
CONSULTATION REPORT

Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bro Myrddin

Appendix A

List of Respondents to the Consultation Document

Bro Myrddin Observation Received List

Number	Name	Position/Category of Respondent
1.1	Eleri MacRae	Staff Member
1.2	Tim Hayes	Staff Member
1.3	Cllr. Jeff Thomas	Councillor
1.4	Beti-Wyn James	Parent/Governor
1.5	M E Madoc-Jones	Parent
1.6	Cllr Peter H. Griffiths	Governor
1.7	Meinir McLellan	Governor
1.8	Gary Evans	Future Parent
1.9	Helen Evans	Future Parent
1.10	Robert Alun Charles	Governor
1.11	L. Davies	Staff Member
1.12	Adrian Williams	Staff Member
1.13	Steffan Davies	Staff Member
1.14	Morwen Hughes	Staff Member
1.15	Hywel Gwyn Jones	Staff Member/Parent
1.16	James Henshaw	Staff Member
1.17	M. Davies	Staff Member
1.18	A E Roberts	Parents
1.19	Luned Davies	Staff Member
1.20	Bethan Jenkins	Staff Member
1.21	Judith Roberts	Staff Member
1.22	Meleri Llwyd-O'Leary	Parent
1.23	Lynwen Roberts	Parent

1.24	Iona Llyr	Parent
1.25	Cefin & Mari Campbell	Parents
1.26	Catrin Griffiths	Youth Worker
1.27	C S Jones	Bursor
1.28	Glesni Davies	Receptionist
1.29	Glenys Thomas	Governor
1.30	Iola Wyn	Parents
1.31	Elaine Edwards	Deputy Head, Y Dderwen
1.32	Dylan Evans	Headteacher, Y Dderwen
1.33	B. Morgan	Ysgol Y Dderwen
1.34	Sian Evans	
1.35	I R Evans	Curriculum Assistant
1.36	Mererid Hopwood	Past Parent
1.37	Eleri Beynon	Parent
1.38	John Beynon	Parent
1.39	Ffion Page	Staff Member
1.40	Meinir Jones	Headteacher, Llanddarog
1.41	W. Huw Davies	
1.42	Nia Lewis	Lesson Supervisor
1.43	Angharad Lewis	Doctor
1.44	Gwenan Morgans-Free	Staff Member
1.45	Gwennan Jones	Future Parent
1.46	A. Baggott	
1.47	Ann Loughran	Governor
1.48	Catrin Pritchard	Staff Member

1.49	Zelda Williams	Staff Member
1.50	Owen Rhys	
1.51	Cllr. Gareth Jones	Governor
1.52	Llio Dyfri Jones	Parent
1.53	Gwlym Dyfri Jones	Parent
1.54	Rhiannon Mathias	Abernant Community Council
1.55	Marlene Jones	Parent
1.56	Geraint Roberts	Past Parent
1.57	Rhiannon Roberts	Past Parent
1.58	Esyllt Davies	Past Pupil
1.59	Lynda Davies	Past Parent
1.60	D. Elfed Davies	Past Parent
1.61	Gethin Page	Past Pupil
1.62	Alwen Haf Owen	Staff Member
2.1	Joanna D. E. Rees	
3	Helen Proctor	Parent
4	Bethan Williams	Parent
5	Rhian Carruthers	Staff Member
5.1	Lonwen Bowen	Staff Member
5.2	Sian Thomas	Staff Member
5.3	Dr. Llinos Jones	Staff Member
5.4	Meinir Richards	Staff Member
5.5	Gethin Evans	Staff Member
5.6	Hannah McAvoy	Staff Member
5.7	L Griffiths	Parent

5.8	Tracy Jenkins	Staff Member
5.9	John Norgrove	Staff Member
6.1	Rhian Williams	Staff Member
7.1	Betsan & Timothy Bowen	Parents
7.2	Abi Thomas	Parent
7.3	Anonymous	
8.1	John Greville	Past Parent

Appendix B

**Summary of observations received following publication of the Consultation Document
and Local Authority related responses**

CATEGORY	OBSERVATION	RESPONSE
No. 1	Proposed Language Category Change of new School 1.1 Fully Supportive of changing to Language Category WM 1.2 I welcome the Authority's decision to change the language category of Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bro Myrddin. As a teacher in the Science Department for over 20 years there's been a natural transition for pupils to learn Science through the medium of Welsh. As I've taught a number of generations in Science through the medium of Welsh, a number of the pupils have moved on to learn and work in the field Science either in Wales or Great Britain. 1.3 I have read the consultation papers and fully support the principle of the School's wish to become the first Welsh Secondary School in Carmarthenshire. The proposal is long overdue and will, at last, follow the example set in East Wales. The reduction in the number of people speaking Welsh in Carmarthenshire makes the proposal a very timely one. 1.4 I fully support the proposal to change the language category of Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bro Myrddin to become a fully Welsh language school. 1.5 As a family we fully support the proposal to change the language category of the School. 1.6 I fully support the proposal to change the language category of the school. This should have happened	Proposed Language Category Change of new School The Local Authority (LA) welcomes the large number of positive responses to the proposed change in the school's language category which is very encouraging. Many of the comments focus on the natural change that has already occurred gradually over the years. The LA welcomes the comments that emphasize that proceeding to the first Welsh Language Category 1 secondary school in Carmarthenshire is an important and historical step. The proposals have been prepared in response to Carmarthenshire County Council Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Strategy (WMES). The Authority has also conducted a Welsh language impact assessment whilst drafting these proposals. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above.

	years ago. I fully support the timeline to launch these changes. 1.7 I think changing the language category of the school is a natural step as there are only a few classes that are currently being taught through the medium of English. 1.8 I support this change. As I understand that the majority of parents who send their children to Ysgol Bro Myrddin want their child to learn Maths and Science through the medium of Welsh. Therefore, it is a natural step to officially change the language category of the school. 1.9 This is an exciting time for Ysgol Bro Myrddin. As a future parent I fully support this change. Changing the language category is a very natural step forward for the school. It is a very successful school with a completely Welsh ethos. I hope that Ysgol Bro Myrddin will become the first Welsh secondary school in Carmarthenshire. 1.10 I fully support the proposal of changing the language category of Ysgol Bro Myrddin from a 2A school to a WM school. 1.11 I fully support the proposal to change the language category of Ysgol Bro Myrddin. As a parent and a teacher at the school it's a natural step for the school to become all Welsh. 1.12 I agree to these changes. 1.13 Brilliant opportunity for the school to develop into	Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above.
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	a WM school. I fully support this change.	
	1.14 Fully support this change.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.15 As a parent to two pupils at the school I'd like to confirm that I support this proposal to change the language category of the school.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.16 Fully support the change,	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.17 This will be excellent news. Fully support the change.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.18 Fully support the proposal of changing the language category of Bro Myrddin. It will encourage the Welsh ethos outside of the classroom and will give the language a higher status within the school. I'm now eager for my children to attend the school.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.19 I fully support the proposal to change the language category of Bro Myrddin.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.20 We as a family are very happy with the proposal to change the language category of the school.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.21 This is the perfect opportunity to make these changes.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.22 I fully support these changes.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.23 This is a natural step forward for the school. I strongly support these changes.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.24 Increasing the provision of Welsh in the school is a completely natural step forward. Bro Myrddin is a	Observation noted. Please see response above.

	successful school who want to develop and move along the language continuum. In my opinion there are no disadvantages with this proposal. 1.25 We fully support the proposal to change the language category of the school. This will be a natural step for the school that have now only a few pupils choosing to study Maths and Science through the medium of English. This change will prove that you don't have to study Maths and Science through the medium of English for you to succeed academically. I would like to congratulate the governors of the school to making this decision to change the language category of the school and for the County Council for their support. 1.26 I fully support the proposal to change the language category. 1.27 Fully support. 1.28 Fully support. 1.29 I fully support that the school should change their language category. It will be a natural step and it will also help save money for the school. 1.30 We fully support this proposal. We believe that a Welsh language school is a more sensible option as it saves time for administration and resources for the school. The need for this change has been at the school for many years. It might be a small step for the school but a very important step. 1.31 I support the proposal to change the language	Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above.
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	category of the school as I feel it's a natural step for the school.	
	1.32 Changing the language category of the school is a natural step. This will confirm the status of the school and I fully support the change.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.33 This will develop the pupil's language skills even further and I fully support the change.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.34 As a past parent, I fully support the change.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.35 Fully support	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.36 It's a pleasure to see the staff of the school support this change. This is the kind of leadership that's needed to support and encourage our pupils to continue with the highest of education. This policy sees the true potential of both languages. I fully support this proposal.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.37 The evidence that was submitted during the consultation period shows the need to change the language category of the school.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.38 I support the school's application to change its language category.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.39 I fully support the language change of the school where all subjects will be taught through the medium of Welsh. This will encourage the pupils to use more Welsh outside the classroom. Without a doubt this is the correct step forward to the school.	Observation noted. Please see response above.
	1.40 I would like to support this process of changing	Observation noted. Please see response above.

	the language category of the school. As a former pupil, I feel this change is long overdue as there are plenty of sectors in the town of Carmarthen to provide English provision to these pupils if needed. 1.41 The image of bilingual education has increased over the years and in my opinion now is the right time for this language change to happen at the school. 1.42 This is the change to put Carmarthenshire and Bro Myrddin on the map. If these changes happen, pupils will attend Bro Myrddin for the right reasons. 1.43 I fully support the change. 1.44 I fully support these changes. It will encourage the Welsh ethos outside the classroom and pupils will attend the school for the right reasons. 1.45 I believe this proposal is a step forward for the school. It will strengthen the use of the language during their day-to-day work. 1.46 I believe this is a step forward for the school and I fully support the change. 1.47 I fully support the change. I believe it is very important that all subjects be taught through the medium of Welsh only in the school. This gives the pupils the best opportunity possible for developing their bilingual skills in every field. As an experienced Mathematics and Physics teacher (not in Bro Myrddin) I believe it is advantageous for pupils to be able to discuss the Sciences through	Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above.
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	the medium of Welsh as this develops their ability to discuss scientific and mathematical concepts. 1.48 As I come from a non-Welsh community in the valleys, I believe it is an honour to receive your education through the medium of Welsh. I studied the Sciences through the medium of Welsh and this did not stop me studying a Scientific course outside of Wales. 1.49 I fully support these changes because as the data shows, parental choice shows that they prefer their children to be taught through the medium of Welsh in Maths and Science and therefore it is a natural step. Studying all the subjects in Welsh will strengthen the learners bilingualism and the Welsh ethos around the school. More emphasis is now given to developing Welsh speakers in every aspect of the workforce. 1.50 I believe that all subjects apart from English and Foreign Languages should be taught through the medium of Welsh. 1.51 I would like to confirm my support for this change. 1.52 I believe that this change will be a natural step forward for the school. 1.53 I strongly support the proposal to change the language category of the school. This a natural step forward for the school. 1.54 After giving the Consultation Document regarding the change in language category careful	Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above.
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	consideration at a meeting of our Council, it was decided that Abernant Community Council support a Welsh Medium School at Bro Myrddin. 1.55 This change has been long time coming for the school. The pupils will be able to cope fine with these changes – the problem will be with the parents. 1.56 I support the proposal to change the language category of the school. 1.57 I support the proposal to change the language category of the school. 1.58 As a former pupil of the school I fully support the proposal to change the language category. Too many parents send their non-Welsh speaking children to the school because it had a ‘new building’. I believe that children should be sent to the school based on whether they speak Welsh or not outside of the classroom without difficulty; reading and writing standards in Welsh and if the child is naturally Welsh. I believe it’s better to have a small secondary school rather than a school with over 1000 pupils in it where only ¼ of those pupils speak Welsh naturally and outside of the classroom. It’s the primary school’s responsibility to support this change and for them to decide which pupils should be sent to Bro Myrddin. 1.59 I hope this change does happen and that Bro Myrddin becomes a category Welsh school. 1.60 I confirm I fully support the proposal to change	Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above.
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No. 2	the language category of the school. 1.61 I fully support the proposal to change the language category of the school. 1.62 This is a natural step for the school and will encourage the Welsh ethos outside the classroom. The pupil should have a choice 2.1 I have been teaching in bilingual since 2005 which has been very successful. The pupils can cope with changing from one language to the next orally and in writing but the majority find it difficult. Personally I feel the option should be given to teach bilingually for GCSE and AS/A Levels. Understanding the language can determine which grade you will get. The pupils should have a choice of language.	Observation noted. Please see response above. Observation noted. Please see response above. The pupil should have a choice The consistently high examination results in Science through the medium of Welsh would not appear to support this view.
No. 3	Considering sending our child to another school if these changes happen 3.1 We have always planned for our son to attend Bro Myrddin. He is currently in Year 6 at Nantgaredig School. However, we are seriously considering other schools as we do not want him to study the sciences through the medium of Welsh. If this does not go ahead then he will definitely attend Bro Myrddin, otherwise it is highly unlikely that we will send him there. We have spoken to a number of people about this and the majority do not believe that this would be a good thing. They have included teachers and friends/colleagues in the medical/scientific profession. I genuinely hope that this does not go ahead because as mentioned earlier, we have always wanted him to attend Bro Myrddin.	Considering sending our child to another school if these changes happen Should the proposal be implemented, parents will have a choice of either a Welsh Medium school or Predominantly English medium secondary school with significant use of Welsh (EW) school in the Carmarthen area.

No. 4	Unfairness of the Process 4.1 I have to draw your attention to the unfairness of the statistical numbers the school shows. The numbers show that fewer children each year choose to do Science in English and from this concludes that fewer parents want their children to study Science in English, but the truth is that fewer parents have the option (e.g. parents of Ysgol Y Dderwen do not have a choice at all). The same for maths, there is no offer at all to study in English. I would like to know how have the school concluded that the school have 'moved naturally along the language continuum'. The numbers do not reflect the demands of the parents at all. English is the language of the scientific word, wherever in the world you live. Why are the school trying to make things more difficult to the pupils by wanting to teach science in Welsh. Shouldn't we be encouraging the pupils to strive for universities of the highest quality, that might be in England, instead of forcing them to study science in Welsh which provides another obstacle in their path. Furthermore the document doesn't show the number of children who leave each year to complete their GCSE's in English. Has thought been given to how many pupils will go to English schools in the county if these changes occur?	Unfairness of the Process The consultation document states clearly that in 2000 35% of the KS3 pupils studied Mathematics in Welsh compared to 65% in English. In 2015 100% are now studying the subject in Welsh. In KS4 28.2% studied Mathematics in Welsh compared to 71.8% in English. In 2015 96.2% study the subject in Welsh. In science in 2000 28.1% of the KS3 pupils studied Science in Welsh compared to 71.9% in English. In 2015 71% study the subject in Welsh. In KS4 20.5% studied Science in Welsh compared to 79.5% in English. In 2015 63.6% study the subject in Welsh. Since 2000 the school language policy states clearly that 'any child who has studied Maths and Science through the medium of Welsh in the primary school will also study through the medium of Welsh in the secondary.' It also states they are 'not permitted to change the medium of the teaching language within a key stage' but that it is possible to change at the end of any key stage. The policy has always been the same, however, the percentage of children deciding to study Science and Maths through the medium of English has decreased. The numbers, therefore, reflect the demands of the parents. The LA is satisfied that the examination results evidence that teaching Science through the medium of Welsh has improved standards. The school prepares students to go to universities all
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No. 5	Advantages for Change 5.1 As the Head of the Mathematics department, the advantages I see to study the subject entirely in the Welsh Language are as follows: The pupils are able to use Welsh terms in the other subjects that have always been taught through the medium of Welsh. This will then reinforce the understanding across the curriculum. As we provide all the terms bilingually this enhances pupils' language skills. Several mathematical terms makes it easier to learn and makes more sense in the Welsh language. As everyone will be studying in the same language, it will be easier to set the pupils which will make the groups fairer to the pupils and will be possible to create smaller groups when required. When analyzing the data over a number of years, it seems that the language does not interfere with the understanding of the subject and if anything, the Welsh groups do better. A significant number of pupils choose to study the subject in A Levels and the majority now decide to do this through the medium of Welsh. A large number have also gone	over the world and it is not the LAs intention to force any language on a child. Should the proposal be implemented, parents will have a choice of either a Welsh Medium school or Predominantly English medium secondary school with significant use of Welsh school in the Carmarthen area. In the last two years 0.7% of KS3 and KS4 pupils have transferred from the school during the academic year. There is no evidence available that suggests that these pupils have left to complete their GCSE's through the medium of English. Advantages for Change Observation noted. The advantages for change are provided in the consultation document.
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	on to study mathematics at university, some have remained in Wales but others have gone further afield. The feedback we've received is that studying mathematics in Welsh in school has been an advantage and not a disadvantage to them. Studying all subjects of the curriculum through the medium of Welsh will reinforce the Welsh ethos of the school and also the local community. 5.2 I have been working in Bro Myrddin for over 25 years in the Science department and the increase in pupils being taught Science through the medium of Welsh has increased considerably and as a former parent and as a staff member the school sees this as a chance not to be missed. Carmarthenshire County Council will be at the forefront and Bro Myrddin will become the first all Welsh school in the county and in West Wales. This will also promote the Welsh ethos of the school outside of the classroom as well as in the local area. It will also reduce the workload of the teachers as they would not have to prepare all the resources bilingually. 5.3 As a past pupil and not a staff member at the school it will be nice to put Bro Myrddin at the forefront of becoming the first all Welsh school in West Wales. This proposal will promote the Welsh ethos outside of the classroom and to provide an opportunity for the nursery school pupils to demonstrate their skills in the Welsh language – skills that are essential in their working life as being able to communicate in Welsh open doors to individuals. 5.4 This is an exciting time in the history of Ysgol Bro	Observation noted. As indicated in the consultation document, all the present Science teachers in Bro Myrddin are confident that moving to teaching Science through the medium of Welsh only has many advantages. Observation noted. As stated in the conclusion of the consultation document 'this is an opportunity, therefore, to lead the way in Carmarthenshire and West Wales and for Bro Myrddin to create history by establishing the first Welsh school in Carmarthenshire.'
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	Myrddin. We are on the threshold of becoming the first Welsh School in the County which will put Carmarthenshire on the map. Bro Myrddin have worked hard to move along the Welsh continuum and the fact that so little pupils decide to learn through the medium of English shows that parents are behind this change. Initial meetings have been held with these discussions already taken place. Since then a small amount of parents have contacted the school with their concerns and have asked for further explanation but everyone has responded very positively and politely. It is pleasing to note that all the staff are very supportive of this scheme. They are of the opinion that these changes will be a big step forward to the school and will encourage the Welsh ethos outside the classroom and will reduce their workload. In an era of budget cuts, changing the language category will benefit the school financially in the long term.	Observation noted. The advantages of the proposal are provided clearly in the consultation document.
	5.5 These changes will encourage the Welsh ethos outside of the classroom. Teaching only through the medium of Welsh will reduce the workload for the teachers who currently have to produce bilingual resources. It will put Carmarthenshire on the map.	Observation noted.
	5.6 These changes will reduce the workload of the teachers who currently have to produce bilingual resources. The changes will encourage the Welsh ethos outside the classroom. It will put Carmarthenshire on the map.	Observation noted.
	5.7 Learning through the medium of Welsh will reduce the workload for the teachers and it will also encourage the Welsh ethos outside the classroom.	Observation noted.

	whatever reason, may wish to study maths and science through the medium of English will no longer have the choice. We object strongly to the removal of this choice. 7.2 After attending the consultation evening for parents, I was expecting there to be an opportunity for some discussion about this with parents. There was not. Bro Myrddin was basically telling parents what they were going to do. They did not ask for our opinions on whether we were happy for this to happen. Also the whole consultation evening was intimidating for parents. Bro Myrddin and the LA need to look at how they engage with parents. I have deep concerns about Welsh medium education on non fluent Welsh speaking parents. All pupils should be treated the same. I have concerns that children of governors, staff members and first language welsh speaking children are given more opportunities than other children. The school needs to recognise that they should always do what is best for the child and this may not always be what's best for the school. The statistics shown in the consultation document is misleading. They show that demand for maths and science through the medium of English has dropped but could they be hiding the fact that some parents who want their children to do these subjects in English have had their requests refused and told that there was not the capacity for the school to do this. 7.3 I would like to take this opportunity to express my disappointment at the intention of changing the language category of the school. Under the present system this school has been very successful academically as witnessed by excellent exam	The informal consultation provided parents / guardians with an opportunity to raise any queries. Parents were invited to speak to a variety of delegates – Carmarthenshire county council officers, the Head teacher, the senior management team and teaching staff. In Bro Myrddin all children are treated fairly and every child has the same opportunity. Since 2000 the school's language policy states clearly that 'any child who has studied Maths and Science through the medium of Welsh in the primary school will also study through the medium of Welsh in the secondary.' It also states they are 'not permitted to change the medium of the teaching language within a key stage' but that it is possible to change at the end of any key stage. The policy has always been the same, however, the percentage of children deciding to study Science and Maths through the medium of English has decreased. The numbers, therefore, reflect the demands of the parents. The current capacity (Measuring Capacity of Schools in Wales (MCSW)) of the school is 923 pupils. There are currently 870 pupils on roll. The school therefore is under capacity and not oversubscribed.
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No. 8	results. It has been equally successful in producing citizens who are confident in speaking both languages. “If it ain’t broke don’t fix it”, is generally not a bad axiom. Is the “<i>choice preferred by the Authority</i>” a ploy in order to decrease the number of pupils leaving primary schools who wish to study at Bro Myrddin? I believe that the school is at present oversubscribed and this could be a way of controlling numbers. Are you able to confirm that all parents were allowed a choice for their children to study Maths and Science in English. It is rumoured that pupils who studied at Welsh medium primary schools are not allowed, or at best dissuaded to select a preference. If this is true, it would of course not be surprising “that the demand from parents for the provision of subjects in English has reduced”. Is this change wise? 8.1 Would this change be a wise move for such a successful school. I believe that my children have had the best education by learning through both languages but in a very welsh atmosphere that had the perfect balance. I went to a school where English was the main language with only Welsh being taught through the medium of Welsh. This wasn’t the best situation. I believe that the opposite would also be a disaster for children who come from Welsh language areas and families.	Since 2000 the school’s language policy states clearly that ‘any child who has studied Maths and Science through the medium of Welsh in the primary school will also study through the medium of Welsh in the secondary.’ It also states they are ‘not permitted to change the medium of the teaching language within a key stage’ but that it is possible to change at the end of any key stage. The policy has always been the same, however, the percentage of children deciding to study Science and Maths through the medium of English has decreased. The numbers, therefore, reflect the demands of the parents. Is this change wise? Bro Myrddin school is a successful school and the excellent results through the medium of Welsh underline the success. The consultation document notes clearly why changing the language category of the school is advantageous.
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Appendix C

ESTYN RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Estyn's response to the proposal to change the language category at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bro Myrddin from category 2A to category WM (Welsh medium) from September 2016.

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales have prepared this report.

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 that 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 and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortium, which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

Introduction

The proposal is from Carmarthenshire County Council. The proposal is to change the language category at Ysgol Gyfun Bro Myrddin from category 2A to category WM (Welsh Medium) from the autumn term 2016.

The definition of category 2A is 'At least 80% of subjects (except English and Welsh) are taught through the medium of Welsh only to all pupils. One or two subjects are taught to some pupils in English or in both languages.'

The definition of category WM is 'All subjects except English are taught through the medium of Welsh to all pupils. Some schools can introduce English terminology in one or two subjects.'

Summary/Conclusion

The proposal is in line with Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan to increase the provision of Welsh-medium education in the local authority.

It is Estyn's view that the proposal is likely to at least maintain current educational standards.

Description and Advantages

The proposer has provided a clear rationale for the logic behind the proposal. It has given a good outline of the reasons for changing the school's language category from category 2a to category WM (Welsh Medium) and has considered the school's developments in this direction over the years. It identifies reasonably that the authority has a duty to consider and operate in line with the recommendations of Carmarthenshire County Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014-17, namely to ensure an increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education.

The proposer has given appropriate consideration to other options such as keeping the school in its current form but recognises that this option is not commensurate with the County Council's vision.

The proposer outlines clearly the difference between the categories and the implications for pupils' education. The proposer also indicates reasonably that the school is already more like a category WM school according to the local authority's definition than the category 2a description, which is its current category.

It indicates effectively that parents and pupils support such a change by drawing attention to the fact that an increasing number of pupils choose to study subjects including mathematics and science through the medium of Welsh.

It also lists the advantages clearly. These appear reasonable and include financial savings, more effective use of teachers' time when preparing resources as well as preparing pupils better for an increasingly bilingual world of work, a local labour market that places a great emphasis on Welsh language skills and a bilingual community.

The proposer considers the disadvantages in a balanced way and states that the school's current pupils will not be affected by the changes. The medium of teaching in Welsh will move year by year up the school.

It states reasonably that pupils' English skills will not suffer because of the proposed model of bilingual learning which has proved successful over a number of years. It supports its argument for change robustly by explaining the cognitive benefits of developing translanguaging skills in order to present new information effectively.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposer gives thorough consideration to the effect of the proposal on the quality of outcomes, provision and leadership at the school.

The proposer highlights clearly that the mathematics department, that already follows these changes, achieves higher than the results for the local authority, the family and the results for the whole of Wales. However, the proposer does not consider sufficiently the school's results compared with similar schools in terms of free school meals.

The proposer has considered thoroughly the implications of the proposed change for pupils and provides a model of bilingual learning that is being implemented effectively by two departments already. The proposer outlines appropriately that it will be possible to place pupils of the same ability in groups. It asserts that the groups will be more effective educationally because they will reflect pupils' ability across the cohort rather than across the medium of learning only. The proposer has conducted an impact assessment of the change in equality and states that the proposal should not have a detrimental effect on any specific groups. It asserts reasonably that there will be adequate Welsh medium provision for pupils with special needs.

Appendix D

Consultation with the Pupils

Consultation undertaken on the 9th November 2015

By

Mrs Mari Owen

Associate Challenge Adviser

Carmarthenshire County Council

Learner's Voice, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bro Myrddin

A meeting was arranged with a range of learners from Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bro Myrddin on November 9th 2015. Seven pupils from years 7-12 were present; Elain Owen (Yr 7), Catrin Owen (Yr 8), Mabon Evans (Yr 9), Mabli Davies (Yr 10), Catrin Lewis (Yr 10), Alice Morris (Yr 10), Carwyn Bebb (Yr 12) and Greta Llŷr (Yr 12).

We discussed the School's intention to naturally move forward to change the School's language category from September 2016. It was noted that it was the County Council and the School's wish to change to Welsh Medium Category. It was explained that the School's description of a Welsh Medium Category is 'All subjects apart from English are taught through the medium of Welsh to all pupils, although some schools may introduce English terminology in one or two subjects' (Quotation from the Consultation Document).

The learners were aware that apart from the English lessons, Mathematics and Science lessons were the only ones offered through the medium of English at present and the number of pupils who choose to do so by joining the School are decreasing annually.

One learner noted that he had followed his Mathematics and Science course through the medium of English because he received his primary education through the medium of English in Llandovery School before joining Bro Myrddin. He was not against the idea of Welsh medium lessons from September 2016, because the new learners and their parents would be aware of the situation before hand when planning and selecting their Secondary education, therefore there would not be a change for the learners who are already pupils in the school. Many noted that they had chosen Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bro Myrddin in order to have their education through the medium of Welsh.

The learners absolutely agreed that changing the medium to Welsh Medium is the way forward for this school. Many advantages were noted: it would facilitate the process of keeping to the rule that Welsh is the School's language; it could save money for the school with respect to staffing and resources; it would mean that the learners' standard of Welsh would improve and their vocabulary would extend; it would ensure the continuity in the Welsh education of all learners and encourage their use of Welsh in the future and throughout their lives. They referred to some situations in the past where learners who were confident in Welsh have chosen the Science and / or Mathematics courses in English because their friends did so. This would not happen in the wake of changing the School's category to Welsh Medium.

Disadvantages to the changing of the category were discussed. The main concern was studying in Universities where the Mathematics and Science training is through the medium of English after following a Welsh Medium A Level course. Although, it was acknowledged that if they understand the concepts and principles relating to the subject, having received the subject specific vocabulary in Welsh and English in the school and managed to achieve an A Level, it was considered that Bro Myrddin learners could cope with the situation.

It was noted, compared to the English medium, Welsh was a disadvantage because of the lack of textbooks. They pointed out that parents felt they could not help their children with their homework, but added that it was the learners' homework anyway, and the majority of parents were not able to help with the

work in the other subjects either, especially at the top of the School. In some schools teachers may not be confident to teach the subjects through the medium of Welsh, but it was noted that it was not applicable at Bro Myrddin.

When considering how the School could support and assist learners and their families as they prepare to join a Welsh Medium School, it was noted that giving training / guidance to teachers at primary schools to teach subjects through the medium of Welsh, particularly in Junior classes in the Primary schools prepare learners well. They listed some schools where the good practice of teaching Science and Mathematics in Welsh is fully underway. Maintaining the order of introducing the technical terms / subject in English, together with some Welsh e.g. glossaries, was very helpful. Another suggestion to support learners early in the academic year was to organize a Book Fair to present and sell appropriate Welsh Medium textbooks. It was identified that there was a need to encourage the Welsh Printing Press and Government to develop and publish more Welsh Medium books to match the wide range of English language resources available to assist the Welsh-medium learners in all subjects.

It was confirmed that the letters to parents will remain bilingual, and there would be no change to the procedures of the School beyond teaching 'all subjects except English through the medium of Welsh for all learners'.

At the end of the meeting all present indicated they were in favour of the change to Welsh Medium category from September 2016 onwards.