

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**LEARNING AND SKILLS SCRUTINY**

**18<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** County Councillor Pete Roberts  
Cabinet Member for a Learning Powys

**REPORT TITLE:** School admissions and home to school transport  
catchment review

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision by Cabinet

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## **1. Purpose**

1.1: This report outlines the outcome of the schools' catchment online consultation <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/12206> undertaken between the 7<sup>th</sup> of February 2022 and 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

The report is supported by the following appendices:

Appendix A – Consultation response – Powys Schools Catchments

Appendix B – Admissions Information and Arrangements 2022-23

Appendix C - Schools admissions code – 2013

Appendix D – Powys Home to School Transport Policy v1.1 Feb 2022

Appendix E – Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 - [Learner Travel \(Wales\) Measure 2008 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/uk/2008/12/1)

Appendix F – Learner Travel – Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance – June 2014

Appendix G – Catchment area maps for consideration

1.2: The proposed catchment maps will be implemented for admissions and transport purposes from September 2024 onwards.

## **2. Background**

2.1 In recent years, many learners and their families have found themselves in a difficult situation due to the difference in legislation and entitlement for school admissions as outlined in the Schools Admissions Code (005/2013)<sup>1</sup> and the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>[School admissions code | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/school-admissions-code)

<sup>2</sup>[Learner Travel \(Wales\) Measure 2008 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/uk/2008/12/1)

2.2 Learners and their families can choose the school they feel most suitable for their child, and if there is capacity within the schools' admissions number, they will be allocated a place. However, if this is not their nearest suitable school, then they are not entitled to free home to school transport unless they wish to access Welsh Medium provision, in which event they will receive free transport to the nearest school with Welsh Medium provision.

Schools admissions code:

2.3 Admission authorities **must** make arrangements enabling the parents of children in their area and, in the case of sixth form admissions, young people, **to express a preference for a school** and to give reasons for that preference. Where a parent or young person expresses a preference according to those arrangements, LAs and governing bodies **must** comply with that preference, subject to the exceptions set out in the 1998 Act<sup>3</sup>.

Transport entitlement:

2.4 Learners receiving primary education will be entitled to free transport if they live **two miles or more from their nearest suitable maintained school**; pupil referral unit; or non-maintained special school. The exception is if the authority has arranged for the learner to board at or near the school.

2.5 A similar entitlement is provided for learners receiving secondary education, but in this case if they live **three miles or more from their nearest suitable maintained school**; pupil referral unit; non-maintained special school or independent school named in a statement of special educational needs.

2.6 Powys's home to school transport states that transport will be provided 'for learners who ordinarily reside in Powys to attend their nearest suitable school or catchment school'<sup>3</sup>.

2.7 Traditionally within Powys, all catchment areas have been based on a learners' nearest school. However, in many instances across the county, this has led to catchment boundaries splitting villages and hamlets and overlooking the natural geography or topography of the area such as natural boundaries formed by rivers.

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<sup>3</sup> Powys Home to School Transport Policy v1.1 02/2022

### 3. The Case for Change

3.1 In line with Powys' Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020 - 2030, the Education Support Services department has identified the need for the admissions and transport teams to work alongside each other to improve the learner entitlement and experience whilst applying for a school place and home to school transport.

3.2 This catchment area review aims to support learners and their families by improving understanding and transparency of learner entitlement. By setting clear catchment areas for each school, the Local Authority will be able to implement the online application system designed so that learners and their families can submit their home address and postcode to identify their nearest schools (including Welsh medium provision) and transport entitlement. This will allow for informed decisions by learners and their families before applying for a school place.

3.3 Each primary catchment map (see appendix G) has been developed based on the following principles:

- i. nearest school
- ii. minor adjustments for local geography and topography

3.4 To support and improve the transition from primary to secondary school, each secondary catchment map has been formed from the amalgamation of each of the secondary cluster feeder primary schools (See Appendix B - Admissions Information and Arrangements document).

3.5 An initial informal consultation with Local Members, Schools and Governing Bodies was undertaken between 23.11.2021 and 17.12.2021 to help inform the public consultation. In total 58 responses were received from a Local Members, Schools and Governing Bodies.

3.6 The online public consultation which ran between 7<sup>th</sup> of February 2022 and 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022 allowed for schools, governing bodies, local members, community councils, parents, governor consultative committee, admissions forum and members of the public to comment on the proposed catchment areas.

3.7 As part of the consultation the following questions were asked for each individual primary and secondary English and Welsh medium catchment maps:

- Name of school
- Name of respondent
- Role of respondent (optional question)
- If in agreement with the catchment map (Yes / No)
- Written feedback for each catchment map
- Email address or respondent (optional question)



3.8 In total 430 individual responses were received. Responses were received from the following:

- County Councillors / Local members
- Community Councillors and Councils
- Headteachers
- Deputy Headteachers
- Headteachers
- Governors and Governing Bodies
- Teachers
- Support Staff
- Parents
- Grandparents
- Learners
- No category specified

All responses have been carefully considered along with nearest school, natural transport routes and links and topography and geography of area to develop the following recommendations. (See Appendix A Consultation response – Powys Schools Catchments)

3.9 Of the responses, 48 (11%) agreed with the proposed catchment areas and 382 (89%) disagreed. Most of the disagreements fell into the following categories:

- request to make amendments to the catchment boundary
- requests for a school to change clusters or to provide greater flexibility
- request to provide greater choice if the nearest school was a Welsh medium school
- request to review the vacant seat policy

3.10 Comments were received in respect of 42 of the 88 school's catchment areas. No responses were received for 46 of Powys' primary, secondary or all age schools. Table A on pages 5-9 provides a summary of the responses received from each school.

3.11 Not all responses contained written responses, only an acknowledgment of their agreement or disagreement with the catchment areas.

**Table A: Summary of responses received by each school**

School	School Type	Number of responses	In agreement	In disagreement	Key themes
Abermule CP	Primary	0			
Archdeacon Griffiths	Primary	1	0	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catchment boundary</li> <li>• Vacant seats</li> </ul>
Arddleen CP School	Primary	1	1	0	
Berriew CP	Primary	0			
Brecon HS	Secondary	4	1	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catchment boundary</li> <li>• Vacant seats</li> </ul>
Brynhafren CP	Primary	0			
Builth Wells CP	Primary	0			
Buttington / Trewern CP	Primary	0			
Caersws CP School	Primary	7	2	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language of provision</li> <li>• Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Carreghofa CP	Primary	0			
Churchstoke CP	Primary	0			
Clyro CiW Controlled School	Primary	6	2	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catchment boundary</li> <li>• Vacant seats</li> </ul>
Cradoc CP	Primary	6	3	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Crickhowell CP	Primary	0			
Crickhowell HS	Secondary	63	2	61	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catchment boundary</li> <li>• Out of County learners</li> </ul>
Crossgates CP	Primary	0			
Forden CiW	Primary	0			
Franskbridge CP	Primary	0			
Gladestry CiW Controlled School	Primary	0			
Guilsfield CP	Primary	0			
Gwernyfed HS	Secondary	6	2	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catchment boundary</li> </ul>

School	School Type	Number of responses	In agreement	In disagreement	Key themes
Hay on Wye CP	Primary	0			
Irfon Valley CP	Primary	0			
Knighton CiW Controlled School	Primary	0			
Leighton CP	Primary	0			
Llanbedr CiW (Aided) Primary School	Primary	0			
Llanbedr CiW School	Primary	1	0	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Llanbister CP School	Primary	2	0	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Llandinam CP	Primary	1	0	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Llandysilio CiW School	Primary	1	0	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Llanelwedd CiW Voluntary Controlled School	Primary	1	1	0	
Llanfaes CP	Primary	0			
Llanfechain CiW	Primary	0			
Llanfihangel Rhydithon CP	Primary	0			
NB: School due to close 31.08.2023. Amended maps for neighbouring schools to be consulted on as part of admissions arrangements					
Llangattock CiW Aided School	Primary	0			
Llangedwyn CiW Voluntary Controlled School	Primary	0			
Llangors CiW Controlled School	Primary	9	4	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Llangynidr CP	Primary	120	0	120	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Llanidloes CP	Primary	8	0	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> <li>Language provision</li> </ul>
Llanidloes HS	Secondary	33	1	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant CP	Primary	1	1	0	
Maesydderwen	Secondary	3	2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Out of county learners</li> </ul>

School	School Type	Number of responses	In agreement	In disagreement	Key themes
Maesyrhandir CP	Primary	1	1	0	• Catchment boundary
Montgomery CiW	Primary	0			
Mount Street CP Infants	Primary	0			
Mount Street CP Junior	Primary	0			
Newbridge on Wye CiW Controlled School	Primary	2	0	2	• Catchment boundary
Newtown High School (John Beddoes Campus)	Secondary	1	0	1	• Catchment boundary
Newtown High School (Newtown Campus)	Secondary	2	0	2	• Catchment boundary
Penygloddfa CP	Primary	0			
Presteigne CP	Primary	0			
Priory CiW (Aided) School	Primary	0			
Radnor Valley CP	Primary	0			
Rhayader CiW Controlled School	Primary	1	1	0	
Sennybridge CP	Primary	0			
St Mary's Voluntary Aided (RC) Primary School	Primary	0			
St Michael's CiW Voluntary Aided School	Primary	0			
Treowen CP	Primary	0			
Welshpool CiW	Primary	0			
Welshpool High School	Secondary	3	1	2	• Catchment boundary • Language provision
Ysgol Bro Caereinion	All Age	9	0	9	• Catchment boundary • Language provision
Ysgol Bro Cynllaith	Primary	1	1	0	
Ysgol Bro Hyddgen	All Age	20	16	4	• Catchment boundary • Language provision

School	School Type	Number of responses	In agreement	In disagreement	Key themes
Ysgol Bro Tawe	Primary	7	1	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> <li>Language provision</li> </ul>
Ysgol Calon Cymru (Builth Campus)	Secondary	2	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Ysgol Calon Cymru (Llandrindod Campus)	Secondary	0			
Ysgol Calon y Dderwen	Primary	13	0	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Ysgol Cefnlllys	Primary	0			
Ysgol Cwm Banwy	Primary	1	0	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd	Primary	2	0	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> <li>Language provision</li> </ul>
Ysgol Dolafon	Primary	0			
Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon	Primary	3	0	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> <li>Language provision</li> </ul>
Ysgol Glantwymyn	Primary	7	2	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boundary line</li> </ul>
Ysgol Golwg y Cwm	Primary	0			
Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn y Glowyr	Primary	0			
Ysgol Gymraeg y Trallwng	Primary	0			
Ysgol Gynradd Carno	Primary	0			
Ysgol Llanbrynmair	Primary	0			
Ysgol Llanfyllin	All Age	45	0	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Ysgol Llansantffraid	Primary	0			
Ysgol Meifod	Primary	5	0	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> <li>Language provision</li> </ul>
Ysgol Pennant	Primary	22	1	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> </ul>
Ysgol Pontrobert	Primary	3	1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catchment boundary</li> <li>Language provision</li> </ul>
Ysgol Rhiwbechan	Primary	0			



School	School Type	Number of responses	In agreement	In disagreement	Key themes
Ysgol Trefonnen CiW Community Primary	Primary	1	0	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catchment boundary</li> <li>• Language provision</li> <li>• Religious provision</li> </ul>
Ysgol Y Bannau	Primary	1	0	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catchment boundary</li> <li>• Language provision</li> </ul>
Ysgol Y Cribarth	Primary	0			
Ysgol y Mynydd Du	Primary	2	0	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catchment boundary</li> </ul>

#### 4. Advice

4.1: Maps and details of change can be reviewed in Appendix G – Catchment areas for consideration.

4.2: Full consideration has been provided on the following basis:

- Nearest School
- Natural transport routes and links
- Topography and geography of area

#### 5. Legal implications

5.1 The Schools Admissions Code (005/2013) set out the requirements of schools' admissions and the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 sets of the requirements for home to school transport. The recommendations can be accepted from a legal point of view.

5.2 The Head of Legal Services and the Monitoring Officer has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report".

#### 6. Resource implications

6.1 By reviewing the catchments areas, this will allow for home to school transport routes to be rationalised and therefore improve overall efficiency.

6.2 The Local Authority recognises that in some instances the timescale for improving overall efficiency may take 7+ years.

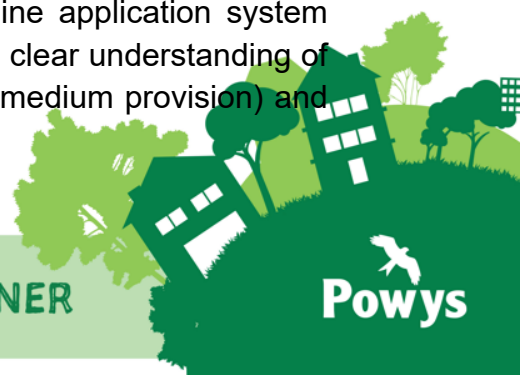
6.3 The amendments to the catchments may impact on total and class / year group pupil numbers for a very few schools. The per pupil allocations will remain the same but may impact the need for additional top ups.

#### 7. Data Protection

7.1 The proposals do not involve any change to the processing of personal data.

#### 8. Impact Assessment

8.1 The proposed catchment review and recommendations will support learners and their families by improving understanding and transparency of learner entitlement. By setting clear and well defined catchment areas for each school, the Local Authority will be able to implement the online application system designed so that learners and their families can have a clear understanding of their nearest suitable school (including nearest Welsh medium provision) and



home to school transport eligibility on application. This will allow for an informed decision by learners and their families before applying for a school place.

## 9. Recommendations

9.1 Maps and details of change can be reviewed in Appendix G – Catchment areas for consideration.

### 9.2 Brecon cluster:

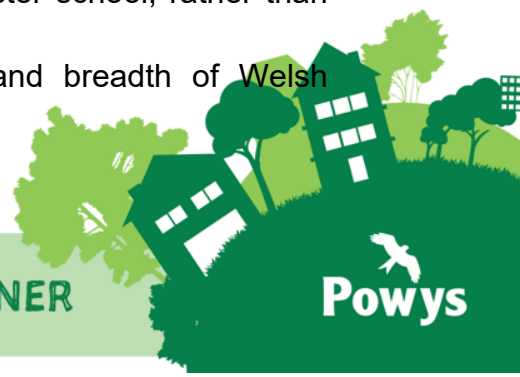
- To **not proceed** with the minor amendments to the catchment boundaries for the primary catchment areas of:
  - Llaneglwys – see appendix G – Page 2
  - Llanfihangel Nant Bran - see appendix G – Page 3
  - Penpont - see appendix G – Page 4
  - Llanddew - see appendix G – Page 5
- To **proceed** with the minor amendment to the catchment boundary for the primary catchment area of:
  - Trallong - amend so that Trallong falls completely within catchment area of Sennybridge - see appendix G – Page 6

### 9.3 Ysgol Bro Caereinion cluster:

- To **not proceed** with the minor amendments to the catchment boundaries for the primary catchment areas of:
  - Castle Caereinion - see appendix G – Page 7
  - Llanfihangel yng Ngwynfa - see appendix G – Page 8
- To **proceed** with the minor amendment to the catchment for the primary catchment area of:
  - Llanwddyn - see appendix G – Page 9
- Removal of Meifod CP as a feeder school for Ysgol Bro Caereinion following request by Meifod governing body in October 2022 to change clusters from Bro Caereinion to Ysgol Llanfyllin - see appendix G – Page 10

Further review to consider if Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd should remain as a feeder school for both Ysgol Bro Caereinion and Llanidloes High School. In doing so, careful consideration should be given to (See appendix G – page 11):

- Impact of strength of transition to only one cluster school, rather than dilution to two secondary schools
- Impact on continuity of language provision and breadth of Welsh language offer



- Impact on capacity number of both schools and impact on neighbouring schools as per the guidance below.

#### 9.4 Ysgol Bro Hyddgen cluster:

- Maintain Ysgol Carno solely within the catchment area of Ysgol Bro Hyddgen for Secondary provision - See appendix G – page 12
- To **not proceed** with the minor amendments to the catchment boundaries for the primary catchment areas of:
  - Aberhosan - see appendix G – Page 12
  - Melinbyrhedyn - see appendix G – Page 12

#### 9.5 Crickhowell High School cluster:

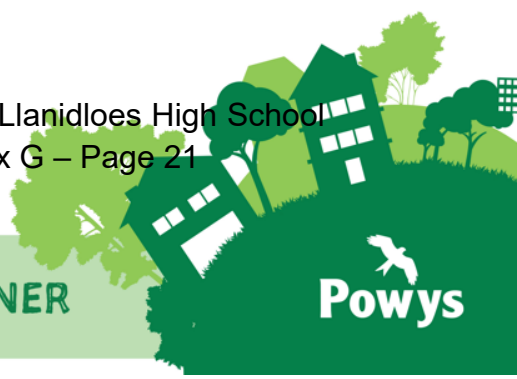
- To **proceed** with the amendment to the catchment map of Llangynidr so that the boundary is based on nearest school only (remove the adjustments made in the area of Bwlch due to the narrow and weight restricted bridge) - see appendix G – Page 13

#### 9.6 Gwernyfed High School cluster:

- To **proceed** with the amendment to the catchment map of Llangors so that the boundary is based on nearest school only (remove the adjustments made in the area of Bwlch due to the narrow and weight restricted bridge) - see appendix G – Page 15
- To **proceed** with the minor amendments to the catchment boundaries for the primary catchment areas of:
  - Bryngwyn - see appendix G – Page 16
  - Dol-y-cannau - see appendix G – Page 16
- To **not proceed** with the minor amendments to the catchment boundaries for the primary catchment areas of:
  - Llanerchir - see appendix G – Page 17
  - Llanstephan - see appendix G – Page 18

#### 9.7 Llanidloes High School cluster:

- To **not proceed** with the minor amendments to the catchment boundaries for the primary catchment areas of:
  - Dernol - see appendix G – Page 19
  - Bwlch-y-sarnau - see appendix G – Page 20
- To **not** include Ysgol Carno within the catchment area Llanidloes High School (no change to the current arrangements) - see appendix G – Page 21



- Further review to consider if Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd should remain as a feeder school for both Ysgol Bro Caereinion and Llanidloes High School. In doing so, careful consideration should be given to:
  - Impact of strength of transition to only one cluster school, rather than dilution to two secondary schools
  - Impact on continuity of language provision and breadth of Welsh language offer
  - Impact on capacity number of both schools and impact on neighbouring schools.

See appendix G – Page 21

### 9.8 Ysgol Maesydderwen cluster:

- To **not proceed** with the minor amendments to the catchment boundaries for the primary catchment areas of:
  - Gurnos - see appendix G – Page 23
  - Cwm Twrch - see appendix G – Page 23

### 9.9 Newtown High School – Newtown Campus cluster:

- To **not proceed** with the minor amendments to the catchment boundaries for the primary catchment areas of:
  - Mochdre - see appendix G – Page 24
  - Penstrowed - see appendix G – Page 24
  - Stepside - see appendix G – Page 24
  - Dolfor - see appendix G – Page 24

### 9.10 Newtown High School – John Beddoes cluster:

- To **proceed** with the minor amendment to the catchment boundary for the primary catchment area of:
  - Beguildy - see appendix G – Page 25

### 9.11 Welshpool High School cluster:

- To **not proceed** with the minor amendment to the catchment boundary for the primary catchment area of:
  - Castle Caereinion - see appendix G – Page 26



### 9.12 Ysgol Calon Cymru – Builth campus cluster

- To **not proceed** with the minor amendment to the catchment boundary for the primary catchment area of:
  - Llanwrthwl - see appendix G – Page 27

### 9.13 Ysgol Calon Cymru – Llandrindod Wells campus cluster

- None

### 9.14 Ysgol Llanfyllin cluster:

- Addition of Meifod CP School as a feeder school following request by Meifod Governing Body to change clusters from Bro Caereinion to Ysgol Llanfyllin in October 2022 - see appendix G – Page 28
- To **not proceed** with the minor amendment to the catchment boundary for the primary catchment area of:
  - Llanfihangel yng Ngwynfa – See appendix G – Page 29
- To **proceed** with the minor amendment to the catchment boundary for the primary catchment area of:
  - Llanwddyn – see appendix G – Page 30

### 9.15 General Recommendation:

- Review of vacant seat policy – within the Home to School transport policy by Dec 2023.

Contact Officer: Anwen Orrells, Service Manager for Education Support Service

Email: [anwen.orrells@powys.gov.uk](mailto:anwen.orrells@powys.gov.uk)

Head of Service: Georgie Bevan – Head of Education

Corporate Director: Lynette Lovell – Director of Education and Children  
Dr Caroline Turner – Chief Executive

