however the majority of respondents did not support the interim expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan as proposed.
98. The revised proposals consulted on addressed the issues that informed the earlier proposals and take account of the issues raised during the earlier consultation.
99. The reorganisation of provision provides an appropriate means of balancing the availability and take up of both English-medium and Welsh-medium provision in the area and represents a more effective and efficient use of resources. Reorganisation would also retain flexibility in the Schools Estate to respond to any future population changes affecting the area.
100. The reconfiguration of English-medium provision and expansion of Welsh-medium provision would support the continued development of high-quality education for all pupils through:
  - Greater opportunities within larger/federated schools for staff to share workload and expertise.
  - Greater opportunities to professionally develop staff e.g., newly qualified teachers (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 of teachers to lead on Areas of Learning, plus Religious Education, Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) and Digital Competency.
  - Greater opportunities to offer a broader range of extra-curricular/enrichment activities.

- 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.
  - Enhanced opportunities for pupil activities leading to improvements to the quality of learning for staff and pupils.
  - Increased School Council and pupil development opportunities (academically and socially).
  - Allowing for cross phase arrangements.
  - Allowing for streamlining of policies and structures.
  - Supporting 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.
  - Providing opportunities to exploit economies of scale and sharing services across the schools.
  - Possible easier recruitment of governors with fewer governor vacancies.
101. The Council has considered locating Welsh-medium provision on the shared Gladstone Primary School/St Monica's Primary School site and English-medium provision on the Allensbank site but has discounted this option.
102. Locating English-medium provision on the shared Gladstone Primary School/St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site provides a more appropriate distribution of places for current and future intakes.
103. The English-medium primary schools included in the proposals serve a diverse range of pupils and needs. The proposals were brought forward in order to provide a more appropriate balance of places and to ensure that a greater level of funding is able to be invested in teaching and learning. The standard of education at all the schools subject to the proposed changes is good. There is no information available that suggests that the proposals would have a negative effect on pupils who receive Free School Meals, pupils that receive support because they have English as an additional language, pupils from a minority ethnic background or pupils with additional learning needs. There are clear benefits associated with each option which would enhance learning opportunities for all learners.
104. Concerns have been expressed regarding the potential impact on Ysgol Mynydd Bychan of occupying a larger site whilst the school grows and the facilities available on the Allensbank Primary School site.
105. The expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan on the Allensbank site would be phased from September 2025, by increasing the admission number for the nursery and Reception year groups only in the first instance. This would mean that the school does not need to use all of its accommodation in 2025/2026 and could allow for parts of the two buildings to be closed to staff and pupils to reduce the impact on the school's budget and/ or whilst works are undertaken.

106. The expansion of the school would incur additional staffing and leadership costs for the school which would be met from the school's budget. The budget would increase in line with the greater number of pupils on roll. The school also receive greater allocations within its budget relating to operating the larger site and buildings, as Allensbank Primary School does at present.
107. The proposed expansion may result in the school operating some smaller classes, or some mixed-aged classes, as the school grows. School admissions preference data indicates that the number of pupils admitted to the school would increase, but the school would have a high level of surplus places for a number of years. Although the school's budget would increase as the number of pupils increases, the cost per pupil would likely be higher for an extended period while the school grows. As growth, and investment, would be phased, the financial impact of changes would be minimised wherever possible.
108. Should Ysgol Mynydd Bychan transfer to the Allensbank site, any changes to the buildings and external areas utilising the Welsh Government capital grant would be considered at a later design stage. The capital funding allocated by Welsh Government is ringfenced to enable the expansion of Welsh Medium education. The Council would identify and agree priorities for the investment in partnership with the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan Governing Body.
109. Whilst all the three options consulted on would deliver a range of benefits, the number of benefits realised for learners in English-medium community education under Option 2 or Option 3 would be reduced compared to Option 1 as there would be a less efficient use of the schools' budgets. There would be no lump-sum funding ringfenced to provide support for a period and a greater proportion of the schools' budgets would be required for leadership and management.
110. Whilst the proposed changes to the organisation of provision would require changes to staffing within each school, changes would also be necessary if proposals were not progressed in order for the relevant English-medium schools to achieve balanced budgets in coming years.
111. The establishment of a new two form entry English-medium primary school, and the expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to two form entry, as proposed in Option 1 would best support teaching and learning by allowing for:
  - the area to have more two form of entry schools. 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 and expertise
- greater opportunities to professionally develop staff e.g., newly qualified teachers 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 of teachers to lead on Areas of Learning, plus Religious Education, Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) and Digital Competency
- greater opportunities to offer a broader range of extra-curricular activities
- greater opportunities for distributed leadership

112. The establishment of nursery provision at St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School would:

- provide continuity of provision which reflects the ethos and culture of the school
- support the development of strong and effective parental links with the school from the earliest possible opportunity
- ease transition for a nursery-aged child when promoting to Reception class (where Reception admission application has been successful)
- allow for the early identification of vulnerable groups. This would mean that the needs of children can be identified as early as possible
- provide an opportunity for children to attend nursery at the same site as their older siblings. This should impact positively on parents' time and reduce the logistical difficulties that seeking an alternative childcare provision may cause
- provide continuity and progression between Early Years and Foundation Phase, enhancing the opportunity to appropriately address individual developmental and cultural needs.

113. The Council has fully considered and appraised responses to the consultation and proposes that Option 1 be progressed.

114. The Council is mindful of the impact on staff at Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School of Option 1 being progressed. The Council's HR Service is committed to continuing to work directly with the

schools affected, and with trade unions, to ensure staff are supported through the process of change.

115. The number of teaching and learning roles required for a two-form entry primary school is similar to the amount required for two one form entry primary schools. However, the type and number of roles required would be dependent on the number of pupils on roll and on the school budget position.
116. Where roles are duplicated e.g., Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher positions, and administrative and estates staff, it is expected that there would be a reduction in the number of roles required overall.
117. The establishment of a new school would require the setting up of a temporary Governing Body to oversee the development of an appropriate staffing structure and appointments process. The appointment of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher roles would be subject to national advert in line with legal requirements. The Council would recommend that the new temporary Governing Body operates a ring-fenced recruitment process to existing staff at Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School.
118. The remaining information within this report is specific to the progression of Option 1 only.

### **Governance Arrangements**

119. In the event of Option 1 being taken forward, the governing bodies of Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School would be dissolved, and new governance arrangements put in place for the newly established 2 Form Entry English-medium primary school.

#### Dissolution of Governing Bodies and establishment of a new Governing Body

120. A proposal to close two schools, and to establish a new school, would require the establishment of a temporary Governing Body ahead of the opening of the newly opened, larger school.
121. The most important reason for considering the amalgamation of two existing schools, by the establishment of a new school and closure of two existing schools, must be the benefits it would bring for children and young people in the existing schools by enhancing educational provision.
122. There are many clear operational benefits to larger schools, compared to smaller schools. The key governance aspects of establishing a single school, to replace two existing schools, are:
  - Following determination of the proposed establishment of a new school, and closure of the existing schools, a new temporary governing body would be established. The new governing body would, in time, replace the individual governing bodies and would



have responsibility for the strategic oversight and planning of the new school.

- The existing governing bodies of all schools would continue to operate, and retain their existing responsibilities, until the existing schools formally close.
- The new Governing Body would consider its name and would have responsibility for the budget and staff of the new school, and through a greater financial base have greater stability in its budget.

123. Overall, a larger school has a larger and more financially stable budget and is therefore able to implement a more efficient and effective leadership and staffing structure and exploit economies of scale. A larger school is more able to strengthen the overall education of pupils in the combined communities presently served by the two smaller schools. A larger school also allows for:

- Greater opportunities for staff to share workload and expertise.
- Greater opportunities to professionally develop staff e.g., newly qualified teachers (NQTs) who can observe their parallel teacher.
- A greater number to teachers to lead on Areas of Learning, plus Religious Education, Relationships and Sexuality Education and Digital Competency.
- The sharing of good practice, preparation materials and resources.

### **Additional Learning Needs**

124. 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.

125. Placements last one to three 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.

126. The Council proposes to continue to operate a city-wide Speech and Language early intervention class in 2025/26 when the proposed changes would take effect. Consideration would be given to establishing the city-wide Speech & Language class within the proposed new two form entry English-medium primary school on the site currently shared by Gladstone and St Monica's, in consultation with the newly established school governing body. If the decision is taken to not locate the class in the new school, this would be established on an alternative site.

127. The level of special educational needs/ additional learning needs in the Welsh medium sector has historically been lower than in the English medium sector. This has been changing over the last five years, with schools reporting an increased incidence of additional learning needs, in all areas of need.

128. Cardiff has invested in specialist provision in the sector, including some capacity to respond to growing demand and to generate more confidence in the availability of specialist provision in the sector.
129. The Council has worked closely with its partners on the Cardiff Welsh Education Forum to develop the new ten-year WESP for the city which includes proposals for the development and delivery of an increased number of primary specialist places to be delivered in specialist resource bases in at least three primary schools that promote to the relevant secondary schools.
130. As the Welsh sector continues to grow it will be important to develop additional provision in anticipation of the need, to ensure Welsh medium education is a genuine choice for learners with complex ALN.
131. The proposed expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to two forms of entry, and transfer to the Allensbank Primary School site would retain sufficient flexibility in the buildings to allow for the establishment of specialist resource base provision. Separate proposals would be developed for this provision.

### **Nursery Provision**

132. 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.
133. At present the Council funds 112 community nursery places between Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School. The number funded is reducing to 96 places next year, to reflect demand. It is proposed to retain sufficient accommodation to allow for up to 96 English-medium community nursery places at the new school.
134. Should the transfer to St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site be taken forward it is proposed that 32 part time nursery places are provided. This would develop continuity and progression in children's learning at the school from the age of three.
135. The number of nursery places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would be increased from 64 to 96 to support its growth to a two-form entry school.
136. Overall accommodation to allow for an increased number of English-medium and Welsh-medium nursery places would be retained. The number of places funded would reflect the demand for places in the local area, as at present.

## **Funding of proposals**

137. The Welsh Government invited all Local Authorities in Wales to submit bids for grant funding to support capital investments that facilitate growth in Welsh-medium education and use of the Welsh language.
138. Cardiff Council was successful in securing funds from the Welsh-medium Capital Grant Scheme including £1.86m 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.
139. The grant funding programme is aimed specifically at capital projects that will demonstrably contribute to meeting the Welsh Government's aim of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050. 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.
140. There is no additional or ring-fenced revenue or capital funding to support the process of organisational change.
141. Capital funding in addition to that already secured from Welsh Government will be sought to facilitate the organisational changes to English-medium provision. The Council recognises that, should the proposals proceed to implementation, there would be a need to prioritise investment at the new school established on the site currently shared Gladstone/ St Monica's site within the School Organisation Programme. This investment would support the new school to maintain and further improve on the high quality of provision offered by the existing schools, to extend inclusive learning opportunities, and to ensure that the high standards of education for all pupils in the community are preserved.

## **Financial appraisal of proposals**

142. The funding formula for schools is driven by per pupil funding and a number of lump sum allocations per school. Funding per pupil is generally higher in smaller schools due to the costs of the headteacher and other fixed costs absorbed over a low number of pupils.
143. A reduction in the number of schools in Cardiff would therefore allow for a reduction in the number of lump sum allocations to schools, and these funds would be redistributed to schools through the funding formula.
144. Larger schools are also generally able to secure better value for money through economies of scale in a number of areas including managing contracts and potentially in their staffing structure. Some of the benefits of a single larger school can be realised through formal federation of governing bodies or collaboration agreements between schools, with more efficient staffing structures.

145. In 2022/23, the amount of funding per pupil at Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School, St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School and Ysgol Mynydd Bychan was higher than the average funding per pupil across Cardiff's 98 primary schools of £3,891.
146. The below table sets out the budgetary position of the above schools.

School	Balance brought forward April 2022	Governor Approved Budget 2022/23	Balance brought forward April 2023	Governor Approved Budget 2023/24
	£	£	£	£
Allensbank	23,757	-132,301	-50,628	-274,788
Gladstone	84,651	0	-39,428	-164,920
St Monica's	41,804	0	34,320	-66,726
Ysgol Mynydd Bychan	170,220	86,286	118,001	17,057

147. The Welsh Government Capital Grant scheme does not provide any additional financial resources for the restructuring of staffing structures of schools affected by reorganisation of provision. These costs would be met from within Education financial funds (including delegated school budgets or SOP finances).
148. The expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would incur additional staffing and leadership costs for the school which would be met from the school's budget. The budget will increase due to more pupils on roll but the relative increase in budget allocation will be subject to the pupil roll changes in all primary schools. Further details on the potential constraints of growth in this school in short / medium term are set out in paragraph 147.
149. The proposed expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan may result in the school operating some smaller classes, or some mixed-age classes, as the school grows. School admissions preference data indicates that the number of pupils admitted to the school would increase, but the school would have a high level of surplus places for a number of years.
150. Although the school's budget would increase as the number of pupils on roll increases, the cost per pupil would likely be higher for an extended period while the school grows. As growth, and investment, would be phased, the financial impact of changes would be minimised wherever possible through effective communication between the Education directorate and the School Governing Body.
151. In a period of falling intakes city-wide, the expected increased intakes to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan would likely reduce the take up of places at other schools in the local area or in neighbouring areas for a number of years.

152. Almost all applicants who have failed to gain admission to Ysgol Mynydd Bychan in recent years have taken up places at other Welsh-medium primary schools. The number of pupils taking up places at these schools may reduce as a consequence of the proposals; however, the Council must increase intake to Welsh-medium provision city-wide and the indirect impact of increasing intakes to Welsh-medium schools would be a reduced intake to English-medium schools city-wide.
153. Should a proposal to transfer Allensbank Primary School to the shared Gladstone Primary School/St. Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site proceed, and the Speech and Language Intervention Class be relocated, the delegated budget for this class would be transferred to another host school.
154. It should be noted that the number of pupils on roll at Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School has fallen in recent years, coinciding with reduced intakes to primary education city-wide which are projected to remain at low levels until at least 2025/2026. In this context, the number of staff employed by schools would likely reduce, whether or not any proposals to reorganise provision are progressed.
155. The school budget formula saving from amalgamating Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School, by closing each school and creating a single two form entry primary school as set out in Option 1 would be c£98k per year based on the removal of lump sum allowances provided to schools. However, some of these lump sum balances are for schools with a pupil roll below 150.
156. This option amalgamates Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools and combining their budget would allow for a redistribution of financial resources to schools through the reduction in the number of lump sum allocations to schools.
157. Should Option 1 be progressed, it is proposed that an amalgamated lump sum of £60,000 is provided to the newly established two form entry English medium. This financial mechanism is currently available in the school funding formula and will be reduced by £15,000 incrementally over four years until it drops to zero. The two entry English medium school will also be provided with the lump sum of £60,000 that all primary schools are given. Any other lump sums provided to the closing schools will be reallocated back to the overall primary school formula distribution.
158. Option 1 would result in the displacement of an existing Headteacher and restructuring of leadership. The anticipated efficiencies in the new school's budget, compared to the two existing budgets combined, could be c£100,000 to £114,000 per year plus on-costs, based on the midpoint of existing leadership salary ranges and the implementation of a new leadership structure of one Headteacher and two Deputy Headteachers.
159. Should Option 1 be progressed, the Published Admission Number at St Monica's Church in Wales Church in Wales Primary School would be

unchanged from 20 places unless the Governing Body wishes to revise this number at a later date.

160. The Governing Body of St Monica's Church in Wales Church in Wales Primary School has set a deficit budget for 2023/24 and is expected be in a deficit budget position in future years if funding and staffing levels remain at a similar level. Although the establishment of nursery provision at St Monica's, and potential for increased pupil numbers in other year groups, would have a positive impact on its budget from September 2025 the challenges for smaller schools to balance budgets remain.
161. The Council is engaging with the Church in Wales Diocese and Roman Catholic Archdiocese to explore options for the more efficient organisation of provision including but not limited to federation of schools.

### **Admission Arrangements**

162. The relevant changes to the Council's policy on the admission of children to schools as a direct result of these proposals relate to the proposed changes in the Published Admission Number of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan, from 30 to 60, and to the potential establishment of a new two form entry English-medium primary school with a Published Admission number of 60 places.
163. Consultation on the 2025/26 admission arrangements for community schools would take place in Autumn 2023 – Spring 2024 in accordance with the requirements of the Admissions Code. This consultation would include any proposed changes to Published Admission Numbers.
164. A review of community primary school catchment areas would be undertaken to consider the balance the number of places available and the projected demand for places and progress against the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan targets. Any proposed changes to school catchment areas would be subject to consultation at the appropriate time.
165. Any change to the St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School admission arrangements arising out of the establishment of nursery provision at the school would be subject to consultation by the Governing Body of the school at the appropriate time.
166. Detailed information about admission arrangements is in the Council's Admission to Schools booklet published on the Council's website.

### **Learner Travel Arrangements**

167. There are no plans to change the Council's transport policy for school children.
168. 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.

169. There are no pupils enrolled in the schools named in this report who are in receipt of free home to school transport on the grounds of the home to school travel distance. The implementation of the proposed expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan and relocation of English-medium provision is not expected to change this.
170. Should the Council not proceed with proposed changes, and an increase in the take up of places consistent with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan targets be achieved, the Council may be unable to accommodate all children in the catchment areas of the four Welsh-medium schools within two miles of their home address unless changes to catchment areas and/or alternative additional provision serving these areas are progressed.
171. 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)

### **Impact of reorganisation on travel arrangements for current pupils**

172. The maximum distances between the above school sites is c0.5 miles. Should any of the schools be relocated onto an alternative site, the maximum increase in home to school travel distance for current pupils is therefore 0.5 miles.
173. The average increase in distance from home to school, should proposals proceed is, however, significantly lower than 0.5 miles.
174. The impact of transferring Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the Allensbank site would result in current pupils having a marginal reduction in travel distance.
175. The impact of transferring Allensbank to the shared Gladstone/ St Monica's site would result in current pupils having an increase of 0.08 miles.
176. The impact of transferring St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site would be an average travel distance increase of 0.2 miles.
177. The logistical impact on current families, in respect of the length and time taken for journeys from home to school, is therefore expected to be marginal.
178. Families wishing to access Welsh-medium provision in the south of the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan catchment area are often unable to gain admission to the school and the nearest alternative places are a significantly greater distance away. It is therefore anticipated that the proposed changes would have a marginal impact on future applicants for admission to English-medium community or Church in Wales primary schools, but a greater positive impact on those within the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan catchment area seeking admission to a Welsh-medium school.

## **Implications for secondary school provision**

179. A proposal to expand and redevelop Cathays High School to meet demand from within its catchment and the wider area was agreed by Cabinet in October 2021 subject to further decisions including the Charity Commission's consent in relation to the Maindy site being held in a charitable trust.
180. Cathays High School presently serves a catchment area comprised of the primary school catchment areas of Albany Primary School, Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School. This catchment area is less populated than other school catchment areas in Cardiff, some of which extend over a much greater geographical area and have pupil populations which exceed their current or planned capacity.
181. Consultation on changes to English-medium community secondary school catchment areas would therefore be required at the appropriate time, in order to provide a suitable and sustainable balance in the supply of and take up of places.
182. The combined demand for places across the three Welsh-medium high school catchment areas is at a high level and can be accommodated within the existing school capacity.
183. 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.

## **Local Member consultation**

184. Local Members were consulted as part of the public consultation. Responses received from Members can be seen at Appendix 10.

## **Reason for Recommendations**

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

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

186. In 2017, the Welsh Government published its Welsh language strategy Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers in accordance with Section 78 of the Government of Wales Act 2006. The strategy supports 'the promotion and facilitation of the use of the Welsh language'. Its long-term aim is for Wales to have one million Welsh speakers by 2050.
187. The strategy names Welsh-medium immersion education as the 'principal method for ensuring that children can develop their Welsh language skills, and for creating new speakers' (Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers, pg21). Therefore, the availability of Welsh-medium



education will be key to meeting the target of one million Welsh speakers.

188. The national target is to:

- *Increase the proportion of each school year group receiving Welsh-medium education from 22 per cent (based on 7,700 seven-year-old learners in 2015/16) to 30 per cent (about 10,500 in each year group) by 2031, and then 40 per cent (about 14,000 in each year group) by 2050.*

189. There is recognition within the strategy that planning will be different for different regions within Wales depending on the characteristics of their populations. It identifies areas with a high population density but lower percentage of Welsh speakers as areas with particular potential for growth.

190. The Council is committed to a 'truly bilingual Cardiff' including the growth of the Welsh-medium education sector across each phase in order to increase the number of people of all ages becoming fluent in both Welsh and English with the confidence and desire to use all their languages in every aspect of their lives.

191. Underpinning this vision are the following principles:

- Applying the principles of the '15-minute neighbourhoods' to ensure that all learners have access to Welsh-medium education within a reasonable distance of their homes.
- Every child in the city can choose to be educated in Welsh or English with the benefits of a bilingual education actively promoted to all parents from their child's birth.
- Learners with additional learning needs (ALN) will receive equal linguistic opportunity.

192. To achieve this vision the Council will deliver:

- More nursery children/ three-year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh.
- More reception class children/ five-year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh.
- An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.

193. The Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan sets out a series of ambitious commitments to build on the progress achieved to date. The WESP commits the Council to ensuring city wide capacity in the primary

Welsh-medium sector at 10% over and above the projected intake at Reception to support growth and allow for in-year admissions and flexibility for transition. This includes the delivery of new Welsh-medium capacity at primary level by 2025 – 2026. It is anticipated that there would be a positive impact on the Welsh Language as a result of these proposals.

194. The proposed changes 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.
195. The proposals directly respond to the following Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Outcomes:
  - Outcome 1 – More nursery children/ three-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
  - Outcome 2 - More reception class children/ five-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
196. The proposals may also secure an opportunity to provide facilities which respond to Outcome 6 - An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN).
197. Schools serve a diverse range of communities and largely reflect their local population; however, it is acknowledged that the Welsh-medium schools are at present less diverse than English-medium schools. Targets and workstreams within Cardiff's adopted Welsh in Education Strategic Plan seek to address this.
198. The proposals would have a greater impact on the population closer to the schools than on the city as a whole.
199. 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.
200. 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 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, and to meet the targets set out in the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy.
201. 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.

202. 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.
203. 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.
204. 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.
205. There is a risk that provision of additional Welsh-medium primary school places may inhibit the growth at other local schools; however, Cardiff's WESP sets out a commitment to develop and implement targeted promotion in conjunction with Bilingual Cardiff to increase take up of Welsh-medium places in areas with low demand.

### **Wellbeing of Future Generations**

206. In line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, the Council is committed to providing local schools for local children, together with encouraging use of sustainable modes to travel to schools, such as walking and cycling. Each school project takes into account key transport issues when they are being designed and the firm need to provide safer routes to encourage walking, cycling and other active travel modes to schools.
207. With the current investments in ICT across the city, student movements may be further reduced as mobile technology develops further allowing for flexible teaching methods. These have the potential to result in a more efficient Travel Plan and further contribute to the Council's targets to reduce its carbon emissions.

### **Financial Implications**

208. In approving the recommendations in this report the decision maker needs to be comfortable that the option taken forward is both affordable from a capital implementation perspective but also that there are clear mechanisms in place in regard to formal school closure which provide a cap to financial liability. In addition the decision maker needs to be assured that the proposals going forward enable each school that will

continue has the best chance possible to be financially viable. Further information is set out below.

209. Paragraphs 155 to 157 suggest intervention in the delegated schools formula. The suggested changes and support to the new 2 FE English medium primary school do conform to the currently agreed Delegated school budget formula process and principles.
210. The correct principles of the school funding formula is that each individual school's budget is predominantly predicated on the basis of pupil numbers and that fixed sums are given for each school on a consistent basis. This includes potential reduction in the formula funding lump sum if schools were combined, alongside staffing efficiencies, particularly in relation to leadership roles. These efficiencies would remain within delegated schools' funding and should (by default) be redistributed to the benefit of all Primary Schools. There is also provision within the formula for transitional funding for new schools and the detail of this is covered in paragraph 157.
211. Paragraph 148 states increased number of pupils at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan will increase the budget in order to allow all additional costs to be covered. As stated in paragraph 148, it is the case that a school with increased numbers will get an increase from the formula but it will be relative to the pupil number of changes in each Cardiff primary School rather than looking at the increase in Ysgol Mynydd Bychan in isolation. In addition, individual increases in school budgets will be subject to the level of increase in overall delegated school budgets which at this time can not guarantee that overall school budgets will increase at a rate that covers all cost inflation / demand pressures.
212. As stated previously, the formula is predicated primarily on pupils who attend the school as opposed to the numbers available. In approving the recommendations the decision maker needs assurance that the number of pupils spaces for each of these schools will be filled in order to provide assurance on financial sustainability going forward.
213. It is noted that St Monica's school is recommended to continue at an admission number of 20 pupils per age group. Without some very close working with the Governing Body, the proposal is at risk of delivering a financially non-viable school going forward. Consideration needs to be given as to the actions required to ensure that that the recommendation if taken will deliver a financially viable school.
214. Any schools' deficit balances that occur due to closure need to have very clear parameters in place and mitigations that ensure the financial liability is manageable and predictable. A key variable in the level of deficit achieved is the approach in respect to school redundancies which will need be managed in a manner which will keep the number of exits to an unavoidable minimum. This level of deficit (including cost of redundancies) will need to be funded from reserves or balances to be identified within Education (the SOP Programme).

215. Any capital costs arising through these options will need to be identified and prioritised within the respective part of the Capital Programme or any grants that are available. It should also be noted that any maintenance or repairs to buildings with less than a year's expected operation must be treated as revenue expenditure and will need to be funded through the SOP Revenue Reserve.
216. The decision maker should have assurance on the overall affordability of any projects or schemes taken forward and should also consider the impact on sustainability of other schools within the localities identified, including pupil numbers and financial risks.
217. Specific VAT advice will need to be sought in relation to land swap and works in relation to Diocese/ trust owned land.

### **Legal Implications**

218. 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.
219. 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. This does not provide a right to attend a certain school, as applications can still be refused for admission where this would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.
220. A local authority can make school organisation proposals, including regulated alterations to a maintained school, including a community special school, under sections 42-44 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
221. The proposals set out in the report 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.
222. 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. Following the public consultation, the Council is required to publish and circulate to all interested parties (listed in the Code) a consultation report:
  - (i) summarising each of the issues raised by consultees;
  - (ii) responding to these by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal or rejection of the concerns, with supporting reasons;
  - (iii) setting out Estyn's response to the consultation in full; and
  - (iv) responding to Estyn's response by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal or rejection of the concerns, with supporting reasons.

223. The proposals qualify as regulated alterations which must comply with the requirements of Part 3 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, which include provisions for consultation and publication of statutory notices. Those are supplemented by the School Organisation Code issued by the Welsh Government.
224. The recommendation in this Report to publish a statutory notice follows a period of consultation which ran from 3 May to 30 June 2023. This Report (together with the appendices attached to it) represents the consultation report which the Code requires to be published. The Cabinet must have due regard to the responses received during the consultation before it makes a decision upon whether to publish a statutory notice.
225. The recommendations note that a decision to proceed is also required from the Governing Body of St Monica's before any statutory notice can be published. The Code requires that the statutory notice must be published within 26 weeks of the end of the consultation period unless an extension of time has been granted by the Welsh Ministers.
226. Following publication of the statutory notice there would be a period for objections of at least 28 days following which a further Report (an Objection Report) would need to be made to the Cabinet summarising the statutory objections and giving responses to those objections. Where there are objections to any statutory notice published by St Monica's, these should also be referred to the Council as an Objection Report for determination under section 51 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. It would then be for the Cabinet to review those objections and determine whether to implement the proposals.

## **HR Implications**

### **School Closures**

227. In the period leading up to the proposed school closures, the Council would work with the Headteachers and Governing Bodies to ensure that staff continue to be supported and motivated during what may be a potentially difficult situation. Full consultation with staff and trade unions would need to begin immediately following the outcome of this report. School closures place school staff at a potential risk of redundancy, and this would need to be managed in line with the School Redeployment and Redundancy Policy.

### **New School**

228. The creation of a new school which is established as a result of the agreed proposals presents opportunities for recruitment and redeployment. Under the Staffing of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2006 the Temporary Governing Body of a new school is responsible for the appointment of staff. The Council will recommend that the new temporary governing body operates a ring-fenced recruitment process to those staff affected by the school closures.

229. The first matter which a Temporary Governing Body must consider is the new school's leadership arrangements and the structure of the staff within the school. Timely creation of the Temporary Governing Body is crucial to this. The Staffing of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2006, as amended, allow for ring fenced recruitment to Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher posts in school reorganisation situations. Whilst this is a matter for the Temporary Governing Body to determine, as is usual in these circumstances the Council would advise the Temporary Governing Body to advertise nationally for both Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher positions and to put in place a robust recruitment process to appoint high quality leadership. HR People Services would work with the Temporary Governing Body to support the recruitment process. In this instance if option 1 is progressed and the new school is to open in September 2025, it is recommended that a recruitment process is progressed as early as February 2024.

### Redeployment

230. A key aspiration for the Council is to achieve staff reductions as far as possible through redeployment rather than voluntary or compulsory redundancies. Therefore, the Council is committed to maximising opportunities for school staff to secure employment in other schools in Cardiff through redeployment into vacancies in other schools in Cardiff.
231. Full support would be offered to the school staff and Governing Bodies by HR People Services throughout the reorganisation. This would involve attendance at consultation meetings, meetings with school staff where appropriate and the circulation of a Frequently Asked Questions document.

### Traffic and Transport Implications

232. The Council committed to ensuring that every school in Cardiff had 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 have Active Travel Plans in place for their current sites.
233. All new (including reorganised) schools need to have a plan in place from the outset of their operation.
234. 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.

235. Following a reorganisation of the schools, the Council will monitor conditions outside the school's 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.
236. 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.
237. 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 the current sites of Allensbank Primary School, Gladstone Primary School and St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School.
238. 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.

### **Property Implications**

Transferring Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site, increasing the capacity of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 192 places (0.9FE) to 420 places (2FE) and increasing the number of nursery places at Ysgol Mynydd Bychan from 64 to 96

239. Allensbank Primary School in Gabalfa is a listed building owned by the Council and extends to 1.35 acres. The listed status of the building means that there will be some constraints if the building is to be remodelled or extended at any time, however no additional land purchases are required and Strategic Estates do not envisage any other property related implications with the transfer of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan to the current Allensbank Primary School site and the expansion of Ysgol Mynydd Bychan.

Formally closing Allensbank Primary School and Gladstone Primary School and establish a new 420 place (2FE) English-medium Primary School with nursery on the current shared Gladstone Primary School / St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site

240. Gladstone Primary School in Cathays is a listed building owned by the Council and extending to approximately 1.08 acres.
241. The adjoining St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School is also listed, extends to 0.38 acres and is owned by the Diocese of Llandaff. If this



proposal were to proceed then a valuation of the existing Diocese owned school site would be required by an external independent valuer ahead of its transfer to the Council. In transferring from the existing site, the net value of the site would be deemed to accrue to the Diocese and used as their capital contribution towards the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan buildings.

242. The listed status of the buildings means that there will be some constraints if they are to be remodelled or extended at any time, however Strategic Estates do not envisage any other property related implications with the closure of Allensbank and Gladstone Primary Schools and the establishment of a new 420 place (2FE) English-medium Primary School with nursery on the current shared Gladstone Primary School / St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site.

Note the consideration by the Governing Body of St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to transfer St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site and establish nursery provision at the school

243. Ysgol Mynydd Bychan in Gabalfa is owned by the Council and extends to circa 0.50 acres.
244. If this proposal were to proceed then a valuation of the existing St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site would be required by an external independent valuer. In transferring to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site, the net value of the existing St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School site would be deemed to accrue to the Diocese and used as their capital contribution towards the Ysgol Mynydd Bychan buildings.

### **Impact Assessments**

245. An initial Single Impact Assessment was carried out prior to consultation. This included an Equality Impact Assessment, Child's Rights Impact Assessment and Welsh Language Impact Assessment. The assessment has been updated as part of the post consultation analysis and is attached at Appendix 13.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the consideration by the Governing Body of St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School of the proposal to transfer St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to the current Ysgol Mynydd Bychan site and establish nursery provision at the school, from September 2025.
2. Subject to the agreement of the Governing Body of St Monica's Church in Wales Primary School to proceed to publish its proposals, authorise officers to proceed to publish proposals in accordance with section 48 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 on proposals to:

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

The proposed changes would take effect from September 2025.

3. Note that, prior to implementation of the proposals, financial resources must be identified to facilitate the process of organisational change of establishing the new two form entry primary school and the transfer of St Monica’s Church in Wales Primary School.
4. Note that, prior to implementation of the proposals, a further report will be provided to the Cabinet providing details of any objections received, the proposed responses to those objections and recommendations for implementation or otherwise of the proposals, and sources of funding for the full set of proposals.

<b>SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	<b>Melanie Godfrey</b> <b>Director for Education and Lifelong Learning</b>
	13 October 2023

*The following appendices are attached:*

- Appendix 1 - Consultation document
- Appendix 2 - Summary document
- Appendix 3 - Notes of consultation meetings with staff and governors
- Appendix 4 - Notes of consultation meetings with pupil representatives
- Appendix 5 - Notes of Cardiff Influencers workshop session
- Appendix 6 - Notes of public meetings (in person and online)
- Appendix 7 - Notes of drop-in sessions at Cathays Library
- Appendix 8 - Notes of on-line drop-in sessions
- Appendix 9 - Notes of parent drop-in sessions
- Appendix 10 - Formal Responses
- Appendix 11 - Summary of the responses received and an appraisal of views
- Appendix 12 - Summary analysis of the responses received
- Appendix 13 - Single Impact Assessment