

Complete Agenda



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CABINET

CYNGOR GWYNEDD

DATE	Tuesday, 9th June, 2026
TIME	1.00 pm
LOCATION	Cyfarfod Hybrid / Hybrid Meeting – Siambr Hywel Dda and Zoom
CONTACT POINT	Gwen Alaw Roberts cabinet@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET MEMBERS

Members	
Nia Wyn Jeffreys	Council Leader
Craig ab Iago	Cabinet Member for Environment
Dilwyn Morgan	Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
Paul John Rowlinson	Cabinet Member for Housing and Property
Menna Trenholme	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families
June Jones	Cabinet Member for Highways, Engineering and Ymgynghoriaeth Gwynedd Consultancy
R Medwyn Hughes	Cabinet Member for Economy and Community
Dewi Jones	Cabinet Member for Education
Huw Wyn Jones	Cabinet Member for Finance
Llio Elenid Owen	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Legal and the Welsh Language

AGENDA

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THE CABINET, TUESDAY, 19 MAY 2026

Present-

Councillors: Nia Jeffreys, Menna Trenholme, R. Medwyn Hughes, Craig ab Iago, Huw Wyn Jones, June Jones, Dilwyn Morgan, Llio Elenid Owen, Dewi Jones and Paul Rowlinson.

Also present-

Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Dewi Morgan (Head of Finance), Dylan Owen (Corporate Director), Gwern ap Rhisiart (Head of Education), Debbie Jones (Assistant Head of Education Services), Cllr Dafydd Davies (Clynnog Ward Local Member), Cllr Peter Thomas (Llanllyfni Ward Local Member), Ffion Madog Evans (Assistant Head of Finance).

1. APOLOGIES

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and the opportunity was taken to recognise Plaid Cymru's victory in the Senedd Election earlier this month. The First Minister was congratulated on his appointment, along with former elected members of this Council as well.

The Council's Elections Team, and all the staff involved in the Election were thanked for their work.

No apologies were received.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent matters.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were no matters arising from overview and scrutiny.

5. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 10 March 2026 were accepted as a true record.

6. YSGOL NEBO - CONSULTATION REPORT

The report was submitted by Cllr Dewi Jones.

DECISION

The content of the report on the outcome of the statutory consultation (Consultation Report) on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 was considered, and the publication of a statutory notice on the proposal was approved, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented stating that it was the result of a very long, thorough and emotional process. Those who participated in the consultation were thanked.

Reference was made to the importance of rural schools to the communities of Gwynedd, but it was noted that there was also a responsibility to consider the reality of the situation honestly. Attention was then drawn to the significant reduction in the number of children in Gwynedd, highlighting that this reduction was also true across the country. The impact this would have on the sustainability of schools within the County was reiterated. It was explained that there were several reasons for the decline in births, citing matters related to second homes, a lack of good jobs in rural areas and the ongoing cost of living crisis.

When referring to Ysgol Nebo in particular, the educational, financial and operational challenges arising from the low numbers of pupils were acknowledged. It was stressed that this was not a reflection of the quality of work of the staff or the commitment of the community. The contentious and difficult nature of a decision of this nature was highlighted, but the need to ensure the best possible educational opportunities for the children of Gwynedd and to safeguard the future of education in the county was stated.

Should the Cabinet agree to move forward with the process, there would be a formal objection period of 28 days before the matter was brought back to the Cabinet. It was assured that steps would be taken to undertake the transition carefully and supportively for the children, and the wider School community.

The Local Member for the Clynnog Ward was welcomed to the meeting. The community, staff and the Governing Body were thanked for the constructive and respectful way they had dealt with this difficult situation. The low numbers in the School and the high costs facing the Council were acknowledged, but there was concern that the discussion about the School's future had been narrow and focused solely on numbers. It was believed that the proposal put forward by the Governing Body, namely the development of Nebo as a more nurturing provision for children with social, emotional and well-being needs, had deserved more consideration. In light of the increasing pressure on children and adult services, it was proposed by the Local Member that schools such as Nebo should be considered as part of early intervention and prevention. In addition, there was concern about the impact of closing the School on the Welsh language in the community.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- It was enquired whether a consultation had taken place with the children of the School and if the voice of the child had been considered here. It was

ensured that the voice of the child must be heard as part of the statutory process and it was stated that an independent facilitator had been commissioned to complete this work. It was noted that the views shared by children had to be weighed against the wider picture before the Cabinet.

- In response to a question about the plans to prepare and support children for any change of this kind, it was highlighted that the Department had been working with children and families to plan for the change and discuss any support that may be required.
- Sadness was expressed about the matter at hand, and assurances were sought in terms of plans to support the community should the decision be approved. It was confirmed that the impact assessments were part of the consultation documentation, and it was added that the Department had revisited these impact assessments following the comments received in the consultation and had addressed some concerns. The importance of the School building as a community resource in Nebo was reiterated, noting that the After-use Policy would now be in place and support would be given to the community if approved by the Cabinet.
- Reference was made to the praise for the additional learning needs provision within Ysgol Nebo, and assurances were sought that this provision would continue in the alternative school. It was noted that the Council was looking at its structures in terms of additional learning needs and inclusion and was looking to strengthen support for all schools. It was highlighted that there were financial and structural challenges in this area, but that the aim was to ensure that all schools were inclusive.
- It was confirmed that Ysgol Llanllyfni had sufficient capacity to welcome the number of pupils who would join from Ysgol Nebo. Attention was drawn to the fact that parents had the right to send their children to any school, so pupils from Ysgol Nebo were not obliged to join Ysgol Llanllyfni if the proposal was implemented.
- It was noted that there were 9 children in the catchment area of Ysgol Nebo, and that several social factors affected parents' choice of which school to send their children. In response to a question about children's concern about being bullied at a larger school, it was confirmed that there were plans in terms of integrating children into other schools. It was added that discussions with the schools receiving the children were ongoing, to ensure they received the necessary support.

7. YSGOL BALADEULYN - CONSULTATION REPORT

The report was submitted by Cllr Dewi Jones.

DECISION

The content of the report on the outcome of the statutory consultation (Consultation Report) on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 was considered, and the publication of a statutory notice on the proposal was approved, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

DISCUSSION

The whole community was thanked for their contribution to the consultation process. It was noted that the Cabinet respected and recognised how much the School meant to the people of the area.

The change in the County's demography was reported with the number of births having dropped significantly in recent years. This meant that fewer children now lived in Gwynedd. It was recognised that this would have a direct impact on the sustainability of the County's schools, and reference was made to the need to re-examine the organisation of education to ensure sustainable provision. It was emphasised that small schools were often strong schools with very passionate communities around them, but it was noted that there were educational, financial and operational challenges in maintaining a school with very low numbers for a long time. It was accepted that the decision in question was difficult, but that the future of education for the whole County had to be considered.

Should the Cabinet agree to move forward with the process, there would be a formal objection period of 28 days before the matter was brought back to the Cabinet. It was assured that steps would be taken to make the transfer supportive and respectful for the children, and the wider School community.

The Local Member for the Llanllyfni Ward was welcomed to the meeting. Officers from the Education Department, the Cabinet Member, and the school community in Nantlle were thanked. It was recognised that the number of children attending Ysgol Baladeulyn was not sustainable, but it was believed that the way forward would be to federate the School with Ysgol Talysarn and add a specialist area for children with specialist learning needs. There was concern about the impact of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn on the social use of the Welsh language in the community, and the potential impact of this on the housing market in the village.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- It was asked whether the community and the children had been given sufficient opportunity to voice their opinions. It was confirmed that the Department had visited the School three times, and held sessions to discuss the challenges, the preferred options, and then to look at the Department's findings. It was highlighted that a drop-in session had also been held, which had given the community the opportunity to ask any questions and receive more information. It was added that the children's views had also been received.
- In response to a question about mitigating any negative impact on the children as a result of the decision in question, it was noted that discussions had taken place with the learners, families and both schools to be able to put support in place to assist with arising concerns.
- It was enquired how the authority supported the County's small schools. It was stated that there was support for all aspects of school life in different ways. It was explained that the Protection Scheme was in place to support smaller schools, and that it ensured minimum staffing levels within those schools.
- It was proposed that a discussion should be initiated with the Welsh Government about a future Education Strategy in rural areas.

- It was explained that a decrease in births was an international trend, but it was recognised that the effect of this may have been seen earlier in Gwynedd as many schools in the County were small schools anyway. It was proposed that there was a need for a nationwide strategic direction in terms of how to respond to these challenges.
- There was concern about transport arrangements to take children to the alternative school. It was noted that the Council provided transport in accordance with the statutory requirement and the Education Transport Policy. It was added that transport would also be provided if the road was unsuitable for walking. It was suggested that anyone with a concern about school transport should contact the Department.
- In response to a question about the consideration given to the option of federalisation, it was stated that a detailed assessment of the benefits had been drawn up but it was believed that federalisation alone would not change the fundamental challenges at hand here. It was explained that this option might be more suitable for larger schools, and for two schools more similar than the ones in question.
- Reference was made to the linguistic impact assessment carried out, and it was reiterated that no impact on Welsh language educational provision was foreseen as a result of the proposal. Commenting on the potential impact on the social use of Welsh, it was stated that a higher percentage of children were fluent at Ysgol Talysarn compared to Ysgol Baladeulyn. It was therefore hoped that the Welsh language would be reinforced outside of school and socially as a result. The mitigation measures identified within the impact assessment were also mentioned.

8. COMMISSIONING INVESTIGATIONS

The report was submitted by Cllr Nia Jeffreys.

DECISION

Resolved:

a) To commission the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council Leader, and where relevant, the Monitoring Officer, to proceed with the further investigations and reviews noted in part 4 of this report following the publication of the Our Bravery Brought Justice report, including:

- (a) Agreement on the terms of reference and operational steps
- (b) Identify and appoint an external independent investigator where required
- (c) Arrange for the receipt of final reports and take steps to submit them to the relevant committees and forums

b) To authorise the Chief Executive to continue to communicate with other relevant bodies and partners about what action and investigations they are undertaking and the lessons learnt that may benefit the Council

c) To authorise the Chief Executive to divert staff resources to support independent investigators to complete the work

ch) To authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Head of Finance and Cabinet Member for Finance, to prioritise and approve allocations from the fund established through the 2026-27 One-Off Bids regime to fund the investigations.

DISCUSSION

It was highlighted that the Council fully accepted the Our Bravery Brought Justice Report, and that it intended to act on all recommendations in the Report. The victims were thanked for their courage and apologies were made for the Council's failures. It was emphasised that the victims were at the forefront of everyone's minds when discussing this topic.

It was noted that the purpose of commissioning this work was to add to the messages of the Our Bravery Brought Justice Report, and to examine some topics in more detail. It was explained that several considerations had been made here such as impact on the victims, the lessons learnt, and what the Council could achieve.

Reference was made to the number of investigations listed that were already underway or had been completed. It was confirmed that these investigations had identified lessons to be learnt. The need to properly understand everything that had happened to be able to improve was highlighted, and the importance that the Council finished carrying out all investigations that were within its power.

It was stated that the review into the Council's governance arrangements considered the missed opportunities, the recommendations set out in the Our Bravery Brought Justice report, and established whether there were governance lessons to be learnt.

The culture review was then discussed, noting that it would involve pulling together work culture matters through multiple sources. It was added that this would draw on several pieces of information that the Council already had. It was intended to complete this work in two parts, and the importance of receiving input from current Elected Members and those elected in the 2027 local elections, staff and other stakeholders was emphasised.

By referring to the Efficiency of the School Governance Procedure, it was highlighted that the current arrangement in terms of the division of statutory responsibilities was not always clear. It was mentioned that the Council had given an input into a review of the Welsh Government's school governance arrangements. While the Council awaited the outcome of that review, it had been acknowledged that it would examine its internal arrangements and the current school governance procedure.

It was reported that considerable changes had taken place to arrangements for dealing with the Council's part 5 referrals since the publication of the Our Bravery Brought Justice Report. It was hoped that this work would be reported to the Safeguarding Strategic Panel in October 2026.

Following this, it was stated that there was an intention to look again in detail at any schools that had been under the leadership of the offender and to expand the Part 5 work to look at these schools. It was reiterated that it was intended to look as far back as possible to complete this work.

It was highlighted that there was a commitment to encourage other organisations to carry out their own investigations, to see if there were wider lessons to be learnt.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that he had an input into this report and was satisfied with the appropriateness of the recommendations. Should anything arise in these investigations that needed to be referred to another statutory body or process, then it was stated that would happen and be a priority. It was confirmed that these investigations would be conducted with regard to data protection requirements and responsibilities to maintain fair and appropriate processes.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- Gratitude was expressed for the report and these investigations were welcomed. It was asked whether it would be possible to summarise the lessons learnt so far, and the steps that had already been taken to strengthen the Council's arrangements. In response, reference was made to the quarterly reports of the Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board. Reference was made to the contents of the Council's website and the information it contained about the conclusions of the Our Bravery Brought Justice Report, what had been achieved, and what was ongoing as part of the Council's response. It was also stated that the County's schools had access to an electronic data management system, so that behavioural change in children could be recorded. It was added that the capacity of the Education Safeguarding and Welfare Team had also increased. The changes to the Section 5 safeguarding arrangements were mentioned and the system that was being piloted to facilitate minute-taking in Section 5 safeguarding meetings. The safeguarding training video was mentioned which had been developed in an accessible and suitable manner for all the Council's workforce. It was stressed that an agreement was in place to enable co-operation with the Police in an emergency. Particular attention was drawn to the Quality Assurance Framework that had been developed by the Children's Department, noting that it clarified expectations for training, support and learning. It was added that the aim was to ensure that the best support was given to children and families, and confirmed that the Framework was a step forward in seeking to embed culture and a long-term change within the Council.
- It was emphasised that there was no political interference when it came to staffing matters within this field. It was recognised that there was a public interest in this matter, but that action must be taken in accordance with the law, and the employment rights of individuals must be respected. It was assured that the Council understood their responsibility and acted appropriately and in a timely manner.
- A Cabinet Member confirmed that lessons were being learnt, and that everything possible was being done to ensure that nothing like this can happen again. He mentioned his belief that the Council had acted appropriately throughout this process, with independent advice having been received and that the Council had acted on that advice. Attention was drawn to the challenge in relation to making decisions about further investigations and reports without being certain of their impact on the individuals at the heart of this and not knowing whether these

would be their preferred actions. It was reiterated that the Council had been supporting the families throughout this process. There was concern that the voice of the child was not evident in this document. It was questioned how was it possible to ensure that decisions within this field respected the needs of the children.

- In response, it was confirmed that the Council was seeking to become trauma informed throughout the journey and that the well-being of the victims was the Council's primary consideration. The request not to use the offender's photo in the media was reiterated, as there was concern about the potential impact of seeing the offender's picture on the victims. The need to be trauma informed of the impact of any investigation or report that would be conducted was emphasised.
- Reference was made to the ongoing review of school governance arrangements, noting that it was entirely fundamental to the future of education and child safety in Wales going forward. It was hoped that this work would continue and get to the root of current systems. It was believed that the division of powers between government bodies and education departments within local authorities should be examined.

9. ALLOCATION OF INCOME FROM THE SECOND HOMES AND EMPTY HOMES PREMIUM FOR 2026-27

The report was submitted by Cllr Huw Wyn Jones.

DECISION

Resolved:

To allocate the additional income from the premium on empty properties and second homes to the priority areas set out in Part 4 below.

To commission further work to formulate proposals for the use of the additional premium funding of £914k relevant to 2025/26 and the remaining £4k unallocated in this report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted stating that councils were required to determine the use of the premium in accordance with the Council Tax Statutory Guidance on empty homes and second homes.

It was reported that the Council had followed this principle in allocating to specific purposes and areas; alignment with the statutory guidance on the use of premium income and alignment with the objectives set out in the Council's Plan.

Several considerations were then listed which also needed to be made when considering the allocation. These included an increased number of enquiries about the premium, further legislative changes to the tax system in 2026-27 which may result in increased enquiries/appeals, the number and timing of appeals to the Valuation Office putting pressure on residents and the administration of the Tax

Service, and that the notice to terminate the Welsh Government's empty housing grant from September 2026 meant that there was no income stream for the realisation of the Housing Action Plan's empty housing targets.

The need to earmark the additional income resulting from the increase in the Empty Property Premium and the collection of premium income that was above the estimates in 2024/25, was highlighted to priority areas.

A value of £1.2 million was recommended for allocation, which was detailed in the report, stating that this was £1.14 million on a permanent basis and £79 thousand on a one-off basis.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- The report was welcomed and the importance of the Community Fund was emphasised as it enabled the Council to support communities.
- Pride was expressed that a column on impact had been added to the report, which provided an opportunity to measure the impact of this funding on the communities and Gwynedd residents.

10. FINAL ACCOUNTS 2025/26 - REVENUE OUTTURN

The report was submitted by Cllr Huw Wyn Jones.

DECISION

RESOLVED

To accept the report and consider the final financial position of the Council's departments for 2025/26:

	<i>Colofn A</i>	<i>Colofn B</i>	<i>Colofn C</i>	<i>Colofn CH</i>	<i>Colofn D</i>
	Gor/(Tan) Wariant Gros 2025/26 £ '000	Addasiadau a Argymhellir			Gor/(Tan) Wariant Addasedig 2025/26 £'000
Oedolion, Iechyd a Llesiant	1,381	(1,281)			100
Plant a Theuluoedd	3,396	(3,296)			100
Gwasanaeth Busnes a Chomisiynu Gofal	(99)				(99)
Addysg	(24)				(24)
Economi a Chymuned	269		(269)		0
Priffyrdd, Peirianeg ac YGC	407	(307)			100
Amgylchedd	1,378	(22)		(1,256)	100
Tai ac Eiddo	(20)				(20)
Tîm Rheoli Corfforaethol a Chyfreithiol	(39)				(39)
Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol	(20)				(20)
Cyllid	(38)				(38)

Noting that there is substantial expenditure above the budget by the Adults, Health and Well-being Department, the Children and Families Department and the Environment Department in 2025/26 (See Column A in the table above). The following financial virements (explained in Appendix 2) were approved –

- The departments that are over-spending to receive one-off financial assistance and to limit the overspend that will be carried forward by the Department to £100k (See column B in the above table).
- To confirm the financial support of £269k above the contracted payment to Byw'n lach (see column C in the table above).
- To fund the overspend of £1.256 million in the Waste field by using £786k from the Parc Adfer Contributory Earnings Recovery Fund and £470k from the Producer Extended Responsibility Fund for packaging materials (See column CH in the above table).
- To allocate a financial bid of up to £800k to the Housing and Property Department to fund the pressure on the emergency accommodation service in 2026/27.
- On Corporate budgets:
 - use (£2.8 million) of the corporate underspend to assist the departments that have overspent in 2025/26.
 - the remainder of (£3.174 million) required to fund all requirements to be funded from the Council's Financial Strategy Support Fund.
 - the underspend of (£914k) on Council Tax Premium is transferred to the Council Tax Premium fund for use to be determined by Cabinet.

The amounts to be carried forward were approved (the "Over/(Under) Adjusted Expenditure" column in column D above and column D of Appendix 1).

To approve the financial virements from the Council's Financial Strategy Support Fund as outlined in Appendix 2 following a review of the funds.

- £6.6 million being moved to the Council's general balances
- £1.5 million being moved to the Building Safeguarding Fund.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented stating that a summary of the final position of all sections was provided in Appendix 1 of the report.

The contents of Appendix 2 were detailed, reporting on some of the main points. It was noted that expenditure in the fields of children's out-of-county placements, waste, residential care and domiciliary care continued to be higher than the budget allocated to them. It was highlighted that the underspend on corporate budgets was helping to alleviate the financial position for the Council as a whole. It was added that £3.2 million from the Financial Strategy Fund would need to be used to balance out the departments' financial deficit situation.

It was stated that the budgetary deficit of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department had been reduced to £1.4 million, recognising that the pressure on delivery services was responsible for most of the departmental pressure.

In reference to the Children and Families Department, it was explained that there had been an increase of 11 out-of-county placements including exceptional cases of unregistered placements. It was reiterated that this was more costly and had led to an increase in the departmental budgetary deficit to £3.4 million by the end of the financial year. In addition, it was mentioned that there were increasing pressures on the Post-16 Service budget and on support plans and field workers.

A budgetary deficit of £407k by the Highways, Engineering and YGC Department was reported. It was mentioned that a reduction in the work commissioned by external agencies had had a negative impact on the income of the Highway services.

The Environment Department was then discussed, highlighting a budgetary deficit of £1.38 million at the end of the year. It was explained that the trend of overspending in the waste field continued and accounted for £1.26 million of the departmental position. It was mentioned that savings schemes in several services were slipping, which were also part of the picture. It was noted that the overspend in the waste field was to be funded from the gains from refunding Parc Adfer and income from a levy on packaging materials for producers and retailers.

Attention was drawn to the Housing and Property Department, along with the significant pressures facing the emergency accommodation service. It was stated that this financial position followed the consideration of an additional budget of £4.2 million allocated from the council tax premium, and an additional one-off budget of £859k allocated as part of the bids system to assist with the increasing pressures.

It was mentioned that school balances had seen a decrease of £1.2 million, and it was highlighted that seven primary schools and three secondary schools had a deficit at the end of the 25/26 financial year.

The virements to be implemented from the Council's funds were reported, as outlined in Appendix 3.

The Head of Finance noted that he considered that the Council's overall balances should be increased.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- It was emphasised that the same was true because of under-funding the services of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department, with increasing pressures on these services. It was highlighted that providing for the county's most vulnerable residents was the priority.
- The growing demand for the children and supporting families service, which led to higher costs, was mentioned. It was noted that work was underway to try to reduce the reliance on out-of-county placements, and to try to support the children in their communities where possible. It was explained that safeguarding children was a priority for the Council, and that the use of reserves emphasised this priority.
- There was concern about the significant cost of placing children in out-of-county placements and the lack of additional support from the Government

to respond to this. It was stressed that there was a moral duty to accommodate any child who needed this support, and therefore that the conversation about funding the area needed to be taken further than the Council's boundaries.

- It was mentioned that spending on homelessness was a cause for concern. It was acknowledged that the previous Government had promised to fund additional costs for services arising from the new legislation, and that it was therefore key for the new Government to deliver on this promise. It was highlighted that the Council had taken steps to purchase buildings, so it was anticipated that expenditure on homelessness would decrease as a result.
- The Cabinet Member for Economy and Community had warned that Byw'n lach building infrastructure would require significant spending in the coming years.
- It was recognised that helping the people of Gwynedd was the main priority, but that under-funding led to the same discussion every year. By referring to Westminster, it was noted that the tax burden on the country was high but that decisions not to fund necessary services provided by Councils had a major impact on people within our communities. It was explained that it needed to be borne in mind that the Welsh Government allocated funding they received from Westminster, and there was concern that not much more funding would be given by Westminster.

11. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26 - END OF YEAR REVIEW (31 MARCH 2026 POSITION)

The report was submitted by Cllr Huw Wyn Jones.

DECISION

To accept the report on the year-end review (position 31 March 2026) of the capital programme.

The following modifications to the Capital Budget approved on 6 March 2025 and adjusted on 11 November 2025 and 20 January 2026 were approved in terms of the funding methods of the programme (as set out in part 3.2.3 of the report), namely:

- £35,000 increase in borrowing use
- an increase of £14,058,000 in the use of grants and contributions
- £485,000 increase in use of capital receipts
- an increase in the use of revenue contributions of £1,313,000
- £2,493,000 reduction in capital fund utilisation
- a reduction of £667,000 in the use of renewal and other funds.

DISCUSSION

It was explained that the report included a Departmental breakdown of the £164.9 million capital programme for the three years 2025/26 – 2027/28. It added that the

report detailed the sources to fund the net increase which was around £12.7 million since the last review.

It was reported that the main conclusions were that the Council had managed to spend £83.8 million in 2025/26 on capital schemes, of which £52.7 million (63%) had been funded through specific grants. It was highlighted that an additional £21.9 million of proposed expenditure had been re-profiled from 2025/26 to 2026/27 and 2027/28.

The main schemes that had slipped since the original budget were then listed.

Attention was drawn to the list of additional grants that the Council had been able to attract since the last review, which included:

- £3.2 million – Transitional Accommodation Capital Programme (TACP) grant from the Welsh Government.
- £2.4 million – Additional School Maintenance Grant 2025/26.
- £2.3 million – Additional General Capital Grant from the Welsh Government.
- £1.8 million – Grant from the Welsh Government towards the Learning Disability Community Hub, Canolfan Dolfeurig.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- A number of positive matters arising from the report were highlighted, including the significant value of additional grants the Council had been able to attract. Attention was drawn to the extensive work underway within the Council's departments to draw up the applications for the grants in question.

The meeting commenced at 1:00pm and concluded at 3:45pm.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



Date of meeting: 9 June 2026
Cabinet Member: Councillor Dewi Jones
Contact Officer: Gwern ap Rhisiart – Head of Education
Title of Item: Ysgol Y Garreg - Objection Report

Report to a meeting of the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 The Cabinet is requested to approve the decision sought which is to confirm the proposal given by statutory notice, namely –
 "To close Ysgol Y Garreg on 31 August 2026 and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school from 1 September 2026," in accordance with section 53 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the requirements of the Schools Organisation Code 11/18.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Ysgol Y Garreg is a community primary school located in the village of Llanfrothen. The school provides education for learners between 3 and 11 years old and is a Category 3, Welsh-medium school. Learners are admitted to the school on a part-time basis in the September following their third birthday, and as full-time learners in the September following their fourth birthday.
- 2.2 The PLASC (Pupil Level Annual School Census) data on 20 January 2026 shows that there are only 2 learners at the school (Reception to Year 6) with 0 learners in the Nursery Class.

Learner numbers at Ysgol Y Garreg (PLASC January 2026)									
	Nursery	Reception	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6	Total
2026	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2

- 2.3 There is a reduction of 88% in the numbers attending the school compared with the PLASC data in January 2025 when there were 17 learners on the register. When learner numbers drop to very low levels, particularly below 10, the ability to present a broad curriculum in the future is hindered. The low number of learners raises concerns regarding:
- Educational experience and interaction with peers
 - Staffing viability and resilience
 - Financial sustainability and efficient use of resources
 - The ability to satisfy the curriculum's statutory requirements

3 THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 3.1 The Education Department submitted a report to the Cabinet on 10 February 2026 requesting permission to hold a statutory objection period on the proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg in accordance with the Standards and Organisation of Schools Act (Wales) 2013 and the Schools Organisation Code 011/2018.
- 3.2 If a school has fewer than 10 learners on the roll when this census is held in January (PLASC - Pupil Level Annual School Census), the Code states:

"The 2013 Act allows governing bodies / local authorities to follow a simpler procedure in order to officially close the school. The only thing they would be required to do under that procedure would be to publish the closure notice - the requirement for consultation would generally be waived, as long as enough places in equivalent schools have been identified that would be reasonably accessible to those pupils who have been displaced or may be displaced."

- 3.3 Due to there being fewer than 10 registered learners in Ysgol Y Garreg (January 2026 PLASC), the Schools Organisation Code allows the authority to follow a simpler procedure to close a school. In particular, the requirement to consult in general is waived, and the only requirement would be to issue the statutory notice.
- 3.4 The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet following an objection period on the proposal - "To close Ysgol Y Garreg on 31 August 2026 and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school from 1 September 2026."
The Statutory Notice was issued on 25 February 2026, commencing a 28-day objection period. The objection period ended on 24 March 2026, and no objections were received.

4 STATUTORY OBJECTION PERIOD

- 4.1 As a result of the decision made by the Cabinet at its meeting on 10 February 2026, a Statutory Notice (**Appendix A**) was issued on 25 February 2026, commencing a 28-day objection period.
- 4.2 The notice was placed on the school gates and in the main entrance of Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch. The notice was published on the Council's website, including the background to the proposal, a link to the report submitted to the Cabinet on 10 February 2026, along with an explanation on how to present objections. All relevant stakeholders received an e-mail with a link to the website, to inform them that the objection period would commence on 25 February 2026.

- 4.3 The objection period ended on 24 March 2026, and no objections were received.
- 4.4 A teacher at Ysgol Y Garreg explained the meaning of the statutory notice to the learners ensuring that they understood the proposal and that the opportunity was given to them to express their views on the proposal, should they wish to do so.

Below is a summary of both letters received from the learners on the proposal -

- They expressed their sadness that the school would be closing.
 - They noted that they were happy at Ysgol Y Garreg and had learnt many things at the school.
 - One of the learners invited the Head of Education to the school, so that he could speak to them.
- 4.5 The Authority has a duty to consider the views of the children affected, in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and the Schools Organisation Code 011/2018. Understanding the learners' feelings regarding the proposal is a key element in order to contribute to a balanced and transparent decision, which considers the impact of the proposal on their well-being, as well as strategic and financial considerations.
- 4.6 This report is presented in order for the Cabinet to consider the situation before reaching a final decision on confirming the proposal.

5. THE RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE 'DECISION SOUGHT'

- 5.1 In accordance with the 'Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd' strategy, several factors were considered when developing and appraising the options for the situation. These matters were addressed in detail in the report submitted to the Cabinet on 10 February 2026. Please see **Appendix B** for the background pack.
- 5.2 Having held the objection period, by means of a statutory notice, and the fact that no objection was received, the Authority is satisfied that implementing the proposal is the most appropriate response to the reasons noted for the formulation of the proposal, as none of the other options considered would address the main challenges faced by the school, namely:
- **Low learner numbers** - The PLASC data in January 2026 shows that there are two full-time learners at the school (Reception to Year 6) and 0 learners in the nursery class.
 - **Leadership and staffing** - The existing staffing structure at Ysgol Y Garreg includes an interim headteacher in charge who is responsible for two schools through an informal arrangement, one full-time teacher and a temporary assistant (0.6 FTE). The current staffing arrangement has offered a short-term solution; however, the very low numbers of learners have contributed to a situation that is challenging in terms of long-term sustainability.
 - **High percentage of surplus places** – Learner numbers (reception to year 6) from the January 2026 census shows that are 95% empty places at the school (39 in total). The school has capacity for 41 learners (Reception to Year 6) and capacity for 7 learners in the Nursery Class. Therefore, with 0 nursery learners on the register, there are 7 empty places in the nursery also.

- **Very small class sizes and a broad age range** - The learners (Reception to Year 6) are educated in one class. The second class in the school is empty. There are no learners in Nursery to Year 5 at the school.
- **Projected numbers** - The projections based on the PLASC numbers in January 2026 suggest that there will be no statutory age learners at the school in September 2026 as there are no learners in the Reception to year 5 classes or in the Nursery class this year.
- **Catchment area learners** - The PLASC census in January 2026 shows that only 9% of the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area learners choose to attend the school. 91% of the catchment area learners choose to attend out-of-catchment schools.
- **Ysgol Y Garreg receives an additional sum to the core financial allocation** - Ysgol Y Garreg receives an additional amount to the usual allocation via the minimum staffing protection policy (which ensures at least a headteacher and teacher at each school, and a headteacher and an assistant in schools with fewer than 15 full-time learners). Based on September 2025 numbers the school would receive £68,822 in additional funding to the usual allocation via the minimum staffing protection policy.
- **Average cost per learner** - The average cost per learner at Ysgol Y Garreg in 2026-27, based on September 2025 numbers, would be £21,471, compared to a county average of £5,998.

6 SPECIFIC FACTORS WHEN CONSIDERING CLOSING THE SCHOOL

Although a process to close a school that has fewer than 10 learners waives the requirement for general consultation, the School Organisation Code states that relevant matters included in the Code must be considered. It notes that when considering whether a school closure is appropriate, special attention should be given to the following options:

- a. *Whether the establishment of multi-site schools might be considered as a means of retaining buildings, or the reasons for not pursuing this option.*

With only 2 learners at the school, Ysgol Y Garreg is facing an increasing challenge to set a balanced budget as the school receives an allocation based on learner numbers, and this, as well as the protection sum allocated to them will enable them to employ a headteacher and assistant only, based on the numbers of 2 learners. Because of this Cyngor Gwynedd is of the opinion that consideration cannot be given to the establishment of multi-site schools as a means of keeping the school open.

- b. *Whether alternatives to closure, such as clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools, might be considered or the reasons for not pursuing these as an alternative.*

As clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools, would mean continuing with the existing school, and therefore there would be a high likelihood that the current challenges would continue and intensify over the next few years, therefore the Council is of the opinion that making this an option does not address the challenges facing Ysgol Y Garreg now and in the future.

- c. *Whether the possibility of making fuller use of the existing buildings as a community or educational resource could be explored.*

Since Canolfan Gymdeithasol Llanfrothen is located next door to the school, and the local pub, Menter Y Ring (The Brondanw Arms) has received funding to re-open for the benefit of the community, it is not anticipated that another community resource is needed in the area. Nevertheless, if the proposal is implemented, Cyngor Gwynedd has a policy for the post-use of school sites and this policy would be followed when considering the future of the site.

ch. The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school-based facilities which are used by the local community).

At present, no community use is made of the school. A Community Centre is located next door to the school. Cyngor Gwynedd is of the opinion that as the Centre is independent from the school, it is not anticipated that closing the school would have any impact on local community events.

d. How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported.

In order to mitigate against any potential negative impact on learners, we would encourage discussions between Ysgol Cefn Coch and the parents of learners at Ysgol Y Garreg so that they can take advantage of their facilities and after-school activities, and to encourage collaboration between the school and the community of Llanfrothen.

7 PRESUMPTION AGAINST THE CLOSURE OF RURAL SCHOOLS

- 7.1 In the case of Ysgol Y Garreg, which has been designated as a rural school for the purpose of the code, specific consideration was given to the additional procedural requirements in relation to drawing-up proposals for rural schools.
- 7.2 The School Organisation Code includes a special procedure in relation to rural schools, establishing a procedural presumption against closure. It is noted in the Code *"This does not mean that a rural school will never close but the case for closure must be strong and all viable alternatives to closure must have been conscientiously considered by the proposer, including federalisation."*
- 7.3 In addition to the factors that are relevant when developing any proposal, specific assessments must also be undertaken in relation to a proposal of this type. Several assessments were conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Code, of the options believed that would address the school's situation.
- 7.4 Several impact assessments were conducted in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, including:
- Assessment of the probable impact on the Welsh Language
 - Assessment of the probable impact on different transport arrangements
 - Assessment of the probable impact on the community
 - Assessment of the probable impact on the quality and standards of education
 - Composite Impact Assessment

Further consideration was given to the above assessments, following the objection period. It is considered that the findings of the assessments are still current and relevant to the recommendation. The latest assessments have been included in **Appendix B**.

- 7.5 The conclusions of the assessment of the likely impact on different travel arrangements are noted that the option of closing the school would mean that learners in the current catchment area of Ysgol Y Garreg need to travel further to their school every day. As the alternative school is more than 2 miles from their homes, they will be entitled to free transport to the alternative school. Ysgol Cefn Coch is located 2.1 miles from Ysgol Y Garreg and transport to the alternative school will be offered in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's transport policy.
- 7.6 The community assessment shows that some negative impact on the community is anticipated if the proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg is implemented. It is acknowledged that closing the school would lead to the loss of a school in the Llanfrothen community, however the assessment notes that a very large proportion of the children who live within the school's catchment area already attend other schools (78%), including Ysgol Cefn Coch (13%), and therefore it is concluded that some link between Ysgol Cefn Coch and the Ysgol Y Garreg community already exists.
- 7.7 An assessment of the likely impact on the quality and standards of education was carried out on all the options. See the full report in Appendix B. According to Estyn's latest reports, Ysgol Cefn Coch offers education of a quality and standard that is equivalent, at least, to Ysgol Y Garreg.

Ysgol Y Garreg was last inspected by Estyn in 2023 (new inspection framework) and it was noted that 'the standard of teaching is consistently good'. Estyn presented the following as recommendations:

- Ensure an appropriate level of challenge to support pupils to develop their skills to the best of their ability.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to take on a leadership role, in order to contribute to the wider work and life of the school.

Ysgol Cefn Coch was last inspected by Estyn in 2018, where it was concluded that the school's current performance against the outcome questions and the provision was Good, and the leadership and care and welfare were Excellent (previous review framework).

As there are more learners at Ysgol Cefn Coch, it is anticipated that there will be an opportunity to teach children in larger groups, with age-related peers to broaden their experiences if the proposed proposal is implemented. Based on this, it is concluded that there would be a positive impact on the learning and teaching experiences of Y Garreg catchment area learners at Ysgol Cefn Coch.

- 7.8 It should be noted that it is not concern about the quality of the current education at Ysgol Y Garreg that has led to this proposal. Indeed, due to a very low learner to teacher ratio, the children are making good progress. Nevertheless, the main challenges the school faces are very low numbers and small class sizes, meaning that there are limitations on the school's ability to provide opportunities for learners to nurture and take advantage of extracurricular, social experiences and the ability to collaborate with pairs and groups of peers in the class in accordance with the requirements of the curriculum.

8 RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The impact assessments were carried out in accordance with the specific guidelines of 'presumption against closing a rural school.' The assessments, together with the report, were presented to the Cabinet on 10 February 2026 and their conclusions are summarised below. There is no change to the conclusions of the assessments as no objections to the proposal were received.

8.2 Composite Impact Assessment

A Composite Impact Assessment was carried out on the proposed proposal. The full assessment can be found in Appendix B.

The assessment gives specific attention to different equality elements such as race, gender, disability, language, religion or belief and age. The assessment notes the current situation and shows that policies and arrangements are in place which would ensure that the proposal considers and is compatible with equal rights.

Having weighed up the relevant factors, it is concluded that the proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on the majority of equality features. It is noted that measures are already in place to ensure that there will be no illegal discrimination or harassment.

It is anticipated that the implementation of the proposed proposal would reduce the inequality in the case of socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that the learners have more experiences and access to more services and activities in the alternative school. Learners would receive more equal opportunities as the learners would receive learning experiences based on national learning principles, with a variety of styles including working in mass groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range together with lessons that are appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

By implementing the proposed proposal, the learners of Ysgol Y Garreg would have a better learning environment and the learners would benefit from having more age-related peers in a school with more learners, which will ensure suitable educational and extracurricular experiences for them together with access to more extracurricular activities.

The Council would follow normal processes by supporting and monitoring, in order to ensure compliance of each school with the equality characteristics.

8.3 Linguistic Impact Assessment

The Welsh Government's guidelines (School Organisation Code) states that an impact assessment on the Welsh Language needs to be carried out as part of any proposal to reorganise schools. See the full assessment in Appendix B. The impact assessment on the Welsh language stated that it is anticipated that the proposed proposal would have a partial impact on certain elements in the context of the Welsh language, mainly:

- the proposed proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school would mean that learners in the Y Garreg catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school.
- the proposed proposal would mean that learners would have access to a higher supply in terms of staffing and they would be part of a larger group of peers of the same age, the proposal could strengthen the opportunities for learners within the class.
- that the proposed proposal would mean that Ysgol Y Garreg learners would be likely to use the Welsh language in informal Welsh contexts informally with their peers outside of school hours.

- that the proposed proposal would mean that fewer parents would likely meet on a daily basis in the Llanfrothen community during drop off and pick up times.

On the basis of the above, if the proposed proposal is implemented, it is anticipated that there would be no impact on Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area learners' use of the Welsh language in a formal context at the school. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that there would be more use of the Welsh language in informal contexts outside of school hours.

9 CONCLUSION

9.1 As no objection was received during the objection period, and that no other option that would address the main challenges faced by the school was identified, it is recommended that the Cabinet approves the decision sought, namely to formally confirm the proposal given by means of a statutory notice, to close Ysgol Y Garreg on 31 August 2026, and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school from 1 September 2026, in accordance with Section 53 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the requirements of the Schools Organisation Code 11/2018.

9.2 The Education Department remains of the opinion, following the objection period, that none of the other options, including federalisation, would address the main challenges facing the school, namely -

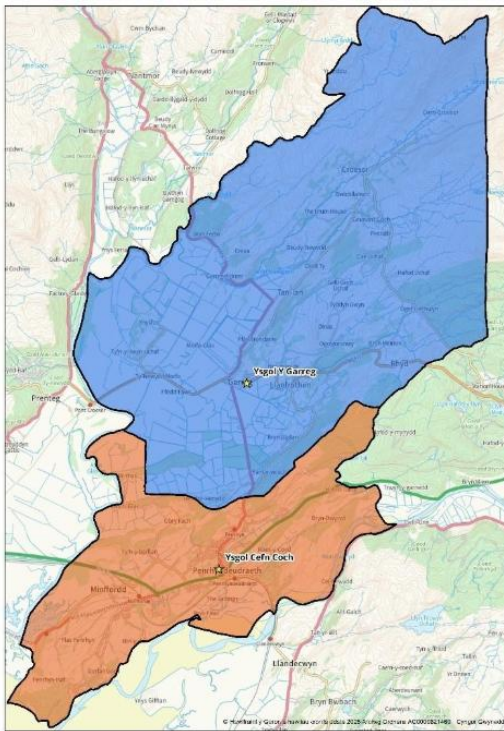
- very low learner numbers.
- projections showing a further drop in learners.
- learners being educated in classes with very small numbers, with only 2 learners in one class and the other class being empty.
- a continued very high cost per head, compared with the average amount in the county.

10. IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

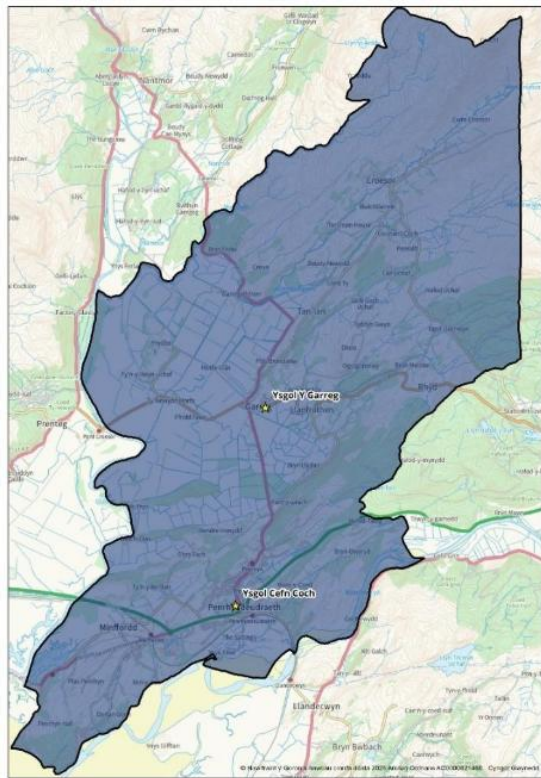
10.1 Learners in the catchment area

If the Cabinet decides to implement the proposal, Ysgol Y Garreg will close on 31 August 2026 and Ysgol Cefn Coch will be denoted as the alternative school from 1 September 2026. The catchment area of Ysgol Y Garreg would be adjusted to include the current catchment area of Ysgol Cefn Coch.

Map 1: The current Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch catchment areas



Map 2: Ysgol Cefn Coch catchment area if the proposal is implemented



10.2 Transport

If the Cabinet decides to implement the proposal, Ysgol Y Garreg will close on 31 August 2026, transport to the alternative school will be offered in line with Cyngor Gwynedd's transport policy.

10.3 Staffing Considerations

Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be staffing implications that could lead to redundancies. Cyngor Gwynedd has developed a detailed staffing policy, jointly with Trade Unions and headteachers. Any redundancies resulting from this proposal will have to comply with that policy. Clear and open communication will play a core part in the implementation of any proposals.

11 RECOMMENDATION

11.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet approves the decision sought which is to confirm the proposal given by statutory notice, namely –

"To close Ysgol Y Garreg on 31 August 2026 and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school from 1 September 2026."

In accordance with section 53 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the requirements of the Schools Organisation Code 11/18.

12 NEXT STEPS

Subject to the Cabinet's decision, these are the next steps of the process together with a timetable:

June 2026	Share the final decision with all relevant stakeholders. Hold discussions with staff at Ysgol Y Garreg.
31 August 2026	Implementation of the proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg.

13 VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

"This work has been supported with advice and guidance from the Legal Services. The report is based on the result of the statutory objection period that has been in place under Part 3 of the School Standards and Organisation Act (Wales) 2013 and presents a final proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg

and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school. I am therefore satisfied with the appropriateness of the decision sought."

Head of Finance Department:

"As stated in the previous report in February 2026, it is clear from the evidence that has been gathered that Ysgol y Garreg's situation is no longer sustainable and that decisive action is needed to address the situation. The result of the further work included in this report supports the previous conclusion and I have no objection to the decision being sought."

13. THE LOCAL MEMBER'S COMMENTS

"No councillor wants to face this situation, and it is extremely sad to have to face the fact that there are no children to go to Ysgol Y Garreg in September 2026. Ysgol Y Garreg has been a key part of the community for over a century and has provided excellent education to the children of the area. It is sad that the numbers have fallen to this extent. The two pupils currently at school are in Year 6 and will be transferring to secondary school in September 2026.

Like other parts of Gwynedd and indeed the western world, the number of children has fallen significantly which has consequently affected the number of pupils on the register. Society has also changed, and for many years now parents have had the right to consider educating their children in a school of their choice. I believe it is important to thank the staff for their dedication in challenging circumstances, and for providing both pupils with excellent and entertaining educational experiences.

I would like to draw attention to the opinion of the governing body which was submitted in the report to the Cabinet in February 2026 -

"Should the Council decide to close the school, I would like to strongly encourage you to consider restructuring the building as a specialist centre for pupils who have trouble settling in mainstream schools, but are not eligible for a Special Learning Needs School."

CYNGOR GWYNEDD

ADRAN 48 DEDDF SAFONAU A THREFNIADAETH YSGOLION (CYMRU) 2013

HYSBYSIAD O GYNNIG I GAU YSGOL Y GARREG

CYNGOR GWYNEDD, SWYDDFA'R CYNGOR, CAERNARFON, GWYNEDD, LL55 1SH

Hysbysir drwy hyn yn unol ag adran 43 o Ddeddf Safonau a Threfniadaeth Ysgolion (Cymru) 2013 a'r Cod Trefniadaeth Ysgolion fod Cyngor Gwynedd yn cynnig cau YSGOL Y GARREG, Llanfrothen, Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd, LL48 6LJ. Cynhelir yr ysgol gan Gyngor Gwynedd.

Cynigir gweithredu'r cynnig ar **31 Awst 2026**.

Yr ysgol a ddynodir ar gyfer dysgwyr dalgylch Ysgol Y Garreg yw Ysgol Cefn Coch, Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd, LL48 6AE o 1 Medi 2026. Mae Ysgol Cefn Coch yn Ysgol Gymuned Cyfrwng Cymraeg. Mae'r ysgol ar gyfer genethod a bechgyn 3 i 11 oed.

Yr awdurdod mynediad ar gyfer Ysgol Cefn Coch yw Cyngor Gwynedd a bydd disgyblion yn cael eu derbyn i'r ysgolion gan Gyngor Gwynedd yn unol â'i bolisi mynediad. Bydd y trefniadau mynediad i'r ysgolion yn cael eu gwneud heb gyfraniad at allu na medr (bandio disgyblion).

Bydd cludiant yn cael ei ddarparu i'r ysgol yn unol â Pholisi Cludiant Ysgolion Cyngor Gwynedd.

Cyngor Gwynedd yw'r awdurdod cynhaliol a Chyngor Gwynedd fydd yn gweithredu'r cynnig yma.

Lluniwyd y cynnig o ganlyniad i'r angen i gyfarch y niferoedd isel iawn o ddisgyblion sy'n mynychu Ysgol Y Garreg ac o ganlyniad, maint bychain y dosbarthiadau, yn ogystal â rhagamcanion isel o niferoedd i'r dyfodol. Nid oedd yr un o'r opsiynau eraill a adnabuwyd ar gyfer yr ysgol, gan gynnwys ffederaleiddio, yn mynd i'r afael a'r heriau yma. Fel canlyniad ystyrir mai cau'r ysgol yw'r opsiwn mwyaf priodol.

Gall unrhyw un wrthwynebu'r cynnig cyn pen cyfnod o 28 diwrnod o ddyddiad cyhoeddi'r cynnig hwn, hynny yw erbyn **24 Mawrth 2026**.

Dylid anfon gwrthwynebiadau ysgrifenedig at sylw'r Pennaeth Addysg, Cyngor Gwynedd, Swyddfa'r Cyngor, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1SH neu drwy anfon neges e-bost at sylw'r Pennaeth Addysg i moderneiddioaddysg@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

Llofnodwyd:



Gwern ap Rhisiart
Y Pennaeth Addysg, ar ran Cyngor Gwynedd
Dyddiad Cyhoeddi: **25 Chwefror 2026**

NODYN ESBONIADOL

(Nid yw'r isod yn rhan o'r hysbysiad ond mae'n cynnig esboniad o'i bwrpas)

Mae Cyngor Gwynedd yn cynnig cau Ysgol Y Garreg ar 31 Awst 2026, a dynodi Ysgol Cefn Coch fel yr ysgol amgen o 1 Medi 2026.

Yn unol â pholisi mynediad yr Awdurdod, mae gan rieni hawl i wneud cais mynediad (neu gais i drosglwyddo) i unrhyw ysgol. Darperir cludiant ysgol am ddim i ddysgwyr o ddalgylch Ysgol Y Garreg sydd yn dymuno mynychu Ysgol Cefn Coch os ydynt yn byw dros 2 filltir oddi wrth yr ysgol neu yn gymwys i dderbyn cludiant am ddim oherwydd natur y ffordd i'r ysgol, yn unol â'r polisi cludiant cyfredol.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD
SECTION 48 SCHOOL STANDARDS AND ORGANISATION ACT (WALES) 2013
NOTICE OF PROPOSAL TO CLOSE YSGOL Y GARREG
CYNGOR GWYNEDD, COUNCIL OFFICES, CAERNARFON, GWYNEDD, LL55 1SH

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 43 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code that Cyngor Gwynedd propose to close YSGOL Y GARREG, Llanfrothen, Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd LL48 6LJ. The school is maintained by Cyngor Gwynedd.

It is proposed to implement the proposal on **31 August 2026**.

The school denoted for the learners of Ysgol y Garreg's catchment area is Ysgol Cefn Coch, Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd, LL48 6AE from 1 September 2026. Ysgol Cefn Coch is a Welsh medium Community School. The school is for girls and boys aged 3 to 11 years old.

The admission authority for Ysgol Cefn Coch will be Cyngor Gwynedd and pupils will be admitted to the schools by Cyngor Gwynedd in accordance with its admissions policy. The admissions arrangements for the school will not make provision for selection by aptitude or ability (pupil banding).

Transport will be provided to the school in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's School Transport Policy.

Cyngor Gwynedd is the maintaining authority and Cyngor Gwynedd will implement this proposal.

This proposal has been formulated as a result of the need to address the very low numbers of pupils who attend Ysgol Y Garreg and consequently, the small classes, as well as low projections of future numbers. None of the other options identified for the school, including federalisation, addressed these challenges. As a result, closing the school is considered the most appropriate option.

Anyone may object to the proposal within a period of 28 days from the date on which this proposal was published, that is by **24 March 2026**.

Written objections should be sent to the Head of Education, Cyngor Gwynedd, Council Offices, Caernarfon, LL55 1SH or by sending an e-mail directed to the Head of Education to modernisingeducation@gwynedd.llyw.cymru.

Signed:



Gwern ap Rhisiart
Head of Education, on behalf of Cyngor Gwynedd
Publication Date: **25 February 2026**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(The following is not part of the notice but is intended to explain its general purpose)

Cyngor Gwynedd is proposing to close Ysgol Y Garreg on 31 August 2026 and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school from 1 September 2026.

In accordance with the Authority's admissions policy, parents are entitled to apply for admission (or transfer request) to any school. Free transport will be provided for pupils within Ysgol Y Garreg's catchment area if they wish to attend Ysgol Cefn Coch if they live over 2 miles from the school or are eligible to receive free transport due to the nature of the road to the school, in accordance with the current transport policy.

Appendix B

Impact Assessment Ysgol Y Garreg

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Assessment of the likely impact on Travel Arrangements	7
Assessment of the likely impact on the Community	11
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**ASSESSMENT OF THE LIKELY IMPACT ON THE QUALITY
AND STANDARDS OF EDUCATION -
YSGOL Y GARREG**

May 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Ysgol Y Garreg is a community primary school located in the village of Llanfrothen. The school provides education for learners between the ages of 3 and 11 and is a Welsh-medium school, Category 3. There has been a significant reduction in the numbers of learners at Ysgol Y Garreg over the past few years, from 26 pupils in 2016 to 2 pupils today, which causes uncertainty about the future of the school.

At its meeting on 10 February 2026, Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet approved the publication of a statutory notice allowing a statutory objection period of 28 days in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the guidance of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 011/2018: on the following proposal -

"Close Ysgol Y Garreg on 31 August 2026 and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school from 1 September 2026."

In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, which includes 'Presumption against closing rural schools', an assessment needs to be made on the likely impact on the quality and standards of education on any reasonable option that can resolve the main challenges the school is facing. For the purpose of the Code, Ysgol Y Garreg is listed as a 'Rural School'.

The Council is committed to providing education of the best possible quality that will give the County's children the experiences, skills and confidence to develop into bilingual, successful and well-rounded citizens.

It remains a high priority to provide the best possible learning experiences - for all learners within the County, ensuring an exciting and broad curriculum, as well as extracurricular activities that stimulate them to learn and understand, which will lead to improving standards.

The objection period was held between 25 February 2026 and 24 March 2026 and no objection was received to the proposal.

2. SUMMARY

Ysgol Y Garreg was last inspected by Estyn in 2023 with the new inspection framework. Ysgol Cefn Coch was last inspected by Estyn in 2018. A summary of the last Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch inspections can be found in the table below.

School	Date of inspection	Standards	Well-being and attitudes towards learning	Teaching and learning experiences	Care, support and guidance	Leadership and management
Y Garreg	2023	New inspection framework				
Cefn Coch	2018	Good	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- *No change – continue with the current situation*

Note that although the case for change has been established, the 'No change' model has been included in the assessment for comparison purposes.

- *Federalisation with a nearby school*

This option would ensure continuity in the school's presence in the village of Llanfrothen through a collaborative arrangement with a nearby school or schools, led by a head or heads and one governing body. Ysgol Y Garreg's governing body would be dissolved, and the school would come under the leadership of one headteacher and the governing body of the federation. The identity of the school in question (including name, ethos, and school uniform) would continue, and it would enable the possibility of sharing staff, resources, buildings, and expertise.

The possibility of federalisation with neighbouring schools was considered, specifically Ysgol Cefn Coch and Ysgol Talsarnau (Afon Dwyrdd Federation).

- *Close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school*

This option would mean closing Ysgol Y Garreg 31 August 2026 and denoting Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school from 1 September 2026.

4. ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY IMPACT ON EDUCATION STANDARDS AND QUALITY

We have used Estyn's latest surveys on the relevant schools as criteria for assessing the different options for the future of education for Ysgol Y Garreg's catchment area.

OPTION 1: DO NOTHING – CONTINUE WITH THE CURRENT SITUATION

This option would mean no change and Ysgol Y Garreg will continue as it is.

Impact criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Standards and general progress of specific groups and in terms of skills	No change.	Neutral
Well-being and attitudes to learning	No change.	Neutral
Learning and teaching experiences	No change.	Neutral
Care, support and guidance	No change.	Neutral
Leadership and management	No change.	Neutral
Vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)	No change.	Neutral
Provision that is at least equivalent to what is available to the learners at the time (including those with ALN)	No change.	Neutral

OPTION 2: FEDERALISATION WITH A NEARBY SCHOOL

Impact criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Standards and general progress of specific groups and in terms of skills	A negative impact on these criteria is not foreseen through federalisation with a nearby school. The results of the latest Estyn inspections of Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch were strong for indicators of standards. As a result, it is concluded that the effect on standards of federating Ysgol Y Garreg with Ysgol Cefn Coch and Ysgol Talsarnau would be neutral.	Neutral
Well-being and attitudes to learning	The results of Ysgol Y Garreg's latest Estyn inspection were strong with Ysgol Cefn Coch's report being 'excellent' for indicators of Well-being and attitudes to learning. As a result, it is concluded that the effect on well-being and attitudes to learning from the federating of Ysgol Y Garreg with Cefn Coch and Ysgol Talsarnau would be neutral.	Neutral
Learning and teaching experiences	Ysgol Y Garreg's latest Estyn inspection stated that the school "plans thoroughly to provide beneficial experiences that cover all of the areas of learning and experience." The latest Estyn inspection of Ysgol Cefn Coch stated that "the quality of teaching across the school is good. Staff establish an effective working relationship with the pupils, which fosters a supportive and active learning atmosphere." As a result, it is concluded that the impact on teaching and learning experiences would be neutral.	Neutral
Care, support and guidance	The latest Estyn inspection of Ysgol Y Garreg stated that the school "is a caring and family community that provides care, support and solid guidance to the pupils". Cefn Coch school has been assessed as 'excellent' under the Care, Support and Guidance indicator. As a result, it is anticipated that the implementation of this option would have a neutral effect on care, support and guidance.	Neutral
Leadership and management	The federating model with a nearby school would offer opportunities to strengthen Ysgol Y Garreg's leadership position, it is concluded that leadership and management would have a positive or at least neutral effect from implementing the federating option.	Positive/Neutral
Vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)	Support is provided to vulnerable groups including children with additional learning needs in accordance with the Authority's policy, and the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs (Wales) Act 2018 in all schools in Gwynedd. As a result, it is predicted that the effect of this option on this criteria would be neutral.	Neutral
Provision that is at least equivalent to what is available to the learners at the time (including those with ALN)	It is anticipated that the impact would be neutral as Ysgol Y Garreg would continue. In addition, the Estyn inspection result for Ysgol Y Garreg's 'Standards' was strong, as was the result of Ysgol Cefn Coch's inspection. Based on information here, no impact on learners' standards is anticipated from implementing this option.	Neutral

OPTION 3: CLOSE YSGOL Y GARREG AND DENOTE YSGOL CEFN COCH AS THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

Impact criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Standards and general progress of specific groups and in terms of skills	The results of the latest Estyn inspections of Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch were strong for indicators of standards. As a result, it is concluded that the impact on this criteria would be neutral by teaching the learners at Ysgol Cefn Coch.	Neutral
Well-being and attitudes to learning	<p>In this case, if the proposal is implemented, it is not anticipated that learners of statutory age at Ysgol Y Garreg on 1 September 2026 would transfer to the alternative school. In the long term, the intention is that implementing this option would have a positive effect on the well-being of learners with attitudes towards learning, as Ysgol Cefn Coch would offer social and extra-curricular opportunities with a range of learners from various age groups.</p> <p>Ysgol Y Garreg School's latest Estyn inspection results were strong with Ysgol Cefn Coch's report being 'excellent' for indicators of Well-being and attitudes to learning. As a result, it is concluded that well-being and attitudes to learning would have a positive or at least a neutral effect of implementing this option.</p>	Neutral / Positive
Learning and teaching experiences	Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch's latest Estyn survey results were strong for the Teaching and Learning Experiences indicator. However, as there are more learners at Ysgol Cefn Coch, it is anticipated that there will be an opportunity to teach children in larger groups and with age-related peers to broaden their experiences. Based on this, it is concluded that there would be a positive impact on teaching and learning experiences from teaching Y Garreg catchment area learners at Ysgol Cefn Coch.	Positive
Care, support and guidance	The latest Estyn inspection of Ysgol Y Garreg stated that the school "is a caring and familial community that provides care, support and solid guidance to the pupils". Cefn Coch school has been assessed as 'excellent' under the Care, Support and Guidance indicator. As a result, it is anticipated that the implementation of this option would have a neutral effect on care, support and guidance.	Neutral
Leadership and management	The results of the latest Estyn surveys of Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch were strong for the Leadership and Management indicators. As a result, it is predicted that the effect of this option on this criteria would be neutral.	Neutral
Vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)	<p>Support is provided to vulnerable groups including children with additional learning needs in accordance with the Authority's policy, and the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs (Wales) Act 2018 in all schools in Gwynedd.</p> <p>When planning staffing (e.g. the role of the ALN) and the provision map, the demand on schools is challenging, and that becomes more evident when considering the demand on smaller schools. In larger schools the conditions of the additional learning needs coordinator are better, and meeting the statutory requirement is easier as a result. In addition, responding to the needs of the learners is also easier in larger schools as they could perhaps host an intervention group to target specific needs. The provision map is more extensive in larger schools to respond to demand.</p> <p>As a result, since learners would be offered a place in a school with a higher number of learners, it is anticipated that the effect of this option on this criterion would be positive.</p>	Positive

Provision that is at least equivalent to what is available to the learners at the time (including those with ALN)	The Estyn inspection result for Ysgol Y Garreg's 'Standards' was strong, as was the result of Ysgol Cefn Coch's inspection. Based on the information from these surveys, it is anticipated that the effect on the teaching standards of Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area learners at Ysgol Cefn Coch would be neutral. As a result, it is anticipated that the provision at Ysgol Cefn Coch would correspond to what is currently available to the learners at Ysgol Y Garreg, at least.	Neutral
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4. CONCLUSION

This assessment of the likely impact on the quality and standards of education shows that implementing the proposed proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school would likely have a positive impact, or at least a neutral impact.

In addition, the assessment indicates that a neutral/partially positive effect is predicted on the quality and standards of education from implementing the federalisation option with a nearby school, it would allow opportunities to share good practices between the sites of the multi-site school, and possibilities of making better use of resources.

Based on the result of the above assessments and comparing Estyn reports, it is concluded that the standard of education provided at Ysgol Cefn Coch corresponds to the standard of education provided at Ysgol Y Garreg. As there are more learners at Ysgol Cefn Coch, it is anticipated that there will be an opportunity to teach children in larger groups, with age-related peers to broaden their experiences. Based on this, it is concluded that there would be a positive impact on teaching and learning experiences from teaching Y Garreg catchment area learners at Ysgol Cefn Coch.

The objection period was held between 25 February 2026 and 24 March 2026 and no objection was received to the proposal. As a result, it is anticipated that the likely effect of implementing the proposed proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school would be neutral/partially positive.

ASSESSMENT OF THE LIKELY IMPACT ON TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS – YSGOL Y GARREG MAY 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Cyngor Gwynedd Transport Policy

The 'Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd' strategy aims to limit travel from home to school to a one-way journey that is no longer than 30 minutes.

Cyngor Gwynedd provides free Transport for learners who live two or more miles from the school in their catchment area, or the nearest school (not including nursery learners). Learners who receive primary education (with the exception of learners with additional learning needs or disabilities), are expected to walk up to two miles to meet any modes of transport provided by Cyngor Gwynedd. The Transport policy can be seen in the parents' handbook: [Information for parents 2025/26](#)

1.2 Background (Ysgol y Garreg)

Ysgol Y Garreg is a community school located in the village of Llanfrothen, about two miles from Penrhyndeudraeth, providing education for learners aged 3-11 years old. There has been a significant decline in the number of learners at Ysgol y Garreg over recent years. There are 2 learners from Reception to Year 6 and no Nursery learners attending the school.

At its meeting on 10 February 2026, Gwynedd Council's Cabinet approved the publication of a statutory notice allowing a statutory objection period of 28 days in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the guidance of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 011/2018: on the following proposal -

"Close Ysgol Y Garreg on 31 August 2026 and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school from 1 September 2026."

The objection period was held between 25 February 2026 and 24 March 2026 and no objection was received to the proposal.

2. ASSESSMENT OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF ALL OPTIONS ON TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

This impact assessment on travel arrangements has been conducted in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (0/112018). The code states that any change in school organisation must assess the impact on learners' travel, including distance, travel time, safety, and transport costs to the authority. This assessment considers all the proposed options, noting the impact on travel arrangements, and ensures compliance with [Cyngor Gwynedd Transport Policy](#) (page 12), ensuring no learner has to travel an unreasonable distance.

2.1 The potential impact of each option on travel arrangements is set out below:

- No change – Continue with the current situation

This model would mean no change to the existing provision in the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area.

This option would not have any impact on the current travel arrangements of Ysgol Y Garreg learners, as the learners would continue to be educated at Ysgol Y Garreg. No learner in the Ysgol y Garreg catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.

- Federalisation with a nearby school

This model would ensure continuity in the school's presence in the village of Llanfrothen through a collaborative arrangement with a nearby school or schools, led by a head or head teachers and one governing body. The governing body of Ysgol Y Garreg would be dissolved, and the school would be under the leadership of one headteacher and the federation's governing body. The identity of the school in question (including name, ethos and school uniform) would continue, and it would enable the possibility of sharing staff, resources, buildings and expertise.

The possibility of federalisation was considered with nearby schools, specifically Ysgol Cefn Coch and Ysgol Talsarnau (Ffederasiwn Afon Dwyrdd).

This option would not have any impact on the current travel arrangements of Ysgol Y Garreg learners, as the learners would continue to be educated at Ysgol Y Garreg and the learners' travel arrangements would continue in the same way. No learner in the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.

- Close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school

This option would mean closing Ysgol Y Garreg and designating Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school.

Ysgol Cefn Coch is located 2.1 miles from Ysgol Y Garreg. This is the geographically closest school to Ysgol Y Garreg.

This option would have an impact on travel arrangements, as it would be necessary to provide transport (in accordance with Gwynedd's transport policy) if all the learners in Ysgol Y Garreg's catchment area chooses to attend Ysgol Cefn Coch (dependent on parents/guardian's choice of school). It is anticipated there would be additional transport costs between £30,000 - £40,000 per year (estimated cost). Some learners will travel further to school than they would currently. No learner in the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.

2.2 Free transport options

In accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's transport policy, learners receiving primary education (excluding learners with additional learning needs or disabilities) are expected to walk up to 2 miles to meet any transport provided by Cyngor Gwynedd along the shortest route.

The shortest route available is the one that the Council does not consider particularly dangerous, after assessing the other routes that could be used, and these routes would be assessed in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's transport policy.

2.3. Summary of the likely impact on travel arrangements

Below is a summary of the impact on travel arrangements of the options under consideration:

Options	The likely impact on travel arrangements for learners	The likely annual financial impact on travel arrangements for the Authority
No change – Continue with the current situation	<p>Neutral – No change</p> <p>No learner in the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.</p>	£0
Federalisation with a nearby school	<p>Neutral</p> <p>The learners would continue to be taught at Ysgol Y Garreg and the learners’ travel arrangements would continue in the same way.</p> <p>No learner in the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.</p>	£0
Close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school	<p>Negative</p> <p>Ysgol Cefn Coch is located 2.1 miles from Ysgol Y Garreg. The Authority would need to provide transport for learners in the current catchment area of Ysgol Y Garreg that would wish to attend Ysgol Cefn Coch and live more than 2 miles from the school, in accordance with the Authority’s Transport Policy.</p> <p>Having considered current numbers that live in Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area (January 2026), it is anticipated that a 30 seater bus would be required to transport learners that would wish to attend Ysgol Cefn Coch (in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd’s transport policy) It is anticipated that this would be at a cost of between £30,000 - £40,000.</p> <p>No learner in the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.</p>	£30,000 - £40,000

3. CONCLUSION

It is not anticipated that there would be a negative impact on the travel arrangements from implementing any of the above options (part 2), except for the option to close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school.

Should the option to Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school be implemented, then it is anticipated that there would be an impact on travel arrangements for the children. However, it is not anticipated that any learners in the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.

Considering the latest learners' numbers (January 2026), it is anticipated that a 30 seat mode of transport vehicle would need to be arranged if all learners from the current catchment area of Ysgol Y Garreg choose to attend Ysgol Cefn Coch (in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's transport policy). The transport costs are estimated to be around £30,000 - £40,000 per year.

The Statutory Objection period was held between 25 February 2026 and 24 March 2026, and no objections to the proposal were received. As a result, it is anticipated that the option to close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school would lead to additional transport costs for the Authority. These costs are estimated to be around £30,000 - £40,000 per year to provide transport should all the learners in Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area choose to attend Ysgol Cefn Coch (in accordance with the choice of the parents/guardians).

ASSESSMENT OF THE LIKELY IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY – YSGOL Y GARREG (MAY 2026)

1. INTRODUCTION

When developing proposals for the organisation of schools, the Authority is required to carry out an assessment of the likely impact on the community, in accordance with the School Organisation Code (011/2018).

1.1 Background

Ysgol Y Garreg is a community school located in the village of Llanfrothen, which is about two miles from Penrhyndeudraeth, and provides education for learners between the ages of 3-11. There has been a significant reduction in the numbers of learners at Ysgol Y Garreg over recent years. By now, January 2026, only 2 Reception to Year 6 learners are on the register, with no learners in the Nursery class.

Due to a significant drop in the numbers of learners attending Ysgol Y Garreg, the situation is now unsustainable and extremely vulnerable. On the basis of PLASC data (Pupil Level Annual School Census) January 2026, Ysgol Y Garreg is the smallest school in the county.

At its meeting on 10 February 2026, Gwynedd Council's Cabinet approved the publication of a statutory notice allowing a statutory objection period of 28 days in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the guidance of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 011/2018: on the following proposal -

"Close Ysgol Y Garreg on 31 August 2026 and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school from 1 September 2026."

The objection period was held between 25 February 2026 and 24 March 2026 and no objection was received to the proposal.

2. THE OPTIONS

The Authority considered and discussed a number of options for the future of Ysgol Y Garreg, including:

- *No change – Continue with the current situation*
- *Federalisation with a nearby school*

This option would ensure continuity in the school's presence in the village of Llanfrothen through a collaborative arrangement with a nearby school or schools, led by a head or heads and one governing body. Ysgol Y Garreg's governing body would be dissolved, and the school would come under the leadership of one headteacher and the governing body of the federation. The identity of the school in question (including name, ethos, and school uniform) would continue, and it would enable the possibility of sharing staff, resources, buildings, and expertise.

The possibility of federalising with neighbouring schools was considered specifically Ysgol Cefn Coch and Ysgol Talsarnau (Ffederasiwn Afon Dwyrdd).

- *Close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school*

This option meant that Ysgol Y Garreg would close and Ysgol Cefn Coch would be denoted as the alternative school.

3. SUMMARY OF THE CATCHMENT AREA

3.1 The Area

Ysgol Y Garreg is located in the rural village of Llanfrothen, which is about two miles from Penrhyndeudraeth in Gwynedd within the Glaslyn ward. According to the 2021 Census, 1,633 people live in Glaslyn ward.

3.2 The Economy

55.7% of people over 16 years of age within the Glaslyn ward are economically active, and 4% of these are unemployed. 43.4% of people in the same age group are economically inactive with 2.9% of these being ill or disabled for a long period.

The type of industry in which the population is mostly employed is varied in the area, with the highest rate (16.5%) working in the field of Accommodation and Food Service Activities.

According to data from the 'Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation Wales (WIMD 2025)' the employment rate of the Llanfrothen area compared to other areas in Wales gives a rank of 1701 out of 1917 areas. Therefore, the Llanfrothen area is within the 50% least deprived areas in Wales.

3.3 Deprivation

Llanfrothen is ranked 1231 out of the 1,917 Lower Tier Expanded Product Areas in Wales, which puts it in the least deprived 50%.

Each area's overall deprivation ranking is based on its ranking across eight categories of deprivation, including income, employment, health, education, access to services, community safety, physical environment and housing.

It is noted that Llanfrothen is within the 20-30% of the most deprived areas in Wales in the 'Housing' field. The indicators in this area are the proportion of people living in overcrowded homes (use of bedrooms), and the proportion of people living in homes without central heating.

In addition, Llanfrothen is within the 20-30% of the most deprived areas in Wales in regard to 'access to services', i.e. deprivation due to people being unable to access a variety of services that are considered essential for day-to-day living. The indicators include average public and private travel times to various services such as food shops, doctor's surgery, primary and secondary schools, post office, public library, pharmacy, leisure centre and private travel time to a petrol station.

Below is a summary of how the Llanfrothen area is positioned in the context of other areas in Wales according to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2025):

Field	Rank in Wales, out of 1917 areas. (1 = most deprived and 1917 = least deprived)	Most deprived % in Wales
Employment	1701	
Income	1342	
Health	1615	
Education	1021	
Housing	284	Within the 10% most deprived
Physical environment	1509	
Access to services	221	Within the 10% most deprived
Community safety	1453	

3.4 The Community

No community use is made of the Ysgol Y Garreg school building.

4. YSGOL Y GARREG AND THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

4.1 Context of the schools according to the Estyn Inspection Reports

As part of Estyn's reports, the schools are placed in context, and their community relations are detailed. This is the context given to Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch by Estyn inspectors.

Ysgol Y Garreg

"The school makes good use of the community to expand the provision and opportunities available to pupils."

Source: Estyn Inspection Report, 2023.

Ysgol Cefn Coch

"Pupils contribute extensively to the community and take pride in the opportunity to support activities such as thanksgiving services in the chapel and concerts in the community hall."

Source: Estyn Inspection Report 2018.

4.2 Statistical information of the schools

The table below shows the numbers of learners at Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch. This table also shows the school's capacity and number on the roll in January 2026. All schools teach through the medium of Welsh.

School	Full Capacity (N – Yr6)	Number on register January 2026 (N – Yr6)	Legal Category	Language Category
Y Garreg	48	2	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Cefn Coch	231	148	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3

Source: PLASC census January 2026

4.3 Catchment information and learners choice of schools

Each school has a specific catchment area which it serves, and which is important in relation to the Authority's admissions and transport policy. Learners do not have to attend the school in their catchment area, the choice is up to parents (in accordance with the admission policy).

The latest data (GIS data January 2026) shows that 92% of children who live in the catchment area of Ysgol Y Garreg attend schools outside of the catchment area. The table below indicates the proportion of learners who live in the catchment area and attend the catchment area school, and the proportion of learners in the catchment area who attend schools outside the catchment area.

School	Proportion of catchment area learners who attend the catchment area school	Proportion of catchment area learners who attend non-catchment area schools	Proportion of the school's learners who attend the school from outside the Catchment Area
Y Garreg	8%	92%	0%
Cefn Coch	78%	22%	16%

Source: GIS Data January 2026

4.4 Summary of the various facilities in the community of Llanfrothen and Penrhyndeudraeth (January 2026)

	Y Garreg	Cefn Coch
Village Hall / Community Centre	✓	✓
Church/Chapel	✓	✓
Public transport	✓	✓
Shop	✓	✓
Cafe/Pub	✓	✓
Post Office		✓
Pharmacy		✓
Library		
Playground/Park		✓
Bank		
Residential Home		
Leisure Centre		
Garage		✓
Tourist Attraction	✓	✓
Cylch Ti a Fi + Cylch Meithrin / Pre-school groups		✓

4.5 Summary of the use of the school buildings outside of usual school hours

A summary of community or extra-curricular use of the local school buildings is below:

	Y Garreg	Cefn Coch
Play groups (School holidays)		✓
Branch of the Urdd		✓
Drama productions		
Voluntary groups		✓
Coffee morning/evenings		✓
Community Auction		
Choir Practice		
Welsh For Adults		
Town Council Meetings/Community Council		
Cylch/Pre-school groups		✓
Clubs/ Sporting activities		✓
After school club		✓
Local interests' group		

Cylch Meithrin Penrhyn is located on the site of Ysgol Cefn Coch and provides early years care and education through the medium of Welsh for pre-school children. The collaboration between Ysgol Cefn Coch and the Cylch means a smooth transition for the children from the Cylch to the nursery class. The Cylch provides places for children between the ages of 2 and 4 and is part of the 2-year-old Childcare scheme where families who live within certain postcodes can receive up to 12.5 hours of free childcare per term after the child has reached the age of two.

The Cylch Meithrin is also part of the Childcare Scheme, which is a scheme that offers up to 30 hours a week of free early years childcare. Children can take advantage of the Childcare Offer from the start of the term following their third birthday until the September after they turn four.

The Cylch Meithrin also provides comprehensive childcare on site from 8:00 to 18:00 from Monday to Friday.

There is no early-years provision at Ysgol Y Garreg, with the exception of the school's Nursery class.

4.6 A summary of activities or groups that the school is regularly involved in:

	Y Garreg	Cefn Coch
Pre-School groups/ Cylch Meithrin/Ti a Fi		✓
Eisteddfodau (Local/County/National)		✓
Branch of the Urdd		✓
Other activities (sports, clubs)		✓

4.7 If buildings, rooms, facilities, or services are provided by a school on behalf of the community where would they be provided if the school is closed?

School	Location of facilities if the school closes
Y Garreg	No community event is held at Ysgol Y Garreg building at the moment. If the Cabinet decided to proceed with the proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg, options for the use of the school building would have to be considered. The local community has various options for hosting any event such as Llanfrothen Social Center and the Brondanw Arms public house (The Ring).

4.8 Distance and travel time to other schools in the catchment area

The table below indicates the distance and travel time between Ysgol Y Garreg and schools in the area. Ysgol Cefn Coch is the closest school to Ysgol Y Garreg. The travel times below take into account the nature of the lanes and roads and the effect that can have on travel time in a rural area.

School	Y Garreg	
Y Garreg	Miles	2.1
	Minutes	6

Source: Google Maps 2026

5. ASSESSMENT ON THE LIKELY IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

In order to assess the community impact of the possible models, it was decided to create criteria in accordance with the recommendations of the community assessment considerations of the School Organisation Code 011/2018.

OPTION 1: NO CHANGE – CONTINUE WITH SURRENT SITUATION

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and Wellbeing	As there would be no change to the current provision therefore no impact on health and well-being is anticipated.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	As there would be no change to the current provision no impact on public transport provision is anticipated. Any transport required by Ysgol Y Garreg for eligible catchment area learners will continue in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	As there would be no change to the provision therefore no impact on the current use of the school is anticipated.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	As there would be no change to the provision therefore no impact on wider community safety is anticipated.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	As there would be no change to the provision therefore no impact is anticipated on how parents choose a school for their children or affect the choice of living in the catchment area.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	As there would be no change to what is currently provided therefore no impact on other local services is anticipated.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	As there would be no change to what is currently being provided, no adverse impact on the wider economy of the community is anticipated.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	As there would be no change to what is currently provided therefore no impact on the local community is anticipated.	Neutral

OPTION 2: FEDERALISATION WITH A NEARBY SCHOOL

Impact criteria	Description	Status of the impact and of the work
Impact on Health and Wellbeing	As federalisation would mean that Ysgol Y Garreg remains open there would be no change to the current provision therefore no impact on health and well-being is anticipated.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	As federalisation would mean that Ysgol Y Garreg remains open there is no anticipated impact on the provision of public transport. Any transport required by Ysgol Y Garreg for eligible learners from the catchment area will continue in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	As federalisation would mean that Ysgol Y Garreg remains open, no change to the current use of the school is foreseen.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	As federalisation would mean that Ysgol Y Garreg remains open there is no anticipated impact on wider community safety.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	As federalisation would mean that Ysgol Y Garreg remains open, no impact is foreseen on how parents choose a school for their children or affect the choice of living in the catchment area or not. A high proportion of catchment area children already attend out-of-catchment schools (92% GIS data January 2026).	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	As federalisation would mean that Ysgol Y Garreg remains open, no impact is anticipated on what is currently being provided, therefore no impact on other local services is anticipated.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	As federalisation would mean that Ysgol Y Garreg remains open, no impact is anticipated on what is currently being provided, therefore no adverse impact on the wider economy of the community is anticipated.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	As federalisation would mean that Ysgol Y Garreg remains open, no impact is anticipated on what is currently being provided, therefore no impact on the local community is anticipated. However, opportunities are identified for the Llanfrothen community and the Ysgol Cefn Coch community to come together.	Neutral

OPTION 3: CLOSE YSGOL Y GARREG AND DENOTE YSGOL CEFN COCH AS THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

Impact criteria	Description	Status of the impact and of the work
Impact on Health and Wellbeing	<p>Ysgol Cefn Coch is located approximately two miles from Ysgol Y Garreg, and further from the homes of learners in the catchment area, it is not anticipated that Ysgol Y Garreg's catchment area learners would be likely to walk to the alternative school.</p> <p>It is anticipated that being in a larger school such as Ysgol Cefn Coch would offer more opportunities to play and participate in team sports and therefore contribute positively towards the health and well-being of learners.</p>	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	It is not anticipated that there will be any impact on public transport provision as any transport to an alternative school as a result of any change will be arranged specifically for learners in the catchment area who are eligible in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	There is no regular use of the Ysgol Y Garreg building in order to host community events. Llanfrothen Social Center is located next door to the school, so community provision is available.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	No impact on wider community safety is anticipated.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	As a high proportion of children in the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area (92% GIS data January 2026), it is not anticipated that families and young children would leave the community if the school were to close. In addition, as an alternative school is located 2.1 miles from Ysgol Y Garreg, it is not anticipated that it would have an impact on families and the school age gap leaving the community.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	As a high proportion of children in the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area, it cannot be concluded that closing the school would have an impact on other services provided locally.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	As the majority of children in the catchment area attend schools outside the catchment area, it is not anticipated that the closure of Ysgol Y Garreg would have an impact on the wider economy of the community.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	<p>If Ysgol Y Garreg were to close, the nearest school would be located further away from the homes of Ysgol Y Garreg's current catchment area, and from a deprivation point of view - it means that one of the indicators of 'access to services' is moving away from the residents of the area. As a result, it is anticipated that there will be some negative impact on the local community if the school were to close.</p> <p>However it should be noted that a high percentage of children in the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area.</p> <p>To mitigate the impact on the community, opportunities are identified to ensure that the Llanfrothen community is aware of the alternative school's activity, and community collaboration between Ysgol Cefn Coch and the Llanfrothen community is encouraged, where appropriate.</p>	Negative

6. CONCLUSION

This assessment shows that the likely impact on the community would be neutral if the options listed below are implemented:

- Do nothing - continue with the school's current structure
- Federalisation with a nearby school

The assessment shows that some negative impact on the community is anticipated if the option to close Ysgol Y Garreg is implemented. It is recognised that closing Ysgol Y Garreg would lead to the loss of a school in the Llanfrothen community, however the assessment stated that a large proportion of the children who live within the school's catchment area already attend other schools. Therefore, it is concluded that a link between neighbouring schools and the Ysgol Y Garreg community already exists.

Should the proposed proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg come true, every effort will be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities and Ysgol Cefn Coch. To mitigate the impact on the community, opportunities are identified to ensure that the Llanfrothen community is aware of the alternative school's activity, and community collaboration between Ysgol Cefn Coch and the Llanfrothen community is encouraged, where appropriate.

If the proposed proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg was implemented, it will be essential as part of the process to encourage discussions between the alternative school (Ysgol Cefn Coch) and the parents/guardians of Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area so that parents and learners can take advantage of their facilities and any after school activities.

In addition, if the Cabinet decided to proceed with the proposed proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg, options for the use of the school building would have to be considered.

The Statutory Objection period was held between 25 February 2026 and 24 March 2026, and no objections to the proposal were received. As a result, there is no change to the community impact assessment.

LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT – YSGOL Y GARREG (MAY 2026)

1. INTRODUCTION

Supporting and developing the ability of Gwynedd’s children to learn and use their language skills is critically important to the county’s education strategies.

1.1 The Situation in Gwynedd

The figures from the 2021 Census show that 66% of people over the age of three are able to speak, read or write in Welsh. The 2021 Census also shows that 64% speak Welsh, which is a decrease since the previous census, when the figure was 65%.

In Gwynedd, as in many other Local Authorities in Wales, there is considerable variation in the percentage of Welsh speakers across different wards. At one end of the scale, in wards such as Aberdyfi, Tywyn and Bangor Central, between 26% and 44% of the population speak Welsh, while as many as 86% speak Welsh in the most Welsh speaking areas, e.g. Hendre and Llanrug.

1.2 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

The [Gwynedd Council Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022–2032](#) is a statutory document of the Local Authority and aligns with the Welsh Government’s priorities for developing Welsh-medium education (in line with the Cymraeg 2050 targets). There are 7 outcomes that Local Authorities are expected to implement in order to realise these aims, namely:

1. More nursery/3-year-old children being educated through the medium of Welsh
2. More reception/5-year-old children receiving their education through the medium of Welsh.
3. More children continuing to improve their Welsh skills as they move from one stage of their statutory education to another.
4. More learners studying for Welsh qualifications (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh.
5. More opportunities for learners to use the Welsh language in different contexts within the school.
6. An increase in Welsh-medium education provision for pupils with additional learning needs (“ALN”) (in accordance with the duties set out by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018).
7. An increase in the number of teaching staff who can teach Welsh (as a subject) and through the medium of Welsh.

1.3 Language Policy

Primary

The aim of the [Language Policy](#) is the same across all of the county’s primary schools, namely to develop every pupil’s ability to be proficient in both languages by the end of Key Stage 2. Welsh is the official language of assessment in the school at the end of the Foundation Phase. In Key Stage 2, pupils’ grasp of Welsh continues to be developed while also giving attention to developing their skills in both languages.

Secondary

In secondary school, every pupil who has reached the required level, namely level 3+ at the end of Key Stage 2, is expected to follow First Language Welsh in Key Stage 3 to ensure appropriate progression and continuity. The hope is that these pupils will be able to study Welsh and English as subjects up to the end of Year 11.

The secondary schools build on the foundation laid in the primary sector by ensuring that every pupil continues to develop their skills in Welsh and English. The County does not categorise secondary schools according to

language categories because the expectation is the same in relation to the Language Policy, namely to give all pupils in the County the opportunity to become confidently bilingual.

1.4 One million speakers by 2050

[Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers](#) is the Welsh Government’s latest strategy for the Welsh language and covers the next three decades. This document sets out specific targets for increasing the number of people who speak the language, as well as the use of Welsh

The aims of Cymraeg 2050 include:

	Aim	Target
1.	Increasing the number of Welsh speakers	1 million speakers by 2050
2.	Increasing the use of the Welsh language	Daily users of the Welsh language increasing from 10% to 20%

The strategic document *Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers* emphasises the importance of increasing the number of people who speak Welsh, but it also stresses that increasing the daily use of Welsh is equally important.

Moving towards the position where we have a million speakers is one aspect of our vision for a thriving Welsh language. However, a thriving Welsh language is a language that is used. We want the use of Welsh to be a routine part of everyday life, so that speakers at all levels feel confident in its use in formal and informal situations.... The Welsh Language Use Survey 2013–15 (Welsh Government and Welsh Language Commissioner 2015) shows that there is a clear link between fluency and frequency of Welsh language use – 84% of fluent Welsh speakers speak Welsh daily.

Source: Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers (2017)

The [Welsh Language and Education \(Wales\) Act 2025](#) provides a statutory framework to strengthen the role of the Welsh language within the education system, supporting the Welsh Government’s target of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

The Act introduces a new system of school language categories, with a requirement for a minimum percentage of teaching to be delivered through the medium of Welsh. Local authorities and schools will be responsible for planning strategically to increase Welsh-medium provision gradually.

Welsh Ministers have a duty to set a National Framework for Welsh-medium Education, and local authorities must prepare and implement strengthened Welsh in Education Strategic Plans. The levels of the Common European Framework of Reference are used to standardise expectations regarding Welsh language proficiency. The Act also establishes a National Welsh Learning Institute to support Welsh learning for people of all ages. Implementation of the Act will take place gradually between 2025 and 2027.

1.5 Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2032

The Welsh Language Standards placed on Gwynedd Council by the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 set an expectation on the Council to produce a five-year strategy that shows how it intends to promote the Welsh language and facilitate its use across the county [Gwynedd Language Strategy 2023-2033](#) is Gwynedd Council’s latest strategy for the Welsh language. This document sets out specific targets for increasing the number of people who speak the language:

	How will we increase the number of speakers?	How will we measure this at a local level, and throughout the period of the strategy?
1.	Providing opportunities for children and young people who are not yet Welsh speakers (e.g. newcomers, children who do not receive	Number of children receiving Welsh-medium education. Number of children receiving support

	mainstream education) to learn and to become confident Welsh speakers.	through the Education Department's immersion system.
2.	Providing opportunities for adults to become new speakers through the Council's learner-support schemes and the community provision offered by partners.	Number of Council staff receiving Welsh learning lessons. Provision of community Welsh learning courses.

The Strategy also includes a commitment to increasing the use of the Welsh language in the following areas:

- *Early years language*
- *Language of Learning*
- *Language of work and service*
- *Language of the community*
- *Research and technology*

1.6 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) requires the public bodies in Wales named in the Act to work towards achieving seven well-being goals, including “A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.”

2. LINGUISTIC PROFILE OF THE GARREG CATCHMENT AREA

2.1 Gwynedd Language Profile Background

64.4% of the county's population aged over three are Welsh speakers – significantly higher than the figure for Wales as a whole, which is 17.8%. In Gwynedd, the highest ability to speak Welsh is in the Hendre ward (86% speak Welsh), and the lowest is in the Bangor Central area (25.6%).

2.2 Wards

2.2.1 Glaslyn and Penrhyndeudraeth Ward

The catchment area of Ysgol Y Garreg lies within the Glaslyn ward, while the catchment area of Ysgol Cefn Coch lies within the Penrhyndeudraeth ward (Office for National Statistics, 2021). The linguistic profile of these school wards is summarised in the table below:

	Glaslyn	Penrhyndeudraeth	Gwynedd	Cymru
Welsh identity only	934 (57.2%)	1,294 (65.1%)	69,560 (59.3%)	1,715,975 (55.2%)
No Welsh identity	39.3%	30.6%	36.3%	36.7%
3+ year old population	1,592 (100%)	1,937 (100%)	114,308 (100%)	3,018,172 (100%)
Can speak Welsh	1,054 (66.2%)	1,423 (73.5%)	73,560 (64.4%)	538,296 (17.8%)
No Welsh skills	410 (25.8%)	372 (19.2%)	29,977 (26.2%)	2,259,017 (74.8%)
Able to understand only verbal Welsh	109 (6.8%)	111 (5.7%)	8,166 (7.1%)	156,762 (5.2%)

Able to speak Welsh but can't read or write Welsh	83 (5.2%)	95 (4.9%)	6,142 (5.4%)	68,391 (2.3%)
Able to speak and read Welsh but can't write Welsh	36 (2.3%)	43 (2.2%)	3,170 (2.8%)	33,971 (1.1%)
Able to speak, read and write Welsh	927 (58.2%)	1,269 (65.5%)	63,256 (55.3%)	429,313 (14.2%)
Able to write Welsh but can't speak or read Welsh	2 (0.1%)	6 (0.3%)	387 (0.3%)	4,970 (0.2%)
Able to read and write Welsh but can't speak Welsh	5 (0.3%)	15 (0.8%)	1,004 (0.9%)	17,560 (0.6%)
Another combination of Welsh language skills	8 (0.5%)	16 (0.8%)	993 (0.9%)	6,621 (0.2%)

Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics

2.3 Ysgol Y Garreg

The table below shows that the majority of learners at Ysgol Y Garreg speak Welsh fluently.

Ysgol	Speaks Welsh fluently at home	Speaks Welsh at home but not fluent	Doesn't speak Welsh at home but fluent	Doesn't speak Welsh at home and not fluent	Doesn't speak Welsh at all
Y Garreg	0%	50%	0%	50%	0%

Source: Percentage of the number of respondents PLASC January 2026

2.4 Ysgol Cefn Coch

The linguistic data for the neighbouring schools can be seen below.

Ysgol	Speaks Welsh fluently at home	Speaks Welsh at home but not fluent	Doesn't speak Welsh at home but fluent	Doesn't speak Welsh at home and not fluent	Doesn't speak Welsh at all
Cefn Coch	58.1%	1.4%	8.8%	6.8%	17.6%

Source: Percentage of the number of respondents PLASC January 2026

2.5 After school activities

Here is a summary of what Ysgol Y Garreg and the alternative school (Ysgol Cefn Coch) offer on their school sites.

	Y Garreg	Cefn Coch
Playgroups (school holidays)		✓
Members of the Urdd		✓
Morning/Evening Coffee		✓
Cylch/Nursery		✓
Club/After school club/Sports Activity		✓

It can be seen from the table above that Ysgol Cefn Coch offers a variety of after-school clubs. This means that learners from the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area could benefit from these activities as an additional opportunity to use and develop their Welsh.

2.6 Community Activities

No community use is made of the Ysgol Y Garreg building.

2.7 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (2022-2032)

Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch operate in line with the objectives of [Gwynedd Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022–2032](#). This includes:

- Ensuring that all pupils in the county possess appropriate linguistic skills in Welsh and English, with that expectation being consistent across all schools.
- Providing suitable provision to enable every pupil to develop into a confident bilingual individual. In this context, schools are expected to continue nurturing the skills of pupils who are Welsh-speaking, and to introduce Welsh to those who are learners.
- Ensuring that all education establishments in the county reflect and reinforce the Language Policy in their administration, social life and pastoral systems, as well as in their curricular provision.

Implementing the proposal would align with the objectives of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022–32.

2.8 Additional Evidence

Ysgol Y Garreg

The 2023 Estyn report states:

“31.3% is the percentage of learners who speak Welsh in the home. They are given beneficial opportunities to develop their oral Welsh skills by working with their peers.”

[Estyn inspection report for Ysgol Y Garreg, January 2023](#)

Ysgol Cefn Coch

The 2018 Estyn report states:

“Ysgol Gynradd Cefn Coch is located in the village of Penrhyndeudraeth in Gwynedd. Welsh is the main medium of work and life at the school. Around 80% of the pupils speak Welsh at home.”

[Estyn Inspection report for Ysgol Cefn Coch, June 2018](#)

3. Assessment of the impact on the Welsh language

3.1 The Options

- *No change – continue with the current situation*

Maintaining the current arrangement would mean that Ysgol Y Garreg would continue in the same way, with the same staffing structure.

Note that although the case for change has been established, the Do Nothing model has been included in the assessment for comparison purposes.

- *Federalisation with a nearby school*

This model would ensure continuity in the school's presence in the village of Llanfrothen through a collaborative arrangement with a nearby school or schools, led by a head or head teachers and one governing body. The governing body of Ysgol Y Garreg would be revoked, and the school would be under the leadership of one headteacher and the federation's governing body. The identity of the school in question (including name, ethos and school uniform) would continue, and it would enable the possibility of sharing staff, resources, buildings and expertise.

The possibility of federalisation was considered with nearby schools, specifically Ysgol Cefn Coch and Ysgol Talsarnau (Afon Dwyrdd Federation).

It is not anticipated that federation would have an impact on the Welsh language, as Ysgol Y Garreg would continue, with opportunities to strengthen leadership arrangements and collaboration for the school.

- *Close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school*

This option would mean closing Ysgol Y Garreg and denoting Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school.

The table on the next page contains an assessment of the impact of closing Ysgol Y Garreg and educating learners at Ysgol Cefn Coch on the Welsh language, compared with the current situation. The table also outlines the additional opportunities to strengthen the Welsh language, as well as the mitigation measures for any negative impact that may arise from the proposal.

4. ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT ON THE WELSH LANGUAGE

This linguistic impact assessment has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), which stipulates that any change to school organisation must assess the impact on the Welsh language and identify mitigation measures to protect or strengthen its use. The assessment considers the school's formal and informal language, access to Welsh-medium- education, and community use of the Welsh language, ensuring compliance with the statutory principles set out in the Code.

Assessment of the impact on the Welsh Language – Proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and work	Have any measures been identified to mitigate any negative impact or to create more positive opportunities	Final impact (following mitigation measures)
School language (formal)	Ysgol Y Garreg is a Welsh-medium school (Welsh-medium Category 3). As Ysgol Cefn Coch is also a Welsh-medium school (Welsh-medium Category 3), it is concluded that the proposal would not have an impact on the language of the children's education.	Neutral	Irrelevant	Irrelevant
School language (informal)	PLASC statistics from January 2026 show that 0% of learners at Ysgol Y Garreg speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 58.1% of learners at Ysgol Cefn Coch. As the learners would be taught in larger classes and with more children of the same age group, the proposal could strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with their peers. On that basis, if the proposal were implemented, it is anticipated that learners from the Y Garreg catchment would have more opportunities to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vibrancy of the Welsh language and informal use of the language would be stronger.	Positive	Irrelevant	Irrelevant
Access to Welsh medium education	Ysgol Cefn Coch is a Welsh-medium school, like Ysgol Y Garreg. It is therefore not anticipated that the proposal would affect this criterion.	Neutral	Irrelevant	Irrelevant
Non-statutory provision	Learners would have access to a higher level of staffing provision and would be part of a larger group of peers of the same age.	Positive	The local authority and the Governing Body of Ysgol Cefn Coch could discuss ways of ensuring that learners are able to take part in extracurricular activities.	Positive
Activities before/after school	Ysgol Cefn Coch is a larger school in terms of learner numbers, so peer groups would be bigger. Ysgol Cefn Coch also offers clubs and after-school activities that provide opportunities to use the Welsh language before and after school.	Positive	The Local Authority and the Governing Body of Ysgol Cefn Coch could consider any additional opportunities for holding after-school activities, ensuring that arrangements are in place to include learners from the Y Garreg catchment area.	Positive
Use of the Welsh Language in the community	If the proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg were implemented, it is anticipated that some elements of community events would be affected. It is expected that there could be some negative impact arising from the proposal, for example because	Negative	The Local Authority and the Governing Body of Ysgol Cefn Coch could consider ways of promoting the use of the Welsh language by involving the Y Garreg community in the school's community activities.	Neutral

parents/carers/families would no longer meet daily in the Y Garreg community when dropping off or collecting children from the school.

Part 2 – How the proposal will affect/contribute towards/align with the Welsh Language Standards, language policies, strategies and other relevant guidance relating to the Welsh language

Gwynedd Language Strategy 2023

A summary of the anticipated impact on the Language Strategy’s areas of action is set out below:

Early Years Language:

As the Cylch Meithrin is located on the Ysgol Cefn Coch site (the alternative school), the proposal is expected to have a positive impact on early years language provision.

Language of Learning:

Ysgol Y Garreg is a Welsh-medium Category 3 school. As Ysgol Cefn Coch is also a Welsh-medium school (Category 3), it is concluded that the proposal would not have an impact on the language of the children’s education.

Language of Work and Service:

It is acknowledged that, if the proposal were implemented, there would be some negative impact on the language as a result of losing the presence of a Welsh-medium Category 3 school in the village of Llanfrothen, which serves the area, and because it would lead to staff redundancies within the school workforce.

However, it is noted that the alternative school (Ysgol Cefn Coch), which would serve the Llanfrothen area if the proposal were implemented, is also a Welsh-medium Category 3 school. It is therefore not anticipated that the proposal would affect the language of work and service provided at the alternative school.

Language of the Community:

If the proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg were implemented, it is anticipated that some elements of community events would be affected. It is expected that there could be some negative impact arising from the proposal, for example because parents/carers/families would no longer meet daily in the Llanfrothen community when dropping off or collecting children from the school.

The community-run Brondanw Arms (Y Ring) and Llanfrothen Community Centre are located in the centre of the village for community use. It is likely that mainly Welsh-medium events are held in these venues, therefore children from the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment currently have convenient access to Welsh-medium community events within their local area.

	<p>To mitigate any negative effects, the Local Authority and the Governing Body of Ysgol Cefn Coch could consider ways of promoting the use of the Welsh language by involving the Llanfrothen community in the school’s community activities. In addition, if the proposal were implemented, the Authority would need to consider options for the future use of the school building, taking into account any community activities currently held there.</p>
<p>Cymraeg 2050, Welsh Government</p>	<p>Any discussions relating to reorganisation must acknowledge the Welsh Government’s efforts to reach the goal of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.</p> <p>Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch are both Category 3 Welsh-medium primary schools. As a result, if the proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school were implemented, learners would continue to be educated in a Category 3 Welsh-medium school.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the proposal would have a negative impact on the Welsh language, mainly because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PLASC statistics from January 2026 show that 0% of learners at Ysgol Y Garreg speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 58.1% of learners at Ysgol Cefn Coch. - The proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school would mean that learners from the Y Garreg catchment would continue to be educated in a Category 3 Welsh-medium school. - As learners would be taught in larger classes with more children of the same age group, it is anticipated that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a greater number of their peers. <p>Based on the above, if the proposal were implemented, it is anticipated that learners from the Y Garreg catchment would have more opportunities to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vibrancy of the Welsh language and its informal use would be strengthened.</p>
<p>To what extent the proposal would support the targets in the approved Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022–2032)</p>	<p>Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch are Category 3 Welsh-medium primary schools.</p> <p>Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch operate in line with the objectives of Gwynedd Council’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022–2032. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that all pupils in the county possess appropriate linguistic skills in Welsh and English, with consistent expectations across all schools. • Providing suitable provision to enable every pupil to develop as a confident bilingual individual. In this context, schools are expected to continue nurturing the skills of pupils who are Welsh-speaking, and to introduce Welsh to those who are learners of the language. • Ensuring that all education establishments in the county reflect and reinforce the Language Policy in their administration, social life and pastoral arrangements, as well as in their curricular provision.

	<p>As a result, if the proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school were implemented, learners would continue to be educated in a Category 3 Welsh-medium school that operates in line with the objectives and supports the targets of the WESP.</p> <p>Based on the above, it is not anticipated that implementing the proposal would have a negative impact on the achievement of Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 of Gwynedd Council’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022–2032, namely:</p> <p>Outcome 1: More nursery/3-year-old children receiving Welsh-medium education. Outcome 2: More Reception/5-year-old children receiving Welsh-medium education. Outcome 3: More children continuing to improve their Welsh-language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to the next. Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts within the school. Outcome 6: An increase in Welsh-medium education provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN), in accordance with the duties set out in the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.</p> <p>As a result, it is concluded that implementing the proposal would align with the objectives of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022–32 and the targets approved within the Plan.</p>
<p>How the proposal would expand or reduce Welsh-medium provision, and in cases where provision would be reduced, explain why it would be reduced</p>	<p>The proposal would mean that a Category 3 Welsh-medium school (Ysgol Y Garreg) would close. However, if the proposal were implemented, learners would be offered a place at an alternative school, which is also a Category 3 Welsh-medium school, namely Ysgol Cefn Coch. Ysgol Cefn Coch has sufficient capacity for learners from both schools.</p>

5. CONCLUSION

Our expectation is that all learners in the county should possess age-appropriate, balanced bilingualism so that they can be full members of the bilingual society of which they are a part. Any reorganisation proposals must fully consider all linguistic impacts. Maintaining and improving the use of Welsh as an educational and social language among children will be a key consideration when developing proposals within the area.

None of the options outlined in section 3 above are anticipated to have a negative impact on the Welsh language.

From the perspective of the proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school, the proposal is not expected to have a negative impact on the Welsh language, mainly because:

- PLASC statistics from January 2026 show that 0% of learners at Ysgol Y Garreg speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 58.1% of learners at Ysgol Cefn Coch.
- The proposal to close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school would mean that learners from the Y Garreg catchment would continue to be educated in a Category 3 Welsh-medium school.
- As learners would be taught in larger classes with more children of the same age group, it is anticipated that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a greater number of their peers.

Ysgol Cefn Coch offers a range of afterschool clubs as well as activities run by local Urdd branches, and local Eisteddfodau are held in the Penrhyndeudraeth area. Promoting collaboration between Ysgol Cefn Coch and the Llanfrothen community to publicise these activities would enrich the Welsh-medium experiences of learners from the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment as they are offered places at the alternative school. Offering a wider range of facilities and activities in the area would provide additional opportunities for learners and their families, giving specific support to those who are disadvantaged. Although it is acknowledged that the school is further from learners' homes, a wider range of activities is available at Cefn Coch. This would contribute positively to their health and wellbeing by increasing opportunities to socialise with a larger group of peers of the same age.

At its meeting on 10 February 2026, Gwynedd Council's Cabinet approved the publication of a statutory notice allowing a statutory objection period of 28 days in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the guidance of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code 011/2018: on the following proposal -

"Close Ysgol Y Garreg on 31 August 2026 and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school from 1 September 2026."

The Statutory Objection period was held between 25 February 2026 and 24 March 2026, and no objections to the proposal were received.

Based on the above, if the proposal were implemented, it is anticipated that learners from the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment would have more opportunities to use the Welsh language informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vibrancy of the Welsh language and its informal use would be strengthened. As a result, there is no change to the linguistic impact assessment.

Composite Impact Assessment

This document assesses what impact the policy, procedure, plan, etc. will have on the county's population and operates based on a number of legislations.

- **Equality Act 2010.** It places a duty on public organisations to give due attention to the impact of any new policy, procedure or plan, etc. (or as they are adapted) on persons with protected characteristics. We are required to
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In Wales, the specific duty notes the need to undertake an impact assessment following specific guidelines to consider the impact that any changes in any policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), will have on persons with protected equality characteristics. A timely assessment should be made before any decision is taken on any relevant change (i.e. that affects people with protected equality characteristics).

- **Socio-economic Duty.** Wales has implemented this further duty, which is part of the Equality Act 2010, and places a duty to address socio-economic disadvantages in strategic decisions.
- **Welsh Language Standards (Section 44 Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011).** The Council is required to consider the impact that any change in any policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), will have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English. This document therefore ensures that these decisions safeguard and promote the use made of the Welsh language.
- **Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.** The Council has a duty to put the five ways of working in place and to respond to the seven national well-being goals.
- **Armed Forces Act 2021.** Councils must give due attention to the impact of this proposal on those who serve or who have served in the Armed Forces, as well as their families.

Ysgol Y Garreg

Author: Gwern ap Rhisiart

Date: May 2026

Version: 2

STEP 1 - Main Aims and Objectives of the Policy or Practice

1. What kind of document or procedure is being assessed?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures (which modify service delivery or employment practices)

2. What are the overall aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy or practice?

Approve the proposal in accordance with the Standards and Organization of Schools (Wales) Act 2013, given by statutory notice, namely to- "Close Ysgol Y Garreg on 31 August 2026 and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school from 1 September 2026."

The significant recent decline in the number of learners attending Ysgol Y Garreg has led to an unsustainable and extremely fragile situation. Based on the PLASC (Pupil Level Annual School Census) of January 2026, Ysgol Y Garreg is the smallest school in the county, with only 2 learners from Reception to Year 6 on the register and 0 in the nursery class. As a result, it is therefore likely that the school is facing increasing challenges, including:

- **Low pupil numbers** – PLASC data from January 2026 shows that there are 2 full-time pupils in the school (Reception to Year 6) and 0 pupils in the nursery class.
- **High percentage of empty places** – Based on January 2026 figures (Reception to Year 6), 95% of places in the school are empty (39 in number). The school has capacity for 41 pupils (Reception to Year 6) and capacity for 7 pupils in the Nursery Class. Therefore, with 0 nursery pupils on roll, there are an additional 7 empty places in the nursery.
- **Very small class sizes and wide age range** – The pupils (Reception to Year 6) are taught in one class. The second classroom in the school is empty. There are no pupils in Nursery to Year 5 at the school.
- **Projected numbers** – Projections based on PLASC January 2026 figures suggest that there will be no pupils in the school in September 2026, as there are no pupils in Reception to Year 5 or in the Nursery Class this year.
- **Catchment area pupils** – PLASC January 2026 census shows that only 8% of pupils living in Ysgol Y Garreg's catchment area choose to attend the school. 92% of catchment pupils choose to attend out-of-catchment schools.

- **Ysgol Y Garreg receives additional funding on top of the core allocation** – Ysgol Y Garreg receives additional funding beyond the standard allocation through the minimum staffing policy (which guarantees at least a headteacher and a teacher in every school, and a headteacher and a teaching assistant in schools with fewer than 15 full-time pupils). Based on September 2025 numbers the school would receive an additional £68,822 of funding.
- **Average cost per pupil** – The average cost per pupil at Ysgol Y Garreg in 2026–27 (based on September 2025 numbers) would be £21,471 compared with the county average of £5,998.
- **Leadership and staffing** – The current staffing structure at Ysgol Y Garreg includes an acting headteacher who is responsible for two schools through an informal arrangement, one full-time teacher, and a temporary teaching assistant (0.6 FTE).

3. Who are the main consultative groups (stakeholders)?

- Staff, Governors, learners and Parents/Guardians of Ysgol Y Garreg and Ysgol Cefn Coch.
- If the Cabinet were to decide to support the recommendation presented, a statutory notice would be issued. A 28-day period is then allowed for anyone to submit an objection to the proposal, known as the ‘Objection Period’.
- The Education Department and officers from other departments within Gwynedd Council.

STEP 2 - Engagement Data and Assessing the Impact

4. Has any effort been made to comply with the duty to engage in accordance with what is described above and has enough information been gathered to move forward?

Yes

The engagement details. Note any consultation or engagement you have conducted or intend to conduct.

Action	Dates	Information
Meeting with the Governing Body	25 November 2025	Intention to take a report before the Cabinet, dependent on the school’s numbers following the January 2026 PLASC. The school’s numbers have fallen to only 2 learners, therefore a meeting has been held with the school to discuss possible options that would address the school’s current challenges.
Meeting with the Governing Body	January 2026	Confirming the numbers on register following the day of the census and the intention to present a paper before the Cabinet on the 10th of February 2026.

Inform parents of the intention to present a report to the Cabinet in February 2026.	January 2026	Correspondence in the form of a letter to the parents / guardians of Ysgol Y Garreg explaining the situation and stating the intention to present a report to the Cabinet on the school's situation.
Meeting at the school with the catering and cleaning staff to explain the next steps.	January 2026	Meeting at Ysgol Y Garreg in order to explain the situation and note the intention to take a report to the Cabinet.
Correspond with the headteacher regarding the need to inform the learners of the objection period and that they have an opportunity to respond if they wish to do so.	February 2026	A session was held in the classroom with the learners under the guidance of the school teacher in order to explain the meaning of the proposal and the statutory notice and give the learners an opportunity to respond to the proposal.
Correspondence with the headteacher regarding the intention to submit a report to the Cabinet on 9 June 2026 following the statutory objection period on the proposal.	May 2026	An e-mail message was sent to the headteacher in order to inform all the stakeholders that it is intended to present a report to the Cabinet on 9 June following the statutory objection period. It was explained that there is no change to the original timetable and that the documentation will be live on the Council's website on 1 June 2026.

5. What information is available about the impact on each of the following characteristics and subjects?

	Evidence, Information and Relevant Data	Potential Positive and/or Negative Impact
Race	Gwynedd schools have relevant policies in place to protect individuals from any discrimination based on race, such as Equality, Inclusion and Anti-bullying Policies. The Anti-bullying Policy provided by Cyngor Gwynedd states anti-bullying guidelines and procedures based on factors such as race in the school. Also, it is states in the Equality policy that is implemented by Gwynedd primary schools that schools	No Impact Identified

	<p><i>"... are opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledge that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i></p> <p>Therefore, it is not anticipated that this proposed proposal would have a negative impact on this characteristic.</p>	
Disability	<p>It is not anticipated that the change would have a negative impact on this characteristic. An accessibility assessment of any relevant alternative schools would be held, and we will ensure that any transport required is suitable for the needs of the individual. The needs of any disabled child will be considered in accordance with the ALN Act, where every child and young person has an Individual Development Plan (IDP).</p>	No Impact Identified
Sex	<p>Implementing the proposal would not have an impact on this characteristic. Implementing the proposal will mean that everyone will be treated according to their need, whatever their gender. Every school implements an Equality Policy stating that the school:</p> <p><i>"... is opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledges that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i></p>	No Impact Identified
Age	<p>Should the proposed proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that the children of Ysgol y Garreg would benefit from having more age-related peers in their class as there are more learners at the alternative school, which will be a way to ensure age-appropriate educational and extra-curricular experiences, as well as access to additional extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>We believe that learners will receive more age-appropriate experiences at the nearby alternative school since the learners will have learning experiences in collective groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range, along with lessons that have been appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.</p> <p>It is anticipated that implementing the proposed proposal would mean that people of any age would be treated fairly and according to their need. Ysgol Y Garreg and the alternative school implement an equality policy stating that the schools:</p>	Positive

	<p><i>"... are opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledge that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i></p>	
Religion and Belief	<p>Ysgol Y Garreg and the alternative school named in the proposed option are community schools.</p> <p>Each school has an Inclusion Policy that would address any discriminatory incident that may arise in the school relating to religion or belief.</p> <p>As a result, it is not anticipated that the proposed option would have an impact on this characteristic.</p>	No Impact Identified
Sexual Orientation	<p>Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) is a statutory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales framework that was published under section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and is mandatory for all learners aged between 3 and 16. RSE has a positive and empowering role to play in learners' education and it is essential to form and maintain a range of relationships, that are all based on respect and trust on both sides, which is core to relationships and sexuality education. These relationships are crucial to developing emotional well-being, resilience and empathy. An understanding of sexuality with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and fairness empowers the learners to understand themselves, to take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviours and to form relationships. We believe that learners will receive more opportunities to develop relationships and learn collaboratively as part of a larger class in an alternative school.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that the proposed proposal would have an impact on people on the grounds of sexual orientation. Ysgol Y Garreg and the proposed alternative school operate an equality policy which states that the school is:</p> <p><i>"... is opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledges that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i></p>	No Impact Identified
Gender reassignment	<p>It is not anticipated that implementing the proposed proposal would have an impact on people on the grounds of gender reassignment. It is stated in the Equality policy that is implemented by Gwynedd</p>	No Impact Identified

	primary schools including Ysgol Y Garreg and the proposed alternative school that the schools <i>"... are opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledge that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i>	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	It is not anticipated that the proposed proposal would have an impact on anyone who is married or in a civil partnership, as both schools who are a part of the proposal implement the same policies.	No Impact Identified
Pregnancy and Maternity	It is not anticipated that the proposed proposal would have an impact on anyone who is pregnant, whether staff or parents, as both schools which are a part of the proposal implement the same policies.	No Impact Identified
The Welsh Language	<p>The aim of Gwynedd's Education Language Policy is the same for all primary schools in the county. This means that, if the proposed option were implemented, learners from Ysgol Y Garreg's catchment area would be able to continue receiving their education in Welsh and bilingually in accordance with the Education Language Policy at the alternative school.</p> <p>No negative impact is anticipated if the proposed option were implemented, and it is likely that the proposal would have a positive effect on the Welsh language as learners from Ysgol Y Garreg's catchment area would benefit from more opportunities to use Welsh with a wider range of peers in class and socially. The proposed alternative school serves areas that are strongholds of the Welsh language.</p> <p>However, if the proposed option to close Ysgol Y Garreg were realised, it is anticipated that some elements of community events would be affected, and as a result, the use of Welsh in the community. It is expected that there could be some negative impact arising from implementing the proposal, as parents/guardians/families would no longer meet daily in the Llanfrothen community when dropping off/collecting children from the school.</p>	Negative/Positive
Socio-economic Considerations	It is envisaged that the proposed proposal would reduce social disadvantage by ensuring more experiences and diversity of	Positive

	learning, more resources and access to more services and activities.	
Those Who Serve or Who Have Served in the Armed Forces, As Well As Their Families	It is not anticipated that the proposed proposal would have an impact on those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, as well as their families. Children from military or ex-military families will get the same fair play whichever school they attend.	No Impact Identified
Human Rights	It is not anticipated that implementing the proposal would have an impact on human rights.	No Impact Identified
Other	-	-

6. Are there any data or information gaps, and if so, what are they and how do you intend to address them?

No objections were received during the statutory objection period.

7. When considering other key decisions that affect these groups, is there an increasing impact (cumulative impact)?

We are not aware of any recent policies that would impact on the children and young people of the area.

8. What does the proposal include to demonstrate you have given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (to promote equality of opportunity; help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation and foster good relations and wider community cohesion) as covered by the three aims of the General Duty in the Equality Act 2010?

It is not anticipated that the proposed option would affect school's statutory duty to protect learners from any discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

The aim is to promote equal opportunities and encourage the proposed alternative school to continue following equality policies and procedures. If the proposed option were implemented, it is anticipated that learners would receive more equal opportunities by being placed in the alternative school, as they would experience learning based on national learning principles, with a variety of approaches including whole-class work, small-group work, paired work and individual work within their specific age range, along with lessons appropriately differentiated for the age range.

As some learners living in Ysgol Y Garreg's catchment area already attend Ysgol Cefn Coch, a link between the school and the community already exists. However, if the proposed option were implemented, opportunities would be promoted for the school to build on its existing connections with the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area.

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a statutory requirement within the Curriculum for Wales framework and is published under section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021. It is mandatory for all learners aged 3 to 16. RSE has a positive and empowering role in learners' education and is essential for forming and maintaining a range of relationships, all based on mutual trust and respect, which are central to relationships and sexuality education. These relationships are crucial for developing emotional wellbeing, resilience and empathy. Understanding sexuality with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and fairness empowers learners to understand

themselves, take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviours, and form relationships. If the proposed option were implemented, it is anticipated that learners would receive more opportunities to develop relationships and learn collaboratively as part of a larger class.

9. How does the proposal show that due regard has been given to the need to address inequality due to socio-economic disadvantage? (Note that this relates to closing the inequality gap, rather than just improving outcomes for everyone.)

It is anticipated that implementing the proposed option would reduce inequality caused by socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that learners have more experiences and access to a wider range of services and activities in the alternative school. It is expected that learners would receive more equal opportunities as they would experience learning based on national learning principles, with a variety of approaches including whole-class work, small-group work, paired work and individual work within their specific age range, along with lessons appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

By implementing the proposed option, learners at Ysgol Y Garreg would have a better learning environment in a school with more learners of the same age, ensuring that they make the most of their education. It is anticipated that learners would benefit from having more age-appropriate peers in a school with a larger number of learners, which would help ensure suitable educational and extracurricular experiences for them, as well as access to a wider range of extracurricular activities.

10. How does the proposal show implementation in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011), to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language, and to ensure opportunities for people to use the Welsh language? Also, how does the proposal operate in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Welsh Language Strategy to take advantage of every opportunity to promote the Welsh language (beyond providing bilingual services) and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community?

Our expectation is that all learners in the County possess balanced bilingualism and the relevant skills in order to be full members of the bilingual society of which they are a part. Proposals to change local arrangements will need to give full consideration to all linguistic impacts. Maintaining and increasing the use of Welsh as an educational and social language among learners will be a key consideration when developing the proposal.

The aim of Gwynedd's Education Language Policy is the same for all primary schools in the County, and every primary school (except one) falls into Category 3 in accordance with the Welsh Government's school categorisation guidance based on Welsh-medium provision. This means that learners at Ysgol Y Garreg would be able to continue receiving their education in Welsh and bilingually in line with the Education Language Policy at the alternative school, if the proposed option were implemented.

No negative impact is anticipated if the proposed option were implemented, and it is likely that the proposal would have a positive effect on the Welsh language as learners from Ysgol Y Garreg would benefit from more opportunities to use Welsh with a wider range of peers in class and socially.

As can be seen from the table below, a high percentage of learners in both schools speak Welsh at home:

Ysgol	Speaking Welsh fluently at home	Don't speak Welsh at home but fluent	Speak Welsh at home but not fluent	Don't speak Welsh at home and not fluent	Can't speak Welsh at all
Y Garreg	0%	50%	0%	50%	0%
Cefn Coch	58.1%	1.4%	8.8%	6.8%	17.6%
	Fluent Welsh		A Little Welsh		No Welsh

Data: PLASC January 2026

If the proposed option were implemented, it is anticipated that there would be sufficient space in the alternative school for any future learners from the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area.

The assessment indicates that some negative impact on the community is anticipated if the option to close Ysgol Y Garreg were implemented. It is acknowledged that closing Ysgol Y Garreg would result in the loss of a school in the Llanfrothen community; however, the assessment notes that a significant proportion of children living within the school's catchment area already attend other schools, including Ysgol Cefn Coch, and therefore it is concluded that a link between Ysgol Cefn Coch and the Ysgol Y Garreg community already exists.

If the proposed option to close Ysgol Y Garreg were realised, every effort would be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities and the alternative school. To mitigate the impact on the community, opportunities are identified to ensure that the Llanfrothen community is aware of the activities of the alternative school, and community collaboration between the alternative school and the Llanfrothen community would be encouraged where appropriate. In addition, the Local Authority and the Governing Body of the alternative school could consider ways of promoting the use of the Welsh language by involving the Llanfrothen community in the school's community activities.

11. How does this proposal meet the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act by implementing the five ways of working, and respond to the seven national well-being goals, including creating a More Equal Wales?

Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the Well-being Act, the 7 goals of the Act and the Council's well-being objectives were considered, and it is concluded that the proposal meets the requirements.

It is acknowledged that, if the Cabinet were to decide to proceed with this proposed option, it could lead to the loss of a school within the community. However, a large number of children living within the school's catchment area already attend other schools, including Ysgol Cefn Coch, and therefore a link between those schools and the community already exists. Every effort would be made to mitigate any negative impact on the community by encouraging links between the community and the alternative school. If the proposed option were approved, discussions would be held to consider the possibility of the alternative school's community activities including the community where appropriate.

The proposed option would ensure that children in the area are educated on a suitable site and within a natural Welsh-speaking environment, increasing opportunities to socialise and collaborate with others and giving them a fair opportunity to thrive among their peers.

STEP 3 - Procurement and Partnerships

12. Will this policy or practice be carried out wholly or partly by contractors or in partnership with another organisation(s)?

No

STEP 4 - Dealing with Negative or Unlawful Impact and Strengthening the Policy or Practice

13. When considering proportionality, does the policy or practice have a significantly positive or negative impact or create unequal outcomes?

Significantly Positive Impact:

If the proposed option were implemented, it is anticipated that learners would receive more equal opportunities by being placed in an alternative school, as they would experience learning based on national learning principles, with a variety of approaches including whole-class work, small-group work, paired work and individual work within their specific age range, along with lessons appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

By implementing the proposed option, it is anticipated that learners at Ysgol Y Garreg would have a better learning environment in a school with more learners of the same age. This would ensure that they make the most of their education and allow access to a wider range of activities appropriate to their ability level. Learners would benefit from having more age-appropriate peers in a school with a larger number of learners, which would help ensure suitable educational and extracurricular experiences for them, as well as access to a wider range of extracurricular activities.

Significant Negative Impact:

It is acknowledged that the proposed option could have an impact on an organisation within the community and affect community cohesion, and it is anticipated that this will need to be mitigated by fostering links between the school and the community.

The school (and its Governing Body) is responsible for implementing its equality policy, and the Authority, through its usual support and monitoring procedures, will ensure compliance.

14. Explain any intentional negative impact and why it is believed that there is justification for operating in this way (for example, on the grounds of improving equal opportunities or developing good relationships between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not or due to objective justification or positive action)

Not applicable.

15. Will any of the negative impacts identified count as unlawful discrimination but they are unavoidable (e.g. budget cuts)?

Not applicable.

Note the reason for stating this and the justification for proceeding

Not applicable.

16. What other measures or changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due regard has been given to equal opportunity; help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation; and foster good relations and wider community cohesion; as covered by the improvement aim of the General Duty in the Equality Act 2010?

Following on from the statutory notice period, no objections were received on the proposal. If the proposal is implemented, the impact will continue to be monitored as part of the Council's ongoing statutory duties.

17. What measures or other changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due regard has been given to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome as a result of socio-economic disadvantage?

It is anticipated that implementing the proposed option would reduce inequality caused by socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that learners have more experiences and access to a wider range of services and activities in the alternative school. Learners would receive more equal opportunities as they would experience learning based on national learning principles, with a variety of approaches including whole-class work, small-group work, paired work and individual work within their specific age range, along with lessons appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

By implementing the proposed option, it is anticipated that learners at Ysgol Y Garreg would have a better learning environment in a school with more learners of the same age, ensuring that they make the most of their education. Learners would benefit from having more age-appropriate peers in a school with a larger number of learners, which would help ensure suitable educational and extracurricular experiences for them, as well as access to a wider range of extracurricular activities.

18. What other measures or changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due regard has been given to the need to increase opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and in treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language as set out in the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and to reduce or prevent any adverse effects that the policy/practice may have on the Welsh language?

It is anticipated that the proposed option would have a positive effect on the Welsh language, as learners from Ysgol Y Garreg would benefit from more opportunities to use Welsh with a wider range of peers in class and socially.

If the school were to close, the Local Authority and the Governing Bodies of the alternative school could consider ways of promoting the social use of the Welsh language through extracurricular and community activities.

19. Is there enough information to make a balanced judgement and to proceed?

Yes

STEP 5 - Decision to Proceed

20. Given the information gathered in Steps 1–4 above, is it possible to move forward with the policy or practice or not, and if so, on what basis?
Choice of:

Continue with policy or practice in its current form.

STEP 6 - Actions and Arrangements for Monitoring Outcomes and Reviewing Data

The EqlA process is an ongoing one that doesn't end when the policy/practice and EqlA is agreed and implemented. There is a specific legal duty to monitor the impact of policies/practices on equality on an ongoing basis to identify if the outcomes have changed since you introduced or amended this new policy or practice. If you do not hold relevant data, then you should be taking steps to rectify this in your action plan. To review the EHRC guidance on data collection you can review their [Measurement Framework](#)

21. What actions noted in Steps 1-5 or any additional data collection work would help to monitor the policy/practice when implemented:

Action	Dates	Timetable	Lead Responsibility	Add to the Service Plan
Objection Period	February – March 2026	28 days	Education Department	No

22. What arrangements to monitor and review the ongoing impact of this policy or practice will be implemented, including timeframes for when it should be formally reviewed:

Monitoring and Review Arrangements (including where outcomes will be recorded)	Timeframe and Frequency	Lead Responsibility	Add to the Service Plan
If the proposed option were implemented, we would monitor the impact of the school's closure and strive to assist with any negative effects that may arise as a result of the policy.	Continuous	Education Department	No

Options Appraisal: Ysgol Y Garreg

Key: **Blue - advantages** **Red - disadvantages** **Black – comments**

	No change – Continue with the current situation	Federalisation with a nearby school	Close Ysgol Y Garreg and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school
Learner numbers and surplus places	<p>Very low numbers continue at Ysgol Y Garreg (January 2026 Numbers: 2 learners in Reception – Year 6 and 0 learner in Nursery).</p> <p>Number of surplus places remain very high (39 surplus places (95%) Reception – Year 6; 46 surplus places (96%) Nursery – Year 6).</p> <p>There are two classrooms in Ysgol Y Garreg, one of which is not in use.</p> <p>According to projections no increase in numbers is foreseen.</p>	<p>Very low numbers continue at Ysgol Y Garreg (January 2026 Numbers: 2 learners in Reception – Year 6 and 0 learner in Nursery).</p> <p>Number of surplus places remain very high (39 surplus places (95%) Reception – Year 6; 46 surplus places (96%) Nursery – Year 6).</p> <p>There are two classrooms in Ysgol Y Garreg, one of which is not in use.</p> <p>According to projections no increase in numbers is foreseen.</p> <p>There is no clear evidence that federalisation would lead to an increase in numbers.</p>	<p>Ysgol Cefn Coch’s numbers are stable with 132 Reception – Year 6 learners and 16 Nursery learners on the register (January 2026)</p> <p>A lower percentage of surplus places in the catchment area.</p>

<p>Class size and age range</p>	<p>There is 1 class in Ysgol Y Garreg (January 2026) with 2 learners (Reception – Year 6) and 0 Nursery learners.</p> <p>According to projections no increase in numbers is foreseen.</p> <p>Ysgol Y Garreg’s class sizes are therefore likely to remain very small, with a strong possibility that the age range would be 4 years of more in each class.</p>	<p>There is 1 class in Ysgol Y Garreg (January 2026) with 2 learners (Reception – Year 6) and 0 Nursery learners.</p> <p>According to projections no increase in numbers is foreseen.</p> <p>There is no clear evidence that federalisation would lead to an increase in numbers. Ysgol Y Garreg’s class sizes are therefore likely to remain very small, with a strong possibility that the age range would be 4 years or more in each class.</p>	<p>Learners to be taught in classes that are more suitable in size. Ysgol Cefn Coch learners are taught in classes of a more suitable size with an average of 21 learners in each class (January 2026).</p> <p>There are 7 classes in Ysgol Cefn Coch, with years 4,5 and 6 sharing two classes.</p>
<p>Financial Resources</p>	<p>Ysgol Y Garreg would receive a minimum staffing protection allocation amount of £68,822 in 2026-27 from the Authority to ensure appropriate staffing levels.</p> <p>Forecast numbers suggest that the need for a significant protection allocation will continue.</p> <p>Ysgol Y Garreg’s average cost per learner would remain high (£21,471) which is based on the number of learners on the register in September 2025. This is significantly higher than the county average of £5,998.</p>	<p>Ysgol Y Garreg would receive a minimum staffing protection allocation amount of £68,822 in 2026-27 from the Authority to ensure appropriate staffing levels.</p> <p>Forecast numbers suggest that the need for a significant protection allocation will continue.</p> <p>Ysgol Y Garreg’s average cost per learner would remain high (£21,471) which is based on the number of learners on the register in September 2025. This is significantly higher than the county average of £5,998.</p> <p>An opportunity to make savings by sharing resources and employing staff across the federation when appointing in the future.</p>	<p>Removing a school from the minimum staffing protection and no need for protection allocation in the alternative school.</p> <p>Cost per learner will be closer to the county average.</p> <p>It is likely to lead to an increase in transport costs for the Authority.</p>

Leadership and Staffing	<p>It is anticipated that the challenges in ensuring stable staffing levels at the school would continue.</p> <p>The school will be likely to receive minimum staffing protection to ensure that a head teacher and a teaching assistant can be employed.</p> <p>Projected numbers suggest that this will continue.</p>	<p>An opportunity to share good practices between the two schools and possibilities of making better use of resources.</p> <p>The school will be likely to receive minimum staffing protection to ensure that a head teacher and a teaching assistant can be employed.</p> <p>Projected numbers suggest that this will continue.</p> <p>The burden would remain heavy for the headteacher, who is responsible for two schools through an informal arrangement.</p>	<p>The staffing structure of Ysgol Cefn Coch ensures teachers in all classes and allows more non-contact time for the Headteacher.</p> <p>It would lead to the dissolution of Ysgol Y Garreg staff's contracts.</p>
Geographical Factors	<p>No change.</p> <p>The school within a reasonable distance of the homes of learners in the catchment area.</p>	<p>No change.</p> <p>The school within a reasonable distance of the homes of learners in the catchment area.</p>	<p>Transport would need to be offered to learners in Ysgol Y Garreg's catchment area, in accordance with the Council's transport policy.</p> <p>Some learners in the catchment area would travel further to school than they would at present.</p> <p>No learner in the Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.</p>
The Community	<p>Retain the school and its potential to be a community resource in Llanfrothen.</p>	<p>Possibility of community collaboration between the 2 schools.</p>	<p>The village of Llanfrothen would lose a school.</p>

	<p>Majority of learners from Ysgol Y Garreg's catchment area already attend out-of-catchment schools.</p> <p>There is no community use of the school outside of school hours.</p> <p>Uncertainty continues regarding the sustainability of education provision at Ysgol Y Garreg.</p>	<p>Retain the school and its potential to be a community resource in Llanfrothen.</p> <p>Majority of learners from Ysgol Y Garreg's catchment area already attend out-of-catchment schools.</p> <p>There is no community of the school outside of school hours.</p> <p>Uncertainty continues regarding the sustainability of education provision at Ysgol Y Garreg.</p>	<p>A wider community where the children and parents can benefit from creating stronger links between 2 neighbouring communities.</p>
The Welsh Language	No change – Learners continue to receive Category 3 Welsh medium education.	No change – Learners continue to receive Category 3 Welsh medium education.	No change – Ysgol Cefn Coch is a Category 3 Welsh medium education school.
Additional comments following a meeting with the Governing Body of Ysgol Y Garreg		<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The suitability of Ysgol Cefn Coch's building, class sizes and the number of staff able to provide for all the learners of Llanfrothen 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of a communal and cultural focal point which has existed for 143 years; a negative impact on the moral and unity of the village <p>Strengths/ Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the building as an educational asset by restructuring it to a specialist centre or wellbeing unit.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD – Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet Report



Title of Item:	Gwynedd Education Language Policy
Cabinet Member:	Cllr. Dewi Jones, Cabinet Member for Education
Relevant officer:	Siwan Llwyd Roberts.
Date of Meeting:	June 9th, 2026

1. Decision sought

The purpose of this report is to invite Cabinet to approve and adopt the Gwynedd Education Language Policy for its introduction as a Model Education Language Policy for schools to consider its adoption and implementation. (*Appendix 1*)

2. The reason why the Cabinet needs to make the decision

2.1 Cabinet is asked to approve a Model Education Language Policy which has been drawn up following an extended and comprehensive process of engagement.

2.2 A draft of a model Gwynedd Education Language Policy for Gwynedd schools came before Cabinet on 15 December 2025, and Cabinet was asked to adopt it for public engagement purposes. The engagement took place between January 7th and February 25th, 2026. The feedback received has been thoroughly reviewed and where appropriate has been incorporated into the formulation of the policy. Cabinet will now be asked to decide on the approval and adoption of the policy for Gwynedd schools.

2.3 Following the adoption of the Model Education Language Policy, the policy will be submitted to each governing body to consider its adoption and implementation.

2.4 Cyngor Gwynedd's strong recommendation is that all schools should adopt Cyngor Gwynedd's Model Education Language Policy and implement it in full by September 2026.

3. Introduction and Rationale

3.1: Gwynedd's Education Language Policy is part of a wider strategy by Cyngor Gwynedd, to ensure that Gwynedd's children and young people can develop sound language skills in both Welsh and English.

3.2 It is timely to update Gwynedd's current Language Education Policy, to reflect the linguistic situation in the county and to provide clear direction and support for schools.

3.3: Under Education Legislation (2013), all local authorities are required to agree a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) with the Welsh Government. This scheme is in place for a

period of ten years (2023-2033) and outlines the main principles underpinning Cyngor Gwynedd's education language policies.

3.4: In 2016, the Welsh Government published the Cymraeg 2050: Million Speakers strategy which emphasises the importance of increasing the number of Welsh speakers and the daily use of Welsh. The objectives of the strategy are in line with the strategic aims that Cyngor Gwynedd Council has been promoting for several decades.

3.5: Under the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 the Welsh language is a compulsory element of the curriculum.

3.6: Cyngor Gwynedd's education strategies are also expected to take into account the following documents: *Our nation's mission: high standards and aspirations for all* (Welsh Government; 2023) and *School improvement guidance: a framework for evaluation, accountability and improvement* (Welsh Government; 2024). In these documents, local authorities and schools in Wales are given a duty to plan effectively for increasing the number of young people who can speak Welsh, and who do so daily.

3.7: Although the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025, received Royal Assent on 7 July 2025, most statutory requirements are not yet in force. Over the next few years, as certain parts of the Act come into force, it will impose statutory duties on schools, local authorities and the Welsh Government. Cyngor Gwynedd's intention is to act proactively by working with schools in the county to maintain and promote Welsh language education and to strengthen each school's commitment to ensuring that the Welsh language flourishes. In addition, Cyngor Gwynedd wants to ensure that Gwynedd's schools are in a robust position to respond to the new requirements which will ensure that every pupil in Wales, by the end of their compulsory education period, develops as an independent user of the Welsh language.

3.8: Within the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 the requirements relating to the categorisation of schools will be implemented gradually. The codes and regulations underpinning the statutory categorisation system are expected to be published by July 2027, with the new arrangements being fully implemented through the School Delivery Plans between 2029 and 2030. This will set statutory language categories for each school. No school will be allowed to move back or reduce its level of Welsh language provision; instead, the existing Welsh provision must be maintained or increased.

4.1 Background/ Introduction

4.1.1 During 2024–2025, Cyngor Gwynedd initiated a comprehensive process of reviewing and amending Gwynedd's Education Language Policy, with the aim of ensuring that the policy reflects the current linguistic reality of the county and responds to new legislative and strategic requirements. This work was part of Cyngor Gwynedd's wider ambition to strengthen Welsh language education and ensure that all children and young people develop strong bilingual skills.

4.1.2 Under the leadership of the Language Consultant, Meirion Prys Jones, an extensive series of engagement sessions were held with key stakeholders, including school headteachers, learners, governors, language organisations, Language Forums and representatives of the Welsh Language Commissioner. A clear consensus emerged that the current policy needed to be updated to respond to a change in the social situation of the Welsh language and to ensure greater consistency, clarity and accountability across schools in the county.

This feedback led to a report to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee in February 2025, highlighting the need for a stronger, clearer and more ambitious policy. In April 2025, a revised draft of the policy was discussed by the Scrutiny Committee, with further calls for measurable targets, robust monitoring arrangements and greater clarity around the language expectations of schools

4.1.3 Subsequently, a Task and Finish Group was established to refine the draft policy. In June 2025 the group presented a series of recommendations relating to strengthening Welsh language provision, using the definitions of the Welsh Language and Education Bill 2025, and ensuring better linguistic progression across all educational stages. The need for a realistic and inclusive approach that would support schools, parents and learners throughout the transition period was also discussed.

4.1.4: In December 2025, a revised draft of Gwynedd's Education Language Policy was submitted to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet, with a request for adoption as a Model Education Language Policy for public engagement purposes. The report emphasised that the policy was an important strategic step in preparing Gwynedd's schools for the implementation of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025, and in realising the Welsh Language 2050 vision.

4.1.5: A formal period of public engagement was held over a period of six weeks between January 7 2026, and February 25, 2026.

Participants were given the opportunity to note what they supported, as well as the elements they had concerns or comments about, in relation to the content of the Model Education Language Policy. This was done in the context of the following categories, with the option to respond either to the policy as a whole or to the sections that were most relevant to the respondent.

- Pre-school
- Nursery to Year2
- Year 3 to Year 6
- Secondary
- Special Education
- Transitional Schools
- Immersion Provision

54 responses to the engagement document were received. (*Appendix 3*) There were some responses that focused on only one category and others responded to more than one category:

Participants were given the opportunity to identify in which role they were responding.

Role	Number
Parent	13
Governor	3
Member of school staff	3
Other	27
No answer given	5

3 responses were received from organisations.

The responses received show varying opinions. Significant support was expressed for Welsh-medium education with a minority expressing concerns about the implementation of the model policy.

In the opinion of some participants, Gwynedd Council should:

- strengthen support for learners who are less confident in their language skills.
- consider expanding immersion provision.
- address concerns about the educational development of pupils in the secondary sector.
- improve clarity in communicating the aims and principles of the Policy.

It is noted that the predominant considerations relate to the period of secondary education.

Overall, a strong consensus that the Welsh language is important to the future of Gwynedd was noted, and therefore the participants found that the Education Language Policy effectively supports Gwynedd pupils.

4.3 Rationale and justification for recommending the decision

4.3.1 The adoption of Gwynedd's Language Education Policy is essential to ensure that the county's education arrangements reflect legislative and strategic requirements as well as the linguistic needs of Gwynedd.

Under education legislation and the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2023–2033, Cyngor Gwynedd has a duty to intentionally plan for the development of pupils' Welsh and English skills and the expansion of daily use of Welsh. This aligns directly with the vision of the Welsh Government's strategy, *Cymraeg 2050* which emphasises the need to increase the number of confident Welsh speakers

In addition, the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 makes the Welsh language a compulsory element of the curriculum for all learners in Wales and the Welsh Government's recent national guidance places firm expectations on local authorities and schools to plan effectively for increasing the number of young people who can use Welsh on a daily basis.

The need to adopt the policy is also timely due to the introduction of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025. Although not all of the requirements of the Act are yet in force, it will impose new statutory duties on schools and local authorities over the coming years, including a new statutory system for categorising schools according to their Welsh provision which ensures that schools cannot reduce their Welsh language provision, but instead will have to maintain or strengthen it.

Therefore, the adoption of Gwynedd's Education Language Policy is a proactive and strategic step to:

- ensure compliance with national legislation and expectations;
- provide clear and consistent direction for the county's schools;
- protect and strengthen the Welsh language as a language of education and community in Gwynedd;
- prepare schools for the new requirements of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025
- ensure that every pupil is given the opportunity to develop as a confident and independent user of both Welsh and English by the end of their compulsory education.

The revised Model Education Language Policy reflects the comments and views received during a lengthy, comprehensive and wide-ranging process of stakeholder engagement and Cabinet is invited to approve it. It will then be presented as a Model Education Language Policy for schools to consider adopting and implementing.

4.3.2 An Equality Assessment has been completed, assessing the impact of Gwynedd Council's Education Language Policy on the entire population of the county, complying with:

- Equality Act 2010
- Socio-Economic Duty
- Welsh Language Standards (2011 Measure)
- Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015
- Armed Forces Act 2021

The aims of the Policy are to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their statutory education, have sound skills in both Welsh and English. This will promote the prosperity of the Welsh language and maintain its community use; empowering pupils to live and work in a multilingual world and ensuring linguistic and social equity for all children.

A significant series of face-to-face engagement meetings were held between October and December 2024 and further public engagement between January 7 and February 25, 2026.

- **Impact Assessment**

Positive impact: There is no obvious negative impact on any of the protected features. Rather, a significant positive impact is predicted in terms of the promotion of the Welsh language, equality of opportunity and community solidarity. The policy will strengthen the use of the Welsh language within education and in the wider community, increase employment opportunities by fostering bilingual skills, and support the development of confidence and a strong identity among learners. In addition, it will ensure equal access for learners with additional learning needs (ALN).

- **Potential risks:** Full implementation of the policy could put additional pressure on schools, highlighting the need for ongoing training and providing adequate resources to

support the work. However, there is no evidence that the policy leads to an unequal effect or any form of unlawful discrimination.

- **Equality and Socio-Economic Considerations.** The policy contributes to the elimination of discrimination by ensuring equal linguistic access for all. It also promotes equal opportunities by expanding access to Welsh-medium education, while fostering positive relationships through school schemes and the Welsh ethos. The policy seeks to address socio-economic disadvantage by providing immersion schemes, support for families, and better access to Welsh language resources and technology.
- **Welsh Considerations.** The policy operates in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards and gives priority to Welsh as the main administrative and educational language. It ensures that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English and promotes the use of the language in the community, among young people and in the workplace. In addition, the policy reinforces the role of schools as key centres for the Welsh language and culture.

4.3.3 Contribution to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The policy contributes to all seven well-being goals, including creating a more equal and resilient Wales, with a vibrant culture where the Welsh language thrives. It also reflects the five ways of working through long-term and preventive action, whilst promoting integration, collaboration and inclusion in the planning and delivery of Welsh education.

5. Next Steps and Timetable

5.1 If Cabinet decides to support the recommendation presented in this report to approve and adopt the Gwynedd Education Language Policy, the policy would be presented as a Model Education Language Policy for schools to consider adopting and implementing. Cyngor Gwynedd's strong recommendation is that all schools should adopt Cyngor Gwynedd's Model Education Language Policy and fully implement it by September 2026.

6. Statutory Officers' Comments

6.1 Chief Finance Officer

"I have no objections to the decision sought from the perspective of financial propriety."

6.2 Monitoring Officer

There has been considerable work and consideration on this proposed policy. It is an initial step in reviewing arrangements and proposing policy to Governing Bodies that would pave the way for the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 coming into force fully. Following the engagement period, it gives the Cabinet the opportunity to agree a Model Policy that can be proposed to the school Governing Bodies. I am satisfied with the propriety of the decision sought.

7.Attachment List:

Appendix 1 – Gwynedd Education Language Policy 2026

Appendix 2 – Guide to Gwynedd's Language Education Policy 2026

Appendix 3 - Analysis of Public Engagement Outcomes January – February 2026

Appendix 4 – Integrated Impact Assessment.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD: EDUCATION LANGUAGE POLICY IN GWYNEDD SCHOOLS.

Introduction:

This document consists of two parts:

1. Cyngor Gwynedd's Education Language Policy (2026).
2. Proposed guidance for headteachers and governors regarding the meeting of the requirement by Cyngor Gwynedd and the Welsh Government that, under the conditions of the *Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025*, each governing body provide a Language Education Policy together with a Welsh Language Education Delivery Plan. Cyngor Gwynedd's strong recommendation is that all schools in the county use the wording of Gwynedd Council's Model Education Language Policy. That meets the requirement in the new law for all governing bodies to pay due attention to the local authority's Education Language Policy when drawing up their Welsh Education Delivery Plan. Cyngor Gwynedd's role is to approve each governing body's Welsh Education Delivery Plan as well as monitoring its implementation.

Context:

Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Strategy 2023-2033:

Cyngor Gwynedd's Education Language Policy is a core part of Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Strategy and is in line with the strategy's central priority, which is to maintain and empower the Welsh language. The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in Welsh and English. This ensures the prosperity of the Welsh language in the communities of the County and ensures pupils of Gwynedd step confidently into a multilingual world.

The aim of the wider policy is *“to create an inclusive strategy with the main aim of increasing opportunities for all residents of Gwynedd to see and use the Welsh language in a wide range of different contexts. By working on raising the status and increasing people's use of the language in all parts of their lives, we will increase the incentive for others to learn the language. We want to pay particular attention to young people's language use over the coming years, including highlighting their use of Welsh with technology, showing them the value of the language as a skill in the world of work, and increasing the informal opportunities for them to use Welsh in their daily lives.”*

1: Cyngor Gwynedd's Education Language Policy (2026)

1.1: Pre –school provision

Welsh is the medium of education for maintained pre-school provision throughout Gwynedd. This formative stage is crucial in introducing children to the Welsh language through play and natural experiences, providing a strong foundation for language acquisition and use.

1.2: Primary Schools

All primary schools in Gwynedd, except for the *transitional school, provide 'Main Language – Welsh' education, corresponding to Category 3 schools according to the current definition of school language categories.

Foundation Phase up to Year 2

- Welsh is the only medium of education, assessment, and extra-curricular activities.
- Sustained and purposeful opportunities for pupils to use Welsh within lessons, across the wider school environment, and in social contexts are provided.

Provision for New Speakers:

- Schools ensure that all new speakers from Year 2 onwards access the Immersion Regime, supporting full engagement with the curriculum.

Years 3–6:

- A minimum of 80% of all pupils' education, assessment and extra-curricular activities are provided through the medium of Welsh.
- English is delivered as a subject, and as a medium for certain tasks within specific work units determined by the school, in accordance with the school's Delivery Plan.

Provision for New Speakers:

- Schools ensure that all pupils who are new speakers (Years 3 - 6) access the Immersion Regime to ensure full access to the curriculum.

Welsh is the language of internal communication in Gwynedd's primary schools. Communication with parents and carers is always in Welsh or bilingual, as required.

Every school has a Welsh ethos.

1.3: Secondary Schools

All secondary schools in Gwynedd, except for two *transitional schools, provide 'Main Language – Welsh' education, which corresponds to Category 3 schools according to the current school language classification system.

- A minimum of 80% of all pupils' education, assessment and extra-curricular activities are delivered through the medium of Welsh.
- English is delivered as a subject, and as a medium for certain tasks within specific work units determined by the school, in accordance with the school's Delivery Plan.

Provision for New Speakers:

- Schools ensure that all pupils who are new speakers (Years 7 - 9) are referred to the Immersion Regime to ensure full participation in the curriculum.
- Schools provide appropriate support to new speakers who register during years 10 and 11, in accordance with the School's Delivery Plan.

Welsh is the medium of internal communication in Gwynedd's secondary schools. Communication with parents and carers is in Welsh or bilingual, as required.

Each school has a Welsh ethos.

1.4: Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

Learners with ALN receive an equal linguistic opportunity to receive education through the medium of Welsh in accordance with this policy. The provision set out in each Individual Development Plan (IDP) is implemented in the appropriate medium, in full compliance with the Additional Learning Needs and Tribunal for Wales Act (2018) and the Equality Act (2010).

*Transitional Schools:

Primary: Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes. Bangor

Secondary: Ysgol Friars, Bangor ac Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn

Our long-term vision is for all schools in Gwynedd to become Primary Welsh Language Schools in accordance with the latest legislation. Cyngor Gwynedd is committed to supporting schools in achieving this objective.

Guide to Cyngor Gwynedd's Model Education Language Policy

The purpose of this guide is to aid schools and governing bodies in developing a Delivery Plan in the context of the Welsh language. When developing a Delivery Plan, schools are expected to consider Cyngor Gwynedd's Model Education Language Policy (2026)

Implementation Objectives of Cyngor Gwynedd's Model Education Language Policy (2026):

- All schools should adopt a Language Education Policy together with a Welsh Education Delivery Plan.
- The Governing Body must ensure that the school provides Welsh language education in accordance with or above the requirements of the Policy.
- The Governing Body has a statutory duty to submit a draft of their Delivery Plan to Cyngor Gwynedd. Cyngor Gwynedd will subsequently either accept or reject the Delivery Plan. If the Delivery Plan is rejected, Cyngor Gwynedd will ask the Governing Body to reconsider the contents.
- The role of the Governing Body is to ensure that the agreed Delivery Plan is fully implemented.
- The school's Language Education Policy and the Welsh Education Delivery Plan:
 - identify the aims and objectives for the teaching of the Welsh language and for teaching through the medium of Welsh.
 - state the amount of Welsh language education provided, ensuring that the school provides Welsh education, in accordance with the school's language category.
 - outline how the Governing Body carries out its duties to provide the required percentage of Welsh education, in accordance with the language category of the school.
 - set out the steps taken to ensure that all new speakers have access to late-immersion education.
 - identify how the Governing Body promotes a Welsh ethos and use of Welsh within the school, and support parents who are not confident Welsh speakers in assisting their children's learning.
- In drawing up the Welsh Language Delivery Plan, the Governing Body is expected to consult with Gwynedd Education Authority officials regarding its content.
- Each Welsh Language Education Delivery Plan shall remain in effect for a period of three school years.
- A draft of the school's Welsh Education Delivery Plan must be submitted to Cyngor Gwynedd at least nine months before it comes into force.
- The Welsh Education Delivery Plan is regularly monitored by Cyngor Gwynedd.

Appendix 3

A formal period of public engagement was held over a period of six weeks between January 7th, 2026, and February 25th, 2026.

Participants were given the opportunity to identify what they supported (**liked**), as well as the elements about which they had concerns or comments (**disliked**), in relation to the content of the Model Education Language Policy. This was done in the context of the following categories, with the option to respond either to the policy as a whole or to the sections that were most relevant to the participant.

- Pre-school
- Nursery to Year2
- Year 3 to Year 6
- Secondary
- Special Education
- Transitional Schools
- Immersion Provision

54 responses to the engagement document were received. Some responses focused on only one category and others responded to more than one category:

Participants were given the opportunity to indicate the capacity in which they were responding.

Participant	Number
Parent	13
Governor	3
Staff Member	3
Other	27
Not noted	5

3 responses were received from organisations.

Summary of Responses by Category

1.1: Pre-school

Support: Strong support was expressed for the principle of 100% Welsh-medium provision, along with a commitment from Cyngor Gwynedd to ensure that all pre-school settings in the County deliver all activities through the medium of Welsh.

Considerations: Concerns were expressed about the lack of specific reference to expectations in relation to private provisions within the model policy, and the need for clarity on how these provisions would be monitored to ensure that Welsh is a medium of education in all pre-school settings in the County. The need to increase Welsh-medium pre-school provision was also noted. In addition, one concern was raised that the proposed changes could lead to an adverse impact on non-Welsh speakers.

1.2: Nursery – Year 2

Support: Support was expressed for the principle of 100% Welsh-medium provision, with recognition that immersion education enables children to develop Welsh skills quickly. School staff were supportive and expressed that developing bilingually was educationally beneficial. While challenges are recognised in aiming for Welsh as the sole medium of education, it was emphasised that the Model Policy strengthens the status of Welsh as the norm and builds firmly on the current statutory pre-school provision.

Considerations: Concern was expressed about the lack of reference to a requirement to ensure that all governors are fluent in Welsh. Concerns were raised that the lack of immersion education provision before Year 2 could undermine the Welsh ethos in classrooms.

It was noted that pupils should be able to use their chosen language during playtime and suggested that any sense of enforcement should be avoided to prevent negative attitudes towards Welsh. In addition, concern was expressed about a lack of flexibility for children from non-Welsh speaking households, and a feeling that 100% Welsh medium provision is too strict and may limit pupils' participation in extra-curricular activities.

1.3: Years 3-6

Support: Strong support was expressed for the model policy, including support for its aims and principles, and recognition of its impact in terms of strong development in the Welsh language.

Considerations: Concern was expressed that some pupils may find it difficult to seek help and that a lack of use of English to explain concepts may disrupt the educational development of some learners. Concern was raised that learning through Welsh puts extra pressure on pupils who need support. One view was noted that the policy restricts the choice of children and parents, and it was suggested that the model policy should be one that addresses bilingual education.

1.4: Secondary

Support: Support was expressed for the principle of strengthening and maintaining the Welsh language, with recognition of the importance of keeping it alive. It was noted that learning opportunities in Immersion Centres are working well, and that the model policy supports better progression between the primary and secondary sectors, building on solid foundations laid in primary. It was suggested that giving schools the flexibility to decide which elements of the curriculum are taught through English can support a more natural and consistent use of Welsh, enriching pupils' learning experiences.

Considerations: Concern has been expressed that the Welsh language is currently being treated less favourably in some cases. It was noted that a very high level of Welsh-medium provision (95-100%) would need to be ensured to prevent further decline in the language and therefore that the policy needed to be strengthened. Calls were made for more support for immersion pupils after they return to their schools, with an emphasis on ensuring that all pupils who do not speak the language have access to the immersion regime. Concerns were raised that there was a lack of flexibility in the choice of language for pupils and parents. Specific concerns about the impact on learners were identified, including difficulty in understanding complex subjects through the medium of Welsh and additional pressures particularly at GCSE level. Concerns were expressed about pupils being forced to sit exams or use Welsh in certain contexts, and the possibility of a negative impact on their English skills in the future. In addition, concern was noted that the Policy could create potential barriers to attracting teachers to teach across all subjects. It was suggested that consideration should be given to establishing a Welsh and English language stream in schools. Concerns were raised about pupils' language rights, impact on language choice, and the possibility of discrimination against non-Welsh speakers.

1.5 : Special Education

Support: Support was expressed for the principle that the provision of ALN through the medium of Welsh should be available to all learners. The importance of clarifying that pupils can change their language medium during their educational journey was noted, and that an early choice of English-medium education, for example at the age of six, does not mean that the same medium must be followed throughout their education.

Considerations: Concern was expressed that the model policy may lead to unfavourable discrimination towards pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). It was also noted that there was a lack of adequate detail in the Policy, limiting clarity regarding its implementation.

1.6: Transitional Schools

Support: The discussion on transitional schools was welcomed, noting the opportunity they offer to support language transitions and facilitate pupils' language development.

Considerations: Concern was expressed about a lack of information for parents, as well as a potential impact on pupils' confidence. It was also noted that some pupils leave transitional schools without adequate Welsh language skills. It was noted that Welsh First Language pupils in transitional schools may face disadvantages in terms of language development, connection with their identity and local community and that the use of Welsh in these schools needs to be strengthened.

It was suggested that the Authority should hold an open discussion with parents and consider providing free transport to Welsh-medium schools, to ensure that pupils are not left without the ability or confidence to use Welsh fluently.

1.7: Immersion Provision

Support: Support was expressed for the immersion provision, with recognition that it can be an effective way of enabling learners to develop their Welsh skills.

Considerations: Concern has been expressed about a lack of support for pupils after the immersion period, with support often being provided too late, particularly to Year 10 pupils, thus affecting their ability to reach their educational potential. It was also noted that there was a lack of resources in the additional support offered.

1.8: Like/dislike about the model policy.

Support: Full support was expressed for the Policy, with emphasis on the importance of the Welsh language in Gwynedd as a key priority for the future, as well as the benefits of bilingualism and the role of the policy in strengthening cultural identity.

The value of the opportunities for pupils to live their lives through the medium of Welsh was noted, and a recognition that the objectives of the model policy are clear in trying to ensure that Welsh is a natural language in the daily life of all pupils.

The Policy was described as a progressive and clear one that puts the Welsh language in its rightful place in the education system and one that empowers individuals of all ages to take pride in the language.

Considerations: Concern was expressed that the model policy does not consider research findings, including Cognitive Load Theory, and its potential impact on the educational progress of pupils, particularly vulnerable pupils, who learn through a second language.

A clear timetable was called for to support the language development of new speakers. The need for adequate resources to implement the objectives without putting too much pressure on pupils, families and staff was emphasised.

Concerns were expressed about the lack of choice of medium of education, the shortage of Welsh-medium teachers for some subjects, and the potential wider implications such as attracting families and workers to the area. Concern was noted about the impact on the ability of non-Welsh speakers to participate fully in school life, and a feeling of discrimination against them.

1.9: Potential issues or impacts that should be considered, and which have not already been addressed by the Council.

Support: Support was expressed for the model policy, stating that it supports the rights of people who are treated less favourably. The importance of monitoring and ensuring consistency across all schools, areas and age groups was emphasised to ensure the success of the Policy, along with an expectation to see an increase in the numbers and percentages of Welsh speakers in Gwynedd by 2031.

It was noted that Welsh education should be provided to ensure that pupils are confident and fluent in Welsh, enabling employment opportunities locally and supporting the economy. It was also suggested that the Welsh language should be the main medium of internal communication in all schools in Gwynedd.

In addition, the need for schools' Welsh Education Delivery Plans to be regularly monitored by the Authority was emphasised, and that the Policy needs to be strengthened to support the strategic aim of increasing the

number of Welsh speakers. It was suggested that the Policy should also clearly explain the steps towards transforming schools into Welsh schools, along with a clear progress report on this work.

Considerations: Concern was expressed that the model policy could have a negative impact on some, particularly pupils in transitional schools, with a risk of inter-school movements which could create community tensions and increase negative attitudes towards the Welsh language. Calls were made for bilingual provision in schools to meet the needs of pupils. Concerns were also raised about resources and support for ALN pupils, the ability of non-Welsh speaking parents to support their children's learning, the potential impact on pupils' progress and wellbeing, as well as the challenges of recruiting a suitable workforce. In addition, concern was noted that the Policy could limit the higher education and employment opportunities of some pupils, creating a disadvantage for Gwynedd learners. It was suggested that the proposed approach does not promote equal rights and that bilingual teaching should be considered.

1.10: The effects that the model Policy would have on opportunities for people to use Welsh, and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English.

Support: Strong support was expressed for the model policy, with the view that it enhances Welsh ethos of the County and helps young people to appreciate the value of the language. The importance of ensuring that pupils understand Welsh as a privilege was noted, and that standards need to be maintained and strengthened. It was emphasised that the Policy is likely to have a positive impact on the Welsh language, contributing to higher levels of bilingualism and improving opportunities for pupils. It is also seen as a step forward towards achieving linguistic equality. The need to monitor the impact of the Policy was noted including the use of the Welsh language in the daily life of the school and collecting data on numbers sitting Welsh and English medium examinations.

In addition, the importance of increasing opportunities to use the Welsh language outside the classroom and raising staff awareness of the importance of the language, was noted. It was also suggested that further clarity should be provided regarding the process and expectations for schools moving towards more Welsh-medium provision, to ensure transparency and a clear accountability framework.

Considerations: Concern was expressed that enforcing the Welsh language could lead to less motivation among pupils to learn it and make it less viable as a community language. Concerns were noted that there was a lack of opportunities to use the Welsh language outside of school.

It was noted that there was a need to ensure that non-Welsh speaking pupils do not feel that they are being treated less favourably.

Concerns were expressed about the impact on educational and career opportunities, with a call for greater emphasis on English in some educational contexts.

1.11. How could the model policy be formulated or modified to ensure that it has positive effects, or more positive effects on opportunities for people to use Welsh, and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English.

Support: It was suggested that the model policy should strengthen communication standards by encouraging Welsh communication primarily when communicating with parents and reducing reliance on digital translation. The value of creating opportunities for schools in English-speaking areas to collaborate with schools in Welsh-speaking areas to share good practice and support language development was emphasised.

The importance of encouraging Welsh pupils to take part in community activities to promote the language and increase its use outside of school was noted.

It was suggested that Welsh history and the Welsh language need to be taught to all pupils to improve understanding of the status of the language and challenge prejudices.

Support was expressed for the development of early education provision within school structures, rather than relying on the private sector.

The need for a robust and effective monitoring system was emphasised, with support for schools where outcomes need to be strengthened, and opportunities to increase the use of Welsh. There were calls for an increase in the percentage of Welsh language education in primary schools. The importance of fully

implementing the model policy and continuously monitoring its impact was noted, as was the ability to strengthen it according to the results.

Considerations: It was noted that the educational well-being of pupils and the practical value of the language should be prioritised, and that the "homework gap" affecting pupils from non-Welsh speaking households should be addressed.

It was suggested that the model policy should focus on creating natural and informal opportunities to use the Welsh language rather than enforcing it, and that Youth Services and work placements should be included to strengthen pupils' understanding of the value of bilingualism.

The need for a suitable "safety net" for ALN pupils was emphasised, as well as the recognition of the role of late immersion or transitional streams to support academic progress.

A call was made for more flexibility within the policy, including offering schools' full choice or choosing a language for external examinations.

In addition, concerns were raised about the impact of the Policy on the preparation of pupils for studies outside Wales, and a view that this wider context needs to be considered in planning.

1.12: Impact of the Model Education Language Policy on people facing socio-economic disadvantage?

Support: The view was expressed that people from all backgrounds can learn Welsh and that opportunities to do so should be available to everyone. It was noted that learning and using Welsh can bring socio-economic benefits, open wider work and career opportunities and improving employment prospects, including access to jobs with higher skill levels and pay.

It was emphasized that bilingualism can contribute to cognitive development and ultimately support the movement of individuals out of socio-economic disadvantage.

It was noted that creating a fully bilingual society can help reduce inequalities, ensuring that all children have the same opportunity to develop Welsh language skills and take advantage of future opportunities.

Considerations: Concern was expressed that transport costs to Welsh-medium schools can create a significant barrier for low-income families, reinforcing findings, that in some areas, Welsh is seen as the most accessible language for certain social groups. It was noted that some families had relocated to ensure their children could receive Welsh-medium education.

It was suggested that the model policy could limit pupils' horizons rather than extend them, with wider concerns about the potential impact on poverty and socio-economic inequality in Gwynedd. Concern was expressed that it could negatively affect migrants and other vulnerable groups.

It was noted that pupils are not always able to travel far to access immersion provision, and that this could exacerbate existing inequalities, as pupils from less favoured socio-economic backgrounds are generally less likely to access Welsh education and develop Welsh language skills.

Conclusion

The results show mixed opinions among participants. Significant support was expressed for Welsh-medium education but a minority of participants express concerns about the implementation of the model policy.

The main areas that need further attention in the opinion of some individuals are:

- strengthen support for learners who are less confident in their language skills.
- consider expanding immersion provision.
- addressing concerns about the educational development of pupils in the secondary sector.
- improve clarity in communicating the aims and principles of the Policy.

It is noted that the predominant considerations relate to the period of secondary education.

Overall, there is a strong consensus that the Welsh language is important to the future of Gwynedd and that the Model Education Language Policy should support all pupils effectively

Integrated Impact Assessment

This document assesses the impact that the policy, procedure, plan etc will have on the population of the county and operates based on several laws.

1. **The Equality Act 2010.** It places a duty on public organisations to pay due attention to the impact of any new policy, procedure, scheme etc (or in adapting them) on people with protected characteristics. We are asked
 1. abolish unlawful discrimination, harassment and persecution and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 2. promote equal opportunities between people who share a relevant protected feature and those who do not.
 3. foster good relationships between people who share a protected trait and those who don't.

In Wales the specific duty sets out the need to carry out an impact assessment following specific guidelines to consider the impact that a change in any policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure) will have on people with protected equality characteristics. A timely assessment must be made before a decision is made on any material change (i.e. affecting people with a protected feature).

1. **Socio-Economic Duty.** Wales has now implemented this duty which is part of the Equality Act 2010 giving a duty to address socio-economic disadvantage in strategic decisions.
2. **Welsh Language Standards (Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011).** Cyngor Gwynedd is required to consider the impact that a change in any policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure) will have on opportunities for people to use Welsh and to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English. This document therefore ensures that these decisions protect and promote the use of the Welsh language.

1. **Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.** Cyngor Gwynedd has a duty to implement the five ways of working, and to respond to the 7 national well-being goals.
2. **the Armed Forces Act 2021.** Councils must give due regard to the impact of this proposal on those serving or having served in the Armed Forces, as well as their families.

Awdur: Siwan Llwyd Roberts (ADDYSG)

STAGE 1 - Main Aims and Objectives of the Policy or Practice

1. What kind of document or procedure is being assessed?

1. New or revised policies, practices or procedures (involving a change in service provision or employment practices)

2. What are the goals, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy or practice?

Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Education Policy is a core part of Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Strategy and is in line with the Strategy's central priority, which is to maintain and empower the Welsh language. The aim of this model policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have solid skills in both languages. This will ensure the prosperity of the Welsh language in the communities of the County, and equip them to step confidently into a multilingual world

3. Who are the main advisory groups (stakeholders)?

Gwynedd Families

Gwynedd Schools

Gwynedd Schools Governing Bodies

Gwynedd Residents

STEP 2 - Engagement Data and Impact Assessment

4. Has an attempt been made to comply with the duty to engage in accordance with what is described above and has sufficient information been gathered to proceed?

Yes

Details of engagement. Please note any consultation or engagement you have made or intend to do

Engagement	Date	Information
Arfon Secondary Headteachers	3/10/24	<p>A series of engagement sessions were held to discuss Gwynedd Council's current Education Language Policy. There was an opportunity to discuss and gather ideas and suggestions regarding the policy and the need to amend it in light of the results of the 2021 Census, Welsh Language and Education Bill (before the Welsh Language and Education Act was passed in June 20250 and the Welsh language aims of 2025. These were mostly face-to-face meetings and those with a range of stakeholders.</p> <p>A public engagement period was held between January 7th and February 25th, 2026, with an opportunity for the public to identify what they supported as well as the elements they had concerns or comments about, in relation to the content of the Model Education Language Policy. This was done in the context of the following categories, with the option to respond either to the policy as a whole or to the sections that were most relevant to the respondent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-school • Nursery to Year2 • Year 3 to Year 6 • Secondary • Special Education • Transitional Schools • Immersion Provision
Arfon Primary and Special School Headteachers	3/10/24	
Dwyfor Primary Headteachers	4/10/24	
Dwyfor Secondary Headteachers	4/10/24	
Meirionnydd Primary Headteachers	10/10/24	
Meirionnydd secondary Headteachers	10/10/24	
Dwyfor Secondary Language Forum (Ysgol Botwnnog)	15/10/24	
Hafod Lon Special School Learners	15/10/24	
Primary School Learners in Dwyfor	15/10/24	
Transitional Category High School Learners- Ysgol Tywyn	16/10/24	
Primary School Learners in Meirionnydd	16/10/24	
Meirionnydd Secondary Language Forum- Ysgol y Moelwyn	16/10/24	
Arfon Secondary Language Forum - Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen	27/11/24	
Primary school Learners in Arfon - Ysgol Cae Top	27/11/24	
Welsh language movements - Cylch yr Iaith, Cymdeithas yr Iaith, Dyfodol yr Iaith, Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg	27/11/24	

Welsh Language Commissioner	4/12/24	
Public Engagement	7/1/26 - 25/2/26	

5. What information is available about the impact on each of the features and topics below?

	Relevant Evidence, Information and Data	Potential Positive and/or Negative Impact
Race	The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in Welsh and English.	No impact has been identified during the engagement
Disability	The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in both Welsh and English. Learners with ALN will receive an equal linguistic opportunity to receive education through Welsh in accordance with this policy. The provision set out in an Individual Development Plan (UDP) will be implemented in the appropriate medium, in full compliance with the ALN and the Welsh Tribunal Act (2018) and the Equality Act (2010)	No discrimination based on disability has been identified during the engagement and the policy ensures that all learners have an equal opportunity to receive education through Welsh.
Gender	The policy is intended to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in Welsh and English.	The policy ensures that all learners have an equal opportunity to receive education through Welsh. No impact has been identified during the engagement.
Age	The aim of the policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in Welsh and English	Upon acceptance of the policy, all pupils in Gwynedd will receive an equal linguistic opportunity to receive education through Welsh.
Religion and belief	The policy is intended to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in Welsh and English.	Upon acceptance of the policy all pupils will receive an equal linguistic opportunity to receive education through the medium of Welsh
Sexual Orientation	The aim of the policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in both Welsh and English.	If the policy is accepted, all pupils in Gwynedd will receive an equal linguistic opportunity to receive education through Welsh.

Gender reassignment	The aim of the policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in Welsh and English.	Upon acceptance of the policy, all pupils in Gwynedd will receive an equal linguistic opportunity to receive education through Welsh.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	The aim of the policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in both Welsh and English.	No effect has been identified
Pregnancy and Maternity	The aim of the policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in both Welsh and English.	No impact has been identified.
The Welsh Language	Gwynedd Council's Language Education Policy is a core part of Gwynedd Council's Language Strategy and is in line with the Strategy's central priority, which is to maintain and empower the Welsh language. The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in Welsh and English. This will ensure the prosperity of the Welsh language in the communities of the County and equip them to step confidently into a multilingual world.	<p>Possible impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ensure the prosperity of the Welsh language in the communities of Gwynedd. • equipping Gwynedd pupils to step confidently into a multilingual world • to develop opportunities to use the Welsh language in a wide range of different contexts • Skip to content _ Skip to footer • Demonstrating the value of language as a skill in the world of work for young people • to increase informal opportunities to use the Welsh language.
Socio-Economic Considerations	The aim of the policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have solid skills in Welsh and English. This will ensure the prosperity of the Welsh language in the communities of the County and equip the young people of Gwynedd to step confidently into living and working within local communities and beyond in a multilingual world.	The opportunity for every single pupil in Gwynedd to become fluent bilingual has been identified as a positive impact.
Those who serve or have served in the armed forces, together with their families	The aim of the policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, including the children of those serving or having served in the Armed Forces, have sound skills in Welsh and English by the end of their period of statutory education. This will ensure the prosperity of the	The opportunity for every single pupil in Gwynedd to become fluent bilingual has been identified as a positive impact.

	Welsh language in the communities of the County and equip pupils to step confidently into a multilingual world.	
Human Rights	The aim of the policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in Welsh and English. This will ensure the prosperity of the Welsh language in the communities of the County and equip them to step confidently into a multilingual world.	The opportunity for every single pupil in Gwynedd to become fluent bilingual has been identified as a positive impact.

6. Are there any data or information gaps and if so, what are these and how are they intended to be addressed?

Further engagement with schools, parents, Governing Bodies and other stakeholders was conducted through a period of public engagement between January 7th and February 25th, 2026. The process has now been completed, and the responses received have been considered in the formulation of the final version of this policy and report.

7. When considering other key decisions affecting these groups, is there a incremental effect (cumulative effect)?

The introduction of the Education Language Policy may have a cumulative impact, particularly in the wider context of policy changes affecting education in Gwynedd.

It is expected that the policy may contribute to strengthening the use of the Welsh language and supporting the development of Welsh language education in the County. It may also lead to additional pressure on schools and teaching staff if appropriate resources and support are not provided for its implementation. The Department of Education will support schools to implement the policy by providing appropriate guidance and support.

8. What does the proposal include to show that you have given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (to promote equal opportunities; help to eliminate discrimination, harassment or unlawful victimisation and foster good relationships and wider community cohesion) as covered by the 3 aims of the General Duty in the Equality Act 2010?

Impact on Equality

- Elimination of discrimination: An opportunity for all pupils in Gwynedd to receive an equal linguistic opportunity to receive education through Welsh.
- Promoting equal opportunities: Increasing access to Welsh education for all.

- Fostering good relationships: ensure that all schools in Gwynedd adopt a Language Education Policy together with a Welsh Education Delivery Plan to ensure consistent provision in the county's schools.

9. How does the proposal show that due attention has been given to the need to address inequalities in the cause of socio-economic disadvantage? (Note that this is about closing inequality gaps rather than just improving outcomes for all)

Delivery Plans will be prepared by each school setting out how they will:-

- identify the aims and objectives in the teaching of Welsh and through the medium of Welsh.
- identify the amount of Welsh education provided, ensuring that the school provides Welsh education, in accordance with the school's linguistic category.
- outline how the governing body will carry out its duties to provide the percentage of Welsh education, in line with the school's linguistic category.
- set out what action the governing body will take to promote late immersion education.
- set out how the governing body will promote the Welsh ethos and use of Welsh within the school, and to support parents who are not confident Welsh speakers to support their children's learning.

10. How does the proposal demonstrate action in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), not to treat the Welsh language less favourably than English, and to ensure opportunities for people to use Welsh? Also how will action be taken in accordance with the Council's language policy and strategy to take advantage of every opportunity to promote the Welsh language (beyond providing services bilingually) and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community?

Cyngor Gwynedd's current Language Policy is based on the principle that Welsh is the Council's natural language and that Welsh is therefore the main administrative and public language, with all services, meetings, correspondence and signage bilingual but with priority given to Welsh. It ensures that the public and staff are fully served in Welsh, that Welsh skills are essential to all jobs, and organisations that receive support from the Cyngor Gwynedd are also expected to promote the Welsh language. In relation to education, the policy emphasises the central role of schools and education providers in passing on the Welsh language to the next generation and reinforcing its use as the main language of learning and community.

Cyngor Gwynedd's Model Education Language Policy is a core part of Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Strategy and is in line with the Strategy's central priority, which is to maintain and empower the Welsh language. The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have solid skills in Welsh and English. This will ensure the prosperity of the Welsh language in the communities of the County and equip Gwynedd pupils to step confidently into a multilingual world.

The aim of the wider policy is to "create an inclusive strategy, with the main aim of increasing opportunities for all residents of Gwynedd to see and use the Welsh language in a wide range of different contexts. By working on raising the status and increasing people's use of the language in all parts of their lives, we will increase the incentive for others to learn the language. We want to pay particular attention to young people's language use over the coming years, including highlighting their use of Welsh with technology, showing them the value of the language as a skill in the world of work, and increasing the informal opportunities for them to use Welsh in their daily lives".

11. How does this proposal meet the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act by implementing the five ways of working, and responding to the 7 national well-being goals including creating a More Equal Wales?

The Gwynedd Education Language Policy contributes directly to the Act in several ways:

1. A prosperous Wales – bilingual skills increase job opportunities and strengthen the economy. A resilient Wales – the language is part of our identity.
2. A healthier Wales – bilingualism supports emotional well-being and positive identity, which is linked to strengthening mental health
3. A more equal Wales – access to the Welsh language ensures linguistic and social equity for all children, regardless of their background.
4. A Wales of cohesive communities – the language connects people to their communities and fosters a sense of belonging.
5. A Wales with a vibrant culture where the Welsh language is flourishing – Welsh-medium education is one of the main means of achieving this goal.
6. Wales has a global responsibility – by protecting a minority language, Wales contributes to the world's linguistic and cultural diversity.

The five ways of working are in place

Long-term – building strong linguistic foundations to maintain the Welsh language for future generations.

Prevention – ensuring that children do not miss the opportunity to become fluent in Welsh through early action.

Integration – linking to education, culture, health and equality.

Collaboration – partnerships between schools, local authorities and parents.

Content – giving families and learners a voice in policy making and development

PHASE 3 - Procurement and Partnerships

12. Will this policy or practice be carried out in whole or in part by contractors or in partnership with other organisation(s)?

No

STEP 4 - Dealing with Negative or Unlawful Impact and Strengthening the Policy or Practice.

13. In considering proportionality, does the policy or practice cause a significant positive or negative impact or create unequal outcomes?

Significant Positive Impact:

The engagement so far suggests a significant positive impact on promoting and strengthening the use of the Welsh language in Gwynedd's schools. The policy is proportionate to Cyngor Gwynedd's strategic aims and in line with the objectives of the Welsh Language and Education Act 2025 and Cymraeg 2050.

While some challenges are possible e.g. ensuring adequate resources and providing appropriate training and support to schools and staff, there is no evidence that the policy creates unequal outcomes for any group. Rather, the policy seeks to ensure equal opportunities for all learners to develop Welsh language skills, regardless of their linguistic or social background.

Therefore, the overall impact can be considered positive and proportionate, providing clear benefits to the education community and the wider Welsh language.

Significant Negative Impact:

As set out in this report, some challenges are possible, e.g. ensuring adequate resources and providing appropriate training and support to schools and staff, but there is no evidence that the policy creates disproportionate outcomes for any group. It is not yet possible to predict what the effect of the impact will be.

14. Any deliberate negative impact and why it is believed that there is justification for such action should be explained

There may be some deliberate negative impacts resulting from the Language Education Policy, for example:

- new requirements for schools and staff to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn Welsh, which can create additional pressure in terms of securing resources and timetables.
- adjustments or limitations in teaching methods to improve equal opportunities, which may mean that some conventional approaches are changed.

However, **there is a clear justification for implementing the policy:**

- it ensures equal opportunities for all pupils to develop Welsh language skills, creating equal opportunities regardless of their linguistic or social background.
- It promotes positive relationships between schools creating a more coherent and inclusive system.
- The policy and action are based on objective principles and affirmative action, avoiding prejudice and inequity while ensuring long-term social and national benefits.

The deliberate negative impact has been carefully and proportionately planned, with the aim of ensuring long-term positive benefits for all and strengthening the Welsh language in education.

15. Will any of the negative impacts identified count as unlawful but unavoidable discrimination (e.g. reduction of funding)?

No

Please note the reason for saying so and the justification for continuing

Gwynedd Council's Model Education Language Policy supports and delivers on the core objectives of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 by ensuring that all pupils develop sound skills in Welsh and English by the end of their statutory education. By placing the Welsh language at the heart of its education strategy, Cyngor Gwynedd contributes directly to the Act's objective of fostering confident bilingual citizens, and helps to ensure consistency, quality and linguistic ambition across Wales.

16. What other measures or changes could be included in order to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due attention has been given to the promotion of equal opportunities; helping to eradicate unlawful discrimination, harassment or persecution and foster good relationships and wider community cohesion; as addressed in the General Duty of the Equality Act 2010?

A period of public engagement was undertaken, and the Department for Education has analysed the responses received. The need for fundamental changes to the policy was not identified, but the feedback was used to strengthen the clarity of operating arrangements and support for schools. The General Duty of the Equality Act 2010 has been considered in the development of the policy, in terms of promoting equal opportunities, eliminating discrimination, and fostering good relationships and community cohesion.

17. What other measures or changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due attention has been given to the need to reduce unequal outcomes because of socio-economic disadvantage?

- To give due consideration to the need to reduce unequal outcomes resulting from socio-economic disadvantage, the following are considered when developing Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Education Policy:
- providing support to pupils from socio-economic backgrounds through the Immersion Regime, offering extended learning opportunities to develop Welsh language skills and language confidence.
- ensure equal access to high quality Welsh language education and resources, including technological support where necessary.
- offer free standard training to teaching staff through the National Centre for Learning Welsh to strengthen capacity to support pupils.
- developing methods of communication and access to support for parents who do not speak Welsh, to strengthen the partnership between home and school.

- continue to collect and analyse data on the linguistic attainment and development of pupils from different economic backgrounds to better identify and address any inequalities.

By implementing these actions, the Council will strengthen its capacity to ensure that all pupils — regardless of their social or economic background — have an equal opportunity to develop sound Welsh language skills and to confidently contribute to a bilingual society.

18. What other measures or changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due regard has been given to the need to increase opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and not to treat the Welsh language less favourably than English in accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and to reduce or prevent any adverse effects that the policy/practice may have on the Welsh language?

The aim of Gwynedd's Model Education Language Policy is to ensure linguistic and social equity for all children, regardless of their background. The language is part of our identity and using Welsh and English confidently increases job opportunities. That leads to a strengthening of the economy. The aim is to build solid linguistic foundations in Gwynedd's schools to maintain the Welsh language for future generations. It is committed to ensuring that children do not miss out on the opportunity to become fluent in Welsh by taking early action, linking up with education, culture, health and equality and maintaining partnerships between schools, local authorities and parents. Families and learners are given a voice.

19. Is there enough information to form a balanced view and move forward?

Yes

STEP 5 - Decide to Go Ahead

20. Given the information gathered at Steps 1-4, is it possible to proceed with the policy or practice, and if so, on what basis?

The policy can be progressed to be presented to Cabinet members, based on the evidence and information gathered through Phases 1–4, which supports its implementation.

PHASE 6 - Actions and Arrangements for Monitoring Results and Reviewing Data

21. What actions identified in Steps 1-5 or any additional data collection work will assist in monitoring the policy/practice when implemented:

Implementation	Timetable	Primary Responsibility	Add to Service Plan
Undertake periodic reviews by the Department of Education to assess progress against the targets of the Delivery Plans and identify areas for strengthening.	Every three years	Department of Education Officers	Yes
Monitor the implementation of the policy by collecting regular data on pupils' linguistic progress and attainment, in line with the schools' Delivery Plans.	Yearly	Department of Education Officers	Yes
Undertake an analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, including information derived from the Delivery Plans, to assess the impact of the policy on different pupil groups.	Yearly	Department of Education Officers	Yes
Use ongoing feedback and information from the Delivery Plans to inform improvements to the implementation of the policy over time	Yearly	Department of Education Officers	Yes
Report monitoring and review findings, including data from the Delivery Plans to Cabinet as required.	Yearly	Department of Education Officers	Yes

22. What arrangements to monitor and review the ongoing impact of this policy or exercise will be implemented, including timescales for when it should be formally reviewed:

Monitoring and Review Arrangements (including where the results will be recorded)	Timetable and Frequency	Primary Responsibility	Add to Service Plan
Delivery Plans for all schools in Gwynedd	Every 3 years	Department of Education Officers	Yes