

Y Grŵp Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Education and Public Services Group



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref
Lisa Walchester
Denbighshire County Council
County Hall
Wynnstay Road
Ruthin
Denbighshire
LL15 1YN

15 October 2015

Dear Lisa

Thank you for your email of 9 October requesting the consent of the Welsh Ministers that the local authority in exercise of its functions under Section 51 (4) of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, may modify proposals published by the Diocese of St. Asaph (the diocesan authority) to establish a new dual-stream category 2 Church in Wales voluntary controlled primary school on 1 September 2016.

On 18 June 2015 the local authority and the diocesan authority jointly published a statutory notice which stated the following:

- *The Council proposes to discontinue Ysgol Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd from 31 August 2016;*
- *The Council proposes to discontinue Ysgol Pentrecelyn from 31 August 2016; and*
- *The Diocese proposes to establish a new dual-stream Category 2, Church in Wales Voluntary Controlled primary school for boys and girls aged 4 to 11 years old from 1 September 2016....*

Pupils currently attending Ysgol Llanfair and Ysgol Pentrecelyn and those admitted during 2016-17 school year will be able to attend the proposed new school in September 2016. The proposed new school will operate from the two current sites of Ysgol Llanfair and Ysgol Pentrecelyn.

The explanatory note, which does not form part of the notice, also stated the following:

c) This proposal is the first phase for the development of the area school. The second phase would see the area school consolidated on a new site in the Llanfair/Pentrecelyn area, subject to land availability and suitability. We are proposing the new build will be ready by September 2017.

The objection period ended on 15 July 2015 and 30 objections were received.

Under section 53 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (the “2013 Act”) the local authority is required to determine whether or not to proceed with its proposal to close Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn by 4 November 2015. The local authority is also required to consider whether to approve the diocesan authority’s proposal to establish a new dual-stream category 2 Church in Wales voluntary controlled primary school under section 51 of the 2013 Act, as objections to the proposal were received. The local authority can decide to reject or approve the diocesan authority’s proposal, or approve the proposal with modifications to either the proposed implementation date or the number of pupils to be admitted to the school. The local authority may only approve the proposal with modification(s) having obtained the consent of the Welsh Ministers and the proposer to the modification(s), and after consulting the governing bodies concerned.

I note that at a meeting held on 29 September 2015 the local authority’s Cabinet was informed that feasibility work indicates the new school building would not be ready by 1 September 2017 and that January 2018 was now considered a more realistic date. The Cabinet was also reminded that concerns were expressed during consultation about the proposed length of time the school would be split over two sites.

The Cabinet resolved to meet again on 27 October to determine the proposals, to consult the diocesan authority and the governing bodies of Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn, and request the consent of the diocesan authority and the Welsh Ministers to modify the implementation dates of the proposals.

I understand that the diocesan authority has agreed to the proposed modification so that the proposals are implemented a year later on 31 August 2017 and 1 September 2017. I have seen and noted letters informing the local authority that the diocesan authority and the chairs of the governing bodies of Ysgol Llanfair and Ysgol Pentrecelyn are content with the proposed modification, although the governing body of Ysgol Pentrecelyn still opposes other aspects of the proposal.

Having carefully considered the information provided, I write to inform you that if the local authority were to decide to approve the proposals, the Welsh Ministers agree to the proposals being modified as set out in your request, as follows:

- *Ysgol Llanfair DC and Ysgol Pentrecelyn to close on 31st August 2017, rather than 2016, with the Church in Wales establishing a new area school on the existing sites on 1 September 2017, rather than 2016.*

I should be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt of this letter and advise me of the decision made by the Cabinet on 27 October.

Yours sincerely



Mary Davies
School Organisation and Governance Branch
Schools Management and Effectiveness Division