

**PROPOSAL TO
AMEND LANGUAGE MEDIUM OF THE
FOUNDATION LEARNING AND ADMIT
3-YEAR-OLD PUPILS ON A PART TIME
BASIS AT ST PADARN'S CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



LEARNING SERVICES

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT
Supplementary Information

October 2023

Ceredigion County Council

Proposal to amend language medium of the foundation learning and admit 3-year-old pupils on a part time basis at St Padarn's Catholic Primary School

Details of affected schools

The following is a list of the schools likely to be affected by the proposal.

School Name	School Category	School Language Category	Age Range	Number of Nursery Places
St Padarn's Catholic Primary	Catholic Primary	T2	4 - 11	No nursery provision
Ysgol Gymraeg Aberystwyth	Community Primary	Category 3	3 - 11	Nursery provision

Welsh Government Guidance on school categories according to Welsh-medium provision (December 2022)

T2: *To help encourage an increase in Welsh-medium provision, we have included what we call, 'transitional sub-categories' which are created as bridging categories. These transitional arrangements enable schools to plan how they will realise an increase in Welsh medium provision over time. We emphasise here that the aim of the transitional sub-category is to increase the Welsh-medium provision in order to facilitate schools moving to the next category. A transitional category should not be permanent. Local authorities' plans for categorising schools according to Welsh-medium provision should be agreed between schools and local authorities and thereafter, outlined in the local authority's WESP. Local authorities are expected to plan intensively during the first five years of their Plan. Similarly, it is expected that decisions that will move a school along the continuum will be made during the first five years. A transitional category should not exceed a maximum period of 10 years.*

3: Welsh Medium: *Welsh is 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 context in and outside of school.*

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 standard of nursery education and the sufficiency of accommodation and facilities offered, both in the classroom and outdoors, and the viability of any school that wishes to add nursery places:

St Padarn's Playgroup is a bilingual childcare and early education setting providing a service for 2-4-year-olds term time only for (7 hours a day).

The setting is located within privately rented premises next door to St Padarn's School.

The setting is managed by a voluntary committee and is registered with the Charity Commission to support pre-school and school aged children in Aberystwyth.

The childcare service is registered and inspected by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and is providing the Welsh Language 'active offer'.

Early Years Wales state "*The setting works well to increase the amount of Welsh they use in the provision and are working on the Silver Welsh Promise Award.*"

The education provision is delivered under an agreement with Ceredigion County Council and inspected by Estyn.

The setting offers the early education during the morning period and childcare elements of the Welsh Government 30-hour Childcare Offer for Wales to 3–4 year olds, ensuring wrap-around childcare is available in one place for working parents. This complies with the Welsh Government's initiative for children to stay at one location to ensure continuity of care and strong attachments during their early development, lessening the number of transitions within a child's day.

St Padarn's Playgroup are able to support Flying Start childcare that offers funded places for 12.5 hours of childcare for 2 year olds per week.

The Playgroup has benefitted significantly from the Childcare Offer Capital Grant (2018-2022) to improve its indoor and outdoor environment and play resources to support the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales. The terms and conditions of this grant is the assurance of providing a childcare service for 5 years after its receipt.

The setting has recently re-opened its registered Afterschool Club to provide childcare within the school for 4–11-year-olds.

Children aged 2-4 with additional learning needs benefit from additional support through the Cynllun Cyfeirio scheme which is not available in schools.

An Additional Support Grant can also be accessed for children eligible for the Childcare Offer for staff support with their additional learning needs and Ymuno funding for the Afterschool Club.

Most recent reports are available here:

[St Padarn's Playgroup | Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#) 2021

“Almost half of the children in the setting have special educational needs and a minority have English or Welsh as an additional language”.

“Many children develop Welsh language skills well. They respond confidently to simple instructions and questions from adults. Most recognise Welsh names for familiar objects such as a butterfly and name primary colours with little support from adults”

[St Padarn's Playgroup | Estyn \(llyw.cymru\)](#) 2019

[Inspection report St Padarn's Playgroup 2020 \(gov.wales\)](#) 2019

Whether there is a need for additional nursery places in the area:

The current provision (19 places) is sufficient to local demand.

Birth rates remain consistent in the area.

There are no large, proposed housing development site in the LSOA.

The levels of demand for certain types of nursery education e.g. Welsh medium or provision with a religious character:

St Padarn’s Playgroup can accept children from the age of 2, meaning children are introduced to the Welsh language from an early age.

The setting is a bilingual setting situated next to the Roman Catholic primary School (English medium) where 22.4% have English as an additional language.

The Early Education for 3–4 year olds is delivered bilingually and funded via an Agreement / Cytundeb by Ceredigion County Council since Spring Term 2003.

Support is provided by the Senior Advisory Teacher – Early Education for 3 year olds and Flying Start Advisory Teacher for 2-year-olds.

Taken from St Padarn’s Playgroup Estyn report:

“The service is working towards providing an ‘Active Offer’ of the Welsh Language.

Almost half of the children in the setting have special educational needs and a minority have English or Welsh as an additional language.

Practitioners support children whose home language is not Welsh or English sensitively and, as a result, these children demonstrate a high level of confidence when communicating with others.”

The impact of the proposals on other organisations, including private and third sector providers:

Each Playgroup/Cylch is an independent charity / business with a voluntary management board responsible for their independent bank accounts, annual accounts, recruitment, staffing responsibilities and business management.

They pay membership to an umbrella organisation for support and advice (Early Years Wales).

3-year-old education funding is the main income of this setting and is necessary for the sustainability of the provision.

Staffing ratios will need to be met to ensure walking the children safely from the school back to playgroup for wraparound care including funded Childcare Offer places.

Providing Flying Start childcare alone is not financially viable due to higher staffing costs of adult to child ratio.

The setting has recently re-opened its registered Afterschool Club to provide childcare within the school for 4–11 year olds.

If the wraparound provision is not sustainable this may impact on other services offered e.g., Afterschool Club.

The lack of childcare in Ceredigion has been identified in the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, and provision is necessary for children in the area.

If the early education is moved from the Cylch to the School, the staff cannot be TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment rights) over as they may not have qualified teacher status.

The extent to which proposal will integrate early years education with childcare services or are consistent with an integrated approach:

If the proposal is approved, parents will have the choice for their child to remain in the non-maintained setting or attend the school nursery provision on a part time basis. The integration of early education with childcare services will be monitored and supported.

Staffing ratios will need to be met to ensure walking the children safely from the school back to playgroup for wraparound care including funded Childcare Offer places.

Revised consultation timetable:

Date	Activity
15 September 2023	Formal consultation period begins: A period of formal consultation will take place, during this time interested parties can make their views known regarding the proposal.
17 November 2023	Extension to Formal Consultation Ends
6 February 2024	Formal Consultation Report: At the end of the formal consultation period, responses will be collated and presented to Cabinet in the form of a Formal Consultation Report including a recommendation from Officers. This will be published on the Ceredigion website.
19 February 2024	Statutory Notice period begins: If the proposal is accepted by Cabinet, a Statutory Notice is issued. During the statutory Objection period, objections must be made in writing and sent to the proposer within 28 days of the date on which the proposal was published.
18 March 2024	Statutory Notice period ends.
4 June 2024	Cabinet: Report the number of objections received and decision as to whether to implement the proposal