

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION & CHILDREN

## CONSULTATION REPORT

For the proposal to change the nature of provision at

**Ysgol Rhys Prichard**

*Our Vision.....Carmarthenshire is a community where children are safe and nurtured and learners of all ages are supported to achieve their full educational potential*

September 2019

Gareth Morgans

Director of Education and Children's Services



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## School Modernisation Section

**Sara Griffiths**, Modernisation Team Manager

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# 1. Executive Summary

## The Consultation Period

On the 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019 Carmarthenshire County Council published proposals to change the nature of provision at Ysgol Rhys Prichard within the community of Llandovery. The County Council's proposal is to:

- Change the nature of provision of Ysgol Rhys Prichard to Welsh medium.

The consultation period commenced on the 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019 in line with the publication of the proposals and closed on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019 with a total of 54 responses received (excluding the responses received from Estyn and the pupils' consultation) in response to the formal consultation.

Responses Received		
Online Survey	Email	Total
53	1	54

It must be noted that of the 54 observations received, all were received prior to the end of the consultation period.

## Responses Received

This proposal has been prepared in response to Carmarthenshire County Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and the Welsh Medium Education Strategy in line with Welsh Government Policies. The proposal to move Ysgol Rhys Prichard along the Welsh language continuum will help the authority achieve their vision of a bilingual Carmarthenshire and support the Welsh Government's aim of achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

For completeness, these responses have also been included within this report and the themes of all comments received are as follows:

### **Supportive**

- Theme 1 – No reason
- Theme 2 - The change will be a progression for the school
- Theme 3 – The proposal adheres to Council and Welsh Government policies

- Theme 4 – Standards and Support
- Theme 5 – Consider further linguistic development along the Education Sector

## Concerns

- Theme 1 - Removal of Choice
- Theme 2 - Status Quo is Successful
- Theme 3 - Discrimination and Exclusion
- Theme 4 - The Pupils' Education and Later Life Opportunities
- Theme 5 - Parents won't be able to help support their children
- Theme 6 - No reason
- Theme 7 - The Community
- Theme 8 - Forcing the Welsh Language
- Theme 9 - Transport and Travel to Other Schools
- Theme 10 - Consultation Process / Misrepresentation of Data
- Theme 11 – Welsh Government / Carmarthenshire County Council Policies / Saving Money
- Theme 12 - Transfer to English Medium Schools
- Theme 13 - Coping with the Welsh Language
- Theme 14 – Additional Learning Needs (ALN)
- Theme 15 - Staffing
- Theme 16 - Opportunities for Parents

Of the 54 respondents, they are categorised as follows:

- Parent (20)
- Staff Member (3)
- School Governor (2)
- Grandparent (8)
- Other (21)

## Overall Summary

Supportive	<b>33%</b>	Not Supportive	<b>67%</b>
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## Workshops

Following the closure consultation period on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019 workshops were held to analyse the observations received.

## **Consultation Event**

A consultation drop in session was held at Ysgol Rhys Prichard on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2019 between 5pm and 7pm to offer an opportunity for staff, parents and stakeholders to ask questions and discuss the proposal.

The consultation drop in session was attended by 23 stakeholders categorised as follows:

Category	No
Ysgol Rhys Prichard Staff	1
Governors	3
Menter Bro Dinefwr	1
Parents	10
Grandparent	1
Councillor (Town & Local)	2
Resident	3
BBC	2

## **Next Steps**

The Consultation Report will be presented to the Education & Children's Scrutiny Committee for comments and a recommendation and then ultimately to the Executive Board for determination on whether or not to proceed with the proposal and publish a statutory notice. Should the Executive Board decide to proceed to the next stage, a Statutory Notice will be published during the Autumn Term 2019.

## 2. Summary of Observations received and Local Authority Responses

Point Number	Point Raised	Local Authority Response	Number of responses raising this point	% of responses raising this point
<b>Supportive Comments Raised</b>				
1.	<p><b><u>No reason</u></b></p> <p>Some respondents did not provide a reason for their support.</p>		11	20%
2.	<p><b><u>The change will be a progression for the school</u></b></p> <p>The number of pupils attending the English stream have been declining over recent years whilst the number of pupils attending the</p>	<p>The Local Authority notes that the school is progressing well linguistically and deems the proposal appropriate, due to the increase in demand for Welsh medium education in the area and the decline in the number of pupils attending the English stream.</p>	3	6%

	Welsh stream have been increasing. There is a clear increase in demand for Welsh medium education provision in the area.	The support was noted.		
3.	<p><b><u>The proposal adheres to Council and Welsh Government policies</u></b></p> <p>In line with the Local Authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and Welsh Government's "Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh Speakers" the proposal ensures that the Local Authority is adhering to Council and Welsh Government policies with the explicit aim of improving planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh, for</p>	<p>The Local Authority is promoting the current proposal for primary education in the area as it firmly believes that this is in the best interests of the children's education. However, the Local Authority also has a responsibility to follow its own policies along with Welsh Government policies.</p> <p>Carmarthenshire County Council has a statutory responsibility under Part 4 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for its area with the explicit aim of improving planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh, from improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh.</p> <p>In April 2014 the County Council formally adopted a comprehensive strategy for the development of the Welsh language in Carmarthenshire, endorsing the recommendations of a politically balanced group of elected members that had examined in depth the</p>	1	2%



	<p>improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh. The proposal ensures that the Local Authority meet their aim of increasing the provision of Welsh medium education in Carmarthenshire and ensure linguistic continuity from the nursery sector along the key stages to the secondary sector so that every pupil becomes fluent and confident in both Welsh and English languages.</p>	<p>status of the Welsh language in the county in the wake of the 2011 census of the population. The strategy required action on 73 points, 21 of which applied to the education service. All relevant recommendations and actions from the strategy have been incorporated within Carmarthenshire's WESP.</p> <p>On 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018, the Local Authority launched Carmarthenshire's most recent Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which seeks to achieve the following outcomes relevant to the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcome 1 - More seven year old children being taught through the medium of Welsh;</li> <li>• Outcome 2 - More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school;</li> <li>• Outcome 5 – More students who have higher language skills in Welsh;</li> <li>• Outcome 6 – Welsh medium provision for learner with additional learning needs (ALN); and</li> <li>• Outcome 7 – Workforce planning and continuing professional development.</li> </ul> <p>The proposal is adhering to the recommendations as set out in Carmarthenshire's WESP.</p> <p>The support was noted.</p>		
4.	<p><b><u>Standards and Support</u></b></p> <p>It is recognised that learning bilingually does</p>	<p>The Local Authority notes that on average, bilingual children achieve higher grades in the English language. It should also be noted that on</p>	1	2%

	not have an impact on pupil standards (in particular in the English language) and that all pupils will receive support as required.	average, about 80% of Carmarthenshire pupils who attend Welsh medium education receive an A*-C grades in both Welsh and English languages.  The support was noted.		
5.	<p><b><u>Consider further linguistic development along the Education Sector</u></b></p> <p>It was recognised that the proposal moves the school along the language continuum, however consideration needs to be given to further linguistic development along all areas of the education sector.</p>	<p>On the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018, in accordance with Welsh Government Strategic Plan, the Local Authority launched Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic plan with its vision for a bilingual Carmarthenshire.</p> <p>The Plan requires <b>all</b> schools within the county to move along the language continuum and notes the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that every pupil is completely bilingual (and multilingual) when leaving school so that they have the skills to operate as bilingual citizens in their communities, the workplace and beyond/worldwide;</li> <li>• Provide services that will ensure high quality learning opportunities for all Carmarthenshire's children, young people and adults, and thereby enabling them to achieve their full potential as lifetime learners in the context of the unique bilingual of the County;</li> </ul>	1	2%

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure progression from pre-school Welsh medium provision to bilingual primary and secondary education;</li> <li>• Ensure linguistic progression across curricular areas when transferring from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3, from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 and promote linguistic progression from Key Stage 4 to lifelong learning; and</li> <li>• Work in partnership with all providers to improve the standard of Welsh within the learning environment.</li> </ul>		
<b>Concerns Raised</b>				
1.	<p><b><u>Removal of Choice</u></b></p> <p>There are concerns regarding the removal of choice of English medium education at the school. It is believed that parents should have the choice of which language their children should be educated through.</p>	<p>Carmarthenshire County Council has a statutory responsibility under Part 4 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for its area with the explicit aim of improving planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh, for improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh.</p> <p>In April 2014 the County Council formally adopted a comprehensive strategy for the development of the Welsh language in Carmarthenshire, endorsing the recommendations of a politically balanced group of elected members that had examined in depth the status of the Welsh language in the county in the wake of the 2011 census of the population. The strategy required action on 73 points, 21 of which applied to the education service.</p>	14	26%

The language strategy received cross-party support from elected members when it was adopted at a meeting of the full County Council. On 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018, the Local Authority launched Carmarthenshire's most recent Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. The WESP has been subject to public consultation during its preparation and subsequent review. Its contents have, therefore, been subject to a test of public opinion in line with statutory requirements. It has also been approved by the Welsh Government in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

The plan seeks to achieve the following outcomes relevant to the proposal:

- Outcome 1 - More seven year old children being taught through the medium of Welsh;
- Outcome 2 - More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school;
- Outcome 5 – More students who have higher language skills in Welsh;
- Outcome 6 – Welsh medium provision for learner with additional learning needs (ALN); and
- Outcome 7 – Workforce planning and continuing professional development.

The proposal is adhering to the recommendations as set out in Carmarthenshire's WESP.

Choice is an important issue in the consideration of this proposal, with the most important aspect of choice being that which is available to

		<p>children as they progress through their education and early lives. This proposal provides all pupils with the opportunity to become fully bilingual with the skills to read, write and speak in both Welsh and English languages by the time they leave primary school. The Local Authority's proposal to develop bilingual children by the time they leave primary school gives children a choice as they move along the education sector. The most effective way of developing bilingual children in the primary sector is to immerse them in Welsh medium education. It is generally accepted in the education profession that studying Welsh as a second language does not develop truly bilingual young people and the schools has been identified as having the potential to move quickly along the language continuum.</p>		
2.	<p><b><u>Status Quo is Successful</u></b></p> <p>The current linguistic arrangements at the school are working well and there is no need for change.</p>	<p>The Local Authority acknowledge that the school is performing well and is successful. This proposal seeks to improve even further the opportunity for children attending the school to secure continually improving outcomes. Carmarthenshire County Council has a statutory responsibility under Part 4 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for its area with the explicit aim of improving planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh, from improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh.</p> <p>In April 2014 the County Council formally adopted a comprehensive strategy for the development of the Welsh language in Carmarthenshire, endorsing the recommendations of a politically balanced group of elected members that had examined in depth the status of the Welsh language in the county in the wake of the 2011</p>	10	19%

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- Outcome 7 – Workforce planning and continuing professional development.

The proposal is adhering to the recommendations as set out in Carmarthenshire's WESP.

		<p>It is important to note that the WESP requires all primary schools in Carmarthenshire, including English medium schools, to move along the language continuum, progressively expanding the proportion of education that is delivered through the medium of Welsh, with a view to ensuring that in time all children leaving primary school are fully bilingual.</p> <p>The pace at which schools will be able to expand bilingualism and Welsh medium education will depend upon local circumstances but the expectation for progress applies to all schools. The school has been identified as having the potential to move quickly along the language continuum.</p>		
3.	<p><b><u>Discrimination and Exclusion</u></b></p> <p>It is believed that the proposal is discriminatory and segregates non-Welsh/English speaking families who desire English medium education. Should the proposal be implemented, pupils could be forced to seek English medium education elsewhere, thus further excluding</p>	<p>This proposal does not seek to discriminate against non-Welsh/English families or to exclude any community members from their own local community in any way. On the contrary, this proposal seeks to provide all children with the opportunity to become fully bilingual with the skills to be able to read, write and speak in both Welsh and English languages by the time that they leave primary school.</p> <p>It is the Local Authority's intention that all current pupils remain at the school and continue to receive their education through the current language. It is important to note that there will be no change for current pupils attending the school. Similarly, it is the Local Authority's desire that in the future local children attend their local school.</p>	10	19%

	<p>them from their local community.</p>	<p>There is a national priority in Wales, shared by Carmarthenshire Council, to increase the number of people in our communities who are able to speak Welsh and use it in their everyday lives. Schools are regarded to be a critically important component in developing children so that they are fully bilingual by the time they leave primary school. This proposal seeks to provide all pupils/parents and community members with the opportunity to develop their Welsh language skills.</p>		
4.	<p><b><u>The Pupils' Education and Later Life Opportunities</u></b></p> <p>It is believed that learning through the medium of Welsh will have a detrimental effect on the pupils' education and English language skills, and will disadvantage children from entering further or higher education and later on in life when applying for job vacancies etc. It is believed that not all pupils will be able to reach their full potential by learning through the medium of Welsh. It must also be noted that the</p>	<p>It is the belief of the Local Authority, based upon international evidence and research and local experience, that children benefit from a truly bilingual education, which provides wider skills developments, such as cognitive ability, task understanding and flexibility, enhanced powers of concentration, etc. and that all children should receive these opportunities. Being bilingual or multilingual also broadens individuals' cultural experiences and can enhance career prospects. Evidence demonstrates that true bilingualism can only be achieved in the local context through children receiving a Welsh medium education.</p> <p>The Local Authority notes that on average, bilingual children achieve higher grades in the English language. It should also be noted that on average, about 80% of Carmarthenshire pupils who receive Welsh medium education receive an A*-C grades in both Welsh and English languages.</p> <p>Bilingualism will increasingly over time become an employment skill. For example, all public organisations in Wales are subject to new statutory</p>	6	11%



	<p>most common language used in day to day life, working life and the business world is English – therefore pupils' understanding of the English language must be secure in order to ensure maximum success within the real world.</p>	<p>Welsh language standards and progressively over time will need to recruit increasing numbers of Welsh speakers to deliver services. Possessing Welsh language skills will increasingly over time give individuals a competitive advantage when seeking employment.</p> <p>Schools prepare young people with the skills to attend universities around the world and the Welsh language should not be seen as a disadvantage. Rather than being an impediment, possessing skills in the Welsh language is seen by many universities, inside and outside Wales, as an additional skill, which can offer benefits when a young person is competing for a place to study.</p>		
5.	<p><b><u>Parents won't be able to help support their children</u></b></p> <p>Concerns were raised that parents will no longer be able to play an active role in their child's education.</p>	<p>Welsh schools set homework instruction in Welsh and in English so there will be no problem in understanding what children are being asked to do at home. Work set will be appropriate to the pupil's age and ability level and therefore should be within reach. Developing increasingly as independent learners, parents may find that children are happy to progress without extra parental guidance as they get older.</p> <p>The school currently offers a range of support to pupils and parents from non-Welsh speaking families and are committed to increasing provision as necessary to meet the future needs of families.</p>	6	11%

6.	<p><b><u>No reason</u></b></p> <p>Some respondents did not provide a reason for their concern.</p>		6	11%
7.	<p><b><u>The Community</u></b></p> <p>The proposal is inconsistent with the make-up of community and will not cater for the needs of the whole community.</p> <p>It is felt that this proposal will have a negative effect on the community due to families moving out of the area to seek English medium education elsewhere. In addition, only providing Welsh medium education may result in less people moving to the area due to unsuitable education</p>	<p>The Local Authority acknowledges that some members of the community are unable to speak the Welsh language and that some children attending the school come from non-Welsh/English backgrounds. It is, therefore important for the Local Authority to increase the provision of Welsh medium education in order to promote bilingualism in the area and to ensure that every pupil becomes fluent and confident in both Welsh and English languages.</p> <p>There is a national priority in Wales, shared by Carmarthenshire County Council, to increase the number of people in our communities who are able to speak Welsh and use it in their everyday lives. Schools are regarded to be a critically important component in developing children so that they are fully bilingual by the time they leave primary school.</p> <p>The Local Authority acknowledges that the nature of communities' changes over time and that social mobility continues to increase. The Local Authority considers that this point reinforces the need to embed Welsh medium education in as many communities as possible in order to bolster the language and provide as many children as possible with</p>	5	9%

	<p>provision. This will result in a negative impact on the economy within the local area.</p>	<p>the opportunity to develop as truly bilingual citizens and to benefit from the personal advantages that bilingualism brings.</p> <p>It is the Local Authority's intention that all current pupils remain at the school and continue to receive their education through the current language arrangements. The proposals will not therefore, affect current pupils. The school will continue to provide sufficient support for all current pupils through the medium in which they currently receive their education so there is, consequently, no need for any child to be moved from the school. Similarly, it is the Local Authority's desire that in the future local children attend their local school.</p> <p>It is hard to estimate the effect the proposal will have on the number of families moving into the area. However, the Local Authority are hopeful that they will understand the benefits of a Welsh medium education and the opportunities and advantages that it can provide. This proposal will provide all future pupils with the opportunity to become fully bilingual in both Welsh and English languages by the time they leave primary school and benefit from these advantages throughout their lives.</p> <p>The Local Authority is also hopeful that this proposal will have a positive effect on the local economy by providing community members with the opportunity to develop their Welsh language skills. Bilingualism will increasingly over time become an employment skill. For example, all public organisations in Wales are subject to new statutory Welsh language standards and progressively over time will need to recruit increasing numbers of Welsh speakers to deliver services. Possessing Welsh language skills will increasingly over time give individuals a competitive advantage when seeking employment.</p>		
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<p>8.</p>	<p><b><u>Forcing the Welsh Language</u></b></p> <p>The community should have a choice of whether to learn through the medium of Welsh or English and the Welsh language should not be forced on anyone. It is important to learn the Welsh language and some pupils may want to use the language in their day to day life however; not all pupils will want to receive their education through the medium of Welsh. Forcing the Welsh language will not create more Welsh speakers, in fact it will have the opposite effect. Implementing the proposal will force pupils to seek English medium education at other English medium schools which will deny pupils</p>	<p>The proposal is consistent with national policy to expand Welsh medium education in order to develop increasing numbers of fully bilingual young people and to enable more children to benefit from the advantages of bilingualism, gathered through international research.</p> <p>It is the Local Authority's intention that all current pupils remain at the school and continue to receive their education through the current language arrangements. The proposals will not therefore, affect current pupils. The school will continue to provide sufficient support for all current pupils through the medium in which they currently receive their education so there is, consequently, no need for any child to be moved from the school. Similarly, it is the Local Authority's desire that in the future local children attend their local school.</p> <p>It is important to remember that the teaching and the development of the English language still occurs in Welsh medium schools to the highest of standards, as a statutory part of the curriculum.</p> <p>International evidence, cited by the Welsh Government, confirms that the most effective way of developing bilingual children is to immerse them in the less common language whilst also developing their skills in the more common language. The Welsh Government also promotes that children who are from non-Welsh speaking families that immersion in Welsh in school is particularly important in embedding the language.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>9%</p>
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	exposure to the Welsh language.			
9.	<p><b><u>Transport and Travel to Other Schools</u></b></p> <p>It is unfair to expect parents to transport pupils to other schools to receive English medium education. This will have time and financial impact on families.</p>	<p>As there will be no change for current pupils attending the schools, there is consequently, no need for any child to be moved from the school. Similarly, it is the Local Authority's desire that all future pupils will attend their local school.</p> <p>The Local Authority are not proposing alternative English medium schools as part of the proposal. Should parents elect to place their children in alternative schools they will do so in full consideration of all the factors that apply, including transport implications. If any parents elect to place their children in alternative schools that are neither the designated nor nearest school, these parents will assume full responsibility for transporting their children to school.</p>	3	6%
10.	<p><b><u>Consultation Process/ Misrepresentation of Data</u></b></p> <p><u>Consultation</u> Some respondents felt that the consultation had not been widely enough</p>	<p>The consultation process has been conducted in compliance with the statutory School Organisation Code 2018 and all required stakeholders have been notified and consulted with.</p>	2	4%

	<p>publicised and should have been more accessible.</p> <p><u>Misrepresentation of Data</u> Some respondents felt that the data and information contained within the Consultation Document was incorrect and a deliberate misrepresentation to mislead stakeholders.</p>	<p>Prior to formal consultation, an informal drop in session was held at the school and during the consultation period a further drop in session was held for stakeholders to discuss the proposal. It must be noted that this practice is not a statutory requirement of the School Organisation Code but considered good practise by CCC.</p> <p>The consultation period was held from 20<sup>th</sup> May until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and was widely publicised via Carmarthenshire County Council's website and social media and was reported by local media. Consultees were able to respond to the consultation via the online survey, e-mail or letter.</p> <p>All data and information contained within the Consultation Document is accurate and is based upon the Pupil Level Annual School Census Data (PLASC). Information regarding the current linguistic arrangements at the school was provided in the document and all data was represented accurately with regards to the proposal. All data contained within the Consultation Document is stipulated as a requirement within the School Organisation Code 2018.</p>		
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11.	<p><b><u>Welsh Government/ Carmarthenshire County Council Policies / Saving Money</u></b></p> <p>Some respondents do not feel that following County Council and Government policies such as WESP is a good enough reason to approve and implement the proposal as it will have no long term benefit. It is felt that these policies have no purpose or justification and are just pushing the Welsh language agenda and wasting money.</p>	<p>The Local Authority is promoting the current proposal for primary education in the area as it firmly believes that this is in the best interests of the children's education. However, the Local Authority also has a responsibility to follow its own policies along with Welsh Government policies.</p> <p>Carmarthenshire County Council has a statutory responsibility under Part 4 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for its area with the explicit aim of improving planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh, from improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh.</p> <p>Every local authority in Wales, including Carmarthenshire County Council has a responsibility to respond to the Act and the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Strategy and is accountable individually to the Welsh Government. Carmarthenshire County Council's WESP has been approved by the Welsh Government in accordance with the requirements of the Act.</p> <p>The plan seeks to achieve the following outcomes relevant to the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcome 1 - More seven year old children being taught through the medium of Welsh;</li> </ul>	2	4%
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcome 2 - More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school;</li> <li>• Outcome 5 – More students who have higher language skills in Welsh;</li> <li>• Outcome 6 – Welsh medium provision for learner with additional learning needs (ALN); and</li> <li>• Outcome 7 – Workforce planning and continuing professional development.</li> </ul> <p>Should the Local Authority not seek to achieve the specific outcomes as detailed in WESP, then it would not meet its aim of improving planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh, from improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh as recommended by the Welsh Government.</p>		
12.	<p><b><u>Transfer to English Medium schools</u></b></p> <p>It is unfair for pupils who desire/require an English medium education to have to transfer to another school outside of their catchment. In addition, it is felt that pupils who struggle with the Welsh language will</p>	<p>It is the Local Authority's intention that all current pupils remain at the school and continue to receive their education through the current language arrangements. The proposals will not therefore, affect current pupils. The school will continue to provide sufficient support for all current pupils through the medium in which they currently receive their education so there is, consequently, no need for any child to be moved from the school. Similarly, it is the Local Authority's desire that in the future local children attend their local school. Sufficient support will be provided for all future pupils in accordance with each individual's needs.</p>	1	2%



	also have to transfer to another school.	<p>Please see <b>point 13</b> which refers to the help and support which is currently and will continue to be provided to all pupils and parents with regards to the Welsh language.</p> <p>Please see <b>point 14</b> which refers to pupils with additional learning needs, special educational needs and the help and support which is and will continue to be provided to these pupils.</p>		
13.	<p><b><u>Coping with the Welsh Language</u></b></p> <p>Concerns were raised that not all children will be able to cope with learning through the medium of Welsh, especially pupils from non-Welsh backgrounds. In addition, there are concerns that non-Welsh speaking parents may find it hard to support and help their children with their school work and home work should the school the proposal be implemented.</p>	<p>The school will continue to provide support for current pupils through the medium of which they currently receive their education. Should the proposal be implemented, sufficient support will be provided to all new pupils in accordance with the needs of each individual. It is also important to note that staff are required to differentiate the curriculum and make reasonable adjustments when required to meet the needs of every pupil. "Athrawon Bro" who provide support to the schools around the county will also be supporting the school. Welsh Language Immersion Centres will also be available for those pupils who may need extra input linguistically.</p> <p>The schools currently offer a range of support to pupils and parents from non-Welsh speaking families and are committed to increasing provision as necessary to meet the future needs of individual families.</p> <p>Several organisations who attended the formal drop in session during the consultation period have also offered their help and support to the community with the development of the Welsh language.</p>	1	2%

14.	<p><b><u>Additional Learning Needs (ALN)</u></b></p> <p>Children with special education needs or additional learning needs may not be able to cope with learning through the medium of Welsh and may require English medium education. It is unfair to assume that all children with SEN/ALN will be able to learn through the medium of Welsh.</p>	<p>Carmarthenshire County Council's policy is that all its schools should be inclusive, with children with additional learning needs being educated in a mainstream setting alongside their peers wherever possible.</p> <p>For this proposal, the support provided to children currently in the schools with additional needs will continue through the medium in which they currently receive their education. Should the proposal be implemented, all future pupils will receive support which is individually tailored to their needs.</p> <p>All pupils with additional learning needs have specific individual plans based on their circumstances and a tailored support programme is provided according to need. Generally, an additional learning need is not a barrier to learning two languages. It is important to assess and monitor progress in each or all of the languages that a child is using or learning, including sign and visually supported communication systems required for some pupils, particularly as the stronger developed language can be used to support and build learning through a lesser developed language medium. Staff are required to differentiate the curriculum and make reasonable adjustments to the language of instruction and response in order to accommodate additional needs and ensure access to the curriculum and learning progress. At times it may be appropriate to target additional support in one language for a period to consolidate and accelerate learning, e.g. in literacy. There will be rare instances, however, where a child may be diagnosed with a condition that is not conducive to a fully bilingual education. In these circumstances a package of support is identified by professional practitioners and discussed with parents.</p>	1	2%
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Whilst the system is designed to meet the needs of learners through an universal and inclusive approach, for a small number of children with significant and complex additional needs this is not always possible and specialised provision offers a more appropriate learning setting.

In order to make sure that the needs of all learners are met the schools system in Carmarthenshire includes a range of provision for children with additional needs. A specialised school or unit offer education to children with the most profound or complex needs where a mainstream setting is either not suitable for the children's needs or where parents prefer an alternative setting. Selected secondary and primary schools across the county include specialised units for children with particular needs, such as autism, sensory impairment or speech and language delay. The Department for Education and Children provides specific additional support in schools wherever practicable so that as many children as possible remain in their local school. Whilst the Council's preference is to meet the needs of all children in a mainstream setting wherever possible, this is not always practicable.

It is this Council's experience that the vast majority of pupils with a wide range of additional learning needs and abilities are successful in our schools irrespective of the language of instruction but the Council does acknowledge that there will be a very few children whose needs cannot be met other than through provision at a specialist unit.

15.	<p><b><u>Staffing</u></b></p> <p>Implementing the proposal will restrict opportunities to staff who do not speak the Welsh language and will restrict employment opportunities. In addition, concerns were raised on whether there are enough Welsh speaking staff employed at the school for the change to be effective.</p>	<p>The schools have been identified as having the potential to move quickly along the language continuum. Rather than restrict opportunities for staff who do not speak the Welsh language, this proposal will help staff to improve their Welsh language skills. "Athrawon Bro" will provide training to staff members who are less confident in using their Welsh language skills and the Local Authority will also provide training support for any staff members wishing to develop their Welsh language skills. Support will also be given through the National Sabbatical courses as well as Welsh for Adults. Courses have been designed specifically to meet the needs of staff at all linguistic levels. Subject specific, classroom and incidental language courses are now available.</p>	1	2%
16.	<p><b><u>Opportunities for Parents</u></b></p> <p>Some respondents felt that further support was required for parents to develop their linguistic skills, in order to help support their children.</p>	<p>Several organisations who attended the formal drop in session during the consultation period have offered their help and support to the community with the development of the Welsh language.</p> <p>Further support and guidance can be found by accessing the following links as noted in the Consultation Document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cymraeg gyda'r plant / Welsh with your kids- give it a go!</b></li> </ul>	1	2%

<http://newsroom.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/media/1214148/gd4808-taflencymraegiplant4-002.pdf>

Within this booklet you will find a number of useful Welsh words and phrases which can be used to practise the Welsh language with young children. This will help them to speak naturally and confidently.

- **Bod yn Ddwieithog... yn Sir Gâr / Being Bilingual... in Carmarthenshire**

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1216432/being-bilingual.pdf>

This booklet details what it means to be bilingual whilst highlighting the advantages that can be achieved from being bilingual in areas such as education, career, health and life. In addition, within this booklet you will find the answers to many common parental concerns regarding the Welsh language.

- **Welcome to Wales Welcome to Carmarthenshire Welcome to Welsh**

<http://newsroom.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1216436/welcome-pack.pdf>

[This booklet has been prepared by Carmarthenshire County Council to welcome newcomers to its bilingual County. Within the booklet you will find information on how the Welsh language is used in Carmarthenshire along with details on where you can find Welsh language support and useful websites to visit to develop your Welsh language skills.](#)

Information by parents and pupils from non-Welsh speaking families is also available to watch on the County council website:

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/education-schools/bilingual-education/#.XR9DGOaovIU>

### 3. Estyn's Observations regarding the Proposal

#### **Estyn's response to the proposal to change the nature of provision at Ysgol Rhys Pritchard to Welsh-medium**

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.

#### **Introduction**

This is a proposal by Carmarthenshire County Council.

The proposal is to change the nature of provision at Ysgol Rhys Prichard to Welsh-medium from 1st January 2020.

#### **Summary/Conclusion**

The proposal focuses on ensuring significant growth in Welsh-medium education and training to increase the number of people of all ages to become fluent in both Welsh and English and have the ability to use their languages confidently with their families, in their communities and in the workplace. The proposer also notes that this is in accordance with the Welsh Government policy of 'Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers'.

The council has given appropriate consideration to three options and has chosen the above proposal.

Estyn is of the opinion that this proposal is at least likely to maintain the current standard of education.

#### **Description and benefits**

The proposer provides a clear rationale for the logic behind the proposal. It identifies clearly that this proposal has been designed in response to Carmarthenshire County Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and the Welsh-medium Education Strategy. They state fairly that it is a transitional

school, which is a school that is working towards becoming a Welsh-medium school for 4-11 year-old children.

They refer validly to the fact that there has been a sustained increase in the number of pupils who have chosen to attend the Welsh-medium stream over the last five years. During the same period, there has been a decline in the number of pupils who have chosen to attend the English stream and, by January 2018, only one pupil was attending the English stream.

The proposer has given appropriate consideration to other options. These include maintaining the status quo, changing the nature of foundation phase provision only and the option of changing the nature of provision of the whole school to Welsh-medium (foundation phase and key stage 2). They identify clearly the advantages, disadvantages and risks that are associated with the proposal and different options.

They have given a good outline of the reasons for changing the nature of the school's provision and list the advantages. These appear to be reasonable and include: taking advantage of opportunities to develop bilingual learners and achieving the objectives of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. The proposer identifies validly the benefit of having buildings and a site with better facilities than the school has at present. This will include provision for an external playgroup in the new school building, rather than in a mobile classroom on the current site.

The proposer states validly that the proposal will increase the school's capacity. This will meet any additional need for places, as outlined in the projected number of pupils by January 2023. They draw relevant attention to the fact that facilities will be available to the local community and will provide an opportunity for the school to become a community hub for the town of Llandovery.

The proposer has given suitable consideration to the proposal's effect on Welsh-medium provision within the authority. They claim fairly that the proposal will have a positive effect on the number of places available within Welsh-medium education in Carmarthenshire.

### **Educational aspects of the proposal**

The proposer gives appropriate consideration to the proposal's effect on the quality of outcomes, provision and leadership within the school.

They refer validly to the outcomes of the school's most recent Estyn inspection report, its category and support banding.

They claim reasonably that this proposal will ensure that pupils will be given an opportunity to become bilingual learners who are confident in both Welsh and English.

The proposer identifies that including nursery provision in the new school building will provide seamless transition from the early years to the foundation phase and key stage 2.

The proposer has conducted an equality impact assessment and has identified reasonably that the proposal should not have a detrimental effect on any specific groups. They state clearly that the proposal will ensure that better facilities in the new building will improve teaching and learning experiences for all learners, including those with additional learning needs.

The proposer has given appropriate attention to the possible disruption to current pupils, and has identified validly that the catchment area will not change and that there will be no change to the current arrangements in terms of pupils transferring to secondary education.



## 3.1 Local Authority Response to Estyn's Observations

As can be seen from Estyn's observations they are of the opinion that the proposal is at least likely to maintain the current standard of education. Their observations include supporting statements as noted below.

### **Statements of support for this proposal by Estyn**

The council has given appropriate consideration to three options and has chosen the above proposal.

Estyn is of the opinion that this proposal is at least likely to maintain the current standard of education.

The proposer provides a clear rationale for the logic behind the proposal. It identifies clearly that this proposal has been designed in response to Carmarthenshire County Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and the Welsh-medium Education Strategy. They state fairly that it is a transitional school, which is a school that is working towards becoming a Welsh-medium school for 4-11 year-old children.

They have given a good outline of the reasons for changing the nature of the school's provision and list the advantages.

The proposer has given suitable consideration to the proposal's effect on Welsh-medium provision within the authority. They claim fairly that the proposal will have a positive effect on the number of places available within Welsh-medium education in Carmarthenshire.

The proposer gives appropriate consideration to the proposal's effect on the quality of outcomes, provision and leadership within the school.

The proposer identifies that including nursery provision in the new school building will provide seamless transition from the early years to the foundation phase and key stage 2.

## 4. Consultation with the Pupils

**School:** Ysgol Rhys Prichard

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019

**Consultation undertaken by:** Mrs Catrin Griffiths – Welsh Language  
Development Manager

**Interviewed:** Cross section of pupils from year 2 to year 6

Ysgol Rhys Prichard pupils did not see this proposal as anything new to them or to their school. They felt that the school is already a Welsh medium school and that there will be no change in the future. When questioned as to the importance of their type of education they were all in agreement that they are and are becoming totally bilingual. They discussed how fortunate they felt to have two languages and are looking forward to learning more languages during their secondary education stage. They spoke about the fact that they feel more able to learn a third and maybe fourth language as they already have two.

They were enjoying the Siarter Iaith and are trying to make sure that all pupils speak Welsh within the school but also in the community.

They felt that homework is not an issue as they can use English to explain the work to the parents that cannot speak Welsh.

All pupils were in agreement that the proposal should go through.