

St Nicholas Church in Wales Primary School
**Consultation Response
Report**

On the proposal to:

- **Change the age range of St Nicholas CIW Primary School from 4-11 years to 3-11 years and to establish a nursery class containing 48 part time places from September 2021**
- **Increase the capacity of St Nicholas CIW Primary School from 126 places to 210 places from September 2021.**

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Contents	Page
Background	3
Outline of consultation process	3
Consultation responses	5
Conclusion	7
Annex A – A summary of key issues raised by statutory consultees and the response to those issues	8
Annex B – A summary of comments received in favour of the proposal	14
Annex C – Frequently asked questions	16
Annex D – Consultation undertaken with young people	17
Annex E – Response from Estyn	20
Annex F - Minutes of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee	23

Background

This report presents the feedback received during the consultation, undertaken from 18 March 2019 to 3 May 2019, in response to the proposals to change the age range of St Nicholas CIW Primary School from 4 to 3 to include 48 part time nursery places and expand St Nicholas CIW Primary School from 126 places to 210 places from September 2021.

This report outlines the consultation process, provides an overview of responses to the consultation, and offers further details of the key issues and favourable comments raised by stakeholders.

Outline of the consultation process

The consultation processes followed Welsh Government guidelines, in compliance with the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and in line with the School Organisation Code 2018. The consultation processes gave prescribed consultees the opportunity to learn about the proposal and for the governing body to hear the views of all those with an interest so that they can be taken into account before any decisions are made.

Publication of the consultation

Formal consultations were conducted through a consultation document and response form distributed electronically to prescribed consultees and published on the Vale of Glamorgan Council website on the 18 March 2019. Consultees were also provided with an email link to the Vale of Glamorgan Council's website. Hard copies of the consultation document were available upon request.

The publication of a consultation document is central to the consultation process for school reorganisation and is prescribed by Welsh Government in the School Organisation Code 2018. The consultation document outlined the proposal being considered, the rationale for the proposal and the details of the consultation exercise. The consultation document also incorporated an individual response form. Consultees were advised of the availability of an online version to complete.

Consultation stakeholder engagement

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

The following groups were consulted:

Staff (teaching and non-teaching) at St Nicholas CIW Primary School	Governing Body of St Nicholas CIW Primary School
Parents/Carers and Guardians of children attending St Nicholas CIW Primary School	St Nicholas with Bonvilston Community Council
Vale of Glamorgan Children and Young	Vale of Glamorgan Early Years Development

People's Partnership	Partnership (EYDCP)
Assembly Members (AM's) / Members of Parliament (MP's) / Regional Assembly Members	Local Councillors
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)	Welsh Language Commissioner
Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RHAG)	Neighbouring Primary and Secondary schools in the Vale of Glamorgan
Estyn	Central South Consortium Joint Education Service
Welsh Government Ministers	Trades Unions
Local Police and Crime Commissioner	Directors of Education – All Neighbouring Authorities
Council's Transportation Department	Diocesan Directors of Education

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

Consultees were invited to complete a formal consultation response form which could be completed in hard copy or online via the Council's website at:

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Expanding-St-Nicholas-CIW>

Consultation meetings and drop in sessions

Meetings were held with the staff and governors at St Nicholas CIW Primary which were attended by the Headteacher and Council officers. The main points of the consultation document were highlighted as well as an explanation of the statutory process.

Drop in sessions were held for parents and members of the community to ask questions about the proposals and provide informal comments.

Nature of consultation	Date/Time	Venue
Parents and Community drop in session	Thursday 4 April 8.45am – 9.45am 3pm – 4pm	St Nicholas CIW Primary School, St Nicholas, Vale of Glamorgan. CF5 6SG
Governors' meeting	Thursday 4 April 6pm	St Nicholas CIW Primary School, St Nicholas, Vale of Glamorgan. CF5 6SG
Staff meeting	Monday 8 April 3.30pm	St Nicholas CIW Primary School, St Nicholas, Vale of Glamorgan. CF5 6SG
Parents and Community drop in session	Monday 8 April 4pm – 6.30pm	St Nicholas CIW Primary School, St Nicholas, Vale of Glamorgan. CF5 6SG
Pupil engagement session	Friday 12 April	St Nicholas CIW Primary School, St Nicholas, Vale of Glamorgan. CF5 6SG

Table 2 – Staff, Governor and Parents meetings

Consultation with children and young people

A consultation session was undertaken with the School Council of St Nicholas CIW Primary to engage the pupils in the consultation process. A report on the outcome of this session can be found at Annex D.

Consultation Questions

Consultees were asked for their opinion on a key question:

Do you support the proposal to expand St Nicholas CIW Primary School from 126 places to 210 places and change the lowest age range for the school from 4 to 3 to provide nursery provision from September 2021?

Consultees were also offered the opportunity to comment further:

If you would like to suggest any changes or alternatives to the proposals, please detail these below.

Any other comments?

Consultation responses

The consultation responses received in writing between 18 March 2019 and 3 May 2019 are outlined below.

Results of the feedback from all stakeholders

27 individual responses were received by the consultation closing date of the 3 May 2019. Of the total 27 individual responses received, 22 were in favour of the proposal and 5 were opposed. Estyn formally responded to the consultation and their full response is contained in Annex E.

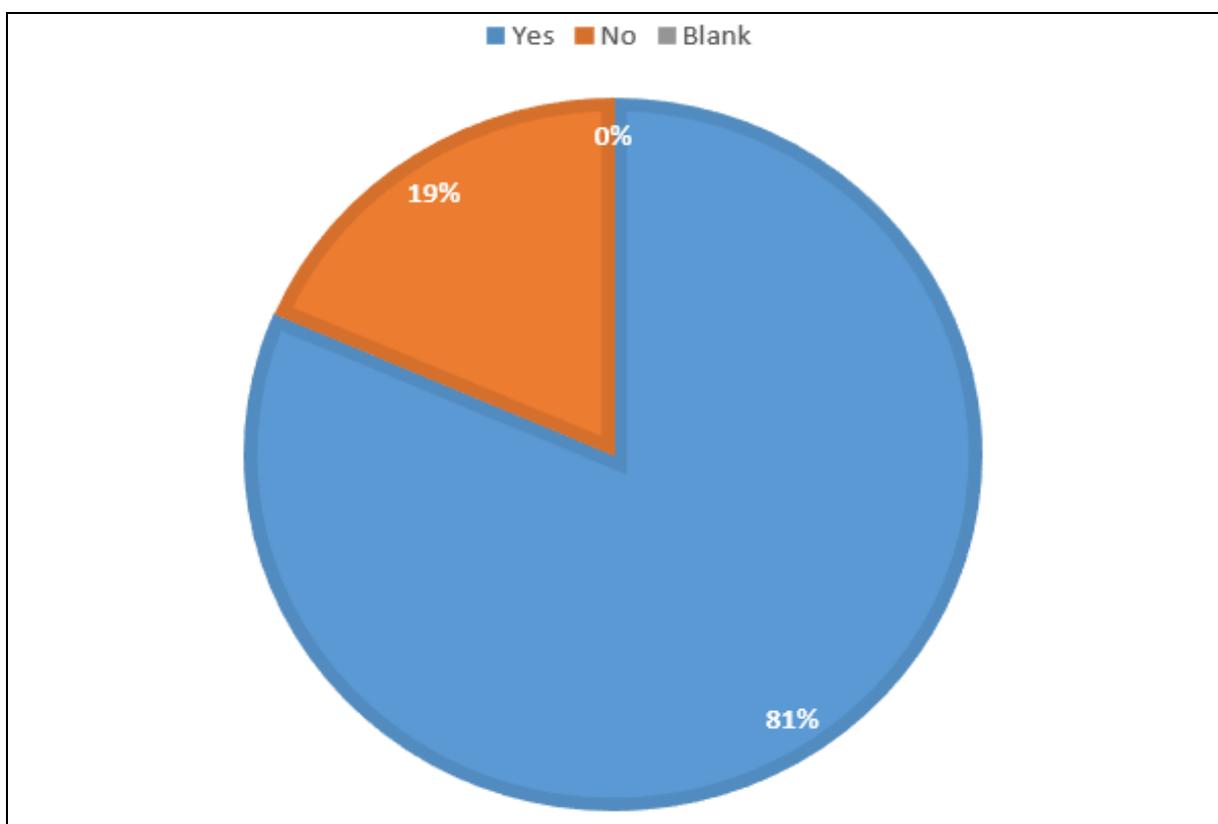


Chart 1 – Split of responses supporting or not supporting the consultation, and those responses left blank

It has been noted that not all consultees provided a response to each of the questions and that some forms were not fully completed. In these cases we have accepted the responses to the questions that they have chosen to answer.

Feedback from consultation meetings and drop in sessions are not included in this report as it was stated clearly in the consultation document that only responses submitted using the official consultation response form would be accepted. Consultees were advised of this at the drop in sessions.

Profile of respondents

Respondents were asked to indicate their role in relation to the proposal, respondents were able to tick more than one option.

Respondent groups	Number of responses from respondent groups	% of responses from respondent groups
Parent	4	15%
Pupil	0	0%
Governor	8	30%
Member of staff	12	44%
Local resident	9	33%
Other	0	0%

Table 3 – Number and percentage of responses from respondent groups

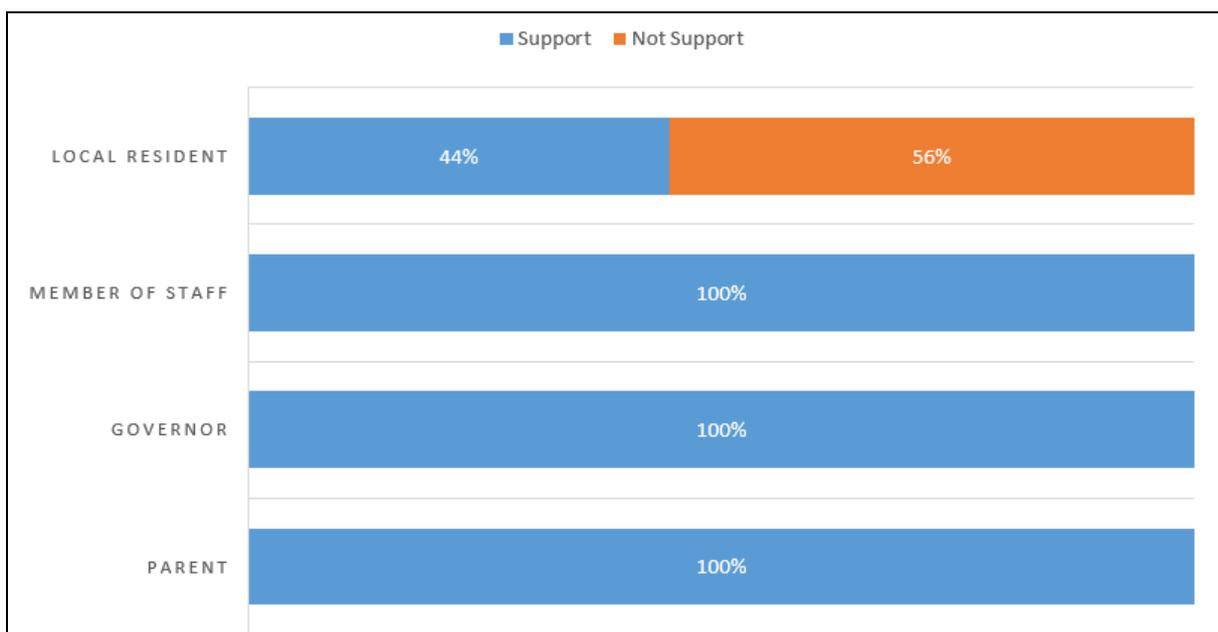


Chart 2 – Split of responses from respondent groups supporting or not supporting the consultation, and those responses left blank

Responses by theme

A summary of key issues raised by statutory consultees and the response to those issues is contained in Annex A. A summary of the comments received in favour of the proposal is contained in Annex B.

The frequently asked questions (FAQs) document has been updated to include the key questions raised during the engagement sessions (Annex C).

A consultation session was undertaken with the School Council of St Nicholas CIW Primary to engage the pupils in the consultation process. A report on the outcome of this session can be found at Annex D. A formal response was submitted by Estyn and can be found at Annex E.

The consultation document was referred to the Learning & Culture Scrutiny Committee on 09 April 2019. The minutes of this meeting can be found at Annex F.

Conclusion

Following consideration of the responses received throughout the consultation period, the governing body has revisited the proposal to determine the likely impact on quality and standards in education, the local community and travel arrangements.

Quality and standards in education

This proposal would likely have a positive impact on the quality and standards in education. A number of responses from parents and members of staff have noted the limitations with the existing buildings which would make fully implementing the new curriculum difficult to achieve. Estyn formally responded to the consultation stating that 'the proposer has considered comprehensively the effect of the proposals on the quality of outcomes, provision and leadership and management'. Estyn also stated that 'the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education and provision in the area'.

The proposal would likely have a positive impact on quality and standards in education by providing:

- Appropriate resources and technologies to support staff and learners to meet the objectives of the Digital Competence Framework.
- Sufficient indoor and outdoor play facilities to promote pupils' wellbeing on a single site.
- Breakout areas to support pupils with additional learning needs.

Community impact

A Community Impact Assessment was undertaken and published alongside the consultation document. Several comments were received regarding the content contained within the assessment. The assessment concludes that the proposal would likely have a positive impact on the local community through increased community facilities and a more efficient supply and demand for school places. However, the revised Community Impact Assessment clarifies the outdoor areas would continue to be accessible to the community and improved with provision of nature areas and sporting facilities. The impact of increased traffic and noise to homeworkers is also more explicitly considered within the revision.

Travel arrangements

A number of concerns were raised during the consultation regarding increased traffic in the village of St Nicholas generated by expanding the number of pupils attending the school. A full Transport Assessment would be completed during the design and planning stage of the proposal. The proposal would be subject to planning approval.

Annex A - A summary of key issues raised by statutory consultees and the governing body's response

The following summarises the key issues raised during the formal consultation period. The issues present an overview of responses and are not intended to be verbatim. All written responses have been made available to members of the governing body.

Issue 1

Access and parking in the village would need to be serious considerations

Several responses noted that it is essential that access and parking concerns are factored into the design of the new school building. There are particular concerns over the safety of pupils and residents from cars being parked on the narrow lanes. This was also raised by a number of parents and members of the community at the drop-in sessions.

Governing body's response to the concerns raised

The governing body acknowledges the concerns raised by parents and members of the community and would work closely with the Council to implement measures to minimise congestion and manage safe access to the site. Previously, a number of measures have been introduced, including:

- Minibus service provided by the school
- Introduction of breakfast club
- Staff presence at the gate before and after school

The Council's 21st Century Schools Team would manage the design and build process. A transport assessment would be undertaken and factored into the design. The new school building would be subject to planning permission which would include formal consultation with members of the community. The governing body would encourage use of bus services and active travel options by parents, pupils and staff as part of behaviour change methods to minimise car use near the site.

A key priority when developing the proposal was to eliminate the need for a split site at St Nicholas CIW Primary School. At the moment, pupils are chaperoned by staff down a road with a pavement to the nearby 'Old School' building.

Issue 2

The proposer has not considered the alternative of locating the school on a new site with better access

Related to the issue raised above, several local residents had concerns over the suitability of the current site in terms of access and suggested an alternative site should have been considered.

Governing body's response to the concerns raised

St Nicholas CIW Primary School is situated on approx. 12,034m² site. Building Bulletin 99: building framework for primary school projects (BB99) requires a gross site area of between 10,024m² and 11,224m² for a 210 place primary school with nursery. The existing site would exceed BB99 requirements. Therefore, finding an alternative site was not explored due to the capital costs associated with land purchases. Considering the current site area is above BB99 requirements, an alternative site may not provide as large an outdoor space for recreation, outdoor learning, and community use.

It is also worth noting that the consultation has been undertaken for the proposed regulated alterations by increasing the capacity of the school and extending the age range. The consultation document states:

“A new 210 place school for St Nicholas CIW Primary has been included as part of the Council’s 21st Century Schools programme. It is proposed that St Nicholas CIW Primary School would move into this building by September 2021 to accommodate the increased demand. Although the transferring of the school to the new building is included as part of this consultation, this is not subject to the statutory process as the transfer would be within 1.609344 kilometres (1 mile).”

A number of respondents suggested that opting for alternative land would result in increased facilities, such as parking. However, the Council only receives funding from Welsh Government to provide BB99 compliant school buildings. There would therefore be no funding for additional facilities.

Issue 3

Expansion of the school is not in-keeping with conservation village status

Several local residents had concerns over increasing the capacity of the school within a conservation village area.

Governing body’s response to the concerns raised

As outlined above, the existing site meets the needs of the increased capacity in terms of BB99. If this proposal is progressed further, architects would be appointed to design the new school. A number of stakeholders would be included throughout the design process, including staff, governors, parents and pupils. The final design would be subject to planning permission, where the impact of the design in the context of the conservation area would be considered. Planning is a statutory process and includes formal consultation with stakeholders, including local residents.

It is worth noting that the reason for the proposal is to meet the increased demand for school places as a result of recent and future housing developments planned for St Nicholas and Bonvilston.

Issue 4

New school being on public open space

Several local residents had concerns over public access to the school fields during construction and whether these would still be accessible after construction.

Governing body’s response to the concerns raised

The governing body are not proposing any changes to the existing arrangement in place for the community use of the school field. There would be limited external space during the construction of the new building as the existing school would remain operational throughout.

The new school may have a larger footprint than the current school building to accommodate the additional capacity which could result in an overall reduction in outside space. However, the external facilities would be enhanced as part of the development, resulting in higher quality external space including sport and habitat areas. The existing school building would be demolished following the opening of the new school building.

Community use is an integral part of the 21st Century Schools Programme. The new school would provide facilities available for community use, including a sports hall.

Issue 5

Local residents did not feel involved as part of the consultation exercise

Several local residents were unhappy they had not been directly informed about the consultation and felt as such they had not been able to provide their views.

Governing body’s response to the concerns raised

Consultation on the proposed regulated alteration was undertaken as outlined in the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. The consultation has been undertaken with prescribed consultees, in line with the School Organisation Code 2018. The consultation document was published on the Vale of Glamorgan Council’s website and distributed to prescribed consultees. Local residents are not identified as prescribed consultees.

Consultation meetings were arranged to provide the opportunity for members of the community to ask any questions regarding the proposal. The following consultation sessions were arranged.

Nature of consultation	Date/Time	Venue
Parents and Community drop in session	Thursday 4 April 8.45am – 9.45am 3pm – 4pm	St Nicholas CIW Primary School, St Nicholas, Vale of Glamorgan. CF5 6SG
Governors’ meeting	Thursday 4 April 6pm	St Nicholas CIW Primary School, St Nicholas, Vale of Glamorgan. CF5 6SG
Staff meeting	Monday 8 April 3.30pm	St Nicholas CIW Primary School, St Nicholas, Vale of Glamorgan. CF5 6SG
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Pupil engagement session	Friday 12 April	St Nicholas CIW Primary School, St

The availability of these sessions was highlighted in the consultation document, on the Council's website and promoted through the Council's social media accounts. The consultation and drop in sessions were also advertised in the school notice board outside of the school. A number of local residents attended the Parent and Community drop in session on Monday 8 April. This included a representative from the St Nicholas with Bonvilston Community Council.

Open communication channels were maintained throughout the consultation period. A number of emails were received from local residents, including a number of the respondents. These were all responded to in a timely manner.

Should the proposal progress to the next stage a formal planning application would be submitted for the new school building. Local residents would be notified of this application directly and would be able to respond with any concerns.

Issue 6

Community Impact Assessment

One respondent disagreed with the findings of the CIA and queried the following points:

- C12 extra facilities would be 'slight improvement' not 'improvement'
- C14 unclear whether field would remain open to public 'degradation' not 'improvement'
- C15 homebased businesses will suffer from noise and traffic
- C16 further staff recruitment may not come from locality
- C17 traffic should be 'moderate to large deterioration' rather than 'slight degradation'
- Score should be +0.5 not +1.375

Governing body's response to the concerns raised

The Community Impact Assessment is an evolving document and will be considered at all stages of this proposal. The Community Impact Assessment has been updated following feedback received during the consultation period.

C12

The school currently provides a number of services for the local community. However, the number of services is limited by the existing site. The governing body believes that a new school building would provide the school with the opportunity to increase the services provided. This would be embedded into the design of the new building. Therefore, the governing body believes that this represents a 'moderate improvement'.

C14

The potential reduction in the size of the school field as a result of the new building has been included and the score has been reconsidered as a result.

C15

The potential impact on homebased businesses as a result of increased noise and traffic has been included as a result of feedback received and the score has been reconsidered.

C16

The proposal would result in additional employment opportunities due to the increased capacity and extended age range. Even though there is no guarantee that these roles would be taken by local residents, it nevertheless provides additional employment opportunities for the local community. A number of members of staff responded stating that the new facilities would improve teaching and learning and create a better environment for staff and pupils. Therefore, the governing body determined that there would be a large improvement on local employment.

C17

The full impact on local infrastructure would be determined by the completion of a full transport assessment. The increased number of pupils attending the school could result in increased traffic and congestion. However, the new build could provide the opportunity to reduce the impact on the local infrastructure. For example, the new build would include a car park compliant with current planning regulations. Therefore at this stage, the governing body has determined that there would be a slight deterioration on the local infrastructure.

Overall

After revising the Community Impact Assessment, the average score is 1.125 showing that the proposal would likely result in a slight improvement for the local community.

Issue 7

Involvement in the planning and construction process

One respondent stated the importance of involving local residents, staff, parents, governors and other stakeholders in each stage of the process.

Governing body's response to the concerns raised

The governing body value the views of local residents, staff, parents and other stakeholders and as such provide opportunities for involvement at each stage of the process. For instance, during the design stage the 21st Century Schools team will frequently meet with school stakeholders for comments and hold drop in sessions open to the community before submitting to planning. During construction the appointed contractors would hold stakeholder engagement sessions in the form of site visits and workshops with pupils. There would also be opportunities for local community groups to apply for in-kind donations, digital skills training, and governance advice from the community benefits aspect of the development.

Issue 8

Building design in-keeping with the village aesthetics

Several respondents noted a preference for the building to be one-storey to increase connection with local building vernacular.

Governing body's response to the concerns raised

Whilst this is more appropriate for the planning stage, the governing body aim to integrate the building design with local considerations early on through aspects of the design such as choice of materials. The 21st Century Schools team would examine all building design options appropriate for meeting educational needs and a one-storey building is one of the options to be considered.

Annex B - A summary of comments received in favour of the proposal.

This section provides the key themes raised during the formal consultation period by those in favour of the proposal. The following presents an overview of responses and are not exhaustive or intended to be verbatim. All written responses have been made available to members of the governing body.

Comment 1

Access to adequate facilities would benefit pupils' health and wellbeing.

St Nicholas CIW Primary would greatly benefit from improved facilities such as appropriately sized classrooms and outdoor sporting provision. Currently the youngest pupils are taught within a separate building, responses note the safety concerns of young children walking on a road without pavements. This also impacts in terms of the staff time required to chaperone pupils between the buildings. All pupils being taught within one building would improve the school identity as a single school and resolve the current problems of transporting pupils between sites. Responses also noted the current inadequate provision for disabled users to access the site and the lack of toilet facilities appropriate for wheelchair users. This would be greatly improved in a 21st Century Schools designed building.

Comment 2

The proposed new facilities would enhance educational standards and extra-curricular activities at the school.

The current school building is not fit for purpose. Better facilities are needed to support the teaching staff in delivering the excellent standards they achieve currently on a wider scale. The benefits the new school building can offer would enable this to happen. Currently there is not enough space in some of the classrooms for pupils to have an adequate work area, this has even resulted in the library being converted into a makeshift classroom. ICT requirements of the curriculum are also difficult to deliver due to insufficient facilities. The proposed new building will provide innovative and creative learning environments which are adaptable to change and will challenge and support children to reach their full potential. Respondents hope the proposed new facilities would better support curriculum delivery to a wider range of pupils and enable additional activities to take place, such as sports and digital learning.

Comment 3

Addition of a nursery would improve the cohesive ethos of the school and enable a smooth transition of pupils from nursery to foundation phase.

Currently the school has no nursery provision, which results in a significant amount of time spent integrating reception pupils into the school and a loss of potential local pupils to other schools further away with nursery provision. The proposed nursery will provide a consistent approach from 3-11 years to promote and underpin continuity and progression for pupils, ensuring breadth and balance across the curriculum. It will also develop the ethos and culture of the school in children from

an earlier age, leading to effective interpersonal relationships and higher self-esteem.

Comment 4

Increased access to community facilities at the proposed new school site would be beneficial to local residents.

The residents of St Nicholas and wider areas would benefit from increased access to community facilities. The proposal would maintain and increase the level of community access and interaction through the use of the school's educational facilities whilst meeting the needs of the school. Responses encourage the availability of facilities for community use; including areas for outdoor recreation and meeting spaces for evening classes.

Annex C - Frequently asked questions.

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

What is the intended timescale for the development of the new school building?

Building work is likely to commence from July 2020. It is proposed that the new school would be open for September 2021.

Who would manage the construction of the new school building?

The Council's 21st Century Schools Team would be responsible for managing the build process. A contractor would be appointed using the SEWSCAP framework. SEWSCAP is a construction framework used by 16 local authorities and provides pre-qualified and suitably experienced Contractors to deliver the 21st Century Schools Programme, and other public buildings, relating to both new build and refurbishment projects over £1.5 million. A programme of engagement would be devised to ensure all stakeholders are informed of progress and are able to feed into the design process. There would be regular meetings between the Council, contractor and school.

Would the construction of the new school result in disruption for staff, pupils and local residents?

It is proposed that the new school building is built on the existing site which would result in some disruption for staff, pupils and local residents during the construction phase. The school would work closely with the Council's 21st Century Schools Team to limit disruption through restricting delivery times and working collaboratively with the site manager.

Would contingency arrangements be put in place during the construction of the new school to ensure pupils are able to access outdoor space?

As the proposed new build would be built on the existing site, the school would lose outside space during the construction phase. During this time, the school would work closely with the 21st Century Schools team to ensure pupils have access to sufficient outside space and the curriculum is not compromised. The school would work closely with the construction team to ensure pupils are involved throughout the process and the curriculum is enhanced through regular site visits.

How would we be involved throughout the design process?

A programme of engagement would be devised to ensure all stakeholders are informed of progress and are able to feed into the design process. There would be regular meetings between the Council, contractor and school. Any feedback or thoughts can be sent to the 21st Century Schools Team

on: 21stcenturyschools@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Annex D - Consultation undertaken with young people.

Consultation with St Nicholas Church in Wales Primary School on behalf of Vale of Glamorgan Council on the proposal to change the age range of the school from 4-11 yrs to 3-11 yrs, establish a nursery class and increase the capacity from 126 places to 210 from September 2021.

Background and Aim

- In their Consultation document on the above proposal the Vale of Glamorgan Council note the importance of making suitable arrangements to consult with pupils and where possible those pupils likely to attend the school: 'The Council firmly believes that the pupils of St Nicholas CIW Primary School should be given the opportunity to make their views known about this proposal'.
- A consultation workshop was arranged with the school council on 12 April 2019 to gather their views about the proposal.
- The information gathered from the session will be included in the final consultation report. The full report will be submitted to the Council's Cabinet for consideration following the consultation period.

Methodology

- An interactive workshop which gave pupils an opportunity to discuss and share ideas together.
- It started with a discussion on the meaning of consultation and why it was important to talk to pupils
- Agreement was reached on what made a good discussion/consultation
- The consultation document was then explained to them, including the background and the timeline for the activity.
- The pupils were divided into 2 groups to share and note their own ideas. The two groups then merged to have further discussion on these ideas, based on the rules of engagement as agreed at the beginning of the session.
- Following the feedback pupils were given information on the advantages and shortcomings noted in the consultation document, they were reminded of the timeline and it was explained to them that their comments would be fed into a report on this session and that it would be presented to the council as part of the evidence gathered on this consultation.

Pupils responses (12 pupils – 10 from School Council (Yrs 2-6) with an additional 2 Yr 3 pupils)

What makes a good discussion:

- Listen to everybody
- Opportunities for everyone to speak
- Get everyone's ideas
- Work well together as a team

Benefits of the proposed plan

- More children will have more opportunity
- More children will have an education
- We could have bigger classrooms
- Make a nursery for the little ones
- If we have a nursery the people who go to the nursery will go straight to the school
- Everybody will be together
- Give the children more space
- More separate classes which will be easier for teachers and pupils (as they'll be same abilities/age)
- More things to do in the classroom
- A room for reading
- More creative stuff
- More play outside
- Discuss with people more
- We will have more facilities
- We could have a bigger hall so more people can eat at the same time
- More healthy food
- More art and stuff
- More colours and creativity (art display)
- More PE
- Have more sports clubs after school
- A playground with swings, slides and obstacle course and a climbing frame
- Get to know more people and make more friends
- New teachers
- More children in each year group
- Raising more money
- More space for sports day
- More space to play and run around
- More equipment
- Safe and fun
- More resources
- More activities

Possible pitfalls of the proposed plan

- The school will get muddy because it is built on grass and pupils will be coming in to the school with muddy feet (keep this in mind whilst building)

- Worried it will be too big and too busy for the little ones (children getting hurt)
- Will we have the same climbing frames and bars?
- Concern about losing some equipment they have now
- If it is two floors then it might be dangerous for the little ones
- More people could bully you
- Losing outside area during construction

General comments

Good contributions from all pupils, Yr 2 up to Yr 6. Pupils responded in an organised, fair and open manner.

Overwhelming support for the proposal; when asked to vote for 'Yes', 'Not Sure,' or 'No', the 12 pupils voted as follows:

Yes – 11

Not Sure - 1

12.iv.19

gj

Annex E - Response from Estyn

In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2018, a copy of the consultation document was sent to Estyn.

Estyn response to the proposal by Vale of Glamorgan County Council's consultation on changing the age range and increasing the capacity of St. Nicholas CIW Primary School.

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However, Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer.

Introduction

This is a consultation proposal from Vale of Glamorgan County Council.

The proposal is to:

- Change the age range of St. Nicholas CIW Primary School from 4-11 years to 3- 11 years and to establish a nursery class containing 48 part time places from September 2021
- Increase the capacity of St. Nicholas CIW Primary School from 126 places to 210 places from September 2021

Summary/Conclusion

The proposal focuses on meeting the projected increased demand for places in St. Nicholas CIW Primary School.

The proposer has outlined clearly that the proposal should meet the forecast demand for extra places in the school.

In Estyn's opinion the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education and provision in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposer has provided a detailed and clear rationale for the proposal. Due to significant housing developments within the school catchment area the forecast numbers of pupils should rise significantly. The proposer states validly that extra places are necessary in order to meet this anticipated demand as the school is currently above capacity. The proposer draws attention fairly to the poor present

state of the school buildings and nature of its sites and asserts reasonably that this situation would be improved by building a new school on the site.

The proposer outlines the possible advantages, disadvantages and risks usefully. It states validly that the school would provide a better learning environment for pupils and ensure that the Vale of Glamorgan Council is able to accommodate the future demand for faith based education. It maintains fairly that the improved facilities would increase the level of community interaction with the school. The proposer recognises suitably that the potential disadvantages include disruption to pupils, staff and resources during the transition to the new school building.

The proposer has considered other alternative options appropriately. It considered four alternative options and discounted each one due to a range of relevant factors. The proposer states firmly that the proposal would not impact on existing learner travel arrangements as the school would remain on the existing site and there would be no change to the catchment area.

The proposer states reasonably that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant impact on other schools in the area as catchment area boundaries will not change. The proposer has acted appropriately in assessing the proposals impact on the Welsh language. It maintains fairly that the proposal will not have a negative effect on Welsh medium provision nor the teaching of Welsh to pupils in the school which teaches predominantly through the medium of English.

Educational Aspects of the proposal:

The proposer has considered comprehensively the effect of the proposals on the quality of outcomes, provision and leadership and management. It refers validly to the outcomes of the school's most recent inspection report by Estyn and the school's support category and band.

It concludes reasonably that it does not anticipate any negative impacts on the quality of standards of education and wellbeing of pupils in the school. The proposer asserts strongly that new facilities would support teaching, learning and the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum. It argues effectively that the proposal could have a positive impact on standards through the provision of a learning environment and infrastructure that support both teachers and pupils.

The proposer asserts correctly that at present St Nicholas CIW Primary School does not offer nursery provision. It argues strongly that the proposed 48 part time nursery places will develop continuity and progression in children's learning from the age of three. This, it states fairly, should help ensure a consistent approach and delivery of the foundation phase.

The proposer makes the case satisfactorily that it does not anticipate any adverse impact on leadership and governance under these proposals.

The proposer has considered suitably the impact upon vulnerable groups. It concludes appropriately that there is no evidence to suggest the proposal would have a negative impact on vulnerable pupils including those with Special Educational Needs. It states reasonably that the new building would improve

facilities to support wellbeing, including spaces for withdrawal for additional learning needs interventions.

The proposer has given suitable consideration to possible disruption to pupils. It recognises validly that as the new school building will be built on the existing site this will result in some disruption during the construction phase. However, the school asserts reasonably that disruption will be minimised through working closely with the Council's 21st Century Schools Team

Annex F - Minutes of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee on the proposal

LEARNING AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Extract from the Minutes of a meeting held on 9th April, 2019.

921 PROPOSAL TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES AND ESTABLISH 48 PART TIME NURSERY PLACES AT ST. NICHOLAS CIW PRIMARY SCHOOL (REF) –

Cabinet had, on 18th February, 2019, referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for its consideration as part of the proposed consultation exercise. Cabinet approval had been sought to undertake a statutory consultation as outlined in the School Organisation Code 2018 on the proposal to:

- Alter the lowest age range of pupils at St. Nicholas CIW Primary School from 4 to 3, to consist of the addition of a new nursery class containing 48 part time places from September 2021;
- Increase the capacity of St. Nicholas CIW Primary School from 126 places to 210 places from September 2021;
- The proposal would ensure St. Nicholas CIW Primary School was able to meet increased demand for school places as a result of recent housing developments within the catchment area and would address the condition and suitability issues with the existing buildings;
- The establishment of a nursery would develop continuity and progression in children's learning from the age of 3;
- St. Nicholas CIW Primary School had been included as part of Band B of the Council's 21st Century Schools Programme with the creation of a new 210 primary school building scheduled for completion by September 2021;
- Feedback received throughout the consultation period would be presented to Cabinet for consideration in June 2019.

The Council had a statutory duty to review the number and type of schools in the area and to make the best use of resources to raise standards in schools. The Council also had a statutory duty to secure sufficient school places in its area to meet current and future demand for school places in line with national, regional and local strategies. Expanding schools and developing new schools was required where there was a shortfall in school places, current and future, to meet demand for Welsh, English and denominational schools. This may arise due to large scale housing developments planned for an area, increased demand and changes to parental preference for schooling.

In order to ensure St. Nicholas CIW Primary School was able to meet anticipated future demand for education, its capacity would need to increase.

The report detailed that the current school building had a capacity of 126 places but had 128 pupils on roll as outlined below.

School	Type of school	Language category	Admission number	School capacity	Number on roll	Age range
St. Nicholas CIW Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	English Medium	18	126	128	4 - 11

The table showed that current demand for school places at St. Nicholas CIW Primary School was above the current capacity which meant there was no capacity to accommodate additional pupils generated by the new housing developments.

The Head of Service for Strategy, Community Learning and Resources in presenting the report, advised that it had therefore been considered that a 210 place building was the minimum size from an efficiency and sustainability perspective and a 210 place school would accommodate the projected increase in pupil numbers from the new housing developments. St. Nicholas CIW Primary School did not currently offer nursery provision due to the limitations of the existing building.

It was proposed that 48 part time nursery places were provided to develop continuity and progression in children's learning from the age of 3. This would ensure there was a consistent approach to planning and delivery of the Foundation Phase (Nursery to Year 2).

St. Nicholas CIW Primary School was a timber clad building which had been categorised as being in poor condition and suitability. This meant the school was exhibiting major defects and teaching methods were adversely affected. It would not be possible to refurbish teaching areas to fully meet 21st Century standards.

The school was split over two sites with Reception pupils having to walk to the nearby "Old School" building following morning assembly. There was no path along this stretch of road. Classroom sizes were also inconsistent throughout the building. There were currently 72 children being taught across two classrooms.

St. Nicholas had therefore been included as part of the Council's 21st Century Schools Programme and a new 210 place school building would be built on the existing school site. It was anticipated that the new school building would open by September 2021.

Following a query as to whether any consultation had been undertaken in light of the new developments for St. Nicholas and Bonvilston and whether the department also had information regarding where children resided that went to the school, the Head of Service advised that provisions and projections had been taken into account with the conclusion reached that there was enough demand for Church in Wales placements as well as there being some surplus capacity. There were a significant number of pupils who attended the school from outside the locality and once accepted, they were on the school roll.

The Chairman, in referring to the location and parking on the site, was informed that the department would look to install turning circles at the site. The issue of pupils currently walking from one site to the other would be resolved by the new proposals.

Having considered the report, the Scrutiny Committee subsequently unanimously
RECOMMENDED – T H A T the proposals as outlined in the report be endorsed.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents contained therein and the discussions at the meeting.