

The expected trend in net total surplus capacity in our secondary schools over the next five years is as follows:

2002/2003 (January 2003)

English Medium	3,297	Surplus	= 17.4% of capacity
Welsh Medium	1,030	Surplus	= 21.2% of capacity

2005/2006 (January 2006)

English Medium	3,607	Surplus	= 19.0% of capacity
Welsh Medium	870	Surplus	= 17.9% of capacity

2008/2009 (January 2009)

English Medium	4,083	Surplus	= 21.5% of capacity
Welsh Medium	764	Surplus	= 15.7% of capacity

N.B. YG Rhydywaun now has its full complement of pupils.

The Council intends to undertake a review of its' secondary education provision, once the best value review of primary education provision is concluded.

Summary of Pupil Number Projections

In January 2003, the total pupil population in the nursery and primary sector was 23,053, the number of pupils is expected to be 19,973 by January 2009, which indicates a 13.4% fall in the pupil population.

In the secondary sector the total pupil population in January 2003 was 19,494, decreasing to 18,845 by January 2009, a 3.3% fall. However, if Bridgend opens its Welsh medium secondary school, the secondary pupil population figure for Rhondda Cynon Taf could fall further than that indicated.

The above analysis is based upon best estimates, including actual pupil numbers at primary sector schools and live birth statistics, along with planned housing developments.

The projections are not uniform. Some schools' pupil numbers are forecast to fall (and thereby result in increased surplus places), whilst others show increasing trends, which will require additional, statutory, basic need accommodation, unless remedial strategies are introduced, such as reviewing school catchment areas and/or amalgamating some schools.

Obviously pupil projections are themselves subject to potential fluctuation due to:

- new housing;
- migratory flows;
- parental preference;
- effects of new school builds such as Ysgol Gyfun Rhydfelen and YGG Garth Olwg through the Private Finance Initiative;
- the effect of Bridgend opening a new Welsh Medium Secondary School.

See Appendix 3, for a summary of data for Primary and Secondary Schools.

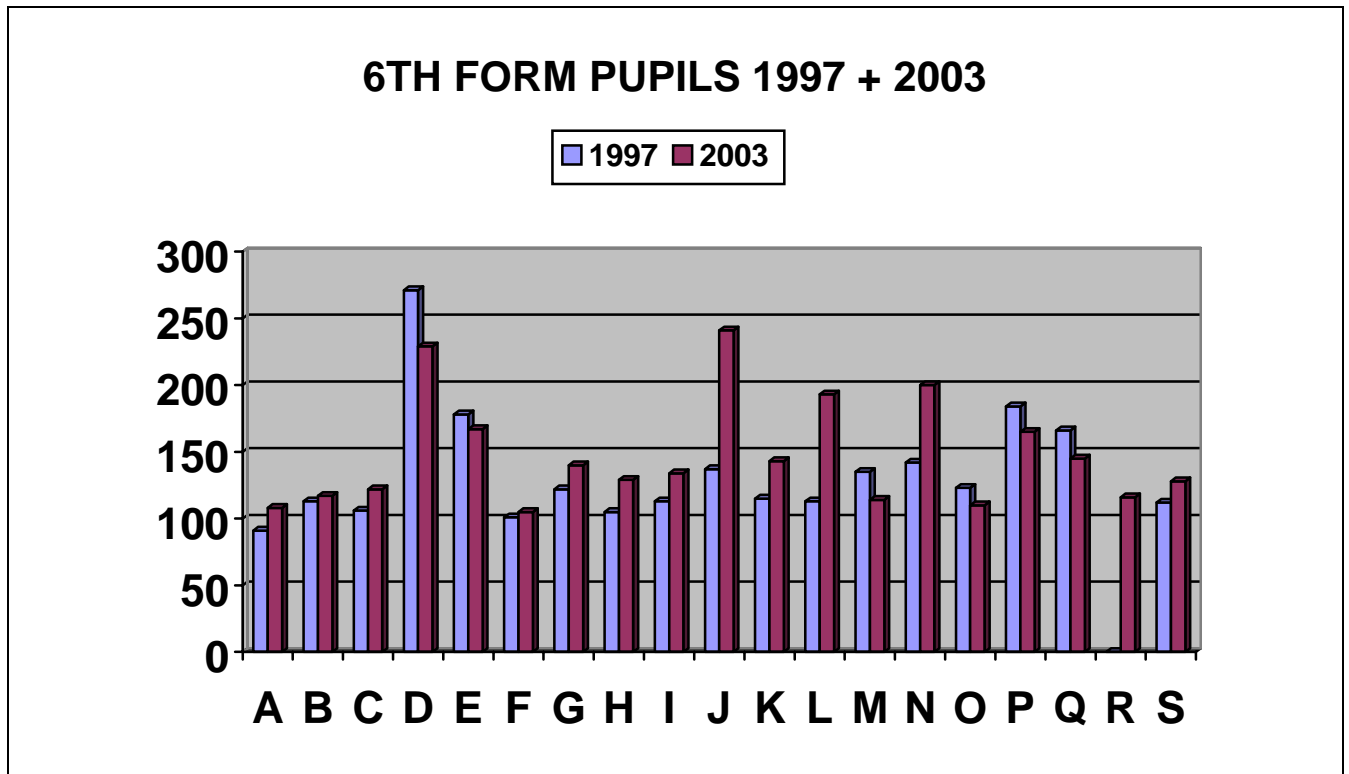
Arrangements with Neighbouring LEAs (Primary and Secondary)

Rhondda Cynon Taf has arrangements with neighbouring LEA's for both primary and secondary education, covering Welsh medium education, denominational schools, SEN provision and where catchment areas overlap more than one LEA area. A small number of pupils from Rhondda Cynon Taf attend schools in the Merthyr Tydfil, Bridgend and Caerphilly County Borough areas. Equally, a small number of pupils from Merthyr Tydfil, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Neath Port Talbot and Cardiff attend schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf. However, whilst the number of out of county pupils in most of our schools is generally small, in some schools the proportion is high e.g. YG Rhydywaun, where over 50% of pupils are from Merthyr Tydfil.

Post 16 Education Provision

Rhondda Cynon Taf has 13 sixth forms which have less than 160 pupils with only 6 exceeding the 160 threshold. This means that 68% of our sixth forms are considered to be small. (The Audit Commission suggest that a minimum cost effective size for a sixth form is 160 or above). However, an assessment of the numbers on roll for the past four years shows that there has been an overall growth in numbers of pupils in the majority of sixth forms. In 1997 the pupil number on roll was 2,417 and in 2003 the number was 2,806. (See figure 9 below):

Figure 9



KEY

- | | |
|---|--|
| A Aberdare Boys' Comprehensive | K St John Baptist CiW Comprehensive |
| B Aberdare Girls' Comprehensive | L Tonypany Comprehensive |
| C Blaengwawr Comprehensive | M Tonyrefail Comprehensive |
| D Bryncelynnog Comprehensive | N Treorchy Comprehensive |
| E Coed-y-lan Comprehensive | O Y Pant Comprehensive |
| F Ferndale Comprehensive | P Ysgol Gyfun Llanhari |
| G Hawthorn High | Q Ysgol Gyfun Rhydfelen |
| H Mountain Ash Comprehensive | R Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun* |
| I Cardinal Newman RC Comprehensive | S Ysgol Gyfun Y Cymer |
| J Porth Comprehensive | |

The former Further Education Colleges of Aberdare and Pontypridd have merged as Coleg Morgannwg, which provides a comprehensive range of post 16 qualifications, including A Level, GCSE, GNVQ, NVQ and City and Guilds courses. There are close strategic and working links between the LEA and Coleg Morgannwg, including the development of appropriate learning opportunities for pupils following alternative programmes of study. The Council has undertaken a consultation exercise on its draft policy for 14-19 education, which refers to the continuing development of mutually beneficial links with the further education sector.

The number of 16-19 year old students attending Coleg Morgannwg at 1 January 2003 was as follows:

Campus	Full-Time	Part-Time
Aberdare	222	250
Pontypridd	1,247	688
Rhondda	337	245

There are also a small number of students who attend colleges outside the area, estimated to be approximately 300.

In addition, the County Borough has the University of Glamorgan within its boundaries. The LEA, schools, Coleg Morgannwg and the Education Business Partnership have forged strong strategic links with the University and effective working relationships exist between all parties.

The Council has introduced a policy of promoting wider community access to its schools. This is particularly significant given the emergence of ELWa. Whilst the Council established (through the Lifelong Learning Strategic Forum) consultative mechanisms with our partners in other educational sectors, these have recently been strengthened through the CCET and the leading role the Council plays in its affairs.

The value of these mechanisms undoubtedly lies in their potential for streamlining local planning processes that will be required to implement the emerging ELWa corporate plan. Objective One Funding also provides opportunities for

improving provision in the education and training opportunities available to students post 16.

Special Educational Needs

Our policy for special educational needs reflects the LEA's vision for the future:

“Rhondda Cynon Taf aims to put in place arrangements across the education service which ensure that no child or adult learner is prevented from accessing or benefiting from education and training opportunities because they have special needs”.

Our policy states that all children, as far as possible, within the terms of the Education Act 1996, should be educated in mainstream schools, with extra support provided where necessary. This approach is reflected in the LEA's Strategic Plan.

It is essential that the LEA monitors and keeps under review all aspects related to special educational needs provision and practices.

Under national legislation, a child or young person has special educational needs if he/she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. Learning difficulty is defined in terms of children:

“Who have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of their age, and/or have disabilities which either prevent or hinder them from making effective use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided in schools in their LEA area for children of their age, or who are under the age of five years and are, or would be if special educational provision were not made for them, likely when over that age to fall within the terms above”. (Education Act 1996).

This includes children with emotional and behavioural needs. Gifted and talented children are excluded from this definition, as are children for whom English is an additional language.

The majority of children with special educational needs, as defined in the Act, will continue to be educated within the resources of their mainstream school and will not require the LEA to determine how their needs are best met.

It may sometimes be necessary, however, because of the nature of a child's educational needs, for the LEA to issue a 'statement of special educational needs' to determine the required provision. It is the LEA's policy that, wherever practicable, every attempt will be made to provide the necessary special educational provision without recourse to a statement.

Support Services

The LEA maintains support services to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities for pupils with SEN. These services consist of:

- **The Educational Psychology Service** - which, in partnership with others, aims to apply its knowledge of learning and behaviour to promote the positive development of children, young people, adults, families and organisations.
- **The Behaviour Support Service** - which, in conjunction with the Education Psychology Service, is available to work with schools and parents in supporting pupils with behavioural difficulties.
- **The Learning Support Service** - which helps schools identify, assess and make special educational provision for pupils with SEN through its referral system for individual pupils.
- **The Language Support Service** - (the LSS) which assists the LEA in the raising of literacy standards by providing tuition for children who are experiencing difficulties in learning to read.

- **A Multi-disciplinary Approach** - The LEA follows a multi-disciplinary approach to supporting children with SEN and their families, and looks to the Health Authority to provide medical and paramedical support, where necessary, to help the Council meet its obligations.

Similarly, education staff liaise with our Childrens Services' colleagues on all matters which involve the safeguarding of children.

Special Educational Needs Provision

It is the policy of the LEA to:

- maintain a continuum of provision to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs;
- work in partnership with schools to meet the needs of pupils in mainstream primary and secondary schools wherever possible;
- provide a central support service which includes educational psychologists, specialist SEN co-ordinators and support teachers. This multi disciplinary team works in partnership with schools to help them be more effective in supporting pupils with SEN;
- provide additional ancillary support in mainstream where appropriate;
- promote preventative work with children and young people with an emphasis on early identification and intervention;
- provide for pupils with SEN in the Authority's primary, secondary and special schools;
- provide transport for pupils with statements when this is a requirement of such statements in line with the LEA's transport policy. The LEA also provides transport for pupils attending SEN provision which is outside a pupil's own local school catchment area;
- additionally, in exceptional cases, when a child has such profound and complex needs that effective provision cannot be met within the Council's education service, placement may be purchased outside the County Borough, in another LEA school or in an independent school. Such

provision would be made on either a day or residential basis, as appropriate.

The needs referred to above could include any of the following:

Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties (EBD), including Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD),
 Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)
 Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
 Sensory Impairments
 Physical Difficulties
 Communication Disorders including Aspergers Syndrome
 Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
 Speech and Language Difficulties

Details are given below of the children being educated in schools outside the county together with the type of provision, as at January 2003.

Category	Number of Pupils	Type of Provision
Schools in other LEA areas within Wales	37	SLD/EBD/ASD
Schools in other LEA areas outside Wales	1	EBD/SpLD/VI/HI
Independent Schools within the UK	13	SLD/EBD/ASD/SpLD/VI
Independent Schools outside the UK	1	ASD

In addition to the above the LEA provides the following specialist services: -

- Arrangements for Pre-School Children
- Support for Specific Learning Difficulties
- Support for Pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties
- Support for Physical Difficulties
- Support for Medical Conditions
- Support for Hearing Impairment
- Support for Visual Impairment
- Support for Speech and Language Disorders
- Support for Severe Learning Difficulties
- Support for Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Support for Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
- Support for Gifted and Talented Pupils

- Tuition Services
- Home Tuition
- Pupil Referral Unit
- English as an Additional Language (E.A.L.)
- Hospital Tuition
- Pregnant School Girls Tuition Groups
- Education at Home
- Travellers' Children (Tuition)
- Specialist Small Group Tuition
- Post-Sixteen Provision Support

Consideration of Pupils for Jointly Supported Out of County Residential Placements

It is sometimes necessary to consider certain pupils for out of county residential placements, jointly provided in a tri-partite agreement with the Health Authority and Children's Services. In such circumstances, the LEA will adhere to specific criteria in determining whether this provision is appropriate. In January 2003 there was 1 such pupil being provided for in this manner. This pupil is included in the category "Independent Schools within the UK".

Statistics relating to Special Educational Needs Pupils

Pupils with special educational needs are provided for in the four Special Schools and within mainstream schools (see Appendix 4, for details of designated special classes).

Figure 11 below sets out the designation and number of pupils on roll in the Special Schools:

Figure 11

School	Designation	Age Range	No. on Roll (Jan. 2003)	Out-County Borough Pupils
Maesgwyn	Moderate Learning Difficulties	7-18	108	0
Park Lane	Severe and Complex Learning Difficulties and Physical Disabilities	2-18+	52	0
Ysgol Hen Felin	Severe and Complex Learning Difficulties and Physical Disabilities	3-18+	76	0
Ysgol Ty Coch	Severe and Complex Learning Difficulties and Autism	3-18+	101	4

There are 10 residential places available at Ysgol Ty Coch.

The LEA currently maintains an EBD Unit (Ty Gwyn/Talbot Green), under the management of one Headteacher, which was formerly located on a split site in three locations across the County Borough. This provision has been consolidated, to create a Unit on two sites only, one site catering for Key Stage Two pupils (Talbot Green), and the other, established in a vacant building on the site of Craig yr Hesg Primary School, for Key Stage Three and Four pupils. The Craig yr Hesg site, which was renamed Ty Gwyn, offers places for up to 56 pupils, aged 11 – 16 years, with long term emotional and behavioural difficulties, with the aim of reintegrating these pupils back into mainstream education wherever possible.

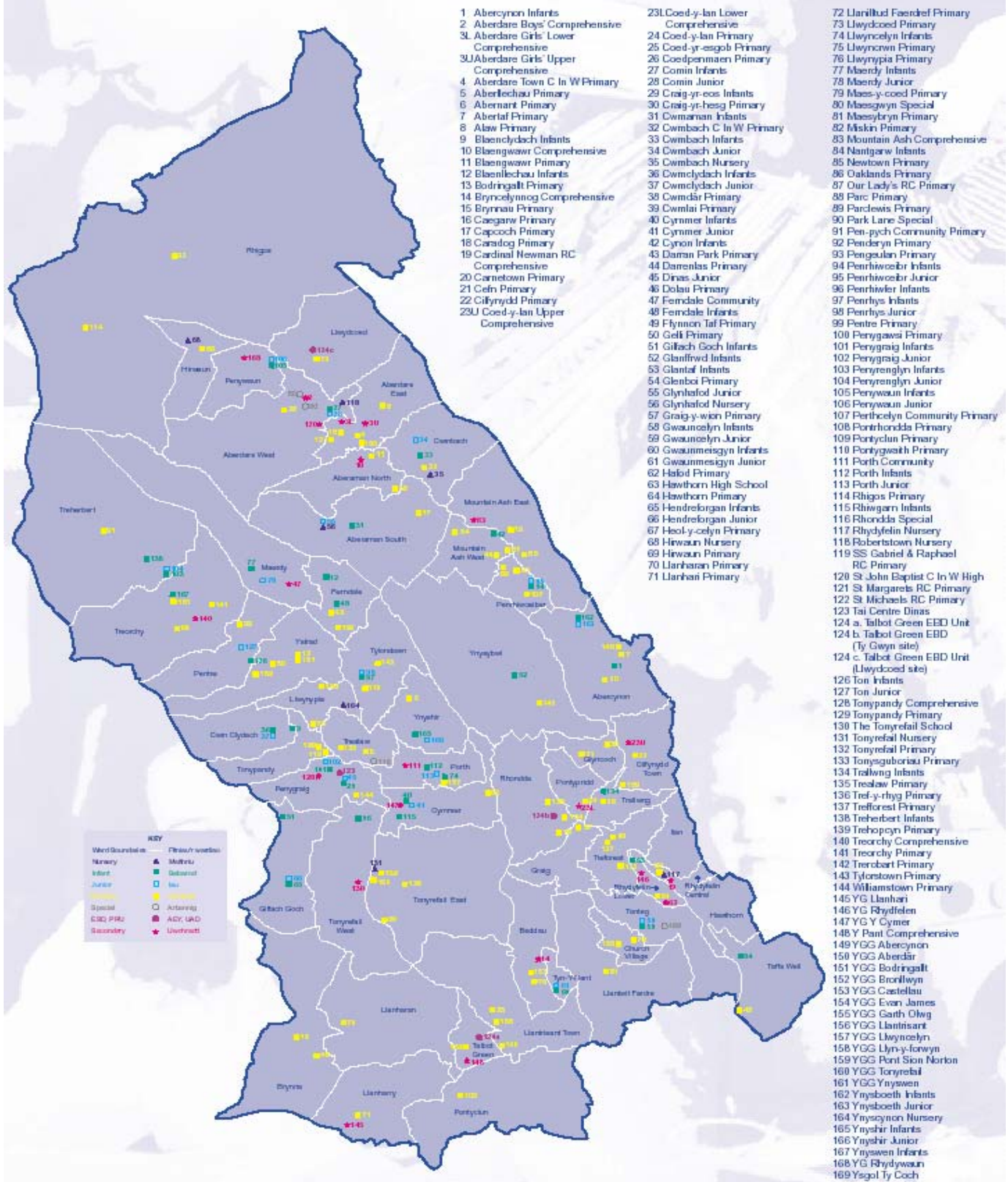
Rhondda Special School has been relocated into a new, state of the art building, with additional capacity, and renamed Ysgol Hen Felin. It is envisaged that this additional capacity will enable the Council to reduce the number of children that have to travel to specialist schools outside of the County Borough.

We undertook a statutory consultation process in relation to Maesgwyn, and have consequently increased the age range of the school to 7-18 years, to ensure parity of provision with other Special Schools within the County Borough.

3.3 Map indicating Location of Schools within the County Borough

Rhondda Cynon Taff Location of Schools within the County Borough

Dosbarthiad Ysgolion Bwrdeistref Sirol



SECTION 4 FRAMEWORK OF SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLANNING

4.1 Planning Background

A number of themes emerge from the LEA's priorities in education planning to date. These will clearly shape the School Organisation Plan and, along with information gleaned from individual school reviews, will inform our priorities.

These themes are:

- A continuing commitment to raising standards of pupil performance and a greater investment in the facilities provided to support the education process.
- An emphasis on continual improvement and a commitment to Best Value in the Education Service. This applies to the education that pupils receive from our schools as well as the services provided by the Council to schools.
- The Community Dimension of Schooling. Schools will increasingly be seen and utilised as a community resource encouraging and supporting learning as a lifelong process. The relationship between schools and their communities will become increasingly symbiotic as we seek to harness an increasing range of resources in support of learning and community development.
- Equality of opportunity – particularly for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools.
- A desire to work in partnership with other providers, to maintain a diversity of provision and to encourage links with local community organisations

4.2 Current Policies and Practices on Planning of School Places

General

A number of policy aims are in place and will influence our approach to the planning of school places. These include;

- a commitment to a local education service;
- an aim to increase school links with their communities;

- to encourage the alternative use of school buildings;
- to remove specific buildings from service, which would remove surplus places;
- to examine the viability of small schools in the primary sector as size is generally considered to be an important variable in determining a school's effectiveness. Whilst the Council has not defined what it considers to be a 'small' school in the primary sector, schools below 60-90 pupils can experience difficulties in delivering the national curriculum to a satisfactory standard and ensuring that staff develop specialised curriculum knowledge. Currently, 28 schools fall short of the 90 pupils on roll figure;
- a continuum of curriculum experience is largely regarded as a positive quality which is facilitated by 'all through' primary schools i.e. with pupils of between 3-11 years;
- to have cost effective and value for money educational establishments.

These issues formed the main part of the scope of our Best Value Review of Primary Education Provision.

Following a directive from the Welsh Assembly Government, the Council had an obligation to produce Asset Management Plans and Property Condition Surveys for all schools by 2002. This process has now been completed in Rhondda Cynon Taf, following a 'rolling programme' put in place to produce the required reports. With the change in the division of responsibilities for building maintenance, introduced under the 'Fair Funding' legislation in April 2000, this information is essential for governing bodies and headteachers when producing school development plans and scheduling maintenance works at their schools.

Surplus Places

The LEA has set a provisional target for the removal of surplus places of between 2 and 3% per year. However, as a consequence of proposals outlined in the Best Value Review of Primary Education Provision, 1060 surplus primary school places were removed in one year.

For the purposes of clarification, the Audit Commission defines schools with 25% or more surplus accommodation as having a 'significant' number of surplus places. Currently there are 48 Primary Schools and 6 Comprehensive School within the County Borough, with 'significant' surplus accommodation.

School Performance

A variety of measures are used to determine school performance, including an analysis of end of key stage assessments and public examination results. There is also a planned monitoring and support programme, in agreement with schools, with regular feedback to the LEA. Rhondda Cynon Taf LEA has adopted a strategy of improvement for all its schools and seeks to ensure all local schools will normally be the first choice of parents. This is considered to be an important contribution to the strengthening of local communities within the County Borough.

Through systematic school monitoring the LEA will receive early warning of poor performance enabling preventative measures to be put in place in good time. It is therefore unlikely that underperformance is likely to become a factor in removing school places.

Access

The Education Service is committed to increasing the accessibility of schools for pupils with disabilities through a rolling programme of access improvement work.

Transport

There is a statutory duty placed upon the LEA to provide pupils with free transport to their relevant school if they reside beyond the "walking distance" to that school.

The law relating to "walking distance", as defined by a House of Lords ruling, is two miles for pupils under eight years of age and three miles for all other pupils.

This LEA has a policy that defines these distances as one and a half miles for pupils in primary, junior and infant schools, and two miles for secondary aged pupils - the distance measured by the nearest available walking route.

Where pupils attend, as a result of parental preference, a school other than the local traditional area school, as recognised by the LEA, and which is not the nearest school to their home, parents will need to accept full responsibility for transport arrangements.

Free transport is currently provided for in excess of 11,000 pupils per day which equates to approximately 25% of the school population.

Free transport is provided for all pupils with special educational needs who do not attend their local school, irrespective of distance and family circumstance. Free transport on medical grounds is only made on the recommendation of the Health Medical Officer and the Principal Educational Psychologist.

All students aged 16, 17 or 18 years on September 1, who are attending a first course of full time study at a college of further education, may be entitled to free travel if they are required to travel at least two miles in each direction (home to college and return) providing the student is attending the nearest appropriate college from those previously within the boundaries of the former Mid Glamorgan Council. This policy is under continuous review.

The Education Service has recently become involved with the 'Safe Routes to Schools' scheme, and a project has commenced at Penpych Community Primary School in conjunction with our Transportation Division. Similar schemes are being piloted at Tylorstown Primary and Comin Infants Schools..

The Council has introduced one successful 'walking buses' scheme, at Penpych Primary School. The aim of this scheme is to implement measures that ensure routes for children walking and cycling to school. are safe and attractive, which will encourage a greater use of these modes of travel and to promote them as beneficial to both personal health and the environment.

The scheme has involved improvements to the junction and carriageway of the B4522, which leads to the school, a new tarmac surface and access barrier to the shared use off-road community route, new cycle sheds and lockers provided at the school, and additional footway provision that allows a safe and continuous pedestrian route from a nearby housing estate. Three different routes for the 'walking bus' have been identified, and the school has enlisted the assistance of students from the University of Glamorgan in co-ordinating the scheme. High visibility vests, bearing the school logo, have been provided to the children participating in the scheme.

Post 16 Provision

Students have a choice whether to remain at a school or to attend a college of further education to continue their post 16 studies.

SECTION 5 CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

5.1 Summary

The School Organisation Plan provides an outline of provision, with supporting data and analysis, and sets out the policies and principles which support our current pattern of school organisation. This final section highlights the essential key areas for action over the next five years and sets out broad proposals. A constant theme is the need to concentrate resources (support, expertise, funding) on teaching and learning, to raise the achievements and self-esteem of pupils and to provide equal opportunity for all.

5.2 Early Years Education

The level of early years provision is high, with all four year olds and 95.9% of three year olds being provided with at least a part time place in a maintained school. This provision is complemented by the full range of good quality pre-school services provided by the voluntary and private sector, through the medium of Welsh and English.

In recognition of the need to raise standards in schools, high quality early years provision is considered central to any strategy for raising educational standards.

High quality early years education is also regarded as a key component of the wider social inclusion and economic regeneration agenda and, therefore, the LEA intends, in partnership with the voluntary and private sectors, to secure 100% nursery provision for three to four year olds.

During 2000-2001, nursery provision for three year olds was developed at:

- Brynnau Primary School (30 places)
- Llanharan Primary School (30 places)
- Ysgol Ty Coch (8 places SEN)

Continued development will be concentrated in areas where early years services are limited. Clearly the outcome of the National Assembly review of provision for three year olds will impact on nursery development within RCT and we have recently received further guidance on this issue.

Construction work has been completed on a new Early Years Centre at YGG Abercynon, which will be organised through the medium of Welsh. This Centre provides an additional 60 part time, or 30 full time nursery places for 3 year olds, plus a range of other early years services, including childcare.

It is likely that future developments will focus more particularly on early years centre development, more nursery provision for three year olds with special needs and Welsh medium nursery development. A further area of development will include improvements to external play areas for nursery children, with a view to creating more stimulating and interesting environments, suitable for children of this age.

There is a need to ensure that good quality early years education is available to all children, and that a diversity of provision is maintained. This will require on-going collaborative planning with the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership in order to ensure that all opportunities to promote early childhood development are fully utilised and children are enabled to reach their full potential. The Council considers this aspect of the education service to be fundamental to the future of raising standards in schools.

5.3 Primary Education

There is a wide variation in size across primary sector schools and there is a mix of provision between 3-11 Primary schools and separate Infant and Junior schools. This highlights issues of value for money and equality of provision across the County Borough.

In January 2003 there was a net surplus capacity of 5,032 pupils in the primary sector which equates to 19.4% of the overall accommodation available, therefore there will be a requirement to amalgamate schools and rationalise provision in order to reduce high surplus capacities. However, any removal of surplus capacity at primary level must proceed with caution because the current measure of capacity (MOE formula) does not take account of curriculum developments, such as the National Grid for Learning and the pledge to keep KS1 class sizes at 30 or below. The National Assembly has established a joint working group with the ADEW Benchmarking Club on the issue of the supply of school places, and a review of the calculation of the MOE formula will form part of this Group's remit. It should be noted that Paragraph 10(3) and (4) of Schedule 23 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 states that the National Assembly for Wales will take into consideration the statutory limits on infant class sizes when determining standard number variations. In making a judgement on a standard number application, the National Assembly will take into consideration all factors laid before it on a case by case basis. Such factors will include changes in curriculum.

Primary schools are best placed to be the focus of local communities. Pupils are more likely to walk to them with their parents and therefore parents have more opportunities to become familiar with the school and with other families who also attend. Four new community primary schools have been constructed within the County Borough, and a number of primaries are already involved with, and promoting, adult learning. Several of our primary schools are already involved in promoting wider concepts of lifelong learning which directly supports LEA policies on learning and community education, including the use of libraries and other education services. Opportunities for the promotion of extra curricular activities and child care arrangements, through the New Opportunities Fund, will also lead to increased usage of schools buildings.

The majority of primary schools have access to at least part of their teaching areas for pupils with disability problems connected with mobility. While there is considerable scope for improvement, current provision enables the majority of pupils with mobility related access needs to attend a nearby primary school where feasible. Our policy is to make provision available for disabled pupils in mainstream schools wherever possible.

A continuous review of temporary accommodation is being undertaken to remove temporary buildings with a rolling programme of replacement with permanent build structures. We recognise that we have a substantial number of demountable classrooms which is a cause of concern. Where feasible, accommodation problems are addressed with permanent build extensions, but the nature and age of some of our properties (a large proportion were built pre-1900) does not always allow for this. A programme of removing redundant mobile classrooms is under way, coupled with an on going programme to provide permanent build extensions to those schools with a significant proportion of such accommodation.

We have been successful in obtaining credit approval from the National Assembly for the replacement of YGG Garth Olwg. It is the Council's aim, in partnership with the Private Sector, to complete the new primary school part of the project in the autumn of 2004. The importance of liaising with the relevant school governing bodies, Bridgend LEA and the Welsh Assembly Government to ensure the smooth operation of the PFI scheme is fully recognised.

A new replacement building for YGG Aberdar was provided in January 2003 with an additional 80 places over the capacity of the present school, which is judged sufficient to meet the recognised increase in demand for places. We are also proposing to relocate YGG Llantrisant to a new school building at Cefn yr Hendy, which will also have an increased capacity, again to meet recognised demand for places in this area.

5.4 Secondary Education

The Council's 19 secondary schools currently have a surplus capacity of 4,326 pupil places, which equates to 18.2% of the overall accommodation available. Of the 19 schools, 17 have a capacity figure of less than 100%. Six schools fall into the category defined by the Audit Commission as having 'significant' surplus places, i.e. over 25%. There has been a growth in pupil numbers up to 2005, but projections then show a slight decline in numbers up to 2009. This varying trend indicates a need to constantly review provision.

The majority of secondary schools have access to at least part of their teaching areas for pupils with mobility problems. While there is considerable scope for improvement, current provision enables the majority of pupils with disabilities to attend their nearest school.

Two of the secondary schools are located on split sites. A feasibility / initial design brief was undertaken during the 1999/2000 academic year to consider whether new accommodation could be made available at the Upper School sites. The Education Service has made a bid, in respect of both projects, to be included in the Council's future corporate capital programme, with priority given to the scheme at Coedylan Comprehensive. Construction work at the Coedylan site will commence early in 2004.

Extensions to the buildings of Y Pant Comprehensive and Ysgol Gyfun y Cymer have been completed, adding 200 places to both schools. A similar extension has been constructed at Bryncelynnog Comprehensive. All three schools have experienced an increased demand for places, mainly due to housing development in their catchment areas.

If Bridgend LEA is to open a Welsh Medium Secondary School in the near future then the LEA will need to work closely with all Welsh Medium Secondary Schools and Bridgend LEA to assess the impact of this development and to determine future provision for Welsh medium education in both LEA areas.

5.5 Post-16 Education Provision

The LEA already operates an active partnership between schools and Coleg Morgannwg which has been developed through the County Borough Community Consortium for Education and Training (CCET).

As part of the continuing development of the Post-16 sector, the LEA will continue to consult with secondary schools on the development of sixth form provision, in particular to further enhance collaborative arrangements. The LEA has no plans to introduce a tertiary system and intends to provide further support to the five post -16 consortia that have been established. The emphasis will be on tertiary 'arrangements' and not a tertiary 'system'.

However, the LEA recognises that rapid and radical change needs to take place in the way schools currently address post-16 provision. Accordingly, during 2006/07, the LEA will review school sixth forms and, if there are grounds for concern, work with ELWa and schools to make the changes necessary to enhance the options available to post-16 students in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Clearly, since ELWa is the body mainly responsible for post – 16 education and training in Wales, the Council will need to develop and maintain close relations with this organisation.

5.6 Special Educational Needs

The LEA policy that all pupils, as far as possible, should be educated in mainstream schools requires that specialist provision is continuously reviewed. We undertake regular reviews of the learning support classes in mainstream schools, to ensure the provision matches changing needs.

Additional capital funding is required to improve access for pupils with mobility related needs, but it is clear that the capital funding required for such improvements exceeds available resources.

5.7 Education Otherwise than at School

The Behaviour Support Service co-ordinates services to provide appropriate education for pupils out of school because of illness or injury, or for other reasons such as:

- pregnancy;
- school phobia;
- pupils looked after by other local authorities;
- pupils in pupil referral units (PRU's);
- school aged pupils attending FE Colleges;
- pupils educated at home by their parents;
- pupils educated in psychiatric units and young offenders in secure provision.

Provision made for pupils in this category includes:

- Home Tuition;
- Group Tuition;
- Pupil Referral Unit;
- Key Stage 4 Education Otherwise Provision.

At all stages, except the Key Stage 4 provision the emphasis is on pupils re-integrating into an appropriate mainstream provision. The Key Stage 4 provision includes:

- work experience with 1½ days education at the pupils mainstream school;
- college placement;
- partnership programme, in conjunction with our Community Education Service, which allows pupils to follow a programme of study which includes numeracy, literacy, IT, life skills, physical activities and work experience.

The Education Service also co-ordinates a project (which is GEST funded), under the Children and Youth Partnership, which employs 3 teachers dealing with the needs of 'looked after' children, and 1 teacher dealing with KS4 age pupils.