

Newport City Council

School Reorganisation Proposal

Consultation Report

Proposal to amalgamate Kimberley Nursery School and Fair oak Nursery School into a single school on the current Fair oak Nursery School site from September 2021.

Formal Consultation Period:

Initial launch: 10th March 2020 – 30th March 2020

Relaunch: 29th June 2020 – 11th September 2020

Purpose

This report is published in line with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code, November 2018.

This consultation report includes the following sections:

- The Proposal
- Consultation Launch Details
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Learner Voice
- Consultation Responses
- Estyn's Response
- Other Considerations
- Recommendations
- Appendices

The Proposal

This consultation report concerns a proposal to amalgamate Kimberley Nursery School and Fair oak Nursery School into a single school on the current Fair oak Nursery School site from September 2021.

Consultation Launch Details

The proposal was initially launched to run from 10th March 2020 until 21st April 2020. Due to the closure of all schools in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the consultation was withdrawn on 30th March 2020.

The proposal was subsequently re-launched when schools re-opened on 29th June 2020 and ran until 11th September 2020.

Stakeholder Engagement

An invitation to take part in the statutory consultation was issued to the stakeholders outlined below, with a link to the consultation pack on the Council's website sent by e-mail:

- Parents, carers and guardians of pupils attending Kimberley Nursery School, Fair oak Nursery School, Crindau Primary School, Malpas Court Primary School, Malpas Park Primary School, Millbrook Primary School, Monnow Primary School, Chuckles Nursery and Tiny Tots Nursery;
- Pupils attending Crindau Primary School, Malpas Court Primary School, Malpas Park Primary School, Millbrook Primary School and Monnow Primary School.
- Members of staff currently employed at Kimberley Nursery School, Fair oak Nursery School, Crindau Primary School, Malpas Court Primary School, Malpas Park Primary School, Millbrook Primary School, Monnow Primary School, Chuckles Nursery and Tiny Tots Nursery;
- The Church in Wales, Diocese of Monmouth;
- Roman Catholic Archdiocese;
- Neighbouring Local Authorities across the South East Wales Consortium area;
- The Headteacher and Governing Bodies of all Newport schools;
- All Newport City Council elected members;
- All Newport City Council Heads of Service;
- All Community Councils across Newport;
- The Welsh Ministers;
- Assembly Members (AMs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) representing the area served by the schools subject to the proposals;
- Estyn;
- Teaching and staff trade unions representing teachers and staff employed at Kimberley Nursery School and Fair oak Nursery School;
- The South East Wales Education Achievement Service;
- The Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent;
- The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership;
- All non-maintained registered nursery education providers across Newport;
- Aneurin Bevan Health Board;
- Public Health Wales;

- Newport Serennu Centre;
- SNAP Cymru;
- Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations;
- Preventative Services.

Hard copies of the full consultation document and the Everyday Summary Version for Children and Young People were available at the two nursery schools, the Information Station and from the Civic Centre, and were provided bilingually in Welsh and English.

The schools identified as being affected by the proposal are listed below:

School	Reason
Directly Affected	
Kimberley Nursery School	The school will be affected due to the proposed amalgamation with Fairoak Nursery School
Fairoak Nursery School	The school will be affected due to the proposed amalgamation with Kimberley Nursery School
Possibly Affected	
Crindau Primary School	Possibly affected. If the proposal is implemented, applications for nursery places at these settings could increase
Malpas Court Primary School	
Malpas Park Primary School	
Millbrook Primary School	
Monnow Primary School	
Chuckles Nursery	
Tiny Tots Nursery	

Distribution of Information

Initially 20 hard copies of the full consultation document and 20 hard copies of the Children and Young People's Everyday Summary Version were provided to both Kimberley Nursery and Fairoak Nursery to be available for staff, pupils and parents. Two copies of each document were also provided to the possibly affected schools and nursery settings listed above. Further copies of the document were available to be delivered to schools on request.

The consultation documents were reviewed and refreshed prior to the relaunch in June 2020. As a result, copies of the updated documents were provided to the directly affected and possibly affected settings outlined above under the same arrangements as for the original launch

Drop-in Events

When the consultation was launched in March 2020, the Council arranged two stakeholder drop-in sessions, which were publicised via the Council's website and in all correspondence and documentation relating to the proposal. The drop-in session at Fairoak Nursery was held as planned, however, the planned session at Kimberley Nursery was cancelled following the Council's suspension of public meetings and the subsequent withdrawal of the consultation.

The drop-in session at Fairoak Nursery was held on Tuesday 17th March 2020 between 11:15 – 13:15 to accommodate parents/carers of children attending both morning and afternoon nursery sessions. The session was facilitated by the Council’s Education Transformation Officer and an Education Information and Development Officer and the Head Teacher of the nursery school was also present. Only one stakeholder attended the session. This stakeholder confirmed that they supported the proposal in light of low pupil numbers across the two nursery sites, but did not submit a formal response to the consultation.

Due to the ongoing public health situation, there were no face-to-face consultation events arranged to support the relaunched consultation. Stakeholders were advised that any questions concerning the proposal could be submitted to school.reorg@newport.gov.uk and Council officers would provide a timely reply to ensure that informed responses could be submitted during the consultation period. No queries were received this way.

Learner Voice

Everyday Summary Version – Children & Young People

An Everyday Summary Version of the main consultation document was prepared and published, and was targeted specifically at children and young people. This summary version was available on request from the Information Station and the Civic Centre.

The Council is committed to gaining the views of learners, and this was facilitated through School Pupil Workshops at Fairoak Nursey School and Kimberley Nursery School.

Fairoak Nursery Session – 17th March 2020

The first session was held at Fairoak Nursery during the initial launch and was attended by two Newport City Council officers, a teacher at Fairoak Nursery School and eight pupils from the school. Due to the age of the pupils, the session was led by their teacher.

Teacher Actions and Questions	Pupil Responses
The teacher started by explaining to the children that there is another nursery school in Newport called Kimberley Nursery School. She showed the children pictures of toys and activities that the children play with at the two nursery schools. The children were invited to share their thoughts and ask questions.	The children observed that the toys at Kimberley Nursery were the same that they have in their Nursery at Fairoak and realised that the children in both nurseries do the same things and play with the same toys.
The teacher then asked the children what they thought about the idea of the two nurseries joining and the children from Kimberley Nursery coming to join the children at Fairoak Nursery.	The children liked the idea as they would have a lot of new friends and would be able to play with each other and share toys. They expressed that they would be kind and nice to each other and would show their new friends smiles. One child stated it would be wonderful to join together.

<p>The teacher asked the children if they thought the other children and their parents would like to come to Fair oak Nursery.</p>	<p>The children said that they thought the other children would love to come to Fair oak Nursery as they would have new friends and get to play with new toys. The children voiced that they love to share, therefore they would like to be able to share their toys. They also thought that the children from Kimberley Nursery would like to be shown around Fair oak and be shown the toys they can play with. The children also expressed how the children from Kimberley would have new teachers, which they believed they would like as they are very nice and friendly.</p>
<p>The teacher then asked the children how they thought the new families would get to the nursery.</p>	<p>The children thought that the new families would drive to the new nursery by car.</p>
<p>The teacher followed up with the children and asked if they had any questions or anything else they would like to say about the two nurseries potentially becoming one.</p>	<p>One child thought it could be a good idea for the children at Kimberley Nursery, to come and visit Fair oak Nursery to meet the new children before they move. The children also thought it would be very exciting and a nice idea for the two nurseries to join together, with one child replying that the joint nursery would be like a cotton candy cloud.</p>

Kimberley Nursery Session – 14th July 2020

Following the relaunch of the proposal, a second session was held at Kimberley Nursery School. This was facilitated by a teacher at the school with six pupils taking part. Due to the public health situation following the outbreak of Covid-19, no Council officers were present, and so a teaching assistant observed and acted as scribe.

Teacher Actions and Questions	Pupil Responses
<p>The teacher began by asking the children what they liked about their nursery and what lovely things they liked to do. She then explained that there was another local nursery called Fair oak where she used to work.</p>	<p>The children responded to the teacher by telling her what they liked about Kimberley – the fairy door, the bikes, playing with their friends and hot chocolate in the forest school area.</p>
<p>The teacher then showed the children pictures of the resources in the other nursery. <i>(To ensure consistency the teacher used the same resources as in the workshop at Fair oak).</i></p>	<p>In response to the pictures of items at Fair oak, the children named the items and agreed that they have the same toys at Kimberley. They got excited by the pictures and began to talk about which toys they liked and who they played with.</p>

<p>The teacher then explained that the two nurseries might become one and asked children what they thought about the children from Kimberley going instead to Fair oak to play and learn.</p>	<p>The children's responses included: "Yes, we can go and play with them"; "I'd feel a little bit scared when I meet new people"; "Maybe one day when lockdown finishes we can meet them".</p>
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The Council is very grateful to the staff and pupils who took part, and would like to thank them for their valuable contributions to this process.

Consultation Responses

Responses received during the initial consultation period and the re-launch are included in this consultation report. Overall, a total of eighteen responses were received during the two consultation periods.

Eight responses were made via the standard response pro-forma (see Appendix A), from the following stakeholder groups:

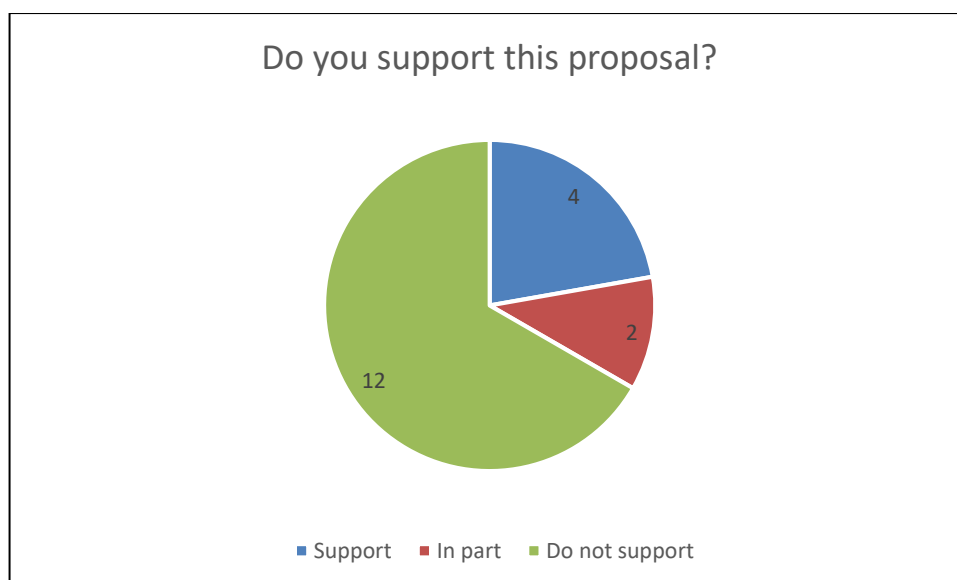
- Current/past/prospective parents/carers of pupils at Kimberley Nursery
- Residents in the area of Fair oak Nursery
- Staff at Newport schools
- Governors at Newport schools

There were ten responses by email, from the following stakeholder groups:

- Current/past/prospective parents/carers of pupils at Kimberley Nursery
- The previous Head teacher of Kimberley Nursery School
- A Newport elected member
- A Trade Union representative
- Estyn (*Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales*)

Seven of the ten email responses were sent directly to the Cabinet Member of Education and Skills with another sent directly to the Chief Education Officer. It was noted that the wording in six of the seven e-mails sent to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills was almost identical.

A summary of the responses provided are shown in the chart on the following page.



The table below shows the various adverse comments and questions raised during the consultation period, and the Council’s response to these points. As many respondents raised more than one issue, the number of commentators listed below is greater than the total number of consultation responses received.

Comment	Number of Similar Comments	Council’s Response
The provision is long-standing with excellent facilities and would be a loss to the local community	7	The low pupil numbers and deficit budget position mean the current model of provision must change. There are a number of very good alternatives in the local area, including the new school that will be created by the amalgamation.
This proposal would will impact other schools nearby.	7	The Council anticipates some increase in applications for nursery places in schools and non-maintained settings in the Malpas and Bettws areas but considers there to be sufficient places available to meet this demand.
The removal of nursery provision from Kimberley will negatively affect Malpas Church in Wales Primary. Many families consider there to be natural transition between the two.	4	In taking forward this proposal, the Council did not and does not anticipate any adverse impact on Malpas Church in Wales Primary School. The Council is committed to ensuring that this school is viable and will work with school leadership team to ensure a sustainable future.
The distance between the two nursery schools is too far.	6	The distance between the two locations has been noted. However, there are a range of alternative provisions in the Malpas/Bettws areas, both in maintained and non-maintained settings.

Increased congestion around Fair oak Nursery at drop-off and pick-up times	2	Fairoak Nursery has capacity for 144 pupils and in the recent past has had in excess of 100 pupils on roll. As Fairoak nursery is currently not reaching capacity, any additional pupils coming from Kimberley will not result in pupil numbers in excess of the building capacity. We do not expect congestion to be a huge issue, however staggered start and finish times could be considered by the governing body to help alleviate any problems.
A purpose built new nursery in a central location would offer a better solution to the Fair oak building.	1	There are no other Council owned available sites nor available funds to build a new nursery in an alternative location.
Relocation of the Communication Class could cause distress for affected pupils and could affect the quality of provision.	2	Staff currently employed to work in the Communication Class will be offered the opportunity to apply for the same positions post-amalgamation. This will ensure that the high standard of education, care and support currently provided will continue if the class is relocated to Fairoak. The relocation would be effective at the start of the academic year reducing the number of pupils who will be required to transfer to a new school. Any pupils who will be required to transfer will be supported through the change by their teachers.
Additional provision is required across Newport for children with additional learning needs	1	The Council is currently considering plans for the future use of the Kimberley Nursery School building should this proposal be successful. Further information on this is included later in this report.
Current nursery provision should not be reviewed during the Covid-19 pandemic	2	The proposal, if approved, would not come into effect until September 2021, and unfortunately, the Council is unable to predict whether this will still be a factor at this time. However, all Headteachers have all received appropriate guidance on completion of risk assessments to enable schools to continue to operate safely during this pandemic.

Compulsory redundancies should be avoided.	1	If there are any potential staffing reductions as a result of the proposal, these will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Job Security Policy. The Council will work with two existing Governing Bodies to redeploy any unplaced staff to other vacancies across the city, either in schools or elsewhere in the Council.
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The Council was made aware of an online petition started within the community to *Save Kimberley Nursery*. The petition had received 1,283 signatures at the time when the second consultation period concluded, but this has not been formally submitted to the Council. During the relaunched consultation period, a banner was erected outside Kimberley Nursery reading 'SAVE OUR NURSERY!' The banner was subsequently removed as it was not erected with permission.

Estyn's Response

The full response from Estyn is included at Appendix B of this report. However, in summary, the response states:

- The local authority has set out clearly its proposal for the amalgamation of Kimberley Nursery School and Fair Oak Nursery School.
- Both schools have been running well under capacity over recent years, therefore 140 half-day sessions are likely to easily accommodate current demand, with some scope for an increase in numbers.
- The local authority has considered appropriately a number of alternative arrangements to those set out in the proposal.
- The proposal has identified potential governance and staffing implications arising from the proposal, however, these are not fully spelt out.
- Both nursery schools are currently categorised as English medium language category. The proposal does not consider specifically Welsh medium needs.

In conclusion, the response states that it is unlikely the amalgamation of these schools, and the relocation of the Communication Class will have a detrimental impact upon learners, and educational standards are likely to be at least maintained.

In response to the comments in relation to staffing implications and Welsh medium needs, the Council response is as follows:

If the two nursery schools are amalgamated, a new governing body will be established for the new school. This governing body will be responsible for determining the appropriate staffing structure for the new school and making the necessary appointments. Until this process is complete, it is not possible to fully understand the possible staffing implications of

the proposal. As set out in the consultation document, this process would be supported by the Council's Job Security Policy and officers from the Council's Human Resources team.

The proposal concerns the amalgamation of two English language nursery schools that both use and teach the Welsh language in accordance with the national curriculum. The proposal is expected to have either a positive or a negative impact on the availability of provision to meet Welsh-medium needs. However, a separate proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium primary school for pupils aged 3-11 years was determined in June 2020. This new school will open to Nursery and Reception pupils from September 2021.

Other considerations

Since the launch of the statutory consultation on this proposal, the Council has allocated funding to be used for the refurbishment of the Kimberley Nursery building with a view to this being re-purposed as a dedicated Foundation Phase provision for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This is currently subject to a detailed feasibility study, and if appropriate, a separate school reorganisation proposal will be taken forward in due course.

Recommendations

It is recommended that permission be sought to move this proposal forward by publishing a statutory notice. This decision will be referred to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and taken through the Council's agreed democratic process.

In accordance with the School Organisation Code (2018) this report is published electronically on Newport City Council's website at www.newport.gov.uk/schoolreorganisation

To request a hard (paper) copy of this document please contact Newport City Council's Education Information and Development Officer on 01633 656656 or email school.reorg@newport.gov.uk

Appendix A

Consultation Response Pro-forma

This response relates to a proposal to:

- Bring together Kimberley Nursery School and Fair oak Nursery School as one school on the Fair oak Nursery School site from September 2021.

Your views matter. Please tell us what you think about the proposal by completing this questionnaire and returning it to the Education Information and Development Officer, Newport City Council, Room 425W, Civic Centre, Newport NP20 4UR. Alternatively, you can complete this form online at www.newport.gov.uk/schoolreorganisation or email your response to school.reorg@newport.gov.uk **The closing date for the submission of responses to this consultation is midnight on Friday 11 September 2020.** Please note that negative responses made to this consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal, they will be recorded as adverse comments. Objections can only be registered following the publication of a statutory notice.

1) Do you support the proposal to:

To bring together Kimberley and Fair oak Nursery Schools as one school on the Fair oak site.



Please use the box below to provide comments or explain which element of the proposal you do not support

2) Do you believe that the proposal will have a positive or negative effect on opportunities to use the Welsh language?

Positive Negative No effect

3) If you think it will have a negative effect, what steps could we take to lessen or remove this and improve positive effects?

4) Do you believe that the proposal will treat the Welsh and English languages equally?

Yes No

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Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent/carer of a child attending a local nursery)

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Please select your Ethnic group			
White British		Asian-Bangladeshi	
White Irish		Asian-Indian	
Any other White background (please state): _____		Asian-Pakistani	
Gypsy or Irish Traveller		Any other Asian background	
White and Asian		Black Caribbean	
White and Black African		Black African	
White and Black Caribbean		Any other Black background	
Any other Mixed background (please state): _____		Arab	
Asian-Bangladeshi		Chinese	
Asian-Indian		Any other ethnic group (please state): _____	
Asian-Pakistani		Prefer not to say	

Welsh language			
Do you consider yourself a Welsh speaker?			
Yes		No	Prefer not to say

Caring Responsibilities			
Do you care for children of school age?			
Yes		No	Prefer not to say
Do you care for children of pre-school age?			
Yes		No	Prefer not to say
Do you care for a dependent adult or child above school age?			
Yes		No	Prefer not to say

If you wish to be notified of the publication of the consultation report, please supply your contact details:

E-mail: _____

Postal address: _____

Appendix B

Estyn's full response to the proposal

Introduction

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 and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia, which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

Summary/ Conclusion

The local authority's proposal for the amalgamation of Kimberley Nursery School and Fair oak Nursery School into a single school on the current Fair oak Nursery School site from September 2021.

It is unlikely that the amalgamation of these schools, and the relocation of the Communication Class will have a detrimental impact upon learners, and educational standards are likely to be at least maintained.

Description and benefits

The local authority has set out clearly its proposal for the amalgamation of Kimberley Nursery School and Fair oak Nursery School into a single school on the current Fair oak Nursery School site from September 2021 and for the continuation of the dedicated Communication Class for 16 pupils, also on the same site.

The proposal will provide a single amalgamated stand-alone nursery school with capacity for up to 140 half-day sessions for mainstream pupils. This is a reduction of 84 half-day sessions across the two current schools. However, both schools have been running well under capacity over recent years, and projections suggest this would continue if no changes were made. Therefore 140 half-day sessions are likely to easily accommodate current demand, with some scope for an increase in numbers.

The local authority has considered appropriately a number of alternative arrangements to those set out in the proposal. The local authority's rationale behind the dismissal of each of these alternatives, appears to be reasonable.

The proposed new site for the amalgamated schools may mean additional travel distance for some of those currently using the Kimberley Nursery School. However, as nursery places are not given free home to school transport, this will not impact upon those local authority arrangements. Should parents wish to choose a more conveniently sited school, there are seven other nursery schools within two miles of Kimberley Nursery School, with three less than a mile away. Nearly all of these seven schools have surplus nursery places.

Both nursery schools are currently categorised as English medium language category. The proposal does not consider specifically Welsh medium needs.

The proposal has identified potential governance and staffing implications arising from the proposal, however, these are not fully spelt out. Any staffing reductions as a result of the proposal, will be dealt with in accordance with the council's Job Security Policy, with the redeployment of any unplaced staff to other vacancies across the city, either in schools or elsewhere in the council. The proposal to locate the Communication Class at Fairoak is not likely to have any impact on staffing. Under this proposal the specialist staff in the Communication Class will transfer with the provision, to Fairoak.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The amalgamation of Kimberley Nursery School and Fairoak Nursery School into a single school, and the location of the Communication Class on the same site is unlikely to have a detrimental impact upon the overall educational provision. The educational standards are likely to be at least maintained.

The nursery provision within the Malpas and Bettws area, in which Kimberley Nursery and Fairoak Nursery Schools are situated, are all categorised as green by the local authority, with the exception Kimberley which is yellow. Estyn's most recent inspections of the schools evaluated performance of both as good across the board. Six of the other nine nursery providers in the Malpas and Bettws areas identified as potentially being indirectly affected by the proposal have received judgements of 'good' or better in all key inspection areas. The one school, which received an 'adequate' judgement for performance and standards has since been deemed to have made good progress in these areas by Estyn.