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### **with additional learning needs (ALN) across Blaenau Gwent county borough.**

#### **Introduction**

This report has been prepared by His Majesty's Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMIES) for Wales. Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However, Estyn is not a body that is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore, as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide its opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer.

#### **Summary/Conclusion**

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council proposes to increase the capacity for ALN and ASD Resource Bases across the county borough in some primary and secondary schools. This will include establishing and changing ALN provision in a number of primary and secondary schools in the county borough. The proposal is to increase ASD and ALN places from 61 to 86 across primary schools and increase provision in secondary schools from 62 to 80 places in Phase 1 (including 15 Welsh-medium places). Furthermore, the proposals include the potential to increase places by a further 40 places in Phase 2 (including Faith-

detail the precise actions that will be needed to meet the implementation, particularly when action is required in September 2023.

The potential advantages and disadvantages of the proposed changes have been outlined appropriately. The advantages include:

- Pupils will have access to suitable and appropriate provision within their local area;
- Pupils will have access to suitable and appropriate provision in terms of protected characteristics e.g., faith or language;
- Creation of a local solution which will address the increased demand for ALN provision;
- Continuity and sustainability in terms of local education for pupils with ALN;
- The structure will build confidence and self-esteem in pupils, parents and staff;
- A local option for pupils transitioning from mainstream school to resources bases;
- Reduce the costs of out of county placements for pupils with SEN of an estimated

- Highlight how the council will ensure that there is no negative effect on well-being and attitudes to learning, particularly in schools that need to improve aspect of well-being
- Highlight how leaders intend to ensure the staffing levels that are needed for the increase in capacity and to maintain the quality of experiences
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