

Consultation Report – May 2026

Consultation on the proposal to close
Ysgol Baladeulyn



Consultation Report - Statutory consultation on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn

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Consultation Report - Statutory consultation on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn

1. OVERVIEW OF THE STATUTORY CONSULTATION

Following the Cabinet's decision on [14 October 2025](#), Cyngor Gwynedd held a statutory consultation on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn. This is the proposal put forward as part of the consultation:

“To close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027.”

Stakeholders were invited to submit their comments on the above proposal, for consideration by the Council before making any further decisions about the next steps.

The statutory consultation was held between 10 December 2025 and 28 January 2026.

(i) The consultation process

The statutory consultation documentation was published on [the Council's website](#) in accordance with the requirements and guidance of the School Organisation Code (011/2018) (“the Code”).

The consultation documentation published included the following:

- [Statutory consultation document](#)
- [Impact Assessments Pack](#): This pack included comprehensive impact assessments, including the impact on the Welsh language, the local community, equality, travelling arrangements, the quality and standards of education and an assessment against the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015).
- [Background Pack](#): This pack consisted of supporting documents such as a statistical pack, relevant reports presented to the Cabinet (including the proposal paper dated 14 October 2025), and an overview of the local discussions that took place between March and July 2025.
- [Response Form](#) - PDF version + link to the on-line version
- [Consultation document](#) – version for children and young people
- [Questionnaire](#) – a children and young people's version.

The documentation was available on the Council's website throughout the consultation period, and hard copies were provided upon request from individual consultees.

The documents were distributed to all relevant consultees, in accordance with the requirements of the Code, via e-mail which included a link to a dedicated page on the Council's website, namely www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/ConsultationYsgolBaladeulyn.

An e-mail was sent with a link to the consultation documentation to Ysgol Baladeulyn, Ysgol Talysarn, as well as other nearby schools, with a request to headteachers to distribute the message amongst parents/guardians of the learners, all staff members and all members of the schools' Governing Bodies.

The consultation was open to the relevant consultees and to any other individual or organisation that wished to respond, with the opportunity to do so either by completing an online response form, completing a paper or electronic (PDF) copy of the response form and submitting it to the Modernising Education Team, or by sending an e-mail or letter to the Modernising Education Team.

During the consultation period, a drop-in session was held in Llys Llywelyn Centre to give staff and governors an opportunity to ask questions and to discuss the consultation in further detail. 12 people attended the drop-in sessions. A drop-in session was also held in the school for staff where they had the opportunity to discuss with officers from the Human Resources Department.

A consultation document was also prepared for children and young people, together with related questionnaires. Arrangements were made for an independent facilitator to host the sessions with learners from Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn, to gather their views. The summary of the responses received during these sessions has been included in Section 5 below.

An adapted version of the consultation document and response form for children and young people was also published on the Council's website. Therefore, there was an opportunity for children and young people who had not attended a session at their school to also present their responses to the consultation.

(ii) Responses to the consultation

30 written responses were received to the statutory consultation, including a response from Estyn. This figure does not include the feedback collected from learners during the consultation sessions.

Format	Number Responses
On-line response form	25
Word or PDF response form	0
Response form - hard copy	1
E-mail	4
Total	30

In accordance with the requirements of the Code, Estyn's response to the consultation has been noted in full in Section 4 below.

A summary of the issues raised by consultees along with the Council's response to those issues have been included in Section 5 below.

A summary of the responses received from the learners has been included in Section 3 below.

(iii) Summary of the main matters noted in the responses

Set out below are the main issues raised in responses to the statutory consultation, with more detailed consideration of each of these issues provided in Section 5 below.

1. COMMENTS ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Quality of Education
- 1.2 Support for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)
- 1.3 A Welsh ethos
- 1.4 Behaviour and Inclusion
- 1.5 Experiences beyond the classroom
- 1.6 Developing Responsibility and Confidence
- 1.7 The advantages of a small school (such as Ysgol Baladeulyn)
- 1.8 Family support

2. COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Objections to the Proposal
- 2.2 A call to keep the school open
- 2.3 In favour of the proposal
- 2.4 A call to reconsider the proposal
- 2.5 Legal comments regarding the status and ownership of the school

3. IMPACT ON LEARNERS

- 3.1 Emotional and well-being impact
- 3.2 Impact of moving to a larger school
- 3.3 Impact on education

- 3.4 Social Opportunities
- 3.5 Losing small school benefits
- 3.6 Impact on vulnerable learners

4. THE WELSH LANGUAGE

- 4.1 Positive comments about the current Welsh language provision
- 4.2 Concern that the proposal would have a negative impact on Welsh education
- 4.3 Impact of the proposal on Welsh in the community
- 4.4 Concern when comparing the number of Welsh-speaking learners in Talysarn and Nantlle
- 4.5 Mitigation measures to safeguard the Welsh language and reduce detrimental impacts
- 4.6 Positive Impact of the Proposal on the Welsh language

5. ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN)

- 5.1 Staff continuity and ALN support
- 5.2 The impact of a larger school on children with ALN
- 5.3 Well-being, confidence and safety of ALN learners
- 5.4 Increasing demand for ALN provision

6. TRANSPORT, TRAVEL AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Walking, cycling and learners' independence
- 6.2 Transport to Ysgol Talysarn
- 6.3 Concerns regarding travel safety
- 6.4. The impact of further travel on learners' well-being
- 6.5 Lack of public transport
- 6.6 Challenges for families who do not drive
- 6.7 Transport for children under 5 years old
- 6.8 General comments about transport

7. THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND FAMILIES

- 7.1 Family and multi-generational connections
- 7.2 Community Identity and Local Pride
- 7.3 Impact of the proposal on the viability of the community
- 7.4 Community life and social connections
- 7.5 Attracting young families to the village
- 7.6 Comments about the school's role in the village
- 7.7 Impact on families in the community

8. CAPACITY, LOCAL DEMOGRAPHY AND CATCHMENT ARRANGEMENT

- 8.1 Current capacity and impact of developments
- 8.2 Local demography
- 8.3 Catchment arrangements

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Argument against the proposal based on cost
- 9.2 Financial and Cost per Head Inconsistencies across County Schools

10. COMMENTS ON THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENTATION AND THE STATUTORY PROCESS

- 10.1 Sufficiency of impact assessments in general
- 10.2 Community Impact Assessment
- 10.3 Welsh Language Impact Assessment
- 10.4 Engaging and communicating with parents as part of the statutory process

10.5 Impact Assessment on Equality

11. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 11.1 Keeping the school open (status quo)
- 11.2 Promote and strengthen small schools
- 11.3 Federalisation with ALN provision
- 11.4 Share leadership
- 11.5 Modify the proposal for the benefit of the Welsh Language
- 11.6 ALN specialist provision
- 11.7 Other alternative options received

2. RESPONSE FORM

Responses were received by means of a response form from 26 respondents (25 through the on-line response form, 1 via e-mail/post).

The answers received to question 1 (a) and (b) from the respondents who completed the response form have been included in the table below. Please note that a summary of the written comments presented in the response forms have been included in Section 5 below.

1 (a) I am responding as a:	Number	%
Parent/Guardian	12	43%
School Governor	3	11%
Learner	1	4%
Staff	0	0
Other	12	43%

1 (b) from the following school:	Number	%
Ysgol Baladeulyn	23	88%
Ysgol Talysarn	1	4%
Other	1	4%
No response	1	4%

Note that the totals shown in the tables do not always correspond to the total number of responses received, as some respondents chose more than one option when responding to the relevant questions.

3. CONSULTATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

A consultation document and a response form/questionnaire for children and young people was published on the Council's website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/ConsultationYsgolBaladeulyn, so that children and young people who had not attended a session at their school, could also respond to the consultation.

Sessions with learners:

Dedicated sessions were held with a group of learners from Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn to ensure that we obtained the views of children and young people.

It was arranged for a facilitator to attend Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn to discuss the proposal with the children to ensure that they understood what was being proposed and to give the children an opportunity to express their opinion on the proposal. Each session involved explaining the proposal and completing a questionnaire.

It was explained that Cyngor Gwynedd was considering closing Ysgol Baladeulyn and offering learners a place at Ysgol Talysarn.

It was explained that the Council wanted to know how they felt about the proposal for closing Ysgol Baladeulyn, before they decided on the way forward.

It was explained that should the Cabinet decide to proceed with this proposal, it would mean:

- That Ysgol Baladeulyn would close on 31 December 2026, and
- That Ysgol Baladeulyn learners would transfer to Ysgol Talysarn on 1 January 2027.

Please see below the timetable of the consultation sessions, a list of the relevant schools and the number of respondents:

	Date	The session was held with:
Ysgol Baladeulyn	Thursday, 15 January 2026	Members of Ysgol Baladeulyn School Council (3 learners)
Ysgol Talysarn	Thursday, 15 January 2026	Learners of Year 5 and 6 in Ysgol Talysarn (22 learners)

See below a summary of the learners' responses

PLEASE NOTE – The following table includes a summary of the responses from the children and young people.

How do you feel about this?			
School	Happy	Not sure	Unhappy
Ysgol Baladeulyn	0	0	3
Ysgol Talysarn	13	10	0

Question 1 – How do you feel about this?	
Ysgol Baladeulyn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm anxious and sad (x2). • I like my teacher and friends, and I don't want to leave them. • My school is safe and special to me. • I feel heartbroken and scared about the situation.
Ysgol Talysarn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel happy and confident. • I want the children to make friends with us, it would be nice to have new friends. • We will have more friends to go to secondary school. • I feel half and half, but more happy than sad. • I chose the middle option as the little children won't have the confidence to walk to the school. • I want Ysgol Baladeulyn to close and the children to come to a better school (Ysgol Talysarn). • What if the teachers don't get another opportunity to get a job?
Question 2 - What would you like to see as part of this proposal?	
Ysgol Baladeulyn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want the school to stay open. • I would like to keep in touch with old friends (x2) and make new friends. • I want things to stay the same. • I would like to have help to make new friends and visit the new school.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I want my teacher to help me to be happy not sad.
Ysgol Talysarn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I want to meet the children of Ysgol Baladeulyn and have a taster day before they come to our school (x2). I would like the children to come to our school. I want to get to know the children and teachers. I would like the children to be welcomed at Ysgol Talysarn (x5). I would like to see the children of Ysgol Baladeulyn making new friends (x2). I want more chromebooks for the children (x2). I want a new desk. I'm not sure.
Question 3 – Does anything about this worry you?	
Ysgol Baladeulyn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I won't be able to see my friends anymore and I will miss the friendliness of my teachers. We won't be able to meet in the park because we will be travelling home from school. I might lose a few of my closest friends and I don't want to go to a new school. If things won't be the same at Ysgol Talysarn.
Ysgol Talysarn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nothing (x7). Not worried (x3). Nothing apart from bullying worries me, there's no bullying here. We will need to buy more things. There will be more cars here (x2). I'm happy about this. It's sad for the children who will be moving. I'm worried about the children of Ysgol Baladeulyn. We won't know the children. The children might not like our school. Perhaps another school will think about closing. Perhaps there won't be any room in our school.
Question 4 - What are the most important things for you in the school?	
Ysgol Baladeulyn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friends, staff and fairness My friends and teachers, because they are kind to me (x2). Feeling safe and happy. Having fun lessons and playtimes.
Ysgol Talysarn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeing and playing with my friends (x12). Teachers (x6). Doing work and learning new things (x8). Enough room in the class. Having a good education. Keeping the children safe (x2). Having enough room to play. Sports e.g. football.

Other observations received verbally from learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn during the consultation session:

- How many children make up a suitable size class?
- We have a good education now.
- What if a child has a learning difficulty?
- When playing with older children, young ones build confidence.
- At this school, we play with little children, we aren't afraid to go with them.
- It's a good opportunity to learn patience by playing with little children.

- There are enough resources in the school.
- The size of the class is fine.
- I get to know children quicker.
- You can get the teacher's attention quicker in a smaller class.
- All the children receive the same attention.
- We have a quiet corner where we can go if we are sad.
- Everyone can take part in the Christmas concert, and this helps our confidence when performing.
- The School Council has made a presentation to the school governors.
- We enjoy sports sessions with the children of Ysgol Nebo.

Conclusion/Summary:

The main responses and concerns conveyed by the learners during the consultation sessions are summarised below. The conclusions reflect the main themes and concerns conveyed first hand by the learners in the discussions.

The learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn express feelings of concern, sadness and uncertainty about the situation and particular concern about the possibility of having to leave their current school, which they see as being a safe and special place. Losing friends and teachers, together with the uncertainty around how things will be in a new school, are causing significant concern. The learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn question how many learners are required to create a suitable sized class, and some express concern about children with individual learning needs.

Learners clearly state that they want the school to remain open, drawing attention to the strengths of the current school, such as smaller classes that enable them to have more attention from teachers, plenty of resources, opportunities to build confidence by playing with younger children, and quiet spaces to support well-being. They appreciate the opportunities to participate in activities such as the Christmas concert, sports sessions with learners from another school, and the work of the School Council. Should the school close, learners would be eager to keep in touch with their current friends, get support to make new friends, and ensure that their teachers support them to feel happy. The things that are most important to them in the school are friends, the staff, feeling safe and happy, and enjoying fun lessons and play time.

Amongst Ysgol Talysarn learners, positive feelings were expressed in regard to the proposal, with many feeling happy and confident, and looking forward to the possibility of making new friends. Although some felt a bit unsure, the majority noted that there was nothing worrying them. Some of the learners expressed concern about an increased number of cars and traffic near the school, as well as if there will be enough space in the school for learners from Ysgol Baladeulyn. Several learners also expressed empathy towards the children of Ysgol Baladeulyn and worry about how they would cope.

In terms of their wishes, the learners of Ysgol Talysarn would be eager to welcome the new children, including organising meetings, taster days and opportunities to get to know them. They would wish to see the children settling in well and making new friends. Some also asked for more resources such as *chromebooks*.

In short, the responses received during the consultation sessions have drawn our attention to the concerns of the learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn regarding closing the school and they have underlined the importance of community and belonging. The main messages from the discussions are being worried about losing the school, being scared of moving to a larger school, and a deep appreciation of the relationships that exist between learners, their friends and teachers.

4. ESTYN RESPONSE

In accordance with the requirements of the Code, Estyn's response to the statutory consultation has been noted in full here:

“Estyn’s response to the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31st December 2026 with pupils transferring to Ysgol Talysarn on 1st January 2027”.

Introduction

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

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

Summary/Conclusion

Cyngor Gwynedd is consulting on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn from 31st December 2026, with pupils transferring to Ysgol Talysarn. The information that is part of the consultation is clear and thorough and provides the public with detailed information. A beneficial range of options is considered, responding to the educational advantages and disadvantages in a balanced manner. Estyn is of the opinion that this proposal is likely to maintain the standard of education provision for pupils in the area.

Description and benefits

The Council has provided a clear rationale for the consultation. It provides clear information about the assumption against closing rural schools. The proposal is in line with achieving the Council’s current strategic aim. This is based on its vision to:

1. Provide education of the best possible quality that will provide the county’s children with the experiences, skills and confidence to develop into bilingual, successful and well-rounded citizens.
2. Maintain the Gwynedd Welsh Language Strategy
3. Realise the objectives of the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28

The Council has provided a clear and detailed description of the proposal. It has presented useful background information and included a timetable for completing statutory procedures.

The Council has identified clearly the main advantages and disadvantages of the proposal when compared to the status quo. It provides a detailed outline of the current situation in the area of Ysgol Baladeulyn, setting the geographical context of the area within the catchment area of Ysgol Uwchradd Dyffryn Nantlle. Detailed attention is given to maintaining robust provision for the Welsh language in the area, in line with the Council’s policies.

The proposal provides information about the numbers currently attending schools in the area. The current numbers at Ysgol Baladeulyn are low, with only 6 full-time and 2 part-time pupils in September 2025. There is only one class in the school. Only two pupils live in the school's catchment area. The Council has considered the financial effect of the proposal, with additional funding being allocated to the school in accordance with the Council’s guidelines. Information is provided about Ysgol Talysarn, which is part of the proposal, and it is noted that the school is already federated with Ysgol Brynaerau. The proposal also provides useful information about

other nearby schools in order to consider the possible effect on them. Attention is given to the definitions of the Council's schools, noting that Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn are Welsh-medium 'community' schools.

An outline is provided of the strengths and weaknesses of the current situation, providing clear guidance that the Council is of the opinion that the disadvantages outweigh the advantages. The proposal outlines seven different options that were considered as part of the process. This gives due attention to the School Organisation Code 2018 in considering the future of rural schools. The proposal includes details of the other elements that were considered. This includes class sizes and surplus places, the effect on leadership and staffing, financial resources and geographical factors. Attention is also given to the effect on the community and the Welsh language.

The proposal gives careful consideration to seven options:

- maintaining the status quo
- federation with Ysgol Talysarn
- federation with another school adding a specialist unit for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn
- close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer learners a place at a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn)
- merge local schools to support and maintain Ysgol Baladeulyn
- add a specialist area for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn
- include a language unit at Ysgol Baladeulyn.

The advantages and disadvantages of the options are identified. Consideration is given to the financial effect of the proposal, along with the beneficial opportunities for pupils to be educated in classes of a more suitable size. Elements such as redundancy and transport costs are considered in a balanced and fair manner. It is noted that the average cost per learner at Ysgol Baladeulyn is £14,953, compared to the county average of £5,780. It is also noted that Ysgol Baladeulyn has received a staffing protection allocation of £56,781 during the 2025-26 financial year. The proposal also considers the effect of the change of the leadership of Ysgol Talysarn and ensuring non-contact time for the headteacher.

It is considered that these changes are unlikely to have any effect on the Welsh language as the schools are Welsh-medium schools. The proposal gives attention to a wide range of factors, for example in scrutinising projected pupil numbers, alongside the costs of maintaining the buildings.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The Council has considered the impact of the proposal on the quality and standards of learning. It refers to information from the most recent Estyn reports, during 2017, where it was identified that all aspects at Ysgol Baladeulyn were good. Ysgol Talysarn received an 'excellent' judgement for well-being and care, support and guidance, along with leadership and management. Ysgol Talysarn was inspected during November 2025, but the report has not been published prior to the proposal and this response.

The consultation has considered the impact of the proposal in separate sections, such as standards and progress; well-being and attitudes to learning; teaching and learning experiences; care, support and guidance, and leadership and management. It considers the likely effect of the proposal on ensuring the delivery of a full and balanced curriculum.

The proposal scrutinises in detail the possible effect on the standard of provision for learners. Balanced attention is given to the effect on pupils' standards and progress. It is noted that the effect of the proposal on pupils' learning experience is likely to be positive, as pupils will be taught with more of their peers, benefitting from wider opportunities to work together. The proposal suggests that the effect on vulnerable pupils and pupils with

additional learning needs would likely be positive as a result of attending a school with higher staffing levels.

The Council has given due consideration to a full range of factors in considering school closures and the presumption against the closure of rural schools.

Summary of the Matters Raised by Estyn and the Council's Response

In considering Estyn's response to the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer the learners to Ysgol Talysarn, the Council notes that Estyn has confirmed that the proposal complies with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, and has indicated that the proposal is likely to maintain the standard of educational provision in the area. The Council welcomes this conclusion and notes that maintaining and improving learners' educational experience has been a primary consideration in developing the proposal.

Estyn has highlighted the significant sustainability challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn, including very low learner numbers, a high percentage of surplus places, a single mixed-age class, and projected numbers that remain low. The Council notes that all these factors were considered in detail as part of the options appraisal process, along with the associated educational and financial impacts. In this context, the Council notes that Ysgol Talysarn has sufficient and appropriate capacity to accommodate learners from Ysgol Baladeulyn.

Estyn has also acknowledged Ysgol Baladeulyn's status as a rural school and has noted that the proposal appears to address the additional requirements for rural schools. The Council confirms that the proposal has been thoroughly assessed against the factors relevant to rural schools, including the presumption against the closure of rural schools, and that only after considering all reasonable alternative options, and concluding that none would address the key challenges, was it determined that the proposal is appropriate and proportionate. In addition, Estyn notes that the Council has considered the impact on the community and on the Welsh language.

The Council also notes that Estyn has recognised that the proposal carefully examines the potential impact on the quality of provision for learners, giving attention to the effect on learner standards and progress. As a result, the Council considers that the proposal's impact on pupils' learning experiences is likely to be positive, as learners would be taught alongside more of their peers and benefit from broader opportunities to collaborate.

The Council further notes that Estyn has acknowledged that the proposal takes into account learners who are vulnerable and learners with additional learning needs (ALN), and that the proposal suggests the impact is likely to be positive due to attending a school with higher staffing levels.

Considering the matters raised by Estyn, the Council has given appropriate consideration to the full range of factors when assessing the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn and the presumption against the closure of rural schools as a whole. While there are local impacts, the Council remains of the view that the proposal is appropriate, proportionate, and compliant with the requirements of the School Organisation Code, and is in the best interest of learners in the area in the medium and long term.

5. SUMMARY OF THE KEY MATTERS RAISED BY CONSULTEES

A summary of the main issues raised during the statutory consultation period is provided below, along with the Authority's responses to those matters.

1. COMMENTS ABOUT THE SCHOOL

1.1 Quality of Education

Ref	Comment	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
1.1.1	"The school's quality of education has been exceptional". "The sense of community and the fact that every child is accepted is vitally important."	Cyngor Gwynedd notes these positive comments about the provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn.
1.1.2	"We chose to keep our children in Ysgol Baladeulyn because of the level of education they receive, their friends and our childcare being their grandparents in the village."	<p>In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), an Assessment of the likely Impact of the proposal on the Quality and Standards of Education was carried out, and it was updated following consideration of the comments received during the consultation. The assessment acknowledges that the current performance of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been evaluated as 'Good' by Estyn Inspection, and that the current provision offers a positive educational experience for the learners who currently attend the school.</p> <p>In the same context, the Council is of the view that the provision offered at Ysgol Talysarn, as the proposed alternative school, includes classes of a more suitable size with a narrower age range, which may offer benefits to some learners. These include more opportunities to learn and socialise with peers of the same age and facilitating more specific teaching planning for developmental stages, contributing positively to the wellbeing and personal development of some children.</p> <p>However, it is noted that the review of the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been based on broader evidence relating to the long-term sustainability of the provision, including persistently low learner numbers, a very high percentage of empty places, small classes with a wide age range, and projections of numbers that remain low in the medium and long term. In addition, catchment-area choice patterns show that the majority of learners attend other schools.</p>
1.1.3	It is noted that the children thrive and are happy at school, and receive very valuable experiences.	
1.1.4	"Ysgol Baladeulyn provides a small, nurturing environment where children feel safe, known, and supported"	
1.1.5	"The education is excellent through the medium of Welsh and the curriculum values our national identity and heritage"	

1.2 Support for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
1.2.1	<p>“my Son had learning difficulties and the school helped a lot and built his confidence up.” “I don't think they would have had that support in a bigger school.”</p>	<p>The Council notes the comments received which emphasise the inclusive support provided to learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) at Ysgol Baladeulyn, including personal attention and a flexible response to the emotional needs of some learners.</p>
1.2.2	<p>Ysgol Baladeulyn provides a small, calm and predictable environment, with a close relationship between staff and pupils – something that is vital to the emotional wellbeing and learning of my child, who has ALN.</p>	<p>In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an Impact Assessment on the Quality and Standards of Education was carried out, and this was included as part of the statutory consultation documentation. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment was updated. The revised assessment continues to acknowledge that all schools have a statutory duty to provide appropriate support for learners with ALN, and notes that larger schools often have broader provision, more robust support structures, and access to a wider range of interventions and specialist support. Based on a comparison of Estyn inspection findings and the relevant evidence, the assessment concludes that the educational provision offered at Ysgol Talysarn is at least equivalent to the provision currently offered at Ysgol Baladeulyn, including in terms of supporting learners with ALN.</p> <p>As a result, although the Council acknowledges these viewpoints, the updated Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment concludes that implementing the proposal would likely lead to a neutral or partly positive effect on the quality and standards of education, as the provision at the alternative school is able to meet learners’ needs, including those with ALN, in accordance with statutory requirements and the Authority’s policy.</p>

1.3 A Welsh ethos

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
1.3.1	<i>"A small Welsh speaking school that continues to be open, in a Welsh speaking area, there is no school like Ysgol Baladeulyn!"</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.
1.3.2	<i>"Ysgol Baladeulyn has received a gold award for work with the Language Charter." "The current headteacher, Mrs Myrddin has worked tirelessly on this." "This is the strength of a small school with incredible staff."</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes these positive comments about the Welsh language provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn.

1.4 Behaviour and Inclusion

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
1.4.1	<i>"In a school like Baladeulyn bullying is not a problem." Children learn to be inclusive."</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes these positive comments about the provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn.

1.5 Experiences beyond the classroom

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
1.5.1	It is emphasised that the school conducts regular outdoor sessions in the community e.g. in the forest and near the lake.	Cyngor Gwynedd notes these positive comments about the provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn.

1.6 Developing Responsibility and Confidence

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
1.6.1	<i>"I've scratched my head about this comment ... when reflecting on all the special and various experiences Ysgol Baladeulyn children currently have." "the responsibilities they inevitably have to shoulder as ambitious and able learners ...and healthy and confident individuals."</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the concerns expressed about the use of the term 'fair experiences' and recognises that Ysgol Baladeulyn learners currently benefit from valuable and varied experiences within their school. The statement does not try to undermine the current provision, but reflects the intention to ensure that every learner, regardless of their background, gain access to consistent education opportunities. It is considered that the proposal would be able to maintain and develop the principles of the Curriculum for Wales by providing broader resources, staffing and peer groups, supporting learners' development as confident individuals, ethical citizens, enterprising contributors and ambitious learners.

1.6.2	Ysgol Baladeulyn gives vulnerable and naturally shy learners an opportunity to gain confidence, develop life skills and undertake school duties.	Cyngor Gwynedd notes these positive comments about the provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn.
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1.7 The advantages of a small school (such as Ysgol Baladeulyn)

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
1.7.1	"I disagree, contrary to the suggestions of several persons that it is a disadvantage to be in a small school. "There has been excellent joint working between the schools of Nebo and Nantlle for years." "Children get more opportunity to be part of every Christmas service, games teams and every trip and opportunity." "There is no selection process and everyone has the honour of participating in everything."	The Council notes the comments received regarding the strengths of small schools and the opportunities they provide for participation in activities and events.
1.7.2	Support in a small rural school is invaluable, where all the learners know each other, get individual attention, and are not lost in large classes.	In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, the likely impact of the proposal on the quality and standards of education was assessed, including specific consideration of wellbeing, social experience and sense of belonging. Although the Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment was updated following consideration of these comments, the additional considerations did not lead to a change in the assessment's conclusion. The assessment continues to show that implementing the proposal would be likely to have a neutral or partly positive effect on the quality and standards of education, as the provision at the alternative school is at least equivalent to the current provision and is able to offer broader opportunities for learners in terms of relevant age groups, social interaction and the range of learning experiences.
1.7.3	<i>"The consultation emphasises what the learners would gain from joining a larger school but what about what the learners would lose?" "Specifically vulnerable learners with their parents having chosen a small school such as Baladeulyn for them." "The proposal will definitely have more of a negative impact on the school's vulnerable learners."</i>	In this context, it is important to note that Ysgol Baladeulyn faces significant and ongoing challenges which have formed the basis of the review of the provision. These include low learner numbers over an extended period, a very high percentage of empty places, small classes with a wide age range, and projections indicating that numbers will remain low in the medium and long term. In addition, the evidence shows that choice patterns within the catchment area have resulted in the majority of learners attending other schools, and that the cost per learner at Ysgol Baladeulyn is significantly higher than the county average. As a result, although the Council notes the comments received regarding the educational value of a small rural school such as Ysgol Baladeulyn, the updated Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment shows that the current arrangements present challenges in ensuring the
1.7.4	<i>"A few examples are the attention and time the teacher and assistants at Baladeulyn are able to give to the learners" "responsibilities such as roles on the School Council, playtime duties etc and important roles to play in public presentations" "no child is excluded and each one has gained pride and confidence in themselves as a result of this."</i>	
1.7.5	<i>"a smaller school gives an excellent opportunity for these pupils to get more attention and to thrive." "Small schools are perfect for these pupils and everyone does not work well in large schools."</i>	

		long-term sustainability of the provision. Similarly, should the proposal be implemented, it is noted that the alternative provision at Ysgol Talysarn would be able to offer an educational arrangement that continues to support appropriate quality and standards of education for learners in the catchment area.
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1.8 Family support

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
1.8.1	"They also supported the children through difficult times family wish."	Cyngor Gwynedd notes these positive comments about Ysgol Baladeulyn's provision.
1.8.2	"Ysgol Baladeulyn has never failed their students no matter the problem" "they would and will support the family instead of thinking about numbers they care unlike most schools"	

2. COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSAL

2.1 Objections to the Proposal

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
2.1.1	"Ysgol Baladeulyn's Governing Body strongly disagrees with the statement to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on the 31st of December 2026."	<p>The Council notes the objections and the significant disappointment expressed in relation to the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn. Clear opposition to the proposal was expressed, emphasising the value of the school and the view that it should remain open.</p> <p>The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn is preferred as it responds directly to the significant challenges the school is facing, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very low learner numbers, which have been declining in recent years; • a very high percentage of empty places, which undermines the sustainability of the provision; • small classes with a wide age range, which present challenges in terms of organisation and the quality of educational experiences; • low projected numbers for the future, which do not suggest any significant improvement in the situation; • a clear pattern of choice among learners in the catchment, with the majority already attending other schools;
2.1.2	An objection is expressed to the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn.	
2.1.3	An objection is expressed to the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn at the end of 2026 and to transfer learners to Ysgol Talysarn from 1st January 2027.	
2.1.4	"I disagree with the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn"	
2.1.5	Do not close our school, this is my child's school and this is our local village where we would like to stay.	
2.1.6	"I disagree with this statement as I have attended the school from when I was three until eleven."	
2.1.7	A definitive objection is expressed to the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer the education provision to Ysgol Talysarn.	
2.1.8	"I disagree with the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and favour any of the alternative options more."	

2.1.9	"There is no way to close the village school can be positive"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a cost per learner that is significantly higher than the county average, raising concerns about long-term financial sustainability. <p>Following the statutory consultation period, and in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, the consultation report must be presented to the Cabinet in order to summarise the issues raised by consultees and to set out the Council's response to those issues. After considering the report, the Cabinet will decide whether or not to proceed with this proposal.</p> <p>The Council confirms that all comments received have been fully considered in preparing this consultation report (Appendix A – Consultation Report), and that they have informed the further assessments and the evaluation of the proposal and the reasonable alternative options.</p> <p>If the Cabinet decides to proceed after considering the consultation report, the proposal must be published in the form of a statutory notice. The notice will be published on a school day and there will be a 28-day "objection period" from the date the proposal is published. Anyone may object to the proposal.</p> <p>Once the objection period has ended, the Council will publish a summary of the statutory objections and the Council's response to those objections in an "Objection Report".</p> <p>Following this, the Council's Cabinet will make the final decision on the objection report. When the Cabinet has reached its final decision, the decision will be issued in writing, together with the specific reasons for the decision.</p>
2.1.10	"Don't close a good small school"	
2.1.11	"I believe that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn is an unfavourable crisis for the pupils and staff." "A small school that gives individual attention to pupils dealing with learning disabilities, 1:1 and favouritism." "Closing this school would be a completely stupid choice!"	
2.1.12	"A huge shock to the village, a completely bonkers idea to close such a fantastic school!"	
2.1.13	"The school is very old, and it would be a shame for it to close."	
2.1.14	"I strongly oppose and disagree with the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn, Nantlle."	
2.1.15	Strong opposition is expressed to the proposal to close the school at the end of 2026, based on personal experience as well as the specific needs of their children.	

2.2 A call to keep the school open

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
2.2.1	"But it would not be a problem if the small school would stay open." "No it will effect the children either way."	The Council notes the comments expressed regarding the possible impact of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn.

2.2.2	<p>“Keep Baladeulyn open as they always speak fluent welsh” “No, either way it will have negative effect on the children”</p>	<p>The revised Community Impact Assessment notes that a high percentage of children from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment already attend out-of-catchment schools (75%), including Ysgol Talysarn, which suggests that wider community and educational links already exist. At the same time, the revised Welsh Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative effect on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), namely Ysgol Talysarn. It is also noted that, in the educational context, there is potential to strengthen opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally by socialising with more peers of the same age.</p>
2.2.3	<p><i>"The school needs to be kept open for the benefit of all the learners!"</i> <i>"The school needs to be kept open!!!"</i></p>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>Ysgol Baladeulyn has been prioritised for a review of its educational provision because it is facing a number of challenges. Learner numbers at the school have declined over recent years, leading to a critical situation with 6 full-time learners from Reception to Year 6 and 2 nursery learners on roll in January 2026. As a result of the current low numbers, the school is in a vulnerable position and faces an increasing number of challenges, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low learner numbers – In January 2025, 13 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 0 nursery learners attended Ysgol Baladeulyn. Numbers have fallen further since then, with 6 full-time learners and 2 nursery learners on roll in January 2026. • A very high percentage of empty places – With 6 learners (Reception to Year 6) on roll and a capacity of 55, there are 49 empty places at the school, equivalent to 89% of its capacity. The school also has capacity for 7 nursery learners, so with 2 nursery learners on roll, there are 5 empty nursery places. Taking Nursery to Year 6 capacity and numbers together, Ysgol Baladeulyn has 54 empty places (87%). • Small class sizes and a wide age range – At Ysgol Baladeulyn (September 2025) there is one class containing all learners in the school – 6 learners from Reception to Year 6 (Reception, Years 1 and 2, and Years 4 and 5) together with 2 nursery learners. Within this class, different groups are formed at different times of the day,

		<p>with teaching assistants leading activities for the youngest learners. This means the age range within the class spans up to 8 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projected numbers – Projections for September 2025 suggest that numbers will remain low over the next three years, with an estimated 7 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 1 nursery learner on roll by September 2028. • Catchment learners – According to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data from January 2026, only 25% of learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment choose to attend the school. 75% choose to attend out-of-catchment schools. • Additional funding above the core allocation – Ysgol Baladeulyn receives additional funding beyond the standard allocation through the minimum staffing policy (which guarantees at least a headteacher and teacher in every school, and a headteacher and assistant in schools with fewer than 15 full-time learners). The total additional amount during the 2026–27 financial year (based on September 2025 numbers) will be £74,446. • Average cost per learner – The average cost per learner at Ysgol Baladeulyn in 2026–27 will be £25,123, compared with the county average of £5,998 for the same period. <p>Following the statutory consultation period, and in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, the consultation report must be presented to the Cabinet in order to summarise the issues raised by consultees and set out the Council’s response to those issues. After considering the report, the Cabinet will decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal.</p> <p>If the Cabinet decides to proceed after considering the consultation report, the proposal must be published in the form of a statutory notice. The notice will be published on a school day and there will be a 28-day “objection period” from the date the proposal is published. Anyone may object to the proposal.</p> <p>Once the objection period has ended, the Council will publish a summary of the statutory objections and the Council’s response to them in an “Objection Report”.</p>
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		Following this, the Council's Cabinet will make the final decision on the objection report. When the Cabinet has reached its final decision, the decision will be issued in writing, together with the specific reasons for the decision.
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2.3 In favour of the proposal

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
2.3.1	Support is expressed for the proposal for pupils to transfer to Ysgol Talysarn, where there is a higher number of children.	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comments.
2.3.2	"I believe that the proposal in its existing form will have a positive impact." "Supporting and maintaining situations as in Baladeulyn does no good to the Welsh language."	
2.3.3	"I strongly support the proposal." "Continuing to maintain the two schools whilst their numbers are so low, their surplus places so much and the cost per head so high in a challenging financial climate is unfair, unreasonable and immoral."	
2.3.4	"they come into contact and engage with many children from various backgrounds... and it better prepares them to be full members of that community."	
2.3.5	<i>"I imagine that moving from a primary school of fewer than 20 to a secondary school 20 times the size is truly daunting."</i>	

2.4 A call to reconsider the proposal

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
2.4.1	The Council is called to reconsider the proposal and work closely with the local community to ensure an answer that safeguards the provision of primary education in the Baladeulyn area.	The Council notes the comment, recognising the importance of primary education provision in the Baladeulyn area and valuing the concerns expressed by residents. See Section 7 and Section 8 of the consultation document, which outline the options that were considered during the process. The Council also notes that a more detailed Options Appraisal is available in Appendix B, which provides further analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each option.

		<p>Following the statutory consultation period, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, the consultation report must be presented to the Cabinet in order to summarise the issues raised by consultees and to set out the Council’s response to those issues. After considering the report, the Cabinet will decide whether or not to proceed with this proposal.</p> <p>The Council confirms that all comments received have been fully considered in preparing this consultation report (Appendix A – Consultation Report), and have informed the further assessments and the evaluation of the proposal and the reasonable alternative options.</p> <p>If the Cabinet decides to proceed after considering the consultation report, the proposal must be published in the form of a statutory notice. The notice will be published on a school day and there will be a 28-day “objection period” from the date the proposal is published. Anyone may object to the proposal.</p> <p>Once the objection period has ended, the Council will publish a summary of the statutory objections and the Council’s response to those objections in an “Objection Report”.</p> <p>Following this, the Council’s Cabinet will make the final decision on the objection report. When the Cabinet has reached its final decision, the decision will be issued in writing, along with specific reasons for the decision.</p>
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2.5 Legal comments regarding the status and ownership of the school

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
2.5.1	“Baladeulyn school was classified under the Education Act 1944 as a ‘voluntary school’... Gwynedd Council should consult Welsh Gov. for additional funding”	Cyngor Gwynedd confirms that Ysgol Baladeulyn is a community school, not a voluntary school.
2.5.2	“This declaration of trust may be at Penmaenmawr Museum (currently closed) or Conwy County Archives. ‘Kinmel Estates’ Breach may have legal implications for Gwynedd Council.	It is noted that full title of the property was transferred to Caernarfonshire County Council in 1972. Cyngor Gwynedd holds no record of any trust associated with the site within the title deeds.

3. IMPACT ON LEARNERS

3.1 Emotional and well-being impact

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
3.1.1	"Closing the school risks disrupting pupils' emotional wellbeing, their sense of belonging, and the continuity of their learning"	<p>The Council notes the concerns expressed about the possibility that closing the school, and any associated negative impact, could affect the wellbeing and experience of current learners. These matters have been considered when reviewing the Wellbeing Impact Assessment and the Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment, which examine the potential impact of changing schools on individual learners, as well as the appropriate mitigation measures.</p> <p>The Council anticipates that the proposal would ensure that learners in the area benefit from experiences gained through socialising with a wider range of peers of a similar age, while receiving quality education in a school able to offer a learning environment and experiences suitable for a broader range of learners.</p> <p>Although the assessments conclude that the educational provision at the alternative school is at least equivalent to the current provision, they also emphasise the need for planned transition arrangements and appropriate support to minimise any negative impact on learners' wellbeing and educational progress should the proposal be implemented.</p>
3.1.2	"It would cause great upset for our children to move away from their friends now, on top of moving to a new school in a unknown village"	

3.2 Impact of moving to a larger school

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
3.2.1	<i>"In general, I believe that my children's experience of a 'large school' is more positive than the experience of their peers in 'smaller schools'."</i>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an assessment was undertaken of the likely impact of the proposal on the quality and standards of education, and this was included as part of the statutory consultation documentation. Following consideration of the comments submitted during the consultation, the Impact Assessment was updated to reflect the issues raised, including views relating to mixed-age education, pupils' social development, and the</p>

		<p>wellbeing of learners in small schools. However, this update did not result in any change to the overall conclusion of the assessment.</p> <p>The Impact Assessment indicates that implementing the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer learners to Ysgol Talysarn would be likely to have a neutral or partly positive effect on the quality and standards of education. The assessment notes that the standard of education provided at Ysgol Talysarn is at least equivalent to that currently offered at Ysgol Baladeulyn, and that a larger school could offer additional opportunities for learners in terms of age-appropriate peer groups, broader social interaction, and a wider range of teaching and learning experiences.</p>
3.2.2	“The children can withdraw in a bigger school as the staff wouldn't be able to support the children in a larger school” “it could cause more possible problems for the child”	<p>The Council notes the comments expressed by respondents regarding the potential impact of relocating current Ysgol Baladeulyn learners to a larger school, particularly in relation to emotional wellbeing, social adjustment, and the needs of vulnerable learners.</p> <p>The Council has taken these concerns into account when undertaking and updating the Equality Impact Assessment and the Wellbeing Impact Assessment, which consider respondents’ views on the importance of personal support, small class sizes, and an inclusive environment for the wellbeing of some learners.</p> <p>The Council notes that Ysgol Talysarn, like Ysgol Baladeulyn, is subject to the same statutory duties in relation to wellbeing, safeguarding, and inclusion, and operates policies to support the individual needs of learners, including those with additional learning needs. Should the proposal be implemented, planned and proportionate transition arrangements would be put in place to support individual learners through the change, including opportunities to familiarise themselves with the alternative school, clear communication with parents and carers, and targeted support where required.</p> <p>Although the impact assessments have been updated to record and consider these concerns, the comments received have not resulted in a change to the overall conclusions of the assessments. The Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment indicates that implementing the proposal would be likely to have a neutral or partly positive effect on the</p>
3.2.3	“It could have more impact on some groups.” “it could cause the child to withdraw into themselves as a bigger school could be overwhelming.” “some problems could go unnoticed.”	
3.2.4	<i>“One-year classes mean that all the lesson content is relevant to them.”</i>	

		quality and standards of education, as the provision at the alternative school is at least equivalent to the current provision. In addition, the Equality Impact Assessment and the Wellbeing Impact Assessment highlight the need to ensure appropriate transition arrangements and tailored support for individual learners should the proposal be implemented.
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3.3 Impact on education

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
3.3.1	<i>"There are 5 other schools within a 15-minute car journey to Ysgol Baladeulyn." "The experience will be very similar."</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.

3.4 Social Opportunities

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
3.4.1	<i>"They have more peers and a broader choice of friends of their age."</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.

3.5 Losing small school benefits

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
3.5.1	<i>"The consultation emphasises what the learners would gain from joining a larger school but what about what the learners would lose?" "Specifically vulnerable learners with their parents having chosen a small school such as Baladeulyn for them." "A few examples are the attention and time the teacher and assistants at Baladeulyn are able to give to the learners." "responsibilities such as roles on the School Council, playtime duties etc and important roles to play in public presentations" "no child is excluded and each one has gained pride and confidence in themselves as a result of this."</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment. These matters have been taken into account when reviewing the Wellbeing Impact Assessment and the Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment, both of which consider the potential impact of changing school on learners, as well as the appropriate mitigation measures. Although the assessments conclude that the educational provision at the alternative school is at least equivalent to the current provision, they also emphasise the need for planned transition arrangements and appropriate support to minimise any adverse impact on learners' wellbeing and educational progress should the proposal be implemented.
3.5.2	Concern is expressed that the consultation focuses on the potential advantages for learners, without giving enough attention to what they would lose, e.g. individual time and	

	<p>attention, accepting responsibilities such as being part of the School Council, and taking part in activities such as public presentations. It is clear that every learner plays a central role due to the smaller numbers, and nurtures their pride, confidence and their life skills.</p>	<p>Based on a comparison of Estyn reports and an assessment of the options against the relevant criteria, the Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment indicates that implementing the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer learners to Ysgol Talysarn would be likely to have a neutral or partly positive effect on the quality and standards of education. It is noted that the provision at the alternative school is at least equivalent to the current provision and would enable some learners to be educated alongside a greater number of peers of the same age.</p>
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3.6 Impact on vulnerable learners

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
3.6.1	<p>"The transition to a larger school may be challenging for many children, particularly those with additional learning needs or those who thrive in smaller settings"</p>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comments.</p> <p>The Council recognises that Ysgol Talysarn, like Ysgol Baladeulyn, is subject to the same statutory duties in relation to wellbeing, safeguarding and inclusion, and operates policies to support the individual needs of learners, including those with additional learning needs (ALN). Should the proposal be implemented, planned and proportionate transition arrangements would be put in place to support individual learners through the change. These would include opportunities to familiarise themselves with the alternative school, clear communication with parents and carers, and targeted support where required.</p> <p>In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an Impact Assessment on the Quality and Standards of Education was undertaken and included as part of the statutory consultation documentation. After taking the comments received into account, the assessment was updated.</p> <p>The revised assessment continues to acknowledge that all schools have a statutory duty to provide appropriate support for learners with ALN, and notes that larger schools often have broader provision, more robust support structures, and access to a wider range of interventions and specialist support. Based on a comparison of Estyn inspection findings and the relevant evidence, the assessment concludes that the educational provision offered at Ysgol Talysarn is at least equivalent to that currently provided at Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p>
3.6.2	<p>"This will make my children loose themselves as one is struggling into a bigger school" "The school has always supported them"</p>	

As a result, while the Council acknowledges the views expressed, the updated Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment concludes that implementing the proposal would be likely to have a neutral or partly positive effect on the quality and standards of education. This is because the provision at the alternative school is capable of meeting learners' needs, including those with ALN, in line with statutory requirements and the Authority's policies.

4. THE WELSH LANGUAGE

4.1 Positive comments about the current Welsh language provision

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
4.1.1	"The school has taught kids from being fluent in, French, English, German to full Welsh" "Welsh is getting forgotten about and needs to be carried on"	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.
4.1.2	"Ysgold Talysarn and Ysgold Baladeulyn both have excellent Welsh provisions."	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.
4.1.3	"Ysgol Baladeulyn keeps the welsh language alive and the children is happy to talk welsh confidently"	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.
4.1.4	"The school delights in giving a high status to the Welsh language in every aspect of their provision and is proud of running Welsh-only activities that welcome the whole community." "Every assembly and concert - Christmas, Thanksgiving, St David's Day - every child presentation and every celebratory occasion... they are all completely Welsh-speaking." "Without the school, there is genuine risk that the community use of Welsh will weaken."	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>As part of the statutory process, the Council undertook an assessment of the impact of the proposal in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code, and the original version was published as part of the statutory consultation documentation. The revised Community Impact Assessment notes that a high proportion of children living in the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area already attend out-of-catchment schools (75%), including Ysgol Talysarn, which suggests that wider community and educational links are already in place. At the same time, the revised Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), Ysgol Talysarn. The assessment also highlights the potential, in an educational context, to</p>

strengthen opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally through socialising with a greater number of peers of the same age.

4.2 Concern that the proposal would have a negative impact on Welsh education

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
4.2.1	"It will have detrimental impacts on the language and there will be less opportunities for people to use the Welsh language."	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>The revised Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal, if implemented, is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), Ysgol Talysarn. The assessment also highlights the potential, in an educational context, to strengthen opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally through socialising with a greater number of peers of the same age.</p>
4.2.2	"The impact would be significant as more speak English in bigger schools but Baladeulyn is fully Welsh."	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>The revised Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), Ysgol Talysarn. January 2026 data shows that 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p> <p>The assessment also highlights the potential, in an educational context, to strengthen opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally through socialising with a greater number of peers of the same age.</p>
4.2.3	"most children speak English in bigger school"	<p>The Council notes the comment.</p>
4.2.4	"significant detriment to welsh language as school situated on the boundary of Eryri National Park"	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p>

		<p>The revised Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), Ysgol Talysarn. January 2026 data shows that 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p> <p>The assessment also highlights the potential, in an educational context, to strengthen opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally through socialising with a greater number of peers of the same age.</p>
4.2.5	<p>The proposal could reduce opportunities to use the Welsh language, particularly for vulnerable learners who rely on a small and stable environment to develop and maintain their language skills. The Council must consider how the transfer could place Welsh at a disadvantage compared with English for children with additional learning needs, and how these effects would be mitigated.</p>	<p>The Council notes the comment.</p> <p>These matters have been taken into account when reviewing the Wellbeing Impact Assessment and the Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment, both of which consider the potential impact of a school change on learners, as well as the appropriate mitigation measures.</p> <p>Although the assessments conclude that the educational provision at the alternative school is at least equivalent to the current provision, they also emphasise the need for planned transition arrangements and appropriate support to minimise any adverse impact on learners' wellbeing and educational progress should the proposal be implemented.</p> <p>The Gwynedd Parents' Handbook 2025/26 is an official document published by Gwynedd Council's Education Department to provide parents with details about various educational arrangements, including provision for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). The handbook is available here: Parents' Handbook.</p> <p>As noted in the handbook, learners with ALN are entitled to continue receiving the support set out in their Individual Development Plan, and the Authority has a duty to ensure that this provision continues even when school arrangements change.</p>

4.3 Impact of the proposal on Welsh in the community

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
4.3.1	Serious concern is expressed regarding the impact of closing the school on the Welsh language and community life. It is noted that the school and its events have been an important method of integrating new residents, including some from English-speaking backgrounds, to the Welsh life of the village. It is felt that losing the school would undermine this process.	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comments received which highlight the important role of Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p> <p>As part of the statutory consultation process, a Welsh Language Impact Assessment was undertaken, and the original assessment was published as part of the statutory consultation documentation. Following consideration of the comments received during the consultation, the Language Impact Assessment was reviewed and updated, with the issues raised by respondents taken into account in preparing the revised assessment.</p> <p>At the same time, the revised Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), Ysgol Talysarn. The assessment also notes the potential, in an educational context, to strengthen opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally through socialising with a greater number of peers of the same age.</p> <p>The Council also undertook a Community Impact Assessment to consider the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on the local community. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, giving due consideration to the comments and issues raised by respondents, including concerns about the loss of the school as a community focal point.</p> <p>As noted in the conclusions of the updated Community Impact Assessment, the Council recognises that there would likely be some negative impact on the local community if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were implemented, and that the loss of the school could undermine opportunities for people to use Welsh in a natural, everyday context within the community. This conclusion acknowledges the concerns expressed regarding social wellbeing, but is also based on the wider evidence considered within the assessment.</p>
4.3.2	"Ysgol Baladeulyn serves a community where Welsh is the natural, everyday language."	
4.3.3	Losing the school would have a significant impact on the Welsh language in the area.	
4.3.4	<i>"Once the school goes, the Welsh language will be at a loss in this area forever."</i>	
4.3.5	The school's direct contribution to maintain the Welsh language in the local school is noted, with the view that the proposal could undermine the linguistic ecosystem in the area.	
4.3.6	<i>"I believe that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn would have a significant and harmful impact on the use of the Welsh language in the village."</i>	
4.3.7	Serious concern is expressed regarding the impact of closing the school on the Welsh language and community life. It is noted that the school and its events have been an important method of integrating new residents, including some from English-speaking backgrounds, to the Welsh life of the village. It is felt that losing the school would undermine this process.	

		<p>The Council further acknowledges in the Welsh Language Impact Assessment that the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn could lead to 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, the assessment notes that mitigation measures could be considered, such as promoting the use of Welsh by involving the Nantlle community in the activities of the alternative school, as well as exploring appropriate options for the future use of the school building, taking into account the community activities currently held there.</p>
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4.4 Concern when comparing the number of Welsh-speaking learners in Talysarn and Nantlle

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
4.4.1	<p>“Moving children to a larger, less welsh environment could weaken Welsh immersion.” “Talysarn has a larger portion of english speaking families” “This will mean that our children will be less exposed to welsh language in school and around the community”</p>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>The revised Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), namely Ysgol Talysarn. The latest PLASC data (January 2026) shows that 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p> <p>The assessment also highlights the potential, in an educational context, to strengthen opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally through socialising with a greater number of peers of the same age.</p> <p>In addition, a high proportion of children from the catchment already attend out-of-catchment schools (75%), with 50% of primary-aged learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment already attending Ysgol Talysarn. The revised Community Impact Assessment also notes this pattern, concluding that wider community and educational links with neighbouring communities already exist. However, it acknowledges the concerns expressed that the presence of the school plays an important role in sustaining Welsh identity and the everyday use of the language within the community.</p>

		The revised impact assessments note that, should the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting continued links between the Baladeulyn community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and using the Authority's Post-Use Policy as a framework for discussing suitable options for the future of the school building, including potential community use where feasible.
4.4.2	"The current school provides learning almost exclusively in the medium of Welsh" "ysgol talysarn uses more English"	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment. However, the revised Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), namely Ysgol Talysarn. In addition, PLASC data from January 2026 shows that a higher proportion of learners at Ysgol Talysarn (37%) speak Welsh fluently at home compared with Ysgol Baladeulyn (29%). The assessment also highlights the potential, in an educational context, to strengthen opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally through socialising with a greater number of peers of the same age.
4.4.3	"Closing the school would be a devastating blow to the Welsh language and the community of Nantlle." "Especially given that the Welsh-language levels are 55% at Baladeulyn and 37% at Talysarn."	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment. The revised Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), Ysgol Talysarn. January 2026 data shows that 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn.
4.4.4	The view that closing the school would have a devastating blow on the Welsh language and the community was expressed, given that the use of speaking Welsh in percentages is 55% at Baladeulyn and 37% at Talysarn.	
4.4.5	"Closing the school would be a devastating blow to the Welsh language and the community of Nantlle." "Especially given that the Welsh-language levels are 55% at Baladeulyn and 37% at Talysarn."	The assessment also highlights the potential, in an educational context, to strengthen opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally through socialising with a greater number of peers of the same age.
4.4.6	"As a former pupil, I can confidently say that Welsh was the only language spoken at Baladeulyn." "At Talysarn, pupils were more likely to use English." "This creates a serious impact on the Welsh language."	
4.4.7	"Welsh language is important to the council, indeed the every day business of the Council is conducted in Welsh as are all	

	public meeting” “Ysgol Baladeulyn is a very Welsh school. It is amongst the top in Gwynedd 55% I think, the highest being 80%.” “But the Council are happy to propose moving the pupils to Talysarn school that has only 37% the lowest in Gwynedd”
4.4.8	<i>"Closing the school would be a devastating blow to the Welsh language and the community of Nantlle." "Especially given that the Welsh-language levels are 55% at Baladeulyn and 37% at Talysarn."</i>

4.5 Mitigation measures to safeguard the Welsh language and reduce detrimental impacts

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
4.5.1	“the Council should guarantee that Ysgol Talysarn maintains a strong first language Welsh ethos.” “Transition arrangements should prioritise Welsh medium support.” “The Council should also take steps to preserve Welshlanguage community life in Nantlle.”	<p>The revised Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), Ysgol Talysarn. January 2026 data shows that 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p> <p>The assessment also highlights the potential, in an educational context, to strengthen opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally through socialising with a greater number of peers of the same age.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the Council acknowledges the concerns raised regarding the use of the Welsh language and notes that the local authority and the governing body of the alternative school could explore ways of encouraging and fostering opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally and to build confidence in doing so.</p>
4.5.2	<i>"Ensure that Welsh is encouraged more than anything."</i>	As above.
4.5.3	“Redirect savings to support the Welsh language”	<p>The Council notes the comment.</p> <p>Any savings in revenue costs would be retained in the Gwynedd Schools department.</p>

4.5.4	<i>"It would be possible to draw up or amend the proposal to ensure that it does not have detrimental impacts, or it has a less detrimental impact on the opportunities for people to use Welsh." "By choosing one of the alternative options proposed in the consultation."</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comments.
4.5.5	<i>"by considering one of the alternative options in the consultation instead of closing the school on 31 December 2026."</i>	Ysgol Baladeulyn has been prioritised for a review of its educational provision due to a number of significant challenges. Learner numbers have declined in recent years, resulting in a critical situation with 6 full-time learners (Reception to Year 6) and 2 nursery learners on roll in January 2026. As a result of the current low numbers, the school is in a vulnerable position and faces a range of challenges, including:
4.5.6	<i>"by considering one of the alternative options in the consultation instead of closing the school on 31 December 2026."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low learner numbers – In January 2025, 13 learners (Reception to Year 6) and 0 nursery learners attended Ysgol Baladeulyn. Numbers have fallen further, with 6 full-time learners and 2 nursery learners on roll in January 2026. • High proportion of surplus places – With 6 learners (Reception to Year 6) on roll and a capacity of 55, there are 49 surplus places, equivalent to 89% of the school’s capacity. The school also has capacity for 7 nursery learners; with 2 currently on roll, there are 5 surplus nursery places. Taking Reception–Year 6 and nursery capacity together, Ysgol Baladeulyn has 54 surplus places (87%). • Very small class sizes and a wide age range – In September 2025, the school operated a single class containing all learners: 6 learners from Reception to Year 6 (Reception, Years 1–2, and Years 4–5) plus 2 nursery learners. Within this class, different groups are formed at various times of the day, with teaching assistants leading activities for the youngest learners. This means the age range within the class spans up to 8 years. • Projected numbers – Projections for September 2025 indicate that numbers will remain low over the next three years, with an estimated 7 learners (Reception to Year 6) and 1 nursery learner on roll by September 2028. • Catchment learners – According to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data from January 2026, only 25% of learners living in the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment attend the school. The remaining 75% attend out-of-catchment schools. • Additional funding above the core allocation – Ysgol Baladeulyn receives additional funding beyond the standard allocation through the minimum staffing policy (which guarantees at least a headteacher and teacher in every school, and a headteacher and assistant in schools with fewer than 15 full-time learners). The additional amount for the 2026–27 financial year (based on September 2025 numbers) will be £74,446.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average cost per learner – The average cost per learner at Ysgol Baladeulyn in the 2026–27 financial year will be £25,123, compared with the county average of £5,998 for the same period. <p>Following an assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of the alternative options for Ysgol Baladeulyn, it is concluded that they would not adequately address the main challenges facing the school, as outlined above. The reasonable alternative options are considered further in Section 7 of this report.</p>
4.5.7	<p>If retaining the language is important, then there is a need to keep local schools open ... this is the best way to learn Welsh, particularly for children from English-speaking families.</p>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the objections raised in relation to the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p> <p>The preferred option is to close Ysgol Baladeulyn, as it directly addresses the significant challenges facing the school, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very low learner numbers, which have been declining over recent years. • A very high proportion of surplus places, undermining the sustainability of the provision. • Very small classes with a wide age range, creating challenges in terms of organisation and the quality of educational experiences. • Low projected numbers for the future, with no indication of a substantial improvement in the situation. • A clear pattern of parental choice, with the majority of catchment learners already attending other schools. • A significantly higher cost per learner compared with the county average, raising concerns about long-term financial sustainability. <p>Following the statutory consultation period, and in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, the consultation report must be presented to the Cabinet to summarise the issues raised by consultees and to set out the Council’s response to those issues. After considering the report, the Cabinet will decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal. The Council confirms that all comments received have been fully considered in preparing this consultation report (Appendix A – Consultation Report), and have</p>

		<p>informed the further assessments and the evaluation of the proposal and the reasonable alternative options.</p> <p>If the Cabinet decides to proceed after considering the consultation report, the proposal must then be published in the form of a statutory notice. The notice will be published on a school day and will trigger a 28-day “objection period” from the date of publication, during which anyone may object to the proposal.</p> <p>Once the objection period has ended, the Council will publish a summary of the statutory objections received and the Council’s response to them in an “Objection Report”.</p> <p>Following this, the Council’s Cabinet will make the final decision on the proposal. Once the Cabinet has reached its final decision, the decision will be issued in writing, together with the specific reasons for that decision.</p>
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4.6 Positive Impact of the Proposal on the Welsh language

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
4.6.1	<p>"No negative impact." "If something, an improvement based on the fact that there will be an opportunity to use the Welsh language in a more accessible way with more children." "In a larger school, the impact is therefore much less significant."</p>	<p>The Council notes the comment.</p> <p>The revised Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), Ysgol Talysarn. January 2026 data shows that 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p>

		The assessment also highlights the potential, in an educational context, to strengthen opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally through socialising with a greater number of peers of the same age.
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5. ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN)

5.1 Staff continuity and ALN support

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
5.1.1	"The school funds ... [an assistant for an]...ALN learner, will these hours be transferred to the new school?" "In order to ensure continuity and stability for the learner, will the same assistant continue their job to support the learner?"	The Council notes the comments.
5.1.2	Question whether the current teachers and assistants would remain to ensure progression and stability, and whether the ALN funding for Ysgol Baladeulyn's current learners continues should the school close.	The Council acknowledges this concern, and while continuity of support staff at the alternative school cannot be guaranteed should the proposal be implemented, it is noted that each request is assessed on an individual basis. The Gwynedd Parents' Handbook 2025/26 is an official document published by Gwynedd Council's Education Department to provide parents with information on a range of educational arrangements, including provision for learners with ALN. The handbook is available here: Parents' Handbook
5.1.3	"28.75 hours have been allocated for a level 3 assistant as required to provide one to one care for a nonverbal pupil with a severe learning disability." "Will the person providing the care at present be transferred to Ysgol Talysarn to provide continuity of care to this very vulnerable pupil. Or will this child be forced to endure not only a change of school from the nice quiet one attended now to one which will nearly be at full capacity 95 pupils. But also a new assistant, a stranger" "How could this possibly be in the interest of the child?"	As stated in the handbook, learners with ALN are entitled to continue receiving the support set out in their Individual Development Plan, and the Authority has a duty to ensure that this provision continues even when school arrangements change.
5.1.4	It is noted that a forced move to a larger or unfamiliar school is likely to cause significant distress and disrupt the progress of children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), particularly those who rely heavily on routine, consistency and familiar staff.	In relation to the comments concerning the Council's Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision, it is noted that wider consideration of ALN provision is an ongoing responsibility of the Local Authority, and that the individual needs of learners are continually considered through existing statutory processes. The consultation process regarding the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been conducted on the basis of the information and evidence available at the time, and any final decision, should one be made, would include consideration of appropriate transition arrangements and suitable support for all learners, including learners with ALN.

5.1.5	<p>“Cabinet must consider cost implications of closure on redundancy costs, loss of SEN expertise and medical knowledge.”</p>	<p>The Council notes the comment.</p> <p>If the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were to be implemented, it is anticipated that the staffing implications would lead to redundancies, as posts would come to an end when the school closes. Staff and Trade Union representatives were specifically consulted as part of the statutory consultation period. Any redundancies arising from the proposal would be required to comply with the relevant employment legislation and the Gwynedd Redundancy Scheme.</p> <p>During the consultation, drop-in sessions were held at which officers from the Council’s Human Resources service were available for any staff member who wished to discuss their situation. Staff were also informed that they were welcome to contact the Human Resources service directly should they wish to have further discussions.</p>
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5.2 The impact of a larger school on children with ALN

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
5.2.1	<p><i>"The proposal will certainly have more impact on those learners from a more vulnerable background, learners who are naturally shy" "learners who are naturally shy who have had an opportunity to gain confidence and flourish in a small school and on ALN learners."</i></p>	<p>The Council notes the comments received which highlight the inclusive support provided to learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) at Ysgol Baladeulyn, including personalised attention and a flexible response to the emotional needs of some learners.</p>
5.2.2	<p>We have previously experienced a situation where my child’s needs were not identified for a long period while attending a larger school. Since moving to Ysgol Baladeulyn, those needs have been recognised and the school has provided appropriate support.</p> <p>I wish to express strong confidence in Ysgol Baladeulyn’s ability to understand and support children with additional learning needs, in contrast with concerns about whether larger schools are able to do so as effectively. Closing Ysgol Baladeulyn would remove a safe and supportive environment that has proven its ability to understand and meet the needs of children with additional learning needs.</p>	<p>In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, a Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment was undertaken and included as part of the statutory consultation documentation. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment was updated. The revised assessment continues to recognise that all schools have a statutory duty to provide appropriate support for learners with ALN, and notes that larger schools often have broader provision, more robust support structures, and access to a wider range of interventions and specialist support. Based on a comparison of Estyn inspection findings and the relevant evidence, the assessment concludes that the educational provision offered at Ysgol</p>

Talysarn is at least equivalent to that currently offered at Ysgol Baladeulyn, including in relation to supporting learners with ALN.

The Council has considered these concerns when reviewing and updating the Equality Impact Assessment and the Wellbeing Impact Assessment. The Council notes that Ysgol Talysarn, like Ysgol Baladeulyn, is subject to the same statutory duties regarding wellbeing, safeguarding and inclusion, and operates policies to support the individual needs of learners, including those with additional learning needs. Should the proposal be implemented, planned and proportionate transition arrangements would be put in place to support individual learners through the change, including opportunities to familiarise themselves with the alternative school, clear communication with parents and carers, and the provision of targeted support where required.

Although the impact assessments have been updated to record and consider these concerns, the comments received have not led to a change in the overall conclusions of the assessments. The Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment indicates that implementing the proposal would be likely to have a neutral or partially positive impact on the quality and standards of education, as the provision at the alternative school is able to meet learners' needs, including those with ALN, in line with statutory requirements and the Authority's policies. In addition, the Equality Impact Assessment and the Wellbeing Impact Assessment highlight the need to ensure appropriate transition arrangements and tailored support for individual learners should the proposal be implemented.

As a result, while the Council acknowledges the views expressed, the updated Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment concludes that implementing the proposal would be likely to lead to a neutral or partially positive impact on the quality and standards of education, as the provision at the alternative school is able to meet learners' needs, including those with ALN, in accordance with statutory requirements and the Authority's policy.

5.3 Well-being, confidence and safety of ALN learners

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
5.3.1	<p>It is emphasised that parents made a conscious choice to send their children to a small, homely school where learners feel safe and comfortable, and this choice deserves the same respect as the decisions of other parents in the catchment area to send their children to other schools.</p>	<p>The Council notes the comment.</p> <p>In accordance with the School Admissions Policy, parents have the right to express a preference for a school for their child, and there is no requirement for them to attend the school in their village or home catchment area. The Authority considers each application in line with the statutory admissions criteria and allocates places where capacity allows. It is also noted that parents make educational choices based on a range of factors, including personal experience, the individual needs of their children, and family preferences.</p>
5.3.2	<p>It is emphasised that the Council must consider the serious impact of forced transfers on children with severe additional learning needs, and the risks associated with a sudden change in educational placement. Concern is expressed that the proposal would have a negative impact on disabled learners, particularly autistic children and those with communication difficulties.</p>	<p>The Council notes the comment.</p> <p>The Council has taken these concerns into account when reviewing and updating the Equality Impact Assessment and the Wellbeing Impact Assessment. The Council notes that Ysgol Talysarn, like Ysgol Baladeulyn, is subject to the same statutory duties in relation to wellbeing, safeguarding and inclusion, and operates policies to support the individual needs of learners, including those with additional learning needs. Should the proposal be implemented, planned and proportionate transition arrangements would be put in place to support individual learners through the change, including opportunities to familiarise themselves with the alternative school, clear communication with parents and carers, and the provision of targeted support where required.</p> <p>The Gwynedd Parents' Handbook 2025/26 is an official document published by Gwynedd Council's Education Department to provide parents with information on a range of educational arrangements, including provision for learners with ALN. The handbook is available here: Parents' Handbook</p> <p>As stated in the handbook, learners with ALN are entitled to continue receiving the support set out in their Individual Development Plan, and</p>

		<p>the Authority has a duty to ensure that this provision continues even when school arrangements change.</p> <p>In relation to the comments concerning Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision, it is noted that wider consideration of ALN provision is an ongoing responsibility of the Local Authority, and that the individual needs of learners are continually considered through existing statutory processes. The consultation process regarding the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been conducted on the basis of the information and evidence available at the time, and any final decision, should one be made, would include consideration of appropriate transition arrangements and suitable support for all learners, including learners with ALN.</p> <p>Although the impact assessments have been updated to record and consider these concerns, the comments received have not led to a change in the overall conclusions of the assessments. The Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment indicates that implementing the proposal would be likely to have a neutral or partially positive impact on the quality and standards of education, as the provision at the alternative school is at least equivalent to the current provision in terms of quality and standards. In addition, the Equality Impact Assessment and the Wellbeing Impact Assessment highlight the need to ensure appropriate transition arrangements and tailored support for individual learners should the proposal be implemented.</p>
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5.4 Increasing demand for ALN provision

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
5.4.1	“the current intake of pupils at SEN Pendalar and Hafon y Lon is nearing capacity despite record numbers of children being home educated with SEN”	<p>The Council notes the comment.</p> <p>The Gwynedd Parents’ Handbook 2025/26 is an official document published by Gwynedd Council’s Education Department to provide parents with details about a range of educational arrangements, including provision for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). The handbook is available here: Parents' Handbook.</p>

		<p>As stated in the handbook, learners with ALN have the right to continue receiving the support set out in their Individual Development Plan, and it is the Authority’s duty to ensure that this provision continues even when school arrangements change.</p> <p>With regard to the comments relating to the provision, it is noted that broader consideration of ALN provision is an ongoing matter for the Local Authority, and that individual learners’ needs are continually considered through the existing statutory arrangements. The consultation process on the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been undertaken on the basis of the information and evidence available at the time, and any final decision, should one be made, would include consideration of appropriate transition arrangements and suitable support for every learner, including learners with ALN.</p>
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6. TRANSPORT, TRAVEL AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Walking, cycling and learners' independence

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
6.1.1	<p>“Year 4 pupils are permitted to walk or cycle home from school.” “This has been a popular choice for Baladeulyn pupils over the years and still is today on nice dry days.” “This gives the children a little independence and helps them build confidence.”</p>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an assessment was completed of the impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and educate the learners at Ysgol Talysarn on travel arrangements.</p>
6.1.2	<p>“It takes about 10 - 15 mins for them to walk from Ysgol Baladeulyn to the park.” “All playing happily outdoors, exercising if you prefer.” “It's a big thing I believe in trying to get more children playing outdoors.”</p>	<p>As the alternative school is located 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, and further from some homes within the catchment, it is not anticipated that learners from Ysgol Baladeulyn would walk to the alternative school.</p> <p>On this basis, the Authority has identified that there would be a negative impact should the proposal be implemented, as learners would be educated at Ysgol Talysarn and the Authority would be required to provide transport for learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment to Ysgol Talysarn, in accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy.</p>

Additional transport costs are anticipated, with an estimated cost of between £17,000 and £30,000 per year, and some learners would travel further to school than they do at present. No learner from the Baladeulyn catchment would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school.

6.2 Transport to Ysgol Talysarn

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
6.2.1	"All the current children regardless of catchment area attending the school need transport to ysgol talysarn as a priority"	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an assessment of the impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and educate the learners at Ysgol Talysarn on travel arrangements was completed. As stated in the assessment, Ysgol Talysarn is located approximately 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn. If the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer a place to those learners at Ysgol Talysarn was implemented, the revised catchment area of Ysgol Talysarn would include the current catchment area of Ysgol Talysarn and the current catchment area of Ysgol Baladeulyn combined.</p> <p>Current learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn who live within that catchment area would be offered transport to Ysgol Talysarn where that is relevant, in accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy. Under the Policy, free transport is provided to primary learners who live 2 miles or further from the school in their catchment area or the nearest school, or where the walking route is assessed as unsafe.</p> <p>In accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy, it is noted that learners who live outside that revised catchment area would not be eligible to receive free school transport to Ysgol Talysarn. However, the Council considers individual applications in unique circumstances.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that some learners would travel further to school than they do at present, however, no learner from the Baladeulyn catchment would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school.</p>
6.2.2	"Will transport to Talysarn be offered to every child who is currently on the Baladeulyn register, including those children who are out of the Nantlle village catchment area?"	
6.2.3	"Arrange transport for ALL current children of Ysgol Baladeulyn to Ysgol Talysarn" "transport should be arranged for ALL children regardless of their catchment area"	
6.2.4	"Transportation would need to be a priority for ALL pupils currently attending Ysgold Baladeulyn, including children currently attending outside of the catchment area to allow them to remain with their peers."	
6.2.5	"Is there assurance that EVERY child who is currently on the Ysgol Baladeulyn register will receive transport to Ysgol Talysarn?" "Is there assurance that nursery children living in the village will receive transport to Ysgol Talysarn's nursery sessions?"	
6.2.6	It was asked whether there would be additional costs for parents/guardians to transport their children to the alternative school.	

6.3 Concerns regarding travel safety

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
6.3.1	“there are no safe ways for children to travel on foot as the road is dangerous due to a lack of pavements and fast moving traffic”	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.
6.3.2	Concern is expressed regarding travel safety should children have to attend a school further away. It is noted that the potential footpaths between the communities are unsuitable and unsafe to walk, including footpaths through industrial areas or along speeding highways.	In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an assessment was completed of the impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and educate the learners at Ysgol Talysarn on travel arrangements. As noted in the assessment, Ysgol Talysarn is located approximately 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn. Should the proposal be implemented, the current catchment area of Ysgol Baladeulyn would be incorporated into the catchment area of Ysgol Talysarn. Learners currently attending Ysgol Baladeulyn who are eligible for transport would be offered transport to Ysgol Talysarn, where applicable, in accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy.
6.3.3	“as there is NO SAFE footpath walking is not a option”	
6.3.4	It is noted, should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, that the learners would lose the ability to walk to school safely, as there are no suitable footpaths or roads. It was asked whether the Council would fund the creation of purposeful footpaths?	<p>In line with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy, Cyngor Gwynedd provides free transport for learners who live 2 miles or more from their catchment school, the closest school, or where learners must travel along a route that the Council considers to be highly dangerous. A dangerous route is defined as one where the nature of the road (including public footpaths) means it would not be reasonable to expect learners (taking account of their age and with escorts where necessary) to walk in relative safety. When assessing the relative safety of a route, the Council considers the hazards a learner may face along the designated route (including, for example, rivers, ditches, traffic speed on adjacent roads, previous accidents, overhanging trees or branches that may obstruct visibility for pedestrians or drivers, etc.). The assessment must be carried out at the time of day and on the days of the week when learners would be expected to use the route.</p> <p>In accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy, primary-age learners (excluding those 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 available route. The shortest available route is one that the Council does not consider to be particularly dangerous, following an assessment of other possible routes. These routes would be assessed in line with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy. The Policy can be found in the parents’ handbook: Information for Parents.</p>

		<p>Nursery-age learners are not eligible for transport under the policy, and the policy does not assume that parents are responsible for providing transport where a child is eligible for statutory transport.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that some learners would travel further to school than they do at present; however, no learner from the Baladeulyn catchment would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school.</p>
6.3.5	<i>"Would the Council consider funding a purposeful footpath to connect the two villages, passing the Bro Silyn housing estate, to enable Nantlle and Talysarn children and residents to walk between the two villages?"</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment regarding new transport provision, such as a dedicated walking route linking the two villages. Any consideration of developing or funding such a route would fall outside the scope of this statutory proposal and would need to be assessed separately through the appropriate planning and funding arrangements.
6.3.6	"Then as now, the road connecting the two villages has no foot or cycle path. Just an overgrown grass verge." "The road speed limit has now been lowered to 50mph, but it remains dangerous to walk along. Especially with the hgv wagons from the Quarries, and the farm traffic. Not to mention the flooding when it rains." "Can the Council assure us that they will make provision for an adequate footpath and cycle path between Talysarn and Nantlle, something they have refused to consider, during the consultation before embarking on improving the road and turning it into a flooded race track."	With regard to travel safety, it is noted that the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy provides for school transport where a walking route is deemed dangerous or unsuitable, regardless of distance. Should the proposal be implemented, learners' eligibility for school transport would be assessed in accordance with that policy, ensuring that appropriate transport arrangements are available where applicable.
6.3.7	"No public pavement on 50mph zone... poor street lighting and liable to flooding."	

6.4. The impact of further travel on learners' well-being

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
6.4.1	There is concern that learners will have to travel further, noting the narrow and uncertain nature of the roads, and the potential impact on learners' safety and well-being.	<p>The Council notes the concerns expressed regarding the possibility that learners may have to travel further, including worries about the narrow and uncertain nature of some local roads, and the potential impact on learners' safety and wellbeing.</p> <p>As part of the statutory process, an assessment of the impact of the proposal on travel arrangements was completed, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). This</p>

		<p>assessment has been updated following consideration of the comments submitted during the statutory consultation, and takes into account distances, route safety and potential implications for learners.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, any school transport arrangements would be provided for learners who are eligible for transport in accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy, where transport is provided if a walking route is deemed dangerous or unsuitable, regardless of distance. Walking routes are assessed in detail in line with the policy, taking into account factors such as the nature of the road, traffic volume and speed, and overall safety at relevant times of day.</p> <p>While the Council acknowledges, that should the proposal be implemented, some learners may travel further than they do at present, but it is not anticipated that any learner would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school. Transport arrangements, where applicable, would be planned to minimise potential safety risks and to mitigate any negative impact on learners' wellbeing.</p>
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6.5 Lack of public transport

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
6.5.1	We do not drive, and buses would be an extremely challenging way to travel to and from school every day.	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comments and acknowledges the concerns expressed regarding the suitability and reliability of public transport, as well as the practical challenges that may arise for families who do not drive.</p> <p>As part of the statutory process, an assessment was completed on the impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer learners to Ysgol Talysarn on travel arrangements, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). This assessment has been updated following consideration of the comments submitted during the statutory consultation.</p> <p>Should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer places to those learners at Ysgol Talysarn be implemented, any school transport arrangements would be provided for learners who are eligible for transport in accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy, and families would not be expected to rely on public transport in order for learners to attend school.</p>
6.5.2	“the public transport is not adequate”	
6.5.3	“the bus schedule can be unreliable.”	
6.5.4	“with the transport situation with buses ect we need a school in the village”	
6.5.5	“there is also no public transport available at suitable times”	

		<p>Cyngor Gwynedd School Transport Policy provides free school transport for learners who live 2 miles or more from their catchment school, the nearest school, or where the shortest suitable walking distance between a learner’s home and the school exceeds 2 miles, or where a walking route is deemed dangerous or unsuitable, regardless of distance. Walking routes are assessed in accordance with the policy.</p> <p>If the proposal were implemented, the current catchment area of Ysgol Baladeulyn would be incorporated into the revised catchment area of Ysgol Talysarn. Given that Ysgol Talysarn is located approximately 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, learners from the current Baladeulyn catchment who are eligible under the policy would be offered school transport arranged by the Council.</p> <p>While it is acknowledged that some learners would travel further than they do at present, it is not anticipated that any learner from the Baladeulyn catchment would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school. Transport arrangements would be planned to minimise any potential negative impact on learners and families.</p>
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6.6 Challenges for families who do not drive

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
6.6.1	“If the closer of Baladeulyn was to go ahead and placed offered in Talysarn, how the children would get to the school would need to be seriously considered.” “given that some of the parents and family members who provide care for the students do not drive”	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comments and acknowledges that travel arrangements are an important consideration for families, particularly where increased travel distances may place additional practical or financial pressures on households.</p> <p>In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an assessment was completed of the impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and educate the learners at Ysgol Talysarn on travel arrangements. As noted in the assessment, Ysgol Talysarn is located approximately 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn. Should the proposal be implemented, the current catchment area of Ysgol Baladeulyn would be incorporated into the catchment area of Ysgol Talysarn. Learners currently attending Ysgol Baladeulyn who are eligible for transport would be offered</p>
6.6.2	“Not providing transport would increase pressure on family members / parents who don’t drive due to the additional costs involved especially when care givers live local to the current school and have disabilities restricting their mobility”	
6.6.3	There would be a need to sit outside for a significant period, without any facilities... I cannot stand for half the time that would be required for me to take my child to the school.	
6.6.4	"These are questions that families with young children need an answer to before deciding to reside in the village of Nantlle."	

6.6.5	It is asked whether any financial support would be available for families who would face additional transport costs, especially when public transport will have to be used several times a day. It could mean that some parents will have to take the bus to and from the alternative school twice a day - would there be support to fund this?	transport to Ysgol Talysarn, where applicable, in accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy.
6.6.6	“It would ease a lot of our stress if the council could agree to transport for our children [<i>from a village outside of the catchment area to Talysarn</i>] to help us make this transition easier for all of us.”	<p>In line with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy, Cyngor Gwynedd provides free transport for learners who live 2 miles or more from their catchment school, the nearest school, or where learners must travel along a route that the Council considers to be highly dangerous. The Policy can be found in the parents’ handbook: Information for Parents.</p> <p>Nursery-age learners are not eligible under the policy, and the policy does not assume that parents are responsible for providing transport where a learner is eligible for statutory transport. Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that some learners would travel further to school than they do at present; however, no learner from the Baladeulyn catchment would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school. However, should the proposal be implemented, parents or carers with specific concerns about travel arrangements would be encouraged to contact the Education Department to discuss their circumstances.</p>

6.7 Transport for children under 5 years old

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
6.7.1	Practical and financial concerns are raised regarding transport for children under 5 years old (who are not yet in statutory education). It is noted that this could be a significant challenge for families without access to a car, leading to complex arrangements and costs from day to day.	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comments and acknowledges the call for clarity and assurance regarding transport arrangements and potential transport costs should the proposal be implemented.</p> <p>If the proposal were to be implemented, school transport arrangements would be made in accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy. Nursery-age learners are not eligible under the policy, and the policy does not assume that parents are responsible for providing transport where a learner is eligible for statutory transport.</p>
6.7.2	<i>"Having considered that education is not statutory for children until the term after they turn 5 years old, will this transport be offered to 3- and 4-year-old learners?" "Will there be suitable arrangements in terms of safety for young learners travelling in the cars with car seats?"</i>	<p>The Council recognises the importance of reliable transport for families. However, school transport is not generally provided to facilitate access to additional services, and such arrangements are considered in line with the transport policy and the relevant statutory criteria.</p>
6.7.3	“Children are permitted to start school at age 3 in Wales, but are only legally obliged to start at age 5.” “Will there be transport provided to take 3 year olds and parent/ guardian to school in the mornings and return the parent/guardian home again.” “Will this be by taxi, can you provide costings for this.”	<p>The Council recognises the importance of reliable transport for families. However, school transport is not generally provided to facilitate access to additional services, and such arrangements are considered in line with the transport policy and the relevant statutory criteria.</p>

6.7.4	<i>"Is there assurance being given that nursery-age children who live in the village will receive transport to Ysgol Talysarn nursery sessions?"</i>
6.7.5	Will there be safe seats, and an adult present to ensure the safety of Nursery and Reception learners?

6.8 General comments about transport

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
6.8.1	<i>"There are many more schools than needed...travelling is much easier today and there's no need for so many schools close together."</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.

7. THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND FAMILIES

7.1 Family and multi-generational connections

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
7.1.1	<i>"Ysgol Baladeulyn is the heart of the community." "Both of my daughters were taught at the school as well as my mother and her sisters." "My grandmother was also a cook at the school so the school means a lot."</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.
7.1.2	<i>"My 3 children went to Baladeulyn" "And now my grandchildren are there and they are giving the same support to them."</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.
7.1.3	<i>"I've lived in the village for 15 years and both my daughters went to the school and it was a really good school for the local people"</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.

7.2 Community Identity and Local Pride

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
7.2.1	It is noted that school learners nurture pride in their school and small community, that the school is the heart of the community, close to homes and an integral part of local culture.	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.
7.2.2	Concern is expressed that moving the children's education to another village would lead to a loss of knowledge about their local area, as they would be in another village every day.	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.

7.2.3	“the children have a close connection to the village and the welsh language and history of the village”	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.
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7.3 Impact of the proposal on the viability of the community

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
7.3.1	“The biggest negative effect will be closing the school.” “It will irreparably damage our community.”	In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an assessment was completed of the impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and educate the learners at Ysgol Talysarn on the community.
7.3.2	The school is a central element of village life, with concern that closing it would have a substantial community impact, undermining the sustainability and vitality of the local community.	On this basis, the Council anticipates that, if implemented, the proposal would have some negative impact on the community, as closing Ysgol Baladeulyn would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community.
7.3.3	Losing the school would undermine village life.	<p>However, the assessment notes that a significant proportion of learners living within the school’s catchment area already attend other schools (75%), including Ysgol Talysarn (50%). It is therefore concluded that a link between Ysgol Talysarn and the Ysgol Baladeulyn community already exists.</p> <p>Should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, every effort would be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging connections between the communities and Ysgol Talysarn. To help reduce the impact, opportunities would be identified to ensure that the Baladeulyn community is aware of activities taking place at the alternative school, and community collaboration between Ysgol Talysarn and the Baladeulyn community would be encouraged where appropriate.</p> <p>If the proposal were implemented, it would also be essential to encourage discussions between the alternative school (Ysgol Talysarn) and the parents of Ysgol Baladeulyn learners, to ensure that parents and learners are able to benefit from the school’s facilities and any after-school activities.</p> <p>In addition, should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn, options for the future use of the school building would need to be considered, taking into account the community activities currently held there.</p>

7.4 Community life and social connections

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
7.4.1	<p>“They are usually joined by parents, grandparents, villagers just passing by stopping for a chat and some gossip.” “It's not just a school you are trying to erase.” “The gatherings at the park will stop, the arrangements to meet at the lake for swimming on the hotter days become more difficult.”</p>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an assessment was completed of the impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and educate the learners at Ysgol Talysarn on the community.</p> <p>The Council acknowledges within the assessment that the loss of the school could have a negative impact on certain local social and community aspects. Should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, it is anticipated that some elements of community activity may be affected, for example the loss of daily opportunities for parents, carers and families to meet within the community when dropping off or collecting children from the school. However, the assessment also notes that a substantial proportion of learners living within the school's catchment area already attend other schools (75%), including Ysgol Talysarn (50%). It is therefore concluded that a link between Ysgol Talysarn and the Ysgol Baladeulyn community already exists.</p> <p>If the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were implemented, every effort would be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging connections between the communities and Ysgol Talysarn. Opportunities would be identified to ensure that the Baladeulyn community is aware of activities taking place at the alternative school, and community collaboration between Ysgol Talysarn and the Baladeulyn community would be encouraged where appropriate.</p> <p>Should the proposal be implemented, it would also be essential to encourage discussions between the alternative school (Ysgol Talysarn) and the parents of Ysgol Baladeulyn learners, to ensure that parents and learners are able to benefit from the school's facilities and any after-school activities.</p> <p>In addition, should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn, options for the future use of the school building would need to be considered, taking into account the community activities currently held there.</p>

7.5 Attracting young families to the village

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
7.5.1	"I've realised how important small schools are to the community." "Without a school in Nantlle, it does not attract new families."	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.
7.5.2	"Without a school in Nantlle, it does not attract young families to the village. As a result, the village is transforming into a glum village."	<p>In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an assessment was completed on the impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and educate the learners at Ysgol Talysarn on the community.</p> <p>The assessment concludes that, as a high proportion of learners within the catchment area already attend out-of-catchment schools (75%), with 50% of primary-age learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment already attending Ysgol Talysarn, it is not anticipated that families and young children would leave the community if the school were to close. Furthermore, given that the alternative school is located 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, the proposal is not expected to encourage families with school-age children to move away from the community, nor to make the area less attractive to young families considering moving in.</p>

7.6 Comments about the school's role in the village

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
7.6.1	"Precious schools like these are needed in our areas and getting rid of them would be social vandalism."	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.
7.6.2	The view is expressed that Ysgol Baladeulyn is needed, and that the school's learners help to sustain the village.	In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an assessment was completed of the impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and educate the learners at Ysgol Talysarn on the community.
7.6.3	"It will demoraliz the community if they close the school."	
7.6.4	"Schools have no duty to sustain communities...having to close a school is a symptom of a lack of children and not a cause."	The assessment indicates that some negative impact on the community is anticipated should the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented. It is acknowledged that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community. However, the assessment also notes

		<p>that a substantial proportion of children living within the school’s catchment area already attend other schools (75%), including Ysgol Talysarn (50%). It is therefore concluded that a link between Ysgol Talysarn and the Ysgol Baladeulyn community already exists.</p> <p>Should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, every effort would be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging connections between the communities and Ysgol Talysarn.</p> <p>Opportunities would be identified to ensure that the Baladeulyn community is aware of activities taking place at the alternative school, and community collaboration between Ysgol Talysarn and the Baladeulyn community would be encouraged where appropriate.</p> <p>If the proposal were implemented, it would also be essential to encourage discussions between the alternative school (Ysgol Talysarn) and the parents of Ysgol Baladeulyn learners, to ensure that parents and learners are able to benefit from the school’s facilities and any after-school activities.</p> <p>In addition, should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn, options for the future use of the school building would need to be considered, taking into account the community activities currently held there.</p>
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7.7 Impact on families in the community

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
7.7.1	“Closing ysgol Baladeulyn will have a negative effect on the children, families and community of Nantlle”	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an assessment was completed of the impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and educate the learners at Ysgol Talysarn on the community.</p> <p>The assessment indicates that some negative impact on the community is anticipated should the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented. It is acknowledged that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn would result in the loss of a</p>

		<p>school within the Nantlle community. However, the assessment also notes that a substantial proportion of learners living within the school’s catchment area already attend other schools (75%), including Ysgol Talysarn (50%). It is therefore concluded that a link between Ysgol Talysarn and the Ysgol Baladeulyn community already exists.</p> <p>Should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, every effort would be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging connections between the communities and Ysgol Talysarn. Opportunities would be identified to ensure that the Baladeulyn community is aware of activities taking place at the alternative school, and community collaboration between Ysgol Talysarn and the Baladeulyn community would be encouraged where appropriate.</p> <p>If the proposal were implemented, it would also be essential to encourage discussions between the alternative school (Ysgol Talysarn) and the parents of Ysgol Baladeulyn learners, to ensure that parents and learners are able to benefit from the school’s facilities and any after-school activities.</p> <p>In addition, should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn, options for the future use of the school building would need to be considered, taking into account the community activities currently held there.</p>
7.7.2	“It would also be extremely difficult for us to arrange childcare for after school if they were not in a school near to Nantlle.”	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.

8. CAPACITY, LOCAL DEMOGRAPHY AND CATCHMENT ARRANGEMENT

8.1 Current capacity and impact of developments

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
8.1.1	“If all the pupils were transferred to Talysarn school now, I believe the school would be one pupil short of capacity.” “A new housing estate is under development at Penygroes at present, it is not unreasonable to believe that possibly one or two families with primary aged children may well move in.” “Are the Council 100%	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>Based on the information currently available, it is anticipated that there would be sufficient capacity at Ysgol Talysarn to accommodate the learners from</p>

	certain that after closing Baladeulyn and Nebo schools they will indeed have enough capacity moving forward”.	Ysgol Baladeulyn who live within the Baladeulyn catchment area, should the school close.
8.1.2	<i>"Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Bro Llifon are filling up with additional classes being erected on the yard of Bro Lleu." "More and more houses are being constructed in our valley and this is when our small schools will be needed."</i>	The Council recognises that factors such as housing developments can influence future demand, and ongoing monitoring of school capacity would continue as part of the Council’s long-term education planning arrangements.
8.1.3	<i>"With the valley's overcrowded schools, is Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Nebo not an excellent solution?" "If you're going to spend on transport for children, how about taxis from Penygroes to Nantlle?"</i>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>Current Education Department data indicates that there is sufficient capacity across all primary schools within the Dyffryn Nantlle catchment area. The percentage of surplus places in neighbouring schools ranges from 9% to 44%, and therefore no school is currently oversubscribed.</p> <p>It is noted that the review of the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been based on a broader range of evidence relating to the long-term sustainability of the provision. This includes persistently low learner numbers, a very high proportion of surplus places, small classes with wide age ranges, and projections indicating that numbers are likely to remain low in the medium and long term. In addition, patterns of parental choice within the catchment show that the majority of learners attend other schools.</p> <p>In accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy, Cyngor Gwynedd provides free transport for learners who live 2 miles or more from their catchment school, or where the walking route to the school is considered too dangerous. The Authority’s policy does not provide transport to schools outside the designated catchment school under this policy.</p>

8.2 Local demography

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
8.2.1	<i>"Communities are selling out to second homes and holiday homes...or objecting to affordable home developments."</i>	The Council notes the comment.
8.2.2	Several children within the village attend other schools.	The Council notes the comment.
8.2.3	Children should attend the school in their own village.	<p>The Council notes the comment.</p> <p>Parents have the right to express a preference for a school for their child, and there is no requirement for children to attend the school in their village or</p>

within their home catchment area. The Authority considers all applications in accordance with statutory admission criteria and allocates places where capacity allows. It is also noted that parents make educational choices based on a range of factors, including personal experience, the individual needs of children, and family preferences.

8.3 Catchment arrangements

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
8.3.1	"It's a huge disappointment for us that the new catchment doesn't cover the area considering it is one of Dyffryn Nantlles 21 villages." "It seems there is no consistency with catchment areas."	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>Each school has a designated catchment area which it serves, and these areas are important in relation to the Council's admissions and transport policies. School catchment areas are defined in order to enable effective planning of education provision, places and resources across the county. These boundaries are not based on community boundaries, but on the official criteria used to allocate places and maintain provision.</p> <p>Parents have the right to express a preference for a school for their child, and there is no requirement for children to attend the school in their village or within their home catchment area. The Authority considers all applications in accordance with statutory admission criteria and allocates places where capacity allows. It is also noted that parents make educational choices based on a range of factors, including personal experience, the individual needs of children, and family preferences.</p>
8.3.2	Disappointment is expressed that there was no opportunity for parents to participate in early discussions about pupil admission arrangements, should Ysgol Baladeulyn close. It is felt that taking for granted that every child would transfer to Ysgol Talysarn is unfair, considering that some learners live out-of-catchment and they could have alternative options.	

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Argument against the proposal based on cost

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
9.1.1	It is recognised that financial pressures currently exist but the value of the happiness, well-being and health of a child cannot be measured.	The Council notes the comment.

9.2 Financial and Cost per Head Inconsistencies across County Schools

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
9.2.1	<i>"It's disgraceful that schools with a cost per head of £5-6k are facing 'redundancy' arrangements while very small schools with a cost per head of 3 or 4 times that are being protected."</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.

10. COMMENTS ON THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENTATION AND THE STATUTORY PROCESS

10.1 Sufficiency of impact assessments in general

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
10.1.1	"The impact assessment nor the future community impact assessment are insufficient."	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>As part of the statutory process, the original Community Impact Assessment was published as part of the statutory consultation documentation, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. Following consideration of the responses to the statutory consultation, the Community Impact Assessment was reviewed and updated, strengthening the acknowledgement that the loss of the school is likely to have a negative impact on the local community.</p> <p>At the same time, the revised Community Impact Assessment also notes that a high proportion of children within the catchment area already attend out-of-catchment schools, including Ysgol Talysarn, and therefore that community and educational links with neighbouring communities already exist. However, it also recognises the concerns expressed that the presence of the school plays an important role in sustaining Welsh identity and the daily use of the Welsh language.</p> <p>The revised assessment states that, should the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Baladeulyn community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and using the Authority's Post-Use Policy as a framework for discussing suitable options for the future of the school building, including potential community use where feasible.</p>
10.1.2	"I would really like the council consider the children in this as it them that would suffer"	<p>The Consultation Document clearly sets out the requirement to consider the Council's duties under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and these considerations have been embedded through the completion of a series of related impact assessments, including a Well-being Impact Assessment, Community Impact Assessment, Language Impact Assessment, Educational Impact Assessment and Transport Impact Assessment.</p> <p>These impact assessments consider a wide range of factors, including the effect on learners' well-being and educational progress.</p>

The Council acknowledges the concerns regarding the potential impact of a school closure on a rural community and the broader considerations relating to children’s well-being. These matters have been taken into account when reviewing the relevant impact assessments.

10.2 Community Impact Assessment

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
10.2.1	“Single perants or the lack of work in this area”	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment. As part of the statutory process, a Community Impact Assessment was published as part of the statutory consultation documentation, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code.</p> <p>Within this assessment, reference is made to information on the local ward’s economy and levels of deprivation, which provides context regarding employment conditions and the socio-economic profile of the area:</p> <p><i>In the 2021 Census, 55.5% of people aged between 16 and 74 years old within the Llanllyfni ward are economically active, 3.7% of whom are unemployed. 43.2% of people in the same age group are economically inactive, with 5.9% of these being long-term ill or disabled.</i></p> <p><i>The type of industry in which the population is active varies in the area, with the highest rate (19.9%) working in the health and social work field (2021 Census).</i></p> <p><i>According to the 'Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2025)', the employment rate of the Llanllyfni and Clynnog wards, compared to other wards in Wales, is ranked 1152 out of 1917 wards. Therefore, the Llanllyfni and Clynnog ward is rated within the 50% least deprived wards in Wales.</i></p> <p><i>The Llanllyfni and Clynnog ward is in the 20-30% most deprived wards in Wales (ranked 546 out of 1917 wards).</i></p> <p><i>A number of fields draw up these general indexes, including income, employment, health, education, access to services, community safety,</i></p>

		<p><i>physical environment and housing. Note that the Llanllyfni and Clynnog ward is within the 10% most deprived wards in Wales in the 'Housing' field. The indicators of this field are the proportion of people who live in an overcrowded home (bedroom use), and the proportion of people living in homes that do not have central heating.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, the Llanllyfni and Clynnog ward is within the 10% most deprived areas in Wales in the 'access to services' field, i.e. deprivation as people are unable to access the various services considered essential for daily living. The indicators include the average public transport and private travel times to a number of services such as supermarkets, surgeries, primary and secondary schools, post office, public library, pharmacy, leisure centre and private travel time to a petrol station.</i></p>
10.2.2	“Talysarn is a ‘deprived area’, additional travel costs... will have a detrimental impact on household income”	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the call for clarity and assurance regarding transport arrangements and potential transport costs should the proposal be implemented.</p> <p>If the proposal were to be implemented, school transport arrangements would be made in accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy. Under the Policy, free transport is provided to primary learners who live 2 miles or further from the school in their catchment area or the nearest school, or where the walking route is assessed as unsafe. Nursery-age learners are not eligible under the policy, and the policy does not assume that parents are responsible for providing transport where a child is eligible for statutory transport.</p> <p>The Council recognises the importance of reliable transport for families.</p>
10.2.3	Concern is expressed that the proposal would have a negative impact on families facing socio-economic disadvantage.	<p>It is noted that the Consultation Document clearly sets out the requirement to consider the Council’s duties under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and these considerations have been embedded through the completion of a series of related impact assessments, including the Well-being Impact Assessment, Community Impact Assessment, Language Impact Assessment, Educational Impact Assessment and Transport Impact Assessment.</p> <p>It is noted that these matters have been recorded and considered as part of the Equality Impact Assessment and the Well-being Impact Assessment, both of which have been updated following consideration of the responses to the</p>

		statutory consultation. These assessments take into account a wide range of relevant factors, including socio-economic disadvantage, the impact on community cohesion, demographic changes, and medium- and long-term sustainability.
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10.3 Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
10.3.1	<i>"The self-complementary results of the impact assessment on the Welsh language are shameful." "No effort has been made by the Council to assess the impact of closing the school on the Welsh language in the area."</i>	<p>As part of the statutory consultation process, a Welsh Language Impact Assessment was undertaken, and the original assessment was published as part of the consultation documentation. Following consideration of the comments received during the consultation, the Language Impact Assessment was reviewed and updated, with the issues raised by consultees taken into account in preparing the revised assessment.</p> <p>The revised Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), Ysgol Talysarn. It also notes the potential, in an educational context, to strengthen opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally by socialising with a larger number of peers of the same age.</p> <p>The Council also undertook a Community Impact Assessment to evaluate the likely effect of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on the local community. This assessment has been reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, giving due consideration to the comments and issues raised by consultees, including concerns about the loss of the school as a community focal point.</p> <p>As stated in the conclusion of the latest Community Impact Assessment, the Council's view is that there would be some likely negative impact on the local community if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were implemented. This conclusion is also informed by the wider evidence assessed within the report.</p> <p>The revised assessment notes that there is some potential linguistic risk in terms of the use of Welsh as a living community language in Baladeulyn</p>

		should the school close. However, it also identifies possible mitigation measures, including considering appropriate options for the post-use of the school building to support the Welsh language, and promoting opportunities for the Nantlle community to be involved in Welsh-medium activities at Ysgol Talysarn.
10.3.2	<i>"There is no impact assessment either on sending children from Nantlle's non-Welsh speaking families to more Welsh-speaking schools."</i>	The revised Language Impact Assessment concludes that the proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive their education in a Welsh-medium primary school (Category 3), Ysgol Talysarn. January 2026 data shows that 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn.
10.3.3	<i>"There is no attempt to see the long-term impact that closing rural schools is having on the language in general." "The results seem to focus on the impact on current pupils only (4-11-year-old children)."</i>	As noted above. The Council's response is provided in sections 10.3.1 and 10.3.2.

10.4 Engaging and communicating with parents as part of the statutory process

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
10.4.1	The view is expressed that more engagement with parents, including visits to the <i>cylch meithrin</i> and provision of clear information about educational options, would have been beneficial. It is noted that some parents in the village had taken for granted that attending the <i>cylch meithrin</i> in Talysarn meant that their children had to attend the associated school.	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment. The statutory consultation process has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). Although holding public meetings is not a statutory requirement, drop-in sessions for parents, staff and governors were held as part of the engagement process to provide an opportunity to discuss the proposal and the statutory process.

10.5 Impact Assessment on Equality

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
10.5.1	I question whether the impact on disabled children has been fully assessed, and how adequate the consideration given to the rights of disabled children under the Equality Act 2010 is within the impact assessment.	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment. It is noted that the Equality Impact Assessment has been updated following the statutory consultation in order to give specific consideration to the concerns raised regarding disabled learners and learners with Additional

		<p>Learning Needs (ALN). The revised assessment acknowledges that the proposal could lead to a potential negative impact on some disabled learners, particularly in relation to transferring to a larger and unfamiliar school, and these risks are clearly identified.</p> <p>The Assessment also outlines the statutory duties, noting that every learner with ALN has the right to continue receiving the provision set out in their Individual Development Plan, regardless of any change in school arrangements.</p> <p>It is further noted that, should the proposal be implemented, transition arrangements would be planned and delivered jointly with learners, their families and the school, with a specific focus on the individual needs of each learner. The accessibility of the alternative school, along with appropriate transport arrangements, would also be assessed on an individual basis to ensure that disabled children are not disproportionately disadvantaged as a result of the proposal.</p> <p>Based on consideration of the evidence, the comments received, and the mitigation measures identified, the Council’s assessment is that appropriate consideration has been given to the impact of the proposal on the relevant protected characteristics, including Disability, in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Impact Assessment clearly identifies the potential risks, outlines the relevant statutory duties, and confirms that the impact on disabled learners would continue to be monitored and carefully managed should the proposal be implemented.</p>
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11. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

11.1 Keeping the school open (status quo)

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
11.1.1	"No closure"	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment. The Council confirms that these views – namely continuing with the current provision by keeping the school open – have already been considered as part of the original options, specifically as the “do
11.1.2	Want the family to continue receiving education in the current local school.	
11.1.3	"no other proposal, just to keep the school open!!!" "nothing, again just to keep the school open, so much advantage to everyone!"	

nothing” option (Option 1). This option has been fully assessed against the criteria of the School Organisation Code, alongside the other reasonable alternative options set out in this section.

As noted in the conclusion of the assessment, while the Council acknowledges the support expressed for keeping the school open, it is concluded that maintaining the current arrangements, in isolation, does not adequately address the challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn. These include low learner numbers, the high level of surplus places, future demographic projections, and the associated financial pressures. As a result, this option is not treated as a new alternative option nor subject to further separate assessment within this report.

11.2 Promote and strengthen small schools

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
11.2.1	<i>“Yes numbers are low currently, but this could change within a year or two with the right promotion” “Rather than undermine our small schools, promote the advantages and strengths of our important rural schools”</i>	Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comments suggesting that new admissions should be promoted by emphasising the strengths of the school. However, it is noted that such promotional initiatives, in isolation, are not within the Council’s direct control to implement in a way that would guarantee a meaningful change to parental choice patterns or a sustained increase in registered learner numbers, as the final decision regarding school choice remains a matter for parents, in accordance with the statutory framework.
11.2.2	<i>“It’s essentially important for us to get the opportunity to promote the school.” “It would be very beneficial to present new parents in the area to the School by offering an open day.” “Several community houses have recently been put up for rent in Nantlle.” “As so many have not had the experience of being close to the school before.”</i>	
11.2.3	<i>“The council could encourage more families to use smaller school.” “instead of pushing them into other school that are too full.” “struggling to give each child the support they need.”</i>	
11.2.4	<i>“The cylch meithrin in Talysarn attracts children to Ysgol Talysarn.” “I feel that it’s essential for parents to send their children to a small school like Ysgol Baladeulyn.”</i>	

11.3 Federalisation with ALN provision

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
11.3.1	<i>“and prefer the alternative option - ‘3. Federalisation with a nearby school adding a specialist unit for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn”</i>	Full details of the assessment of this option can be found in Section 7 of the report.
11.3.2	<i>"The Body prefers the third option, namely 'Federalisation with a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) adding a specialist unit for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn."</i>	
11.3.3	Suggest that consideration should be given to merging options 3 and 6 of the consultation, namely federate with Ysgol Talysarn and adding a specialist space for ALN provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn. It is noted that support from Ysgol Talysarn would be positive.	

11.4 Share leadership

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
11.4.1	“Would it not be sensible to at least consider re forming the schools into one multi site school.” “With one head teacher and a deputy at the head at the others. This would ensure extra capacity would be available.”	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comments suggesting that alternative options to the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn should be considered, including increasing collaboration with neighbouring schools through amalgamation or the establishment of a multi-site school.</p> <p>The option to merge / establish a multi-site school has already been considered as an alternative option within the consultation document. Further details of the assessment of this option can be found in Section 7 of the report.</p> <p>Following evaluation of the option, it is concluded that this model does not adequately address the fundamental challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn. There is no evidence that such an arrangement would lead to a meaningful increase in learner numbers or a change in the current pattern of high surplus places. As a result, the organisation of small classes, the projected low pupil numbers, and the associated financial challenges would remain, without securing the long-term sustainability of the provision.</p>
11.4.2	"keep the school open and work closer with larger schools"	
11.4.3	"There's a need to work with other schools to ensure that children receive the best possible education, instead of focusing on cramming 30 into a class."	

11.5 Modify the proposal for the benefit of the Welsh Language

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
11.5.1	<i>"It would be possible to draw up or modify the proposal to ensure that it has positive impacts, or more positive impacts on opportunities for people to use Welsh." "By sustaining Welsh community provision on the school site, such as a community centre, cylch meithrin or language centre"</i>	<p>The Council notes that suggestions of this nature have already been considered in accordance with the School Organisation Code (011/2018). The conclusion reached in the proposal paper published in October 2025, and reaffirmed in the subsequent Consultation Document, was that using the school as a community facility or adapting the site to host community provision does not offer a sustainable solution to the core educational challenges facing the school, and therefore this option is not considered a reasonable alternative.</p> <p>Option 7 in the consultation, 'Establishing a language unit on the Ysgol Baladeulyn site', refers to adding a Welsh-language immersion unit on the school site to provide immersion support for new Welsh speakers. As the school building would need to be adapted to accommodate the unit/centre, the school's capacity would likely be reduced, and therefore the option is expected to lead to a reduction in surplus places.</p> <p>However, learner numbers at Ysgol Baladeulyn have reached a critical point, with 6 full-time learners (Reception – Year 6) and 2 part-time learners (Nursery) on roll. As learners attending the language unit/centre would remain registered with their original school, the establishment of a language centre on the site is not expected to affect pupil numbers. As a result, it is anticipated that learner numbers at Ysgol Baladeulyn would be expected to remain low, and the option would not address the challenges currently facing the school.</p> <p>Full details of the options are provided in Section 7 of the report.</p>
11.5.2	<i>"It would be possible to draw up or modify the proposal to ensure that it has positive impacts, or more positive impacts on opportunities for people to use Welsh." "By sustaining Welsh community provision on the school site - such as a community centre, cylch meithrin or language centre"</i>	
11.5.3	It is suggested that it would be possible to modify the proposal to ensure more positive or less detrimental impacts on the Welsh language, which include sustaining Welsh community provision on the school site, e.g., Community Centre, Cylch Meithrin, Language Centre or consider an alternative option from the consultation rather than closing the school.	
11.5.4	<i>"It would be possible to draw up or modify the proposal to ensure that it has positive impacts, or more positive impacts on opportunities for people to use Welsh." "By sustaining Welsh community provision on the school site, such as a community centre, cylch meithrin or language centre."</i>	

11.6 ALN specialist provision

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
11.6.1	"Create a 'Hybrid' mainstream and SEN primary school on Dwyfor/Arfon border." "Potential cost savings on school transport, improvement in number of SEN pupil places, access and qualify for additional Welsh Gov SEN funding through the medium of welsh in a smaller educational setting"	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comments.</p> <p>In this context, the proposal to re-categorise Ysgol Baladeulyn as a mainstream 'hybrid' primary school is considered a reasonable alternative</p>

11.6.2	I suggest that the use of the school should be changed to specialist provision for learners with additional needs.	<p>option and has therefore been included as a reasonable alternative option in this report and is subject to further assessment.</p> <p>However, following evaluation of this option, it is concluded that re-categorising Ysgol Baladeulyn as a mainstream 'hybrid' primary school does not provide a solution to the core challenges facing the school. There is currently no clear evidence that the proposal would lead to a sufficient and sustainable increase in registered learner numbers.</p> <p>There would be transport costs associated with locating an ALN Unit at Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p> <p>A significant capital investment would be required to adapt the building. An additional revenue funding source would also be needed to support the ALN Unit.</p>
11.6.3	provide support for local children with advanced learning needs who will require 1:1 education...a small school is a place where children who need a bit of extra support can thrive.	
11.6.4	The Council should consider developing Ysgol Baladeulyn into a specialist provision for ALN learners, in order to provide more places for children that need support.	

11.7 Other alternative options received

Ref	Comments	Cyngor Gwynedd's Response
11.7.1	"they could pay a little extra for the transport for the children so the bigger school would not burst at them seams and smaller school could support the children"	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comments received suggesting that Ysgol Baladeulyn should be considered as an alternative site in response to neighbouring schools operating over capacity or facing potential overcrowding, including suggestions to provide free transport for those learners who would attend Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p> <p>However, the Council does not consider this to be a reasonable alternative option. Implementing such a model would create significant complexities in relation to admissions and transport arrangements. In addition, the option is not expected to lead to a meaningful increase in pupil numbers at Ysgol Baladeulyn. As a result, it is concluded that this option does not represent a reasonable alternative and is therefore not subject to further assessment within this report.</p>

11.7.2	<p><i>“Offer children from the new estates in Penygroes to join the catchment’s smaller schools - i.e., Ysgol Baladeulyn” “if there’s an occasion when a school has to refuse learners due to lack of space, offer for them to join the catchment’s smaller school - i.e., Ysgol Baladeulyn.”</i></p>	<p>As above.</p>
11.7.3	<p>“Try get more locals into the properties of nantlle not air b and b,s / holiday homes”</p>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment made regarding the need to encourage more local people to live in properties in the Nantlle area rather than in holiday accommodation or AirBnB-type properties.</p> <p>However, it is noted that matters relating to housing policy and the use of residential properties fall outside the scope of the current proposal. In this context, the suggestion is not considered to be a reasonable alternative option within the framework of the statutory school organisation consultation process.</p>
11.7.4	<p><i>“A change in policy in Wales that would mean that every child has to attend their nearest school.”</i></p>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comment.</p> <p>This option relates to a change in national policy. As a result, it will not be treated as an additional alternative option, and it will not be subject to further assessment or consideration.</p>
11.7.5	<p>“Access UNESCO funding – see Richard Hayman Report on significance of Baladeulyn school in slate industry... or National Lottery Heritage Funding”</p>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd notes the comments.</p>
11.7.6	<p>“Gwynedd Council to consult and confer with Welsh Gov. to access the additional funding £3m to build.increase SEN provision to offset the running costs”</p>	<p>We recognise the importance of securing capital funding for the county’s education and heritage projects. However, capital funding alone does not address the challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn. To ensure a sustainable future for the school, a stable and ongoing revenue funding stream would be required. As a result, it is concluded that this option does not represent a reasonable alternative and is therefore not subject to further assessment within this report.</p>

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS PROPOSED BY CONSULTEES

In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, consultees were given the opportunity to suggest alternative options during the statutory consultation.

The table below lists the alternative options suggested by the consultees and notes those deemed as reasonable alternative options that are subject to further assessment in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code, including an options appraisal and an assessment against the presumption against the presumption factors against closing rural schools.

	Option	Initial Consideration
11.1	Maintaining the school in its current form (status quo).	This option is considered the “no change” option, namely continuing with the current provision by keeping Ysgol Baladeulyn open. This option has already been considered as one of the original options and was fully assessed as part of the statutory consultation process, and it is considered further under Option 1 – No change. As a result, this option is not treated as a separate alternative option, and it is not subject to a further standalone assessment within this report.
11.2	Promoting the benefits and strengths of small schools to new parents, including offering an open day to introduce parents to the School.	The Council does not consider this option to be a reasonable alternative, as it does not align with the schools’ strategy. The Council seeks to provide appropriate support to all schools, but it is not possible to promote specific schools. It would also create complications in relation to admission and transport arrangements.
11.3	Federating with a neighbouring school (Ysgol Talysarn) while adding a specialist area for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn.	This option corresponds directly to the original Option 3, namely federating with a neighbouring school while establishing a specialist area for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn. As a result, it is not treated as an additional alternative option and is not subject to further assessment separate from the original option.
11.4	Sharing leadership through a multi-site school arrangement.	This option corresponds directly to the original Option 5, namely merging local schools in order to support and sustain Ysgol Baladeulyn – a multi-site school. As a result, it is not treated as an additional alternative option and is not subject to further assessment separate from the original option.
11.4	Closer collaboration between Ysgol Baladeulyn and neighbouring schools.	Arrangements for collaboration and the sharing of resources and expertise between Ysgol Baladeulyn and neighbouring schools are included within the wider considerations associated with the federated model. As a result, these arrangements are regarded as an element of the federated model rather than an independent alternative option, and therefore this option is not subject to a separate assessment within this report.
11.5	Adapting the proposal for the benefit of the Welsh language by maintaining community provision on the school site,	The Council notes that suggestions of this nature have already been considered in accordance with the School Organisation Code (011/2018). It was concluded in the proposal paper published in

	<p>such as a community centre, cylch meithrin, or language centre.</p>	<p>October 2025, and reaffirmed in the subsequent Consultation Document, that using the school as a community centre or adapting the site to host community provision does not offer a sustainable solution to the core educational challenges facing the school.</p> <p>Specifically, it was identified that such options would not address the persistently low learner numbers, the very small class sizes, or the associated implications for the school’s financial sustainability and its ability to provide statutory primary education. While the value of community provision and initiatives to promote the Welsh language is acknowledged, this option does not provide a viable solution to the challenges facing the school. It is therefore not considered a reasonable alternative and has not been subject to further assessment within this report.</p>
<p>11.6</p>	<p>Hybrid provision combining mainstream education and specialist ALN provision.</p>	<p>This option relates to strengthening and/or expanding the focus of provision associated with ALN. Although ALN provision has already been considered as part of the original options, this option refers to establishing a ‘hybrid’ model of mainstream education and specialist ALN provision. As a result, this option is included as an additional, separate option, rather than a direct variation of the original ALN option, and is therefore subject to further assessment.</p>
<p>11.6</p>	<p>Ysgol Baladeulyn to provide specialist provision for ALN learners.</p>	<p>This option corresponds directly to the original Option 6, which involved adding a specialist area for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn. As a result, it is not treated as an additional alternative option and is not subject to further assessment beyond that undertaken for the original option.</p>
<p>11.7</p>	<p>Using Ysgol Baladeulyn as supplementary provision to reduce pressure on neighbouring schools, with the Council investing in transport.</p>	<p>The Council does not consider this option to be a reasonable alternative. Implementing such a model would result in a significant change to the role and nature of Ysgol Baladeulyn, transforming it from a mainstream community school into a part-time or supplementary provision without a clear basis in terms of organisation, governance, or belonging to a specific school community. It would also create substantial complexities in relation to admissions arrangements, transport, learners wellbeing, and continuity of educational experience, particularly for younger learners.</p> <p>In addition, this option does not address the key challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn in relation to learner numbers, long-term sustainability, and the delivery of coherent educational provision. As a result, it is concluded that this option does not represent a reasonable alternative and is not subject to further assessment within this report.</p>

11.7	A change in policy in Wales that would mean that every child has to attend their nearest school.	The Council does not consider this option to be a reasonable alternative, as it relates to changing the national policy on school admissions. As a result, it will not be treated as an additional alternative option and will not be subject to further assessment or consideration.
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7. A FURTHER ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL AND OTHER REASONABLE OPTIONS

In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code, and because Ysgol Baladeulyn meets the definition of a rural school, a further assessment was undertaken of the proposal and the reasonable alternative options identified in the Consultation Document has been undertaken, with particular regard given to the likely impact on the quality and standards of education, the likely impact on the community, and the impact of different travel arrangements.

In undertaking this further assessment, all additional relevant information received through responses submitted during the statutory consultation period, or otherwise, was considered, in accordance with the intention of the Code to ensure that new perspectives and information are taken into account before a decision is made on the way forward.

Although the comments and suggestions received through the consultation—including the reasonable alternative options proposed by consultees—were considered as part of this review process, the additional information did not lead to any change in the conclusions of the impact assessments relating either to the proposal or to the reasonable alternative options.

The two tables below set out the further assessment of the anticipated impact: the first table summarises the assessment of the proposal and the reasonable alternative options identified in the Consultation Document, while the second table sets out the impact assessment of the reasonable alternative options proposed by consultees during the consultation period. The full impact assessments are available in Appendix C.

Option	Assessment of the probable impact on the quality and standards of education	Assessment of the probable impact on different transport arrangements	Assessment of the probable impact on the community
Option 1 - No change - continue with the current situation	Neutral - No change	Neutral - No change No learner in the Baladeulyn catchment area will need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.	Neutral - No change Keep the school and its potential as a community resource in the village of Nantlle.
Option 2 - Federation with a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn)	Neutral/Partly positive - No impact on the provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn Opportunity to share good practices between both schools and the possibilities of making better use of resources.	Neutral The learners would continue to be taught at Ysgol Baladeulyn and the learners' travel arrangements would remain the same. No learner in the Baladeulyn catchment area will need to travel an	Neutral Possibility of community collaboration between both schools. Keep the school and its potential as a community resource in the village of Nantlle.

		unreasonable distance to school.	
Option 3 - Federation with a nearby school adding a specialist unit for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn	<p>Neutral/Partly positive - No impact on the provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn</p> <p>Opportunity to share good practices between both schools and the possibilities of making better use of resources.</p> <p>Opportunity to develop an additional resource to support learners with ALN. It is anticipated that it would have a positive impact on the criteria of 'Vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs'.</p>	<p>Neutral</p> <p>The learners would continue to be taught at Ysgol Baladeulyn and the learners' travel arrangements would remain the same.</p> <p>No learner in the Baladeulyn catchment area will need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.</p> <p>The authority would need to provide transport for learners in the ALN unit.</p>	<p>Neutral</p> <p>Possibility of community collaboration between both schools.</p> <p>Keep the school and its potential as a community resource in the village of Nantlle.</p>
Option 4 - Close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer a place for the learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn)	<p>Partly positive</p> <p>The assessment notes that the standard of education provided at Ysgol Talysarn is equivalent to the standard of education provided at Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p> <p>As there are more learners at Ysgol Talysarn, it is anticipated that there will be an opportunity to teach children in larger groups, with age-relevant peers to expand their experiences. Based on this, it is concluded that there would be a positive impact on teaching and learning experiences by teaching the learners of Baladeulyn catchment area at Ysgol Talysarn.</p>	<p>Negative</p> <p>Transport would need to be provided for Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area learners to Ysgol Talysarn, in line with Cyngor Gwynedd's transport policy.</p> <p>Additional transport costs are anticipated - estimated cost of £17,000 - £30,000 per annum.</p> <p>Some of the learners will travel further to school than they currently do.</p> <p>No learner in the Baladeulyn catchment area will need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.</p>	<p>Neutral/Partly Negative</p> <p>Lead to the loss of a school and community resource in the village of Nantlle.</p> <p>To mitigate the impact on the community, opportunities are noted to ensure that the community of Nantlle is aware of the activities of the alternative school, and community collaboration will be encouraged between Ysgol Talysarn and the community of Nantlle, where appropriate.</p> <p>It is noted that a vast proportion of the children who live in the school's catchment area already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn therefore it is concluded that there is an existing link between Ysgol Talysarn and the community of Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p>
Option 5- Merge local schools in order to support and	<p>Neutral / Partly positive</p> <p>No impact on the provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn</p>	<p>Neutral</p> <p>The learners would continue to be taught at</p>	<p>Neutral</p> <p>No impact on the provision on the Ysgol Baladeulyn site.</p>

<p>maintain Ysgol Baladeulyn - Multi-site school</p>	<p>Opportunity to share good practices between the school sites and the possibilities of making better use of resources.</p>	<p>Ysgol Baladeulyn and the learners' travel arrangements would remain the same.</p> <p>No learner in the Baladeulyn catchment area will need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.</p> <p>There is a possibility that transport between schools would need to be arranged, depending on the structure of the new school.</p>	<p>Keep the school and its potential as a community resource in the village of Nantlle.</p>
<p>Option 6 - Add a specialist unit for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn</p>	<p>Neutral/Partly positive</p> <p>No impact on the provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn</p> <p>Opportunity to develop an additional resource to support learners with ALN. It is anticipated that it would have a positive impact on the 'Vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs' criteria.</p>	<p>Neutral</p> <p>Learners would continue to be taught at Ysgol Baladeulyn and the learners' travel arrangements would remain the same.</p> <p>The authority would need to provide transport for learners in the ALN unit.</p> <p>No learner in the Baladeulyn catchment area will need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.</p>	<p>Neutral - No change to the provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p> <p>Keep the school and its potential as a community resource in the village of Nantlle.</p>
<p>Option 7 - Include a language unit on the site of Ysgol Baladeulyn</p>	<p>Neutral - No impact on the provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn</p> <p>Opportunity to develop an additional resource to provide specific support for latecomers in a Language Centre on the school's site.</p>	<p>Neutral</p> <p>Learners would continue to be taught at Ysgol Baladeulyn and the learners' travel arrangements would remain the same.</p> <p>No learner in the Baladeulyn catchment area will need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.</p> <p>The authority would need to provide transport for learners in the language unit.</p>	<p>Neutral - Keep the school and its potential as a community resource in the village of Nantlle.</p>

Assessment of the Additional Reasonable Options Suggested by Consultees:

Option	Assessment of the probable impact on the quality and standards of education	Assessment of the probable impact on different transport arrangements	Assessment of the probable impact on the community
<p>11.6 Re-categorising Ysgol Baladeulyn as a mainstream and ALN hybrid primary school to offer a specialist provision for the local area</p>	<p>Neutral/Partly positive</p> <p>No impact on the mainstream provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn.</p> <p>Opportunity to develop a specialist hybrid provision to support learners with ALN. It is anticipated that it would have a positive impact on the 'Vulnerable pupils, including children with Additional Learning Needs' and 'Provision that at least corresponds to what is available to learners at the time (including those with ALN)' criteria.</p>	<p>Neutral</p> <p>The mainstream learners would continue to be taught at Ysgol Baladeulyn and the mainstream learners' travel arrangements would remain the same.</p> <p>The authority would need to provide transport for new learners registering for the mainstream and ALN hybrid provision.</p> <p>No learner in the Baladeulyn catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school.</p>	<p>Neutral</p> <p>Keep the mainstream school and its potential as a community resource in the village of Nantlle.</p>

An appraisal of the options:

Following the consultation, the Authority carried out a further assessment of the proposal and the alternative options included in the original proposal paper, along with an evaluation of the additional reasonable alternative noted by consultees, using the same assessment framework that was used for the original options. A detailed comparison of all options is included in Appendix B – Options Appraisal, and the following table summarises the main conclusions of the appraisal and explains the reasons for not proceeding with the alternative option.

Option	Reasons for rejecting the option
<p>Option 1 - No change - continue with the current situation</p>	<p>Following assessment, it is concluded that maintaining the current situation does not adequately address the challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn, namely the very low number of learners, a very high proportion of surplus places, a single class with a wide age range, continued projections of low pupil numbers, a catchment pattern in which the majority of learners choose other schools, and a cost per pupil that is significantly higher than the county average. This option does not offer a solution to any of these factors, and therefore it is not considered a reasonable choice for ensuring sustainable primary provision in the medium or long term.</p>
<p>Option 2 - Federation with a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn)</p>	<p>It is considered that federating with a neighbouring school would not be sufficient to address the fundamental challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn. There is no evidence that this option would lead to a</p>

	<p>meaningful increase in learner numbers or a reduction in the high proportion of surplus places, and therefore the current structure of small classes with a wide age range would remain. In addition, the projected low pupil numbers and the existing pattern of learners within the catchment choosing other schools would remain unchanged, with the associated financial challenges and high cost per pupil continuing.</p>
<p>Option 3 - Federation with a nearby school adding a specialist unit for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn</p>	<p>Although specialist ALN provision is strategically important, it is concluded that this option does not address the core challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn as a local primary school. Learners accessing the specialist provision would continue to be registered at their original schools, and therefore the option would not increase the school's registered pupil numbers nor reduce the high level of surplus places. As a result, the current structure of small classes, the wide age range, and the existing financial challenges would remain, without providing a sustainable solution to the current situation.</p>
<p>Option 4 - Close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer a place for the learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn)</p>	<p><i>Note: This was the preferred option presented during the statutory consultation.</i></p>
<p>Option 5- Merge local schools in order to support and maintain Ysgol Baladeulyn - Multi-site school</p>	<p>It is considered that this model does not adequately address the fundamental challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn. There is no evidence that the arrangement would lead to a meaningful increase in learner numbers or any change to the current pattern of high surplus places. As a result, the structure of small classes, the projected low pupil numbers, and the associated financial challenges would remain, without securing the long-term sustainability of the provision.</p>
<p>Option 6 - Add a specialist unit for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn</p>	<p>Although specialist ALN provision is strategically important, it is concluded that this option does not address the core challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn as a community primary school. Establishing a specialist unit would not increase the registered numbers in the mainstream provision nor reduce the high level of surplus places, and therefore the current structure of small classes, the wide age range, and the existing financial challenges would remain, without providing a sustainable solution to the current situation.</p>
<p>Option 7 - Include a language unit on the site of Ysgol Baladeulyn</p>	<p>Following assessment, it is concluded that this option does not provide a solution to the challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn. Although a language centre could make partial use of the site, learners attending the centre would continue to be registered at their home schools, and therefore the option would not increase the school's registered pupil numbers. As a result, the high level of surplus places, the small classes with a wide age range, and the existing financial challenges would remain unaddressed.</p>
<p>Options suggested during the consultation:</p>	
<p>Re-categorising Ysgol Baladeulyn as a 'hybrid' mainstream and ALN primary school in order to provide specialist provision for the local area.</p>	<p>This option would involve re-categorising Ysgol Baladeulyn as a 'hybrid' mainstream primary school, incorporating specialist education for children with additional learning needs on the school site. This option would provide hybrid education for primary-age learners in the local area, enabling them to attend Ysgol Baladeulyn as a mainstream school and/or with access to specialist ALN provision.</p>

As the school building would need to be adapted to provide space for the specialist area, the school's capacity would be likely to decrease, and therefore it is anticipated that this option would lead to a reduction in surplus places.

However, pupil numbers at Ysgol Baladeulyn have reached a critical point, with 6 full-time learners (Reception – Year 6) and 2 part-time learners (Nursery) on roll. As learners accessing specialist education provision would continue to be registered as pupils at their original school, it is not anticipated that re-categorising Ysgol Baladeulyn as a mainstream hybrid primary school, to include specialist education for children with additional learning needs, would have an impact on pupil numbers.

8. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

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.

a. Welsh Language Impact Assessment

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.

During the consultation, concerns were expressed about the possible impact of the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn on the community use of the Welsh language within the village. Numerous respondents emphasised the role of the school in integrating new families, including some from English speaking backgrounds, into the Welsh-speaking life of the village. It was emphasised that the school contributes significantly to the use of the Welsh language in informal contexts, such as social meetings, play after school and interaction between parents and residents. Concern was expressed that the loss of the school could undermine the local linguistic ecosystem, leading to a gradual reduction in community use of the Welsh language.

The Council acknowledges the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Baladeulyn 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.

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

- The January 2026 PLASC data shows that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn.
- The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer learners a place in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) means that learners in the Nantlle 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 opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a wider group of peers.

Given the above, if the proposal were to be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be more opportunities for learners in the Nantlle catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers inside and outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and informal use of the language would strengthen.

At the same time, given the comments from the consultation, the Council recognises that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn 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 Nantlle 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 currently held there.

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 Nantlle 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.

b. Equality Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment was carried out on the proposal, and the assessment was revised following the statutory consultation. The full assessment can be found in Appendix C.

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 that the proposal takes account of and aligns with equal rights.

As noted in the most recent assessment, during the statutory consultation, several 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. It was also noted that the loss of the school could undermine opportunities for people to use Welsh as a living, practical language in the everyday life of the community.

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 Talysarn. In addition, it is noted that the Council is committed to ensuring that any transition arrangements prioritise individual needs, including those of vulnerable children and learners with additional learning needs should the school close. Regarding concerns about the community use of the Welsh language, it is noted that mitigation measures would be considered, including promoting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school through community activities, and considering appropriate options for the post-use of the school building in order to support continued use of the Welsh language in the local community.

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 the Welsh language within the local community, especially in terms of its informal use outside of 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 is no unlawful discrimination or harassment, and that individual needs will be appropriately considered.

The Council remains of the view that the implementing of the proposal would reduce the inequality in cases of socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that the learners have more experiences and access to more services and activities at Ysgol Talysarn.

By implementing the proposal, Ysgol Baladeulyn learners would benefit from an improved learning environment and from having more age-appropriate peers in a school with a larger number of learners, which would help ensure suitable educational and extra-curricular experiences, as well as access to a wider range of extra-curricular activities.

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

c. Well-being of Future Generations Act

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

The latest assessment notes that during the 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 facing socio economic disadvantage, and the linguistic and community vitality of the village.

In the latest assessment notes that during the consultation, some specific concerns were raised, particularly in relation to the impact of the proposal on vulnerable learners, learners with additional learning needs, the wellbeing of families facing socio-economic disadvantage, and the linguistic and community vitality of the village.

It is acknowledged that, should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal, the proposal would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of learners living within the school's catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%) suggesting a link between the schools, and the community of the school already exist. Every effort would be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities and Ysgol Talysarn, should the proposal be implemented. Should the proposal be approved, discussions would take place to discuss the possibility that Ysgol Talysarn's community activities would include the Nantlle community where appropriate.

It is anticipated that the proposal would ensure that children in the area are educated on a site that is suitable and in a naturally Welsh-speaking society, increasing opportunities for socialising and collaborating with others and giving them a fair chance to thrive among their peers.

9. RECOMMENDATION

Following the statutory consultation, the Council gave full consideration to the matters raised and undertook further evaluation and impact assessments of the proposal, together with the alternative options presented in the consultation document, as well as the alternative options identified during the consultation. This included an assessment against the factors relevant to rural schools, including the presumption against the closure of rural schools, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code.

On the basis of consideration of the above elements, it was concluded that none of the alternative options considered addressed the main challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn, namely:

- **Low number of learners**- January 2026 data indicates that there are 6 full-time learners and 2 Nursery learners attending Ysgol Baladeulyn.
- **High percentage of surplus places** - With 6 learners (Reception to Year 6) on the school's register, and a capacity for 55, there are 49 surplus places at the school, which equates to 89% of the school's capacity. The school also has capacity for 7 learners in the Nursery class, therefore, with 2 nursery class learners on the register, there are also a further 5 surplus places in the Nursery class. Consequently, when combining Nursery - Year 6 capacity and numbers, Ysgol Baladeulyn has 54 (87%) surplus places.
- **Very small class sizes and broad age range** - In Ysgol Baladeulyn (September 2025), there is one single class that includes every learner at the school - namely 6 Reception-Year 6 learners (Reception, Year 1 and 2, and Year 4 and 5), as well as 2 Nursery class learners. Within this class, different groups are formed at different times of the day, with assistants leading the activities with the youngest learners. Therefore, this means there is an age range of up to 8 years within the whole class.
- **Projected numbers** - Projections for September 2025 suggest that the number of learners will remain low over the next three years, with an estimated 7 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 1 Nursery learner on the register by September 2028.

- **Catchment area learners** - January 2026 data shows that 8 children live within the Baladeulyn catchment area. Of these, 25% (2 children) choose to attend Ysgol Baladeulyn, while 75% (6 children) choose to attend schools outside the catchment.
- **Ysgol Baladeulyn receives an additional sum to the core financial allocation** - Ysgol Baladeulyn 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 £74,446.
- **Average cost per learner** - The average cost per learner at Ysgol Baladeulyn for 2026-27 financial year will be £25,123 compared with a county average of £5,998.

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

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

The proposal addresses these challenges by:

- Responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Baladeulyn, together with projections that remain low, which has resulted in a high percentage of surplus places;
- Providing class sizes with age ranges that are more appropriate;
- Improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate daily with peers, within an educational environment with a greater number of learners of the same age;
- Reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the County

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 Baladeulyn represents the most appropriate response to the challenges facing the school (set out above) and to the reasons identified for the proposal, and therefore continues to recommend it as the most suitable way of addressing the current challenges facing the school.