

Proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim

Objection Report



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A statutory consultation was undertaken regarding the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim from 31st December 2026 and transfer to pupils to Ysgol Griffith Jones, St. Clears or Ysgol Hafodwenog, Trelech. Following consideration of the consultation report on 1 June 2026, the Council's Cabinet members agreed to progress the proposal and approve the publication of a Statutory Notice.

Overall, the response rate during the objection period was reasonably high, and the majority of responses objected to the proposal, with only a few supportive comments received. The objectors raised concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposal on the pupils, families and wider community. The most frequently cited concerns related to the role of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim as a central part of village life and the importance of the school in maintaining community cohesion, supporting local identity and contributing to the long-term sustainability of the rural community. Many respondents highlighted the educational and pastoral benefits associated with the school's small size, including personalised support, strong relationships between staff and pupils, and the nurturing environment that many children currently experience. Significant concerns were also expressed regarding the potential impact on the Welsh language and Welsh culture, pupil wellbeing, the disruption of established friendship groups and community networks, increased travel requirements, and the perceived effect that closure could have on the future vitality of the village.

A substantial number of objections also challenged the financial and strategic case for closure. Respondents questioned whether the projected financial savings would outweigh the educational, social, linguistic and community impacts identified during the consultation process. Many objectors argued that alternative options, including federation arrangements, shared leadership models, expanded community use, childcare provision and wider community-led initiatives, had not been fully explored before progressing to closure. Concerns were also raised regarding future pupil projections, planned housing developments, the presumption against the closure of rural schools, the suitability of receiving schools, the impact on learners with Additional Learning Needs, and the effect that uncertainty surrounding the proposal had already had on some children and families.

The supportive comments received acknowledged the valued contribution Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim has made to its pupils and the local community whilst recognising the significant challenges facing the school. Supporters of the proposal considered that declining pupil numbers, surplus capacity and ongoing financial pressures raised legitimate concerns regarding the school's long-term sustainability. They emphasised the importance of ensuring that public resources are used efficiently and that educational provision remain viable across the wider school network. Supportive respondents also highlighted the availability of alternative Welsh-medium provision within reasonable travelling distances, suggesting that pupils would continue to have access to suitable educational opportunities whilst enabling the Local Authority to take a strategic and sustainable approach to the organisation of school places. These respondents viewed the proposal as a pragmatic response to demographic and financial challenges, notwithstanding the acknowledged significance of the school to the local community.

2. BACKGROUND

This report presents the feedback gathered during the objection period, held between 19 June 2026 and 17 July 2026, undertaken in response to the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and transfer pupils to Ysgol Griffith Jones, St. Clears or Ysgol Hafodwenog, Trelech.

The report outlines the publication of the Statutory Notice and the objection period process, summarises the objections received, and provides an analysis of the key issues and comments raised by stakeholders.

3. THE OBJECTION PERIOD

In line with Welsh Government guidelines, as set out in the School Organisation Code (2018), the objection period gave everyone an opportunity to make an objection or provide supportive comments on the proposal.

The Statutory Notice on the proposal was published on 19 June 2026 for a period of 28 days until 17 July 2026.

The document was distributed electronically to all stakeholders and published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website. Hard copies were made available on

request and displayed on the school's perimeter fence and gates. The notice set out the details of the proposal and the process for submitting objections.

4. ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

In total, 160 observations were received in response to the statutory notice, of which 151 objected to the proposal and 9 supported it.

The table below notes the objections received.

Objections Received			
Online Survey	E-mail	Letter	Total
108	43	0	151

An objection was received via e-mail on 22 July 2026, after the statutory objection period had closed on 17 July 2026. Accordingly, it has not been counted as a formal objection for the purposes of the School Organisation Code. However, for completeness and transparency, the points raised in the submission have been noted and are summarised in Appendix B for members' information.

The table below notes the supportive comments received.

Supportive Comments Received			
Online Survey	E-mail	Letter	Total
9	0	0	9

5. THE OBJECTION REPORT

The objection report summarises the submissions received in objection or support to the proposal and the Local Authority's responses to these submissions.

For completeness, these responses have also been included within this report and the themes for the objections or supportive comments received are as follows:

Concerns

- **Theme 1 – Community Cohesion and Village Sustainability**
- **Theme 2 – Benefits of Small Schools and Small Class Sizes**

- Theme 3 – Welsh Language and Welsh-speaking Communities
- Theme 4 – Pupil Wellbeing, Safety and Sense of Belonging
- Theme 5 – Financial Case for Closure Not Proven
- Theme 6 – Community Identity, Heritage and Generational Connections
- Theme 7 – Splitting the Existing School Community Between Three Schools
- Theme 8 – ALN, Disability and Medical Needs
- Theme 9 – Welsh Culture and Welsh Identity
- Theme 10 – Consultation Process and Decision-Making Concerns
- Theme 11 – Educational Standards and School Performance
- Theme 12 – Future Pupil Numbers, Housing Growth and Sustainability
- Theme 13 – Transport, Travel and Accessibility
- Theme 14 – Alternative Proposals Not Fully Explored
- Theme 15 – Community Hub and Wider Community Use
- Theme 16 – Splitting Friendship Groups and Established Relationships
- Theme 17 – Impact of Uncertainty on Children
- Theme 18 – Receiving School Suitability and Capacity
- Theme 19 – Mid-Academic Year Closure and Transition Arrangements
- Theme 20 – Confidence in Council Spending Priorities
- Theme 21 – Children’s Rights and Child Centred Decision Making
- Theme 22 – Accuracy of Documentation and Changes to the Proposal
- Theme 23 – Presumption Against Closure of Rural Schools
- Theme 24 – Community Resilience and Emergency Support
- Theme 25 – Environmental and Climate Impacts

Supportive Comments

- Theme 1 – Financial sustainability and efficient use of resources
- Theme 2 – Availability of alternative local provision and school rationalisation
- Theme 3 – Recognition of the school’s positive contribution to pupils and the community

6. SUMMARY OF OBJECTIONS RECEIVED AND LOCAL AUTHORITY RESPONSES

The following table notes the themes of the objections received and the Local Authority's responses to those themes. Each theme's count reflects the number of distinct responses that mention it:

Concerns Raised			
Point Number	Point Raised	Number of responses raising this point	% of responses raising this point
1.	Community Cohesion and Village Sustainability	77	92%

The most frequently raised concern throughout the objections received related to the role of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim as a central part of village life and the potential impact that closure would have on the long-term sustainability of the community. Respondents consistently described the school as the heart of the village and argued that its importance extends far beyond its educational function. Many objections stated that the school acts as the main focal point where families, children, grandparents and community members come together on a regular basis. Numerous responses referred to the school as one of the few remaining places that continues to unite different generations and maintain strong social connections within the village. Several objectors expressed concern that the removal of the school would significantly weaken community life and accelerate the gradual loss of important local services and facilities. Respondents frequently noted that many rural communities have already experienced the loss of shops, chapel, pubs, post office and other amenities and argued that closure of the school would represent the loss of another vital component of village life.

Many respondents emphasised the contribution that the school makes to creating and maintaining relationships between residents. Objections referred to daily interactions at school drop-off and collection times, school events, fundraising activities, performances, sporting events and community gatherings. Respondents argued that these opportunities bring people together, create support networks and strengthen relationships between families. Several objectors described the school as providing a natural meeting place where friendships and community connections are

formed and maintained. It was also suggested that the school's activities help reduce social isolation, particularly within a rural community where opportunities for regular social interaction may be more limited. A number of responses highlighted the role that the school plays in supporting wider community wellbeing by fostering a sense of belonging and encouraging people to participate actively in community life. The view frequently expressed by objectors was that closure would weaken these networks and reduce opportunities for meaningful social engagement across the village.

A substantial number of respondents linked the future of the school directly to the future viability of Meidrim as a thriving rural community. Objectors repeatedly stated that access to a local village school is an important factor influencing where families choose to live and raise their children. Many expressed concern that closure would make the area less attractive to young families and could contribute to population decline in the longer term. Several respondents suggested that the absence of a local school would discourage inward migration and could ultimately alter the demographic profile of the village. Concerns were raised that the community may become increasingly dependent upon an ageing population if opportunities for younger families are reduced. A number of objectors referred to planned housing developments and potential future growth in pupil numbers as evidence that the village has the capacity to support both a school and a sustainable community into the future. It was argued that closure could undermine this potential and remove an important asset at a time when opportunities for regeneration and growth exist.

Many respondents viewed Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim as an essential component of the wider social, cultural and economic infrastructure of the village. Objections frequently argued that the consequences of closure would extend beyond education and would affect community identity, participation and resilience for many years to come. Several respondents stated that once a rural school closes it becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible, to reverse the decision or recreate the benefits the school provided. Objectors repeatedly described the proposal as not merely the closure of a building but the removal of a long-established institution that contributes significantly to the character and vitality of the local area. The overwhelming view expressed throughout the objections was that the school plays a crucial role in sustaining community life and that its closure would have profound and potentially irreversible consequences for the future cohesion, resilience and sustainability of Meidrim.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority acknowledges the strength of feeling expressed by objectors regarding the role of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim within the community and recognises that the school is widely regarded as an important part of village life. Throughout the consultation and objection process, many respondents described the school as a focal point for social interaction, community participation and intergenerational engagement. The Authority recognises that schools, particularly in rural areas, often contribute significantly to community identity and cohesion through their involvement in local activities, events and partnerships. These wider community benefits have been carefully considered as part of the decision-making process and have informed the Authority's assessment of the potential impact of the proposal.

The Authority also acknowledges concerns that the closure of the school may affect opportunities for social interaction within the village and may alter some established patterns of community engagement. Respondents highlighted the importance of school events, fundraising activities, performances and informal day-to-day contact in bringing residents together and strengthening community relationships. The Authority accepts that these activities can make a valuable contribution to community wellbeing and social cohesion. For this reason, a detailed Community Impact Assessment has been undertaken to evaluate both the potential direct and indirect effects of the proposal on the community and to identify any possible mitigation measures should the proposal proceed.

In considering these concerns, however, the Authority must distinguish between the important contribution that a school makes to a community and its primary function as an educational institution. While the Authority recognises that schools often serve as community assets, school organisation decisions are required, under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, to consider a broad range of factors including educational provision, pupil numbers, financial sustainability, leadership capacity, surplus places and long-term viability. Community impacts form an important component of this assessment but must be balanced against the Authority's statutory responsibility to ensure that educational provision is sustainable and capable of meeting the needs of current and future learners.

The Authority has carefully considered concerns that closure may affect the future attractiveness and vitality of Meidrim as a place for families to live. Objectors expressed concerns that the loss of a village school could discourage inward migration and contribute to demographic change over time. Whilst the Authority acknowledges these views, it is important to note that community

sustainability is influenced by a wide range of social, economic and demographic factors, many of which operate independently of school provision. Housing availability, employment opportunities, transport infrastructure, access to services and broader population trends all contribute to the long-term sustainability of rural communities. Although a local school can be an important factor for some families, the Authority has not identified conclusive evidence that the future viability of the community is dependent solely upon the continued operation of the school.

The Authority also notes that concerns regarding future population growth and potential increases in pupil numbers were raised by some objectors. These representations have been considered alongside demographic data, pupil forecasts and information relating to planned housing developments. While future development has the potential to influence population trends, school organisation proposals must be assessed using the best available evidence regarding projected learner numbers and the long-term sustainability of provision. Having considered all relevant information, the Authority remains of the view that the proposal represents a proportionate and reasonable response to the challenges facing the school. Whilst recognising the school's valued contribution to community life, the Authority is satisfied that the educational needs of pupils can continue to be met through alternative provision and that the proposal reflects a balanced approach to securing sustainable education provision while taking account of community impacts.

2.	Benefits of Small Schools and Small Class Sizes	66	78%
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A significant proportion of respondents highlighted what they considered to be the educational, social and pastoral advantages associated with Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim's small size. Many objectors argued that the school's scale enables staff to develop a detailed understanding of each pupil as an individual and to respond effectively to their educational and personal needs. Parents frequently referred to the personalised nature of the support provided and stated that children benefit from receiving a level of attention that may be more difficult to achieve within larger educational settings. Several respondents commented that teachers are able to identify strengths, challenges and areas requiring additional support at an early stage, allowing interventions to be tailored appropriately. Many objectors considered this personalised approach to be one of the school's greatest strengths and argued that it contributes positively to both educational attainment and personal development.

Respondents also placed considerable emphasis on the quality of relationships that develop within a smaller school environment. Many described Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim as having a close-knit and

family-oriented atmosphere in which pupils, staff and parents know one another well. Objectors frequently referred to children being known by name throughout the school and to staff having strong knowledge of individual pupils' circumstances, personalities and needs. Several parents explained that the close communication between school and home allows concerns to be addressed quickly and effectively. Former pupils, parents and community members often referred to the sense of belonging and inclusion that pupils experience within the school and suggested that this contributes positively to both confidence and self-esteem. It was frequently argued that these strong relationships help create a supportive learning environment in which children feel comfortable, secure and valued.

Many objections highlighted the social benefits associated with learning in a small school community. Respondents described how pupils regularly interact with children from different year groups and develop friendships across a broad age range. It was suggested that younger children benefit from having older pupils as role models, whilst older pupils gain confidence and leadership skills through supporting younger learners. Several objectors stated that the mixed-age environment helps children develop empathy, responsibility and social awareness. Some respondents described the school community as functioning like an extended family where children learn to cooperate, support one another and work collaboratively. Many considered these opportunities to be particularly valuable in helping children develop important life skills alongside their academic learning and argued that such experiences contribute significantly to pupils' overall development.

A recurring argument throughout the objections was that larger schools do not suit every child and that educational provision should recognise the differing needs of individual learners. Many respondents expressed concern that some children may struggle to thrive in larger, busier educational environments and argued that smaller schools provide a valuable alternative for those who benefit from a quieter and more nurturing setting. Particular reference was made to children who are shy, anxious, lack confidence or who require additional support. Several objectors described examples of children flourishing within Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim because of the school's supportive environment and the individual attention available to them. Parents frequently argued that maintaining a range of educational settings enables families to access provision that best meets their children's needs and that the benefits offered by small rural schools should therefore be recognised as an important part of the wider education system. The strong view expressed by

respondents was that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim provides an educational environment in which many children thrive and that these benefits should be carefully considered when evaluating the proposal.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority notes the views expressed by objectors regarding the perceived benefits of small schools and recognises that many respondents value the personalised and supportive environment provided by Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Parents and community members highlighted the close relationships between staff, pupils and families, together with the individual attention that can be provided within a small school setting. The Authority recognises that these characteristics are often regarded as strengths of small schools and can contribute positively to pupils' educational experiences, wellbeing and sense of belonging. The comments received demonstrate the high regard in which the school is held by many members of the community and reflect their confidence in the care and support provided to learners.

The Authority also acknowledges respondents' views that smaller class sizes and close staff-pupil relationships can support the early identification of learners' needs and facilitate tailored support. Effective pastoral care, strong communication with families and a nurturing learning environment are recognised as important elements of successful educational provision. However, the Authority considers that these outcomes are not determined solely by the size of a school. Evidence from Estyn and wider educational research consistently indicates that the quality of leadership, teaching, learner support and school culture are the most significant factors in influencing pupil wellbeing and educational outcomes. As a result, whilst school size may contribute to particular experiences, it should not be regarded in isolation as a measure of educational effectiveness.

In assessing the proposal, the Authority has carefully considered the capacity of the proposed receiving schools to provide appropriate individual support for learners. Ysgol Hafodwenog is a relatively small rural school and offers a learning environment that shares some characteristics with that currently experienced by pupils at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. In contrast, Ysgol Griffith Jones is a significantly larger school, providing learners with access to larger peer groups, a broader range of social interactions and wider educational opportunities.

The Authority is satisfied that both schools have established systems and processes in place to support pupil wellbeing, monitor individual progress and respond to learners' additional needs. Existing leadership arrangements, staffing structures and pastoral support systems provide

confidence that pupils transferring as a result of the proposal would continue to receive appropriate levels of care, guidance and educational support.

The Authority recognises the importance objectors placed on mixed-age learning and the opportunities this can provide for peer support, leadership development and social interaction across year groups. These benefits have been considered as part of the assessment process. However, mixed-age teaching arrangements are not unique to Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and are a feature of many rural primary schools across the county, including the proposed receiving schools. The Authority is therefore satisfied that pupils would continue to benefit from opportunities to develop positive relationships, social skills and wider personal attributes within their new educational settings. Furthermore, larger pupil cohorts may also provide additional opportunities for friendship development, social engagement and collaborative learning experiences.

The Authority further acknowledges concerns that some pupils may find transition to a larger school environment challenging, particularly those who are less confident or who benefit from highly personalised support. For this reason, comprehensive transition arrangements would be implemented should the proposal proceed. These arrangements would be designed to support pupils and families before, during and after transfer, helping learners to become familiar with their new school environment and establish positive relationships with staff and peers. Having considered all available evidence, the Authority does not believe that the educational and pastoral benefits associated with Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim's small size outweigh the longer-term challenges relating to pupil numbers, sustainability and viability. The Authority remains satisfied that pupils can continue to access high-quality education, effective pastoral care and appropriate individual support within the proposed receiving schools.

3.	Welsh Language and Welsh-speaking Communities	61	73%
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A substantial number of respondents raised concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposal on the Welsh language and the role that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim plays in supporting the Welsh-medium education within the local area. Many objectors described the school as an important contributor to the linguistic character of the community and argued that it provides opportunities for children to become confident Welsh speakers regardless of their linguistic background. Several objectors explained that children coming from English-speaking households have successfully learned to speak, read and write Welsh through attending the school. Respondents frequently highlighted the school's success in helping pupils achieve fluency and suggested that it plays an

important role in increasing the number of Welsh speakers within the area. Many objectors therefore questioned whether the closure of a successful Welsh-medium school would support wider local and national ambitions to promote and expand the use of the Welsh language.

Many respondents also emphasised the school's role in encouraging the use of Welsh beyond the classroom environment. Objectors frequently referred to the way in which pupils use Welsh naturally within their everyday activities, friendships and community interactions. Several responses noted that children attending the school often bring the language home with them, encouraging parents, grandparents and other family members to engage with Welsh and develop their own skills and confidence. Some respondents described how attendance at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim had inspired entire families to learn Welsh and become more involved in Welsh-speaking activities. It was argued that the school contributes not only to children's language acquisition but also to the wider promotion of Welsh within families and the surrounding community. Many objectors therefore viewed the school as an important mechanism for strengthening the language across multiple generations.

A recurring concern throughout the objections was the potential impact that closure could have on the future vitality of Welsh as a community language. Respondents argued that schools such as Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim are key institutions within Welsh-speaking rural communities and provide opportunities for children to use Welsh naturally as part of daily life. Several submissions expressed concern that dispersing pupils between different schools could weaken established Welsh-speaking networks and reduce opportunities for children to use Welsh within their friendship groups and wider community activities. Some objectors also highlighted concerns regarding receiving school arrangements, noting that one proposed receiving school currently operates dual-language provision. It was suggested that closure could therefore result in fewer opportunities for children to experience a fully Welsh-medium educational environment and that this could have wider implications for the long-term use of Welsh within the locality.

Many respondents argued that the significance of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim extends beyond educational provision and that the school plays an important role in supporting the long-term sustainability of Welsh-speaking communities. Objectors frequently referred to the relationship between rural schools, community identity and language transmission, suggesting that schools act as important centres through which language and culture are passed from one generation to the next. Several respondents expressed concerns that the closure of Welsh-medium schools in rural areas contributes to the gradual weakening of Welsh-speaking communities and undermines efforts to preserve the language for future generations. It was argued that once a Welsh-medium institution

is removed from a community, the wider linguistic and cultural impacts may be difficult to reverse. The prevailing view expressed throughout the objections was that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim makes a significant contribution to the promotion, use and sustainability of the Welsh language and that this contribution should be given substantial consideration when assessing the proposal.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority acknowledges and understands the concerns raised by respondents regarding the potential impact of the proposal on the Welsh language and recognises the important role that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim currently plays in promoting Welsh-medium education within the community. Many objectors highlighted the school's success in supporting learners from a range of linguistic backgrounds to become confident Welsh speakers and emphasised its contribution to the linguistic and cultural life of the area. The Authority fully recognises the importance of protecting and promoting the Welsh language and is committed to supporting the objectives of the Welsh Government's *Cymraeg 2050* strategy, which seeks to increase the number of Welsh speakers and strengthen the use of Welsh in everyday life.

In assessing the proposal, the Authority has given careful consideration to Welsh-medium educational provision and the potential implications for learners' language development. The Authority is satisfied that Welsh-medium education would continue to be available to affected pupils through the proposed receiving schools. Both Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog provide Welsh-medium education and have established arrangements in place to support learners' linguistic progression. Consequently, the Authority does not consider that the proposal would reduce pupils' access to Welsh-medium education or limit opportunities for them to develop their Welsh language skills. The Authority remains confident that learners would continue to receive education through the medium of Welsh in environments that promote bilingualism and support high standards of language acquisition.

The Authority acknowledges respondents' views regarding the school's contribution to the use of Welsh beyond the classroom and recognises that schools can play an important role in encouraging the wider use of the language within families and communities. Many respondents referred to examples of children from non-Welsh-speaking households developing fluency and promoting the language within their homes and social networks. The Authority recognises the value of these experiences and accepts that schools can make a significant contribution to language transmission and cultural participation. However, the Authority also considers that the promotion of Welsh is supported through a broad range of educational, community and cultural opportunities across the

county and is not solely dependent upon the continuation of a particular school. Welsh language development remains a priority across all Welsh-medium schools and within the Authority's wider Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, regardless of school language category.

The Authority has also considered concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposal on Welsh-speaking social networks and the long-term sustainability of Welsh as a community language. Objectors expressed concerns that dispersing pupils to alternative schools could affect established friendship groups and reduce opportunities to use Welsh within the local community. While the Authority acknowledges these concerns, it notes that pupils would continue to access Welsh-medium provision within neighbouring schools that actively promote the use of Welsh throughout school life. The receiving schools already support learners from a range of communities and provide opportunities for pupils to use Welsh naturally through teaching, extracurricular activities, social interactions and wider community engagement. The Authority is therefore satisfied that opportunities for learners to develop and use Welsh would continue following implementation of the proposal.

The Authority further recognises the close relationship that exists between rural communities, local schools and the Welsh language. Schools often contribute significantly to community identity and cultural continuity, and these wider benefits have been carefully considered through the consultation process and Welsh Language Impact Assessment. However, when determining school organisation proposals, the Authority must balance these considerations against other factors including educational sustainability, pupil projections, financial viability, leadership capacity and the efficient use of resources. Having considered all available evidence, the Authority remains satisfied that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on Welsh-medium education or learners' ability to develop and use the Welsh language. The Authority believes that strong Welsh-medium provision can continue to be maintained through the receiving schools while supporting the long-term sustainability of education across the county.

4.	Pupil Wellbeing, Safety and Sense of Belonging	55	66%
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A significant proportion of respondents expressed concern about the impact that closure would have on the wellbeing of pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Many objectors described the school as a safe, nurturing and supportive environment where children feel happy, secure and valued. Parents frequently referred to the strong relationships that exist between pupils and staff and explained that children benefit from being educated within an environment where they are well

known and understood. Several respondents stated that the school's small size allows staff to identify concerns quickly and provide both educational and pastoral support tailored to individual needs. Many objectors viewed this supportive environment as one of the school's greatest strengths and argued that it contributes significantly to pupils' emotional wellbeing, confidence and overall development.

Many responses focused on the importance of the sense of belonging that pupils experience within the school community. Objectors repeatedly described Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim as a place where children feel accepted, included and respected. Several parents stated that their children enjoy attending school and have developed strong relationships with both staff and fellow pupils. Respondents argued that the close-knit nature of the school helps children feel part of a wider community and creates an environment in which they are comfortable being themselves. A number of former pupils, governors and community members described the school as having a family atmosphere where children of different ages support one another and where every pupil feels recognised as an individual. Many considered this sense of belonging to be an important factor in promoting positive attitudes towards learning and helping children develop socially and emotionally.

A recurring concern throughout the objections was the potential emotional impact of transferring pupils to other schools. Many respondents expressed concern that closure would require children to leave familiar surroundings, trusted adults and established friendship groups. Several parents highlighted that change can be particularly difficult for younger children and for those who rely heavily on routine and stability. Objectors frequently suggested that the loss of established support networks may lead to increased anxiety, reduced confidence and difficulties adjusting to a new educational environment. Concerns were also raised regarding pupils being required to integrate into larger schools where relationships with staff and peers would need to be rebuilt. Many respondents argued that the emotional consequences of such a transition should be carefully considered and given significant weight within the decision-making process.

Many respondents emphasised that children's wellbeing should remain at the centre of any decision regarding the future of the school. Several objectors argued that educational decisions should not be based solely on factors such as finances, capacity or organisational arrangements but should also take account of pupils' emotional, social and psychological needs. References were frequently made to the importance of stability, continuity and maintaining supportive educational environments during the primary school years. Some respondents suggested that the impacts of closure on wellbeing may not be immediately visible but could affect children's confidence, engagement with

learning and emotional resilience over a longer period. The overall view expressed throughout the objections was the Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim currently provides a positive and nurturing environment which supports children's wellbeing and that any potential loss of these benefits should be considered carefully when evaluating the proposal.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority carefully considered the concerns raised by respondents regarding the potential impact of the proposal on pupil wellbeing and recognises the importance that parents, carers and the wider community place on the supportive environment provided by Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Many objectors described the school as a nurturing setting in which children are well known by staff and benefit from strong relationships, personalised support and a strong sense of security. The Authority recognises that positive relationships, effective pastoral care and a safe learning environment are fundamental components of successful educational provision. The comments received reflect the high regard in which the school is held and demonstrate the importance that stakeholders place on ensuring that learners' wellbeing remains central to any decisions affecting their education.

The Authority acknowledges the view that the school's small size contributes positively to pupils' emotional wellbeing and enables staff to identify and respond quickly to individual needs. However, while the Authority recognises the benefits that can arise from close staff-pupil relationships, it does not consider that wellbeing outcomes are determined solely by the size of a school. Evidence from Estyn and wider educational practice consistently highlights that effective wellbeing provision is underpinned by strong leadership, skilled practitioners, inclusive school cultures and robust support systems. These characteristics can be found in schools of varying sizes. As part of the assessment process, the Authority has therefore considered the quality of pastoral support, safeguarding arrangements and wellbeing provision available within the proposed receiving schools, rather than focusing solely on pupil numbers.

The Authority has carefully considered concerns regarding pupils' sense of belonging and the importance of feeling valued, included and recognised within the school community. Stakeholders emphasised that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim provides an environment where pupils develop strong relationships with both staff and peers, helping to build confidence, self-esteem and positive attitudes towards learning. The Authority accepts the importance of these factors and has therefore examined the ability of the proposed receiving schools to provide similarly supportive learning environments. Ysgol Hafodwenog is a relatively small rural school and offers a learning environment

that shares some characteristics with that currently experienced by pupils at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. In contrast, Ysgol Griffith Jones is a significantly larger school, providing learners with access to larger peer groups, a broader range of social interactions and wider educational opportunities. The Authority is satisfied that both schools have the capacity to provide a welcoming and supportive environment in which pupils can develop positive relationships and continue to thrive both academically and personally.

The Authority also recognises concerns regarding the potential emotional impact of transition, particularly for younger learners and those who may find change challenging. It is acknowledged that moving to a new school can create uncertainty and may require pupils to adapt to new surroundings, routines, staff and peer groups. For this reason, comprehensive transition arrangements would be implemented should the proposal proceed. These arrangements would be developed collaboratively between the schools involved and would include opportunities for pupils and families to become familiar with their new school environment, establish relationships with staff and peers, and access appropriate support throughout the transition process. Particular attention would be given to supporting vulnerable learners and those with additional learning needs to ensure that individual circumstances are fully considered.

The Authority agrees that pupil wellbeing must remain a central consideration in school organisation proposals and has carefully evaluated the potential impacts identified through the consultation and objection process. However, it must also consider wellbeing alongside a wider range of factors, including educational standards, learner opportunities, long-term sustainability, leadership capacity and financial viability. Having considered all available evidence, the Authority is satisfied that the receiving schools have appropriate systems, staffing and support structures in place to safeguard learners' wellbeing and support successful transitions. Whilst recognising the concerns expressed by respondents, the Authority will work closely with the respective schools to ensure wellbeing is actively considered when transition planning etc and remains confident that pupils would continue to be educated within safe, supportive and inclusive learning environments that promote both personal development and educational success.

5.	Financial Case for Closure Not Proven	51	61%
A substantial number of respondents questioned the financial justification presented in support of the proposal to close Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Many objectors acknowledged the financial pressures facing the local authority but expressed concern that the projected savings associated with closure			

appeared relatively limited when compared with the potential educational, social and community consequences identified elsewhere in their responses. Several respondents argued that the financial information did not demonstrate a sufficiently compelling case for the permanent closure of a village school and suggested that wider costs and benefits had not been fully considered. Many objectors considered the proposal to be focused primarily on short-term financial considerations rather than the longer-term impacts on pupils, families and the wider community. Respondents frequently stated that educational establishments should not be assessed solely through financial metrics and that the broader value provided by a rural school should form a significant part of the assessment process.

Many objections raised concerns that the anticipated financial savings may be overstated because they do not fully account for additional expenditure that could arise following closure. Respondents referred to the likely increase in home to school transport costs resulting from pupils travelling to alternative schools and questioned whether these costs would significantly reduce any overall savings. Several submissions also highlighted the potential costs associated with accommodating additional pupils within receiving schools, including possible future investment in buildings, classrooms, staffing and infrastructure. Some objectors argued that the financial calculations presented did not adequately reflect the full consequences of dispersing pupils across multiple schools and suggested that the practical costs of implementing the proposal may be higher than currently anticipated. Many respondents therefore expressed uncertainty regarding whether closure would achieve the level of financial benefit suggested within the supporting documentation.

A recurring concern throughout the objections related to confidence in the financial information presented during the consultation and statutory notice process. Several respondents referred to amendments and corrections made to financial figures during the process and argued that this had weakened confidence in the financial case being advanced. Some objectors suggested that inconsistencies in the financial data had made it difficult for stakeholders to fully understand the economic rationale underpinning the proposal. A number of responses specifically questioned whether sufficient consideration had been given to future pupil growth, changing demographics and planned housing developments within the area. Respondents frequently argued that decisions based upon current financial circumstances alone may fail to account for future opportunities to improve sustainability and increase pupil numbers over time. As a result, many questioned whether closure represented the most appropriate long-term financial solution.

Many respondents also argued that alternative approaches to improving the school's financial sustainability had not been fully explored before progressing towards closure. References were frequently made to federation arrangements, shared leadership structures, expanded childcare provision, community partnership models, renewable energy projects and external funding opportunities that could potentially contribute towards reducing operating costs or generating additional income. Several objectors noted that proposals had been brought forward by governors, community organisations and local stakeholders which sought to strengthen the school's long-term viability and argued that these initiatives should be given greater opportunity to demonstrate their effectiveness. The prevailing view expressed by respondents was that the financial case for closure remained unconvincing and that the potential educational, community and social costs of closure were likely to outweigh the limited financial savings that may be achieved. Many therefore concluded that closure should be proceed until all reasonable alternatives had been fully evaluated and exhausted.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority appreciates the concerns raised by respondents regarding the financial justification for the proposal and recognises that many objectors questioned whether the anticipated financial benefits are sufficient to outweigh the educational, social and community impacts associated with the closure of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. The Authority accepts that school organisation decisions should not be based solely on financial considerations and confirms that the proposal has been developed following an assessment of a wide range of factors, including educational provision, learner wellbeing, community impact, Welsh-medium education, pupil projections, leadership capacity and long-term sustainability. Financial considerations form one important aspect of this assessment but are not the sole determinant in evaluating the future of a school.

In developing the proposal, the Authority has undertaken a detailed review of the school's current and projected financial position together with the wider financial pressures affecting the education budget. The Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that public resources are managed efficiently and that educational provision remains sustainable over the long term. While respondents have argued that the projected savings may appear limited when considered in isolation, the Authority must also consider the cumulative impact of maintaining schools with low pupil numbers, significant surplus capacity and increasing financial challenges. These issues affect not only individual schools but also the sustainability of the wider educational system. Consequently, the

proposal has been considered within the context of the Council's broader Modernising Education Programme and its commitment to ensuring the most effective use of available resources.

The Authority acknowledges concerns regarding potential costs arising from the implementation of the proposal, including learner transport and the accommodation of pupils within receiving schools. These factors have been considered during the development of the proposal and form part of the overall financial assessment. The Authority recognises that school reorganisation can generate additional costs; however, these must be balanced against the ongoing costs associated with maintaining educational provision within a school facing long-term viability challenges. The Authority is satisfied that the proposed receiving schools have sufficient capacity to accommodate additional pupils and that any transport implications have been appropriately considered in accordance with existing policies and statutory responsibilities.

The Authority also notes concerns expressed regarding changes to financial information during the consultation process and the resulting impact on stakeholder confidence. The Authority is committed to ensuring that information presented throughout the process is accurate, transparent and based upon the best available evidence at the time. Where clarifications or amendments have been necessary, these have been made to ensure that stakeholders have access to the most up-to-date information available. Financial projections, by their nature, are subject to revision as circumstances change and further information becomes available. The Authority remains satisfied that the financial information supporting the proposal provides an accurate representation of the challenges facing the school and the wider education budget and enables informed consideration of the proposal.

The Authority further acknowledges the view that alternative options should be fully explored before closure is considered, however the School Organisation Code does not require that alternative options are implemented. Throughout the review process, a range of alternatives have been examined, including collaborative arrangements, leadership models and other measures intended to support long-term sustainability. The Authority recognises the efforts made by governors, staff, community organisations and local stakeholders to identify potential solutions. However, school organisation decisions must be based on an assessment of whether such approaches are capable of addressing the underlying challenges facing the school on a sustainable basis. Having considered all available evidence, including financial forecasts, pupil projections and viability assessments, the Authority remains of the view that the proposal represents the most appropriate and sustainable long-term solution. While recognising the concerns expressed by objectors, the

Authority is satisfied that the financial case should be considered alongside the wider educational and organisational factors supporting the proposal and that the proposal reflects a balanced and evidence-based approach to securing sustainable education provision for the future.

6.	Community Identity, Heritage and Generational Connections	40	48%
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A significant number of respondents referred to the long-standing connection between Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and the families who have lived within the community across multiple generations. Many objectors described the school as an important part of their personal and family history and noted that several generations of the same family had attended the school. References to parents, grandparents, great-grandparents and wider family members having been educated at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim appeared throughout the objections received. Many respondents argued that the school represents much more than a place of education and serves as a shared point of connection between past, present and future generations of local families. Several objectors stated that the school's history is closely intertwined with the history of the village itself and suggested that closure would result in the lost of an institution that has played an important role in shaping community life for many decades.

Many respondents also emphasised the importance of the school in maintaining a collective sense of identity within the village. Objections frequently referred to the school as a symbol of the local community and a source of pride for residents. Several objectors noted that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim is one of the few remaining institutions that continues to connect different generations and bring together families from across the locality. Respondents often argued that the shared experiences created through attending the village school help foster a strong sense of belonging and attachment to place. It was suggested that children who attend the school develop a deeper connection to their community, local history and the people around them. Many considered these factors to be important in sustaining a vibrant rural community and argued that the closure of the school would weaken one of the key elements that contributes to the village's unique identity.

A recurring theme within the objections was the concern that closure would disrupt the continuity that has existed between generations of families who have attended Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Many respondents expressed sadness at the possibility that future generations of children would no longer have the opportunity to attend the same school as their parents, grandparents and other family members. Several submissions described the school as a place where traditions, memories

and relationships have been passed down through successive generations. Objectors frequently referred to school events, educational achievements, community celebrations and personal experiences that had created lasting memories for local families. Many respondents argued that these intergenerational connections form an important part of the village's social fabric and contribute significantly to the sense of community that exists today. They suggested that closure would break an important link between generations and diminish a valued aspect of community life.

Many respondents viewed the preservation of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim as important not only for current pupils but also for protecting the heritage and legacy of the community for future generations. Several objectors argued that rural schools play a unique role in preserving local traditions, community stories and cultural memory. It was frequently stated that once a school closes, much of the identity associated with it can be lost permanently. Respondents expressed concern that future generations may have fewer opportunities to develop the same sense of connection to the village if the school ceases to exist. The prevailing view among objectors was that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim represents an important historical and cultural asset whose value cannot be measured solely through pupil numbers or financial considerations. Many therefore argued that the significance of the school's heritage and its contribution to community identity should be given substantial weight when considering the future of the school.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority understands the concerns raised by respondents regarding the historical, cultural and social significance of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim within the local community. Many objectors described the school as an institution that has served generations of local families and highlighted its role in creating lasting connections between residents across different age groups. The Authority recognises that schools often become an important part of the identity and heritage of rural communities, particularly where there is a long-standing association between the school and successive generations of local families. The comments received demonstrate the depth of attachment that exists within the community and reflect the value that residents place on the school's contribution to village life.

The Authority also acknowledges the view that attendance at a local village school can strengthen an individual's connection to their community and reinforce a shared sense of identity. Respondents referred to the school's role in creating memories, traditions and experiences that are passed from one generation to the next. The Authority accepts that these intergenerational links can contribute positively to community cohesion and can help foster a sense of belonging among pupils, families

and residents. Furthermore, the Authority recognises that schools frequently serve as venues for community activities, celebrations and events that contribute to the social and cultural life of an area.

In considering these concerns, however, the Authority must distinguish between the heritage value of a school and its ability to provide sustainable educational provision into the future. Whilst the Authority recognises the historical significance of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim, school organisation decisions are required to consider a range of statutory factors, including educational standards, learner outcomes, pupil numbers, financial sustainability, leadership capacity and long-term viability. The Authority fully appreciates that a school's contribution to local heritage is an important consideration, but it must balance this against its responsibility to ensure that educational provision remains sustainable and capable of meeting the needs of future learners.

The Authority has also carefully considered concerns that closure may diminish opportunities for future generations to experience the same educational journey as previous family members. While it is recognised that the closure of a long-established school may represent the end of an important chapter in the community's history, the Authority notes that community identity and local heritage are influenced by a range of factors extending beyond a single institution. The Authority therefore does not consider that the proposal would necessarily result in the loss of the community's identity or heritage, although it acknowledges that the school has made a significant contribution to both.

The Authority recognises the strength of feeling expressed by respondents regarding the importance of preserving the school's legacy for future generations. These views have been carefully considered alongside the findings of the Community Impact Assessment and other evidence gathered throughout the consultation and objection process. Having considered all relevant factors, the Authority remains of the view that the proposal represents a balanced response to the challenges facing the school and the wider education system. Whilst acknowledging the important historical and cultural contribution made by Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim, the Authority is satisfied that decisions regarding the future organisation of educational provision must ultimately be guided by considerations of educational quality, sustainability and long-term viability. The Authority therefore remains confident that the proposal appropriately balances the heritage value of the school with its responsibility to secure effective and sustainable education provision for future generations.

7.	Splitting the Existing School Community Between Three Schools	39	46%
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A significant number of respondents expressed concern that the proposal would result in the fragmentation of an established and cohesive school community. Many objectors noted that, rather than transferring collectively to a single receiving school, pupils from Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim would potentially be dispersed across three different schools. Respondents argued that this would fundamentally alter the nature of the existing school community and weaken the strong relationship that have developed between pupils, families and staff over many years. Several submissions highlighted that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim currently serves as a focal point which brings together children from the village and surrounding area, creating a shared identity and sense of belonging. Objectors frequently stated that dividing pupils between multiple schools would dismantle these established connections and result in the loss of a close-knit educational community that has developed naturally over time.

Many respondents referred to the potential impact on friendships and social networks. Objections frequently highlighted that children who have spent many years learning and socialising together may be separated as a result of the proposed arrangements. Several objectors expressed concern that long-standing friendships could be disrupted and that some pupils may find it difficult to establish new social networks within unfamiliar environments. Respondents argued that friendships play an important role in children's emotional wellbeing, confidence and enjoyment of school life. Particular concern was expressed regarding younger children and more vulnerable learners who may find separation from familiar peers especially challenging. Many objectors suggested that the strength of existing pupil relationships should be regarded as an important consideration when assessing the proposal and its potential impact upon learners.

A recurring theme throughout the objections was the concern that dividing the school community would also affect relationships between families and the wider community. Many respondents noted that strong connections currently exist between parents, carers and extended family members due to their shared involvement with Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. It was argued that these relationships contribute to community cohesion and provide valuable support networks for families. Several objectors expressed concern that dispersing children across multiple schools would reduce opportunities for parents and families to interact regularly and participate in shared activities. Respondents suggested that this could weaken the social bonds that currently exist within the community and reduce opportunities for collaborative community involvement. In a number of

submissions, objectors described the proposed arrangements as effectively dividing one established community into several separate groups, with potential long-term implications for community identity and participation.

Many respondents argued that the impact of splitting the existing school community extends beyond immediate educational considerations and could have wider implications for the future cohesion of the village itself. Several objectors stated that the school currently acts as a unifying force within the community and provides a common focus around which families interact and work together. It was suggested that dividing pupils between different schools could gradually reduce the shared experiences that help sustain community identity and social cohesion. Respondents frequently emphasised that the existing school community has developed over many years and that its value should not be underestimated. The general view expressed throughout the objections was that maintaining the integrity of the current school community would be preferable to dispersing pupils across multiple settings and that the social and community consequences of fragmentation should be carefully considered when determining the future of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority acknowledges the concerns raised by respondents regarding the potential fragmentation of the existing school community should the proposal proceed. Many objectors expressed the view that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim provides a strong and cohesive educational community in which pupils, families and staff have developed close relationships over many years. The Authority recognises that these relationships contribute positively to pupils' educational experiences, wellbeing and sense of belonging. It is also acknowledged that the school serves as a focal point for many families within the village and surrounding area, helping to establish social connections and a shared sense of community amongst pupils and parents alike.

The Authority has carefully considered concerns relating to the potential impact on friendships and peer relationships. It is recognised that some pupils may transfer to different schools and that this could result in existing friendship groups being divided. The Authority acknowledges that friendships play an important role in children's emotional wellbeing, confidence and engagement with school life, particularly during periods of change. However, the Authority also recognises that pupils routinely experience educational transitions throughout their school careers, including transition to secondary education, and schools have well-established processes in place to support learners through these changes. Whilst it is accepted that some pupils may initially find separation from

familiar peers challenging, the Authority considers that children are generally resilient and capable of developing new friendships and social networks within supportive educational environments.

The Authority further acknowledges concerns regarding the potential impact on relationships between families and the wider community. Many objectors highlighted the value of the social networks that have developed through shared involvement in the school and expressed concern that dispersing pupils between different schools may reduce opportunities for regular interaction between parents and carers. The Authority recognises that schools can contribute significantly to community cohesion and social capital. However, it also notes that community relationships are often sustained through a wide range of activities and organisations beyond the school environment, including sports clubs, community groups, cultural activities, places of worship and local events. While patterns of interaction may evolve over time, the Authority does not consider that the proposal would necessarily prevent families from maintaining established relationships and community connections.

In developing the proposal, the Authority has considered the capacity of the receiving schools to support pupils socially as well as academically. Both Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog already educate pupils from a range of communities and have established arrangements in place to promote inclusion, wellbeing and positive peer relationships. Should the proposal proceed, comprehensive transition arrangements would be implemented to support pupils and families throughout the process. These arrangements would include opportunities for learners to visit their new schools, meet staff and pupils, participate in transition activities and become familiar with their new learning environments before transfer takes place. Particular attention would be given to supporting learners who may be vulnerable or who require additional assistance during the transition period.

The Authority recognises the significance of the existing school community and appreciates the strength of feeling expressed by objectors regarding the prospect of its dispersal. These views have been carefully considered alongside the wider educational, financial, demographic and organisational factors relevant to the proposal. Whilst acknowledging that changes to established friendship groups and community networks may occur, the Authority is satisfied that appropriate support mechanisms can be implemented to minimise disruption and promote successful transitions. Having considered all available evidence, the Authority remains of the view that the educational and wellbeing needs of pupils can continue to be met effectively within the proposed

receiving schools and that the proposal represents a sustainable approach to the future organisation of education provision in the area.

8.	ALN, Disability and Medical Needs	35	42%
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A considerable number of respondents raised concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposal on pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), disabilities and ongoing medical conditions. Many objectors described Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim as providing a highly supportive environment in which individual needs are recognised and understood. Several respondents referred to the school's ability to offer personalised support and highlighted the strong knowledge that staff have of individual pupils, their learning profiles and their specific requirements. Objectors frequently argued that the small size of the school enables staff to identify concerns quickly and respond appropriately, ensuring that pupils receive tailored support within a familiar environment. Many respondents expressed concern that this level of understanding and continuity may be difficult to replicate within larger educational settings.

Many objections specifically referenced children with autism spectrum conditions, sensory processing difficulties, hearing impairments, developmental needs and other additional learning needs. Parents frequently described how their children had benefited from the school's calm and nurturing environment and argued that the existing provision has enabled them to thrive both academically and socially. Several respondents noted that children with additional needs often rely heavily on familiar routines, consistent support and trusted relationship with staff. Concerns were raised that transferring to a larger or unfamiliar environment could increase anxiety and create additional barriers to learning. Objectors repeatedly stated that the educational experience of children with ALN cannot be assessed solely in terms of available places at an alternative school and argued that consideration must also be given to the quality of support, familiarity of environment and continuity of provision.

Respondents also highlighted the importance of established relationships between pupils, staff and families. Many parents described situations where staff possess detailed knowledge of their children's needs and are able to identify signs of distress, dysregulation or medical concerns at an early stage. Several submissions referred to children with complex medical conditions and disabilities whose parents felt reassured by the school's understanding of their circumstances. Objectors frequently argued that this accumulated knowledge has developed over many years and forms a significant part of the support currently provided to pupils. Concerns were expressed that

transferring children to new schools would require those relationships to be rebuilt from the beginning and that pupils may experience disruption during this transition period. Several respondents suggested that the emotional and educational consequences of losing established support networks should be given careful consideration.

Many respondents acknowledged that formal transition arrangements and Individual Development Plans may be available for pupils moving to alternative settings. However, objectors consistently argued that such measures may not fully address the challenges faced by children with additional needs. Several parents stated that successful education for children with ALN depends not only on formal support structures but also on trust, familiarity, routine and a strong sense of safety within their educational environment. Respondents frequently expressed concern that larger schools may not be able to provide the same level of personalised attention and flexibility that currently exists at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. The overall view presented throughout the objections was that the school provides valuable support for pupils with disabilities, medical needs and additional learning needs and that closure could have a disproportionate impact on some of the most vulnerable learners within the school community.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority is mindful of the concerns raised by respondents regarding the potential impact of the proposal on pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), disabilities and medical conditions. Many objectors highlighted the supportive environment provided by Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and emphasised the benefits of close working relationships between staff, pupils and families. The Authority recognises that children with ALN and medical needs often require carefully planned support, consistency and positive relationships to enable them to access education successfully. It is also recognised that parents and carers may have concerns about how changes to educational provision could affect vulnerable learners and the progress they have made within a familiar school environment.

The Authority acknowledges the view that the school's small size enables staff to develop a detailed understanding of individual learners and their specific needs. Respondents referred to the ability of staff to identify concerns quickly, implement targeted support and build trusted relationships with pupils and families over time. The Authority recognises the value of these relationships and acknowledges the dedication of staff in supporting learners with a wide range of educational, developmental and medical needs. However, the Authority does not consider that effective support for learners with ALN is dependent solely upon the size of a school. Under the Additional Learning

Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, all maintained schools have a statutory responsibility to identify, assess and support learners with additional learning needs and to ensure that provision is tailored appropriately to individual circumstances.

In developing the proposal, the Authority has carefully considered the ability of the proposed receiving schools to meet the needs of pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Both Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog have experience of supporting learners with a range of additional learning needs and have established systems in place for identifying needs, implementing support strategies and working collaboratively with specialist services. The Authority is satisfied that the receiving schools have appropriate staffing structures, pastoral arrangements and access to professional support services to meet pupils' educational, social, emotional and medical needs. In addition, access to wider peer groups, specialist resources and enhanced staffing capacity can provide further opportunities to support learners and ensure that their needs continue to be met effectively.

The Authority also recognises concerns regarding the potential impact of transition on vulnerable learners, particularly those who may rely on familiar routines, established relationships and predictable environments. It is acknowledged that any change in educational placement can create anxiety for some pupils and families. For this reason, should the proposal proceed, detailed transition planning would take place for all pupils, with particular emphasis on supporting learners with ALN, disabilities or medical requirements. This would include collaboration between schools, families, ALN Coordinators, relevant professionals and specialist support services to ensure that information is shared effectively and that appropriate support arrangements are established prior to transfer. Individual Development Plans (IDPs), medical care plans and other relevant documentation would continue to inform the support provided to learners throughout the transition process and beyond.

The Authority accepts that successful support for learners with additional needs extends beyond formal procedures and relies upon positive relationships, effective communication and an inclusive school culture. These factors have therefore been carefully considered as part of the assessment of the receiving schools. Having reviewed the evidence available, the Authority is satisfied that both receiving schools have the capacity to provide safe, inclusive and supportive learning environments in which pupils with ALN, disabilities and medical needs can continue to thrive. Whilst recognising the concerns expressed by objectors, the Authority does not consider that the proposal would result in a detrimental impact on learners with additional needs and remains confident that appropriate

support, continuity and safeguarding arrangements can be maintained throughout the transition and beyond.

9.	Welsh Culture and Welsh Identity	34	41%
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A significant number of respondents referred not only to the importance of the Welsh language, but also to the wider cultural role that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim plays within the community. Many objectors described the school as an important institution for preserving and promoting Welsh culture, traditions and identity within a rural Welsh-speaking area. Several respondents argued that the school's contribution extends beyond educational delivery and includes helping young people develop an understanding of their local heritage, community values and cultural traditions. Former pupils, parents and community members frequently referred to the school as an integral part of a distinctly Welsh community and expressed concern that its closure could weaken cultural connections that have developed over many generations. Objectors often stated that Welsh-medium village schools play a unique role in ensuring that cultural traditions remain visible and relevant within everyday community life.

Many respondents highlighted the role that the school plays in transmitting Welsh culture between generations. References were frequently made to family histories connected to the school and to the importance of children learning within an environment where Welsh culture is embedded in daily activities. Several objectors described how attendance at the school helped strengthen children's understanding of Welsh heritage and encouraged participation in cultural events and community activities. Parents often explained that the school supports a sense of pride in Welsh identity and creates opportunities for children to engage with local history, traditions and customs. Some respondents suggested that the cultural influence of the school extends into family and community life, helping to maintain traditions and values that are important to the character of the area.

A recurring concern throughout the objections was that the closure of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim would contribute to the gradual erosion of Welsh cultural life within the community. Respondents frequently argued that schools are central to sustaining local culture and that the loss of a Welsh-medium village school could weaken opportunities for future generations to engage with their cultural heritage. Several submissions referred to wider concerns regarding the decline of Welsh-speaking rural communities and suggested that closure would remove an important cultural anchor from the area. Objectors often viewed the school as one of the key institutions through which cultural identity is maintained and expressed concern that dispersing pupils to different schools could reduce the

strength of cultural connections that currently exist within the community. Many argued that preserving cultural continuity should be regarded as an important consideration when determining the future of the school.

Many respondents emphasised that the value of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim cannot be measured solely through pupil numbers, finances or educational outcomes. Instead, objectors argued that the school contributes significantly to the preservation of a living Welsh culture and identity which remain deeply embedded within the community. Several respondents stated that village schools provide opportunities for children to experience Welsh culture naturally as part of everyday life rather than solely through formal lessons. Concerns were expressed that closure could undermine the long-term sustainability of Welsh cultural identity within the locality and reduce opportunities for future generations to develop the same sense of connection to their community and heritage. The prevailing view among respondents was that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim serves as an important cultural institution whose contribution to Welsh identity should be recognised alongside its educational and community functions.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority appreciates the concerns raised by respondents regarding the contribution that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim makes to the promotion and preservation of Welsh culture and identity within the local community. Many objectors emphasised that the school's role extends beyond the delivery of education and includes supporting pupils' understanding of their heritage, language, traditions and connection to place. The Authority recognises that schools, particularly Welsh-medium schools in rural communities, often play an important role in nurturing cultural awareness and providing opportunities for children to engage with Welsh traditions, history and values. The views expressed by respondents demonstrate the significance that many members of the community attach to the school's cultural contribution and have been carefully considered as part of the overall assessment of the proposal.

The Authority also acknowledges the view that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim helps to strengthen Welsh identity by providing a learning environment in which Welsh culture forms a natural part of everyday school life. Respondents highlighted the school's role in encouraging participation in cultural activities and fostering a sense of pride in Welsh heritage among pupils and their families. The Authority recognises the importance of these experiences and accepts that cultural identity can be positively influenced by participation in school-based and community activities. However, it is also important to recognise that the promotion of Welsh culture is a feature of Welsh-medium education

more broadly and is not unique to a single school. Welsh cultural experiences, celebrations and opportunities for engagement form an integral part of the curriculum and wider life of Welsh-medium schools across the county.

In considering the proposal, the Authority has carefully assessed whether pupils would continue to have opportunities to develop their understanding of Welsh culture, language and identity within the proposed receiving schools. The Authority is satisfied that both Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog actively promote Welsh culture through their curricula, enrichment activities, participation in cultural events and day-to-day school life. Learners transferring as a result of the proposal would continue to be educated in environments where the Welsh language, heritage and traditions are valued and actively encouraged.

Furthermore, both schools deliver the Curriculum for Wales, including the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience. One of the Statements of What Matters within this Area recognises the importance of equipping learners, as citizens of a bilingual Wales in a multilingual world, with the skills to use Welsh, English and other languages in a range of contexts. The Curriculum also recognises that meaningful language learning experiences support learners' understanding of their own cultural identity and that of others, fostering a sense of belonging, pride in Wales and an appreciation of Welsh culture and heritage.

Through the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales and the schools' wider commitment to promoting Welsh language and culture, learners would continue to have opportunities to develop their understanding of Welsh identity, participate in Welsh cultural experiences and strengthen their connection with their local and national heritage. The Authority therefore does not consider that the proposal would result in pupils losing access to opportunities that support the development of Welsh cultural awareness, identity or a sense of belonging within Welsh-speaking communities.

The Authority acknowledges concerns that the closure of a Welsh-medium village school may be perceived as a loss to the cultural life of the community and accepts that schools can act as important centres of cultural participation and local identity. Respondents expressed concern that the removal of the school could weaken connections between culture, community and future generations. These concerns have been considered alongside the findings of the updated Welsh Language Impact Assessment and updated Community Impact Assessment. While the Authority recognises the symbolic and cultural significance of the school within the locality, it must also consider whether educational provision remains sustainable and capable of meeting future needs. The Authority's assessment has concluded that Welsh cultural and linguistic opportunities would

continue to be available to pupils through neighbouring Welsh-medium schools and through the wider network of cultural and community activities that exist across the area.

The Authority fully recognises the importance of protecting and promoting Welsh culture and identity as part of its wider responsibilities. However, school organisation decisions must balance cultural considerations against a range of other factors, including educational standards, learner outcomes, financial sustainability, leadership capacity, pupil projections and the effective use of public resources. Having considered all available evidence, the Authority remains satisfied that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on pupils' ability to engage with Welsh culture or develop a strong Welsh identity. The Authority is confident that these important cultural benefits can continue to be maintained and supported within the proposed receiving schools while ensuring that educational provision remains sustainable, resilient and capable of meeting the needs of future generations.

10.	Consultation Process and Decision-Making Concerns	33	41%
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A substantial number of respondents expressed concerns regarding the consultation process and the manner in which the proposal to close Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim had been developed and presented. Many objectors stated that they did not feel their views had been fully taken into account during the various stages of the process and questioned whether the consultation genuinely provided an opportunity to influence the outcome. Several respondents acknowledged that opportunities to submit responses had been made available but argued that the process appeared focused on progressing towards closure rather than exploring all available options. A recurring concern was that community engagement had not resulted in any significant changes to the proposal despite the volume of objections received and the alternative suggestions put forward by stakeholders. Many respondents therefore expressed concerns regarding the degree to which consultation responses would influence the final decision.

Many objectors referred specifically to what they perceived as a predetermined approach to decision-making. Several respondents stated that they felt closure had been identified as the preferred outcome from an early stage in the process and that subsequent consultation activities were directed towards justifying that conclusion. Concerns were raised that the views of parents, governors, community organisations and local residents had not been given sufficient weight when compared with financial and organisational considerations. Some respondents suggested that alternative proposals submitted by the Governing Body and wider community had not received the

same level of consideration as the closure proposal itself. As a result, a number of objectors expressed frustration that significant efforts undertaken by stakeholders to identify alternative solutions appeared to have had limited impact on the progress of the proposal.

A recurring theme within the objections was the desire for greater transparency and engagement throughout the process. Several respondents reported difficulties in understanding how particular conclusions had been reached and expressed concern regarding changes made to aspects of the proposal during consultation and the statutory notice period. Others questioned whether sufficient explanation had been provided regarding the assessment of alternatives put forward by governors and community representatives. Some parents and governors indicated that requests for information had not always received timely responses and argued that this had contributed to uncertainty and reduced confidence in the process. Objectors frequently suggested that closer collaboration between the Council, the Governing Body and community stakeholders could have resulted in a more constructive consideration of alternative approaches to addressing the challenges facing the school.

Many respondents concluded that confidence in the decision-making process had been weakened by a combination of perceived inconsistencies, limited engagement regarding alternative proposals and uncertainty regarding how objections were being evaluated. Several submissions argued that decisions relating to rural schools should involve particularly careful consideration because of their potential long-term impact on communities, children and the Welsh language. Respondents frequently stated that they were not opposed to scrutiny of the school's future but wished to see a process that demonstrated clear evidence that all viable alternatives had been explored fully before closure was considered. The overall view expressed by objectors was that greater transparency, engagement and collaboration would strengthen confidence in the process and help ensure that any final decision reflects a balanced assessment of educational, community, linguistic and financial considerations.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority acknowledges and understands the concerns raised by respondents regarding the consultation process and the development of the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. The Authority recognises that proposals of this nature can generate strong views and significant public interest, particularly where schools play an important role within their local communities. The consultation process was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Welsh Government's School

Organisation Code. Throughout the process, the Authority has sought to ensure that stakeholders were provided with opportunities to engage with the proposal, obtain information, ask questions and submit their views for consideration. All consultation responses and objections received have been carefully reviewed as part of the decision-making process and have informed the preparation of both the Consultation Report and the Objection Report.

The Authority acknowledges that some respondents felt the proposal had been predetermined or that closure had been identified as the preferred outcome from an early stage. However, the Authority wishes to emphasise that the purpose of the consultation process is not to secure support for a predetermined decision, but to gather evidence, views and information that can assist decision-makers in assessing the merits and potential impacts of the proposal. The identification of a preferred option at the commencement of consultation is a standard feature of statutory school organisation processes and reflects the Authority's preliminary assessment of the available evidence.

The Authority would also emphasise that both the School Organisation Code and the Local Authority's own decision-making processes establish a lengthy and robust framework for the consideration of school organisation proposals. The process incorporates a number of stages, including the development of a consultation document, a formal consultation period, publication of a consultation report, consideration of all consultation responses received, publication of a statutory notice, an objection period and, where applicable, further consideration of objections prior to any final determination being made. These stages are specifically designed to ensure that stakeholders have meaningful opportunities to contribute their views, challenge assumptions, identify potential impacts and provide additional evidence for consideration.

The consultation and objection processes are therefore a fundamental part of the decision-making framework rather than procedural formalities. Information received throughout these stages can influence the Authority's assessment of a proposal and enables decision-makers to consider the educational, community, linguistic, financial and socio-economic implications in detail before reaching a final determination. All representations received form part of the evidence base presented to decision-makers and are considered alongside other relevant information gathered throughout the process.

The Authority also acknowledges concerns regarding the consideration of alternatives to closure. Throughout the review process, a range of options and representations submitted by governors, parents, community organisations and other stakeholders have been considered alongside the

proposal itself. The Authority recognises the commitment and effort demonstrated by those seeking to identify alternative approaches to addressing the challenges facing the school.

As noted previously, the School Organisation Code requires Local Authorities to consider a range of alternative options when reviewing school provision and developing school organisation proposals. The requirement is to give proper consideration to reasonable alternatives and assess their potential merits, rather than to implement any particular alternative option. Consequently, all alternatives put forward during the review process have been examined and assessed against the same evidence base and evaluation criteria applied to the Authority's preferred proposal.

In considering these alternatives, the Authority has assessed factors including educational sustainability, pupil projections, financial viability, leadership capacity, the impact on Welsh-medium provision, community implications and the long-term resilience of education provision within the area. Whilst alternative suggestions have contributed to the Authority's understanding of local views and circumstances, they must also be capable of addressing the underlying issues identified through the review process.

The Authority is satisfied that the alternatives presented have been appropriately considered and evaluated as part of the statutory process. The decision to progress the proposal to consultation was informed by a balanced assessment of the available evidence, including stakeholder views and the potential advantages and disadvantages associated with alternative options. The subsequent consultation, statutory notice and objection stages have provided additional opportunities for stakeholders to challenge the Authority's assessment, submit further evidence and raise matters requiring further consideration before any final determination is made.

The Authority further acknowledges concerns regarding transparency, communication and the provision of information during the consultation and statutory notice periods. The Authority is committed to ensuring that stakeholders have access to accurate and up-to-date information throughout the process. Where amendments or clarifications to information have been required, these have been made in order to improve accuracy and support informed engagement. The Authority recognises that consultation exercises can raise complex issues and that stakeholders may not always agree with the conclusions reached. However, it remains committed to conducting the process openly and transparently, ensuring that reports, supporting documentation and responses to key issues are made available to decision-makers and the wider public.

The Authority accepts that confidence in school organisation processes is essential, particularly where proposals have the potential to affect pupils, families and communities over the long term.

For that reason, careful consideration has been given to all objections received, including those relating to the process itself. While respondents may hold differing views regarding the merits of the proposal, the Authority is satisfied that the consultation and statutory notice procedures have been conducted in accordance with legislative requirements and that all representations have been considered appropriately.

Having considered all representations received alongside the wider evidence base, the Authority remains satisfied that the proposal has been developed and assessed in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code and that decision-makers are able to determine the proposal based on the full range of evidence available.

Having considered all representations received together with the wider evidence base, the Authority remains satisfied that the proposal has been developed and assessed in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code and that it is appropriate for decision-makers to determine the proposal based upon the full range of evidence available.

Nonetheless, the Authority operates a continuous lessons learned approach and is committed to refining and strengthening its procedures. Any feedback provided through this process will be carefully considered and, where appropriate, used to inform future engagement and consultation activities.

11.	Educational Standards and School Performance	33	41%
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Many respondents highlighted the quality of education currently provided at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and argued that the school's educational performance should be viewed as a significant factor when considering its future. Parents, grandparents, former pupils and community members frequently referred to positive educational experiences and outcomes associated with the school. Several objectors noted that pupils develop strong literacy, numeracy and communication skills and progress successfully through their primary education. Respondents often described the school as a place where children are encouraged to achieve their potential and where learning takes place within a supportive and nurturing environment. Many argued that the quality of education being delivered demonstrates that the school remains a successful educational setting despite the challenges associated with operating as a small rural school.

A recurring theme throughout the objections was the progress made by the school in recent years. Several respondents referred to the improvements achieved by staff, governors and pupils and

highlighted the school's successful journey out of Estyn special measures. Objectors frequently cited this achievement as evidence of the school's ability to respond positively to challenges and continue improving educational provision. Many expressed concern that closure was being proposed at a time when the school had demonstrated clear evidence of improvement and increasing stability. Respondents suggested that the progress achieved should be recognised and built upon rather than interrupted through closure. A number of submissions also noted that staff and governors had shown resilience and commitment throughout a period of considerable uncertainty and argued that this should strengthen confidence in the school's future prospects.

Many respondents also emphasised the broader educational benefits experienced by pupils attending the school. Parents frequently described children achieving academically while simultaneously developing confidence, independence and positive social skills. Several former pupils reflected on their own experiences and stated that the education they received at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim provided a strong foundation for future study, employment and personal development. Some respondents highlighted examples of pupils progressing successfully into secondary education and beyond, including achievements in higher education and professional careers. It was argued that these outcomes demonstrate the effectiveness of the school's approach and challenge assumptions that larger schools necessarily provide superior educational opportunities. Objectors frequently maintained that the quality of education should be assessed through the achievements and development of pupils rather than by school size alone.

Several respondents argued that educational standards should be considered alongside wider educational experiences and opportunities available to children. Objections frequently referred to the strong relationships between staff and pupils, personalised learning approaches and the school's ability to support children with varying abilities and needs. Many respondents believed that these factors contribute directly to educational success and help explain the positive outcomes achieved by pupils. A common view expressed throughout the objections was that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim is not a failing school requiring closure but rather a successful school that continues to deliver positive educational outcomes for its pupils. Respondents therefore argued that the quality of educational provision currently being delivered should be recognised as an important strength of the school and afforded significant weight in determining its future.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority accepts the views expressed by respondents regarding the quality of education provided at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and recognises the positive experiences described by parents,

former pupils, governors and members of the wider community. Many objectors highlighted the school's achievements in supporting pupils' academic progress, personal development and wellbeing. The Authority recognises that stakeholders take great pride in the school's successes and values the commitment shown by staff, governors and pupils in creating a positive learning environment. The educational achievements of learners, together with the experiences reported by respondents, have been carefully considered as part of the assessment of the proposal.

The Authority also acknowledges the progress made by the school in recent years, including the work undertaken to address previous challenges and improve educational provision. Respondents frequently referred to the school's successful journey out of Estyn special measures and highlighted this as evidence of the school's capacity for improvement. The Authority recognises the considerable efforts made by school leaders, staff, governors and pupils in achieving these improvements and accepts that this progress demonstrates a strong commitment to raising standards and enhancing outcomes for learners.

The Authority acknowledges that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim was removed from Estyn special measures in December 2025 and recognises this as a significant achievement for the school, its staff, governors and learners. The Authority accepts that this demonstrates progress in addressing the issues previously identified by Estyn and reflects the commitment shown by the school community. However, whilst this improvement is welcomed and has been fully considered as part of the review process, it does not alter the wider factors that informed the proposal. The school continues to face challenges relating to low pupil numbers, a high level of surplus capacity, financial sustainability and leadership resilience. Consequently, whilst the removal from special measures is an important positive development, the broader concerns regarding the long-term sustainability and viability of the school remain.

However, whilst educational standards are a key consideration in any school organisation proposal, they are not the sole factor that must be considered when determining the long-term future of a school. The statutory framework requires the Authority to consider a broad range of factors, including pupil numbers, financial sustainability, surplus capacity, leadership resilience, Welsh-medium provision and the long-term viability of educational provision. The Authority recognises that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim is not being proposed for closure because it is a failing school. Rather, the proposal has arisen from wider challenges relating to sustainability and the Authority's responsibility to ensure that educational provision across the county remains resilient and capable of meeting

future needs. Consequently, the educational strengths identified by respondents must be considered alongside a wider range of organisational and strategic factors.

The Authority further acknowledges respondents' views that positive educational outcomes can be achieved within small school environments and that school effectiveness should not be judged solely on the basis of size. The Authority agrees that school size alone is not a reliable indicator of educational quality. Evidence from Estyn consistently demonstrates that the most significant factors influencing learner outcomes are the quality of leadership, teaching and support provided within a school. In assessing the proposal, the Authority has therefore examined the capacity of the receiving schools to maintain high educational standards and provide effective teaching and learning opportunities for pupils transferring as a result of the proposal. The Authority is satisfied that the proposed receiving schools have appropriate leadership arrangements, staffing structures and educational provision in place to support continued learner progress and achievement.

The Authority recognises that many respondents believe the school's recent improvements should be afforded significant weight within the decision-making process. These views have been carefully considered alongside all other evidence gathered throughout the consultation and objection periods. Whilst the Authority fully acknowledges the positive educational provision currently offered by Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and the achievements of its pupils, it must also take account of longer-term sustainability considerations. Having considered all relevant factors, the Authority remains satisfied that the educational needs of learners can continue to be met effectively through the proposed receiving schools and that the proposal represents a balanced approach to securing sustainable, high-quality education provision for current and future generations of pupils.

12.	Future Pupil Numbers, Housing Growth and Sustainability	32	38%
Many respondents questioned the assumptions used to assess the future viability of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and expressed concern that projections of future pupil numbers may not fully reflect changing local circumstances. Objectors frequently argued that current enrolment figures provide only a snapshot in time and do not necessarily represent the long-term demand for school places within the area. Several respondents referred to young children already living within the catchment area who had not yet reached school age, together with younger siblings of current pupils who would be expected to attend the school in future years. Many objectors suggested that these factors indicate continued demand for local educational provision and argued that future sustainability			

should be assessed over a longer period rather than being based primarily on present pupil numbers. Respondents frequently expressed the view that the school's future prospects were stronger than portrayed within the proposal documentation.

A significant number of objections referred specifically to planned and potential housing developments within Meidrim and surrounding communities. Respondents argued that additional housing is likely to result in increased numbers of families moving into the area, thereby creating additional demand for school places. Several objectors questioned whether the full impact of future residential development had been adequately reflected within pupil forecasts and highlighted examples of developments that they believed could generate additional enrolment over time. Some respondents also noted that access to a local school often influences housing choices and argued that the continued presence of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim could help attract and retain young families within the area. Concerns were raised that closing the school could undermine opportunities for future growth by making the village less attractive to prospective residents.

Many respondents also suggested that uncertainty surrounding the closure proposal may itself have influenced enrolment patterns and parental decision-making. Several objectors argued that some families may have chosen not to enrol their children at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim because of concerns regarding the school's future, despite a desire to access local Welsh-medium education. It was suggested that prolonged uncertainty can affect parental confidence and create difficulties in recruiting future pupils. Some respondents therefore argued that current enrolment figures may not provide a fully reliable indicator of future demand, particularly if uncertainty surrounding the proposal has already influenced choices made by parents. Several submissions suggested that, were the future of the school secured, enrolment levels might improve as confidence in the long-term availability of provision increased.

Throughout the objections, a recurring view was that greater emphasis should be placed on future opportunities for growth and sustainability rather than focusing solely on current challenges. Many respondents argued that the school remains an important community asset capable of adapting and developing in response to changing circumstances. References were made to proposals involving expanded community use, childcare provision, partnership working and other initiatives intended to strengthen the school's long-term viability. Objectors frequently stated that rural schools should be assessed not only on present numbers but also on their potential contribution to future community sustainability, population retention and local regeneration. The overall view expressed by respondents was that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim possesses realistic opportunities for future growth

and that closure at this stage could remove an important asset before those opportunities have been fully realised or evaluated.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority is mindful of the concerns raised by respondents regarding future pupil numbers and the long-term sustainability of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Many objectors questioned whether current enrolment figures provide a complete picture of future demand for school places and highlighted the presence of younger children within the catchment area who may attend the school in future years. The Authority recognises that pupil numbers can fluctuate over time and that forecasting future enrolment involves a degree of uncertainty. For this reason, the Authority's assessment has not been based solely on current pupil numbers, but has also taken account of demographic trends, birth rate data, historic enrolment patterns and pupil projections over a number of years. These factors have been considered to provide the most robust and evidence-based assessment possible of the school's future viability.

The Authority also acknowledges the views expressed regarding planned and potential housing developments within Meidrim and the surrounding area. Respondents argued that additional housing could increase the number of families living locally and generate future demand for school places. The Authority recognises that residential development has the potential to influence pupil numbers and, where relevant information is available, such developments are considered as part of forecasting methodologies. However, the Authority must base its assessment on evidence that is sufficiently certain and quantifiable. While proposed developments may contribute to future population growth, there can be considerable uncertainty regarding the timing, scale, occupancy rates and demographic profile of new housing schemes. Consequently, pupil place planning cannot rely exclusively on potential future developments where the extent of their educational impact cannot yet be determined with confidence.

The Authority has also considered concerns that uncertainty surrounding the proposal may have influenced parental choice and enrolment patterns. Some respondents suggested that families may have chosen alternative schools because of concerns regarding the future of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and argued that pupil numbers could increase if certainty regarding the school's future were restored. The Authority acknowledges these views and recognises that a range of factors can influence parental decision-making. However, analysis of pupil numbers and admission patterns indicates that the challenges facing the school have developed over a period and cannot be attributed solely to the current proposal. Long-term trends relating to enrolment, demographic

change and surplus capacity have formed a key part of the assessment and have been examined alongside more recent developments.

The Authority further acknowledges the suggestions put forward by respondents regarding future opportunities to strengthen the school's sustainability. Throughout the consultation and review process, representations were received relating to community initiatives, childcare provision, partnership working, increased community use and other measures intended to support future growth. The Authority welcomes the commitment demonstrated by governors, parents and community stakeholders in seeking to secure the future of the school and has carefully considered these proposals as part of the wider review process. However, in evaluating future sustainability, it is necessary to assess not only the potential benefits of such initiatives but also the extent to which they are likely to address the underlying challenges associated with pupil numbers, financial sustainability and long-term viability.

While the Authority recognises that there may be opportunities for future growth within the community, school organisation decisions must be based on the best available evidence regarding both current circumstances and future projections. The Authority has carefully considered demographic information, pupil forecasts, housing-related data and representations received during the consultation and objection processes. Having reviewed all relevant evidence, the Authority remains satisfied that the proposal reflects a balanced assessment of the school's long-term sustainability and future prospects. Whilst recognising the optimism expressed by objectors regarding potential growth, the Authority considers that the evidence currently available does not provide sufficient assurance that any future increases in pupil numbers would significantly alter the long-term challenges facing the school. The Authority therefore remains of the view that the proposal represents an appropriate and sustainable response to the educational, organisational and financial considerations identified through the review process.

13.	Transport, Travel and Accessibility	31	37%
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Many respondents raised concerns regarding the increased travel distances that would result from the closure of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and the requirement for pupils to attend alternative schools outside their immediate community. Objectors frequently stated that one of the key advantages of the existing arrangement is that children can attend a school located within or close to the village in which they live. Several respondents argued that attending a local school enables children to maintain a strong connection with their community while reducing the need for lengthy daily

journeys. Concerns were expressed that younger pupils, in particular, may find longer journeys tiring and disruptive, especially during the winter months or periods of adverse weather. Many objectors viewed the availability of nearby educational provision as an important benefit for both children and families and argued that this should be considered carefully when evaluating the proposal.

A recurring issue throughout the objections related to road safety and the challenges associated with travelling on rural routes. Many respondents referred to the nature of local roads, including narrow lanes, limited passing places, poor weather conditions and seasonal flooding. Several objectors expressed concerns that longer journeys could expose children and families to increased risks, particularly during periods of heavy rainfall, ice or storms. Some respondents highlighted specific difficulties experienced in travelling within rural areas and questioned whether journey times and accessibility issues had been fully reflected within the proposal. It was argued that the practical realities of travelling in a rural environment are often different from those experienced in more urban locations and that these considerations should form an important part of the assessment process.

Many parents and carers also highlighted the practical implications that increased travel would have on family life. Respondents frequently referred to the impact on daily routines, childcare arrangements and work commitments. Several objectors explained that having a local school enables families to manage school runs more efficiently and provides greater flexibility when balancing employment and caring responsibilities. Concerns were expressed that transporting children to schools located further away could increase travel costs, extend commuting times and place additional pressures on working families. Some respondents also noted that attending a local school facilitates participation in after-school activities, community events and social opportunities which may become more difficult if children are required to travel greater distances each day. Many objectors therefore viewed accessibility as an important factor affecting both educational participation and wider family wellbeing.

Several respondents argued that the proposal could also have wider implications for pupils' connection to their community. Objectors frequently stated that attending a school within the village enables children to develop friendships with peers from the local area, participate in community activities and build a stronger sense of belonging. Concerns were raised that travelling to schools outside the community may reduce opportunities for children to engage with village life and weaken local social networks over time. Many respondents considered the relationship between accessibility, community participation and educational experience to be closely linked and argued that the benefits of having a local school extend beyond transport arrangements alone. The overall

view expressed throughout the objections was that increased travel distances, potential safety concerns and the practical impact on families represent significant considerations that should be taken into account when assessing the future of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority acknowledges the concerns raised by respondents regarding the potential impact of the proposal on travel arrangements, accessibility and pupil journeys to school. Many objectors emphasised the benefits of having a school located within the local community and highlighted the convenience this provides for pupils and their families. The Authority recognises that access to local educational provision can contribute positively to family routines, community participation and pupils' sense of connection to their surroundings. These matters have been carefully considered throughout the development of the proposal and form part of the wider assessment of its potential impact on learners and families.

The Authority also acknowledges concerns regarding increased travel distances and journey times should pupils transfer to alternative schools. As part of the proposal process, detailed consideration has been given to the location of potential receiving schools, estimated travel distances, journey times and eligibility for school transport assistance. The Authority recognises that any increase in travel time may represent a significant change for some pupils and families. However, it is also noted that travel to school is a feature of education provision for many learners across Carmarthenshire's rural communities, where pupils routinely access schools outside their immediate villages. The Authority is satisfied that suitable alternative Welsh-medium provision is available within reasonable travelling distances and that eligible learners would continue to receive transport assistance in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy.

The Authority recognises the concerns expressed regarding road safety and the practical challenges associated with travelling on rural roads. Objectors highlighted issues including narrow roads, adverse weather conditions, flooding and seasonal travel difficulties. These concerns are understood and have been considered as part of the assessment process. The Authority places significant importance on learner safety and would ensure that any transport arrangements provided comply with relevant legislation, safety requirements and contractual standards. Existing transport routes across rural areas of the county already operate within similar conditions, and the Authority works closely with transport providers to ensure that routes are regularly reviewed and managed appropriately. Whilst recognising the particular challenges that can arise within rural areas, the

Authority is satisfied that these matters can be appropriately managed through established transport arrangements and procedures.

The Authority also acknowledges respondents' concerns regarding the potential impact of increased travel on family life, childcare arrangements and wider participation in school activities. Many parents highlighted the role that a local school currently plays in supporting daily routines and facilitating involvement in educational and community events. The Authority accepts that changes to school locations may require some families to adjust established arrangements. However, it is also important to consider that pupils would continue to have access to a broad range of educational, extracurricular and wellbeing opportunities within the receiving schools. The Authority is confident that appropriate transition planning and communication with families would help support pupils and parents throughout any changes arising from the proposal.

The Authority further acknowledges the view that attending a local village school can strengthen children's connection to their community and support participation in local activities and friendships. These wider social considerations have been examined through the Community Impact Assessment and have informed the overall evaluation of the proposal. However, school organisation decisions must balance accessibility considerations against other important factors, including educational quality, pupil numbers, leadership capacity, financial sustainability and the long-term viability of provision. Having considered all available evidence, the Authority remains satisfied that pupils would continue to have access to suitable Welsh-medium education within safe and supportive learning environments. Whilst recognising the concerns expressed regarding transport and accessibility, the Authority does not consider that these impacts are of such a magnitude as to outweigh the wider educational and organisational considerations supporting the proposal.

14.	Alternative Proposals Not Fully Explored	29	35%
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A significant number of respondents argued that closure should not proceed because a range of alternative options had been identified which, in their view, had not been fully explored or sufficiently developed before the proposal was progressed. Objectors frequently stated that the discussion had become focused on closure as the primary solution to the challenges facing the school, rather than giving equal consideration to measures that could support its future sustainability. Several respondents acknowledged the financial and organisational pressures facing the education service but argued that these challenges did not automatically require the permanent closure of the school.

Many believed that further work should be undertaken to investigate options capable of maintaining educational provision within the village whilst addressing concerns regarding pupil numbers, leadership arrangements and financial viability. The recurring view was that closure should only be considered once all realistic alternatives had been thoroughly examined and demonstrated to be unworkable.

Many objections referred specifically to proposals developed by the Governing Body, community representatives and local organisations. Respondents highlighted suggestions relating to federation arrangements, shared leadership models and greater collaboration with neighbouring schools. Several objectors argued that these approaches have been implemented successfully elsewhere and could potentially reduce costs whilst preserving local educational provision. It was also suggested that partnership arrangements may provide opportunities to strengthen leadership capacity, improve efficiency and share resources more effectively across schools. Many respondents expressed disappointment that these options had not progressed further and argued that their potential benefits had not been fully assessed before the closure proposal advanced to the statutory stage.

A recurring theme throughout the objections was the belief that the school possesses opportunities for future development which could contribute to its long-term sustainability. Respondents frequently referred to proposals involving expanded childcare provision, wraparound services, early years activities and wider community use of school facilities. Several submissions also highlighted proposals associated with renewable energy initiatives, community partnerships and external funding opportunities which, it was argued, could generate additional income or reduce operational costs. Objectors suggested that these initiatives could increase the school's role within the community whilst supporting pupil recruitment and financial sustainability. Many respondents believed that the combination of these measures could create a stronger and more resilient model for the future and questioned whether sufficient time had been allowed for their potential to be fully explored.

Many respondents expressed the view that the community had demonstrated a strong willingness to work collaboratively in developing solutions to the challenges facing the school. Several objectors referred to the significant efforts made by governors, parents, community groups and local stakeholders to identify and present constructive alternatives. Respondents frequently argued that this level of commitment reflects the value placed upon the school and should be viewed as a positive foundation upon which future plans could be built. Concerns were raised that progressing

directly towards closure risked overlooking opportunities for innovation, partnership and community-led development. The overall view expressed through the objections was that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim remains a viable and valued community asset and that a broader range of alternative options should be fully considered before any final decision regarding closure is made.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority notes the concerns raised by respondents regarding the consideration of alternatives to closure and recognises the significant efforts undertaken by governors, parents, community organisations and local stakeholders to identify potential solutions for the future of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. The Authority appreciates the commitment demonstrated throughout the consultation and objection process and acknowledges the strong desire within the community to retain educational provision within the village. The alternative proposals submitted have been carefully reviewed and have formed an important part of the Authority's assessment of the school's future. The Authority recognises that respondents wish to ensure that closure is only considered once all realistic and viable alternatives have been fully evaluated. As noted previously, the School Organisation Code does not require alternative options to be implemented.

The Authority wishes to emphasise that the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim was developed following a detailed review process during which a range of options were considered. In assessing alternative options, the Authority has been required to consider not only their potential benefits but also their ability to address the underlying challenges facing the school, including declining pupil numbers, surplus capacity, financial sustainability, leadership resilience and long-term viability. The Authority acknowledges that some alternatives may offer short-term benefits or mitigate certain pressures; however, the key consideration is whether such measures provide a realistic and sustainable long-term solution.

The Authority also acknowledges the specific proposals put forward by respondents relating to federation arrangements, shared leadership models and increased collaboration with neighbouring schools. These approaches have been considered as part of the review process and are recognised as arrangements that have been utilised successfully in some circumstances elsewhere. However, the Authority notes that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim has already operated within collaborative leadership arrangements and that these measures have not reversed the longer-term challenges relating to pupil numbers and financial sustainability. Whilst collaboration can strengthen resilience and support operational effectiveness, it does not in itself guarantee long-term viability where underlying demographic and enrolment trends remain unchanged. The Authority must therefore

consider whether alternative governance or leadership structures are capable of securing sustainable provision over the longer term.

The Authority further acknowledges proposals relating to expanded childcare provision, wraparound services, increased community use of facilities, renewable energy initiatives and opportunities to secure external funding. These suggestions demonstrate a positive and proactive commitment from the community to strengthening the school's future prospects. The Authority recognises that such initiatives may provide additional benefits to the school and wider community and has considered these proposals carefully. However, it is necessary to distinguish between measures that may generate additional activity or limited revenue and those capable of addressing the fundamental challenges identified through the review process. While some proposals may contribute positively to the school's operation, the Authority has not identified sufficient evidence that the cumulative impact of these initiatives would fundamentally alter the long-term sustainability assessment or provide certainty regarding future pupil growth.

The Authority greatly values the constructive engagement shown by stakeholders throughout the process and recognises the strength of community support for the school. However, school organisation decisions must be informed by robust evidence and a realistic assessment of future viability. Having considered the alternative proposals presented during the consultation and objection periods, alongside demographic forecasts, financial information, educational considerations and organisational factors, the Authority remains satisfied that the options put forward have been appropriately evaluated. Whilst acknowledging the aspirations and commitment of the community, the Authority remains of the view that the proposal represents the most sustainable and effective long-term solution for educational provision in the area. The Authority is therefore satisfied that reasonable alternatives have been considered and that the proposal has been developed following a balanced assessment of all available evidence. Further detail on alternative options can be found in Section 8 of this report.

15.	Community Hub and Wider Community Use	29	34%
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Many respondents highlighted that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim fulfils a function that extends significantly beyond the delivery of education and serves as an important community hub for residents of the village and surrounding area. Objectors frequently described the school as a focal point for a wide range of activities that bring people together and strengthen community life. References were made to school concerts, fundraising events, social gatherings, sporting activities

and community celebrations which take place throughout the year and encourage participation from people of all ages. Several respondents argued that the school provides one of the few remaining venues where members of the community can come together regularly and maintain social connections. Many objectors expressed concern that closure would not only remove educational provision from the village but would also result in the loss of a valuable community resource that supports social interaction and engagement.

A recurring theme throughout the objections was the role of the school in supporting families beyond the formal school day. Respondents referred to a range of activities and services linked to the school, including parent and toddler groups, early years provision, family events and other initiatives that help strengthen relationships between families and support young children before they enter statutory education. Several objectors noted that these activities provide important opportunities for parents to meet, share experiences and establish support networks within the community. It was argued that the school's role in supporting families begins long before children enrol and continues throughout their educational journey. Many respondents viewed these wider benefits as an important element of the school's contribution to village life and expressed concern that closure could reduce opportunities for families to access locally based support and community activities.

Many respondents also referred to proposals that would further develop the school's role as a community asset. Objectors frequently highlighted ideas put forward by governors, parents and community organisations to expand the use of school facilities and increase community engagement. Suggestions included greater integration of childcare services, additional community programmes, wellbeing initiatives, adult learning opportunities and enhanced partnerships with local organisations. Several respondents argued that the school's facilities provide a valuable resource that could be utilised more extensively to meet local needs and support the long-term sustainability of both the school and the wider community. It was suggested that these opportunities had the potential to strengthen the viability of the school whilst delivering additional social benefits for residents.

Throughout the objections, respondents consistently emphasised that the value of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim should not be assessed solely in terms of pupil numbers or educational outcomes. Many argued that the school functions as an important community asset that contributes to social wellbeing, community cohesion and local resilience. Several objectors expressed concern that closure would remove a central gathering place from the village and diminish opportunities for community participation and collaboration. It was frequently stated that once such facilities are lost

they are difficult to replace and that the wider social impacts may be felt long after educational provision has been transferred elsewhere. The overall view expressed by respondents was that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim performs an important community function which extends beyond education and that this contribution should be fully recognised when considering the future of the school.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority has carefully considered the concerns raised by respondents regarding the wider role of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim as a community hub and recognises that many stakeholders view the school as an important focal point for village life. Objectors highlighted the school's contribution to a range of activities that extend beyond its educational function, including community events, fundraising activities, performances, celebrations and opportunities for social engagement. The Authority recognises that schools in rural communities often serve purposes beyond the provision of education and can play an important role in fostering community participation, strengthening social connections and supporting local identity. These wider community benefits have been carefully considered throughout the consultation and objection process and have informed the Community Impact Assessment undertaken as part of the proposal.

The Authority also acknowledges the importance respondents placed on the school's role in supporting families and providing opportunities for community engagement outside the formal school day. Stakeholders referred to activities involving children, parents and families that contribute to social wellbeing and help create support networks within the local community. The Authority recognises the value of these opportunities and accepts that schools can provide an important environment in which relationships are established and maintained. Community use is an important consideration, but it must be balanced alongside educational, financial and organisational factors.

The Authority has carefully considered representations regarding opportunities to further develop the school's contribution to the community through increased use of its facilities, childcare provision, family services, wellbeing initiatives and partnerships with local organisations. The Authority welcomes the commitment shown by governors, parents and community stakeholders in identifying innovative approaches to supporting both the school and the wider community. These proposals have been reviewed as part of the broader consideration of alternatives to closure. Whilst recognising the potential benefits that such initiatives may bring, the Authority must evaluate whether they are likely to address the underlying challenges facing the school, including declining pupil numbers, financial sustainability, surplus capacity and long-term viability. The Authority has

not identified sufficient evidence to demonstrate that increased community use alone would fundamentally alter the sustainability position of the school.

The Authority is also aware that the Meidrim community currently benefits from a well-used Youth Hall, which provides a venue for a range of community activities and events. In considering representations regarding the future community role of the school, the Authority has also considered the extent of existing community provision within the village. Whilst additional activities at the school may provide further opportunities for engagement, any expansion of provision outside school hours could have implications for the use and sustainability of existing community facilities. It is therefore important to consider the potential impact that duplication of facilities and activities may have on established community venues. These factors have been taken into account in assessing the community implications of the proposal.

The Authority also acknowledges concerns that the closure of the school could result in the loss of an important venue for community gatherings and reduce opportunities for social interaction within the village. Respondents expressed the view that the school provides one of the few remaining locations where residents regularly come together and participate in shared activities. The Authority understands these concerns and accepts that any proposal to discontinue a village school may have wider implications for community life. However, it is important to note that the future use of the school site would be considered separately should the proposal proceed. In accordance with the Council's policies relating to redundant buildings, any opportunities for community use or alternative community benefit would be explored within a set timeframe before decisions regarding the future of the site are made.

The Authority fully recognises the contribution that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim has made as a community facility and acknowledges the strength of feeling expressed by those who value its broader role within village life. Nevertheless, school organisation decisions must take account of a range of statutory considerations and ensure that educational provision remains sustainable, resilient and capable of meeting the needs of current and future learners. Having considered the evidence presented through the consultation and objection processes, the Authority remains satisfied that, whilst the school provides important community benefits, these must be balanced against wider educational and organisational challenges. The Authority therefore remains of the view that the proposal represents a proportionate and sustainable response to those challenges while recognising and carefully considering the potential impact on the local community.

16.	Splitting Friendship Groups and Established Relationships	26	31%
Many respondents expressed concern about the potential impact that closure would have on the friendships and relationships that pupils have developed during their time at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Objectors frequently noted that children spend a significant proportion of their formative years building strong social connections with their peers and that these relationships play an important role in their educational experience and personal wellbeing. Several parents stated that their children have developed close friendships through attending the school and expressed concern that closure could result in these groups being separated. Respondents frequently argued that friendship networks provide emotional support, stability and a sense of belonging and should therefore be considered an important factor when assessing the consequences of the proposal. Many objectors felt that the value of these relationships extends beyond the classroom and forms a significant part of children's day-to-day lives. A recurring concern throughout the objections was the potential emotional impact of disrupting established peer groups. Many respondents suggested that being separated from friends may cause anxiety and uncertainty, particularly for younger pupils and those who find change difficult. Several parents highlighted that children often gain confidence from being surrounded by familiar peers and argued that moving to a new school without established friendship groups could affect their ability to settle successfully. Objectors frequently noted that friendships developed within the school provide support during challenging periods and contribute positively to children's self-esteem and wellbeing. Some respondents expressed concern that pupils could experience feelings of isolation or loneliness if they are required to integrate into unfamiliar social groups following closure. Many respondents also highlighted the unique social environment that exists within Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and the strong relationships that develop between pupils across different year groups. Objectors frequently referred to the close-knit nature of the school community and explained that pupils often interact with children of varying ages both within and outside formal learning activities. Several submissions argued that this creates a particularly supportive environment in which younger children learn from older pupils and older pupils develop leadership and mentoring skills. Respondents suggested that the disruption of these wider friendship networks could have implications beyond individual peer relationships and may affect the broader sense of community			

and mutual support that currently exists amongst pupils. Many viewed these relationships as a defining feature of the school and an important contributor to children's social development.

Several respondents emphasised that the impact of separating friendship groups should not be viewed solely as a temporary transition issue. Many objectors argued that friendships established during primary education often form the foundation for longer-term social relationships and contribute significantly to children's confidence and emotional resilience. Parents frequently stated that maintaining established peer networks is particularly important during periods of change and uncertainty. Concerns were raised that the proposed arrangements may result in children following different educational pathways and becoming separated from friends with whom they have shared many years of learning and development. The overall view expressed throughout the objections was that the friendships and relationships established at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim represent an important aspect of pupils' educational experience and wellbeing, and that the potential disruption of these networks should be carefully considered when evaluating the proposal.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority acknowledges and understands the concerns raised by respondents regarding the potential impact of the proposal on the friendships and relationships that pupils have established during their time at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Many objectors emphasised the importance of peer relationships in supporting children's wellbeing, confidence and enjoyment of school life. The Authority recognises that strong friendships can play a significant role in pupils' social and emotional development and that established peer networks often provide important sources of encouragement, security and belonging. The views expressed by parents, carers and community members regarding the value of these relationships have been carefully considered as part of the assessment of the proposal.

The Authority also acknowledges concerns that the closure of the school may result in some pupils being separated from friendship groups that have developed over a number of years. It is recognised that moving to a different school can be a significant change for children and that some pupils may initially experience uncertainty or anxiety about adapting to a new environment. The Authority accepts that transitions can be particularly challenging for younger learners and for those who derive confidence from familiar routines and established social networks. For this reason, the potential impact on pupils' wellbeing and social relationships has formed an important element of the Authority's consideration of the proposal.

Whilst recognising these concerns, the Authority also notes that educational transitions are a normal part of a learner's educational journey. Pupils regularly experience transitions between classes, schools and educational phases, including the move from primary to secondary education. Schools are experienced in supporting children through periods of change and have established procedures to help learners develop new friendships, build confidence and integrate successfully into new settings. The Authority is satisfied that the proposed receiving schools have strong pastoral arrangements, inclusive school cultures and experienced staff who are well placed to support pupils throughout the transition process and help them establish positive relationships with their new peer groups.

The Authority further acknowledges respondents' comments regarding the close-knit nature of the existing school community and the relationships that exist between pupils of different ages. Many objectors highlighted the benefits of mixed-age interactions and the opportunities these provide for mentoring, leadership and mutual support. These observations are recognised and valued. However, both proposed receiving schools also operate within rural community contexts and provide opportunities for pupils to develop friendships across year groups, participate in shared activities and contribute positively to school life. In addition, larger peer groups may provide opportunities for children to widen their social circles, interact with a broader range of pupils and develop new friendships that can support their continued social development.

Should the proposal proceed, comprehensive transition arrangements would be implemented to support pupils before, during and after their transfer. These arrangements would include opportunities for pupils to visit their new schools, participate in transition activities, meet staff and peers, and become familiar with their new learning environments. Particular consideration would be given to pupils who may be vulnerable, anxious or require additional support. Having considered all available evidence, the Authority recognises that some disruption to existing friendship groups may occur; however, it is satisfied that appropriate support measures can minimise adverse impacts and help pupils establish new relationships successfully. The Authority therefore remains of the view that the potential impact on friendships, whilst important, does not outweigh the wider educational, organisational and sustainability considerations that have informed the proposal.

17.	Impact of Uncertainty on Children	24	28%
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Many respondents expressed concern that the uncertainty surrounding the future of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim has already had a negative impact on children attending the school. Parents frequently

reported that pupils had become aware of the possibility of closure and had begun asking questions about what the future may hold for them, their friends and their teachers. Several objectors stated that children had experienced feelings of anxiety, confusion and worry as a result of ongoing discussions regarding the proposal. Respondents argued that primary-aged children should not be required to cope with prolonged uncertainty about their educational future and suggested that the process had created unnecessary stress for some pupils. Many noted that children are particularly sensitive to changes affecting their daily lives and may struggle to fully understand the reasons behind decisions that have significant consequences for them.

A recurring theme throughout the objections was the concern that uncertainty can affect children's emotional wellbeing and sense of security. Many respondents explained that pupils value routine, familiarity and predictability, particularly during their primary school years. Several parents indicated that discussions surrounding potential closure had disrupted this sense of stability and left children uncertain about whether they would remain in their current school environment. Objectors frequently stated that some pupils had expressed concerns about losing contact with friends, moving to an unfamiliar school or leaving trusted members of staff. It was argued that these uncertainties may affect children's confidence, concentration and enjoyment of school life. Many respondents therefore viewed the continuation of the process itself as having consequences for pupils, regardless of the eventual outcome.

Several respondents also highlighted the particular impact that uncertainty may have on younger children and those who may already experience anxiety or additional support needs. Parents frequently referred to children who benefit from clear routines and familiar environments and expressed concern that prolonged uncertainty can be especially challenging for these learners. Some objectors stated that uncertainty regarding future educational arrangements may be more difficult for children with additional learning needs, autism spectrum conditions or emotional vulnerabilities. Respondents argued that where pupils depend on consistency and stability to feel safe and secure, ongoing uncertainty can create additional pressures that may affect their wellbeing and their ability to engage fully in school life. Many therefore emphasised the importance of minimising disruption and providing clarity wherever possible.

Throughout the objections, respondents consistently stressed the importance of reaching a clear resolution in a manner that prioritises the needs of children. Many objectors argued that uncertainty should be regarded as a significant consideration when evaluating the proposal, particularly where children have already been affected by prolonged discussion regarding the future of their school.

Several respondents expressed the view that the emotional consequences of uncertainty are often less visible than financial or organisational factors but can nevertheless have a meaningful impact on pupils and families. The overall view expressed was that the extended period of uncertainty has placed avoidable pressure on some children and that the importance of stability, reassurance and continuity should be given careful consideration when making decisions that affect their educational future.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority acknowledges the concerns raised by respondents regarding the impact that uncertainty surrounding the proposal may have had on pupils attending Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Many objectors highlighted the importance of stability, routine and predictability in children's lives and expressed concern that ongoing discussions regarding the future of the school may have caused anxiety or worry for some learners. The Authority recognises that school organisation proposals can be unsettling for pupils, families and staff, particularly where there is uncertainty regarding future educational arrangements. The wellbeing of learners has been an important consideration throughout the consultation and statutory notice process, and the Authority acknowledges the views expressed by parents regarding the emotional impact that uncertainty can have on children.

The Authority also recognises that children may become aware of discussions relating to the future of their school and may experience concerns about potential changes to their daily routines, friendships, learning environment and relationships with staff. Respondents referred to pupils expressing worries about leaving familiar surroundings, adapting to new schools or becoming separated from friends. The Authority accepts that such concerns are understandable and that periods of uncertainty can create challenges for some learners, particularly where they are exposed to differing perspectives and discussions regarding the proposal.

The Authority acknowledges that uncertainty may be particularly difficult for younger children and for learners with additional learning needs, autism spectrum conditions, emotional vulnerabilities or other circumstances that make change more challenging. Respondents emphasised that some pupils rely heavily on familiar routines, trusted relationships and consistent environments to support their wellbeing and engagement with learning. The Authority fully recognises the importance of these factors and accepts that individual learners may experience and respond to uncertainty in different ways. As part of the planning process, careful consideration has therefore been given to the support that would be required for vulnerable learners should the proposal proceed, including

personalised transition arrangements and ongoing engagement with families and relevant professionals.

The Authority notes that the statutory process itself is designed to ensure that decisions regarding school organisation are made in a transparent, evidence-based and legally compliant manner. While this necessarily involves periods of consultation, scrutiny and consideration, the Authority recognises that prolonged uncertainty is not desirable for pupils, families or staff. Consequently, the purpose of the consultation and objection process is to enable decision-makers to reach a clear and informed conclusion based upon all available evidence. The Authority is committed to ensuring that stakeholders are kept informed throughout the process and that, once a final determination has been reached, clear information and support are provided to help minimise uncertainty and support future planning.

The Authority agrees that children's wellbeing should remain a central consideration in any decision affecting their education. However, it must also consider uncertainty alongside a wider range of educational, organisational, financial and community factors. Having carefully considered the concerns raised by respondents, the Authority recognises that uncertainty may have affected some pupils during the review process. Nevertheless, it believes that a clear decision regarding the future of the school, together with robust transition and support arrangements where required, would provide certainty and enable pupils, families and staff to plan confidently for the future. The Authority therefore remains satisfied that any potential impacts associated with uncertainty can be appropriately managed and supported and do not outweigh the wider considerations underpinning the proposal.

18.	Receiving School Suitability and Capacity	23	27%
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Many respondents expressed concerns regarding the suitability of the schools identified to receive pupils should Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim close. Whilst some objectors acknowledged that alternative schools are available within a reasonable geographical area, many questioned whether those schools would be able to replicate the educational, pastoral and community benefits currently provided by Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Several respondents argued that the proposal focused primarily on the availability of places rather than fully considering the qualitative differences between the schools. Parents frequently stated that they had deliberately chosen Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim because of its size, ethos, Welsh-medium environment or strong community focus and expressed concern that these characteristics may not be available to the same extent elsewhere. Many

objectors therefore questioned whether the proposed receiving schools could genuinely offer a comparable educational experience for all pupils.

A recurring concern related to the capacity of receiving schools to accommodate additional pupils without affecting the quality of provision. Several respondents sought reassurance that sufficient classroom space, staffing levels and resources would be available to support a larger pupil population. Objectors questioned how the admission of additional pupils may affect class sizes and whether existing facilities would be capable of meeting future demand, particularly if housing developments and population growth result in increasing enrolment pressures over time. Some respondents suggested that schools which currently have surplus places may nevertheless experience challenges if significant numbers of additional pupils are admitted. Concerns were also raised regarding the longer-term implications for staffing structures, learning environments and the overall educational experience available to children following transfer.

Many respondents highlighted the importance of understanding the individual needs of pupils who may be required to move schools. Particular concerns were raised regarding children who benefit from the small-scale and personalised environment currently offered by Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Several parents questioned whether larger schools would be able to provide the same level of individual attention, continuity of support and familiarity that their children currently experience. References were frequently made to pupils with Additional Learning Needs, disabilities, medical conditions and those who may be anxious about change. Objectors argued that, whilst receiving schools may have appropriate policies and support systems in place, the process of adapting to a new environment could still present challenges for some children. Many therefore felt that a more detailed assessment of how individual needs would be met following transfer was required.

Several respondents also raised concerns regarding the impact that transferring to different schools may have on continuity of learning, social relationships and community connections. Objectors argued that suitability should not be measured solely through physical capacity or availability of places but should also take account of the broader educational and social experiences of pupils. Many noted that receiving schools have their own cultures, policies and established pupil groups, and expressed concern that children from Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim may require significant support to integrate successfully. Respondents frequently stated that the success of any transition process would depend upon careful planning and sustained support both before and after transfer. The overall view expressed throughout the objections was that further consideration should be given to

the suitability of receiving schools and their ability to meet the diverse educational, social and emotional needs of pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority notes the concerns raised by respondents regarding the suitability of the proposed receiving schools and recognises that many parents chose Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim specifically because of its size, ethos, Welsh-medium provision and close-knit community environment. Objectors questioned whether alternative schools would be able to replicate the educational, pastoral and social benefits currently experienced by pupils. The Authority recognises that parents place significant value on the characteristics of their child's school and understands why stakeholders wish to be satisfied that any alternative provision would be capable of meeting learners' needs effectively. For this reason, the suitability of potential receiving schools has been a key consideration throughout the development of the proposal.

In assessing the proposal, the Authority has undertaken a detailed evaluation of the proposed receiving schools, including consideration of educational standards, leadership arrangements, wellbeing provision, Welsh-medium education, staffing capacity, accommodation and learner support. The Authority is satisfied that both Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog are able to provide appropriate educational provision for pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Both schools operate within rural settings, have experience of supporting learners from a range of backgrounds and provide Welsh-medium education that supports pupils' academic, social and personal development. The Authority therefore considers that suitable alternative educational provision is available should the proposal proceed.

The Authority also acknowledges concerns regarding the capacity of receiving schools to accommodate additional pupils without adversely affecting the quality of education or pupil experience. Respondents sought reassurance regarding classroom accommodation, staffing levels, resources and the potential impact on class sizes. These matters have been carefully assessed as part of the proposal process. The Authority is satisfied that the receiving schools have sufficient capacity to accommodate pupils transferring from Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and that existing staffing structures and facilities are capable of supporting additional learners. Capacity assessments have also taken account of projected pupil numbers and anticipated future demand to ensure that receiving schools remain able to provide appropriate educational environments over the longer term.

The Authority further recognises concerns relating to pupils who may require additional support, including learners with Additional Learning Needs, disabilities, medical conditions or those who may be particularly anxious about change. Respondents expressed concerns that some children benefit significantly from the personalised environment currently available at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and questioned whether this support could be replicated elsewhere. The Authority has carefully considered these issues and is satisfied that the receiving schools have appropriate systems, resources and professional expertise in place to support learners with a wide range of needs. Furthermore, should the proposal proceed, detailed transition planning would be undertaken to ensure that relevant information is shared effectively and that tailored support is available to those pupils who may require additional assistance during the transfer process.

The Authority acknowledges the view that suitability should be considered in broader terms than physical capacity alone and should encompass educational experiences, wellbeing, social integration and continuity of learning. The Authority agrees that these factors are important and has therefore assessed the receiving schools holistically. Comprehensive transition arrangements would be implemented to support pupils in establishing relationships with staff and peers, becoming familiar with their new learning environments and maintaining educational progress throughout the transition period. Having considered all available evidence, the Authority remains satisfied that the proposed receiving schools have the capacity, resources and organisational arrangements necessary to meet the educational, social and emotional needs of pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Whilst recognising the concerns expressed by objectors, the Authority is confident that appropriate support and planning can ensure successful transitions and positive outcomes for learners should the proposal proceed.

19.	Mid-Academic Year Closure and Transition Arrangements	20	24%

Many respondents expressed concern regarding the proposed timing of the school closure and argued that implementing such a significant change partway through an academic year would create unnecessary disruption for pupils, families and staff. Objectors frequently stated that transitions between schools are generally less disruptive when they coincide with the end of an academic year, allowing children to complete a full year of study before moving to a new setting. Several respondents questioned the rationale for a closure date during the academic year and suggested that this would place additional pressure on pupils who would be required to adjust to a

new environment, new routines and new relationships at a time when other pupils within the receiving schools had already established themselves. Many objectors felt that the timing of the proposal would make an already challenging transition significantly more difficult for those affected.

A recurring concern throughout the objections related to the potential impact of a mid-year transfer on children's educational continuity. Many respondents argued that transferring schools after the academic year has commenced could disrupt learning, curriculum delivery and assessment arrangements. Several parents expressed concern that pupils may be joining established classes where friendship groups, teaching routines and learning programmes are already in place, increasing the challenge of settling into a new environment. Objectors frequently referred to the potential impact on children's confidence and engagement with learning during the transition period. Some respondents also questioned whether pupils would experience disruption to specific projects, activities or learning experiences that were already underway at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. As a result, many argued that if closure were to proceed, arrangements should seek to minimise educational disruption wherever possible.

Particular concern was expressed regarding the impact of a mid-academic year transfer on Year 6 pupils. Many respondents noted that these pupils are already approaching a significant educational transition as they prepare to move from primary to secondary education. Objectors frequently argued that requiring Year 6 pupils to move to a different primary school for a relatively short period before progressing to secondary school would result in two major transitions occurring within a short timeframe. Several parents suggested that this could place unnecessary emotional and educational pressure on pupils at an important stage of their development. Concerns were also raised regarding children with Additional Learning Needs, disabilities or anxiety-related difficulties, with respondents arguing that repeated changes in educational environment may be particularly challenging for these learners. Many felt that the specific circumstances of Year 6 pupils should be given careful consideration when determining transition arrangements.

Many respondents acknowledged that support measures and transition planning would likely be implemented should the proposal proceed. However, objectors consistently emphasised that careful planning alone may not eliminate the difficulties associated with a mid-year move. Several submissions argued that the timing of the closure should be regarded as a distinct issue separate from the principle of closure itself and suggested that any transition should be designed to minimise disruption to pupils and families. Respondents frequently stated that the educational, emotional and social impacts of transferring children during the academic year had not been fully addressed within

the proposal. The overall view expressed throughout the objections was that a mid-academic year closure would create unnecessary challenges for pupils and that, should any reorganisation proceed, transition arrangements should prioritise stability, continuity and the wellbeing of affected learners.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority accepts the concerns raised by respondents regarding the proposed timing of the closure and the potential impact of a school transfer taking place during an academic year. Many objectors expressed the view that educational transitions are generally easier for children when they occur at the end of an academic year, allowing pupils to complete a full year of learning before moving to a new setting. The Authority recognises that any change of school can be significant for learners and their families, particularly where established routines, friendships and support networks are affected. The potential implications of the proposed closure date have therefore been carefully considered as part of the overall assessment of the proposal.

The Authority also recognises concerns relating to continuity of learning and curriculum delivery. Respondents highlighted the possibility that pupils transferring partway through an academic year may need to adapt to different classroom routines, teaching approaches and learning programmes. The Authority acknowledges that these adjustments can present challenges for some learners. However, schools routinely manage the admission of pupils throughout the academic year and have established procedures to support educational continuity. The proposed receiving schools have experience of welcoming learners from different settings and would work closely with Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim to ensure that information regarding pupils' progress, learning needs and curriculum experiences is shared appropriately. This would help minimise disruption to learning and support pupils' successful integration into their new school environment.

The Authority further acknowledges concerns regarding pupils' emotional wellbeing during the transition process. Many respondents expressed concern that a mid-year move may increase anxiety for children who are required to adapt to unfamiliar surroundings, develop new friendships and establish relationships with new members of staff. These concerns are recognised, and the Authority accepts that effective transition planning is essential in reducing uncertainty and supporting learner wellbeing. Should the proposal proceed, comprehensive transition arrangements would be implemented, including opportunities for pupils to visit their receiving schools, participate in transition activities, meet staff and peers, and become familiar with their new learning

environments before transfer takes place. Appropriate pastoral support would also be available during and after transition to ensure that children are supported throughout the process.

The Authority has given particular consideration to the circumstances of Year 6 pupils, recognising that these learners are already preparing for transition to secondary education. Respondents highlighted concerns that a transfer to another primary school shortly before moving to secondary school could result in two significant transitions occurring within a relatively short period. The Authority acknowledges these concerns and would ensure that the specific needs of Year 6 pupils are taken into account within any transition planning. This would include close collaboration between primary and secondary schools to support continuity, minimise disruption and provide learners with appropriate guidance and reassurance as they prepare for the next stage of their education. Similar consideration would be given to pupils with Additional Learning Needs, disabilities or medical conditions, whose individual circumstances would be carefully assessed to ensure suitable support arrangements are in place.

The Authority recognises that the timing of closure is an important issue for many respondents and accepts that there is no transition point that is entirely without challenge. However, the Authority must also consider practical, organisational and financial factors when determining implementation arrangements. Having considered the concerns raised through the objection process, the Authority is satisfied that robust transition planning, effective communication and targeted support can mitigate the potential impacts associated with a mid-academic year transfer. Whilst acknowledging the concerns expressed by objectors, the Authority remains confident that, should the proposal proceed, appropriate arrangements can be implemented to support pupils, families and staff and to ensure that learners continue to access high-quality education within supportive and inclusive learning environments.

20.	Confidence in Council Spending Priorities	18	22%
Many respondents expressed concerns regarding the wider context in which the proposal had been developed and questioned whether the closure of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim represented the most appropriate use of the Council's resources and decision-making powers. Whilst some objectors acknowledged the financial pressures facing local authorities, they argued that the proposed closure had prompted broader questions about spending priorities and the allocation of limited public funds. Several respondents stated that they found it difficult to reconcile the proposed closure of a valued community asset with expenditure undertaken in other areas of Council activity. As a			

result, many objections went beyond challenging the specific financial case for closure and instead focused on whether sufficient priority was being given to sustaining local educational provision and rural communities. Respondents frequently argued that schools should be viewed as long-term investments in children, families and communities rather than solely as budgetary commitments.

A recurring theme throughout the objections was the perception that alternative opportunities for efficiency savings may exist elsewhere within the Council's operations. Several respondents referred to administrative costs, management structures and other areas of expenditure which they believed should be reviewed before considering the closure of a village school. Some objectors suggested that educational services, particularly those supporting younger children and rural communities, should be protected wherever possible and argued that reductions should be sought in less critical areas of spending. Whilst respondents often differed in the examples they provided, the underlying concern was consistent: many questioned whether all reasonable alternatives to school closure had been explored before progressing to a proposal that would permanently remove educational provision from the village.

Many respondents also expressed concern that the value of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim may not have been fully recognised within financial decision-making processes. Objectors frequently argued that traditional financial assessments do not adequately capture the wider benefits generated by a rural school, including contributions to community cohesion, Welsh language sustainability, child wellbeing and local identity. Several submissions suggested that decisions based primarily upon financial metrics risk overlooking significant social and community impacts that may be difficult to quantify but nevertheless carry substantial value. Respondents often maintained that the school provides benefits that extend far beyond the classroom and questioned whether these wider outcomes had been given sufficient weight when balancing costs against savings.

Throughout the objections, many respondents emphasised the importance of maintaining public confidence in the way resources are allocated and decisions are reached. Several objectors stated that closure proposals affecting schools and communities are likely to attract heightened scrutiny because of their long-term implications and the potential impact on future generations. Respondents frequently argued that decisions of this nature should clearly demonstrate that all alternatives have been considered and that wider community benefits have been fully assessed alongside financial considerations. The overall view expressed by these objectors was that greater priority should be given to protecting local educational provision and supporting rural communities, and that closure

of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim should not be pursued unless it can be clearly demonstrated that no more appropriate alternatives exist and that the wider public interest is best served by the proposal.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority acknowledges the concerns raised by respondents regarding the wider context in which the proposal has been developed and recognises that many objectors questioned whether the discontinuance of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim represents the most appropriate use of public resources. Respondents highlighted broader concerns relating to spending priorities and expressed the view that local schools, particularly within rural communities, should be regarded as long-term investments in children, families and community sustainability. The Authority recognises the strength of feeling associated with these concerns and accepts that proposals affecting schools are often viewed not only through an educational lens but also in the context of wider public service provision and community wellbeing. As part of the development of the proposal, the Authority has sought to ensure that decisions are informed by a balanced assessment of educational, financial, community and organisational considerations rather than by financial considerations alone.

The Authority acknowledges that some respondents questioned whether sufficient opportunities for efficiency savings had been explored elsewhere within the Council before progressing a proposal to discontinue a village school. The Authority recognises the importance of demonstrating that public resources are managed responsibly and that all services are subject to appropriate scrutiny and review. However, it is important to note that the financial challenges facing the education service are significant and form part of wider pressures affecting local government funding nationally. The Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that educational provision remains sustainable and that resources allocated to schools are utilised effectively to support high-quality education for learners across the county. Consequently, school organisation proposals must be considered alongside broader measures already being undertaken across Council services to manage financial pressures and improve efficiency.

The Authority also notes that the proposal forms part of the wider context of the Council's Modernising Education Programme, which has been developed in response to significant demographic, financial and organisational challenges affecting education across Carmarthenshire and Wales. Declining birth rates and falling pupil numbers have resulted in increasing levels of surplus capacity across the school estate, placing additional pressure on school budgets and the long-term sustainability of educational provision. These challenges have contributed to a growing number of schools operating in financial deficit and have highlighted the need to ensure that

resources are utilised effectively across the school network. The Council has also been advised by external regulatory bodies, including Estyn and the Panel Performance Assessment, that whilst its school modernisation strategy is credible, progress in implementing change has been too slow given the scale of demographic and financial pressures facing the education system. These wider factors have informed the development of the proposal and continue to support the need for timely school organisation decisions to ensure a sustainable, resilient and effective education system for current and future learners.

The Authority also acknowledges concerns that the wider social, cultural and community benefits provided by Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim may not be fully reflected within financial assessments. Respondents argued that the contribution made by the school to community cohesion, Welsh language sustainability, wellbeing and local identity cannot be easily quantified through financial metrics alone. The Authority recognises this concern and wishes to emphasise that the assessment of the proposal has extended beyond financial considerations. Community impacts, Welsh language implications, learner wellbeing, educational standards and the views of stakeholders have all been examined through the consultation process, Community Impact Assessment and Welsh Language Impact Assessment. The Authority accepts that schools can generate significant social value and that these benefits should be given careful consideration alongside educational and financial factors.

The Authority further acknowledges the importance of maintaining public confidence in decision-making processes, particularly where proposals have the potential to affect current and future generations. Respondents emphasised the need for transparency and reassurance that all reasonable alternatives had been fully explored before a closure proposal was advanced. The Authority recognises the importance of these expectations and confirms that a range of options have been considered throughout the review process. These have included consideration of alternative organisational arrangements, opportunities for collaboration and proposals submitted by governors, parents and community stakeholders. The Authority has sought to evaluate all options consistently against key criteria, including educational sustainability, financial viability, pupil demand, leadership capacity and long-term resilience.

The Authority fully understands why stakeholders wish to ensure that local educational provision is afforded a high priority within Council decision-making. However, it must also balance this objective against its responsibility to ensure that the overall school network remains sustainable, effective and capable of meeting future educational needs. Having considered all available evidence,

including the concerns raised regarding spending priorities, the Authority remains satisfied that the proposal has been developed following a comprehensive assessment of educational, financial, community and strategic factors. While recognising that respondents may disagree with the conclusions reached, the Authority believes that the proposal reflects a responsible and evidence-based approach to managing public resources whilst seeking to secure high-quality and sustainable educational provision for learners across the county.

21.	Children's Rights and Child Centred Decision Making	15	18%
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Many respondents argued that decisions regarding the future of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim should be guided primarily by the needs, interests and wellbeing of children rather than by financial or organisational considerations. Objectors frequently stated that children should remain at the centre of the decision-making process and that any assessment of the proposal should begin by considering the likely impact on current and future pupils. Several parents expressed concern that discussions had become focused on budgets, pupil numbers and school organisation while insufficient attention had been given to the experiences of the children who would be directly affected by the proposed closure. Respondents often emphasised that primary education represents a formative stage in children's lives and argued that decisions affecting their learning environment should place substantial weight on their educational, emotional and social needs. Many submissions reflected a belief that the interests of children should be regarded as the most important consideration throughout the process.

A recurring theme within the objections was the importance of recognising the views and experiences of children themselves. Several respondents referred to conversations with pupils who had expressed concerns about leaving their school, losing contact with friends or moving to an unfamiliar environment. Parents and carers frequently stated that children had developed strong attachments to their school, teachers and wider school community and argued that these relationships should not be overlooked when considering educational reorganisation. Some objectors highlighted the importance of ensuring that children's voices are heard and taken seriously, particularly where decisions have the potential to affect their daily lives and future educational experiences. Many respondents felt that children are not merely recipients of educational services but individuals whose perspectives should inform decisions that directly affect them.

Many objections also focused on the broader principle that educational decisions should seek to promote the best possible outcomes for learners. Respondents frequently argued that the success of a school should be assessed not only through financial efficiency but also through its ability to support children's development, wellbeing and achievement. Several objectors highlighted the positive experiences currently enjoyed by pupils at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and questioned whether alternative arrangements would deliver the same level of support, belonging and personal growth. It was suggested that where children are thriving within an educational setting, strong justification should be required before making changes that could disrupt their progress. Respondents often argued that preserving a stable and supportive learning environment is consistent with promoting children's best interests and should therefore be afforded considerable importance within the decision-making process.

Throughout the objections, many respondents expressed the view that a genuinely child-centred approach would involve balancing financial and organisational considerations against the potential impact on children's lives. Objectors frequently acknowledged the challenges facing education services but maintained that such challenges should not outweigh the importance of safeguarding children's wellbeing, educational continuity and sense of security. Several submissions referred to the long-term consequences that educational decisions can have on confidence, emotional development and future opportunities. The overall view expressed was that children should remain at the heart of the decision-making process and that any decision regarding the future of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim should clearly demonstrate how the interests, experiences and wellbeing of learners have been considered and prioritised alongside all other factors.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority understands the concerns raised by respondents regarding the importance of placing children and young people at the centre of decision-making relating to the future of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Many objectors emphasised that decisions affecting educational provision should be guided by the needs, experiences and wellbeing of learners and argued that the interests of children should be a primary consideration throughout the process. The educational, emotional, social and wellbeing needs of current and future learners have therefore been a key consideration throughout the consultation, statutory notice and objection stages of the process.

The Authority also acknowledges the views expressed regarding the importance of listening to and considering the perspectives of children themselves. Respondents highlighted concerns that pupils have developed strong attachments to their school, teachers, friends and wider school community

and may have concerns about potential changes to their educational environment. The Authority recognises that children have a right to express their views on matters affecting them and that those views should be considered appropriately within decision-making processes. As part of the school organisation process, opportunities have been provided to gather and consider views relating to the potential impact of the proposal on learners. The Authority recognises that pupils may experience uncertainty or anxiety regarding change and has carefully considered these issues as part of its assessment of the proposal.

The Authority further acknowledges the view that educational decisions should promote the best possible outcomes for children and young people. Respondents highlighted the positive experiences currently enjoyed by pupils at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and questioned whether alternative arrangements would provide the same level of support, continuity and sense of belonging. In assessing the proposal, the Authority has carefully considered the capacity of the proposed receiving schools to meet learners' educational, social and emotional needs. This assessment has included consideration of educational standards, wellbeing provision, safeguarding arrangements, Additional Learning Needs support, Welsh-medium education and transition planning. The Authority is satisfied that the receiving schools are capable of providing high-quality educational experiences and appropriate support for pupils transferring as a result of the proposal.

The Authority recognises that the best interests of children cannot be considered in isolation from the wider factors that contribute to sustainable and effective educational provision. Whilst pupil wellbeing and educational outcomes remain central considerations, the Authority must also take account of issues such as leadership capacity, financial sustainability, pupil projections, surplus places and the long-term viability of the school network. The objective of the school organisation process is to ensure that children not only receive a positive educational experience today but continue to benefit from resilient, sustainable and high-quality educational provision in the future. Consequently, the Authority must balance both immediate and long-term considerations when determining what arrangements best support learners' interests.

The Authority remains committed to ensuring that children's rights and wellbeing are fully considered throughout the decision-making process. Having reviewed the evidence gathered through consultation, objection submissions, impact assessments and supporting documentation, the Authority is satisfied that the potential effects on learners have been carefully evaluated and afforded significant weight. Whilst recognising the concerns expressed by respondents, the Authority remains of the view that the proposal has been developed in accordance with its

responsibility to promote the educational interests, wellbeing and future opportunities of learners. Should the proposal proceed, comprehensive transition and support arrangements would be implemented to ensure that children remain at the centre of planning and that their educational, emotional and wellbeing needs continue to be effectively supported throughout the transition process.

22.	Accuracy of Documentation and Changes to the Proposal	14	17%
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Many respondents expressed concerns regarding the accuracy, consistency and presentation of information throughout the consultation and statutory objection process. Objectors frequently stated that it was important for stakeholders to have access to clear, reliable and comprehensive information when considering a proposal with significant implications for pupils, families and the wider community. Several respondents referred to instances where information had been amended, clarified or corrected during the course of the process and argued that this had created uncertainty regarding the evidence underpinning the proposal. Whilst some objectors acknowledged that issuing corrections is appropriate where errors are identified, many expressed concerns that such changes had affected their confidence in the robustness of the documentation and the conclusions drawn from it. A recurring view was that all supporting information should be fully accurate and consistent from the outset to enable meaningful consultation and informed decision-making.

Many objections specifically referred to changes made to financial information during the process. Respondents highlighted revisions to figures relating to school costs and expenditure and questioned the extent to which these revisions may have influenced the overall business case for closure. Several objectors suggested that amendments to numerical data made it difficult to assess the strength of the financial argument being presented. Concerns were also expressed regarding how corrected information was communicated to stakeholders and whether all interested parties had sufficient opportunity to review and consider revised figures. Some respondents argued that when financial data forms a key part of the justification for a proposal, any amendments to that information require careful explanation and scrutiny to maintain confidence in the process.

A number of respondents also referred to changes relating to receiving school arrangements, catchment considerations and other operational aspects of the proposal. Objectors suggested that modifications introduced at different stages of the process sometimes created uncertainty regarding the full implications of closure. Several respondents argued that changes to important elements of the proposal made it more difficult for stakeholders to understand precisely what was being

proposed and how affected pupils and families would be impacted. Some objectors expressed the view that significant amendments should trigger additional opportunities for engagement and discussion, particularly where communities are being asked to assess complex educational, logistical and community implications. Many respondents felt that maintaining clarity throughout the process was essential to ensuring meaningful participation.

Throughout the objections, respondents frequently linked concerns regarding documentation accuracy to wider issues of trust and confidence in the decision-making process. Many objectors stated that public confidence is strengthened when information is presented transparently, consistently and in a format that is easy to understand. Several respondents argued that accuracy is particularly important in school organisation proposals because of the long-term effects such decisions have on children and communities. Whilst few objectors suggested that errors or amendments were deliberate, many emphasised that inconsistencies had contributed to uncertainty and raised questions regarding the reliability of some aspects of the supporting evidence. The overall view expressed was that all documentation associated with the proposal should be accurate, transparent and consistent, and that any changes should be clearly communicated to ensure stakeholders can participate fully and confidently in the decision-making process.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority accepts the concerns raised by respondents regarding the accuracy, consistency and presentation of information throughout the consultation and statutory notice process. The Authority recognises the importance of ensuring that stakeholders are provided with clear, accurate and transparent information when considering proposals that may have significant implications for learners, families, staff and communities. Respondents highlighted concerns regarding amendments and clarifications made to certain aspects of the supporting documentation and expressed the view that any changes to information can affect confidence in the process. The Authority accepts that maintaining public confidence requires information to be presented as accurately as possible and that stakeholders should be informed openly where corrections or updates are necessary.

The Authority wishes to emphasise that the purpose of providing clarification or revised information during a consultation or statutory process is to improve accuracy and ensure that decision-makers and stakeholders have access to the most reliable evidence available. In complex school organisation proposals, information may occasionally require amendment following further verification, the receipt of additional data or the identification of inadvertent errors. Where this

occurs, the Authority considers it essential that corrections are made transparently rather than allowing inaccuracies to remain within the published documentation. The Authority does not consider that the need for clarification undermines the overall integrity of the process; instead, it reflects a commitment to openness, accuracy and continuous review of the evidence base supporting the proposal.

The Authority acknowledges the particular concerns raised regarding changes to financial information during the process. Financial data forms an important component of school organisation assessments and it is therefore understandable that revisions to figures may attract attention and scrutiny. The Authority confirms that any amendments made to financial information were undertaken to ensure the accuracy of the data available to stakeholders and decision-makers. Where revised figures were identified, efforts were made to communicate these changes openly and to explain their significance within the overall context of the proposal. The Authority remains satisfied that the financial information, when considered in its entirety, provides an accurate representation of the challenges facing the school and supports informed consideration of the proposal.

The Authority also recognises concerns regarding changes or clarifications relating to receiving school arrangements and other operational aspects of the proposal. Throughout the consultation and objection process, information has continued to develop as further evidence has been gathered, stakeholder feedback has been considered and technical assessments have been completed. The Authority acknowledges that such developments can create uncertainty for some stakeholders; however, it is also important that the process remains sufficiently flexible to consider new information and respond appropriately to issues raised during consultation. The Authority believes that engagement processes are strengthened when feedback leads to further analysis, clarification and refinement of proposals where appropriate.

The Authority agrees that transparency and accountability are essential components of effective decision-making and recognises the importance of maintaining public confidence throughout the process. For this reason, consultation responses, objections, supporting evidence and impact assessments have all been considered as part of the statutory process and will be available to decision-makers. Having reviewed the concerns raised by respondents, the Authority remains satisfied that the consultation and statutory notice process has been conducted in accordance with legislative requirements and that stakeholders have been provided with appropriate opportunities to access information, seek clarification and express their views. Whilst acknowledging the

concerns expressed regarding documentation and amendments, the Authority is confident that the proposal is supported by a robust evidence base and that decision-makers have access to sufficient information to reach an informed and balanced conclusion.

23.	Presumption Against Closure of Rural Schools	13	15%
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Many respondents referred directly to the rural status of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and argued that this should be a significant consideration when assessing the proposal. Objectors frequently highlighted that the School Organisation Code contains a presumption against the closure of rural schools and expressed the view that this reflects a recognition of the unique role such schools play within their communities. Several respondents stated that rural schools should not be assessed solely on the basis of pupil numbers, capacity levels or financial considerations, as their contribution often extends beyond educational provision. Many argued that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim provides social, cultural and linguistic benefits that are particularly important within a rural setting and that these wider contributions should be afforded substantial weight within the decision-making process. Respondents frequently expressed concern that the proposal did not sufficiently acknowledge the special status of rural schools or the reasons why additional protections exist within national guidance.

A recurring theme throughout the objections was the belief that closure should only be considered after all realistic alternatives have been thoroughly explored and demonstrated to be unviable. Many objectors argued that the presumption against closure places a responsibility on decision-makers to consider every reasonable option capable of maintaining educational provision within the community. Several respondents referred to alternative proposals put forward by governors, parents and community organisations and suggested that these options warranted further exploration before progressing towards permanent closure. Objectors frequently stated that the existence of potential alternatives strengthened the argument for retaining the school and questioned whether the threshold required to justify closure had been met. Many respondents therefore maintained that closure should be regarded as a last resort rather than a preferred solution.

Many respondents also linked the presumption against closure to the wider impact that rural schools have on community sustainability. Objections frequently argued that village schools support population retention, encourage young families to remain within rural areas and contribute positively to community cohesion and resilience. Several objectors suggested that the rationale underpinning the presumption against closure recognises the importance of maintaining rural infrastructure and

protecting communities from further decline. Respondents often referred to the cumulative effect of losing local services and argued that rural schools may have a disproportionately important role compared with schools located in larger towns and urban areas. It was frequently suggested that the potential consequences of closure extend beyond education and may affect the long-term viability and identity of rural communities such as Meidrim.

Throughout the objections, respondents consistently argued that any decision to close a rural school should be supported by clear and compelling evidence demonstrating that closure represents the most appropriate option available. Many objectors expressed the view that the benefits provided by Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim as a rural school outweigh the challenges identified within the proposal. Several respondents emphasised that the loss of a rural school can have lasting consequences for future generations and can be extremely difficult to reverse once educational provision has been removed from a community. The overall view expressed was that the statutory presumption against closure exists for a reason and that decision-makers should exercise particular caution when considering proposals affecting rural schools. Respondents therefore argued that the rural status of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and its associated community benefits should remain a central consideration when determining the future of the school.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority acknowledges the concerns raised by respondents regarding the rural status of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and recognises the importance placed upon the statutory presumption against the closure of rural schools. Objectors highlighted that the School Organisation Code requires particular consideration to be given to proposals affecting rural schools and argued that such schools often make contributions that extend beyond the provision of education alone. The Authority accepts that rural schools can play an important role in supporting community cohesion, Welsh language sustainability, local identity and access to services within rural areas. These wider considerations have been carefully recognised and assessed throughout the development of the proposal and have informed both the Community Impact Assessment and Welsh Language Impact Assessment undertaken as part of the statutory process.

The Authority wishes to emphasise that the presumption against closure does not prevent the discontinuance of a rural school where there is a robust and evidence-based case for change. Rather, the School Organisation Code requires proposers to demonstrate that they have given careful consideration to the specific circumstances of the rural school, the likely impact of closure and the availability of reasonable alternatives. In developing this proposal, the Authority has sought

to comply fully with these requirements by undertaking a detailed assessment of educational, demographic, financial, community and linguistic considerations. The proposal has therefore not been based solely on pupil numbers or financial factors, but on a comprehensive evaluation of the school's long-term sustainability and its ability to continue meeting the needs of current and future learners.

The Authority also acknowledges the concerns raised regarding alternative options and the view that closure should only be considered once all realistic alternatives have been thoroughly explored. Throughout the review process, a range of options have been examined, including continuing with current arrangements, collaborative approaches, leadership models and proposals put forward by governors, parents and community stakeholders. The Authority recognises the commitment and effort invested by those seeking to identify alternatives capable of sustaining educational provision within the village. However, in assessing these options, it has been necessary to determine whether they would provide a sustainable long-term solution to the challenges facing the school, including declining pupil numbers, surplus capacity, financial pressures and ongoing viability concerns. The Authority remains satisfied that these alternatives have been considered appropriately as part of the decision-making process.

The Authority further acknowledges respondents' views regarding the wider role that rural schools can play in supporting community sustainability and resilience. Schools are often viewed as important community assets and can contribute positively to population retention, social interaction and community identity. For this reason, the Authority has carefully considered the potential impact that closure may have on the local area. However, the Authority must also consider its statutory responsibility to secure effective and sustainable educational provision across the wider county. While the importance of maintaining services within rural communities is recognised, decisions regarding school organisation must balance local considerations against broader educational, demographic and financial realities. The Authority does not consider that the rural status of a school alone can outweigh all other relevant factors where significant sustainability challenges have been identified.

The Authority acknowledges that decisions regarding rural schools require particularly careful consideration due to the potentially long-lasting consequences for communities and future generations. For this reason, the proposal has been subject to extensive consultation, detailed impact assessments and statutory scrutiny. Having considered all relevant evidence, including the objections received, the Authority remains satisfied that it has given full regard to the presumption

against closure of rural schools and the specific circumstances of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Whilst recognising the value that the school brings to the community, the Authority remains of the view that the proposal represents a proportionate, balanced and sustainable response to the challenges identified and that the educational needs of learners can continue to be met effectively through alternative Welsh-medium provision.

24.	Community Resilience and Emergency Support	10	12%
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Many respondents highlighted the role of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim as an important community asset that contributes to the resilience of the village beyond its primary educational function. Objectors frequently argued that rural schools serve multiple purposes within their communities and can play an important role during periods of disruption or emergency. Several respondents noted that the school provides a centrally located facility that is familiar and accessible to local residents and is capable of supporting community activities when needed. It was suggested that in rural areas, where public buildings and community facilities may be limited, schools often become key components of the local infrastructure. Many objectors expressed concern that the closure of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim would reduce the range of facilities available to support the community and weaken an important local resource that contributes to the village's overall resilience.

A number of respondents referred specifically to the challenges that rural communities can face during periods of adverse weather, flooding, storms and other unexpected events. Objectors argued that community facilities such as schools can provide an important focal point during difficult circumstances and can assist in maintaining communication, coordination and support within a rural area. Several responses referenced previous occasions when community cooperation had been necessary and suggested that the availability of local facilities enhances a community's ability to respond effectively. Many respondents viewed the school as part of a wider network of assets that help support local people during times of need and argued that its closure would diminish the resources available to the community in such circumstances.

Many objections also linked community resilience to the strength of local relationships and social networks that have developed through the school. Respondents frequently argued that the school helps foster a strong sense of community by bringing together families, volunteers, local organisations and residents through a range of educational and community activities. Several objectors noted that these relationships can become particularly important during challenging periods, as communities with strong social connections are often better able to support vulnerable

individuals and respond collectively to difficulties. It was suggested that the school's contribution to building and maintaining these networks represents an important aspect of its wider value. Many respondents considered community resilience to be closely connected to community cohesion and argued that maintaining a strong local school helps strengthen both.

Throughout the objections, respondents frequently stated that the closure of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim should be considered not only in terms of educational provision but also in relation to the broader role that the school plays within the village. Several objectors argued that rural communities require a range of local institutions in order to remain sustainable, adaptable and resilient in the face of future challenges. Respondents often expressed concern that the cumulative loss of services and facilities can reduce a community's ability to function effectively and respond to changing circumstances. The overall view expressed was that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim contributes positively to the social infrastructure and resilience of the village and that the potential loss of this role should be recognised as part of any assessment of the proposal.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority notes the concerns raised by respondents regarding the wider role of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim in supporting community resilience and recognises that many objectors view the school as an important local asset beyond its educational function. Respondents highlighted the school's role as a familiar and accessible community facility and argued that it contributes to the village's capacity to respond to local challenges and changing circumstances. The Authority recognises that schools in rural communities often provide opportunities for social interaction, community engagement and local coordination, and that these wider functions can contribute positively to the overall resilience and wellbeing of an area. These considerations have been taken into account as part of the assessment of the proposal and through the Community Impact Assessment process.

The Authority also acknowledges the concerns expressed regarding the potential loss of a local facility that may be utilised during periods of disruption, adverse weather or other emergency situations. Respondents noted that rural communities can face particular challenges associated with flooding, severe weather conditions and limitations in the availability of public facilities. The Authority recognises that community buildings can provide valuable support during such circumstances and understands why stakeholders have highlighted the school's contribution as part of the local infrastructure. However, the primary purpose of the school is to provide education, and

school organisation decisions must principally be assessed on the basis of educational provision and long-term sustainability, whilst also taking account of wider community impacts.

The Authority further acknowledges the view that the school contributes to community resilience through the relationships and social networks that have developed amongst pupils, families and residents. Objectors emphasised that strong community connections can support collective problem-solving, social support and community wellbeing, particularly during challenging periods. The Authority accepts that schools can play an important role in fostering these relationships and that social capital represents a valuable aspect of community life. Nevertheless, community resilience is influenced by a wide range of factors and organisations, including community groups, local facilities, voluntary organisations, emergency planning arrangements and wider social networks. While the school contributes to these networks, it is not the sole mechanism through which community resilience is established or maintained.

The Authority has carefully considered concerns regarding the cumulative impact of the loss of services and facilities within rural communities. It is recognised that stakeholders are concerned about the long-term sustainability of local infrastructure and the potential implications for the community's ability to adapt to future challenges. For this reason, the Authority has considered the proposal not only in terms of educational provision but also through its Community Impact Assessment, which examines the wider implications for community life, local facilities and social cohesion. The Authority remains committed to ensuring that these broader considerations are taken into account alongside educational, organisational and financial factors when evaluating the proposal.

Whilst acknowledging the important contribution that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim makes to the social fabric and resilience of the community, the Authority must balance these considerations against its statutory responsibility to secure sustainable and effective educational provision. Having considered all available evidence, the Authority remains satisfied that the proposal has appropriately taken account of the potential impact on community resilience and that the wider needs of the community have been carefully assessed. Although the Authority recognises that the school provides benefits beyond education, it remains of the view that these considerations must be weighed alongside the long-term challenges relating to pupil numbers, financial sustainability, surplus capacity and educational viability. The Authority therefore remains satisfied that the proposal represents a balanced and proportionate response to the issues identified through the review process.

25.	Environmental and Climate Impacts	9	11%
Many respondents expressed concern that the proposed closure of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim would have adverse environmental consequences as a result of increased travel requirements for pupils, families and staff. Objectors frequently noted that one of the advantages of maintaining a local village school is that it reduces the need for long-distance transport and enables some children to travel shorter distances or remain within their local community. Several respondents argued that closure would inevitably increase the number of journeys undertaken by private vehicles, school transport services and families travelling to and from alternative schools. It was suggested that these additional journeys would lead to increased fuel consumption and higher carbon emissions, conflicting with wider environmental objectives and efforts to promote sustainability. Many objectors considered the proposal to have implications that extend beyond educational provision and felt that the environmental impact should be assessed alongside financial and organisational considerations. A recurring theme throughout the objections was the relationship between school organisation decisions and wider climate change commitments. Many respondents referred to national and local ambitions to reduce carbon emissions and promote more sustainable lifestyles. Several objectors questioned whether increasing the distance travelled by pupils each day was consistent with these objectives. Concerns were raised that closing a local school would increase dependence on motorised transport at a time when organisations and communities are being encouraged to reduce unnecessary journeys wherever possible. Some respondents argued that maintaining educational provision within local communities represents a practical means of supporting environmental sustainability and reducing the overall carbon footprint associated with daily travel. Many therefore viewed the environmental impacts of closure as an important consideration that should be given greater prominence within the assessment process. Many respondents also highlighted the impact that closure could have on opportunities for active travel. Objectors frequently noted that pupils attending a local village school may be able to walk, cycle or travel short distances with family members, whereas alternative arrangements may require greater reliance on vehicles or organised transport services. Several respondents argued that encouraging active travel contributes positively to children's health and wellbeing whilst also supporting environmental objectives. Concerns were expressed that transferring pupils to schools located further away could reduce opportunities for active travel and increase dependency on cars and buses. Some objectors suggested that the benefits of retaining a local school should therefore			

be viewed not only in terms of community convenience but also in relation to broader efforts to promote healthier and more environmentally sustainable travel habits.

Throughout the objections, respondents frequently argued that environmental considerations should form part of a holistic assessment of the proposal. Many acknowledged that the environmental impact alone may not determine the outcome of the decision, but maintained that it remained a relevant factor when considering the cumulative effects of closure. Several objectors suggested that increased transport demands, reduced opportunities for active travel and higher carbon emissions would create consequences extending beyond the immediate educational context. Respondents often linked environmental concerns to wider themes of community sustainability, rural resilience and long-term planning, arguing that local institutions such as village schools can contribute positively to more sustainable communities. The overall view expressed was that the potential environmental and climate implications of the proposal should be carefully considered and weighed alongside educational, financial, linguistic and community factors when determining the future of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority has carefully considered the concerns raised by respondents regarding the potential environmental implications of the proposal, particularly in relation to increased travel distances for pupils, families and staff. Many objectors highlighted the benefits of maintaining educational provision within a local community and argued that village schools can help reduce the need for travel by allowing children to attend school closer to home. The Authority recognises that sustainability and environmental responsibility are important considerations in public policy and accepts that school organisation proposals can have implications for travel patterns and associated carbon emissions. For this reason, environmental impacts have been considered alongside a range of other factors during the development of the proposal.

The Authority acknowledges the concerns expressed regarding the potential increase in vehicle journeys arising from the transfer of pupils to alternative schools. Respondents argued that longer journeys may result in higher fuel consumption and increased carbon emissions. The Authority recognises that transport-related emissions are an important consideration and has therefore taken account of transport arrangements, travel distances and accessibility when assessing the proposal. However, it is also necessary to consider environmental impacts within the broader context of maintaining a sustainable school estate. Decisions regarding school organisation require consideration of the long-term viability and efficient use of educational facilities, including the

environmental implications associated with operating and maintaining buildings that may have significant levels of surplus capacity.

The Authority also acknowledges comments relating to national and local commitments to address climate change and reduce carbon emissions. The Council remains committed to supporting environmental sustainability and recognises the importance of ensuring that its policies and decisions contribute positively to wider environmental objectives where possible. Nevertheless, school organisation proposals require the balancing of environmental considerations against other statutory responsibilities, including the provision of high-quality education, financial sustainability, learner wellbeing and the effective use of public resources. Environmental considerations form part of this assessment but cannot be considered in isolation from the broader educational and organisational context.

The Authority recognises concerns regarding the potential reduction in opportunities for active travel should pupils attend schools located further from their homes. Objectors noted that local schools can support walking and cycling and may help reduce reliance on motorised transport. The Authority accepts that active travel can provide benefits for both learner wellbeing and environmental sustainability. However, the opportunities available for active travel vary significantly depending on individual circumstances, including distance, route safety and rural geography. The Authority is satisfied that any transport arrangements arising from the proposal would be implemented in accordance with relevant policies and statutory requirements and that consideration would continue to be given to promoting safe and appropriate travel options wherever possible.

The Authority agrees that environmental impacts should form part of a holistic assessment of the proposal and has considered these issues alongside educational, community, linguistic, demographic and financial factors. While recognising the concerns expressed regarding increased travel and potential carbon emissions, the Authority does not consider that the environmental impacts identified are of such a magnitude as to outweigh the wider evidence supporting the proposal. Having considered all available information, the Authority remains satisfied that the proposal reflects a balanced approach to school organisation planning and that environmental considerations have been appropriately taken into account as part of the overall decision-making process.

7. SUMMARY OF SUPPORTIVE COMMENTS RECEIVED AND LOCAL AUTHORITY RESPONSES

The table below notes the themes of the supportive comments received and the Local Authority's responses to those themes:

Supportive Comments Raised			
Point Number	Point Raised	Number of responses raising this point	% of responses raising this point
1.	Financial sustainability and efficient use of resources	2	66.7%
A prominent theme within the supportive responses related to concerns regarding the long-term financial sustainability of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Respondents who supported the proposal expressed the view that the continued operation of the school is becoming increasingly difficult to justify given its current circumstances. The comments suggested that challenges relating to the school's viability have been apparent for a considerable period and that a decision regarding its future was viewed as inevitable by some members of the community. Supporters of the proposal considered it important that difficult decisions are taken when educational provision is no longer viewed as sustainable over the longer term. Respondents also highlighted the importance of ensuring that public funding is used as efficiently as possible. In the context of increasing financial pressures across the education sector, consultees indicated that resources should be directed towards provision that can operate effectively and sustainably. The maintenance of schools with very low pupil numbers was viewed by some as an increasingly challenging use of limited resources, particularly where alternative educational provision exists nearby. These respondents considered that financial considerations are a legitimate and necessary aspect of school organisation planning. Several comments reflected a broader perspective on educational planning across the county. Respondents referred to the need to rationalise school provision in order to improve efficiency throughout the education system. While recognising that school closures can be difficult for local communities, those supporting the proposal suggested that maintaining an extensive network of schools in the face of demographic and financial pressures may not be achievable in the longer			

term. They argued that strategic reorganisation could assist in ensuring the sustainability of educational services across a wider geographical area.

Overall, supportive responses framed the proposal as a pragmatic response to ongoing financial and demographic challenges. Respondents emphasised the need to balance local considerations with the wider responsibility to manage public resources effectively and to ensure that educational provision remains sustainable for future generations. From this perspective, the proposal was viewed as a sensible and responsible course of action despite the acknowledged significance of the decision for the local community.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority acknowledges the views expressed by respondents regarding the importance of financial sustainability and the responsible use of public resources when considering school organisation proposals. The Authority recognises that maintaining a sustainable education system requires careful consideration of how limited funding is allocated across the school estate, particularly during a period of significant financial pressure, changing demographic trends and declining pupil numbers. Respondents highlighted concerns regarding the long-term viability of very small schools and the need to ensure that resources are utilised in a way that achieves the greatest educational benefit for learners. These considerations have formed an important part of the Authority's assessment of the proposal.

In developing the proposal, the Authority has considered both the current and projected financial position of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim alongside the wider challenges facing the education budget. School funding is largely driven by pupil numbers and, as enrolment declines, the costs associated with maintaining staffing, leadership arrangements, premises and educational provision become increasingly difficult to sustain. Whilst the Authority recognises the dedication and commitment demonstrated by staff and governors in maintaining provision, it must also consider whether the continued operation of the school represents a proportionate and sustainable use of public funding in the longer term.

The Authority also acknowledges respondents' observations that challenges associated with the school's viability have been evident for some time. Historical trends in pupil numbers, demographic forecasts and levels of surplus capacity have all been examined as part of the proposal development process. School organisation decisions require consideration not only of current circumstances but also of future sustainability. As part of its statutory responsibilities, the Authority

must take a strategic view of educational provision across the county and consider whether existing arrangements remain capable of meeting future needs effectively.

The Authority also notes that the proposal forms part of the wider context of the Council's Modernising Education Programme, which has been developed in response to significant demographic, financial and organisational challenges affecting education across Carmarthenshire and Wales. Declining birth rates and falling pupil numbers have resulted in increasing levels of surplus capacity across the school estate, placing additional pressure on school budgets and the long-term sustainability of educational provision. These challenges have contributed to a growing number of schools operating in financial deficit and have highlighted the need to ensure that resources are utilised effectively across the school network. The Council has also been advised by external regulatory bodies, including Estyn and the Panel Performance Assessment, that whilst its school modernisation strategy is credible, progress in implementing change has been too slow given the scale of demographic and financial pressures facing the education system. These wider factors have informed the development of the proposal and continue to support the need for timely school organisation decisions to ensure a sustainable, resilient and effective education system for current and future learners.

Respondents also referred to wider issues relating to the rationalisation of school provision and the need to manage resources efficiently across the education system. The Authority recognises that decisions regarding school organisation must balance local considerations against the need to maintain a sustainable and effective school network across the county as a whole. Within this context, reducing surplus capacity and ensuring that educational resources can be directed towards teaching, learning, additional support services and school improvement initiatives remain important objectives of the Council's Modernising Education Programme.

Having considered these matters, the Authority remains satisfied that financial sustainability is a relevant and significant consideration in the proposal. Whilst recognising the importance of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim to its community, the Authority considers that it has a responsibility to ensure public funds are managed prudently and directed towards educational provision that can remain viable, resilient and sustainable over the long term. The proposal therefore forms part of a broader strategic approach to securing a high-quality and financially sustainable education system for current and future generations of learners.

2.	Availability of alternative local provision and school rationalisation	1	33.3%
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Supportive responses identified the availability of alternative educational provision as an important factor in supporting the proposal. Respondents noted that pupils affected by the closure would continue to have access to Welsh-medium primary education within a reasonable travelling distance of the village. The existence of alternative schools was viewed as helping to reduce the potential impact of the proposal on pupils and families and was considered an important consideration when assessing the overall merits of the scheme.

One respondent made specific reference to Ysgol Griffith Jones as a practical alternative for pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. The respondent considered the school's location to be reasonably accessible for families within the village and viewed it as a suitable option for accommodating displaced learners. While alternative schools were acknowledged, distinctions were drawn between the relative practicality of different receiving schools, with concerns expressed regarding travel distances to some locations.

Supportive consultees also linked the availability of alternative provision to broader considerations relating to educational planning and efficiency. The consolidation of pupils into neighbouring schools was viewed as having the potential to strengthen the viability and sustainability of those schools while reducing inefficiencies associated with maintaining provision across multiple sites. Respondents suggested that concentrating resources within a smaller number of schools may support more effective educational delivery and long-term resilience.

Overall, respondents expressing this view considered the proposal to represent a practical approach to managing educational provision within the area. The presence of accessible alternative schools gave reassurance that pupils would continue to receive their education within local communities while allowing the Local Authority to take a more strategic and sustainable approach to organising school places across the wider area.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority accepts the views expressed by respondents regarding the availability of alternative educational provision within a reasonable travelling distance of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Respondents indicated that the existence of neighbouring schools supports the rationale for the proposal and reduces the potential impact on affected pupils and families. The availability, suitability

and capacity of alternative provision has been a fundamental consideration throughout the assessment of the proposal.

In developing the proposal, the Authority has undertaken a detailed evaluation of potential receiving schools, including consideration of capacity, educational standards, leadership arrangements, pupil wellbeing, Welsh-medium provision and transport implications. The Authority is satisfied that both Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog have sufficient capacity to accommodate pupils should the proposal proceed. Furthermore, the schools provide continuity of Welsh-medium education and are capable of supporting learners' academic, social and emotional development throughout any transition process.

The Authority recognises that accessibility remains an important consideration for families. Consequently, the assessment has considered travel distances and transport arrangements alongside educational factors. Whilst individual preferences regarding receiving schools may vary, the Authority is satisfied that suitable alternative provision exists and that pupils will continue to have access to quality education within reasonable travelling distances. Appropriate learner transport arrangements will be provided in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy where eligibility criteria are met.

Respondents also linked the proposal to broader considerations surrounding the rationalisation of school provision. The Authority acknowledges that maintaining a sustainable school network requires ongoing evaluation of the distribution of school places across the county. Demographic changes and declining pupil numbers have resulted in increasing levels of surplus capacity within parts of the school estate, creating challenges for both educational planning and financial sustainability. In this context, school organisation proposals play an important role in ensuring that educational provision remains fit for purpose and capable of meeting future demand.

The Authority therefore considers that the availability of appropriate alternative provision mitigates the potential impact of the proposal. The existence of nearby Welsh-medium schools with sufficient capacity, established leadership arrangements and satisfactory educational standards provides assurance that pupils will continue to receive an appropriate education within supportive learning environments. Taken together, these factors support the Authority's view that educational provision can continue to be delivered effectively and sustainably should the proposal proceed.

3.	Recognition of the school's positive contribution to the pupils and the community	1	33.3%
Although supportive of the proposal overall, one respondent took the opportunity to acknowledge the positive contribution made by Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim to both its pupils and the wider community. The response described the school as a valued institution that has benefitted the children who attend and has played an important role within village life. This reflects an appreciation of the school's achievements and the contribution it has made throughout its history. The comment highlighted that support for the proposal should not necessarily be interpreted as criticism of the school itself. Instead, the respondent recognised that the school provides a positive learning environment and contributes to community cohesion while still accepting the arguments in favour of the proposal. This distinction demonstrates that some consultees may simultaneously value the school and understand the factors leading to its proposed discontinuance. The response also illustrates the complex nature of school organisation decisions, particularly within rural communities where schools often have significance beyond their educational function. While acknowledging the benefits that the school brings to pupils and local residents, the respondent nevertheless supported the proposal, suggesting an acceptance that broader strategic, demographic or financial considerations may ultimately need to take precedence. Overall, this theme demonstrates that support for the proposal was not solely driven by concerns regarding viability or efficiency. It also reflects an understanding that schools can be highly valued community assets while still being affected by wider challenges that influence long term sustainability. The response recognised both the strengths of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and the difficult nature of the decision facing the Local Authority.			
Local Authority Response The Local Authority appreciates the supportive comment recognising the positive contribution that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim has made to its pupils and the wider community. The Authority fully recognises that the school has played an important role within village life and that it has provided educational opportunities for generations of local children. Throughout the consultation and objection processes, many stakeholders have highlighted the school's value as both an educational setting and a focal point within the community.			

The Authority wishes to emphasise that the proposal does not arise from concerns regarding the commitment, professionalism or efforts of the school's staff, governors or pupils. The school has continued to provide education and support for its learners despite significant challenges associated with declining enrolment and financial sustainability. The proposal should not therefore be interpreted as a reflection of the quality of work undertaken within the school, nor as a criticism of the contribution it has made to the local area.

The Authority recognises that schools, particularly within rural communities, often fulfil functions that extend beyond education alone. They can contribute to community identity, social cohesion and local participation in a range of activities and events. These wider community impacts have been carefully considered as part of the process and have formed a key element of the Community Impact Assessment undertaken in relation to the proposal. The Authority acknowledges that any proposal to discontinue a school is likely to generate concerns regarding the future vitality and sustainability of the community it serves.

At the same time, the statutory framework governing school organisation requires the Authority to balance community considerations against a range of other factors, including educational standards, learner outcomes, pupil projections, financial sustainability and the effective use of public resources. While community value is an important consideration, it cannot be viewed in isolation from the broader responsibility to ensure that educational provision remains viable and sustainable over the longer term.

Having considered all available evidence, the Authority remains satisfied that the proposal represents a balanced response to the challenges facing the school. The Authority acknowledges and respects the positive contribution that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim has made to both its pupils and the wider community. Nevertheless, it considers that the educational needs of learners can continue to be met through alternative provision and that the proposal reflects a strategic approach to ensuring sustainable education provision across the county in the future.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

During the statutory objection period, the Governing Body of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim submitted a detailed objection document in response to the proposal to discontinue the school. The document outlines the Governing Body's objection to the proposal and presents a range of alternative options and measures which, in its view, could address the concerns identified by the Local Authority in relation to leadership capacity, financial sustainability, pupil recruitment, educational resilience and the long-term viability of the school. The document also provides additional information regarding federation discussions, community partnership proposals, educational improvements, potential external funding opportunities and the perceived impact of the proposal on the local community and Welsh language provision.

In recognition of the detailed nature of the submission and to ensure that each alternative proposal has been given full, fair and conscientious consideration, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis has been undertaken for each of the alternative options identified within the Governing Body's objection. The purpose of this assessment is to evaluate the potential educational, financial, operational and community implications of each option, together with its ability to address the reasons that led to the publication of the statutory proposal. The analysis also considers the likely impact of each option on educational standards, community sustainability and learner travel arrangements, together with the reasons why the Local Authority considers that the alternatives do not currently represent a preferable or sufficiently robust alternative to the proposal to discontinue the school. For completeness and transparency, a full copy of the Governing Body's Objection Document is included in Appendix A.

Option 1 – Federate with Ysgol Bancyfelin and Ysgol Llangain Federation	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Directly addresses the Local Authority's concerns regarding leadership capacity and succession planning.	There is no guarantee that a federation proposal would be supported by all governing bodies or approved

Provides access to experienced executive leadership.	The proposal remains wholly dependent upon the agreement and ongoing commitment of another governing body.
Increases opportunities for staff collaboration, curriculum development and sharing of specialist expertise across schools.	Federation would not address the fundamental issue of declining pupil numbers, which have reduced further to 24 pupils as of 9 September 2026 .
Improves staff resilience and succession planning.	Financial sustainability concerns would remain, as funding is largely driven by pupil numbers rather than governance arrangements
Could reduce some management and leadership costs over time through shared leadership arrangements.	Federation does not address the school's limited ability to provide age-appropriate peer groups across all year groups.
May strengthen parental confidence by demonstrating a proactive approach to securing the school's future.	Governance transition can be lengthy and complex.
	Provision does not align with aspirations of Carmarthenshire's Primary Education Principles.

Opportunities	Threats
Access to a wider pool of teaching expertise, support staff and professional learning opportunities. Potential for more efficient deployment of staffing and resources across the federation.	Publication and implementation of the closure proposal would bring federation discussions to an end.
Enhanced educational resilience through collaboration, shared planning and moderation.	Any potential partner federation could withdraw interest at any stage of the process.
Opportunity to develop innovative shared leadership and curriculum models that support school improvement.	Continued uncertainty and ongoing financial/pupil number challenges could delay progress and make federation less attractive to another Governing Body.
Increased parental confidence.	Even within a federation, declining enrolment could eventually lead to renewed consideration of school reorganisation.
Potential platform for longer term pupil growth.	Pupil numbers have fallen further and as of September 2026, pupil numbers are 24.
Likely impact on quality and standards in education Federation has the potential to strengthen leadership capacity and educational resilience by providing access to an established executive leadership structure, wider professional expertise and increased opportunities for collaboration across schools. A federated model could enhance school improvement capacity through shared self-evaluation, curriculum planning, professional learning and quality assurance processes. It may also strengthen succession planning and reduce the vulnerability associated with leadership turnover in a very small school.	

Learners and staff could benefit from access to a broader network of colleagues, wider curriculum enrichment opportunities and increased opportunities to share effective practice. Over time, these arrangements could support improvements in teaching, learning and leadership by reducing professional isolation and increasing organisational resilience.

However, the educational benefits of federation would not be immediate and cannot be guaranteed. Any improvement would be dependent upon the successful completion of federation discussions, agreement from all governing bodies, approval of the necessary statutory processes and the establishment of effective joint leadership and governance arrangements. Furthermore, whilst federation may help address leadership capacity concerns, it would not in itself resolve the school's declining enrolment, which has reduced further to 24 pupils as of 9 September 2026. As a result, challenges relating to curriculum breadth, learner peer groups, financial sustainability and long-term viability would remain.

Consequently, whilst federation could provide a stronger leadership and governance framework and may contribute positively to educational standards over time, it does not provide a sufficiently certain or comprehensive solution to the underlying issues that led to the publication of the statutory proposal. At present, federation remains a potential option rather than a confirmed outcome.

Likely impact on the community

The continuation of the school through federation would allow the school to remain within the community whilst benefiting from a more sustainable leadership structure. However, some loss of local autonomy may occur through shared governance arrangements across a federation.

Likely effect of different travel arrangements

There would be no immediate change to travel arrangements because pupils would continue to attend Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim.

Reason for discounting / preferring this option

Whilst federation represent a potentially positive development, it remains at an exploratory stage, and no formal discussion has been taken by the potential

partner schools. Federation would principally address leadership resilience but would not resolve concerns regarding low pupil numbers, surplus capacity, long-term financial sustainability or the efficient use of educational resources. The success of this option remains dependent upon factors outside the Council's direct control and cannot be guaranteed within the timescale of the statutory proposal. Therefore, whilst federation could form part of a future solution, it does not currently provide sufficient certainty to address the grounds for the closure proposal.

Option 2 – Council-Community Partnership Model	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Retains educational provision within the village.	Largely untested model in this context.
Maintains Council responsibility for education provision and standards.	Significant detail remains undeveloped in the current proposal.
Encourages community involvement and local ownership.	Financial benefits are currently unquantified and there is limited evidence regarding the scale of savings or income generation that could realistically be achieved.
Has the potential to generate supplementary income through community use, shared facilities or community-led initiatives.	Requires substantial and sustained commitment from volunteers, community groups and external partners over the long term.
Supported by discussions with external organisations.	Would necessitate complex governance, accountability and operational arrangements that may increase organisational risk.

	Does not resolve the key challenges facing the school of low pupil numbers and financial pressure.
	Dependent primarily on grant funding which is often un-predictable, of a one-off nature and can not guarantee long-term sustainability. Reliance on grant funding creates uncertainty, as many funding streams are time-limited, competitive and intended for specific projects rather than ongoing revenue costs.
Opportunities	Threats
Potential access to external grants and funding streams to support community and educational initiatives.	Funding opportunities may not materialise or may be insufficient to address the school's underlying financial challenges.
Development of the school as a broader community asset and hub for local services and activities.	Community capacity, volunteer availability and stakeholder commitment may diminish over time, affecting sustainability.
Increased use of school facilities outside curriculum hours, generating additional community benefit and potentially supplementary income.	Reliance on external partners introduces uncertainty. Unlikely that there would be any long-term or contractual commitment.
Improved community cohesion.	There is no guarantee that income will be sufficient to meet the operating costs of the school.

Potential reduction in operating costs through partnership working.	The model may create additional administrative and governance burdens without addressing the underlying drivers of the statutory proposal.
Likely impact on quality and standards in education The Council-Community Partnership Model has the potential to strengthen links between the school and the wider community, increase access to additional resources and provide enriched learning experiences through community engagement and external partnerships. Additional funding, facilities and community involvement could enhance aspects of pupils' educational experiences and support wider wellbeing, cultural and Welsh language activities. However, the educational impact of the proposal remains uncertain. There is currently limited evidence demonstrating how the model would lead to measurable improvements in teaching and learning, pupil outcomes, leadership capacity or school improvement arrangements. The proposal does not directly address concerns relating to leadership resilience, educational sustainability or the challenges associated with delivering education within a very small school. Furthermore, no detailed implementation or educational improvement plan has been provided to demonstrate how the proposed arrangements would secure higher standards or improve learner outcomes over time. Whilst the model may provide additional community and enrichment benefits, it remains largely aspirational and dependent upon external funding and partner engagement. Consequently, the Local Authority does not consider that sufficient evidence has been presented to demonstrate that this option would provide a robust, sustainable or deliverable alternative capable of addressing the educational, financial and organisational challenges that led to the publication of the statutory proposal.	
Likely impact on the community This option would have a positive impact on the community by retaining the school as a key community asset. The model seeks to strengthen community	

participation, increase the use of the building and create opportunities for community led projects and services. It could support the sustainability of a rural Welsh-speaking community and potentially attract additional external investment into the village. However, the model relies heavily on sustained community involvement and long-term partner commitment. It is unclear whether this would be sustainable and therefore poses a risk.

Likely effect of different travel arrangements

No changes to travel arrangements would arise if the school remained open. Pupils would continue attending their local school and families would avoid extended travel times associated with attendance at alternative schools. Existing transport patterns would remain unchanged.

Reason for discounting / preferring this option

Although the model is innovative and has potential benefits, many elements remain undeveloped and dependent upon future agreements, external organisations and potentially unsustainable funding opportunities if grant funding is to be relied upon. There is currently insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the model would provide a sustainable solution to the financial and educational challenges identified by the Council. The proposal does not contain confirmed funding streams, formal partnership agreements or quantified financial outcomes capable of demonstrating long-term viability. Consequently, the option cannot currently be relied upon to address the strategic concerns underpinning the closure proposal.

Option 3 – Expanded Community Hub and Wider Community Use

Strengths	Weaknesses
Makes better use of existing public assets.	Educational buildings are primarily designed for teaching and learning; the age, design and layout of the building may require significant

	adaptation to accommodate wider community use.
Supports community wellbeing.	Additional income generated is likely to be modest and there is no evidence that it would be sufficient to address the school's underlying financial challenges or ensure long-term sustainability.
Increases utilisation of school facilities beyond the school day and throughout the year.	External and community activity would create increased management and operational requirements which may add to the workload of staff and leadership beyond their reasonable capacity.
Can generate supplementary income. May generate supplementary income through facility hire, community activities and partnership arrangements.	Additional safeguarding and operational considerations will be required for community use within a school day.
Supports rural sustainability objectives.	The proposed plan does not include: • projected income and expenditure; • cashflow forecasts; • 3-5 year budgets; • sensitivity analysis; • quantified savings from proposed initiatives.

	Would not directly strengthen leadership capacity, governance resilience or succession planning.
Opportunities	Threats
Development of a broader range of community activities and services from the school site.	The population base of the community is small and there may be insufficient demand for services to render them viable.
Expansion of adult learning, family learning and lifelong learning opportunities.	Operating, maintenance and staffing costs may outweigh any income generated through community use.
Health and wellbeing projects.	The model may become reliant on volunteers and community champions whose capacity and availability may fluctuate over time.
Intergenerational activities.	Sustainability dependent on long-term community engagement.
Potential access to grant funding linked to community development, Welsh language promotion, wellbeing and rural sustainability.	The physical layout of the school building is not ideally suited to extensive community use during the school day, potentially limiting opportunities.
	Low birth rates and declining pupil numbers may continue to undermine the overall sustainability of the school irrespective of increased community use.

	Grant funding opportunities may not materialise or may be time limited.
	These aspiration may not materialise. Many of the proposed benefits remain aspirational and there is no guarantee that sufficient demand, income generation or partnership arrangements will be secured.
Likely impact on quality and standards in education Expanded community use of the school site could provide additional enrichment opportunities for learners through extracurricular activities, intergenerational projects, health and wellbeing initiatives and stronger engagement with families and the local community. Increased access to services, community programmes and external partners may contribute positively to pupils' wider experiences, wellbeing and sense of belonging within their community. However, the educational benefits would be largely indirect. The proposal does not directly address the key concerns identified by the Local Authority regarding leadership capacity, educational resilience, succession planning, financial sustainability or declining pupil numbers. Whilst increased community activity may enhance the school's role within the village and provide valuable enrichment opportunities, there is limited evidence that it would lead to measurable improvements in teaching and learning, pupil outcomes or leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, increased community use could place additional operational and management demands on school staff and leaders, potentially diverting capacity away from core educational priorities. The success of the model would also depend on sustained community engagement, sufficient demand for facilities and the availability of external funding and partners. Consequently, whilst this option may strengthen community links and contribute positively to pupil enrichment and wellbeing, it does not provide a robust or evidenced solution to the educational, organisational and financial challenges that	

led to the publication of the statutory proposal. The Local Authority therefore considers that the potential educational benefits are likely to be limited and insufficient, in isolation, to secure the school's long-term sustainability.

Likely impact on the community

The community impact could be highly positive as the school site would continue operating as a focal point for village life. Increased use of the facility could support community wellbeing, social inclusion and local engagement whilst helping to maintain the viability of services within the community. The option aligns with the role often played by rural schools as community hubs.

Likely effect of different travel arrangements

The option would avoid the need for pupils to travel to alternative schools and would allow educational and community activities to remain within Meidrim. Local access to services would be maintained for both pupils and community members.

Reason for discounting / preferring this option

Whilst wider community use would enhance the value of the site as a community asset, it would not directly resolve the core issues identified in the statutory proposal. Additional community activity does not necessarily generate sufficient income to secure long-term educational sustainability and there is limited evidence regarding anticipated usage levels or financial benefit. The option therefore offers community benefits but does not provide a comprehensive educational or financial solution.

Option 4 – Childcare, Wraparound and Holiday Provision

Strengths	Weaknesses
Responds to identified childcare and wraparound care needs within the local area.	Demand has not been fully evidenced through a robust market assessment and the level of likely uptake remains uncertain.

Could improve parental confidence in the school and strengthen engagement with current and prospective families.	Provision would require appropriately qualified staff, regulatory compliance and ongoing management oversight.
May support pupil recruitment by establishing stronger links with pre-school children and their families.	Income projections are currently speculative and unsupported by detailed viability modelling.
Creates opportunities for additional income generation through childcare, wraparound and holiday provision.	Additional accommodation adaptations may be required to ensure appropriate segregation between childcare and mainstream school provision.
Could improve transition arrangements into statutory education through earlier engagement with children and families.	Childcare provision would need to evidence viability to ensure compliance and sustainability. It is unlikely that there would be sufficient demand to ensure this.
	Any increase in pupil numbers is uncertain and likely to occur gradually over an extended period, if at all.
	Does not provide a clear solution to leadership resilience, educational sustainability or long-term financial viability.
Opportunities	Threats
Potential to increase pupil recruitment through stronger engagement with young families and pre-school children.	Existing childcare provision already operates within nearby areas, including the Cylch Meithrin in Bancyfelin and childcare providers within the St Clears area, creating

	direct competition for a limited number of children.
Improved transition arrangements between early years provision and statutory education.	Insufficient demand could undermine financial viability and lead to ongoing subsidy requirements.
Increased opportunities for parental engagement and family learning.	Staffing recruitment challenges.
Potential access to childcare, early years and community-focused grant funding streams.	Operating costs, staffing costs and regulatory requirements may exceed income generated through the provision.
	Demographic trends, including low birth rates and a declining school-age population, could limit future demand.
	Even if successful, childcare provision may not generate sufficient pupil growth to address surplus places or long-term sustainability concerns.

Likely impact on quality and standards in education

The provision of childcare, wraparound care and holiday activities could contribute positively to learner wellbeing, school readiness and family engagement. Early engagement with children and families may support smoother transitions into statutory education, strengthen relationships between home and school and provide opportunities to promote Welsh language development from an earlier age. Over time, increased contact with prospective families may contribute to improved pupil recruitment and retention.

However, the educational benefits are likely to be indirect rather than transformational. Whilst childcare provision may support children's readiness to learn and enhance parental engagement, it does not directly address the key

issues that led to the publication of the statutory proposal, namely leadership capacity, educational resilience, declining pupil numbers and long-term financial sustainability. No evidence has been presented to demonstrate that the proposal would result in measurable improvements in teaching quality, learner outcomes or school leadership.

Furthermore, the success of the proposal is dependent upon sufficient demand, financial viability, successful recruitment of appropriately qualified staff and ongoing compliance with childcare regulations. Any impact on pupil recruitment is likely to be gradual and uncertain, particularly given the limited local population base and the availability of existing childcare provision in neighbouring communities.

Consequently, whilst childcare and wraparound provision could provide valuable benefits for children, families and the wider community, the Local Authority considers that it represents a supporting measure rather than a comprehensive solution. The proposal may contribute positively to community sustainability and family engagement, but it does not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that it would address the fundamental educational, organisational and financial challenges facing the school.

Likely impact on the community

The proposal could provide an important service for local families, particularly in rural area where childcare provision may be limited. It may improve work-life balance for parents, support local employment and make the area more attractive for young families. The development of childcare provision may also increase community use of the school site.

Likely effect of different travel arrangements

Establishing childcare provision within the village could reduce the need for some families to travel elsewhere to access childcare services. However, there is no assessment of the extent to which this is currently happening and whether parents currently accessing provision elsewhere would be willing to change. If this were to happen, it would create a further risk to existing provision in other nearby areas.

Travel arrangements for school pupils would remain unchanged while providing additional convenience for local parents.

Reason for discounting / preferring this option

Whilst wraparound childcare may contribute positively towards pupil recruitment and community sustainability, the proposal is supplementary rather than transformational. Providing viable and sustainable childcare is a challenge in many smaller and rural communities due to the low population base and thus lack of demand. Alternative provision exists within the St Clears and Bancryfelin areas and any new provision would very likely be in direct competition with these providers for the same children. There is no evidence that the anticipated income or pupil growth would be sufficient to address concerns around surplus places, long-term financial sustainability or educational resilience. As such, the proposal can only be viewed as a supporting measure rather than a standalone solution.

Option 5 – Renewable Energy and Sustainability Initiatives

Strengths	Weaknesses
Has the potential to reduce energy and operating costs over the longer term.	Would require significant upfront capital investment before any financial benefits could be realised.
Aligns with Welsh Government, Local Authority and national sustainability and decarbonisation priorities.	Financial savings are uncertain and would likely accrue gradually over an extended period.
	The proposal does not address the fundamental challenge of declining pupil numbers, which have reduced further to 24 pupils as of 9 September 2026.

	Does not directly address leadership capacity, educational resilience or succession planning.
Supported by specialist organisations with expertise in renewable energy and community sustainability projects	Requires specialist expertise.
Could provide valuable curriculum enrichment opportunities linked to science, sustainability, environmental awareness and climate change.	Not a direct solution to pupil number and financial challenges facing the school.
May enhance the environmental performance of the school estate and reduce carbon emissions.	Requires specialist technical expertise, project management and ongoing maintenance arrangements.
	The age and condition of the school building may require significant additional capital investment before renewable technologies could be installed. Benefits would take time to materialise and would not address the immediate concerns that led to the publication of the statutory proposal.
Opportunities	Threats
Grants and external funding streams are available to develop such schemes.	Funding is not secured and would require a competitive application process with no guarantee of success.
Reduction in energy consumption and carbon emissions.	

Potential community energy initiatives and partnerships with environmental organisations.	Long payback periods, potentially extending to 10 years or more, may limit the ability of the proposal to address short- or medium-term financial pressures.
Enhanced community profile and positive publicity through participation in sustainability projects.	Benefits may not be realised quickly enough to address concerns regarding the school's current viability.
Opportunity to develop innovative curriculum projects linked to sustainability, science, technology and environmental stewardship	Savings achieved may be lower than anticipated due to fluctuations in energy markets, maintenance costs or technical performance. Even if fully implemented, energy savings alone are unlikely to offset the financial challenges associated with maintaining a school with very low pupil numbers. Continued declines in pupil enrolment could undermine the overall sustainability of the school regardless of improvements in energy efficiency. Capital investment could divert limited resources from other educational priorities.
Likely impact on quality and standards in education Renewable energy and sustainability initiatives could enhance learning experiences by providing meaningful opportunities for pupils to engage with sustainability, climate change, science, technology and environmental education in practical and relevant contexts. Such initiatives may support curriculum	

enrichment, strengthen learner engagement and contribute positively to pupils' understanding of environmental responsibility and sustainable development.

The proposal could also create opportunities for partnership working with specialist organisations and enable pupils to participate in real-world projects that develop their knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of curriculum areas.

However, any educational benefits would be secondary to the primary objective of reducing operating costs and improving environmental sustainability. The proposal does not directly address the key concerns identified by the Local Authority in relation to leadership capacity, educational resilience, declining pupil numbers or long-term financial sustainability. Whilst sustainability projects may enhance aspects of the curriculum, there is limited evidence that they would lead to measurable improvements in educational standards, learner outcomes or the school's long-term viability.

Furthermore, any financial benefits resulting from reduced energy costs are likely to emerge over an extended period and would be dependent upon securing funding, overcoming technical challenges and successfully implementing the required infrastructure improvements.

Consequently, whilst renewable energy initiatives could provide worthwhile environmental, educational and community benefits, they do not offer a direct or comprehensive solution to the issues that led to the publication of the statutory proposal.

Likely impact on the community

There could be positive community benefits through greater local involvement in environmental initiatives, potential reductions in energy costs and increased community pride in sustainability projects. External investment and partnership opportunities may also strengthen community engagement.

Likely effect of different travel arrangements

No impact on pupil travel arrangements would be anticipated as educational provision would remain within the community. Existing travel arrangements would continue.

Reason for discounting / preferring this option

Whilst renewable energy projects may provide operational savings in the longer term, they are unlikely to generate savings of a scale sufficient to address the wider strategic issues facing the school. Funding remains uncertain, implementation would require significant lead-in time, and the benefits would not directly resolve concerns about pupil numbers, educational resilience or surplus capacity. Consequently, the proposal provides potential efficiencies but not a complete solution.

Option 6 – Defer Closure and allow a Defined Development Period (Governing Body’s Preferred Alternative)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Provides an opportunity for federation discussions to reach a formal conclusion.	Delays resolution of the concerns that led to the statutory proposal and extends a period of ongoing uncertainty. Does not directly address the underlying challenges of declining pupil numbers, which have reduced further to 24 pupils as of 9 September 2026.
Enables testing of partnership arrangements.	Financial pressures and the requirement for continued subsidy

	would remain throughout the development period.
Allows external funding bids to progress.	There is no guarantee that federation discussions, funding applications or partnership proposals will ultimately be successful.
Preserves future options.	Extends period of instability.
Decision could be based on more complete evidence.	The proposal lacks clearly defined success criteria, milestones and intervention points against which progress could be measured objectively. May prolong instability for pupils, parents, staff and the wider community. Continued uncertainty may adversely affect parental choice, pupil recruitment and staff recruitment. Does not provide an immediate solution to concerns regarding educational resilience and long-term viability. Risks postponing a difficult decision without materially changing the underlying position.
Opportunities	Threats
Potential stabilisation or growth in pupil numbers if confidence in the school's future improves.	Pupil numbers may continue to decline during the deferral period, further weakening long-term viability.

Enables further discussion of development of sustainable leadership arrangements.	Federation discussions may not result in an agreed proposal.
Delivery of partnership initiatives.	Funding applications may be unsuccessful or insufficient to address the school's financial challenges.
May provide an evidence base for future decision-making.	Continued uncertainty discourages enrolment.
	Community and partnership initiatives may fail to generate anticipated benefits or income Recruitment and retention challenges could become more difficult during an extended period of uncertainty. Further declines in enrolment, demographic projections or financial performance could leave fewer options available in the future than are available currently.
Likely impact on quality and standards in education A defined period of continued operation would provide an opportunity for federation discussions, partnership proposals, funding initiatives and community-led solutions to be developed and evaluated fully. The school would have the opportunity to build upon recent improvements in educational performance and leadership, including its successful exit from special measures, while continuing to implement its improvement priorities. Deferral may also create opportunities to strengthen leadership arrangements, increase collaboration with neighbouring schools and test whether alternative approaches can improve the school's long-term sustainability. Additional time may	

enable the school to demonstrate whether recent improvements in educational provision translate into increased parental confidence and pupil recruitment.

However, educational benefits cannot be assumed and would depend on demonstrable progress during the agreed period. Continued uncertainty regarding the school's future may affect staff morale, recruitment, retention and long-term planning. Furthermore, whilst deferral creates time for alternative solutions to be explored, it does not itself address the core concerns identified by the Local Authority regarding declining pupil numbers, financial sustainability and educational resilience.

The impact on quality and standards would therefore largely depend upon whether the additional period resulted in measurable and sustainable improvements against clearly defined success criteria. In the absence of such progress, there remains a risk that the same challenges would persist at the end of the review period.

Likely impact on the community

Deferral would be welcomed by many within the local community as it would preserve educational provision and allow further opportunities for community-led initiatives to develop. It may improve confidence amongst local families and support ongoing community engagement. Conversely, prolonging the process may extend uncertainty for pupils, families and staff and delay a final resolution.

Likely effect of different travel arrangements

No immediate changes would occur to travel arrangements as pupils would continue attending Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Existing transport arrangements would remain in place and future transport implications would depend upon the outcome of the review period.

Reason for discounting / preferring this option

The Local Authority may conclude that sufficient time has already been provided to explore alternatives throughout the consultation, legal proceeds and objection stages. Whilst further development may produce additional information, there remains no certainty that the proposals would ultimately resolve concerns

regarding pupil number, financial sustainability and educational resilience. Deferral may also prolong uncertainty for pupils and families without materially changing the underlying position. Consequently, Members may determine that the available evidence is sufficient to take a decision at this stage.

Overall Conclusion

The Governing Body of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim has presented a comprehensive range of alternative proposals and mitigating measures during the objection period which seek to address the challenges facing the school. These include progressing federation discussions with neighbouring schools, developing a Council-Community Partnership model, expanding community use of the school site, establishing childcare, wraparound and holiday provision, exploring renewable energy and sustainability initiatives, and deferring implementation of the proposal to allow further development of these arrangements. The Local Authority acknowledges the considerable efforts of the Governing Body, staff, parents and community representatives in exploring potential alternatives and recognises the commitment demonstrated in seeking to secure the future of the school. The Authority also acknowledges the school's successful removal from Estyn special measures and the proactive engagement that has taken place with a range of external organisations in investigating opportunities for future development.

In considering the objections received, the Local Authority is required to evaluate the proposed alternatives against its statutory duties and responsibilities, including the provision of high-quality and sustainable education, the promotion of effective leadership and governance, the efficient use of public resources, and the long-term sustainability of school organisation across Carmarthenshire. In doing so, it is necessary to assess not only the potential benefits of the alternatives proposed, but also their deliverability, level of certainty, scalability and capacity to address the issues that led to the publication of the statutory proposal.

The Authority recognises that several of the alternative proposals have merit and, either individually or collectively, may contribute positively to community sustainability, community engagement and the enhancement of local services. However, many remain dependent upon future discussions, third-party agreement, the successful securing of external funding, the availability of specialist expertise, the willingness of

volunteers and partner organisations to participate, and assumptions regarding future pupil growth and income generation. At the present time, many of these factors remain uncertain or unconfirmed, and limited evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the anticipated benefits would be realised to the extent necessary to address the challenges facing the school.

Particular consideration has been given to the federation proposal, which the Governing Body identifies as a key mechanism for strengthening leadership resilience and securing greater educational sustainability. Whilst federation has the potential to enhance leadership capacity, increase professional collaboration and improve organisational resilience, discussions remain ongoing and no formal agreement has been reached. Furthermore, whilst federation may address some leadership-related concerns, it would not in itself resolve the school's declining enrolment, substantial surplus capacity or long-term financial sustainability challenges. Consequently, the Local Authority must assess the proposal on the basis of the current evidence available rather than on the expectation that a future federation arrangement may be secured.

Similarly, whilst the proposed Council-Community Partnership model, expanded community hub arrangements, childcare provision and sustainability initiatives may provide wider benefits for the school and community, there is presently insufficient evidence to demonstrate that these proposals would generate the level of financial savings, additional income, pupil growth or organisational resilience required to secure the school's long-term viability. Many aspects of these proposals remain developmental in nature and would require significant further planning, investment, governance arrangements and external support before their effectiveness and sustainability could be fully assessed. Whilst these initiatives may complement educational provision and contribute positively to community wellbeing, they cannot currently be regarded as sufficiently robust alternatives to the statutory proposal.

The Local Authority has also carefully considered the Governing Body's preferred option of deferring implementation of the proposal to allow additional time for alternative arrangements to develop. It is recognised that further time may enable federation discussions, funding applications and partnership initiatives to progress further. However, Members must balance the potential benefits of additional exploration against the need to provide certainty and stability for learners, parents,

staff and the wider community. The issues identified through the review process, including declining pupil numbers, substantial surplus places, leadership resilience and long-term financial sustainability, have been known for a considerable period and have informed both the consultation process and the statutory proposal. Whilst further work may provide additional information, there remains no certainty that the alternative measures proposed would deliver outcomes capable of addressing the fundamental issues that gave rise to the proposal.

Having considered each of the alternative proposals individually and collectively, the Local Authority concludes that none currently represents a sufficiently evidenced, deliverable or sustainable solution capable of addressing the educational, organisational and financial challenges facing the school. Whilst the proposals demonstrate significant local commitment, community ambition and a clear desire to retain educational provision within the village, they do not provide the level of certainty required to secure the long-term sustainability of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. In particular, they do not adequately address the continued decline in pupil numbers, which stood at 24 pupils as of 9 September 2026, nor do they provide a clear and evidenced route to achieving long-term financial sustainability, educational resilience and organisational viability.

The Local Authority has therefore concluded that the alternative options should be discounted on the basis that they are either insufficiently developed, dependent upon factors outside the Authority's control, reliant upon outcomes that cannot be guaranteed, or unable to address the underlying issues that led to the publication of the statutory proposal. Accordingly, having carefully considered the objections received and the alternatives put forward, the Local Authority remains of the view that the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim represents the most appropriate and sustainable option for securing high-quality educational provision and ensuring the effective and equitable use of educational resources within the area.

9. POST-OBJECTION PERIOD REASSESSMENT IN RESPECT OF RURAL SCHOOL STATUS

In accordance with the School Organisation Code (2018), the Local Authority has undertaken a further review of the proposal following the statutory notice period. Particular consideration has been given to Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim's status as a rural school and the requirement within the Code that rural schools should not be closed

unless there are strong and compelling reasons for doing so. This reassessment has taken full account of all objections received during the objection period, including the issues raised by objectors regarding the educational, community, linguistic and social impact of the proposal.

The Local Authority has re-examined the proposal and the alternative options previously considered during the consultation process. These include retaining the school in its current form, federation arrangements, changes to the school's age range, enhanced community use of the site, and other measures intended to strengthen the school's long-term viability. The Authority has also considered the additional information and arguments submitted by objectors and assessed whether they alter the conclusions reached during the consultation stage.

The objections received highlighted the school's importance to the local community, its contribution to the Welsh language, concerns regarding learner travel, and the potential effect on community cohesion. These matters have been carefully reviewed alongside updated information relating to pupil numbers, school capacity, financial sustainability and leadership arrangements.

Having considered all objections and undertaken the additional scrutiny required for proposals affecting rural schools, the Local Authority remains of the view that the challenges facing Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim continue to be significant. These include sustained low pupil numbers, a high level of surplus places, financial pressures and ongoing difficulties in securing permanent leadership arrangements. The Authority has not identified any new evidence through the objection process that would provide a sustainable alternative capable of addressing these issues while maintaining high-quality educational provision.

The Local Authority therefore remains satisfied that the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim represents the most appropriate course of action. In reaching this conclusion, the Authority has carefully balanced the impact on learners, families, the local community and the Welsh language against the need to secure sustainable, effective and high-quality educational provision for current and future learners.

This reassessment confirms the Authority's view that there are strong reasons to proceed with the proposal despite the school's rural status, and that the requirements of the School Organisation Code have been fully met.

10. CHANGES ARISING FROM THE OBJECTION PERIOD

The Local Authority has carefully considered all objections received during the statutory notice period, including concerns raised about the potential impact of the proposal on learners, families, staff, the local community and the Welsh language. The Authority has also reviewed the alternative suggestions put forward by objectors and considered whether any changes to the proposal are necessary as a result of the issues raised.

Whilst the objection period has provided an opportunity for stakeholders to formally express their views and has further informed the Authority's understanding of the potential impacts of the proposal, no new evidence has been presented that would justify amending the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim.

The key factors that informed the original proposal remain unchanged. Whilst Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim was removed from Estyn special measures in December 2025, the school continues to face challenges relating to low pupil numbers, financial sustainability, surplus capacity and leadership resilience. As of September 2026, there were 24 pupils on roll at the school, and the evidence supporting the proposal remains valid. The Authority therefore remains satisfied that these factors continue to support the published proposal.

Accordingly, no changes are proposed to the published proposal.

However, the matters raised during the objection period, including learner transition arrangements, transport, support for vulnerable learners, childcare and wraparound provision, staff wellbeing, and the wider impact on the community, have been noted and will continue to inform implementation planning should the proposal be approved. These considerations will help ensure that appropriate support and mitigation measures are put in place to minimise any adverse impacts on learners, families and staff.

The Local Authority is therefore satisfied that the proposal published in the statutory notice remains appropriate and that no amendments are required as a consequence of the objections received.

11. CONCLUSION

The Local Authority recognises that the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim has continued to generate significant interest and concern during the statutory objection period. The objections received reflect the strength of feeling within the local community and demonstrate the importance that many stakeholders attach to the school's role in supporting learners, families and the wider community.

The objections raised a number of concerns, including the potential impact on community cohesion and the sustainability of the village, the contribution of the school to the Welsh language, learner wellbeing and emotional resilience, travel arrangements, Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision, and the educational benefits associated with small rural schools. Objectors also questioned whether alternative options could provide a more sustainable future for the school and its community.

The Local Authority has carefully considered all objections received and has reviewed the issues raised alongside the information previously gathered during the consultation process. In reaching its position, the Authority has considered its statutory responsibilities, the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2018), the school's rural status, educational standards, pupil numbers, surplus places, financial sustainability, leadership capacity and the long-term viability of educational provision within the area.

The Authority acknowledges that the closure of a rural school can have a significant impact on its community and recognises the valued role that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim currently plays within village life. The Authority also recognises the positive relationships, supportive learning environment and Welsh-medium provision that the school offers. However, having considered all evidence available, including the objections received, the Authority remains of the view that the challenges facing the school are substantial and are unlikely to be resolved through the alternative options proposed.

No new evidence has been presented during the objection period that alters the Authority's assessment of the proposal or demonstrates a viable and sustainable alternative capable of addressing the issues identified. While the concerns raised by objectors are understood and acknowledged, the Authority remains satisfied that the

proposal represents the most appropriate means of securing sustainable, effective and high-quality educational provision for learners in the area.

The Local Authority is satisfied that the statutory objection process has been conducted in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2018), that objectors have been given a full opportunity to express their views, and that all objections have been properly considered as part of the decision-making process.

Having considered the content of the objections, together with all relevant educational, financial, community and statutory factors, the Local Authority has concluded that there is no basis on which to amend or withdraw the proposal. The Authority therefore remains of the view that the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim from 31 December 2026 should proceed for determination by County Council.

12. RECOMMENDATION

Having carefully considered all objections received during the statutory objection period, together with the findings of the consultation process, the statutory assessments undertaken, and the further review required under the School Organisation Code (2018), the Local Authority recommends that the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim from 31 December 2026 proceeds as published in the statutory notice.

In making this recommendation, the Local Authority confirms that:

- All objections received during the statutory notice period have been considered in full and given appropriate weight as part of the decision-making process.
- The issues raised by objectors, including concerns relating to community impact, Welsh-medium education, learner wellbeing, ALN provision, travel arrangements and the implications of closing a rural school, have been carefully considered.
- A post-objection reassessment of the proposal, including the additional requirements relating to rural schools, has been undertaken in accordance with the School Organisation Code (2018).

- Alternative options have been reviewed and reconsidered; however, no sustainable alternative has been identified that would adequately address the educational, organisational and financial challenges facing the school.
- Appropriate mitigation measures, including transition arrangements, continuity of ALN support, maintenance of Welsh-medium education provision and learner transport arrangements, will be implemented should the proposal be approved.
- The proposal supports the Local Authority's responsibility to secure high-quality, sustainable and effective education provision for current and future learners across the county.

The Local Authority recognises that this proposal has generated significant concern and acknowledges the strength of feeling expressed through both the consultation and objection processes. It also recognises the important role Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim plays within its local community and the value placed on the school by pupils, parents, staff and residents.

However, having balanced the objections received against the educational, financial, organisational and strategic considerations associated with the proposal, the Local Authority remains satisfied that discontinuing Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim represents the most appropriate course of action. The Authority therefore recommends that the proposal proceeds for determination by Cabinet.

13. NEXT STEPS

The Objection Report and all associated documentation will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration. Cabinet will determine whether to recommend to the full County Council that the proposal proceeds. The Objection Report, together with all associated documentation, will be presented to the County Council for determination. The County Council will then decide whether the proposal should be implemented.

In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2018), the Objection Report will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website within seven days of the decision being made. Copies of the report will also be made available on request, and all prescribed consultees will be notified of its publication and availability.

APPENDIX A – OBJECTION DOCUMENT – YSGOL GYNRADD MEIDRIM'S GOVERNING BODY

A Sustainable Future for Ysgol Meidrim A Practical Alternative to Closure Governing Body Representation in Response to the Statutory Notice



Submitted by
The Governing Body of Ysgol Meidrim
July 2026

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Executive Summary

At a Glance....

Council Concern	Position Today
Leadership	Federation discussions progressing
Finance	Partnership model developed
Pupil Numbers	Housing & childcare proposals emerging
Educational Standards	School removed from Special Measures
Welsh Language	Risks identified in proposed arrangements
Community	Strong community partnership proposal

Our Recommendation

The Governing Body respectfully asks Members to allow a defined period for the strengthened proposal to be fully evaluated before taking an irreversible decision to close Ysgol Meidrim.

Why Members Should Read This Report

WHAT THIS REPORT IS	WHAT THIS REPORT IS NOT	WHAT WE ARE ASKING MEMBERS TO DO
Evidence-based	Not an emotional appeal	Review the updated evidence
Solution-focused	Not opposition for the sake of opposition	Assess the proposal as it exists today
A practical alternative	Not a criticism of officers	Consider whether the Council's concerns can now be addressed

WHAT THIS REPORT IS	WHAT THIS REPORT IS NOT	WHAT WE ARE ASKING MEMBERS TO DO
A collaborative approach	Not a request to ignore financial pressures	Decide whether closure remains necessary
Focused on long-term sustainability	Not a request to delay indefinitely	Consider whether a short period of continued development would enable a better-informed decision

1. Introduction and Background

This Representation constitutes the Governing Body's formal objection to the Statutory Notice under the statutory objection process. However, whilst it fulfils that legal purpose, it is intentionally presented not as an objection for its own sake, but as a constructive invitation to continue working collaboratively with Carmarthenshire County Council to secure a sustainable future for Ysgol Meidrim. The Governing Body believes that collaboration, rather than closure, now offers the greatest opportunity to address the concerns identified during consultation.

This Representation is submitted by the Governing Body of Ysgol Meidrim in response to the Statutory Notice proposing the discontinuance of the school.

The Governing Body recognises that Carmarthenshire County Council faces significant financial pressures and difficult decisions in ensuring that education across the County remains sustainable. We fully acknowledge the Council's responsibility to plan strategically for the future of education and understand the challenges associated with maintaining small rural schools.

However, we respectfully submit that the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Meidrim is both premature and unnecessary at this stage.

Since the publication of the consultation document, and particularly following the Judicial Review proceedings, the Governing Body has continued to develop a credible and increasingly robust alternative to closure. That work has not stood still. New partnerships have been explored, financial opportunities have emerged, federation discussions have progressed and the proposal has evolved significantly beyond that originally considered during consultation.

This Representation therefore does not simply repeat earlier objections. Instead, it presents the Council with updated information, new evidence and practical developments that demonstrate there remains a realistic opportunity to secure a sustainable future for Ysgol Meidrim.

The Governing Body accepts that challenges exist. Leadership resilience, financial sustainability and pupil numbers all require continued attention. We do not seek to minimise those issues. Rather, we seek to demonstrate that each of these challenges is now capable of being addressed through a combination of partnership working, shared leadership, external investment and community collaboration.

Importantly, our proposal is no longer centred upon the concept of community ownership of the school. We recognise that this presents legal and practical complexities. Instead, we have developed a model based upon a Council - Community Partnership, whereby Carmarthenshire County Council would continue to retain responsibility for education whilst working alongside the Governing Body, community organisations and external partners to strengthen the long-term sustainability of the school.

The Governing Body believes this approach aligns more closely with the Council's strategic objectives. It seeks to reduce financial pressures, increase educational resilience, attract external investment that would not otherwise be available to the Authority and maximise the use of an important public asset for the benefit of both pupils and the wider community.

The statutory presumption against the closure of rural schools recognises that schools are more than places of education. They are integral to the social, cultural and linguistic sustainability of rural communities. Ysgol Meidrim fulfils each of these functions. The proposal before the Council therefore extends beyond the future of one school; it concerns the future sustainability of an entire rural community.

The Governing Body respectfully asks Members to consider this Representation not simply as an objection to closure, but as evidence that a credible alternative continues to emerge. We believe that significant progress has been made since consultation, that further measurable progress remains achievable, and that closure at this stage would remove the opportunity to fully explore solutions that are now within reach.

Should Members conclude that further collaborative work is justified, the Governing Body would welcome a defined period, determined by the Council and supported by agreed milestones, to demonstrate the delivery of the strengthened proposal before any irreversible decision is implemented.

2. Why Closure is Premature

The Governing Body recognises that, at the time the statutory consultation commenced, Carmarthenshire County Council considered there to be significant concerns regarding the long-term sustainability of Ysgol Meidrim. Those concerns centred on leadership resilience, financial sustainability and declining pupil numbers.

The Governing Body does not dispute that these were legitimate matters requiring careful consideration. However, the proposal before Members should not be assessed solely on the circumstances that existed at the beginning of the consultation process.

A significant amount has changed.

The Governing Body respectfully submits that Members are now considering a materially different proposal from that which existed when consultation commenced. During the consultation period, significant work has been undertaken with external organisations, neighbouring schools and community partners to develop practical solutions to the concerns identified by the Council. The question before Members is therefore not simply whether the original proposal was sustainable, but whether the strengthened proposal now merits further collaborative development before an irreversible decision is taken.

Since the consultation began, the Governing Body has continued to work proactively and constructively to address the concerns identified by the Council. This has not been a campaign simply to oppose closure. It has been a sustained effort to develop realistic and deliverable solutions that directly respond to the issues raised.

Importantly, the proposal has evolved considerably since it was first presented. New opportunities have emerged, discussions with potential partners have progressed, and alternative approaches to leadership, financial sustainability and community partnership have been explored in far greater detail.

These developments include:

- progress towards a potential federation with neighbouring schools
- agreement from the Governing Body of Ysgol Bancyfelin, Llangain and Llansteffan to formally consider federation at its next full Governing Body meeting
- continued engagement with organisations including Cwmpas, Social Business Wales, Ynni Teg, Ynni Sir Gâr, Perthyn and the Architectural Heritage Fund
- development of a Council–Community Partnership model focused on supporting, rather than replacing, the Council's responsibility for education
- exploration of additional income opportunities through wider community use, childcare provision and sustainability initiatives
- further evidence relating to planned housing growth, projected pupil numbers and the increasing demand for school places across the wider area.

The Governing Body also recognises that the Council has a statutory responsibility not only to manage surplus places but also to ensure that sufficient school places are available to meet future demand. Significant housing development continues along the A40 corridor and Ysgol Bancyfelin is already operating at or above its published capacity. In those circumstances, the available capacity at Ysgol Meidrim may become an important strategic asset, providing the Council with a cost-effective means of meeting future demand without the need for additional capital investment elsewhere.

These are not theoretical aspirations. They represent tangible progress that has occurred during the consultation process and demonstrate that the proposal is continuing to develop.

The Judicial Review did not halt the statutory process. However, it reinforced an important principle: that alternatives to closure should receive genuine and conscientious consideration. The Governing Body has taken that message seriously. Rather than simply repeating previous arguments, it has continued to strengthen its proposal in direct response to the concerns that have been raised.

The Governing Body therefore respectfully submits that the proposal now before Members is materially different from the position that existed when consultation commenced.

Closure is an irreversible decision. Once a rural school is closed, its educational role, its contribution to the Welsh language, and its place at the heart of the community cannot easily be recreated.

By contrast, allowing a defined period of continued collaborative development, with agreed milestones determined by the Council, would not remove any future options. It would simply allow Members to make their final decision on the basis of the fullest possible evidence.

This is not a request to delay difficult decisions indefinitely.

It is a request to recognise that significant progress has already been made, that further measurable progress is achievable, and that the evidence now available justifies allowing that progress to continue before an irreversible decision is taken.

The Governing Body believes that the question before Members is no longer simply whether Ysgol Meidrim faced challenges when consultation began.

The Governing Body respectfully submits that the circumstances surrounding Ysgol Meidrim have evolved significantly since consultation commenced. New partnerships have emerged, federation discussions have progressed, financial opportunities have expanded and further evidence has become available.

Closure is irreversible. Collaboration is not.

The Governing Body therefore respectfully asks Members to consider whether it is now reasonable to allow a defined period of continued collaborative development before determining whether permanent closure remains necessary.

We respectfully submit that, in light of the evidence now available, such an approach represents the most proportionate, constructive and responsible course of action.

3. The Council's Objectives and the Governing Body's Response

Throughout the consultation process, the Governing Body has listened carefully to the concerns raised by Carmarthenshire County Council.

Rather than simply opposing the proposal, we have sought to understand the underlying reasons for it and to develop practical solutions that directly address those concerns.

This Representation is therefore not simply a restatement of our original proposal. It is the result of many months of continued work, engagement with external organisations, and the development of new ideas designed to strengthen the long-term sustainability of Ysgol Meidrim.

The Governing Body believes it is important that Members assess the proposal as it exists today, rather than solely as it existed when consultation commenced.

The table below summarises the Council's principal concerns, the work undertaken by the Governing Body since consultation began, and why we believe those developments now warrant further consideration.

Council Concern	Progress Since Consultation	Why This Matters
Leadership resilience	Federation discussions have continued. The Governing Body of Ysgol Bancyfelin, Llangain and Llansteffan have agreed to formally consider federation at its next full Governing Body meeting. Shared leadership arrangements continue to be explored.	Leadership resilience is no longer an issue without potential solutions. A realistic pathway now exists to strengthen leadership through collaboration.
Financial sustainability	The proposal has evolved from one based largely on community ownership to a Council–Community Partnership model. Discussions have taken place with Cwmpas, Social Business Wales, Ynni Teg, Ynni Sir Gâr, Perthyn and the Architectural Heritage Fund. The Council's own valuation of the site	Financial sustainability should now be assessed against the proposal as it currently exists, rather than against the position at the start of consultation.

Council Concern	Progress Since Consultation	Why This Matters
	(approximately £150,000) has also demonstrated that future partnership options are considerably more achievable than originally anticipated.	
Pupil numbers	Housing development within the village continues. Opportunities for wraparound childcare, holiday provision and wider community use of the site have emerged. The school has also successfully exited special measures, improving its attractiveness to prospective families.	Future sustainability should consider the school's potential for growth as well as its current position.
Educational resilience	Federation discussions, shared leadership opportunities and wider partnership working have all progressed significantly.	Educational resilience should be assessed on the basis of future capacity as well as present circumstances.
Community sustainability	The proposal has developed into a wider Rural School Sustainability Partnership, bringing together education, sustainability, childcare, community use and external investment.	The school has the potential to become an asset that delivers wider benefits for both the Council and the local community.
Welsh language and rural communities	The Governing Body has continued to develop proposals that strengthen the role of Ysgol Meidrim as a centre for Welsh language, community activity and intergenerational engagement.	Retaining the school supports not only education, but also the long-term cultural and linguistic sustainability of the community.

Rather, we respectfully submit that each of the Council's principal concerns is now capable of being addressed through a combination of partnership working, collaboration and continued development.

The purpose of this Representation is therefore not to argue that change is unnecessary.

It is to demonstrate that change can be achieved through collaboration rather than closure.

The Governing Body has responded constructively to the concerns identified by the Council. The proposal has evolved significantly during the consultation process and now presents credible opportunities to address leadership, financial sustainability, educational resilience and community sustainability. Members are therefore invited to assess the proposal as it exists today, rather than solely as it existed when consultation began.

4. Leadership – A Challenge That Is Now Capable of Resolution

Leadership resilience has consistently been identified by Carmarthenshire County Council as one of the principal reasons for proposing the discontinuance of Ysgol Meidrim.

The Governing Body fully accepts that stable and effective leadership is essential to the long-term success of any school. We do not underestimate the importance of this issue, nor do we seek to minimise the challenges that have arisen.

However, we respectfully submit that the leadership position should now be viewed in the context of the significant progress that has been made since the consultation commenced.

The current leadership situation did not arise because of a lack of commitment by the Governing Body or the school community.

Following changes to the school's leadership arrangements, the school has experienced an extended period of uncertainty. Despite this, staff have continued to provide high-quality education and, importantly, the school has successfully exited Estyn special measures.

Throughout this period the Governing Body has worked constructively with Carmarthenshire County Council to secure appropriate leadership arrangements and has continued to explore longer-term solutions.

Progress Since Consultation

Since the original proposal was published, the position has evolved significantly.

Following the withdrawal of interim leadership support from the Bancyfelin, Llangain and Llansteffan Federation, Carmarthenshire County Council acted promptly to secure alternative interim executive leadership arrangements. The Governing Body welcomed this response, as it demonstrated that leadership challenges can be managed collaboratively while longer-term solutions continue to develop.

Interim leadership support has been secured to ensure continuity for pupils and staff whilst longer-term arrangements continue to develop.

Continuity for Pupils During a Period of Uncertainty

Since March 2026, the school has also been without its substantive headteacher, with interim leadership arrangements ensuring continuity for pupils and staff.

The Governing Body wishes to record its appreciation for the professionalism, resilience and commitment shown by staff during this period.

At the same time, pupils and parents have experienced prolonged uncertainty, not only regarding the school's future but also during a period of changing leadership arrangements.

While interim arrangements have maintained educational provision, prolonged uncertainty inevitably affects confidence amongst families considering enrolment decisions and creates additional anxiety for existing pupils.

The Governing Body respectfully submits that these exceptional circumstances should be recognised when assessing current pupil numbers and long-term sustainability.

At the same time, discussions regarding federation have continued.

The Governing Body has consistently maintained that federation represents the most sustainable long-term solution for Ysgol Meidrim, providing:

- stronger leadership resilience
- greater professional collaboration

- wider opportunities for staff development
- improved educational resilience
- and increased long-term sustainability.

Most significantly, the Governing Body of Ysgol Bancyfelin, Llangain and Llansteffan has now agreed to formally consider federation at its next full Governing Body meeting.

This represents a significant step forward.

Whilst no final decision has yet been made, it demonstrates that meaningful discussions are taking place and that federation is no longer simply a theoretical option.

The Current Barrier

The Governing Body understands that neighbouring schools are understandably cautious about entering into formal federation discussions whilst the future of Ysgol Meidrim remains uncertain.

This is entirely understandable.

A federation requires stability, long-term planning and confidence that all partners are investing in a sustainable future.

The current closure proposal inevitably creates uncertainty, making it difficult for potential partners to commit fully whilst the future of the school remains undecided.

The Governing Body therefore believes that the present uncertainty has itself become one of the principal barriers to resolving the leadership issue.

A Realistic Pathway

Importantly, leadership is no longer a problem without a solution.

There is now a credible pathway by which leadership resilience can be strengthened through:

- federation
- shared executive leadership
- collaborative working between neighbouring schools
- continued support from Carmarthenshire County Council.

The Governing Body is not asking Members to assume these arrangements will automatically succeed.

Rather, we ask Members to recognise that the issue is now capable of being addressed.

Governance During the Transition to Federation

The Governing Body recognises that, should federation proceed, the governance arrangements for Ysgol Meidrim would, in due course, transfer to a newly established Federal Governing Body in accordance with the statutory federation process.

During any transitional period, the current Governing Body of Ysgol Meidrim would continue to work collaboratively with Carmarthenshire County Council to develop the proposed Council–Community Partnership and the associated Community Hub arrangements.

Once federation is established, responsibility for the educational governance of Ysgol Meidrim would naturally transfer to the Federal Governing Body. Any wider community initiatives could then continue through an appropriately constituted Meidrim Community Hub Committee, or similar community body, working in partnership with the Federal Governing Body and Carmarthenshire County Council.

The Governing Body is not seeking to prescribe the detailed governance arrangements at this stage. Rather, we recognise that these should be developed collaboratively with the Council and neighbouring governing bodies as federation discussions progress. Our intention is simply to demonstrate that there is a clear and realistic governance pathway capable of supporting both federation and the proposed Council - Community Partnership.

The Council's Role

The Governing Body respectfully asks the Council to work with us in facilitating these discussions.

A collaborative approach between the Council, neighbouring governing bodies and the Governing Body of Ysgol Meidrim offers the best opportunity to secure long-term leadership stability.

Closure would remove that opportunity before it has been fully explored.

Leadership has been presented throughout this process as one of the principal reasons for closure.

However, the evidence now available demonstrates that the position has changed materially since consultation began.

There is now a realistic and developing solution.

The Governing Body therefore respectfully submits that leadership should no longer be regarded as an insurmountable obstacle to the future sustainability of Ysgol Meidrim.

Leadership remains an important challenge, but it is no longer a challenge without a solution. Federation discussions are progressing, interim leadership arrangements are in place, and a credible pathway now exists to strengthen leadership resilience. The Governing Body believes this issue is capable of being resolved through continued partnership working rather than closure.

5. Financial Sustainability – A Proposal That Has Evolved

Financial sustainability has understandably been one of the Council's principal concerns throughout this process.

The Governing Body accepts that Ysgol Meidrim, like many small rural schools, faces financial challenges. We do not dispute that the current financial position requires improvement, nor do we suggest that meaningful progress can be achieved overnight.

However, we respectfully submit that the financial case considered during consultation no longer reflects the proposal that is now before Members.

A Proposal That Has Changed

Since the consultation commenced, the Governing Body has continued to develop a more robust and sustainable financial model.

The proposal has evolved from one focused primarily on community ownership to one based upon a Council - Community Partnership, where Carmarthenshire County Council retains responsibility for education whilst working alongside the Governing Body, the local community and external organisations to strengthen the long-term sustainability of the school.

This approach is intended to complement the Council's investment in education rather than replace it.

Significant Progress Since Consultation

Since the original proposal was submitted, discussions have taken place with a range of organisations that specialise in community development, sustainability and external funding.

These include:

- Cwmpas
- Social Business Wales
- Ynni Teg
- Ynni Sir Gâr
- Perthyn
- Architectural Heritage Fund

The purpose of these discussions has not been to replace the Council's role in education, but to identify opportunities to strengthen the long-term financial sustainability of Ysgol Meidrim through partnership working and external investment.

The Council's Valuation

One of the most significant developments since the original proposal was prepared has been the Council's own valuation of the school site.

The site has now been valued at approximately £150,000, around half of the figure originally anticipated by the Governing Body.

This has materially altered the financial landscape.

Whilst the Governing Body is no longer promoting community ownership as the immediate solution, the valuation demonstrates that future partnership opportunities are considerably more achievable than previously understood.

It also illustrates that, should partnership arrangements develop further over time, the level of community investment required is realistic and proportionate.

The net saving identified by the Council from closing Ysgol Meidrim is relatively modest when considered in the context of the potential long-term consequences for education, community sustainability and the Welsh language. The Governing Body

respectfully submits that, where a credible alternative is continuing to develop, it is appropriate to explore whether those modest savings can instead be achieved through partnership, innovation and external investment rather than through closure.

Balancing Cost and Value

The Governing Body recognises that the Council has identified financial savings through the proposed discontinuance of Ysgol Meidrim. We fully appreciate the financial pressures facing the Authority and understand its responsibility to ensure that public resources are used effectively.

However, the question before Members is not simply whether savings can be achieved. It is whether closure is the only reasonable means of achieving them.

The anticipated net financial saving from closing Ysgol Meidrim is relatively modest (£13,000) when considered alongside the wider educational, social, cultural and economic consequences of permanently losing a rural Welsh-medium school.

Since the consultation commenced, the Governing Body has developed a range of proposals that were not available, or not sufficiently developed, when the original financial assessment was undertaken. These include partnership working, external grant funding, renewable energy opportunities, wider community use of the site, childcare provision and shared leadership arrangements.

Collectively, these initiatives have the potential to improve the long-term sustainability of the school whilst reducing financial pressures on the Council.

The Governing Body therefore respectfully submits that Members should consider not only the cost of retaining Ysgol Meidrim, but also the value that the school provides to the community and whether the same financial objectives can be achieved through partnership and innovation rather than permanent closure.

Before taking an irreversible decision, we believe it is reasonable to ask whether these opportunities have been fully explored and properly evaluated.

Wider Financial Opportunities

The proposal now extends beyond the traditional funding available to schools.

It includes opportunities to:

- attract grant funding that is unavailable to the Council

- explore renewable energy projects that reduce long-term operating costs
- increase appropriate community use of the site outside school hours
- develop wraparound childcare and holiday provision
- create additional opportunities for partnership working with local organisations.

Individually, none of these initiatives resolves every financial challenge.

Collectively, they create a more resilient and diversified model than that considered during consultation.

Assessing the Proposal as it Exists Today

The Governing Body respectfully asks Members to consider whether the financial assessment undertaken during consultation continues to reflect the proposal that is now before them.

The proposal has changed materially.

It now includes partnership arrangements, external funding opportunities and wider sustainability initiatives that were either not available or not sufficiently developed at the time of consultation.

For that reason, we believe the financial case should be reconsidered in light of the evidence now available.

The Governing Body accepts that financial sustainability remains a challenge.

However, the proposal has evolved significantly since consultation commenced.

It now presents a collaborative Council - Community Partnership model supported by external expertise, additional funding opportunities and a broader strategy for long-term sustainability.

Members are therefore invited to assess the financial viability of the proposal as it exists today, rather than solely on the basis of the position that existed when consultation began.

6. Welsh Language, Community Cohesion and Rural Sustainability

One of the defining characteristics of Ysgol Meidrim is that it is more than a place of education.

It is the educational, cultural and social heart of a rural Welsh-speaking community.

The statutory presumption against the closure of rural schools recognises that schools contribute not only to educational outcomes but also to the long-term sustainability of the communities they serve. In rural communities, schools play a unique role in supporting the Welsh language, encouraging community participation, attracting young families and maintaining the social fabric of village life.

The Governing Body respectfully submits that these wider considerations deserve significant weight when determining the future of Ysgol Meidrim.

The Governing Body also asks Members to consider the importance of stability for children within their own community. For many pupils, Ysgol Meidrim is the only school they have known. During the statutory process they have experienced prolonged uncertainty about whether they will remain with their classmates, teachers and wider school community. Whilst difficult decisions are sometimes necessary, the impact of sustained uncertainty on young children is a relevant consideration when assessing the timing of any decision.

The School and the Community

Ysgol Meidrim is not simply attended by children from the surrounding area.

It provides a focal point for the community through education, cultural activities, sporting events, family engagement and the everyday use of the Welsh language.

The proposal to discontinue the school therefore has consequences that extend well beyond the education of the current cohort of pupils.

It fundamentally changes the relationship between education and the community it serves.

Division of the Catchment

One of the most significant developments during this process has been clarification of the future catchment arrangements.

Rather than transferring the Meidrim community to a single receiving school, the existing catchment area would be divided between three separate schools.

The village of Meidrim itself would become part of the catchment for Ysgol Griffith Jones.

Other parts of the current catchment would transfer to Ysgol Hafodwenog and Ysgol Bancyfelin.

The Governing Body respectfully submits that this represents far more than an administrative boundary change.

It divides one established school community into three separate educational communities with different catchment areas, different transport arrangements and different educational pathways.

The proposal therefore does not simply relocate pupils.

It redistributes an entire community.

Welsh-medium Education

The Council has stated that Ysgol Griffith Jones is progressing towards becoming a fully Welsh-medium school.

The Governing Body welcomes that ambition.

However, this transition will take time.

During the transition period, some year groups will continue to have access to both English-medium and Welsh-medium provision.

This creates a foreseeable risk that some families, particularly those travelling towards Carmarthen for work or childcare, may choose English-medium education elsewhere rather than Welsh-medium education.

The Governing Body is not suggesting that this outcome is inevitable.

However, it is a realistic possibility that deserves careful consideration because it may produce an outcome that is contrary to the Council's own Welsh in Education objectives.

The proposal therefore has the potential to weaken, rather than strengthen, participation in Welsh-medium education during the transition period.

Capacity and Receiving Schools

The Council has confirmed that Ysgol Bancyfelin does not currently have sufficient capacity to accommodate all pupils from Ysgol Meidrim.

Consequently, not every family wishing to choose Welsh-medium education at Bancyfelin would be able to do so.

At the same time, the Council's own consultation documents include observations from Estyn regarding the financial sustainability of Ysgol Hafodwenog.

Estyn acknowledged that the school's future financial position would depend upon pupil transfer levels and noted that contingency arrangements were not fully articulated.

Whilst this does not mean that Hafodwenog cannot provide an excellent education, it demonstrates that the receiving arrangements themselves are not without uncertainty.

The Governing Body believes this is an important consideration when assessing whether closure provides the most sustainable long-term solution.

The Wider Community

The impact of closure extends beyond education.

Removing the village school risks reducing the attractiveness of Meidrim to young families, weakening opportunities for community participation and diminishing the everyday use of the Welsh language within the village.

The Governing Body's developing proposal seeks to strengthen these very outcomes through a Council–Community Partnership, wider community use of the school site, childcare provision and greater community engagement.

Closure would remove the opportunity for these developments to be fully explored.

The Governing Body fully accepts that financial sustainability is an important consideration.

However, the statutory presumption against the closure of rural schools exists because schools provide benefits that cannot easily be measured through financial accounts alone.

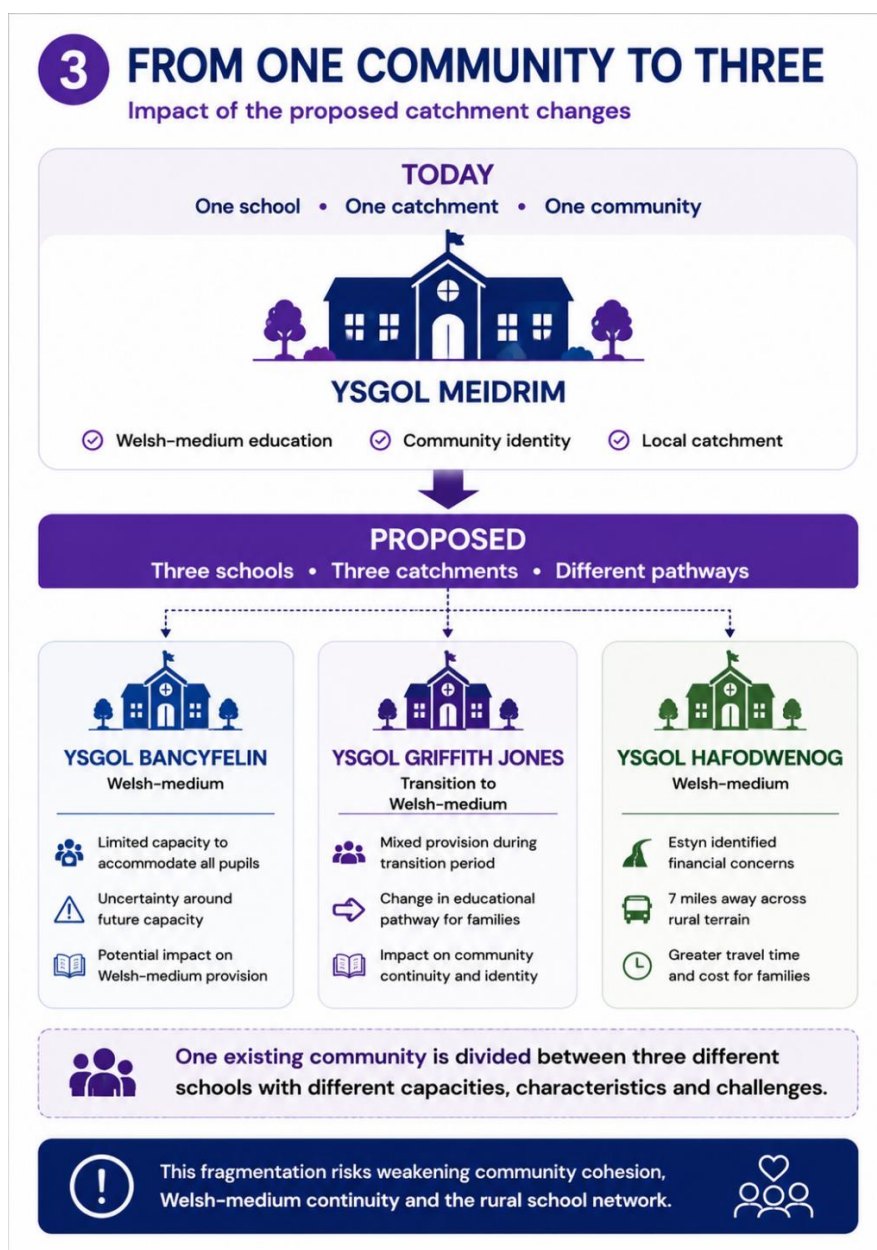
Members are therefore asked to consider not only the financial implications of retaining Ysgol Meidrim, but also the wider educational, linguistic and community consequences of permanently dispersing one established rural Welsh-speaking community across three separate schools.

The proposal before Members is not simply the closure of one rural school.

It fundamentally changes the educational geography of the Meidrim community.

One established Welsh-speaking school community would be divided between three different schools, each facing different educational circumstances and opportunities.

Before such an irreversible change is made, the Governing Body respectfully submits that these consequences should be fully understood and carefully weighed alongside the financial case for closure.



7. Educational Outcomes and the Best Interests of Children

The Governing Body recognises that the primary consideration in determining the future of Ysgol Meidrim must be the best interests of its pupils.

In reaching this decision, Members are required to have due regard to the **Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011**, which incorporates the principles of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)** into Welsh Government decision-making. Children have the right for their best interests to be treated as a primary consideration, to receive education that supports their development, and to learn within a safe, stable and supportive environment.

Children's Rights at the Heart of this Decision

This decision is not solely about finances or school organisation. It is also about whether the best interests, wellbeing and educational needs of the children of Ysgol Meidrim are best served by permanent closure, or by allowing a strengthened alternative proposal to be fully evaluated before an irreversible decision is taken.

Throughout this process, the Governing Body has remained firmly focused on ensuring that every child continues to receive a high-quality education within a caring, inclusive and nurturing Welsh-medium environment.

Educational Improvement

Since the original consultation commenced, Ysgol Meidrim has continued to improve. Most significantly, the school has successfully exited Estyn special measures, demonstrating the commitment, professionalism and resilience of staff, pupils and governors during an exceptionally challenging period.

The Governing Body believes this demonstrates that the school has the capacity to improve when provided with stability, appropriate support and collaborative leadership.

Stability, Wellbeing and Confidence

The statutory closure process has now extended over many months, creating a prolonged period of uncertainty for pupils, parents and staff.

For many children, the last several months have been characterised by uncertainty about whether their school will remain open, whether they will remain with their friends and teachers, and where they may ultimately complete their primary education.

Primary school should provide children with security, routine, confidence and a sense of belonging. Instead, many pupils have experienced an extended period of uncertainty during some of the most important years of their education.

Parents have shared concerns about the effect this uncertainty has had upon their children, while Governors have witnessed the understandable anxiety experienced by many families attempting to make important decisions without clarity about the future of the school.

The Governing Body respectfully submits that children's emotional wellbeing is an important educational consideration. Confidence, security and emotional wellbeing are fundamental to successful learning and should form part of Members' assessment of what is in the best interests of the children currently attending Ysgol Meidrim.

These exceptional circumstances should also be recognised when considering current pupil numbers. Families making decisions during a prolonged period of uncertainty may understandably delay enrolment or seek certainty elsewhere. Current numbers should therefore be viewed within that context rather than as a reliable indicator of the school's long-term potential.

Stability and Additional Learning Needs

Children thrive where there are stability, continuity and trusted relationships.

Ysgol Meidrim provides a learning environment in which staff know pupils exceptionally well and can respond quickly to their individual educational, emotional and wellbeing needs.

This is particularly important for pupils with Additional Learning Needs, many of whom depend upon familiar routines, established relationships and highly personalised support to achieve their potential.

The Governing Body respectfully asks Members to consider carefully whether sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that equivalent levels of personalised support, continuity and wellbeing can be maintained following closure.

Future Educational Opportunities

The strengthened proposal seeks not simply to retain the existing school, but to improve educational provision through:

- shared leadership and federation;
- greater collaboration with neighbouring schools;
- enhanced wraparound childcare and holiday provision;
- stronger community partnerships;
- improved access to external funding; and
- sustainability projects that enrich the curriculum and strengthen community engagement.

Collectively, these initiatives have the potential to enhance educational outcomes whilst maintaining the individual attention and nurturing environment that characterise a successful small rural school.

Conclusion

Educational improvement at Ysgol Meidrim has continued despite prolonged uncertainty.

The school has exited Estyn special measures, staff have continued to provide high-quality education, and the Governing Body has developed credible proposals to strengthen leadership, financial sustainability and long-term educational resilience.

The Governing Body respectfully submits that the best interests of children would be served by allowing this positive trajectory to continue whilst the strengthened proposal is evaluated against clear and measurable milestones.

Closure would permanently remove the opportunity to determine whether these developing solutions can secure a sustainable future for the school. Allowing a defined period for continued progress would preserve the Council's future options while ensuring that any eventual decision is based upon the fullest available evidence and, above all, upon what is genuinely in the best interests of the children of Ysgol Meidrim.

8. Why the Governing Body Believes Closure Should Be Deferred

The Governing Body fully recognises that Members must make difficult decisions in balancing educational standards, financial sustainability and the effective use of public resources.

We also recognise that maintaining the status quo indefinitely would not be a responsible option.

However, we respectfully submit that the Council is not faced with a choice simply between immediate closure and leaving matters unchanged.

Since the statutory consultation commenced, significant progress has been made in addressing the principal concerns that led to the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Meidrim.

Leadership discussions have progressed.

A strengthened Council–Community Partnership model has been developed.

Independent organisations have become actively engaged.

External funding opportunities have been identified.

Opportunities to strengthen long-term educational and financial sustainability continue to emerge.

Taken together, these developments mean that the proposal before Members today is materially different from the proposal originally considered during consultation.

The question before Members is therefore no longer whether challenges exist.

They clearly do.

The question is whether those challenges now have a credible pathway towards resolution.

The Governing Body respectfully submits that they do.

A Measured and Proportionate Approach

The Governing Body is not asking Members to postpone a difficult decision indefinitely.

Instead, we propose a defined period of continued partnership working during which the progress already made can be translated into measurable outcomes.

During this period, work would continue to:

- conclude federation discussions and determine long-term leadership arrangements;

- develop the proposed Council–Community Partnership into an agreed framework for future collaboration;
- progress external funding applications and renewable energy proposals designed to improve long-term financial sustainability;
- develop wraparound childcare, holiday provision and wider community use of the school;
- strengthen pupil recruitment through increased confidence and certainty; and
- report progress against agreed milestones to enable Members to make any future decision on the basis of evidence rather than assumption.

This represents a practical and accountable approach that allows progress to be measured transparently while preserving all future options available to the Council.

Why Deferral Represents the Lower-Risk Option

Closure is irreversible.

Once a rural school closes, the educational community it serves cannot simply be recreated if circumstances later improve.

The opportunity to test federation, attract external investment, strengthen community partnerships and evaluate future growth would be lost permanently.

By contrast, allowing a defined period for the strengthened proposal to develop does not remove the Council's ability to reconsider closure in the future.

Should sufficient progress not be achieved, Members would retain the ability to make a fully informed decision later.

However, if the proposal succeeds, Carmarthenshire County Council will have demonstrated that a collaborative approach can secure the future of a rural Welsh-medium school while addressing the very concerns that originally led to the closure proposal.

This is, in the Governing Body's view, the lower-risk and more proportionate course of action.

9. Recommendations to Members

The Governing Body respectfully asks Members to recognise that the evidence available today is materially different from that available when consultation commenced.

We ask Members to assess the proposal on its current merits rather than solely on the circumstances that existed at the beginning of the statutory process.

We further ask Members to allow a defined period for the strengthened proposal to be tested against clear and measurable milestones before taking an irreversible decision to discontinue Ysgol Meidrim.

Such an approach would preserve the Council's future options, enable informed decision-making based upon evidence, and ensure that every reasonable opportunity to secure a sustainable future for Ysgol Meidrim has been fully explored.

The Governing Body therefore respectfully recommends that Members:

1. Recognise that the proposal has evolved

Acknowledge that the alternative proposal now before Members is substantially different from that considered during consultation and should therefore be assessed on its current merits.

2. Recognise that progress has been made

Take account of:

- educational improvement since consultation
- interim leadership arrangements
- federation discussions
- Council–Community Partnership proposals
- external funding opportunities
- wider community support.

3. Recognise that closure is irreversible

Acknowledge that once Ysgol Meidrim closes there will be no opportunity to determine whether the developing proposal could have succeeded.

4. Allow further time

Provide a reasonable period in which the Council and Governing Body can continue working collaboratively to develop the proposal and demonstrate measurable progress.

5. Agree measurable objectives

Should Members consider it appropriate, agree a series of measurable objectives against which progress can be monitored jointly, including:

- leadership resilience
- federation progress
- financial sustainability
- pupil recruitment
- community partnership development
- wider educational provision.

6. Review before making a final decision

Following this period, review the evidence before determining whether closure remains necessary.

Our Request

The Governing Body is not asking Members to disregard the challenges facing Ysgol Meidrim.

Nor are we asking Members to make a decision based upon optimism alone.

We are simply asking Members to recognise that the proposal before them today is significantly stronger than the proposal originally considered and that there is now credible evidence demonstrating that the school's challenges are capable of being addressed.

In those circumstances, we respectfully submit that the most proportionate course of action is to allow those solutions the opportunity to be fully developed before taking an irreversible decision to discontinue the school.

Risks of Closing Now...

If Closure Proceeds	If Proposal Continues
Federation discussions end	Federation explored
Partnership lost	Partnership tested
External funding unavailable	External funding pursued
Community proposals abandoned because the school acts as the focus for young families	Community services developed
School permanently closes	Decision based on evidence

10. Conclusion

Throughout this process, the Governing Body has sought to engage positively and constructively with Carmarthenshire County Council.

We have never sought to ignore the challenges facing Ysgol Meidrim. We recognise the financial pressures on the Authority, the importance of educational resilience and the need to ensure that every school is sustainable for the future.

Our response has therefore not been one of resistance, but of action.

Since the consultation began, the position has changed significantly. The school has successfully exited Estyn special measures. Interim leadership arrangements have been secured. Federation discussions are progressing. A Council - Community Partnership has been developed. External organisations have offered expertise and support. New opportunities for childcare, community use, sustainability and external investment continue to emerge.

Taken individually, none of these developments provides a complete solution.

Taken together, however, they present a credible and deliverable pathway towards a more sustainable future for Ysgol Meidrim.

The question before Members is therefore no longer simply whether the school faces challenges. The evidence demonstrates that it does.

The question is whether those challenges are now capable of being addressed without permanently closing a rural Welsh-medium school that remains central to the educational, cultural and social life of its community.

Closure is irreversible.

Once the school has closed, the opportunity to demonstrate that these developing solutions could succeed will be lost forever. By contrast, allowing a reasonable period for the strengthened proposal to be fully evaluated would enable Members to make their final decision based on the fullest and most up-to-date evidence.

The Governing Body is not asking Members to accept promises or aspirations alone. We are asking Members to recognise the progress that has already been made and the realistic opportunities that continue to develop.

We respectfully submit that the proposal before Members today is materially different from the proposal considered during consultation.

For that reason, we believe it deserves to be assessed on its current merits.

The Governing Body therefore respectfully asks Members to:

- **recognise the significant progress made since consultation**
- **acknowledge that credible solutions are continuing to emerge**
- **allow those solutions the opportunity to be fully developed and assessed**
- **defer any irreversible decision until that work has been completed.**

The statutory presumption against the closure of rural schools exists because schools contribute far more than education alone. They support communities, sustain the Welsh language, provide stability for children and help ensure that rural communities continue to thrive.

The Governing Body believes that Ysgol Meidrim still has a realistic opportunity to fulfil that role for future generations.

We therefore respectfully ask Members to ensure that every reasonable opportunity to secure the future of Ysgol Meidrim has been fully explored before taking the irreversible decision to discontinue a school that remains at the heart of its community.

The decision before Members is not whether Ysgol Meidrim has faced challenges. It is whether those challenges should now be given the opportunity to be resolved before taking the irreversible step of closing a rural Welsh-medium school.

Summary of Our Request

The Governing Body respectfully asks Members to:

- ***Consider the proposal as it exists today, not only as it existed during consultation.***
- ***Recognise the progress made in leadership, educational improvement and partnership working.***
- ***Take account of the additional evidence submitted during the objection period.***
- ***Consider whether a short period of further development would enable a more informed and robust final decision.***
- ***Ensure that every reasonable alternative has been fully explored before approving the permanent closure of Ysgol Meidrim.***

Final Reflection

Ultimately, this decision is not solely about buildings, budgets or organisational structures.

It is about the children who attend Ysgol Meidrim today and those who may attend in the future.

The Governing Body believes those children deserve a decision based on the fullest possible evidence, after every reasonable opportunity to secure a sustainable future for their school has been properly explored.

We therefore respectfully ask Members to allow this strengthened proposal to be tested before taking an irreversible decision.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Evidence of Future Demand for School Places

Expressions of Interest and Emerging Demographic Evidence

Throughout the statutory objection period, the Governing Body invited parents and prospective parents to complete a Parent Expression of Interest Form to indicate whether they would consider applying for a place at Ysgol Meidrim should the school remain open.

These forms are not formal school admission applications, nor are they intended to replace the Council's admissions process. However, they provide important evidence of emerging demand and demonstrate that future pupil numbers cannot be assessed solely by reference to the school's current roll.

The Governing Body respectfully submits that these expressions of interest should be considered alongside wider demographic changes within the community when assessing the long-term sustainability of Ysgol Meidrim.

Summary of Expressions of Interest Received

Evidence	Number
Completed Expressions of Interest received	10
Prospective pupil places identified	14
Families intending to enrol more than one child	4
Existing families intending younger siblings to attend	Yes
New families identifying Ysgol Meidrim as their preferred school	Yes

Why Families Have Chosen Ysgol Meidrim

Parents consistently identified the following reasons for wishing their children to attend Ysgol Meidrim:

- Welsh-medium education
- Small, nurturing learning environment
- Strong community ethos
- Rural location
- Proximity to home
- Additional Learning Needs support
- Existing family connections with the school
- The school's role within the wider community

Several parents also commented on the confidence their children had developed since attending Ysgol Meidrim and the value of the school's personalised approach to learning and wellbeing.

Examples of Parent Feedback

"Our seven-year-old's Welsh has developed incredibly since starting at Ysgol Meidrim. Being a small, nurturing school, I believe that if either of my children required additional medical or educational support it would be identified and addressed quickly."

"The school is the hub of the community. Financial investment in our children cannot simply be viewed as a budget exercise. The children of Meidrim deserve the opportunity to remain within their own community."

Emerging Demographic Evidence

The Governing Body also wishes to draw Members' attention to further evidence that has emerged during the statutory objection period.

This includes:

- Four babies have been born within the Meidrim community during the past month alone.
- Ongoing residential development within and around the local area, including new housing expected to attract additional young families.
- Continued expressions of interest from families considering relocating into the area should the school remain open.

Whilst none of these factors alone guarantees future enrolment, collectively they demonstrate that the future demand for school places is more dynamic than is reflected by the current pupil roll.

Home Educated Children

The Governing Body also notes that Carmarthenshire currently has over 700 children known to be receiving Elective Home Education.

Whilst many of these children will appropriately remain within home education, this illustrates that there is a significant cohort of school-aged children outside mainstream education whose circumstances may change over time.

Small rural schools such as Ysgol Meidrim may provide an attractive educational option for some families seeking a personalised, nurturing and community-based learning environment.

The Governing Body does not suggest that these children should automatically be regarded as prospective pupils. However, their existence further demonstrates that future demand for school places cannot be assessed solely on current school rolls.

The Council has a statutory responsibility not only to manage surplus places but also to ensure that sufficient school places remain available to meet future demand.

The Governing Body respectfully submits that decisions regarding the long-term future of Ysgol Meidrim should therefore consider not only the current pupil roll, but also:

- confirmed expressions of parental interest
- sibling admissions
- local birth rates
- planned housing development
- changing patterns of parental choice
- future educational demand within the wider area.

Taken together, this evidence demonstrates that the current position should not be viewed as static. Rather, it suggests that there remains realistic potential for pupil numbers to grow over the coming years, particularly if the uncertainty surrounding the future of the school is resolved.

Supporting Document B1 - Expression of Interest Forms

Supporting Document B2 - Housing information

APPENDIX C

Progress Towards Federation

Leadership Through Collaboration

One of the principal reasons identified by the Council for proposing the closure of Ysgol Meidrim has been leadership resilience.

Since the statutory consultation commenced, the Governing Body has continued to explore federation as the preferred long-term solution to strengthen leadership capacity, improve educational resilience and enhance financial sustainability.

Meaningful discussions have taken place with neighbouring schools regarding the potential for federation, and these discussions have progressed beyond the exploratory stage.

The Governing Body understands that the Governing Body of the Bancyfelin, Llangain and Llansteffan Federation has agreed to formally consider federation at a future Governing Body meeting.

Whilst no decision has yet been made, this represents a significant development since consultation and demonstrates that federation is now a realistic option rather than a theoretical proposal.

The current uncertainty surrounding the future of Ysgol Meidrim inevitably makes it difficult for neighbouring schools to make long-term commitments. However, the willingness to consider federation demonstrates that collaborative solutions remain achievable if sufficient time is allowed for discussions to continue.

The Governing Body respectfully submits that this progress directly addresses one of the Council's principal concerns and supports the case for allowing further collaborative development before any irreversible decision is taken.

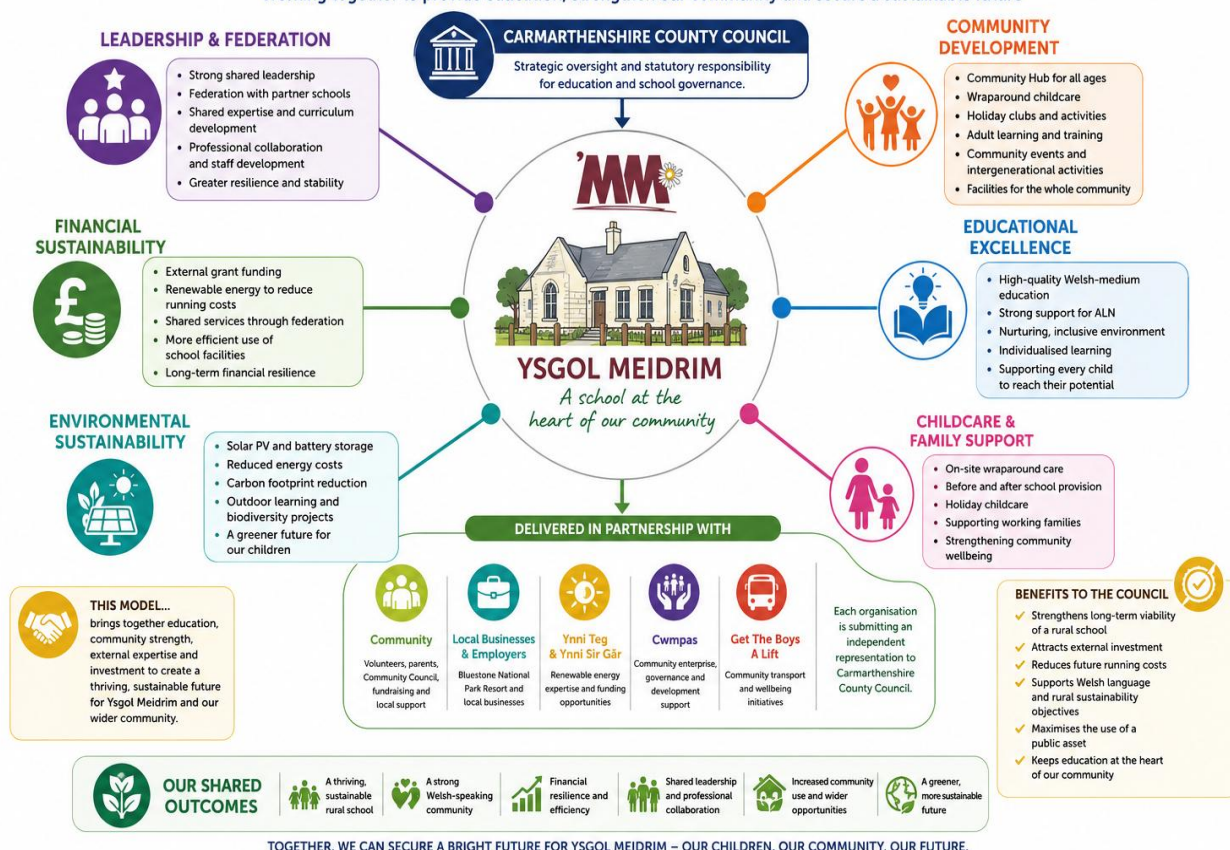
Supporting Document C1 - Email

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX D

A COUNCIL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP MODEL FOR THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF YSGOL MEIDRIM

Working together to provide education, strengthen our community and secure a sustainable future



Appendix E – Independent External Support

Independent Expert Representations

Since the statutory consultation commenced, the Governing Body has worked constructively with a range of organisations whose expertise aligns with the proposals contained within this Representation.

To ensure transparency and independence, these organisations have not been asked to contribute to the Governing Body's Representation. Instead, they have chosen to submit their own independent representations directly to Carmarthenshire County Council during the statutory objection period.

These submissions should be considered on their own merits and demonstrate that the strengthened proposal has attracted support from organisations with recognised expertise in community development, sustainability, governance and local partnership working.

Organisation	Area of Expertise
Ynni Teg	Community energy and renewable energy
Ynni Sir Gâr	Renewable energy and sustainability
Cwmpas	Community enterprise and governance
Bluestone National Park Resort	Major local employer and community partner
Get The Boys A Lift	Community wellbeing and transport

APPENDIX B – SUMMARY OF RESPONSE RECEIVED AFTER THE CLOSURE OF THE OBJECTION REPORT

An objection was received on 22 July 2026, after the statutory objection period had closed on 17 July 2026. As the submission was received outside the prescribed timescale, it cannot be treated as a formal objection for the purposes of the School Organisation Code (2018) and has not been included in the total number of objections received. Nevertheless, in the interests of transparency and completeness, the Local Authority has reviewed the matters raised. A summary of the issues identified, together with the Authority's response, is provided below. The consideration of this representation does not affect the statutory position regarding the number of valid objections received, as reported elsewhere in this document.

Theme 1.	Mental Health, Wellbeing and Trauma-Informed Practice
A prominent theme throughout the representation was the importance of mental health and wellbeing and the potential contribution that the proposal could make towards improving outcomes for children, young people and families. The respondent highlighted the proposal's commitment to creating nurturing, trauma-informed environments, particularly for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), anxiety and other additional support requirements. It was argued that such approaches recognise the importance of emotional wellbeing as a foundation for learning and development and place emphasis on ensuring that children feel safe, supported and able to build positive relationships. The representation referred to evidence suggesting that early intervention and relationship-based approaches can have a significant impact on children's resilience, confidence and long-term wellbeing. Particular emphasis was placed on the benefits of providing consistent support for children who may face barriers to learning as a result of emotional, behavioural or developmental challenges. The respondent considered that the proposal reflects a preventative approach that seeks to address needs at an early stage rather than responding only when difficulties become more severe. The respondent also suggested that the proposed model aligns with wider developments across education, health and social care that increasingly recognise the interaction between educational attainment and emotional wellbeing. In their view, investment in supportive environments can improve educational engagement, reduce social isolation and create conditions that allow children	

to thrive both academically and personally. The proposal was therefore regarded as having the potential to deliver positive outcomes that extend beyond education and contribute to improved wellbeing across the community.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority welcomes the respondent's recognition of the importance of promoting positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people. The Authority acknowledges the value of trauma-informed and nurturing approaches within educational settings and recognises the important role that schools play in supporting learners' emotional wellbeing, resilience and personal development.

The Authority agrees that early intervention and relationship-based support can contribute positively to learner wellbeing and educational engagement. Across Carmarthenshire, schools are encouraged to develop inclusive and supportive environments that enable learners to achieve their full potential, and the Authority remains committed to ensuring that these principles continue to underpin educational provision irrespective of school size or location.

In considering the proposal, the Authority has assessed the likely impact on learner wellbeing and has given careful consideration to the needs of vulnerable learners, including those with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). Should the proposal proceed, transition planning would be undertaken to support learners through the transfer process and to ensure continuity of support and provision. This would include individual planning where appropriate and close collaboration between schools, parents and relevant support services.

The Authority also recognises that concerns regarding emotional wellbeing were raised by a number of consultees and objectors during the consultation and objection processes. These concerns have been carefully balanced against the educational, organisational and financial challenges facing the school. While the benefits of nurturing educational environments are acknowledged, the Authority remains of the view that long-term sustainability must also be considered when determining future educational provision.

Having considered the points raised by the respondent, the Authority notes their support for the wellbeing-focused elements described within the proposal. Whilst these observations are welcomed, they do not alter the Authority's assessment of the school organisation proposal, which continues to be based on a broad range of educational, financial, demographic and statutory considerations.

Theme 2.	Rural Isolation, Loneliness and Community Connectedness
The representation identified rural isolation as a significant issue affecting many communities and recognised the potential role of the proposal in addressing these challenges. The respondent noted that residents in rural areas can face additional barriers to accessing services, support networks and social opportunities due to factors such as distance, transport limitations and the gradual reduction of local facilities. It was suggested that these factors can contribute to loneliness, social exclusion and poorer wellbeing outcomes for some individuals and families. Particular attention was drawn to the proposal's ambition to create facilities and services that encourage greater community engagement and provide opportunities for residents to connect with one another. The respondent considered that maintaining accessible local resources within the community can help strengthen social networks and create opportunities for people of all ages to remain actively involved in community life. The representation further argued that strong community connections are an important protective factor in maintaining mental wellbeing. According to the respondent, opportunities for residents to access local services, participate in activities and seek support within their own community can reduce feelings of isolation and contribute to a stronger sense of belonging. In this context, the proposal was viewed as potentially supporting not only individual wellbeing but also the wider social fabric of the community.	
Local Authority Response The Local Authority recognises the challenges that can affect rural communities, including social isolation, reduced access to services and the importance of maintaining opportunities for community engagement. The Authority acknowledges the respondent's comments regarding the wider role that accessible local facilities can play in supporting social wellbeing and fostering community connectedness. Throughout the consultation and objection processes, significant emphasis has been placed on the role of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim within the local community. The Authority acknowledges the strength of feeling expressed regarding the school's importance to village life and accepts that any proposal affecting a rural school requires careful consideration of community impacts in addition to educational considerations.	

In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2018), the Authority has undertaken detailed assessments of the proposal's impact on the community and the implications associated with the closure of a rural school. The Authority has carefully considered representations both supporting and opposing the proposal and has assessed whether alternative options could provide a sustainable means of maintaining provision while addressing the challenges facing the school.

Whilst the respondent's comments highlight potential benefits associated with community-focused initiatives and local support networks, the Authority remains of the view that the educational and operational challenges identified within the proposal remain significant. These include declining pupil numbers, substantial surplus capacity, financial pressures and ongoing sustainability concerns.

The Authority therefore acknowledges the respondent's observations regarding community connectedness and wellbeing but remains satisfied that the proposal continues to represent the most sustainable option for educational provision in the area, having balanced community considerations against wider strategic responsibilities.

Theme 3.	Community Resilience and Emergency Support
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A significant element of the submission focused on the proposed Emergency Resilience Hub and the role that such a facility could play in strengthening local resilience. The respondent considered that rural communities may be particularly vulnerable during periods of disruption, including severe weather events, utility failures, transport difficulties or other emergencies. They suggested that having an established local facility capable of supporting residents during such circumstances could provide practical and emotional benefits.

The representation highlighted the importance of having trusted community locations that can serve as centres for information, coordination and support during emergencies. The respondent considered that local hubs can play a key role in ensuring that vulnerable individuals and families are able to access assistance when required and can help communities respond more effectively to unforeseen challenges.

The respondent also emphasised that resilience extends beyond emergency response and encompasses a community's capacity to adapt to social, economic and environmental pressures over time. In their view, facilities and services that promote collaboration, mutual support and local

engagement help to build stronger and more resilient communities. The proposal was therefore regarded as contributing to long-term community sustainability as well as providing practical support in times of need.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority welcomes the respondent's comments regarding the importance of community resilience and recognises the value of local arrangements that assist communities during periods of disruption, emergency or changing circumstances. The observations regarding the potential role of community facilities in supporting residents during times of need are noted.

The Authority acknowledges that community resilience encompasses a wide variety of factors, including local infrastructure, partnerships, access to information, volunteer capacity and strong social networks. These considerations form part of broader community planning responsibilities and are recognised as important in maintaining the wellbeing and resilience of rural communities.

In considering the proposal, the Authority has carefully assessed both the educational requirements and the wider impacts on the local community. While the potential community benefits identified by the respondent are acknowledged, the central purpose of the proposal remains the reorganisation of educational provision in response to challenges relating to sustainability, leadership capacity, financial viability and learner numbers.

The Authority further notes that community resilience can be supported through a range of mechanisms and is not solely dependent upon the continued operation of a school. Opportunities to strengthen community resilience may continue to be explored through wider community planning arrangements and collaborative initiatives involving local partners and stakeholders.

Whilst the Authority welcomes the respondent's support for community resilience objectives, consideration of these observations does not alter the overall assessment of the proposal or the conclusions reached regarding the long-term sustainability of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim.

Theme 4.	Integrated Community Services and Early Intervention
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The representation expressed strong support for the proposal's intention to provide a range of integrated services and activities from a single community-focused location. Particular reference was made to wraparound childcare, youth services, community learning opportunities and broader support for families. The respondent suggested that bringing these services together in one place

could improve accessibility and encourage greater participation across different groups within the community.

It was argued that the availability of local support services can help to identify and respond to emerging needs before they escalate into more significant difficulties. The respondent viewed community hubs as an effective mechanism for delivering preventative support, enabling individuals and families to access advice, opportunities and assistance at an early stage. This was seen as particularly important in rural communities where access to services may otherwise require significant travel.

The representation further noted that integrated services can facilitate stronger partnership working between organisations and improve coordination between educational, wellbeing and community support initiatives. The respondent considered that this joined-up approach could maximise the benefits of limited resources and help create a more coherent support network for residents. As a result, the proposal was regarded as having the potential to deliver benefits across multiple areas of community life.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority acknowledges the respondent's support for integrated service provision and the role that accessible community-based services can play in supporting children, families and the wider community. The Authority recognises the value of early intervention approaches and the benefits associated with providing support before issues become more complex or entrenched.

The Authority agrees that partnership working between services can enhance outcomes for individuals and communities. Across Carmarthenshire, a range of services already work collaboratively to support families and vulnerable individuals, and opportunities to strengthen such arrangements continue to be explored through ongoing service planning and community engagement.

The proposal has been assessed principally against the requirements of the School Organisation Code and the Authority's statutory responsibilities in relation to educational provision. Nevertheless, the Authority recognises that educational facilities often function as important community assets and that wider community benefits have been raised throughout both the consultation and objection processes.

Whilst the respondent identifies potential opportunities associated with integrated service delivery, the Authority must also consider the practical challenges associated with maintaining educational

provision where pupil numbers, leadership capacity and financial sustainability are under significant pressure. These factors remain central to the rationale for the proposal.

The Authority therefore welcomes the respondent's positive observations regarding integrated services and early intervention but remains satisfied that the issues identified do not alter the overall case for the proposal as published.

Theme 5.	Benefits for Children, Young People and Families
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A recurring theme within the representation was the potential positive impact of the proposal on children, young people and families. The respondent noted that the proposed provision would create additional opportunities for children to access structured activities, supportive relationships and enriching experiences beyond the traditional school day.

The submission suggested that access to childcare and youth provision can help support children's social, emotional and personal development. Opportunities to engage in activities within a safe and supportive environment were viewed as contributing to the development of confidence, communication skills, independence and resilience. The respondent also considered that these opportunities could complement educational provision by supporting wider aspects of child development.

For families, the representation highlighted the practical benefits associated with accessible childcare and locally available support services. It was suggested that the availability of such provision can help reduce pressures on parents and carers while making it easier for families to access support within their own community. The respondent considered that these factors may contribute to improved family wellbeing and stronger community participation.

Local Authority Response

The Authority acknowledges the respondent's comments regarding the importance of providing opportunities that support the wider development and wellbeing of children and young people. It is recognised that access to supportive environments, enrichment opportunities and appropriate services can contribute positively to learner outcomes and family wellbeing.

The Authority has carefully considered the potential impact of the proposal on children and families throughout both the consultation and objection processes. Particular attention has been given to learner wellbeing, continuity of educational provision, Additional Learning Needs (ALN), transition

arrangements and access to support services. These matters have formed an important part of the overall assessment.

Should the proposal proceed, detailed transition arrangements would be developed to support learners and families. The Authority would work closely with the receiving school, parents, staff and relevant support services to minimise disruption and ensure that individual needs are appropriately addressed throughout the transition process.

The Authority also recognises that wider support services, childcare arrangements and opportunities for family engagement are important considerations. These issues have been raised by a number of stakeholders and will continue to inform future planning and implementation arrangements where relevant.

Whilst the Authority notes the respondent's positive assessment of the potential benefits for children and families, it remains of the view that these considerations do not outweigh the educational and financial challenges identified within the proposal.

Theme 6.	Intergenerational Opportunities and Social Cohesion
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The respondent identified intergenerational activity as a particularly positive aspect of the proposal. They suggested that creating opportunities for people of different ages to engage with one another could generate a range of social, educational and wellbeing benefits while helping to strengthen community relationships.

The representation noted that activities involving children, young people, adults and older people can promote understanding between generations and encourage the sharing of experiences, knowledge and skills. Such interaction was viewed as beneficial both for younger participants and for older residents who may otherwise have fewer opportunities for social engagement.

The respondent further suggested that intergenerational activities can strengthen community identity and foster a greater sense of shared purpose. By bringing different sections of the community together, the proposal was viewed as having the potential to reduce social isolation, encourage volunteering and support stronger community cohesion. The respondent considered these outcomes to be particularly valuable within rural communities where local relationships often play an important role in community wellbeing.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority welcomes the respondent's comments concerning the value of intergenerational activities and the potential contribution such initiatives can make towards community wellbeing. The Authority acknowledges that opportunities for people of different ages to interact can promote social inclusion, mutual understanding and stronger community relationships.

The importance of community cohesion has been a recurring theme throughout the consultation and objection processes, with many stakeholders expressing concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposal on community identity and local participation. The Authority has fully considered these concerns as part of its assessment.

The respondent's observations regarding the value of shared community activities and collaborative initiatives are acknowledged. Such activities can support wellbeing, reduce social isolation and encourage greater engagement across different sections of the community. The Authority recognises the positive role that these opportunities can play within rural communities.

However, the Authority must also consider whether the continued operation of the school represents a sustainable means of delivering educational provision. Whilst community cohesion remains an important consideration, it must be balanced alongside factors such as learner numbers, financial sustainability, leadership arrangements and educational resilience.

The Authority therefore welcomes the respondent's observations regarding intergenerational opportunities while maintaining its view that the proposal remains justified when all relevant factors are considered collectively.

Theme 7.	Alignment with Wider Wellbeing and Policy Objectives
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The representation also considered the proposal in the context of wider policy objectives relating to wellbeing, inclusion, equality and prevention. The respondent expressed the view that the proposal reflects broader ambitions to create healthier, more resilient and better-connected communities through early intervention and community-based support.

Particular emphasis was placed on the value of preventative services which seek to address challenges before they develop into more significant issues. The respondent considered that the proposal's focus on wellbeing, community engagement and accessibility aligns with established approaches to promoting positive outcomes for individuals and communities.

The representation also suggested that the proposal reflects principles associated with creating inclusive environments where individuals of all ages and backgrounds can access support and participate in community life. This commitment to accessibility and inclusion was viewed as an important component of community wellbeing and long-term sustainability.

Local Authority Response

The Authority notes the respondent's view that elements of the proposal align with broader principles relating to wellbeing, inclusion, prevention and community empowerment. These objectives are reflected within a range of national and local strategies and form important considerations in the delivery of public services across Wales.

The Authority recognises the importance of preventative approaches and agrees that enabling individuals and communities to access support at an early stage can contribute to improved long-term outcomes. Consideration of wellbeing, equality and inclusion forms part of the Authority's wider decision-making framework and has informed assessments undertaken throughout the school organisation process.

The respondent's reference to broader policy objectives has been noted and considered alongside the statutory assessments completed in relation to the proposal. These include consideration of educational impacts, community impacts, Welsh language implications, equality considerations and the additional requirements applicable to rural schools.

Whilst the Authority acknowledges that aspects of the proposal may support wider wellbeing objectives, it remains necessary to assess the proposal against the specific requirements of the School Organisation Code and the evidence relating to the sustainability of educational provision. The Authority continues to believe that the proposal represents the most appropriate response to the challenges facing the school.

Accordingly, while the respondent's observations are welcomed and noted, they do not provide evidence that would lead the Authority to amend or withdraw the proposal.

Theme 8.	Support in Principle for the Overall Vision and Strategic Direction
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The overarching position set out in the representation was one of support in principle for the broader vision, objectives and intended outcomes described in the proposal. While the respondent explicitly stated that they were not seeking to comment on the merits of the statutory school organisation

process itself, they indicated that many aspects of the proposal aligned closely with their organisational aims and understanding of good practice in promoting wellbeing.

The respondent considered that the proposal presents a vision centred on prevention, early intervention, wellbeing, community resilience and social connectedness. They viewed these objectives as consistent with evidence relating to positive mental health outcomes and effective community development. In particular, they welcomed the emphasis on supporting children, families and vulnerable individuals while strengthening community infrastructure.

The representation concluded by expressing support for the proposal's overarching ambitions to enhance wellbeing, reduce isolation and create a stronger and more resilient rural community. The respondent also indicated a willingness to engage with the Authority on wellbeing-related matters in the future and recognised the potential of the proposal to deliver benefits extending beyond education into broader community wellbeing and social development.

Local Authority Response

The Local Authority welcomes the respondent's support in principle for the broader aims and aspirations described within the proposal. The Authority notes that the respondent has highlighted the potential benefits associated with strengthening community support structures, promoting wellbeing, reducing isolation and fostering greater resilience within rural communities.

The Authority acknowledges the respondent's clarification that their comments relate principally to the broader vision and objectives associated with the proposal rather than the statutory school organisation process itself. These observations have nevertheless been considered as part of the overall review of representations received.

The respondent's support reflects one of a number of perspectives expressed throughout the consultation and objection processes. While many representations focused on concerns regarding the potential closure of the school, some respondents also identified potential opportunities associated with alternative models of service delivery, community development and long-term sustainability. The Authority has sought to consider all views received in a balanced and proportionate manner.

The Authority remains committed to ensuring that educational provision across the area is sustainable, effective and capable of meeting the needs of current and future learners. In reaching its conclusions, the Authority has balanced educational, financial, strategic and community considerations together with all representations received.

Having considered the representation in full, the Authority notes the support expressed for the proposal's overall objectives. However, the matters raised do not alter the Authority's assessment of the proposal or its conclusion that the proposal should proceed for determination in accordance with the statutory process.

APPENDIX C – COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Subject: The proposed closure of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and transfer pupils to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog.

This Community Impact Assessment has been updated following the statutory consultation period conducted between January and March 2026 and the objection period held between June and July 2026. It reflects issues and evidence raised by consultees, including parents, community members, pupils and other stakeholders, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (Wales) 2018.

1. Information on the proportion of pupils from the catchment area that attend the school;

The table below highlights the proportion of pupils from the catchment area attending the school, the proportion of pupils from outside of the catchment area attending the school, the proportion of pupils from the catchment area attending other schools and what schools they attend. As of September 2026, there were 24 pupils on roll at the school.

Year	Pupil numbers	In Catchment	Out of Catchment	In Catchment at Other schools*
PLASC 2026	32	25	7	22*
Other Schools				
*Bancyfelin, Brynsaron, Griffith Jones, Hafodwenog, Johnstown, Model				

2. After-school clubs and extra-curricular activities provided by the school:

The school offers an Arts and Crafts Club every Tuesday, giving pupils the opportunity to develop their creativity and enjoy working collaboratively on a range of projects. The school currently doesn't provide breakfast club.

3. Any other facilities or services the school accommodates or services the school provides:

The school welcomes the Cylch Ti a Fi group to the school every Thursday morning that offers a welcoming and inclusive space for babies, toddlers, and their families to come together.

4. Other use by the community of the school building

Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim is not used regularly by the wider community, as the Youth Hall in the village provides a dedicated venue which supports a wide variety of local activities.

5. Other links between the school and the community

The school are proud of their strong local connections with the community that are embedded across its daily practice and curriculum design.

The school perform twice a year for the local elderly residents, both in care homes and at community events. They welcome monthly visits from the local vicar to lead collective worship and classroom visits. The school visits the village church, allowing the children to explore cultural heritage. They do fundraising activities for the village park which are planned and led by the pupils. They host the Christmas and Summer fetes in the Youth Hall as well as performing annual Christmas shows in the Church Hall. The school have 'Clean-Up' walks around the village to promote care for the environment and do fundraising for many local, regional and national charities. Local residents come into the school to share about their interests, businesses etc.

During both the consultation and statutory objection periods, stakeholders repeatedly highlighted the school's contribution to community life beyond its formal educational role. Respondents described Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim as an important focal point for interaction between families, local organisations and different generations of residents. Many considered the school to play an important role in fostering community spirit, supporting local participation and strengthening relationships within the village. The school was frequently identified as a symbol of community identity and continuity, with respondents emphasising its contribution to maintaining social connections and supporting a strong sense of belonging within the local area. (**Objection Themes 1, 6, 9, 15 and 24**).

A recurring theme throughout the consultation and objection processes was the long-standing connection between Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and generations of local families. Many respondents described the school as an important part of the village's history and heritage, noting that several generations of the same families have attended the school. Stakeholders emphasised that the school contributes to a shared sense of identity and continuity within the community and expressed concern that its closure would result in the loss of an institution closely associated with the history and character of the village. The Authority acknowledges the significance of these representations and has considered them as part of the wider assessment of community impact.

It is noteworthy that even among respondents who supported the proposal, there was recognition of the important contribution the Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim has made to pupils, families and the wider community. Supportive comments acknowledged the school's positive educational environment and valued role within village life, whilst recognising the longer-term sustainability challenges facing the school. (**Supportive Theme 3**)

6. If accommodation, facilities or services are provided by a school, where would they be provided in the event of closure?

The school welcomes the Cylch Ti a Fi group to the school every Thursday morning that offers a welcoming and inclusive space for babies, toddlers, and their families to come together. If the proposals were to proceed and implemented, the Cylch Ti a Fi group could relocate to the Youth Hall in the village.

In relation to the future of the school building, should the proposals be implemented and Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim become surplus to the Local Authority's educational requirements, it is the Council's general approach to first consider whether the site is required for any other internal corporate purpose. Where no such requirement is identified, it may, in certain circumstances, be appropriate to explore the potential for ongoing community use of the building. This could include use by voluntary or charitable organisations or social enterprises, such as the Cylch Ti a Fi, subject to there being a clear and evidenced local need.

7. Whether other facilities available in the immediate local or wider community will or could be enhanced in the event of a school closure (e.g.

improvements to village halls, playgrounds, provision of holiday play schemes);

There are no plans to improve or enhance other facilities within the immediate local or wider community as part of the current proposal.

8. Information about the facilities and services provided at any alternative school;

Ysgol Griffith Jones is a primary school for pupils aged 3-11. The school benefits from having modern facilities and resources. The nursery provides high-quality early years education for children under five.

The school hall, along with both a fixed and mobile stage, supports creative expression through drama is ideal for hosting social events. Spacious playing fields allow children to enjoy a wide range of sporting activities. The large, well-equipped gym offers space for gymnastics, movement, netball, basketball, dance, athletics and badminton. In September 2022, a new library was opened to support and enhance pupils' reading development.

Ysgol Griffith Jones has a Breakfast Club, which operates every morning from 8:05am until 8:40am in the school hall.

Clwb yr Enfys runs the after-school club from 3:00pm to 5:55pm, Monday to Friday. For a fee of £10 per session, children are offered a health snack and access to a variety of indoor and outdoor activities, depending on the weather.

In addition to Clwb yr Enfys, the school offers a range of After School Activity Clubs during the Autumn Term. These include sports club; art club; folk dancing; ICT club; French club; cooking club; science club and drama club. Dragon Sport Club also offer a range of sports during the term, including netball; football; rugby; cricket and athletics.

Ysgol Hafodwenog takes pride in its active participation in the Urdd Eisteddfod, competing annually in both group and individual competitions. This year, pupils achieved notable success at the Urdd National Eisteddfod in Margam Park, earning three prizes for the clog dancing, the unison party for schools with up to 50 pupils, and the folk-dance party for schools with up to 100 pupils. In addition, the clog dance group won third prize at the Pontypridd National Eisteddfod. The school also

competes regularly in Urdd sports competitions, showcasing pupils' enthusiasm and talent beyond the classroom.

Academic and cultural achievements include winning one of the top prizes in the Welsh Heritage Initiative competition for a Victorian History project based on the Trelech area and being among the first schools in the county to receive the Gold Language Charter award in Summer 2023. Pupils benefit from a rich musical education, with violin lessons offered to Years 3–6 through the County Music Service and harp lessons available to all pupils through an external tutor. Environmental awareness is also celebrated, with the school proudly achieving its seventh Eco Schools Platinum Award—an exceptional accomplishment for a small school.

The school promotes pupil voice and leadership through its active school council, '*Hafod Hwylus*'. This group organises charitable activities, influences school policies, and regularly presents its ideas and progress to the Governors. A wide range of clubs enriches school life, including a daily Breakfast Club, '*Clwb Clociso*' during the spring term, and '*Clwb Hwyl*'—an after-school care club operating on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3:45pm to 5:30pm.

Community involvement is at the heart of the school's ethos. Seasonal community lunches bring pupils and local residents together, often followed by performances or shared activities such as games. Volunteers from the community play an invaluable role by reading with pupils, supporting musical and dance groups, and even helping develop outdoor learning areas—such as a sensory garden created in partnership with *Adam yn yr Ardd* and new planting beds maintained by parents. Produce grown at the school is sold to parents and community members. Volunteers and parents also assist with sports coaching in activities including rounders, netball, rugby, and cricket.

Hafod Hwylus organises regular community events such as the Macmillan Coffee Afternoon, the School Eisteddfod, a Thanksgiving service, and litter-picking sessions around the village. The school also provides a clothing recycling site for community use. Strong links are maintained with Capel y Graig, where pupils regularly perform at singing services and concerts, and the school participates in chapel-organised events. Collaboration with Cylch Meithrin Trelech is also strong, with joint activities including Shwmae Su'mae Day, sports sessions, and photography days. The Cylch

uses the school site for various fundraising events and meets regularly for Clwb Ti a Fi sessions, even joining pupils for lunch once a month.

Aelwyd Hafodwenog meets weekly on the school premises, and the Parents and Teachers Committee is very active, hosting meetings and organising community events such as a Rounders evening that brings together local young farmers clubs, chapels, and community groups. Parents also hold an annual maintenance day to help tidy the school grounds. Canon Ann Howells visits twice a term to lead services with the pupils, and the school regularly contributes to local initiatives such as the '*Hwb Cynnes Trelech*', where pupils engage villagers through games and performances.

The school site is designated as a suitable and accessible meeting point for the community in the event of an emergency.

9. Distance and travelling time involved in attending an alternative school of the same language category;

The proposal is to close Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and transfer pupils to Ysgol Griffith Jones which is approximately 3.1 miles or Ysgol Hafodwenog which is approximately 6.8 miles from Meidrim. Travel time from Ysgol Griffith Jones is approximately 7 minutes with travel time from Ysgol Hafodwenog being approximately 12 minutes. These are estimated times and actual times may vary depending on traffic volumes and other factors such as driving conditions and road works.

10. How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported;

The proposal is to close Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and transfer pupils to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog. Should the Council proceed with the statutory process and eventual implementation of the preferred option, support would be provided to pupils and their parents as part of the transition process.

If parents choose to send their children to an alternative school other than Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog, they will need to follow the School Admissions policy and process which can be found on the Carmarthenshire Council website.

11. Impact on health and wellbeing e.g. if pupils would be less able to walk or cycle to school;

As a result of the proposed school closure, pupils would be less able to walk or cycle to the receiving school due to increased distance and road safety concerns. This may reduce opportunities for daily physical activity, which could have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of some pupils. Respondents also highlighted the potential impact of increased travel on family routines, childcare arrangements and working patterns. Concerns were raised that longer journeys may increase the time commitment associated with school attendance and reduce flexibility for some families. Whilst recognising that adjustments may be required should the proposal proceed, the Authority notes that home to school transport assistance would be available in accordance with Carmarthenshire County Council's School Transport Policy.

The receiving schools offer a wide range of sports clubs as detailed above, which would help to mitigate some of the potential impacts by providing regular opportunities for physical activity during and outside of school hours. Many respondents also emphasised the relationship between attending a local village school and maintaining a connection to the community. Concerns were raised that travelling to schools outside the village may reduce opportunities for children to participate in community activities and develop friendships within their immediate locality. The Authority acknowledges these concerns and recognises that schools can contribute to community identity and local participation. These wider impacts have been considered through both the Community Impact Assessment and the statutory objection process.

The Local Authority will consider where possible whether an agreed designated pick-up point could be agreed for those pupils eligible for transport, to enable pupils who currently walk to school to continue to walk part of their school journey should the proposal proceed.

12. Any wider implications e.g. impact on public transport provisions, wider community safety issues

There are no anticipated impacts on public transportation services. School transport policy requires that free transportation be provided for any child living more than two

miles from the nearest appropriate school, therefore, transportation will be provided to those who are eligible.

The possible closure of the school building could also result in the loss of a designated safe space for community emergencies, such as a shelter or meeting point. However, it is currently unclear whether the school is actively used for this purpose.

During the consultation and objection periods, respondents raised concerns regarding the practical challenges associated with travelling on rural road networks, including narrow lanes, limited passing places, seasonal flooding and adverse weather conditions. Stakeholders highlighted that travel in rural areas can present different challenges to those experienced in urban locations and expressed concerns regarding journey reliability and accessibility during periods of poor weather. The Authority acknowledges these concerns and notes that any transport arrangements provided would be subject to appropriate safety assessments and would operate in accordance with relevant transport and safeguarding requirements.

13. Additional considerations for rural schools

The School Organisation Code includes a number of additional considerations that are likely to be relevant when carrying out a community impact assessment for a rural school closure. As Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim is identified as a rural school, these factors are considered below.

A number of respondents referred specifically to the statutory presumption against the closure of rural schools contained within the School Organisation Code. Objectors argued that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim provides educational, social, linguistic and community benefits which should be afforded significant weight when considering its future. Particular emphasis was placed on the school's contribution to community sustainability, Welsh language use, local identity and population retention. These representations have been carefully considered as part of the assessment process alongside evidence relating to educational sustainability, pupil projections, financial viability and the availability of alternative provision.

- **Whether closure would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community;**

Should the proposal proceed, it would leave Meidrim with no local school and as a result the village may become less attractive to families with young children, potentially accelerating demographic decline and aging the population. As families potentially seek easier access to services and education, property turnover may rise, but demand for housing from young families may decline.

During the objection period, a significant number of respondents expressed the view that the presence of a local primary school is an important factor influencing decisions by families regarding where they choose to live and raise children. Several objectors argued that the loss of the school could make Meidrim less attractive to prospective families and potentially contribute to demographic change over time. Concerns were also raised regarding the long-term sustainability of the village and potential impact on future housing demand. Whilst these concerns are acknowledged, the Authority recognises that population trends are influenced by a wide range of factors, including housing availability, employment opportunities, access to services and wider demographic patterns. *(Objective Themes 1,13 and 23)*

- **What impact closure might have on other services provided locally, for instance if the school is the only remaining public building in a community;**

The school welcomes the Cylch Ti a Fi group to the school every Thursday morning that offers a welcoming and inclusive space for babies, toddlers, and their families to come together. If the proposals were to proceed and implemented, the Cylch Ti a Fi group would be required to relocate.

- **Whether, or not, the school is a real hub of community life, used for other purposes – such as public meetings, local events, fetes, surgeries, and other get togethers – which would either cease or be diminished by being required to move elsewhere;**

The school building is not used regularly by the wider community, as the Youth Hall in the village provides a dedicated venue which supports a wide variety of local activities.

Although the school building itself is not used extensively for wider community activities, many respondents argued that the school's role as a community hub extends beyond use of the physical premises. Throughout the objection process, stakeholders highlighted the school's importance in bringing together pupils, families, residents and community groups through educational, cultural, fundraising and social activities. Respondents frequently described the school as a key institution within the village and suggested that its value derives as much from the relationships and community networks it helps sustain as from the building itself. These wider community functions have been considered as part of the assessment of the proposal.

- **Whether or not the loss of the school, and potentially families, will have a detrimental effect on the wider economy of the community;**

If the proposal were to proceed, the closure may have wider consequences for the economic stability of the local community. Throughout the consultation and objection process, respondents expressed concerns that the loss of the school could reduce the attractiveness of the area to young families, influence future housing demand and contribute to demographic change over time. Several stakeholders argued that rural schools support local sustainability by helping retain families within the community and supporting the viability of other local facilities and services. Whilst it is difficult to quantify the extent of these potential impacts, the Authority acknowledges that schools can contribute positively to the social and economic wellbeing of rural communities and has considered these representations as part of the overall assessment process.

Respondents also raised concerns regarding indirect economic consequences arising from the closure of the school. It was suggested that the removal of local educational provision could influence future housing demand, reduce the attractiveness of the area to younger families and contribute to longer-term demographic changes. Whilst evidence regarding these effects is inherently uncertain, these representations have been considered as part of the overall assessment of community sustainability and resilience. **(Objective Themes 1, 20 and 23)**

- **How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported (e.g. how pupils; particularly any less advantaged pupils) will be helped to participate in after school activities);**

If the proposal were to proceed and the Council moves forward with the statutory process and ultimately implements the preferred option, appropriate assistance will be offered to pupils and their parents throughout the transition.

Several respondents expressed concern that increased travel distances could affect pupils' ability to participate in extracurricular activities, community events and social opportunities outside the school day. The Authority recognises the importance of these activities in supporting wellbeing, social development and community participation. Both receiving schools offer a broad range of extracurricular opportunities and, as part of transition planning, support would be provided to help pupils and families access and engage with these activities following transfer.

- **The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school-based facilities which are used by the local community.**

If the proposal were to proceed and the school were to close, the Cylch Ti a Fi provision would be required to relocate to an alternative venue within the community. Whilst the school building itself is not regularly used for wider community activities, respondents consistently highlighted that the school's contribution extends beyond the physical use of the premises. A significant number of stakeholders described the school as an important contributor to community cohesion, Welsh language use, local identity, intergenerational relationships and community resilience. Concerns were raised that closure could weaken established social networks, reduce opportunities for participation in community life and diminish an important community institution that has served generations of local families.

The Authority recognises that, particularly within rural communities, schools often fulfil social, cultural and linguistic functions in addition to their educational role. These potential impacts have been carefully considered through the Community Impact Assessment and Welsh Language Impact Assessment. Whilst acknowledging the significance of these concerns, the Authority has balanced them against the school's long-term educational viability, financial sustainability and the availability of suitable

alternative Welsh-medium provision. On balance, the Authority remains of the view that the proposal represents a proportionate response to the educational and organisational challenges currently facing the school.

The objection process identified broader concerns regarding the potential impact of closure on community cohesion, village sustainability and community identity. Many respondents argued that the school's significance derives not solely from use of the physical building but also from its role as a community institution that brings together families, supports local relationships and contributes to the cultural and linguistic character of the area. Concerns were also raised regarding the potential cumulative impact of losing a further local service within a rural community and the effect this may have on the attractiveness of the village for young families, future population sustainability and community resilience. These concerns have been considered carefully by the Local Authority and balanced against educational, organisational and financial considerations.

Whilst alternative community facilities are available within the village, a number of respondents argued that these facilities do not replicate the educational, social and symbolic role performed by the school. Stakeholders emphasised that the perceived value of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim lies not only in the availability of a building but also in the relationships, activities and community networks that have developed around the school over many years. These views have been considered in assessing the wider community implications of the proposal. (**Objective Themes 1, 6, 9, 15, 20, 23 and 24**)

14. Issues raised during the consultation period

During the consultation period, a wide range of views were expressed in relation to the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. A significant proportion of responses raised concerns about the potential impact on the local community. The school was widely regarded as a central community asset, serving not only as a place of education but also as a focal point for village life and an anchor for local families. Stakeholders emphasised that its closure could undermine the sustainability of the rural community, contributing to population decline and reducing the area's attractiveness for young families. In addition, the school's role in supporting community cohesion and its broader social value were highlighted as key considerations.

A further prominent issue related to the potential impact on the Welsh language. As a Welsh-medium school, Ysgol Meidrim was seen as integral to maintaining and promoting Welsh within the locality. Respondents expressed concerns that closure could weaken the use of the language locally and have a detrimental effect on the linguistic and cultural character of the area, particularly within a rural context where schools often play a central role in sustaining Welsh-speaking communities.

Concerns were also raised regarding the extent to which the “presumption against closure” of rural schools had been applied. Some respondents felt that the proposal had been advanced without sufficient exploration of alternative options and that closure had not been clearly demonstrated as a last resort, as required by national policy. In this context, the governing body’s counter-proposal to develop the school as a community hub attracted attention, with calls for more meaningful engagement and collaboration with the local authority to explore sustainable alternatives during the consultation process.

Additional concerns related to educational provision and pupil wellbeing. Responses noted that the school was perceived to be improving and provided a supportive environment, including for pupils with additional learning needs. There were also concerns regarding the potential impact of closure on pupils, including increased travel distances, disruption to education, and the implications of any transition occurring during an academic year. Financial aspects of the proposal were similarly questioned, with some stakeholders highlighting that the projected savings were relatively modest when balanced against increased transport costs and the potential loss of wider community value.

Alongside these concerns, a number of responses expressed support for the proposal, primarily referencing the need to ensure long-term sustainability and the efficient use of resources. Supportive comments recognised the challenges associated with low and declining pupil numbers, high levels of surplus capacity, and the financial pressures linked to maintaining provision in small schools. It was acknowledged that such factors can impact on the ability to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum and may limit opportunities available to learners.

Some respondents also supported the strategic rationale for reviewing school provision, noting the importance of directing resources effectively across the wider

education system. From this perspective, the proposal was seen as part of a wider approach to ensuring that education is delivered in sustainable settings and that public funding is used efficiently to benefit the greatest number of pupils. In addition, potential benefits for pupils attending larger schools were identified, including access to a wider peer group, increased extracurricular opportunities, and a broader range of teaching expertise and facilities.

Overall, the consultation responses reflected a balance of views. While there was strong emphasis on the school's importance to the community, the Welsh language, and rural sustainability, there was also recognition among some respondents of the financial, demographic, and strategic challenges facing the school and the wider education system.

Issues raised during the objection period

During the statutory objection period, concerns continued to focus strongly on the role of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim in supporting community cohesion, village sustainability and local identity. Many respondents described the school as the heart of the village and argued that its closure would have consequences extending beyond education alone. Objections highlighted concerns regarding the future sustainability of the community, the loss of intergenerational connections, the impact on Welsh language use and Welsh culture, and the contribution the school makes to social wellbeing and community resilience. Respondents also emphasised the significance of the statutory presumption against closure of rural schools and questioned whether sufficient weight had been given to the wider community impacts identified.

Respondents also highlighted the role of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim in supporting Welsh language use and Welsh cultural identity within the community. Many considered the school to be an important contributor to the transmission of Welsh language and culture between generations and raised concerns regarding the potential impact of closure on the linguistic and cultural character of the area. These matters have been considered in detail through the Welsh Language Impact Assessment and have informed the Authority's consideration of the proposal. (***additional objective information***)

Supportive responses recognised the positive contribution that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim has made to pupils and the wider community while also acknowledging the

financial, demographic and organisational challenges facing the school. These respondents generally viewed the proposal as a pragmatic response to long-term sustainability issues and considered that suitable alternative Welsh-medium provision exists within the local area. *(additional supportive information)*

15. Conclusion

The consultation confirmed that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim is highly valued within the local community, particularly for its role in supporting community cohesion, sustaining the Welsh language, and contributing to the overall social fabric of the area. Concerns were raised about the potential negative impacts of closure on the village's long-term sustainability, pupil wellbeing, and continued access to local education.

However, responses also recognised the challenges facing the school, including declining pupil numbers, surplus capacity, and financial pressures. It is considered that suitable alternative provision exists within a reasonable distance and that appropriate transition support can mitigate impacts on pupils. On balance, while acknowledging the potential adverse effects on the community, these have been weighed against the need to ensure sustainable, high-quality educational provision for future learners, and the proposal is considered a proportionate response to these challenges.

In line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 and the Council's long term duties, the Local Authority has considered the social impacts anticipated as a result of the proposal against the need for sustainable, high quality education provision.

The consultation and objection processes demonstrated that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim is highly valued by many members of the community and is regarded as an important contributor to village life, Welsh language use, local identity and intergenerational connections. The Local Authority recognises that concerns regarding community cohesion, community sustainability, rurality and Welsh culture extend beyond the educational function of the school and may continue to be felt should the proposal proceed. These impacts have been considered carefully throughout the Community Impact Assessment process and have informed the Authority's evaluation of the proposal.

The Local Authority also recognises that even those respondents supporting the proposal acknowledged the positive contribution made by the school to pupils, families and the wider community. Supportive responses generally reflected an acceptance

that wider financial, demographic and organisational challenges had created significant concerns regarding the long-term sustainability of the school despite the value placed upon it by the community.

The Local Authority fully acknowledges the educational, social, cultural and community value of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and the important role it has played within village life. Nevertheless, having taken account of all evidence gathered throughout the review process, including the concerns and aspirations expressed by stakeholders, the Authority is satisfied that the proposal appropriately balances community considerations against its statutory responsibility to secure sustainable and effective educational provision. The Authority therefore concludes that, whilst the proposal may give rise to identifiable community impacts, these do not outweigh the long-term educational, organisation and financial considerations supporting the proposal.

APPENDIX D – WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. Introduction and Purpose

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) considers the likely effects of the proposal to close Ysgol Meidrim with the transfer of pupils to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on the principle of treating Welsh no less favourably than English. The assessment has been prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government School Organisation Code (Wales), the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, Carmarthenshire County Council's Welsh Language Standards Compliance Framework, and guidance issued by the Welsh Language Commissioner.

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation and objection periods relating to the proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Particular regard has been given to issues raised by stakeholders concerning the school's contribution to Welsh-medium education, opportunities for the informal and social use of Welsh, the role of the school in supporting Welsh language use within the community, and the potential impact of the proposal on Welsh-language and cultural activities. The assessment identifies potential risks together with appropriate mitigation and monitoring arrangements and has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (Wales) 2018, Welsh Language Standards and the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

2. Methodology and Evidence Base

The assessment is informed by the statutory consultation documentation relating to the proposal to close Ysgol Meidrim; Estyn inspection reports for Ysgol Meidrim Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog; Census 2021 Welsh language data for Carmarthenshire and the Meidrim, St Clears and Trelech area; Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022–2032; and relevant Welsh Government policy including Cymraeg 2050 and the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025.

The assessment provides more detailed consideration of Ysgol Griffith Jones due to its mixed Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) and Category 2 (Dual Language) language

pathways from Year 3 onwards, whereas Ysgol Hafodwenog offers consistent Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) provision throughout.

3. Context: Ysgol Meidrim, Ysgol Griffith Jones, Ysgol Hafodwenog and the Proposal

Ysgol Meidrim is a Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) 4–11 community primary school serving a rural Carmarthenshire community. Ysgol Hafodwenog is also a 4–11 Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) school, providing Welsh-medium education within a wider rural catchment.

Ysgol Griffith Jones is a 3–11 primary school that delivers Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) provision throughout the Foundation Learning phase (Nursery to Year 2), with Welsh as the principal language of teaching and learning. From Year 3 onwards, the school offers a choice of language pathways, enabling pupils either to continue in Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) provision or to follow a Category 2 (Dual Language) pathway.

The proposal is for the closure of Ysgol Meidrim, with pupils transferring to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog, thereby maintaining access to Welsh-medium provision and ensuring pupils are educated within sustainable Welsh-language learning environments.

4. Welsh Language Impact Assessment (Table 1)

This section assesses the proposal against the Welsh Language Standards (No.1 Regulations 2015), specifically the Policy-making Standards (Standards 88–93), Service Delivery Standards (Standards 1–83), and Operational Standards (Standards 127–135).

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact	Potential Mitigation Measures to enhance positive impact	Final impact (following mitigation)
Informal use of Welsh at the school	Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and Ysgol Hafodwenog are both Category 3 Welsh-medium schools, where	Negative	Clear communication	Neutral

(greetings, signage, routines, general communication)	Welsh is the main language of daily communication. The transfer of pupils would place learners in larger Welsh-speaking peer groups with established routines that support the informal and social use of Welsh throughout the school day. Ysgol Griffith Jones also provides Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) provision within the Foundation Learning phase (Nursery to Year 2), ensuring that Welsh is the principal language of communication for younger learners. From Year 3 onwards, pupils at Ysgol Griffith Jones may follow either a Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) or Category 2 (Dual Language) pathway, enabling continued access to Welsh-medium provision. Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) is defined as Welsh as the school's main language of internal communication. Communication with parents and carers is in either English, Welsh or bilingually as needed. This is a school with a strong Welsh language ethos at its core, supporting and enabling learners' Welsh language use in all social contexts in and outside of school.		with Parents/ Guardians. Share and promote bilingual material explaining the benefits of Welsh-medium education, including cognitive, cultural, and career advantages. Share success stories. Actively promote the benefits of the Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) pathway to parents and guardians through clear communication, transition events, and information sessions. Clarify the difference between Welsh-medium and bilingual provision to avoid confusion. Develop further enrichment activities (e.g. drama, sport,	
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	In a Welsh immersion setting all learners are taught fully in Welsh, with English being used on occasion to ensure understanding during early immersion. From aged 7 onwards at least 80% of learner's school activities (both curricular and extra-curricular) will be in Welsh. The proposal would maintain the availability of Welsh language provision. Category 2 (Dual Language) provision is defined as an approach where both Welsh and English are used for internal communication within the school and in communication with parents and carers. There is a clear and shared understanding that maintaining a strong Welsh-language ethos is essential and supports positive attitudes towards the use of Welsh across the school community. Learners in schools within this category are expected to develop the ability to speak, read, write, and listen in both Welsh and		coding) through the medium of Welsh to reinforce usage beyond the classroom. Provide targeted linguistic support and immersion opportunities to build parental and learner confidence in choosing and sustaining Welsh-medium education. Regularly review take-up trends and language provision through leadership and governing body oversight, with the ability to adjust arrangements if Welsh-medium access is being diluted. Strengthen staff professional learning to ensure consistent, high-quality	
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	English, in line with their age and ability. Welsh-language skills are further strengthened through an increasing range of curricular and extra-curricular learning opportunities delivered through the medium of Welsh. With appropriate support, learners following a Category 2 (Dual Language) pathway may progress to a Category 3 Welsh-medium secondary school. A minimum of 50% of learners' school activities will be delivered through the medium of Welsh. The Siarter Iaith supports children and young people to use Welsh in all aspects of their lives and aims to increase the social use of Welsh and is part of WESP Outcome 5. Ysgol Meidrim has achieved the Siarter Iaith Bronze Award and Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog have achieved the Gold Award. This proposal may strengthen opportunities for pupils to use the Welsh language formally and informally with a wider range of peers. There is a potential risk that some families may choose the Category		Welsh-medium pedagogy across both pathways. Work closely with the local authority to align language provision with Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) priorities and long-term progression routes to Welsh-medium secondary education.	
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	2 (Dual Language) pathway at Ysgol Griffith Jones, which could result in a reduction in the level of Welsh-medium provision accessed by some pupils.			
Current Welsh language standards and provision	Ysgol Meidrim Ysgol Meidrim's most recent Estyn inspection report stated that "Many of the youngest pupils acquire the Welsh language beneficially and strive to speak it and enjoy their learning. Leaders have allocated funds appropriately to employ additional staff to support pupils to develop their confidence and fluency in Welsh appropriately. This is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' oracy skills. Many pupils' reading skills develop appropriately as they move through the school. The youngest pupils begin to use a range of phonic strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar words and to find the meaning of text. By Year 6, a majority develop their reading skills suitably. Year 1 and 2 pupils write a series of simple sentences which include capital letters and clear punctuation appropriately. They are given opportunities to write a relevant variety of texts	Neutral	Structured transition and induction planning to support continuity in Welsh-medium learning, including shared baseline information on pupils' Welsh language development, oracy confidence, and literacy skills between Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim, Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog. Targeted pastoral and language support during the initial transition period to ensure pupils feel confident using Welsh socially and	Positive

	with their peers. However, as a result of a lack of purposeful planning, pupils' early writing skills are not developed coherently. At the top of the school, when pupils are given an opportunity to write independently, they write in an interesting manner and use purposeful punctuation. However, they are not given regular opportunities to write at length in a variety of genres." Nearly all pupils develop positive attitudes towards learning and take pride in their work. Nearly all pupils develop their literacy skills appropriately according to their age and ability. Almost all pupils speak about and read their written work effectively. A few have a tendency to switch to English when discussing their work. Scrutiny of literacy work shows that specific writing processes are in place in Years 3 to 6, and that teaching steps follow a logical sequence to raise standards in both Welsh and English, for example, model texts, purpose features, boxing up, and MPLL. Opportunities for extended writing across the curriculum are limited.		academically, particularly in a larger peer group and mixed-ability setting. Consistent Welsh-medium pedagogy and language expectations across the school, reinforced through clear routines, modelling of high-quality spoken Welsh and explicit expectations for Welsh use in lessons and informal contexts. Focused monitoring of Welsh language progression, to identify any gaps early and ensure pupils make secure progress in oracy, reading and writing through the medium of Welsh following transfer.	
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	Ysgol Griffith Jones The latest Estyn inspection report for Ysgol Griffith Jones states that “The school’s provision to develop pupils’ Welsh and knowledge of their heritage is effective. As a result, most pupils know what it means to be Welsh and speak Welsh completely naturally and with pride. They have a sound understanding of Welsh culture. Most pupils develop their oral skills effectively in a good range of activities. In the foundation phase, they discuss their work confidently and respect each other’s contributions. Many are keen to develop their ideas successfully from nursery age. A good example of this is the way in which they choose a sound to represent the characters in the story of ‘Alun yr Arth.’ As pupils move through the school, many have the skills to discuss various topics maturely as they argue for and against having a famous fast-food restaurant in the village. They develop to become skilful bilingual learners. At the beginning of the foundation phase, many pupils develop a useful understanding of letters and sounds. By the end of the		Access to a broader curriculum experience enabled by larger cohort sizes, allowing more purposeful opportunities for extended writing, group discussion, collaborative learning, and application of Welsh language skills across areas of learning. Ongoing professional learning for staff, where required, to support consistent delivery of Welsh-medium provision, effective differentiation, and high expectations for language development across all ability ranges. Enhanced opportunities for Welsh language	
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	phase, nearly all pupils have positive attitudes towards reading. In key stage 2, most pupils read fluently and with accuracy in Welsh and English. They discuss the content of books purposefully and show a preference for different types of books. By Year 6, many write confidently in a range of contexts and produce purposeful work. In the Category 2 stream, "A very few pupils in the English stream read Welsh novels very skilfully and discuss them confidently in Welsh. However, many pupils' Welsh reading skills in the English stream are less developed. They explain the text simply and pronounce words correctly when reading aloud." Ysgol Hafodwenog The latest Estyn inspection report for Ysgol Hafodwenog states that pupils "express themselves with increasing accuracy and confidence in Welsh and English. However, a minority use vocabulary that is relevant to a particular subject, and there is a tendency for many pupils to use English words when communicating in Welsh. Most pupils' reading skills are		enrichment, including participation in Urdd activities, cultural events, and extracurricular provision, to reinforce language use beyond formal lessons and raise pupils' confidence and fluency. Clear bilingual engagement with parents and guardians, including information on how Welsh-medium provision is delivered and how families can support Welsh language development at home, reinforcing confidence and understanding.	
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	developing suitably for their age and ability. The youngest pupils recognise letters and sounds and are beginning to build words confidently. By the end of the foundation phase, most develop to become purposeful readers and read accurately and fluently. Throughout key stage 2, most pupils develop as moderate readers in Welsh and English. Many use their reading skills confidently to organise information from various sources. Most pupils' early writing skills are developing purposefully. By the end of the foundation phase, many develop their writing skills appropriately in a limited range of different genres. They extend their sentences by using basic conjunctions and use capital letters and full stops correctly. However, over-use of worksheets limits the ability of a majority of pupils to write at length and achieve as well as they could. Many pupils in key stage 2 make appropriate progress in their writing skills in Welsh and English. By Year 6, a majority write successfully in a few genres, for example as they write a script of			
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	the story of the wedding of Nant Gwrtheyrn. They punctuate suitably and their spelling in both languages is developing purposefully. However, pupils do not use their independent extended writing skills often enough in other areas of the curriculum. The standard of presentation of pupils' work also varies too much across the school.			
After-school and enrichment opportunities (Welsh-medium/bilingual)	Ysgol Meidrim Ysgol Meidrim currently provides limited Welsh-medium enrichment opportunities beyond the formal curriculum. The school offers a weekly Arts and Crafts Club, held on Tuesdays, which gives pupils opportunities to develop creativity and collaborate on a range of practical projects. This provision supports informal social interaction through Welsh; however, the overall enrichment offer is restricted in scope. The school does not operate a breakfast club, nor does it provide a broader programme of after-school or childcare provision. Ysgol Griffith Jones Ysgol Griffith Jones provides a programme of after-school and enrichment activities designed to	Positive	Active promotion and supported access to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog's existing Welsh-medium after-school and enrichment provision, including Urdd cultural and sporting activities, music tuition, and childcare clubs, to encourage participation by pupils transferring from Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim.	Positive

	support pupils' wider development and promote the use of Welsh in informal and social contexts. Extra-curricular provision includes a range of clubs such as Clwb Canu Cŵl (Cool Singing Club), Eco Club, Health Club, and a Digital Club, each offering structured opportunities for pupils to use Welsh beyond formal lessons. The school choir meets regularly to rehearse Welsh-language songs in preparation for competitions and concerts, fostering musical development, confidence, and cultural pride. Pupils also receive dance and recitation training as part of their preparation for the Urdd Eisteddfod, supporting engagement with Welsh cultural traditions and national events. These activities contribute positively to pupils' linguistic confidence and provide meaningful opportunities to use Welsh socially across year groups. Ysgol Hafodwenog Ysgol Hafodwenog offers a broader range of Welsh-medium and bilingual activities, including a		Planned induction and familiarisation activities, enabling pupils to join clubs gradually and confidently, supported by staff and peers, so that engagement with Welsh-medium enrichment activities is sustained following transition. Clear bilingual communication with parents and guardians outlining available after-school and enrichment opportunities, helping families to understand the benefits of participation and to support engagement beyond the school day. Use of enrichment activities as authentic language	
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	daily breakfast club, after-school care, Welsh-language cultural and sporting activities through the Urdd, music tuition, and opportunities for pupil leadership. The transfer of pupils from Ysgol Meidrim to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog has the potential to increase access to a wider range of Welsh-medium enrichment opportunities, enabling pupils to use Welsh more frequently in informal and social settings beyond the classroom. This expanded provision may support increased linguistic confidence, positive attitudes towards the Welsh language, and stronger engagement with Welsh cultural life.		contexts, reinforcing Welsh language use informally through sport, music, performance, and social interaction, thereby strengthening pupils' confidence, fluency, and positive attitudes towards Welsh. Ongoing partnership working with the Urdd and local Welsh-language organisations, ensuring continued access to cultural, sporting, and social opportunities through the medium of Welsh.	
Community opportunities (support for parents/carers and wider community)	The proposed change would have a predominantly neutral impact on community opportunities for parents, guardians and the wider community by providing access to Ysgol Griffith Jones' or Ysgol Hafodwenog's well-established	Negative	Sustaining links with the Meidrim community where practicable through partnership working.	Neutral

	and wide-ranging programme of community engagement, volunteering, early-years partnerships and Welsh-medium cultural and social activities, thereby increasing opportunities to use Welsh beyond the classroom and strengthening community cohesion. There is, however, a potential negative impact in relation to the relocation of some community-based activities previously hosted within the Meidrim community, which could affect informal engagement opportunities for some families. Community opportunities currently provided by schools: Ysgol Meidrim • The school hosts a Cylch Ti a Fi (Parent & Toddler Group) every Thursday morning, providing a warm and inclusive space for babies, toddlers, and their families to come together and connect. • While the school itself is not regularly used by the wider community, the Youth Hall in the village serves as a dedicated		Explore opportunities for alternative community venues within the locality to host Welsh-medium community activities previously delivered at Ysgol Meidrim, ensuring continuity of provision. Planned transition and engagement activities to introduce pupils, parents and guardians from the Meidrim community to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog's established community events, groups and partnerships, supporting confidence and continuity of engagement through Welsh.	
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	venue that supports a broad range of local activities. • The school takes pride in its strong local connections, which are deeply embedded in its daily practices and curriculum design. • Pupils perform twice a year for elderly residents in the community, both in local care homes and at community events. • The school welcomes monthly visits from the local vicar, who leads collective worship and engages with pupils through classroom visits. Children also visit the village church to explore and appreciate their cultural heritage. • Pupils take the lead in planning and delivering fundraising activities for the village park, developing their sense of responsibility and community spirit. • The school hosts both Christmas and Summer fetes in the Youth Hall and performs its annual Christmas shows in the Church Hall, strengthening ties with the wider community. • Regular 'Clean-Up' walks around the village help promote		Continuation of early-years community support, including facilitating onward participation in the Cylch Meithrin Trelech and the school-based <i>Ti a Fi</i> provision, ensuring support for families with younger children is maintained. Clear bilingual communication with parents and carers outlining community activities, volunteering opportunities, and events available through the school, enabling families to engage meaningfully with Welsh-medium community provision. Encouragement of community participation and	
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	environmental awareness, alongside fundraising efforts for a range of local, regional, and national charities. • Local residents are invited into the school to share their interests, experiences, and businesses, enriching pupils' understanding of the community around them. Ysgol Griffith Jones The school site is used by Urdd Gobaith Cymru, who hire the gymnasium to run a Welsh-medium gymnastics club, promoting physical activity through the Welsh language. The Urdd also delivers sports clubs during school holidays, providing pupils with continued access to active, Welsh-language experiences beyond term time. In addition, the local Young Farmers' Club uses the school hall to host concerts and games evenings, strengthening links between the school and the wider rural community. Ysgol Hafodwenog The school maintains strong and active links with the local		volunteering, supporting parents and guardians to contribute to school-based and wider community activities, strengthening Welsh language use in social, cultural, and inter-generational contexts. Sustaining links with faith, cultural and voluntary organisations, where practicable, to ensure continuity of Welsh-medium cultural, charitable and heritage activities that support community cohesion. Work with the local authority, Menter Iaith and community groups to retain and develop Welsh-language activities as a	
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	community through a wide range of initiatives: • Seasonal Community Lunches are held where members of the community are invited to dine with pupils. These events are often followed by performances of Eisteddfod items, board games, and other activities. • Weekly Volunteers from the community, both Welsh and non-Welsh speakers, support pupils with reading. Others assist with music and dance preparation for school and Urdd Eisteddfod competitions, including Cerdd Dant and accompaniment. One volunteer developed a sensory garden during summer 2025 with “Adam in the Garden” while parents have created new planting beds. The school sells vegetables to parents and the wider community. • Sporting Support is provided by volunteers and parents who help teach sports such as rounders, netball, rugby, and cricket. • The Hafod Hwylus School Council organises regular community events including Macmillan Coffee Afternoons, the School Eisteddfod, Harvest		priority in the Meidrim area. Engage proactively with Menter Iaith and the community to identify demand and co-design Welsh-medium activities, helping to sustain local language use despite potential reduced access to the school building.	
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	Thanksgiving, and village litter-picking sessions. A clothing recycling point is also available at the school entrance for community use. • The school works closely with Capel y Graig, the village chapel, using the site for services and hymn-singing gatherings, and participating in chapel-organised events. • There is a strong partnership with Cylch Meithrin Trelech, with nursery pupils joining in activities such as ‘Shwmae Su’mae Day’ and sports sessions led by Sports Ambassadors. They are also invited to professional photo sessions and school sports days. The Cylch uses the school site for fundraising events like the Christmas Fair, “Cawl a Chên,” tractor runs, and committee meetings. They also run a weekly “Ti a Fi” club and join the school for lunch monthly. • Aelwyd Hafodwenog, a youth group, meets weekly at the school every Thursday evening. • An active and successful Parents and Teachers Committee use the school for meetings and events. Activities			
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	include collaborative evenings such as rounders nights with Young Farmers Clubs from Pen-y-bont and Capel Iwan, local chapels, and village hall committees. Parents also organise an annual maintenance day to tidy the school grounds. • The local Canon leads services with pupils twice each term. • Pupils have participated in Trelech's Warm Hub community activities, engaging residents through educational games and performances. • Emergency Meeting Point - The school site is designated and available as a community meeting point in the event of an emergency. The closure of Ysgol Meidrim may lead to a reduction in community access to the school building, potentially limiting opportunities for community activities and events delivered through the medium of Welsh that currently support local language use and social cohesion.			
Support for Welsh cultural participation (Urdd, Mentrau)	The proposed change would have a positive impact on support for Welsh cultural participation by enabling pupils transferring from	Positive	Supported induction into Welsh cultural activities, ensuring	Positive

laith, eisteddfodau, heritage)	Ysgol Meidrim to access Ysgol Griffith Jones' or Ysgol Hafodwenog's well-established involvement in Urdd cultural and sporting activities, eisteddfodau, Welsh heritage projects, and wider Welsh-language events. This broader and more sustained participation is likely to strengthen pupils' confidence, engagement, and sense of Welsh identity through regular opportunities to use Welsh in cultural and social contexts beyond the classroom, although careful transition support will be important to ensure pupils engage fully with these opportunities following the change.		pupils transferring from Ysgol Meidrim are actively introduced to Urdd, eisteddfodau, music, dance, and heritage opportunities at Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog, with staff and peer support to build confidence and engagement. Active encouragement and inclusive participation, ensuring that all pupils are encouraged to take part in Welsh-language cultural activities regardless of prior experience, ability, or confidence, in line with expectations around equity and inclusion.	
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			Continuation and strengthening of partnerships with Welsh-language organisations such as the Urdd and local cultural networks, to provide regular and meaningful opportunities for participation through the medium of Welsh. Use of cultural activities as authentic language contexts, reinforcing Welsh language use through performance, competition, celebration and shared cultural experiences beyond the classroom. Clear bilingual communication with parents and guardians, outlining available	
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			cultural opportunities and the value of participation, to support sustained engagement and reinforce Welsh language use within families and the wider community.	
Alignment with WESP and Welsh Government School Organisation Code	The proposal aligns with Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) by maintaining access to Welsh-medium (Category 3) provision and supporting the sustainability and quality of Welsh-medium education within a viable school setting. However, there is a potential risk that some families may choose the Category 2 (Dual Language) pathway from Year 3 at Ysgol Griffith Jones, which could result in a reduction in the level of Welsh-medium provision accessed by some pupils and may have a negative impact on the achievement of WESP Outcome 3, particularly in supporting pupils to continue along a	Negative	Clear communication with Parents/Guardians. Share and promote bilingual material explaining the benefits of Welsh-medium education, including cognitive, cultural, and career advantages. Share success stories. Actively promote the benefits of the Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) pathway to parents and guardians through clear	Neutral

	Welsh-medium education pathway. It is consistent with the Welsh Government School Organisation Code, which requires local authorities to consider the impact of proposals on the Welsh language and to secure effective, efficient, and sustainable provision. The proposal retains access to Welsh-medium education locally while supporting improved educational outcomes and opportunities to use Welsh formally and informally, with no adverse effect on the Authority's ability to meet its WESP objectives.	communication, transition events, and information sessions. Clarify the difference between Welsh-medium and bilingual provision to avoid confusion. Develop further enrichment activities (e.g. drama, sport, coding) through the medium of Welsh to reinforce usage beyond the classroom. Provide targeted linguistic support and immersion opportunities to build parental and learner confidence in choosing and sustaining Welsh-medium education. Ongoing monitoring through WESP reporting arrangements,	
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			ensuring that the impact of the proposal on Welsh-medium provision, pupil progression, and opportunities to use Welsh is reviewed regularly at Local Authority level. Use of school self-evaluation and improvement planning at Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog to monitor Welsh language standards and informal language use, in line with expectations and WESP priorities. Clear bilingual communication and engagement, ensuring parents, guardians and pupils are informed and supported throughout implementation,	
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			reinforcing confidence in Welsh-medium provision and parental choice.	
Treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English This requirement aligns directly with the Service Delivery Standards (Standards 1–83), which require that all public-facing services and communications are available in Welsh and English to an equal standard.	The proposal would have a neutral impact on the requirement to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English, as it maintains Welsh-medium (Category 3) provision and ensures continued compliance with the Welsh Language Standards (Service Delivery Standards 1–83). All public-facing services, consultation materials and communications relating to the proposal are, and will continue to be, provided in Welsh and English to an equal standard, with responses available in the language of choice. The proposal does not reduce access to Welsh-language services or visibility of Welsh and therefore does not disadvantage the Welsh language when compared with English.	Neutral	Continued compliance with the Welsh Language Standards (Service Delivery Standards 1–83), ensuring that all public-facing services, consultation materials, correspondence, and information relating to the proposal are provided in Welsh and English to an equal standard. Clear bilingual communication throughout the statutory process, including consultation, decision-making and	Neutral

			implementation stages, with individuals able to communicate and receive responses in their language of choice. Consistent visibility of Welsh within the receiving school, ensuring that Welsh continues to be the primary language of communication, signage, engagement, and daily school life, reinforcing its equal status with English. Monitoring of service delivery practices, to ensure that no aspect of communication, engagement or provision gives preference to English over Welsh, in line with the Authority's Welsh Language	
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			Standards compliance arrangements. Accessible and inclusive engagement, ensuring that parents, carers, pupils, and community members can participate fully in consultation and school activities through Welsh, supporting confidence and normalisation of Welsh language use.	
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5. Welsh Language Standards (Table 2)

This assessment considers the impact of the proposal against the Welsh Language Standards (No.1 Regulations 2015), including the Policy-making Standards (88–93), Service Delivery Standards (1–83), and Operational Standards (127–135).

Requirement	Does the proposal impact these Standards?	What evidence has been used to support this view?	Positive/Negative impacts
Opportunities for people to use the Welsh language	Yes – positive impact. The proposal is assessed as having a positive impact on opportunities for persons to	Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim consultation document, which sets out the proposal to transfer pupils to Ysgol	Positive impacts: The proposal increases opportunities for

	use the Welsh language. While Welsh-medium (Category 3) provision is retained, the transfer to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog would place pupils within a larger and more sustainable Welsh-language environment, increasing day-to-day opportunities to use Welsh both formally in learning and informally through social interaction, enrichment activities, and community engagement. The broader range of Welsh-medium extracurricular, cultural, and community-based opportunities available at the receiving school further strengthens opportunities for pupils and families to use Welsh in meaningful, real-life contexts, aligning with the intent of the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015.	Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog, confirming that Welsh-medium (Category 3) provision will be retained and that pupils can continue to receive education through the medium of Welsh in a sustainable school environment. Welsh Language Impact Assessment, which identifies that the receiving school offers a broader range of Welsh-medium informal, extracurricular, cultural, and community-based opportunities than currently available at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Estyn inspection evidence for both schools, indicating that Welsh is used as the principal language of teaching and communication and that pupils develop Welsh language skills within a Welsh-medium setting, with greater opportunities for peer interaction and progression in a larger school context. Information on after-school, cultural and community	pupils to use Welsh through access to a larger Welsh-speaking peer group and a broader range of Welsh-medium curricular, extracurricular, cultural and community activities at Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog. Increased participation in Urdd activities, enrichment provision and community engagement provides more frequent and authentic contexts for using Welsh informally and socially beyond the classroom, supporting confidence, fluency, and positive language attitudes.
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		provision at Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog, including regular participation in Urdd cultural and sporting activities, Welsh heritage initiatives, music provision, and community engagement, all of which provide additional opportunities to use Welsh beyond the classroom. Carmarthenshire County Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022–2032, which emphasises the importance of sustaining Welsh-medium provision and increasing opportunities for learners to use Welsh in both formal and informal contexts.	Negative impacts: There is a potential risk that some families may choose the Category 2 (Dual Language) pathway at Ysgol Griffith Jones, which could result in a reduction in the level of Welsh-medium provision accessed by some pupils. Any potential short-term challenges associated with transitioning to a new school environment can be mitigated through planned induction, pastoral support, and clear communication, ensuring continuity of Welsh language use and progression.
Treating Welsh no less	Yes – neutral impact. The proposal engages the Welsh Language Standards	The statutory consultation documentation for Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim, which	Positive impacts: The proposal safeguards linguistic

favourably than English	but does not disadvantage the Welsh language when compared with English. Welsh-medium (Category 3) provision is maintained, and all public-facing services and communications relating to the proposal continue to be available in Welsh and English to an equal standard, in accordance with the Service Delivery Standards (1–83).	confirms bilingual provision of consultation materials and engagement throughout the process. The Welsh Language Impact Assessment, which identifies continued compliance with the Welsh Language Standards and the maintenance of Welsh-medium education. Local Authority Welsh Language Standards compliance arrangements, ensuring public-facing communications, correspondence and responses are provided in the language of choice. School language categorisation information, confirming that the receiving schools operate as either a Category 3 Welsh-medium school or has a Category 3 Welsh-medium stream where Welsh is the main language of teaching, learning and communication.	equality by maintaining Welsh-medium education and ensuring full compliance with the Service Delivery Standards, reinforcing the equal status, visibility, and availability of Welsh alongside English in all public-facing services and communications. Negative impacts: There is a potential risk that some families may choose the Category 2 (Dual Language) pathway at Ysgol Griffith Jones, which could result in a reduction in the level of Welsh-medium provision accessed by some pupils. The proposal does not reduce access to Welsh-language services or
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			opportunities, nor does it accord preferential treatment to English over Welsh.
Policy Making Standards – due regard to the Welsh language	Yes – positive impact. The proposal directly engages the Policy Making Standards (Standards 88–93) as it requires explicit consideration of the effects on the Welsh language. A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been undertaken at the proposal stage, demonstrating due regard to the Welsh language by identifying potential impacts, assessing opportunities to enhance Welsh language use, and identifying mitigation measures where appropriate.	The statutory consultation document for Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim, which includes an explicit assessment of the impact of the proposal on Welsh-medium education and the Welsh language. The Welsh Language Impact Assessment, which systematically evaluates impacts on Welsh language use, provision, and community engagement. Welsh language categorisation information confirming that both the closing and receiving schools operate as Category 3 Welsh-medium schools. Alignment with Carmarthenshire’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022–2032, which provides the strategic framework informing the proposal.	Positive impacts: The proposal demonstrates due regard to the Welsh language by embedding Welsh language considerations throughout policy development, consultation, and decision-making processes. It safeguards Welsh-medium provision, identifies opportunities to enhance informal and social use of Welsh, and aligns with local and national Welsh language policy objectives. Negative impacts: No negative impacts have been identified

		Compliance with the Welsh Government School Organisation Code (Wales), which requires local authorities to give due regard to the Welsh language when developing school organisation proposals.	in relation to the Policy Making Standards. The consideration of Welsh language impacts at an early stage mitigates the risk of unintended adverse effects and supports compliance with statutory requirements.
Service Delivery Standards – public-facing services in Welsh	Yes – neutral impact. The proposal engages the Service Delivery Standards (Standards 1–83) but does not disadvantage the Welsh language in comparison with English. All public-facing services, communications and engagement activities relating to the proposal will continue to be provided in Welsh and English to an equal standard.	The statutory consultation document for Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim, which confirms that consultation materials and engagement are provided bilingually and that individuals may communicate and receive responses in their language of choice. The Welsh Language Impact Assessment, which confirms continued compliance with the Welsh Language Standards and bilingual service delivery arrangements. Carmarthenshire County Council's Welsh Language Standards compliance	Positive impacts: The proposal maintains full compliance with the Service Delivery Standards, ensuring the continued availability, visibility, and equal treatment of Welsh in all public-facing services and communications, reinforcing Welsh as a normal and accessible language for engagement. Negative impacts: No negative impacts have been identified.

		framework, which ensures that all public-facing services, correspondence, and information are available in Welsh and English to an equal standard. School language categorisation information, confirming that the receiving school operates as a Category 3 Welsh-medium school where Welsh is the primary language of communication.	The proposal does not reduce access to Welsh-language services, information, or engagement opportunities, nor does it favour English over Welsh.
Operational Standards – internal use of Welsh by staff	Yes – neutral impact. The proposal engages the Operational Standards (Standards 127–135) and is not expected to have an adverse effect on the internal use of Welsh by staff. The receiving school, Ysgol Hafodwenog, operates as a Category 3 Welsh-medium school where Welsh is the primary language of professional communication, supporting compliance with the Operational Standards and offering scope to strengthen	School language categorisation and operational practice, confirming that Ysgol Griffith Jones has a Category 3 stream and Ysgol Hafodwenog is a Category 3 Welsh-medium school where Welsh is the main language of teaching, learning and internal communication. The Welsh Language Impact Assessment, which identifies continued Welsh-medium operation and internal use of Welsh within the receiving schools.	Positive impacts: Staff will work within a Welsh-medium environment that normalises and reinforces the internal use of Welsh across professional communication, collaboration, and school life, with access to wider peer support and established Welsh-language practices. Negative impacts:

	day-to-day internal use of Welsh.	Local Authority workforce and Welsh language compliance arrangements, which support staff to use Welsh in internal communications and access Welsh language development where required.	No significant negative impacts have been identified. Any short-term adjustment associated with staffing or transition can be mitigated through existing support arrangements and ongoing professional development.
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6. Community Linguistic Context

Census 2021 data show a decline in Welsh language ability across Carmarthenshire, including among children and young people in some rural communities. Schools providing Welsh-medium education therefore play a critical role in supporting language transmission and regular use. The proposal maintains Welsh-medium educational provision within the area and supports the resilience of the Welsh language locally.

Linguistic Profile of Meidrim, Trelech and surrounding areas.

Meidrim and Trelech are situated within a predominantly rural part of Carmarthenshire, alongside the wider St Clears area, which has experienced a decline in Welsh language ability in recent years, reflecting broader county-wide trends identified in Census 2021 data. While rural areas generally retain higher levels of Welsh language use than urban centres, reductions in the proportion of Welsh speakers, particularly among children and young people, present increasing challenges for sustaining intergenerational language transmission.

Although the Meidrim, Trelech, and St Clears areas continue to demonstrate cultural and linguistic strengths, Welsh language use within homes and community settings

cannot be assumed consistently across all families. Demographic change, population mobility, and wider social factors have increased pressure on Welsh as a community language, reinforcing the importance of schools as key environments for language acquisition, confidence, and regular use. In rural communities such as these, schools play a vital role not only in education but also in contributing to opportunities for Welsh language visibility and use within both the school environment and the wider community.

In this context, Ysgol Griffith Jones, serving the St Clears area, plays a key role in supporting Welsh language provision. The school provides Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) provision during the Foundation Learning phase, ensuring early immersion in Welsh, and from Year 3 onwards offers both Category 3 and Category 2 (Dual Language) pathways. This structure supports inclusion and maintains Welsh as a strong language of learning and communication. However, the linguistic context of the wider catchment means that continued emphasis on Welsh-medium experiences is essential to sustain confidence and progression for learners.

Meidrim has traditionally been a strong Welsh-speaking rural community, with relatively high levels of Welsh language use compared to wider county averages. However, recent demographic change and a reduction in the proportion of Welsh-speaking children reflect broader rural trends, meaning that sustained Welsh-medium educational provision remains essential to support language transmission and daily use among younger generations.

Trelech similarly reflects a rural linguistic profile where Welsh continues to be visible and used within community and cultural life. While levels of Welsh language ability remain comparatively strong, especially among older residents, there is evidence of gradual decline among children and young people, increasing the importance of schools as stable environments for Welsh language learning and confidence.

St Clears presents a more mixed linguistic profile, influenced by its role as a small town serving a wider rural hinterland and by higher levels of population mobility. Welsh is present within the community but is used less consistently in daily life than in surrounding rural villages, making schools such as Ysgol Griffith Jones particularly important in providing structured Welsh-medium experiences and supporting progression along Welsh-medium education pathways.

Welsh-medium schools across the Meidrim, Trelech, and St Clears communities therefore have a critical function in sustaining Welsh as a living language. Providing stable, high-quality Welsh-medium education within viable school settings supports pupils to develop confidence and fluency in Welsh, regardless of home language background. Access to wider peer groups, enrichment activities, and community engagement opportunities further strengthens the likelihood that Welsh is used beyond formal lessons and embedded in everyday social and cultural life.

Analysis of Census 2021 data across Carmarthenshire highlights variation in Welsh language ability between communities, with rural areas such as Meidrim and Trelech generally recording higher proportions of Welsh speakers than more urbanised locations, including parts of the St Clears area. However, these communities are not immune to linguistic vulnerability, particularly where population numbers are small and community capacity is limited. This emphasises the need for sustainable, well-planned educational provision that can consistently support Welsh language development and use across generations.

Taken together, this evidence demonstrates that the linguistic environment across Meidrim, Trelech, and the St Clears area requires continued and proactive support to maintain and strengthen opportunities to use Welsh. The proposal therefore has a key role in reinforcing Welsh as a living language through education, supporting families, and contributing to the long-term resilience of Welsh within rural Carmarthenshire, in line with the objectives of Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and the national ambition of Cymraeg 2050.

7. Risks and Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
There is a potential risk that some families may choose the Category 2 (Dual Language) pathway at Ysgol Griffith Jones, which could result in a reduction in the level of Welsh-medium provision accessed by some pupils,	Maintain a strong whole-school Welsh language ethos, ensuring Welsh is used consistently in assemblies, informal interactions, signage, and social activities across all pathways. Ensure that the Category 2 (Dual Language) pathway delivers a

particularly over time if uptake of the dual-language pathway increases.	minimum of 50% Welsh-medium provision, with clear expectations set through curriculum planning and timetabling. The Local Authority is currently consulting on a proposal to amend the language category of Ysgol Griffith Jones. Actively promote the benefits of the Category 3 (Primarily Welsh) pathway to parents and guardians through transition arrangements, information sessions, and regular communication. Provide targeted linguistic support and confidence-building interventions for learners and families to encourage continued engagement with Welsh-medium learning. Expand Welsh-medium extra-curricular and enrichment activities that are accessible to all pupils, regardless of pathway choice. Regularly monitor uptake trends and the balance of language provision, with oversight from school leadership, governors, and the local authority, enabling timely review if Welsh-medium access is being diluted. Align language pathway implementation with Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)
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	priorities, particularly those supporting progression to Welsh-medium secondary education.
Short-term reduction in informal use of Welsh among pupils during transition	Planned transition arrangements, including induction visits and peer support, to help pupils build confidence using Welsh in a new social environment. Clear expectations for Welsh language use embedded in daily routines and supported through pastoral care.
Disruption to pupils' confidence in using Welsh socially	Continued emphasis on Welsh as the main language of communication at the receiving school, with staff modelling high-quality Welsh and encouraging inclusive participation in classroom and social activities.
Loss of some locally based Welsh-medium community activities previously centred around Ysgol Meidrim	Engagement with Menter Iaith, local community venues and groups where practicable, alongside clear communication to support families in continuing community activities through alternative local provision and wider school-based opportunities.
Reduced visibility of Welsh within the Meidrim community following school closure	Reinforcement that Welsh-medium (Category 3) education is being retained locally, with pupils accessing a sustainable Welsh-medium school that supports Welsh language use in

	education, enrichment, and community engagement. Increased links with the Menter Iaith, Urdd and other local providers.
Variable engagement of parents/carers in Welsh-medium community and school activities	Clear, accessible bilingual communication outlining opportunities for parental and community engagement, volunteering and participation through Welsh-medium events and partnerships at the receiving school.
Uneven participation in Welsh-medium after-school, cultural or enrichment activities	Supported induction into after-school clubs, Urdd activities, cultural events, and enrichment provision, with encouragement from staff and peers to ensure activities are inclusive and accessible to all pupils
Perception that school closure could weaken Welsh-language transmission in the local area	Transparent communication explaining how Welsh-medium provision, cultural participation, and opportunities to use Welsh will be maintained and enhanced.
Potential pressure on staff to support Welsh language continuity during transition	Use of transition planning processes, professional collaboration between schools and access to Local Authority support where required, alongside ongoing monitoring of Welsh language progression.

Reduced opportunities for inter-generational Welsh language use within the Meidrim community	Encourage continued engagement with Meidrim community events, faith-based activities and local initiatives that provide inter-generational Welsh language opportunities, alongside promoting participation in wider community events linked to the receiving school.
Loss of informal Welsh language contact points linked to the physical school building	Support continued use of local community venues and shared spaces for Welsh-medium activities where appropriate, reducing reliance on the former school site alone.
Risk that Welsh language use becomes concentrated within the school setting rather than the wider community	Strengthen links between the receiving school and community organisations, early-years provision and cultural groups to extend Welsh language use beyond the school environment. Increased links with the Menter Iaith, Urdd and other local providers.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

Mitigation actions identified in this WLIA will be monitored through established Local Authority and school improvement processes and consultation feedback, with adjustments made where necessary to maximise positive impact on the Welsh language.

Ongoing monitoring will ensure continued compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, including the Policy-making Standards (88–93), Service Delivery Standards (1–83) and Operational Standards (127–135), as required of the local authority.

9. Continuous Improvement Mechanisms

This proposal demonstrates clear due regard to the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code and the Welsh Language Standards, and the local authority will monitor Welsh-language outcomes throughout design, construction, and operation, reviewing evidence annually and refining actions so that Welsh is consistently promoted and treated no less favourably than English.

10. Conclusion and Summary

The proposal to close Ysgol Meidrim, with pupils transferring to either Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog, has been carefully assessed in terms of its potential impact on the Welsh language. Overall, access to Welsh-medium education will be maintained, with opportunities to support and further strengthen the use of Welsh through effective mitigation measures. However, it is recognised that there is a potential risk that some families may opt for the Category 2 (Dual Language) pathway at Ysgol Griffith Jones, which could lead to a reduction in the extent of Welsh-medium provision accessed by some pupils from Year 3 onwards.

This risk can be mitigated through strong leadership, clear and consistent promotion of Welsh-medium pathways, and ongoing monitoring of language provision and pupil progression. In addition, the receiving schools offer larger peer groups and a wider range of curricular and extracurricular opportunities, which have the potential to enhance the use of Welsh in both formal and informal settings.

Subject to these measures, the proposal aligns with Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the national ambitions of Cymraeg 2050, by safeguarding access to Welsh-medium education and supporting the continued development and everyday use of Welsh among children and young people. Overall, opportunities to use Welsh are expected to be maintained or enhanced, with robust safeguards in place to minimise any potential dilution of Welsh-medium uptake.

This WLIA will be reviewed at key stages of the statutory process, including following consultation and prior to determination, to ensure that any emerging issues or feedback are fully considered.

APPENDIX E – INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Draft Integrated Impact Assessment Report – Proposed closure of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim.

Carmarthenshire County Council Integrated Impact Assessment

PROPOSAL DETAILS			
Service & Department:	Completed by (lead officer):	Date of initial assessment:	December 2025
Education & Children Services	MEP team	Version number:	3
		Revision Date:	10/08/26
What is the proposal to be assessed?	Proposal to discontinue Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and transfer pupils to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog from the 31 of December 2026. Post-Consultation Reassessment This Integrated Impact Assessment has been reviewed and updated following the completion of the statutory consultation undertaken between 16 January and 2 March 2026 in accordance with the School Organisation Code (2018). The review has had full regard to the views and evidence received from stakeholders, including parents, pupils, staff, governors, Estyn and members of the wider community. Consultation feedback highlighted a number of consistent and strongly expressed themes, most notably the perceived impact of the proposal on the local community and the Welsh language. In particular, responses emphasised that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim is widely regarded as being at the heart of the community, with value extending beyond its educational function to its role in supporting community identity, cohesion, and the sustainability of the village. Stakeholders highlighted the school's importance in fostering social connections, supporting local families, and contributing to the vitality of a rural Welsh-speaking community. These matters, alongside issues relating to pupil and staff wellbeing, additional learning needs, travel arrangements and environmental considerations, have been carefully considered and are reflected and strengthened within the relevant sections of this Assessment. The consultation has provided further insight into both the tangible and intangible impacts of the		

	proposal, particularly in relation to community wellbeing, place, and the social value attached to the school by stakeholders. While consultation responses have added important context and strengthened understanding of these impacts — including the social and cultural role of the school within the community — no new or materially different evidence has been identified, including in relation to pupil numbers, surplus capacity, financial sustainability or Estyn outcomes, that would alter the core assessment of the proposal’s educational, financial or organisational sustainability. The proposal itself therefore remains unchanged. These matters were revisited following consideration of the objections received during the statutory objection period and no additional evidence was identified that would materially alter the assessment. However, mitigation measures and implementation considerations have been further developed and strengthened in light of the consultation findings, particularly in relation to transition arrangements, support for vulnerable learners, community considerations, and the continuation and promotion of the Welsh language. Post-Objection Reassessment This Integrated Impact Assessment has been reviewed following the completion of the statutory objection period in accordance with the School Organisation Code (2018). The review has had full regard to all objections received during the statutory notice period, together with the outcomes of the consultation process and the evidence previously considered by the Local Authority. The objections raised a number of issues relating to the potential impact of the proposal on the local community, the Welsh language, learner wellbeing, Additional Learning Needs provision, travel arrangements and the long-term sustainability of the village. Particular emphasis was placed on Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim’s role as a rural school and its importance to community identity and cohesion. The Local Authority has reviewed these matters alongside the educational, financial and organisational evidence supporting the proposal, including pupil number forecasts, surplus
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	capacity, leadership arrangements, budget projections, Welsh language considerations and community impacts. Having undertaken the additional scrutiny required by the School Organisation Code for proposals affecting rural schools, the Authority has concluded that the objections received do not provide new evidence that materially alters the findings of this Assessment. The proposal therefore remains unchanged. However, the issues raised during the objection period have informed the Authority's implementation planning and mitigation measures, particularly in relation to learner transition, ALN support, transport arrangements, staff wellbeing, community engagement and the promotion of the Welsh language. Evidence considered includes the Consultation Report, Objection Report, Post-Objection Rural School Reassessment, Statutory Notice and all valid objections submitted during the objection period.
Who will be directly affected by this proposal?	Pupils currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim Parents and carers of these pupils School staff at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim Governors of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim Receiving schools (Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog) staff and pupils Local community of Meidrim Other local schools.
As you complete the assessment, you will be required to identify all sources of evidence. This includes referencing to other documents, data etc and be completed through hyperlinks.	
WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT FIVE WAYS OF WORKING <i>(also known as the sustainable development principle. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires the Council to consider how any proposal improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales using the five ways of working as a baseline)</i>	
The sustainable development principle is: ‘... the public body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.’	

Ways of Working	How does the proposal demonstrate that it has taken this into account?
Long-term Balancing short term need with the long term and planning for the future	The proposal addresses the unsustainable status quo at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim, which has very low and declining pupil numbers (32 pupils, 43% surplus places) and a budget deficit of £62,581 in 2025/26. In September 2026, figures show there are only 24 pupils on roll at the school. Maintaining the school would not be viable in the long term. By transferring pupils to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog, the proposal improves educational outcomes by ensuring access to a broader curriculum, age-appropriate classes, and better facilities, supporting long-term educational success. It also supports financial sustainability by reducing ongoing costs and preventing further deficit growth, enabling resources to be used more effectively across the county. Furthermore, the proposal future-proofs provision by aligning with the Modernising Education Programme (MEP) Strategy, which aims to create a sustainable school network equipped for 21st-century learning. What evidence has been used to support this view? PLASC data: Shows persistent low pupil numbers and surplus places (43% in 2026). Budget reports: Highlight unsustainable deficit trends and high cost per pupil (£6,363 vs county average £5,479). Estyn inspection (April 2024): School placed in Special Measures, indicating urgent need for improvement. The school were removed from Estyn's Special Measures in December 2025. MEP Strategy: Sets out objectives for long-term sustainability and improved educational standards. School Organisation Code (2018): Requires action where surplus places exceed 25% and 30 unfilled places.
Prevention Preventing problems occurring or getting worse	The proposal prevents the situation from getting worse by tackling the ongoing challenges at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim before they become irreversible. The school currently faces low pupil numbers, with only 32 pupils on roll and 43% surplus places, alongside a budget deficit of £62,581 in 2025/26. In September 2026, figures show there are only 24 pupils on roll at the school. Maintaining the status quo would lead to further financial instability and continued difficulties in delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, as highlighted by Estyn's recent inspection placing the school in Special Measures. The school were removed from Estyn's Special Measures in December 2025. By transferring pupils to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog, the proposal mitigates these risks, ensuring pupils access education in age-appropriate classes and modern facilities. This proactive approach aligns with the Modernising Education Programme (MEP) Strategy, which aims to create a sustainable school network and avoid deterioration in educational standards and financial viability.

	What evidence has been used to support this view? PLASC Data (2026): Shows only 32 pupils on roll and 43% surplus places, with projections indicating continued low numbers and high surplus capacity. In September 2026, figures show there are only 24 pupils on roll at the school. Budget Reports: Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim has a deficit of £62,581 in 2025/26, with no licensed deficit in place. Cost per Pupil: £6,363 compared to the Carmarthenshire average of £5,479, highlighting financial inefficiency. Estyn Inspection (April 2024): School placed in Special Measures due to safeguarding concerns, weak leadership, and poor standards. The school were removed from Estyn's Special Measures in December 2025. Modernising Education Programme (MEP) Strategy: Sets out objectives for creating a sustainable school network and improving educational standards. School Organisation Code (2018): Requires action where surplus places exceed 25% and 30 unfilled places, which applies to Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim.
Integration Recognising relationships and interdependencies with other well-being goals and objectives of other service areas and partners.	The proposal demonstrates integration by recognising the relationships and interdependencies between educational provision, financial sustainability, community well-being, and cultural objectives. Closing Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and transferring pupils to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog aligns with Carmarthenshire's Modernising Education Programme (MEP) Strategy, which seeks to create a sustainable school network that supports the Curriculum for Wales and Welsh Government priorities, including Cymraeg 2050. It also contributes to wider corporate objectives such as reducing surplus places, improving resource efficiency, and supporting socio-economic equality by ensuring pupils have access to high-quality education regardless of location. The proposal integrates with transport policy by providing free school transport for eligible pupils, and with community planning by considering the impact on local services such as the Cylch Ti a Fi group. This holistic approach ensures that decisions about education provision are not made in isolation but take account of economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being goals. Consultation responses highlighted that, while the school building itself is not extensively used for formal community activities, Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim is widely perceived as being at the heart of the community. Stakeholders described the school as playing a key role in supporting community identity, strengthening local relationships, and providing a focal point for families within the village. The presence of the school was viewed as contributing to the social sustainability of the area, particularly in encouraging young families to remain in or move

	to the community. As such, its potential closure is considered likely to have a broader impact beyond education, particularly in relation to community cohesion and the long-term vitality of the village. These matters were revisited following consideration of the objections received during the statutory objection period and no additional evidence was identified that would materially alter the assessment. What evidence has been used to support this view? Modernising Education Programme (MEP) Strategy: Sets out objectives for sustainable school networks and improved educational standards. School Organisation Code (2018): Requires consideration of surplus places and community impact. Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP): Ensures continued Welsh-medium provision and supports Cymraeg 2050. Financial Data: Demonstrates unsustainable deficit and high cost per pupil at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Transport Policy: Free school transport for eligible pupils to maintain accessibility. Community Impact Assessment: Highlights links with local organisations and services. Consultation Feedback Highlighted views of stakeholders and the public. Consultation Report Objection Report Post-Objection Rural School Reassessment Community Impact Assessment
Collaboration Delivered by working with other internal and external partners (public, private or voluntary sector) to find shared sustainable solutions	The proposal has been developed and delivered through collaboration with internal and external partners to identify shared sustainable solutions. Internally, the Local Authority worked with Education Services, Finance, HR, and Transport teams to ensure the proposal addresses educational standards, financial sustainability, and accessibility. Externally, engagement took place with the school's governing body, headteacher, and local elected member during initial discussions. The consultation process was conducted in line with the School Organisation Code (2018), which ensured that stakeholders, including parents, staff, trade unions, Estyn, and the Welsh Language Commission can contribute their views. This collaborative approach supports transparency, shared responsibility, and the development of a solution that balances educational, financial, and community needs. Following publication of the statutory notice, stakeholders were provided with an opportunity to submit objections in

	accordance with the School Organisation Code (2018). The Authority has considered all objections received and has continued engagement with key stakeholders throughout the statutory process. What evidence has been used to support this view? Shaping Discussions: Initial discussions with Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim's governing body and local member (March 2025). School Organisation Code (2018): Sets statutory requirements for consultation and stakeholder engagement. Consultation Document: Outlines engagement with parents, staff, trade unions, and community groups. Modernising Education Programme (MEP) Strategy: Developed collaboratively across service areas to ensure sustainable school networks. Community Impact Assessment: Considers local organisations and services which may be impacted. Consultation Report Objection Report Record of statutory notice publication
Involvement Involving those with an interest and seeking their views in decisions that affect them	The proposal has been developed by actively involving those with an interest and seeking their views in decisions that affect them. In line with the School Organisation Code (2018), Carmarthenshire County Council undertook a comprehensive stakeholder consultation process between 16 January and 2 March 2026, followed by a statutory objection period following publication of the statutory notice. Stakeholders were provided with opportunities throughout both stages of the process to express their views and submit representations. This included engagement with parents, carers, pupils, school staff, governing bodies, trade unions, Estyn, the Welsh Language Commissioner, local elected members, and community representatives. Pupils were consulted through age-appropriate materials and school council sessions, ensuring their voices were heard. The consultation period (16th January to 2nd March 2026) had multiple channels for feedback, including online surveys, email submissions, and paper response forms. A formal Consultation Report was published summarising all responses and the Council's considerations before any final decision was made. This approach ensures transparency and meaningful involvement of stakeholders in shaping the proposal. Following publication of the statutory notice, a statutory objection period was undertaken in accordance with the School Organisation Code (2018

	What evidence has been used to support this view?
	School Organisation Code (2018): Sets statutory requirements for stakeholder involvement. Consultation Document: Details consultation timeline, methods, and stakeholders. Planned Consultation Activities: Online survey, email responses, paper forms, and pupil engagement sessions. Commitment to publish Consultation Report: Ensures feedback is considered before determination. Consultation Report Objection Report Pupil Consultation Report Objection Analysis

What action can be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or support any positive impacts?

1. Long Term	To support long-term sustainability, the proposal includes a phased transition plan to ensure pupils move smoothly to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog, or any other school of the parents or carers' choosing, maintaining continuity in education and wellbeing. If required, investment will be made in sustainable infrastructure at the receiving school to accommodate additional pupils without compromising quality. The Council will also monitor the long-term impact on community cohesion and explore options for repurposing the Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim site for community benefit in line with the Local Authority's policy for redundant school buildings.
2. Prevention	Preventative measures focus on reducing uncertainty and avoiding further deterioration of the situation. This includes early engagement and clear communication with parents and staff, targeted support for vulnerable learners during transition, and implementing financial controls to prevent further deficit growth at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim until closure.
3. Integration	The proposal integrates with wider strategies and objectives by aligning with the Modernising Education Programme (MEP) Strategy and Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). It ensures consistency with educational and cultural goals while coordinating with transport services to provide safe and efficient travel arrangements.
4. Collaboration	Collaboration is central to the proposal, with continued engagement between internal teams, Education, Finance, HR, and Transport, and external partners such as Estyn, the Welsh Language Commissioner, and trade unions. The Council will also work closely with all stakeholders including the receiving school to ensure that all parties have full collaboration in the transition.

5. Involvement	To ensure meaningful involvement, the Council has undertaken transparent consultation processes, giving parents, pupils, staff, and community stakeholders opportunities to provide feedback. Pupil-friendly consultation materials and school council sessions were used to involve children in decisions affecting them. A formal Consultation Report was published summarising feedback and how it influenced the final decision. Following the publication of the statutory notice, a statutory objection period was held, and an Objection Report was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (Wales) 2018.
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EQUALITIES (the Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to have “due regard” to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and foster good relations between different groups)

Protected Characteristics	Does the proposal impact on any of the protected characteristics?	What evidence has been used to support this view?
Age	The proposal directly impacts pupils of primary school age currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim, as they will need to transfer to another school. It also affects parents and carers who may need to adjust to new travel arrangements. The proposal directly impacts all staff employed at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Consideration will need to be given to mitigate any impact on staff, including those aged over 55.	PLASC data (2026) showing 32 pupils on roll. In September 2026, figures show there are only 24 pupils on roll at the school. Staffing profile
Disability	Consultation responses highlighted a number of considerations in relation to disability and Additional Learning Needs (ALN). Stakeholders emphasised the importance of ensuring continuity of support for pupils with additional needs during any transition, noting that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim provides a	ALN Code for Wales Consultation Report Objection Report Objections relating to ALN provision and learner wellbeing

	familiar, supportive and inclusive environment where individual needs are well understood. Concerns were expressed about the potential impact of change on vulnerable learners, particularly in relation to disruption, emotional wellbeing and the need to re-establish support arrangements in a new setting. However, it was also recognised that the receiving schools have established processes in place to support learners with ALN, including access to specialist staff, a wider range of resources and experience in delivering individualised support. The Local Authority has taken these views into account and will ensure that appropriate transition planning, person-centred approaches and tailored support are in place to minimise disruption and maintain continuity of provision for all learners with additional needs. These matters were revisited following consideration of the objections received during the statutory objection period and no additional evidence was identified that would materially alter the assessment.	
Gender reassignment	No impact identified. The proposal does not relate to gender identity or involve changes that would affect individuals undergoing or having undergone gender reassignment.	Nature of the proposal (school closure and transfer) is unrelated to this characteristic.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No impact identified. The proposal does not affect marital or civil partnership status.	Proposal scope limited to school provision.

Race	No negative impact anticipated. Both schools provide Welsh-medium education and promote equality and inclusion.	Welsh Language Impact Assessment and Estyn reports confirm inclusive practices.
Religion/Belief	No impact identified. The proposal does not alter religious education provision or restrict access to faith-based activities.	Both schools are community schools without a designated religious character.
Pregnancy and maternity	Potential impact on parents who are pregnant or on maternity leave due to changes in travel arrangements. Mitigation includes clear communication and transport support. Pregnant staff, those on maternity leave, or those returning to work will have access to ongoing HR advice and guidance throughout the implementation process. Where possible a named HR contact will be identified for pregnancy- and-maternity-related queries.	CCC School transport policy and support measures.
Sexual Orientation	No impact identified. The proposal does not affect opportunities or treatment based on sex or sexual orientation.	Proposal relates solely to school organisation and pupil transfer.
Sex	No impact identified to pupils. The proposal does not affect opportunities or treatment based on sex or sexual orientation. No differential impact identified on staff. Any staffing impacts arising from the proposal would be managed in line with the Council's employment policies, ensuring fair and equitable treatment regardless of sex.	Proposal relates solely to school organisation and pupil transfer.

What action can be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or support any positive impacts?

1. Age	Provide clear communication and transition support for pupils and parents, including familiarisation visits to the receiving schools. Offer additional pastoral care for younger pupils to ease anxiety during the change.
2. Disability	Ensure the receiving schools makes reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities if required, including accessibility adaptations and transport arrangements. Provide individual transition plans for pupils with additional learning needs.
3. Gender reassignment	Maintain confidentiality and ensure inclusive policies are upheld. Provide staff training (if required) on equality and diversity to prevent discrimination and foster an inclusive environment.
4. Marriage and Civil Partnership	No direct impact anticipated, but maintain flexible communication channels for parents to accommodate family circumstances.
5. Race	Continue to promote equality and inclusion at the receiving schools. Monitor for any potential issues and provide cultural awareness activities to maintain positive relations.
6. Religion/Belief	Ensure that any religious observances or dietary requirements continue to be respected at the receiving schools. Communicate with parents to confirm arrangements.
7. Pregnancy and maternity	Offer flexible engagement options for parents/staff who are pregnant or on maternity leave, such as virtual meetings and extended deadlines for consultation responses. These matters were revisited following consideration of the objections received during the statutory objection period and no additional evidence was identified that would materially alter the assessment.
8. Sexual Orientation	Provide equality and diversity training for staff to maintain an inclusive environment and prevent discrimination if required. Ensure anti-bullying policies are enforced.
9. Sex	Provide equality and diversity training for staff to maintain an inclusive environment and prevent discrimination if required. Ensure anti-bullying policies are enforced. Any staffing impacts arising from the proposal would be managed in line with the Council's employment policies, ensuring fair and equitable treatment regardless of sex.

WELSH LANGUAGE *(the Welsh Language Measure 2011 and Welsh Language Standards require the Council to have “due regard” for the positive or negative impact a proposal may have on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and ensuring the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language)*

Requirement	Does the proposal impact on the following Standards?	What evidence has been used to support this view?	Does the proposal have any positive or negative impacts?
Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language	Yes, positively. Pupils will continue to receive education through the medium of Welsh through the Welsh stream at Ysgol Griffith Jones, which is a language Category 3.2 Dual-Stream school or continue to receive education through the medium of Welsh at Ysgol Hafodwenog which is also a Category 3 Welsh-medium school. Consultation responses identified the Welsh language as a key consideration, with many stakeholders highlighting the important role that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim plays in supporting and promoting the use of Welsh within the local community. As a Welsh-medium school, it was widely regarded as contributing significantly to the daily use of the language, both within the classroom and more broadly across the village, reinforcing	Both schools are Welsh-medium. Welsh Language Impact Assessment states that the proposal maintains Welsh-medium provision and supports Cymraeg 2050 objectives. . Ysgol Griffith Jones is a Dual-Stream school and Ysgol Hafodwenog is a Welsh-medium school which is the same category school as Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. Welsh Language Impact Assessment states that the proposal maintains Welsh-medium provision. Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim has achieved the Siarter Iaith Bronze Award with both Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog achieving the Gold Award. Welsh Language Impact Assessment. Consultation Report. Objection Report.	Positive impact: Pupils will have increased opportunities to use Welsh in a larger peer group and access extracurricular activities (e.g., Urdd clubs) that promote Welsh language and culture.

	its role within a rural Welsh-speaking community. Concerns were raised that the closure of the school could reduce opportunities for informal use of Welsh within the locality and may impact on the linguistic character of the community. However, it is recognised that the proposed receiving schools, Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog, both provide Welsh-medium education and offer broader opportunities for pupils to use Welsh within larger peer groups and through a wider range of curricular and extracurricular activities. The Local Authority has taken these views into account and is satisfied that opportunities for pupils to access Welsh-medium education and to use the Welsh language on a daily basis will be maintained and, in some respects, enhanced through access to a broader Welsh-speaking environment. These matters were revisited following consideration of the objections received	WESP 2022 – 2032. Receiving school language category information. Responses received relating to Welsh language impacts.	
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	during the statutory objection period and no additional evidence was identified that would materially alter the assessment. Objections received during the statutory notice period reinforced concerns previously raised during consultation regarding the role of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim in supporting the Welsh language within the local community. The Local Authority has reviewed these concerns and remains satisfied that Welsh-medium education opportunities will continue through the receiving schools.		
Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language	No negative impact. Welsh language provision will continue to be treated equally and promoted in line with statutory requirements.	All schools operate under Welsh Language Standards.	Positive impact: Maintains and strengthens Welsh-medium provision, ensuring pupils continue to learn and communicate primarily in Welsh.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY (*The Socio-Economic Duty requires us, when making strategic decisions, to consider how our decisions might help reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage. Inequality of outcome relates to any measurable differences in outcome between those who have experienced socio-economic disadvantage and the rest of the population. It also requires us to understand the views and needs of those impacted by the decision, particularly those who face economic disadvantage*)

Requirement	
What evidence do you have about socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in relation to this decision?	PLASC data (2026) shows that no pupils at Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). However, free home-to-school transport will be provided for eligible pupils, reducing financial burden.
Have you engaged with those effected by the decision?	Shaping discussions have been held with the headteacher and governing body. The proposal included a statutory consultation process in line with the School Organisation Code (2018). This involved engagement with parents, carers, pupils, staff, and community stakeholders through online surveys, email responses, and meetings. Pupil voice was included via school council sessions and age-appropriate materials. The Local Authority has undertaken both a statutory consultation process and a subsequent statutory objection process in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (2018). Parents, carers, pupils, staff, governors, local residents and other stakeholders have been provided with opportunities to submit views and representations throughout both stages.
Have you considered communities and places of interest?	Yes. The Community Impact Assessment has been revisited following consultation feedback and highlights the significant role of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim within the 'heart' of the community of Meidrim, including its role in supporting social cohesion, local identity and intergenerational interaction. Respondents raised concerns regarding potential impacts on community activity and the use of the Welsh language. Consultation responses reinforced the view that Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim plays a significant role as the heart of the local community. Although the school building is not heavily utilised for formal community use, stakeholders consistently highlighted its wider social value, noting its contribution to community identity, informal social interaction, and its role as a focal point for families. The school was described as supporting connections between residents, contributing to a sense of belonging, and forming an integral part of daily life within the village.

	These matters were revisited following consideration of the objections received during the statutory objection period and no additional evidence was identified that would materially alter the assessment. Respondents also indicated that the presence of a local school is an important factor in sustaining rural communities, particularly in attracting and retaining young families. The potential loss of the school was therefore viewed as having implications for the long-term sustainability and vibrancy of the area. This feedback has informed the assessment by recognising that the impact of the proposal extends beyond the physical use of the building and includes less tangible but significant social and community wellbeing considerations. Objections received during the statutory notice period reiterated concerns regarding community sustainability, the role of the school within village life and the potential impact on Welsh language use within the locality. These matters have been revisited as part of the post-objection reassessment and continue to inform the Authority's understanding of the proposal's community impacts.
What are the main impacts of the proposal?	The main impacts include the closure of a local school, which may affect community cohesion and accessibility for families in Meidrim. Pupils will need to travel further to attend Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog, which could increase reliance on school transport. However, the proposal ensures continued Welsh-medium education and improved educational standards by transferring pupils to a larger school with better facilities. Financially, the proposal reduces inefficiencies and prevents further deficit growth.
How could the proposal be improved so it reduces inequalities of outcome as a result of socio-economic disadvantage?	The proposal could be improved by providing additional support for families facing economic hardship, such as: • Ensuring free school transport for all eligible pupils. • Offering flexible engagement options for parents (e.g., virtual meetings). • Providing financial assistance for extracurricular activities at the receiving schools.

	School funding takes into account levels of deprivation by using Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility as an indicator of disadvantage. Extra funding is provided for each eligible pupil, so schools with more pupils on FSM receive more support. This helps ensure resources go to the areas where they are needed most.
What is the likely impact on those sharing protected characteristics and further impacts regarding intersectionality?	The proposal is unlikely to negatively impact most protected characteristics, as Welsh-medium provision and inclusive practices will continue. However, intersectional impacts may occur for pupils from low-income families who also have additional learning needs or parents who are pregnant/maternity. These impacts can be mitigated through individual transition plans, transport support, and targeted pastoral care.

THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD <i>(In this section, we need to consider whether the proposal has any direct or indirect impact on children and young people).</i>			
Requirement		What evidence has been used to support this view?	What action can be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or support any positive impacts?
Will the proposal have any impact (direct or indirect) on children and young people?	Yes, the proposal will have a direct impact on children currently attending Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim, as they will need to transfer to another school. This change may affect their sense of security, friendships, and daily routines. Indirect impacts include changes to travel arrangements and potential effects on family life. Article 28 (Right to Education) has been considered as the	• PLASC data (2026) showing 32 pupils on roll. In September 2026, figures show there are only 24 pupils on roll at the school. • Estyn inspection report (April 2024) placing the school in Special Measures, highlighting the need for improved educational standards. The school were removed from Estyn's Special Measures in December 2025.	• Develop a transition plan, including familiarisation visits to Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog if required. • Provide additional pastoral support for pupils during the transition period. • Ensure clear communication with parents and pupils about timelines and arrangements. • Offer opportunities for pupils to maintain peer

	proposal directly affects where children will receive their education. The Local Authority has assessed whether access to education will be maintained and notes that learners would continue to have access to Welsh-medium primary education at Ysgol Hafodwenog or Ysgol Griffith Jones or another school chosen by parents through the admissions process. Article 29 (Goals of Education) has been considered as the proposal seeks to provide learners with access to a broader range of educational opportunities, larger peer groups, enhanced facilities and wider curricular and extracurricular experiences, supporting the development of each child's abilities and potential. Article 12 (Respect for the Views of the Child) is engaged	• Consultation Report • Objection Report Article 12 (respect for the views of the child) Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life. Article 28 (right to education) Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this. Article 29 (goals of education) Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the	relationships through joint activities before the move. • Develop individual transition plans for pupils identified with ALN, informed by consultation feedback and pupil voice.
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	because pupils affected by the proposal will be given opportunities to express their views during the consultation process. Article 30 (Children from Minority Groups) has been considered because the proposal relates to Welsh-medium education. The proposal would maintain access to Welsh-medium education and opportunities to use the Welsh language through provision at Ysgol Hafodwenog or Ysgol Griffith Jones.	child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment. Article 30 (children from minority or indigenous groups) Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.	
Is the initiative designed / planned in the best interests of children and young people?	Yes, the initiative is designed to improve educational outcomes by transferring pupils to a school with better facilities, stable leadership, and the ability to deliver the full Curriculum for Wales. It also ensures continued Welsh-medium provision. Article 3 (Best Interests of the	• Estyn report for Ysgol Gynradd Hafodwenog (Special Measures) vs. Ysgol Griffith Jones (No Follow-Up status) and Ysgol Hafodwenog (No Follow-Up status). • Modernising Education Programme (MEP) Strategy prioritising sustainable, high-quality education.	• Engage pupils in the consultation process using age-appropriate materials. • Provide emotional and wellbeing support during and after the transition. • Monitor progress and wellbeing of transferred pupils to ensure positive outcomes. • Maintain communication with parents to address concerns promptly.

	Child) has been considered throughout the development of the proposal. The Local Authority has assessed the educational, wellbeing, accessibility and community implications of the proposal and considers that, on balance, the proposal is intended to support the long-term best interests of learners by providing access to sustainable Welsh-medium education, broader educational opportunities, improved facilities and enhanced support services. Article 23 (Children with Disabilities) has been considered because the proposal may affect learners with disabilities and additional learning needs. The Local Authority has considered the accessibility of the receiving school, the continuation of additional learning provision, access to specialist	• Welsh Language Impact Assessment confirming continuity of Welsh-medium provision. Article 3 (best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children. Article 23 (children with a disability) A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled children and their families. Article 31 (leisure, play and culture) Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.	
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	services and the need for individual transition arrangements. Where the proposal is implemented, appropriate support and reasonable adjustments will be provided to ensure that learners with disabilities continue to access education and participate fully in school life. Article 31 (Leisure, Play and Participation in Cultural Life) has been considered as the proposal may affect pupils' participation in recreational, sporting and cultural activities. The Local Authority considers that pupils transferring to Ysgol Hafodwenog or Ysgol Griffith Jones would have access to a broader range of extracurricular, sporting and cultural opportunities, including opportunities to participate in Welsh-language		
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	activities and events, supporting their rights under Article 31.		
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ENVIRONMENT (WALES) ACT & NET ZERO CARBON Section 6 of the duty requires that public authorities *“must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in doing promote the resilience of ecosystems”*. To comply with the S6 duty public authorities should embed the consideration of biodiversity and ecosystems into their early thinking and business planning, including policies, plans, programmes, and projects, as well as their day to day activities.”

Carmarthenshire County Council is committed to tackling climate change and acknowledge that we have a significant role to play in both further reducing our own greenhouse gas emissions and providing the leadership to encourage residents, businesses and other organisations to take action to cut their own carbon footprint.

Requirement	
Does the proposal impact on the county's Biodiversity and ecosystem resilience?	Consultation responses and objections received during the statutory process raised concerns regarding increased travel distances and associated carbon impacts. These matters have been reviewed using updated transport and building energy data. Consultation responses raised concerns regarding increased travel distances and associated carbon impacts. These issues have been reassessed post-consultation using updated building energy and transport emission data to ensure an informed and proportionate evaluation. These matters were revisited following consideration of the objections received during the statutory objection period and no additional evidence was identified that would materially alter the assessment. The proposal is unlikely to have a significant direct impact on biodiversity or ecosystem resilience. The closure of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim involves repurposing or selling an existing building rather than new development, so no major habitat disruption is anticipated. However, any future use of the site should comply with biodiversity duties.

	Increased traffic from school transport may disrupt nearby habitats however the impact is likely to be minimal as there will be no infrastructure expansion or loss of green spaces required to facilitate the proposal. The proposal could also promote environmental awareness through outdoor learning spaces, eco-educational programmes at Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog. An increase in pupil numbers could produce more waste at Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog, however, the effective waste management in place at the school would mitigate negative impacts.
Does the proposal have a positive or negative impact on the CCC commitment to be a net zero carbon local authority by 2030?	Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim, constructed circa 1900 and heated using an oil-fired system, recorded a carbon footprint of 11.37 tonnes CO₂e in 2024/25, with benchmarked energy consumption of 172.6 kWh/m². This metric provides a normalised basis for comparison across sites of differing size and operational use. Similarly, Ysgol Hafodwenog, constructed in 1971 and heated via liquid petroleum gas (LPG), recorded a higher carbon footprint of 21.2 tonnes CO₂e in the same period, with a comparable energy consumption of 172.9 kWh/m². In contrast, Ysgol Griffiths Jones, constructed in 1963 and heated via natural gas, has a significantly larger gross internal area (3,676 m²) compared to both Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim (268 m²) and Ysgol Hafodwenog (566 m²). Despite this, it recorded emissions of 70.41 tonnes CO₂e in 2024/25, alongside a markedly lower energy consumption of 98.6 kWh/m²—just over half that of the other schools. These figures highlight the disproportionately high emissions associated with maintaining smaller, less energy-efficient school buildings, particularly where occupancy levels are low. In considering pupil transport to alternative provision, a shared bus undertaking a 13-mile return journey between Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and Ysgol Hafodwenog, Trelech, over 190 teaching days would generate approximately 2.5 tCO₂e per annum, based on DEFRA-derived emission factors (approximately 13 kg CO₂e per trip). Alternatively, a shared bus operating a shorter 6-mile return journey between Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim and

	Ysgol Griffiths Jones, St Clears, over the same period would generate approximately 1.1 tCO₂e per annum (approximately 6 kg CO₂e per trip). While these estimates exclude emissions associated with vehicle positioning journeys, the total transport-related emissions remain significantly lower than those associated with the continued operation of Ysgol Gynradd Meidrim. The proposal may have a minor negative impact due to increased travel distances for pupils, leading to higher transport emissions. However, it also removes the need to maintain and heat an additional school building, which could reduce overall carbon footprint.
Does the proposal have a positive or negative impact on the County's resilience to the existing and future impacts of climate change?	The proposal has a neutral impact on resilience. Consolidating education provision into a modern, energy-efficient buildings (Ysgol Griffith Jones and Ysgol Hafodwenog) supports climate adaptation goals. However, increased reliance on transport could offset some benefits.

DATA PROTECTION (*Data Protection legislation includes a legal requirement to undertake Data Protection Impact Assessments in order to identify and reduce the privacy risks of a project at an early stage. In this section, we need to establish whether the proposal requires this assessment needs to be completed. There are also specific requirements around using third parties to process personal data on the Council's behalf, which must be covered by a legally binding Data Processing Agreement).*

Does the proposal involve the collection/use of personal data (information relating to an identified or identifiable person)?	Yes	If yes, please provide information on the type of data
		Email or postal addresses are requested should consultees wish to be informed of the publication of the consultation report. Consultation responses will remain anonymous.
Does the proposal require the use of new technologies and be likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of the individuals?	No.	If yes, please provide information on the type of new technologies
		Consultation documents and the Consultation Report were available online and in paper form at the school. Response forms will be available online and in paper form at the school. The Objection Report will be available online and in paper form.
Does the proposal involve a third party collecting, being provided with, or	No	If yes, please provide information on what this will entail

otherwise having access to personal data controlled by the Council?		
If you have answered yes to any of these considerations, please consult the Data Protection Officer to initiate a Data Protection Impact Assessment and/or discuss whether a Data Processing Agreement is required.		

IMPLICATIONS (Please consider any additional implications and ensure that any arising implications have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below)

Are there any direct implications that need to be considered as part of this proposal?

1. Legal and Risk Management

The statutory notice period has been completed in accordance with the School Organisation Code (2018). The Local Authority has prepared an Objection Report summarising the objections received and the Authority's response. The proposal will now proceed through the relevant decision-making process.

2. Finance, Procurement, ICT and Physical Assets

If the proposal is approved, it will be funded in line with Local Authority maintained 3-11 schools.

The school's current financial position as well as forecasted budgets have been considered as part of the proposal papers. Should the proposals proceed, and implementation agreed, there would be anticipated annual revenue savings. In addition, there are other savings to the Council from the reduction in central support services provided to schools such as Human Resources, Education and ALN Support, IT, Music Service, cleaning, property maintenance, grounds maintenance and catering.

If approved, the receiving school would benefit from additional pupil funding.

Should the proposal proceed, and implementation agreed, the Local Authority would gain a redundant school building within its estate. If there is no corporate or community interest in retaining the building as per the 'Future Use/Disposal of Redundant Land and Buildings' policy, then the building would be placed on the open market and could generate a capital receipt. Should the proposal proceed and implementation agreed, the Local Authority would gain one redundant school building within its estate with an estimated value of £150,000.

The property would be transferred to the Corporate Property Division for the procedures outlined in the 'Future Use/Disposal of Redundant Land and Buildings' arising from the Modernising Education Programme policy to be actioned. This policy has been developed to allow the community to be offered the asset in the first instance before placing the site on the open market.

3. Staffing

If the proposal is approved, Ysgol Griffith Jones or Ysgol Hafodwenog would utilise their current staffing complement.

The decision to propose the closure of a school is never taken lightly, and we fully recognise the significant impact such proposals can have on the staff who work there. Our priority is always to minimise disruption and to support our staff through any period of change. In line with our Model Redundancy / Surplus Staffing Policy for Schools, we are committed to doing everything we can to avoid compulsory redundancies. This includes exploring all possible redeployment opportunities within the wider schools network and the local authority, offering voluntary redundancy or early retirement where appropriate, and working closely with trade unions throughout the process.

However, while we will make every effort to redeploy affected staff, we cannot completely rule out the possibility of redundancies. Where redeployment is not feasible, we will follow a fair and transparent process and will support those affected.

We understand the uncertainty this creates for staff and their families, and we are committed to providing clear communication, timely updates, and access to support services throughout the process. Our HR team will work closely with Headteachers and Governing Bodies to ensure that all staff are treated with dignity and respect throughout the process.

4. Marketing & Media

The statutory notice was published in accordance with the School Organisation Code (2018) and publicised through the Council's website and other appropriate channels. Stakeholders were notified of the objection period and their right to submit objections. The Objection Report will be published in accordance with statutory requirements.

5. Crime and Disorder

No implications are anticipated. Closure could result in the school site becoming vacant for a period. Empty public buildings can attract vandalism, trespass, anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping, potentially creating community safety concerns and additional costs associated with site security and maintenance.

Closure may reduce levels of daily activity and informal supervision in the vicinity of the school. Reduced occupation may create opportunities for anti-social behaviour and unauthorised use of school grounds, particularly during evenings and weekends.

Vacant buildings can experience an elevated risk of deliberate fire setting. Any such incident could have implications beyond the site itself, including risks to neighbouring residents, environmental impacts and demands upon emergency services.

Any potential community safety issues associated with the potential closure of the school are expected to be temporary and largely dependent upon the future use of the site.

To mitigate these risks, the Authority will ensure that appropriate security measures are implemented to secure the property and minimise the risk of unauthorised access, vandalism, anti-social behaviour, fly-tipping or arson. In addition, the Authority will endeavour to determine the future use of the site at the earliest opportunity in order to minimise any period during which the building may remain vacant and to reduce the likelihood of longer-term community safety concerns.

