

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Proposal to establish a specialist provision supporting primary age pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) at Coedffranc Primary and at Crynallt Primary schools

Context

1. This Welsh language impact assessment¹ has been carried out in line with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.
2. Implementing the proposal will result in the establishment of a provision recognised by the Council as reserved for pupils with ALN/SEN and although it is based in two mainstream schools the pupils who are admitted are in addition to the admission numbers of the schools. Admission to the specialist provisions will be via a special admission panel of the Council and all placement decisions will be predicated on the expectation of pupils securing a successful return to their base school or another appropriate establishment.

The reasons for the proposal

3. The establishment of specialist provision has been identified as an essential within a new delivery model of a continuum of support for pupils with Social and Emotional Behavioural Difficulties, (SEBD).
4. The Council has identified, as a priority, the need to establish a consistent approach in all schools to improve provision for aspects of wellbeing and behaviour.
5. The new wellbeing and behaviour continuum will ensure that schools and the Council work in partnership to focus on prevention and early intervention in order to meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people and to ensure the best possible outcomes.
6. In March 2017, the Council's Cabinet approved scoping

¹ First iteration: 200717; Second iteration 241017

discussions with head teachers and chairs of governors over the establishment of a specialist provision for primary age pupils who externalise their needs and who are finding difficulty in maintaining their mainstream school placements.

7. Following a positive response to the discussions and the identification of host schools, a proposal is being presented to the Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Board for Members' consideration and approval.
8. The specialist provisions will provide a period of assessment for pupils at the primary phase of education to identify barriers to learning, create bespoke packages of support and plan for successful reintegration back into mainstream school. Pupils will benefit from being taught by specialist staff, highly experienced in working with pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, whilst mainstream schools will also gain further capacity to plan and provide for pupils presenting with these needs.
9. The provision will alleviate the current pressure to address demand for places for pupils externalising their needs, avoiding potential costly out of county placements and allowing opportunities for young people to access learning within their local community.
10. Agreed protocols will ensure that pupils remain on roll and retain contact with their base school. However, it is likely to be the case that a small number of children may require transition to another specialist provision within the LA. The assessment period will ensure appropriate placement where needs can be best met.
11. The proposal seeks to complement the type of specialist provision and support already available at Ysgol Hendrefelin's assessment facility for secondary age pupils. It will also enhance the range specialist provision available to primary age pupils. Provision is currently available only at Awel y Môr Primary School and Ysgol Hendrefelin.

Welsh language impacts associated with the proposal

12. The Council recognises that language and culture are essential parts of an individual's identity and is committed to

promoting and celebrating the Welsh language and culture in a pro-active and inclusive way. The Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) details how it intends to support and further develop Welsh language education in schools.

13. The current profile of the Welsh language within Neath Port Talbot presents a sound foundation for future growth and development. Nearly 90% of the County Borough's population was born in Wales, 15.3% of whom can speak Welsh. This compares with 19% of the total population of Wales and is the 9th highest percentage among local authorities in Wales. The percentage of Welsh speakers remains high (50%+) in communities of Lower Brynaman, Gwaun Cae Gurwen and Cymllynfell.
14. Coedffranc Primary and Crynallt Primary schools are categorised as an English-medium schools where Welsh is taught as a second language in accordance with the National Curriculum. Provision at each of the specialist units will reflect provision at each school. The Council is satisfied that the Welsh language education at each of the specialist provisions will be sufficient to meet the language requirements of the pupils admitted. Both provisions will accommodate those pupils who speak Welsh as their first language or whose base school is a Welsh-medium school as each will have access to staff who can support pupils through the medium of Welsh.

Welsh language provision at Coedffranc Primary and at Crynallt Primary schools

15. Coedffranc Primary and Crynallt Primary schools are categorised as an English-medium schools where Welsh is taught as a second language in accordance with the National Curriculum.
16. In relation to the schools, Estyn reports that:
 - a. Throughout the school, standards in Welsh second language at Crynallt Primary school are impressive and that almost all pupils speak and read with confidence and enjoyment, using good pronunciation. By the end of key stage 2, they respond well to complex instructions in Welsh and the more able can sustain a conversation using

vocabulary beyond simple patterns. Furthermore, Estyn reports that Welsh language provision is a strength of the school. Teachers are successful in engaging pupils to use the language confidently and effectively in all their lessons.

Almost all pupils show motivation, enthusiasm and enjoyment in their Welsh language learning. The school promotes the culture of Wales particularly well, for example in the detailed work undertaken to compare Wales with Bangladesh.

Although not Welsh first language speakers, almost all staff promote the Welsh language particularly well so that there is an easy transition between the use of Welsh and English in day-to-day activities with the pupils. This supports good standards in pupils' use of Welsh throughout the school.

- b. At Coedffranc Primary school, nearly all Foundation Phase pupils make good progress in developing their Welsh language skills. They speak, read and write with developing accuracy, appropriate to their age and ability.

By the end of key stage 2, standards in Welsh are sound. Many older pupils write simple sentences correctly and respond well orally to questions and instructions, using familiar phrases and patterns. Many older pupils read in Welsh at an appropriate level. However, most pupils do not write sufficiently at length in Welsh, or use their Welsh language skills extensively outside of Welsh lessons.

Provision for developing Welsh language skills throughout the school helps pupils to make steady progress. However, opportunities to write in Welsh in key stage 2 are limited.

The school promotes the Welsh culture and heritage successfully with an annual eisteddfod and a suitable range of educational visits to support pupils' understanding of local history and heritage.

Staff records show that Crynallt Primary school has 3 staff who have declared themselves as fairly fluent in Welsh and 1 who is fluent, whilst at Coedffranc Primary school 2

members of staff are fairly fluent and 2 have declared themselves as fluent.

Estyn's consultation response

17. Specifically on the proposal Estyn comments that proposal will not negatively affect the provision for Welsh for pupils who will access the specialist provision. The proposal takes suitable account of the WESP and confirms that the council is satisfied that provision for those pupils who speak Welsh as a first language will be sufficient. Proposals for the provision at both schools will be at least comparable with existing provision.

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18. In light of the findings above and the fact that both school have staff who are fluent and fairly fluent in Welsh, the Council is satisfied that both schools are well placed to support provision for Welsh language and Welsh culture and at the respective specialist units which will be at least comparable with existing provision at the schools and that implementing the proposal should result in a positive impact on Welsh language development.