



CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Review of Secondary School catchment
areas in Monmouthshire

Consultation period:

18th January 2019 to 1st March 2019

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1. Introduction

This consultation document is an opportunity for consultees and other interested parties to learn about some proposed changes to secondary school catchment areas within the County of Monmouthshire. The proposed changes form part of the review of the School admission arrangements that are proposed to be implemented for the 2020/21 academic year.

The consultation provides you with an opportunity to ask questions, make comments, and share your views on the proposals put forward. Your input into this consultation will be considered carefully when the Council considers whether the proposals should be taken forward to implementation.

Please note that the information contained within this document should be considered in conjunction with the draft school admission policy 2020/21, which is available to view / download at www.monmouthshire.gov.uk

2. Your views matter

Your views on the proposed changes to secondary school catchment areas are important to us. We really do want you to engage in this consultation and tell us what you think of the proposals, particularly if they may affect you or your children.

Important: This consultation will not make any assumptions, so whether you are for or against the proposed changes, please take this opportunity to have your say

You can tell us what you think by:

- 1) Attending one of the consultation sessions:

Review Area	Date	Venue
Goytre and surrounding areas	5 th February 2019 at 6pm	Goytre Fawr Primary School
Trellech and surrounding area	12 th February 2019 at 6pm	Trellech Primary School
Llandogo and surrounding area	18 th February 2019 at 6pm	Llandogo Primary School
Usk and surrounding area	20 th February 2019 at 6pm	Usk Church in Wales Primary School
All areas day time drop in session	14 th February 2019 9.30am to 11.30am	County Hall, Usk

- 2) Completing the online response form available via www.monmouthshire.gov.uk or

- 3) Contacting the Access Unit on 01633 644508, by emailing accesstolearning@monmouthshire.gov.uk or by post to @innovation House, Wales 1, Caldicot, NP26 9AN

Please note that the deadline for responses to this consultation is 1st March 2019 at 5pm. Any responses received by the local authority after this closing date will not be considered as part of this consultation.

3. Consultation requirements

The School Admissions Code Wales (July 2013), Local Authorities must consult on the admission arrangements for those schools for which it is the admissions authority. Where changes to existing arrangements are proposed, including school catchment areas, consultation must be undertaken with those likely to be affected by the proposals.

The Council is required to undertake this consultation by 1st March 2019 and determine the outcome of the proposals by 15th April 2019 should it wish to implement the proposals for September 2020 onwards.

4. Consultation with children and young people

The views of children and young people are extremely important to the Council and therefore children and young people will be provided with opportunities to contribute to this consultation process. The Council will engage with children and young people considered to be affected by these proposals and ensure that their views are captured and considered in any reports that determine our way forward.

5. Consultation arrangements - Key Dates

Consultation stage	
Task	Key Dates
Consultation commences	18 th January 2019
Consultation ends (6 weeks)	1 st March 2019

Consideration stage	
Task	Key Dates
Consultation report published by	27 th March 2019
Cabinet consider results of consultation and agree on how to proceed	3 rd April 2019

Implementation stage
September 2020

6. How will your views be considered

The Council will develop a consultation report incorporating all of the responses received from consultees by the consultation closing date. The consultation report will be made available for all consultees to view.

It is this consultation report that will be considered by the County Council's Cabinet informing a decision on whether any of the proposals should be implemented. So if you have a view, whether you support the proposals or not, please share them with us prior to the closing date.

Alongside your views, the Cabinet will consider the financial implications of the proposals prior to making a decision on whether they should be implemented. However, at this stage of the consultation we want to know what you think.

7. Background to the review of school catchment areas

The majority of catchment areas within Monmouthshire have been in place in their current form since the reorganisation of local government in 1996, and it is thought that they have been in place for many years prior to this. In many cases the catchment areas do not seem to follow a specific rationale, they are not in all cases based on nearest school and they do not in all cases follow transition arrangements. Some primary school catchment areas also show trends of regular overpopulation.

A review of School Catchment Areas was last undertaken in 2015. The local authority entered into a formal consultation to seek views on the proposed changes to secondary school catchment areas, however, the significance of the proposed

changes led to a Cabinet decision to re-engage in a more intensive consultation with the Monmouthshire community prior to implementing any changes.

In February 2018, the Council adopted a new corporate plan that sets out the 22 priorities to be completed by 2022. A review of school catchment areas has been identified within the corporate plan as one of the priorities to be revisited.

This consultation document starts this review with a particular focus on Secondary School catchment areas, with a review of Primary School catchment areas to follow.

8. Current provision across Monmouthshire

Secondary Schools

The County of Monmouthshire is geographically comprised of four in county Secondary School catchment areas serving in the region of 4644 children and young people from years 7 to 13. Our Secondary school estate consists of:

- King Henry VIII Comprehensive School in the Northwest
- Monmouth Comprehensive School in the Northeast
- Chepstow School in the East
- Caldicot School in the Southeast

Some areas of Monmouthshire also fall within a catchment area for a school that falls outside of the County border:

- Caerleon Comprehensive School in the Southwest

A map detailing the Secondary School catchment areas can be found under appendix 1.

Primary Schools

The Primary School estate is comprised of 30 Primary Schools supporting around 6315 children and young people. The structure of our Primary school estate includes:

- Two Welsh Medium Primary Schools, one located in the North and one located in the South of the County.
- Two Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic Primary Schools, one located in the North and one located in the South of the County.
- Two Voluntary Aided Church in Wales Primary Schools, both located in the South of the County.
- Four Voluntary Controlled Church in Wales Primary schools, three located in the North of the County and 1 located in central Monmouthshire.

A full list of Monmouthshire Primary Schools can be found under appendix 2

Each of the above Primary Schools offers its own designated catchment area, with the exception of our two Roman Catholic Primary Schools. It is understood that St Marys VA RC Primary serves the South of the County, whilst Our Lady and St Michaels RC Primary School serves the North of the County. However, these arrangements are not formally supported through designated catchment areas.

9. Why do we have School Catchment Areas?

The catchment area of a school is significant for the following reasons:

- School catchment areas are in place to help support the assessment and determination of school places. Children and Young People that reside within the catchment area for a designated school currently receive a priority for school places in the event that the preferred school is oversubscribed.
- Whilst parents are not obliged to apply for their children to attend their designated catchment school, having catchment areas is useful as a guide for parents to understand which school generally serves their immediate community.
- Catchment areas play a key part in ensuring adequate provision of school places within a designated area.
- Catchment areas are linked to the entitlement to free home to school transport in line with the County Council's current Home to School Transport Policy. If a pupil attends their catchment on nearest available school and lives over 2 miles from that school (Secondary) or 1.5 miles (Primary), they are entitled to free transport.

Under the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 Local Authorities have a Statutory Duty to provide transport to the nearest suitable school, if over 2 miles for primary and 3 miles for Secondary.

10. Aims of the catchment area review

The majority of catchment areas across the county have been in place for a significant amount of time and lack rationale and reasoning. The review thus far has identified the following overarching aims when reviewing primary and secondary school catchment areas:

- To address the current position whereby some areas of the County do not fall within the catchment area for a Monmouthshire school.

- Where possible, to align Primary and Secondary School catchment areas to support transitional arrangements.
- Where possible, to address areas whereby the catchment school is not necessarily the nearest school.
- To seek to address any imbalances within existing school catchment areas to ensure robust arrangements for the planning for school places.
- To review school catchment areas through the ongoing development of school reorganisation proposals.

Whilst the above form the council's overarching aims for this catchment area review, it's recognised that they cannot be applied in all cases due to the geography and rurality of our County.

11. Transitional Arrangements

Section 198 of the Education Act 2002 imposes a requirement upon the Governing Bodies of maintained Secondary schools and Primary schools to collaboratively draw up Transition Plans. A Primary school is only formally linked to the Secondary school that receives the majority of its year 6 leavers.

There are certain points of transition when the learning progress of pupils is more likely to dip. Transition from the Primary to the Secondary phase in school is a particularly vulnerable stage. For many young people, the move often leads to a downturn in achievement. As part of the effort to help smooth this transition, strong partnerships have been developed between Secondary schools and their feeder cluster Primary schools

12. Secondary School Catchments - Identified issues

A review of secondary school catchment areas has been agreed to be the Council's first stage of a countywide review of school catchment areas that will take place between now and 2022. In line with our overarching aims that underpin this review, our secondary school catchment areas present the following challenges:

- Some areas within the Monmouthshire County do not fall within the catchment area for one of our four secondary schools.
- There are Primary School catchment areas that do not align in their entirety with the catchment area for the feeding secondary school.
- Some areas have been identified as being within a Secondary School catchment area which is not their closest Monmouthshire School.

At this stage of the review, the Council has identified four main areas of the County to be reviewed as part of this consultation, and now seeks your input on some of the suggestions that have been put forward.

As a reminder, this consultation is the start of the ongoing review of school catchment areas. The Council will further engage with identified areas as it seeks to bring forward further proposals.

13. Areas considered under this review

Review area 1 – Village of Goytre and immediate surrounding areas

Review area 2 – Town of Usk and immediate surrounding areas

Review area 3 – Village of Trellech and immediate surrounding areas

Review area 4 – Village of Llandogo and immediate surrounding areas

14. Finance

The aims of this stage of the catchment area review are not financially driven. However, a full cost analysis looking at the financial impacts of each proposal will be undertaken alongside this consultation, paying particular attention to the impact on the Monmouthshire schools affected by these proposals, as well as the impact on home to school transport costs.

A full cost analysis will be presented to the Council's Cabinet alongside the views received as part of this consultation, to determine whether or not proposals should be implemented.

Appendix 2 - List of Primary Schools

CLUSTER	SCHOOL
Caldicot	Archbishop Rowan Williams CIW Primary
Caldicot	Castle Park Primary
Abergavenny	Cantref Primary
Monmouth	Cross Ash Primary
Abergavenny	Deri View Primary
Caldicot	Destow Primary
Caldicot	Durand Primary
Abergavenny	Gilwern Primary
Abergavenny	Goytre Fawr Primary
Monmouth	Kymin View Primary
Monmouth	Llandogo Primary
Abergavenny	Llanfoist Fawr Primary
Abergavenny	Llantilio Pertholey CIW Primary
Abergavenny	Llanvihangel Crucorney Primary
Caldicot	Magor CIW Primary
Monmouth	Osbaston CIW School
Abergavenny	Our Lady & St Michaels RC Primary
Monmouth	Overmonnow Primary
Chepstow	Pembroke Primary
Monmouth	Raglan CIW VC Primary
Caldicot	Rogiet Primary
Chepstow	Shirenewton Primary
Chesptow	St Mary's RC Primary
Chesptow	The Dell Primary
Chepstow	Thornwell Primary
Monmouth	Trellech Primary
Caldicot	Undy Primary
Monmouth	Usk CIW Primary
Abergavenny	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni
Caldicot	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin

Appendix 3 - List of Consultees

The governing body of the relevant schools

- Governing bodies of All secondary schools in Monmouthshire
 - Caldicot School
 - Chepstow School
 - King Henry VIII Comprehensive School
 - Monmouth Comprehensive School
- Governing bodies of any other secondary schools affected by the proposals:
 - Caerleon Comprehensive School
- Governing bodies of Primary Schools affected by the proposals:
 - Llandogo Primary School
 - Trellech Primary School
 - Goytre Fawr Primary School
 - Usk Church in Wales Primary School

Neighboring Local Authorities affected by the proposals

- Newport City Council
- Gloucestershire County Council
- Herefordshire County Council

Parents of Children Likely to be affected

- Monmouthshire Parents of pupils living in the affected areas with children on roll in Nursery to Year 5

Other key parties

- Members of the School Admission Forum
- County Councillors
- Ward Members for the affected areas

