



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 3RD SEPTEMBER 2024

**SUBJECT: SCHOOL ORGANISATION CODE 2018 - PROPOSAL FOR
THE AMALGAMATION OF HENDRE JUNIOR SCHOOL AND
HENDRE INFANTS SCHOOL**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND
CORPORATE SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to consult with Members in respect of the proposed amalgamation of Hendre Junior School and Hendre Infants School with effect from September 2025.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 The report identifies the Schools and Governing Bodies who wished to proceed to formal consultation in partnership with the Local Authority.

2.2 Approval to proceed to consultation stage was received from Cabinet on the 24th July 2024.

2.3 The consultation process is proceeding in line with the requirements of Welsh Government Statutory Code document no 011/2018 - School Organisation Code 2nd Edition 2018 where exemptions do not apply.

2.4 The purpose of the report is to consult with Scrutiny Members on the proposed amalgamation of Hendre Junior School and Hendre Infants School in their formal capacity as statutory consultees.

2.5 The consultation period for the proposal commenced on the 2nd September 2024 and ends midnight on the 15th October 2024.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Members are asked to:

- a) Note the information contained in the report and the attached consultation pack.
- b) To obtain Members views as part of the consultation process for the proposal which will be noted as part of the minutes of this meeting and included in the Consultation Report which will be presented to Cabinet as part of the decision making process.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure Members are consulted with regards to the outlined proposal.
- 4.2 To assist the Council in discharging its duty in consulting stakeholders in line with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2018 where applicable.
- 4.3 To work in partnership and support the schools identified in 1.1 in undertaking a consultation exercise on amalgamation which if approved will formalise the successful collaboration that has been in place for a number of years.

5. THE REPORT

Background

- 5.1 The term "Amalgamation" describes a formal and legal agreement by which two or more existing schools become one school, for example where an Infant and Junior school become a Primary as is the basis for this proposal.
- 5.2 The amalgamation of schools is a more formal way of extending existing collaboration and promoting closer working relationships. Both schools have been informally 'collaborating' since September 2022 and share the same Head Teacher with both Governing Bodies working together for the best interests of the school, pupils and wider community.
- 5.3 It is proposed that the current school sites would remain in operation but function as a single Primary school campus. Both schools are located in the same locale within the Caerphilly basin (130 yards on opposite sides of St Cenydd Road) and there are no proposed changes to the existing shared catchment arrangements.
- 5.4 The Governing body of both schools have requested the Local Authority consider the proposal and agree to proceed in partnership with the individual schools to formal consultation.

- 5.5 Approval to proceed to consultation stage was received from Cabinet on the 24th July 2024.
- 5.6 As part of the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 2018 and Section 42/44 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, proposals must be published when we make a 'regulated alteration' to a maintained school and consultation must be undertaken with Members and wider Stakeholders as outlined in the attached documentation.
- 5.7 The consultation period for the proposal commenced on the 2nd September 2024 and will close midnight on the 15th October 2024.
- 5.8 Following consultation, all the comments received during the consultation period will be compiled into a Consultation Report.
- 5.9 The Consultation Report will be taken to Cabinet who will then decide as to whether to proceed, make changes or not to proceed with the proposal.
- 5.10 Should Cabinet decide to proceed, a Statutory Notice will be published providing a 28 day notice period for objections. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 provides that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal has the opportunity to do so at this stage. To be considered as statutory objections, objections must be made in writing and sent to the Council within the notice period. Formal Responses can only be registered following the publication of a statutory notice.
- 5.11 Full details of the Consultation Process for the proposal can be found in the main Consultation Document as part of the attached consultation pack.

5.12 **Conclusion**

- 5.12.1 Members are asked to note the information contained in this report and the supporting consultation pack documentation with a view to providing views on the proposal in their capacity as a 'consultee' under the School Organisation Code 2018.
- 5.12.2 Members views will be included in the Consultation Report which will be taken to Cabinet who will then decide on how the proposal will progress as outlined.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made in relation to this report. The process outlined by Welsh Government is being adhered to ensure transparency, balanced and open decision making.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 A full Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been completed in relation to the proposal to ensure compliance with the socio-economic duty, Sections 1 to 3 of Equality Act 2010.

[Link to IIA](#)

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Hendre Infants School and Hendre Junior School are currently funded separately.
- 8.2 The amalgamation process brings both budgets into a single funding formula for the proposed Hendre Primary School.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 This will be dependent on specific proposals and will be considered as part of the consultation process.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 The draft report was distributed as detailed below. All comments received have been reflected in this version of the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 School Organisation Code 2018 (Welsh Government)
School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013

Author: Andrea West, Place Shaping and Sustainable Communities for Learning Service Manager

Consultees:

Dave Street, Deputy Chief Executive
Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services
Mark S Williams, Corporate Director for Economy and Environment
Councillor Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities
Councillor Donna Cushing, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Councillor Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services

Scrutiny Committee

Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy / Place
Shaping Programme Director

Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer

Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer

Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN

Sarah Mutch, Early Years Manager

Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement

Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager

Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services

Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Ben Winstanley, Head of Land and Property Services

Steve Pugh, Corporate Communications Manager

Appendices:

Link to Consultation Document – [Hendre Infants School / Hendre Junior School](#)