

**From the Chair of Governors**  
Evenlode Primary School  
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*Always being our best,  
for ourselves  
and for each other*

## **Open Letter**

October 2021

### **Re: Evenlode Primary School and Bute Cottage Nursery School Amalgamation**

#### **Dear Evenlode School Community,**

We are writing this letter on behalf of the Governing Body at Evenlode Primary School. It is our intention to set out our position on how we intend to respond to the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Consultation on its plans to amalgamate our school with Bute Cottage Nursery School.

We believe that the needs of children are best met when schools and teachers collaborate and are able to maintain close links with the communities they serve, and that we can build on the already strong collaboration between both schools for the benefit of all the children in the two communities. We are aware that each setting has its own unique identity, and we strongly believe that this can be maintained with a shared ethos. The proposed amalgamation would enable the transition between Nursery and Reception to be seamless, and impact positively on the wellbeing and emotional development of all our learners.

We would like to start by highlighting the excellent work that already goes on between staff at both schools to ensure the transition of pupils between nursery and primary school is as smooth as possible. This collaborative approach enables staff at both schools to prepare children in the best possible way to enrol at Evenlode each year.

The current proposals, if implemented, include the nursery remaining on its current site at Bute Cottage and with its current capacity. Although this would become part of Evenlode Primary School, there are no plans for any staff redundancies, or to change any personnel between sites. The governors at Evenlode recognise the specialist provision and expertise of the staff at Bute Cottage Nursery.

#### **Educational benefits**

It is our view that the amalgamation of Bute Cottage Nursery and Evenlode Primary School would have the following educational benefits:

- By being part of the same school community from the day they start Nursery provision, learners will benefit from an even stronger transition process and allow nursery pupils to build bonds with staff and other children. The amalgamation would provide more strategic opportunities for joint working to support the transition from the nursery site into the reception classrooms on the primary site. Staff knowing children from the start of their learning journey will enhance understanding of each child and their individual strengths and needs.
- Enhancing professional development of staff - deeper collaboration and the sharing of specialist expertise and knowledge of early years provision. This will enhance even further the early years provision, and opportunities for learning and development for the children in these communities.
- With the statutory implementation of the Curriculum for Wales in September 2022, the proposed amalgamation would be timely in ensuring the curriculum approaches of both settings dovetail and complement each other to ensure that all learners have a firm and consistent grounding at the start of their academic journey.

- Partnership with Parents will be strengthened further. By being part of the same community from the day children start Nursery provision, Parents and Carers will be able to build relationships with staff across both settings more easily.
- Governance of both settings will be strengthened, with the amalgamated governing bodies working together to ensure the best provision for children from Nursery to Year Six.

### **Wider community benefits**

We strongly believe there are many opportunities for community improvement under the proposals.

These include:

- Better communication with members of both school communities, which naturally have a large crossover of membership between the two schools given their close geographical proximity and shared parent members.
- Better coordination surrounding school drop off and collection arrangements with parents, carers, and wrap-around care facilities.
- Development of wrap around care facilities for Parents, for example access to 'Saplings' out of hours club.
- Increased use of school facilities across a wider community membership
- Improved opportunities for professional development across all phases of primary education for staff looking to develop their careers further.
- Although not expected to be significant we even believe that local business links and transport will be improved with a larger coordinated approach to these areas.

As a governing body we commend this proposal and ask members of our school community to respond to the consultation process after consideration of this open letter. We want to ensure that all views are represented and can be considered by the council fully when the time comes. As Governors, we also promise to exercise our responsibility to support this current consultation process fully and fairly.

**The consultation documents and response form are available at:**

[www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/nurseryprovisionpenarth](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/nurseryprovisionpenarth)

**The closing date for responses to this consultation is the 5th November 2021.**

If you have any questions, or would like a hardcopy then please contact a member of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Team on 01446 709828 or email [21stcenturyschools@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:21stcenturyschools@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)



**Click here now...  
to complete your response to the consultation**

Yours sincerely,

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**Stephen Burkitt-Harrington**  
Cadeirydd y Llywodraethwyr  
Chair of Governors