

Report

Cabinet Member for Education & Young People

Part 1

13th February 2013

Item No. 1

Subject **Nursery Education Provision on RC Primary sites**

Purpose To seek Cabinet Member approval to begin the Formal Consultation stage of the statutory consultation process to establish two community maintained nursery schools in Newport, on two Roman Catholic Primary school sites.

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Ward All

Summary This report details 2 Roman Catholic (RC) primary schools who have an age range of 4 – 11, this report proposes moving to Formal Consultation to establish a community maintained nursery on each site with effect from January 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Nursery education is non-denominational and for that reason two RC primary schools are seeking to host a nursery unit maintained by the Council on their school sites.

Admission to the Nursery would be under the Council admission policy, with admission into the Reception year group of the Primary School under the jurisdiction of the admission policy held by the RC Primary School Governors.

Proposal **To move to Formal Consultation to establish community maintained nursery schools on two RC Primary school sites.**

Action by Head of Education

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Chief Education Officer
- Strategic Director – People
- Headteacher and Chair of GB for each of the 2 schools named within this report
- Headteacher & Chair of Kimberley Nursery School
- RC Primary Heads Group
- Headteacher and Chair of Pillgwenlly Primary School

- Chair of the EYDCP
- Education Business Manager
- Early Years Business Manager
- Group Accountant
- Schools Resources Manager
- Education Human Resources Business Partner

Signed:

Background

The 21st Century Schools Strategic Outline Plan published in December 2010 and updated in November 2011 (available on the web site) detailed the vision for 3 – 11 education in Newport and how additional nursery places would be developed, so that primary schools would be able to support the 3 – 11 transition agenda. This work was further complemented by the National Implementation Plan for 3 – 16 Education launched in Autumn, 2012. All local authorities are considering the most appropriate actions to support the drive towards higher educational attainment at age 16, it is recognised that this work commences at age 3.

It is critical that all stakeholders working with 3 and 4 years olds in Newport have the opportunity to work together to unlock the potential of our children. This can be achieved by providing high quality provision for 3 and 4 year olds. Our schools identified in this report are looking forward to working alongside the non-maintained settings to share good practice and to balance the delivery of pre-school childcare facilities under a mixed economy, for parents to have a choice. That choice will be of the same high quality across Newport at all 3 and 4 year old locations and is being taken forward by the Early Years Business Manager in company with the Chair of the EYDCP and the Education Business Manager to ensure that all non-maintained settings have the opportunity to work alongside schools and to support the early years provision.

This report seeks to move to Formal Consultation on a proposal to establish community maintained nursery units within a Roman Catholic Primary School setting.

Roman Catholic Primary Schools

Nursery education is non-denominational and as such can only be delivered within a community maintained or non-maintained setting. With this in mind, and in consideration of the demand for nursery places across the city, the Council have consulted the Archdiocese of Cardiff.

The Council with the support of the Archdiocese of Cardiff now wish to take forward a proposal to establish community maintained nursery units within St Michael's RC Primary School and within the site of St Patrick's RC Primary School.

Admissions Policy

The nursery unit is a separate school entity to the primary school hosting the provision and as such, the admissions policy for the two community maintained nursery units will be that held by the Council, with all applications being administered by the School Admissions Team on behalf of Newport City Council.

Those parents who elect a preference for mainstream education following nursery education will be invited to apply to the schools as they hold the admissions policy for entry to the Roman Catholic primary school in Reception up to year group 6.

The closing date for admission to Nursery Schools in September 2013 is 1st March 2013. According to the WG legislation, parents must be afforded a period of at least six weeks in order to make their application. Thus the availability of the new Nursery Classes at St Michael's and St Patrick's must have been publicised by 18th January 2013 at the latest. For this reason it is suggested therefore that an implementation date of January 2014 is appropriate.

Details of both the Council Admission Policy for nursery intakes and that held by the RC Primary Schools for Reception intake will be detailed within all consultation documentation for this proposal.

School Profiles

Proposal	School Site	Current nursery / childcare provision within the locality	Proposal details
1	St Michael's RC Primary School	Pillgwenlly Primary School – nursery unit	It is proposed to establish a community maintained nursery unit within the school, as St Michael's RC Primary School have suitable surplus accommodation to host the nursery pupils. For two academic years, this school hosted the satellite overflow nursery for Pillgwenlly Primary School as a result of insufficient nursery places in the area.
2	St Patrick's RC Primary School	Private play group provider within a Pavilion building on the school site.(note the playgroup is registered to provide childcare only and does not currently receive pre-school funding for the education of 3 & 4 year olds)	It is proposed to establish a community maintained nursery unit within the school site, utilising the Pavilion for the delivery of St Patrick's nursery unit.

Nursery Specification

An exercise had been carried out with all primary Headteachers involved in the expansion of nursery education to develop a specification by the Headteachers for the Headteachers. This work had regard for the differing site and premises issues and the limited funding available. The two RC Primary School Headteachers joined that workshop and were able to note the development of nursery education alongside their own provision and where possible replicate some of the features.

The Design and Consultancy team for the Regeneration and Regulatory Service area noted the specification in drawing up preliminary costings and designs for each school. The detail will feature within each separate proposal consultation pack.

Funding Implications

The 21st Century Schools Strategic Outline Plan bid for funding for the community maintained schools only within Band A of the programme, which commences 2014, with the ability to bid to draw down early small sums in advance of the programme start date. The 21st Century paper was submitted followed consultation with the Archdiocese of Cardiff who are aware that the Council cannot support capital investment on the Roman Catholic primary school sites.

Financial Summary:

There are no financial implications in this report.

Risks:

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Failure to move to Formal Consultation	H	L	Adhering to the School Reorganisation Code and recommending full statutory consultation process for all school reorganisation proposals.	Head of Education

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

Welsh Government Statutory Code of Admissions, July 2009

21st Century Schools Strategic Outline Plan, December 2010 & November 2011

Options available

Option 1: to move to formal consultation to establish a community maintained nursery unit on each of the two RC Primary School sites.

Option 2: not to move to formal consultation on this proposal, but to continue to identify additional nursery places within the non-maintained sector and community maintained primary schools.

Preferred Option and Why

The preferred option is option 1, as this allows the implementation of the education vision for a 3 – 11 strategy to be extended to two RC primary school sites; provides additional sufficiency of nursery education places across the city; provides equity of education delivery within a community maintained setting; extends the choice for parents; eases the logistics of parents who have siblings within schools; enables the family to return to work by schools having more services on the one site; develops the professional learning communities on all school sites; facilitates The National Implementation Plan for 3 – 16 Education

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

The proposals with regard to the creation of additional nursery provision within Newport schools, will add additional costs to the Education service through its Schools accounts as Schools will need to be funded for additional pupils within their schools,. Additional resource can be found from the closure of the Don Close Nursery and transferring funding from central early years budgets, as there would be some pupils moving from independent providers into school settings. However, due to the expansion of WG Flying Start activity and the increasing birth rate within Newport it is anticipated that there will be additional pressures on the Education budget from 2014/2015. These will need to be quantified together with the anticipated savings, and any pressures built into the Education Medium Term Financial Plan for overall Council consideration in future years.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

In taking and implementing these decisions about providing 2 additional community maintained nursery schools on the sites of existing Roman Catholic voluntary aided schools, the Council must comply with the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the procedures set out in the Education (School Organisation Proposals)(Wales) Regulations 1999 (as amended). The Council will need to follow the prescribed statutory procedures for publicising and consulting on these proposals because they will involve extending the school range and lower age limits to establish nurseries at the existing Roman Catholic Schools. The Council also has to comply with Guidance issued by the Assembly, given that any proposals have to be approved by the Minister for Education if there are any unresolved objections. The key issues are in relation to education provision and the report sets out the relevant considerations in terms of the need for this additional nursery provision. Because nursery education is non-denominational, the nursery provision will need to be separately run by the LEA as a community maintained school, although the Schools' admissions policies will apply at primary school age. The Council is required to undertake a period of prior consultation with key stakeholders, including the Diocesan body, and consider the responses received before deciding whether or not to proceed with the publication of the relevant statutory notices and the formal consultation process. Both proposals will need to be the subject of separate publication and consultation.

Comments of Non Executive Members

None received

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Transformation

There are no staffing implications as a result of this report.

Local issues

Background Papers

None

Dated:

13 February 2013