

To the parents, carers and guardians of pupils attending Tremains Primary School; headteacher, staff and governing body of Tremains Primary School, prescribed consultees

**Uned Cymorth Cyfarwyddiaeth Addysg a Chymorth i Deuluoedd (UCCACD)
Education and Family Support Directorate – Directorate Support Unit (EDSU)
Deialu uniongyrchol / Direct line: (01656) 643643**

Ein cyf / Our ref: Tremains Primary School
Eich cyf / Your ref: Tremains Primary School

Dyddiad / Date: 20 October 2022

Dear consultee

Proposal to open provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) establishing a learning resource centre (LRC) for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) at Tremains Primary School.

In line with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018 (the Code), a consultation exercise with prescribed consultees and other interested parties was undertaken from 6 January 2022 and 17 February 2022. The aim of the consultation was to inform consultees about the above proposal and solicit views.

On 14 June 2022, the outcome of the consultation was reported to Cabinet and a Consultation Report was subsequently published on the Council's website. The report provided an overview of feedback received during the consultation period and outlined the local authority's response to the issues raised.

Also on 14 June 2022, having considered the outcome of the consultation process, Cabinet gave approval to publish a statutory notice in respect of the proposal. The statutory notice was published on 30 June 2022 for 28 days and consultees were advised of its availability.

The Code provides that anyone wishing to make objections to a school organisation proposal could do so. To be considered as statutory objections, objections must be made in writing or by email and sent to the proposer before the end of 28 days, beginning with the day on which the notice was published ("the objection period"). The statutory notice closed on 27 July 2022. No objections were received in respect of the proposal.

On 18 October 2022, the outcome of the statutory notice was reported to Cabinet who determined to approve the proposal as published.

Hard copies and alternative formats of the cabinet report are available on request from:

Contact Officer: Education and Family Support Directorate Support Unit

Telephone: (01656) 643643

E-mail: edsu@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Bridgend County Borough Council, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend
CF31 4WB

The proposal will result in a LRC for pupils with ASD opening at Tremains Primary School. The LRC would be for a maximum of eight pupils. The LRC would be an integrated part of the mainstream school, providing an appropriate environment in which pupils can develop and thrive within their peer group and have normal access to mainstream curriculum, where appropriate. The LRC would provide specialist learning facilities within the school and provide expertise and advice to all staff. The proposal will come into effect in autumn term 2022

In determining the proposal, Cabinet was satisfied that the proposal will:

- provide an LRC at Tremains Primary School for a maximum of eight pupils with ASD to open in autumn term 2022;
- ensure a graduated intake in autumn term 2022 and the admissions for the LRC would be decided upon through an admissions' panel;
- support an integrated part of the mainstream school, providing an appropriate environment in which pupils can develop and thrive within their peer group and have normal access to mainstream curriculum, where appropriate; and
- provide specialist learning facilities within the school and provide expertise and advice to all staff.

The reasons for the decision in respect of the factors outlined in the Code are as follows:

Quality and standards in education

'It is Estyn's view that this proposal is likely to have a positive impact on the standard of education provision in the area. The council has provided a clear rationale for the proposal.'

Estyn states that the proposal considers appropriately current standards at the school and how it compares with similar schools and Wales averages. The proposal states that pupils with additional learning needs make good or better progress across the school.

Need for places and the impact in accessibility of schools

Local authorities across the United Kingdom are experiencing a rise in the demand for services for children and young people with ALN and the cost to support this is often exceeding budget. Anecdotal evidence from many local authorities suggests that not only are these needs becoming more numerous by volume, but also in their complexity.

Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has taken a proactive approach to this by commissioning an additional learning needs strategic planning provision review in 2020.

An Additional Learning Needs Strategic Planning Provision Review Board has been established. One of the areas which has been identified for additional provision is at Key Stage 2 for children with ASD. There is an identified need to open an additional LRC for children with ASD.

Adaptation works to Tremains Primary School funded through the Schools Maintenance capital grant has been made, which would afford the space required to open an ASD LRC for a maximum of eight pupils.

The projected level of enrolment has no expected level of significant fluctuation that would impact the proposal.

Pupils will be provided with free school transport in accordance with Bridgend County Borough Council's current Home-to-School/College Transport Policy. Free school transport is currently provided in the county borough for walking distances greater than 1.5 miles by available walking routes for nursery-aged pupils and for walking distances greater than 2 miles by available walking routes for primary pupils. Transport would be provided as in line with transport policy for pupils who attend an LRC.

The local authority is committed to taking forward plans to strategically grow the Welsh language and with effective strategic planning and significant investment, aims to significantly contribute to achieving Welsh Government's 'Cymraeg 2050' vision of one million Welsh speakers across Wales.

The local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) can be viewed via the following links:

<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/cy/fy-nghyngor/cydraddoldeb-ac-ymgysylltu/y-gymraeg/>

<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/equalities-and-engagement/welsh-language>

Resourcing of education and other financial implications

It is not expected that the opening of the ASD LRC will have an impact on other schools as the ASD LRCs within the alternative schools are at capacity.

It is important to recognise that the increase in places for an ASD LRC at Tremains Primary School is predominantly to address capacity issues in the English-medium ASD LRCs. Consequently, negative effects on Welsh-medium education in the area is not anticipated.

There is an ASD LRC located at a Welsh-medium primary school and an ASD LRC located at the Welsh-medium secondary school. There is capacity within these provisions.

The funding for the LRC would be allocated through the mainstream school's delegated budget, via the school's funding formula allocation, and using a combination of a class allocation and the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) element.

Other general factors

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out as part of the consultation stage. The assessment concluded that the proposal is unlikely to impact disproportionately on any protected group. The impact on age is positive, there will be growth for pupils with ASD to access support. Also, the impact on disability is positive, there will be growth for pupils with ASD.

A Community Impact Assessment was carried out as part of the consultation stage and was published as part of the consultation document. It is not considered likely that the proposal will impact disproportionately on any protected characteristics. There will be additional staff required for the ASD LRC as with the other ASD LRCs a specialist teacher and two learning support officers.

A Welsh Impact Assessment was carried out. It concluded that there would be no significant impact on the Welsh language provision currently experienced by learners at the school and that Welsh would continue to be taught through the curriculum as presently.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Iorwerth Harvey'.

Lindsay Iorwerth Harvey (Mr)
Corporate Director – Education and Family Support
Bridgend County Borough Council