



**Formal Consultation Stage
of the Statutory Consultation process
In Respect of the
City of Newport
Nursery Reorganisation Programme**

Formal Consultation with all stakeholders

**Launched on Wednesday 20th February 2013 for one month until
Wednesday 20th March 2013**

SCHOOL PROFILES

As part of its 21st Century Schools Programme a Strategic Outline Plan was submitted to Welsh Government by Newport City Council which proposed that 10 of its primary schools shall be provided with their own nursery provision. In addition, 2 Roman Catholic primary schools shall be invited to host a community maintained (Council) nursery on their sites to assist in addressing the sufficiency of nursery places across the city.

At the same time, the Council working with the Headteacher and Chair of Don Close Nursery School have assessed that the circumstances are now appropriate to take a forward the proposal to close the stand-alone nursery situated on Don Close, Bettws. Nursery provision currently accessed at this location will be available for parents to access at two nursery units on the Bettws estate and at other schools in the locality.

Don Close Nursery – Education Standards

The latest Estyn inspection report on Don Close Nursery in January 2012 concluded that current performance and prospects for improvement are good.

Key areas highlighted include:

- nearly all children make good progress and achieve well in the seven areas of learning;
- children have a positive attitude towards school, are enthusiastic and motivated;
- there is a good range of activities and experiences across the seven areas of learning both indoors and outdoors;
- there are effective plans for the development of children's early literacy skills throughout the provision;

- staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Phase.
- the Foundation Phase has been implemented very effectively;
- the school's self-evaluation procedures cover all aspects of the school's work and are becoming an integral part of the improvement process;
- the arrangements for assessing outcomes are effective and contribute well to identifying strengths and areas for improvement; and
- the school works effectively with parents and other partners to improve the quality of its provision.

Estyn made a number of recommendations for the nursery, to be monitored by the Local Authority:

- R1: refine its planning procedures to identify clear learning intentions and plan for children with additional needs;
- R2: develop more robust processes for monitoring standards of teaching and learning;
- R3: develop better ways of making sure children know how well they are doing;
- R4: introduce more formal procedures for the performance management of staff; and
- R5: develop the governing body's role as a critical friend.

In the background, all schools are aware that Newport City Council has always been committed to a longer term plan to replace stand-alone nursery schools with attached mainstream nursery provision, to ensure a more cohesive system for children.

It is hoped that the best practice identified in the effective quality delivery of nursery provision in Don Close nursery school will be able to continue as a legacy ensuring a seamless transition for younger pupils into and through the mainstream schools of their choice.

FORMAL CONSULTATION STAGE

Community Maintained Nurseries – Community School Sites:

The 10 schools maintained by Newport City Council listed below have expressed an interest in hosting a nursery, in order to take forward that proposal the Council are obliged to formally consult on extending the age range of each school from 4 – 11 to 3 – 11. They have been grouped in relation to how swiftly the implementation date could occur allowing for the completion of the build project:

Group 1 – implementation date 1st January 2014:

Clytha Primary School

Marshfield Primary School

High Cross Primary School

Group 2 – implementation date 1st January 2014:

Millbrook Primary School

Monnow Primary School

Group 3 – implementation date 1st April 2014:

Langstone Primary School

Malpas Park Primary School

Glasllwch Primary School

Pentrepoeth Primary School

Mount Pleasant Primary School

It is essential that all stakeholders are consulted on a formal basis as part of the statutory consultation process, on whether to establish the nursery provision. Following the conclusion of that process, the final designs and plans for each new nursery can be completed.

Working in company with our Headteachers, it has been assumed that any new extension / internal alteration will need to provide the following minimum accommodation:

- 1) Teaching area equivalent to 2.7sqm per pupil attending the proposed nursery, this area to incorporate some fitted furniture containing a sink for wet play/art
- 2) Unisex toilets equivalent to 1 for every 10 child attending the nursery unit (approximately 6sqm). The toilets are to be provided either within or directly off the class base for ease of supervision.
- 3) Small cloak area adjacent to the entrance or external play area, this will not be a separate room but rather an area off the teaching area. The cloak area shall contain a coat rail with pegs for the number of children attending the nursery and a small length of bench/seating (the seating will not be provided continuously under the coat rail
- 4) Small store cupboard.

It is assumed that the nursery unit on each site will have access to facilities such as staffroom / staff toilets and accessible toilets within the main school building, along with facilities such as kitchens for the preparation of and cooking of cakes etc.

For some sites it has been determined that the proposed works may result in major disruption to the school. Due to the extent of the proposed works and the construction period that will be required to complete the works and its resultant impact on the day to day management of the school, consideration has been given to providing an alternative standalone facility that would have less impact on the school and may provide a better solution to the school needs. Each school will work alongside Council Officers in determining the most appropriate nursery setting for their school site.

Some schools require considerably more work than others and for that reason the implementation date is to be phased over the next academic year. With an April 2014 implementation date given to those 5 schools where purpose built or surplus accommodation is not present or available within the school site and that the grounds can accept considerable building work in order to provide nursery accommodation. This later implementation date is in recognition of the need to secure planning permission; preparation of tenders; letting of contracts and completion of the build programme on site.

Headteachers will be fully engaged in the process and the design of all facilities. The Council encourage consultation with pupils on all school reorganisation proposals including the proposals to introduce nurseries. Consultation with pupils is also recommended in the design of the facilities for their school. Headteachers are being invited to carry out that work with their pupils.

Community Maintained Nurseries – RC Primary School Sites:

Two of the six Roman Catholic Primary schools in Newport expressed an interest in hosting a Council or community maintained nursery on their site. As work will not be carried out the implementation date for both will be 1st January 2014:

St Patrick's RC Primary School
St Michael's RC Primary School

Nursery education is non-denominational and therefore the nursery school will be a Council maintained nursery but this proposal includes that the name of the school is adopted for reference purposes.

The Council encourage consultation with pupils on all school reorganisation proposals including the proposals to introduce nurseries.

School Organisation

Each school has declared they would wish to host the following number of pupils per session:

School	Number of Pupils per session
Clytha Primary School	16
Marshfield Primary School	16
High Cross Primary School	16
Millbrook Primary School	16
Monnow Primary School	30
Langstone Primary	16
Malpas Park Primary School	16
Glasllwch Primary School	16
Pentrepoeth Primary School	16
Mount Pleasant Primary School	16
St Patrick's RC Primary School	16
St Michael's RC Primary School	16

Admissions:

All children resident in Newport are entitled to a free part-time education place in the term after their third birthday. This place can be in a Council nursery school / class or in a registered education provider setting, which may be a playgroup or a private day nursery. Admission to nursery schools and classes is generally for a half-day session only, either for a morning or an afternoon session, 5 days per week.

Newport City Council is the admissions authority for all community-maintained schools, and undertakes its statutory obligations in accordance with Welsh Government legislation and the Council's published admissions policies.

Parents have the right to express a preference for their chosen school. In many cases this will be the catchment school for the area in which they live. Each request will be considered individually and complied with wherever possible. Some schools will however have more requests for places than there are spaces available. Where a school is oversubscribed, preference requests will still be considered, but the priorities set by the Council will be applied. In deciding which children to

admit to a school, the Council will apply its oversubscription criteria in order of priority.

Parents should be aware that attending a specific nursery class does not guarantee a place in the Reception year group at the same school, since there is an entirely separate application process under which there is no priority for those pupils currently attending the relevant nursery setting. Applications for entry into the Reception year group are made available in the Autumn term and are considered against a separate set of oversubscription criteria.

However, in the case of Roman Catholic schools, applications to the Reception year group at St Michael's RC Primary School and St Patrick's RC Primary School are dealt with by their Governing Bodies. Each of these schools has its own admissions policy, which is separate to that held by the Council in respect of community-maintained schools.

Forecast Pupil numbers:

School projections produced by the local authority indicate that whilst there has been a decline in pupil numbers in the schools across Wales over the last four years, the number of pupils requiring education at Schools across Newport is now increasing and is likely to remain relatively stable over the next five years.

For this reason the Council need to provide additional or sufficient numbers of nursery places within the right schools in the right places, to be further supported and to work alongside non-maintained settings.

Non maintained settings :

Newport City Council currently provides many funded nursery places to eligible aged children via Non-Maintained settings.

Non Maintained Settings are playgroups and private day nurseries that are registered with the Newport Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and have met specific criteria in order to become registered. They are inspected by ESTYN and are expected to provide a very high standard of education and childcare.

The Council is committed to retaining a mixed economy of pre-school provision and will rely upon the non-maintained sector to support the burgeoning population across the city in areas where it is not possible or practical to establish a school nursery or to expand current school based nursery provision.

In addition, the Private sector have extended opening hours and thus offer support to those parents who work and require childcare as well as education for their child.

It is a key factor of accessing nursery education, that parents can exercise their preference and need to have a choice of high quality, easily accessible provision.

For some families the school environment is suited to their needs, for other families there are other logistical circumstances and the extended opening hours and childcare arrangements within many private settings enable families to continue their day to day commitments.

The Council is keen to support schools working alongside the non-maintained sector in the provision of wrap around care models which may not be practical or achievable within the school environment.

Education Policy on School Reorganisation Proposals

Newport City Council has previously consulted with schools on Education matters and that there would be a move forward for all through Primary provision in Newport. This is because we believe there are benefits to the school in terms of management, economics of scale in delivering of the curriculum and other aspects. Indeed, more importantly, in ensuring a seamless transition for younger pupils through the school, Newport City Council has also always been committed to a long term plan to replace stand-alone nursery schools with attached mainstream nursery provision to ensure a more cohesive system.

It has previously been agreed that the moves described above would be gradual and each set of schools would be completed with no specific target and date.

Summary

Newport City Council is committed to:

- All through primary schools with sustainable rolls
- Long term plans for all through Primary schools throughout the city with on-site provision for nursery pupils through to the end of key stage two.
- Maximum public and professional consultation about reorganisations and amalgamations
- Long term plans to replace stand-alone nursery schools with attached mainstream units
- Supporting the staff and Governing Body of each school to ensure as smooth a transition as possible in each case.
- Consideration of longer term buildings plans and financial commitment for the appropriate redesign of school provision as required.

The Nursery Reorganisation Programme

For the City of Newport

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



When the reorganisation of schools is proposed, those affected may have many questions about the process. Some of the most frequently asked questions and some responses to them are outlined below. A copy of this document is available in Welsh on request from the Chief Education Officer, Newport City Council, Civic Centre, Newport NP20 4UR

- ***How will Parents gain admission to the nursery schools?***

Newport City Council is the admission authority for all nursery places to the schools within this proposal. Application forms should be returned to the Civic Centre, Newport. A separate admission application process is in place and will continue to gain entry to the Reception of any of the schools within this proposal.

- ***Why are only 2 Roman Catholic Schools hosting a Council nursery?***

St Patrick's and St Michael's are the only two Roman Catholic Schools that had available accommodation within their school sites with which to host a Council or community maintained nursery. As each of the other Roman Catholic schools determine available space, they too can be invited to host a Council or community maintained nursery.

- ***Why are they not called Roman Catholic nurseries?***

Nursery education is non-denominational, and therefore a nursery school cannot legally be established by the Roman Catholic primary schools. The Council is working alongside the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff who is in full agreement with the

principle of the 2 Roman Catholic schools hosting a Council or community maintained nursery school. The Council will ensure that all parents who wish their children to attend those nurseries are aware of the different admission policy to gain entry into Reception. The nursery will adopt the name of the school.

- ***Why is Newport City Council considering the future of Don Close Nursery***

Newport City Council has a policy of replacing stand-alone nurseries with attached mainstream units on school sites as and when the opportunity arises.

Providing children with the best possible education within existing resources is the most important reason to make any change to the education system.

The Foundation Phase is the statutory curriculum for all 3 to 7 years old children in Wales in both maintained and non-maintained settings. It encourages children to be creative, imaginative and to have fun and makes learning more enjoyable and more effective.

Children are given opportunities to explore the world around them and understand how things work by taking part in practical activities that are relevant to their developmental stage. They are challenged with open-ended questions and given opportunities to explore and share their ideas for solving problems.

The Foundation Phase is based on the principle that early years' provision should offer a sound foundation for future learning through a developmentally appropriate curriculum. It brings more consistency and continuity to children's education at such an all-important period in their development.

By providing nursery education on school sites, children can benefit from a continuous Foundation Phase experience enjoying the same surroundings and practices from the age of three onwards. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of pupils is better as they have greater period to build up a knowledge base on each of them.

Transition from Nursery to Reception can be further developed and enhanced to allay any fears and anxieties that pupils may have as they progress through the year groups.

Primary schools offer greater opportunities for staff development with teachers able to gain experience across the key stages, gaining a breadth of experience within the Foundation Phase.

Comparing pupils' work across the school gives teachers a greater understanding of standards expected and pupils aspire to achieve higher results.

Staff from Nursery and Reception phases can work more closely together, ensuring greater continuity and consistency for the children.

Governors can establish a shared vision for the education of the children from 3 – 11, unifying the work in the nursery, infant and junior phases.

Parents may prefer the wider age ranges in the school as it is likely that parents with more than one child will have them in the same school at some point.

There can be more whole school events reinforcing an all-through primary school ethos.

Pupils' expectations are raised when they can see what older pupils can do, e.g. in musical events, plays, and assemblies.

Relationships between teachers and parents are established that last over long periods of time. Parents get to know the school well.

- ***What is the role of Newport City Council in considering the future of the schools?***

The Council is responsible for deciding the overall pattern and quality of schools in Newport. It has to ensure that there are sufficient suitable places for Newport pupils in the total number of schools. It has to make the best use of the resources by making sure that money is not wasted by having too many surplus places. It is therefore critical to ensure the right school is in the right place

and the community have demonstrated there is a requirement for additional nursery places across the city.

- ***What about the non-maintained or private sector?***

It is a key factor of accessing nursery education, that parents can exercise their preference and need to have a choice of high quality, easily accessible provision. For some families the school environment is suited to their needs, for other families there are other logistical circumstances and the extended opening hours and day and childcare arrangements within many private settings enables families to continue their day to day commitments.

The Council is keen to support schools working alongside the non-maintained sector in the provision of wrap around care models which may not be practical or achievable within the school environment.

- ***What will happen to the staff at the Don Close Nursery school?***

Every member of staff will be provided with personal support. Their individual needs will differ and they will receive individual advice. The Governing Bodies of the primary schools who are establishing nurseries across the city will be making all appointments to a new staff structure with which to support an extended age range. All the nursery pupils will require a sufficient level of staffing which is not yet available within most schools.

- ***What will happen to the funding for Don Close Nursery School?***

The allocation of funding to all schools is by a formula agreed with Headteachers and is based largely on pupil numbers. As the pupils from the Don Close nursery may generally choose to transfer to one of the local primary school – nursery units, as anticipated, the funding will also be transferred.

- ***How can I make my opinion heard?***

- 1) You can write to:
Chief Education Officer
Newport City Council
Civic Centre
Newport
NP20 4UR

Your letter will be acknowledged and comments will be collated.

- 2) You should attend one or more of the meetings or drop-in sessions that will be advertised at your local school
- 3) The period of 'Formal Consultation' will commence:
Wednesday 20th February 2013
and will end:
Wednesday 20th March 2013.

Any and all questions and comments will be noted with responses provided within meetings or drop-in sessions by Officers representing Newport City Council. Minutes of formal meetings and questions and comments received during drop-in sessions will be published on the internet on the Council website:

- 4) You can e-mail your comments to:
newportnurseries.consultation@newport.gov.uk
Your e-mail will be acknowledged.

Finally, it is important that any comments or objections, questions and answers are shared in the public domain, for this reason personal letters, calls and emails will not receive a detailed response. Attendance at one of the meetings is to be encouraged to set your questions and receive answers in that forum. All minutes of meetings containing all points raised will be published on the internet on the Council website.