



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO ENHANCE WELSH MEDIUM  
LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SIGNIFICANT  
ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS**

**21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2022**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INCLUSION SERVICES IN  
DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR  
BONETTO, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION**

**Author: Ceri Jones, Head of Inclusion Services (Tel: 01443 744008)**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the outcome of the recent consultation in respect of the proposal to enhance Welsh medium Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the information contained within the attached Consultation Report, which includes a summary of correspondence received during the consultation exercise, including the full response from Estyn, feedback received from the online survey, and notes of the meetings held.
- 2.2 Agree to progress the proposal to enhance Welsh medium Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) by issuing the appropriate statutory notice to open a Key Stage 3/4 LSC for pupils with significant Additional Learning Needs (ALN) at Ysgol Garth Olwg accommodating 14 pupils.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To progress the proposal in accordance with the process outlined in Welsh Government legislative guidance (the School Organisation Code 011/2008) so that an improved continuum of Welsh medium Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision can be achieved in RCT.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Members will recall that, at the meeting of Cabinet held on 13th December 2021, approval was given to begin a process of formal consultation on a proposal to enhance Welsh medium Learning Support Class (LSC) provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT).

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The Consultation Report, prepared in respect of this proposal, is attached at Appendix 1 for your attention. It contains information in respect of meetings held to discuss the proposal, with copies of the notes taken at these meetings; it contains Estyn's full response to the proposal and the appropriate clarification to the response; it also contains a summary of the online survey responses received during the consultation period and where required the appropriate clarification to any issues raised.
- 5.2 It must be noted that there has been a positive response to this particular consultation process with 31 written responses being received via the online survey which was available on the RCT website for the duration of the consultation period and 1 formal letter. Due to COVID restrictions, meetings with the community could not be held. However, a virtual meeting was held with the staff and governors and a face-to-face consultation was undertaken with the School Council.
- 5.3 Out of the 32 responses received, 28 were in agreement with the proposal, 2 respondents were not in agreement and 2 were unsure. The responses were overwhelmingly positive and in favour of the proposal to establish a Welsh medium Learning Support Class at Ysgol Garth Olwg to support pupils with significant additional learning needs.

#### **6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS/SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**

- 6.1 Equality and Community Impact Assessments were prepared in respect of this proposal and were published, and can still be viewed, on the Council's website together with the Consultation Document that outlines the proposal in detail. The link is below:  
<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/SchoolConsultations/SchoolsConsultations.aspx>
- 6.2 In summary, the outcome of Equality Impact Assessment identified positive and neutral impacts, and no negative impacts, upon the protected characteristics and so it was deemed that approval would be sought to continue to implement the proposal. It also confirmed that the Action Plan will continue to be reviewed throughout the duration of the project delivery period.

#### **7. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment was prepared in respect of this proposal and published, and can still be viewed, on the Council's website together with the Consultation Document that outlines the proposal in detail.

The link is below:

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/GetInvolved/Consultations/SchoolConsultations/SchoolsConsultations.aspx>

- 7.2 In summary, the outcome of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment was that the proposal would encourage people to use Welsh at work; it would promote Welsh medium ALN education; increase opportunities for pupils with significant ALN to study through the medium of Welsh; it would promote the status of Welsh or positive attitudes towards the language. No negative impacts were identified.

## **8. CONSULTATION/INVOLVEMENT**

- 8.1 The consultation process in respect of this proposal has been undertaken under the arrangements outlined in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, which was introduced on 1st November 2018, replacing the previous Code introduced in October 2013. These arrangements stipulate that a Consultation Report must be prepared prior to the publication of any Statutory Notices which will progress the proposal. It further states that Statutory Notices must be published within 26 weeks of the end of the consultation period, which is 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2022 in this instance.

## **9. THE STATUTORY PROCESS**

- 9.1 The Statutory Notice for this proposal will refer to:
- The opening of a Learning Support Class for pupils with significant additional learning needs at Ysgol Garth Olwg with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022
- 9.2 If agreed, and subject to the matter not being called in for consideration by Scrutiny, the Statutory Notice will be published on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and will allow for a minimum 28 day period for objections, ending on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022.
- 9.3 If any objections are received during this period, in accordance with the aforementioned Code, an Objections Report will be prepared. This matter will then be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet, in June or July of this year, for Members to receive and consider the Objections Report and to make a final decision on this proposal.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Secondary schools hosting LSC provisions are funded via the Council for one specialist teacher and two learning support assistants at an approximate cost of £112k per class. Funding that is currently provided to Ysgol Garth Olwg to

establish a Step 4 provision following the amended proposal in June 2020 will be re-directed to support the establishment of the proposed new LSC for learners with significant ALN.

- 10.2 The creation of the LSC will incur a transportation cost in line with the Council's Learner Travel Policy, however this increase in cost is seen as a necessity in order to enhance provision for RCT's most vulnerable pupils. Costs cannot be quantified at this time as placements are pupil led.

## **11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 11.1 Section 316A of the Education Act 1996 specifies that children with SEN/ALN should normally be educated in mainstream schools if this is compatible with them receiving the special educational/additional learning provision that their learning difficulty requires, the efficient education of other children, and the efficient use of resources.

- 11.2 Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 also requires Local Authorities to ensure that SEN/ALN provision is kept under review. The ALN Code for Wales (2021) places a statutory duty upon the LA to keep under review the overall Additional Learning Provision (ALP) available in its area and supporting arrangements, to ensure provision is sufficient to meet the overall needs of its population of learners with ALN and that provision is available in Welsh.

## **12. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT**

- 12.1 The proposal will ensure that two of the Council's three key priorities will be met. These include:
- Economy: Building a strong economy
  - People: Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone.

- 12.2 The proposal will ensure that some of the Council's most vulnerable pupils will have the best chance of achieving positive outcomes, whilst also ensuring equity and support for vulnerable learners and their families in line with strategic priority 3 (Ensuring equity and support for vulnerable learners and their families) of the Education and Inclusion Services Directorate's Strategic Plan for 2022-2025. The proposal will also ensure more efficient and effective use of the Council resources to promote the development of social inclusion and positive outcomes for learners.

- 12.3 The proposal will ensure there is renewed capacity to focus on prevention which is a key statutory requirement of the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act and a key element of the Council's Corporate Plan.

12.4 The proposal will also assist the Directorate in meeting the targets of the Council's current Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for this academic year, and beyond.

**13. CONCLUSION**

13.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the attached Consultation Report, and to give officers approval to publish an appropriate Statutory Notice to progress this proposal.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

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**Background papers: None**

**Officer to contact: Ceri Jones, Head of Inclusion Services (01443 744008)**



**PROPOSAL TO ENHANCE WELSH  
MEDIUM LEARNING SUPPORT CLASS  
PROVISION WITHIN RCT**

**CONSULTATION REPORT**

# CONSULTATION REPORT

## Proposal: to enhance Welsh medium Learning Support Class provision within Rhondda Cynon Taf

### 1. Purpose of the Consultation Report

This report is prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code. Its purpose is to inform the outcome of the consultation held during the period 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 between all stakeholders and interested parties listed below.

### 2. Who did we consult?

A copy of a consultation document which fully outlined and explained our proposal was sent to the following stakeholders. The document was also published on the Council website at [www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/schoolconsultations).

- The Governing Bodies, parents, carers and staff of Ysgol Garth Olwg
- Governing Bodies, parents/carers of pupils attending primary schools within the catchment area of the proposed host secondary schools
- The Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authorities
- The Governing Body of Coleg Y Cymoedd
- The Governing Body of the University of South Wales
- Welsh Minister for Education and Skills
- Assembly Members for all constituencies and regional areas serving Rhondda Cynon Taf
- The Early Years and Childcare Partnership
- South East Wales Transport Association
- The local Communities First Partnerships
- Teaching and Support staff trade unions
- Central South Consortium Joint Education Service
- Cwm Taf Local Health Board
- Estyn
- Members of Parliament for the Rhondda, Pontypridd and Cynon Valley
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- The Welsh Language Commissioner
- Neighbouring local authorities
- SNAP Cymru
- Menter Iaith



### 3. What did we consult on?

The proposal consulted on the enhancement of Welsh medium Learning Support Class provision for Key Stage 3/4 pupils with Significant Additional Learning Needs in September 2022.

Details of the proposal and the rationale behind it are fully outlined in the consultation document that was circulated to all stakeholders listed in point 2 overleaf.

### 4. The Consultation Process

All stakeholders identified in section 2 were sent electronic copies of our consultation documentation. The consultation documentation was also posted on the RCT Consultation web page with a link to an electronic consultation return. The following meetings were also convened:

School Affected	Group	Time	Date	Venue
Ysgol Garth Olwg	Governing Body and staff	3:30pm - 4:30pm	27 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	Virtual
Ysgol Garth Olwg	School Council	9:30am - 10:30am	27 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	Ysgol Garth Olwg

Due to Covid-19 restrictions the meeting with the Governing Body and staff at Ysgol Garth Olwg was held virtually via Teams.

Notes of the above meetings were taken and are attached as Appendix 1a and 1b. These notes record questions raised, comments and statements made, with the responses provided where appropriate.

### 5. Summary of responses to consultation

Responses to the matters raised at the meetings outlined above are, as indicated, summarised in the notes of the meetings attached as Appendix 1a and 1b. In addition, 31 responses were received via the online survey which was available for the duration of the consultation phase. Out of the 31 on-line submissions 27 (87.1%) were in favour of the proposals, 2 (6.45%) were against, and 2 (6.45%) were unsure. Additionally, 1 formal letter was also received which was in favour of the proposal. When considering all 32 responses, the percentage in favour equates to 87.5%. Please refer to Appendix 2 for details of the proforma responses received.

In accordance with the Code, a summary of the responses received are detailed in the table below and where issues have been raised, these have been responded to, where applicable, by means of clarification with supporting reasons.

The table below highlights the overwhelmingly positive response received to the proposal as consulted upon.

**Table 1: Summary of Responses to Online Questionnaire and Formal Responses**

Number of consultation responses - 32			
School	Agreed with proposal	Disagreed with proposal	Unsure regarding proposal
Ysgol Garth Olwg	28	2	2

It is pleasing to note that the proposal is seen by stakeholders as a positive enhancement to LSC provision within RCT.

## 6. Summary of Key Issues Raised and LA Responses

The following key themes emerged from the consultation:

**Table 2: Key Themes**

Question	Comments/Issues	Clarification if required
<b>Q1.</b> Do you agree with the proposal?	This is very much needed. However, we should not forget that there are many Primary aged pupils also in need of this provision through the medium of Welsh	It is evident from the responses that the enhancement of Welsh medium provision is welcomed. The LA understands the concern regarding the current lack of primary phase Welsh medium LSC. In the meantime, the primary phase will continue to access the specialist Welsh medium peripatetic provision currently in place. The ALNET Act 2018 requires the LA to develop a bi-lingual system ALN and Access and Inclusion are working towards this requirement.
	There is no current base or support in RCT for Welsh medium education and the new ALNET Act means the authority needs to act and provide where possible. Will increase specialist teachers in the school. Teaches mainstream children about celebrating difference.	This proposal will address this need.
<b>Q2.</b> Please state any alternative options, additional views or	The siting of the support in Garth Olwg is a positive proposal, building on the existing support provision and making the most of	The proposed host school was selected due to their inclusive practices, capacity of surplus places, geographical location.

Question	Comments/Issues	Clarification if required
<p>points which you would like to be taken into account.</p>	<p>its central role in the community and new 3-19 status.</p>	
	<p>Why does it have to be within a mainstream school? Surely a stand-alone unit would be more beneficial to all.</p>	<p>RCT has 44 LSCs within the borough all of which are located within mainstream schools. Having the specialist provision based at mainstream settings is key to the ethos of an inclusive education. Pupils will have bespoke learning plans which include inclusion in mainstream lessons/activities as appropriate to their individual needs.</p>
	<p>1. Ble mae'r ddarpariaeth ar gyfer plant oed cynradd? 2. Beth yn benodol fydd anawsterau'r plant? O brofiad, mae anghenion yn amrywio'n fawr felly pa anghenion y bydd y dosbarth cynnal dysgu'n canolbwyntio arnynt? 3. Os oes 44 dosbarth cynnal dysgu trwy gyfrwng y Saesneg yn ogystal ag ysgolion arbennig ac unedau, sut gellir cyfiawnhau dim ond lle ar gyfer 14 disgybl mewn 1 dosbarth a dim byd o gwbl ar gyfer plant cynradd?</p> <p>1. Where is the provision for primary age children? 2. What specifically will be the children's difficulties? From experience, needs vary greatly so what needs will the learning support class focus on them? 3. If there are 44 teaching support classes through the medium of English as well as special schools and units, how only space for 14 pupils in 1 class can be justified and nothing at all for primary children?</p>	<p>Concern is noted. The LA is required by Welsh Government and the ALNET Act 2018 to continuously review both the sufficiency of its Additional Learning Provision for both English and Welsh medium learners and work proactively towards developing a fully bilingual ALN system over time.</p> <p>The proposed LSC will support pupils with significant additional learning needs. There will be agreed Placement Criteria which will be written in consultation with the school. It is recognised that the LSC may need more than 1 classroom area for interventions to help support each learner and sufficient support and expertise to support pupils with a range of needs. The needs of the pupils attending the provision will be closely monitored by the LA in collaboration with the school.</p>
<p><b>Q3.</b> Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties, the Council has a legal</p>	<p>laith o ddewis, rhaid rhoi dewis i pawb. Anabledd - gall plant gyda anabledd dysgu colli mas ar opportunities, os nad oes cyfle iddyn nhw dysgu trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Bydd hyn yn ffafrio i lefel cydraddolbed o ran iaith</p>	<p>The proposal seeks to address in part the inequality of specialist provision available through the medium of Welsh. Further work will be undertaken by Access &amp; Inclusion to ensure all pupils who meet the entry criteria for</p>

Question	Comments/Issues	Clarification if required
<p>duty to look at how its decisions impact on people because they may have particular characteristics. How would the Council's proposal affect you because of your:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Sex</li> <li>b. Age</li> <li>c. Ethnicity</li> <li>d. Disability</li> <li>e. Sexuality</li> <li>f. Religion/Belief</li> <li>g. Gender identity</li> <li>h. Relationship status</li> <li>i. Pregnancy</li> <li>j. Preferred language.</li> </ul>	<p>dewisol. Ar hyn o bryd mae hyn yn anghytwys. Language of choice, everyone must be given a choice. Disability - children with a learning disability can miss out on opportunities, if there is no opportunity for them to learn through the medium of Welsh This will favour an equalised level of preferred language. At the moment this is unbalanced.</p>	<p>specialist placement in a LSC have access to Welsh medium specialist learning support class. However, as noted above, all primary aged pupils will continue to receive support from our Welsh medium peripatetic team at this point in time. This will be reviewed by Access and Inclusion in line with the statutory duty upon LAs under the ALNET Act to review the sufficiency of their Additional Learning Provision to meet the needs of their learners.</p>
	<p>2. Oed - mae'r ddarpariaeth dim ond ar gyfer plant oed uwchradd 10. Iaith - er bod y ddarpariaeth yn y Gymraeg, mae angen cydraddoldeb ar blant yr ardal er mwyn cael mynediad i addysg arbenigol o 3-11 oed hefyd.</p> <p>Age – provision is only for secondary age children 10. Language - although provision is in Welsh, the children of the area need equality in order to access specialist education from aged 3-11.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p><b>Q4.</b> Do you think the proposal could (positively) impact opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language?</p>	<p>The opportunity here is to considerably improve Welsh language provision not only for learners with ALN but support those who also come from non-Welsh-speaking homes who perhaps have had limited support over the difficulties of the pandemic.</p> <p>Due to there being no ALN classes currently through the medium of Welsh this has resulted in a failing for many children. At the end of the day we live in Wales why are there no Welsh medium ALN classes?</p>	<p>Schools have received grant funding to address the adverse impact of the pandemic on learner outcomes.</p> <p>The LA recognises that there is a need to enhance Welsh medium specialist provision for pupils with additional learning needs and this proposal will provided enhanced provision in the Welsh medium sector. Further work will be undertaken regarding the</p>

Question	Comments/Issues	Clarification if required
		development of bi-lingual specialist provision in future.
<b>Q5.</b> Do you think the proposal in any way treats the Welsh Language LESS favourably than the English Language?	This will have a negative impact on the use of the Welsh language within the school	There will be a requirement for all pupils who are eligible for placement in the LSC to speak Welsh and to access their education through this medium. There is no evidence to suggest that this provision will adversely impact on the use of Welsh language in the school.

## 7. Estyn's Response

Please refer to Appendix 3 which details Estyn's responses to the proposal from Rhondda Cynon Taf to enhance learning support classes with effect from September 2022. In line with School Organisation Code, it is to be presented in full.

### LA Response to Estyn Feedback on Proposals

RCT acknowledges the response from Estyn and is pleased to note that it has agreed that there will be no detrimental impact on education standards if the proposal to enhance LSC provision within the County Borough is implemented. Estyn response also acknowledges that the proposal provides a further option for educating a small number of pupils with significant additional learning needs through the medium of Welsh which is does not currently available within RCT.

RCT is pleased that the proposal is in accordance with the requirements set out in the Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal (ALNET) Act 2018 for a continuum of provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), and which also provides bilingual support.

The table below responds in more detail to the main comments raised by Estyn:

**Table 3: Estyn Feedback**

Comments within Estyn Feedback	RCT Response
Pupils who are likely to use the new LSC must currently be taught either in mainstream Welsh medium classes or in English medium LSCs elsewhere.	Yes, this comment is correct Welsh medium ALN pupils are currently supported via a specialist peripatetic team within their mainstream setting.
Three reasons are given why Ysgol Garth Olwg has been selected for the new LSC: its inclusive practice, its success in educating pupils with additional learning needs and its	ALN provision has historically been effective as referenced by previous Estyn inspection reports. The school continues to work effectively with a range of ALN

Comments within Estyn Feedback	RCT Response
<p>current surplus capacity. However, no evidence is given to support the first two assertions</p>	<p>Services in relation to providing inclusive additional learning provision to their learners with ALN.</p>
<p>There is no comment in the proposal about the possibility of more parents wanting to educate their children through the medium of Welsh and whether this might impact on the current and future surplus capacity at Ysgol Garth Olwg.</p>	<p>The LA is required to continuously review its specialist provision. The ALNET Act requires the LA to ensure we provide a bilingual provision to RCT learners. Therefore, we will be closely monitoring the use of the LSC. In addition, expanding Welsh medium educational provision for learners is a priority within the LA WESP.</p>
<p>There are two risks associated with the proposal which aren't considered. Firstly, having a single Welsh medium LSC in the whole of RCT is likely to mean that some pupils attending the new LSC would have to travel significant distances every school day. It is possible that some parents might refuse to allow their children to attend the new LSC if they live too far away from it.</p> <p>Secondly, the employment benefit of having one teacher and two teaching assistants to run the new LSC is mentioned, but not the impact of this on the current peripatetic Welsh medium additional learning needs support being provided in the local authority.</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that some pupils may have further to travel however the situation will be closely monitored. Further work will be undertaken regarding the development of bi-lingual specialist provision throughout RCT in future. Transport will be provided in accordance with LA's generous home to school transport policy.</p> <p>The specialist peripatetic team will continue to support ALN Welsh medium pupils within primary settings.</p>
<p>An estimated cost must be available and could have been included and explained within the proposal.</p>	<p>Secondary schools hosting LSC provisions are funded via the Council for one specialist teacher and two Learning Support Assistants at an approximate cost of £112k per class. Additional funding to enhance RCT LSC provision was approved during a previous proposal to Cabinet. Due to the impact of Covid this consultation was paused, and funding redirected for a time limited 2 year period to enable Ysgol Garth Olwg to establish a school based Step 4 provision.</p>
<p>The proposal could have referred to previous inspection reports for the original secondary and primary schools on the site in providing evidence for why Ysgol Garth Olwg is an appropriate school to host the new LSC.</p>	<p>Comment is noted.</p>

Comments within Estyn Feedback	RCT Response
What extent the host school supports the proposal.	The Governing Body, pupils, parents/carers and staff have all been consulted on the proposal the responses received have been extremely positive.

## 8. Assessment of Consultation

In view of the responses and comments received during the consultation period, a further assessment of the proposals, which are included within the consultation document, has been undertaken. The proposals have been revisited and the following matters have been reassessed:

- The likely impact of the proposals on the quality and standards of education;
- The likely impact on the community; and
- The likely effect of differing travelling arrangements.

After further consideration, the proposals are considered to remain appropriate and as such no amendments to the proposal have been made.

## 9. Conclusion

Following consideration of the information held within this report no information submitted during the consultation period is considered to warrant a change to the consultation document and so the information remains unchanged. As such it is considered that these proposals should be progressed in accordance with the School Organisation Code with no amendments.

Implementing this plan will be of benefit Welsh medium pupils with significant ALN across RCT and will ensure greater equality and access to specialist provision.

The priority for the Education and Inclusion Service Directorate is to continue to focus on driving up standards in schools and to improve the outcomes for all children and young people. In light of the Welsh Government ALN Transformation Agenda and the Council's vision to increase the number of Welsh medium learners in its schools by responding proactively to both national and local strategies, such as the Welsh Government Welsh Language Strategy: Cymraeg 2050, Rhondda Cynon Taf's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and the current 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools plan to increase and improve Welsh medium provision RCT, it is essential to enhance current Welsh medium ALN provision within RCT.

The recommendation of this report is that the publishing of a statutory notice should be considered by Cabinet, and consulted upon with no modifications, in order to progress with the proposal outlined.



<b>Learning Support Class Review Consultation Event 2022</b>			
<b>School Name:</b>	Ysgol Garth Olwg		
<b>Venue:</b>	Virtual meeting via Teams		
<b>Date:</b>	27.01.20	<b>Local Authority Officers in Attendance:</b>	Ceri Jones Lisa Carter
<b>Number of attendees:</b>	41 (37 staff, 2 Governors and 2 LA officers)		
<b>Governors and Staff</b>			
<p>Mr Edwards explained to the attendees that a meeting had been held with the School Council this morning and pupils engaged well with the discussions and that this session was part of the wider consultation process.</p> <p>Mr Edwards introduced the LA officers.</p> <p>Ceri Jones reminded attendees that the consultation on proposals were started 2 years ago prior to the pandemic however they were suspended, and a Step 4 provision established within the school. The LA now wishes to open a Learning support Class provision for 14 pupils with significant additional learning needs. Ceri Jones provided attendees an overview of proposals using the script, explaining current provisions and the new ALNET statutory duties highlighting that the LA now has to work proactively to provide Welsh medium provision. Welsh medium support does exist within Access and Inclusion with specialist teachers, EPs and this will continue but needs to be enhanced. This is seen as an exciting opportunity for both school and LA who aim to increase Welsh medium specialist provision across the LA.</p> <p>Dosbarth yr Bont was established as a school-based provision (Step 4). The difference with the proposal is that the LSC will be managed by the Access &amp; Inclusion Service but is very much a partnership with the school. For example, the School Council will help with the appointment process. The LSC will be accessed by all pupils across the County Borough however there will be entry/exit criteria. The questions raised by the attendees are summarised below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Why are Garth Olwg Governors not involved in appointment process?</b> LA has no objection to governors being part of the appointment process, governors are welcome to join the process. Chair of Governors would like GB to be included.</li> <li>• <b>Concerns were raised that there remains no Welsh medium provision for the younger children as school is 3-19 why is the proposal only for KS3/4 pupils?</b></li> </ul>			



LA continuously reviews its LSC provision and we are considering younger LSC provision as it is recognised that early intervention and preventative approaches are key. In the meantime the LA will continue with its peripatetic support for primary pupils

- **Concerns were raised that 2 pupils with very different ALN would be placed together?**

LA appreciates the concern as there is only one LSC proposed at the moment this will be the case. However, if the proposal proceeds the LA will work in collaboration with other Welsh medium specialist provisions who currently support pupils with a range of ALN, reviewing their models of delivery. The LA and school will continuously review the situation as the LSC is embedded. Within our special schools we have a wide range of needs being supported. Class organisation and support from staff will be key to success, including timetabling to allow pupils to access mainstream provision. The skill set of staff will be an important factor to ensuring the LSC can support a range of needs.

- **If a pupil accesses the LSC from another RCT secondary school, do they go back to their original school for the mainstream integration element?**

No the pupils will be based full time at Ysgol Garth Olwg so they would become part of the school community

- **Dosbarth Y Bont is match funded by the LA. What happens if the current pupils accessing that provision do not meet the criteria for the new LSC?**

When submitting a proposal for the Step 4 funding, a key criterion for accessing the match funding was that the school would sustain the model at the end of the funding period. School would have to continue to support those pupils who do not meet LSC criteria.

LA matched funding for Dosbarth y Bont is time limited therefore the responsibility to sustain the provision lies with the school. The school could do the same as another Tranche 1 school and continue with the Step 4 provision utilising their own budget.

- **Would LA consider a phased approach to allow school to continue to support Dosbarth y Bont? If LSC is not at capacity could Dosbarth y Bont pupil access the LSC?**

Further discussions would be needed between school and LA. Yes, pupils could potentially access the provision if the class was not full however those pupils that meet criteria would be prioritised over Y Bont pupils

- **Would school staff have additional training in order to support ALN pupils?**

Schools that host LSC always provide overwhelming feedback regarding the positive and often significant collaboration between ALNCo and LSC staff. Access and Inclusion will ensure that training will be available to support staff – professional learning programme.

- **Do you have any concerns regarding the recruitment of staff for the LSC?**

It will be a challenge. We have at times experienced difficulty appointing English medium specialist posts; however, the posts will be advertised externally and in the Times Education Supplement.

- **What happens if staff are unavailable to support the LSC?**

Supply cover from day 1 is paid for by the LA also Access and Inclusion have specialists who can support the class. Each class has a dedicated SEN Co-ordinator who will provide

strategic support. We understand there could be issues, but we will do our best to put in enhanced support

- **Concerned with the number of staff to pupil ratio to ensure needs of pupils are met**  
Diversity of need in the LSC may require additional support and this will be closely monitored. Access and Inclusion have the facility to provide enhanced support to LSCs on a short-term basis. Applications are considered by ALN Panel and reviewed on a termly basis. A long term situation would be reviewed to ensure staffing was sufficient

- **Concerned with pupil attainment and impact on other learners when ALN pupils accesses mainstream settings?**

No historical concerns have been raised by other host schools. Integration with mainstream is part of the inclusive ethos of the school. LSC teacher will be able to support with the learning of the pupil. Headteacher will be seeking views of other heads regarding the challenges they have faced in preparation for the opening in terms of what has worked. Senior Management will learn from this and develop school practices.



### Learning Support Class Consultation Event 2022

<b>School Name:</b>	Ysgol Garth Olwg		
<b>Venue:</b>	Ysgol Garth Olwg - School canteen		
<b>Date:</b>	27/01/2022	<b>Number of School staff:</b>	2
<b>Number of pupils:</b>	31		
<b>Local Authority Officers in attendance:</b>	Ceri Jones Lisa Carter		

### School Council

The School Council consisted of a number of pupils from year 7-13 who represented a cross section of pupils attending the 3-19 setting.

Ceri Jones provided the background of the proposal and explained the rationale as to why the LA was seeking to establish a specialist learning support class provision for pupils in years 7-11 with significant learning needs with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022 at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

Mr Edwards provided context of the proposal from a school perspective and explained the reason why the school was supporting the proposed LSC provision being located at the school. The Council were encouraged to ask any questions. A summary of the questions raised and responses are as follows:

- **What type of ALN will be supported in the class?**

The class will support pupils with significant additional learning needs (ALN) – so a mix of ALN. As this will be first Welsh medium Learning Support Class (LSC) provision for pupils with ALN in RCT we will be looking at other models to seek the help and expertise of existing Welsh medium provision in neighbouring LAs. We understand that mixing pupils with for example ASD and behaviour difficulties will be a challenge but we will learn from other provisions, review and refine provision as it becomes more established.

- **Where will the class be located in the building?**

Capacity of class will be 14 pupils plus 3 staff members. The LA will work with the school to look at an appropriate location within the school building. It is important that the class is not on the edge of school as we would want to develop an inclusive approach ensuring that the LSC feels a part of the school ethos and in the spirit of inclusion so that pupils won't feel

excluded. If the class needs adaptations the LA will work with the school and pay for any adaptations that may be needed.

Mr Edwards added it won't be a class building at the bottom of the field - it will be included within the one community of the school.

- **Will the pupils on roll be in a different registration class?**

They would have their own class registration practice however it does vary from school to school but it is likely they will start in their own class to start the day and check in with the staff. Practice can be reviewed in conjunction with the school as the LSC is established.

Mr Edwards explained that the school has over 1250 pupils and that unfortunately not everyone comes into school ok; some are upset and angry, some may feel they can't work well that particular day. For the first half hour of the day some pupils may need support from members of staff. School will ensure support is at hand to settle them and help them to get into school mode. Could be an element of both some days in LSC some days integrated in mainstream, but it is very much individual needs lead - flexibility and working out what supports the individuals best will be key.

- **Are the pupils within their own year group or will they be mixed across year groups?**

Yes, there will be a mixed age range from years 7-11. The numbers of pupils in the class will vary depending on their needs and what mainstream classes they are accessing. When they access mainstream classes, they will be in their year group.

- **Provision is aimed at years 7-11. Can that be expanded to year 12-13 and possibly younger age range?**

New legislation - ALNET Act has a requirement that the LA endeavours to provide bi-lingual provision for ALN pupils aged 0-25 - the LA now has statutory duty to support a wider range of provision. LA has to continuously review its ALN provision and ensure it is able to support a bi-lingual system. The LA may need to consider expanding provision. At the moment our English medium only supports to yr 11, but the new Act does require us to review that arrangement. Looking at evidence-based research, LSCs may not be best option under the new Act and we are required to look at other opportunities in FE.

Mr Edwards – you are our pupils and the school will support you and signpost you. Support will be available for pupils to remain in school if appropriate it would depend on the learning pathway chosen by the pupil

Ceri Jones explained that we have had pupils within LSCs that have remained in school in the sixth form and the LA and host schools have taken a flexible approach to meeting pupils needs.

- **Will this help the school/help other pupils attending our school?**

Mr Edwards responded, yes absolutely, it will provide opportunities for incidental conversations, sharing good practice at staff learning days, expertise is shared within the wider school context.

Ceri Jones advised the group that within the 44 LSCs the LA support, the overwhelming feedback is positive the impact on ethos of school, network of support, training that can be

shared. The ALNCo within school often works closely with the LSC teacher and shares information with other school colleagues. There are clear benefits.

- **If there was a maths lesson in lesson 2 would it be the same in LSC?**

It could be that the pupils are accessing the same class or they could be undertaking intervention work numeracy/literacy tailored to the needs of the pupils. The lessons may not necessary be held at same time but the LSC will link with maths department to ensure differentiated work, different timetable. Pupils in the LSC will have access to core subjects.

Mr Edwards expressed that one of the benefits of Covid has been the use of digital communication which could continue to support the pupils on-going forward.

- **Will break time and lunch time be the same for the pupils?**

Mr Edwards explained that at the moment there is a split lunch break for lower, middle and upper. It would depend on the individual if they can access the same break then yes but we would be flexible and take a sensible approach, possibly trying different methods to see what works well.

Ceri Jones replied where it is possible for groups to join and we would give this opportunity as sharing experiences with peers would be positive. However, some pupils cannot cope with larger groups. It would be very much based on the individual, but where possible yes it would encouraged.

- **If pupils come from us from a different school would they have to be in a different bubbles?**

Mr Edward stated he would hope that the need for bubbles for everyone would be gone shortly. Once they become part of the school they would be wearing our school uniform so would be in the school community.

Ceri Jones further explained that the placement would not be a part-time placement - pupils would be attending full time, Monday to Friday.

- **What would be the transport arrangements?**

Ceri Jones explained that transport is provided in line with the Council's policy. Pupils would have a taxi into the provision from their home to school; if they were local and within walking distance they would be expected to walk.

- **Have the school got plans to support current pupils to adjust to the new class and help the new pupils?**

Mr Edwards stated that it will be the school's privilege to have this class, it won't be a mystery, school will be honest and open with pupils. Pupils have previously spoken to groups of pupils to tell them about their additional learning needs. If older pupils can provide mentoring and support the head teacher would very much support and appreciate it.

Ceri Jones explained that other schools with LSCs put them on their website and the provision is seen as part of the whole school. There would be peer mentoring opportunities and range of ways you could support – wellbeing mentoring. Bryncelynnog LSC was shared as an example; this setting provides information days, which improves and enhances everyone's understanding and the more you are able to learn the more you can support the pupils. There is a consultation event for staff and governors later today and an

online consultation LA wants it to feel the proposal is being done in collaboration. If there are concerns the LA will endeavour to address them to ensure there is a whole school and community approach to supporting the pupils.

Mr Edwards reiterated that inclusivity and working together is one of the school's core values.

- **Would the pupils be able to join the rugby and football teams?**

Yes of course they would be part of school community.

- **Why only 14 pupils?**

Capacity of class would be 14 pupils with 3 members of staff. However, depending on the mix of pupils, we could place additional pupils and we often put in additional support if this is necessary. If we cannot support any additional pupils because of the existing mix of pupils we may put additional provision in place at their mainstream school.

- **Family member has sister with significant medical and learning needs would she be able to attend the LSC?**

LA has continuum of provision - we have short term placements, LSCs and special schools which supports a range of pupils. This class would not support significant medical/physical needs.

Mr Edwards gave an example of a pupil suffering with acute behavioural needs who would be unable to be supported in an LSC but could access other specialist provision.

Ceri Jones assured the group that there would be comprehensive discussions with staff, pupils and family to ensure the correct placement is provided. The LA is able to move pupils up and down the continuum of provision depending on their needs

Mr Edwards explained that there was a network with Maesgwyn and that the school currently taps into their expertise. For example, their staff have provided training on trauma informed approaches on an inset day.

- **In what way would you be supporting the families?**

There would be a lot of support and involvement from LA staff and teams for meetings, specialist support and advice and information about the pupil's needs and also emotional support. Every parent copes differently. The LA has a Family Liaison Officer and Educational Psychologists who will work with families. If parents make the decision to remain in mainstream then we will support that decision. Once pupil is placed in LSC there is regular contact with parents.

### Summary of Returned On-Line Consultation Proformas

This report was generated on 14/02/22. Overall, 31 respondents completed this questionnaire. The report has been filtered to show the responses for 'All Respondents'. The following charts are restricted to the top 12 codes. Lists are restricted to the most recent 100 rows.

#### Do you agree with the proposal?

Yes	(27)	87.1%
No	(2)	6.45%
Not sure	(2)	6.45%

#### Please let us know the reasons for your choice:

Most definitely needed to support WM pupils.

This is very much needed. However, we should not forget that there are many Primary aged pupils also in need of this provision through the medium of Welsh.

Especially in the wake of the disruption caused by the pandemic, additional support for Welsh medium pupils with ALN is to be welcomed.

As a parent of a child requiring support this is very good as there needs to be more classes like this out there.

Even in Welsh schools there is a special needs provision needed!

My son attended Garth Olwg mainstream from 11-16 and struggled but would have benefited from an ALN class.

I think both my children would benefit greatly from this idea, my eldest is currently struggling with some aspects of the Welsh language, and it has had a knock on affect in her other subjects.

I believe more support should be given for children with ALN within the Welsh schools.

Mae angen yn y clwstwr am ddsbarth cynnal dysgu. - There is a need in the cluster for a learning support class.

Angen cefnogaeth teg ar gyfer ADY trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg Rydw i yn athrawes mewn Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg ac yn gweld nifer o blant ADY yn symud i addysg Saesneg er mwyn cael y gefnogaeth cyn symud i'r Uwchradd Saesneg. Mae nifer o ddisgyblion ADY gyda ni a fyddai'n elwa o hyn wrth symud i Ysgol Garth Olwg ym mlwyddyn .- Fair support needed for ALN through the medium of Welsh I am a teacher at a Welsh Primary School and see a number of ALN children moving into English-medium education in order to get the support before moving to English Secondary. We have a number of ALN pupils who would benefit from this when moving to Ysgol Garth Olwg in year.

Er fy mod yn hapus iawn bod y Cyngor wedi gweld yr angen i sicrhau cydraddoldeb i blant ag ADY dwys yn y sector Gymraeg, dwi'n poeni nad oes digon o wybodaeth ynglyn a pha math o ADY fydd y dosbarth yn cefnogi. Mae dosbarthiadau ADY y Sir fel arfer wedi ei categoreiddio yn ol angen - e.e. dwys a chymhleth, iaith a lleferydd, angehnon emosiynol ac ymddygiad, Awtistiaeth - fel bod y dysgwyr yn medru cael mewnbwn ac arbenigedd penodol. I fe'r syniad yw bod plant o wahanol fathau o ADY i gyd yn cael eu

cymysgu yn y dosbarth yma? Dydy hyn ddim yn hollol glir yn y wybodaeth. - Although I am very happy that the Council has seen the need to ensure equality for children with intensive ALN in the Welsh language sector, I am concerned that there is not enough information about what kind of ALN the class will support. The County's ALN classes are usually categorised according to need e.g. severe and complex, speech and language, social emotional behavioural, Autism - so that learners can have specific input and expertise. If the idea is that children of different types of ALN are all mixed in this class? This is not entirely clear in the information

Baswn i ddim yn cefnogi dosbarth hollol gymysg o anghenion a thros ystod oedran mor eang - a dydy hyn ddim yn dangos cydraddoldeb gyda'r sector Saesneg. Dwi yn hollol gefnogol o sefydlu dosbarth. - I wouldn't support a completely mixed class of needs and over such a wide age range – and this does not show parity with the English sector. I'm totally supportive of setting up a class.

ADY ar y safle, ond ddim yn siwr yn ol y categoraiddio. Does dim gwybodaeth yn y pecyn chwaith yn nodi pam Cyfnod Allweddol 3/4 a dewiswyd yn hytrach na'r oedran Cynradd - efallai bod data yn dangos hyn ond nid yw hyn yn glir.- ALN on site, but not sure in the categorisation. There is also no information in the pack stating why Key Stage 3/4 was chosen rather than the Primary age – data may show this but this is not clear.

Dylai pawb cael y cyfle i ddysgu trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg, petai nhw'n alluog neu petai nhwn cael anghenion dysgu ychwanegol ac angen ychydig mwy o Cymorth.- Everyone should have the opportunity to learn through the medium of Welsh, whether they are able or have additional learning needs and need a little more support.

### **Please let us know the reasons for your choice:**

My child had this 'informally' at Garth Olwg. Will be good for parents / children coming behind to have a formal arrangement and option to access special education in Welsh, and on a mainstream campus.

I'm a Special Needs Support Higher Level Teaching Assistant and I work in Special Needs Resource Base. I believe that majority of English and Welsh medium schools need to be supported and have the resources/ units/bases in their schools. Without covid-19, there was still a substantial percentage of children needing these ALN units, and now due to covid-19 the percentage of children needing these bases/units have increased tremendously. These units not only give the children who are able to access them, they give them the support and independents they need. Which they can not access in a mainstream class. The amount of children I've seen that's come from mainstream to a SRB and then able to gain the ability for them either to be back integrated into mainstream or been able to have diagnosis to be moved to special needs school. Welsh medium schools need these just as much as English medium schools.

There is no current base or support in RCT for Welsh medium education and new ALNET Act means the authority need to act and provide where possible. Increase of specialist teachers to the school.

Teaches mainstream children about celebrating difference.

I don't know what ALN means. We're not all up with your jargon.

Mae diffyg cydraddoldeb yn y system ar hyn o bryd o ran y ddarpariaeth ychwanegol sydd ar gael I ddysgwyr trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg o'i gymharu â'r ddarpariaeth cyfrwng



Saesneg. Mae hyn yn golygu bod dysgwyr ADY mewn ysgolion Cymraeg yn wynebu dewis na ddylent orfod gwneud, megis 1) Ymdopi â darpariaeth o safon is, 2) Symud i addysg cyfrwng Saesneg. - There is currently a lack of parity in the system in terms of the additional provision available to learners through the medium of Welsh compared to English-medium provision. This means that ALN learners in Welsh-medium schools face a choice that they should not have to make, such as 1) Coping with lower quality provision, 2) Moving to English-medium education.

Rwyf yn cytuno gyda'r cynnig ac o'r diwedd bydd darpariaeth yn y Gymraeg i ddisgyblion y Sir. Fodd bynnag, rwyf yn hynod o siomedig mai ar gyfer Cyfnod Allweddol 3 a 4 yn unig mae'r ddarpariaeth. - I agree with the proposal and at last there will be Welsh language provision for pupils in the County. However I am really disappointed that the provision is for Key Stage 3/4 only.

Ble mae'r cydraddoldeb ar gyfer disgyblion oed cynradd? Ble mae'r ddarpariaeth arbenigol ar eu cyfer nhw? - Where is the equality for primary age pupils? Where is the specialist provision for them?

Gyda'r Ddeddf ADY newydd - rhaid rhoi cydraddoldeb i'r ddwy iaith ac mae dyletswydd ar yr awdurdod i ddarparu hynny. With the new ALN Act – equality must be given to both languages and the authority has a duty to provide that.

Braf gweld bod yr awdurdod yn ystyried darpariaeth yn y Gymraeg, er ei fod wedi ei gyfyngu i dim on 14 o blant. - It is pleasing to see that the authority is considering Welsh language provision, although it is limited to 14 children.

**Please state any alternative options, additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account:**

I would be also very supportive of developing Primary phase WM classes too

Given Garth Olwg is a 3-19 school, provision for younger pupils must be a logical extension

The siting of the support in Garth Olwg is a positive proposal, building on the existing support provision and making the most of its central role in the community and new 3-19 status.

ALN class would be beneficial to children through the medium of Welsh from age 3 up. I have 4 children with additional needs and my oldest 2 who have no left education were failed within the mainstream system.

I would like the local dialect to be taught in Welsh medium schools. My children live in Pontypridd but have always been taught the Northern dialect as correct and the southern dialect as incorrect.

I have no alternative options, children should be able to have the access for a ALN which children have in a English medium school.

A stand alone unit that is not part of a mainstream school.

Will this increase workload for ALN staff at Garth Olwg? How will traffic be managed as pupils taxi'd in. Will Governing Body be responsible or LEA?

Pam dewiswyd Cyfnod Allweddol 3 a 4? Beth fydd categori yr ADY yn y dosbarth? Ydy 1 athrawes a 2 LSA yn ddigonol ar gyfer 14 plentyn ag anghenion dwys a chymhleth

a/neu anghenion emosiynol ac ymddygiad dwys? Yn ol y wybodaeth yn y pecyn, gallech cael plant BI7 ADY mewn gyda plant BI1 ydy hyn wir yn bosib ac i'r gorau? Oes bosib cael 1 dosbarth CA3 ac 1 dosbarth CA4? - Why were Key Stages 3 and 4 chosen? What will be the ALN category in the class? Are 1 teacher and 2 LSA adequate for 14 children with profound and complex needs and/or emotional and severe behaviour needs? According to the information in the pack, you could have year 11 children in with year 7 children. Is this really possible and for the best? Can there be 1 KS3 class and 1 KS4 class?

**Please state any alternative options, additional views or points which you would like to be taken into account:**

Why does it have to be within a mainstream school? Surely a stand alone unit would be more beneficial to all.

Assessments with relevant professionals should be made more accessible to the school for their pupils. I am one of many that have had to go privately for a diagnosis that can and should be carried out by the school

I don't believe it's a sensible use of funds when such a minority of people in RCT speak Welsh.

Rather than setting up a dedicated department, one to one tutoring would be a better option.

Gweler fy sylwadau ar y dudalen flaenorol. Balch iawn bod yr awdurdod yn dechrau darparu trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg ond mae'n destun pryder nad oes unrhyw uned/ddosbarth arbenigol ar gyfer plant oed cynradd. Rhaid ystyried cydraddoldeb yn y Gymraeg i ddisgyblion a chanddynt ADY - ,beth am y ddeddf? Hefyd - beth fydd arbenigedd yr uned? Ai ymddygiad? Ai awtistiaeth? Ai anawsterau meddygol? - See my comments on the previous page. I am pleased that the authority is beginning to provide through the medium of Welsh but it is worrying that there is no specialist unit/class for primary age children. Equality in Welsh must be considered for pupils with ALN - what about the act? Also - what will be the unit's expertise? Is it behaviour? Is it autism? Are medical difficulties?

1. Ble mae'r ddarpariaeth ar gyfer plant oed cynradd? 2. Beth yn benodol fydd anawsterau'r plant? O brofiad, mae anghenion yn amrywio'n fawr felly pa anghenion y bydd y dosbarth cynnal dysgu'n canolbwyntio arnynt? 3. Os oes 44 dosbarth cynnal dysgu trwy gyfrwng y Saesneg yn ogystal ag ysgolion arbennig ac unedau, sut gellir cyfiawnhau dim ond lle ar gyfer 14 disgybl mewn 1 dosbarth a dim byd o gwbl ar gyfer plant cynradd? - 1. Where is the provision for primary age children? 2. What specifically will be the children's difficulties? From experience, needs vary widely so what needs will the learning support class focus on? 3. If there are 44 LSCs through the medium of English as well as special schools and units, how can only a place for 14 pupils in 1 class be justified and nothing at all for primary children?

**Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties, the Council has a legal duty to look at how its decisions impact on people because they may have particular characteristics. How would the Council's proposal affect you because of your:**

**1. Sex**

2. Age
3. Ethnicity
4. Disability
5. Sexuality
6. Religion / Belief
7. Gender identity
8. Relationship status
9. Pregnancy
10. Preferred language

N/A

None

N/A

N/A

N/A

10. Preferred language. Undermine the Welsh language spoken at the school.

10. This will be detrimental to the use of the Welsh language within the school.

laith o ddewis. - Language of choice.

2. Oed - mae'r ddarpariaeth dim ond ar gyfer plant oed uwchradd 10. laith - er bod y ddarpariaeth yn y Gymraeg, mae angen cydraddoldeb ar blant yr ardal er mwyn cael mynediad i addysg arbenigol o 3-11 oed hefyd. - 2. Age – provision is only for secondary age children 10. Language - although provision is in Welsh, children in the area also need equality to access specialist education from the age of 3-11.

Dwi'n anabl felly hoffwn I weld hygyrchedd penodol? Digonedd o llefydd parcio, rampiau ac ati! - I'm disabled so I'd like to see a certain accessibility? Plenty of parking spaces, ramps etc!

laith o ddewis ,rhaid rhoi dewis i pawb. Anabledd - gall plant gyda anabledd dysgu colli mas ar opportunities, os nad oes cyfle iddyn nhw dysgu trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg - Language of choice, everyone must be given a choice. Disability - children with a learning disability can miss out on opportunities, if there is no opportunity for them to learn through the medium of Welsh

Bydd hyn yn ffafrio i lefel cydraddolbed o ran iaith dewisol. Ar hyn o bryd mae hyn yn anghybwys. - This will favour an equalised level of preferred language. At the moment this is unbalanced.

**With regards to the Council's proposal, and the impact it may have, please let us know:**

**If you feel it could impact opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language (Positive or Negative) and if in any way, it treats the Welsh Language less favourably than the English Language? How positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be decreased?**

It would support the development of the Welsh language to all - currently it sometimes seems that WM education is not suitable for those with any form of learning difficulty causing pupils to become disaffected and families less than supported.

This provision for ALN through the Medium of Welsh is to be applauded and will certainly help promote the language. But all the Council's services for ALN should be available in both languages.

The opportunity here is to considerably improve Welsh language provision not only for learners with ALN but support those who also come from non-Welsh-speaking homes who perhaps have had limited support over the difficulties of the pandemic.

**With regards to the Council's proposal, and the impact it may have, please let us know: If you feel it could impact opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language (Positive or Negative) and if in any way, it treats the Welsh Language less favourably than the English Language?**

**How positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be decreased?**

This is a huge positive enabling those Welsh learners who require the additional support to receive it rather than ending up transferring to the English department. There needs to be more of these classes.

Parents can choose to teach their children Welsh even with additional needs

Due there being no ALN classes currently through the medium of Welsh this has resulted in a failing for many children. At the end of the day we live in Wales why are there no Welsh medium ALN classes???

Better understanding of the Welsh language, creating more opportunities to succeed in other subjects within the Welsh schools curriculum.

It's a positive move. My child has become a part of the local Welsh community through being.

included and supported to learn in Welsh language education, albeit adapted to meet his educational needs.

This promotes Welsh.

Thus will have a negative impact on the use of the Welsh language within the school.

Defnydd cadarnhaol i ddechrau darparu addysg ac arbenigedd ADY yn gyffelyb a'r ochr Saesneg. Yn meddwl na fydd plant rhagor yn gorfod gadael y sector Cymraeg er mwyn cael arbenigedd mewnbyn - Positive use to begin to provide ALN education and expertise similar to the English side. This means that children will no longer have to leave the Welsh sector in order to gain specialist input

ADY - ALN

Mae angen sicrhau bod gwasanaethau eraill yn y cyngor yn galluogi pobl i ddefnyddio'r iaith o'u dewis. Mae'r Cyngor wedi gwneud hyn rhywfaint ond dylent barhau i aenlu at wasanaeth lawn ddwyieithog. Awgrymnir bod y Cyngor yn ystyried cefnogi busnesau lleol hefyd i ddefnyddio'r. Gymraeg lle bon'n bosib er mwyn cynyddu'r amllder o weld Cymraeg ysgrifenedig a chlywed Cymraeg achlysurol yn cael ei ddefnyddio tu hwnt i'r Cyngor ac ysgolion Dyma'r cam cyntaf yn y ddarpariaeth Gymraeg sy'n dda o beth ond sionedig iawn mai dyma'r unig ddarpariaeth yn y sir. Beth am ddisgyblion cynradd? Nid oes gan siaradwyr Cymraeg yr un cyfleoedd I gael addysg wedi'i theilwra os oes ganddynt anghenion penodol iawn. Mae angen tegwch ar bob un plentyn. - There is a need to ensure that other services in the council enable people to use the language of their

choice. The Council has done this somewhat but should continue to add to a fully bilingual service. It is suggested that the Council also consider supporting local businesses to use Welsh where possible to increase the frequency of seeing written Welsh and hearing occasional Welsh being used beyond the Council and schools. This is the first step in Welsh-medium provision which is good what's disappointing is that this is the only provision within the Authority. What about primary pupils? Welsh speakers do not have the same opportunities for tailored education if they have very specific needs. Every single child needs fairness.

Braf gweld bod yr awdurdod yn dechrau ystyried dosbarthiadau trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg i blant ADY ond mae llawer o waith i'w wneud er mwyn cydymffurfio a'r ddeddf ALNET. - It is pleasing to see that the authority is beginning to consider classes through the medium of Welsh for ALN children but there is much work to be done in order to comply with the ALNET act.

**Please indicate who you are (Please indicate who you are (e.g. parent/carer of a pupil at named school, governor at named school etc.))**

RCT NEU branch Secretary

Governor at Ysgol Garth Olwg and Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Castellau

I am a parent at the school.

Parent of children in heol y celyn

staff ysgol clwstwr Garth Olwg

Parent of children in PSN

Athrawes ysgol Gynradd yn y clwstwr

Athro yn RCT

Welsh\_Medium\_Learning\_Support\_Class

Rhiant (ysgol Gynradd Castellau)

Parent. Child has moved to special school for 6th form, but has one day a week at Garth Olwg.

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Evan James

Athro

12 x Parents/carers of children at Ysgol Garth Olwg

Resident

### **Estyn's response to the proposal by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Council to enhance Welsh medium Learning Support Class provision**

#### **Introduction**

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However, Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters.

Therefore, as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

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

#### **Summary/ Conclusion**

The proposal is likely to maintain or improve the standard of education provision in Rhondda Cynon Taf because:

It provides a further option for educating a small number of pupils with significant additional learning needs through the medium of Welsh. Such an option does not currently exist in RCT.

It helps ensure that RCT meets its obligations under the Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal (ALNET) Act (2018) to provide a bilingual additional learning needs system.

#### **Description and benefits**

The proposer has given a clear rationale for the proposal based on the fact that there is currently no provision in a Learning Support Class (LSC) for Welsh medium learners, although there are 44 LSCs across RCT for English medium learners. It would have been helpful if the proposer had specified the number of Welsh medium learners in the local authority compared to the number of English medium learners as this would have made the discrepancy in provision even more striking.

The proposer has provided a detailed description of the proposal and its projected timetable for statutory procedures and for implementation. There are no interim arrangements since the proposal is to open an LSC for up to 14 key stage 3/4 pupils in the all-through Welsh medium Ysgol Garth Olwg using existing facilities in that school from September 2022.

Pupils who are likely to use the new LSC must currently be being taught either in mainstream Welsh medium classes or in English medium LSCs elsewhere. This information isn't provided in the proposal.

The expected benefits and disadvantages compared with the status quo are set out briefly but clearly. For example, there will be increased transport costs, because a small number of pupils who may currently be being taught in their catchment school may have to be transported to Ysgol Garth Olwg near Pontypridd instead.

A couple of suitable alternatives have been considered: either providing more funding to mainstream schools to meet the needs of the Welsh medium pupils with significant additional learning needs or establishing the new LSC in a different location. The first option is likely to lead to fragmented provision. Three reasons are given why Ysgol Garth Olwg has been selected for the new LSC: its inclusive practice, its success in educating pupils with additional learning needs and its current surplus capacity. However, no evidence is given to support the first two assertions, which is a weakness of the proposal. There should certainly be the necessary capacity within Ysgol Garth Olwg as this relatively new 3-19 school has capacity for 1,434 pupils (1,110 in the secondary phase and 324 in the primary phase) while projections suggest a maximum total of 1,242 pupils by 2024/25, leaving a minimum of 192 surplus places (although LSC places will require more space than mainstream places).

There is no comment in the proposal about the possibility of more parents wanting to educate their children through the medium of Welsh and whether this might impact on the current and future surplus capacity at Ysgol Garth Olwg.

Benefits of the proposal include the potential impact on the rest of the school of having specialist additional learning needs expertise on site as well as the small decrease in surplus capacity. The potential to reduce exclusions in the local authority is also mentioned as a benefit. However, there are two risks associated with the proposal which aren't considered. Firstly, having a single Welsh medium LSC in the whole of RCT is likely to mean that some pupils attending the new LSC would have to travel significant distances every school day. It is possible that some parents might refuse to allow their children to attend the new LSC if they live too far away from it. Secondly, the employment benefit of having one teacher and two teaching assistants to run the new LSC is mentioned, but not the impact of this on the current peripatetic Welsh medium additional learning needs support being provided in the local authority.

The proposal clearly supports the targets within the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and helps it to meet the obligations of ALNET (2018).

The financial costs of the proposal could be clearer. No costs are specified beyond the total amounts spent in RCT on the existing 44 LSCs, 4 special schools and 2 pupil referral units, as well as the additional funding given to mainstream schools to enhance capacity for educating pupils with additional learning needs. It isn't clear whether funding for the new LSC will come from existing budgets, from elsewhere within the education budget or from an increase to the overall education budget. While it is true that the exact cost of an LSC will depend upon the number of pupils in it and their needs, the proposal specifies that there will be a teacher and two teaching assistants in the LSC and so an estimated cost must be available and could have been included and explained within the proposal.

## **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The proposer has considered the likely impact of the proposal on the quality and standards in education appropriately. If pupils who are currently struggling to learn in mainstream Welsh medium schools or are having to learn in English in another LSC when their preferred language of learning is Welsh, can instead be taught in a Welsh medium facility tailored to their individual needs, this is highly likely to improve their own learning experience as well as having a positive impact on the schools they are in now. The proposal makes clear the potential added benefits to Ysgol Garth Olwg of having additional learning needs expertise on site and refers to Estyn's Common Inspection Framework as highlighting the positive impact that this expertise can have on enhancing practice and improving outcomes for learners with ALN across the whole school.

The proposal does not refer to Estyn inspection reports on the basis that there has been no inspection since the all-through Ysgol Garth Olwg was created in 2019. However, the proposal could have referred to previous inspection reports for the original secondary and primary schools on the site in providing evidence for why Ysgol Garth Olwg is an appropriate school to host the new LSC.

There are clear likely benefits to the proposal for the delivery of the full curriculum to the pupils with significant additional learning needs who will attend the new LSC. The proposal states that there may be some limited disruption to Ysgol Garth Olwg as a consequence of hosting the LSC, but that this will be outweighed by the likely benefits. What is, perhaps, surprising is that it isn't clear to what extent the host school supports the proposal as there is no statement about this.