



**CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO CLOSE CRAIGCEFNPARC PRIMARY SCHOOL
ON 31 AUGUST 2019**

Table of Contents	Page
Background to the proposal	2
What is the proposal?	2
What would this proposal mean if it was agreed?	2
The educational case for change	3
What alternative options have Swansea Council considered?	5
What are the potential benefits of closing Craigcefnparc Primary School?	9
Quality and standards in education	10
What are the main challenges for this proposal?	10
Governing Body	11
Staffing	11
Building/Investment needs	11
Admission Arrangements	11
Transport	12
Financial Information	12
Community Impact Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment	12
UNCRC	13
How will the consultation take place?	13
What do you now have to consider?	13
How do you make your views known?	14

Background to the Proposal

Craigcefnparc Primary School is in the village of Craigcefnparc about a mile from Clydach near Swansea. At the last national pupil level annual school census in January 2018 it had 54 full-time pupils on roll from the ages of 4 to 11, plus 2 part-time nursery children. There are three mixed-age classes in the school. The number on roll has been declining for the last five years.

The last Estyn inspection of the school was in May 2015 with the school's performance being adequate at the time and with adequate prospects for improvement and was placed in a category of Estyn monitoring. The school was removed from Estyn monitoring in October 2016 after considerable support from the local authority and investment of time by school staff.

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/craigcefnparc-primary-school>

The school will have a new acting headteacher in September 2018 who will have to take on a part-time teaching role to balance the school's budget.

What is the Proposal?

1. This consultation is on a proposal to close Craigcefnparc Primary School. The consultation is on the basis that, if agreed, the school would close with effect from 31 August 2019. The current catchment area for Craigcefnparc would be transferred to Clydach Primary School. Transport would be provided for eligible pupils to Clydach Primary School as per Swansea Council's Home to School Transport Policy.
2. The Council wishes to seek the views of all of those with a likely interest in the proposal so that their views can be taken into account before decisions are made. Those being consulted on this proposal are the pupils, parents, governors and staff of Craigcefnparc Primary School, as well as neighbouring schools, the local community and other interested parties in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.
3. This consultation period will take place from 5 September 2018 to 18 October 2018. A report on the outcome of these consultations will be submitted to a Cabinet meeting of elected members on 20 December 2018.

What would this proposal mean if it was agreed?

4. The school at Craigcefnparc would be closed as of 31 August 2019. As from 1 September 2019 the catchment area of Clydach Primary School would be extended to encompass that of the existing Craigcefnparc Primary School. Pupils would attend Clydach Primary School as the new catchment area school or make a preferred placement application to another school.
5. The future of the Craigcefnparc school building which is a condition category C building (2017 Swansea Schools Premises Collection Data), would be

considered within the context of the Council's corporate asset management process.

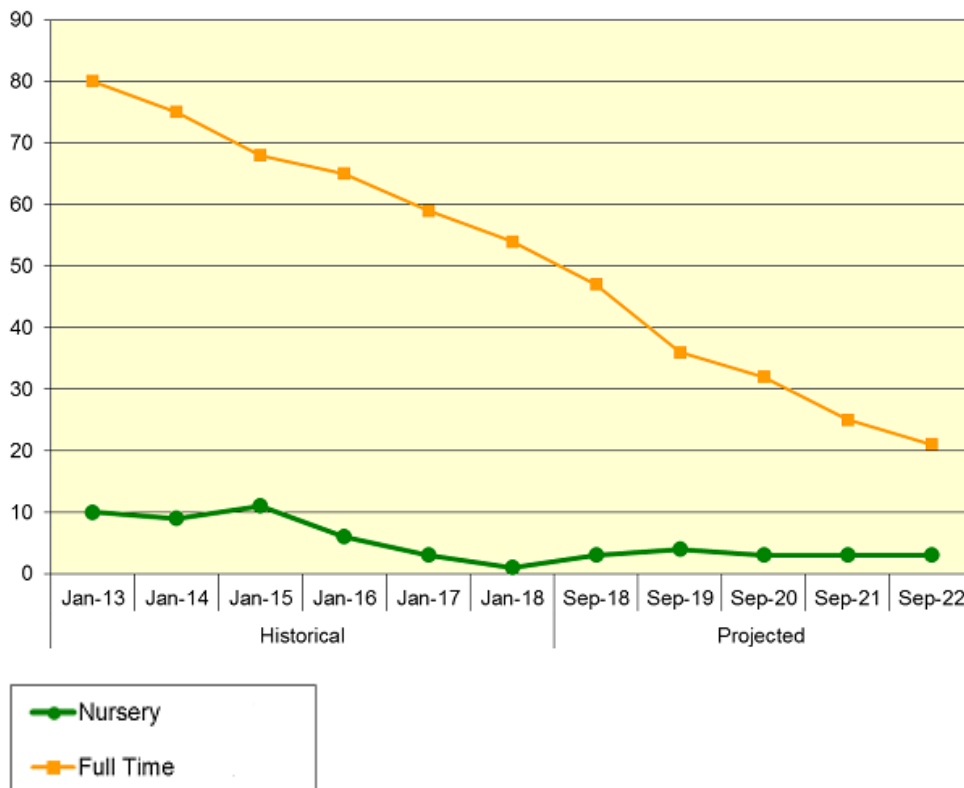
6. Pupils may be entitled to transport to their new school in accordance with the Council's transportation policy, which states that free transport is provided for primary aged pupils who live two miles or more from their catchment area school or where there is not an available walking route.
7. Clydach Primary School has sufficient capacity to accommodate all pupils from Craigcefnparc Primary School, although some modest capital investment would be made to enhance the toilet facilities at Clydach Primary School as well as some access work on the roads outside of the school.

The Educational Case for Change

8. During the last five years education provision at Craigcefnparc Primary School has been variable and lack of permanent leadership has been an impediment to school improvement. The local authority has intervened to provide considerable support and challenge to ensure necessary improvements were made in the quality of provision and in the quality of leadership. The local authority cannot sustain this level of support long term.
9. Consequently there are several specific reasons why this proposal has been made on educational grounds:
 - a. Clydach Primary School can offer a wider range of facilities on a less restricted site, offering a greater flexibility in covering all areas of the curriculum and greater access to resources and staffing.
 - b. Current and future anticipated pupil needs at Craigcefnparc Primary School can be appropriately met at Clydach Primary School.
 - c. The size of Craigcefnparc Primary School raises the concern that the quality of educational provision may not be sustainable in the future.
 - d. The larger team of staff at Clydach Primary School can provide a broader range of expertise in areas of the curriculum and in terms of leading whole school initiatives. It can provide staff with more opportunities to develop their skills and can enable the best use to be made of staff expertise.
 - e. A larger school has more flexibility with its budget and can have access to a wider range of resources and staffing.
 - f. Whilst 74.1% of learners on roll at Craigcefnparc Primary School are from the catchment area, only 45.5% of primary school age pupils living within the school's catchment area attended Craigcefnparc Primary School at January 2018.

- g. Pupil numbers at Craigcefnparc Primary School have decreased over a number of years and are not projected to increase to a sustainable level as the chart below shows:

Historical and Projected Number on Roll - Craigcefnparc



- h. The need to ensure cost effective and equitable distribution of funding amongst schools in Swansea in line with Welsh Government and Audit Commission Guidance.

The Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code states:

“It is important that funding for education is cost effective. Relevant bodies should take into account the following factors in relation to the resourcing of education:

Whether proposals will ensure a fairer and more equitable distribution of funding between mainstream schools within the local authority’s area. Whilst some variation in the per capita funding provided to schools is to be expected, inefficient patterns of school organisation can result in uneven and unfair funding patterns where some schools receive a disproportionate share of funding at the expense of pupils attending other schools in the area. Proposals should not exacerbate such funding differences. Rather, wherever possible, they should contribute towards establishing a more equitable pattern of school funding”.

- i. Whilst this proposal has not been made for financial reasons, the School Organisation Code requires information to be provided on the cost per place at schools subject to statutory proposals. The cost of a pupil place at Craigcefnparc Primary School is higher than the average cost per primary place in Swansea. The higher figure is due to small school factors and lump sums in the funding formula. The cost of a pupil place at the school compared to the average cost per primary place in Swansea is shown below:

Financial Year	Cost Per Place at Craigcefnparc	Average Cost Per Primary Place in Swansea
2016/2017	£4,752	£3,387
2017/2018	£5,156	£3,418
2018/2019	£4,742	£3,487

The school is having difficulty setting a balanced budget for the Financial Year 2018-2019 without additional support from the Council and future projections are for increased financial pressure. This will impact on the educational provision for learners at the school.

- j. One of the main themes of the Audit Commission's report *Rationalising Primary School Provision* was the need for local authorities to consider the closure of those small primary schools that were not justified by local circumstances. Three arguments were put forward against small primary schools:
1. Cost: small schools attract greater funding per pupil than larger ones.
 2. Expertise: the National Curriculum [and the new, emerging Curriculum for Wales] demands a breadth of expertise that is more difficult to provide in a school with only two or three teachers.
 3. Resources: small schools are less likely to have basic facilities, such as halls and playing fields, without which such pupil activities as drama and team sports are likely to be curtailed.*

*Although there is no exact definition of what constitutes a small primary school, the Audit Commission analysed delegated budgets per pupil against numbers on roll and there was a marked increase in spending per pupil for schools of below about 90 pupils. The Audit Commission therefore recommended that local authorities keep under review primary schools with under 90 pupils on roll, to satisfy themselves that each is justified.

The Audit Commission suggested that action should be taken to rectify the situation if a school has a surplus capacity of more than 25% or 30 unfilled places. The surplus capacity at Craigcefnparc Primary School as at January 2018 was 42.55% and 40 surplus places. This is predicted to increase by September 2019.

What alternative options have the Council considered?

10. Local authorities are responsible for ensuring that there are sufficient schools providing primary and secondary education for their area in terms of number, character and equipment to provide for all pupils the opportunity of appropriate

education. In order to fulfil these duties, local authorities must ensure that they plan thoroughly for schools serving their areas. The School Organisation Code also recognises that education must be the primary consideration. This is linked directly to a local authority's duty to strive to raise standards of education.

11. It is these considerations which require local authorities to take into account wider factors such as the need to manage the school estate as efficiently and effectively as possible. This includes managing excessive numbers of surplus places which tie up resources unproductively – resources which are then unavailable for use in raising standards and quality of education for all pupils. This means that they must look to reduce excessive numbers of surplus places in schools that are significantly under-occupied. Although the Code encourages local authorities to manage surplus places, this does not necessarily mean closing schools. The Code encourages them to explore alternatives to closure including collaboration or federation, increasing community use of school buildings or co-location of local services within the school to offset costs.
12. Careful consideration has been given to alternative options to closure, including the potential for federation, as set out below. However, at present it is considered that as no sustainable alternative option has been identified, the Council's preferred option is Option 4.

Option 1 – Status Quo

Advantages	Disadvantages
Craigcefnparc Primary School would remain open	Would not address the current projected number of pupils at the school
Retention of school identity	Continuing challenge to maintain sustainability of educational provision at the school
No additional capital investment required	Need for additional resources to support leadership and teaching/learning likely to continue
	Pupils would remain in increasingly mixed age cohorts having to cater for many year groups in one class
	Future liabilities in terms of future maintenance costs remain
	Would not contribute to the provision of pupil places where they are needed and reduce surplus places where there is not the need to support the greater efficiency and effectiveness of the school estate
	Cost per pupil is £4,742 compared with a County average of £3,487 and this unbalanced distribution would remain

Option 2 – Amalgamation

Advantages	Disadvantages
Educational provision would remain on the current Craigcefnparc Primary	Would not effectively address the current projected number of pupils at the school

School site, although its separate identity would be lost	
Potential sustainability of amalgamated school on more than one site could be tested and sites rationalised in the future if there proves to be no alternative	Whilst current per pupil cost disparity would be addressed to a limited extent additional costs would remain as a result of the split sites and need for a management presence on each site
No additional capital investment required initially	Continuing challenge to maintain appropriate educational provision at the school with limited scope to secure the benefits of amalgamation. The distance between school sites would severely limit for example the opportunities for whole school activities, and peer working, sharing of resources, staff development and leadership and management
Potentially enhanced leadership and management (across more than one site) and saving in Headteacher salary cost	Future liabilities in terms of future maintenance costs remain
Greater opportunity to share resource and best practice and broader range of staff expertise	Would not contribute to reducing surplus places
	Likely that pupils would remain in mixed age cohorts although there would be some opportunities to undertake activities with pupils on other sites

Option 3 – Federation

Advantages	Disadvantages
Craigcefnparc Primary School would remain open	Would not effectively address the current projected number of pupils at the school
Retention of school identity	Continued risk of failure to maintain sustainability of appropriate educational provision at the school due to the need to ensure appropriate management of each school site
No additional capital investment required	Future liabilities in terms of future maintenance costs remain
Potentially enhanced leadership and management (across more than one site) and some potential scope to make savings in senior leadership costs across federation	Would not contribute to reducing surplus places
Greater opportunity to share resource and best practice and broader range of staff expertise	Pupils would remain in the same mixed age cohorts although there would be some opportunities to undertake activities with pupils on other sites but with staff / pupils travelling to provide the same breadth of curriculum support as

	available on a single site
Full ownership from all parties to federate can prove to be effective – although generally with a number of small schools of a similar size	Requires full ownership from all parties to be effective rather than council direction and no indication to date of such interest from another school
	Cost per pupil is £4,742 compared with a County average of £3,487 and this unbalanced distribution would remain and the possible duplication of resources could further increase overall staffing costs

Option 4 – School Closure

Advantages	Disadvantages
Sustainability of appropriate educational provision within the wider area, enhanced with reduction in surplus places and more efficient and effective allocation of available resources to strengthen overall provision, more evenly distributing of funding per pupil across wider area	Loss of school in the village
Greater learning opportunities for pupils with access to wider range of staff expertise and resources, greater curriculum and resource access, as well as enhanced social and sporting opportunities better preparing them for their move to a larger secondary school	Relocation of pupils to different schools
Removes potential future liabilities for future maintenance costs	Staff would be redeployed or made redundant
Potential future capital receipt to re-invest in the development of education in Swansea	Some modest capital investment required
Pupils would be able to access a 'Good / Excellent' standard of education in neighbouring schools (Clydach/Craigfelin)	Additional transport costs would be incurred to transport pupils to a different school, offsetting any other financial savings from closure
Modest capital investment would enhance facilities for pupils at Clydach Primary	

13. Under a federation, two or more schools work together under one governing body while still retaining their own identity and having separate budget allocations. The one governing body for the federation could consider having one headteacher for the federation instead of one for each school. This could also apply to any new members of staff appointed, for example there could be one administration officer or one person to support special needs etc.

14. With an amalgamation, two or more schools are closed and a new school is opened using the sites of the old schools under one governing body with one budget allocation. The new school would have a new name and identity.
15. Collaboration is when a number of schools work together, usually on specific projects. As such, collaboration would offer broadly similar advantages and disadvantages as the status quo option above.
16. The local authority does not consider that it is possible to bring external community use into Craigcefnparc Primary School to help with sustainability as there is not enough suitable space, particularly when ensuring the segregation of learners and safeguarding. There are also already other options for community use in the village, including the community hall.

What are the potential benefits of closing Craigcefnparc Primary School?

17. A larger primary school has a larger team of staff that can provide more flexibility in terms of delivering the full curriculum. It can provide staff with more opportunities to develop their skills across the whole primary age range and can enable the best use to be made of staff expertise.
18. Moving pupils from Craigcefnparc Primary School to Clydach Primary School would provide pupils with an education in a larger, more sustainable school with greater curriculum and resource access, as well as allowing enhanced social and sporting opportunities for the learners and preparing them for their move to a larger secondary school.
19. Clydach Primary School has positive standards of achievement and received a favourable Estyn Inspection in 2014. The school is well managed and has a supportive governing body. The school benefits from consistency in leadership with the current headteacher being in post since 2012.
20. While there are no revenue savings to be achieved through this proposal, a larger school has more flexibility with its budget and can have access to a wider range of resources and staffing. Any efficiencies from having fewer schools in Swansea will be reinvested in the remaining schools for the benefit of all pupils in Swansea.
21. The very low numbers at Craigcefnparc Primary School inevitably restrict the range of opportunities for group and interactive work and change the nature of the social education that the school can provide.
22. The Council would benefit from the removal of a condition category C* building, reduced backlog maintenance and improved building efficiency.

*(2017 Swansea Schools Premises Collection Data).

Quality and standards in education

23. The latest Estyn Inspection ratings for the schools affected were:

School	Date	Current Performance Rating	Schools Prospects for Improving
Craigcefnparc	2015	Adequate	Adequate
Clydach	2014	Good	Good
Craigfelen	2018	Three excellent judgements and two good.	

Craigcefnparc Primary School was placed under Estyn Monitoring following its inspection in 2015. They were removed from monitoring in October 2016.

The summary of the Estyn reports can be found at Appendix B.

The full reports can be found at:

<http://www.estyn.gov.uk/english/inspection/inspection-reports/>

Information on the affected schools' standards and performance can also be found at Appendix B.

There would be no detrimental impact from the proposals on the ability of Clydach Primary School to deliver the full curriculum at the foundation phase or at key stage 2.

The proposal will provide at least as good a quality of educational provision for pupils and would be expected to have a positive impact on educational standards due to:

- Increased number of staff and range of expertise in a larger school environment.
- Greater opportunity for learning with pupils of the same age.
- Improved opportunities for participating in social, cultural and sporting activities.

What are the main challenges for this proposal?

24. Closing the school will inevitably cause some disruption and uncertainty for a period of time, although experience shows that this can be kept to a minimum and that the children's education does not suffer.

25. There will be staffing implications from a school closure but the Council will endeavour to redeploy staff into suitable alternative posts, and in particular will discuss options with the governing body at Clydach Primary School.

26. Whilst the vast majority of schools in Swansea are larger primaries, some parents may feel that a smaller school may be more personal and less daunting for pupils. Parents can of course apply to other Swansea schools if they feel

Clydach is not their favoured school. Such an application would be considered in line with the Council's admissions policy. Information regarding surrounding schools can be found in Appendix A.

27. The majority of learners will require home to school transport due to the walking route from Craigcefnparc into Clydach. This cost will be met by the Council and, although it will reduce the ability to walk to school for some learners, it may help to reduce the number of vehicles on the school run in the village of Craigcefnparc.

Governing Body

28. The governing body will be fully briefed and included throughout this process, and will cease on 31 August 2019, in line with the school closure date, should the proposal be successful.

Staffing

29. The new staffing structures at the new catchment school would take into account a number of factors, including the delivery of curriculum, class-size limits and the likely budget available. The Council would recommend that any new staff posts required at the school should be 'ring-fenced' to the staff of Craigcefnparc Primary School. If more than one member of staff applies for a post then this would normally be decided by competitive interview.
30. It is vitally important to ensure a smooth transition in order to seek to minimise any anxiety or uncertainty for affected staff. Regular communication with staff will be important so that progress can be reported and staff kept informed.
31. In the event that there are any redundancies the Council's policy in place at that time would apply.

Building/Investment needs

32. A capital investment of £50,000 is being sought to reorganise the toilet facilities for the foundation phase at Clydach Primary School, to provide better access and improved location of provision for younger pupils. It is proposed to fund this cost from remaining uncommitted capital monies across education schemes.
33. Clydach Primary School is on a split site. The two sites are in close proximity to each other, however it is possible that a Safer Routes in the Community bid may be considered for highways improvements in the vicinity. If such highways improvements are not able to be included as a Safer Routes in the Community bid, or if such an application is unsuccessful, the funding for these improvements will be identified from central education budgets. The proposed highway improvements include additional road cushions, new traffic regulations, bollards on a footway and 'build out' opposite the 'junior school' site.

Admission Arrangements

34. All full-time pupils on roll at Craigcefnparc Primary School on 31 August 2019 could transfer to Clydach Primary School on 1 September 2019, or alternatively could apply for a place at a preferred school and applications would be considered in line with admission arrangements. Pupils applying to nursery and reception in September 2019 would have to apply to Clydach Primary School or an alternative school according to the Council's agreed admission arrangements. Admission information for Swansea Council can be found at <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/schooladmissionarrangements>

Transport

35. Transport would continue to be provided for any pupils that met agreed criteria i.e. for those attending their catchment school and living more than 2 miles from that school or where there was no available walking route to school. For further information on home to school transport please see <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/schooltransport>

There would be an increase in travel time to school of approximately 5 minutes should pupils in future attend Clydach Primary School.

Financial Information

36. Capital

The future of the Craigcefnparc school building would be considered within the context of the Council's corporate asset management process and no decision has been made yet.

37. Revenue

Schools are funded from an overall delegated budget – the Individual Schools Budget (ISB). There is a funding formula that allocates a budget share to each individual school from the ISB. The budget share for Clydach Primary School would increase to include the number of learners moving there from Craigcefnparc Primary School. Any efficiencies would be reinvested into other schools in Swansea.

Closure of schools can lead to some initial increased costs, for example redundancy costs and transport costs. Although we would recommend to governors at Clydach Primary School that all new posts to support the additional learners are ring-fenced to existing employees at Craigcefnparc Primary School, there could be some staff that are not successful in matching against a post, with redundancy costs charged to central Council budgets. Home to school transport would be required for learners where there is not an available walking route. Further details on financial implications are provided at Appendix C.

Community Impact Assessment/Equalities Impact Assessment

38. A Community Impact Assessment was carried out prior to agreement to consult and will be updated on completion of the consultation. The assessment did not identify any issues and it was noted that the school is not used by the community

other than for a parent and toddler group. The assessment can be found at <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/craigcefnparcconsultation> . There is a community centre in the village.

39. An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out prior to agreement to consult on this proposal and will be updated on completion of the consultation. The assessment did not identify any issues. The assessment can be found at <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/craigcefnparcconsultation>

UNCRC

40. Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children have the right to have a say in decisions that affect them and to have that view taken seriously. Therefore, throughout the process, we will ensure that children and young people have a chance to have a say on the proposals and on how they think it will affect their rights under the convention.
41. It is our view that either children's rights will be enhanced under the proposal or they will not be affected.
42. A move to a larger primary with more staff, resources and improved school building will ensure better education and extra-curricular opportunities for the pupils, which supports the rights of the child under articles 28 and 29. Article 31 will not be affected as the play opportunities currently available will continue and indeed improve.

How will the Consultation take place?

43. Consultation will be carried out during September and October 2018 and the results will be reported to a Cabinet meeting of Swansea Council on 20 December 2018. If the Cabinet decide not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal for the foreseeable future.
44. However, if Cabinet decide to go ahead, after considering the results of this consultation, there would be a statutory procedure to follow to make the proposed changes for September 2019. A statutory notice outlining the proposals would need to be published, inviting any formal written objections to be submitted within 28 days of publication of the notice (a copy of the notice will be provided to parents/carers and staff members and it will also be published at the schools, at the nearest library and on the Council's website www.swansea.gov.uk). If there are objections, Cabinet will need to consider the objections to the proposal before making a decision.
45. Please note that responses submitted as part of the formal consultation period will not be counted as objections to the proposal. Statutory objections can only be made if a statutory notice is published. If a statutory notice is published objections can then be registered. Consultees may submit a request during the statutory objection period that their response submitted at the consultation stage should be treated as an objection.

46. The timetable and procedure which is required by law will be as follows:

9 January 2019	Publication of statutory notices (followed by 28-day objection period).
21 March 2019	If there are no objections to the proposal, the Cabinet can decide to proceed with closing Craigeefnparc Primary School. If there are objections, Cabinet will have to consider the objections and decide whether or not to proceed.

The earliest date when Craigeefnparc Primary School could close would be 31 August 2019.

Further information on the timetable can be found at Appendix D

What do you now have to consider?

47. We would like your views on this proposal to close Craigeefnparc Primary School. Is there any alternative option that you would like the Council to consider?

How do you make your views known?

48. Consultation meetings will be held and you are welcome to attend the appropriate meeting:

Pupils, parents, staff and governors of Craigeefnparc Primary School

Date:	Tuesday 18 September
Venue:	Craigeefnparc Primary School
Meeting for pupils:	2:30 p.m.
Meeting for all staff:	3:30 p.m.
Meeting for governors:	4:15 p.m.
Drop-in session for parents and other interested parties :	5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Pupils, parents, staff and governors of Clydach Primary School

Date:	Monday 24 September 2018
Venue:	Clydach Primary School
Meeting for pupils:	2:30 p.m.
Meeting for all staff:	3:30 p.m.
Meeting for governors:	4:15 p.m.
Drop-in session for parents and other interested parties :	5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

There will also be additional drop-in sessions for the proposals on:

Date:	Thursday 20 September 2018
Venue:	Craigeefnparc Community Centre

Time: 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Date: Tuesday 2 October 2018
Venue: Committee Room 2, Civic Centre, Oystermouth
Road, Swansea
Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Date: Monday 8 October 2018
Venue: Craigcefnparc Community Centre
Time: 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

You are also welcome to put your views in writing on the attached pro-forma (Appendix E) to:

Mr. Nick Williams
Director of Education
Civic Centre
Oystermouth Road
Swansea
SA1 3SN
(Please mark for the attention of Ms Kelly Small)
Or e-mail SchoolOrganisation@swansea.gov.uk

All views must be received by no later than 18 October 2018. Views received will then be collated into a consultation report together with a response from the local authority and this report will be given to Cabinet at their meeting on 20 December 2018 for them to decide if the proposal should move to the next stage of the publication of a Statutory Notice. Please note that any responses received during the consultation stage will not be counted as an objection. A formal objection can only be registered following publication of the notice.

If you require this document in a different format, please contact Kelly Small on 01792 636686.

Please note that under the Freedom of Information Act any responses received can be requested and may have to be made public. All views received in writing during the consultation and any subsequent objection period will be forwarded to Councillors that participate in the Cabinet meetings. Correspondence will also be recorded and acknowledged.