



STATUTORY CONSULTATION DOCUMENT



Ysgol Abersoch

12 January 2021 – 23 February 2021

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Foreword

At their meeting on **15 September 2020**, and later on **3 November 2020**, **Gwynedd Council Cabinet** resolved to undertake a period of statutory consultation on the proposed proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch on 31 August 2021 and to provide education for learners at Ysgol Sarn Bach from 1 September 2021, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation Act 2013.

The statutory consultation will be held between **12 January 2021 and 23 February 2021**, based on the proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch on 31 August 2021, and offer a place for the pupils at Ysgol Sarn Bach on 1 September 2021.

Gwynedd Council invites you to put forward your views for consideration before a decision is made. At the end of the consultation period, we will submit a report to Gwynedd Council's Cabinet.

A copy of this document, and other background papers, are available on the Council's website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation and hard copies will be available upon request from the Modernising Education Office by emailing modernisingeducation@gwynedd.llyw.cymru or by phoning **01286 679247**.

PLEASE NOTE - any comments on the statutory consultation document should be sent to the Modernising Education Office by **13:00 on Tuesday, 23 February 2021**. The relevant contact details can be found at the end of this statutory consultation document.

We look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,



Garem Jackson
Head of Education

1. Introduction

Gwynedd Council is considering closing Ysgol Abersoch as a result of the pattern of low numbers attending the school for some years. In September 2020, 10 pupils were registered at the school. Ysgol Sarn Bach has been named as the 'alternative school' and it is proposed that pupils would be offered a place at this school.

Gwynedd Council has considered many options for primary education in the Ysgol Abersoch catchment area in order to ensure a sustainable provision for the future, responding specifically to the low pupil numbers. This document outlines the consultation process, the factors considered to be relevant by the Council and the decision-making process.

1.1 The Proposal that is the subject of this Statutory Consultation is to:

Close Ysgol Abersoch on 31 August 2021, and to offer pupils a place at Ysgol Sarn Bach from 1 September 2021.

2. The Consultation

The consultation will be held between **12 January 2021 and 23 February 2021**.

This consultation only relates to Ysgol Abersoch and Ysgol Sarn Bach; therefore, responses to this consultation should only refer to the proposal as described in paragraph 1.1 above.

The consultation document will be distributed to the following consultees in accordance with Welsh Government's School Organisation Code:

The requirements of the Organisation Code 011/2018	It will be distributed to...
The maintaining or proposed maintaining authority for any school likely to be affected by the proposals;	Gwynedd Council is submitting the proposal
Any other local authority (including those in England, where appropriate) likely to be affected - including in the case of dedicated SEN provision any authority placing or likely to place pupils with SEN in it;	Powys, Denbighshire, Conwy and Anglesey Councils
The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authority for the area in which any school likely to be affected is located;	Church in Wales Diocese
Any other appropriate religious body for any school likely to be affected by the proposals;	-
The governing body of any school which is the subject of the proposals;	The Governing Body of Ysgol Abersoch The Governing Body of Ysgol Sarn Bach

The governing body of other schools which the proposer considers are likely to be affected by the proposals;	The Governing Body of Ysgol Llanbedrog The Governing Body of Ysgol Foel Gron
Welsh Ministers;	Welsh Ministers
Constituency and Regional Assembly Members (AMs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) representing the area served by/intended to be served by any school which is the subject of the proposals;	<u>Dwyfor-Meirionnydd Constituency MS</u> Dafydd Elis-Thomas MS <u>Regional AMs for North Wales</u> Helen Mary Jones MS Neil Hamilton MS Joyce Watson MS Eluned Morgan MS <u>Dwyfor-Meirionnydd Constituency MP</u> Liz Saville Roberts MP
Estyn;	Meilyr Rowlands - Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales
Teaching and staff trade unions representing teachers and other staff at any school which is the subject of the proposals;	Representatives of NASUWT; NEU; UCAC; ASCL; UNSAIN
The relevant Regional Education Consortium;	Arwyn Thomas – GwE Managing Director
The Police and Crime Commissioner for the area served by/intended to be served by any school which is the subject of the proposals;	Arfon Jones - North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
Any community or town council for the area served by/intended to be served by any school which is the subject of the proposals;	Llanengan Community Council Llanbedrog Community Council
In the case of proposals affecting nursery provision any independent or voluntary providers who may be affected including Mudiad Meithrin;	Abersoch Cylch Meithrin / Cylch Ti a Fi Cylch Meithrin Llanbedrog
In the case of proposals affecting nursery provision, the Children and Young People’s Partnership and/or the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships where present;	Gwynedd Ni Mudiad Meithrin - Early Years Specialists
In the case of proposals affecting SEN provision, any relevant health or third sector bodies with an interest;	Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Representative
In the case of proposals affecting secondary provision, any further education institutions serving the area of the school;	Ysgol Glan y Môr / Ysgol Botwnnog
In the case of proposals affecting Welsh language provision, the Welsh Language Commissioner	Welsh Language Commissioner, Mantell Gwynedd
Other	All Gwynedd Council Councillors All headteachers of Gwynedd Schools

This consultation document will be published on Gwynedd Council's website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation and hard copies will be available on request from the Education Modernisation Office.

During the consultation period, Gwynedd Council officers will hold "drop-in sessions" via virtual meeting software in order to give stakeholders such as Governors, staff and parents an opportunity to ask questions and to discuss the consultation further.

In addition, consultees will be welcome to send questions regarding the proposal or consultation by sending them to modernisingeducation@gwynedd.llyw.cymru ideally during the first weekend of the consultation, i.e. between **12 and 26 January 2021**. We will attempt to respond in a timely way to enable consultees to submit an informed response during the consultation period. Where appropriate, we will also include the question and answer on our website for the benefit of the other consultees.

The comments received during the statutory consultation period will be considered by the Cabinet, before a decision is made on the next steps. Gwynedd Council's Cabinet will decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal, and whether or not a Statutory Notice should be published.

As part of the consultation process, a background information pack will be published on Gwynedd Council's website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation and hard copies will be available on request from the Modernising Education Office. The pack includes:

- The School Organisation Code 011/2018
- Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
- Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd
- Statistics Pack (2020-21)
- Language Impact Assessment Report
- Report on the Assessment of the likely impact on the community
- Equality Assessment Report
- Report on the Assessment of the likely impact on transport arrangements
- Report on the Assessment of the likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education
- Well-being Act Assessment Report
- Minutes of the School Review Panel Meetings
- Cabinet Report and Decision Notice, September 2019
- Cabinet Report and Decision Notice, September 2020
- Report to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee October 2020
- Cabinet Report and Decision Notice, November 2020

If you wish to receive this document in a different format, or if you have questions about the proposal, contact the Modernising Education Office by e-mailing modernisingeducation@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

Consultation with Children and Young People

Arrangements will also be made to ensure that we receive the views of the children and young people who attend the schools. Designated sessions will be held with a group of pupils from both schools - exact dates to be confirmed. The consultation document for children and young people can be seen on the Council's website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation, along with a response form/questionnaire. This will ensure that all pupils have an opportunity respond to the consultation.

How to Respond to the Consultation?

The comments received during the statutory consultation period will be considered by the Cabinet, before a decision is made on the next steps.

You can respond to this consultation by completing the response form attached to the consultation document and returning it to:

E-mail: modernisingeducation@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

Post: Modernising Education Office
Gwynedd Council
Shirehall Street
Caernarfon
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Note – All responses, either via post or e-mail, must reach the Council's Headquarters by **13:00 on Tuesday, 23 February 2021**.

3. Background Information

3.1. How the Proposal was developed

In September 2019, there were 7 full-time pupils (4-8 years old), and 2 nursery pupils attending Ysgol Abersoch. At its meeting on 17 September 2019, Gwynedd Council's Cabinet supported a recommendation to "to commence formal discussions with the Governing Body and other relevant stakeholders of Ysgol Abersoch, to enable the formulation of a range of potential options relating to the school's future."

In accordance with the Cabinet's decision (17 September 2019), an Ysgol Abersoch Review Panel (SRP) was established and the Governing Body, parents, staff and the Local Elected Member were invited to join the panel and participate in the discussion. Three SRP meetings were held between October 2019 and January 2020 to discuss a range of options to seek to resolve the main challenges faced by the school.

The proposal was developed in line with achieving the aims of the current strategies. The "Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd" Strategy was submitted to a meeting of the Full Council on 2 April 2009. The strategy was unanimously approved by the Council with the vision being to:

"Provide education of the best possible quality that will provide the County's children with the experiences, skills and confidence to develop into bilingual, successful and well-rounded citizens."

The proposal was developed using the factors in the Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd Strategy, and these were measured against the options. This assessment can be viewed in the Appendices.

In addition, the following strategies and objectives were considered as the proposal was developed:

- Towards 2025 - Future of Education and Training for Children and Young People in Gwynedd
- Welsh Language Promotion Plan for Gwynedd 2018-2023
- Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023

At its meeting on 15 September 2020, Gwynedd Council Cabinet resolved to hold a statutory consultation, in accordance with the requirements of section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, on the proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch on 31 August 2021 and to provide a place for the pupils at Ysgol Sarn Bach from 1 September 2021. The decision was confirmed by the Cabinet at its meeting on 3 November 2020, after the original decision was called in and referred back to the Cabinet by the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 8 October 2020.

3.2. Abersoch School Review Panel

The Abersoch School Review Panel (SRP) was established in October 2019 and a series of meetings were held between October 2019 and January 2020, with the last of these held on 6 January 2020. The SRP included the school's headteacher, governors, the Local Member, parents and staff.

During the meetings, a number of options were considered for primary education in the Ysgol Abersoch catchment area in order to ensure a sustainable provision for the future, and respond specifically to the substantial drop in numbers, and the small class sizes.

4. Existing Arrangements in the Abersoch Area

The Ysgol Abersoch catchment area adjoins with the catchment area of 3 nearby primary schools, namely Ysgol Sarn Bach, Ysgol Foel Gron and Ysgol Llanbedrog.



1 The locations of schools in the Abersoch area

The Schools which are the Subject of this Consultation:

4.1 Ysgol Abersoch

- Ysgol Abersoch serves the village of Abersoch, located approximately seven miles from Pwllheli, and provides education for pupils aged between 3 and 8 years.
- Ysgol Abersoch pupils transfer to Ysgol Sarn Bach in year 4.
- Pupils are admitted to the school part-time in the September following their third birthday and as full-time pupils in the September following their fourth birthday. In September 2020, eight full-time pupils and two part-time (nursery) pupils were registered at the school.
- 5 (50%) of Ysgol Abersoch's pupils come from the school's catchment area. The remaining pupils (5(50%)) come from catchment areas of neighboring schools.
- There is one class in the school.
- The Abersoch Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi are located at the school.
- According to the 2011 census, 43.5% of the population of the Abersoch Ward speak Welsh. 33% of the school's pupils speak Welsh at home, but not fluently (PLASC January 2020).
- The school receives an additional amount to the usual financial allocation via the minimum staffing protection policy (which ensures at least a headteacher and teacher at each school, and a headteacher and an assistant in schools with fewer than 15 full time pupils). The total additional funding for the 2020-21 financial year (based on the numbers in September 2019) is £52,582.
- The cost per pupil at Ysgol Abersoch is £17,404 (2020-21); the county average cost per pupil is £4,198.

4.2 Ysgol Sarn Bach

- Ysgol Sarn is located in the centre of the village of Sarn Bach, and is located 1.4 miles from Ysgol Abersoch.
- Pupils are admitted to school part-time in the September following their third birthday and as full-time pupils in the September following their fourth birthday. The school already accepts pupils in year 4 from Ysgol Abersoch every September.
- In September 2020, 45 pupils (+ 3 nursery pupils) were registered at the school.
- According to 2020 data, 28 of Ysgol Sarn Bach's pupils (N-Yr.6) lived within the school's catchment area. A total of 20 pupils who attended the school lived in another school's catchment area, including 9 (N-Yr.3) who lived in the Ysgol Abersoch catchment area.
- There are two classes in the school.

- According to the 2011 census, 63.4% of the population of the Llanengan Ward speak Welsh. 53% of the Ysgol Sarn Bach pupils speak fluent Welsh at home (PLASC January 2020).

Other nearby Primary Schools:

Information is provided about the schools below as it could be considered reasonable that the pupils may wish to transfer here.

4.3 Ysgol Llanbedrog

- Ysgol Llanbedrog is located in the village of Llanbedrog, located approximately four miles from Pwllheli and 3.5 miles from Ysgol Abersoch.
- In September 2020, 93 pupils (+ 10 nursery) were registered at the school.
- 35% of the pupils speak fluent Welsh at home (PLASC January 2020).

4.4 Ysgol Foel Gron

- Ysgol Foel Gron is located in the centre of the village of Mynytho, approximately five miles from the town of Pwllheli, Gwynedd, and 3.4 miles from Ysgol Abersoch.
- In September, 40 pupils (+ 3 nursery) were registered at the school.
- 42% of the pupils speak fluent Welsh at home (PLASC January 2020).

4.5 Schools Categories

Gwynedd schools are defined as Community, Voluntary Aided (VA) or Voluntary Controlled (VC). Also, Voluntary Aided or Voluntary Controlled Schools can be designated with a religious character i.e. as a Church in Wales School.

Ysgol Abersoch, Ysgol Sarn Bach and Ysgol Llanbedrog are 'Community' schools. Ysgol Foel Gron is a Voluntary Controlled School (VC) with a religious character (Church in Wales).

4.6 Summary of the School's Statistics:

		Abersoch		Sarn Bach		Llanbedrog		Foel Gron	
Location of Schools		Pwllheli, LL53 7EA		Pwllheli, LL53 7LF		Pwllheli, LL53 7NU		Pwllheli, LL53 7RN	
Age Range		3 - 8		3 - 11		3 - 11		3 - 11	
School's Category (Community [CS], Voluntary Aided [VA], Voluntary Controlled [VC])		CS (I)		CS		CS		VC (E)	
Language Medium Category		Welsh Medium		Welsh Medium		Welsh Medium		Welsh Medium	
Number of pupils on the register – September 2020	Nursery	2		3		10		3	
	Reception – Yr. 6 **(Reception-Yr3 in the case of Ysgol Abersoch)	8		45		92		40	
	Total	10		48		102		43	
Number of pupils on the register for the previous five years		Nursery	Reception-Yr.3	Nursery	Reception-Yr.6	Nursery	Reception-Yr.6	Nursery	Reception-Yr.6
	September 2019	2	7	2	48	12	80	5	35
	September 2018	1	12	4	43	9	75	3	36
	September 2017	1	16	3	48	12	69	3	37
	September 2016	7	17	4	44	11	68	8	32
	September 2015	4	16	3	56	7	65	3	39
Capacity	Nursery	8		7		10		7	
	Reception – Yr. 6 **(Reception-Yr3 in the case of Ysgol Abersoch)	34		66		73		54	
	Total	42		73		83		61	
Surplus places R-Yr6 September 2020 ** (Reception-Yr3 in the case of Ysgol Abersoch)		26 (76%)		21 (32%)		0		14 (26%)	
Pupil Projections		Nursery	Reception-Yr.3	Nursery	Reception-Yr.6	Nursery	Reception-Yr.6	Nursery	Reception-Yr.6
	September 2021	3	7	2	40	10	84	6	39
	September 2022	2	10	2	31	10	84	4	33
	September 2023	2	10	2	28	10	82	4	32
	September 2024	2	9	2	22	10	78	5	28
	September 2025	2	9	2	17	10	73	4	30
School performance data (Estyn)		3 x Good (2017)		5 x Good (2017)		3 x Good (2014)		3 x Good (2015)	
Category condition of buildings (Council's Criteria)		B		B		B		B	
Financial Allocation 2020-21		£137,140		£228,890		£364,470		£185,417	
Cost per pupil 2020-21		£17,404		£4,683		£4,274		£4,984	

5. The Case for Change

5.1. The Current Situation

The school has been prioritised for a review of the educational provision as it faces a number of challenges. Pupil numbers at the school have reduced consistently since 2016 and have been fragile for some time. Consequently, it is likely that the school is facing increasing challenges, including:

- **Low pupil numbers:** In September 2020, there were eight full-time pupils and two part-time nursery pupils registered at the school.
- **Projected numbers:** It is anticipated that the numbers will continue to be low over the coming years (September 2021 = 10; September 2022 = 12; September 2023 = 12.)
- **High percentage of surplus places:** Based on the figures for September 2020, there were 76% surplus places at the school (a total of 26 (R-Yr.3))
- **Small class sizes:** The 10 pupils are taught in one mixed-age class.
- **Broad age ranges within classes:** The pupils are taught in one class with an age range of up to 5 years (3-8 years).
- **Financial Resources:** Ysgol Abersoch receives an additional sum to the usual financial allocation via the minimum staffing protection policy - this amounted to £52,582 during the 2020-21 financial year. The cost per pupil at Ysgol Abersoch in the 2020/21 financial year is £17,404 - the average cost in the county per pupil is £4,198.
- **Pupil residence:** 2020 data shows that 26 3-8 year old children live in the Ysgol Abersoch catchment area with 21 (81%) of them attending schools outside the catchment area.

		Home catchment area (September 2020)					Total School (N-Yr6) * (N-Yr 3 for Abersoch School)
		Abersoch	Sarn Bach	Llanbedrog	Foel Gron	Other	
Attending School... (September 2020)	Abersoch	5	1	-	-	4	10
	Sarn Bach	9	28	-	2	9	48
	Llanbedrog	6	6	58	15	17	102
	Foel Gron	2	4	4	24	9	43
	Other	4	2	2	1		
Total		26	41	64	42		

Source: September 2020 School Census

5.2. Pupil Numbers and Projections

Overall, there has been a reduction of approximately 20% in pupil numbers across the County's schools since 1975. Consequently, resources are spent every year on the maintenance of buildings and ineffective systems, rather than on the education of children and young people.

The following table provides a summary of pupil numbers in the area's schools between 1980 and 2020:

Numbers [Nursery - Yr 6 (3-11 years)]													1980-2020	1980-2020
School	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2017	2019	2020	growth	% growth	
Abersoch* (3-8 years)	34	30	13	14	29	19	20	20	17	9	10	-24	-71%	
Sarn Bach	51	53	62	59	74	54	51	59	51	50	48	-3	-6%	
Llanbedrog	90	83	48	62	63	65	78	72	81	92	103	13	15%	
Foel Gron	43	20	25	42	44	52	31	42	40	40	43	0	0%	
Total	218	186	148	177	210	190	180	193	189	191	204			

Source: Gwynedd Annual School Census Data (September 2020)

The table shows that the pupil numbers of Ysgol Abersoch for September 2019 are at a 39-year low, with a -71% reduction in the number of pupils attending the school between 1980 and 2020. The numbers at Ysgol Sarn Bach also reduced by -6% since 1980. On the contrary, the numbers at Ysgol Llanbedrog have increased by 15% over the same period.

The table below shows the current pupil population in the area.

School	Numbers (September 2020)	
	Full-time	Part-time
Abersoch	8	2
Sarn Bach	45	3
Llanbedrog	92	10
Foel Gron	40	3

Source: September 2020 Census Data

The table below shows the projections of the area over the next 5 years (N - Yr 6 excluding Ysgol Abersoch where reference is made to N-Yr 3 numbers):

School	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Abersoch	7	10	10	9	9
Sarn Bach	40	31	28	22	17
Llanbedrog	84	84	82	78	73
Foel Gron	39	33	32	28	30
Total	170	158	152	137	129

Source: September 2020 Census Data

5.3. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Current Situation

Strengths	Weaknesses
Continued presence of the school in the village of Abersoch	Low pupil numbers and a lack of daily opportunities for pupils to socialise and collaborate with peers
Welsh medium Education continuing in the village of Abersoch - continue to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language locally / within the community	Small classes with a wide age range of up to 5 years.
The school is within walking distance for the majority of pupils of the Ysgol Abersoch catchment area	High cost per pupil
	Projected pupil numbers indicate that numbers will remain low over the next 5 years.
	The financial allocation of the school would not maintain the current staffing structure in the future.
	High percentage of surplus places
	Uncertainty continues regarding the long-term sustainability of the school
	High percentage of pupils attend schools outside the catchment area
	Ysgol Abersoch continues to receive an additional sum to the usual financial allocation via the minimum staffing policy.

It is acknowledged that the weaknesses noted above outweighs the strengths, and consequently, the Education Department is of the opinion that continuing with the current education provision at Ysgol Abersoch would not be a viable option for the future. The Education Department is of the opinion that it is impractical to continue with the current situation, mainly due to:

- Very small classes
- Low numbers and a lack of daily opportunities for pupils to socialise and collaborate with peers
- Future projections indicate that numbers will remain low over the next 5 years, with 9 pupils attending by 2025.

6. Options Appraisal

During the local meetings, several possible models were proposed and discussed, specifically:

No change ('The Status Quo')	Do Nothing. Continue with the current situation.
Option 2 (a)	Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 to 3-11 years
Option 2 (b)	Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 to 3-9 years
Option 3	Federalisation with a nearby school
Option 4	Federalisation with a nearby school, locating the Foundation Phase on the Ysgol Abersoch site, and KS2 on the site of a nearby school
Option 5	Federalisation with nearby schools, locating the Foundation Phase + Years 3 and 4 + Years 5 and 6 on the sites of three different schools
Option 6	Close Ysgol Abersoch and offer a place for the pupils in an alternative school
Option 7	Locate a Language Centre on the Ysgol Abersoch site
Option 8	Establish a Cylch Meithrin at Ysgol Abersoch*
Option 9	Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 to 3-9 + establish a Cylch Meithrin at Ysgol Abersoch

**It should be noted that the school's situation has developed since the local meetings were held in the Autumn term 2019 as a result of the opening of Abersoch Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi (located on the school site). The development of the cylch meithrin and its potential impacts have been included as a consideration under all options, including the No Change option (the Status Quo).*

6.1 Comparing Options

An options appraisal was completed to summarise the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the options under consideration. All options were appraised against the factors of the Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd strategy, whilst also considering the School Organisation Code and other relevant considerations.

In accordance with the 'Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd' strategy, a number of factors were considered when appraising the options, specifically:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| i. Class sizes | v. Financial Resources |
| ii. Pupil numbers | vi. The Welsh Language |
| iii. Leadership and Staffing | vii. Geographical Factors |
| iv. The Community | |

A copy of the full options appraisal has been included in **Appendix 1**.

The table below summarises the reasons for not proceeding with the options:

Option	Description	Reasons for not proceeding with the options
Status Quo	Do Nothing. Continue with the current situation.	It is anticipated that the numbers and projections would remain low, classes would remain small, and the broad age range within classes would continue. Whilst acknowledging the potential positive impact that locating a Cylch Meithrin on the Ysgol Abersoch site may have on the pupil numbers, this cannot be guaranteed, and it is anticipated that the challenges would continue.
Option 2 (a)	Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 to 3-11 years	This option is considered further as it would rationalise the age range with the rest of the county's schools, and would mean that the school offers a comprehensive Key Stage 2 provision. This could possibly strengthen the school's situation.
Option 2 (b)	Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 to 3-9 years	It is not anticipated that adding one educational year would lead to a sufficient increase in the numbers. Consequently, the challenges facing the school would continue. It would not allow for the school to offer a comprehensive Key Stage 2 provision. The pupils would continue to transfer to Ysgol Sarn Bach to complete their primary education.
Option 3	Federalisation with a nearby school	This option is considered further as it could strengthen the school's situation by enabling the possibility of sharing staff, resources, IT, buildings and expertise.
Option 4	Federalisation with a nearby school, locating the Foundation Phase on the Ysgol Abersoch site, and KS2 on the site of a nearby school	It is anticipated that this option would lead to an increase in the number of Ysgol Abersoch Foundation Phase (FP) pupils, but would reduce numbers at the nearby school. An age range of up to four years would continue in the FP class and KS2 class. Although it would reduce the financial protection sum at Ysgol Abersoch, it is possible that it would lead to a situation where both schools included in the federation would be reliant on an additional financial allocation by means of the minimum staffing protection policy.
Option 5	Federalisation with nearby schools, locating the Foundation Phase + Years 3 and 4 + Years 5 and 6 on the sites of three different schools	It is anticipated that this option would lead to an increase in the number of Ysgol Abersoch FP pupils, but would reduce numbers at the two nearby schools. An age range of up to four years would continue in the FP class. Although it would reduce the financial protection sum at Ysgol Abersoch, it is possible that it would lead to a situation where the three schools included in the federation would be reliant on an additional financial allocation by means of the minimum staffing protection policy.

Option 6	Close Ysgol Abersoch and offer a place for the pupils in an alternative school	This option is considered further as it would mean that pupils are educated with their peers in more viable and sustainable sized classes for the future.
Option 7	Locate a Language Centre on the Ysgol Abersoch site	Although it would make better use of the building, locating a language centre in a school does not normally attract children to a school. Consequently, it is not anticipated that this would affect numbers and projections, or class sizes.
Option 8	Establish a Cylch Meithrin at Ysgol Abersoch	Whilst acknowledging the potential positive impact that locating a Cylch Meithrin on the Ysgol Abersoch site could have on the numbers, this cannot be guaranteed. It is anticipated that the numbers and projections would remain low, classes would remain small, and the broad age range within classes would continue.
Option 9	Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 to 3-9 + establish a Cylch Meithrin at Ysgol Abersoch	Whilst acknowledging the potential positive impact that locating a Cylch Meithrin on the Ysgol Abersoch site would have on the numbers, this cannot be guaranteed. It is anticipated that numbers and projections would remain low, classes would remain small, and the broad age range within classes would continue.

It is acknowledged that a number of the above options make better use of the building, such as locating a language centre and/or Cylch Meithrin on the school's site. Nevertheless, after appraising the options against the factors of the Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd strategy, it was concluded that these options did not manage to meet, or resolve, the main challenges faced by the school (*as detailed in section 5.1*).

6.2 Alternative Options

After appraising the advantages and disadvantages of the above options against the factors of the Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd strategy, three options became evident as the most viable and realistic to address the school's situation, measured against the current situation, namely:

Option 2 (a)	Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 to 3-11 years
Option 3	Federalisation with a nearby school.
Option 6	Close Ysgol Abersoch and the pupils to be educated at an alternative school*.

* It was considered that Ysgol Sarn Bach would be named as the 'alternative school', and the reasons for this are detailed in section 6.4.

This document details and elaborates upon the school's vulnerable situation and the need to take further steps to address this. Whilst the option of maintaining the current situation has been considered, the options appraisal shows that it would not address the problems in question.

6.3 Impact Assessments

Several impact assessments were conducted in line with the requirements of the Schools Organisation Code 011/2018, of the options believed to be the most viable and realistic to address the school's situation. As noted above, these options were Option 2 (a) Change the school's age range, Option 3 Federalisation with a nearby school, and Option 6 Close Ysgol Abersoch and the pupils to be educated at an alternative school.

6.3.1. Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education

Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 to 3-11 years

The Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education shows that it is not anticipated that extending the school's age range would have a negative impact on the quality and standards of education provided at the school. Extending the age range would increase the KS2 provision at the school.

Federalisation with a nearby school

The Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education shows that it is anticipated that federalisation would have a positive impact on the teaching and learning experiences criteria, as well as on leadership and management. Subject to the exact federal model, implementing such a model could lead to saving the Headteacher's time by planning across the federation rather than for individual schools.

Close Ysgol Abersoch and the pupils to be educated at Ysgol Sarn Bach.

Based on the conclusions of the assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education, it is concluded that the standard of education provided at Ysgol Sarn Bach is of the same level as the quality of education at Ysgol Abersoch. Consequently, it is not anticipated any negative impact would derive in terms of the quality and standards of education from the proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch and transfer the pupils to Ysgol Sarn Bach. The information in the assessment follows the latest Estyn inspections of the schools in question, noting that each of the schools have been placed in at least an equivalent category to Ysgol Abersoch, and each of the schools have been placed in the yellow or green in terms of Welsh Government's support category.

Implementing this option would give pupils an opportunity to be educated in peer groups with much less of an age range and an opportunity to improve the educational and social experience of the pupils, on a daily basis. The needs of any vulnerable groups, including children with additional learning needs, would be assessed and implemented in line with the authority's policy and procedures.

Further details on the quality and standards of education are provided in Section 7.2 of this document and a full assessment of the likely impact on the quality and standards of education can be found on the website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

6.3.2. Assessment of the Likely Impact on Different Transport Arrangements

Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 to 3-11 years

The Assessment of the Likely Impact on Different Transport Arrangements shows that changing the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 years to 3-11 years would not affect the school's transport arrangements, as the model would mean that the current pupils continue to be educated at Ysgol Abersoch.

Federalisation with a nearby school.

The Assessment of the Likely Impact on Different Transport Arrangements shows that forming a federalisation with another school(s) is not likely to have any impact on the school's transport arrangements, as the model would mean that the current pupils would continue to be educated at Ysgol Abersoch.

Close Ysgol Abersoch and the pupils to be educated at Ysgol Sarn Bach.

The option to close the school would mean that pupils from Ysgol Abersoch would need to travel farther to school every day. Ysgol Sarn Bach is located 1.4 miles from Ysgol Abersoch, and it is anticipated that the journey takes approximately 5 minutes each way in a car or on a bus, which is within the reasonable distance expected for primary children to travel to their school in accordance with the 'Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd Strategy' expectation of 30 minutes each way.

Transport to the alternative school would be offered in line with Gwynedd Council Transport Policy.

Further details on the travel and transport arrangements are provided in Section 7.10 of this document, and a copy of the full assessment of the Likely Impact on Travelling Arrangements can be seen on the Council's website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation.

6.3.3. Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Community

Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 to 3-11 years

The assessment of the Likely Impact on the Community shows that it is not anticipated that changing the age range of the school would have an impact on the community, as the presence and activity of the school would continue in the community, as per the current situation.

Federalisation with a nearby school

The assessment of the Likely Impact on the Community shows that it is not anticipated forming a federalisation would have an impact on the community, as the presence and activity of the school would continue in the community, as per the current situation.

Close Ysgol Abersoch and the pupils to be educated at Ysgol Sarn Bach.

In brief, the assessment of the impact on the Community shows that there would be some negative impact on the community deriving from implementing the option of closing Ysgol Abersoch and the pupils being educated at Ysgol Sarn Bach. However, it is noted that 35% of pupils (N-Yr 3) who live in the Abersoch catchment area already attend Ysgol Sarn Bach; therefore, it is concluded that a link already exists between the school and the broader area.

To mitigate any potential negative impact on the community should the proposal be implemented, the assessment notes the importance of ensuring that the community of Abersoch is included in the activities of the alternative school, and to encourage community collaboration between the alternative school and the Abersoch community, where appropriate.

Further details on the impact on the community are provided in Section 7.8 of this document and a full assessment of the likely impact on the Community can be seen on the website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation.

6.4 Appraisal of the Options to consider for the School

Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch

Two options to change the Ysgol Abersoch's age range were discussed and considered, namely extending to 3-9 years and extending to 3-11 years.

It should be noted that the option favoured locally was the option to extend the school's age range to 3-9 years, including the development of the Cylch Meithrin. This option was preferred locally for practical reasons such as better use of the empty space in the school building by providing a location for the Cylch Meithrin, and to mitigate against the potential impact that the change could have on the pupil numbers at Ysgol Sarn Bach (the school that provides an education for the 9-11 year old pupils from the Ysgol Abersoch area).

After comparing the two options, it was concluded that the best option to be considered further was the option to extend the age range to 3-11 years. The 3-9 years option was disregarded for the following reasons:

- It is not anticipated that adding one educational year would lead to a sufficient increase in the numbers. Consequently, the challenges facing the school would continue.
- The age range would not be consistent with the majority of the county's primary schools.
- It would not allow for the school to offer a comprehensive KS2 provision. The pupils would continue to transfer to Ysgol Sarn Bach to complete their primary education.

It is believed that the option to extend the age range to 3-11 years would offer more advantages from the perspective of having an opportunity to increase the numbers at the school, compared to the option to extend the age range to 3-9 years. The option would also rationalise the age range with the rest of the county's primary schools, and would mean that the school offers a comprehensive KS2 provision.

In order for the option to respond to the challenges facing the school, this increase in numbers would have to be substantial. Nevertheless, it is likely that any increase in the numbers at Ysgol Abersoch after extending the age range, would cause a reduction in the numbers at Ysgol Sarn Bach and, potentially, at nearby schools.

After further consideration, it was concluded that the option would not be a sustainable solution for the future for the school, and that it could have a harmful impact on the numbers of pupils at nearby schools.

Federalisation with a nearby school.

As can be seen in the table above (6.1), three different versions of the federalisation option were discussed and considered. It was concluded that the most reasonable option to consider further was the option to federalise with a nearby school.

This model would ensure the continued presence of the school in the village of Abersoch by means of a collaboration agreement with a nearby school under the leadership of a headteacher or headteachers and one Governing Body. The Governing Bodies of the individual schools would be dissolved and a new Governing Body for the federation would be established. The identity of the school in question (including name, ethos, and uniform) could be retained or changed to reflect the identity of the new federation. Such a model would also enable the possibility to share staff, resources, IT, buildings and expertise.

However, it is unlikely that the option would address the main challenges faced by the school, such as low numbers, small class sizes, and consequently, the school's financial challenges would continue.

Discussions were held with the headteachers and chairs of governors of the two nearby schools (Ysgol Sarn Bach and Ysgol Llanbedrog) regarding the option to establish a federation with Ysgol Abersoch.

After weighing up the pros and cons of the model, it was concluded that federalisation would not be a sustainable solution for the school. There is no clear evidence that federalisation would lead to an increase in numbers. Consequently, should this option be realised, it is anticipated that the challenge of low numbers, small class sizes and the financial challenges faced by the school, would continue.

Therefore, it is considered that federalisation is not the best option for the school's situation.

Close Ysgol Abersoch and the pupils to be educated at Ysgol Sarn Bach.

This model means closing Ysgol Abersoch and moving the pupils to be educated at Ysgol Sarn Bach. This proposal is put forward following an options appraisal, with the outcome of that appraisal noting that no other option would address the main challenges faced by the school. This proposal is detailed further in the document.

Ysgol Sarn Bach is considered as the 'alternative school' for the following reasons:

- i. Geographically, Ysgol Sarn Bach is the closest school to Ysgol Abersoch. The school is located 1.4 miles from the Ysgol Abersoch site.
- ii. Ysgol Sarn Bach already accepts pupils in year 4 from Ysgol Abersoch.
- iii. 35% of children (N-Yr.3) from the Ysgol Abersoch catchment area already attend Ysgol Sarn Bach.
- iv. Ysgol Sarn Bach has sufficient capacity to accept the current pupils of Ysgol Abersoch.

Therefore, it is proposed that the Ysgol Sarn Bach catchment area is extended to include the catchment of Ysgol Abersoch in future.

7. The Proposal

A Summary of the Proposal

Following an appraisal of the options, the preferred direction and the proposal which is the subject of this statutory consultation is to close Ysgol Abersoch on 31 August 2021, and for the pupils to be educated at Ysgol Sarn Bach, namely the 'Alternative School', from 1 September 2021.

Alternative School	Ysgol Sarn Bach	
Age range	3-11 years	
School Category (community, voluntary aided, voluntary controlled)	Community	
Language Category	Welsh Medium	
Implementation date	1 September 2021	
Projected numbers - September 2021	<i>Nursery</i> 5	<i>Reception - Yr 6</i> 47
Capacity (based on Welsh Assembly Circular 21/2011: 'Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales')	<i>Nursery</i> 7	<i>Reception - Yr 6</i> 66
Quality of the building and classrooms (Building Condition Category)	B	

At present, Ysgol Abersoch and Ysgol Sarn Bach both have community status, and on this basis, it is proposed, in terms of legal category, that a 'community' status is the option for the statutory consultation.

As in all similar situations, parents have the right to choose an alternative location for their children if they wish.

This option would result in:

- a) Reducing the number of surplus places within the schools
- b) Offering experiences for pupils to socialise and collaborate with peers on a daily basis
- c) Educating the children in more suitably-sized classes
- d) Reducing the range of cost per head for all the County's pupils
- e) Ensuring that pupils transfer once during their primary and secondary education rather than twice.

In this section, we note some of the reasons why this is the favoured option and why this is the subject of this statutory consultation.

7.1. Reason for the Proposal

Gwynedd Council is consulting on the proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch as there is a need to address the school's vulnerable situation. Pupil numbers at the school have reduced consistently since 2016 and the figure has been fragile for some time. Consequently, it is likely that the school is facing increasing challenges, including:

- **Low pupil numbers:** In September 2020, eight full-time pupils and two part-time nursery pupils were registered at the school.
- **Projected numbers:** It is anticipated that the numbers will remain low over the coming years (September 2021 = 10; September 2022 = 12; September 2023 = 12.)
- **High percentage of surplus places:** Based on the figures for September 2020, there were over 76% of surplus places at the school (a total of 26) (R-Yr.3)
- **Small class sizes:** The ten pupils are taught in one mixed-age class.
- **Broad age ranges within classes:** The pupils are taught in one class with an age range of up to 5 years.

7.2 Quality of the Education

The Council is committed to providing an education of the highest possible quality that will give the County's children the experiences, skills and confidence that would enable them to develop to be bilingual, successful and full citizens.

One of the priorities is to provide the best possible learning experiences for every learner within the County, and ensuring an exciting and broad curriculum, as well as extra-curricular activities that motivate them to learn and understand, leading to improving standards.

Leadership, good governance and management structures are key factors in terms of enabling underperforming schools to ultimately improve their performance.

7.2.1. Summary of Estyn reports:

School	Inspection year	How good are the outcomes?	How good is the provision?	How good are the leadership and management?
Abersoch	June 2017	Good	Good	Good

(Note that Estyn has introduced 5 fields for inspection by October 2017.)

School	Inspection year	Standards	Well-being and attitudes to learning	Teaching and learning experiences	Care, support and guidance	Leadership and management
Sarn Bach	October 2017	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

Source: Estyn Website

Recent Estyn inspections note that both schools provide a 'Good' quality of education. Realising the proposal would give pupils an opportunity to be educated in peer groups with much less of an age range and an opportunity to improve the extra-curricular and social experiences of the pupils.

7.2.2. The Quality of the Education and Standards at the Two Schools Included in the Consultation

Estyn inspection reports note that the standard of the education provision at both schools is good.

Ysgol Abersoch was last inspected in June 2017, where it was concluded that the school's current performance was 'Good'. In 2019, the school was placed in Welsh Government's yellow category in terms of support and the school's ability to improve.

Ysgol Sarn Bach was last inspected in October 2017, where it was concluded that the school's current performance was 'Good'. In 2019, Welsh Government placed Ysgol Sarn Bach in the yellow category in terms of support and the school's ability to improve. The alternative school offers education of equal standard at least, and provides pupils with more opportunities for collaborating and socialising with their peers, and enables the pupils to gain a range of curricular and extracurricular experiences.

Ysgol Abersoch

During the latest Estyn inspection (June 2017), it was noted that the performance of Ysgol Abersoch was good. It was noted that

"many of the pupils are making firm progress in their learning"

In addition, it was noted that the oral skills of the majority of the pupils were developing firmly, although their basic skills when commencing school were lower than expected, with Welsh being a new language for the majority of them. It is noted, in general, that many are making good progress across the school in their reading and numeracy skills. It is also noted that almost all pupils feel safe and happy at the school and know who to turn to for support and advice.

Ysgol Sarn Bach

During the latest inspection in October 2017, it was noted that the school's performance was good.

"The welfare of pupils is central to the school's work. Almost all pupils behave well, they are eager to learn and show respect towards others."

In addition, it was noted that the school benefited from clear leadership that is based on raising standards and ensuring the pupil's welfare.

The proposal will not affect the provision of the full curriculum, including the foundation phase, as Ysgol Sarn Bach already provides education in the foundation phase and key stage 2.

Level of Achievement

The Welsh Government alongside several partners and experts has undertaken a fundamental review of the accountability system for schools in Wales.

A joint communication from Welsh Government, the WLGA and Estyn to Chairs of Scrutiny, Cabinet Members, Directors of Education, Chief Executive Officers, and Managing Directors of Regional Education Consortia, published on 16 July 2019 stated that:

"It is counter-productive for schools to be placed under disproportionate pressure on the basis of individual measures. It is not in the interest of school improvement and risks undermining the ongoing change in culture that we are working together to achieve. We expect local authorities and regional consortia to support schools to make appropriate decisions about their curriculum to avoid narrowing choice for learners.

Collectively, we have agreed that this is the right approach to take and strongly advise you to use a broad range of un-aggregated data and information to enable you to discharge your duties when reporting on school performance. Evaluating the performance of individual schools rather than generating aggregated data at local authority level will be more helpful to supporting and challenging individual schools with their improvement.”

As a result, it is not possible to publish performance data, and there is no means of making performance comparisons.

However, in 2019, standards in the Foundation Phase in Gwynedd Local Authority were good overall, and the performance in the Foundation Phase Indicator at Ysgol Abersoch was comparable to Ysgol Sarn Bach.

The table below shows the likely impact of the proposal on the five relevant Estyn inspection fields.

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Standards and general progress of specific groups and in terms of skills	The outcome of the Estyn inspection for the standard indicators of Ysgol Abersoch were 'Good' as was the outcome of the Ysgol Sarn Bach inspection. Based on the information in the last inspections (2017), no impact is anticipated by educating the children at Ysgol Sarn Bach.	Neutral
Well-being and attitudes to learning	'Adequate' was the outcome of the Estyn inspection for the 'Well-being' indicator at Ysgol Abersoch during their last inspection in 2017, whilst the outcome at Ysgol Sarn Bach was 'Good'. Therefore, based on the outcome of these inspections, it is concluded that educating the children at Ysgol Sarn Bach would have a positive impact.	Positive
Teaching and learning experiences	'Adequate' was the outcome of the 'learning experiences' indicator at Ysgol Abersoch, and the outcome of the 'teaching' indicator was 'Good'. The outcome of the inspection for the 'teaching and learning experiences' indicators were 'Good' at Ysgol Sarn Bach in 2017. Consequently, it is deemed that the option could possibly have a positive impact on the teaching and learning experiences of the pupils. Ysgol Sarn Bach can offer an opportunity to teach in larger groups and with peers in order to expand on their experiences and their ability to learn independently.	Positive
Care, support and guidance	The outcome of the 'Care Support and Guidance' indicator was 'Good' during the last inspection of Ysgol Abersoch and Ysgol Sarn Bach. Based on this information, no impact is anticipated on this field by educating the pupils at Ysgol Sarn Bach.	Neutral
Leadership and management	It was noted in the last Ysgol Abersoch Estyn report that the leadership and management of the school was 'Good'. Ysgol Sarn Bach was placed in the 'Good' category also.	Neutral
Vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)	Support is provided to vulnerable groups, including children with additional learning needs, in accordance with the Authority's policy, as in every school in Gwynedd.	Neutral
A provision that at least corresponds to what is available to the learners at the time (including those with ALN)	The outcome of the Estyn inspection for the standard indicators of Ysgol Abersoch were 'Good' as was the outcome of the Ysgol Sarn Bach inspection. Based on the information in the last inspections (2017), no impact is anticipated by educating the children at Ysgol Sarn Bach.	Neutral

The above table has been taken from the Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Standards and Quality of Education and is based on the information in the Estyn report for Ysgol Abersoch (June 2017) and Ysgol Sarn Bach (October 2017) - see the full assessment on the website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

7.3 Class Sizes and Appropriate Age Range

Our expectation is that there should be appropriately-sized classes in primary schools, as far as possible, so that children in the county receive the best possible experiences and opportunities.

Gwynedd Council aims to have suitable class sizes, with no more than two age-ranges within the same class in the primary sector.

In September 2020, all Ysgol Abersoch (Nursery to Year 3) pupils were educated in one class with 10 pupils. The average class size at Ysgol Sarn Bach in September 2020 is 24.

The table below shows the class sizes of Ysgol Abersoch and Ysgol Sarn Bach in September 2020.

School	Nursery	Reception	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Total	Number of classes	Largest class	Smallest class	Average class size
Abersoch	2	3	2	-	3	-	-	-	10	1	10	10	10
Sarn Bach	3	2	5	4	8	5	10	11	48	2	34	14	24

Source: September 2020 Annual School Census

Realising the proposal would mean that Ysgol Abersoch pupils would be educated in more sustainably sized classes, with more children from the same age group.

If the proposal is implemented, it is expected that the Governing Body of Ysgol Sarn Bach will give due consideration to determining class sizes and the distribution of school staff resources.

7.4 Pupil Numbers and Surplus Places

According to the September 2020 projections, Ysgol Abersoch numbers are projected to remain low over the next 5 years:

Table 1 - Number projections for Ysgol Abersoch

	N	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
September 2020	2	3	2	0	3	-	-	-	10
September 2021 Projection	3	2	3	2	0	-	-	-	10
September 2022 Projection	2	3	2	3	2	-	-	-	12
September 2023 Projection	2	2	3	2	3	-	-	-	12
September 2024 Projection	2	2	2	3	2	-	-	-	11
September 2025 Projection	2	2	2	2	3	-	-	-	11

The table below shows the projections for the nearby schools should the proposal be implemented (Ysgol Sarn Bach includes the numbers for Reception - Yr 3 at Ysgol Abersoch):

Numbers from Reception - Yr 6	Ysgol Sarn Bach	Ysgol Llanbedrog	Ysgol Foel Gron	Total
September 2021 Projection	47	84	39	170
September 2022 Projection	41	84	33	158
September 2023 Projection	38	82	32	152
September 2024 Projection	31	78	28	137
September 2025 Projection	26	73	30	129

As a result of the low pupil numbers, there are also a number of surplus places in Ysgol Abersoch (Reception - Yr 3) 26 (76%). There are 21 (32%) surplus places at Ysgol Sarn Bach. By including the Nursery capacity and numbers for both schools, Ysgol Abersoch has 32 (75%) surplus places and Ysgol Sarn Bach has 25 (34%) surplus places.

With 21 surplus places (and four surplus places in the Nursery), Ysgol Sarn Bach has sufficient capacity for the number of pupils from Ysgol Abersoch and Ysgol Sarn Bach currently and for the next five years.

Currently, between Ysgol Abersoch and Ysgol Sarn Bach, there are 47 (47%) of surplus places in the area. Implementing the proposed proposal would reduce the number of surplus places in the area to 19 (29%) (Reception – Yr.6).

7.5 Management and Leadership

Gwynedd Council acknowledges the importance of strong leadership at a school as a way of maintaining and improving standards. The following steps are in place to ensure strong leadership at Gwynedd schools for the future:

- GwE is training one senior manager from each secondary school to develop their personal leadership skills, and also to develop the middle managers of their schools;
- Successful schools share good practice and hold Leadership Development days for the managers of the rest of the schools;
- School to school plans ensure that school leaders collaborate and develop leader expertise;
- Prospective leaders encouraged to gain the NPQH qualification;
- Headteacher mentoring scheme.

Our expectation is that headteachers will receive sufficient opportunity to provide professional leadership and management for their schools. We also expect governing bodies to lead schools efficiently within their budgets for the benefit of the pupils. We will expect schools to have the best staff to provide an education of the best quality.

The leadership at Ysgol Sarn Bach has been identified by Estyn (2017) as "Good" and notes that "the school benefits from clear leadership that are based on raising standards and ensuring the welfare of pupils."

In addition, it is noted that the Governing Body is "very supportive of the school's work, meets regularly and achieves their duties conscientiously."

Currently, Ysgol Abersoch acts under the leadership of a Headteacher in Charge. The current staffing structure of Ysgol Abersoch includes one full-time headteacher, a part-time teacher, a part-time CPA teacher, and a part-time assistant. The headteacher teaches for 70% of the time and receives 30% of non-contact time for managerial and leadership matters.

At Ysgol Sarn Bach, there is a headteacher, two part-time teachers (equivalent to 1.0 FTE), and three part-time assistants. The Headteacher teaches for 80% of the time and receives 20% of non-contact time for managerial and leadership matters.

7.5.1. Impact on Management and Leadership

There is a need to ensure working conditions that allow headteachers to establish a productive and positive environment so that pupils reach their potential. Headteachers are also responsible for setting a culture of ongoing improvements that are appraised and that offer support to teachers and other middle managers at their schools. One of the greatest challenges facing the secondary sector is the fact that headteachers do not have sufficient time to lead in very small schools, and at times there is a need to educate a broad range of children of various ages and abilities in the same class. Estyn (2013) notes:

"Leadership and processes to improve quality are usually better developed in large primary schools. In small primary schools, many headteachers have a significant teaching responsibility that limits the time they can devote to leading and managing and they have fewer opportunities to evaluate standards and to drive improvement."

Schools with higher numbers of children can offer a more robust structure to planning and providing the curriculum by establishing middle management teams and subject and curriculum leaders. In addition, a number of responsibilities can be centralised, such as those relating to the curriculum and managerial matters, which can be a burden for small organisations, e.g. evaluation arrangements, development plans, performance management. It is a greater challenge for small schools to be able to create professional development training programmes and specific development plans, as well as offering fair opportunities for staff to develop subject expertise and share good practice with peers.

7.5.2. Governance and Staffing Matters

Governing Body

Should the proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch and educate the pupils at Ysgol Sarn Bach be implemented, it would mean that the Ysgol Abersoch governing body would dissolve on 31 August 2021.

No changes are anticipated to the current governing body of Ysgol Sarn Bach.

Staffing Implications

Should the proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch on 31 August 2021 be implemented, the staffing implications would lead to redundancies as the posts would end when the school closes. There will be a specific consultation with staff and Union representatives as part of the statutory consultation period. Any redundancies arising as a result of the proposal would be required to comply with the relevant employment law and the Gwynedd Redundancy scheme. Clear and open communication with staff will be a core part of the implementation of any proposal.

During the consultation, virtual drop-in sessions will be held where arrangements can be made for staff from the Council's Human Resources Service to be in attendance, if any member of staff wishes to discuss his/her situation. Staff will also be welcome to contact the Human Resources service directly, if they wish to have a one-to-one discussion. A support package will be offered, including training, if appropriate, to all staff affected by the proposal.

7.6 Financial Resources

It is expected for Gwynedd to make the best possible use of the financial resources available to provide education in the County.

This is increasingly important considering the very challenging climate currently facing the Council. Therefore, it is important that efforts are made to use resources as effectively as possible within the

education and training system, for the benefit of children and young people. This includes all resources - human, technical, buildings and finances.

The expenditure per pupil varies greatly from school to school. For the 21st Century, there is a need to ensure that Gwynedd has a network of schools of the right type in the right locations across the County. Reducing the number of surplus places and ensuring schools of a robust size would provide opportunities to develop inclusive elements. Acting in this way is essential if we are to promote equal opportunities across the County and reduce the impact of poverty on the lives of children and young people.

A total of £915,917 was allocated to the primary schools of the area (Abersoch, Sarn Bach, Foel Gron and Llanbedrog) in 2020/21. The cost per head for primary schools in the catchment area is £7,836 per pupil on average, compared with an average cost per pupil in Gwynedd of £4,198. It is estimated that implementing the proposal would lead to a cost per pupil of £4,434 at Ysgol Sarn Bach in September 2021.

School	PROPORTION OF THE BUDGET		Minimum Staffing Protection*
	Total Budget	Cost Per Pupil	
Abersoch	£137,140	£17,404	£52,582
Sarn Bach	£228,890	£4,683	-
Average for the County's Primary Schools	-	£4,198	County total for the Minimum Staffing Protection Policy: £671,977

**The protection policy ensures at least a headteacher and a teacher in each School with more than 15 full-time pupils, and a headteacher and a classroom assistant in schools with fewer than 15 full-time pupils.*

Ysgol Abersoch receives an additional amount to the usual financial allocation via the minimum staffing protection policy (which ensures at least a headteacher and teacher at each school, and a headteacher and an assistant in schools with fewer than 15 full time pupils). This came to a total of £52,582 this year (2020-21). The school's current staffing structure, which consists of a full-time headteacher, a part-time teacher, a part-time CPA teacher, and a part-time assistant, means that Ysgol Abersoch, without making any changes, would face a budgetary deficit based on the current numbers and projections for the future.

Ysgol Sarn Bach does not receive an additional financial allocation through the protection policy. The school's current numbers attract a sufficient budget to maintain an appropriate staffing level.

In the 2020-21 financial year, a total of £366,030 was allocated to the Ysgol Abersoch and Ysgol Sarn Bach. In terms of revenue costs, it is projected that the proposed proposal would create an annual saving of £110,062, less the additional transport costs.

A primary school bus already runs between Abersoch and Ysgol Sarn Bach, and it is anticipated that there would be enough spare seats for the existing Ysgol Abersoch pupils – therefore no additional transport costs are anticipated as a result of implementing the proposed proposal. If transport would need to be provided for all pupils in the Ysgol Abersoch catchment area, then there would be a need to adapt the current transport arrangements at Ysgol Sarn Bach. This could mean that a purposeful bus (morning and afternoon) may be needed for the pupils of Ysgol Sarn Bach, at an additional cost of approximately £14,000 per year, and consequently, the projected net savings would likely be £96,062 per year.

Any savings in revenue costs would be utilised to benefit Gwynedd Schools.

7.7 Learning Environment

The Council's aim is to provide quality primary education buildings in the County by undertaking structured planning, providing appropriate rooms for school headteachers and teachers and access to appropriate playing fields and a hall for the children. Buildings will also need to comply with the requirements for the Foundation Phase and the curriculum.

The Council conducts annual condition surveys on all its property. The annual reviews contribute to the Authority's Asset Management Plan and allows for the prioritisation of the schools' maintenance programme.

The table below includes the condition of buildings at Ysgol Abersoch and Ysgol Sarn Bach, as well as the required maintenance costs.

School	Condition Category	Condition Defects	Cost of Required Maintenance Work
Ysgol Abersoch	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The remaining wooden windows in the school need to be replaced with uPVC windows 	£7,500
Ysgol Sarn Bach	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to upgrade kitchen ventilation including gas interlock 	£25,000
Key to the Categories:			
A	GOOD (No Decline)	C	POOR (Major Decline)
B	SATISFACTORY (Minor Decline)	D	BAD (Reached the end of its lifespan)

Source: Gwynedd Property Department

Ysgol Abersoch:

The condition of Ysgol Abersoch building has been identified as being in category B (Satisfactory). Further work is required to replace the remaining wooden windows at the school with uPVC widows, otherwise the building is in an acceptable condition.

As there is no dedicated hall in the school, the school makes use of the village hall for concerts and activities. In addition, as the school does not have a suitable kitchen, food is transported there from a nearby school.

Ysgol Sarn Bach:

As with the Ysgol Abersoch building, the Ysgol Sarn Bach building has been identified as being in category B (Satisfactory). Work is required to upgrade the kitchen ventilation system including gas interlock, otherwise the building is in an acceptable condition. This work does not interfere with the interior teaching space.

7.8 The Community

The Council completed an assessment of the community impact of the options in order to compare the impact they would have on the communities in question. A copy of the full report is included in the background pack on the Council's website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation.

When developing any proposals relating to education modernisation, full consideration must be given to the potential impact on the community. The assessment noted that by closing Ysgol Abersoch, some elements

of community events would be affected. The conclusion of the assessment notes that there is no reason for any of the options to have a substantial negative impact on the community.

The table below notes the current community use made of the buildings of both schools:

	Abersoch	Sarn Bach
Play Groups (School Holidays)		
Aelwyd yr Urdd	✓	✓
Dramas		
Voluntary Groups		
Coffee Morning/Evening		
Community Auction		
Community Library		
Choir Practice		
Welsh for Adults		
Town/Community Council Meeting		
Cylch/Ysgol Feithrin	✓	
Sports Club/Activity	✓	✓
After School Club		
Local Interest Club		

Source: Headteacher Questionnaires November 2020

Activities or groups that the school are regularly involved with are noted in the table below.

	Abersoch	Sarn Bach
Cylchoedd Meithrin/Ti a Fi	✓	✓
Eisteddfod (Local/County/National)	✓	✓
Adran yr Urdd	✓	✓
Other activities (sports, clubs)	✓	✓

Source: Headteacher Questionnaires November 2020

The assessment notes that there would be some negative impact as a result of closing the school. However, it is noted that 9 (35%) of Nursery - Yr 3 pupils who live in the Ysgol Abersoch catchment area already attend Ysgol Sarn Bach. Consequently, it is concluded that a link already exists between the school and the broader area.

To mitigate any potential negative impact on the community should the proposal be implemented, the assessment notes the importance of ensuring that the community of Abersoch is included in the activities of the alternative school, and to encourage community collaboration between the alternative school and the Abersoch community, where appropriate.

7.9 The Welsh Language

Our expectation is that the County's primary schools support and enhance the use of the Welsh language as their pupils' social language and educational language.

When developing any proposals relating to schools' reorganisation, full consideration must be given to the potential impact on the Welsh language. Sustaining and improving the use of the Welsh language as a social language and educational language is always a key consideration when drawing up proposals and when assessing options.

Any discussions regarding re-organisation needs to note Welsh Government's efforts to reach the aim of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

In accordance with the Language Policy, it is expected for the medium of the curricular provision to be the same across our primary schools. The Council developed the Welsh Language Charter - which is operational in every primary school in Gwynedd - in order to encourage the children's social use of the Welsh language, promote the Welsh ethos of our schools and raise the children's awareness of Welsh culture.

In accordance with the Schools Organisation Code 011/2018, an assessment was completed of the linguistic impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch and educating the children at Ysgol Sarn Bach. The assessment is available on the Council website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation.

It is concluded in this assessment that no negative impact on the Welsh language is anticipated, should the proposal be realised. This is specifically so as the alternative school offers a Welsh-medium education, as currently offered at Ysgol Abersoch. The Language Policy is the same for all Gwynedd primary schools; therefore, the provision would be the same, regardless of which school they would choose to attend.

In addition, it appears that the linguistic situation at Ysgol Sarn Bach is strong. With 57% of Ysgol Sarn Bach pupils coming from Welsh speaking homes. In comparison, 33% of Ysgol Abersoch pupils come from Welsh speaking homes.

Ysgol Abersoch has worked hard to develop the learners' bilingual skills and promote the importance of Welsh culture. The school managed to win the gold Welsh Language Charter in 2019. Therefore, it is all important that the proposal acknowledges the need to support and continue with this work.

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-20

Both schools, Ysgol Abersoch and Ysgol Sarn Bach, implement the aims of Gwynedd Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-2020. This includes:

- Setting a strong foundation for the Welsh language at the Early Years stage, ensuring that pupils from a non-Welsh speaking background are given the opportunity to learn Welsh as soon as possible.
- During the Foundation Phase, building on the foundation established at the nursery and reception stages by continuing to develop pupils' grasp of Welsh, and begin the process of developing their English language skills. On a practical level, this means that most schools would start introducing English as a subject during the final term at the end of the Foundation Phase, focusing on developing reading, speaking and writing skills in that language. Welsh will be the school's official assessment language at the end of the Foundation Phase.
- In KS2, continue to develop the pupils' mastery of Welsh, paying attention to the development of their skills in both languages. Pupils' progress in Welsh and in English are assessed at the end of the key stage.

Implementing the proposed proposal would be in keeping with the objectives of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2017-20, and the targets approved in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

7.10 Geographical Factors

7.10.1. Proposed Travel and Transportation Arrangements

The Gwynedd Council strategy for primary education aims to restrict travel from home to school to a one-way journey of no more than 30 minutes. Free transportation is available for primary school pupils who live 2 miles or more from the school in their catchment area.

By moving to the alternative school, it is not anticipated that any pupil will need to travel an unreasonable distance to reach an educational site, in accordance with the strategy. Ysgol Abersoch is located 1.4 miles from the current Ysgol Sarn Bach site and it is anticipated that the journey would take approximately 5 minutes each way in a car or bus.

Transport would be provided in accordance with the County's school Transport Policy, it is not anticipated that additional costs would be incurred from providing transport to the current Ysgol Abersoch children as the bus already carries pupils from Abersoch to Ysgol Sarn Bach, and we understand that there are a sufficient number of empty seats available on this bus. If transport would need to be provided for all pupils in the Ysgol Abersoch catchment area, then there would be a need to adapt the current transport arrangements at Ysgol Sarn Bach. This could mean that a purposeful bus (morning and afternoon) may be needed for the pupils of Ysgol Sarn Bach, at an additional cost of approximately £14,000 per annum.

7.10.2. Schools Admissions Catchment Areas

It should be noted that Ysgol Sarn Bach already accepts pupils from the Abersoch area at the beginning of September following their eighth birthday.

If the proposal is implemented, the catchment area of Ysgol Sarn Bach would be adapted to include the area of the existing school, as well as the existing catchment area of Ysgol Abersoch.

Map 1: Current situation of the area's catchment areas



Map 2: Ysgol Sarn Bach catchment area if the proposal is implemented

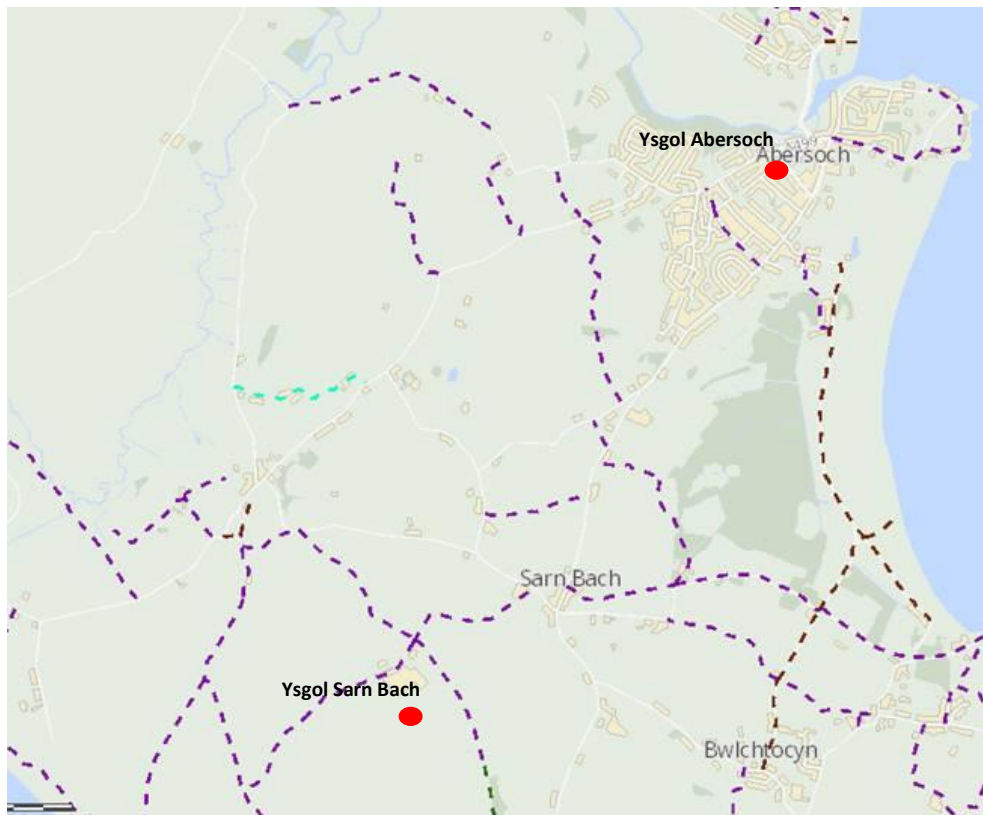


7.10.3. Proposed Admissions Arrangements

Gwynedd Council's Education Authority would be the Admissions Authority, and admission to the school would be in accordance with the County's Schools Admissions Policy. The Authority would manage admissions to the school.

7.10.4. Walking paths

Public footpaths near Ysgol Sarn Bach are highlighted on the map below:



7.11 Equality Impact

An equality assessment was carried out on the options. The assessment gives specific attention to various equality elements such as race, gender, disability, language, religion or belief and age. The assessment notes the current situation and the policies and arrangements that are in place to ensure that the proposal considers and is in accordance with equal rights.

The assessment notes that the proposed options are unlikely to have any negative impact on equality characteristics. It is noted that measures are already in place at the schools to ensure that there will be no unlawful discrimination and harassment. There will be no change to the policies of the relevant schools on equality issues as a result of the proposal.

The Council will follow its usual procedures by supporting and monitoring, to ensure the compliance of every school with the equality characteristics. Estyn also inspects schools and assesses equality aspects as a part of its usual guidelines.

The full assessment can be seen on the Council's website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation.

7.12 The Well-being of Future Generations Act

The Education Department has a role in promoting the well-being objectives of the Act amongst pupils in the county through its activities and projects. The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. As part of the duty, the Council has published well-being objectives that outline the way it will improve well-being in the "2018-23 Gwynedd Plan".

Following consideration and an assessment in line with the requirements of the Well-being Act, the conclusion was reached that the proposal did satisfy the seven well-being objectives within the Act, and the Council's well-being objectives. This proposal will allow us to respond to and address the children's needs today, and strengthen their future well-being. The proposal will ensure that the children of the area are educated on a site that is suitable and in a naturally Welsh-speaking society, thus increasing the opportunities to socialise and collaborate with others, and to give them a fair opportunity to thrive among their peers.

The full assessment can be seen on the Council's website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation.

7.13 Information about Additional Learning Needs

The Ysgol Sarn Bach building has facilities equal to Ysgol Abersoch to offer a specialist provision that is suitable for pupils with additional learning needs. Support is provided to vulnerable groups, including children with additional learning needs, in accordance with the Authority's policy.

7.14 Future use of site

If the proposal is implemented, Ysgol Abersoch would cease to offer an educational provision. The Council has a policy on the post use of school buildings and the policy would be followed. The Council would need to discuss and consider any binding legal terms or restrictions that could come into force if any of the sites would cease to be a site for an educational provision.

7.15 Potential Risks

Risk	Possible impact	Steps to Mitigate the Risk
Lack of decision-making	An inability to put change into practice due to a lack of decision-making which increases the likelihood of disturbing the pupils' education. It could harm the Council's reputation.	A timetable with clear milestones which notes when key decisions are needed from the Gwynedd Council Cabinet.
Insufficient transportation for the new arrangements	Children unable to be admitted to the alternative school	Prepare and plan a timetable with clear milestones for planning and tendering the transportation far in advance of the pupil transfer day
The quality of the education in the short-term whilst the school's situation is under review	Reduced quality of education provision for the pupils.	Monitoring the school in accordance with the Education Department's policy.

7.16 Expected advantages and disadvantages of the proposal

The advantages and disadvantages identified for the proposal are outlined in the table below:

Considerations	Advantages	Disadvantages
Class Sizes	Pupils to be educated in more suitably-sized classes. Pupils being educated with more children from the same age group.	-
Pupil Numbers	Numbers at the school that will provide education for the area will be more robust and sustainable in the future. Reduction in the percentage of surplus places in the area.	-
Leadership and Staffing	-	Impact on staff employment
The Community	-	Losing school presence in the village of Abersoch

Considerations	Advantages	Disadvantages
Financial Resources	The school will not continue to receive a minimum staffing protection contribution. Teaching cost per pupil closer to the county average.	Transportation costs for the Authority if the alternative school is more than 2 miles from the pupils' homes.
The Welsh Language	Welsh-medium education is offered as per the current situation.	
Geographical Factors	No pupil in the area will need to travel an unreasonable distance to the school.	Some of the pupils will need to travel further to school than they currently do.
Other considerations	School interests and resources. Offer experiences for pupils to socialise and collaborate with peers.	-

8. A Summary of the Proposal

This proposal relates to the closure of Ysgol Abersoch, and the transfer of existing pupils to Ysgol Sarn Bach.

Close Ysgol Abersoch on 31 August 2021, and offer a place for the pupils in Ysgol Sarn Bach from 1 September 2021 onwards.

9. An Explanation of the Statutory Process and Consultation Details

At its meeting on 3 November 2020, Gwynedd Council Cabinet confirmed its decision to "hold a statutory consultation, in accordance with the requirements of section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, on the proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch on 31 August 2021 and to provide a place for the pupils at Ysgol Sarn Bach from 1 September 2021 onwards".

The Cabinet approved the recommendation to proceed to a statutory consultation period on the preferred option. This is the consultation document that includes the details of the proposal. This document was published on **12 January 2021** and responses can be received until **13:00 on Tuesday, 23 February 2021**. **These responses will not be dealt with as objections, but rather as observations/comments.** If anyone wishes to object, they must do so following the publication of the statutory notice (should one be published). During this consultation, the responses could include observations or questions on any aspect of the proposal, or they could suggest other options.

Following this statutory consultation period, in accordance with the requirements of the Schools Organisation Code 011/2018, a report on the consultation must be submitted to the Cabinet in order to summarise the matters raised by the consultees and note the Council's response to those matters. After considering the report, the Cabinet will decide whether or not to proceed with this proposal. The report will be published on the Council's website and hard copies will be available upon request. The parents, carers and guardians, staff and governors of the school will be informed that the report is available. A number of representatives from other agencies will be informed that the consultation report is available, e.g. Estyn, Welsh Ministers, relevant Assembly Members and Members of Parliament, etc.

If the Cabinet decides to proceed after considering the consultation report, the proposal must be **published in the form of a statutory notice**. The notice will be published on a school day and an "**objection period**" of 28 days will commence from the publication date of the proposal. Any one may object to the proposal. The notice will be published on Gwynedd Council's website and also close to the main reception in each of the two schools involved with the proposal; electronic copies will be sent to the schools for distribution to the pupils, parents, carers and guardians, staff and governors. Hard copies will be available upon request from the education modernisation office.

Following the end of the objection period, the Council will publish a summary of the statutory objections and the Council's response to the objections in an "Objections Report". The objections report will be published on the Council's website and hard copies will be available upon request. The parents, carers and guardians, staff and governors of the school will also be informed that the objections report is available. A number of representatives from other agencies will be informed that the consultation report is available.

Subsequently, the Council's Cabinet will make the final decision on the objections report. When the Cabinet has made its final decision, the decision will be put in writing, along with specific reasons for the decision. The decision will be published on the Council's website, and the parents, carers and guardians, staff and governors of both schools will be informed of the decision. A number of representatives from other agencies will be informed of the decision.

In some cases – following the Cabinet's final decision – it is possible for the following bodies to refer the proposal for consideration by Welsh Ministers:

- Another Local Authority affected by the proposal
- The appropriate religious body for any school affected
- The governing body of a voluntary or established school subject to the proposals
- Any Trust holding land on behalf of a voluntary or established school subject to the proposals
- A further education establishment affected by the proposal

The bodies referring the proposal will have to note why they believe that the decision made by the Local Authority is wrong. Welsh Ministers will decide whether the proposals affect the bodies and whether they need to consider the proposals.

10. Proposed Timetable

Date	Stage
15 September 2020	Report to the Cabinet: Seeking permission to carry out a statutory consultation
3 November 2020	Cabinet: Decision confirmed 15 September 2020.
12 January 2021	Statutory consultation period commences: A minimum of 42 days to be allowed for consultees to respond, with a minimum of 20 of those days to be school days.
23 February 2021	Closing date of the statutory consultation: The closing date for receiving observations on the proposal
March 2021	Cabinet: Following the statutory consultation, a report on the responses will be submitted to the Cabinet. The Cabinet will discuss the report and decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal. This report will be published on the Council's website.
May 2021	Publication of statutory notice: If the Council decides to proceed with the proposal, a statutory notice will be issued and an objection period will be held. Any objection must be submitted within the 28 day objection period.
June 2021	The Cabinet: Following the objection period, the Cabinet will discuss the objections report and decide whether or not to confirm the proposal.
July 2021	<p>Referring The decision to the Welsh Ministers: In accordance with section 54 of the 2013 Act, within 28 days of the Cabinet's decision, the following bodies can refer the proposal to Welsh Ministers for a decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Another Local Authority affected by the proposals; ii. The appropriate religious body for any school affected; iii. The governing body of a voluntary or established school subject to proposals; iv. A trust holding property on behalf of a voluntary or established school subject to proposals; v. A further education establishment affected by the proposals.
31 August 2021	Implementation of the proposal: Ysgol Abersoch officially closes, subject to the Cabinet's decisions.

Appendix 1 – Options Appraisal

Key:

Blue = Advantages

Red = Disadvantages

Black = Comments and Facts

	1	2 (a)	2 (b)	3	4
	Status Quo	Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 years to 3-11 years	Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 years to 3-9 years	Federalise with a nearby school	Federalise with a nearby school locating the Foundation Phase on the site of Ysgol Abersoch, and KS2 on the site of the nearby school
Class Sizes and Age Range	<p>Ysgol Abersoch class sizes remain small – 1 class of 10 (September 2020)</p> <p>Age range of up to 5 years remains in the class.</p>	<p>Ysgol Abersoch class sizes remain small – 1 class of 10 (September 2020)</p> <p>Age range of up to 5 years remains in the class.</p>	<p>Ysgol Abersoch class sizes remain small – 1 class of 10 (September 2020)</p> <p>Age range of up to 5 years remains in the class.</p>	<p>Ysgol Abersoch class sizes remain small – 1 class of 10 (September 2020)</p> <p>Age range of up to 5 years remains in the class.</p>	<p>Pupils educated in more viably sized classes.</p> <p>Pupils educated with more children in the same age group.</p> <p>Age range of up to 4 years remains in FP class + KS2 class.</p>
Pupil Numbers	<p>Numbers would remain low at Ysgol Abersoch.</p> <p>26 surplus places (76%)</p> <p>School projections continue to appear fragile in terms of numbers.</p> <p>Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi opened on the school site in February 2020, this could lead to a small increase in pupil numbers.</p>	<p>Numbers would remain low at Ysgol Abersoch.</p> <p>26 surplus places (76%).</p> <p>School projections continue to appear fragile in terms of numbers.</p> <p>Extending the provision to year 6 is likely to lead to a small increase in pupil numbers and consequently reduce surplus places.</p> <p>Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi opened on the school site in February 2020, this could lead to a small increase in pupil numbers.</p>	<p>Numbers would remain low at Ysgol Abersoch.</p> <p>26 surplus places (76%).</p> <p>School projections continue to appear fragile in terms of numbers.</p> <p>Extending the provision to year 4 is likely to lead to a small increase in pupil numbers, and consequently reduce surplus places, but not as much as option 2 (a).</p> <p>Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi opened on the school site in February 2020, this could lead to a small increase in pupil numbers.</p>	<p>Numbers would remain low at Ysgol Abersoch.</p> <p>26 surplus places (76%).</p> <p>School projections continue to appear fragile in terms of numbers.</p> <p>Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi opened on the school site in February 2020, this could lead to a small increase in pupil numbers.</p>	<p>Pupil numbers at the school would likely increase as Ysgol Abersoch would be the provider of FP education for pupils in the 2 schools within the catchment area.</p> <p>Restricting the neighbouring school to provide education for KS2 pupils only would lead to a reduction in pupil numbers at that school</p> <p>Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi opened on the school site in February 2020, this could lead to a small increase in pupil numbers.</p>
Leadership and Staffing	<p>No change to the headteacher's non-contact time.</p>	<p>No change to the headteacher's non-contact time.</p>	<p>No change to the headteacher's non-contact time.</p>	<p>Opportunities to share staff and share expertise across the schools.</p> <p>Opportunities to collaborate on curricular issues and develop joint plans.</p>	<p>Opportunities to share staff and share expertise across the schools.</p> <p>Opportunities to collaborate on curricular issues and develop joint plans.</p>
The Community	<p>Retaining school presence in the village – no effect on the relationship between the school and the local community.</p> <p>Uncertainty remains regarding the long-term sustainability of the school.</p>	<p>Retaining school presence in the village – no effect on the relationship between the school and the local community.</p> <p>Should the numbers remain low, the uncertainty regarding the long term</p>	<p>Retaining school presence in the village – no effect on the relationship between the school and the local community.</p> <p>Should the numbers remain low, the uncertainty regarding the long term</p>	<p>Retaining school presence in the village – no effect on the relationship between the school and the local community.</p> <p>Uncertainty remains regarding the long-term sustainability of the school.</p>	<p>Retaining school presence in the village – no effect on the relationship between the school and the local community.</p>

	High percentage of Ysgol Abersoch catchment area pupils already attend out of catchment schools, and as a result there is already a link between the community and the nearby schools.	sustainability of the school would continue. High percentage of Ysgol Abersoch catchment area pupils already attend out of catchment schools, and as a result there is already a link between the community and the nearby schools.	sustainability of the school would continue. High percentage of Ysgol Abersoch catchment area pupils already attend out of catchment schools, and as a result there is already a link between the community and the nearby schools.	High percentage of Ysgol Abersoch catchment area pupils already attend out of catchment schools, and as a result there is already a link between the community and the nearby schools.	
Financial Resources	Ysgol Abersoch remains financially unsustainable and therefore receives an additional minimum staffing protection allocation from the authority to ensure appropriate staffing levels (£52,582 in 2020-21) Average cost per pupil remains high at £17,404, over four times the county average, and the highest in the county. With the opening of a Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi on the Ysgol Abersoch site, there is potential to generate income for the school by charging childcare providers for the use of the building.	Ysgol Abersoch remains financially unsustainable and therefore receives an additional minimum staffing protection allocation from the authority to ensure appropriate staffing levels (£52,582 in 2020-21) Average cost per pupil remains high at £17,404, over four times the county average, and the highest in the county. If the numbers were to increase, it would lead to a reduction in the cost per pupil. With the opening of a Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi on the Ysgol Abersoch site, there is potential to generate income for the school by charging childcare providers for the use of the building.	Ysgol Abersoch remains financially unsustainable and therefore receives an additional minimum staffing protection allocation from the authority to ensure appropriate staffing levels (£52,582 in 2020-21) Average cost per pupil remains high at £17,404, over four times the county average, and the highest in the county. If the numbers increased, it would lead to a reduction in the cost per pupil. With the opening of a Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi on the Ysgol Abersoch site, there is potential to generate income for the school by charging childcare providers for the use of the building.	Ysgol Abersoch remains financially unsustainable and therefore receives an additional minimum staffing protection allocation from the authority to ensure appropriate staffing levels (£52,582 in 2020-21) Average cost per pupil remains high at £17,404, over four times the county average, and the highest in the county. Opportunity to share resources and access to budgets across the schools in the federation. Any managerial saving resulting from the arrangement would be retained by the schools to run the federation. With the opening of a Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi on the Ysgol Abersoch site, there is potential to generate income for the school by charging childcare providers for the use of the building.	Ysgol Abersoch remains financially unsustainable and therefore receives an additional minimum staffing protection allocation from the authority to ensure appropriate staffing levels (£52,582 in 2020-21) Cost per pupil likely to remain high. Opportunity to share resources and access to budgets across the schools in the federation. If the numbers increased, it would lead to a reduction in the cost per pupil. Any managerial saving resulting from the arrangement would be retained by the schools to run the federation. With the opening of a Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi on the Ysgol Abersoch site, there is potential to generate income for the school by charging childcare providers for the use of the building.
Welsh Language	No change in the situation regarding the language. Welsh medium education continues in Abersoch village - continue to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language locally / within the community.	No change in the situation regarding the language. Welsh medium education continues in Abersoch village - continue to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language locally / within the community.	No change in the situation regarding the language. Welsh medium education continues in Abersoch village - continue to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language locally / within the community.	No change in the situation regarding the language. Welsh medium education continues in Abersoch village - continue to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language locally / within the community.	No change in the situation regarding the language. Welsh medium education continues in Abersoch village - continue to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language locally / within the community.
Geographical Factor	No change. School within walking distance of the home for most Abersoch catchment area pupils.	No change. School within walking distance of the home for most Abersoch catchment area pupils.	No change. School within walking distance of the home for most Abersoch catchment area pupils.	No change. School within walking distance of the home for most Abersoch catchment area pupils.	No change for FP pupils. School within walking distance of the home for most Abersoch catchment area FP pupils. Some pupils would have to travel further to school than they do at present - need to consider the environmental impact.

Further considerations		No disruption to the school's KS2 provision - may lead to better curriculum continuity as the school would offer 2 full phase teaching (FP + KS2) The age range of the school would be consistent with most of the county's primary schools. The existing building / site, without modifications, would not be suitable for a large increase in pupil numbers.	The age range of the school would not be consistent with most of the county's primary schools. The existing building / site, without modifications, would not be suitable for a large increase in pupil numbers.	Federation is a model that depends on the willingness of other schools to join the co-operation arrangement. Ysgol Abersoch would remain unsustainable with low pupil numbers and continue to receive financial protection.	Federation is a model that depends on the willingness of other schools to join the co-operation arrangement. The federation could be subject to a statutory process to change the age range of schools. Potentially it would lead to a reduction in number of pupils attending the nearby school, as it would be restricted to provide KS2 education only.
Comments from SRP members	Small classes can be an advantage. Potential for numbers to increase through local housing initiative. Continuing opportunities to strengthen the Welsh language in the school and community. Ysgol Abersoch has been awarded the Gwynedd Language Charter Gold Award.	Small classes can be an advantage. Ysgol Abersoch has been awarded the Gwynedd Language Charter Gold Award	Small classes can be an advantage. Pupils have the option to continue their education for an additional year at Ysgol Abersoch. Ysgol Abersoch has been awarded the Gwynedd Language Charter Gold Award	Small classes can be an advantage. Concern about the lack of full representation of the communities on the federal governing body. Ysgol Abersoch has been awarded the Gwynedd Language Charter Gold Award	Concern about the lack of full representation of the communities on the federal governing body. Classes too large in terms of pupil numbers can be disadvantageous - but, isn't it true that there would be room for two CS classes at Ysgol Abersoch and three KS2 classes at Ysgol Sarn Bach? The change could lead to parents choosing not to send their children to the school. Ysgol Abersoch has been awarded the Gwynedd Language Charter Gold Award.

	5	6	7	8 (a)	8 (b)
	Federalise with neighbouring schools locating Foundation Phase + Years 3 and 4 + Years 5 and 6 on 3 different school sites	Close Ysgol Abersoch and offer pupils a place at a nearby school	Locate a Language Centre on the site of Ysgol Abersoch	Establish a Cylch Meithrin at Ysgol Abersoch	Change the age range of Ysgol Abersoch from 3-8 years to 3-9 years and establish a Cylch Meithrin at Ysgol Abersoch
Class Sizes and Age Range	Pupils educated in more viably sized classes. Pupils educated with more children in the same age group.	Pupils educated in more viably sized classes. Pupils educated with more children in the same age group. Age range of up to 4 years remains in FP + KS2 class.	Ysgol Abersoch class sizes remain small – 1 class of 10 (September 2020), Age range of up to 5 years remains in the class.	Ysgol Abersoch class sizes remain small – 1 class of 10 (September 2020), Age range of up to 5 years remains in the class.	Ysgol Abersoch class sizes remain small – 1 class of 10 (September 2020), Age range of up to 5 years remains in the class.
Pupil Numbers	School pupil numbers would likely increase as Ysgol Abersoch would be the provider of FP education for pupils in the 3 schools within the catchment area.	Numbers at the school providing education in the area would be much stronger and sustainable for the future. Reduction in the percentage of surplus places in the area.	Numbers would remain low at Ysgol Abersoch. School projections continue to appear fragile in terms of numbers.	Numbers would remain low at Ysgol Abersoch. 26 surplus places (76%). School projections continue to appear fragile in terms of numbers.	Numbers would remain low at Ysgol Abersoch. 26 surplus places (76%). School projections continue to appear fragile in terms of numbers.

	<p>Restricting the neighbouring schools to provide education for only 3 and 4 + 5 and 6 pupils would lead to a reduction in pupil numbers at those schools.</p> <p>Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi opened on the school site in February 2020, this could lead to a small increase in pupil numbers.</p>		<p>Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi opened on the school site in February 2020, this could lead to a small increase in pupil numbers.</p>	<p>Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi opened on the school site in February 2020, this could lead to a small increase in pupil numbers.</p>	<p>Extending the provision to year 4 is likely to lead to an increase in pupil numbers, and consequently reduce surplus places, but not as much as option 2 (a).</p> <p>Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi opened on the school site in February 2020, this could lead to a small increase in pupil numbers.</p>
Leadership and Staffing	<p>Opportunities to share staff and share expertise across the schools.</p> <p>Opportunities to collaborate on curricular issues and develop joint plans.</p>	<p>Staff redundancies.</p>	<p>No change to the headteacher's non-contact time.</p>	<p>No change to the headteacher's non-contact time.</p>	<p>No change to the headteacher's non-contact time.</p>
The Community	<p>Retaining school presence in the village – no effect on the relationship between the school and the local community.</p>	<p>Loss of school presence in Abersoch village.</p> <p>A high percentage of Ysgol Abersoch catchment-area pupils already attend out-of-catchment schools, therefore a link between the neighboring schools and the community in Abersoch already exists.</p>	<p>Retaining school presence in the village – no effect on the relationship between the school and the local community.</p> <p>Uncertainty remains regarding the long-term sustainability of the school.</p> <p>High percentage of Ysgol Abersoch catchment area pupils already attend out of catchment schools, and as a result there is already a link between the community and the nearby schools.</p>	<p>Retaining school presence in the village – no effect on the relationship between the school and the local community.</p> <p>Should the numbers remain low, the uncertainty regarding the long term sustainability of the school would continue.</p> <p>High percentage of Ysgol Abersoch catchment area pupils already attend out of catchment schools, and as a result there is already a link between the community and the nearby schools.</p>	<p>Retaining school presence in the village – no effect on the relationship between the school and the local community.</p> <p>Should the numbers remain low, the uncertainty regarding the long term sustainability of the school would continue.</p> <p>High percentage of Ysgol Abersoch catchment area pupils already attend out of catchment schools, and as a result there is already a link between the community and the nearby schools.</p>
Financial Resources	<p>Opportunity to share resources and access to budgets across the schools in the federation.</p> <p>If the numbers were increased, it would lead to a reduction in the cost per pupil.</p> <p>Any managerial saving resulting from the arrangement would be retained by the schools to run the federation.</p> <p>With the opening of a Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi on the Ysgol Abersoch site, there is potential to generate income for the school by charging childcare providers for the use of the building.</p>	<p>May lead to increased transport costs for the authority (if alternative school is more than 2 miles from pupils' homes)</p> <p>The school would not remain in the minimum staffing protection allocation.</p> <p>Cost per pupil for teaching would be closer to the county average.</p>	<p>Ysgol Abersoch remains financially unsustainable and therefore receives an additional minimum staffing protection allocation from the authority to ensure appropriate staffing levels (£52,582 in 2020-21)</p> <p>Average cost per pupil remains high at £17,404, over four times the county average, and the highest in the county.</p> <p>Implementing the option would not generate income for the school in terms of the language centre.</p>	<p>Potential to generate income by charging a fee on the child care providers.</p> <p>Ysgol Abersoch remains financially unsustainable and therefore receives an additional minimum staffing protection allocation from the authority to ensure appropriate staffing levels (£52,582 in 2020-21)</p> <p>Average cost per pupil remains high at £17,404, over four times the county average, and the highest in the county.</p> <p>If the numbers increased, it would lead to a reduction in the cost per pupil, but</p>	<p>Potential to generate income by charging a fee on the child care providers.</p> <p>Ysgol Abersoch remains financially unsustainable and therefore receives an additional minimum staffing protection allocation from the authority to ensure appropriate staffing levels (£52,582 in 2020-21)</p> <p>Average cost per pupil remains high at £17,404, over four times the county average, and the highest in the county.</p> <p>If the numbers increased, it would lead to a reduction in the cost per pupil, but</p>

	The 3 schools may require an additional allocation to ensure appropriate staffing levels.		With the opening of a Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi on the Ysgol Abersoch site, there is potential to generate income for the school by charging childcare providers for the use of the building. If the numbers were increased, it would lead to a reduction in the cost per pupil, but the school will still be in need of financial protection.	the school will still be in need of financial protection.	the school will still be in need of financial protection.
Welsh Language	No change in the situation regarding the language. Welsh medium education continues in Abersoch village - continue to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language locally / within the community.	Loss of Welsh medium education in Abersoch village. Similar Welsh-medium education provision offered at alternative school.	No change in the situation regarding the language. Welsh medium education continues in Abersoch village - continue to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language locally / within the community.	No change in the situation regarding the language. Welsh medium education continues in Abersoch village - continue to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language locally / within the community.	No change in the situation regarding the language. Welsh medium education continues in Abersoch village - continue to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language locally / within the community.
Geographical Factor	No change for FP pupils. School within walking distance from the home for most Abersoch catchment area FP pupils. Some pupils would have to travel further to school than they do at present - need to consider the environmental impact.	No pupil in the area will travel an unreasonable distance to school. Some pupils would have to travel further to school than they do at present - need to consider the environmental impact.	No change. School within walking distance from the home for most Abersoch catchment area pupils.	No change. School within walking distance from the home for most Abersoch catchment area pupils.	No change. School within walking distance from the home for most Abersoch catchment area pupils.
Further considerations	Federation is a model that depends on the willingness of other schools to join the co-operation arrangement. It is not possible to federate schools with different legal status. The federation could be subject to a statutory process to change the age range of schools. Potentially it would lead to a reduction in number of pupils attending the nearby school, as it would be restricted to provide KS2 education only. Pupils transferring 2 times during their time in primary school.		Sacrifice learning space to locate the language centre. Concerns regarding the lack of demand for additional language centre provision in the area.	Sacrifice learning space to locate a Cylch Meithrin.	Sacrifice learning space to locate a Cylch Meithrin.
Comments from SRP members (January 2020)	Concern about the lack of full representation of the communities on the federal governing body. Classes too large in terms of pupil numbers can be disadvantageous.	Closing the school will lead to the closure of Cylch Meithrin, Ti a Fi, Urdd, Hunaniaith Craft Club and all other community initiatives the school is involved in including: • using the weekly bus service to the Leisure Center (children buy their own tickets, learn how to handle money, use public transport)	Small classes can be an advantage. Ysgol Abersoch has been awarded the Gwynedd Language Charter Gold Award.	Small classes can be an advantage. Ysgol Abersoch has been awarded the Gwynedd Language Charter Gold Award.	Small classes can be an advantage. Ysgol Abersoch has been awarded the Gwynedd Language Charter Gold Award.

	<p>The change could lead to parents choosing not to send their children to the school.</p> <p>Ysgol Abersoch has been awarded the Gwynedd Language Charter Gold Award.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • judging shop / business window decoration competitions for Christmas and St David's Day • Christmas and St David's Day concerts • singing at Age Cymru's Coffee Mornings, local shops and other organisations • beach visits • and much more! <p>The Community: Neighboring schools do not have a significant presence or link with the local Abersoch community. It is not possible to emulate the contribution of the community if the school is not located in the village, e.g. the cost of transport in terms of the impact on money and environment versus walking</p> <p>Impact on daily contact with parents as each child is dropped off and collected at Ysgol Abersoch rather than catch a bus, allowing for invaluable and vital ongoing communication and development, encouraging Welsh learners to improve their Welsh.</p> <p>The Welsh Language:</p> <p>The loss of Welsh-medium education in Abersoch and the wider community would affect the use of Welsh as a living language and work (see Hunaniaith Gwynedd - Action Plan for Promoting the Welsh Language in Abersoch).</p> <p>Miss being involved in activities such as Shwmae Su'mae to distribute leaflets to the shops / businesses.</p>			
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Key:

Blue = Advantages

Red = Disadvantages

Black = Comments and Facts