

CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



Date of meeting: 19 May 2026
Cabinet Member: Councillor Dewi Jones
Contact Officer: Gwern ap Rhisiart – Head of Education
Title of Item: Ysgol Nebo – Consultation Report

Report to a meeting of Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 The Cabinet is requested to consider the contents 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, and approve the publication of a statutory notice on the proposal, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

2 THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1 The attached consultation report (Appendix A) sets out the outcomes of the statutory consultation held on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027. The Cabinet is asked to consider the contents of the consultation report, and approve the issuing of a statutory notice on the proposal and to hold a 28-day formal objection period, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code.
- 2.2 The need for a decision derives from the school's vulnerable position, with low number of learners for some time, a high percentage of surplus places, high costs per learner, and reliance on additional protection funding. Projections show that the numbers will remain low over the next few years.

3. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Ysgol Nebo is a Welsh-medium Category 3 community primary school, located in the village of Nebo. The school provides education for learners between 3 and 11 years old.
- 3.2 At the January 2026 PLASC census point, there were 11 Reception to Year 6 learners on Ysgol Nebo's register, with a capacity for 51 learners at the school. As a result, there were 40 surplus places in the school, equivalent to 78% of the school's capacity. The school also has capacity for 7 learners in the Nursery class, there was 1 Nursery learner on the register, leaving 6 surplus places in the nursery class.
- 3.3 Since that census, those numbers have decreased further, and by now, there are only 10 learners from Reception to Year 6, and 1 Nursery learner on the school register. It is noted that this report uses the January 2026 census data as a basis for the analysis and comparisons, to ensure consistency throughout the document.

3.4 Due to the current low numbers, the school is in a vulnerable position and is facing numerous increasing challenges, including:

- **Low number of learners** – January 2026 data indicated that there were 11 learners from Reception – Year 6 and 1 nursery learner attending Ysgol Nebo.
- **High percentage of surplus places** - With 11 learners from Reception to Year 6 on the school's register, and a capacity for 51, there are 40 surplus places at the school, which equates to 78% of the school's capacity. The school also has capacity for 7 learners in the Nursery class, therefore with 1 nursery learner on the register, there are a further 6 surplus places in the nursery.
- **Very small class sizes and a broad age range** – There are 2 classes in Ysgol Nebo with 5 learners (Reception – Year 3) and 1 Nursery learner in one class. There are 6 learners (Year 4 - Year 6) in the second class. Therefore, there is an age range of up to 5 years in one class and up to 3 years in the second class.
- **Projected numbers** - Projections for September 2025 suggest that the number of learners will remain low over the next three years, with an estimated 10 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 2 Nursery learners on the register by September 2028.
- **Catchment area learners** - January 2026 data shows that 9 children live in the Ysgol Nebo catchment area. Of these, 22% (2 children) choose to attend Ysgol Nebo, while 78% (7 children) choose to attend schools outside the catchment area.
- **Ysgol Nebo receives an additional sum to the core financial allocation** – Ysgol Nebo 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). The total additional funding for the 2026-27 financial year (based on the numbers in September 2025) will be £64,046.
- **Average cost per learner** – The average cost per learner at Ysgol Nebo in 2026-27 will be £16,066 compared with a county average of £5,998.

3.5 During 2025, the Ysgol Nebo School Review Panel (SRP) was established, with representation from the governing body, parents, staff and a Local Member. A series of three SRP meetings were held to discuss the challenges facing the school and to identify options for the school's future. A wide range of options were discussed, which were evaluated and assessed against the factors of the "Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd" Strategy and the relevant factors from the School Organisation Code 011/2018.

3.6 On 14 October 2025, a proposal paper was submitted to Cabinet, recommending that a statutory consultation be held on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo. The Cabinet approved this proposal, noting the need to respond to the vulnerable position regarding low numbers, high costs and the long-term sustainability of the school.

4. THE STATUTORY CONSULTATION

4.1 In accordance with the Cabinet's decision on 14 October 2025, a statutory consultation was held on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and provide places for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards. The consultation was held between 5 December 2025 and 23 January 2026, ensuring compliance with the requirements of the School Organisation code (011/2018).

4.2 A statutory consultation document, an impact assessment pack (including impact assessments on the Welsh language, the community, equality, various transport arrangements, quality and standards of education and the Well-being of Future Generations Act), a background pack, response forms and consultation document and questionnaires for children and young people were published on the Council's website. The documentation was distributed to all relevant consultees via e-mail which included a link to a dedicated page on the Council's website [Statutory Consultation: Ysgol Nebo](#). Hard copies were supplied upon request.

- 4.3 Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by either completing an on-line response form, a paper or electronic copy (PDF) or via e-mail/letter.
- 4.4 A drop-in session during the consultation period was held for Ysgol Nebo staff, parents and governors. The purpose of the session was to share information about the proposal and the consultation process and provide an opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions about the proposal and the process. 12 people attended the drop-in session.
- 4.5 Separate consultation sessions were held for representatives of learners from Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni, with an independent facilitator holding the sessions. The purpose of these sessions was to gather the views of the learners about the proposal. A children and young people-friendly version of the consultation document was available on the Council's website to ensure that all learners had the opportunity to contribute, even if they had not attended the session at their school. A report on the matters that arose during the consultation with children and young people has been included in section 3 of the consultation report (Appendix A).
- 4.6 Responses to the Consultation**
- 4.7 A total of 70 written responses were received to the statutory consultation, including a response from Estyn. This figure does not include the feedback gathered from learners during the consultation sessions.
- 4.8 Estyn's full response has been included in the Consultation Report (Appendix A).
- 4.9 Summary of the Consultation's Findings**
- 4.10 The consultation report (Appendix A) provides a full summary of the issues raised by the consultees and the Council's responses to those issues. Listed below are the main issues that arose in the responses to the statutory consultation, and more detailed consideration to each of the issues can be found in the Consultation Report.

1. Objection to the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo

- 1.1 General objection to the proposal to close the school

2. Comments about Ysgol Nebo

- 2.1 Advantages of a small school, quality of education and inclusive admission
- 2.2 Quality of the educational provision and evidence of high standards
- 2.3 Positive relationships, the school's ethos and their impact on pupils' success and wellbeing
- 2.4 Experiences of learners and former pupils
- 2.5 Connection with the community and outdoor learning
- 2.6 Small classes and effective support for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)
- 2.7 Impact on the Welsh language and Welsh ethos
- 2.8 Social development and empathy
- 2.9 Direct experience of improved wellbeing
- 2.10 High percentage of out-of-catchment learners attending Ysgol Nebo
- 2.11 Comments highlighting recent increases in numbers at Ysgol Nebo
- 2.12 Comments questioning the reliability of the projected numbers
- 2.13 Impact of uncertainty about the school's future on parental choice and learner numbers
- 2.14 Comments about preparing school meals on site and reducing reliance on transporting food from other schools

3. Educational value of a small rural school

3.1 Personalised education, small classes and individual attention

3.2 Mixed-age groups, social development and wellbeing

3.3 Small rural schools: sense of belonging, community, pupil wellbeing and the wider role of the school within the local area

4. Comments in favour of the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo

4.1 Value for money, cost per learner and financial fairness

4.2 Perceived advantages of larger schools and single-age classes

4.3 Rationalising school provision and demographic changes

5. Impact of the proposal on the wellbeing, individual care and educational experience of current Ysgol Nebo pupils

5.1 Respondents' concerns about the impact of changing school and relocating pupils on emotional wellbeing, social adjustment and vulnerable groups

5.2 Respondents' concerns about the disproportionate impact of closure on vulnerable pupils, individual support and ALN provision

5.3 Possible impact on social relationships and learner wellbeing

5.4 Consideration of the child's voice and the wellbeing of current learners

5.5 Possible impact on learners who transferred to Nebo for wellbeing reasons

5.6 Criticism of the wellbeing assessment and the consideration given to the impact of closure on current pupils

5.7 Prioritising financial savings over children's wellbeing and educational experience

6. Impact on the Community

6.1 The school as the heart, social hub and essential community asset for Nebo and Nasareth

6.2 Concerns about loss of community cohesion, inter-generational links, and the impact on health, wellbeing and loneliness if Ysgol Nebo closes

6.3 Concerns about the impact of closure on the village's sustainability, young population and long-term demographic change

6.4 The school as a cultural, historical and linguistic asset: Ysgol Nebo's central role as a community hub, a unique resource for sustaining the Welsh language, and the implications of the proposal for cohesion, wellbeing and long-term community sustainability

6.5 Concerns about undermining rural Welsh-speaking communities: the impact of closure on long-term sustainability, community cohesion, social wellbeing and the Council's duties under the Well-being of Future Generations Act

7. Impact on the Welsh Language

7.1 The school as the main community space for using Welsh / the heart of village life / a local community link

7.2 Impact on natural, everyday use of Welsh

7.3 Welsh immersion, small school environment and development of fluency

7.4 Inter-generational transmission and Welsh as a living language

7.5 Impact of closure on linguistic demographics, attractiveness to families and the sustainability of Welsh

7.6 Identity, culture, sense of place (*cynefin*) and the sustainability of rural Welsh-speaking communities and the continuation of the language

7.7 Language policy and the Council's statutory duties: the status of Welsh, the principle of not treating Welsh less favourably, and the impact on community use, opportunities to use Welsh and compliance with the Welsh Language Standards

- 7.8 Views expressing that alternative Welsh-medium provision is adequate or positive
- 7.9 General views expressed about the potential negative impact of the proposal on the Welsh language
- 7.10 Challenge to the conclusions of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment

8. Transport and Travel

- 8.1 Traffic and parking safety around Ysgol Llanllyfni
- 8.2 Suitability of walking routes between Nebo and Llanllyfni for primary-aged children
- 8.3 School transport costs for the Council and budget sustainability
- 8.4 Suitability of bus transport for young children (4-year-olds)
- 8.5 Environmental impact and the impact on health and wellbeing of transporting pupils rather than walking
- 8.6 Transport accessibility in rural areas and the impact on families already experiencing poverty
- 8.7 Call for clarity on proposed transport arrangements and cost implications

9. Challenges to the Validity, Fairness and Quality of the Statutory Process

- 9.1 General concern about the fairness, quality and validity of the consultation process
- 9.2 Inadequate consultation period and its timing (Christmas, lack of notice, short deadlines)
- 9.3 Concerns about interpretation of Governors' proposals and the consideration given to alternative options within the statutory process
- 9.4 Lack of transparency and supporting evidence regarding school repair costs (£95,000)
- 9.5 Inconsistency or errors in financial data (cost per learner)
- 9.6 Capacity and surplus places over-estimated or unrealistic
- 9.7 Statutory process timeline, impact of mid-year closure and a call to extend the implementation date to ensure fair transition and to consider the September 2026 ALN Report before making a decision
- 9.8 Factually incorrect or outdated statements in the process
- 9.9 Comments relating to non-compliance with the School Organisation Code (2018), especially the duty to consider alternative options
- 9.10 Insufficient consideration of long-term effects, wellbeing and the wider community context
- 9.11 Lack of clarity about the criteria for assessing consultation responses
- 9.12 Lack of appropriate opportunities for the community to participate in the consultation process
- 9.13 Call not to proceed with the consultation until all options have been fully considered and based on accurate facts
- 9.14 Challenging the suitability of the criteria for rural schools

10. Comments about Ysgol Llanllyfni

- 10.1 Concerns about the capacity of Ysgol Llanllyfni, especially the nursery class and adequacy of long-term places
- 10.2 Questions about the accuracy of capacity and surplus place figures at Ysgol Llanllyfni
- 10.3 General comments

11. Impact on Staff

- 11.1 Comments highlighting the impact on staff

12. Home Education

12.1 Comments noting a significant increase in Home Education as a sign of an education system not meeting all learners' needs, and a lack of strategic response to flexibility, wellbeing and emotional needs

13. Additional Learning Needs

13.1 Strategic and financial challenges in supporting children with ALN and complex needs – call for long-term assessment and investment

14. Cross-cutting Comments

14.1 Long-term economic and demographic context: population, jobs and community sustainability

14.2 Call to promote a local admissions policy and a campaign to encourage children to attend their local school

14.3 Comments challenging the prioritisation of financial savings over educational, social and community investment

14.4 Suggestion to consider cross-authority collaboration arrangements to reduce costs and maintain small local schools

14.5 Long-term financial impact on education, health and wellbeing services

14.6 Comments calling for consideration of housing plans and potential population growth

14.7 Comments suggesting reinvesting savings into educational provision or Welsh-language projects

14.8 Supporting families by providing free school uniform

14.9 Post-use (future use of the site)

14.10 Comments about systemic decline in rural education provision, trend towards urbanisation, and long-term implications for Welsh-speaking communities

14.11 Call to invest in local and community-based education rather than closing the school

15. Alternative Options

15.1 "Ysgol Nebo to offer the site as provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with PRUs for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity."

15.2 Developing Ysgol Nebo as a Transition Unit to Support Integration of ALN Pupils into Mainstream Education

15.3 Using Ysgol Nebo as additional intake capacity for neighbouring schools facing overcrowding or being over capacity

15.4 Developing Ysgol Nebo as a Specialist Centre for Outdoor Learning and Fieldwork

15.5 Federating Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Baladeulyn

15.6 A federal governing body across schools in the catchment

15.7 Collaboration and sharing of resources and expertise between Ysgol Nebo and neighbouring schools

15.8 Developing Ysgol Nebo as a Welsh and/or Community Centre

15.9 Including small schools in heritage and regeneration strategies

15.10 Keeping Ysgol Nebo open

15.11 Other alternative suggestions

5. PRESUMPTION AGAINST THE CLOSURE OF RURAL SCHOOLS

5.1 The School Organisation Code 011/2018 introduced new arrangements, in particular in relation to rural schools, thus establishing a procedural presumption against closure. 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. Ysgol Nebo has been designated as a 'rural school' for the purpose of the Code. This means that a more detailed series of procedures and requirements must be followed when forming a proposal to close.

5.2 As reported to the Cabinet on 14 October 2025, additional specific assessments were held, in accordance with the requirements of the Code, in relation to the option to close a rural school and the other reasonable options that had been identified. The Code also sets out specific requirements in relation to the preparation of the report following a statutory consultation period. It is therefore a requirement to undertake further assessments, specifically on:

- The likely impact on the quality and standards of education
- The likely impact on the community
- The likely impact on different transport arrangements.

5.3 The purpose of this further assessment is to consider any further information that was received as a result of the consultation or otherwise. Following the consultation period, a further assessment of the proposal and other reasonable options was undertaken, taking into account any further information received that related to the responses during the consultation. A summary of these assessments can be seen in section 7 of the Consultation Report (Appendix A) and the full impact assessments in Appendix C.

6. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 In addition to the impact assessments held in accordance with the specific 'a presumption against the closure of rural schools' guidance, several other impact assessments were carried out and updated following the statutory consultation. These assessments are included as part of the Impact Assessments appendix (Appendix C), and their conclusions are summarised below.

6.2 Welsh Language Impact Assessment

6.3 An impact assessment was held on the Welsh Language, and the assessment was revised following the statutory consultation. The full assessment can be found in Appendix C.

6.4 During the consultation, concerns were expressed about the possible impact of the closure of Ysgol Nebo on the community use of the Welsh Language within the village. Numerous respondents emphasised the role of the school as a social and cultural focus that supports the natural, daily use of the Welsh language, not only among pupils but also among families and wider residents, including new speakers and those who are not fluent speakers. A view was expressed that the loss of the school could lead to fewer informal opportunities to use the Welsh language in the community, weakening the inter-generational transmission of the language, and reducing the attractiveness of the village for Welsh-speaking families in the future.

6.5 The Council acknowledges the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Nebo in supporting the community use of the Welsh language within the village and accepts that the comments highlight the possible detrimental impact on local linguistic vitality outside the formal educational provision.

6.6 However, based on the available information, the Council's view is that the proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on the Welsh medium educational provision or on learners' linguistic opportunities, for the following reasons:

- The January 2026 PLASC data shows that 56% of learners at Ysgol Nebo, and 68% of learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni, speak Welsh fluently at home.
- The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and offer learners a place in a nearby school (Ysgol Llanllyfni) means that learners in the Nebo catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school.
- It is anticipated that the learners would be taught in larger classes and with more children from the same age group, and that the proposal would strengthen the opportunities for the learners to socialise in Welsh with more of their peers.

- 6.7 Given the above, if the proposal were to be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be more opportunities for learners in the Nebo catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and informal use of the language would strengthen.
- 6.8 At the same time, given the comments from the consultation, the Council recognises that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its use as a community language outside the educational context; however, it is noted that consideration could be given to mitigation measures, by promoting the use of Welsh by involving the Nebo community in the alternative school's community activities, as well as considering suitable options for the future use of the school building, taking into consideration the community activities that are currently held there.
- 6.9 In the educational context, given the above, it is anticipated that if the proposal were to be implemented, there would be increased opportunities for learners in the Nebo catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language would be strengthened.
- 6.10 Equality Impact Assessment
- 6.11 An equality impact assessment was carried out on the proposed option, and the assessment was reviewed following the statutory consultation. The full assessment can be found in Appendix C.
- 6.12 The assessment gives specific consideration to different equality elements such as race, gender, disability, language, religion or belief, and age. The assessment sets out the current situation and shows that policies and arrangements are in place that would ensure the proposal takes account of, and aligns with, equal rights.
- 6.13 As noted in the most recent assessment, during the statutory consultation some specific equality-related concerns were identified, particularly in relation to vulnerable children, learners with additional learning needs, and families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. Concerns were expressed that moving some learners to a larger school could reduce the level of personal support available to them, and that travel distance, transport costs or lack of access to private transport could disproportionately affect some families. Possible impacts on older people and community cohesion were also raised, noting that the school provides an accessible location for socialising and supporting wellbeing.
- 6.14 The assessment notes that the Council acknowledges the issues raised and emphasises that equality and inclusion policies are already in operation within the current provision and at Ysgol Llanllyfni. In addition, it is noted that the Council is committed to prioritising individual needs, including those of vulnerable children and learners with additional learning needs should the school close. Regarding the concerns about community use of the Welsh language, it is noted that mitigation measures would be considered, including promoting continued links between the Nebo community and the alternative school through community activities, and considering appropriate options for the post-use of the school building in order to support the continued use of Welsh language within the local community, should the proposal be implemented.
- 6.15 After weighing up the relevant factors, including the responses to the statutory consultation, the Council acknowledges that some respondents identified a possible negative impact on certain protected groups, including vulnerable learners, learners with additional learning needs, families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, and community cohesion. Specific concerns were also raised regarding the potential impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, especially in terms of its informal use outside the educational context. However, based on the overall equality assessment, the evidence set out in the related impact assessments, and the mitigation measures described, the Council remains of the view that the proposal is unlikely to lead to a significant negative impact on equality characteristics. It is noted that policies and procedures are already in place to ensure that there will be no unlawful discrimination or harassment, and that individual needs will be appropriately considered.
- 6.16 The Council remains of the view that implementing the proposal would reduce inequality in cases of socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that learners have more experiences and access to a wider range of services and activities at the alternative school.
- 6.17 By implementing the proposal, Ysgol Nebo learners would benefit from an improved learning environment and from having more age-appropriate peers in a school with a larger number of learners. This would help ensure that they receive suitable educational and extracurricular experiences, as well as access to a wider range of

extracurricular activities. In addition, it is noted that Ysgol Nebo learners would continue to receive Welsh-medium education in an alternative school where Welsh is strong, with more opportunities to use the language informally with peers, thereby strengthening the vitality and natural use of Welsh among learners.

6.18 The Council would follow its usual processes by providing support and monitoring to ensure that all schools comply with equality characteristics, should the proposal be implemented.

6.19 The Well-being of Future Generations Act

6.20 An assessment was undertaken on the proposal in relation to the Well-being Act, and the assessment was updated after the consultation period ended. The 7 aims of the Well-being Act and the Council's well-being objectives were considered, and it was concluded that the proposal met the requirements. The full assessment can be found in Appendix C.

6.21 The latest assessment notes that during the statutory consultation some specific concerns were raised, particularly in relation to the impact of the proposal on vulnerable children, learners with additional learning needs, the well-being of families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, and the linguistic and community vitality of the village.

6.22 It is acknowledged that should the Cabinet decide to proceed with this proposal, it could result in the loss of the school in the Nebo community. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of children living within the school's catchment area (78%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni (44%), suggesting that links with neighbouring communities, including the Llanllyfni community, already exist. Every effort will be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities and Ysgol Llanllyfni should the proposal be implemented. Should the proposal be approved, discussions will take place to discuss the possibility that Ysgol Llanllyfni's community activity includes the community, where appropriate.

6.23 It is anticipated that the proposal will ensure that the children of the area are educated on a site that is suitable and in a naturally Welsh-speaking society, thus increasing the opportunities to socialise and collaborate with others, and to give them a fair opportunity to thrive among their peers.

6.24 Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011)

6.25 Building on the findings of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment and the Equality Impact Assessment outlined above, the Council confirms that the entire statutory process in relation to reviewing the future of Ysgol Nebo has been conducted in accordance with the requirements of Welsh Language Standards 88–93 under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. In accordance with Standards 88, 89 and 90, due consideration was given to the potential effects that the policy decision could have on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language. This included consideration of potential positive and adverse effects, how the proposal could be formulated or amended to secure more positive effects, and how any potential adverse effects could be mitigated. In addition, in accordance with Standards 91, 92 and 93, views were sought and considered through the statutory consultation process in relation to these linguistic effects, including views on how the proposal could be formulated or amended to increase positive effects or reduce adverse effects on the Welsh language. These requirements were supported through the undertaking of a Welsh Language Impact Assessment, alongside related impact assessments, including the Equality Impact Assessment, and it is noted that these assessments were reviewed and updated following consideration of the responses received during the statutory consultation.

6.26 Financial Considerations

6.27 As a result of the low number of learners at Ysgol Nebo, the pupil-led allocation is not sufficient to sustain the school. Consequently, Ysgol Nebo receives an additional sum above the core allocation through the minimum staffing protection 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 learners). An additional £64,046 has been allocated to Ysgol Nebo this year (2026–27) through the Minimum Staffing Protection Policy.

6.28 The allocations for Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni for the year 2026–27 are based on the September 2025 pupil numbers, and the amounts allocated to both schools can be seen below:

| School | 2026–27 Budget Allocation | | Minimum Staffing Protection Amount |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| | Total Financial Allocation | Cost per Learner | |
| Nebo | £183,793 | £16,066 | £64,046 |
| Llanllyfni | £404,489 | £6,250 | - |
| County Primary School Average | - | £5,998 | - |

6.29 According to the 2026–27 financial budget, the cost per learner at Ysgol Nebo will be £16,066, and the cost per learner at Ysgol Llanllyfni will be £6,250 (2026–27 budget, based on September 2025 pupil numbers). The County average cost per primary learner for the same period will be £5,998. This means that the cost per learner at Ysgol Nebo will be £10,068 higher than the County average for the same period.

6.30 A total of £588,282 will be allocated to both schools in the 2026–27 financial year. Ysgol Llanllyfni does not receive any additional funding through the minimum staffing protection policy. The school’s current learner numbers attract a sufficient budget to maintain appropriate staffing levels.

6.31 From a revenue-cost perspective, if the proposal were implemented and all Ysgol Nebo learners transferred to Ysgol Llanllyfni, based on the 2026–27 budget (which is based on September 2025 learner numbers):

- it is projected that the proposal would generate an annual saving of £142,000, minus estimated additional transport costs (up to £30,000) — giving a total saving of approximately £112,000 per year.
- it is projected that Ysgol Llanllyfni’s core budget allocation would increase to £466,000, with a cost per learner of £6,121.

6.32 Any savings in revenue costs would be retained within the Gwynedd Schools budget.

7. RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Following the statutory consultation, the Council gave full consideration to the matters raised and an appraisal and further impact assessments were undertaken in relation to the proposal, the alternative options presented in the consultation document, as well as the alternative options noted in response to the consultation. This included an assessment against the relevant factors for rural schools, which included the presumption against the closure rural schools, in accordance with the School Organisation Code.

7.2 Based on the consideration of the above elements, it was concluded that none of the alternative options considered addressed the main challenges facing Ysgol Nebo, as noted in section 3.4 above.

7.3 Following consideration of the comments received during the statutory consultation, together with the evidence presented in the Statutory Consultation Document, and the impact assessments, the Council remains of the opinion that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is appropriate, proportionate and in the best interests of learners in the area in the medium and long term.

7.4 The Council acknowledges the concerns expressed by consultees, particularly regarding the role of the school in the local community, and the importance of the Welsh language within the community. However, the evidence set out in the consultation document shows that Ysgol Nebo faces significant challenges which are unlikely to be resolved without a fundamental change to provision.

7.5 The proposal addresses these challenges by:

- Responding to the challenge of low numbers in Ysgol Nebo, as well as projections that remain low, and the high percentage of surplus places;
- Offering classes of a more suitable size and age range;
- Improving opportunities for learners to socialise and work together on a daily basis with peers, in an educational environment with more learners of the same age;
- Reduce the cost per learner for all learners in the County

7.6 Overall, having considered the evidence, the comments received during the statutory consultation, the further evaluation of the proposal and the alternative options, together with the Council’s strategic direction, the Council confirms that it is of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo represents the most appropriate response to the challenges facing the school (as set out in section 3.4) and to the reasons identified for the proposal, and therefore continues to recommend it as the most suitable means of addressing the current challenges faced by the school.

8. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

8.1 If the Cabinet resolves to support the recommendation submitted in this report, a statutory notice will have to be issued in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the guidance in the School Organisation Code 011/2018.

8.2 The notice will be published on a school day and there will be a 28-day objection period starting from the date of publishing the notice. During this period, any individual has the right to submit a formal objection to the proposal.

8.3 Following the objection period, a further report will be submitted to Cabinet summarising any objections received, and the recommendation for a final decision. It should be noted that under certain circumstances the Council's final decision could be referred to the Welsh Ministers, in accordance with the School Organisation Code (011/2018).

8.4 Subject to the Cabinet's decision, these are the next steps of the process and an outline timetable:

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| June 2026 | Statutory Notice Published: If the Council decides to proceed with the proposal, a statutory notice will be published, and an objection period of 28 days will be held. Any objection must be submitted within this period. |
| September 2026 | Cabinet: Following the objection period, if objections are received, the Cabinet will discuss the objections report and decide whether the proposal should be confirmed or not. If there are no objections, or if they are all withdrawn, the Cabinet Member can make the decision. |
| October 2026 | Refer the decision to Welsh Ministers: In accordance with section 54 of the 2013 Act, within 28 days of the Cabinet's decision, the following bodies can refer the proposal to Welsh Ministers for a decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Another Local Authority affected by the proposals; iii. The appropriate religious body for any school affected; iv. The governing body of a voluntary or foundation school subject to proposals; v. A trust holding property on behalf of a voluntary or foundation school subject to proposals; vi. A further education establishment affected by the proposals. |
| 31 December 2026 | Implement the proposal: Ysgol Nebo officially closes, subject to the Cabinet's decisions. |

9. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Consultation Report

Appendix B: Options Appraisal

Appendix C: Impact Assessments:

- Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education
- Assessment of the Likely impact on travel arrangements
- Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Community
- Welsh Language Impact Assessment
- Well-being Assessment
- Equality Assessment

Appendix D: [Statutory Consultation Document](#) and [Consultation Documentation: Statutory Consultation: Ysgol Nebo](#)

Appendix E: Comments from the Local Member

10. Views of the statutory officers

Monitoring Officer:

“The report follows a period of statutory consultation on the future of Ysgol Nebo. According to the legal principles on consultation, the Cabinet, when considering the decision sought, is required to have regard to the results of the consultation before reaching a decision on the proposal. The report provides comprehensive information for the proper conduct of this exercise. I am therefore satisfied that the Cabinet can properly come to a decision on this matter.”

Head of Finance:

“From a financial perspective, I cannot see that there has been any change in the situation since the Cabinet discussed this matter in October and the process of closing the school was started. Ysgol Nebo's current situation is not sustainable and the previous report showed that an assessment had been carried out of the options available, and I was satisfied with the robustness of the financial estimates contained therein. I support the decision sought.”