



## Proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School Consultation Document

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This document is also available in Welsh.

If you require a paper copy of this document, or a copy of the document in a different format, please contact the Transforming Education Team on 01686 611553, or e-mail [transforming.education@powys.gov.uk](mailto:transforming.education@powys.gov.uk).

# Consultation on the closure of Irfon Valley C.P. School

## Contents

<b>OVERVIEW.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>PART A – THE CASE FOR CHANGE .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1. BACKGROUND .....	5
2. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN POWYS .....	7
3. THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT .....	9
4. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED AT IRFON VALLEY.....	10
5. OPTIONS CONSIDERED .....	10
6. PREFERRED OPTION .....	11
<b>PART B – THE PROPOSAL .....</b>	<b>13</b>
7. OVERVIEW.....	13
8. REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL .....	13
9. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES .....	13
10. RISKS.....	14
11. POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION TIMESCALE .....	14
<b>PART C – LIKELY IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL.....</b>	<b>15</b>
12. IMPACT ON PUPILS.....	15
13. IMPACT ON STAFF .....	15
14. IMPACT ON NURSERY / EARLY YEARS PROVISION .....	16
15. IMPACT ON GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS.....	17
16. IMPACT ON QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION.....	17
17. NEED FOR PLACES AND IMPACT ON AVAILABILITY OF PLACES AND ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS .....	21
18. RESOURCING OF EDUCATION AND OTHER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS.....	23
19. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.....	24
20. SPECIFIC FACTORS IN THE CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURES .....	26
21. EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS .....	27
<b>PART D – CONSULTATION DETAILS.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>APPENDIX A – KEY DATA.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>APPENDIX B – SWOT AND CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>APPENDIX C – IMPACT OF EACH OPTION ON RURAL SCHOOLS CRITERIA .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>APPENDIX D – REASONS WHY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS HAVE NOT BEEN TAKEN FORWARD .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>APPENDIX E – RESPONSE FORM.....</b>	<b>54</b>

# Consultation on the closure of Irfon Valley C.P. School

## OVERVIEW

### 1. The Proposal

Powys County Council is consulting on a proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Irfon Valley C.P. School from the 31st August 2024, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools.

### 2. How to respond to the consultation

You can respond to this consultation by completing the online questionnaire which is available on our website:

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/14958/Irfon-Valley-C.P-School>

A paper copy of the questionnaire is also available at the back of this document. Alternatively, you can respond in writing using the contact details below.

All responses must be received by the **7th December 2023**.

### 3. Contact details

All responses should be sent to the following address:

Transforming Education Team  
Powys County Council  
County Hall  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys  
LD1 5LG

E-mail: [school.consultation@powys.gov.uk](mailto:school.consultation@powys.gov.uk)

Phone: 01686 611553

### 4. What will happen next

Once the consultation period has ended, a consultation report will be produced which will outline the feedback received. The Council's Cabinet will consider the consultation report and will consider whether or not they wish to proceed with the proposals outlined in the consultation document. This is expected to happen early in 2024.

If the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposals, a statutory notice would be published, and there would be a period of 28 days for people to submit objections. The Cabinet would then need to consider another report summarising any objections received and decide whether or not to proceed with implementation.

## PART A – THE CASE FOR CHANGE

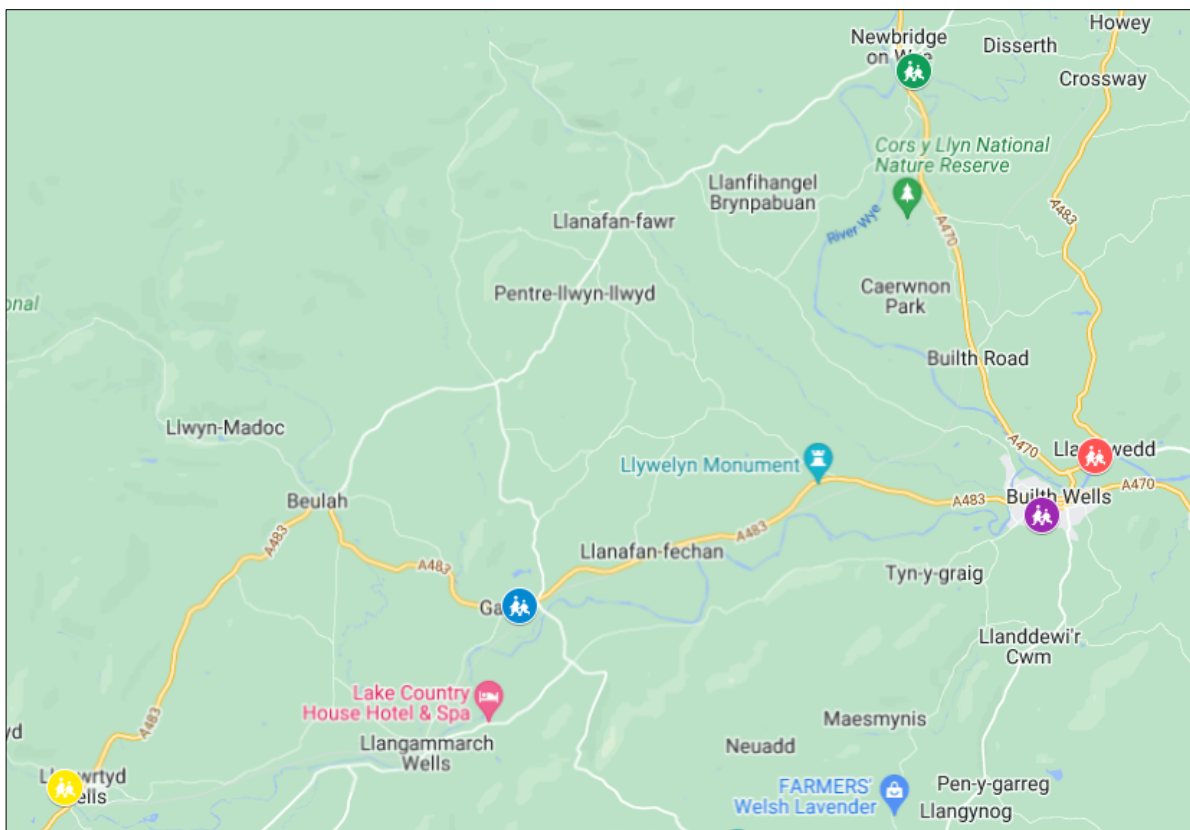
Powys County Council is consulting on a proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Irfon Valley C.P. School from the 31st August 2024, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

### 1. BACKGROUND

Irfon Valley C.P. School is a small English-medium primary school, located in the village of Garth in the Builth Wells catchment in Mid-Powys. Irfon Valley C.P. School has a formal Collaborative Partnership Agreement with Ysgol Dolafon, Llanwrtyd, based on the Collaboration between Maintained Schools in Wales (2008) Act. This means that there is a formal agreement between the schools to share a headteacher. This agreement comes to an end this academic year.

The following map shows the location of Irfon Valley C.P. School and other schools in the area:



Key – Blue: Irfon Valley C.P. School; Red: Llanellwedd C. in W. School; Green: Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School; Yellow: Ysgol Dolafon; Purple: Builth Wells C.P. School.

The following is a summary of key data relating to the school:

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number <sup>1</sup>	Rural School <sup>2</sup>
<b>Irfon Valley C.P. School, Garth, Llangammarch Wells LD4 4AT</b>	Community Primary  School building owned by the council	English-medium	11	Yes

Current pupil numbers<sup>3</sup> at the school are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
<b>Irfon Valley C.P. School</b>	1	6	4	0	1	2	5	19

There has recently been a significantly decrease in pupil numbers at Irfon Valley C.P. School. In July 2023, the school's governing body wrote to the Council, outlining their concerns about the impact of the decrease in pupil numbers on the school's educational and financial sustainability. The governors stated that the lack of wraparound provision at the school, such as an after-school club, was a key factor in some parents' decision to move their children to other schools, along with concern about the small numbers in year groups and the impact of this on their children's education and wellbeing.

Following the communication with the governing body, the Council has carried out an options appraisal exercise to consider options for the school and identify a preferred option for Irfon Valley C.P. School.

The following steps have been undertaken:

- Options appraisal exercise
- Recommendation considered by Transforming Education Officer Group
- Recommendation considered by the Cabinet

On the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2023, the Council's Cabinet considered a report in respect of Irfon Valley C.P. School, and agreed to commence consultation on the following:

*'To close Irfon Valley C.P. School from the 31st August 2024, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools.'*

<sup>1</sup> Powys County Council's Admissions Information and Arrangements 2023-24

<sup>2</sup> Annex F of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018)

(<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/school-organisation-code-second-edition.pdf>)

<sup>3</sup> Teacher Centre, September 2023

## **2. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN POWYS**

Powys is a large, rural authority. Covering a quarter of the landmass of Wales, it contains only 4.2% of the population, making it the most sparsely populated county in Wales. Delivering services across such a large, sparsely populated area is challenging and expensive.

The Council's new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys outlines a number of challenges facing education in Powys, which were identified following engagement with key stakeholders during the autumn term 2019 and spring term 2020.

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing the Council, as outlined in the Strategy:

### **i) High proportion of small schools**

Based on PLASC 2021 figures, there were 33 small primary schools in Powys – this is approximately 43% of the primary provision in the county. 15 schools had fewer than 50 pupils, and for those schools the budget share per pupil is generally higher than the Powys average for primary schools.

### **ii) Decreasing pupil numbers**

Pupil numbers have decreased over the past decade, and are expected to decrease further over the next five years. Pupil numbers in the primary sector in Powys are expected to decrease by approximately 5% by 2026.

### **iii) High number of surplus places**

Based on PLASC 2021 figures, there was 14% surplus capacity in Powys primary schools. With pupil numbers across Powys projected to decrease overall over the coming years, the proportion of surplus places across the county will continue to increase.

### **iv) Building condition**

Whilst the Council has invested in its school's estate through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme and the Asset Management Plan, building condition remains an issue across Powys, with associated maintenance costs.

### **v) Financial pressures**

The Council is currently facing significant financial pressures in general. This is affecting all service areas, including the schools' sector. There are

significant variations in the budget share per pupil across Powys schools, ranging from £3,512 to £11,689 in the primary sector in 2022-23.

**vi) Inequality in access to Welsh-medium education**

In contrast to other areas of Wales, there has been no growth in Welsh-medium pupil numbers in Powys over recent years. Significant changes are needed to the Welsh-medium offer in Powys to reverse the trend of the last few years and ensure that all Powys learners can access comprehensive Welsh-medium provision throughout their educational careers.

**vii) Limited post-14 and post-16 offer**

In September 2019, the Council's Cabinet considered a report on post-16 provision, which outlined a number of challenges facing the sector, including decreasing learner numbers, financial challenges and sustainability of the curriculum offer, including Welsh-medium provision.

**viii) Inequality in access to ALN/SEN provision**

Within Powys, pupils with special education needs (SEN/ALN) attend a range of settings, including special schools, specialist centres, the pupil referral unit (PRU) as well as mainstream schools.

Currently, not all pupils are educated in the setting that meets their needs best, and depending on where pupils live, they have access to a different quality and type of provision.

**ix) Historical lack of political decision making**

The Council's failure to implement a number of high-profile proposals in the past left a legacy in Powys.



### 3. THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

In the summer of 2019, Powys Education Services were inspected by Estyn. The report published by Estyn following the inspection outlined significant concerns regarding the Council's progress on school reorganisation, and includes a recommendation to 'Ensure that the organisation of provision for non-maintained, post-16, Welsh-medium education and secondary education meets the needs of children and young people of Powys.'

Following the publication of the inspection report, the Council carried out a strategic review of schools during 2019-20, which led to the development of a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys. The strategy, which was developed following engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, was approved in April 2020, and was updated and relaunched in July 2022.

The strategy sets out a Vision Statement and Guiding Principles which will underpin the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years.

The Vision Statement is as follows:

***All children and young people in Powys will experience a high-quality, inspiring education to help develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that will enable them to become healthy, personally fulfilled, economically productive, socially responsible and globally engaged citizens of 21st century Wales.***

In order to achieve the vision and guiding principles, the strategy outlines a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years, in order to provide the best possible opportunities to Powys learners now and in the future. One of these aims is to 'improve learner entitlement and experience' and this aim includes an objective to 'rationalise primary provision'.

The current proposal in respect of Lrfon Valley C.P. School is in line with these priorities.

#### 4. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED AT IRFON VALLEY

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing Irfon Valley C.P. School:

##### i) Low pupil numbers

Current pupil numbers<sup>4</sup> at Irfon Valley C.P. School are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
<b>Irfon Valley C.P. School</b>	1	6	4	0	1	2	5	19

The Welsh Government defines a 'small school' as a school with less than 91 pupils. Pupil numbers are significantly lower than this, and the latest projected pupil numbers suggest that pupil numbers are not expected to increase significantly over the coming years.

##### ii) Budget difficulties

The significant reduction in pupil numbers at the school over a relatively short period has caused significant budgetary pressures at the school.

##### iii) High budget share per pupil

Based on the Council's Section 52 Budget Statement for 2023-24, the school's budget share per pupil during 2023-24 was £7,346. This is higher than the Powys primary school average of £4,729. Irfon Valley C.P. Primary School is ranked the 4<sup>th</sup> highest primary school in Powys by budget share per pupil.<sup>5</sup>

##### iv) Combined age classes

The small pupil numbers at the school mean that pupils are taught in whole key stage classes, with foundation learners in one class and older learners in another. Because pupil numbers in each year group are small, it is more difficult to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.

#### 5. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The following options have been identified which could potentially provide a solution:

Option	Description
1	Status quo – continue as a standalone school

<sup>4</sup> Teacher Centre, September 2023

<sup>5</sup> Section 52 Budget Statement 2023/2024

2	Federate Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon
3	Merge Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to establish a new school on two sites
4	Merge Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to establish a new school on the Irfon Valley site
5	Merge Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to establish a new school on the Dolafon site
6	Close Irfon Valley C.P. School, but retain the site as part of Ysgol Dolafon
7	Close Irfon Valley C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools

SWOT analyses have been carried out for each of these options. In addition, the options have been assessed against a number of Critical Success Factors, and the likely impact of each option on quality and standards, the community and travelling arrangements was also considered. These can be found in Appendix B and Appendix C of this document.

## 6. PREFERRED OPTION

Based on the SWOT analyses, the assessment against the Critical Success Factors, the consideration of the likely impact of each option on quality and standards, the community, and travelling arrangements, the preferred option is as follows:

### **Close Irfon Valley C.P. School, pupils to attend their nearest alternative schools**

The reasons for this are:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Irfon Valley
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupils would be taught in classes with peers of similar ages
- Minimal impact on other schools compared with other options
- Opportunity for the Council to realise a capital receipt from sale of the school site

This is the basis for the current proposal on which the Council is consulting.

The proposal is further explored in the following section. The reasons why the other options considered have not been taken forward are summarised in Appendix D of this document.

## PART B – THE PROPOSAL

### 7. OVERVIEW

Powys County Council is consulting on a proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Irfon Valley C.P. School from the 31st August 2024, with pupils to transfer their nearest alternative schools

### 8. REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL

The Council is proposing to close Irfon Valley C.P. School for the following reasons:

- Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Irfon Valley
- Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools
- Revenue saving to the Council
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum
- Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities
- Pupils would be taught in classes with peers of similar ages
- Minimal impact on other schools compared with other options
- Opportunity for the Council to realise a capital receipt from sale of the school site

### 9. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

The advantages and disadvantages of the current proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. are summarised below:

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Irfon Valley</li><li>– Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools</li><li>– Revenue saving to the Council</li><li>– Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum</li><li>– Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities</li><li>– Pupils would be taught in classes with peers of similar ages</li><li>– Minimal impact on any other schools</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Additional travel for those pupils for whom Irfon Valley C.P. School is currently the closest school</li><li>- Additional travel costs</li><li>- Pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School would have to transfer to alternative provision</li><li>- Loss of provision from Garth</li><li>- Impact on the current staff of Irfon Valley C.P. School</li><li>- Impact on the Garth community</li></ul>

– Opportunity for the Council to realise a capital receipt from sale of the school site	
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## 10. RISKS

As with all school reorganisation proposals, there are some risks associated with the proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School.

These are outlined below, along with suggested mitigating actions:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating Actions
Period of uncertainty for Irfon Valley C.P. School if a statutory process is carried out and implemented which might have a negative effect on standards at the school	Medium	Medium	The Council to provide advice and support to the school and governing body to ensure that standards and performance do not deteriorate during the transition period
Uncertainty for staff whilst the process is ongoing	Medium	Medium	Engagement with staff to take place throughout the process and staff to be kept informed of developments

## 11. POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION TIMESCALE

Should Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposals, potential implementation timescales are as follows:

Formal Consultation	26 <sup>th</sup> October 2023 to 7 <sup>th</sup> December 2023
Consultation Report to be published, and considered by Cabinet	February 2024

### If Cabinet decide to proceed:

Publish Statutory Notice (28 days objection period)	February / March 2024
Objection Report to be published and considered by Cabinet	April / May 2024

### If Cabinet approves implementation:

School closes	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2024
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## **PART C – LIKELY IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL**

### **12. IMPACT ON PUPILS**

#### **i) Pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School**

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the proposal, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. It is acknowledged that this would have an impact on pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School, as they would need to transfer to an alternative school. Should the proposal be implemented, the Council would work closely with the current school and the alternative schools to ensure a smooth transition.

As Irfon Valley C.P. School would close and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative provision, additional transport would be required for pupils for whom Irfon Valley C.P. School is currently the closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with Council's home to school transport policy, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on pupils' ability to access after-school activities, and that there could be increased travelling times to school for some pupils.

#### **ii) Pupils attending other schools**

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the proposal, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close and pupils currently attending the school would transfer to their nearest alternative schools.

Should Irfon Valley C.P. School close, pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools. It is expected that this would include Ysgol Dolafon, Builth Wells C.P. School, Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School and Llanelwedd C. in W. School, however some pupils may choose to transfer to other schools. The proposal could also impact on pupils at these schools as they would receive additional pupils. However, the total number of pupils attending Irfon Valley C.P. School is relatively small, therefore it is not anticipated that this would have a significant impact on pupils attending neighbouring schools. The numbers admitted to neighbouring schools would be in line with the admissions number for each school.

### **13. IMPACT ON STAFF**

Should the proposal be implemented, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close. A staff redundancy process would be necessary for staff currently employed at Irfon Valley C.P. School. This would be conducted in line with the relevant HR policies for teaching and support staff. All cleaning and catering staff that are currently employed centrally by the Council would be supported by the relevant HR policies for Council employees.

## **14. IMPACT ON NURSERY / EARLY YEARS PROVISION**

In September 2017, the Council changed the age of admission to primary schools in Powys from “at the start of the term in which they attain their fourth birthday” to “at the start of the school year following his/her fourth birthday”. Following this change, there are no nursery aged pupils attending Irfon Valley C.P. School.

Funded early years provision is provided for pupils at a number of locations across Powys. This includes Rainbow Tots, which is located on the site of Irfon Valley C.P. School. However, Rainbow Tots isn't currently funded for the full 10 hours a week. Due to low numbers at Rainbow Tots and Dolafon Ducklings, both settings offer 7.5 hours a week.

Should the Council proceed with the proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School, it is unlikely that the provision at Rainbow Tots would continue to be viable.

Access to alternative funded early years provision would be available at other providers in the area. This would include the following providers:

### **Dolafon Ducklings (Llanwrtyd Wells)**

Dolafon Ducklings is a non-maintained school run setting, which operates from the site of Ysgol Dolafon in Llanwrtyd Wells. They do not provide the Childcare Offer for Wales. Standards of nursery education and sufficiency of accommodation at this provider are good.

There are 12 seven and a half hours early years education places available at this provider which currently meet the need for early years education in the area.

### **Cylch yn yr Ysgol (Builth Wells)**

Cylch yn yr Ysgol is a non-maintained community run setting which operates from the site of Builth Wells C.P School. They do not provide the Childcare Offer for Wales.

There are 24 ten hours early years education places available at this provider which are currently sufficient to meet the need for early years education in the area.

### **Llanelwedd Little Learners (Llanelwedd)**

Llanelwedd Little Learners is a non-maintained school run setting which operates from the site of Llanelwedd Church in Wales School.

There are 16 ten hours early years education places available at this provider which are currently sufficient to meet the need for early years education in the area.



### **Newbridge-on-Wye 3 Year Old Setting (Newbridge-on-Wye)**

Newbridge-on-Wye 3 year old setting is a non-maintained school run setting which operates from the site of Newbridge Church in Wales School. They also provide the Childcare Offer for Wales.

There are 16 ten hours early years education places available at this provider which are currently sufficient to meet the need for early years education in the area.

## **15. IMPACT ON GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

Implementation of the proposal would result in the closure of Irfon Valley C.P. School and the Governing Body of Irfon Valley C.P. School would be dissolved.

## **16. IMPACT ON QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION**

### **i) Standards, wellbeing and attitudes to learning**

#### **Standards and progress overall, of specific groups and in skills**

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to alternative schools. Should the school close, the nearest schools for most pupils would be Ysgol Dolafon or Builth Wells C.P. School, however some pupils would also be closer to Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School, and pupils may also choose to transfer to Llanelwedd C. in W. School. The Council's view is that all of these schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Irfon Valley C.P. School, so it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on standards and progress overall.

This would also apply in respect of pupils belonging to specific groups, such as pupils eligible for Free School Meals, pupils for whom English is an Additional Language, Looked after Children and pupils with Additional Learning Needs. There are small numbers of pupils with Additional Learning Needs, who are in receipt of free school meals, or who have English as an additional language at Irfon Valley. It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the standards and progress of these pupils. There are currently no Looked after Children or pupils at Irfon Valley C.P. School.

This is also the case in respect of the impact on the skills of all pupils, including literacy, numeracy and ICT. Pupils would transfer to a larger school, which would provide improved opportunities to share staff expertise and resources, and which have an improved ability to monitor pupil progress in these aspects.

## **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning**

In the short term, it is possible that there would be an impact on pupils' wellbeing, as they would need to transfer from Irfon Valley C.P. School to alternative schools in the area. However, the receiving school(s) would provide full support to the pupils during the transition period in order to minimise any negative impact on them.

Closure of Irfon Valley C.P. School could result in additional travel for some pupils, particularly those for whom Irfon Valley is currently the closest school. Irfon Valley is currently the closest school for the majority of pupils attending the school, however, the additional travel time to alternative provision would likely not be excessive.

In the longer term, the intention is that implementation of the preferred option would have a positive impact on pupil wellbeing and attitudes to learning as they would transfer to a larger school with a larger cohort of pupils, providing improved social and extra-curricular opportunities, as well as better access to the new curriculum.

## **ii) Teaching and learning experiences**

### **Quality of teaching**

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools.

Should the school close, the nearest schools for most pupils would be Ysgol Dolafon or Builth Wells C.P. School, however some pupils would also be closer to Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School, and pupils may also choose to transfer to Llanelwedd C. in W. School. The Council has no concerns about the quality of teaching at the nearest alternative schools, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the quality of teaching experienced by pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School.

### **The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum**

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools.

Should the school close, the nearest schools for most pupils would be Ysgol Dolafon or Builth Wells C.P. School, however some pupils would also be closer to Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School, and pupils may also choose to transfer to Llanelwedd C. in W. School. The Council's view is that the nearest alternative schools would provide a curriculum which is at least equivalent to

that currently provided at Irfon Valley C.P. School. Pupils would be transferring to larger school, therefore the expectation would be that there would be an improvement in the breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum provided to pupils. Pupils would also be able to work in groups of similar ability pupils. However, it is acknowledged that some of the schools pupil may transfer to also meet the Welsh Government definition of a small school.

### **The provision of skills**

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools.

Should the school close, the nearest schools for most pupils would be Ysgol Dolafon or Builth Wells C.P. School, however some pupils would also be closer to Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School, and pupils may also choose to transfer to Llanelwedd C. in W. School. The Council has no concerns about the provision of skills at these alternative schools, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on the provision of skills for pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School.

### **iii) Care support and guidance**

#### **Tracking, monitoring and the provision of learning support, personal development and safeguarding**

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools.

It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on tracking, monitoring, the provision of learning support, personal development, or safeguarding for pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School.

### **iv) Leadership and management**

#### **Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers, self-evaluation processes and improvement planning**

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools.

The headteacher of Irfon Valley C.P. School is also headteacher of Ysgol Dolafon, therefore there would be continuity in leadership for pupils who

choose to transfer to Ysgol Dolafon. The Council's view is that leadership and management at Ysgol Dolafon, as well as the other alternative schools, would be at least as good as the current arrangements at Irfon Valley C.P. School.

### **Professional learning**

It is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would impact on professional learning opportunities at the school. Staff currently employed at Irfon Valley C.P. School would be subject to a management of change process.

### **Use of resources**

Irfon Valley is currently projecting a carry forward surplus of £31k at the end of financial year 2023-24 decreasing to a cumulative deficit of £122k by 31 March 2026. Finance and school improvement officers are working with the school to identify ways to reduce the deficit, but this is increasingly challenging due to the combination of low pupil numbers and high inflation on running costs the school is experiencing. When small schools encounter any unexpected pressures such as long-term sickness or building maintenance issues, then the risk of falling into a deficit is higher as they have more limited scope to reduce costs in other areas to compensate.

One of the main challenges facing the Powys schools infrastructure is the proportion of small schools in the county. This, coupled with significant surplus places, results in higher premises related costs per pupil. Irfon Valley C.P. School is one the smallest schools in the county in terms of numbers on roll, and the budget share per pupil at the school is therefore significantly higher than the Powys primary school average.

Should the preferred option be implemented, pupils would transfer to a larger school, ensuring a more effective use of both schools' and the Council's resources.

#### **v) Impact on vulnerable groups, including children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) / Additional Learning Needs (ALN)**

Implementation of the emerging preferred option would impact on any vulnerable pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School, including any pupils with ALN/SEN.

Based on PLASC 2023 information, 18.6% of pupils at Irfon Valley C.P. School had additional learning needs.

Whilst the emerging preferred option would impact on these pupils, as they would be required to move to an alternative school, there is no reason to believe that Irfon Valley C.P. School would not be able to meet their needs.

Should the option be implemented, the Council would work with Irfon Valley C.P. School and the receiving schools to ensure an effective transition for any vulnerable children, including children with ALN/SEN, and their families.

**vi) Impact on the schools' ability to deliver the full curriculum in the foundation stage and each key stage, including the quality of curriculum delivery and the extent to which the structure or size of the school is impacting on this**

Should the emerging preferred option be implemented, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools, therefore Irfon Valley C.P. School would no longer need to deliver the curriculum to any key stages.

This would also result in an increase in pupil numbers at neighbouring schools, which would improve receiving schools' ability to deliver the curriculum in all key stages. However, depending on the school's class structure and current breakdown of pupils, it is possible that some adjustments would be needed to the school's class structure to accommodate additional pupils.

The number of pupils transferring to alternative schools is likely to be very small, so it is not anticipated that this would impact on the ability of these schools to deliver the full curriculum to pupils.

**vii) Impact on other schools**

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the preferred option, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close, and pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative schools.

Whilst it is possible that this could have some impact on receiving schools, particularly upon receiving additional pupils in the short term, the total number of pupils at Irfon Valley C.P. School is relatively small. Therefore, it is not anticipated that this would have a negative impact on the quality and standards in education (to include standards, wellbeing and attitudes to learning, teaching and learning experiences, care support and guidance, and leadership and management) at neighbouring schools. In some cases, it is possible that implementation of the proposal would have a positive impact on quality and standards in education at the alternative schools, as it would lead to an increase in pupil numbers and the opportunity to provide enhanced opportunities to pupils.

**17. NEED FOR PLACES AND IMPACT ON AVAILABILITY OF PLACES AND ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS**

The preferred option is for pupils to transfer from Irfon Valley C.P. School to their nearest alternative schools.

The following table provides information on the number of spaces available and building condition of the nearest alternative schools:

School	Capacity	Current pupil numbers <sup>6</sup>	Available spaces	Available capacity	Building Condition	Building Suitability
Builth Wells C.P. School	249	205	44	17.7%	B	A/B
Ysgol Dolafon	69	57	12	17.39%	B	B/C
Llanelwedd C. in W. School	103	102	1	1%	C	B/C
Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School	107	116	-9	-8.4%	A	A

This shows that, whilst there is pressure on places at Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School and Llanelwedd C. in W. School, there are sufficient places available at Builth Wells C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to accommodate pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School.

However, it is acknowledged that Builth Wells C.P. School is a dual stream school, so the available places would be split across the two streams.

Irfon Valley C.P. School's building is categorised as Condition C. The quality of accommodation at the alternative schools is categorised as Condition C or better.

**i) Is the alternative provision sufficient to meet existing and projected demand for schools of the same language category and (if relevant) designated religious character?**

There are sufficient places of the same language category available in the local area to accommodate Irfon Valley C.P. School's current and projected pupil numbers.

Irfon Valley is a community primary school. Alternative community primary provision is available at Ysgol Dolafon and Builth Wells C.P. School.

**ii) What will be the nature of journeys to alternative provision and resulting journey times for pupils including SEN pupils?**

For the majority of pupils, the closest alternative schools would be:

School	Distance from Irfon Valley	Approx. travel time
Ysgol Dolafon	6.5 miles	12 minutes
Builth Wells C.P. School	6.0 miles	10 minutes

<sup>6</sup> Teacher Centre, September 2023

Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School	9.1 miles	17 minutes
Llanelwedd C. in W. School	6.8 miles	12 minutes

The travel times above are the approximate travel times from Irfon Valley C.P. School to the alternative schools, however the distance and travel time from individual pupils' homes to alternative schools would be different.

Analysis has shown that the distances and travel times to alternative provision would not be in excess of 45 minutes for primary pupils. This includes journeys for ALN/SEN pupils.

## 18. RESOURCING OF EDUCATION AND OTHER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

### i) What effect will the proposals have on surplus places in the area?

Implementation of the preferred option would lead to an overall reduction in surplus places in the area.

### ii) Do the proposals form part of the local authority's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Investment Programme and contribute to the delivery of sustainable schools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and to the better strategic management of the school estate?

The review of Irfon Valley C.P. School does not form part of the local authority's 21st Century Schools Investment Programme.

However, the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys identifies a number of issues relating to the overall Powys schools' estate, including a high proportion of small schools, a high number of surplus places and issues with building condition. The Strategy includes a strategic objective to 'Reconfigure and rationalise primary provision', which aims to address these issues, to ensure better strategic management of the Powys school estate. The review of Irfon Valley C.P. School is being carried out in order to meet this objective.

### iii) What are the recurrent costs of proposals over a period of at least 3 years and is the necessary recurrent funding available?

The recurrent costs of this proposal would be the increased transport costs, which are currently estimated to be an additional £46k per annum as detailed in section (iv) below. This has been included in the delegated revenue costing and is funded through savings in other areas of the formula in relation to this proposal.

### iv) Will additional transport costs be incurred as a result of the proposal?

It is estimated there would be additional transport costs of £46k per annum, based on pupils' current location and assuming that pupils will transfer to the next nearest school.

**v) What are the capital costs of the proposal and is the necessary capital funding is available?**

It is not anticipated that capital funding would be required in order to implement the emerging preferred option. As indicated in the table in section 17 (i) above, there are sufficient places at neighbouring schools to accommodate all current and projected pupils.

**vi) What is the scale of any projected net savings (taking into account school revenue, transport and capital costs)**

It is estimated that this would result in annual revenue savings to the Council of around £75k. This overall figure comprises a potential saving on Schools' delegated funding of £121k and estimated additional transport costs of £46k.

**vii) Without the proposals, would the affected schools face budget deficits?**

The school is currently projecting a carry forward surplus of £31k at the end of financial year 2023-24 rising to a cumulative deficit of £122k by 31 March 2026.

**viii) Will any savings in recurrent costs be retained in the local authority's local schools budget?**

Any savings would be reinvested in the Council's corporate budget and any reinvestment in the schools' system would be agreed as part of the annual budget planning cycle.

**ix) Will the proceeds of sales (capital receipts) of redundant sites be made available to meet the costs of the proposal or contribute to the costs of future proposals which will promote effective management of school places?**

Irfon Valley C.P. School is owned by the Council, therefore there is the opportunity for the Council to realise a capital receipt from the sale of the school site.

## **19. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

**i) Impact on educational attainment among children from economically deprived backgrounds**



Implementation of the preferred option would impact on any pupils from economically deprived backgrounds currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School. All pupils currently attending the school, including any from economically deprived backgrounds, would need to transfer to alternative schools. Free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with Council's home to school transport policy, however it is acknowledged that there would be an impact on families due to the requirement to travel to school events, which could have a greater impact on children from economically deprived backgrounds.

Based on PLASC 2023 information, 17.6% of pupils attending Irfon Valley C.P. School were eligible for free school meals, therefore it is likely that implementation of the proposal would impact on some pupils from economically deprived backgrounds, however the number of pupils is likely to be small.

The Council's view is that Irfon Valley's neighbouring schools would provide education for pupils which is of at least equivalent quality as that provided at Irfon Valley C.P. School, therefore it is not anticipated that implementation of the preferred option would have a negative impact on educational attainment, including for any children from economically deprived backgrounds.

#### **i) Land and Buildings**

##### **Comparison of the quality of accommodation at the school from which pupils would be transferred**

Information about the quality of accommodation at Irfon Valley C.P. School and other schools to which pupils may transfer is provided in Appendix B.

##### **Information on any building works necessary to ensure that transferred children can be accommodated**

No building works are necessary as there is sufficient capacity at nearby schools to accommodate all pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School.

##### **Details of any potential transfer or disposal of land or buildings that may need to occur as a result of the proposals**

Irfon Valley C.P. School building is owned by the Council, therefore no transfer or disposal of buildings is necessary.

##### **Is/are the school/schools involved subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the proposals, for example in relation to the use or disposal of land?**

Irfon Valley C.P. School is not subject to any trust which may be affected in relation to the use or disposal of land.

**ii) Walking routes to school**

Should the proposal be implemented, walking routes which are currently established for Irfon Valley C.P. School would no longer be required.

For those pupils for whom Irfon Valley C.P. School is currently the closest school, additional travel would be required to access alternative provision. For these pupils, it is unlikely that walking or cycling to the alternative school would be possible.

**iii) School Admissions**

Should the proposal be implemented, admissions to nearest alternative schools in Powys would continue to be administered by the Council in accordance with the Council's Admissions Policy, which is available on-line at: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/1158/Applying-for-a-School-Place>.

**iv) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)**

The proposal is to close an English-medium school. The proposal is not linked to the targets in the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

The proposal would not expand or reduce the availability of Welsh language provision.

**20. SPECIFIC FACTORS IN THE CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURES**

**i) Whether the establishment of multi-site schools might be considered as a means of retaining buildings, or the reasons for not pursuing this option**

A range of options have been considered in respect of Irfon Valley C.P. School, these are outlined in Appendix C of this document, as well as an assessment of each option which includes a summary of the weaknesses/threats associated with each.

Pupil numbers at Irfon Valley C.P. School are low, and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years. Establishing a multi-site school would not address this issue.

**ii) Whether alternatives to closure, such as clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools, might be considered or the reasons for not pursuing these as an alternative**

Various alternatives to closure have been considered, however, pupil numbers at Irfon Valley C.P. School are very low, and are expected to continue to decrease over the coming years. Clustering, collaboration or federation would not address this.

**iii) Whether the possibility of making fuller use of the existing buildings as a community or educational resource could be explored**

The Council's view is that making more use of the existing building as a community or educational resource would not address the issues identified in respect of Irfon Valley C.P. School.

Pupil numbers at the school are low and are not projected to increase significantly over the coming years.

**iv) The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school-based facilities which are used by the local community)**

Implementation of the preferred option would mean that there would no longer be provision in Garth. It is acknowledged that this would have a negative impact on the Garth community, including the loss of primary provision from the village of Garth, and a possible loss of any community facilities associated with the school from the village.

An initial community impact assessment has been carried out, with input from the school to identify the potential impact on the community. This will be updated throughout the process to reflect any feedback received and will be considered by the Council's Cabinet as part of the decision-making process.

**v) How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported**

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventual implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process, to ensure full engagement with their new schools. The nature of this support will depend on the needs of the parents/pupils; however, this could include effective transition arrangements with the receiving school to ensure pupils transition is positive.

## **21. EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

Draft impact assessments have been carried out in respect of the proposal. These will be updated following the consultation period to reflect any additional issues raised. The assessments are available on the Council's website:

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/14958/Irfon-Valley-C.P-School>

A summary of the assessments is provided below:

**i) Equalities impact assessment**

Should the proposal be implemented, Irfon Valley C.P. School would close, and pupils would attend their nearest alternative schools.

This would have a significant impact on pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School, including any pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that attend that school, as some additional travel would be required in order to attend their nearest alternative school.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal would impact on pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that attend the school, it is to be noted that alternative schools, being larger than Irfon Valley, should be able to deliver the new curriculum more effectively, offer more extra-curricular activities for pupils, and also offer a greater amount of wraparound care to support parents. Therefore, the negative impacts of additional travel are likely to be mitigated by the benefits of attending a larger school. In addition, there is no reason to believe that alternative schools would not be equipped to meet the needs of pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups that would be affected, including pupils with Additional Learning Needs, pupils eligible for Free School Meals, and Looked After Children.

**ii) Impact on the community**

Should there be no school in Garth, pupils would transfer to alternative schools. These would be larger schools, and the expectation is that an increased number of activities would be available to pupils. However, it is acknowledged that pupils would need to travel to the alternative schools, which could impact on their ability to access activities, particularly where these take place after school.

Should the proposal be implemented, there would be no school provision in the village of Garth. The information provided above indicates that there is some community use of the Irfon Valley School building, including as a meeting place for parents. There is, however, a village hall located in Garth, therefore community events and activities could continue to take place in the village.

It is also acknowledged that implementation of the proposal would result in additional travel to school for pupils for whom Garth is currently their closest school. Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the home to school transport policy, it is acknowledged that there could be an impact on some pupils' ability to access after school activities, and could impact on the ability of parents to take part in school events, meetings etc.

## **PART D – CONSULTATION DETAILS**

### **Who will we consult with?**

The Council will consult with a range of stakeholders as required by the School Organisation Code, which include the following:

- Parents, carers and guardians at Irfon Valley C.P. School and other schools which may be affected by the proposal
- Governors at Irfon Valley C.P. School and other schools which may be affected by the proposal
- Staff at Irfon Valley C.P. School and other schools which may be affected by the proposal
- Pupils at Irfon Valley C.P. School and other schools which may be affected by the proposal
- The Welsh Minister for Education
- Local Powys Councillors
- Town and Community Councils in the local area
- The Senedd Members for Brecon and Radnorshire and for the Mid & West Wales region
- The MP for Brecon and Radnorshire
- Estyn
- Teaching and staff trade unions
- Mid Wales Education Partnership
- The Police & Crime Commissioner for Dyfed Powys
- Nursery providers in the local area
- Mudiad Meithrin
- The Powys Children and Young People's Partnership

Consultation with pupils will take place in accordance with the Welsh children and young people's national participation standards<sup>7</sup>.

### **The consultation period**

The consultation period will commence on the 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and will end on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

### **The statutory process**

Consultation on this proposal will follow the guidelines set out by the Welsh Government in the revised School Organisation Code which became operational on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018. The process is summarised below:

#### **i) Consultation**

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<sup>7</sup> <https://gov.wales/children-and-young-peoples-national-participation-standards>

Consultation will start on the 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and end on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023. Feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and a consultation report will be produced and shared with stakeholders.

It is important to note that responses made to the consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal, and that only objections can be registered following publication of a statutory notice.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the consultation report and the feedback received during the consultation period, and will decide whether to proceed with the proposal, to make changes to the proposal, or to not proceed with the proposal. If the Cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

It is anticipated that the Consultation Report will be considered by the Cabinet early in 2024.

## **ii) Statutory notice**

If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal, statutory notices would be published after the Cabinet meeting. There would then be a period of 28 days for people to submit written objections.

If there were objections, the Council would publish an objection report providing a summary of the objections and the Council's response to them before the end of 7 days beginning with the day of the local authority's determination. Only written objections submitted during the statutory notice period will be considered as objections and included in this report. Comments submitted as part of the consultation period would not be counted as objections. Should stakeholders wish their consultation responses to be considered as objections, they would need to be re-submitted in writing during the statutory notice period.

A further report would be presented to the Council's Cabinet, which they would consider alongside the objection report, in order to decide whether or not to approve the proposal.

It is anticipated that a final decision would be made by April/May 2024.

## **iii) Implementation**

If the Council's Cabinet were to approve the proposal, it would be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date.

## **How to respond to the consultation**

A consultation response form is attached to this document. An online version is also available on the Council's website:

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/14958/Irfon-Valley-C.P-School>

Alternatively, you can respond in writing.

Completed forms and other written responses should be sent to the following address:

*Transforming Education Team, Powys County Council, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells,  
LD1 5LG*

*E-mail: [school.consultation@powys.gov.uk](mailto:school.consultation@powys.gov.uk)*

All correspondence should be received by the **7<sup>th</sup> December 2023**.

If you have any further questions about this proposal, you can contact the Transforming Education Team using the above contact details, or by phoning (01686) 611553.

## APPENDIX A – KEY DATA

Key data about the affected schools is provided below:

### 1. Irfon Valley C.P. School

#### General information

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number <sup>8</sup>	Rural School? <sup>9</sup>
<b>Irfon Valley C.P. School</b>	Community Primary School building owned by the Council	English medium	11	Yes

#### Pupil numbers

##### i) Current pupil numbers<sup>10</sup>

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
<b>Irfon Valley C.P. School</b>	1	6	4	0	1	2	5	19

##### ii) Historical pupil numbers<sup>11</sup>

	Jan. 2016	Jan. 2017	Jan. 2018	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020	Jan. 2021	Jan. 2022	Jan. 2023
<b>Irfon Valley C.P. School</b>	55	52	50	46	45	45	42	34

##### iii) Projected pupil numbers<sup>12</sup>

	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Jan. 2026	Jan. 2027
<b>Irfon Valley C.P. School</b>	30	33	33	33	36

<sup>8</sup> Powys Admissions Information and Arrangements 2023-24

<sup>9</sup> Annex F of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018)

(<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/school-organisation-code-second-edition.pdf>)

includes a list of 'rural schools', to which the 'Presumption against the closure of rural schools' applies.

<sup>10</sup> Teacher Centre, September 2023

<sup>11</sup> PLASC

<sup>12</sup> Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC 2022 & Birth Rates. 2023 projections are not yet available.



iv) **Projected pupil numbers (Finance projections)<sup>13</sup>**

	Jan. 2023	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Jan. 2026	Jan. 2027
Irfon Valley C.P. School	33	19	17	N/A	N/A

**Building Capacity and Condition**

i) **Capacity**

	Current Capacity <sup>14</sup>	Currently Filled	Surplus Capacity
Irfon Valley C.P. School	60	19	41 (68%)

ii) **Building condition<sup>15</sup>**

	Condition	Suitability	Sufficient
Irfon Valley C.P. School	C Poor	B/C Satisfactory/Poor	Yes

**Quality and standards of education**

i) **Estyn**

Irfon Valley C.P. School was inspected by Estyn in June 2022.

The recommendations were as follows:

- R1 Address the health and safety issue identified by the school
- R2 Ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced, and that it meets pupils' needs
- R3 Provide regular opportunities for all pupils to write creatively, at length, across a broad range of genres
- R4 Strengthen the governance of the school, to ensure that the governing body fulfils the statutory requirements and develops its role as a critical friend

**Financial information**

<sup>13</sup> Powys Finance Projections based on data provided by the schools. Provided by the Finance team in September 2023.

<sup>14</sup> Welsh Government School Places Return – August 2022

<sup>15</sup> Premises Data Return to Welsh Government – 2022

## Cost per pupil<sup>16</sup>

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
<b>Irfon Valley C.P. School</b>	£242,000	£7,346	£7,000	£0

## Equalities information

### i) National identity<sup>17</sup>

	British	English	Irish	Scottish	Welsh	Other	Not supplied	Refused
<b>Irfon Valley C.P. School</b>	32.6%	4.7%	0.0%	0.0%	53.5%	2.3%	7%	0%

### ii) Ethnic Group<sup>18</sup>

	White British	Other known ethnicity	Information not yet obtained
<b>Irfon Valley C.P. School</b>	95.3%	4.7%	0.0%

### iii) English as an Additional Language<sup>19</sup>

	% EAL	% EAL A/B/C
<b>Irfon Valley C.P. School</b>	2.3%	2.3% A 0% B 0% C

### iv) Free School Meals<sup>20</sup>

	% Eligible for FSM
<b>Irfon Valley C.P. School</b>	17.6%

<sup>16</sup> Section 52 Budget Statement, 2023/24

<sup>17</sup> PLASC 2023

<sup>18</sup> PLASC 2023

<sup>19</sup> PLASC 2023

<sup>20</sup> PLASC 2023

v) **Looked after children<sup>21</sup>**

	Looked after children
Irfon Valley C.P. School	0.0%

vi) **Additional Learning Needs (ALN)<sup>22</sup>**

	None	School Action	School Action Plus	Statement	School IDP	LA IDP	% ALN
Irfon Valley C.P. School	81.4%	11.6%	4.7%	0.0%	2.3%	0.0%	18.6%

**2. Other schools that could be affected**

Should the proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School be implemented, pupils would transfer to their nearest alternative school.

The expectation is that the number of pupils transferring to each school would be small, and therefore the impact on these schools would not be significant. However, information about schools to which pupils may transfer is provided below:

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number <sup>23</sup>
<b>Builth Wells C.P. School</b>	Community Primary School	Dual stream	40
<b>Ysgol Dolafon</b>	Community Primary School	English medium	9
<b>Llanelwedd C. in W. School</b>	Church in Wales Primary School	English medium	14
<b>Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School</b>	Church in Wales Primary School	English medium	17

**Pupil Numbers**

i) **Current pupil numbers<sup>24</sup>**

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total

<sup>21</sup> PLASC 2023

<sup>22</sup> PLASC 2023

<sup>23</sup> Powys Schools – Powys County Council Admission Arrangements and Information 2024/25

<sup>24</sup> Teacher Centre, October 2023

<b>Builth Wells C.P. School</b>	25	33	31	31	28	35	22	205
<b>Ysgol Dolafon</b>	6	8	7	7	8	6	10	52
<b>Llanelwedd C. in W. School</b>	9	9	13	15	20	17	10	93
<b>Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School</b>	15	17	20	16	12	17	10	107

ii) **Historical pupil numbers<sup>25</sup>**

	<b>Jan. 2016</b>	<b>Jan. 2017</b>	<b>Jan. 2018</b>	<b>Jan. 2019</b>	<b>Jan. 2020</b>	<b>Jan. 2021</b>	<b>Jan. 2022</b>	<b>Jan. 2023</b>
<b>Builth Wells C.P. School</b>	262	255	227	220	206	201	207	209
<b>Ysgol Dolafon</b>	77	67	65	55	54	57	60	49
<b>Llanelwedd C. in W. School</b>	85	92	105	102	108	117	109	93
<b>Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School</b>	121	132	129	122	126	129	118	100

iii) **Projected pupil numbers (Birth rate)<sup>26</sup>**

	<b>Jan. 2023</b>	<b>Jan. 2024</b>	<b>Jan. 2025</b>	<b>Jan. 2026</b>	<b>Jan. 2027</b>
<b>Builth Wells C.P. School</b>	203	190	193	178	168
<b>Ysgol Dolafon</b>	45	48	48	49	52
<b>Llanelwedd C. in W. School</b>	97	95	97	97	88
<b>Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School</b>	103	97	96	87	88

**Building Capacity and Condition**

i) **Capacity**

<sup>25</sup> PLASC 2023

<sup>26</sup> Powys Schools Service Projections (R – Yr6) based on PLASC 2022 & Birth Rates. 2023 projections are not yet available.

	<b>Current Capacity<sup>27</sup></b>	<b>Currently Filled<sup>28</sup></b>	<b>Surplus Capacity</b>
<b>Builth Wells C.P. School</b>	249	205	17.7%
<b>Ysgol Dolafon</b>	69	57	17.39%
<b>Llanelwedd C. in W. School</b>	103	102	1%
<b>Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School</b>	107	116	-8.4%

ii) **Building condition<sup>29</sup>**

	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Suitability</b>
<b>Builth Wells C.P. School</b>	B	A/B
<b>Ysgol Dolafon</b>	B	B/C
<b>Llanelwedd C. in W. School</b>	C	B/C
<b>Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School</b>	A	A

**Standards of Education**

i) **Estyn<sup>30</sup>**

	<b>Builth Wells C.P. School</b>
<b>Date of Inspection</b>	March 2017
<b>The School's current performance</b>	Adequate
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	Adequate
<b>How good are outcomes?</b>	Adequate
<b>How good is provision?</b>	Adequate
<b>How good are leadership and management?</b>	Adequate
<b>Outcome of Estyn review, November 2018</b>	The school is judged to have made sufficient progress in addressing the

<sup>27</sup> Powys Welsh Government School Places Return, 2022

<sup>28</sup> Teacher Centre, September 2023

<sup>29</sup> Premises Data Return to Welsh Government – 2022

<sup>30</sup> Estyn website

	recommendations from the Section 28 inspection. The school has been removed from the list of schools requiring Estyn review. There will be no further monitoring activity in relation to this inspection.
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<b>Ysgol Dolafon</b>	
<b>Date of Inspection</b>	February 2017
<b>The School's current performance</b>	Good
<b>The school's prospects for improvement</b>	Good
<b>How good are outcomes?</b>	Good
<b>How good is provision?</b>	Good
<b>How good are leadership and management?</b>	Good
<b>What happens next?</b>	The school will draw up an action plan that shows how it is going to address the recommendations.

<b>Llanelwedd C. in W. School</b>	
<b>Date of Inspection</b>	November 2022
<b>Recommendation 1</b>	Address the health and safety issue raised during the inspection
<b>Recommendation 2</b>	Increase leadership capacity by devolving responsibilities across all levels of staff
<b>Recommendation 3</b>	Ensure that teachers provide sufficient challenge for pupils of all abilities
<b>Recommendation 4</b>	Improve pupils' Welsh oracy skills
<b>What happens next?</b>	The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

<b>Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School</b>	
<b>Date of Inspection</b>	June 2018
<b>Standards</b>	Good
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	Good
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	Good
<b>Care, support, and guidance</b>	Good
<b>Leadership and management</b>	Good
<b>What happens next?</b>	The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection

### **Financial information**

#### **i) Cost per pupil<sup>31</sup>**

<sup>31</sup> Section 52 Budget Statement 2023/2024

	Budget share per school	Budget share per pupil	Notional SEN budget	Non ISB funds devolved to the school
<b>Builth Wells C.P. School</b>	£280,000	£4,470	£30,000	£0
<b>Ysgol Dolafon</b>	£280,000	£5,709	£13,000	£0
<b>Llanelwedd C. in W. School</b>	£432,000	£4,496	£15,000	£0
<b>Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School</b>	£468,000	£4,103	£50,000	£0

### Equalities Information<sup>32</sup>

#### i) National identity

	British	English	Irish	Scottish	Welsh	Other	Not supplied	Refused
Builth Wells C.P. School	20.6%	14.4%	1.4%	0.0%	62.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
Ysgol Dolafon	75.9%	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	12.1%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Llanelwedd C. in W. School	89.8%	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	3.7%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School	30.1%	18.6%	0.0%	0.0%	34.5%	1.8%	1.8%	0.9%

#### ii) Ethnic Group

	White British	Other known ethnicity	Refused/Information not yet obtained
Builth Wells C.P. School	98.1%	1.4%	0.5%
Ysgol Dolafon	91.4%	1.7%	6.9%
Llanelwedd C. in W. School	98.1%	1.9%	0.0%
Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School	78.8%	6.2%	15.1%

#### iii) English as an Additional Language

	% EAL	% EAL A/B/C
Builth Wells C.P. School	0.0%	N/A
Ysgol Dolafon	8.6%	3.4%/0.0%/3.4%
Llanelwedd C. in W. School	1.9%	0.9%/0.9%

<sup>32</sup> PLASC 2023

Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School	0.0%	N/A
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**iv) Free School Meals**

	Number of pupils who had a free school meal on Census day
Builth Wells C.P. School	12.4%
Ysgol Dolafon	24.5%
Llanelwedd C. in W. School	16.1%
Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School	12.0%

**v) Pupils in care**

	Number of pupils in care
Builth Wells C.P. School	0.0%
Ysgol Dolafon	3.7%
Llanelwedd C. in W. School	0.0%
Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School	0.9%

**vi) SEN/ALN**

	School Action	School Action Plus	IDP
Builth Wells C.P. School	13.4%	4.8%	6.7%
Ysgol Dolafon	20.7%	8.6%	0.0%
Llanelwedd C. in W. School	8.3%	7.4%	3.0%
Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School	2.7%	0.0%	0.9%



## APPENDIX B – SWOT ANALYSIS AND CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

### 1. SWOT ANALYSES

SWOT analyses for each of the options identified in section 5 are provided below:

#### Option 1: Status quo – continue as a standalone school

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would retain provision in Garth</li> <li>- There would be no additional transport costs</li> <li>- No requirement for a reorganisation process</li> <li>- No change for staff</li> <li>- No impact on pupils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupil numbers at Irfon Valley C.P. School would continue to be low</li> <li>- Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision</li> <li>- Would still need to maintain the Irfon Valley building</li> <li>- Would not reduce surplus places</li> <li>- Would not lead to a financial saving</li> <li>- Would not address the high budget per pupil</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunities for further collaboration with Ysgol Dolafon to provide increased opportunities for pupils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupils numbers at the school could continue to decrease</li> </ul>

#### Option 2: Federate Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would retain provision in both locations</li> <li>- There would be no additional transport costs</li> <li>- More opportunities could be provided to pupils and staff</li> <li>- Pupils at both schools would continue to attend school in the same location</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupil numbers at Irfon Valley C.P. School would continue to be low</li> <li>- Pupils would still be taught separately</li> <li>- Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision</li> <li>- Would still need to maintain the two buildings</li> <li>- Would not reduce surplus places</li> <li>- Would not lead to a financial saving</li> <li>- Would not address the high budget per pupil at Irfon Valley</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunities for further collaboration between the two schools to provide increased opportunities for pupils</li> <li>- More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff</li> <li>- Opportunity for shared staffing across the federation</li> <li>- Opportunity to realise some financial efficiencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupil numbers at Irfon Valley C.P. School could continue to decrease</li> </ul>
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**Option 3: Merge Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to establish a new school on two sites**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would retain provision in both locations</li> <li>- More opportunities could be provided to the pupils</li> <li>- There would be no additional transport costs</li> <li>- Could provide a financial saving to the Council</li> <li>- Opportunity for all staff to secure positions in the new school</li> <li>- More opportunities for staff from working in a larger school</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop a new identity for the new school, bringing together the two communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupil numbers at Irfon Valley C.P. School would continue to be low</li> <li>- Pupils would still be taught separately</li> <li>- Would still need to maintain two buildings</li> <li>- Would not reduce surplus places</li> <li>- Would not lead to a financial saving</li> <li>- Both schools would lose their identity</li> <li>- Would impact on staff at both schools</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunities for further collaboration across the sites</li> <li>- More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff</li> <li>- Opportunity to realise some financial efficiencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupil numbers on the Irfon Valley site could continue to decrease</li> </ul>

**Option 4: Merge Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to establish a new school on the Irfon Valley site**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Would result in the establishment of one larger school</li> <li>– Would retain provision in Garth</li> <li>– All pupils would attend school in the same location</li> <li>– A larger school would mean that more opportunities could be provided to pupils</li> <li>– No additional travel for pupils currently attending Irfon Valley</li> <li>– Could provide a financial saving to the Council</li> <li>– Opportunity for all staff to secure positions in the new school</li> <li>– More opportunities for staff from working in a larger school</li> <li>– Opportunity to develop a new identity for the new school, bringing together the two communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Loss of provision in Llanwrtyd</li> <li>– Impact on the Llanwrtyd community</li> <li>– Possible impact on co-located community facilities in Llanwrtyd</li> <li>– Additional travel for pupils currently attending Ysgol Dolafon</li> <li>– Additional transport costs</li> <li>– Less convenient for the majority of pupils currently attending the two schools</li> <li>– Pupils currently attending Ysgol Dolafon would have to transfer to a new site</li> <li>– The Irfon Valley building does not currently have capacity to accommodate Dolafon pupils</li> <li>– The new school would still be a 'small school' based on the Welsh Government definition</li> <li>– Would not be attractive to Ysgol Dolafon</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Opportunity for the Council to realise a capital receipt from sale of the school site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Unpopular with the Llanwrtyd community</li> </ul>

**Option 5: Merge Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to establish a new school on the Dolafon site**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Would result in the establishment of one larger school</li> <li>– Would retain provision in Llanwrtyd</li> <li>– All pupils would attend school in the same location</li> <li>– A larger school would mean that more opportunities could be provided to pupils</li> <li>– No additional travel for pupils currently attending Ysgol Dolafon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Loss of provision in Garth</li> <li>– Additional travel for pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School</li> <li>– Additional transport costs</li> <li>– Pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School would have to transfer to a new site</li> <li>– Loss of provision from Garth</li> <li>– Impact on the Garth community</li> <li>– May not be attractive to Irfon Valley C.P. School</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Could provide a financial saving to the Council</li> <li>- Opportunity for all staff to secure positions in the new school</li> <li>- More opportunities for staff from working in a larger school</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop a new identity for the new school, bringing the two communities together</li> <li>- More convenient for the majority of pupils currently attending the two schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The new school would still be a 'small school' based on the Welsh Government definition</li> <li>- Inconvenient location for Irfon Valley pupils</li> <li>- Some Irfon Valley pupils would be closer to other schools</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity for the Council to realise a capital receipt from sale of the school site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unpopular with the Garth community</li> <li>- Irfon Valley pupils may choose to transfer to alternative schools instead of travelling to Llanwrtyd</li> </ul>

**Option 6: Close Irfon Valley C.P. School, but retain the site as part of Ysgol Dolafon**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would retain provision in Irfon Valley</li> <li>- Would build on the collaboration that is already in place thanks to the shared Headteacher</li> <li>- There would be no additional transport costs</li> <li>- Pupils would continue to attend school in the same location</li> <li>- Minimal impact on staff employed at Ysgol Dolafon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Small numbers would remain at the Irfon Valley site</li> <li>- Irfon Valley pupils would still be taught separately</li> <li>- Would still need to maintain the Irfon Valley building</li> <li>- Would not reduce surplus places</li> <li>- Staff employed at Irfon Valley School would have to go through a Management of Change process</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensuring equal opportunities to all pupils due to age range of pupils in mixed age classes</li> </ul>

**Option 7: Close Irfon Valley C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Would address the issue of low pupil numbers at Irfon Valley</li> <li>– Would reduce the Council's overall surplus capacity in primary schools</li> <li>– Revenue saving to the Council</li> <li>– Pupils would attend larger schools, which would be better equipped to meet the requirements of the new curriculum</li> <li>– Pupils would attend larger schools, which could provide a wider range of educational and extra-curricular opportunities</li> <li>– Pupils would be taught in classes with peers of similar ages</li> <li>– Minimal impact on any other schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Additional travel for those pupils for whom Irfon Valley is currently the closest school</li> <li>– Additional transport costs</li> <li>– Pupils currently attending Irfon Valley School would have to transfer to alternative provision</li> <li>– Loss of provision from Garth</li> <li>– Impact on the current staff of Irfon Valley School</li> <li>– Impact on the Garth community</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Opportunity for the Council to realise a capital receipt from sale of the school site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Likely to be unpopular with the Garth community</li> </ul>

## 2. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The options have also been assessed against the following Critical Success Factors:

Critical Success Factor	Description
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The option must align with the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030, to include the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Address the challenges facing education in Powys, as outlined in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030</li> <li>- Align with the Vision and Guiding Principles outlined in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030</li> <li>- Align with the Strategic Aims and Objectives outlined in the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2030</li> </ul> </li> <li>● The option must optimise the benefits of the Council’s Transforming Education Programme</li> </ul>
2 – Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The option must optimise the resources available for the delivery of learning</li> <li>● The option must provide value for money in the delivery of learning</li> </ul>
3 – Potential achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The option must be achievable within current legislation</li> <li>● The option must be operationally achievable</li> <li>● The option must be physically achievable</li> </ul>
4 – Potential affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The extent to which the option is affordable within the Council’s forecasted revenue</li> <li>● The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted capital funding available to the Council</li> </ul>

Each option has been assessed against the Critical Success Factors based on the following criteria:

✓ – Meets    ? – Could meet    x – Does not meet

The assessment for each option is as follows:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
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1 – Strategic fit and business needs	x	x	x	✓	✓
2 – Value for money	x	x	x	?	?
3 – Potential achievability	✓	✓	✓	x	✓
4 – Potential affordability	x	x	x	✓	✓
<b>Total ✓</b>	1	1	1	2	3
<b>Total x</b>	3	3	3	1	0
<b>Outcome</b>	Discount	Discount	Discount	Discount	<b>Preferred</b>

## APPENDIX C – IMPACT OF EACH OPTION ON RURAL SCHOOLS CRITERIA

The likely impact of each option on quality and standards, the community and travelling arrangements is considered below:

Option	Likely impact on quality and standards	Likely impact on the community	Likely impact of different travelling arrangements
<p><b>Option 1:</b> <b>Status quo – continue as a standalone school</b></p>	<p>There would be no impact on quality and standards – pupils would continue to access the current provision at Irfon Valley.</p>	<p>There would be no impact on the community – provision would continue to be available in Garth.</p>	<p>There would be no impact on travel arrangements – pupils would continue to attend Irfon Valley C.P. School.</p>
<p><b>Option 2:</b> <b>Federate Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon</b></p>	<p>There would be very little impact on quality and standards – pupils would continue to access the current provision at Irfon Valley. Pupil numbers at Irfon Valley would continue to be low, however, more opportunities may be provided for collaboration between the schools.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Garth.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school in the same location, thus there would be no additional transport costs.</p> <p>Some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>
<p><b>Option 3:</b> <b>Merge Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to establish a new school on two sites</b></p>	<p>This option would retain provision in Garth, as both sites would be retained as part of the merger.</p> <p>There would be enhanced opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff, however, ensuring equal opportunities to all pupils in mixed age range classes would continue to be difficult.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Garth. However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there may be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make-up of the new governing body.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Irfon Valley C.P. School.</p> <p>Some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>



	<p>Merging the two schools to establish a new school is likely to result in a school where the quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p>		
<p><b>Option 4: Merge Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to establish a new school on the Irfon Valley site</b></p>	<p>This option would retain provision in Garth, as both sites would be retained as part of the merger.</p> <p>There would be enhanced opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff, however, ensuring equal opportunities to all pupils in mixed age range classes would continue to be difficult.</p> <p>Merging the two schools to establish a new school is likely to result in a school where the quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal – provision would continue to be available in Garth. However, one new governing body would be responsible for both sites, therefore there may be a perceived reduction in community involvement in management of the school, depending on the make-up of the new governing body.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Ysgol Dolafon, particularly those for whom Dolafon is currently the closest school.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council’s Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities/events.</p>
<p><b>Option 5: Merge Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to establish a new school on the Dolafon site</b></p>	<p>This option would remove provision from Garth, with pupils to attend school on the Dolafon site.</p> <p>There would be enhanced opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff, however, ensuring equal opportunities to all pupils in mixed age</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Garth as there would no longer be provision in Garth.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to eligible pupils in accordance with the Council’s Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for</p>

	<p>range classes would continue to be difficult.</p> <p>Merging the two schools to establish a new school is likely to result in a school where the quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p>		<p>parents in order to access school activities/events.</p>
<p><b>Option 6: Close Irfon Valley C.P. School, but retain the site as part of Ysgol Dolafon</b></p>	<p>This option would retain provision in Garth, building upon the relationship that is already in existence with Ysgol Dolafon.</p> <p>There would be enhanced opportunities for networking and sharing good practice between staff, however, ensuring equal opportunities to all pupils in mixed age range age classes would continue to be difficult.</p> <p>It is anticipated that implementation of this option would mean that pupils attend provision where the quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision.</p>	<p>The impact on the community would be minimal. Provision would continue to be available in Garth. However, the site would be managed by Ysgol Dolafon, so there could be a perceived reduction in community involvement in the management of the school.</p> <p>In addition, it is possible that joint school activities would take place on the larger Ysgol Dolafon site, which could lead to a reduction in activity on the Irfon Valley site.</p>	<p>Pupils would continue to attend school on the current site of Irfon Valley C.P. School.</p> <p>Some additional travel may be required between schools in order to access activities and events.</p>
<p><b>Option 7: Close Irfon Valley C.P. School, pupils to attend nearest alternative schools</b></p>	<p>The nearest schools to Irfon Valley are Ysgol Dolafon and Builth Wells C.P. School. Some pupils would also live closer to Newbridge-on-Wye C. in W. School. Should pupils transfer to any of</p>	<p>There would be a significant impact on the community of Garth, as provision would no longer be run within the village.</p>	<p>Additional travel would be required for pupils currently attending Irfon Valley C.P. School.</p> <p>Whilst free home to school transport would be provided to</p>

	these schools, it would mean that pupils would be attending provision where the quality and standards are at least as good as the current provision at Irfon Valley.		eligible pupils in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy, there would also be an additional travel requirement for parents in order to access school activities/events.
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## APPENDIX D – REASONS WHY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS HAVE NOT BEEN TAKEN FORWARD

Option	Description	Reason for discounting
1	<b>Status quo – continue as a standalone school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupil numbers at Irfon Valley C.P. School would continue to be low</li> <li>- Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision</li> <li>- Would still need to maintain the Irfon Valley building</li> <li>- Would not reduce surplus places</li> <li>- Would not lead to a financial saving</li> <li>- Would not address the high budget per pupil</li> <li>- Does not meet all the Critical Success Factors</li> </ul>
2	<b>Federate Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupil numbers at Irfon Valley would continue to be low</li> <li>- Irfon Valley pupils would still be taught separately</li> <li>- Would not lead to a rationalisation of primary provision</li> <li>- Would still be required to maintain the Irfon Valley building</li> <li>- Would not reduce surplus places</li> <li>- Would not lead to a financial saving</li> <li>- Would not address the high budget per pupil</li> <li>- Does not meet all the Critical Success Factors</li> </ul>
3	<b>Merge Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to establish a new school on two sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupil numbers at the Irfon Valley site would continue to be low</li> <li>- Irfon Valley pupils would still be taught separately</li> <li>- Would still need to maintain the Irfon Valley building</li> <li>- Both schools would lose their identity</li> <li>- Would also impact on staff at Ysgol Dolafon</li> <li>- Does not meet all the Critical Success Factors</li> </ul>
4	<b>Merge Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to establish a new school on the Irfon Valley site</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possible impact on co-located community facilities in Llanwrtyd</li> <li>- Less convenient for the majority of pupils currently attending the two schools</li> <li>- The Irfon Valley building does not currently have capacity to accommodate Dolafon pupils</li> <li>- The new school would still be a ‘small school’ based on the Welsh Government definition</li> <li>- Would not be attractive to Ysgol Dolafon</li> <li>- Does not meet all the Critical Success Factors</li> </ul>
5	<b>Merge Irfon Valley C.P. School and Ysgol Dolafon to establish a new</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May not be attractive to Irfon Valley C.P. School</li> <li>- The new school would still be a ‘small school’ based on the Welsh Government definition</li> </ul>

	<b>school on the Dolafon site</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inconvenient location for Irfon Valley pupils</li> <li>- Some Irfon Valley pupils would live closer to other schools</li> <li>- Does not meet the Critical Success Factors</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<b>Close Irfon Valley C.P. School, but retain the site as part of Ysgol Dolafon</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Numbers on the Irfon Valley site would remain low</li> <li>- Irfon Valley pupils would still be taught separately</li> <li>- Irfon Valley pupils would still be taught in classes with a wide age range</li> <li>- The Irfon Valley building would still need to be maintained</li> <li>- Would not reduce surplus places</li> <li>- Staff employed at Irfon Valley School would have to go through a Management of Change process</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX E – RESPONSE FORM

### PROPOSAL TO CLOSE IRFON VALLEY C.P. SCHOOL

Powys County Council is consulting on a proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Irfon Valley C.P. School from the 31st August 2024, with pupils to transfer to their nearest alternative schools

A consultation document which provides more information about the proposals is available on the Council's website at <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/14958/Irfon-Valley-C.P-School>. This consultation response form gives you the opportunity to let us know your view on the Council's proposal. The response form can also be completed online – a link to the online form is available by following the link above.

The closing date for this consultation is **7<sup>th</sup> December 2023**. All responses must be received by this date.

For information on how the Transforming Education Team protects and uses personal information collected during consultation processes, please see the Transforming Education privacy notice, which is available via the following link:  
<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/9803/Transforming-Education-Privacy-Notice>

#### Part 1 – About You

**1. Please indicate how you are associated with the schools affected by this consultation:**

- |                          |                            |                          |  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Parent, carer, or guardian | <input type="checkbox"/> | Prospective parent, carer, or guardian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Governor                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Member of staff                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Member of the community    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Organisation e.g. Community Council    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | No association             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other                                  |

If you said 'Other' or are responding on behalf of an organisation, please specify:

\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Please specify which school you are associated with:**

- |                          |                          |                          |                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Irfon Valley C.P. School | <input type="checkbox"/> | Another school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | No association           |                          |                |

If you are associated another school, please specify which school:

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Please provide your postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_



**5. Are there any other options you think the Council should be considering for Irfon Valley C.P. School?**

Please outline any alternative options below, including a description of the option(s) you think the Council should be considering:

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**Impact on people with protected characteristics**

**6. Do you have any comments or concerns about the impact of the proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010?**

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

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## Copy of Consultation Report

7. **At the end of the Consultation Period, the Council will publish a Consultation Report, summarising the issues raised in the consultation responses received and providing the Council's response to these issues.**

Would you like to be informed of the publication of the consultation report?

 Yes No

If you answered 'Yes', please provide an e-mail address or postal address:

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### **Part 3 – Equalities Information (Optional)**

We want to ensure that we include all sectors of the community in our consultation, and are requesting that you provide this information to enable us to identify whether the consultation has been inclusive. However, these questions are optional.

#### **8. How old are you?**

 Under 16 16-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-74 75-84 85+ Prefer not to say

#### **9. What is your gender?**

 Male Female Gender Fluid Non-Binary Gender neutral Prefer not to say

#### **10. Can you understand, speak, or write Welsh?**

 Yes No Prefer not to say

#### **11. If you have school-aged children, are they entitled to receive free school meals?**

 Yes No Prefer not to say

#### **12. If you have school-aged children, do they have any additional learning needs?**

 Yes No Prefer not to say

**13. Do you consider yourself to be disabled?**

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

**14. What is your ethnic group?**

White

Asian

Black, African or Caribbean

Mixed

Gypsy/Traveller

Other

Prefer not to say

**Part 4 - Impact on the Welsh language**

We are required by the Welsh Language Standards to consider the effects of any policy decisions on the Welsh Language. Please note these questions are optional.

**15. In your opinion, what positive or adverse effects would the proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School have on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

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**16. How do you think the proposal to close Irfon Valley C.P. School could be formulated or revised so that it would have positive / more positive effects, or so that it would not have adverse effects / less adverse effects on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

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**Thank you for completing this questionnaire.**

Completed questionnaires should be sent to the following address, to arrive **no later than the 7<sup>TH</sup> December 2023.**

*Transforming Education Team, Powys County Council, County Hall, Llandrindod Wells, LD1 5LG*

*E-mail: [school.consultation@powys.gov.uk](mailto:school.consultation@powys.gov.uk)*