



monmouthshire  
sir fynwy

# CONSULTATION REPORT

Federation of the Governing Bodies of  
Kymin View and Llandogo Primary Schools.

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## 1. Introduction

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The Local Authority (LA) wishes to promote collaboration between schools as part of its school reorganisation programme and to improve outcomes. School federation is a more formal way of extending collaboration and promoting closer working relationships and is the principal initiative for achieving formal partnership working amongst schools thus helping to improve performance and narrow the attainment gap.

The Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2014 revoke and replace the 2010 Federation Regulations and additionally provides LAs with a mechanism to federate schools.

The 2014 Federation Regulations set out how the governing bodies of between two and six maintained schools can federate. In addition, they set out how LAs can federate schools. The regulations prescribe how federation may be proposed, established, constituted and how one or all schools may leave it.

Monmouthshire County Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient and suitable school places for children within its County, and in doing so ensure that resources and facilities are efficiently utilised to deliver the education opportunities that our children deserve.

The purpose of the consultation was:

### **To federate the Governing Bodies of Kymin View Primary School with Llandogo Primary School.**

This consultation report now represents the council's responsibilities in line with the Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2014 to produce a report outlining the date of the publication of the proposal, the date of return of responses, the length of the period for stakeholders to submit a response and a summary of the responses.

## **2. Distribution of the Consultation Report**

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The Consultation report was distributed to the following:

- Parents/ carers of pupils attending Kymin View and Llandogo Primary Schools
- All staff employed at Kymin View and Llandogo Primary Schools
- Governing Bodies of Kymin View and Llandogo Primary Schools
- Trade Unions for Teaching and Support Staff
- All County Councillors in Monmouthshire
- Headteachers Monmouth Cluster
- Chair of Monmouthshire Association of School Governors
- Welsh Government

## **3. Background to the proposal to federate Kymin View and Llandogo School Governing Bodies**

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The Education (Small Schools) (Wales) Order 2014 defines a small school as one that contains fewer than 91 registered pupils. Llandogo Primary School is by definition a small school and currently has 83 pupils on roll.

As of the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020, Llandogo Primary School did not have a Headteacher or a Deputy Headteacher to act up until a new a new Head could be appointed. It is widely known that Headteacher recruitment is currently challenging and finding a Headteacher for a small school such as Llandogo would be particularly difficult. Therefore, in the short term the Governing Body of Llandogo School in conjunction with the Local Authority looked to appoint an Executive Headteacher from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020 and for the academic year 2020/21.

In May 2020, the Governing Body of Kymin View Primary School agreed to release their Headteacher to undertake the role of Executive Headteacher of Kymin View Primary School and Llandogo Primary School for the academic year 2020/21. In addition to this, there was an agreement to commence the process to federate the two Governing Bodies from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2020.

Both schools have similar aims, values and ethos, which make them ideal for federation.

### **Kymin View Primary School**

Situated in one of the most beautiful parts of the Wye Valley, in the community of Wyesham, Kymin View Primary School was opened in September 2007.

The School values every individual and promotes the highest standards of achievement by all pupils regardless of ability, religion, ethnic origin or gender. All children are encouraged to think for themselves, placing emphasis on problem solving, decision making and becoming independent learners.

The Schools mission statement is that ‘Today matters for tomorrow’s successes. The school will provide a learning environment where potential is maximised. It will nurture confident individuals who value themselves and provide each child with the opportunity to develop socially as well as academically.

The School’s mission is that all members of the school community “Achieve to Grow” and to enable this mission to be realised the school values, nurtures and motivates all members of its community.

### **Llandogo Primary School**

Llandogo School is a Community Primary School situated in the heart of the Wye Valley, one of the most picturesque places in Great Britain. The School caters for children from the ages of 4 to 11.

At Llandogo School, in conjunction with the parents, the staff and Governing Body strive to offer all pupils a broad, balanced, creative education regardless of their ability, gender, race, culture, or religion. All learners are given equal opportunities to develop their basic skills of literacy and numeracy along with skills in thinking, information communication technology and personal and social education, thus enabling them to access the wider world of learning.

The school is at the centre of the community and ensures it remains at the heart of the community by fostering links with local people and organisations.

Kymin View is a self-improving school that has secured a strong position in the wider schooling system in Monmouthshire. Llandogo is an improving school and has made suitable progress over the past two years. Both schools are stable.

The following information provides the comparative performance of the two schools in 2018. Welsh Government changes to reporting regulations from 2019 mean that the Local Authority is unable to provide performance outcomes for individual schools from 2019 onwards\*.

#### **Foundation Phase Indicator O5+**

	2018	2019*	2020*
Kymin View	91.7%	NA	NA
Llandogo	100%	NA	NA

#### **Foundation Phase O6+**

	2018	2019*	2020*
Kymin View	37.5%	NA	NA
Llandogo	20.0%	NA	NA

### **Key Stage 2 Core Subject Indicator L4+**

	2018	2019*	2020*
Kymin View	96.7%	NA	NA
Llandogo	90.0%	NA	NA

### **Key Stage 2 Core Subject Indicator L5+**

	2018	2019*	2020*
Kymin View	37.9%	NA	NA
Llandogo	20.0%	NA	NA

Kymin View Primary School has a surplus budget, and is projected to continue this surplus position into the next academic year.

Llandogo Primary School has a deficit budget. The school has prepared a budget recovery plan, agreed by the governing body, which will see the school return to a surplus budget in 2023/24. .

Numbers on roll projected to decline at both schools over the next 5 years.

School	Jan 2020	Jan 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2023	Jan 2024	Jan 2025
Kymin View	164	162	151	151	143	137
Llandogo	79	84	75	70	57	54

The proposed Instrument of Government for the Governing Body of Kymin View and Llandogo Primary Schools are attached at Appendix 1.

## **4. A reminder of our proposal**

The proposal is formally federate the Governing Bodies of Kymin View Primary School and Llandogo Primary Schools.

It is proposed an Executive Headteacher will head up the Federation should it go ahead.

Currently following the resignation of the Headteacher of Llandogo Primary School in 2020 there has been a 'soft' federation in place and the Headteacher at Kymin View Primary School is currently Executive Headteacher of both schools.

## 5. Consultation Arrangements

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### Methodology

Consultees listed above in Section 2 were provided with a copy of the consultation document in readiness for the consultation to commence on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

Consultees were advised of the following opportunities to respond to the consultation proposals:

- In writing using the pro forma at Appendix 5 to Sharon Randall-Smith, Monmouthshire County Council, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk. NP15 1GA
- By Email [strategicreview@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:strategicreview@monmouthshire.gov.uk)
- By attending a consultation meeting

The consultation closed on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2021

### Consultation Meetings

As part of the consultation process, the Council held consultation sessions, which were open to staff, governors, parents, Trade Unions, and members of the community to ensure engagement with all interested parties who may wish to learn about the proposal. Lockdown restrictions meant that consultation sessions were held virtually rather than face to face. At the same time, schools were closed to pupils and this meant that the local authority was unable to consult with the school council.

Kymin View Primary School	12 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
Llandogo Primary School	14 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
Staff and Trade Unions Kymin View	20 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
Staff and Trade Unions Kymin View	21 <sup>st</sup> January 2021

Senior officers of the Councils' Directorate attended all of the consultation meetings for Children and Young People. The consultation meetings provided interested parties with an opportunity to learn more about the proposals and ask any questions / raise any concerns.

Officers in attendance at the consultation meetings provided reassurance that any comments / concerns raised were recorded and fed into the consultation outcomes. Consultees were also encouraged to submit their formal responses through one of the preferred available methods.

The comments raised and key themes of concern raised during the consultation meetings have been summarised and included as part of the overall responses received in section 6 of this document.

## 6 Results and Comments

The Council has received a number of responses to the consultation exercise. A broad profile of the respondents are outlined in the table below

	<b>Total</b>
<b>Parents</b>	2
<b>Staff</b>	8
<b>Governors / Governing body</b>	2
<b>Trade Unions</b>	1 letter
<b>Other organisations</b>	0
<b>Total</b>	13

The below table shows a summary of the comments / concerns raised during the consultation period together with the Council's responses. The comments / concerns have been drawn and summarised from any written responses received together with the feedback given during the consultation meetings.

<b>Question/Comment</b>	<b>Council Response</b>
Given the MCC budget predicament, is this a formality and are key stakeholders wasting their time with this box ticking exercise?	Llandogo Primary School Governing Body approached the Local Authority with a request to federate with Kymin View Primary School. We have responded positively to this request and have supported the consultation process. Any decision relating to the federation will be based on feedback gathered during the process.
Has this been given enough thought and is there a precedent for this within schools in Monmouthshire?	The Local Authority successfully supported a federation between Kymin View and Llandogo Primary Schools. This federation has been in place for almost two years and both schools are thriving.
This feels like this arrangement has been in place for some time. What is the feedback from school leaders at both schools?	A temporary arrangement has been in place between both schools since May 2020. Feedback from governors and leaders is positive.



<p>Given the amount of debt, which Llandogo seems to be carrying now, I am worried that this will affect Kymin View in relation to children, staffing and resources. Can the panel confirm that Kymin View resources be maintained at current levels?</p>	<p>A Federation agreement does not allow any cross over of budgets. Each school will retain its individual delegated budget.</p>
<p>How can a school (Llandogo) under our LA become so heavily in debt?</p>	<p>The historic reason for the debt is that the schools was overstaffed for a number of years, this included running an additional class and thus incurring the costs from their own budget.</p> <p>All these issues had now been addressed and there is a recovery plan in place with has been agreed by the LA and GB and the balance is set to improve.</p>
<p>The benefits seem clear for Llandogo but I struggle to see the benefits for Kymin View.</p>	<p>Llandogo School will benefit the most from the Federation initially as it is difficult to recruit to head teacher posts in small schools.</p> <p>Increased opportunities for joint working for staff in both schools can help to share expertise and ease workload. For example, working with a wider group of staff will reduced the individual workload and reduced duplication as the schools implement the new curriculum.</p> <p>The Federation will also provide new opportunities for pupils in Llandogo and Kymin View. For example, children can play team games such as football and netball, and they can share the cost of enhanced educational experiences</p>
<p>How will the Headteacher be able to manage being a visible presence in both schools?</p>	<p>The Executive Headteacher will have set times to be in each school and these will be shared with pupils, staff and parents.</p>
<p>The Headteacher is an Estyn Inspector. Can all this responsibility be managed practically?</p>	<p>Many of our Headteachers work with other organisations, including Estyn and the EAS for short periods throughout the school year. This provides school leaders with an opportunity to see good practice outside of the local authority and bring it back to share in their own school.</p>
<p>Given the current situation, very few parents have had the chance to meet the Kymin View Head or discuss her</p>	<p>We have facilitated virtual meetings with stakeholders, which the Headteacher has attended. The consultation for a</p>

views on taking the school forward. Shouldn't the consultation be delayed until this can happen?	federation follows a statutory timeline and so we are unable to delay the process.
The consultation document showed heavily dwindling pupil numbers into the future. What are these forecasts based on? I am interested in the projection numbers given for the last year as those children are yet to be born.	Pupil forecasts are based on a combination of live birth numbers and historical trends in the catchment area. Although the last predication does not use live births, the historical trends over time is a helpful indication of numbers in the future.
What does it mean for school resources? Number of teaching staff/back office staff?	The delegated budget will remain for each school so that staffing and resources will be determined in the same way as it has in previous years.
I noticed the projected numbers are to fall in Llandogo and Kymin View, if that was to reverse and the numbers were to increase, is it likely that the federation would then dissolved.	If the proposal goes ahead, there will be a formal federation agreement in place. However, if overtime circumstances change, there is a formal process to dissolve the federation.
The staff, which we are representing, are part of the resource of the school. I am working on the theory that you are not expecting staff to move between sites.	Schools in the federation would retain their own staff as they do at present. However, staff would be supported to work across schools if there was an opportunity and if they wished to do so.
If in the future you have a PPA teacher that could work on both sites, would that be a new contract effectively?	If staff needed to work in both schools, this would require consultation and a new contract of employment.
Is there a plan to close either School on the back of this federation/joining? Is the plan to merge the two entirely I.e. close Llandogo? It would not be viable.	There are no plans to close either school. The proposal to federate is predicated on securing the sustainability of both schools.
Is it the plan that the staff share the workload and the planning etc, or is it for financial pressures	Increased opportunities for joint working for staff in both schools can help to share expertise and ease workload. For example, working with a wider group of staff will reduced the individual workload and reduced duplication as the schools implement the new curriculum.
I am coming from a school that was closed down a few years ago. I am thinking from a business point of view a financial point of view, if we have got more children here and we've got more money to support those children and Llandogo have less so will Kymin View be sharing their money with Llandogo for the resources really, not staff.	The delegated budget will remain for each school so that staffing and resources will be determined in the same way as it has in previous years. There will be increased opportunities for staff to work together.
NEU asked about the role of Executive Headteacher. In the consultation document, it mentions this in the	A federation between the two schools means that leadership is shared from within the schools. In this case, there is

opening; it confirms it will continue until September 2021. Is it going to continue beyond that point?	a temporary Executive Headteacher arrangement in place. If the proposal were accepted, then this arrangement would remain in place.
Does that mean that there will be no further appointments of Deputy Heads or anything like that to fill vacancies in the future?	This would be a matter for the Federated Governing Body to consider of the proposal goes ahead.
Have you had any feedback from parents at all and at this point, they have been asked? What their opinions so far and have had positive feedback about the federation.	During the consultation, parents have had the opportunity to ask questions in live sessions and to share comments. Parents are also able to send questions and comments to the Local Authority for at any time during the consultation period. All comments and questions relating to the federation proposal will be included in the Consultation Report submitted to Cabinet.
There will inevitably be a higher workload on the head teacher, how does the HT access support to keep up with this?	The Headteacher will have dedicated time in both schools to focus on individual school priorities. However, many common priorities would only need to be completed once on behalf of both schools. For example, statutory policies. It will be up to the Headteacher in collaboration with the Governing Body to determine what support would be needed to balance the needs of the schools and wellbeing.
When a new Head teacher is recruited will this make it a harder process, would being HT of two schools put off applicants?	Many Headteachers are already interested in becoming a Headteacher of a Federated School. It gives experienced Headteachers an opportunity to move on to a larger school and to further their career. A federation can potentially attract a wider number of experienced of applicants.
In view of the fact that the Federated Governing Body will have a different composition to that currently in each school. How will the governing body be elected?	If the proposal does go head, a new Governing Body will be established to take over from 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021. The Local Authority will support governors in both schools to go through the process of establishing a Federated Governing Body. Until the federation comes into effect, existing governing bodies will retain their current roles and responsibilities.

### Comments from Parents

As a parent of children at the school – the feeling from a number of parents is that the school could be doing more to support attainment. The key word is consistency and we do feel that there is a huge difference in expectations in our school ..... This should not be the case, as every child deserves the same chances in education. I could support the joining of schools if I felt that Kymin View would gain from this..... I feel our school should be pushed harder to deliver. The Green School status is a very poor indicator of teaching and learning in my view.

Before this pandemic, we have noticed gaps in learning and we would question whether this watering down of leadership is a good idea – but in light of the pandemic, it would seem that school leaders should be focused on the school in question.

### **Comments from Staff**

The opportunity to have that possibility of seconding across, having built that relationship with another school is actually very positive for me and for any teacher, because it gives you those chances to upskill and develop without having to move around too far and look for opportunities elsewhere. So having the federation opportunity I think is a positive one for the staff members themselves. Obviously with everybody being willing and people not being moved when they do not want to be. I think it is fabulous.

Education, as everybody here knows, it is not always the easiest career to gain experience, because you have to leave a job to take a job. Whereas if you already have some in-house opportunities, whether it is in your setting or your partner setting. I think that is invaluable.

As a Teaching Assistant at Llandogo Primary, she feels on her own a little bit, as there are only two Teaching Assistants. Knowing that there are people who are trained in a similar sort of area I do not feel as if I am on my own anymore. There might be things you have not done for a while and you might need a bit of a boost. It is nice to know that the Headteacher has a team there that are trained in exactly the same things as me. I can then ask if I can meet up with other Teaching Assistants to have a chat. It is a positive from my point of view as a TA.

Although cluster relationships are positive. However, it is very different from talking to somebody in a cluster school than talking to somebody who is part of your federation – your partner school. You can develop your personal relationships as well as your skills.

Member of staff commented that the schools are almost the opposite end of the spectrum in some respects of what the children bring to school. It is important to retain the two schools, but within one federated partnership, everybody gets the best of it then.

I feel a positive area is the increased opportunities for the children. We need to remember what our roles are and what we do. I am currently the Year 5 and 6 teacher, and as a small school with small cohorts. So having the chance for my

Year 6 to engage on a frequent basis with a federated partner with their Year 6 will be very beneficial for the children to start to build those relationships, particularly in preparation for the moved from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3. Our child already do present very confidently, but I think that for them it will be a good opportunity to have that partnership to help our children as well

I think reading the consultation, seeing that the schools will retain their own independence and that there will be a joint Governing Body, I think that is good. You get the best from both schools and we, as Llandogo, will still maintain our independence. We will maintain our unique uniform and registrations. It will still be Llandogo, and Llandogo will not disappear and that is quite lovely. It is not a drawback, it is a strength.

As we have had the opportunity of the interim Headteacher cover, the fact that that is where we are going for our federation I think is the right way to provide consistency. We have already started developing those relationships, both as staff and with our children and our families knowing the Headteacher. If we had to look for federation elsewhere, we would need to start that process all over again. I think that having had the agreement of the interim Headteacher I feel it is another positive for a federation.

### **Comments from Governors**

I can see that this could benefit both schools in sharing costs that are currently doubled up and time working on similar documents such as policy writing, which would be the same in both schools. I can also see that sharing resources would be beneficial and that this could improve opportunities for staff especially those in Llandogo being a smaller school.

I would like to point out that in federating, it is imperative that a strong senior leadership scheme is in place in both school so that when the Head teacher is not on site decisions and responsibility are covered.

Having spoken to a Governor at a recently federated school, I would like to bring up the point that combining the Governing bodies of the two schools may mean that individual Governors may feel that they do not contribute so much in meetings and to the role in general. Alternatively, fresh ideas from a wider Governing body may be beneficial.

### **Comments from Trades Unions**

The National Education Union, Monmouthshire District, which provides support to a substantial number of teaching and learning support staff members at Kymin View and Llandogo Primary Schools, broadly welcomes the proposed partnership between the two schools by the formal federation of the two Governing Bodies.

The Union understands that the Federated Governing Body and Headteacher will decide how the Federation is structured and operates to ensure the workings and arrangements match the needs of both schools.

In this respect, the Union would expect the Federation to have a detailed action plan and agreed staffing structure that provides the framework for more detailed planning and the day-to-day organisation and management of the two schools, including times when the Headteacher and/or Deputy may not be present at either site at any time, and which would be shared with the Union and the other recognised trade unions.

The Union would also wish to see that there are clearly defined, recorded and agreed job descriptions assigned to staff within each school in relation to their roles, and particularly where they may be changed or adapted to meet the demands of the Federation action plan and any other revision to the staffing structure, roles and responsibilities.

From comments relating to recent post-Federation experiences, the Union would draw attention to the disadvantage of an immediate strive for consistency across the two schools while the development plans of one school might be different to those from the other. Experience has shown, that with time and through careful management and supportive leadership, this tends to sort itself out, and especially where there are both efficient and effective communication and information systems between and across both schools.

The Union recognises that while each school will remain open in its community, keep its own budget, character, school uniform, admissions arrangements and ethos, and undergo its own Estyn inspection when appropriate, it may give the children access to a broader curriculum which could enrich their experiences, provide high quality education and help raise their attainment.

By federating the schools, the provision of a wider curriculum could offer real choices and options for the children that perhaps smaller schools cannot always provide with having fewer staff. Sharing teachers and teaching expertise, learning from one another and sharing good practice are all perceived as advantages associated with federating.

As one NEU member at a recently Federated school stated, "In a small school it can feel a little isolated at times professionally speaking, and I have enjoyed the sharing of resources, advice, etc. It has been valuable professionally to share responsibilities and have a wider support network. The level of professional dialogue has increased."

Through Federation, each school's commitment is formalised and the collective decision making of the single governing body should protect the provision of quality of education for the children, ensure resources are properly prioritised where needed and prevent individual schools from reallocating their resources for other priorities as and when it suits them.

However, the Union would not expect this to lead to an increase in workload for its members and unnecessary or excessive travelling between the respective school sites. Consideration in the planning of any activities and movements between school sites should take account of staff well-being and work-life balance.

While it is accepted that there will be a continuing reduction in school leadership costs with a single Headteacher, and savings in the administration costs of the single Governing Body, the Union anticipates that the proposed Federation is about a more cost-effective way of increasing additional learning opportunities at both schools, such as sharing the costs of purchasing goods and facilities to achieve economies of scale and avoiding duplication, savings on curriculum and strategic planning and administrative time, and being able to pool funding to recruit staff for specialist activities and events.

The Union recognises the Federated Governing Body will be responsible and accountable for making strategic decisions on the deployment of resources including budgets, staff and facilities, and would thus expect each school to keep a clear and transparent audit trail and accounts for their respective budget spends.

## **8 General overview and consensus**

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The consultation process highlighted considerable support for the principles of the proposal.

Parents at Kymin View were keener as to how the school would benefit from the Federation and that it would only be Llandogo School that could benefit. However when parents were informed in more detail of the benefits of federation such as pupil achievement, extra-curricular opportunities, transition and staff professional development, they were more reassured.

Parents at both schools were concerned around the future sustainability of the schools but following the virtual session were reassured that the Federation would make the schools future more secure.

The feedback received for the proposal was positive and supportive overall. A very few concerns about consistency in learning and balancing leadership capacity were raised. However, there were no comments against the proposal.

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## Appendix 1 –Proposed Instrument of Government

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### INSTRUMENT OF GOVERNMENT: FEDERATED SCHOOLS

1. The name of the federation is THE GOVERNING BODY OF KYMIN VIEW AND LLANDOGO PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

2. The names and categories of the schools in the federation are:

Name	Category
1. KYMIN VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL	COMMUNITY SCHOOL
2. LLANDOGO PRIMARY SCHOOL	COMMUNITY SCHOOL

3. The name of the governing body is THE GOVERNING BODY OF KYMIN VIEW AND LLANDOGO PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

4. The governing body shall consist of the following:

Category of governor	No. in each category
Parent Governors: 1. KYMIN VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL 2. LLANDOGO PRIMARY SCHOOL	TWO PER SCHOOL
Headteacher (except at any time when he/she has given written notice to the clerk to the governing body of the School that he/she chooses not to be a governor).	ONE
Staff Governor: 1. KYMIN VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL 2. LLANDOGO PRIMARY SCHOOL	ONE PER SCHOOL
Teacher Governor: 1. KYMIN VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL 2. LLANDOGO PRIMARY SCHOOL	ONE PER SCHOOL
LA Governors	TWO PER SCHOOL
Community Governors	TWO PER SCHOOL
Additional Community Governors	ONE



5. The total number of governors appointed in accordance with Part 4 of the Federation Regulations shall be EIGHTEEN (except any time when the Headteacher has given notice that he/she chooses not to be a governor, when the total number of governors will be 17).
6. The Additional Community Governor will be a governor for whose appointment nominations are to be sought from the minor authority.
7. In accordance with Part 4 of The Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2014 this instrument of government comes into effect on 1ST SEPTEMBER 2021
8. This instrument comes into effect on
9. This instrument was made by order of LA on *or before*

THE COMMON SEAL of )  
MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL )  
was hereunto affixed in the presence of: )

Authorised Officer

## Appendix 2

The following have been provided with a copy of the Consultation report

- All staff employed at Kymin View and Llandogo Primary Schools
- Governing Bodies of Kymin View and Llandogo Primary Schools
- Parents of pupils attending Kymin View and Llandogo Primary School
- Trade Unions for teaching and support staff
- County Councillors for Central Monmouthshire and Lower Wye areas
- Headteachers Monmouth Cluster
- Chair of Monmouthshire Association School Governors
- Welsh Government