

DIRECTORATE OF LEARNING AND SKILLS OBJECTION PERIOD SUMMARY REPORT

ON THE PROPOSAL TO:

- TRANSFER SPECIALIST RESOURCE BASE AT LLANDOUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL TO YSGOL Y DDRAIG FROM JANUARY 2023.



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1. BACKGROUND

The Council undertook a statutory consultation exercise on the proposal from 13th July 2022 to 22nd September 2022. The aim of the consultation was to inform prescribed consultees about the school re-organisation proposal being put forward under section 2.3 of the School Organisation Code. Section 2.3 refers to Regulated Alterations of a school, which includes changing the location of a school. The proposal for the school was as follows:

- Relocate the Specialist Resource Base (SRB) at Llandough Primary School to Ysgol Y Ddraig from January 2023.

To implement the proposal specialist educational provision for pupils aged 4-11 year with Speech, Language and Communication Needs would be relocated from Llandough Primary School to Ysgol Y Ddraig. Ysgol Y Ddraig is an English medium community school located in Llantwit Major which currently caters for 3–11-year-olds. An area of the building has been allocated for the SRB. It is proposed that the SRB would follow the same model as described above, maintaining its focus on pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs.

The consultation process followed Welsh Government guidelines as outlined in the School Organisation Code 2018. It provided an opportunity for prescribed consultees as well as members of the local community to learn about the proposal and for the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Cabinet to hear the views of all those with an interest so that they can be taken into account before decisions are made.

During the consultation exercise, 4 individual responses were received by the consultation closing date of 22nd September 2022. Regarding the representations made all 4 responses were in favour of the proposal. However, clarifications were requested on certain aspects of the proposal. A summary of the responses received and the Council's response to the clarification requests were published in the consultation report and made publicly available on the Council's website.

1.1. CONSULTATION REPORT

A consultation report was published following the consultation exercise (<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Working/Education%20and%20Skills/21st-Century-Schools/LPS-to-YYDd-Proposal-Consultation-Response-Report-v2.pdf> refers).

The consultation report was considered by the Council's Cabinet on 3rd November 2022 which can be viewed using the following link:

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2022/22-11-03/Minutes.pdf> - Minute C121 refers

1.2. STATUTORY NOTICE

Following consideration of the consultation report on 3rd November 2022, the Council's Cabinet decided to progress the proposal and approve the publication of a statutory notice.

A statutory notice was displayed on 9th November 2022 at both schools involved in the proposal. The notice was displayed for 28 days until 7th December 2022 to allow any person to object to the proposal in accordance with section 49 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013

The notice was published on both the schools' and Vale of Glamorgan Council's website which can be viewed using the following link:

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/living/schools/Consultations/Consultation-on-SRB-re-location-to-Ysgol-Y-Ddraig.aspx>

A hardcopy of the notice was also displayed at the main entrances of the schools. Copies of the notice were distributed to parents, carers and guardians, governors, and staff members, as well as respondents who wished to be notified via email. All other organisations and consultees required under the School Organisation Code 2018 were provided with a copy of the letter and notice as an attachment to the email as well as a link to the notice on the website.

This report outlines the statutory process and provides an overview of any objections received.

1.3. STATUTORY NOTICE STAKEHOLDER NOTIFICATION

Engagement for the statutory notice on the proposal was undertaken with prescribed consultees as contained within the School Organisation Code 2018.

The following groups were consulted:

Table 1: List of groups consulted as part of the consultation process

Staff (teaching and non-teaching) at Ysgol Y Ddraig and Llandough Primary School	Governing Body of Llandough Primary School
Parents/Carers and Guardians of children at Ysgol Y Ddraig and Llandough Primary School	Governing Body of Ysgol Y Ddraig
Town and Community Councils	Diocesan Directors of Education
Vale of Glamorgan Children and Young People's Programme Board	Vale of Glamorgan Early Years Development Partnership (EYDCP)
Assembly Members (AM's) / Members of Parliament (MP's) / Regional Assembly Members	Local Councillors

Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RHAG)	Welsh Language Commissioner
Estyn	Primary and Secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan
Welsh Government Ministers	Central South Consortium Joint Education Service
Local Police and Crime Commissioner	Trade Unions
Council's Transportation Department	Directors of Education – All Neighbouring Authorities

Consultees could view the notice on the Council's website below:

[Consultation on SRB re-location to Ysgol Y Ddraig \(valeofglamorgan.gov.uk\)](http://valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

Objections were requested via email or letter to the following addresses:

Sustainable Communities for Learning,
Civic Offices,
Holton Road,
Barry
CF63 4RU

or

e-mail: sustainablecommunitiesforlearning@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

2. OBJECTION PERIOD SUMMARY

No objections were received during the objection period to the Statutory Notice between 9th November 2022 to 7th December 2022.

2.1. LATE OBJECTIONS

The objection period to the statutory notice closed on 7th December 2022. However, 2 objections were received after the close of the objection period on the 8th and 9th December 2022. Both representations raised the same concerns as part of the objection which are summarised below:

- Extended travel times to and from proposed work place,
- Additional expense due to travel,
- Extended work hours due to the need to use public transport,
- Compensation required due to the change to working terms and conditions.

Both objections were received late, and the Council does not have to consider them under the statutory guidance contained within the School Organisation Code (2018). However, it is good practice to respond to concerns when raised, therefore a response to the concerns outlined has been provided below:

ISSUE 1

Relocation would result in additional travel time and costs for staff

Concerns were raised based on the relocation of the SRB to Ysgol Y Ddraig and the impact this would have on staff travel times and the associated costs with the additional travel. References were made to the impact the change would have on existing contractual arrangements with staff and the need for compensation.

Council Response

The Council is not responsible for how members of staff attend work, staff are responsible to make their own travel arrangements to and from their place of work. Furthermore, travel time to and from work is not considered to be working hours and therefore would not be viable for compensation. The statutory notice period relating to the move of the SRB has been followed and the relevant union consultees contacted as part of the process. It is considered sufficient time has been given for staff to consider travel arrangements to the proposed new location.

Although the SRB has moved location to Llantwit Major, the SRB serves the wider Vale of Glamorgan, and the new location is more central to serve both the western and eastern areas of the Vale being more accessible to a wider range of schools.

The new location will provide better facilities as the school has been redeveloped under the sustainable communities for learning programme (previously 21st Century Schools). The proposed new location would provide:

- A high-quality IT rich learning environment for pupils meeting the educational curriculum needs of the 21st Century
- Unobstructed access between all internal areas for children and staff
- Enhanced safeguarding and site security for pupils and staff
- Improved outdoor sports facilities for ALN pupils
- Specialist provision to provide a curriculum that best meets the needs of learners
- Full access for the whole community with full disabled access to internal and external areas.

This will help improve both the education environment for pupils and the working environment for staff.

Contractually, all LSA staff are informed of a primary base of work, but this can be subject to change following the relevant notice period to any other location within the boundary of the Vale of Glamorgan. The contracts confirm no compensation or excess mileage allowance will be payable in respect such a change. The two teachers employed for the SRB provision are subject to different contractual arrangements. Their contracts do not include reference to working in other locations. However, as part of the proposal all staff have been given the relevant notice and the statutory consultation periods have been followed in relation to the proposal to allow staff to raise concerns and objections to the proposal to be considered by the Council.

Since early 2021-2022 when the temporary move to Y Ddraig was agreed, the service has paid excess mileage to staff where the total mileage from home to work and return is greater as a result of the temporary relocation to Y Ddraig. This was agreed to compensate for the lack of notice that the service was able to give employees due to covid restrictions in place at the time. For employee's who do not drive, taxi expenses have been covered for the same period to ensure a fair approach to all staff. As part of the Trade Union consultation meeting on 15th June 2022, the proposal to cease excess mileage payments and payment of taxi expenses was put forward and this was also explained to the staff in a consultation meeting on 17th June 2022. The service feel that they have acted reasonably by paying excess mileage/expenses to date. However financially the Council will regrettably be unable to continue to pay excess mileage and taxi expenses due to significant financial pressure on the service.

As noted above, as part of the consultation process the Council have worked with the relevant trade unions to outline the changes to staffing arrangements due to the relocation proposal to ensure staff interests were represented and addressed.

Overall, it is considered on balance the new location for the SRB would benefit the intended users of the service due to access to newer facilities.

3. CONCLUSION

The Council concludes that the proposal would have an overall positive impact on the existing and future pupils at Ysgol Y Ddraig and the SRB following the relocation of the unit. The proposal would likely have a positive impact on quality and standards in education by providing:

- Improved ICT infrastructure, collaborative breakout areas, and effective circulation due to the delivery of the school under Band A of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme which requires new schools to be built to modern standards.
- Opportunities for professional development for teaching staff throughout Ysgol Y Ddraig in relation to Speech, Language and Communication Needs.
- A central location within the Authority to provide a specialist resource base for Speech, Language and Communication Needs in a more accessible location to a wider area of the Authority.

The proposal would provide targeted support for pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs within a suitable mainstream primary school environment in order to ensure that pupils reach their full potential. Additionally pupils and staff would have access to improved learning environments which are adaptable to change and will challenge and support children to reach their full potential.

Regarding travel arrangements, there would be less pupils currently attending the school who would be within walking distance of the proposal, however, as the SRB is utilised by the whole Vale it is considered likely the travel times for pupils will change. This is reflected in historic data for the SRB with more pupils traveling from the western Vale in previous years. It is noted that the location of Ysgol Y Ddraig is more centrally located within the Authority than the SRB at Llandough and is easily accessible from the B4265 which links with the wider strategic network in the Authority.

ALN pupils in the SRB with specific travel requirements which cannot be met with reasonable adjustment on mainstream transport will have their eligibility determined by the ALN Team. ALN pupils will be eligible for free transport if they are assessed as having severe and/ or complex difficulties and are attending a special school or specialist resource base as directed by the Complex Needs Team or a class in a mainstream school which is 2 miles or further (primary aged pupils) from the parental home address as measured by the shortest available walking route. In addition where specialist travel arrangements are not required pupils who live 2 miles or further away from the school will be eligible for standard free school transport.

It is noted that no objections were received for the proposal during the objection period to the Statutory Notice.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended:

1. That the Council's Cabinet consider the objection report.
2. That the Council's Cabinet approve the publication of the objection report
3. That the Council's Cabinet approve the implementation of the proposal to relocate the Specialist Resource Base (SRB) at Llandough Primary School to Ysgol Y Ddraig from January 2023.
4. That the Council's Cabinet refer the Consultation Document, Consultation Report, Statutory Notice, Objection Report to the Council for final determination in line with section 51 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

5. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.

This section provides updated frequently asked questions in relation to the proposal.

What is the intended timescale of the proposal?

The permanent relocation to Ysgol Y Ddraig school building is due to be completed for January 2023.

How would pupils be allocated a place at the SRB?

The Council would allocate pupils to the SRB in consultation with the leadership of the SRB at Ysgol Y Ddraig. This would be based on an assessment of the individual needs of the pupils.

Who would manage and support learners attending the SRB?

Ysgol Y Ddraig would receive additional funding for the SRB to ensure the appropriate support is available via the main school funding formula to cover additional costs associated with the SRB for the school. The school would appoint a leader to manage the SRB with staff from the original SRB at Llandough Primary School relocating to Ysgol Y Ddraig to support individual learners. The purpose of the SRB is to provide additional support to pupils to ensure they can access mainstream education.

How will pupils travel to the relocated SRB?

Mainstream primary aged pupils are provided with free school transport if they live 2 miles or further from their nearest suitable school.

However, ALN pupils who have specific travel requirements which cannot be met with reasonable adjustment on mainstream transport will be eligible for free transport if they are assessed as having severe and/ or complex difficulties and are attending a special school or specialist resource base as directed by the Complex Needs Team or a class in a mainstream school which is 2 miles or further (primary aged pupils) from the parental home address as measured by the shortest available walking route.

Ysgol Y Ddraig supports travel to the school by active modes of travel such as walking and cycling where possible. This would extend to ALN pupils where appropriate.

Will the proposal have a negative impact upon existing pupils at Ysgol Y Ddraig?

Ysgol Y Ddraig is a 2-form entry school and has capacity for 420 pupils. Currently there are 289 pupils attending the school set over 14 classrooms. Due to the surplus capacity at the school, not all the classrooms are utilised. The SRB would occupy 2 vacant classrooms on the ground floor of the school. As these rooms are not currently used by pupils it is not considered that this will detract from their learning environment.

Furthermore, the SRB will be incorporated into the operations of Ysgol Y Ddraig allowing for sharing of knowledge between staff, helping to improve best practice at the school. Overall, the inclusion of the SRB at Ysgol Y Ddraig will benefit both staff and pupils in the long term.