



# **Newport City Council School Reorganisation Proposal Objection Report**

**Proposal to permanently remove the Learning Resource Base provision at  
Llanwern High School with effect from January 2018**

## **Background**

This report is published in line with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code July 2013 and includes a summary of the objections received against the statutory proposal and the Council's response to these objections.

## **Statutory Proposal**

The Council published a statutory proposal on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2017 until 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017 to permanently discontinue the Learning Resource Base (LRB) currently housed at Llanwern High School. A period of consultation was undertaken before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report, containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees and the Council's response is available on the Newport City Council website.

The LRB is currently empty, all pupils having moved to either alternative small group provisions in host schools or small nurture groups which are more suitable to their specific needs. The trained staff employed at host schools and the increased use of outreach support will enable schools to make best use of resources at a local level to support pupils through small group provision, interventions and support.

It was proposed to implement the proposal from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018.

The statutory proposal was published on the Newport City Council website and copies were displayed at all main entrances to Llanwern High School. The notice was also shared with all stakeholders as outlined in the statutory School Organisation Code, including pupils, staff and parents / carers of Llanwern High School and the parents of pupils currently attending the five cluster primary schools: Alway Primary, Eveswell Primary, Llanmartin Primary, Milton Primary and Ringland Primary.

## **Objections to the Proposal and the LA responses**

One objection was lodged during the statutory notice stage, and was received from a member of staff employed to work with the LRB at Llanwern High School. The objection was made on the following basis:

### *Re-establishment of provision*

Under this section, the individual referred to the changes that were previously made to the provision in 2014, the staff employed at the base and the training provided to them to meet the needs of the pupils.

### *Current Situation at Llanwern LRB*

Under this section, the individual outlined the operational arrangements in place over the course of the 2016/17 academic year, including the creation of a 'Nurturing Parents Group' and the establishment of new ways of working and initiatives to support challenging youngsters.

**LA Response:** These comments are factually correct. The Council acknowledges the previous success of the provision however, and as noted in the original consultation document, Newport City Council's Cabinet took the decision to withdraw the funding associated with the Learning Resource Base (LRB) provision currently at Llanwern High School as part of the budget determinations for the 2017/2018 financial year.

This decision supported the strategy that individual pupil needs could be better met at more inclusive Additional Learning Needs (ALN) settings within mainstream host schools, and also serves to reduce the significant operational running costs of the existing provision.

The LRB has been empty since the start of the 2017/18 academic year, pending a decision on permanent closure.

### *Some Concerns Regarding the Proposed Closure of the LRB*

Under this section, the individual outlined the reasons for placing a pupil in a LRB and outlined the disparity between the number of Key Stage 2 LRB places and Key Stage 3 LRB places across Newport's primary and secondary schools.

This section went on to give some specific details regarding the pupils who were asked to contribute to the learner voice and outlines the difficulties facing the staff who previously worked within the LRB along with their current positions within the school.

**LA Response:** As previously outlined in the consultation report, there is recognition that some pupils need specialist support but the LA feels that this can best be achieved via small group provision within a host school setting. This will enable extended integration and a more personalised learning pathway, and young people will have access to a high level of support within their mainstream setting including a broader access to a menu of interventions and interaction with positive role models.

Going forward, the emphasis will be on the provision of a nurturing environment to support individual needs throughout the school. The LA has provided extensive training to mainstream staff and there has been collaboration across the City involving staff members that operate small groups and Inclusion Centres in mainstream schools.

**School Response:** In terms of some of the specific comments outlined in this section, the Headteacher has confirmed that appropriate advice has been sought from the nominated Human Resources Business Partner at Newport City Council and this is being followed by the school.

In terms of current arrangements, all affected staff members have been moved to suitable alternative posts within the school environment as the governing body is keen to utilise the valuable skills that they can provide. It is not appropriate however to comment on these individual contexts within a public report.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that this proposal be moved forward to the final determination stage. Since an objection was received during the statutory proposal stage however, this decision will need to be taken by the Council's Cabinet acting as the Local Determination Panel. The internally agreed timetable of Cabinet meetings however means that this will not be referred for a decision until January 2018 and this in turn will affect the proposed implementation date of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018. The Cabinet will be asked therefore to modify the original proposal and approve implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.

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In accordance with the School Organisation Code (2013) this report is published electronically on Newport City Council's website at [www.newport.gov.uk](http://www.newport.gov.uk)

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