



Formal Consultation Report

relating to the proposal for a new Area School to replace Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn
Clwyd and Ysgol Pentrecelyn

June 2015

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Denbighshire County Council (DCC) has completed a period of formal consultation regarding the proposal for a new Area School to replace Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd and Ysgol Pentrecelyn. DCC would close Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn on the 31st August 2016; and the Church in Wales will establish a new Area School on the existing sites from the 1st September 2016.
- 1.2. The proposal is that the new Area school will be a Language Category 2- Dual Stream and Voluntary Controlled Church in Wales' school.
- 1.3. It is proposed that the new Area school would initially use the existing buildings in Llanfair and Pentrecelyn until the new Area School is consolidated on one site in a new build. If the proposal is implemented, we intend that the new build will be ready by September 2017.
- 1.4. The formal consultation began on the 3rd February 2015 and closed on the 16th March 2015.
- 1.5. Following the end of a school organisation consultation period, the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code requires us to publish a consultation report. In this document we have to:
 - Summarise each of the issues raised by people we speak to and who write to us;
 - Show our response to those issues; and
 - Set out Estyn's view of the overall merits of what we are considering.
- 1.6. This report should be considered by decision makers prior to determining whether or not to implement any proposal.

2. Formal Consultation

- 2.1. Hardcopy and electronic versions of the formal consultation document were sent to 390 recipients. You can see the complete list of recipients in [**Appendix A**](#).
- 2.2. The formal consultation document was published on DCC's website and the Diocese' website on 3 February 2015. We wrote a special version of the Consultation Document, aimed at primary school children, and published it on the two websites. You can see both versions of the Consultation Document in the Schools section of the Diocese' website and the Closed Consultation section of the DCC website; just click on the proposal for a new area school to replace Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn.
- 2.3. To help and encourage people to give us their views, we produced a response document (Standard Response Form). This formed part of the Consultation Document and, so, was also published on our websites. The children's version of the Consultation Document contained an age appropriate response form. The Standard Response Form was converted into an online survey; a link to this survey was also published on our websites.
- 2.4. We published the above documents in Welsh and English.

3. Meetings

- 3.1. We held separate consultation meetings with the governors, teachers and support staff, parents and the School Councils of Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn.
- 3.2. Meetings were held as follows:
- With Staff and Governors of Ysgol Llanfair DC- 3rd February 2015
 - With Staff and Governors of Ysgol Pentrecelyn- 4th February 2015
 - With Parents of Ysgol Llanfair- 9th February 2015
 - With parents of Ysgol Pentrecelyn- 10th February 2015
 - Additional session with parents of Ysgol Pentrecelyn who wanted the session completely through the medium of Welsh- 24th February 2015
 - School council at Ysgol Llanfair DC- 5th March 2015
 - School council at Ysgol Pentrecelyn- 6th March 2015
- 3.3. Both initial parents meetings were held in the respective schools. It was decided to adopt a 'parents' evening' format in favour of the open, question and answer format used during the informal consultation. The parents' evening format created a more intimate environment in which people could say what they thought without having to be heard by a room filled with people.
- 3.4. You can read a summary of the points raised at these meetings and the responses given at the time in **Appendix B.**
- 3.5. Details of the consultation with pupils can be found in **Appendix C.**

4. Consultation Response

- 4.1 In total 205 responses were received during the consultation stage which included responses from Estyn, the National Union of Teachers of Wales (UCAC) and the NUT (Cymru). The table below shows the connection to either school (or not) of each respondent:

| Connection of Respondent | Total |
|---|------------|
| Ysgol Llanfair DC | 69 |
| Ysgol Pentrecelyn | 90 |
| No connection / Didn't state connection | 46 |
| Total | 205 |

- 4.2 We received joint responses from the following:
- 4.2.1 Staff of Ysgol Llanfair DC (17 staff members)
- 4.2.2 Governors of Ysgol Llanfair DC (11 Governors) See the full response in **Appendix J.**
- 4.2.3 Governors and staff of Ysgol Pentrecelyn which included 3 petitions:
- 1) Signed by 27 parents, 3 of which were parents to potential future pupils of the school- Stated if Denbighshire County Council close Category 1 school and only provide a Category 2 school they would send their child/children to another Category 1 school outside the area.
 - 2) Signed by 8 parents in regards to the Cylch Ti a Fi in Pentrecelyn stating their support for a Category 1 school in the area.

- 3) Signed by 37 people- parents, staff and governors of the school- to support the response as a whole.

See the full response in **Appendix K**.

4.3 Table below shows the methods people used to respond to the consultation:

| Method of contact | Number of contacts received |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Standard Response Forms | 159 |
| Children & Young Person's Response Forms | 4 |
| Letters | 19 |
| Emails | 23 |
| Total number of contacts | 205 |

4.4 The breakdown of the response types and the indicative support / opposition to the current proposals set out below.

| No | Response Type | For the Proposal | | Against the Proposal | | Other | | Total |
|---------------|---------------------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| | | (actual / %) | (actual / %) | (actual / %) | (actual / %) | (actual / %) | (actual / %) | |
| 1. | Letters | 4 | 21.1 | 15 | 78.9 | 0 | 0 | 19 |
| 2. | Emails | 5 | 21.7 | 13 | 56.5 | 5 | 21.7 | 23 |
| 3. | Response Form (Online & postal) | 70 | 44.0 | 86 | 54.1 | 3 | 1.9 | 159 |
| 4. | Children's Response Form | 0 | 0 | 4 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Totals | | 79 | 38.5 | 118 | 57.6 | 8 | 3.9 | 205 |

4.5 The following table shows how often issues were raised in the correspondence we received:

| Rank | Issue | Description | Frequency of issue raised |
|------|-------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 1. | Language Category | Important to retain Welsh Language Category for school, Importance of Bilingual Language Category in retaining pupils from non-Welsh speaking families, Long term impact of change in Language Category | 150 out of 205 |
| 2. | Church status | Reasons for and against, importance of maintaining links to the Church, what does it mean. | 32 out of 205 |
| 3. | Governance | Importance of the Welsh language and ethos, | 25 out of 205 |

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| | | ensuring that the Welsh language provision is not weakened. | |
| 4. | Other Issues | Proposal Document, Consultation method, future of nearby schools, transport, informal consultation | 25 out of 205 |
| 5. | Area school | Amalgamation of the 2 schools, financial pressures | 23 out of 205 |
| 6. | School facilities | Suitability of current facilities at both schools, need for updated facilities | 21 out of 205 |
| 7. | Class sizes | Pupil: teacher ratio, concerns of class sizes and size of school. | 20 out of 205 |
| 8. | Community | Threat to community life. | 15 out of 205 |
| 9. | Community & Welsh language Impact assessment | Value of the assessment, impact on the Welsh language for the area. | 14 out of 205 |
| 10. | Rural school | Importance of maintaining a school in the area. | 12 out of 205 |
| 11. | Site | Location of the new school | 11 out of 205 |
| 12. | Other options | Alternative options to the proposal | 7 out of 205 |
| 13. | New build | Availability of funding | 4 out of 205 |

4.6 The Council's response to the concerns raised can be found in **Appendix G**

5 Response forms and correspondence

5.1 The Standard Response Form was designed to establish:

- whether or not people were in favour of the Proposals;
- the capacity in which they were responding;
- whether or not they were linked to either school;
- what influenced their views on the Proposals and any negative or positive comments they had;
- whether or not they would send their child(ren) to the new area school if the Proposals were implemented; and
- whether they wanted to make any other comments.

5.2 A summary of the responses to the Standard Response Form and the Children's Response Form is set out in **Appendices D and E**.

5.3 On the response forms, we asked people to confirm whether they were linked most closely with Ysgol Llanfair DC, Ysgol Pentrecelyn or neither school. We also received letters and

emails from people telling us their view; some of those people indicated whether or not they were linked with either school. Details of the respondents are set out in **Appendix F**.

- 5.4 Examples of the types of points raised by all respondents to the Consultation, together with the Promoters' response are set out in **Appendix G**.

6 Response from Estyn

The main points made by Estyn in response to the Proposals and the Promoters' response to them are set out below. The full response from Estyn is set out in **Appendix H**.

| Estyn Comment | Promoters' Response |
|---|--|
| The proposal is likely to maintain the present standards of educational provision in this area of Denbighshire. | Agreed |
| Based on current provision, the proposal reasonably claims that maintaining the status quo could provide greater risks than any proposals for change. | Agreed |
| For the long term, the authority asserts appropriately that partnership working between both schools would provide greater stability. | Agreed |
| The proposal acknowledges appropriately the possible perception that the Welsh language and ethos would be affected negatively. | Agreed |
| Proposer does not identify possible concerns about the re-designation of Ysgol Pentrecelyn as a faith school. | Ysgol Llanfair DC is a VC school. Both Governing Bodies have continued dialogue with Denbighshire regarding options for joint working to ensure sustainable provision in the Llanfair / Pentrecelyn area. During these meetings an overall consensus towards the area school model has been supported alongside the new school being designated as a school with a designated religious character. This designation will be a Voluntary Controlled School recognised by the Church in Wales. |
| The proposal appropriately claims that the area school would need a new staffing structure. | During Phase 1 when the new area school is utilising both sites we envisage staffing staying broadly the same but with changes to leadership and management only. When the school is on one site in the new build a new staffing structure will be in place. Work on this will begin immediately once the new headteacher and temporary governing body are in place. |

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| The local authority has considered suitable alternatives. | Agreed |
| The authority has appropriately considered the impact of the proposal on the quality of the outcomes and provision as well as leadership and management. | Agreed |
| Pupils will continue to be transported to their designated site in accordance with the current Home to School Transport Policy. | Agreed |
| Pupils with additional learning needs who currently attend the schools would continue to receive the same education and support, but the environment may change. | Agreed |
| The second phase of the proposal to eventually move to a new area school is likely to prove more of a challenge to pupils with additional learning needs. | Agreed |

7 Response from UCAC and NUT Cymru

7.1 In accordance with the requirements from the School Organisation Code, a copy of the Consultation Document was sent to all relevant trade unions for their observations. UCAC (The National Union of Teachers Cymru) and NUT Cymru both submitted a response to the formal consultation.

7.2 In its response, UCAC observes that:

- The Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd area requires a larger school as a matter of urgency and
- UCAC appreciates Denbighshire County Council's intention to preserve education in rural areas.

7.3 UCAC's concerns include:

- The lack of assertiveness regarding Phase 2.
- Availability and suitability of land.
- Denbighshire County Council ability to fund Phase 2.
- Will the new school be big enough?
- Timescale to establishing Temporary Governing Body and appointing a new Headteacher.
- To ensure jobs for the current staff are protected.

7.4 The full UCAC response can be found in [Appendix I](#).

7.5 NUT Cymru full response was as follows:

We are pleased with the commitment to ring fence posts for those already employed at the two current schools. We also acknowledge the following point:

16.4 While the Area School operates on two sites the council does not anticipate any major changes to the existing staffing structures other than the Headteacher and other leadership positions. However, final decisions regarding the new staffing structure would be taken by the Temporary Governing Body and the new Headteacher.

and therefore would not anticipate any redundancies when the new school is created. We would also request that we are consulted with regarding the proposed new staffing structure of the new area school before it is implemented.

APPENDIX A

Consultation Document Recipient List

| No | Stakeholder | Number of recipients |
|-----|--|----------------------|
| 1. | Parents of pupils of Ysgol Pentrecelyn | 28 |
| 2. | Parents of pupils of Ysgol Llanfair DC | 76 |
| 3. | Teachers and support staff at Ysgol Pentrecelyn | 12 |
| 4. | Teachers and support staff at Ysgol Llanfair DC | 17 |
| 5. | Governors at Ysgol Pentrecelyn | 9 |
| 6. | Governors at Ysgol Llanfair DC | 11 |
| 7. | School Council Ysgol Pentrecelyn | 6 |
| 8. | School Council Ysgol Llanfair DC | 10 |
| 9. | Governors of the Other Schools Likely to be Affected (Clerks) | 11 |
| 10. | School Council of the Other Schools Likely to be Affected (Co-ordinator) | 11 |
| 11. | Dioceses of St Asaph and Wrexham | 3 |
| 12. | Headteachers and (Chair) Governors of all schools in Denbighshire | 112 |
| 13. | Denbighshire Children and Young People's Partnership and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership | 1 |
| 14. | Independent nursery providers in the Ruthin area | 6 |
| 15. | All Denbighshire County Councillors | 47 |
| 16. | Local and regional Assembly Members and MPs | 8 |
| 17. | Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd Community Council | 1 |
| 18. | Llanelidan Community Council | 1 |
| 19. | Efenechtyd Community Council | 1 |
| 20. | Ruthin Town Council | 1 |
| 21. | The Welsh Ministers | 3 |
| 22. | Estyn | 1 |

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| 23. | Relevant Teaching and support staff Trade Unions | 6 |
| 24. | Taith | 4 |
| 25. | North Wales Regional School Effectiveness and Improvement Service | 1 |
| 26. | North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner | 1 |
| 27. | Flintshire County Council | 1 |
| 28. | Wrexham County Borough Council | 1 |
| | Total | 390 |

APPENDIX B

Summary of issues raised in meetings

Teachers' and support staff meeting at both Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn

| No | Issue Raised | Response |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | How will it work for staff, especially if there is an equivalent post in Ysgol Pentrecelyn? | <p>Initially nothing will change when the new school is on the 2 existing sites. Once the Temporary Governing Body is in place, staffing structures for the new school in the new build will be determined. This will give HR plenty of time to work with all existing staff to ensure that alternative employment is identified elsewhere if appropriate.</p> <p>In terms of the new school, staff would have to re-apply but posts would be ring fenced for staff at the 2 current schools. This can be discussed further with Denbighshire County Council's HR department.</p> <p>Any vacancies that occur during the time that the school is on the 2 sites will be filled on a temporary basis only.</p> |
| 2. | Can you clarify something, in section 12.10- it states that the new school will be for 140 pupils- does this mean 4 classes? | <p>It is not for the local authority to configure the school. The Temporary Governing Body will decide how the school will be configured. There will be changes in the budget and the Temporary Governing Body will work closely with the Local Authorities finance team in terms of pupil numbers and staffing to determine how the school will be configured.</p> |
| 3. | Why a Category 2 and not Category 1? | <p>Local Authority sees that Ysgol Llanfair's model is something special and exceptional, not just across Denbighshire but also Wales.</p> <p>The outcomes of pupils wanting a Welsh medium education are equal in Category 1 and Category 2. The 2 Categories in terms of Welsh medium provision are the same but the way they are delivered may differ. The key will be how do we maintain and sustain the provision in a new model.</p> <p>It does not help that the categorisation is numerical and that some people read that Category 2 is a lesser category than Category 1, in terms of Welsh language education they are the same just delivered differently. We want to increase the number of non-Welsh speaking children accessing Welsh medium education and we believe Category 2 can do this.</p> <p>It is important to note and look at what</p> |

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| | | <p>categorisation is and what it means. In each category there are 3 clear criteria's-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Curriculum, 2. Language of the school and 3. Outcomes <p>Pupils who choose the Welsh medium stream in Category 2 have the same opportunities to go onto Welsh medium secondary education as those who attend a Category 1 school.</p> |
| 4. | One concern is that at the moment the secret to our success is the classes are relatively small; the outcomes may not be as good if the classes are bigger. | It will be about working in partnership with GwE and working with the Temporary Governing Body to look at what is needed and what the budget will allow. It is important to understand that there is a commitment from the Local Authority that this will work, and it is about what will be needed at that moment in time. |
| 5. | It will be important how the new teaching areas in the new build will be designed. Will we have a say? | The Temporary Governing body will work with the Local Authority in designing the new school. We are guided by BB99 regulations in terms of how much space will be needed for the number of pupils, and will work on what we would like, what we can afford and what needs to be prioritised. |
| 6. | Will teachers have to be interviewed for their jobs? | <p>Not during the first phase, as everything will stay the same.</p> <p>For the new build, and when this is open, there are a number of processes to go through. The Temporary Governing Body and the Local Authority will start work early on the staffing structure for the new school in the new build. This will give HR plenty of time to work with all existing staff to ensure that alternative employment is identified elsewhere if appropriate.</p> <p>In terms of the new school in the new build you would have to re-apply, posts will be ring fenced for current staff at the 2 schools.</p> |
| 7. | Who will make up the new Temporary Governing Body? | Page 20 of the consultation document explains the make-up of the Temporary Governing Body and this will initially be made up of Governors from both Ysgol Llanfair and Ysgol Pentrecelyn as well as representatives from the Diocese. |
| 8. | Does the new school depend on Ysgol Llanfair and Ysgol Pentrecelyn working together? | <p>We have had a number of meetings already with Ysgol Pentrecelyn governors and they are fixed on the new school being Category 1.</p> <p>Governors from Ysgol Pentrecelyn appreciate that the outcomes at Ysgol Llanfair are excellent and if it can be guaranteed that the staff and</p> |

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| | | <p>head remain, then that would go to some way to allaying some of their concerns.</p> <p>As we have explained to them, we believe that the new school should be a Category 2 as based on evidence and numbers this is the correct way forward.</p> <p>Elected members could agree or disagree with the proposal. They cannot say it should be a Category 1, this would need to be consulted on. Members want a new school in the area, and we are all aware that the debate will be around the language category. Education is a top priority and members have had to make difficult decisions in other areas.</p> <p>The other factor in the proposal which we cannot overlook is whether the new school should be voluntary controlled, Church in Wales school.</p> |
| 9. | When will the language category be decided? | <p>It really is an evolving process. The consultation report will be going to Cabinet in May. In terms of the consultation period it is not about the volume of responses; it is more to do with any evidence in terms of outcomes that we have missed that you can feed into the consultation process. Members can change their mind.</p> <p>If the proposal is agreed there is then the statutory notice period where people can, if they wish, object to the proposal. It is an evolving process.</p> |
| 10. | Ysgol Clocaenog and Ysgol Cyffylliog came together, have they got a new school yet? | <p>We decided from a political perspective to go for the funding for all 3 of the Ruthin projects at the same time. We now have agreement in place for funding for the Llanfair/ Pentrecelyn area school, new school for Ysgol Carreg Emyln (amalgamation of Ysgol Clocaenog and Ysgol Cyffylliog) and the new schools in Ruthin for Ysgol Pen Barras and Rhos Street.</p> |
| 11. | New school is for 140 pupils- will there be room for expansion? | <p>Yes, we base the numbers on current pupil numbers and predictions. We cannot build a school too big as it could put other schools at risk. We need to manage the number of pupils across the area.</p> <p>The final size of the school will be discussed with the Temporary Governing Body.</p> |
| 12. | Has a site been chosen yet for the new school? | <p>We are currently looking at all options and we need to look at where the majority of pupils are coming from, which is the Llanfair area. We are undertaking feasibility studies on a number of sites but will not say our preferred site, as we do not own the land. There is more work to be done</p> |

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| | | on the sites such as traffic assessments, environmental studies etc. |
| 13. | What would the language at play or lunch be? Bi-lingual? | It would depend on how the school was configured. In terms of the new school it will be the responsibility of the leadership team to decide. |
| 14. | Would all jobs be Welsh essential? | Yes; we are advising that the governors ensure that the HR policy indicates that all posts must be Welsh essential. |
| 15. | Can the governors change the policy so that posts advertised won't be Welsh essential? | The HR documents will be determined by the Governing Body. As a Local Authority, if we saw a job was not Welsh essential, we would question it as it is not representative of the school. There are a number of checks the HR department would do and question if there was anything we were not happy with. |
| 16. | Could the school end up non- Welsh speaking? | Yes it could- but so could any school. However, schools will be closely monitored by the Local Authority and scrutinized, and if they are not delivering what they should they will be challenged. It is not appropriate to discuss other schools history and, if we are honest, we have not been challenging those schools who are not delivering within their category. One of the aims of the categorisations is to ensure that parents know what the offer looks like and gives them the right information. |
| 17. | Does the Cabinet read the documentation? | Yes, throughout the consultation period we speak with them and they ask us questions. People do not see what goes on in the background. Equally people can lobby their local members aswell. |
| 18. | What would the difference be being a church school to not being one? | There is not a great deal of difference. In terms of curriculum and admissions policy nothing would change. Community schools are required to promote "broadly Christian values"; as a voluntary controlled school it would have a "clearly" Christian ethos. The school would have 2 inspections- 1 from Estyn and 1 from the Church. The Church would have representation on the Governing Body. The Church would give extra help and support to the school. |

Governors' meetings at Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn

| No | Issue Raised | Response |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | Is it possible that the decision, should the proposal go forward, be delayed and delayed by certain people who do not want the Language Category, referring to the Ysgol Llanbedr case? | <p>Ysgol Llanbedr situation was referred to the Minister by the Diocese of St.Asaph as it is a church school.</p> <p>A number of specified organisations can refer the proposal to the Minister if they wish, in accordance with the School Organisation Code.</p> |
| 2. | With all the debate around the language categorisation, could an option be 2 separate new build buildings, one for Category 1 school and one for Category 2 school? | This would not be an option as it would not be sustainable and would be 2 schools instead of 1. If the proposal goes ahead it will be a decision for the Temporary Governing Body to determine how the new school would be configured. |
| 3. | Taking into account the current climate if 100% of Ysgol Pentrecelyn do not want it, can it still go ahead? | <p>It is not about the volume of negative responses that we receive, it is about the case being made and this being backed up by evidence.</p> <p>Responses need to be focused on evidence and the outcomes. Important that we do not lose site of the categorisations and the 3 criteria- Curriculum, Language of the school and Outcomes. In terms of the Welsh medium offer Category 1 and Category 2 offer the same.</p> <p>Pupils who choose the Welsh medium stream in a Category 2 school have the same opportunities to go onto Welsh medium secondary education as those who attend a Category 1 school.</p> |
| 4. | <p>It is a very emotive issue and we have to defend the school, it is a very difficult situation.</p> <p>It is obvious that some people see Category 1 is better than 2, numerical way of categorisation does not help.</p> | <p>It is important to note that the staff and governors at Ysgol Pentrecelyn are very supportive of the model at Ysgol Llanfair and if we could guarantee that it would follow that same model they would not have a problem.</p> <p>It is unfortunate that the categorisation are numerical and there is an assumption that 1 is better than 2.</p> <p>1 is the same as 2, just delivered differently. We believe 2 can increase the number of children accessing Welsh medium education and becoming proficient in the Welsh language. It is important to recognise that pupils at Llanfair in the English stream have very good Welsh second language skills as well.</p> <p>We agree the way the categories are classed does not help but we see Ysgol Llanfair as an example of best practice, not just across Denbighshire but Wales. We believe a Category 2 increases the number of learners that learn</p> |

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| | | through Welsh. |
| 5. | Our children come from Welsh speaking homes but we believe that a Category 2 school gives them more confidence with their English, as a parent you want their language skills to be strong in both English and Welsh so they can work anywhere. | <p>Yes, outcomes at the school are very good for English, Welsh and second language Welsh. We believe that pupils' direction of travel is very good, and that pupils from the school go onto secondary school either in the Welsh stream or the N- stream.</p> <p>Our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is all about increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers and people who are competent in Welsh.</p> |
| 6. | In regards to the timeline- has the money definitely been allocated for phase 2, and how long could the school potentially be on 2 sites? | <p>Money has been allocated for the new build by councillors and feasibility work on site location has started. This has obviously started at risk so if the proposal does go ahead we have started some of the preparatory works. We will not go public with our preferred site until we own the site.</p> <p>We would hope that the one school on the 2 sites would only be for one academic year, if all goes smoothly in terms of the build.</p> |
| 7. | How long do the feasibility studies take? | We have a number of studies that we will be carrying out on the sites- traffic study, environmental impact etc. Work is ongoing. |
| 8. | Will the governors have input into the projected size of the new school, which is currently 140? | <p>The document states that the building will be 140 pupils but this is negotiable. We looked at projected pupil numbers at both schools and added a tiny bit extra. We cannot build too big as we will be creating surplus places, also there is a risk that building too big could negatively affect another school. We need to find a balance so that the school is flexible and that the school is 'future proofed'.</p> <p>We can debate the figure with the Temporary Governing Body at the appropriate time.</p> |
| 9. | Timeline is very tight if the new school is to open September 2017. | We agree, but by starting some of the work now we are hopeful that we can make that deadline. |
| 10. | What will the staffing structure look like? | <p>The staffing structure during the first phase when the school is on the current sites will not change, but remain as they are.</p> <p>There will be 12 months for the Temporary Governing Body to decide how to configure the new school, their budget and what staff they will need.</p> |
| 11. | What is the process of building a new | We would work with representatives from the Temporary Governing Body on the design. The |

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| | school? How will it work? | design will have to be a certain size in terms of pupil numbers and how much space they will be required by building regulations BB99. Inevitably, we will need to work on what you ideally would like and what is affordable and this is a process of value engineering. We can take you to see other schools and show you how it is important that the space created is flexible. The curriculum is changing at a fast pace and it is important to future proof the design. |
| 12. | The decision on Ysgol Llanbedr, how will this affect things? | There are a number of options for Llanbedr which we are looking into with the Diocese. This consultation is independent of the Llanbedr process and will not be affected by any decision there. |
| 13. | Does the new build depend on Ysgol Pentrecelyn closing? | Members want a new area school for this area, and their vision is Category 2, voluntary controlled school. Their vision is to close both Ysgol Pentrecelyn and Ysgol Llanfair, that is the preferred option. Things remaining as they are- the status quo- is not an option, it is not sustainable. |
| 14. | Has there been any proposal for the school to be Category 1? | Back in 2013 when we did the informal review of the Ruthin area we had an open mind; we wanted to understand the language needs and the view on church status. After looking at the evidence and looking at the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, it was discussed that Category 2 does more than Category 1 in terms of increasing the numbers of Welsh language speakers. |
| 15. | Words such as 'downgrading' and 'diluting' need to be challenged in terms of the categorisation? The way the categories are presented needs to change away from the numerical way. | Absolutely, we agree. |
| 16. | How much could this proposal change, how much influence can we have? | The report from this consultation will go to Cabinet in May, they will not be able to change it and say the new school will be Category 1. They would have to ask us to go out to consultation on a new proposal i.e. the new area school being Category 1. |
| 17. | Would this affect our timescales though? | Yes it would. However, we have the money for the new build, we bid for the money along with the proposal for the Ruthin town schools and the new build for Ysgol Carreg Emlyn. The funding has now been allocated. |
| 18. | What happens if in a few years' time parents choose to send their children to | It is important that we do not lose sight of the categorisations and the 3 criteria- Curriculum, |

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| | <p>the English stream, how can this be mitigated, how do we stop parents making this choice? Can you say a percentage in each stream? It would be very difficult to manage; influence in Ysgol Llanfair at the moment is Welsh.</p> | <p>Language of the school and Outcomes. In terms of the Welsh medium offer Category 1 and Category 2 offer the same. Pupils who chose the Welsh medium stream in Category 2 have the same opportunities to go onto Welsh medium secondary education as those who attend a Category 1 school.</p> <p>We want to maintain the model of Ysgol Llanfair as it is now, not just here but across Denbighshire. The key will be recruitment of the head and the staff and ensuring they are all Welsh speakers. The Temporary Governing Body will need to ensure that their recruitment policy reflects this and states that all staff must be Welsh essential. Historically there has not been enough rigour on monitoring the categories of schools in Denbighshire but this is something we are now addressing. Schools must deliver outcomes that match their categories criteria.</p> |
| 19. | <p>We have seen this in Ysgol Rhewl there are no Welsh speakers, not anymore anyway.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| 20. | <p>This will affect natural Welsh communities, huge responsibility on your hands- what is the evidence that Category 1 leads to worse outcomes than Category 2, where is the evidence? We understand that either way people will be displeased and faced with a choice?</p> | <p>In the consultation document we have to say which Category we are proposing for the new area school. Based on the evidence presented and outcomes at Ysgol Llanfair we believe a Category 2 school is the way forward for this area.</p> |
| 21. | <p>Parents have an entitlement to send their children to a Welsh speaking school.</p> | <p>We want equal options in the area and we see Category 2 doing this, not Category 1. The local provision cannot be sustained as it is currently.</p> |
| 22. | <p>If half of the parents at the Category 1 school went to Ysgol Pen Barras the area school would not be viable?</p> | <p>No it would not go ahead as planned, we would have to review elements of the plan.</p> |
| 23. | <p>How many dual stream Category 2 schools are there in Denbighshire at present?</p> | <p>2- Ysgol Llanfair and Ysgol Rhewl.</p> |
| 24. | <p>Is there any opposition from the Diocese in terms of Category 1 and 2.</p> | <p>They are supportive of our proposals and are very proud of Ysgol Llanfair DC, as they believe it is more accessible to those children whose parents may not speak Welsh.</p> |
| 25. | <p>If the proposal for Ysgol Rhewl closure goes ahead Ysgol Pen Barras or Rhos Street would meet the outcomes of the children, how does the recent decision that Ysgol Llanbedr remains open affect things?</p> | <p>The decision on Ysgol Llanbedr was never factored into the proposal, whether the closure went ahead or not.</p> |
| 26. | <p>The data on page 25 looks bad as it indicates that not all our pupils speak Welsh.</p> | <p>The data comes from the PLASC in January 2014, we actually see it as more of a positive that non-welsh speakers would come into a</p> |

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| | | Welsh medium school. |
| 27. | Also the PLASC data that refers to English speaking homes. | Again this is seen as a positive. |
| 28. | In terms of staffing it mentions 'ringfencing', what does this mean? | The first phase- when the one school is on the 2 existing sites there will be no staff changes. When the school moves onto one site there will be staffing changes, but jobs within the staffing structure of the new school will be ring-fenced for the current staff of the 2 schools i.e. priority will be given to these staff members. |

**An Ysgol Pentrecelyn governor asked for it to be noted that she was very disappointed that the whole consultation meeting was carried out through the medium of English.*

Parents' meetings at Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn

| No | Issue Raised | Response |
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| 1. | Will it stay as a church school? | Yes, that is the proposal. |
| 2. | Ysgol Llanfair works well because of the small class sizes, I would be very concerned if the class sizes were to increase? | The learning offer and structure of the new school will be the responsibility of the new headteacher and the Temporary Governing Body, they will decide how it will be configured in order to deliver what is required. We as a Local Authority can advise and support to ensure that the offer is right to deliver dual stream. It would be premature to say now how the class sizes will be configured. When the school is on the 2 existing sites we would advise the Temporary Governing Body to keep things as they are. |
| 3. | I am happy that there will be a new school as the building lets Ysgol Llanfair down, there does seem to be some feeling between us and Pentrecelyn? | Ysgol Pentrecelyn parents believe the new school should be a Category 1 school. We believe it should be a Category 2 as this would retain the provision in this area. |
| 4. | We see the category as a win-win for English and Welsh speakers. | It will be down to the new head teacher and Temporary Governing Body to ensure that Welsh is not reduced in any way, that all staff can speak Welsh- this can be incorporated into the schools recruitment policies. If there was any pressure for the category to change there are safeguards in place to protect it. The Governing Body has an important role to play in ensuring a Category 2 school delivers the outcomes of a Category 2 school. |
| 5. | Nothing is guaranteed forever though? | That is true and no-one really knows where education is going to be in 10/20 years' time. We want to increase the number of Welsh speakers and we believe Category 2 does this. |
| 6. | Having a new build will be brilliant, concerns regarding the finances and what | If the Cabinet agree that it should not be a Category 2 school but Category 1, we will then |

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| | happens if the language category is opposed? Could the money be taken away? | <p>have to go back out to consultation- this would delay things.</p> <p>However, in terms of the funding for the new school we decided from a political perspective to go for the funding for all 3 of the Ruthin projects at the same time. We now have agreement in place for funding for the Llanfair/ Pentrecelyn area school, new school for Ysgol Carreg Emyln (amalgamation of Ysgol Clocaenog and Ysgol Cyffylliog) and the new schools in Ruthin itself for Pen Barras and Rhos Street.</p> |
| 7. | When will the building works start? | Until we have approval on the amalgamation of the 2 schools nothing can really start. We have undertaken some initial site feasibility works already; this work has been done at risk in the hope that things can move forward quicker if approval is given to proceed with the proposal. |
| 8. | How did you decide on the new school being a Church school? | <p>We thought about the status of Ysgol Llanfair DC as a Church school and the additional support they receive from the Church. It was also discussed and agreed by both sets of governors.</p> <p>There is not too much difference between a Church and a community school. In terms of curriculum nothing would change. The school would have 2 inspections- 1 from Estyn and 1 from the Church.</p> |
| 9. | Why does the bi-lingual offer work in Ysgol Llanfair and not in other schools? | Unfortunately, in the past monitoring of the categorisations has not been as stringent, but moving forward as a Local Authority we are committed in ensuring a school's categorisation matches what it is delivering and its outcomes. We would ensure that safeguards are put in place around the Governing Body to ensure that what has happened previously would not happen. |
| 10. | To us it is important that our child is fluent in English? | Outcomes in English are just as important as outcomes in Welsh. We believe a Category 2 school can help pupils have good outcomes in both English and Welsh. |
| 11. | We are very happy with the offer at the moment- does not take for much for it to go wrong? | It is all about continuously monitoring, working in partnership and taking responsibility for all learners. |
| 12. | Over the long term the press are saying that the number of Welsh speakers will decrease, we need to maintain the level of Welsh? | If we are going to safeguard the language we need to increase the effort to speak Welsh. |
| 13. | We are concerned about the risks that surround this change? | The bigger risk is to do nothing and allow things to continue as they are. One school is not sustainable and there is a risk we could miss this |

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| | | opportunity for a new school for the area. We need to be mindful in terms of managing any risks that come with the proposal. |
| 14. | So in terms of classrooms in the new build the ratio does not have to be 30 pupils to 1 teacher? | At the stage of designing the building we will work in partnership with the Governing Body, as we have done on other projects such as Rhyl High and Ysgol Dyffryn Ial. We do a lot of consultation with the pupils as well as the Governing Body and staff. |
| 15. | What is hoped to be achieved with a new area school? | Currently we have 2 schools in the area; we know that this is not sustainable and we also know both schools have problems in terms of accommodation. We are on the outskirts of Ruthin and the view of Cabinet is to reduce surplus places whilst maintaining the good standard of education and giving parents a choice of a rural school. |
| 16. | What is 'rural education'? | That education remains in the community and not solely in the larger towns. This means parents still have a choice and that some schools remain in the community. It is about a balanced sustainable approach. |
| 17. | How much is the new school building going to cost? | We have a budget of £3.4 million for the new build. |
| 18. | From a design point of view, what is the upper limit, the maximum number of pupils a classroom will be designed for? | 30 is the maximum. |
| 19. | In terms of the size of the overall school, I would say Ysgol Llanfair is at its maximum now with around 100 pupils, it starts to lose its intimacy when it gets bigger , I think it ceases to be 'rural' if it gets any bigger. When we moved to the area we wanted a small school, size does matter especially at primary age. In a small school the children get to know one another, a headteacher can teach and all kids are part of the Christmas play. I have to say I would move my children if the proposal went ahead as I believe the school would be too big. | Point noted |
| 20. | Clarification of impact of proposal on their children | Timescales confirmed that the new school would operate across the current 2 sites as of September 2016, with the planned new school operational as of September 2017 |
| 21. | Would the proposal amend current options for pupils to be educated in either stream? | Language options would stay the same for parents of Ysgol Llanfair, as they could indicate whether they wished their children to be educated in either language stream. They would be expected to be competent in both |

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| | | <p>languages by the end of KS2.</p> <p>The Council believes that should the new school be a Category 2 school this would not be detrimental to the Welsh language as this would not impact upon outcomes.</p> |
| 22. | Would the Headteacher remain? | This would be a matter for the Temporary Governing Body to consider. |
| 23. | What would be the main changes for pupils? | <p>Many elements would stay the same in the first phase. There would be minimum change in respect of curriculum delivery with teaching staff expected to be the same. Elements which would change would be the name and uniform.</p> <p>The Council believes that the proposal offers parents the opportunity to maintain Welsh medium provision. The Council needs to reduce the number of places and schools in the area and this proposal will assist this.</p> |
| 24. | Would there be pupil movement between the two sites should the schools amalgamate? | As the arrangements would be for 12 months we believe this would be very unlikely. However the final decision will be made by the new Temporary Governing Body in partnership with the new Headteacher in how the 2 sites would operate. |
| 25. | Where will the funding come for the new school? | <p>The funding is planned to come from Denbighshire 100% and this is what is in the current capital plan.</p> <p>The Council will discuss with the Church in Wales issues in relation to the disposal of sites and any finance that may be received in due course, should the proposal proceed.</p> |
| 26. | What sites are being considered? Will highway safety and safe routes to school be considered? | A number of sites are under discussion. The Council are exploring a number of issues such as highways access, planning policy etc. The issues in relation to walking routes to school etc. will all be considered carefully over the coming months. |
| 27. | Would the number of pupils educated through the medium of Welsh be increased if it was a Category 1 school? | The Council has focussed on the outcomes for the children more than the actual category of the school. Based on this, the Council believes that the current proposal would allow a greater number of pupils to be educated through the medium of Welsh. |
| 28. | As a parent I have strong views in favour of the benefits of the dual stream provision as this will deliver the most sustainable provision for the area in the long term. | Point noted |
| 29. | How will the Council monitor standards to ensure a full Welsh curriculum is | The delivery of the curriculum would be a matter for the Governing Body of the new |

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| | offered? | school. The Council will monitor this and it would be the role of the Head of Education to hold the Governing Body accountable should standards decline, including curriculum offer. |
| 30. | What do you expect will be the outcome of the proposal on children currently attending the school? | We expect that for pupils who attend the school that the outcomes from the new school should be similar. The Council is of a view that the present proposal allows more pupils to access a Welsh medium education and allows pupils who initially may have chosen an English medium education to become immersed in the Welsh ethos and potentially transfer to the Welsh stream. |
| 31. | Will pupils from a wider area be able to attend the school? | The process for applications to the new school will be the same, and all pupils will be able to apply subject to capacity numbers; and then eligibility rules will come into play. |
| 32. | Would a crossing be provided on the A525 through the village to enable pupils to access the Village Hall? | This would need to be considered in the assessment of traffic movements and the location of the new school. |
| 33. | Is this approach, as in the proposal, a way to get around the issue of not being able to federate? | The option of federation was removed last year for a community and a voluntary controlled school to come together. Federation was seen as a first phase towards an amalgamation on one site. This change in regulations resulted in an alternative option of amalgamation in two phases emerging and being supported by Cabinet. |
| 34. | When will the Council know the preferred site? Will the existing sites be looked at? | Members have committed finances to looking for a new site and various surveys have been commissioned ahead of receiving confirmation of any school organisational proposals. All options will be considered. Redeveloping the existing sites will produce difficulties which would need to be addressed, particularly the poor highways' access to the Llanfair site. |
| 35. | Will the new school continue its links with the Church? | The new school would be a voluntary controlled school and maintain its links with the Church. This would be an issue for the new Temporary Governing Body and the Church in Wales to develop further. |
| 36. | What do the parents at Ysgol Llanfair think if the school was a Category 1? | Some parents have told us they would move their child/ ren. |
| 37. | Around 70% of the children in Ysgol Llanfair DC are educated in Welsh, why isn't Category 1 the starting point? | Pupils at Ysgol Llanfair do not all start in the Welsh stream; the way Ysgol Llanfair delivers Category 2 outcomes is very successful. We understand that a major concern is the sustainability of this and retaining it. We need to put in place safeguards to ensure |

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| | | the offer maintains the outcomes and put in place certain things which can ensure that the Welsh offer is not diluted, for example to ensure the recruitment policy allows jobs to be advertised Welsh essential. |
| 38. | Ysgol Carreg Emlyn is a Category 1? Why? | <p>The difference in that situation was that Ysgol Cyffylliog, although classed as a Category 2 school, offered very little dual stream provision- it was mainly through the medium of Welsh. There was a very small cohort of pupils who had been assessed in English and second language Welsh over the last few years, however most pupils were assessed in Welsh.</p> <p>The balance overall was much greater for Welsh medium education in the area. Ysgol Llanfair offers something distinctive.</p> |
| 39. | This proposal will lose parents? Do you want that? For parents not to send their children to the local school? | No, we want to encourage more people into the Welsh language. The categorisation system is not ideal but we believe a Category 2 school gives both sets of children access to the curriculum in either language. |
| 40. | What about the future of the Welsh language? | The council as a whole has commissioned a report which looks at the Welsh language provision across the whole council area. This work has been done over the last 12 months and was looking at gaps in provision. The audit is now completed and a draft of the report is being prepared. |
| 41. | Do you have evidence that pupils start in the English and move into the Welsh stream? | <p>We know of English speaking families in the area whose children have attended Ysgol Llanfair and originally started in the English medium stream and moved in the Welsh stream and therefore coming out of the school fully bilingual.</p> <p>Figures from February 2015 show that of the 103 pupils:</p> <p>76 pupils (73.8%)- Welsh stream</p> <p>27 pupils (26.2%)- English stream</p> <p>18 of these pupils transferred from starting in the English stream to now being in the Welsh stream.</p> |
| 42. | <p>The stats in the document are insignificant and show nothing with no numbers.</p> <p>We don't dispute that Ysgol Pentrecelyn has some problems, the proposal looks like Ysgol Llanfair are getting a new school and Ysgol Pentrecelyn does not</p> | <p>You are right about the stats and we take on board what you are saying. However, when there is a small cohort we cannot put the figures as individual children could be easily identified. What is more important is looking what happens to that child after primary, when they enter secondary school.</p> <p>Members understand the data and how it is</p> |

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| | look strong. | presented. The Temporary Governing Body of the new area school will have equal representation from both schools and will be able to shape the instrument of governance. |
| 43. | The Category is important, despite your reassurances, when it's gone it's gone forever. | Point noted |
| 44. | Ysgol Llanfair is an excellent school, however Ysgol Rhewl is also a Category 2 school and is completely different. | We have to be honest and transparent; Ysgol Llanfair is delivering to the Category, but Ysgol Rhewl is not and this is causing confusion. We will shortly be going out to consultation on closing Ysgol Rhewl. Had we not been doing this, we would be definitely changing their language categorisation. |
| 45. | At the moment Welsh is spoken constantly at the school, including social activities and on the playground. My worry is this could be diluted in a bilingual school as my children will not be speaking Welsh throughout the day. | We understand your concerns. Initially the new school will be on the 2 sites and not much would change. When they move into the new build, it is difficult to tell you at this stage what the offer would look like entirely; nothing is predetermined. |
| 46. | I want my 2 to be in the same class. When Ysgol Cyffylliog and Ysgol Clocaenog amalgamated to become Ysgol Carreg Emlyn, the sites were split I would not want this. | I understand that, the split site works there and was a relatively easy decision. If the proposal goes ahead it will be a decision the Temporary Governing Body and Headteacher will have to make; we have said one option would be to keep things as they currently are. |
| 47. | I will not have my children go to a bilingual school, so the only option I have is Ysgol Pen Barras, as Ysgol Bro Elwern is too far away. What happens if, even if they get a new school, Pen Barras is oversubscribed- where will they go? | A strong Governing Body and safeguards can be put in place to ensure that the Welsh ethos that exists in both schools now will remain and continue in the new area school; things such as ensuring the school's recruitment policy states that all posts must be Welsh essential and that the instrument of governance reflects the offer of the school. |
| 48. | I question the balance of the document and why in section 8.2 you discuss alternative schools. | As part of the School Organisation Code we have to include certain things in a consultation document, and looking at alternative provision is something we have to detail. |
| 49. | In terms of the stats can we not use fractions or would that break confidentiality? | Yes it would as it might make a pupil easily identifiable. It is important to note that elected members do understand the stats and that some schools have small cohorts. |
| 50. | How do you influence parental choice? If its dual-stream 50%-50% in each stream? | It's not about the number, it's more about the offer and how it works. |
| 51. | Can you say Welsh essential in recruitment policy? | Yes you can. |
| 52. | Who would monitor it? | The Local Authority would monitor it. There is a strong Welsh in Education Strategic group, |

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| | | <p>which is currently undertaking a big piece of work looking at both primary and secondary school language categorisation.</p> <p>This group is responsible for monitoring if a school should be in a particular category, and questioning and challenging the schools if they are not delivering to the outcomes of their categorisation.</p> |
| 53. | Who wrote the Community and Welsh language impact assessment? | This was written by the modernising education team with the stats coming from the PLASC in January 2014 and the headteachers themselves. We have to work with the School Organisation code and in this it states that "the Welsh Government takes the view that the requirement for assessments should not be overly burdensome and does not consider that it is necessary to commission such work from external consultants." |
| 54. | As a governing body of a Category 2 school, can I say the afterschool club will be delivered through the medium of Welsh. | You have to be really careful in terms of the offer and equal opportunities need to be given to both sets of learners. |
| 55. | Is this just a formality? Lots of assumptions have been made? Who wrote the document? | The modernising education team wrote the document. If you are not happy with the balance of the document and you think it is biased in its information, please make this clear in your response. Nothing is predetermined and no decision has been made. We as officers do not make the decision; all the responses are collated and will be presented to Cabinet in May. The report will contain a recommendation which the Cabinet will have to support or not. They could ask us to re-consult on another proposal and this would mean another period of consultation. |
| 56. | My concern as a parent is that this isolates Pentrecelyn as a school and picks it out that it is a school that has to close. | Point noted. |
| 57. | Who governs a Church in Wales in school? | The Church appoints a minority of Foundation Governors to the Governing Body. As well as fulfilling the roles and responsibilities of School Governors, they are tasked with ensuring the school upholds an ethos based on clearly Christian values. |
| 58. | Why do parents who live in Ruthin send their children to Llanfair? | Parent can choose where they send their child to school and this choice can be factored by many things e.g. language, faith. |
| 59. | Pentrecelyn is used by local people, I guess it is use it or lose it? Local school isn't always about the language, not | Point noted. |

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| | everyone wants the same thing. I do worry the negative effect on the use of the church and chapel should the school no longer be here. | |
| 60. | The playing field is owned by Llysfasi college, if the proposal goes ahead will we still be able to utilise it? | That is correct, the field is owned by Llysfasi College (now Coleg Cambria) which allow the school to use the sports field free of charge, whilst the school exits. |
| 61. | This modernising 21 st Century schools programme which is building new schools, it does not necessarily mean outcomes are improved or maintained, its more about a good structure, strong headteacher and good support- how does building a new school do this? | It is concerned with improving the learning environment and can improve the way in which the curriculum is delivered. It is about using the space in a flexible manner to future proof the school, so it can deliver the ever-changing curriculum. Then yes, it is about strong governance and accountability. |
| 62. | Why hasn't Pentrecelyn been able to appoint a headteacher? | We as the Local Authority advised the school not to have a head, as we knew the area review was happening. |
| 63. | You have created that risk not us, we wanted to appoint a permanent head 2/3 years ago. | I understand what you are saying, but another problem is the qualification you now need to be a headteacher and the difficulty in accessing this qualification. It is a major problem and quite a complicated subject. |
| 64. | Why has Ysgol Carreg Emlyn not been included as an alternative Welsh medium school for the parents of Ysgol Pentrecelyn. Ysgol Gwyddelwern has been included and that is 8 miles but Ysgol Carreg Emlyn is 6 miles. | The alternative schools are identified by the current catchments and home locations of current pupils, not the distance between school sites. |
| 65. | How will education be delivered in the new area school, how does the dual stream element work? Is it one class for the English stream and one class for the Welsh stream or are they both taught in one class with a teacher going between both? We need to know this type of information before we commit. | The current model in Ysgol Llanfair has both streams in one classroom. The structure of the new school will be a matter for the Temporary Governing Body. |
| 66. | Would it not be better for Ysgol Dyffryn Ial and Ysgol Llanfair which are both Category 2 schools and Church in Wales schools to be brought together instead of Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn. | We look at a number of factors, such as pupil travel times and distance when consulting on a proposal. Ysgol Dyffryn Ial is a Category 4 school, not a Category 2 school. |
| 67. | What about a type of Federation with Ysgol Pen Barras, Ysgol Pentrecelyn could be a satellite or unit of Ysgol Pen Barras but retaining Welsh medium education in a rural area. Concerns about the future of the Welsh language in rural areas, this would help maintain it. | Alternative options have been explored, the current proposal maintains Welsh medium provision in the area. |

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| 68. | I don't think many parents of this school will choose to send their children to the new area school if it is a Category 2 school. It is more realistic that parents will send their children to alternative category 1 schools such as Ysgol Carreg Emlyn and Ysgol Pen Barras. | Point noted. |
| 69. | The Welsh ethos at Ysgol Llanfair has been helped by socio-economic factors within the area. This has boosted the Welsh ethos of the school. Children who attended the local Ti a Fi playgroups and their parents have chosen the Welsh stream education for their children. The Local Development Plan for the area will see more people moving into the area over time- where will these people be coming from- there has to be a balance to ensure that the Welsh language is maintained in rural areas. | We cannot predict who will move into the area. There is also parental preference and it is difficult to foresee which medium of education people will choose for their children. |
| 70. | It is important that it is realised that changes in pupil numbers are a feature of rural areas, it's the dynamics of an area and sometimes there will be more pupils and sometimes less. It is a common feature of rural schools everywhere. | We acknowledge this, which is why we are proposing an area school so that rural education is retained but is better prepared to respond to fluctuations in pupil numbers. |
| 71. | Llanfair is closer to Ruthin. Why Pentrecelyn and Llanfair and not Borthyn and Llanfair? | One reason is to increase the number of Welsh speakers, another is to manage the number of schools and reduce surplus places. We want to secure education in relevant geographical areas. Simply federating schools will not reduce surplus places. |
| 72. | The Estyn report for Llanfair is dated 2010 but Pentrecelyn's has just been done. There is nowhere in the document which shows the difference between then and now. So you are not comparing like with like. | The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, that we have to comply with, states that reference must be made to the latest Estyn reports of any schools being discussed. |
| 73. | Why isn't the category 2 option available in Ruthin? | Ysgol Pen Barras is a Category 1 and Rhos Street a Category 5, both are big enough to keep them as 2 separate schools: Llanfair and Pentrecelyn are not. |
| 74. | Villages in Llanfair and Pwllglas will develop. It only takes a few families, at the moment Llanfair school has 70:30 [Welsh speaking]. When that changes, it will follow the example of Rhewl. There is also the risk of new Governors coming in. | Yes, but they cannot change the category without consulting the Local Authority. Also, the Governors are committed to the Welsh language. I'm sorry that the message isn't getting across from Llanfair. The Governing Body has extended an invitation to parents to visit the school. |

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| 75. | The feedback from here for the initial consultation would have been 100% [in favour of a category 1] Welsh for this school. | Our view is that the outcomes are the same [with Category 1 and 2]. |
| 76. | The main point is that Llanfair is very long overdue for re-categorisation. I believe that if it were done, Llanfair would be a category 1 school. | As mentioned some children in Ysgol Llanfair will start in the English stream and become immersed in the Welsh language and then move into the Welsh stream. |
| 77. | 140 places – if everyone from Pentrecelyn goes to Llanfair. 49 pupils in Pentrecelyn; 100 in Llanfair – so it's too small before you start. | We won't commence the build until all reviews are concluded. We can re-size. |
| 78. | The new school will be a Church in Wales school. Could they take over? | No they cannot. They will have representatives on the governing body but would not be in the majority. |
| 79. | How does categorisation work across the County- is there a Welsh Education Strategy to monitor this? | Yes the Welsh in Education Strategic Group are currently undertaking a piece of work on the categorisation of schools across Denbighshire and how they work. |
| 80. | In a Category 1 school pupils do not just have their education in the classroom through the medium of Welsh it is the entire ethos of the school. This could be lost in a Category 2 school, this is the concern. Parents have the right to send their children to a category 1 school if they want to. | A Category 2 schools provides 2 offers, a Welsh Medium offer which must meet the outcomes of a Category 1 school and an English medium offer which meets the outcomes of a Category 5 school. |
| 81. | Would the parents of Ysgol Llanfair continue to send their children to the new area school even if it was a Category 1 school? Have they been asked, proposal is only asking about Category 2? | The option for parents to respond about which school they would send their child to is included within the response form and this information will be collected and presented in the formal consultation report. |
| 82. | I want my children to be educated in the Welsh language entirely with a teacher that does not have to go from them to other children in two different languages in one classroom. I want them to speak Welsh not just in the classrooms but in all school activities. This won't happen in a Category 2 school. Most go to the bilingual stream in Brynhyfryd not the Welsh stream, how does this strengthen the Welsh language. | A Category 2 school offers Welsh medium education provision and also English medium provision. If it offers Welsh medium it must meet the outcomes of a Welsh medium school. There is a review of the school categorisations currently taking place as part of the Welsh in Education Strategic Group work programme. |
| 83. | What is going to happen to the N Stream in Brynhyfryd in the future? | The 'N' stream is for Welsh learners; it is not bilingual provision. From September 2015, the N Stream is stopping in its present form. Pupils already in the 'N' |

| | | |
|-----|--|---|
| | | stream will receive additional support so that they can successfully enter the Welsh 1st Language stream and will be assessed as 1st Language at the end of key stage 3 and at GCSE. There may be a few pupils who do not make the expected progress or because of parental preference will transfer to the English stream. |
| 84. | Would the new Pen Barras have sufficient capacity to accommodate the pupils? | Yes it would. |

*A group of parents at Ysgol Pentrecelyn made representations objecting to the consultation meeting being conducted in English. They said they did not want to speak with the council representatives in English because Welsh is their first language and they could not properly get their point across in English – even with a translator (as some of the parents had used). An additional session was arranged at County Hall in Ruthin for any parents wishing to discuss the proposal through the medium of Welsh for the following week. Details of the session were distributed via the acting headteacher of the school.

APPENDIX C

School Council Findings

Report on the consultation with Pupils of Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The School Organisation Code requires Denbighshire County Council (the proposers) to make suitable arrangements to consult with the pupils of any school which is affected by school organisation proposals.
- 1.2 The code says that consultation must include consultation with the school councils of schools which are affected and should also include consultation with individual pupils where this is appropriate and practicable.
- 1.3 The requirement has been set in respect of Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which states that children and young people have a right to have their views and opinions heard and listened to in decisions made by adults which affect their lives.

2.0 Method of Consultation

- 2.1 Denbighshire County Council published a separate Children's version of the Formal Consultation Document. Copies of the children's document were provided to children of both schools.
- 2.2 Meetings were arranged by Denbighshire County Council Learner Voice Champion with both school councils. The meeting with the School Council of Ysgol Llanfair DC took place on the 5th March 2015 and the meeting with the School Council of Ysgol Pentrecelyn took place on the 6th March 2015.

3.0 Consultation Response

- 3.1 Each meeting focused on similar elements:
 - What does the school look like now?
 - What they would like in a new school?
 - Hopes and Fears

4.0 Response from the School Council at Ysgol Llanfair DC

- 4.1 What does your school look like now?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| • After school club | • Not enough space |
| • Bilingual school (5 pupils) | • Not much room upstairs |
| • Breakfast club | • Park |
| • Cabins outside of school | • Place for first aid |
| • Cannot do PE because of rain | • Playground for the small children and one different for the big kids |
| • Church | • Plenty of space to play |
| • Church school (2pupils) | • Poly tunnel (4 pupils) |
| • Classes upstairs (2 pupils) | • Quiet place |
| • Eating in the classrooms (2 pupils) | • Sheds |
| • Field (7 pupils) | |

- Football goals
- Forest school (2 pupils)
- Have somewhere to change to exercise
- Have the opportunity to take part in the Eisteddfod
- I have lots of friends
- Need a better place to eat (3 pupils)
- Need a hall
- Need a safe way
- Need new toilets/ more toilets
- No canteen
- No hall
- No where for music
- Not enough PE
- Not enough PE tournaments
- Small yard
- Sports club
- Teachers (2 pupils)
- Large hedge eats footballs
- Order of the lessons is good
- Things to play with
- Toilet
- Classes in school building
- Crossing the road at busy times
- Yard (6 pupils)

4.2 What would you like in the new school?

- Pink uniform
- SMART Boards
- Continue after school club (3 pupils)
- Animals
- Apple Mac
- Art room (2 pupils)
- Astro turf (6 pupils)
- Better park
- Big yard (2 pupils)
- Bilingual (5 pupils)
- Black trousers
- Breakfast club
- Bring a phone to school (2 pupils)
- Canteen (11 pupils)
- Children's room
- Class (2 pupils)
- Class teachers
- Class to help with homework
- Climbing wall (4 pupils)
- Computer room (9 pupils)
- Continue school council and eco council (2 pupils)
- Craft room
- Do not want the new school to have rubbish on the floor
- Exercise hall
- First aid room (2 pupils)
- Flat field (6 pupils)
- Flat playground/ yard (7 pupils)
- Friends
- Fun activities (2 pupils)
- Garden
- Getting more people in the Eisteddfod
- Making friends
- Monkey bars
- More exercise, less homework
- More football tournaments
- More sport
- Music Cabin/ room (6 pupils)
- Need a place to play when raining
- Netball games
- New bus stop
- New toilets (5 pupils)
- Nice teachers
- Not by a road
- 1 day a week you can wear your own clothes
- Park (2 pupils)
- Parking instead of walking across the road to go to the car
- Place for children to go when feeling sad/ worried (2 pupils)
- Place for football
- Place to go when feeling poorly (2 pupils)
- Place to play
- Place to relax
- Read the bible in assembly
- Room for each year
- Safer road (3 pupils)
- Science
- Slide
- Solar panels
- Somewhere to change before exercise
- Somewhere to play inside
- Space for assembly
- Sport/ PE (3 pupils)

- Hall (7 pupils)
- Healthy food
- Hop Scotch
- In Llanfair Mrs Hughes is good at knowing everyone
- Ipads (2 pupils)
- Church
- Large play park
- Library (5 pupils)
- Lockers to change
- Lollipop lady (3 pupils)
- Lots more food

- Staff room (8 pupils)
- Staff toilets
- Technology room
- Welcome new people
- Whiteboard in every classroom
- More classrooms (2 pupils)
- More room
- Sheltered play area
- Forest school

4.3 Hopes and Fears

| Hopes | Fears |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hope that here will be a canteen, hall, library, toilets and a place to change. • Hope there will be a place for somewhere to go for a minute if you are sad. • Looking forward to having more friends and a hall to exercise in if it rains. • More room to play outside. • More room to eat. • I hope we are going to get a canteen and hall. (2 pupils) • Hope that the new school will be bilingual and a church school near Llanfair. • There is a flat pitch and the yard isn't slanted. • People will get used to the new building. • Making new friends and getting to know them better. • Looking forward to having things we don't have now. • I would like to see the 2 get along. • Want to learn French. • Would like somewhere to do PE inside • Hope the new school is bilingual, has a sports hall and a canteen. • Nobody to be nasty. • Everyone will be friends. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worried about the teachers losing their jobs (4 pupils) • Worry that the children in Ysgol Pentrecelyn will not think our Welsh is good enough (3 pupils) • People are sad about missing the old building. • Worried that there will be nasty people in Ysgol Pentrecelyn. • If some from Pentrecelyn are nasty during playtime. |

5.0 Response from the School Council at Ysgol Pentrecelyn

5.1 What does your school look like now?

- Healthy Breakfast Club
- Keeping healthy
- More rules
- Teachers
- After school club
- Listening to the teacher
- Good garden (2 pupils)
- Enough equipment to play with
- Speak Welsh
- Good playground

- Large enough
- I like lunch (2 pupils)
- Play with everyone
- Do not like red paint, like it green
- Tables are noisy
- Colourful chairs in the hall
- Keep Ti a Fi
- Good education
- Laptops
- Lots of playtime
- We can cook

5.2 What would you like in the new school?

- Have the same uniform
- Exercise all week
- Use whiteboards everyday
- Listen to the teachers
- Breakfast club
- More toilets
- Good education
- Playground
- Friendly children
- We will be with Llanfair
- People not speaking English
- No nasty children
- Keeping healthy
- Sports offer
- Councils
- Playing with each other
- Good clubs
- Retain our clubs
- Good uniform
- Green jumpers
- Keep the school council/ eco council
- People who speak Welsh (2 pupils)
- Keep the school Welsh (2 pupils)

5.3 Hopes and Fears

| Hopes | Fears |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave the school here • Stay in Ysgol Pentrecelyn • Do not join Ysgol Pentrecelyn with Llanfair • The school will be Welsh (4 pupils) • To have a rural school • Have good friends • Have the same friends • Nobody will speak English | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miss our friends • The school being bilingual • Would not know anyone • Everyone speaking English (2 pupils) • Our Welsh getting worse • Have a new school uniform • Hurt the feelings of people that have been educated at Ysgol Pentrecelyn • School will not be Welsh • Would not know where the classrooms are • Don't want an English school |

6.0 Additional responses from Ysgol Llanfair DC

Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 pupils at Ysgol Llanfair DC submitted the following responses in terms of how they feel about the 2 schools coming together:

Years 3 & 4:

- Good idea as make new friends (15 pupils)
- Excited for a new school (3 pupils)
- Flat yard and field (6 pupils)
- Miss the old building, gazebo, poly tunnel and tyres
- Not sure
- Don't like the idea of the 2 schools becoming a new school
- Proud to be a church school
- Happy it will be a church school (5 pupils)
- New canteen (15 pupils)
- More children in the school (2 pupils)

- Nice to have a pool
- Great to have 2 schools together as more children will speak Welsh and this will help with the other learners to speak Welsh.
- More space to play (2 pupils)
- Looking forward to working with Pentrecelyn
- New hall (9 pupils)
- Worried some teachers may lose their jobs
- Library (2 classes)
- Staff room (3 pupils)
- Computer room (4 pupils)
- Our school has perfect field with perfect grass
- Don't want the school to close, feel sad (2 pupils)
- Toilets are disgusting, walls are old
- No mobiles
- New school (3 pupils)
- Car park (2 pupils)
- Must be bilingual (8 pupils)

Years 5 & 6:

- Make new friends (4 pupils)
- Bigger classrooms
- Strengthen our sports teams
- Gives students different opportunities and saves money
- Excellent to have a new school
- Staff and parents car park
- Good idea (6 pupils)
- Build a new school on the field in Ysgol Llanfair
- I feel weary as some pupils will not get on with each other
- Year 6 classroom too small
- Staff room needed (9 pupils)
- It will be sad when the school closes as I'm used to this school
- New hall (9 pupils)
- Bilingual school (11 pupils)
- New canteen (4 pupils)
- Computer room

APPENDIX D

Summary of responses to Standard Response Forms

Question 1 Are you in favour of the Proposals?

| | Total | %age |
|-----------|------------|--------|
| Yes | 70 | 44.03% |
| No | 86 | 54.09% |
| No answer | 3 | 1.89% |
| | 159 | |

Question 2: Please tell us whether you are responding as a:

| Type | Total | %age |
|------------------------------------|------------|--------|
| Pupil of either school | 4 | 2.52% |
| Parent of a pupil of either school | 63 | 39.62% |
| Staff Member of either school | 4 | 2.52% |
| Community Member | 42 | 26.42% |
| Other | 46 | 28.93% |
| | 159 | |

Question 3: With which school are you most closely associated?

| Type | Total | %age |
|-------------------|------------|--------|
| Ysgol Llanfair DC | 61 | 38.36% |
| Ysgol Pentrecelyn | 71 | 44.64% |
| Neither school | 27 | 16.98% |
| | 159 | |

Question 4: Please tell us if any of the following have had an influence on your view of the Proposals:

| Type | Total | %age |
|--|--------------|-------------|
| Impact on education | 118 | 74.21% |
| Impact on local community | 65 | 40.68% |
| Other: | | |
| | | |
| Issues raised under "Other" heading (respondents could detail more than one "other") | Total | %age |

| | | |
|--|-----------|--------|
| Other: Impact on the Welsh language | 20 | 12.58% |
| Other: Importance of the school being a Church school | 3 | 1.89% |
| Other: Important that the school is bilingual | 4 | 2.52% |
| Other: Important that the school is Category 1 | 9 | 5.66% |
| Other: Importance of Area schools | 4 | 2.52% |
| Other: Need of improved facilities | 2 | 1.26% |
| Other: Importance of equal opportunity for all parents/ children in the area | 1 | 0.63% |
| Other: Family life | 1 | 0.63% |
| Other: Importance of small class sizes remaining | 2 | 1.26% |
| Other: Lack of choice for parents | 1 | 0.63% |
| Other: Impact on the children | 1 | 0.63% |
| | 48 | |

* Respondents were able to state more than one reason. This explains why the total is greater than the number of respondents.

Question 5: If the Proposals are implemented would you send your child/children to the new Area school or would you choose another school? If you would choose another school, which one and why?

| Type | Total | %age |
|---------------------------------|-------|--------|
| The New Area School | 67 | 42.14% |
| Other | 20 | 12.58% |
| Skipped question, N/A or unsure | 49 | 30.82% |
| Ysgol Pen Barras | 18 | 11.32% |
| Ysgol Bryn Tabor | 4 | 2.52% |
| Ysgol Llanbedr | 1 | 0.63% |
| Ysgol Carreg Emlyn | 1 | 0.63% |
| | 160* | |

Comment: Those who stated other but did not name a specific school stated that they would choose a Category 1 school for their child/ children.

* One response named 2 schools so this is counted twice.

Parents from the current schools responded as follows:

Ysgol Llanfair: 33 parents responded- 31 said they would go to the area school, 1- was unsure/ skipped question, 1- said Ysgol Llanbedr

Ysgol Pentrecelyn: 30 parents responded- 4 said they would go to the area school, 4- were unsure/ skipped question, 9 said to another Category 1 school, 12 to Ysgol Pen Barras, 1 to Ysgol Bryn Tabor, 1 to Ysgol Carreg Emlyn (1 parent responded twice)

Question 6: Please let us have any comments, positive or negative, that you would like to make about the Proposals:

Please note that the responses to this question have been considered as part of the main consultation responses in **Appendix G**.

APPENDIX E

Summary of responses to Children's Response Forms

Question 1: Which school do you go to now?

| Type | Total | %age |
|-------------------|-------|------|
| Ysgol Llanfair DC | 0 | 0 |
| Ysgol Pentrecelyn | 4 | 100% |
| Another | 0 | 0 |
| | 4 | |

Question 2: How do you feel about the 2 schools coming together?

| Type | Total | %age |
|--|-------|------|
| In favour | 0 | 0 |
| Happy but only if the school stays Welsh | 1 | 25% |
| Unhappy | 3 | 75% |
| | 4 | |

Question 3: Is there anything else you would like to see happen instead of what we are planning?

| Type | Total | %age |
|---|-------|------|
| A new school with the building in Pentrecelyn | 1 | 25% |
| Federation with Ysgol Pen Barras | 1 | 25% |
| Keep the school as it is | 1 | 25% |
| No response | 1 | 25% |
| | 4 | |

Question 4: Would you like to say anything else?

| Type | Total | %age |
|-----------------------------|-------|------|
| No | 3 | 75% |
| No Welsh, English and Welsh | 1 | 25% |
| | 4 | |

APPENDIX F

Respondent Types

| Type | Total | %age |
|--|-------|-------|
| Linked most closely with Ysgol Llanfair | 69 | 33.6% |
| Linked most closely with Ysgol Pentrecelyn | 90 | 44.0% |
| Neither school / did not say | 46 | 22.4% |
| | 205 | |

APPENDIX G

Summary of Issues and Responses

Language:

| Consultee Comment | Promoters' Response |
|---|---|
| <p>Must consider factors such as educational outcomes, linguistic performance and social cohesion, together, rather than separately. Parental choice is also important. There is a strong majority preference amongst parents in the area for a community based bilingual school.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>Ysgol Llanfair has a long history of supporting and promoting the Welsh language by taking part in Urdd Eisteddfodau and other musical, social and community events through the Welsh language. The area is bilingual and so the school has always aimed to achieve high standards of education in both languages and kept a strong Welsh ethos.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>Llanfair Governing Body has been approached on several occasions over the last 20 years by the Local Authority, to consider becoming a Welsh medium school. However, after careful consideration, these requests were declined.</p> <p>Llanfair Governing Body believes that, if the school had changed, many non-Welsh speaking families within the community would not have sent their children to the school. It believes the same would be true if such a change happened now.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>The positive experience of the Welsh language has encouraged parents to change their children from the English to Welsh medium.</p> <p>Parents would not choose a Welsh-medium school initially and so such pupils would be potentially 'lost' from bilingual or Welsh-medium education in the longer term.</p> | <p>We want to encourage more people into the Welsh language. The categorisation system is not ideal but we believe Category 2 gives both sets of children access to the curriculum in either language.</p> <p>We received a number of responses from parents who sent their child to Ysgol Llanfair initially to the English stream, who then transferred to the Welsh stream. These parents stated that had the school been Category 1 then they would have sent them to an English medium school and therefore the Welsh language would have lost those pupils.</p> |
| <p>The local paper has suggested that merging Llanfair with Pentrecelyn to make a bilingual school would 'downgrade' the Welsh language.</p> <p>As a parent of a child who began his education at Llanfair, I would like to strongly refute that assertion. The teaching of the Welsh language</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| was always at the forefront of activity at the school. | |
| The proposal would make sense if it was a Category 1. | We believe the area is best served if the new area school is categorised as a 2. |
| Ysgol Llanfair is successful in bringing in pupils from English speaking families and making them confident and at ease in Welsh. Ysgol Llanfair has strengthened, broadened, protected and developed the Welsh language. | Point noted. |
| Want a new school but must be Category 2. Open to bilingual education but not to provision in only one language. | Point noted. |
| There is a subtle difference between a bilingual and dual stream school. Llanfair is bilingual. Dual stream suggests that English and Welsh-speaking pupils are taught separately. The school teaches them in the same class. | The Local Authority recognises that the current model of delivery at Ysgol Llanfair is very successful and we would like the new area school to deliver the curriculum in a similar way. Ultimately the way the school is configured would be developed by the new headteacher and the Temporary Governing Body. The wording used is based on the Welsh Governments terminology of language classification. |
| Bilingual provision creates an atmosphere of tolerance and inclusion and encourages families with English language background to consider a Welsh language education for their children as they know communication in both languages is acceptable e.g. PTA meeting, parents evening etc. | Point noted. |
| Unless the Welsh language reaches out to new learners, it won't have a bright future. The creative and successful work carried out in Llanfair will help this. | Point noted. |
| We want to build well educated children proficient in both English and Welsh, educated in modern facilities where staff and students can thrive. | Point noted. |
| Being a single Welsh medium school does not provide assurance of pupil numbers for the future. If the Welsh language is to survive, it is completely reliant on winning over non-Welsh speakers. This is what Llanfair has done over the last 20 years. Their success as a community school shows that there is no need to always divide our education between the needs of Welsh speakers and non-Welsh speakers. | Point noted. |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>The press has stated that the standard of Welsh education in a bilingual school is inferior to that found in a Welsh school. The staff at Ysgol Llanfair disagree with this and take pride in the high standard of Welsh at the school - at a first language and second language level.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>Words such as "dilution", "degrading", "diminution" and "watering down", are emotive and inevitably, therefore, inaccurate. Ysgol Llanfair is a very Welsh school. The basic business of the school is conducted through Welsh. All members of staff (not just teachers) are Welsh speakers, apart from one, I believe, who is a Welsh learner and whose understanding is excellent. All adverts for teaching posts stipulate that a command of Welsh is essential rather than preferable.</p> | <p>We agree that words like these, including 'downgrading' are not helpful, unfortunately the Categories use a numerical system and people see 1 as better than 2, when this is not the case.</p> <p>The Categories have been developed by the Welsh Government to give better information to parents and they indicate "the amount of Welsh used in teaching and learning and in the day to day conduct of the school."</p> |
| <p>The 2 schools are in fact incredibly similar; the only difference being a minority of pupils did not take their foundation phase and Key stage 2 tests through the medium of Welsh. The question remains how do you secure this forever when a school is a constantly evolving entity? The answer is via opening a new welcoming rural Category 1 school marketed as promoting bilingualism.</p> | <p>The Council believes that the proposal offers parents the opportunity to maintain Welsh medium provision in the area. The Council needs to reduce the number of places and schools in the area and this proposal will assist this.</p> |
| <p>Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that this enlightened situation will continue in Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd in future. Being a 'Bilingual School' does not mean the same thing in each Category 2 School.</p> | <p>That is true and no-one really knows where education is going to be in 10/20 years' time. We want to increase the number of Welsh speakers and we believe Category 2 does this in this area.</p> |
| <p>Future of the "N" class in Ysgol Brynhyfryd?</p> | <p>The "N" stream is considered to be suitable for pupils who have learnt Welsh as a second language and who, by the end of key stage 2, have a good understanding of the language. These are usually pupils transferring from Category 2 and Category 3 primary schools. The 'N' stream is for Welsh learners; it is not bilingual provision.</p> <p>Pupils' competency and confidence in the Welsh language is assessed at the end of key stage 2 and advice provided on the most appropriate provision in terms of ensuring linguistic progression.</p> <p>From September 2015, the N Stream is stopping in its present form. Pupils already in the 'N' stream will receive additional support so that they can successfully enter the Welsh 1st Language stream and will be assessed as 1st Language at the end of key stage 3 and at GCSE. There may be a few pupils who do not make the expected progress or because of parental preference will transfer to the</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | English stream. |
| Why close a Welsh Language school? There are so few in the area. However, there could be real positives from the changes. | Point noted. |
| How many currently use the English stream at Llanfair? is it effectively a welsh school anyway? | <p>Figures from February 2015 show that of the 103 pupils:</p> <p>76 pupils (73.8%)- Welsh stream</p> <p>27 pupils (26.2%)- English stream</p> <p>18 of these pupils transferred from starting in the English stream to now being in the Welsh stream.</p> <p>If these children had not switched streams the figures would look quite different:</p> <p>58 pupils (56.3%)- Welsh stream</p> <p>45 pupils (43.7%)- English stream</p> <p>This proves the success of the Ysgol Llanfair model and the way they develop the Welsh language in pupils.</p> |
| All schools in Wales should be bilingual. Segregation of English and Welsh speakers will ultimately cause the demise of the Welsh language. Bilingual schools create Welsh speakers from English families and vice versa. | Point noted. |
| Council should support the creation of an area school that builds on the existing strengths by encouraging and challenging pupils and staff to ensure fluency in Welsh and English as well as true bilingualism - as some Category 3 schools in some counties are able to do. | Point noted. |
| What will happen to the Pentrecelyn Ti a Fi? It is a very important step to introduce the language to children from a non-Welsh home. | <p>During the first phase when the school is on the 2 existing sites nothing will change and the Ti a Fi could continue.</p> <p>Prior to the establishment of a single site school we would work with providers to ascertain best service delivery for these services.</p> |
| It is said that it works because only 30% of pupils are in the English stream at Ysgol Llanfair D.C. What if this were turned on its head? | It is not about the number, it is more about the offer and how it works. |
| We need to provide a centre to deliver Welsh medium education for years to come with a guarantee. A bilingual school does not do this due to the constant fluctuation in pupils selecting either stream. A Welsh medium school still attracts non Welsh speaking parents. Ysgol Pentrecelyn has a thriving Ti a Fi which gives people a taste of how our school works, we do not exclude none welsh speakers, neither do the other Welsh medium schools in | Point noted. |

| the area. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|---------|----|----|---|-----|-------|----|---|---|---|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|----|----|---|---|--------------|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| In reference to the document in section 3.6 “DCC recognises how important bilingualism is in 21st century Wales”; does bilingualism work better through immersion in a category 1 school or a category 2 school? | From the evidence we believe that the outcomes at Ysgol Llanfair are very good and that the way they deliver Category 2 outcomes is very successful. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>The Current Proposal for Pentrecelyn and Llanfair does not:</p> <p>i) safeguard and sustain one of the main targets outlined in the ‘Welsh Government’s Welsh Language Education Strategy’ i.e. ‘to safeguard and strengthen Welsh-medium education.’</p> <p>ii) safeguard and sustain outcome 1 as outlined in ‘Denbighshire’s Strategic Plan for Welsh in Education’ i.e. ‘placing more seven-year-olds being taught through the medium of Welsh’</p> <p>It has been suggested that the proposals are inconsistent with the duty on local authorities to promote the Welsh language.</p> <p>If the new school is Category 2, the Council will run counter to the practices of other counties in Wales who establish more Welsh medium, Category 1 schools.</p> <p>How can the Council be truly committed to the Welsh in Education Strategic plan if they are closing a Category 1 Welsh medium school? And, if bilingual schools work so well, why are there only 36 out of the 1333 primary schools in Wales?</p> <p>How is the proposal contributing to any increase in the numbers who speak Welsh? How is it a sign of "commitment" that the Council is talking about in its Strategic Plan.</p> | <p>Denbighshire County Council believe that Ysgol Llanfair’s current model brings more pupils into Welsh education who may have gone to an English medium school otherwise.</p> <p>For those pupils in the Welsh stream at Ysgol Llanfair they are receiving a similar provision to those who attend a Category 1 Welsh medium provision.</p> <p>We believe Ysgol Llanfair DC attracts pupils from English speaking families who may have otherwise gone to an English medium school. A number of pupils that attend Ysgol Llanfair who start their education in the English stream transfer into the Welsh stream. As of February 2015 the split at Ysgol Llanfair was as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="791 947 1404 1760"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Total</th> <th>Welsh stream</th> <th>English stream</th> <th>Transfers: English to Welsh</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Nursery</td> <td>13</td> <td>10</td> <td>3</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Recep</td> <td>15</td> <td>9</td> <td>6</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>13</td> <td>12</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>11</td> <td>8</td> <td>3</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>13</td> <td>10</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>12</td> <td>9</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>12</td> <td>8</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td>14</td> <td>10</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>103</td> <td>76 (73.8%)</td> <td>27 (26.2%)</td> <td>18 (17.5%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The outcomes of pupils wanting a Welsh medium education are equal in Category 1 and Category 2. The 2 Categories in terms of Welsh medium provision are the same but the way they are delivered may differ. The key will be how do we maintain and sustain the provision in a new model.</p> <p>Denbighshire County Council’s Welsh in Education</p> | Year | Total | Welsh stream | English stream | Transfers: English to Welsh | Nursery | 13 | 10 | 3 | N/A | Recep | 15 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 13 | 12 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 11 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 13 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 12 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 14 | 10 | 4 | 4 | Total | 103 | 76 (73.8%) | 27 (26.2%) | 18 (17.5%) |
| Year | Total | Welsh stream | English stream | Transfers: English to Welsh | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Nursery | 13 | 10 | 3 | N/A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Recep | 15 | 9 | 6 | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 13 | 12 | 1 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | 11 | 8 | 3 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | 13 | 10 | 3 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | 12 | 9 | 3 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 14 | 10 | 4 | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 103 | 76 (73.8%) | 27 (26.2%) | 18 (17.5%) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <p>Strategic Plan 2014-2017 states that, “Denbighshire County Council is fully committed to the Welsh Government’s aspiration of delivering ‘a sustained increase in both the number and percentage of people able to speak Welsh. The Council recognises the importance of bilingualism in 21st Century Wales and has adopted a long term aspiration that all children and young people in the County will leave full-time education being competent and confident in using both Welsh and English languages.”</p> |
| <p>The Council decided Ysgol Carreg Emlyn was to be Category 1 with Ysgol Cyffylliog (Category 2) required to conform. If Category 2 is so essential for Pentrecelyn/Llanfair why was it not a requirement for Ysgol Carreg Emlyn?</p> | <p>The difference in that situation was that Ysgol Cyffylliog, which although classed as a Category 2 school offered little dual stream provision- it was mainly through the medium of Welsh. There was a very small cohort of pupils who had been assessed in English and second language Welsh over the last few years, however most pupils were assessed in Welsh. The balance overall was much greater for Welsh medium education in the area. Ysgol Llanfair offers something distinctive.</p> |
| <p>With 100% of pupils at Ysgol Pentrecelyn receiving Category 1 Welsh education and with 70% of pupils from Ysgol Llanfair DC in the Welsh stream - is this not a sound basis for new Category 1 school?</p> | <p>Pupils at Ysgol Llanfair do not all start in the Welsh stream, the way Ysgol Llanfair deliver Category 2 outcomes is very successful. We understand that a major concern is the sustainability of this and retaining it. We need to put in place safeguards to ensure the offer maintains the outcomes and put in place certain things which can ensure that the Welsh offer is not diluted, for example to ensure the recruitment policy allows jobs to be advertised Welsh essential.</p> |
| <p>The sole purpose of this Proposal is to facilitate the county’s plans to provide a new school building for Llanfair D.C. To achieve this, the county requires the premises at Pentrecelyn and the children. Neither linguistic benefits nor the safeguarding of future full Welsh medium education is under any consideration. Supporting this Proposal would be no less than downgrading full Welsh medium education in the area. The only option remaining for children and families of Pentrecelyn is to remain open in its present form as a ‘Category 1 independent school’.</p> | <p>We need to review our school provision to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make sure our education provision is of a high quality, and is sustainable in the long term, • improve the quality of school buildings and facilities, • provide the right number of school places, of the right type, in the right locations. <p>The 2 schools continuing as they are is not an option as they are not sustainable in the long term and face real issues in regards to delivering the changing curriculum.</p> |
| <p>Ysgol Pentrecelyn Governors- A Category 2 school does not provide a cast iron guarantee that Welsh medium education will be present for future generations and add to that the fact that the Governing body of a Voluntary</p> | <p>Any future change to the language category of the school would be required to be the subject of formal consultation and statutory notices. A Governing Body cannot undertake a change in language category by itself. The Governing Body of</p> |

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| <p>Controlled School can propose to change a language category of a school rather than the Local Authority then this adds to the weakening of this guarantee.</p> | <p>a school rather than the Local Authority publishes proposals to make regulated alterations to a school, including changes to the language category. The Local Authority, amongst other stakeholders, will be consulted with and could submit an objection if it was of the view that the proposal did not meet the Council's Strategy for Welsh Medium Education.</p> <p>If there are any objections to the proposal then the Local Authority will decide if it should proceed. If the Local Authority itself objects then the proposal would be decided by the Welsh Minister.</p> |
| <p>In a Category 1 school all pupils leave fluent in Welsh and English, personnel can change, parents can change but the language provision is not subject to these variables.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>The current model in Ysgol Llanfair basically operates as a Category 1 school in all but name.</p> | <p>The outcomes at Ysgol Llanfair in Welsh first language are very good and we believe the model at Ysgol Llanfair attracts pupils from English speaking families who may have otherwise gone to an English medium school.</p> |
| <p>A Category 2 school is not an equivalent choice for parents seeking Welsh medium education. Parents will be forced out of the area to a town school or another village school or even to an oversubscribed school in the next county. 100% of our pupils are attending their nearest suitable school. Parents choose to send their child to the local school to be immersed in Welsh, how do we safeguard this option for the future?</p> | <p>A Category 2 school offers Welsh medium education provision and also English medium provision. If it offers Welsh medium it must meet the outcomes of a Welsh medium school.</p> |
| <p>In a Category 2 school the number of children assessed through the medium of Welsh is dependent on parental choice. Is the Council prepared to safeguard the balance between Welsh medium and English medium in the new area school?</p> | <p>It is important that we do not lose sight of the categorisations and the 3 criteria- Curriculum, Language of the school and Outcomes. In terms of the Welsh medium offer Category 1 and Category 2 offer the same.</p> <p>Pupils who chose the Welsh medium stream in Category 2 have the same opportunities to go onto Welsh medium secondary education as those who attend a Category 1 school.</p> <p>We want to maintain the model of Ysgol Llanfair as it is now, not just here but across Denbighshire. The key will be recruitment of the head and the staff and ensuring they are all Welsh speakers. The Temporary Governing Body will need to ensure that their recruitment policy reflects this and states that all staff must be Welsh essential. Historically there has not been enough rigour on monitoring the categories of schools in Denbighshire but this is something we are now</p> |

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| | addressing. Schools must deliver outcomes that match their categories criteria. |
| <p>The Council schools admissions policy clearly states that “The majority of Nursery, Reception and Year 1 pupils attending Welsh Medium or opting for Welsh at a dual stream school easily develop competence and confidence in both Welsh and English, regardless of the family home language.”</p> <p>Parents are not afraid to use Welsh medium child care and the local Cylch Meithrins, so why is there a fear surrounding primary education. We as a Welsh medium primary school have non-welsh speaking families, we are not exclusive, we are a community. If the new school were to be a Category 2 it would isolate those parents seeking a Welsh Medium education via true immersion.</p> | <p>We believe that the Category 2 model, as delivered in Ysgol Llanfair, attracts pupils from both Welsh and English speaking families. The Welsh stream in Ysgol Llanfair is a similar provision to a Welsh medium Category 1 school.</p> |
| <p>Ysgol Llanfair DC is a unique model sustained by factors that can be changed, it cannot be preserved for ever and is in fact closing, something that people seem to be forgetting. How can the new area school work in the same way when it will be a bigger school starting with a new slate?</p> | <p>The Temporary Governing Body will be made up of governors from both schools which will ensure the Welsh ethos of the new Area school will remain.</p> <p>It will be down to the head teacher and Temporary Governing Body to ensure that Welsh is not reduced in any way, that all staff can speak Welsh- this can be incorporated into the school’s recruitment policies.</p> <p>If there was any pressure for the category to change there are safeguards in place to protect it. The Governing Body has an important role to play in ensuring a Category 2 schools delivers the outcomes of a Category 2 school.</p> |
| <p>Concern about the pupils learning Welsh as a second language, where is the place for them in the secondary sector? How does this fit with Outcome 2 of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP):</p> <p>“More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school. We aim to increase the percentage of learners who are assessed in Welsh first language at the end of year 9 to 21%”</p> | <p>Pupils assessed at the end of Key stage 2 in Welsh as a second language will usually transfer to an English medium school or English medium stream. They will continue to be assessed in Welsh as a second language unless they choose to enrol in a Welsh language immersion scheme.</p> <p>The overall objective of the WESP is to: “expand Welsh medium provision throughout the County to reflect and capitalise on the increased demand for Welsh medium education. The Council will work with our Welsh Medium and Bilingual schools to increase the number of pupils receiving their education through the medium of Welsh and to ensure that those pupils who receive Welsh medium primary education continue to do so in the secondary sector.”</p> <p>A significant influence on this target is the language assessed at the end of Key stage 2. Based</p> |

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| | <p>on current numbers at Ysgol Llanfair and Ysgol Pentrecelyn, 76% of pupils would be in the Welsh medium stream at the end of Key stage 2 of the new area school. This would deliver 96 pupils to secondary Welsh medium education based on the number of pupils at the school in September 2014.</p> <p>Based on current demand for Welsh medium education at the point of admission 79 pupils would attend a single stream Category 1 school. 18 pupils have been gained to Welsh medium education in Ysgol Llanfair due to the policy of the school.</p> |
| <p>Must ensure that Welsh is not only the language of the classroom but the language in which pupils socialise too. In Category 2 schools pupils in the Welsh stream are not obliged to speak Welsh outside of the classroom i.e. during playtime and lunchtime, trips and extracurricular activities etc. It is in these situations that pupils from non-Welsh speaking families are more likely to turn to their mother tongue. It is also not statutory in a Category 2 school to deliver extracurricular activities in Welsh.</p> | <p>We understand this concern, however initially not much would change whilst the school remains on 2 sites. When the school is on one site it is difficult to say what the offer would look like entirely, nothing is predetermined.</p> |
| <p>Whilst there is a majority selecting the minority language it may work with the support of staff but how can the school implement a policy forcing limits on parental choice; is this possible? It would be better to use a Category 1 school as the basis for the immersion model.</p> | <p>It will be down to the head teacher and Temporary Governing Body to ensure that Welsh is not reduced in anyway and that all staff can speak Welsh. We believe that the Category 2 model, as in Ysgol Llanfair now, delivers very good outcomes.</p> |
| <p>A Category 2 school in Denbighshire isn't equivalent to the Welsh Government's categories. In the Government's categories, 2B and 2C categories are very different to category 2A, and the county needs to be clear about this.</p> <p>The debate on access to Welsh-medium education which is in in the county's survey is vague, mentioning 'Category 2', which does not correspond to the Government's categories. The establishment of a Welsh school, be it a category 1 or a category 2A one, is a positive step. Any other category would not promote Welsh education.</p> | <p>The Welsh Government's Defining Schools According to Welsh Medium Provision (Oct 2007) states that categories 2A and 2B refer to Bilingual secondary school classification only, not primary. Within the primary school sector the categories are as follows:</p> <p>Category 1: Welsh medium</p> <p>Category 2: Dual Stream Primary school</p> <p>Category 3: Transitional primary school: Welsh medium with significant use of English</p> <p>Category 4: Predominantly English Medium school but with significant use of Welsh</p> <p>Category 5: Predominantly English medium primary school</p> <p>The above categories are also stated in Denbighshire's Schools Information guide 2015-16.</p> |

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| <p>There is a notable difference between dual-stream schools and Welsh-medium schools. To enable dual-stream schools to present an education that is similar to Welsh education, there is a need to distinguish between both streams in the classroom, and outside. This includes school assemblies, sports, lunch hour and breaks. It is difficult for dual-stream schools to do this.</p> <p>The small numbers of English speakers in the two schools in question means it would be a negative step to maintain an English stream in the proposed school.</p> | <p>The current model in Ysgol Llanfair has both streams in one classroom. The way the new Area school is configured will be a decision for the new headteacher and Temporary Governing Body.</p> |
| <p>The natural language of Ysgol Pentrecelyn in terms of learning and socialising on the playground is Welsh. Would this be true of the Category 2 School proposed in Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd/Pentrecelyn? What is the current situation at Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd, on the playground as well as within the classroom?</p> | <p>Initially the new school will be on the 2 sites and therefore not much would change. When the school is on one site it is difficult to tell you at this stage what the offer would look like entirely.</p> |
| <p>With the likely growth of the area through housing development, population growth and so on, it means that the vague comments advised by the Council's proposal on steps that the Governors could take to ensure future Welsh ethos is meaningless and unfounded. There is only one way of ensuring a Welsh ethos, and that is the growth in the number of pupils who wish to be educated through the medium of Welsh. A Category 1 school safeguards the procedure for the future, with each child fluent in Welsh and English.</p> | <p>We cannot predict who will move into the area. There is also parental preference and therefore difficult to assess which mediums of education people will choose for their children in terms of language, faith, size and location.</p> |
| <p>Indeed, under the proposed model, the County Council will not have a Category 1 school for any community between Ruthin and Llangollen. This would be a truly remarkable situation. This would leave many parents from the Pentrecelyn catchment having to travel out of the county to Wrexham for Category 1 Welsh education.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>The situation at Ysgol Rhewl, the only other Category 2 school in Denbighshire.</p> | <p>Unfortunately in the past monitoring of the categorisations has not been as stringent but, moving forward as a Local Authority, we are committed in ensuring a school's categorisation matches what it is delivering and its outcomes. We would ensure that safeguards are put in place around the Governing Body.</p> |

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| <p>A Category 2 school is beneficial for learners of Welsh as a second language but not beneficial to Welsh first language learners.</p> | <p>We believe that outcomes for learners in the English and Welsh stream at Ysgol Llanfair are very good.</p> |
| <p>There isn't clear guidance from Denbighshire County Council's "School Admissions" department to ensure the Welsh medium stream thrives. We may well see a situation arising where a child wishing to receive Welsh medium education in the school is denied at the expense of a child wishing to have English-medium education.</p> | <p>Parents can apply for a place at any school, and the Local Authority will make an offer if a place is available.</p> <p>Parents choose a school based on many factors including language, location and faith. We hope that the new school, as happens in Ysgol Llanfair now, attracts pupils from both Welsh speaking and non- Welsh speaking families, and that those pupils who initially enter the English stream will move into the Welsh stream as they progress through the school.</p> |
| <p>In Category 1 schools the competence of all staff i.e. head teachers, senior managers, teachers and ancillary staff to communicate in writing and verbally in Welsh and English is essential. In such schools the status of Welsh is entirely secure.</p> | <p>The outcomes of pupils wanting a Welsh medium education are equal in Category 1 and Category 2. The 2 Categories in terms of Welsh medium provision are the same but the way they are delivered may differ. The key will be how do we maintain and sustain the provision in a new model.</p> <p>It is important that we do not lose site of the categorisations and the 3 criteria- Curriculum, Language of the school and Outcomes. It is not about anything else- incidental Welsh or extra-curriculum activities. In terms of the Welsh medium offer Category 1 and Category 2 offer the same.</p> <p>Pupils who choose the Welsh medium stream in Category 2 have the same opportunities to go onto Welsh medium secondary education as those who attend a Category 1 school.</p> |
| <p>Concern about the impact of the proposals on the provision of Welsh Education in rural areas.</p> | <p>In Denbighshire's schools all children have the opportunity to learn through the medium of Welsh or English. Bilingualism is introduced as early as possible. Welsh is part of the National Curriculum, and is taught both as a first and second language, depending on the school.</p> <p>Ysgol Llanfair is currently identified as Category 2 (Dual Stream School). The normal expected outcomes for pupils in the Welsh stream are the same as for Category 1. For pupils in the English medium stream, normal expectations are the same as for Category 5.</p> |
| <p>Concerns about the provision of Welsh Medium Education in the medium to long term within a Category 2 school: The former Ysgol Dyffryn iâl, Bryneglwys School was permitted to change its category during 2002-2005 from 1 to 2, despite the opposition of some of the</p> | <p>The new categories from the Welsh Government were introduced in 2007/08. Schools were allowed to align themselves with the most appropriate category. It is important to remember that the definitions of the categories have no basis in legislation but have been developed to give</p> |

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| <p>Governors. The school subsequently closed and Ysgol Dyffryn iâl reverted to one site in Llandegla. The provision of Welsh language education was further downgraded to the present category 4.</p> | <p>parents better information in terms of Curriculum delivery, language of the school and outcomes.</p> <p>The Local Authority as part of its overall monitoring role for the Welsh Education Strategic Plan will ensure that the current strong Welsh medium ethos in both schools is retained and will intervene as appropriate should this be diluted.</p> |
| <p>There is a notable difference between dual-stream schools and Welsh-medium schools. To enable dual-stream schools to present an education that is similar to Welsh education, there is a need to distinguish between both streams in the classroom, and outside. This includes school assemblies, sports, lunch hour and breaks. It is difficult for dual-stream schools to do this.</p> <p>The small numbers of English speakers in the two schools in question means it would be a negative step to maintain an English stream in the proposed school.</p> | <p>‘Dual- stream’ is the wording used that the Welsh Government describes a Category 2 school, how this is delivered is down to the schools themselves- the way Ysgol Llanfair currently deliver Category 2 outcomes is something we wish to replicate in the new school- where both streams are in the same class, thereby immersing all pupils in the Welsh language.</p> |
| <p>Has the link between language medium of pupils and where they live? Do people (who live closer to another suitable school) choose to travel from Ruthin because of language, religion or something else?</p> | <p>There are no formal catchment areas in regards to school admissions. It is down to parental preference and it is difficult to identify trends as a consequence.</p> |
| <p>Forcing pupils to move from a Category 1 school to a Category 2 school is totally unfair and it will have an adverse impact on the linguistic nature of the area for generations to come, and will be another nail in the coffin of the Welsh language.</p> | <p>We believe that the Category 2 model as demonstrated in Ysgol Llanfair DC strengthens the Welsh language.</p> |
| <p>The closure of a Category 1 school will not "maintain the provision" we have at present.</p> | <p>The Council believes that the proposal offers parents the opportunity to maintain Welsh medium provision. The Council needs to reduce the number of places and schools in the area and this proposal will assist this.</p> |
| <p>Under the banner of a Category 2 school the new school can be anything between bilingual and English (e.g. Ysgol Rhewl and Ysgol Llandegla now) There is nothing to protect the Welsh ethos or education through the medium of Welsh. County officials argue that it is possible to maintain the existing ethos of Ysgol Llanfair – but it must be remembered that Ysgol Llanfair is being closed as part of this proposal – so it is not possible to use the existing ethos of Ysgol Llanfair as a reference for the new school – there will be a new school, a new location and completely new</p> | <p>To maintain the ethos and language currently celebrated at both schools, we need to ensure that the Temporary Governing Body adopts relevant policies to safeguard the Welsh language, such as ensuring the recruitment policy states all posts will be Welsh essential.</p> <p>The new school staff will be recruited from the 2 existing school staffs, posts will be ‘ring fenced’ for staff at the 2 existing schools. Whilst the area school operates on two sites the council does not anticipate any major changes to the existing staffing structures other than the Headteacher and other leadership positions.</p> |

| <p>teachers here (and possibly pupils) and these will create a whole new ethos – under the umbrella of a Category 2 school the teachers here can be non-Welsh speakers, there's nothing that can guarantee a Welsh ethos.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| <p>Favour a Category 1 Welsh medium site. It is common sense to conclude that students who use Welsh socially in Key stage 1 and Key stage 2 with their peers on the corridors and yard are more likely to be more confident and competent in their Welsh language skills, than those who do not. Welsh becomes a natural language of communication.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Now the Cylch Ti a Fi at Pwllglas has closed, the Cylch Meithrin continues but with a substantially lower intake. To what extent can the Cylch Meithrin continue to feed children from Welsh families to Ysgol Llanfair? What will the consequences be for Ysgol Llanfair if less Welsh families send their children to the school? Isn't there a real threat here to the bilingual balance of the school? Is there a danger that Welsh speakers will be drowned?</p> | <p>We believe that Ysgol Llanfair is attractive to Welsh speaking and non-Welsh speaking families. The ethos of the staff and school is distinctively Welsh. The delivery model of the curriculum allows for those pupils who start at the school in the English stream to move into the Welsh stream confidently and to continue their education in the medium of Welsh in secondary school.</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>A 50/50 split in one classroom disrupts the progress of the pupils rather than developing them further in the long term. The percentage of Ysgol Llanfair pupils who achieve the expected outcome in the development of the English language is weak, while the rest of the results are very good which leads us to ask the question - is there sufficient time and attention given to those children who wish to study in English? Is it possible to ensure a level playing field for all children of all abilities in both languages?</p> | <p>The table below shows % achieving level 4+ at Key Stage 2 in English in 2014:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="791 1238 1353 1585"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>English</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Ysgol Llanfair DC</td> <td>93.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ysgol Pentrecelyn</td> <td>60.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Denbighshire</td> <td>89.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wales Average</td> <td>88.4%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | English | Ysgol Llanfair DC | 93.3% | Ysgol Pentrecelyn | 60.0% | Denbighshire | 89.2% | Wales Average | 88.4% |
| | English | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ysgol Llanfair DC | 93.3% | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ysgol Pentrecelyn | 60.0% | | | | | | | | | | |
| Denbighshire | 89.2% | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wales Average | 88.4% | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Moving the school backward from Category 1 to Category 2 is a massive step backward from the perspective of language sustainability in the Vale of Clwyd and sets a dangerous precedent for the future. Previously the Council had a clear policy of moving categories upwards from 3 to 2 to 1 and it wasn't possible to degrade a school. Did this policy change in the last few years?</p> | <p>As we have explained we believe that the new school should be a Category 2 as based on evidence and numbers for this area that this is the correct way forward.</p> <p>Unfortunately in the past monitoring of the categorisations has not been as stringent, but moving forward as a Local Authority we are committed in ensuring a schools categorisation matches what it is delivering and its outcomes.</p> | | | | | | | | | | |

Church:

| Consultee Comment | Promoters Response |
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| <p>Welcome the strong moral values and ethos in the school. Feel the connection with the church is of fundamental importance.</p> | <p>Point noted</p> |
| <p>Does the new school have to be a Church School? (Llanfair is a church school but Pentrecelyn is not)</p> <p>We are now in Denbighshire building Church schools from new. The non-conformists and some without faith will lose a county school.</p> | <p>We believe that faith-based education is an important part of the overall education portfolio on offer to parents in Denbighshire, and we wish to maintain the provision currently offered by Ysgol Llanfair DC in this regard.</p> |
| <p>Concern about creating a new Church school rather than a council school, prejudicing against non-faith and Welsh chapel children who would not want a church school education? This would not be allowed where any other faiths were concerned, and for parents who are Welsh chapel goers.</p> | <p>There is no prejudice against non-faith or Welsh chapel children. Admissions criteria and the RE syllabus remain the same as is currently in place in both Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn. We would welcome strong links with the local chapel, and would hope the new school would foster a positive and fruitful relationship with the chapel minister as well as the local Church in Wales incumbent.</p> |
| <p>The church teachings are not provided through the medium of Welsh, and even in the event that they are bilingual (rarely) it does still not provide the total Welsh education that a Category 1 school provides. If the involvement of the church is so small, why does it need to be a Church school at all?</p> | <p>RE is taught in Welsh in both schools currently, and this offer will remain in the Category 2 model of the new school.</p> <p>Church and chapel services in the area are delivered in Welsh, with Welsh-speaking ministers serving the local chapel and parish.</p> |
| <p>The new Area School should be a 'Community School'. The church should not be involved with the school. Church involvement is not in tune with the 21st Century.</p> | <p>We believe that the Church still has a major relevance in the 21st Century as a provider of education, safeguarding the important position of RE in the curriculum and ensuring pupils have reflective space and guidance when considering some of the mysteries and challenges they will face as they grow.</p> |
| <p>The church is an integral part of the life of a church school and this should continue. Any new site for the proposed school needs to take into account the access and availability of SS Cynfarch and St. Mary's Church.</p> <p>The Christian character of the school subtly influences the behaviour, expectations and ethos of the classroom and school yard and my children have been taught tolerance, compassion, respect and self-confidence which I believe stem from this ethos.</p> <p>The school should maintain strong links with the Church.</p> <p>The church school is important in instilling</p> | <p>Points noted.</p> |

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| correct moral/ ethical principles and we feel that a new Area school would be some distance from the church that children currently walk to. This would mean either a) more transport, b) less frequent use of the church. | |
| If the new school is to be a Faith school this only drives the concerns regarding language stability. The Local Authority has no power to change the language category therefore how can it truly implement monitoring of the Welsh language provision. The Church in Wales overall is not, in our opinion, against a Welsh Medium School, it in fact has some in its portfolio but in this case the involvement in the proposal should be carefully considered. What does the Church have to offer the new school that is different to the ethos that is in most community schools already? | Local Authority monitoring of language provision is not dependent on the school being VC or CP. |
| A new Church in Wales area school would be very beneficial for the education of the children in the area. | Point noted. |
| The new area school will need to be within safe walking distance of Llanfair Parish Church in order to maintain this. | Point noted. |
| I also oppose it being a church school and would much prefer it wasn't. | Point noted. |
| Religion and education should remain separate. The school should not be run by the Church. Considering the majority of the UK population is non-Christian, atheist, agnostic etc. that any school needs to be secular. Lets have a modern bilingual local school open to everyone. | The school will not be run by the Church in Wales; the Church in Wales will appoint a minority of foundation governors to the Governing Body, who will run the school. A new VC school would be open to everyone, as VC schools follow Local Authority admissions criteria. |
| Is a model adopted around the 1870's still relevant in today's education system? Schools should offer objective, fair and balanced multi-faith belief education, including non-religious and other world views, rather than the one- faith religious instruction and worship. | The RE syllabus followed (local Agreed syllabus) does include study of other beliefs and world views; it is not "one faith religious instruction". |
| How much money is the Church putting forward towards building a new community school to get so much influence on the decisions of the Council? | Discussions are ongoing with the relevant Trusts and authorities as to how the Church can best contribute to the costs of the new build. There are legal considerations surrounding the land asset that need to be properly managed. |
| Do the Church of Wales oppose to a Category 1 School? | In this case, the Church in Wales believe that the Category 2 model, as taught in Ysgol Llanfair, |

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| | offers the best way forward; providing excellent outcomes, encouraging a high uptake of Welsh from children from a non-Welsh-speaking background, and allowing parents to engage more fully with their children's education. |
| Better to combine Llanfair and Llanbedr schools? Both are church schools. You would keep the bilingual and Welsh provision. | The future of Llanbedr school is itself under review. The overall rationalisation of primary school provision envisaged by the Ruthin review process did not consider this a feasible option. |

School Facilities:

| Consultee Comment | Promoters' Response |
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| Both schools need better facilities; including hall for assemblies and indoor PE when necessary, canteen, gym, and the toilets and classroom facilities are in need of updating. | We agree that both schools' facilities are in need of updating to ensure that the curriculum is delivered effectively. A new build school ensures that the space provided is flexible and future proofs the school for the ever-changing curriculum. |
| Facilities at Ysgol Llanfair are below standard. It would be good to have new facilities. However moving the school will adversely affect the relationship between the school and church/community. | The new school would be a Voluntary Controlled school and would therefore maintain its links with the Church. This would be an issue for the new Temporary Governing Body and the Church in Wales to develop further. |
| Ysgol Pentrecelyn has superb sports facilities in the form of a large playing field, donated to the school and free of charge. | The field is owned by Llysfasi College (now Coleg Cambria) which allow the school to use the sports field free of charge whilst the school exists. |
| It seems that Llanfair is in more need of a new school than Pentrecelyn. The state of Llanfair's building and location is a real issue. As the proposal is for the new school to be bilingual and a church school it results that in real terms it is a proposal for a new school for Llanfair into which Pentrecelyn will be absorbed. | The status quo is unsustainable and the Council believes that the current proposal is the right offer for the area. |
| Transport is an issue for Llanfair but not one that means the school has to move. Traffic lights, a pedestrian crossing and rumble strips on the road at the entrance to the village would help. The current site in the village is close to the community and the church. The buildings are beautiful. It would be a waste to move. It would be better to replace the temporary accommodation on the current site. | Redeveloping the existing sites will produce difficulties which would need to be addressed, particularly the poor highways access to the Llanfair site. |
| New build does not necessarily mean better education. | We believe that an improved learning environment can improve the way in which the curriculum is delivered. It is about using the space in a flexible manner to future proof the school. |

Governance:

| Consultee Comment | Promoters' Response |
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| <p>The governors at Llanfair are aware of the anxieties raised by those who believe that a bilingual school provides no certainty for the future of the Welsh language within such a designation. It has been claimed that a change in membership of the Governing Body could also be to the detriment of Welsh medium education. We believe that such an argument is not based on any sound evidence.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>At Ysgol Llanfair, successive governing bodies, with linguistically mixed composition, have consistently supported the language category of the school and its strong Welsh ethos. This has also been reflected in staff recruitment. It is our understanding that, should further safeguards in this respect be required, this can be provided through an Instrument of Government for the new area school. We would support such an Instrument being put in place.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>As it is the governors who will decide whether Welsh is a 'necessary' or a 'desirable' requirement for the head of the new school, the position of Welsh in the new school seems fragile.</p> | <p>The Temporary Governing Body of the new school will initially be made up of Ysgol Llanfair DC governors, Ysgol Pentrecelyn governors and representatives of the Diocese.</p> <p>It will be down to the head teacher and Temporary Governing Body to ensure that Welsh is not reduced in any way, that all staff can speak Welsh- this can be incorporated into the schools recruitment policies. This is no different to a Category 1 school.</p> <p>If there was any pressure for the category to change there are safeguards in place to protect it, the Governing Body have an important role to play in ensuring a Category 2 schools delivers the outcomes of a Category 2 school.</p> |
| <p>The ethos, management, administrative and social language of teachers, staff and pupils is equally as important as the linguistic medium of instruction in Welsh schools. Welsh should have priority.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>Concern that the Welsh language may slip in time under the management of new people who may have different views to the current head teacher.</p> | <p>A strong Governing Body and safeguards can be put in place to ensure that the Welsh ethos that exists in both schools now will remain and continue in the new area school; such as ensuring the schools recruitment policy states that all posts must be Welsh essential and that the instrument of governance reflects the offer of the school.</p> |
| <p>Doubt over whether a Welsh ethos can be</p> | <p>This would be a decision for the Temporary</p> |

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| <p>created. The facts seem to suggest that the governors meetings in the new school would be held in English.</p> <p>There is no certainty that the future Governing Body will be supportive of the Welsh language, it may decide to put a greater emphasis on English.</p> | <p>Governing Body.</p> <p>It will be up to the governors, parents and community to ensure that this does not happen.</p> |
| <p>Can it be guaranteed that the Governing Body can follow the expected mitigation measures arising from the linguistic assessment? Can it be guaranteed that the Local Authority has the capacity to monitor and influence in future? Should challenge not be the aim rather than mitigation?</p> | <p>The Local Authority would monitor it; there is a strong Welsh in Education Strategic group, which is currently undertaking a big piece of work looking at both primary and secondary school language categorisation.</p> <p>This group is responsible for monitoring if a school should be in a particular category, and questioning and challenging the schools if they are not delivering to the outcomes of their categorisation.</p> |
| <p>The ethos, administration language, staff appointments and management regime through the medium of Welsh would be safeguarded in a Category 1 school, such as Ysgol Pentrecelyn.</p> | <p>For a school to operate as a Category 2 school they need to be able to deliver Category 1 outcomes and ensure that the ethos etc. is delivered in both languages.</p> |
| <p>As long as there are governors who can ensure staffing of the school remains to such a high level of bilingualism, education in both languages can only be a positive thing.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>Emphasis is placed on the security of the Governing Body to ensure a neutral impact on the Welsh language - what actions will be in place by the County to ensure that the same emphasis is given within 10 years?</p> | <p>The importance of the Welsh language and ethos will ultimately be the responsibility of the schools Governing Body to ensure that the Welsh offer at the school does not weaken.</p> |
| <p>Making the new area school a Category 2 school rather than a Category 1 school endangers the strong ethos present at Llanfair. It would not be compulsory for the Governing Body to appoint a head teacher or teachers who speak Welsh.</p> | <p>The Temporary Governing Body will need to make sure its recruitment procedures ensure the staff at the school; both teachers and support staff, have the required levels of fluency to maintain the current strong Welsh ethos. This should be addressed by ensuring all jobs are classified as Welsh essential during the recruitment process and that the Governing Body's recruitment policy reflects that all staff members must be able to communicate in Welsh.</p> |
| <p>The balance of first language Welsh speakers to second language speakers may change. Governors will need to be very aware of the linguistic challenges and accountable as regards their commitment to ensuring the social peer to peer use of the language.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>Anglican schools do not have to maintain Welsh language categories; it is in the hands of the governors not the council whether changes are made in the future. Whilst this might mean</p> | <p>Any future change to the language category of the school would be required to be the subject of formal consultation and Statutory Notices. A Governing Body cannot change a language</p> |

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| <p>support for the Welsh language, it might mean downgrading the language category in the future. If large housing developments go ahead the demographics might threaten immersion education.</p> | <p>category by itself. The Governing Body of a VC school rather than the Local Authority publishes proposals to make regulated alterations to a VC school, including changes to the language category. The Local Authority would have to be consulted with, and could submit an objection if it was of the view that the proposal did not meet the Council’s Strategy for Welsh Medium Education.</p> <p>If there are any objections to the proposal then the Local Authority will decide if it should proceed. If the Local Authority itself objects then the proposal would be decided by the Welsh Minister.</p> |
| <p>The current school in Llanfair will be closed as part of this proposal – therefore it is not possible to use the current Llanfair School ethos as reference for the new school – there will be a completely new school, location and teachers here (and possibly pupils) and these will create a completely new ethos – under Category 2 umbrella the teachers may be non-Welsh speaking of course, there is nothing to guarantee the Welsh ethos.</p> | <p>In terms of staffing, during Phase 1 nothing is expected to change. During this time the Temporary Governing Body will work to develop a new staffing structure for when the school is operating off one site, and these posts will be ‘ringfenced’ for the current staff. The Temporary Governing Body need to ensure that their recruitment policy states that all jobs will be advertised as Welsh Essential.</p> |
| <p>The consultation document states that the Governing Body should have a strong ethos and policies which put language at the heart of the school to mitigate against the Welsh language and ethos being diluted. How can the Governing Body influence parent choice and retain a Welsh majority to allow immersion to continue in future years?</p> | <p>It is up to the Governing Body to set the ethos and culture of the school to ensure it is attractive to parents who seek Welsh medium education for their child, whether they be fluent Welsh speakers or learners.</p> |

Community:

| <p>Consultee Comment</p> | <p>Promoters’ Response</p> |
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| <p>The knock on effect to the community of closing Ysgol Pentrecelyn will have a significant impact, which once implemented cannot be redressed.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>It is important that any new school, and its provision, reflects the aspirations of the majority of the local community and provides equal opportunity for all parents/children in the area.</p> | <p>We believe that this proposal offers a sustainable provision in the area.</p> |
| <p>It is important that we do not lose our village schools, it would be a shame if the only option was in town.</p> | <p>Currently we have 2 schools in the area, we know that this is not sustainable and we also know both schools have problems in terms of accommodation. We are on the outskirts of Ruthin and the view of Cabinet is to reduce surplus places, whilst maintaining the good standard of education and giving parents an</p> |

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| | option of a rural school. |
| <p>This is a rural Welsh area, and it is paramount to retain the local children in their community. There are many local families with young children who currently send their children to Pentrecelyn, and many of these would be forced to take their children out of their community to other Category 1 Welsh schools if the new school is categorised as Category 2. This would have a detrimental impact on our community and society with youngsters losing their sense of community and roots, not knowing each other as co-inhabitants, which will in its turn destroy the sense of community attachment.</p> | <p>It is parental choice as to where the parents would wish to choose to send their child. The proposed new area school would deliver the same outcomes as a Category 1 school for those children who are educated in the Welsh stream.</p> |
| <p>The language and the community would be at a loss in losing the Cylch Ti a Fi and Category 1 Welsh education in the area – a large number of children would lose being fluent in the language and that is a damaging effect, which is contrary to Welsh Government and Denbighshire County Council strategies and the needs and desires and rights of people in this Welsh rural area.</p> | <p>During the first phase when the school is on the 2 existing sites nothing will change and the Ti a Fi could continue. Prior to the establishment of a single site school, we would work with providers to ascertain best service delivery for these services.</p> <p>The proposal should not alter the number of children who are fluent in Welsh negatively.</p> |
| <p>Schools play a vital role in promoting social cohesion and community spirit. Our hope is that the new school be a focus of unity and concord in the Llanfair and Pentrecelyn area. We appreciate that the closure of existing schools can be challenging, but we trust that the best of both schools can be preserved and safeguarded for the benefit of future generations.</p> | <p>Point noted.</p> |
| <p>Pentrecelyn school has been around for decades and is the centre of the village for many reasons. It helps keep the chapel well attended, not just through the direct use by the school at Christmas and harvest festivals etc., but also outside of the school by children who would not necessarily use it but have friends from school who go and they want to join in. It provides a venue for all the summer fairs, Christmas fairs, whist drives, meetings and other events that are organised by the school and also as a playground out of school hours for children to use.</p> | <p>During the first phase the schools will remain open on each site. Once Phase 2 is implemented the school buildings will close in both villages.</p> <p>Policy 10 of the Modernising Education Policy states that:</p> <p>“In the case of sites owned by the County Council, the Council will consider proposals for retention of the building and the minimum necessary land for access/car parking / playing fields for community use on the following basis only:</p> <p>(a) There is no alternative provision in the community for community events and meetings such as a community or village hall, church institute or sports club. Evidence suggests that communities have difficulty in properly funding and supporting more than one such facility;</p> <p>(b) Responsibility for running and maintaining</p> |

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| | the building would be passed in full to the local Town or Community Council or other community organisation. Community facilities should be funded by local residents in line with the arrangements which exist in many other communities across the county. The County Council is prepared to consider transferring the freehold of the building at nil consideration. |
| Pentrecelyn school also provides a reason to know the people in our community. These are the things that the big town schools are taking from the community, and without our little school, we lose touch with the village and the people who live in the surrounding areas. This would be a great shame. | It will be up to the Temporary Governing Body to ensure that all communities served by the new school are considered when events are held. |

Class sizes:

| Consultee Comment | Promoters' Response |
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| Child:teacher ratio is an important issue undermining the success of Ysgol Llanfair. We would hope to see the current child:teacher ratio maintained. | <p>The learning offer and structure of the new school will be the responsibility of the headteacher and the Temporary Governing Body. They will decide how it will be configured in order to deliver what is required.</p> <p>We as a Local Authority can advise and support to ensure that the offer is right to deliver dual stream. It would be premature to say now how the class sizes will be configured. When the school is on the 2 existing sites we would advise the Temporary Governing Body to keep things as they are.</p> <p>It will also be about working in partnership with GwE and working with the Temporary Governing Body to look at what is needed and what the budget will allow. It is important to understand that there is a commitment from the Local Authority that this will work and it's about what will be needed at that moment in time.</p> |
| An increase in the school population via amalgamation could lead to further benefits, in that year groups could be taught together, rather than in dual or multi year groups. This should lead to greater challenge for pupils and a more streamlined focus on age-specific needs. | The way the year groups are configured will be a decision for the Temporary Governing Body. |
| Prefer smaller schools (less than 100 pupils). Small rural schools are a wonderful part of education in Wales. | Unfortunately it is no longer sustainable for the 2 schools to continue as they are. |

Area School:

| Consultee Comment | Promoters' Response |
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| The amalgamation is a positive step. The services and numbers that can be shared will save costs for the council and for the schools. This should have happened years ago. | Denbighshire County Council Cabinet members are committed to delivering an Area school for Llanfair/ Pentrecelyn. |
| If this doesn't happen there is a risk of a super school in Ruthin which will damage numerous communities- Llanfair, Pwllglas, Pentrecelyn and Graigfechan and the surrounding areas. | Point noted. |
| Makes more sense to have one area school like at Ysgol Bro Famau and Ysgol Carreg Emlyn - examples of successful mergers | Currently we have 2 schools in the area, but we know that this is not sustainable and we also know both schools have problems in terms of accommodation. Llanfair and Pentrecelyn are on the outskirts of Ruthin and the view of Cabinet is to reduce surplus places whilst maintaining the good standard of education and giving parents an option of a rural school. |
| Educational provision in the County has to be modernised and changed. The creation of a new area school from the pupils of Ysgol Llanfair and Pentrecelyn is inevitable. However using the model of one of them is not the most sensible and fair solution. The current model in Llanfair is a Category 1 in all but name. | We want to increase the number of Welsh speakers and we believe that the way Ysgol Llanfair delivers outcomes for Category 2 delivers this. We also need to manage the number of schools and reduce surplus places whilst securing education in relevant geographical areas. |
| There is general support for the new area school but not the language model. | Point noted. |
| In favour of the establishment of area schools, for the following reasons:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ they increase the opportunities for pupils in various fields, ○ it is possible to reduce the age range in the classroom, ○ it promotes healthy social interaction between the pupils, ○ area schools are cost effective, There are strong educational and social reasons for establishing area schools. | Point noted. |
| Ysgol Pentrecelyn has already agreed in principle on establishing an area school. The school also agreed with the proposal to establish a voluntary controlled district school ruled by the Church in Wales. By standing their ground over the issue of language category it is true that the school stands for the principles of equal opportunities for pupils. | Point noted. |
| It is a completely hypothetical proposal as there's | The proposal clearly states that the area school |

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| no information for the new school in the consultation documents regarding its nature, location or cost. | will be a Category 2, Church in Wales school. Location of the new build has not been determined yet and the cost of the new build will be £3.4 million. |
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Rural School:

| Consultee Comment | Promoters' Response |
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| Attending a local rural school is enjoyable. An all- inclusive, local school which provides education in English and Welsh is fundamental in creating a strong community. | Point noted. |
| There is often an argument that a small school cannot provide an adequate education, but there is much more to a school than statistical figures. | The Authority is of the view that size of school does not always correlate to performance. |
| Not in favour of the proposal but would still rather send my children to a rural community school than to town. It seems that the proposal is for a new school for Llanfair DC into which Pentrecelyn will be absorbed. | Point noted. |
| Ysgol Pentrecelyn always served as a rural 'area' school, not just for the village i.e. Llanelidan, Llandegla etc. Nearest alternative is Pen Barras- overcrowded and poor facilities. | Point noted. |
| Want to preserve a local centre of excellence for Welsh language within this rural setting. | Point noted. |
| <p>According to point 8.2, the Council is of the view that the majority of pupils will transfer to the new area school, whilst accepting that it may lose some pupils from Ysgol Pentrecelyn due to proposed category of the new school. Is the Council prepared to lose these children and keep them from their nearest local school?</p> <p>Such a situation would lead to the break-up of communities, with children who live in a rural area like this, where dwellings are scattered, attending different schools to their nearest neighbours, who will as a result become estranged from one another. In rural areas such as this the school is the hub of the area, forming part of the children's sense of belonging. Sending them to school in town will oust them from the square mile of their childhood, which is extremely sad.</p> | <p>We would hope that pupils would attend the new area school, as a Category 2 school Welsh medium offer is similar to a Category 1 school.</p> <p>The final decision regarding choice will be made by parents.</p> |
| Maintaining a rural community school is paramount to me | The new area school will mean parents will still have a choice between a school in the community and a larger town school. It is about a balanced sustainable approach. |

Community & Welsh Language Impact Assessment:

| Consultee Comment | Promoters' Response |
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| <p>The Impact Assessment says that opening more Category 2 schools will provide opportunities for more children to get a bilingual education. This is true only if raising schools from Category 3 to Category 2 is the intention. The proposed change will have a negative effect on the ethos and use of the Welsh language outside of the school. What should happen is that Ysgol Llanfair DC is raised to the level of a Category 1 school (as happened with Ysgol Henllan) rather than Welsh education of Ysgol Pentrecelyn is 'revisionism'.</p> | <p>Based on current provision the Authority believes that a Category 2 school meets the needs of the communities in Llanfair and Pentrecelyn.</p> <p>Category 2 schools can deliver the same outcomes as Category 1, therefore the phrase 'raising the level' is perhaps inappropriate.</p> |
| <p>The county's proposal would be neutral, according to the Impact Assessment. Being in a dual-stream school weakens the Welsh atmosphere that the Welsh school pupils have at present. The impact would be negative.</p> | <p>We acknowledge that the use of Welsh language outside may reduce.</p> <p>It will be important for the new school to ensure the Welsh ethos is retained.</p> |
| <p>It concluded that the impact is "neutral" as the area school will be on the 2 current sites. According to the Council's proposal, this situation would continue for only a year, and the Council hasn't tried to analyse the impact on the community of moving the 2 site school to a one site school within a year. The Council therefore has failed in its duty to produce an Assessment of the Impact on the Community.</p> | <p>The consultation document is regarding the school organisational proposal to establish an Area school on 2 sites, therefore the impact assessment was focused on this proposal only.</p> |
| <p>The Positive / Neutral / Negative table doesn't reflect the reality of the situation, but rather a personal view that we think is wrong.</p> | <p>The drafting of a document of this nature is always subjective. In writing the document we sought to maintain a balance in terms of the impact of this proposal.</p> |

Other Options:

| Consultee Comment | Promoters' Response |
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| <p>Option for Ysgol Pentrecelyn to remain and be a 'satellite' of Ysgol Pan Barras and share a head teacher?</p> | <p>This would not address issues such as surplus places and condition of the school.</p> |
| <p>The use of the present sites as separate infants and primary sites (as with Clocaenog/ Cyffylliog)</p> | <p>When the school is on the 2 existing sites it will be up to the Temporary Governing Body as to how the sites are configured. We have suggested that the sites should remain as they are with the pupils coming together once the new build is ready.</p> |
| <p>Category - why either Category 1 or Category 2? Should the County be looking at creating a model that is so progressive that it doesn't actually exist at present? Let's be the "first" to create a model that truly reflects the uniqueness and diversity of the Pentrecelyn/Llanfair/Pwllglas community and secures fully, for generations to come, the status of the Welsh language and the natural</p> | <p>The Council has to define the language category of a school in accordance with Welsh Government guidance.</p> |

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| Welshness of the area. | |
| Wouldn't it be an option to keep it as it is, as a Category 1 Welsh Medium primary school, and appoint a permanent joint head with another school, as is currently happening at Ysgol Bro Elwern and Ysgol Betws Gwerfil Goch (with less children attending those schools!). Aren't there 48 children at Pentrecelyn now, which means that there are only 8 spaces left? (56 at full capacity) | Proposals are not solely focused on numbers but the right offer in the right location. As of September 2014 Ysgol Pentrecelyn had 35 full time pupils, therefore 21 surplus places. |
| What about the possibility of creating a Category 1, Welsh Medium primary school in the Pwllglas area, which would cover children from the rural areas of Bro Elwern, Carreg Emlyn, Llanfair DC and Pentrecelyn. A Welsh medium school that would be the heart of the rural community, without anyone having to travel much more than 4 miles to school. Close 4 schools and create one central school - isn't this the way forward, which would also protect the Welsh language, (a very favourable financial option I would expect!) | Proposals are not solely focused on numbers, but on the right offer in the right location. We believe that the proposal offers a sustainable provision for the area. |
| What about the possibility of Ysgol Pentrecelyn and Ysgol Pen Barras sharing a head teacher? Two Category 1 Welsh medium schools federating with one permanent head, until the new Welsh medium school in Ruthin is ready. I think then that both schools would need to be closed, before the formation a brand new educational establishment – a Category 1 Welsh Medium primary school. | Point noted. |
| Is there really a need for 3 Church in Wales schools within 3 miles (or less) of each other in the Ruthin area? Wouldn't it be a less favourable option to merge Ysgol Llanfair D.C. with Ysgol Llanbedr area schools, under the ecclesiastical institution in Wales? | Currently discussions are ongoing in regards to Ysgol Llanbedr's future. |
| What about Ysgol Dyffryn Iâl - less than 50 children (similar to Ysgol Pentrecelyn in pupil numbers) Ysgol Borthyn? They could federate as they are all Church in Wales Schools. | Proposals are made not solely focused on numbers, but on the right offer in the right location. |
| Why should the only way of improving/modernising Llanfair to join with another school that are not currently interested to join anyway? Why not build on the positive situation we have instead of stopping it and starting again. What's the proof this will work? | Provision as it is is not sustainable, we need to reduce surplus places and the number of schools that we have. Other mergers that the Local Authority has undertaken in the area have been successful. |
| When it became clear that the federation between the two schools in question was not | A number of options have been looked at with both sets of governors involved in these |

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| possible, they immediately moved on to a model of one area school. The failure of the Council to consider alternative models is a fundamental weakness in this process in my opinion. | discussions. |
| Federating with the other rural Category 1 schools – Carreg Emlyn and Gwyddelwern with 1 managing head. | A federation involving 4 schools over a wide geographical area could place pressure on the leadership of the school. This would also not address issues regarding surplus places. |
| The new area school being a Category 1 community or voluntary controlled school and pupils seeking English medium (and faith based) education transferring to Ysgol Borthyn or Ysgol Llanbedr or Ysgol Stryd Y Rhos | We believe that the proposal of a category 2 school meets the needs of the area that the school will serve. |
| One school, 2 defined and separate streams, English and Welsh, therefore a clear choice from the start for parents, the immersion would still be there for those pupils from non-Welsh speaking families in the Welsh stream. | We believe that the way Ysgol Llanfair currently delivers Category 2 delivers the best outcomes for Welsh and non-Welsh speakers. |
| In section 6.4, of this document it states that DCC does not use catchment areas when determining school admissions, should this be reconsidered as it would greatly reduce transport cost and remove the cyclical movement of pupils from school to school depending on popularity? | The current arrangements allow for diversity of choice regarding faith, language and location which are often difficult to determine with strictly defined catchment areas. |

Other Issues:

| Consultee Comment | Promoters' Response | | | | |
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| Should the parents of Pentrecelyn pupils not wish for their children to attend a Category 2 school, Denbighshire should provide transport, free of charge, for the pupils, so that they can attend Ysgol Penbarras, in Ruthin. | Transport will be provided in accordance with Denbighshire County Council's School Transport policy September 2014 states that, "The Authority will provide discretionary transport to the nearest school providing Welsh medium education even if it is not their nearest qualifying school. For this purpose, it would be a school which is categorised as 1 or 2 within the Welsh Government guidelines on Welsh Medium Provision." | | | | |
| It is difficult to accurately compare the 2 Estyn reports as they were completed 4 years apart and the bar has been significantly raised. | We have to comply with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which states that reference must be made to the latest Estyn reports of any schools being discussed. | | | | |
| The percentage of Welsh speakers in the area compares very favourably with the rest of Wales. The percentage of Welsh speakers in the area is close to the highest in Wales. Of the 887 wards in Wales, some 150 wards have a higher | The overall percentage able to speak Welsh in the Llanfair/ Gwyddelwern ward is 48.3%. This is broken down: <table border="1" data-bbox="810 2011 1396 2065"> <thead> <tr> <th>Community</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Community | % | | |
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| percentage, but the percentage of Welsh speakers in the wards in this area is more than double the average for Wales and belong to the upper quartile of Welsh wards. | Gwyddelwern | 62.06% |
| | Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd | 49.71% |
| | Llanelidan | 45.89% |
| | Bryneglwys | 39.89% |
| With Pentrecelyn the third most Welsh area in Denbighshire, I feel it is the duty of DCC to provide Welsh medium education in a Category 1 local school just as pupils of the area are receiving at present. | Within the Llanfair/ Gwyddelwern ward there are currently 3 primary schools: Ysgol Pentrecelyn- Category 1 Ysgol Bro Elwern- Category 1 Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd- Category 2 | |
| Originally it was requested that both schools federalise (i.e. one federal governing board for both schools), but the Council states that the new government regulations make this impossible as it prohibits a federation between a community school and a voluntary 'church' school. However, guideline 8.13-8.15 explains the process of co-operation which is more or less equal to a federation which is 'co-labour' with a joint governors committee rather than one federal governing board. Practically, this is synonymous to creating a federation. It's obvious that Denbighshire County Council officers have misunderstood and, as a result, they haven't given due consideration to this model as they should in accordance with the requirement to consider every alternative. | Co-operation was discussed with both sets of governors after it was no longer possible to federate. This was not seen as a suitable option. | |
| I am not confident that the members of Denbighshire County Council's Education Modernisation Programme will change their minds when discussing the plan to set up a Category 2 area school in Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd/Pentrecelyn. Presuming that this will be the final decision following the current 'consultation', I believe that a deserving provision should be made for pupils who will wish to continue to receive Welsh-medium education in a Category 1 school. | The decision will be made by Denbighshire County Council's Cabinet. If the decision is to proceed with the proposal as it stands a Statutory notice will be issued and an objection period of 28 days from the date of publication will begin. (This is detailed in Section 22 of the proposal) | |
| The consultation process, run by the Council so far has been amateurish, and in my opinion, extremely insensitive. There is no excuse for failing to provide a process by which residents can contribute just as easily in both Welsh and English. | Residents were able to respond in English or Welsh in a number of ways. The formal consultation document was available in both languages and the online survey was set up in English or Welsh. | |
| We were disappointed that we did not have the opportunity to put our views at the meeting in Welsh. Having a translator is not equal to being able to express directly in our chosen language. | At both parents' meetings a Welsh speaking officer was available if required. Due to the tight timescales the follow up meeting details was passed onto the school and the school | |

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| We were not able to attend the hastily convened follow up meeting that was not advertised. | were asked to inform all parents of this. |
| English reply to ensure all personnel concerned understand my response. | Responses were invited in either Welsh or English. Any Welsh responses have been translated into English and attached to the original. |
| Are the responses to an informal consultation reliable and inclusive of the views of all stakeholders? | The informal consultation was open to all members of the public. |
| Unsure whether uniform will change in September 2016? | This will be a decision for the Temporary Governing Body. |
| The alternative school options being offered to Welsh language parents are in a worse state than Pentrecelyn. | Ysgol Pen Barras will be moving into a new build at the Glasdir development, this is due to be ready by September 2017. |
| My son did not have the opportunity to ask questions about the merger. He does not know if the school council had that opportunity. He was not properly consulted. | Both school councils at Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn were consulted (See Appendix C) A children's version of the consultation document was available online and Ysgol Pentrecelyn requested a copy of the childrens version for each pupil, which were sent to the school. |
| The Llanelidan Community Council did not receive the consultation documents from the council. This is another example of the Council officers failure to consult properly. | In total 4 community/ town councils were emailed the formal consultation document including the Llanelidan Community Council. |
| Why close 2 schools who provide a different education and who work effectively in this rural area. | Keeping the status quo is not an option, as this is no longer sustainable. |
| Why does Denbighshire County Council wish to locate two schools in one building whilst planning to move Ysgol Pen Barras and Rhos Street School in Ruthin to two new schools apart on the Glasdir site. | Ysgol Pen Barras is a Category 1 school and Rhos Street is a Category 5 school, both are in need of new buildings and are big enough schools to remain as 2 separate schools. |
| The proposal is set out biased to the model of one of the 2 schools which will be closing. It does not set out any forward thinking "out of the box" ideas. The new school will not be a reproduction of the present model due to increased pupils numbers. How does the school in Llanfair manage to have so many teachers when the county is under such financial pressure? | The budget for each school in Denbighshire is defined by a standard methodology. It is then the responsibility of the governing body to manage this accordingly. |
| The reality is that Llanfair has had optimal circumstances for success with favourable demographics and the stability a long term full time head teacher brings. Pentrecelyn has had unfavourable demographics in its area and only temporary head teachers for ten years. The demographics of the Pentrecelyn area are | We understand that rural schools face uncertainty in regards to pupil numbers. This is where an area school can help education being retained in rural locations, as it is better prepared to respond to fluctuations in pupil numbers. |

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| <p>now much improved and going to get better, a merger now allows for long term sustainability of a Category 1 school.</p> | |
| <p>Ysgol Pentrecelyn full-time pupil numbers (on figures collected locally rather than PLASC and council forecast) are set to rise to 44 next year, 45 in 2016/17 and 52 in 2017/18, would this make the new school oversubscribed?</p> <p>And have a subsequent influence on the pupil: teacher ratio. How does Denbighshire County council propose to safeguard the Welsh language provision in cases of oversubscription, would there be preference to those selecting the Welsh stream (point 3 in section 1.9 of Denbighshire Schools Admissions Policy)?</p> | <p>We have to use the figures that are based on the PLASC and our projections. The size of the new school is not set in stone but we have to be mindful that we do not build the school too big, as this may have a negative effect on neighbouring schools.</p> |
| <p>This proposal was decided upon without consultation with stakeholders and people experienced in Welsh medium education.</p> | <p>The proposal was developed with a range of organisations including the Governing Bodies of both schools, prior to public consultation.</p> |
| <p>In 2012 RhAG published “The Growth of Welsh Medium Education (2002-2012)”, in reference to DCC they state that “There is now a stronger leadership in education generally, including Welsh medium education and this is bearing fruit. There are some notable milestones...creating a Strategic Group for Welsh Education.....taking advantage of the School Modernisation agenda to change the medium of some schools in the south of the county, creating two designated Welsh medium schools and making some English medium schools bilingual....”, has this been achieved?</p> | <p>In terms of Welsh medium education in Denbighshire over the last 5 years, we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extension works to increase capacity at Welsh medium school Ysgol Gymraeg y Gwernant, Llangollen. ○ Establishing a Welsh medium school Ysgol Bro Dyfrdwy, Cynwyd. ○ Establishing a Welsh medium school Ysgol Carreg Emlyn, Clocaenog and Cyffylliog. ○ Capital investments in Welsh medium schools; Ysgol y Llys, Prestatyn, Ysgol Twm o’r Nant, Denbigh and future extension works at Ysgol Glan Clwyd, St.Asaph. ○ Establishment of Welsh in Education Strategic Group. |
| <p>According to the table under point 8.2., there aren’t enough surplus places available in Ysgol Gwyddelwern and Ysgol Penbarras, the nearest Category 1 schools, of all Ysgol Pentrecelyn pupils, should 100% of the parents decide not to send their children to a Category 2 school.</p> | <p>Figures from September 2014 show that there are 29 surplus places in Ysgol Pen Barras and 13 in Ysgol Bro Elwern, therefore a total of 42 places. The new development in Glasdir will also increase the capacity at Ysgol Pen Barras.</p> <p>We would hope that some Pentrecelyn parents would send their child to the new area school, Of the 30 parents who responded- 4 said they would go to the area school, 4- were unsure/ skipped question, 9 said to another Category 1 school, 12 to Ysgol Pen Barras, 1 to Ysgol Bryn Tabor, 1 to Ysgol Carreg Emlyn (1 parent responded twice)</p> |

Site:

| Consultee Comment | Promoters' Response |
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| Has the site at Ysgol Pentrecelyn been seriously considered? It is in an ideal non-hazardous site/ position. | Feasibility work on a possible site for the new school has started. Part of this work will be to look at both school sites. |
| Why would the site be in Llanfair? Ysgol Pentrecelyn serves a large area from Llandegla-Graigfechan- Llanelidan. | The majority of pupils attending the school would live in the Llanfair, Pwllglas area. |
| We welcome a new local location away from the very hazardous and busy main Wrexham road, which currently has no traffic calming / speed reduction facility. | Point noted. |
| It is pleasing that the interim period (on two sites) is only anticipated for 1 year, and I would urge anyone involved in the process to do their utmost to ensure this time period does not drag; a longer transitional period on 2 sites would no doubt have an impact on the management of and teaching in the 2 sites, which could sadly be detrimental to the education of the children. | At the moment, we are hoping that the new school build will be open for September 2017, therefore ensuring that the split site will remain for 1 academic year only. |
| <p>This proposal does not seem joined up with the desire to build new schools in Ruthin. As the majority of these pupils are provided with transport to school, surely the location of the school for these pupils should be considered and discussed alongside the proposals for the town schools.</p> <p>The parents of all pupils at the school need to be asked which language they want the education for their children.</p> | <p>All 3 of the Ruthin new build projects are moving forward together; new build for Ysgol Carreg Emlyn, the development at Glasdir in town and the area school for Llanfair/ Pentrecelyn.</p> <p>Parents choose a school for many reasons, not just language.</p> |
| I am in favour of the proposal for the main reason that it seems that to continue as we have done or to improve and upgrade the facilities at Ysgol Llanfair does not seem to be seen to be a viable option. My preferred option would be to channel resources and skill into achieving an updated and improved, viably functioning Area School on the Ysgol Llanfair site. | Both current school sites will be looked at during the feasibility study. |
| I would also like to know why schools have to be brand new to provide a better education for pupils. Pentrecelyn has plenty of room, a big hall and dining area, computer points and all the latest Ipads etc. and access to the internet with super-fast fibre optic broadband and a lovely playing field and garden. It has no portacabins and is not overcrowded but is not in declining in numbers either. Its main building and house are | We believe that new school build allow for future-proofing the space provided to ensure that the ever-changing curriculum can be delivered to a high standard. |

in good condition. I can only see that better education comes from better teaching and leadership, something you as the council have knowingly denied Pentrecelyn for years.

New Build

| Consultee Comment | Promoters' Response |
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| <p>What will happen if funding is not available for the new build?</p> | <p>Funding for the area school has now been secured and agreed at Full Council in February 2015. The new school build will be funded 100% by Denbighshire County Council. This will be made up of a mixture between prudential borrowing, cash reserves and capital receipts. The progression of the project is not dependent upon external funding.</p> |
| <p>Could the funding be rescinded if for example there is a change of government?</p> | <p>No, funding for the new school is now committed through Denbighshire's own finances and is not coming from the government.</p> |
| <p>Another consideration is the possible disruption while the two schools are amalgamated and the new school is built. Of all the proposals, we think this clearly has the most benefits for the children and the community.</p> | <p>The Temporary Governing Body would ensure that any disruption would be kept to a minimum and the delivery of education to all pupils at the school on both sites will continue to be delivered to its current standard.</p> |
| <p>It is hugely important if the proposal goes ahead that pupils stay where they are (and siblings aren't split up) until the new build is ready.</p> | <p>Whilst the school remains on 2 separate sites it will be the Temporary Governing Body who will decide how each site will be configured. One option would be to keep things as they are until the new building is ready, with activities to bring all the pupils together.</p> |

Appendix H

Estyn Response

Estyn's response to the proposal to create a new area school to serve both Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd and Pentrecelyn Communities.

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales have prepared this report. 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.

Introduction

This consultation proposal is from Denbighshire County Council. The proposal is to close Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd and Ysgol Pantycelyn on the 31st August 2016. The Church in Wales will establish a new area school on the existing sites from the 1st September 2016. It is anticipated that this split site provision will be for one academic year only. The split site provision will be replaced by a new build in the Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd / Pentrecelyn area, subject to land availability and suitability.

Summary/ Conclusion

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of provision in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposal contains an appropriate rationale and clearly defines the expected benefits.

Whilst the existing facilities at both schools allow for the delivery of the basic curriculum entitlement, the proposal suggests that the current environment restricts the potential to deliver the innovative curriculum required for 21st Century learning. In terms of the 21st Century Schools Survey Condition Category, the condition of both schools is listed as 'B', satisfactory (minor deterioration). The proposal identifies relevant concerns regarding the learning environment, such as a narrow staircase access to Year 4 provision at Ysgol Dyffryn Clwyd. Based on current provision, the proposal reasonably claims that maintaining the status quo could provide greater risks than any proposals for change.

For the long term, the authority asserts appropriately that partnership working between both schools would provide greater stability. It claims that this proposal would formalise the joint working between the schools and provide the foundation for moving towards one school on a modern, purpose built accommodation.

The proposal acknowledges appropriately the possible perception that the Welsh language and ethos would be affected negatively. It emphasises the essential role of the new Governing Body and Denbighshire Council in ensuring that the current strong Welsh ethos is retained. However, the proposal does not identify possible concerns about the re-designation of Ysgol Pentrecelyn as a faith school. Additional information supplied to accompany the initial proposal document clarifies that any future change to the language category would be subject to formal consultation and statutory notices.

The proposal appropriately claims that the area school would need a new staffing structure, taking into account a number of factors including operating initially on two sites, delivering the curriculum, class sizes and budget considerations. There would be implications for staff at the current Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd and Ysgol Pentrecelyn. The proposal states that the council would work initially with the temporary governing body, and then with the established governing body of the area school to support employment issues should the need arise. This seems appropriate.

The local authority has considered suitable alternatives. These have been considered with reference to the council's 21st Century Schools Programme objectives concerning appropriate learning environments to enable school improvement and better educational outcomes, greater economy through better use of resources and a sustainable education system. Each of these options have been analysed against appropriate investment objectives and critical success factors. As a result of this analysis, closing both schools and establishing a dual site area school is considered to be the preferred option.

The authority has appropriately considered the impact of the proposal on the quality of the outcomes and provision as well as leadership and management. The proposal is considered to have distinct advantages. The proposal predicts greater opportunities for the two schools to work together to improve staff expertise that would lead to raising standards. Additional teaching capacity for smaller groups of pupils, including more able and talented pupils is expected as well as stability in terms of resource management, improved partnership working and strengthened leadership.

The authority appears to have appropriately considered the impact of the changes on learner travel arrangements for the first stage of the proposal. Pupils will continue to be transported to their designated site in accordance with the current Home to School Transport Policy.

Pupils with additional learning needs who currently attend the schools would continue to receive the same education and support, but the environment may change. The proposal states that the council would take all practicable steps to minimise disruption and assist pupils with any transfer.

The second phase of the proposal to eventually move to a new area school is likely to prove more of a challenge to pupils with additional learning needs. The proposal lists appropriate procedures to provide help and support for pupils and their parents during this process.

Date: 12 March 2015

Appendix I

UCAC Response

Formal Consultation on the proposal to establish a New Area School to replace Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd and Ysgol Pentrecelyn

1. The National Union of Teachers Cymru (UCAC) is pleased to have the opportunity to respond to the formal consultation on the proposal to establish a New Area School to replace Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd and Ysgol Pentrecelyn. We would be more than willing to elaborate on these comments and discuss them at any time.
2. In drawing up this response, UCAC has consulted with its members locally and has drawn on the experiences of members who have been through a similar reorganization or who are working in quite similar situations in other counties.
3. UCAC appreciates Denbighshire County Council's desire to protect education in the rural areas and ensuring that it responds appropriately to local demand for Welsh medium education. We recognize that this proposal, were it to be implemented fully and timely, would realize these ambitions.
4. The data presented confirms unequivocally that there needs to be a bigger school in the Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd area, and quickly. Practical requirements, therefore, has led to the creation of a proposed two-stage plan with the intention of implementing the First Step – which is to establish an Area School on two sites in September 2016 – this is only a part-time solution to the crisis.
5. However, UCAC has some concerns about the lack of assertiveness in the Consultation Document in terms of the lack of full commitment from the Council to realize the Second Stage if the Plan is approved. We also have concerns about the possible implications on employment throughout the process.

Throughout the document, there are clauses that raise 'doubts' that the plan will be fully realized:

... on the whole supported the proposal .. (Par 2.3)

... dependent on availability and suitability of land .. (Par. 2..5)

... anticipated that the pupils .. (Par 12.12)

... site .. that will manifest itself from the Second Stage .. (Par 18.1)

... may be within reach .. (Par 18.3)

... any negotiations that might be needed .. (Par. 18.4)

... councillors considering approving capital funding (Par 19.1)

6. UCAC strongly believes that a site should be secured for the new school immediately. Without this assurance, there is a real danger that parents will choose to send their children to other schools if only to avoid a situation where the youngest children of the family are in a different location for the older children. Any Statutory Notice, therefore, should fully elaborate on the two stages.
7. UCAC believes that capital funding should be secured before proceeding to issue any Notice. It is noted in the document that the 'councillors will consider approving capital funding.'
8. UCAC believes it should be ensured that staff and pupils have an input into the planning of the new school. The experience of many authorities is that a new school attracts pupils; it is important therefore that the new school will be big enough from the start and that the plans allow for it to be extended easily if the need arises.
9. Assuming that the Plan will proceed, the Union has a real concern that it will be late in the day when the Temporary Governing Body will be established. This has been the experience unfortunately in other places. This means that the Body cannot make critical staffing decisions in good time. Therefore it must be ensured that a tight deadline to appoint a Body and to make decisions is included in any Notice.
10. UCAC is firmly of the view that jobs should be protected by limiting them to staff within the two existing schools. Temporary staffing needs also need to be considered in the First Stage, in parallel with the needs for more permanent needs in the Second Stage by ensuring that every member of staff are certain of the nature of their agreement from the outset. The Union expects to be part of any discussions on the appointment process and any relocation requirements that may result from this reorganization.

Conclusion

UCAC recognizes that the Proposal to establish a New Area School is an option to face the challenges that rural schools face today.

If the Council decides to introduce a Statutory Notice on the basis of the Formal Consultation, we emphasize that it needs to have considered the concerns raised in the response to protect the staff's interests and protect the education of pupils locally.



Prif Swyddfa **UCAC**, Ffordd Penglais, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 2EU

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Appendix J

Ysgol Llanfair DC Governors Full Response

The Governing Body of Ysgol Llanfair DC is in agreement with the proposal that the new area school should be a bilingual (Welsh language category 2) Church school.

In recent weeks much emphasis has been placed on the language category alone in press and public discussion. However, the Governing Body believes that it is essential to consider factors such as educational outcomes, linguistic performance and social cohesion, together, rather than separately. Parental choice is also an important consideration and we understand there is a strong majority preference amongst parents in the area for a community based bilingual school.

We are fully aware of the arguments advanced that changing the categorisation of the proposed area school to a Welsh medium school is the only means of protecting the Welsh language. We do not share this view and contend that the available evidence does not support this.

The Governing Body and the community in Llanfair and Pwllglas are fully committed to protecting and promoting the Welsh language and believe that the most effective means of doing so is by maximising the number of children who are fluent in Welsh by the end of KS2. This is what Ysgol Llanfair has successfully achieved over many years.

As well as achieving high standard of bilingualism (Estyn 2010) the school also achieves high standards in Welsh 1st Language. Welsh Government data shows that for the past three years (2012 to 2014 inclusive), the school's performance in Welsh 1st Language at Level 4 has been consistently in the highest 25% or the highest 50% of schools in Wales with a similar free school meals percentage to Ysgol Llanfair. During that period the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 or above at the end of KS2 ranged from 90.9% to 100%. Over the same period the school's high benchmarking position was almost identical for English.

The evidence of standards therefore demonstrates that a bilingual model can, in some cases, such as Ysgol Llanfair, be even more successful in promoting high standards of 1st language Welsh than a Welsh medium school. All available evidence also demonstrates that a designation as a Welsh language category 1 school also does not in itself guarantee high standards in other subjects, good leadership, effective governance or higher numbers of bilingual children at the end of KS2.

Ysgol Llanfair also has a long history of supporting and promoting the Welsh language; this is not a recent development as some have suggested. The school has always played a prominent role in Welsh cultural activities such as Urdd Eisteddfodau as well as participating in a wide range of musical, social and community events through the Welsh language. But the school has also been mindful of the fact that this area is bilingual and so we have always aimed to achieve high standards of education in both languages whilst maintaining a strong Welsh ethos within the school.

The governors at Llanfair are aware of the anxieties raised by those who believe that a bilingual school provides no certainty for the future of the Welsh language within such a designation. It has been claimed that a change in membership of the Governing Body could also be to the detriment of Welsh medium education. We believe that such an argument is not based on any sound evidence.

At Ysgol Llanfair, successive governing bodies, with linguistically mixed composition, have consistently supported the language category of the school and its strong Welsh ethos. This has also been reflected in staff recruitment. It is our understanding that, should further safeguards in this respect be required, this can be provided through an Instrument of Government for the new area school. We would support such an Instrument being put in place.

The Governing Body at Ysgol Llanfair has been approached on several occasions during the last 20 years by the Local Authority, asking us to consider changing the designation of the school to become a Welsh medium school. This was always given lengthy consideration but after examining the evidence, including evidence of standards, the requests were declined. The Governing Body was always acutely aware that had this change been made, many non-Welsh speaking families within the community would not have chosen to send their children to our school. We have no doubt that this would also be the case now if the school became the preserve of only a part of our community.

Many local families who are no less Welsh than those of us, who are already bilingual, make a positive choice of Ysgol Llanfair because it is bilingual with a strong Welsh ethos.

The very positive experience of the Welsh language that they encounter in the school has also encouraged a number of parents to change from English to Welsh medium preference as their children progress through the school. However, we believe that such parents would not initially make a choice for a Welsh-medium school, and as a result such pupils would be potentially 'lost' from bilingual or Welsh-medium education in the longer term. We are aware that in other areas of the local authority, designation of schools as either Welsh or English medium has led to some division of communities along linguistic lines.

To date, our community has successfully managed to avoid this by providing a positive bilingual alternative which is fully inclusive of all families.

Geraint Lewis Jones
Cadeirydd/Chair
Corff Llywodraethol/Governing Body
Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd

Appendix K

Ysgol Pentrecelyn Governors Full Response

Dear Modernising Education Programme Team and Cabinet members,

Response to the Proposed New Area School for Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd and Ysgol Pentrecelyn

INTRODUCTION

This document constitutes the response to the proposal for a new area school to replace Ysgol Llanfair and Ysgol Pentrecelyn. It represents the views of the governors, staff and parents at the school.

It has been the position of the Governing Body from the very outset to work in partnership with the Council as part of the Modernising Education Programme. The Governing Body recognises the financial challenges facing the Council and indeed the whole of the public sector and, as such, has been open to considering any options for education provision in the area.

The options offered by council officials have been limited; in fact they were exclusively focussed around federating with Ysgol Llanfair and/or merging with Ysgol Llanfair on a new site. In May 2014 any options of a federation or merger were removed at short notice by council officials due to the introduction of the School Organisation Code (2013) which came into Force on the 1st October 2013 and which imposes requirements and provides guidelines in respect of school organisation proposals.

Notwithstanding this last minute change the Governing Body were still keen to cooperate with the Council, and during discussions the Governing Body has been consistent in expressing its concerns that any new school would need to guarantee the provision of Welsh language schooling in the area in the future. Despite the obvious high standards currently set at Ysgol Llanfair it has become clear during discussions that the only way of guaranteeing Welsh language schooling of the highest integrity for the future would be through the provision of a category 1 Welsh language school.

We object to Denbighshire County Councils proposal for a Category 2 Church in Wales school on 2 counts, namely language category and faith provision. In our opinion a Category 2 school does not provide a cast iron guarantee that Welsh Medium Education will be present for future generations and add to that the fact that the Governing body of a Voluntary Controlled School can propose to change a language category of a school rather than the Local Authority then this adds to the weakening of this guarantee.

We are not against the formation of a new school as it will no doubt improve the educational provision for all children within the area. We do question why the proposed model was set out as per the current model in Ysgol Llanfair? If this is the case and the argument was based on a majority then why wasn't the number of pupils learning through the medium of Welsh (70% in Ysgol Llanfair and 100% in Ysgol Pentrecelyn) taken as the majority. The current model in Ysgol Llanfair basically operates as a Category 1 school in all but name.

We feel we are having to form this response from a disadvantaged position as the Proposal is a reproduction of the current model in Llanfair, we are having to prove our model, a Category 1 school in Wales, rather than both sides debate over a new and exciting educational prospect that promotes progression in educational provision for all children in the area.

Denbighshire County Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan states that it is fully committed to the Welsh Governments aspiration of delivering

“a sustained increase in both the number and percentage of people able to speak Welsh”, yet in this case it is proposing to close a category 1 school. Surely the risk factors of closing a category 1 school outweigh the risk factors of closing a category 2 school.

POINTS ARISING FROM THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

In a category 2 school Welsh Medium education is dependant on a large number of variables with a category 2 school – Head Teacher, Governing Body, Staff, Pupil: teacher ratio and parent preference.

Point 2.3 – Summary of proposal. The document states parents can opt for a Welsh Medium or English Medium Education and the school by definition can give a high priority to creating a Welsh ethos, therefore by definition the model is prone to variance. The consultation document states *“the competency and confidence of pupils in both English and Welsh will be depending on the ethos and policies of the school and the governing body”* both of which are constantly evolving in a direction dictated by parent pressure. Whilst the model in Ysgol Llanfair works well there are other examples within the county where it has not worked so well; in Ysgol Rhewl no children been assessed through the Medium of Welsh first language for the last 4 years and it is under threat of closure, Ysgol Dyffryn Iâl has been moved from a category 2 to a category 4, Ysgol Cyffylliog has been closed. In fact Ysgol Llanfair could be the only category 2 school left in Denbighshire County Council in the very near future.

In a category 1 school all pupils leave fluent in Welsh and English, personnel can change, parents can change but the language provision is not subject to these variables.

Point 3 - The consultation process. The Governing Body has already stated its disappointment that there were no Welsh speakers at the meeting with staff, governors and parents. The meeting with the school council also had to be arranged to provide Welsh speakers. We were also disappointed to see information on the Denbighshire County Council website stating “we have now completed consultation meetings with staff, governors and parents from both schools” when in actual fact some parent meetings had been re-arranged. We also have concerns over the dissemination of information as some community council members (Llanelidan) had not seen the document. We would question how you propose to analyse your data and evidence as the document is clearly weighted towards the school and community with a larger population.

Point 6 – Current Provision. To the reader this can be misleading. The document states that Ysgol Llanfair has 19% surplus places; this is due to inclusion of the temporary classrooms and does not make it clear that the school is oversubscribed and not fit for purpose. The current Denbighshire County Council policy of not using catchment areas when determining school admissions means that schools go in cycles of popularity, Llanfair is a popular school at the moment drawing on a wide geographical area.

Our full-time pupil numbers (on figures collected locally rather than PLASC and council forecast) are set to rise to 44 next year, 45 in 2016/17 and 52 in 2017/18, would this make the new school oversubscribed? And have a subsequent influence on the pupil: teacher ratio. How does Denbighshire County council propose to safeguard the Welsh language provision in cases of oversubscription, would there be preference to those selecting the Welsh stream (point 3 in section 1.9 of Denbighshire Schools Admissions Policy)?

It is also difficult to accurately compare the 2 Estyn reports as they were completed 4 years apart and the bar has been significantly raised.

Point 7 - Educational attainment. Ysgol Pentrecelyn struggles every year to get meaningful information out of the data provided by Foundation Phase and Key stage 2 tests due to low cohort numbers, we can quickly fall from the first to the fourth quartile based on one pupil performance and we are not obliged to publish our data because cohort numbers are so low. Therefore to the reader it could make our school appear to be under performing. This year we have found the

Numeracy and Literacy test figures a much better measure of performance. Ysgol Llanfair delivers good results in these tests in Welsh and English, and in Welsh as a second language at key stage 2. In foundation phase only 67% achieve expected level in English and none achieved the higher level, therefore is there a level playing field for those pupils choosing the English stream, or does it demonstrate that there can never be a true balance between languages in a dual stream model?

Point 8 - Alternative provision. Despite what we have been told and notwithstanding the fact that the current category 2 model provide a Welsh stream, a category 2 school is not an equivalent choice for parents seeking Welsh Medium Education. Parents will be forced out of the area to a town school, or another village school or even to an oversubscribed school in the next county, 100% of our pupils are attending their nearest suitable school, parents chose to send their child to the local school to be immersed in Welsh, how do we safeguard this option for the future? As a local authority you will have no Category 1 schools between Ruthin and Llangollen. Forcing parents to send their child to an alternative school also breaks up community links and friendships, but despite this parents are prepared to remove their children from the new area school if it is not a category 1, see attached petition.

Points 12 and 21 - The proposed option is basically a reproduction of the current model with an increased pupil : teacher ratio, therefore it may not work as well. We are concerned that at no point whilst engaging with us has there been any serious considerations to any other models. Have the following options been seriously considered

- Federating with the other rural category 1 schools – Carreg Emlyn and Gwyddelwern with 1 managing head
- Federating with Ysgol Penbarras although this would not satisfy the County’s concerns over the maintenance backlog of our building and would parents naturally gravitate to one of the new schools anyway?
- The new area school being a category 1 community or voluntary controlled school and pupils seeking English medium (and faith based) education transferring to Ysgol Borthyn or Ysgol Llanbedr or Ysgol Stryd Y Rhos
- Two schools, one site, an executive head managing the 2 schools,
- One school, 2 defined and separate streams, English and Welsh, therefore a clear choice form the start for parents, the immersion would still be there for those pupils from non-Welsh speaking families in the Welsh stream.

Point 13 - Language provision, the document refers to the councils Welsh in Education Strategic Plan *“Denbighshire County Council is fully committed to the Welsh Government’s aspiration of delivering ‘a sustained increase in both the number and percentage of people able to speak Welsh. The Council recognises the importance of bilingualism in 21st Century Wales and has adopted a long term aspiration that all children and young people in the County will leave full-time education being competent and confident in using both Welsh and English languages.”*

How does the council propose to monitor and sustain this via a category 2 school, the current model delivers this, how will this be safeguarded for the future? Does the council plan to put limits on how many parents can choose a particular stream? Outcome 2 of WESP states “more learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school”, currently only 67% of learners from Ysgol Llanfair transfer to Welsh stream in Brynhyfryd.

The recruitment policy is cited as one of the safeguarding measures even if the Head is a fluent Welsh speaker this does not mitigate against over 50% of parents selecting the English stream thus switching the dominant language of teaching to English.

We also have concerns over the voluntary control aspect of the school, that the governing body would not be able to undertake a change of language category without a formal consultation period. Point 18 – Site. Has the site at Pentrecelyn been seriously considered? We understand in the current situation the site is not considered big enough but why not request additional land is gifted from college Cambria (Llysfasi Campus) as is the case with the current school field. The consideration to site the school centrally to where the current population of pupils comes from is misleading due to the fact a large number currently travel from Ruthin to Llanfair. The site in Pentrecelyn is off the main road and currently the 52 seater bus transporting children from Pwllglas to Llanfair comes down to the bus stop at Llysfasi College to turn around. The children in Llanfair could also travel on this bus to the new site.

Point 20 - Disadvantages of the proposal. The document states that the governing body should have a strong ethos and policies which put language at the heart of the school to mitigate against the Welsh language and ethos being diluted. How can the governing body influence parent choice and retain a Welsh majority to allow immersion to continue in future years?

Point 23 - Community, Welsh Language Impact Assessment document. We have concerns over how the impact can be considered neutral, can anything be neutral? It states that increasing the bilingual offer could ensure more pupils are educated in Welsh as well as English but in fact a category 1 school would ensure more pupils were educated in Welsh as well as English. In reference to the document in section 3.6 “DCC recognises how important bilingualism is in 21st century Wales”; does bilingualism work better through immersion in a category 1 school or a category 2 school? Pupils are assessed in Welsh first language and Welsh second language in a category 2 school with pupils transferring to the bilingual stream in Brynhyfryd but if this ceases to exist then how would these pupils studying Welsh as a second language continue their education?

In section 6.4 of this document it states that DCC does not use catchment areas when determining school admissions, should this be reconsidered as it would greatly reduce transport cost and remove the cyclical movement of pupils from school to school depending on popularity?

Q: WOULD THIS PROPOSAL DEGRADE WELSH IN THIS AREA IN THE LONG TERM?

A: YES

EDUCATION VIA TRUE IMMERSION

As stated above our aim is to preserve and guarantee Welsh language provision for the future. The key to this has to be immersion. It is internationally recognised that immersion education offers the best conditions for a child to acquire a second language, and to become fully fluent. This is by far the most common practice used in Canada. To quote from Foundations of Bilingual Education And Bilingualism 2nd Edition (Colin Baker)

Heritage or Maintenance Language Education refers to the education of language minority children through their minority and majority language. In most cases, the majority language will be present in the curriculum, ranging from second language lessons to a varying proportion of the curriculum being taught the majority language.

Where a minority language is used for a majority of classroom time (e.g. 80% - 100% in Wales), the justification is usually that children easily transfer ideas, concepts, skills and knowledge into the majority language. Having taught a child multiplication in Spanish, this mathematical concept does not have to be re-taught in English.

The justification given for heritage language education is also that a minority language is easily lost, a majority language is easily gained. Children tend to be surrounded by the majority language. Television and train advertisements, shops and signs, videos and visits often provide or induce bilingual proficiency in an incidental way by accenting a majority language. Thus bilingualism is achieved by a concentration on the minority language at school.

If the focus switches from public political opinion to the educational opinion of teachers, parents and students, there is general satisfaction with Canadian Heritage Language

programs... the advantages may be summarized as follows (Canadian Education Association 1991):

- *Positive self concept and pride in one's background;*
- *Better integration of child into school and society;*
- *More tolerance of other people and different cultures;*
- *Increased cognitive, social and emotional development;*
- *Ease in learning of new languages;*
- *Increased probability of employment*
- *Responding to the needs and wishes of community.*

Immersion education also means that as well as the language medium of lessons Welsh is used as:

- the language medium of activities across the whole school
- the language medium of extra-curricular activities such as school excursions
- the language informally used by the children with each other: on the school yard, at break and lunch times

In comparison, dual stream schools offer Welsh-medium lessons; both languages could be used for school-wide activities, but the emphasis would inadvertently be placed on the English language as this is the common language – lingua franca – of the establishment. From our experience of dual stream schools, English is most commonly used on the school yard, during excursions, sport events and so on.

Usually, from the perspective of the child and his/her language, a second language needs to have a major role in one 'sphere' of their life. Today, up to 95% of children who attend Welsh medium schools come from families where English is the main, or only language used in all spheres e.g. the home, entertainment, the wider family, recreational activities, the media. The Welsh language must be the main language of at least one of these spheres, and immersion education safeguards this. In dual stream schools, it is more often than not, that the Welsh language would be only be used as the medium of teaching, which is in total contrast to the linguistic experiences of a pupil receiving full Welsh medium education.

Welsh-medium schools make a significant contribution to the cultural as well as educational development of a child, offering a comprehensive experience of Wales' culture e.g. Eisteddfod, acting, singing, competing. This cannot always be achieved to the same degree in a dual stream school.

The success of Welsh medium schools is dependent on having a Welsh-speaking Head teacher and all other members of staff who then speak the language with the pupils at all times. Again, this is in comparison with dual stream schools where the Head teacher could be a non-Welsh speaker in addition to some members of the English stream.

Welsh-medium schools are dependent on the co-operation of parents, who wish for their children to attain fluency in the Welsh and English language, and who accept that the language of their education will be through the medium of Welsh. Their co-operation is an integral part of the success of Welsh medium schools. It is less than likely that this level of commitment would be found at a dual stream school.

HOW IMMERSION WORKS IN YSGOL PENTRECELYN

In a category 1 school such as ours Welsh medium education via immersion works. The Welsh language is used in all aspects of school life – sports, school trips, Urdd, music, PTA, Services and concerts etc. We accommodate those for whom Welsh is not a first language on entry into the school, we have a pupil teacher ratio of 15.5:1 (My Local Schools), pupils home language is split 43% from Welsh homes, 39% from English speaking homes and 18% from bilingual homes (information from Community and Welsh language Impact Assessment) therefore no-one can dispute the fact that we produce more pupils fluent in Welsh on leaving the school than starting and therefore promote Denbighshire County Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan of bilingualism. Parents from Welsh speaking homes choose to send their children to a Category 1 school as they wish for their children to be fully immersed in a totally Welsh culture and ethos which is natural for them. Our parents who are unable to speak Welsh or are from bilingual homes are proud of the way their children have progressed at the school:

"I felt with my kids not speaking any Welsh at home, the best way for them to have any chance of picking it up was going to a Welsh school and be completely immersed in it all day. I don't think my child's Welsh would be as good if she had gone to a bilingual school, I think she would have carried on speaking English because that would have been easier and that option would have been available where as in a category 1 she didn't have much choice other than to learn Welsh if she wanted to be able to speak to anyone"

"I'm very proud that my children are bilingual and although school provides loads of good stuff being fully bilingual at an early age is a life skill that I couldn't have given them otherwise. We live in Wales, all children living here should grow up able to speak Welsh and immersion is the best way to achieve that. Even though I've lived here since I was three years old my Welsh is poor, I'm proud that my children will be bilingual and able to interact in Welsh and benefit in terms of social and work opportunities"

"If my children went to a bilingual school and that school became very 'English' there's a risk my children will start speaking English to each other -on the school yard etc and then at home- as their father is English speaking. With going to a cat 1 school they naturally speak Welsh to each other and I work hard to encourage Welsh speaking at all times."

There is no mention in the consultation of the "Cylch Ti a Fi" at Pentrecelyn which was established in November 2010. Meeting weekly at Ysgol Pentrecelyn, the Cylch Ti a Fi offers activities which support child development from birth to 3. It is a great opportunity for parents/carers/grandparents to meet and share experiences and socialise within a Welsh environment. It is managed by a committee of parents. There are currently 12 children attending each week at the school hall. We have a play session, snack, story and song time during the 90 minute session. It has been an ideal introduction for the children to the school's nursery phase. It also gives an introduction to the Welsh language before they start school and non-Welsh speaking parents and children from families where Welsh is not spoken at home come to introduce their children to the sound of the language and to sing and socialise bilingually. Ex-parents/pupils from "Pentrecelyn Ti a Fi" and the current children/parents reflect the school's linguistic nature – as it draws from the local area, Welsh, non-Welsh and mixed language families come and are prepared to introduce the language to their children and be part of this Welsh community. This Ti a Fi group shows that there is a future, support and a need for category 1 Welsh education in our Welsh rural area.

HOW IMMERSION WORKS IN YSGOL LLANFAIR DC (in its current form)

Ysgol Llanfair DC has a strong Welsh ethos disseminated through the school via an excellent head and staffing structure. It is also influenced by the fact that around 70% of the pupils are educated through the Welsh medium stream. Classes are run as one rather than 2 streams and so those choosing the English stream are immersed in Welsh, this is entirely due to the very low pupil:

teacher ratio of 12.9:1. This ratio is not sustainable with the proposed 20 pupils per year group therefore is the quality of teaching through both languages sustainable?

An ex-teacher at a bilingual school had this to say:

I have experience of teaching bilingually. I must say it can work well in the classroom improving the Welsh language standard of the English group and the English language standard of the Welsh group. But teachers must be prepared to give time to the Welsh language, and I know that some just turn to English as it is easier. Also when visitors come to speak or when we go on trips, they speak English so they don't have to repeat themselves. So the Welsh language is lost frequently in situations like this. All the best with the campaign!

Parental co-operation and choice to put their child through a Welsh medium education has helped tremendously in the last 10 years. There have been a large number of Welsh families choosing to send their children to Ysgol Llanfair that have been fed by Cylch Meithrin in Pwllglas which has contributed to the language balance. There is now no Ti a Fi in Pwllglas demonstrating that this cohort of parents has grown up and not been replaced, what influence will this have on the future linguistic balance in the school?

During the last academic year 2 governors from Ysgol Pentrecelyn visited Ysgol Llanfair to see how they delivered their education. It was clear that the school had an incredibly strong Welsh ethos, most lessons were entirely delivered in Welsh. This left the Governors with the feeling that the two schools were in fact incredibly similar, the only difference being a minority of pupils did not take their foundation phase and key stage 2 tests through the medium of Welsh. The question remains how do you secure this forever when a school is a constantly evolving entity? The answer is via opening a new welcoming rural category 1 school marketed as promoting bilingualism.

INTERNAL FACTORS THAT MAY INFLUENCE IMMERSION IN A CATEGORY 2 SCHOOL

In the equation of a successful bilingual school, such enthusiasm and commitment by head teachers and principals, teachers and auxiliary workers, may be an important and often underestimated factor in success. There is a danger of seeing success in bilingual education as due to the system (e.g. immersion) and use of two languages in school. The commitment of bilingual teachers, and the special skills that a bilingual teacher uses beyond those required of a monolingual teacher, may be underestimated in the equation of successful bilingual schooling.

In a category 2 school the number of children assessed through the medium of Welsh is dependant on parental choice. Is Denbighshire County Council prepared to safeguard the balance between Welsh medium and English medium in the new area school?

We believe that downgrading the new area school from category 1 to category 2 would have a detrimental effect on our pupils' choice of language whilst socialising with their friends and family. In order to create a Welsh ethos and provide a firm foundation for pupils' Welsh identity, we must ensure that Welsh is not only the language of the classroom but the language in which pupils socialise too. In category 2 schools pupils in the Welsh stream are not obliged to speak Welsh outside of the classroom i.e. during playtime and lunchtime, trips and extracurricular activities etc. It is in these situations that pupils from non-Welsh speaking families are more likely to turn to their mother tongue. It is also not statutory in a category 2 school to deliver extracurricular activities in Welsh.

A parent has spoken to a parent of a Welsh speaking pupil who attends a category 2 school, who said that her daughter is the only member of her group of friends who comes from a Welsh speaking home. In the classroom, this group of pupils attend the Welsh stream and speak Welsh, but as soon as the bell rings the language changes immediately to English and that forces the Welsh speaking pupil to change the language in which she socialises.

As parents, with the help of the teachers and category 1 school staff, we have the ability to encourage, control and temper the use of the Welsh language outside the teaching area of the school and into extra curricular activities and events with the community. This ensures that the children have a sound foundation for the future.

In comparison this would be much harder to encourage in secondary education however the identity would be cemented in. So in the event of category 1 background children socialising with non category 1 children in the secondary school, the former would seamlessly flip between the two languages depending on the audience. Non-Welsh speaking people are often heard commending people who have this ability.

Our concern would be that if first language Welsh children attend a category 2 school, the socialising would be done in English with Welsh becoming a classroom only language with no relevance to life outside of the classroom. By attending a category 1 school firmer Welsh language foundations are likely to be set. This will place pupils from non – Welsh speaking homes in a much more favourable position in the future as they are immersed in the language from the beginning of their academic career at 3 years old through to 11 years old in and out of the classroom. The core of first language Welsh pupils provides a strong basis for the language used outside of the classroom. These children are used to speaking the language every day in informal situations with their parents, siblings, family friends and extended family. They are far more likely to maintain this practice at school and in social activities with their non-Welsh speaking peers which in turn motivates the second language Welsh speakers to make use of the language outside of the classroom and realise it is not only the language of the classroom. If non-Welsh children are a majority, Welsh children will change the language to accommodate non-Welsh speakers. As time progresses this will become the norm. Whilst Welsh speaking children immersed in a naturally welsh speaking environment will stick to that language sadly this will no longer be the case and it will become a norm for the Welsh speakers to speak English together as that is what they will be used every day.

Another important factor in relation to socialisation is that if the new proposed school is category 2 and some families decide to send their children to the school whilst others will opt for an alternative category 1 school. This will lead to a break up in communities with children living effectively next door although separated by rural fields not knowing each other and parents of these children subsequently having no reason to get to know each other. Therefore this will have a detrimental effect on rural communities and the people who live there. The school currently has links with the community via a termly Community Lunch in the school, visits to Llysfasi college, Pentrecelyn Chapel and Llanelidan Church, there is a real danger here of pupils growing up without a sense of their community.

The question is can there be a level playing field in an immersion model?

Again we refer to Colin Baker :

***Two Way/Dual Language Bilingual Education** occurs when approximately equal numbers of language minority and language majority students are in the same classroom. The English and non-English speakers are integrated in all lessons. Two way bilingual classrooms contain a mixture of language majority and language minority students. A **language balance** close to 50% - 50% is attempted. If one language becomes dominant (e.g. due to much larger numbers of one language group), the aim of bilingualism and biliteracy may be at risk.*

*An **imbalance** in the two languages among students may result in one language being used to the exclusion of the other (e.g., Spanish speaking children having to switch to English to work cooperatively). Alternatively, one language group may become sidelined (e.g. Spanish speakers become excluded from English speaking groups). Segregation rather than integration may occur. In the creation of a dual language school or classroom, careful student selection decisions have to be made to ensure a **language balance**.*

When an **imbalance** does exist, it may be preferable to have slightly more language minority children. Where there is a preponderance of language majority children, the tendency is for language minority children to switch the higher status, majority language. In most (but not all) language contexts, the majority language is well represented outside school (e.g. in the media and for employment). Therefore, the balance towards the majority language outside school can be complemented by a slight balance towards the minority language in school (among student in-take and in curriculum delivery).

A balance towards a greater proportion of minority language speakers may help to ensure that the ‘common denominator’ majority language does not always dominate in informal classroom and playground talk.

..studies of bilingual education indicate that it may be preferable to **separate languages in instruction** rather than to mix them during a single lesson. It tends to be regarded as preferable that one language is used for one set of subject; the other language for a separate set.

One residual problem is in which language are particular subjects taught? For example, if mathematics and science, technology and computing are taught in the English language, will the hidden message be that English is of more value for scientific communication, for industrial and scientific vocations? Will English latently receive a special, reserved status? If the minority or second is used for humanities, social studies, sport and art, is the hidden message that minority languages are only of value in such human and aesthetic pursuits? Such language development needs to occur across the curriculum, in Science as well as Language Arts, in Maths and Technology as well as History and Geography. Language development needs to be joined by cultural development. Throughout the curriculum, in all areas and cross-curricula topics, the culture surrounding the minority language needs transmitting to give that language purpose, meaning and vitality.

Taking that evidence into account then the answer is there cannot be a level playing field. Whilst there is a majority selecting the minority language it may work with the support of staff but how can the school implement a policy forcing limits on parental choice, we would ask is this possible? Or would it be better, as we feel it would, to use a category 1 school as the basis for the immersion model.

EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT MAY INFLUENCE IMMERSION IN A CATEGORY 2 SCHOOL

Apart from individual classroom and school characteristics, the effectiveness of bilingual education can take into account the **social, political and cultural context** in which such education is placed. Various effects may act and interact to make bilingual education more or less effective, e.g. home and parental, community, teacher, school and society.

In the current Land Development Plan there are 129 units of housing allocated over 6 areas in Graigfechan, Llanfair and Pwllglas, 55 are forecast to be built in the next 5 years, the other 74 unlikely to be built within the next 5 years. This could have a dramatic influence on the language balance within the new area school; there can be no guarantee on the parental preference of the families moving into the area. If the new school was a category 1 then the pupils would be immersed in Welsh regardless of home language and there would be an increase in pupils leaving Key stage 2 speaking Welsh and English whilst mitigating against the social factors already mentioned.

Census figures last taken in 2011 show as a nation there was a 2% drop in Welsh speakers despite an increase in overall population. These figures can be broken down to a more local level to the 2 local electoral wards,

| Electoral Ward | % Welsh speakers aged 3 and over – 2001 | % Welsh speakers aged 3 and over - 2011 |
|----------------|---|---|
| | | |

| | | |
|----------------------|---|------|
| Llanfair/Gwyddelwern | 50.24 – Llanfair 68.61 – Gwyddelwern | 48.3 |
| Efenechtyd(Pwllglas) | 54.53 | 53.7 |

(The Office for National Statistics)

This clearly demonstrates a decrease in the number of people speaking Welsh and shows that Denbighshire County Council should be striving to increase the number of Welsh speakers within the area to stop this trend.

In 2012 RhAG published “The Growth of Welsh Medium Education (2002-2012)”, in reference to DCC they state that “There is now a stronger Leadership in Education generally, including Welsh medium education and this is bearing fruit. There are some notable milestones...creating a Strategic Group for Welsh Education.....taking advantage of the School Modernisation agenda to change the medium of some schools in the south of the county, creating two designated Welsh medium schools and making some English medium schools bilingual....”, has this been achieved?

HOW DO OTHER CATEGORY 2 SCHOOLS PERFORM

The following table give some brief data on how the 36 category 2 dual stream school perform in Wales. The number of pupils learning through the medium of Welsh is sourced from Estyn inspections reports and as such is difficult to present consistently but it does still demonstrate how these schools function.

Firstly 3 of these schools are infant schools so are not listed. There are only 5 schools out of the remaining 33 that have 70% or above pupils taking the Welsh medium, 25 of them have around 50% or less in the Welsh Medium and 3 do not have any pupils taking Welsh as a first language at key stage 2. Of these 3 schools 1 is situated very close to RAF Valley in Anglesey and the other 2 are in Denbighshire, what reassurance does this give us that our Local Authority will be able to preserve the current category 2 model for the long term? The table clearly demonstrates that Ysgol Llanfair DC has the lowest Pupil Teacher ratio, which as stated previously cannot be sustained if pupil numbers grow, and according to some parents at the school this is the reason the model works so well.

| School Name | Local Authority | Pupil Teacher Ratio (My Local School) | Number of Pupils learning through Welsh Medium (most recent Estyn report) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Ysgol Caergeiliog Foundation School | Ynys Môn | 21.4 | No pupils taking KS2 tests in Welsh first language |
| Ysgol Maelgwn | Conwy | 18.6 | 53% Welsh First language; 2 streams |
| Ysgol Pencae | Conwy | 14.5 | 2 streams (no data on split) |
| Ysgol Rhewl | Denbighshire | 15 | No pupils taking KS2 tests in Welsh first language |
| Ysgol Llanfair DC | Denbighshire | 12.9 | 73.8% in Welsh stream |
| Ysgol Dyffryn Iâl | Denbighshire | 21.2 | No pupils taking KS2 tests in Welsh first language |
| Ysgol Cynddelw | Wrexham | 19.3 | 57% in Welsh stream |
| Llanfair Caereinion C P | Powys | 21.5 | 47% Welsh stream 53%English stream |
| Ysgol Dyffryn Trannon | Powys | 17 | 70% Welsh; 2 streams |
| Llanfyllin CP School | Powys | 16.9 | 4/7 classes Welsh medium |
| Builth Wells CP School | Powys | 18.1 | 5/13 classes Welsh medium |
| Sennybridge CP School | Powys | 15.7 | 3/5 classes Welsh medium |
| Ysgol Rhiw Bechan | Powys | 20.4 | 2 streams from Year 2 |
| Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant CP | Powys | 15.6 | 2 streams |
| Llandrindod Wells C I W School | Powys | 20.3 | 4 /8 classes Welsh medium |
| Rhayader C I W School | Powys | 20.3 | 2/6 classes Welsh medium |
| Narbeth C P School | Pembrokeshire | 22.5 | 6/11 classes Welsh medium |
| Tenby Junior Community School | Pembrokeshire | 17.4 | 2/10 classes Welsh Medium |
| Ysgol Gelli Aur | Pembrokeshire | 21.6 | 4/13 classes Welsh medium |
| Ysgol Glannau Gwaun | Pembrokeshire | 20.4 | 70% in Welsh stream |
| Ysgol Gynradd Parcrhun | Carmarthenshire | 16 | Do have pupils taking KS2 in Welsh first language but no data found |
| Ysgol Llys Hywel | Carmarthenshire | 15.9 | 50:50 split, 2 streams, Meithrin and Derbyn taught through Welsh only |
| Llangennech Junior School | Carmarthenshire | 21.3 | 54% Welsh, 2 separate streams |
| Hendy CP School | Carmarthenshire | 22.8 | 4/8 classes Welsh medium |
| Llangunnor CP School | Carmarthenshire | 21.6 | 2 streams, no data |
| Ysgol Griffith Jones | Carmarthenshire | 18.6 | 8/11 classes Welsh medium |
| Ysgol Y Felin | Carmarthenshire | 15.8 | 4/8 classes Welsh medium |
| Ysgol Bro Banw | Carmarthenshire | 18.2 | 5/21 classes Welsh medium |
| Penderyn Primary School | Rhondda Cynon Taf | 23.6 | 5/8 classes Welsh medium |
| Dolau Primary School | Rhondda Cynon Taf | 25 | 50:50 split 2 streams |
| Heol Y Celyn Primary School | Rhondda Cynon Taf | 21.4 | 6/15 classes Welsh Medium |
| Ysgol Gynradd Gwaelod Y Garth | Cardiff | 20.2 | 8/10 classes Welsh medium |
| Ysgol Gynradd Creigiau | Cardiff | 22.3 | 6/13 classes Welsh medium |

Q: DOES THIS PROPOSAL GO AGAINST THE NATIONAL DIRECTION OF TRAVEL IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL WELSH LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES?

A: YES

The Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Strategy

The Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Strategy is a statutory strategy that Denbighshire County Council is expected to reflect in its provision of education within the county. Denbighshire County Council's intention to close a Welsh language category 1 school and transfer the pupils to a two stream Welsh and English category 2 school goes against their objectives and therefore breaches the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Strategy. The failure to satisfy the need for a Welsh Language category 1 education in the Pentrecelyn area under the new proposed arrangement is a failure to recognise local needs and respond to them, in compliance with the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Strategy, 3.2:

'Local authorities are expected to plan comprehensively for Welsh-medium education across their areas of responsibility...to recognise and respond to local needs of learners and to implement policies to fulfil the national aims.'

Introducing pupils who have received a Welsh medium category 1 education to a classroom environment where lessons are taught through English as well as Welsh goes against strategic objective 1.3:

'Welsh medium and bilingual school are expected, in their planning processes to self-evaluate, reflect the direction of national targets and local authorities to safeguard and reinforce Welsh medium provision, and in some areas, bilingual provision'.

In our opinion, it can't be argued that weakening the presence of Welsh in the classroom (by moving from a monolingual Welsh education to a bilingual situation) achieves the strategic objective of safeguarding and reinforcing Welsh medium provision.

The Strategy notes further in Section 3.5:

'This Strategy will bring about enduring change in the education infrastructure to ensure the sustainability of Welsh-medium education and the progression of learners from one stage to the next.'

The sustainability of Welsh medium education is not ensured by turning it into a Welsh and English medium education. On the contrary, extensive educational and social research on the effect of a bilingual environment shows that introducing a minority language (Welsh) to a situation that includes the mass language (English), without exception leads to the weakening of the minority language. This is elaborated upon in the response above.

Strategic Objective 1.8 makes it:

'...To require local authorities to consider demand for, and access to, Welsh-medium provision when planning and bringing forward statutory proposals to change school provision'

Further to this, the first strategic aim of the Strategy is:

'To improve the planning of Welsh-medium provision in the pre-statutory and statutory phases of education, on the basis of proactive response to informed parental demand'

Which means:

'Ensuring the availability of Welsh-medium provision is dependent on strategic planning, effective joint working, systematic analysis of demand and a commitment to act on the evidence of demand where appropriate.'

The projections show that there is a growth in the call for places in a category 1 school in the Ysgol Pentrecelyn catchment area. With so many Pentrecelyn parents declaring their aim to ensure a Welsh medium category 1 education for their children, even if the County proceed with their plan, it's evident that the Education Authority has ignored the local demand if they are forced to attend a category 2 school.

Finally, and maybe more importantly, the Government's Strategy measures its success through different outcomes. The relevant one in this case is:

Outcome 1

More seven-year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh

The plan to introduce a category 2 school instead of a category 1 school is not compatible with this outcome, nor with the objectives of the Government's targets.

The Welsh Government's policy is to develop each school on a language continuum which means that each school should build on their Welsh medium provision, not weaken the provision.

In response to a question in the Senedd on 10th February 2015, the First Minister, Carwyn Jones said:
"... it is extremely important the any authority doesn't do anything that weakens the Welsh in their area."

It must be asked if the proposed recommendations are congenial with this statement.

And moreover, the Education Minister, Huw Lewis AM said, again in the Senedd on 11th February 2015: *"...we will assess any effect any proposals would have on the growth of Welsh-medium education in the area."* This suggests that the Welsh Government is concerned about the proposed changes on the language.

Denbighshire's Welsh Language in Education Strategy

Denbighshire's Welsh Language in Education Strategy for 2014-2017 sets the following as Outcome 1:

'More seven-year-olds being taught through the medium of Welsh

Denbighshire's Welsh Language in Education Strategy also notes:

'In January 2009, the Council adopted the Modernising Education Policy Framework. The Framework sets out the criteria and policies to be considered when reviewing school provision. The Framework clearly emphasises the importance of promoting Welsh & bilingual education and that any future reviews identify the need to reflect demand for Welsh medium provision. It also contains a Promoting Bilingualism policy which articulates the Council's long-term aspiration that all children and young people leave full time education being competent and confident using both Welsh and English languages.'

The Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Strategy's aim is to 'safeguard and reinforce Welsh medium provision' unambiguously. The aim of Outcome 1 in Denbighshire's Welsh Language in Education Strategy is to ensure that 'more children aged seven are educated through the medium of Welsh' is a clear policy statement.

We are of the view that the reclassification of a naturally Welsh school to be a bilingual one, with a vast majority of the pupils Welsh first language speakers, congenial with this.

According to the 2011 census, 48.3% of the residents of the ward can speak Welsh, amongst the highest in Denbighshire. If there isn't a basis to create a Category 1 school in one of the most Welsh areas of the county, then the whole logic of the existence of Category 1 schools in any part of the county must be questioned.

Good Practice

Denbighshire County Council's aim is to increase the number of pupils receiving a Welsh medium education from 28.1%(285) in 2012/13 to 29% in 2017. Moreover, the Denbighshire Strategy boasts that the 'Council's previous challenging target to increase the percentage to 28% by 2015/16 had been reached three years earlier than expected.

Sir Gâr has adopted a policy recently committing the Authority to turn each two steam primary schools to Welsh schools, and every English school schools where the Foundation Phase is delivered entirely through the Welsh with two streams in KS2 a Welsh stream and 50% Welsh/English stream.

Ynys Môn has set clear targets. In their Welsh in Education Strategy Plan 2014-17, it states:

'Outcome 1 : More seven year old children receiving their education through the medium of Welsh.

We will increase the percentage of pupils who follow first language track and are assessed in Welsh as a first language at the end of the Foundation Phase and KS2, aiming at 76% by 2017 (from 69.7% in 2013).

Ceredigion's Plan says

'Outcome 1: Ensure that 80% of our 7 year old pupils are in Welsh education by 2017 (from 76.4% in 2012/13).

In Gwynedd, it states:

Language Policy – primary

The goal of the Language Policy is the same across the county's primary schools, to develop the ability of every pupil to be confident in both languages by the end of KS2. Welsh is the school's official language of assessment at the end of KS1. In KS2, we continue to direct attention at developing pupils' grasp of Welsh but we also begin the process skills in both languages.

Gwynedd council has a target of 100% of pupils being assessed as Welsh first language.

It seems strange that Denbighshire's boast to reach a 'challenging' target earlier than anticipated leads to setting a very small target of only 29% by 2016/17, and one of the best ways of reaching the aim would be to ensure an area school in one of the most Welsh areas of the County of Welsh medium category 1 status.

Denbighshire's Language Scheme

The Welsh Language Commissioner has powers to research the possible failures of public establishments to implement their Language Schemes. Section 17 of Denbighshire's current Language Scheme notes that the County will establish the language choice of any face to face meeting with the public. It states:

17.1 When we arrange or attend face-to-face meetings with members of the public, we will establish their language preference at the earliest opportunity and, whenever possible, ensure that a suitably qualified Welsh speaking member of staff deals with those whose preferred language is Welsh.

17.2 If no suitably qualified Welsh speaker is available, we will offer the choice of continuing the meeting in English, arranging a meeting with an interpreter or dealing with the subject

by corresponding in Welsh. The above will also apply to meetings held using videoconferencing and similar equipment.

16.1 The council will ensure that all meetings with the public are fully bilingual. We will provide simultaneous translation from Welsh into English at our public and council meetings unless we have established that all participants are likely to use the same language e.g. invitation only meetings.

We are of the opinion that the Council has failed in this duty to offer services in the Welsh language on a number of occasions during this consultation process.

We also understand that the Council is in the process of creating a new Welsh Language Scheme for the county. We feel strongly that any decision to reclassify school should be put on hold until this new scheme is adopted. There is no sense in agreeing on one policy that affects the education in the county when another policy, that could affect education in the county, is prepared at the same time.

CONCLUSION

We believe that creating a voluntary controlled category 2 school in the area will not promote and guarantee Welsh medium education for the future. There is a thought that a category 2 school is more attractive than a category 1 school if parents are unsure about whether their child will cope with learning Welsh as a second language. The Denbighshire County Council schools admissions policy clearly states that “The majority of Nursery, Reception and Year 1 pupils attending Welsh Medium or opting for Welsh at a dual stream school easily develop competence and confidence in both Welsh and English, regardless of the family home language.” . Parents are not afraid to use Welsh medium child care and the local Cylch Meithrins so why is there a fear surrounding primary education. As stated above we as a Welsh medium primary school have non-welsh speaking families, we are not exclusive, we are a community. In our opinion if the new school were to be a category 2 you would in fact be isolating those parents seeking a Welsh Medium Education via true immersion.

There is a history of children switching from the English stream to the Welsh stream in Llanfair

| Year | Total Pupils | Welsh Stream | English Stream | Number of pupils who have moved from English to the Welsh Stream |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Nursery | 13 | 10 | 3 | N/A |
| Reception | 15 | 9 | 6 | 5 |
| Year 1 | 13 | 12 | 1 | 2 |
| Year 2 | 11 | 8 | 3 | 0 |
| Year 3 | 13 | 10 | 3 | 2 |
| Year 4 | 12 | 9 | 3 | 1 |
| Year 5 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 4 |
| Year 6 | 14 | 10 | 4 | 4 |
| TOTAL | 103 | 76 (73.8%) | 27 (26.2%) | 18 (17.5%) |

(Information provided by Denbighshire County Council)

If these children had not switched language stream then the language balance within the school would have been 56% Welsh Stream: 44% English stream, a very different language balance.

As stated previously our school accommodates and welcomes all pupils regardless of home language, we call on you to make the new area school a category 1 school. We can prioritise to continue this ethos within the new school and ensure that we do not exclude those who are fearful of a Welsh medium Education. One parent has been quoted as saying:

'Nid mater o gau plant "Saesneg" allan o gymdeithas Cymraeg yw pwrpas ysgolion swyddogol Cymraeg, yn wir i'r gwrthwyneb yw eu pwrpas. Rydw i'n dysgu mewn Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg mewn ardal eithaf Saesnigaidd o Gymru. Mae 90% o'r disgyblion yn dod o gartrefi di-Gymraeg. Un o bwyntiau'r ysgolion Cymraeg yw hybu'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg yn eu bywydau y tu allan i'r ysgol. Esiampl perffaith o'r llwyddaint yma yw cyn ddisgyblyn fy ysgol i, sef John Hartson. Yn ei ddyddiau ysgol roedd John yn gwrthwynebu defnyddio'r Gymraeg, am ei fod am chwarae pel-droed yn y Premiership. Ers iddo adael yr ysgol fodd bynnag mae ef wedi sylweddoli bod y defnydd o'r Gymraeg yn fantais iddo ac mae e'n (gymharol) rheolaidd i'w glywed yn sgwrsio yn y Gymraeg ar S4C ac ar radio Cymru.'

How can Denbighshire County Council be truly committed to the Welsh in Education Strategic plan if they are closing a category 1 Welsh Medium school? And, if bilingual schools work so well, why are there only 36 out of the 1333 primary schools in Wales? Ysgol Llanfair DC is a unique model sustained by factors that can be changed, it cannot be preserved for ever and is in fact closing, something that people seem to be forgetting. How can the new area school work in the same way when it will be a bigger school starting with a new slate? Welsh language provision cannot be guaranteed unless the school is Welsh medium.

By definition a category 1 Welsh medium school should deliver children at the end of key stage 2 competent in English as per a category 5 school therefore delivering results consistent with Denbighshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. These pupils can then progress to Welsh medium education in the secondary sector. We are strongly concerned about the pupils learning Welsh as a second language, where is the place for them in the secondary sector? How does this fit with Outcome 2 of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan:

"More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school. We aim to increase the percentage of learners who are assessed in Welsh first language at the end of year 9 to 21%"

In Professor Donaldson's recent report "Successful futures" he says

"In particular there is a need to build children and young people's confidence to use the language not only in lessons but also in activities and real-life situation outside the classroom and outside the school"

Professor Sioned Davies, in her foreword to "One language for all: Review of Welsh second language at key stages 3 and 4(2013)", says

"The future of Welsh and Welsh culture is wholly dependant on transmitting the language to our young people"

Cen Williams, Bangor University Research can be quoted

"Immersion education is a success story, a fact that needs to be emphasised. Pupils who experience immersion become competent in a new language and achieve academic success through the medium of that language. But we don't need to visit other countries to see the evidence for that; it has been happening here in Wales for at least forty years. In the bilingual or Welsh-medium schools of the south-east or north-east the vast majority of the pupils learn Welsh through immersion education at school rather than at home. The secondary schools then build on this success so that their second language develops as an academic language as well. They succeed academically in their content subjects through the medium of their second language. But by then they have two first languages, both Welsh and English; that is the extent of the success and the value of immersion education for us in Wales. The education system needs to recognise this success and to learn how to use aspects of

immersion education to make up for the relative failure of learning Welsh as a subject in the majority of our English-medium schools. If our intent is to create a bilingual Wales, we need to capitalise on what is already happening here in the Welsh-medium sector and in other countries, and extend immersion education to English-medium schools.”

In a report published last year by Estyn “Linguistic progression and standards of Welsh in ten bilingual schools” Anne Keane, Chief Inspector is quoted as saying

“Only in a third of bilingual schools do most pupils who study Welsh as a first language follow two or more additional GCSEs through the medium of Welsh. Overall, the proportion of pupils studying Welsh as a first language declines as they progress through their schooling. Although Gwynedd, Anglesey, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire have the highest proportion of pupils in key stage 4 studying Welsh as a first language, the numbers of pupils choosing this path decreased by approximately one in every five pupils between key stages 2 and 4.”

Whilst these quotes in part refer to secondary education the key point is the decrease of the number of pupils progressing the Welsh Medium Education in the Secondary sector. The report also states that a number of pupils who studied Welsh as a first language at primary school do not continue to study Welsh as a first language in secondary school or chose to study other subjects through Welsh. These pupils and their parents often make these choices without considering the benefits of continuing their studies through the medium of Welsh.

If the new school is to be a Faith school this only drives the concerns regarding language stability. The Local authority has no power to change the language category therefore how can it truly implement monitoring of the Welsh Language provision. The Church in Wales overall is not, in our opinion, against a Welsh Medium School, it in fact has some in its portfolio but in this case the involvement in the proposal should be carefully considered. What does the Church have to offer the new school that is different to the ethos that is in most community schools already?

We invite Officers and Elected members to consider our case and come forward with an exciting and progressive solution to what has been a difficult debate.

Yours Sincerely

Sarah Wynne
Chair of Governors
On behalf of Parents, Staff and Governors
Ysgol Pentrecelyn

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