

Appendix C: Welsh Language Impact Assessment

This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIS) tool enables Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) to consider the principles and requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015 to ensure compliance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

<u>Stage 1 – Information Gathering</u>	
NOTE: As you complete this tool you will be asked for evidence to support your views . Please see <u>Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance</u> for more information on data sources.	
Proposal Name	Proposal to close the sixth form at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School with pupils transferring to Aberdare Community School
Department	Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services – 21 st Century Schools Team
Service Director	Andrea Richards
Officer Completing the WLIA	Lisa Howell
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Brief Description	<p>The proposal is to seek formal approval to commence a statutory school organisation consultation with the relevant stakeholders on the proposal to close the sixth form at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School and amend the catchment area for post-16 provision to place Mountain Ash Comprehensive School in the catchment area of Aberdare Community School. It is proposed that the sixth form at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School closes by no later than September 2026. To enable the closure of the sixth form at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School by this date, no new year 12 sixth form pupils will be admitted in September 2025.</p> <p>The proposal seeks to provide the opportunity for more sixth form pupils to benefit from the significant investment delivered via the Welsh Government's (WG) Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, previously known as the 21st Century Schools Programme, in the Aberdare area, which includes the provision of the new Aberdare Community School building.</p> <p>Mountain Ash Comprehensive School is an 11 to 19 English medium secondary school located on New Road, Mountain Ash with capacity for 1,394 pupils (year 7 to 13). The site comprises four separate buildings, set over several levels with the ground undulating substantially. According to the property condition survey carried out for RCTCBC in June 2024, Mountain Ash Comprehensive School is graded B for condition and B for suitability, where A is the highest and D is the lowest performing building, respectively. This means that in terms of condition, Mountain Ash Comprehensive School is sound,</p>

	<p>operationally safe, and exhibiting only minor deterioration. Whilst in terms of suitability, Mountain Ash Comprehensive School is satisfactory, performing as intended, but does not effectively support the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales in some areas.</p> <p>Aberdare Community School is an 11 to 19 English medium secondary school located on Ynys Road, Aberdare with a pupil capacity of 1,574. Aberdare Community School was part of a wider leisure and education investment locally, which saw the nearby Sobell Leisure Centre receive significant investment for school and community use. As Aberdare Community School is a new school, constructed in 2014, it is graded A for condition and A for suitability. The building has been built to meet the required standards and regulations, allowing pupils of Aberdare Community School to benefit from a learning environment fit for 21st century education. Aberdare Community School also has facilities that are regularly used by the local community ensuring that others are benefitting from the new resources available.</p> <p>The school site and building are fully compliant with the <u>Equality Act 2010</u>. As part of the significant investment at Aberdare Community School, there was a particular focus on enhancing the onsite and offsite traffic management arrangements, including improved staff parking and the creation of a dedicated home to school transport drop off area.</p>
Date	02.12.2024
Please outline who this proposal affects? (Service Users, Employees, Wider Community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governing Body of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mountain Ash Comprehensive School ○ Aberdare Community School • Parents and carers of children attending: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mountain Ash Comprehensive School ○ Aberdare Community School • Pupils and staff of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mountain Ash Comprehensive School ○ Aberdare Community School
What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?	<p>The aim of this proposal is to begin the relevant and required statutory school organisation consultation to seek formal approval to close the sixth form at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School with pupils transferring to Aberdare Community School. Although the schools involved with this proposal are English medium secondary schools, the Welsh medium secondary school in this area of the county borough is YG Rhydywaun which has recently benefitted from funding through the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme to expand the school, increasing capacity and delivering a new teaching block and first-class sports facilities.</p>

	<p>All Councils in Wales must produce a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The WESP is a long-term language planning tool which sets the direction for the strategic planning, delivery and growth in Welsh medium and Welsh language education. Through the WESP, and effective strategic planning and investment, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) aims to contribute significantly to achieving the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050, as set out in Cymraeg 2050.</p> <p>There are seven outcomes within RCTCBC's WESP, two of which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh.• More opportunities for pupils to use Welsh in different contexts in school. <p>The aim is to embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language through purposeful planning to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst pupils inside and outside schools. Facilitating the use of the Welsh language across the curriculum and in wider contexts in schools, to ensure a continuum of linguistic progression to support pupils in the transition between year groups, offers all pupils the opportunity to become fully bilingual and aligns with the new Curriculum for Wales. The 'Cymraeg Campus' Welsh Language Charter (Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus) programme is part of a series of Welsh Government programmes which aim to increase children and young people's use of Welsh in informal situations and contributes to Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy. It's an important tool to increasing the social use of Welsh in Wales, no matter linguistic background.</p> <p>As of November 2024, both Mountain Ash Comprehensive School and Aberdare Community School have engaged with the programme and have received the bronze 'Cymraeg Campus' Welsh Language Charter award. Both schools are now working towards achieving their silver awards. Staff and pupils at both schools will continue to be supported to work through the awarding ranks until they've reached the gold awards.</p> <p>In terms of additional extracurricular activities through the medium of Welsh, both Aberdare Community School and Mountain Ash Comprehensive School engage in activities. Aberdare Community School regularly engage with the local Eisteddfodau and in recent years, the school reached the national round of the Urdd Eisteddfod. Welsh language organisation, Menter Iaith, run a Welsh club every Wednesday at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School with Menter Iaith reporting good levels of engagement with these sessions. These sessions are delivered through a tendering process with RCTCBC's Youth Engagement Participation Service (YEPS).</p>
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	<p>The facilities at both schools could be utilised to provide opportunities for third parties to offer Welsh medium learning classes for adults or any other Welsh language groups. This could contribute towards Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 target of creating a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050.</p>
<p>Who will benefit / Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? If so, list them here.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governing Body of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mountain Ash Comprehensive School ○ Aberdare Community School • Parents and carers of children attending: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mountain Ash Comprehensive School ○ Aberdare Community School • Pupils and staff of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mountain Ash Comprehensive School ○ Aberdare Community School <p>Any impact on Welsh language groups should be neutral as the closure of the sixth form at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School will not result in a new English medium sixth form setting opening in the county borough.</p>
<p>Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s) concerned</p>	<p>Every ten years the nation sets aside one day for the Census – a count of all people and households. The Census is a key source of information about the number of people who can speak Welsh.</p> <p>The 2021 Census figures regarding the Welsh language show a decrease in the percentage of Welsh speakers across Wales to 17.8%. There was, however, a small increase in RCT – the percentage of the population of the County Borough who can speak Welsh increased from 12.3% to 12.4%. RCT saw a 2.8% increase in the number of Welsh speakers in the County Borough, from 27,779 speakers to 28,556 speakers. RCT was also one of only four Local Authorities in Wales to see an increase in the percentage of Welsh speakers – the other Local Authorities were Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil and the Vale of Glamorgan. All of these are neighbouring Local Authorities, which could demonstrate that our region is seeing some positive trends in terms of increases in Welsh speakers, and that there may be a resulting increase in demand for services through the medium of Welsh.</p> <p>In recent years, support has been given to promote and increase pupils' use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools and in social contexts. This has been done through the Welsh Language Charter (Siarter Iaith/Cymraeg Campus), developed by Gwynedd Council, and various other projects, in partnership with the Central South Consortium Joint Education Service (CSCJES) and the Urdd. Both schools involved with this proposal have achieved the bronze 'Cymraeg Campus' awards and are currently working towards the silver awards. To achieve these awards, the school must demonstrate an increasing</p>

	<p>use of incidental Welsh throughout the school, amongst other key criteria factors. An evaluation conducted in July 2023 whilst gathering information and data for the WESP Annual Review Report evidenced the positive impact the programme has had on the use of the Welsh language in English medium schools. 13 English medium primary schools from different areas of the County Borough were contacted and all reported an increased use of incidental Welsh throughout the school with more children playing yard games through the medium of Welsh and more assemblies being held with focus on the Welsh language, history and heritage. All Welsh and English medium primary and secondary schools in the Cynon area are engaged with the programme and are working through the awarding ranks. The continued roll out of this programme will support the Welsh Government's target of reaching one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 and the targets set out in the Council's new WESP (2022 to 2032).</p> <p>The Council recognises the importance of immersion in the Welsh language for pupils who wish to transition from English to Welsh medium education. In July 2022 funding was approved by the Welsh Government to establish Welsh language immersion provision for latecomers to the language. This provision opened to pupils from September 2023, adapting a peripatetic model of delivery with the immersion team travelling to the home schools of pupils accessing the service to immerse pupils in the Welsh language. The provision continues to evolve and demand for the service continues to grow. When demand for the service surpasses the capacity of the service, the Council will consider creating a dedicated Welsh language immersion unit for latecomers alongside the development of its Band B Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.</p>
Other relevant data or research	<p>The language category and standards of alternative / neighbouring schools</p> <p>RCTCBC has sixteen Welsh medium primary school provisions located throughout the County Borough to ease access. There are two all-through schools for 3 to 19 year olds, namely Ysgol Garth Olwg and Ysgol Llanhari, one dual language primary school for 3 to 11 year olds, namely Dolau Primary School and 13 Welsh medium primary schools for 3 to 11 year olds. All learners who attend these schools' study through the medium of Welsh. In the Cynon area of Rhondda Cynon Taf there are four schools offering Welsh medium education for pupils, comprising of: one secondary school catering for 11-19 years old, and three primary schools catering for 3 to 11 year olds.</p> <p>In line with the Council's WESP 2022-2032, the Council will continue to ensure the benefits of Welsh medium and Welsh language education are promoted to parents and carers. This includes the initial early years, through to primary and secondary education, then progressing through to higher and further education, for all learners, whatever their learning need. This promotion is fundamental to increasing the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education. In addition, the headteachers of both schools will be encouraged to promote and signpost to Welsh language provision available in the locality.</p>

The Council recognises the importance of immersion in the Welsh language for learners who wish to transition from English medium education into Welsh medium education, in order to further encourage the uptake of Welsh medium education. The Council has a newly established peripatetic immersion provision that will offer support where it's needed. During the last academic year (2023-24), the Council's immersion team supported pupils transferring from English medium to Welsh medium education in the Cynon area, namely at YGG Penderyn. Networking, marketing and stimulating demand for late immersion in the County Borough has been identified as a key driver for RCT, as is supporting the transition for pupils already being educated through the medium of Welsh to ensure that they progress along the Welsh language continuum. This remains the focus for the Immersion Support Service, and an area that will need a targeted approach to achieve the results required to deliver the targets and commitments of our WESP (2022-2032).

What is the language category of the school included in this proposal?

Mountain Ash Comprehensive School and Aberdare Community School are English medium schools.

What facilities are there for members of the community to learn Welsh or undertake activities through the medium of Welsh?

Built into the new school build at Aberdare Community School were community use classrooms and meeting rooms, meaning there are facilities available to offer opportunities through the medium of Welsh. The headteacher of Aberdare Community School will be encouraged and supported to utilise the facilities available to increase participation in the Welsh language by offering the opportunity to parents and carers and other members of the community to learn Welsh through hosting Welsh lessons and/or any other opportunities for community engagement through the medium of Welsh, as has been successfully implemented at other schools. This will support the Welsh Government's target of one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 and the targets set out in the Council's WESP.

Is it appropriate to provide additional after school facilities at any alternative school to further secure standards in the Welsh language?

The Welsh medium secondary school, namely YG Rhydywaun, which is in this area of the county borough has community use facilities available in the brand new teaching block. The facilities at the school could be utilised to provide after school opportunities for parents and carers and other members of the community to learn Welsh through hosting Welsh lessons and/or any other opportunities for community engagement through the medium of Welsh.

In addition to this, situated in the Taf area of the county borough is Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre which is frequently used and offers a variety of courses through the medium of Welsh to children, young people and adult learners.

Both Aberdare Community School and Mountain Ash Comprehensive School engage in extracurricular activities through the medium of Welsh to provide opportunities for learners to use the language outside of the classroom and in different contexts. Aberdare Community School regularly engage with the local Eisteddfodau and in recent years, the school reached the national round of the Urdd Eisteddfod. Welsh language organisation, Menter Iaith, run a Welsh club every Wednesday at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School with Menter Iaith reporting good levels of engagement with these sessions.

How parents and carers and pupils' engagement with any alternative school and any specific language enhancement it offers could be supported?

RCTCBC has developed and updated a 'Being Bilingual' booklet which was first published in March 2016 and has since been updated. The booklet has information on the benefits of receiving a bilingual education, outlining the pathway to Welsh medium education and answering some frequently asked questions around the option of choosing Welsh medium education. The booklet is distributed via Flying Start provisions, birth registration services and childcare settings. The booklets have been provided to housing developers in the Taf Ely area of the county borough where there are large housing developments underway, to be provided to any potential new buyers in their sale packs. In addition to this, the Council's WESP Officer and Welsh Language Immersion team attend local events throughout RCT to distribute resources to the general public, including the National Eisteddfod held at Ynys Angharad Park, Pontypridd in August 2024, and annual events such as the Teddy Bears Picnic and Parti Ponty.

Local Welsh language organisations have also recently started to host free Welsh language events targeted at pre-school children and their families. The Council's WESP Officer and Welsh Language Immersion Lead Officer attend the 'Miri Mawr' events, hosted by Menter Iaith Rhondda Cynon Taf. Partners from Welsh language organisations also attend to market and promote Welsh medium education in the area. Six events will be held at varying locations throughout the county borough during 2024/25, so that all residents have the opportunity to attend their local event and receive information on the options and support available to them on the journey to becoming bilingual.

RCTCBC's 'Starting School' booklet also provides parents and carers with a range of information including advice on choosing a school, the provision of home to school transport and a directory of schools.

Amendments have been made to the 'Starting School' booklet to include information relating to Welsh medium education in RCT, along with information on the new Welsh language immersion provision, ensuring this information is readily available to parents and carers.

Cymraeg i Blant run free baby group sessions each week throughout the county borough. These sessions are bilingual and include baby massage, baby yoga and Welsh rhyme time. This provision ensures that parents and carers receive key early messages during the ante-natal and post-natal period and are made aware of the bilingual pathway available for their child and the Welsh medium offer available locally. The nearest Cymraeg i Blant baby group is situated in Aberdare Library and runs every Monday at 13:00.

RCTCBC's Youth Engagement and Participation Service work with Menter Iaith and the Urdd to deliver bespoke language awareness sessions for young people, highlighting the value of having the Welsh language as a skill. The Youth Engagement and Participation Service also deliver social events and activities for young people through the medium of Welsh which include residential opportunities, eisteddfodau, sporting activities and accreditation.

For any learners who transition into local colleges as opposed to remaining in sixth form education, there will be opportunities to engage in Welsh language activities. Coleg y Cymoedd offer learners the option of completing some elements of their studies through the medium of Welsh, should they wish to do so, and this is encouraged by the college. In addition, they also work closely with Menter Iaith to deliver Welsh language youth forums which provide learners with the opportunity to engage with the Welsh language outside of their learning.

RCTCBC recognises the importance of immersion in the Welsh language for pupils who wish to transition from English to Welsh medium education. In July 2022, funding was approved by the Welsh Government to establish Welsh language immersion provision for latecomers to the language. The provision, now established and gaining momentum throughout RCT, adopts a peripatetic model of delivery with the Immersion Lead Officer engaging with pupils accessing the service to become immersed in the Welsh language. When demand for the service surpasses the capacity of the service, the Council will consider creating a dedicated Welsh language immersion unit for latecomers alongside the development of its Band B Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.

Information on how the proposal fits with the WESP and any future actions that will be needed in consequence of the change to continue to comply with the scheme or meet targets in the scheme.

The Council believes that all learners should have appropriate opportunities for learning in the mediums of both Welsh and English to enable them to develop the confidence to use both languages in everyday life in order to meet the demands of the 21st Century.

The Council recognises the importance of the Welsh Government's **Cymraeg 2050** target and how central the education system in Wales is in achieving its vision. The Council's new WESP (2022 to 2032) sets out a ten-year vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education within the County Borough, in order to maximise its contribution to achieving the target of one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050. It builds on the work of the previous WESP (2017 to 2022) and sets out an action plan which demonstrates how we intend to achieve our ten-year vision.

If this proposal were to go ahead, this would allow learners to pursue a varied curriculum with options to specialise in their area of interest which could support Outcome 4 of the WESP which aims to increase the number of learners studying for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh, should learners choose to study Welsh as a subject at A Level. The continuing engagement with the 'Cymraeg Campus' Welsh Language Charter will support Outcome 5 of the WESP which focusses on providing more opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.

The key to successfully achieving the outcomes outlined within the Council's WESP is effective marketing and promotion of Welsh education as a whole. Over recent months, the Council have created a range of promotional videos encompassing the seven outcomes of the WESP. These videos include teacher recruitment, Welsh language immersion, Welsh medium ALN education, Welsh medium post-16 education and transition. Footage has been prepared involving practitioners who currently work in schools in RCT, headteacher and teacher interviews, parental interviews and interviews with pupils who currently attend Welsh medium schools. These videos form part of a wider targeted marketing campaign specifically focussing on growing numbers in the Welsh medium education sector that was launched at the National Eisteddfod in August 2024.

The majority of the Welsh medium schools in the County Borough have sufficient surplus places to meet demand. However, there are a number of schools where demand is close to outstripping supply. As such, the Council has or is currently taking action to address these issues through a number of projects and proposals. Projects that will address this issue include the recently completed expansion of YGG Aberdar, including a purpose built Welsh medium childcare facility; Ysgol Awel Taf, the new Welsh medium primary school in Rhydyfelin to accommodate pupils from YGG Pont Sion Norton and the Welsh stream at Heol y Celyn Primary School, which opened in September 2024; the expansion of YG Rhydywaun with a new teaching block and sports facilities; and the proposed new Welsh medium primary school to serve the

Llanilid housing development, which is currently at consultation stage. Furthermore, the Council has also committed to increasing the quality and availability of early years Welsh medium provision by investing significantly in a number of provisions through various funding schemes, such as the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Capital Grant. This will assist in ensuring a language continuum of Welsh medium provision and ensure that increased demand for Welsh medium education is met.

No changes to these proposals are required in order to comply with the WESP.

Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

In this section you need to consider the impact, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement. This is to ensure that the opportunities for people who choose to live their lives and access services through the medium of Welsh are not inferior to what is afforded to those choosing to do so in English, in accordance with the requirement of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note there is a separate impact assessment for Equality and Socio-Economic duty that must also be completed for policy proposals.

Remember that effects that are positive for some groups could be detrimental to others - even among Welsh language groups. Consider the effects on different groups. For example, a proposal may be beneficial to Welsh learners, but not to Welsh speakers.

Previous Welsh Language Impact Assessments can be found on Inform by [clicking here](#).

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language e.g., staff, residents and visitors. The rights of Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh when dealing with RCTCBC and for staff to use Welsh at work.	Positive.	Everyone residing in Wales has the right to speak to a Welsh speaker when dealing with any public relation matters. The Council will continue to adhere to The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and its standards which requires the Council to produce a five-year strategy outlining actions which will facilitate and promote the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Welsh Language Commissioner's 'The Position of the Welsh Language 2016 to 2020: Welsh Language Commissioner's 5-year Report' makes it clear that organisations need to have robust internal arrangements to ensure compliance with the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a person is unable to speak Welsh, they must call on a colleague in the building who is able to speak Welsh if this is being requested or a call back service can be offered when a Welsh speaker is available.

		<p>Welsh language. Any persons wishing to correspond with the Council through the medium of Welsh are able to do so.</p> <p>Built into the new school build at Aberdare Community School were community use classrooms and meeting rooms, meaning there are facilities available to offer opportunities through the medium of Welsh. The headteacher of Aberdare Community School will be encouraged and supported to utilise the facilities available to increase participation in the Welsh language by offering the opportunity to parents and carers and other members of the community to learn Welsh through hosting Welsh lessons and/or any other opportunities for community engagement through the medium of Welsh. This will support Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 target of creating a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050.</p> <p>From a staff perspective, there are a range of opportunities available to staff working in schools in RCT should they</p>	<p>standards and sufficient capacity in terms of Welsh speakers to provide the Welsh language services required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The demand for classes through the medium of Welsh can be evidenced by the popularity of the Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre. Learn Welsh Glamorgan/Dysgu Cymraeg Morgannwg currently host Welsh for adults' classes at varying levels across 6 different locations throughout RCT, evidencing the demand for provision across the County Borough. • Data and information relating to these opportunities are shared with the Council's WESP Officer and members of the WESP Outcome 7 sub-group which has been established to focus specifically on this outcome which aims to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will work with Aberdare Community School to encourage and support them to consider hosting Welsh for adult's classes, or any other Welsh language group classes/sessions at the school. • To continue working with the CSCJES to promote the range of professional learning opportunities available to any staff looking for opportunities to learn, improve or upskill their Welsh language skills. • The Council's WESP Officer and the Council's Welsh Language Services will continue to work with staff internally and Welsh language partner organisations to encourage and facilitate long term growth for the Welsh language and Welsh medium education. • Ensure any Council publications,
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		<p>wish to improve or upskill their Welsh language skills so that they can use Welsh more at work. CSCJES regularly promote the professional learning opportunities available to practitioners in RCT. These opportunities include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asynchronous Welsh language professional learning – Pre-entry, Entry and Foundation levels • Welsh language refresher courses – no Welsh language skills, Entry, Foundation, Advanced levels <p>CSCJES promote these opportunities through their relevant channels with the schools. The Council's Education Directorate further promotes these opportunities through promoting with schools directly throughout the academic year.</p> <p>The Council has opportunities for internal staff across all services to access free training to improve their Welsh language skills. Welsh</p>	<p>increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In line with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards, any Council publications, documentation and correspondence must be bilingual with a message included to state that correspondence in Welsh is welcomed and corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. • English medium secondary schools in the Cynon area work as a consortium to offer Welsh as an A Level, with Aberdare Community School being the host school. Any learners in the Cynon area wanting to study Welsh as an A Level will attend 	<p>documentation and correspondence are bilingual with a message included to state that correspondence in Welsh is welcomed and corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. New school builds now also incorporate bilingual braille on school signage providing equal opportunities in terms of the Welsh language and equality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the option of studying Welsh as an A Level in English medium schools in the Cynon area. Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol are arranging to visit schools throughout Wales to promote studying Welsh as an A Level. An event has been arranged in Treorchy Comprehensive School in the spring term, with this school being the host school and surrounding schools being invited to attend.
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		<p>Language Services are working to develop technological support for Welsh speakers and learners within the Council to be able to deliver services through the medium of Welsh. All newly recruited Council staff are required to undertake Welsh language Level 1 training. By working with the Council's Welsh Language Services, specifically the internal Welsh language tutor, all members of staff will be encouraged to continue to improve their Welsh language skills beyond Level 1. Members of staff who opt to do this will be fully supported. This will support the opportunities available for the Council to create a bilingual workforce with the ability to work and deliver services bilingually.</p> <p>From a learner perspective, Aberdare Community School is the host school in the Cynon area for English medium learners who wish to study Welsh as an A Level. The school also engage in a range of extracurricular activities through the medium of Welsh. One example of this is their participation in local Eisteddfodau, where any</p>	<p>Aberdare Community school to do so.</p>	<p>Aberdare Community School could contact the college to request for this event to be held at their school, inviting learners from other English medium schools to attend</p>
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		participants must participate using the Welsh language.		
Stage	2	–	Impact	Assessment
Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?				
	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Numbers and/or percentages of Welsh speakers. e.g., Welsh medium education/study opportunities. Links with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy / RCTCBC Five Year Welsh Language Strategy.	Positive.	Built into the new school build at Aberdare Community School were community use classrooms and meeting rooms, meaning there are facilities available to offer opportunities through the medium of Welsh. The headteacher of Aberdare Community School will be encouraged and supported to utilise the facilities available to increase participation in the Welsh language by offering the opportunity to parents and carers and other members of the community to learn Welsh through hosting Welsh lessons and/or any other opportunities for community engagement through the medium of Welsh. In addition, the headteacher will be encouraged to signpost parents and carers to Welsh medium classes offered by Learn Welsh Glamorgan/Dysgu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The demand for classes through the medium of Welsh could be evidenced by the popularity of the Garth Olwg Lifelong Learning Centre. Learn Welsh Glamorgan/Dysgu Cymraeg Morgannwg currently host Welsh for adults classes at varying levels across six different locations throughout RCT, evidencing the demand for the provision across the County Borough. Data and information relating to Cymraeg Campus Welsh Language Charter is shared with the Council's WESP Officer and members of the WESP Outcome 5 sub-group which has been established to focus specifically on this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council will work with both schools to encourage them to host Welsh language events and sessions. The schools will be encouraged to invite Welsh language groups to utilise the space available to host any other Welsh language group classes/sessions at the school. The school-based workforce will be supported with continued professional learning, networking and opportunities to share best practice. All English medium primary and

		<p>Cymraeg Morgannwg. This will support the Welsh Government's target of one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 and the targets set out in RCTCBC's WESP.</p> <p>In contributing towards the vision of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050 and in line with the Council's WESP, it is vital to ensure a school based workforce of sufficient size and capability. In order to create more Welsh speakers, our education system is dependent on its school based workforce, and we must work locally, regionally and nationally to ensure we create a school based workforce with robust linguistic skills, able to inspire and motivate learners in Welsh medium and Welsh language education.</p> <p>In recent years, support has been given to promote and increase learners' use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools in social contexts. This has been done through the introduction of the Welsh Language Charter (Siarter Iaith/Cymraeg</p>	<p>outcome which aims to increase opportunities for learners to use Welsh in school.</p>	<p>secondary schools will be supported to promote and increase learners' use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools and achieve the Cymraeg Campus awards.</p>
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		<p>Campus). As of November 2024, all Welsh medium primary schools in RCT, except for the newly opened school at YGG Awel Taf, have received the bronze award. YGG Awel Taf have now engaged with the programme and are working towards achieving the bronze award. Fourteen Welsh medium primary schools have received the silver award and 7 have received the gold award. Two Welsh medium secondary schools have received the bronze award and 1 has received the silver. The Cymraeg Campus has been implemented in both primary and secondary English medium schools in order to develop pupils' use of the Welsh language. As of November 2024, 59 English medium primary schools have received the bronze award, 24 have received the silver award and 4 have received the gold award. A total of 7 English medium secondary schools have received the bronze award and 2 have received the silver award.</p> <p>More recently, the CSCJES have begun working with</p>		
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		<p>special schools, learning support classes and pupil referral units in Rhondda Cynon Taf to implement the Welsh Language Charter (Cymraeg Campus) programme. To date, 5 special schools/units have achieved the bronze Cymraeg Campus award.</p> <p>Of all English medium schools in the County Borough, only 1 school is yet to engage. The CSCJES are continuing to work with this school to encourage an uptake on the programme and are actively working with special schools and units to support them with the roll out of the programme.</p> <p>In partnership with the CSCJES and the Urdd, English medium secondary schools are supported to provide informal opportunities to use the Welsh language and intensive Welsh language learning opportunities through the Urdd's Cymraeg Bob Dydd.</p> <p>The aim has been to embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language through purposeful planning within primary and secondary</p>		
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		schools and to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst learners inside and outside primary and secondary schools. Facilitating the use of the Welsh language, across the curriculum and in wider contexts in primary and secondary schools, to ensure a continuum of linguistic progression to support learners in the transition between key stages offers all learners the opportunity to become fully bilingual and aligns with the Curriculum for Wales – 2022.		
<p>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language.</p> <p>e.g., status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work and in the community.</p> <p>Actively encourage and promote the use of our services in Welsh to see an increase in demand over time.</p>	Positive.	<p>The Welsh language now has official status and legislation in place which provides rights for Welsh speakers to receive Welsh language services. The challenge is to expand the opportunities for people to be able to use the Welsh language in their daily life through creating the right conditions for new pupils of all ages to develop and use their skills from the earliest stages and throughout each stage of education. To ensure opportunities for people to use the Welsh language, the schools will continue to receive support in order to achieve the silver 'Cymraeg Campus'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data and information relating to the 'Cymraeg Campus' Welsh Language Charter is shared with the Council's WESP Officer each quarter via the CSCJES Welsh Language Officer. • In recent years Welsh Government have worked with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to launch a 'Why choose Welsh?' campaign which focusses on the benefits of studying Welsh as an A Level. The college have created a range of promotional resources from videos to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue working with the CSCJES to promote and increase pupils' use of the Welsh language in primary and secondary schools with all English medium schools being supported to achieve the 'Cymraeg Campus' Welsh Language Charter awards. • Promote the option of studying Welsh as an A Level in English medium schools in the Cynon area.

		<p>Welsh Language Charter award.</p> <p>There are a range of resources available through Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to promote studying Welsh as an A Level with both Welsh and English medium schools. The college actively promote these opportunities through their channels and the Council also share messaging throughout the year in relation to the promotion of studying Welsh as an A Level with English medium schools.</p> <p>The Welsh Government's ambitious Cymraeg 2050 strategy calls for far-reaching changes and boundaries being pushed to increase the numbers learning and using Welsh. To achieve the Cymraeg 2050 targets of reaching a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050, each local authority needs to transform how Welsh is taught to all pupils. The Council will continue to promote the support available via the Council's Welsh language immersion team for any parents/carers who wish to transfer their</p>	<p>leaflets, these are periodically shared with schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for immersion provision across the County Borough has been really positive. The immersion team are currently supporting learners at the following schools in the Cynon area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ YGG Penderyn. • Representatives from all service areas referred to (Welsh Language, Youth, Leisure, Musical, Arts and Culture) are members of the Council's WESP Outcome 5 group, which focusses specifically on creating more opportunities for pupils to use Welsh in different contexts in school, but also extends the use of Welsh in different contexts across all service areas and in the wider community. Information is shared with the Council's WESP Officer and members of the sub-group during quarterly meetings. 	<p>Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol are arranging to visit schools throughout Wales to promote studying Welsh as an A Level. An event has been arranged in Treorchy Comprehensive School in the spring term, with this school being the host school and surrounding schools being invited to attend. Aberdare Community School could contact the college to request for this event to be held at their school, inviting learners from other English medium schools to attend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of the options available to learners who wish to transition from English medium education into Welsh medium education through sharing information and resources.
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		<p>child(ren) from English medium to Welsh medium education. Parents/carers and pupils who decide to transition into Welsh medium education will be fully supported by the Welsh language immersion team. This will support the Council in increasing the numbers and percentages of Welsh speakers throughout the County Borough in line with the targets outlined within the WESP.</p> <p>The Council's Five Year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy (2022 – 2027) along with its supplementary action plan has been taken into consideration in order to encourage and facilitate long term growth for the Welsh language and Welsh medium education. The strategy outlines the Council's commitment to working towards the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 vision of increasing the number of Welsh speakers, increasing the use of the language in the workplace, via Council services and throughout the community and creating favourable conditions. Rhondda Cynon Taf Welsh Language Services, Youth Services, Leisure Services and</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council's WESP Officer and the Council's Welsh Language Services will continue to work with staff internally and Welsh language partner organisations to encourage and facilitate long term growth for the Welsh language and Welsh medium education.
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		<p>Arts and Culture Services and Musical Services are all working proactively towards the ongoing development of opportunities for pupils and the wider community to use the Welsh language. These include, but are not limited to:</p> <p>Welsh Language Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing materials to provide to school-based catering staff to support with their Welsh language skills and the use of incidental Welsh within schools.• Exploring the feasibility of Welsh medium learning/support digital applications being placed on all staff devices to support their linguistic skills and development. <p>Youth Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Running trips for Welsh medium pupils to provide opportunities to use Welsh in different contexts.• Creating promotional materials to be placed in youth clubs throughout the County Borough.		
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working in partnership with the Urdd and Menter Iaith to develop Welsh Language Youth Forums in all Welsh and English medium secondary schools along with Coleg y Cymoedd campuses. <p>Leisure Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working with the Urdd to deliver sport activities for Welsh medium schools and exploring extending this to incorporate English medium schools on a bilingual model of delivery.• Working with Menter Iaith to develop opportunities to introduce the Welsh language into leisure sessions.• Working closely with the newly established first Welsh language sport club in RCT, based in Aberdare. <p>Arts and Culture Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborating with Youth Services on a programme of provision across community and cultural venues to encourage the use of the Welsh language and		
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		<p>incorporating the Welsh language into community based events.</p> <p>The Council will continue to ensure a clear alignment with the Five Year Welsh Language Promotion Strategy. This commitment to promoting the Welsh language, increasing the number of Welsh pupils and improving the Welsh language skills of staff and pupils across schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf is reaffirmed in the Education and Inclusion Directorate's Education Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2025.</p>		
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Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>Compliance with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards.</p> <p>e.g., Increasing or reducing RCTCBC's ability to deliver services through the medium of Welsh.</p>	Positive.	<p>All processes associated with this proposal will be in accordance with the Council's Welsh Language Standards.</p> <p>Where possible, the school, the Council and CSCJES will provide support to teaching, learning support and support staff to participate in Welsh</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All public correspondence in relation to these proposals will be bilingual with Welsh positioned first. • The number of teaching, learning support and support staff participating in Welsh language skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouragement of participation in Welsh language skills courses at different levels. • In recent months, the Council's Welsh Language Services ran a series of bitesize

Consider the rights of Welsh speakers to use Welsh when dealing with RCTCBC and for staff to use Welsh at work.		language professional learning opportunities at varying levels in order to meet identified needs.	courses at different levels will be reported on a quarterly basis.	sessions on various topics related to the standards. These sessions were promoted to all members of staff internally and all were encouraged to attend the sessions to strengthen their understanding and awareness of compliance with these standards.
Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language.	Positive.	Although this proposal relates to English medium schools, it is related to the Council's Sustainable Communities for Learning programme which the Council and Welsh Government jointly fund to ensure that the Council's vision that there are good schools, so all children and young people, whatever their learning need is, have access to good English and Welsh medium education, is fulfilled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Communities for Learning - Strategic Outline Programme contains a wide range of schools (Welsh and English medium) in various parts of the county borough. • In the Cynon Valley, YG Rhydywaun, the Welsh medium secondary school, has recently benefitted from an investment of £12.1 million to increase capacity at the school and deliver improved facilities fit for the 21st century. • In the Cynon Valley, YGG Aberdar, a Welsh medium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of Welsh medium classes for community groups etc. in the fully accessible dedicated community facilities at Aberdare Community School.

			primary school, has recently benefitted from an investment of £4.7 million to construct a new extension with a dedicated childcare facility on site.	
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Stage 3 - Strengthening the Proposal

Having listed actions in section 2 which may mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts – please record below which ones you will imbed into the policy proposal and who will be responsible for them.

Also consider is the proposal necessary? Would it be possible to meet demand without any new developments? Could other existing provision be used? Where should the development be?

What are you going to do?	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible?
Support the headteachers of both Mountain Ash Comprehensive School and Aberdare Community School to promote community and third-party use of the facilities for the purpose of delivering a range of opportunities through the medium of Welsh, with support of Welsh language organisations such as Learn Welsh Glamorgan/Dysgu Cymraeg Morgannwg, Menter Iaith and the Urdd to assist in the promotion of the Welsh language.	Once the outcome of the consultation has been finalised and a decision made.	RCTCBC's 21 st Century Schools Team.
Work with both schools and Learn Welsh Glamorgan/Dysgu Cymraeg Morgannwg to hold Welsh for Adults classes at the schools. Ensure that parents and carers and the wider community are signposted to the classes through marketing and promotion via the Council's website and corporate social media platforms, and throughout the local community.	Once the outcome of the consultation has been finalised and a decision made.	RCTCBC's 21 st Century Schools Team and Learn Welsh Glamorgan / Dysgu Cymraeg Morgannwg.
Promote the support available to pupils who wish to transition from English medium to Welsh medium education through effective marketing and promotion of the Council's Welsh language immersion provision. This will be done by distributing promotional leaflets and implementing a marketing campaign via the Council's website and corporate social media platforms using the videos which have been created to promote the service.	Ongoing. The marketing campaign was launched at the National Eisteddfod in August 2024.	RCTCBC's Welsh Language Immersion Team.
The Council will continue to work with the CSCJES to actively market and promote the professional learning opportunities available to school-based practitioners to learn Welsh or improve or upskill their Welsh language skills.	Ongoing – we work closely with the CSCJES to promote the professional opportunities	CSCJES.

	available and actively encourage practitioners to consider these opportunities.	
The CSCJES will continue to work with schools to promote the Welsh Language Charter programme to increase pupils' use of the Welsh language across all schools.	Ongoing – CSCJES continue to support schools engaged with the programme to progress through the awards. CSCJES continue to make attempts to engage with the two remaining schools yet to engage.	CSCJES.
The Council's WESP Co-ordinator will work collaboratively with partners in developing and implementing strategies in line with the Council's WESP to support the delivery of the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 vision of a million Welsh speakers, and to contribute towards the development of strategies which promote the Welsh language and Welsh medium education across the County Borough.	Ongoing – the WESP is a ten-year plan; we will continue to work with partners on developing and implementing strategies in line with the WESP.	RCT WESP Officer.
If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible to implement, please explain why. Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning.		
What was identified?	Why is it not possible?	
N/A.	N/A.	
<u>Stage 4 – Review</u>		
For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not, you are required to forward this assessment to Welsh Language services – welshlanguageofficer@rctcbc.gov.uk and the Consultation and Engagement team – consultation@rctcbc.gov.uk in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.		
As part of the Welsh Language, Equalities and Socio Economic Duty Impact Assessment Process all proposals that fall within the definition of Significant Key Decision should present at the Officer Review Panel. This panel is made up of officers from across Council Services and acts as a critical friend before your report is finalised and published for SLT/Cabinet approval.		
If this proposal is a Key Strategic Decision, please forward your completed (Stage 1>6) impact assessment, policy proposal/report and consultation		

report to CouncilBusiness@rctcbc.gov.uk for an Officer Review Panel to be organised to discuss your proposal. [See our guidance document](#) for more information on what a Significant Key Decision is.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable Welsh language considerations wherever possible. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below in collaboration with the relevant departments.

Welsh Language Services Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback
Officer Review Panel Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Officer Review Panel considerations
<p>Welsh Language Services would like to thank officers for considering how this proposal might impact upon opportunities for people to learn, use and promote the Welsh language amongst sixth form pupils in the Cynon Valley. We would encourage officers to go into a little more detail specifically regarding the sixth form/A Level context, regarding the current record of both schools involved in terms of Welsh language (as a subject and as a medium of instruction/extra-curricular activities) and the opportunities offered by other organisations to give a clearer picture of the opportunities and challenges with this particular proposal/age group.</p> <p>Regarding the consultation results, there seems to be a fairly high percentage of respondents who think this proposal will have a negative impact - do we know why that is? Are there activities etc held at MACS in Welsh that may be lost/impacted due to this proposal, and can these be replicated at ACS/elsewhere locally?</p>	04.02.2025	Further detail added to the assessment with regards engagement with Welsh medium extracurricular activities for both schools included in this proposal. Detail has also been added on the offer to study Welsh as an A Level in English medium schools in the Cynon area of the valley.
Consultation Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consultation
<p>In accordance with the Welsh Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015 and in compliance with RCTCBC's statutory obligations, the consultation included the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you think the proposal could impact opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh Language (Positive or Negative)? 2. Do you think the proposal in any way treats the Welsh Language less favourably than the English Language? 	27.01.2025	No changes to make.

3. How positive effects on the Welsh Language could be increased, or negative effects be decreased?

The table that follows provides a summary of the responses received from those respondents that answered the questions. As a result of the responses received, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal has been updated accordingly.

Welsh Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015: Summary of Consultation Responses				
Questions	Responses			
How do you feel the proposal could impact on opportunities for pupils to use and promote the Welsh Language?	Negatively	Don't Know	Positively	Not Sure
	%			
	46.0%	26.0%	5.0%	23.0%
How positive effects on the Welsh Language could be increased, or negative effects be decreased.	Positive Effects Increased	Negative Effects Decreased	Not Sure	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Make learning Welsh fun, adapt the way it's taught so it caters to	None.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stop focusing on the Welsh language it has no	

	<p>everyone as not all pupils learn in the same way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting basic skills [in the Welsh language] to parents/carers, grandparents etc. 		<p>impact on the pupils attending either of these schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> [There would be no] effect whatsoever, but the Welsh language should be promoted. 		
Do you think the proposal in any way treats the Welsh Language less favourably than the English Language?	Yes	No	Don't Know		
	%				
	36.0%	18.0%	46.0%		

Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

How and who will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?

RCTCBC's Directorate of Education and Inclusion Services 21st Century Schools Team will monitor this proposal holding periodic review meetings.

Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment, to include some of the main positive and negative impacts along with an overview of actions taken since the impact assessment to better contribute to more positive impacts. This summary must be included in the Welsh Language Considerations section of the SLT/Cabinet report template. It is not suitable to only write 'please see full report at Appendix x' in the body of the report. The impact assessment must be published alongside the report.

A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been completed and the main findings are as follows:

The proposal is to close the sixth form at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School with pupils transferring to Aberdare Community School.

Aberdare Community School was part of a wider leisure and education investment locally, which saw the nearby Sobell Leisure Centre receive significant investment for school and community use. As Aberdare Community School is a new school, constructed in 2014, it is graded A for condition and A for suitability. The building has been built to meet the required standards and regulations, allowing pupils of Aberdare Community School to benefit from a learning environment fit for 21st century education.

RCTCBC aims to embed positive habits and attitudes towards the Welsh language through purposeful planning to promote the informal use of the Welsh language amongst pupils inside and outside schools. Facilitating the use of the Welsh language across the curriculum and in wider contexts in schools, to ensure a continuum of linguistic progression to support pupils in the transition between key stages, offers all pupils the opportunity to become fully bilingual and aligns with the Curriculum for Wales 2022. Aberdare Community School will continue to be encouraged and supported to do this through the achievement of the 'Cymraeg Campus' Welsh Language Charter, a framework to promote and increase the use of Welsh.

Aberdare Community School also has facilities that are regularly used by the local community ensuring that others are benefitting from the new resources available. The school will be encouraged and supported to consider using these facilities to increase participation in the Welsh language by offering the opportunity to parents/carers and other members of the community to attend Welsh medium learning classes for adults and/or other opportunities for community engagement through the medium of Welsh.

This could contribute towards the WG's ambitious goal of creating a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 and the WESP.

Stage 7 – Sign Off

Name of Officer completing the WLIA	Lisa Howell.	Service Director Name:	Andrea Richards.
Position	21 st Century School Business and School Organisation Manager.	I recommend that the proposal: (Highlight decision)	Is implemented with no amendments
			Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
			Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language
Date	29.11.2024	Date	29.11.2024