

Meeting of:	CABINET
Date of Meeting:	21 JULY 2026
Report Title:	FEDERATION OF TYNRYHEOL PRIMARY SCHOOL AND THE GARW VALLEY FEDERATION
Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member	CABINET MEMBER EDUCATION AND YOUTH SERVICES CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION, EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE
Responsible Officer:	GAYLE SHENTON HEAD OF LEARNING DARREN JONES GROUP MANAGER SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no impact on the Council's Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.
Executive Summary:	The Garw Valley Federation has developed since 2019 to strengthen leadership, improve outcomes and ensure sustainability across primary schools in the Garw Valley. The Garw Valley Federation currently consists of Betws Primary School, Blaengarw Primary School and Ffaldau Primary School. After a period of shared leadership with Llangynwyd Primary School that came to an end in August 2025, Tynyrheol Primary School sought further support, particularly after being placed in special measures by Estyn in November 2025. In response, it pursued formal federation with the Garw Valley Federation. A full consultation in early 2026 received no objections, and the Garw Valley Federation and Tynyrheol Primary School governing bodies approved the proposal. From 1 September 2026, a single governing body will oversee the expanded federation. This model strengthens leadership, improves consistency in teaching and learning, enhances access to specialist

	support and delivers financial efficiencies, supporting sustained improvement and better outcomes for all pupils.
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to support the governing bodies of the Garw Valley Federation and Tynyrheol Primary School in progressing a joint proposal to establish a formal federation, to be known as the Garw Valley Federation, with effect from 1 September 2026.

2. Background

- 2.1 Betws Primary School and Blaengarw Primary School federated in 2019 under a single governing body and executive headteacher, strengthening leadership capacity across both schools.
- 2.2 In September 2021, Ffaldau Primary School entered into a collaborative arrangement with the federation.
- 2.3 Following a successful consultation process, the Garw Valley Federation, comprising Betws, Ffaldau and Blaengarw Primary Schools, was formally established in September 2024, further securing a sustainable, shared leadership model.
- 2.4 From November 2022 until August 2025, Tynyrheol Primary School and Llangynwyd Primary School operated within a shared leadership model after the headteacher of Tynyrheol Primary School left the school in October 2022.
- 2.5 During this period of collaboration, the headteacher of Llangynwyd Primary School undertook executive headteacher responsibilities across both settings, while deputy headteachers assumed interim head of school roles. This approach secured financial efficiencies and provided a more sustainable leadership structure during the period of collaboration.
- 2.6 In May 2025, the governing body of Llangynwyd Primary School formally notified the governing body of Tynyrheol Primary School of its intention to conclude the joint working arrangement at the end of the academic year (August 2025).
- 2.7 Supported by the local authority, the governing body of Tynyrheol Primary School approached the Garw Valley Federation to explore a collaborative, shared leadership arrangement. This proposal was approved by both governing bodies, and the collaboration commenced in September 2026.
- 2.8 Under this model, the executive headteacher of the Garw Valley Federation assumed the role of interim executive headteacher across both the federation and Tynyrheol Primary School, with head of school responsibilities being fulfilled by a senior leader from the Garw Valley Federation.

3. Current situation/ proposal

- 3.1 In November 2025, Tynyrheol Primary School was inspected by Estyn and was placed in special measures. A key recommendation was to strengthen strategic leadership and governance by ensuring it is stable and effective.
- 3.2 In response, the governing body of Tynyrheol Primary School sought to formalise joint working arrangements by requesting to join the Garw Valley Federation at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.3 The aim of the Federation is to enable schools to work collaboratively to develop and embed effective shared practice that improves outcomes and broadens opportunities for pupils and staff, while establishing common goals and reflective approaches to teaching and learning to ensure equitable access to high-quality education across all communities. This strategic approach is intended to secure sustained improvement in standards and outcomes for all learners.
- 3.4 Tynyrheol Primary School has already benefitted from the increased leadership capacity within the federation, which has supported improvements in the provision for additional learning needs, curriculum design and the quality of teaching and learning at the school.
- 3.5 The consultation followed the statutory process under the Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2014, including the publication of a consultation document on Monday 9 February 2026; notification to parents/carers, staff, trade unions, neighbouring schools and other stakeholders; a minimum six-week consultation period; and the holding of staff consultation meetings, parent/carer information meetings and pupil meetings. The local authority was also consulted during the development of this proposal.
- 3.6 In addition to these formal arrangements, a range of further engagement activities was undertaken, including the distribution of the consultation document via email, the provision of paper copies upon request, social media updates and drop-in sessions.
- 3.7 There were no responses received during the consultation period.
- 3.8 Following consideration of all consultation feedback, the governing bodies of the Garw Valley Federation and Tynyrheol Primary School met separately on Tuesday 28 April 2026. At these meetings, both governing bodies resolved to proceed with the proposal to formally federate, with the Garw Valley Federation agreeing to federate with Tynyrheol Primary School and Tynyrheol Primary School agreeing to join the Garw Valley Federation. Consequently, both governing bodies have agreed to establish a single governing body for the federation from 1 September 2026.
- 3.9 Enhanced collaboration between schools supports greater consistency in teaching, planning and assessment practices. Staff share expertise, co-develop curriculum resources and promote a coherent learning journey across all key stages. This continuity benefits pupils who move between settings or require sustained support, as interventions are better aligned and pupil progress can be monitored more effectively.

- 3.10 The new combined governing body will operate under an Instrument of Government, attached at **Appendix 1**. This document sets out the size of the governing body and the allocation of the different categories of governors.
- 3.11 The federation model enables the schools to share access to specialist teachers, additional learning needs coordinators (ALNCos) and pastoral staff, which may not be financially viable for individual schools. This shared provision strengthens the breadth of the curriculum and supports the early identification of pupils' needs. Access to specialist expertise also enhances professional learning for staff, contributing to improvements in the quality of teaching across the federation.
- 3.12 The combined leadership structure supports strategic alignment across schools, reducing duplication and enabling leaders to focus on long-term improvement. A shared vision promotes consistency in policies, behaviour expectations, safeguarding practices and quality assurance processes. This results in stronger oversight of teaching standards, improved staff accountability and a more coherent approach to school improvement planning.
- 3.13 The schools can reduce operational costs by sharing administrative functions, site management, digital infrastructure, procurement processes and support services. Joint commissioning further improves value for money and enhances efficiency in service delivery. Over time, this enables the schools to release resources for reinvestment in teaching and learning.
- 3.14 Pooling budgets and aligning spending priorities enable schools to plan more strategically. Joint purchasing of curriculum resources, staff training and digital tools delivers economies of scale. A coordinated approach to financial management supports sustainability, reduces the risk of deficit budgets and strengthens the overall financial resilience of the schools involved.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts because of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

- 5.1 The well-being goals and principles prescribed for within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 connect directly to the approach to supporting children, young people and their families. The approach is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle and more specifically as follows:

Long term

The approach to teaching and learning focuses on meeting the needs of children and young people from the age of 4 to 11 to maximise their potential.

Prevention	The focus of teaching and learning is upon identification of needs of young people and ensuring that there is appropriate learning provision in place to meet individual needs.
Integration	The approach to teaching and learning addresses the need for a coherent delivery of economic, social, environmental, and cultural outcomes.
Collaboration	A fundamental principle of the approach to teaching and learning focuses on improving collaboration within schools, between schools, with officers and school stakeholders create a unified system.
Involvement	Ensuring that children and young people, parents and carers are at the heart of the system and that needs are discussed and met in a person-centred way.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 6.1 There are no climate change or nature implications resulting from this report. However, we are committed to supporting the implementation of the local authority's 'Bridgend 2030 – Net Zero Carbon Strategy' and Welsh Government's carbon reduction commitments.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 The directorate has a robust approach to safeguarding, and this is detailed within the directorate's strategic plan. The Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate Strategic Plan 2023-2026 is aligned with Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC's) Corporate Parenting Strategy.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 The federation model offers improved financial efficiency and sustainability through the sharing of resources, staffing and operational functions. By pooling budgets and aligning spending priorities, schools can achieve economies of scale in areas such as staffing, procurement, training and digital infrastructure. This reduces duplication of costs and strengthens value for money.
- 8.2 Shared access to specialist staff, including teachers, ALNCoS and pastoral support, enables provision that would not be affordable for individual schools, supporting early identification of need and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.
- 8.3 Joint commissioning and coordinated financial planning reduce the risk of deficit budgets and improve overall financial resilience. Over time, these efficiencies enable schools to reinvest resources into frontline provision, contributing to improved outcomes for learners.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet note the proposal progressed by the governing bodies under the statutory federation process.

Background documents

None

Appendix 1

Instrument of Government

The Garw Valley Federation

1. The name of the federation is: The Garw Valley Federation
2. The names and categories of the schools in the federation are:

Name	Category
1. Betws Primary School	Community
2. Blaengarw Primary School	Community
3. Ffaldau Primary School	Community
4. Tynyrheol Primary School	Community

3. The name of the governing body is: The Garw Valley Federation

4. The governing body shall consist of the following:

Category of governor	Number of governors
Parent governors Number per school	8 in total (2 per school)
Executive headteacher	1
Staff governors	2
Teacher governors	2
Local authority governors	2
Community governors Additional community governors (where a primary school in a federation is situated in a community council area)	4 Community 1 Community Council