

December 4th, 2018

Dear Parent / Carer,

As part of the Local Authority proposals to reorganise schools in our area of Pontypridd, I would like to present to you a formal response from Pontypridd High as part of the consultation process. On behalf of the Governors, staff and students, I trust you will support us by expressing similar views in your own written response before the end of January, 2019. I have included a brief summary of the School position and also a more detailed justification of our thoughts on the three proposals. The three proposals which could impact on Pontypridd High are:

1. To remove the Sixth Form provision from Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Cardinal Newman and develop Post-16 'centres of excellence' based at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School and Coleg y Cymoedd. **We do not accept this proposal**
2. Create a new 3-16 school on the site of Pontypridd High. **We accept this proposal if the Sixth Form proposal above can be agreed**
3. Amend the catchment areas of Pontypridd High. **We accept this proposal.**

We have worked very closely with Hawthorn High School in forming our responses and together we strongly challenge the arguments put forward by the Local Authority in an attempt to justify Cabinet thinking about Sixth Form provision in Pontypridd. **We are asking the LA to give further consideration to sixth form reorganisation by identifying an appropriate and suitable location in Pontypridd for a Pontypridd Sixth Form using 21st Century funding. This should be one which:**

- can be led and managed predominantly by staff working in our Schools
- is accountable to the LA for standards achieved
- meets the aspirations of students and makes use of facilities and future investment planned for this important and well serviced central location within RCT

The time has now come to present our views clearly to the Local Authority and I trust you can find the time to read the attached summary and the more detailed information guide on the school website. Please use this to inform your own opinion and complete a response to the consultation process by January 31st, 2019.

The consultation proforma that you can use is also attached. I am sure that through our responses we will make a strong case for a 21st Century sixth form education provision in Pontypridd that our children are entitled to and which gives them the opportunity to meet aspirations and enjoy a successful future.

Please contact me at school should you wish to discuss any of the information included or if you require further advice on completing the consultation response document.

As always thank you for your continued support.



Huw Cripps
Headteacher

It is important to state that any comments about Bryncelynnog CS or Coleg y Cymoedd are only made in reference to information available. It is in no way our intention to criticise the work of other schools/colleges, but rather to question and challenge the LA analysis and interpretation of this information as portrayed in the Council's consultation document and the contextual report to members.

Proposal 1 – To remove the Sixth Form provision from Pontypridd High, Hawthorn High and Cardinal Newman and develop Post-16 'centres of excellence' based at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive School and Coleg y Cymoedd

We do not accept this proposal because:

- Previous attempts at linking our Sixth Form with Bryncelynnog have not materialised because of the distance between the two schools and areas students travel from
- Students have expressed clearly that they will not want to travel to a BCS sixth form
- Standards at GCSE and A Level in Pontypridd High School are at a much higher standard than the consultation document suggests
- The Estyn report of 2017 would suggest that CyC is no better placed than the present Pontypridd Sixth Form partnership to become a Centre of Excellence.
- Present partnership working within the Pontypridd Sixth Form enables a broad subject choice to be offered and class sizes to be higher than the consultation document suggests
- Pontypridd is an important central place in RCT and a university town which should have a Sixth Form provision
- Equity of provision for our students is at the heart of Welsh Government policy for young people in Wales and the lack of a Sixth Form in Pontypridd town does not support this national priority.

Proposal 2 – Create a new 3-16 schools on the site of Pontypridd High.

In principle we accept this proposal because;

- We understand the benefits to both students and staff of access to improved facilities and the progression that can be made through such learning experiences
- Good practise can be gained from 3-16 schools elsewhere in RCT
- If an acceptable Sixth Form option is agreed then the 3-16 proposal could be accepted.

Proposal 3 – Amend the catchment area of Pontypridd High.

We accept this proposal because:

- We have discussed a resolution to the historical problems of our catchment area caused by the relocation of both PHS and HHS for a number of years
- It will help to support better progression and transition into Year 7

We ask that the Local Authority gives further consideration to this aspect of reorganisation by identifying an appropriate and suitable location in Pontypridd for a Pontypridd Sixth Form using 21st Century funding. One which:

- can be led and managed by staff working in our Schools
- is accountable to the LA
- meets the aspirations of all students and makes use of facilities and future investment planned for this important and well serviced central location within RCT