



Newsletter

St David's 3-16 School

5 April 2017

Welcome to the second newsletter in relation to the new 3-16 school for the St David's peninsula. **Despite some speculation to the contrary, we wish to re-assure you that Ysgol Dewi Sant will not be closing prior to September 2018, at which time the new 3-16 school will commence.** Until that time we aim to ensure that pupils, parents, governors and staff are kept informed of developments right up until that time.

Temporary Governing Body

The temporary governing body for the new school has now been established. The members of the Temporary Governing Body and governor types are listed below, with Mr David Halse and Mrs Lindsey-Anne Richards being elected Chair and Vice-Chair respectively.

The temporary governing body has chosen to proceed to recruit nationally for a headteacher and the advertisement for this post will be published by Easter 2017.

Name	Governor Type
Canon Dorrien Davies	Foundation
Mrs Rosemary Davies	Foundation
Rt Revd Wyn Evans	Foundation
Mrs Bethan Goodson	Foundation
Mr James Harris	Foundation
Mrs Glenys James	Foundation
Mrs Jennifer Kitchell	Foundation
Mrs Brenda Lloyd	Foundation
Mrs Katherine Pearce	Foundation
Mr Stephen Probert	Foundation
Miss Moyra Skenfield	Foundation
Mr Oliver Waterer	Foundation
Cllr David Halse	Local Authority
Ms Heidi Holland	Local Authority
Mrs Kathryn Docker	Parent
Mrs Lindsey-Anne Richards	Parent
Mrs Denise Ingram	Staff
Mrs Josephine Jones	Teacher
Mrs Rachael Thomas	Teacher



Ysgol Dewi Sant



Solva Community School

Solva Community School—

Temporary classroom

In relation to the Solva site, we are pleased that the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority has given its consent to extend the planning consent for the mobile classroom for a further five years i.e. until January 2022. This is particularly pleasing, as the temporary Governing Body will be able to plan its configuration of the school based upon the current accommodation.

School Development—Ysgol Dewi Sant site

On 21st March 2017, the Council issued the following statement to members of the Ysgol Dewi Sant governing body:

As part of its 21st Century Schools Programme, the Council is in the process of developing a scheme which would result in a part redevelopment of the Ysgol Dewi Sant site. A preferred scheme has been identified which would result in the demolition of an existing school block to be replaced by new accommodation; this would result in the rationalisation of capacity identified as part of the original case for change for St David's, i.e. the removal of surplus places.

However, in order to carry out the above there is a need to consider how to operate the school during the demolition and construction phases. As you are aware the school occupies a constrained site which offers little flexibility; consequently, the Council is considering various pupil decanting options, including a temporary re-location to another school site. In considering such options, the Council is mindful of the need to minimise disruption and to ensure the safety of pupils and staff alike.

Currently, the Council is discussing the possibility of utilising part of the Tasker Milward school site in Haverfordwest for this purpose—some preliminary discussions are taking place with the Trustees of the Tasker Milward and Picton Trust and the Headteacher. A number of practical issues have been identified and these will need to be resolved before a decision has been made.

Please note that no decisions have yet been made on this matter and that only preliminary discussions are taking place.

The views of the governing body are welcomed.

Following this statement, there has been much speculation in the community and social media of the Council's intentions in relation to education provision in St David's, much of which has been incorrect. The Questions and Answers that follow have been produced in order to allay fears and to explain the process which is being undertaken.

A number of options are being explored at this time and these will be shared with the temporary governing body of the new school and the Ysgol Dewi Sant governing body prior to asking for their preferred course of action.

Part redevelopment of the Ysgol Dewi Sant site

Common Questions & Answers arising following the statement prepared for the Ysgol Dewi Sant Governing Body on 21 March 2017

Item	Question/Issue	Response
1.	<p>The Council want to permanently close the YDS School.</p> <p>Utterly despicable and shocking thing it would be to see the city of culture of 2021 a city lacking a culture of education.</p> <p>There will be real concern within the community that this is all a hoax and that they are losing their school, as such I think there is a potential that some/a lot of parents will jump ship and place their kids in different schools.</p>	<p>The Council and Welsh Government have approved plans for a new 3-16 school for the St David's peninsula and the emphasis of the current work is about building new parts to the school, which will ensure its long term viability and deliver a C21 education.</p> <p>As a reminder, the position in relation to the organisation of schools in the St David's peninsula is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The closure of Ysgol Dewi Sant, Ysgol Bro Dewi VA and Solva CP schools on 31st August 2018; 2. Establish a new 3-16 Church in Wales VA school on 1st September 2018 by utilising the sites of the existing schools; 3. To provide Post 16 provision for the above school in a new sixth form centre as part of a formal collaboration between the County Council and Pembrokeshire College.
2.	YDS will be closed for a year.	<p>No! - Ysgol Dewi Sant will remain open until 31st August 2018 at which time it will be closed as part of the implementation of the new 3-16 school. The intention is that the school will remain open: the method by which the redevelopment work will be carried out is under review, and it is very likely that any option will involve disruption to teaching spaces, and the need for some sort of management. Because of the very disruptive nature of some works, the Council is considering the possibility of a decant off-site. This radical option would keep the whole school together as a single entity.</p>
3.	The Council is considering moving pupils from Ysgol Dewi Sant to other schools in Pembrokeshire after what has been described as 'a health and safety issue' was identified.	<p>No! – The school does have asbestos contained as part of its construction; this has been known about for a considerable time and it is managed properly in accordance with current requirements, and is safe. Pupils are not being exposed to asbestos.</p> <p>The idea of considering a decant only comes about when considering how to build a substantial new element to the school. The disruption involved in building work means that it is considered worthwhile considering a decant option.</p>

4.	<p>Alarmed that no consultation has been undertaken to discuss this with the students and parents.</p> <p>The complete lack of transparency and discussion is an appalling blight on the “trust” that had been building.</p>	<p>The discussion with the governing body (GB) was a step in the process of consultation and there is no intention to prevent discussion. However, the processes involved are not straightforward, for example, the permanent layout is something the new School’s GB should have oversight of. But the existing GB are responsible for the existing school in the meantime. In addition, in order to provide the information needed to stakeholders, we need to actually undertake some due diligence (such as talking with Tasker Milward). This means we do not have all the answers in place, but are actually telling people at an early stage what we are doing in order to be part of that process. This is not a lack of engagement, but being honest and transparent whilst involving people as soon as we are able to.</p>
5.	<p>How is a future GB supposed to manage the sites from an albeit alien location that has not been part of the plan since day one.</p>	<p>The existing GB will manage the school up to Sept 2018, and therefore over the transition period when construction is under way.</p> <p>Should the decision be made to temporarily decant pupils and staff to the Tasker Milward site, Ysgol Dewi Sant will remain as an entity, led by the Ysgol Dewi Sant GB and the Headteacher.</p>
6.	<p>I would strongly suggest that the ongoing merger is not able to take place with this development on the table.</p>	<p>The statutory arrangements are already in place, and the new school will be established in September 2018. A temporary GB has already been appointed and is working towards overseeing the necessary arrangements.</p>
7.	<p>That all Year 7 pupils due for admission to YDS this autumn 2017, should go to Ysgol Bro Dewi, dubbing their classroom as a 'Middle School'. I believe shipping them to Haverfordwest is just not on, having managed to secure Roch and together with Croesgoch, the potential loss of pupils is too risky.</p> <p>That the rest of the pupils, if possible, should stay on campus at YDS during 2017/2018, but temporary classrooms or similar should be placed in the existing car park to the front of the school and joining the school.</p> <p>Parking for staff could go into the playing field across the road, but the coaches could still arrive in the remaining front part of the school car park.</p>	<p>This idea was considered, but it was felt that breaking up the school would also be detrimental to the cohesion of the school and the teaching.</p> <p>This has been considered, but would mean loss of parking (which could be re-provided on the playing fields opposite), and the need to deal with bus drop off and pick up. This, in itself is very disruptive, but needs to be read “in the round” of the overall disruption. There is also a cost to this, which means it would be lost to the “finished” scheme. We wish to ensure that the cost of such temporary arrangements are minimised in order to ensure that capital funding is directed towards the building.</p>
8.	<p>That the school block due to be demolished, be taken down and disposed of, if at all feasible, within the time scale of the summer holiday months of 2017, if extra weeks are needed either end to accomplish this, then this could be factored in, thus avoiding health & safety issues.</p>	<p>The demolition of the teaching block is considered to take up to 20 weeks, because of the removal of asbestos, so cannot be completed in a school holiday period. Even if this were possible, there would remain significant health & safety hazards with the new build arrangements which would require substantial mitigation measures.</p>

9.	If necessary the building could be implemented in stages.	This would significantly span out the timescale for the new build, and add even more time to the amount of disruption; it is not favoured. As part of Band A of the Council's 21 st Century Schools Programme, the project would need to be completed by April 2019.
10.	Practically, all vehicles, deliveries, materials associated with constructing the building could be directed round to the leisure centre car park, thus not conflicting on safety.	Not agreed. There would still be a requirement for movement of pupils to the sports facilities in the gym and playing fields, and also to the retained Technology Block at the rear of the site. In addition, the temporary arrangements would also likely to require the relocation of parking and bus drop off / pick up points, again adding hazards that need to be mitigated.
11.	Kids are very resilient and can adapt; upheavals either way are inevitable, but I am not convinced that taking a strong based community school away from their area is a good idea, on so many levels.	Noted – but this is why due diligence is ongoing at this time to review the decant option.
12.	I think it will put huge strain and uncertainty on the staff.	Noted – but this will also be the case with any temporary arrangements on site; perhaps more so, in terms of disrupted teaching lessons. This would also be the case where the school is broken up, i.e. if Year 7 pupils are taught separately.
13.	I am very concerned that the stress factor on displacing the kids to a new environment 15 miles away, may have a negative effect on their confidence. (I don't believe that a comparison can be made between kids choosing to travel to YDS from outside the catchment area/and those not choosing to go outside of it).	Noted – however, the school would remain as Ysgol Dewi Sant. Pupils would still have their existing teachers, albeit at a different site.
14.	I think it will strengthen the sense of 'this is our school' so we will stay and make sure its okay. I believe strongly that it is better, not to displace the pupils for a whole year, at a totally different location. I think it is better for them to embrace the challenges staying put in St Davids, if at all practically possible. If they are moved, I think it will cause a great deal of uncertainty on both the pupils and parents. This decanting will cause enormous disruption to {children's} education at a critical time in their development.	Noted – but pupils and staff will encounter substantial disruption if they remain on the YDS site whilst demolition and construction work takes place. The decant option is only being considered because it resolves a lot of the health and safety concerns, keeps the school together as one entity, and shortens the overall construction period.
15	Students at other schools/colleges have not been shipped off during the rebuilding of units, rather the school has adapted to any temporary situation, so could this realistically be managed at YDS.	Unfortunately, the YDS site is particularly constrained, and the impacts of the proposed new build option on the confined site are such that it lends itself toward consideration of the decant option.

16	<p>It is unfair and unjust to give us parents and children such little notice. I am not debating or questioning the arguments for and against the proposed changes to education in the area, I am however outraged that we should be given so little notice.</p>	<p>The reorganisation of the school has already been the subject of much formal consultation. It has been stated that as part of the reorganisation that there would be some capital investment in the new school. It has not been possible to advance the planning much to date, given the former statutory consultation process, the need to confirm match funding from the Diocese, and the need to set up a temporary governing body. It is accepted that timescales are short, but this is an opportunity to modernise the school with C21 facilities and it is based on a process which has been in the public domain for some time.</p>
17	<p>The council states "Please note that no decisions have yet been made on this matter and that only preliminary discussions are taking place". So the council admits that it is considering a major building project and massive disruption to pupils but hasn't finalised a plan when there are only months to go before the start of the works. Is this really how a county council should be doing business. If it isn't finalised then it can be delayed.</p> <p>Is the council not duty bound to provide more notice than 5 months?</p>	<p>In order to undertake due diligence, it is necessary to enter into discussions with various people / bodies. This is being done transparently. However, it remains necessary to undertake some scheme development work, to ensure that the scheme overall remains on programme; this is being done at risk, pending final decisions on decant. If we had developed "full and final" proposals and then presented them, we would be accused of a <i>fait accompli</i> – in this process we are trying to engage openly, and as quickly as possible, whilst also trying to deliver improvements.</p> <p>No. The Council is duty-bound to ensure that due diligence is given to minimising the disruption to the school. The Council is sharing with stakeholders the information it has and is trying to work with the school and community to move this forward.</p>
18.	<p>Children only get one chance in this life, they need stability and not disruption in order to get the best results. Pembrokeshire County Council is failing us.</p> <p>The Council is failing to provide my children with stability and a good standard of education.</p>	<p>Noted. The whole purpose behind the reorganisation in the peninsula and the redevelopment of the YDS site is to raise standards.</p> <p>The Council and Welsh Government has already approved the establishment of a new 3-16 school for the St David's peninsula. As part of this, the Council is considering options which complement this and which are intended to sustain or improve current performance.</p>
19.	<p>The £4 million capital cost is "up in the air" and not confirmed.</p>	<p>Funding for the preferred project is in place as part of Band A of the 21st Century Schools Programme and this amounts to £4 million. We have a preferred scheme, i.e. to demolish an existing block and to replace it with 21st century accommodation, but as part of that we have to consider decanting pupils.</p>

Any questions arising from this newsletter should be sent to

Huw Jones
Planning School Places & Admissions
County Hall
Haverfordwest
SA61 1TP

01437 764551
Huw.jones@pembrokeshire.gov.uk