

## Welsh Language Impact Assessment

### CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO CLOSE YSGOL GYNRADD GYMRAEG FELINDRE ON 31 AUGUST 2019

1. This Welsh language impact assessment has been carried out in line with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.
2. Implementing the proposal would result in the school closing with effect from 31 August 2019. The current catchment area for YGG Felindre would be transferred to YGG Tirdeunaw as the next nearest school, unless a separate proposal to relocate YGG Tan-y-lan to a new location off Beacons View Road in Clase is approved, in which case it would become the nearest school and would take the pupils from YGG Felindre's catchment area.
3. Transport would be provided to the new school as per the Council's Home to School Transport Policy.
4. During the last five years education provision at YGG Felindre has been weak. Lack of permanent leadership has been an impediment to school improvement and quality of teaching has been adequate. The local authority has intervened to help to find leaders at the school. The local authority has also intervened to provide considerable support and challenge to ensure necessary improvements were made in the quality of provision and in the wider quality of leadership. The local authority cannot sustain this level of support long term.
5. The proposals for enhanced capacity and facilities at YGG Tan-y-lan and YGG Tirdeunaw would secure strong educational provision in future as well as the benefits of expert permanent leadership at different levels.
6. Consequently, there are several specific reasons why this proposal has been made on educational grounds:
  - i. The new catchment school can offer a wider range of facilities on a less restricted site, offering a greater flexibility in covering all areas of the curriculum and greater access to resources and staffing.
  - ii. Current and future anticipated pupil needs at YGG Felindre can be appropriately met at the new catchment area school.
  - iii. The size of YGG Felindre raises the concern that the quality of educational provision may not be sustainable in the future.
  - iv. The larger team of staff at the new catchment area school can provide a broader range of expertise in areas of the curriculum and in terms of leading whole school initiatives. It can provide staff with more opportunities to develop their skills and can enable the best use to be made of staff expertise.
  - v. A larger school has more flexibility with its budget and can have access to a wider range of resources and staffing.
  - vi. Only 35% of learners on roll at YGG Felindre are from the catchment area.

- vii. Pupil numbers at YGG Felindre have decreased over a number of years and are not projected to increase to a sustainable level.
  - viii. The need to ensure cost effective and equitable distribution of funding amongst schools in Swansea in line with Welsh Government and Audit Commission Guidance.
  - ix. The need for local authorities to consider the closure of those small primary schools that were not justified by local circumstances.
  - x. There has been an inability to attract a headteacher to this small school, leading to a number of short-term interim appointments over the last few years. Sustainable leadership is needed to ensure that standards for learners are maintained.
7. Careful consideration has been given to alternative options to closure, including the potential for Federation. However, at present it is considered that no sustainable alternative option has been identified.
  8. A larger primary school has a larger team of staff that can provide more flexibility in terms of delivering the full curriculum. It can provide staff with more opportunities to develop their skills across the whole primary age range and can enable the best use to be made of staff expertise.
  9. Moving pupils from YGG Felindre to a new catchment school would provide pupils with an education in a larger, more sustainable school with greater curriculum and resource access, as well as allowing enhanced social and sporting opportunities for the learners and preparing them for their move to a larger secondary school.
  10. Both YGG Tan-y-lan and YGG Tirdeunaw have positive standards of achievement and received good Estyn inspections. The schools are well managed and have supportive governing bodies.
  11. A larger school has more flexibility with its budget and can have access to a wider range of resources and staffing. Any efficiencies from having fewer schools in Swansea will be reinvested in the remaining schools for the benefit of all pupils in Swansea.
  12. The very low numbers at YGG Felindre inevitably restrict the range of opportunities for group and interactive work and change the nature of the social education that the school can provide.
  13. The Council would benefit from the removal of a condition category B building, reduced backlog maintenance and improved building efficiency.
  14. The latest Estyn Inspection ratings for the schools affected were:

School	Current Performance Rating	Schools Prospects for Improving
YGG Felindre	Adequate	Adequate
YGG Tirdeunaw	Good	Good
YGG Tan-y-lan	Good	Good

15. There would be no detrimental impact from the proposals on the ability of YGG Tan-y-lan or YGG Tirdeunaw to deliver the full curriculum at the Foundation Phase or at Key Stage 2.
16. The proposal will provide at least as good a quality of educational provision for pupils and would be expected to have a positive impact on educational standards due to:
- Increased number of staff and range of expertise in a larger school environment –reflected in improved planning and schemes of work, quality of provision and monitoring of subjects
  - Greater opportunity for learning with pupils of the same age
  - Improved opportunities for participating in social, cultural and sporting activities
17. During the consultation the following issues were raised in relation to the impact on the Welsh language in the community:

*We do not believe that the Council is adhering to its duty under the compliance notice that was published on 30 September 2015 under Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 in Standard 91, Standard 92 and Standard 93.*

Our response to these points are as follows:

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Response</b>
<p>Standard 91:</p> <p>When you publish a consultation document which relates to a policy decision, the document must consider, and seek views on, the effects (whether positive or adverse) that the policy decision under consideration would have on - (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p>	<p>The Council's wider Welsh in Education Strategic Plan seeks to increase the number of Welsh-medium places in Swansea significantly. As a result of proposals to reach our targets we believe that this would increase opportunities for more people to use the Welsh language and ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.</p> <p>The increase in Welsh-medium places will see Swansea playing its part in the Welsh Government's target of having one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050.</p> <p>In the Mawr area of Swansea, if this proposal were to go ahead we believe that as part of a new catchment area the ward would become part of the wider family of the designated school and therefore be able to access further</p>

	<p>opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language.</p>
<p>Standard 92:</p> <p>When you publish a consultation document which relates to a policy decision the document must consider, and seek views on, how the policy under consideration could be formulated or revised so that it would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p>	<p>The Council's wider Welsh in Education Strategic Plan seeks to increase the number of Welsh-medium places in Swansea significantly. As a result of proposals to reach our targets we believe that this would increase opportunities for more people to use the Welsh language and ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.</p> <p>The increase in Welsh-medium places will see Swansea playing its part in the Welsh Government's target of having one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050.</p> <p>In the Mawr area of Swansea, if this proposal were to go ahead we believe that as part of a new catchment area the ward would become part of the wider family of the designated school and therefore be able to access further opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language.</p>
<p>Standard 93:</p> <p>When you publish a consultation document which relates to a policy decision the document must consider, and seek views on, how the policy under consideration could be formulated or revised so that it would not have adverse effects, or so that it would have decreased adverse effects, on - (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p>	<p>The Council's wider Welsh in Education Strategic Plan seeks to increase the number of Welsh-medium places in Swansea significantly. As a result of proposals to reach our targets we believe that this would increase opportunities for more people to use the Welsh language and ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language.</p> <p>The increase in Welsh-medium places will see Swansea playing its part in the Welsh Government's target of having one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050.</p> <p>In the Mawr area of Swansea, if this proposal were to go ahead we believe that as part of a new catchment area the ward would become part of the wider family of the designated school and therefore be able to access further</p>

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18. Against this background and combined with the advantages as listed above we believe that the proposal should result in a positive impact on Welsh language development in Swansea.

19. As such, the Council is satisfied that provision for Welsh language will be improved in Swansea.