

# Proposal to change the age range from 4-11 to 3-11 at Ysgol Cwrt Henri

## Consultation Report



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## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A statutory consultation was conducted regarding the proposed changes at Ysgol Cwrt Henri. The consultation received a total number of 31 responses. Overall, the balance of sentiment was predominantly positive, with a clear majority of respondents expressing support for the proposal, though a minority raised concerns or objections.

The main themes raised in support included: the benefits of earlier access to education, positive impacts on the Welsh language and bilingualism, and the long-term sustainability of the school. Themes raised in opposition or concern included the suitability of starting formal education at age three and issues relating to the condition of the school building. All feedback was considered in line with statutory requirements.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

This report presents the feedback gathered during the consultation period, held from the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2025 to the 16<sup>th</sup> of October 2025. The consultation was undertaken in response to proposals to amend the age range at Ysgol Cwrt Henri from 4-11 to 3-11, incorporating provision for part-time nursery education.

The report sets out the consultation process, summarises the responses received and provides an analysis of the key issues and comments raised by stakeholders.

## **3. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS**

The consultation process followed Welsh Government guidelines, in compliance with the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and in line with the School Organisation Code 2018. The consultation processes gave prescribed consultees the opportunity to learn about the proposal and provide feedback.

The consultation document was published on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2025. The consultation document was distributed electronically to prescribed consultees and published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website. Hard copies of the consultation document were available upon request. The consultation document

outlined the proposal being considered, the rationale for the proposal and the details of the consultation exercise. The consultation document also incorporated an individual response form. Consultees were advised of the availability of an online version to complete and where to send written letters or email responses.

Consultation with Pupils of Ysgol Cwrt Henri took place in a dedicated session undertaken with members of the School Council.

#### 4. ANALYSIS OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The consultation responses received between 4<sup>th</sup> of September and the 16<sup>th</sup> of October 2025 are outlined below:

Responses Received			
Online Survey	E-mail	Letter	Total
29	1	1	31

In addition to the above, Estyn provided a response to the consultation and feedback from pupils was gathered.

##### 4.1 ONLINE SURVEY

A total of 29 online survey responses were received. No responses were received after the closure of the consultation. Responses are detailed below.

##### Q1. Are you responding as a:

Parent, carer or guardian	16	Community Council	0
Governor	2	Other:	2
Member of the community	7	Staff	1
Prospective parent, carer or guardian	1		

## Q2. Do you support the proposal?

Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
26	1	2

Overall, the feedback from the online survey indicates a predominantly positive response to the proposal, with the majority of respondents expressing support.

## Q3. Do you have any comments regarding this proposal that you would like us to consider?

Q3 Analysis of key themes of responses	
Supportive	Unsupportive
Early Years provision is needed and would be beneficial for the children and the community.	Concerns about the suitability of the school building for younger children.
The proposal would strengthen the school's sustainability and competitiveness.	Concerns that starting formal education at age 3 may be too early for some children.
Positive impact on the Welsh language and community cohesion.	
Would bring Ysgol Cwrt Henri in line with other local schools which already offer part-time provision.	

## Local Authority Response

The Local Authority acknowledges the strong support for early years provision and recognises the perceived benefits for children, the school, and the wider community, including the promotion of the Welsh language. These themes align with the WESP's strategic aims to increase Welsh-medium provision and support linguistic continuity from nursery to secondary education.

The Local Authority notes concerns regarding the condition of the school building and the appropriate age for starting education. Attending part-time nursery at the age of 3 is not compulsory. The legal age to receive education is from age 5. However, primary education typically starts at age 4. The decision as to whether a child starts school earlier than this is one for the parents to make but is an option for parents who feel that their child is ready. In accordance with the School Organisation Code, the sufficiency and quality of accommodation, as well as the viability of adding nursery places, are key factors in decision-making. These issues will be considered as part of the ongoing review and planning process.

**Q4. Are there any other options that you think the Council should be considering for Ysgol Cwrt Henri?**

	Yes	No Response	No
Are there any other options that you think the Council should be considering for Ysgol Cwrt Henri?	3	1	25
<b>If yes, please outline the alternative option(s)</b>			
No statements outlining alternative options were received.			

**Q5.a. In your opinion, what positive or adverse effects would this proposal have on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

<b>Q5.a Analysis of key themes of responses</b>
Positive impact on Welsh language development and continuity from an early age.
Increased opportunities for bilingualism and immersion for non-Welsh speaking families.
Strengthening the role of Welsh in the community and supporting national language strategy.

No negative statements were received for this question.

## Local Authority Response

The Local Authority recognises the positive impact on Welsh language provision and continuity. The WESP sets out a commitment to increase Welsh-medium places and ensure linguistic continuity from nursery to secondary education, supporting the Welsh Government's target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

The Local Authority acknowledges the strong support for the proposal's positive impact on Welsh language development and bilingual opportunities.

**Q5.b. How do you think the proposal could be formulated or revised so that it would have positive or more positive effects on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

No statements outlining alternative options were received.

**Q5.c. How do you think the proposal could be formulated or revised so that it would not have adverse effects or have less adverse effects on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

No statements outlining alternative options were received.

## 4.2 RESPONSES RECEIVED VIA EMAIL

One response was received via email during the consultation period. No responses were received via email after the closure of the consultation.

<b>Analysis of key themes of responses received via email</b>
<b>Early access to education:</b> All children in the rural area would benefit from rich educational experiences from the age of 3.

**Collaboration with local childcare providers:** Continued close working with the local cylch meithrin (Welsh-medium nursery) and care providers, developing suitable care packages for working parents.

**Maintaining local education and community:** Ensuring children from a wide area can continue to receive their education at their local school, strengthening community ties and sense of belonging.

**School as a community hub:** Retaining Ysgol Cwrt Henri as an important centre for the whole community.

**Sustainability and future of the school:** Increasing pupil numbers to secure the school's future and that of local services; without this provision, some parents are taking children to alternative schools, miles away.

**Adequate facilities:** The school has sufficient space and is in good condition to expand pupil numbers.

**Promotion of the Welsh language:** The proposal supports the aim of increasing opportunities to use Welsh through early education.

## Local Authority Response

The Local Authority welcomes the strong support for the proposal to expand the admission age at Ysgol Cwrt Henri. The themes identified align with the priorities set out in the School Organisation Code (2018) and Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), including providing early access to high-quality education, maintaining schools as community hubs, and promoting the Welsh language.

The proposal will enable children to benefit from rich learning experiences, support working families, and enhance the sustainability of local education provision.

### 4.3 RESPONSES RECEIVED BY LETTER

One letter was received during the consultation period. No responses were received via letter after the closure of the consultation.

<b>Analysis of key themes of responses received via letter</b>	
<b>Supportive</b>	<b>Concerns</b>
Addressing Gaps in Early Years Provision	Staffing and Language Competence
Expanding Early Welsh Immersion	Full Welsh Immersion
Smooth Transition for Young Children	Parental Engagement
School Sustainability	

#### **Local Authority response**

The Local Authority welcomes strong support for the proposals to extend early years Welsh-medium provision and strengthen linguistic continuity. The WESP emphasises early immersion, community engagement, and school sustainability. The positive feedback will be considered as part of the statutory decision-making process.

The Local Authority acknowledges the constructive recommendations regarding staffing, full Welsh immersion and parental engagement.

Ysgol Cwrt Henri is already categorised as a Welsh medium primary school and as such, should the proposal be approved, the part-time provision offered in the school would be entirely through the medium of Welsh.

The school will ensure that all their staff can deliver the curriculum confidently through the medium of Welsh.

All feedback and risks identified will be conscientiously considered, and mitigation measures will be incorporated into implementation plans if required to ensure the proposals deliver maximum benefit for learners, families, and the Welsh language.

#### 4.4 PUPIL CONSULTATION ANALYSIS

Consultation with Pupils of Ysgol Cwrt Henri took place on the 10th of October 2025 in a dedicated session undertaken with members of the School Council. A full breakdown of the responses received is in Annex B.

<b>Analysis of key themes of responses</b>	
<b>Q1. Do you know that we might be changing the age of the children who can come here?</b>	
The proposal would support working parents by providing local childcare.	It would enable access to education for 3-year-olds in the local area.
The change would improve transition from Cylch Meithrin to school.	It would ensure equity with other 3-11 schools and support early skill development.
<b>Q2. How would you feel about having children who are younger than you in school?</b>	
Welcoming younger children would ensure equal rights and access to education.	The change would foster new friendships and increase the school community.
Early access to Welsh-medium education would be supported.	
<b>Q3. What do you like most about your school?</b>	
Enjoyment of outdoor play and socialising with friends.	Appreciation for supportive and engaged teachers.
Positive experiences with technology and learning resources.	

<b>Q4. What might be good about more young children coming to our school?</b>	
Early access to Welsh-medium education for more pupils.	Opportunities for older pupils to support younger ones.
Early skill development, particularly for those lacking resources at home.	
<b>Q5. Is there anything you're worried about if the school changes?</b>	
No concerns about the proposed change to 3-11.	Concern that not changing to 3-11 could lead to a decline in pupil numbers and potential school closure.
<b>Q6. What would you like to tell the grown-ups who are making the decision?</b>	
Support for transition and continuity from early years settings.	Early access to Welsh-medium education and facilities.
Community benefits, including local childcare and school sustainability.	Equity of access to early years education.

### **Local Authority Response to Feedback from Pupils**

The Local Authority is pleased to note that pupils recognise the benefits of providing local early years education, supporting working families, and ensuring equitable access to provision. These views will be considered as part of the statutory process and align with the Council's commitment to increasing access to early years and Welsh-medium education.

The positive attitude towards inclusion is welcomed as well as the recognition of the benefits of early Welsh-medium education and community-building. These perspectives will inform the planning and implementation of any changes.

It recognises the value pupils place on outdoor play, supportive staff, and access to technology. These factors will be considered in maintaining and enhancing the school environment during any transition.

It notes the benefits identified by pupils, including peer support and early language development. These align with strategic aims to promote Welsh-medium education and equitable opportunities for all learners.

Appreciation of the clear support for the proposed change and the emphasis on transition, equity, and community benefit is expressed. These factors will be central to the Council's considerations and align with strategic objectives for early years and Welsh-medium education.

It is noted that no concerns were raised in this section. However, the Local Authority acknowledges the concern about school sustainability, the impact on pupil numbers and community viability should the proposal not go ahead.

#### **4.5 ESTYN'S RESPONSE**

Estyn considers that the proposal is *"is likely to deliver Welsh medium provision for 3–11-year-olds at a standard at least equal to its existing 4–11 offer."* The key themes of Estyn's response are summarised in the tables that follow. The full response from Estyn is included in Annex A.

<b>Theme 1: Quality and Continuity of Welsh-medium Education</b>
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<b>Local Authority Response:</b>
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The Local Authority welcomes Estyn's view that the proposal will maintain or enhance Welsh-medium educational standards for 3–11-year-olds. It was pleasing to note that the school's inclusive and supportive culture was highlighted as a strength.
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**Theme 2: Early Access and Timely Support****Local Authority Response:**

In line with the WESP 2022–2032, the Local Authority is committed to ensuring high-quality provision, early identification of learning needs, and inclusive support for all learners, including those with ALN and from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Local Authority will continue to monitor standards and wellbeing outcomes throughout implementation.

**Theme 3: School Sustainability and Resource Efficiency****Local Authority Response:**

The Local Authority confirms that the anticipated increase in pupil numbers will enhance sustainability and resource efficiency.

**Theme 4: Facilities and Capacity****Local Authority Response:**

The Local Authority confirms that the school has sufficient facilities and outdoor space to accommodate nursery pupils without requiring capital investment or changes to class structure.

**Theme 5: Community and Welsh Language Impact****Local Authority Response:**

The Local Authority welcomes Estyn’s recognition of the proposal’s consistency with the WESP and its capacity to enhance the continuity of the Welsh language. It remains committed to advancing Welsh medium education and will ensure that the growth in provision contributes directly to the Welsh Government’s Cymraeg 2050 strategy. In addition, the Local Authority will make certain that community and language impact assessments continue to guide both decision making and ongoing engagement.

**Theme 6: Potential Impact on Private Nursery Providers****Local Authority Response:**

The Local Authority acknowledges the potential implications for private nursery providers and childminders. In line with the School Organisation Code the council commits to open and transparent consultation but would like to note that there are currently no such providers within the catchment area. Whilst the absence of providers within the catchment area minimises this risk, all views will be considered before a final decision is made.

**Theme 7: Transport and Accessibility****Local Authority Response:**

Early years education is non-statutory and as such free transport is not available for 3-year-olds. The council has considered the impact of travel costs on low-income families and expects the proposal to improve travel arrangements for families currently accessing provision outside the catchment.

**Theme 8: Transition Planning****Local Authority Response:**

Transition arrangements will be planned to ensure a smooth implementation, with minimal disruption expected due to the school's existing capacity and facilities.

**5. CONCLUSION**

The Local Authority recognises and appreciates the support received for this proposal throughout the consultation process to date. The majority of responses received from stakeholders clearly highlight that introducing part-time nursery provision at Ysgol Cwrt Henri is seen as hugely beneficial to the pupils, parents and the community. A few concerns were expressed as to the age of the pupils starting part-time education, but we must emphasise once more that this provision is not compulsory and is a choice for the parents to make as to whether they wish their child to attend nursery or not.

The Local Authority also appreciates Estyn's support for the proposal which highlighted that it is likely to deliver Welsh medium provision for 3– 11-year-olds at a standard at least equal to its existing 4–11 offer. They recognised that the LA presented a clear rationale for the proposal and had considered the impact on Welsh-medium provision as well as demonstrating alignment with the WESP.

Implementing the proposal to amend the school's age range from 4–11 to 3–11 is considered the most suitable approach for the following reasons:

- Children gain early opportunities for Welsh language immersion, supporting the development of strong linguistic skills.
- Three-year-olds benefit from a phased and supported introduction to school, beginning with half day sessions and gradually moving to full school days.
- Creates nursery provision in the area as there are currently no private nursery providers in the locality. This in turn will help to reduce inequality in provision compared to neighbouring schools.
- Parents are given wider choice in early years provision available within the local community.
- The school may draw in additional pupils, helping to reduce surplus places and strengthen its long-term sustainability.

The Authority will proceed with statutory decision-making in line with the School Organisation Code (2018), ensuring that the best interests of learners remain the priority and that the introduction of nursery provision is carefully planned and effectively implemented.

## **6. RECOMMENDATION**

Following consideration of the consultation responses and the assessment of the proposal, it is recommended that permission is sought to implement the proposal to change the age range of the school from 4–11 to 3–11 without amendment. This recommendation reflects the identified benefits of the proposal, including enhanced parental choice, improved continuity of education, increased sustainability of the

school, and positive impacts on equality of opportunity and Welsh language development.

## **7. NEXT STEPS**

The Consultation Report will be presented to the Cabinet who will decide whether or not to approve the proposals or to approve with modifications.

The Consultation Report will be published on Carmarthenshire County Council's website at least two weeks prior to the publication of a Statutory Notice should Cabinet decide to proceed.

## APPENDIX A – ESTYN RESPONSE

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

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However, Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore, as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

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

The proposal is to change the age range of Ysgol Cwrt Henri from 4-11 to 3-11.

### **Summary/ Conclusion**

Estyn considers that the proposal is likely to deliver Welsh medium provision for 3–11-year-olds at a standard at least equal to its existing 4–11 offer.

### **Description and benefits**

The Council presents a clear rationale for this proposal, setting out the advantages of changing the age range at Ysgol Cwrt Henri from 4–11 to 3–11. While it outlines the statutory procedure and a projected timetable, the only confirmed implementation date is September 2026, with no suggested plan for the transition. Given that the proposal outlines that there are currently sufficient facilities at the school, it would be reasonable to assume that transition requirements would be minimal.

The proposal identifies benefits and disadvantages in a balanced way and includes measures to manage potential risks. The advantages appear to outweigh the disadvantages. A notable risk is the potential impact on private nursery providers. The council commits to consulting openly with providers to assess any potential impact.

The proposal notes that there are currently no private nursery providers within the school's catchment area.

The consultation document compares the proposal against maintaining the status quo with what seems to be clear reasoning. The council note that as early years education is non-statutory, free transport is not available for 3-year-old pupils. In reaching its decision, the council takes account of the impact of travel costs on low-income families and how the proposal may have a positive impact on the travel arrangements of those who currently travel outside of their catchment area to access early education. In addition, it suggests the proposal will help close the gap in early years provision for 3-year-olds in the Ysgol Cwrt Henri catchment. The changes are also expected to reduce the number of surplus places at the school, currently projected to be 20 places in January 2027.

The proposal considers the impact on Welsh-medium provision and demonstrates alignment with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). A Welsh medium nursery would make the Welsh language more accessible in the local community strengthening the transition between Welsh medium nursery provision and primary education.

If approved, the proposal would not require capital funding. Existing learning areas would be adapted to accommodate additional pupils, and the school would receive delegated formula funding for the new provision.

The local authority has provided a Welsh Language Impact Assessment as part of this proposal.

The local authority has provided a Community Impact Assessment as part of this proposal.

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

The proposer appears to give careful attention to educational outcomes. The proposal draws on the most recent Estyn inspection report, noting both current strengths and recommendations for improvement. It assumes reasonably that Ysgol Cwrt Henri

would deliver Welsh medium provision for 3–11-year-olds at a standard at least equal to its existing 4–11 offer. Therefore, no negative impact on pupil standards or progress is anticipated.

The latest Estyn report highlights that nearly all pupils enjoy the school's life and work and feel safe within a supportive and inclusive learning community. This effective and inclusive culture suggests that expanding provision is unlikely to have adverse effects on pupil wellbeing. This appears to be a reasonable statement.

The proposal notes that the headteacher and all staff ensure that all pupils receive the best education to prepare them for the future. An increase in pupil numbers is expected to improve resource efficiency and contribute to long-term school sustainability. This appears to be reasonable.

The needs of vulnerable groups, including learners with additional learning needs (ALN) and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, appear to be carefully considered. Earlier access to education is expected to support timely identification of individual learning needs and the provision of appropriate interventions, improving learner outcomes. The proposal expresses confidence in the school's ability to deliver a purposeful curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils. This appears to be reasonable.

### **Specific factors where proposals concern adding nursery classes**

The Council appears to have considered accommodation, facilities, and long-term viability suitably. With the school currently operating below capacity, no changes to the current class structure would be needed at the school to accommodate the additional Nursery pupils. The school's capacity and admission number would remain the same. The proposal states that there is sufficient outdoor space, specifically for Nursery pupils, in addition to the pupils in the remainder of the school. The council expects that the additional nursery provision will boost pupil numbers and positively impact its viability. This appears to be a reasonable assumption.

The proposal outlines a gap in Welsh medium early years education provision within the Ysgol Cwrt Henri catchment area. If the proposal is approved, the school aspires

to develop wraparound care provision alongside early years education, offering an integrated approach to learning and care.

The proposal recognises the potential impact on Welsh early years education providers in proximity to Ysgol Cwrt Henri with the closest being 5.4 miles from the school. The proposal states that key stakeholders can respond to the proposal with any concerns they may have and that the Council's Cabinet will consider all views and potential impacts before making a decision.

## APPENDIX B – CONSULTATION WITH PUPILS

### Consultation with Pupils of Ysgol Cwrt Henri

10/10/2025

### Your School Might Be Changing!

We want to know what **you think** if our school changes the age of the children who can come here. That means there might be **younger children** joining.

Please help us by answering these questions. You can **tick a smiley face** and tell us more if you want!

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#### 1. Do you know that we might be changing the age of the children who can come here?

- 😊 Yes  
 😐 Not sure  
 😞 No

#### Tell us what you think about that:

The school council thought that the proposal would be a good idea as it would provide childcare for working parents. Children would also be able to access education within their local area as there is currently no education provision for 3 year olds within the area. The pupils thought that it would provide a good transition between the local Cylch Meithrin and the School. The children also thought that the pupils would be provided with equitable education as other 3-11 schools and would help children learn skills from an earlier age.

#### 2. How would you feel about having children who are younger than you in school?

- 😊 Happy  
 😐 Okay  
 😐 Not sure  
 😞 Worried

#### Why do you feel that way?

The School Council thought that it would provide the local children with the same rights as other children who have access to 3-11 education provision. The children would be happy to receive younger pupils at the school as it would mean more children attending the school and everyone would meet new children and make more

friends. It would also ensure that children would be able to access Welsh medium education from an earlier age.

### 3. What do you like most about your school?

 **Write or draw your answer here:**

The School Council felt strongly about having access to play areas outside and enjoy being able to play outside with all of their friends. The pupils also acknowledged that they have teachers who are always willing to help, who also enjoy playing yard games with the children. The children also enjoy having access to Ipads to do their work.

 *(You can draw if you like!)*

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### 4. What might be good about more young children coming to our school?

-  Making more friends
-  More fun or new activities
-  More pupils in the classrooms
-  I'm not sure

 **Any other good things you can think of?**

The children also thought it would be a good opportunity for pupils to access Welsh medium education from an earlier age and for older pupils to be able help the younger pupils. It would also mean that pupils could learn skills from an earlier age, especially those who may not have facilities at home.

### 5. Is there anything you're worried about if the school changes?

-  Too many children
-  Missing things I like now
-  Not sure

 **Tell us more or draw your worries:**

The School Council did not have any concerns regarding changing the school to 3-11. However, this children did have concerns that if the school didn't change to 3-11, that parents would choose to send their children to other 3-11 schools resulting in the school closing due to not enough numbers attending the school.

## 6. What would you like to tell the grown-ups who are making the decision?

 **This is your space to share your ideas!**

The School Council felt strongly that the school should change to 3-11 for the following reasons:

- Opportunities for transitioning between the local Cylch Meithrin and the school
- Pupils will be able to access Welsh medium education from an earlier age
- Pupils will have access to appropriate facilities
- The change will help the local community in providing local childcare and keeping the school open
- There is no access to 3 year old education provision in the local area and therefore pupils have to attend other schools.
- It provides all children with the same rights as those who have access to 3-11 education

**Thank you for helping us!**

Your thoughts are really important.