



monmouthshire
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CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Review of Primary School catchment areas in
Monmouthshire (Phase 1)

Consultation period:

8th January 2024 to 19th February 2024

1. Introduction

This consultation document is an opportunity for consultees and other interested parties to learn about some proposed changes to primary school catchment areas within the County of Monmouthshire. The proposed changes form part of the Councils' School Admission Arrangements that are proposed for implementation in readiness for the 2025/26 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 2025/26, which is available to view / download [here](#).

2. Your views matter

Your views on the proposed changes to primary 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 drop in sessions:

Review Area	Date	Venue
Tredunnoch, Llanhennock and Llandegveth	6 th February 2024. Open drop in session between 4pm – 6pm	County Hall, Usk
	7 th February 2023. Open drop in session between 1pm – 4pm	County Hall, Usk

- 2) To enable us to carry out detailed analysis of the feedback provided we would urge you to complete the consultation questionnaire, which is available [here](#).

If you have any questions on the proposals please contact the Access Unit on 01633 644508 or by emailing accesstolearning@monmouthshire.gov.uk.

Please note that the deadline for responses to this consultation is 19th February 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) confirms that 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 the consultation stage of this process by 1st March 2024 and determine the outcome of the proposals by 15th April 2024 should it wish to implement the proposals for September 2025 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	Monday 8 th January 2024
Consultation ends (6 weeks)	Monday 19 th February 2024

Consideration stage	
Task	Key Dates
Consultation report published by	1 st April 2024
Cabinet consider results of consultation and agree on how to proceed	10th April 2024

Implementation stage
September 2025

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 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, it's important for us to know what you think.

7. Background to the review of school catchment areas

The majority of primary school 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 some cases, it is thought that the catchment areas do not seem to follow a specific rationale. For example, they are not in all cases either based on nearest school or alternatively through connecting communities. Some primary school catchment areas are also show trends of regular overpopulation based on the birth data from Health.

A review of secondary school catchment areas was undertaken in 2018, with a particular focus on the provision within the North / Central parts of the County. There were two key principles that underpinned this review:

- 1) To ensure that secondary school catchment areas are both supportive and reflective of transitional arrangements between primary and secondary schools.
- 2) To ensure that Monmouthshire residents have access to a secondary school that falls within the County boundaries.

As a result of the above consultation, the catchment boundaries for Monmouth and King Henry VIII Comprehensive Schools were extended to absorb the areas of Usk, Goytre and surrounding areas that previously fell within the catchment of Caerleon Comprehensive School, Newport. The catchment area for Monmouth Comprehensive School was also aligned to that of Trellech and Llandogo Primary Schools to support transitional arrangements.

8. So what is next?

We are now seeking to build on the work undertaken so far by commencing a review of primary school catchment areas. On 26th July 2023, a scrutiny workshop was held with Elected Members, forming an opportunity to highlight any areas of concern for review. Alongside this, the Council is in the process of implementing a new revised local development plan (RLDP), which proposes housing developments in most corners of the County. It's clear that primary school catchment areas will need to be reviewed in each cluster as the RLDP unfolds between 2025 and 2033, as we build our education provision to meet the demands of this plan.

This consultation document kick starts this programme with further consultations to follow in response to our duty to ensure we have a sufficient number of school places in the right areas of the County.

9. 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 4825 mainstream children and young people from years 7 to 13. Our Secondary school estate consists of:

- King Henry VIII 3-19 School, Abergavenny
- Monmouth Comprehensive School, Monmouth
- Chepstow School, Chepstow
- Caldicot School, Caldicot

All residents of Monmouthshire now have a secondary catchment that aligns to one of the above schools.

Primary Schools

The Primary School estate is comprised of 30 Primary Schools supporting around 6064 children and young people. The structure of our Primary school estate includes:

- Two Welsh Medium Primary Schools, one located in the North (Abergavenny) and one located in the South (Caldicot). A new Welsh Medium seeding school will be opening in Monmouth in September 2024.
- 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.
- Twenty-Four Community Schools

A full list of Monmouthshire Primary Schools can be found under appendix 1.

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.

Not all residents of Monmouthshire have a primary catchment for a school within the County. The area of Tredunnoch, Llanhennock, Llandegveth and immediate surrounding areas fall within the catchment for Charles Williams Primary School, Newport.

10. 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.

11. Aims of the catchment area review

The majority of primary school catchment areas across the county have been in place for a significant amount of time and a review is required to ensure that they are fit for purpose. The review thus far has identified the following overarching aims:

- 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 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.
- Where possible and reasonable / feasible to do so, to address arrangements where existing arrangements are dividing communities.
- To review school catchment areas alongside any possible 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.

12. Primary School Catchments - Identified issues

A review of primary school catchment areas follows on from the catchment area review undertaken back in 2018. In line with our overarching aims that underpin this review, our primary school catchment areas present the following challenges:

- It has been identified that some areas within the County do not fall within the catchment area for one of our Monmouthshire primary schools.
- There has been feedback from some communities that the existing arrangements are causing divides within their communities
- There are some primary school catchment areas that are not aligned to their nearest school and should be reviewed to establish whether change is feasible
- There are some cases of imbalance within existing primary school catchments whereby some catchment areas are showing regular patterns of oversubscription
- The Council has a revised local development plan proposing a significant number of housing developments between 2025 and 2033. Primary school catchment areas may need to be amended in response to any possible school reorganisation proposals that may arise as a result.

At this stage of the review programme, the Council would like to consult on the area of Tredunnoch, Llanhennock and Llandegveth which currently does not have a primary school catchment in Monmouthshire. We now seek your input on the suggestions that have been put forward.

As a reminder, this consultation is the start of the ongoing review of primary 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 – Tredunnoch, Llanhennock, Llandegveth (appendix 2)

14. Finance

The proposals put forward for consultation under this stage of the 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.

We are interested to hear the views of those residing within the affected areas during this consultation stage. The feedback received alongside a full cost analysis will be presented to the Council's Cabinet who will determine whether or not proposals should be implemented.

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15. List of Primary Schools

CLUSTER	SCHOOL
Caldicot	Archbishop Rowan Williams CIW Primary
Caldicot	Castle Park Primary
Abergavenny	Cantref Primary
Monmouth	Cross Ash Primary
Abergavenny	King Henry VIII 3-19 School
Caldicot	Dewstow 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
Chepstow	St Mary's RC Primary
Chepstow	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

16. List of Consultees

The governing body of the relevant schools

- Governing bodies of schools affected by proposals:
 - Usk Church in Wales Primary School
 - Charles Williams Church in Wales Primary School

Neighbouring Local Authorities affected by the proposals

- Newport City Council

Parents of Children Likely to be affected

Parents of children residing within the affected areas

Other key parties

- Members of the School Admission Forum
- County Councillors
- Ward Members for the affected areas
- All Monmouthshire Primary School
- Church in Wales Diocese
- Roman Catholic Diocese