# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Closure of Godre’r Graig Primary School, Neath Port Talbot** |
| **DATE** | **22 July 2019** |
| **BY** | **Kirsty Williams AM, Minister for Education** |

Members will be aware of the recent closure of Godre’r Graig Primary School. I am providing an update following a commitment made by the Minister for Finance and Trefnydd during Business Questions on 16 July. Neath Port Talbot Council took the decision to close on 11 July, following receipt of a report from geological experts which identified a risk to the school’s playground from a potential landslide. The school has been closed as a precautionary measure until more detailed investigations are undertaken.

The report provided by Earth Science Partnership (ESP), the experts commissioned by Neath Port Talbot Council, identifies a medium level risk from a quarry spoil tip near the school which is affected by groundwater.  ESP’s investigations found that if the stream became blocked as a result of a severe weather event, there is a possibility that water levels and pressures in the tip could induce materials to flow downhill.

In circumstances such as these the safety of our children is paramount and I am pleased that Neath Port Talbot Council has made the proactive decision to close the school while more detailed tests are carried out.  We remain in close contact with the Council and have offered the Welsh Government’s support if needed.

The council is keeping parents informed of developments and will be making arrangements to relocate all the pupils and staff onto an alternative site ready for September. [www.npt.gov.uk/godrergraig](http://www.npt.gov.uk/godrergraig).

The report specifically refers to the school and its grounds only and does not currently refer to the wider area. Local residents will be naturally concerned about what this means for them. The council has asked ESP to carry out further detailed investigations and modelling to establish if there is any potential impact upon the area surrounding the school.  They have contacted residents of Godre’r Graig to advise them of the situation, and will update them with further information once it becomes available. A dedicated e-mail address has been published on the LAs website for residents to raise any concerns.

I will continue to monitor the situation at the school.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Assembly returns I would be happy to do so.