

Wrexham County Borough Council

**Post Consultation Report
Proposal to establish a new
Welsh medium Primary School**

**Temporary Site at
Hafod y Wern - Nursery Building
Deva Way, Wrexham, LL13 9HD**

Subsequent Transfer to a Future Permanent Site

At

**Borras Park – Infant Building
Borras Park Road, Wrexham LL12 7TH**

Or a permanent location yet to be determined

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1. Introduction

Wrexham County Borough Council has recently completed a period of consultation in relation to the proposal to establish a new Welsh medium primary school. The consultation period began on 26 September 2017 and ended on 07 November 2017. This consultation was extended to engage with consultees further. The extended consultation period began on 18 December 2017 and ended on 30 January 2018.

The consultation has been carried out in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 which requires the School Organisation Code 2013 to be issued to and give guidance to relevant bodies (Local Authorities, Governing Bodies).

This document will set out the steps taken during the formal consultation period, refer to findings obtained during the consultation and will aim to answer and tackle queries that have been put to the Authority.

2. Publication of Consultation

The consultation began with the bilingual publication of the Consultation Document on 26 September 2017 on the Council's website. Links to the documents were emailed to the full list of consultees. The detail below sets out the list of recipients, as guided by the School Organisation Code (2013), who received a copy of, or were directed to the Consultation Document during the consultation period.

List of Consultees

- The proposed maintaining authority Wrexham Council Borough Council (Executive Board).
- Other local authorities, Flintshire County Council and Denbighshire County Council.
- The Governing Bodies of all Wrexham primary schools.
- The Governing Body of Ysgol Morgan Llwyd.
- The Governing Body of Hafod y Wern.
- The Governing Body of Borrass Park CP.
- The Governing Body of Ysgol Plas Coch
- The Governing Body of Ysgol Bodhyfryd
- Flying Start Health Team Based at Hafod y Wern.
- Parents (and where possible prospective parents) carers and guardians.
- The Welsh Ministers.
- Assembly Members: AM Llyr Gruffydd, AM Lesley Griffiths, AM Mark Isherwood, AM Ken Skates.
- Members of Parliament: MP Susan Jones, MP Ian Lucas.
- Estyn.
- Teaching and staff trade unions representing teachers and other staff.
- GwE.
- Wrexham Council's Transport Department.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner.

- Acton Park Community Council.
- The Children and Young People's Partnership and The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships.

Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by completing the consultation form provided or by emailing or writing to the Education Department. Responses could be submitted electronically or in hard copy paper format.

3. Consultation Meetings

As part of the consultation process, drop in sessions were held by Education Officers at Borrass Park CP, Ysgol Plas Coch and Ysgol Bro Alun. Parents were invited to attend the sessions some of which were well attended not only by parents but also the wider community of Borrass. The sessions held at both Ysgol Bro Alun and Ysgol Plas Coch received low attendance with less than 5 people in attendance at both sessions.

A further evening meeting was held for parents, residents and stakeholders, at Borrass Park CP on Wednesday 25 October 2017 at 5.30pm. This meeting was well attended with over 20 copies of the consultation document being taken. Local Authority Officers also met with the Governing Body of the school on the evening of 6 November 2017.

School	Stakeholder	Date	No. of Consultees
Ysgol Bro Alun	Parents and Community	25.10.17	5
Borrass Park CP	Parents and Community	19.10.17 25.10.17	16 Day 31 Evening
Ysgol Plas Coch	Parents and Community	23.10.17	4
Borrass Park CP	Governing Body	6.11.17	2 LA Officers Lead Member Full Governing Body

All attendees of the various drop-in sessions were advised to provide feedback to the consultation. It was explained that there are several ways in which this communication could be made. Attached to the consultation document is a proforma. This could be completed and returned to the address indicated. Contact could also be made via email or letter.

4. Consultation with Children

A bilingual children's version of the Consultation Document was published on Wrexham Council's website alongside the full Consultation Document.

During the consultation Local Authority Officers met with School Councils to discuss the proposals.

School	Stakeholder	Date	No. of Consultees
Ysgol Bro Alun	School Council	18.10.17	8 children
Borras Park CP	School Council	19.10.17	30 children
Ysgol Plas Coch	School Council	23.10.17	8 children

During the school council meetings, the children were asked if they had seen copies of the children's consultation document and officers explained what the consultation was about. The children were encouraged to ask any questions and share ideas that they may have.

The following feedback was recorded on the day and the children were also asked if they could send their ideas and opinions to Wrexham Council via the school co-ordinators.

Feedback from School Councils:

Ysgol Bro Alun School Council – 18.10.17

1. What about more children needing to go to Ysgol Morgan Llwyd when the children in the primary school are older?
2. How many teachers would the new school need?
3. How many children would be in the school?
4. Will we be able to find enough Welsh teachers for the new school?
5. Who will be the Headteacher?
6. What colour will the new uniform be?
7. Will the new school be in Borras?
8. What will happen to the temporary building? Could it be a shop or a house or another school?
9. What equipment will be in the new school?
10. The children might be worried about changing sites.

It was explained to the children that currently there are in fact surplus spaces at Ysgol Morgan Llwyd and we are already planning to further increase the size of the school to make room for more pupils.

The new school would need enough teachers for the number of classes at the school. This would start off with just a few members of staff and would increase as the size of the school increases. The children at Bro Alun had a good understanding of this process, as Bro Alun itself was established in this way.

It was also explained we would have to advertise for new teachers and a new Head teacher and this would be done once a decision had been made. The colour of the uniform would be decided by the new governing body of the school. We also explained that a decision had not yet been made and that is why we were holding the meeting to discuss the possibility and ask for the opinions and thoughts of the children. The children were happy that the new school would have all the equipment it would need to help the children to learn in a safe and warm environment.

Borras Park CP School Council – 19.10.17

1. Will we be sharing space with the Welsh school? (Such as the field).
2. Will we be going to the Welsh school for Welsh lessons?
3. Will you be building on the field?
4. Will we be in school having lessons during building?
5. When will this change start?
6. Why do we need to build a new school in Borras (traffic, parking problems)?
7. Why do we need a Welsh school?
8. Why is the empty Groves building not considered space for a Welsh primary & secondary school?
9. What will happen to the doctor's surgery?
10. Will we have to be mixed year groups because of less space (infants moving to the junior site)?

It was explained to the children that they will continue to have their own space but if the new Welsh school was located next to their school the Headteacher may decide to work together on some projects. However, this would not affect the amount of space they would have to enjoy recreational activities. The new facilities that would be provided would be as good as they have now and some would be an improvement on what they currently have. No decisions had yet been made on building works but we would talk to the children, again as more information was available for building, traffic, parking, the doctors surgery etc. The current Groves site was not being considered as we are unable to consider this site at this time. The children were assured they would not be placed in mixed year groups due to lack of space.

Feedback was given to the classes (as interpreted by the School Council children - a child's view), which led to other questions being raised.

The children thought the idea of a new Welsh school in Wrexham was a good idea but were still either unsure or against the site being in Borras.

Further questions (after feedback from school council or discussion with mums and dads):

1. When the junior site is being built upon, will the children have to move into mobile classes? If so, will these classes be sited on the school playground? Where will the children play as the field gets too muddy to play on, except on sunny days in the summer?
2. Will a new kitchen be built? Food is presently cooked at the infant site and transported to the junior site.
3. Will a new 2 storey hall be built as it is not large enough for infant and junior children combined for assemblies or cafeteria?
4. Will the school field remain wholly for Borrás (some parents believe that MacAlpine gifted the field to the school).
5. Wrexham.com reported that the Groves site is to be considered as a possible new school site - is the new Welsh school now going to go there?
6. Will the new Welsh school be more popular? Will pupil numbers drop in Borrás?
7. Will we get a larger playground as the entire infant school and junior school will now be using the same yard? (The large year 6 children will be knocking the reception children over if both are rushing around in a small space).

It was explained that no decisions have been made and are still being discussed, however it is likely that the children will stay in the infant site until works have been completed to create a new extension on the junior building. It was also explained that this work did not depend on the result of the new Welsh school consultation and this was a separate project to improve the learning environment at Borrás Park CP and to finalise the joining of the two schools.

Ysgol Plas Coch – 23.10.17

1. How many years is the school going to go up to?
2. How many teaching assistants will it have?
3. How many children will there be in each class?
4. If we did have a new school, where would it be?
5. On the playground will there be one playground for all the children or two separate playgrounds?
6. Will they have dinner ladies?
7. Who will be the Headteacher?
8. Will we need another Welsh secondary school?
9. Will the children have special book bags / water bottles with the logo on?
10. What shoes would they wear? Will the shoes be black?
11. Will the children know what lessons they're going to be doing or will they just be told on the day?

12. What will the name of the new school be?
13. Will there be a rule about putting your hair up?
14. What colour uniform will the children wear?
15. Will there be a pool and a tennis court?
16. I think it should be called Ysgol y Brenin (Kings School) – I just picked the name out of my mind.
17. It should have warm classrooms and big classrooms.
18. It should have lots of land.

It was explained to the children that no decisions had been made with regard to many of their questions on staffing, equipment, building works, uniform etc but the proposal is for the new school to eventually have 30 children per year in classes from nursery up to year 6. The children were told that we would also be very interested to hear any ideas which they may have regarding the setting up of a new school and would very much like them to be involved. The children were happy to offer their views and ideas for a new school.

During these meetings feedback from the children suggested they enjoyed being part of the consultation process. The children raised many questions and two of the three school councils voted in favour of the new Welsh medium school with a unanimous show of hands on the day.

5. Consultation Feedback

During the course of the consultation period Wrexham County Borough Council received 74 responses to the consultation document. The table below demonstrates the format of response used by stakeholders.

Format of Response	Number of Responses Received
Consultation Response Form	11
Email/Letter	63
Total Received	74

Responses were received from the following:

Parents	18
Residents of Borrás	18
Governing Bodies	4
School Councils	3 (a total of 46 children)
Councillors	3

Assembly Member	1
Menter Iaith	1
Headteacher	1
Estyn	1
Governor	1
RhAG (Parents for Welsh Medium Education)	1
Reverend / Church – 1	1
NASUWT Teaching Union	1
UCAC Cymru Union	1
MP	1
Unknown	18

All responses received are available to view in the Members' Library.

Band B of 21st Century Schools Programme

A number of the responses we have received during this consultation relate not to the consultation directly but rather to the announcement of the 21st Century Schools Programme for Band B in Wrexham. One of the schemes identified within the programme is an extension and refurbishment of the Borrás Juniors site, in order to co-locate the already amalgamated school.

Some concern was raised over the requirement of details on this development. Reassurance has been given that once the programme has received Welsh Government approval that the design team will begin a separate consultation with the school, Governing Body and wider community in the design development phase.

The proposed development has meant we have a building that will be excess to the current requirements of Borrás Community Primary on completion of the Band B project. This infant building is the proposed site for the location of the Welsh medium primary thus utilising the Education Estate as effectively as possible.

Any developments undertaken on school sites do take into consideration the improvement of facilities, including external spaces and on site traffic management wherever feasible.

6. Parent/Governor & Community Feedback

Themes from the responses have been collated and analysed as follows:

Theme	No of times occurred
In support of the proposal to establish a new Welsh medium primary school	31
Against the proposal to establish a new Welsh medium primary school	8
Not stated whether for or against the proposal to establish a new Welsh medium primary school	32
Concerns with proposed temporary site (Hafod y Wern Nursery)	9
Concerns with proposed permanent site (Borras Infants)	44
Concern about traffic / parking / safety / transport costs	44
Concern about lack of outdoor space	19
Concern about the impact on pupils	17
Community concerns	13
Concern about the GP Surgery in Borras	10
Concern about existing school facilities at Borras CP (e.g. Forest School)	12
Lack of information given / concern about timescales	12
Competition from new school	6
Reference to Groves site	12
Reference to younger siblings	5
Concern about staffing and leadership	7
Concern about future of Welsh medium secondary provision	11

Feedback from the consultation is summarised below:-

Copies of all responses are available for Members to review. It was noted by Officers however that many respondees were in fact responding to the proposed Band B of 21st Century schools programme for Borras Community Primary, and not the consultation proposal for a new Welsh medium primary itself.

In summary there have been comments raised regarding the following areas:

- **Traffic:** 44 Respondees

These related to the current issues raised at Borrás Community Primary regarding traffic levels and parking issues, and the possible exacerbation of this through an additional school on the site.

The current road has a 20mph speed limit, has a number of traffic calming measures (road humps, speed cushions and a single lane chicane) and double yellow lines.

In response: A traffic survey has been undertaken during a one week period (7 Nov 2017 to 14 Nov 2017). (appendices)

The findings of the survey suggest that traffic calming features are working well on Borrás Road and the average speeds support this as below the posted speed limit of 20mph in both directions.

The following is a summary of information gained during the survey:

- The Average Vehicle speeds at this location are
Vehicles travelling to Norfolk Road - 17.9mph
Vehicles travelling away from Norfolk Road – 17.0mph
- 85%ile Speeds at this location are
Vehicles travelling to Norfolk Road - 20.8mph
Vehicles travelling away from Norfolk Road - 20.1mph
- The average 24hr daily flow over a 5-day period (Mon-Fri) is 5470 vehicles/day
- The average 24hr daily flow over a 7-day period is 4890 vehicles/day

During the period of the survey approximately 18.7% of those vehicles recorded were travelling in excess of the posted 20mph speed limit.

Even though if this proposal proceeds there would be increased traffic, this would be mitigated as any development would include traffic and parking improvements on site. This will include additional structured parking and parent and taxi drop off road, which this school currently does not have. This should also mitigate current issues. Further, it is expected that the new school would reduce cross town travel as people will access the school closest to their home address thus travelling less.

Parking

Respondents were concerned that if the proposal proceeds there would be increased demand on parking around the site. In particular, there is a tendency for parents who pick up and drop off their pupils to park in and around streets adjacent to the school.

In response:

It is recognised that parking issues at pick up and drop off times are an issue around almost every school within the County Borough. However, new schemes funded through the 21st Century Schools programme have always considered this issue and aimed to mitigate the impact.

Should this proposal go ahead it is intended that a scheme is submitted for outline planning permission and officers would consult with the planning authority to ensure that a suitable solution is developed in order to minimise any impact caused.

Initial feasibility studies have been carried out by education officers and architects and the following mitigation measures have been developed.

- a) It is intended to stagger the start time of the Welsh medium school so that there is 15minute delay between the pick-up and drop-off times of the existing Borrass Park School.
- b) The new Welsh medium school would develop a walking bus scheme for the most local pupils. This is a scheme which has been successful at other schools in the borough.
- c) A development of an on-site pick and drop-off zone. This has been successful at other 21st Century Schools and allows for parents who do not wish to accompany their pupils into the schools, allowing them to safely drop off in an area which is then protected from further traffic.
- d) Increasing the number of parking spaces on site. Sketch schemes have been developed which demonstrate that up to **113** spaces can be accommodated within the curtilage of the school site, whilst still providing all of the required pupil facilities. The total staff requirement has been calculated at a generous maximum of **71**. Currently, the car park is left open during the day for surgery users, but this facility only has a lease agreement for two spaces. This however, should be reviewed and a safe entry system developed so that the surgery can allow access for disabled visitors. Suitable control of the parking area would allow the schools to mitigate on-street parking by allowing up to **42** surplus places to be used at pick-up and drop-off times.

- **Outdoor Space:** 19 Respondees

This is in relation to the 21st Century Band B bid recently submitted to Welsh Government on 31st July 2017.

In response: Reassurance has been given that the site size is sufficient to accommodate 2 schools using the Building Bulletin Guidance in respect of required facilities, including that of outdoor space. The site can accommodate a 420 capacity school, which is the current capacity of Borrass Community Primary and a further 210 capacity school as included within the consultation and bid.

- **GP Surgery:** 10 Respondees

In response: The Local Authority has limited control over where the Health Board locates their practices; there is a lease on the site currently to be used exclusively by health professionals.

- **Noise disruption and concern on the impact of pupils:** 17 Respondees

This for the most part relates to the possible impact of noise on the local residents and pupils during the 21st Century schools building phase and not this current consultation.

In response: Residents and staff have been reassured that some noise will be inevitable as with any building project, however where possible the impact will be limited and mitigation applied as necessary.

- **Objection to Welsh Language:** 2 Respondees

This related to any additional funding being made available for the expansion of the Welsh language in general in Wrexham.

In response: The Local Authority is responding positively to demand both in terms of numbers and that of demographic spread and has a published Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

- **Secondary Provision concerns:** 11 Respondees

These related to the increased number of pupils that will in turn access secondary provision within Wrexham.

These related to the increased number of pupils that will in turn access secondary provision within Wrexham.

In response: Ysgol Morgan Llwyd currently has surplus capacity as below:-

Capacity including 6th form* = 1143 | Surplus places = 412 (Number on Roll: 731)
36.05% whole school surplus capacity.

Capacity 7-11* = 965 | Surplus places = 342 (Number on roll: 623) **35.44% years 7-11 surplus capacity.**

*Based on January 2017 PLASC

Ysgol Morgan Llwyd is also undergoing an expansion within Band A of 21st Century schools programme in order to accommodate the forecasted increase in demand we are seeing.

- **Staffing and leadership:** 7 Respondees

In response: There is no current evidence that there are issues providing staffing for Welsh medium provision. It should be acknowledged however, that the challenges

facing the recruitment of teaching and support staff in Welsh medium provision will consequently increase with any future developments of provision, therefore regional and national planning will need to address this.

The recent Welsh Government review of the Teacher Training programme and review of Teachers' Professional Standards gives a timely opportunity to help address the issue on a national basis and to help ensure that future teaching professionals will be proficiently qualified in Welsh to be able to work in all schools in Wales in the future.

- **Initial Site Location** : 9 Respondees

These related to why we would use an initial site then move to another.

In response: The whole project is using effectively and efficiently Education estate. The use of the initial site allows us to increase the overall capacity within Welsh medium primary by September 2019. Should we wait until the Borrás project is fully approved and completed then the likely first increase in places would be delayed by two years to 2021 at the earliest, this could impact on current Welsh medium sites with an additional requirement to provide places beyond their published admission number possibly requiring a costly temporary solution such as mobiles.

- **School Admissions** : 5 Respondees

This related to nearest school and possible disadvantage to parents with siblings already in Welsh medium schools across the county.

In response: The Local Authority intends to use Borrás as the measure for the nearest school criteria when using the temporary site at Hafod y Wern, to ensure that those individuals from Caia Park are not disadvantaged and for whom Ysgol Bodhyfryd will remain the nearest school.

In Summary

Out of the **74** responses received throughout the consultation period, **31** of these have expressed support for the establishment of a new Welsh medium primary School. A further **32** responses did not state whether they were for or against the proposal for the establishment of a new Welsh medium primary and **8** expressed that they were against the proposal to establish a new Welsh medium primary school

Whilst a number of concerns have been raised regarding the creation of a Welsh medium primary school initially at Hafod y Wern and subsequently at the current Borrás site (subject to Band B 21st Century schools approval) these are factors that the Local Authority have carefully considered.

Currently there is no funding available to create a whole new provision elsewhere, Officers wish to make the most of the current opportunity to further capitalise on the proposed bid to extend and refurbish Borrás Community Primary, thus utilising our current Education estate as effectively and efficiently as is possible.

If it is decided not to proceed with the current proposal, then it is likely that given the increase in demand for Welsh medium that temporary accommodation would need to be provided on current school sites, for which there is currently no external funding available, and is at best a short term solution.

The LA believe that despite concerns raised outside this consultation that will be further addressed throughout the development of the 21st Century schools programme, that this proposal is the most effective use of resources available.

7. ESTYN Feedback

The feedback provided by ESTYN is prepared by answering set questions to ensure that the local Authority have taken into account all educational requirements within their proposals. In answer to the question 'Are the proposals likely to maintain or improve the standard of education provision in the area?' ESTYN commented as such:-

Estyn's response to the proposal to establish a new Welsh medium primary school

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.

Introduction

The consultation proposal is from Wrexham County Borough Council. To create a 210 pupil capacity school initially utilising the current Hafod y Wern Infant site. A permanent site within a fit for purpose school will be developed within a former school building at Borrás Infants. The proposal is to establish a new Welsh medium primary school. The proposer indicates that this new provision will be available from September 2019 for pupils of Nursery and Reception ages in the first instance.

Summary/Conclusion

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to maintain the current standards of education and provision in the area. The proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on any other schools or education providers in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposal contains an appropriate rationale and clearly defines the expected benefits. These include a strategic approach to increasing, in accordance with likely demand, the availability of Welsh medium places in Wrexham. However, details are thin in relation to important issues such as when the proposer plans to move from the interim site to the permanent site. The proposer does not clarify why the school needs to open at an interim site in the first instance.

The proposer has compared the benefits of the proposal with the status quo appropriately. Overall, Estyn agrees that the proposer's preferred option, option two, is the most suitable. This is because this option presents a more strategic approach to increasing capacity for Welsh language provision in the county. The proposal takes good account of the likely demand for Welsh language places in the coming years based on a balanced analysis of the evidence available.

The proposal provides suitable estimates of the cost per pupil for establishing the new school although these costs are based on the assumption that cohorts will be full from the school's start date. The proposal implies likely financial savings. For example, that by using existing disused school sites the proposer will avoid paying for mobile classrooms. The proposal also makes suitable suggestions for the use of existing assets, for example by recycling disused school sites. However, actual financial benefits, containing figures are unclear. The proposal does not contain any cost information for ensuring that the quality of the disused school sites is fit for purpose. This is important as one of the buildings is categorised as condition grade D at the time of the proposal. Although the site has previously housed foundation phase provision, there is no indication of its suitability at the current time.

The proposal evaluates fairly the implications for existing Welsh medium providers in the locality. However, it does not evaluate implications for any independent nurseries in the area.

The proposer identifies fairly the potential risks associated with the proposal, for example the risk that the proposal may not be able to go ahead if the proposer does not secure Welsh Government capital funding. The proposer identifies a suitable range of strategies to minimise risks as far as is possible at this stage. However, a few evaluations of risk are limited, for instance there is little information about safe walking routes for pupils and their families or of implications for families when the school moves sites to its permanent location. The proposal clarifies the local authority's position on providing transport to school in accordance with its overall transport policy. Estyn considers that the proposer has carried out a fair community impact assessment. This assessment suggests that there will be very little, if any negative impact on community services.

The proposal is thorough in its use of data with regard to past, present and future pupil numbers in all schools affected by this re-organisation. The proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on Welsh medium education.

The local authority identifies that the proposed arrangements are not likely to have any impact on provision for pupils with special educational needs or those who are new to the English language. The proposal states that the school would not include SEN provision. For the purposes of this response, Estyn is assuming that the proposer is referring to specialist resources bases, as it is highly likely that the school will need to provide for pupils with special education needs at some level. The impact assessment refers appropriately to the potential impact of this proposal on vulnerable groups. There is little information to suggest that the proposal would impact negatively on the pupil standards. There are six other Welsh medium primary schools in Wrexham. One of these is relatively new and has not yet been inspected. Four were inspected more than three years ago meaning that Estyn's intelligence with regard to leadership, standards and provision in these schools isn't current. The remaining school was inspected in 2014. At that time, the school's leadership was adequate, provision and standards were good.

The proposal identifies appropriately the arrangements for admission to the new school. These will follow county policy.

8. Executive Board Decision

Wrexham County Borough Council Executive Board will meet on **10 April 2018** to discuss the consultation for the proposal to establish a new Welsh medium Primary School.

The Executive Board will be asked for approval to continue to the Statutory Notice for determining the establishment of a new Welsh Medium Primary. This consists of a 28 day formal Objection Period whereby any objections to the proposal must be made in writing. Following this the Local Authority will return to the Executive Board to determine the final decision.