

Date/Dyddiad 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016  
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To: Parents, Carers and Guardians of children attending St. Helens Catholic Infant and Junior Schools  
Headteachers, Staff and Governors of St. Helens Catholic Infant and Junior Schools  
Statutory Consultees

Dear Consultee,

### **Proposal to amalgamate St. Helens Catholic Infant and Junior Schools**

On 25 January 2016 the Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff and the Governing Bodies of St. Helen's Catholic Infant and Junior schools held a full consultation with prescribed consultees on a proposal to create a new all through 308 place primary school and nursery by amalgamating St. Helen's Catholic Infant and Junior Schools. A statutory public notice was published on the 15 September 2016 for a period of 28 days that closed on 14 October 2016. The Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff and the Governing Bodies of the schools received one objection to the statutory notice on the proposal.

Where objections are received to the publication of a statutory notice by a governing body of a voluntary school and diocesan authority, the Council's Cabinet is required to determine the proposal. The Council is accordingly required to determine the proposal to create a new all through 308 place primary school and nursery by amalgamating St. Helen's Catholic Infant and Junior Schools.

On 12 December 2016, the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Cabinet met to determine the proposal to create a new all through 308 place Primary School and nursery by amalgamating St. Helen's Catholic Infant and Junior Schools. Cabinet in making its decision considered the proposal in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2013. It was noted that one objection had been received in respect of the proposal during the statutory objection period. The main concerns of the objector is summarised in the objection report together with the response from the Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff and the Governing Bodies of St. Helen's Catholic Infant and Junior schools. The objection report is available to view on the council website at [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/sthelens](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/sthelens) or a hard copy is available on request to the address above or e-mail [MMatthews@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:MMatthews@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk).

Taking all matters into account, Cabinet approved the proposal. As a result a new all through 308 place primary school will be created by amalgamating St. Helen's Catholic Infant and Junior Schools from 1 May 2017.

In determining the proposal, Cabinet were satisfied that the proposal will:

- Maintain the quality and standards of education in the area;
- Maintain access and parental preference for denominational education in the area;
- Continue to provide a mix of English medium, Welsh medium and faith provision within Barry and the surrounding area;
- Will lead to greater efficiency in the resourcing of education within the immediate area and across the school estate;

The reasons for the decision in respect of the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code are as follows;

### **Quality and Standards of Education**

The proposal will enable the high standards of education present in the existing, separate schools to be combined and to contribute to high quality provision within one school operating across two sites. The new school will be managed by one headteacher. This would allow a shared vision and leadership and minimise the number of transition points between schools that children currently experience. The proposal will maximise the benefits arising from such continuous transition and will offer greater potential for improving the levels of achievement for all pupils.

The amalgamation is based on sound educational principles including the progression of pupils through a school with a single management and pedagogical ethos.

The view of Estyn is “It seems likely that the proposal will at least maintain the standards of educational provision and outcomes for pupils in the area”

### **Need for places and the impact on the accessibility of schools**

Barry and the surrounding area will retain English, Welsh and faith provision. The number of school places available for children in the area will not alter as a result of the proposal. The amalgamated school will continue to meet the demand of parents for places within the schools.

There will be no impact as a result of the proposal on pupils’ journeys and available walking routes to schools as the amalgamated school will operate over the two existing sites. Nothing in the proposal will change school transport arrangements, eligibility or accessibility.

### **Resourcing of education**

The amalgamation of the two schools would result in funding being allocated to the primary school on the same basis as for other primary schools with nurseries. The delegated funding for the primary school will be approximately £60,000 less than the funding currently being provided for the separate nursery and primary schools.

A net saving of approximately £60,000 would be achieved through the reduction of two head teacher posts to one, a reduction in the small school allowance and the introduction of a split site allowance for the schools.

The amalgamation of the schools will ensure available resources are used as effectively as possible.

The decision is subject to the call in procedures as set out in the Council’s constitution which allows decisions taken by Cabinet to be reviewed. Should a call in of the decision take place, all stakeholders will be informed.

Yours sincerely



Paula Ham  
Interim Director of Learning and Skills