

# Addysg / Education

Pennaeth Addysg /  
Head of Education – Garem Jackson

Gofynnwch am/Ask for: **Moderneiddio Addysg**  
☎ (01286) 679247 Ein Cyf / Our Ref: **Ysgol Abersoch**  
📄 (01286) 677347 Eich Cyf / Your Ref:  
✉ [ModernisingEducation@gwynedd.llyw.cymru](mailto:ModernisingEducation@gwynedd.llyw.cymru)



**11 November 2021**

**To:** All consultees involved with the proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch on 31 December 2021 and offer pupils a place at Ysgol Sarn Bach on 1 January 2022 in accordance with the School Organisation Code (11/2018)

Dear Stakeholder,

***RE: The proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch on 31 December 2021 and offer pupils a place at Ysgol Sarn Bach from 1 January 2022.***

In its meeting on 9 November 2021, following careful consideration of the comments of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet decided not to change their decision made on 28 September 2021, and to finally confirm the proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch on 31 December 2021 and offer pupils a place at Ysgol Sarn Bach from 1 January 2022.

The proposal to close Ysgol Abersoch on 31 December 2021 and offer the pupils a place at Ysgol Sarn Bach from 1 January 2022 was developed as a result of the main challenges facing the school, namely:

- school numbers are a cause for concern - in September 2020, there were 8 full-time pupils and 2 nursery pupils.
- the class sizes are small - with 10 pupils being taught in one mixed-age class. Projections show 10 pupils in 2021, 12 pupils in 2022, and 12 pupils in 2023.
- September 2020 data shows that 26 pupils live in the Ysgol Abersoch catchment area with 21 of them attending other schools. It also shows that 5 pupils from outside the Abersoch catchment area attend Ysgol Abersoch.
- Ysgol Abersoch receives an additional amount to the usual allocation via the minimum staffing protection policy (which ensures at least a headteacher and teacher at each school, and a headteacher and an assistant in schools with fewer than 15 pupils). The total additional funding for the 2020/21 financial year (based on the numbers in September 2019) was £52,582. The per pupil cost for Ysgol Abersoch during the 2020/21 financial year was £17,404, compared with the county-wide average per pupil cost of £4,198 for the same period.
- number of surplus spaces - 76% surplus places at the school (32 in total).

In deciding on the proposal, the Cabinet considered the following factors in accordance with the School Organisation Code (11/2018):

- Quality and standards in education
- The need for places and the impact on school accessibility
- Education resources and other financial implications
- Other general factors
- Specific factors in the consideration of school closures

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- The likely effect on different travel arrangements
- The likely impact on the Community
- The likely impact on the Welsh Language
- The likely impact on quality and standards in education
- Equality
- The requirements of the Well-being and Future Generations Act 2015

The decision was confirmed by the Cabinet on 28 September 2021 following a statutory objection period that was held between 25 June and 23 July 2021. The objections received and the local authority's response are summarised in the objection report submitted to the Cabinet on 28 September 2021 and later on 9 November 2021. The report and other relevant documents are available at [www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/ModernisingEducation](http://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/ModernisingEducation).

Following consideration of the objection report, the Cabinet was satisfied that the proposal to close was the most appropriate option for this situation as none of the other options proposed, including federalisation, would address the main challenges facing the school. The Cabinet was also satisfied that the proposal will result in more consistent opportunities for children in the catchment area, and fulfilled the Council's strategic aspiration, which are:

- Class sizes (and age range) – pupils to be taught in more appropriately sized classes than the current situation. Implementing the proposal would lead to greater consistency in class sizes and reduce age range within primary school classes in the area.
- Population and Pupil Numbers – pupils to be educated in a school where the numbers and projections are more robust and sustainable for the future, and reduce the rate of surplus places in the area's schools.
- Leadership – strong leadership and management in a school where the numbers allow a Headteacher to professionally lead and manage in the school.
- The Community – to mitigate any potential negative impact on the community it is important that the Abersoch community would be included in the activities of the alternative school, and that community collaboration between the alternative school and the Abersoch community is encouraged.
- Financial Resources - rationalising the cost per pupil in schools which would reduce the range in cost per pupil for all Gwynedd children. It is estimated that the realisation of this proposal will result in a cost per pupil of Ysgol Sarn Bach of £4,683 compared to the current cost per pupil of £17,404 at Ysgol Abersoch. The county average for the same period is £4,198 per pupil. It is estimated that the proposal would generate an annual saving of £110,062, less additional transport needs costs (£14,000) – which is approximately £92,062 per annum.
- The Welsh Language – pupils will be education in a Welsh-medium school, as is the current situation, and in a school where the social use of the Welsh language is strong.
- Geographical Factors – the pupils will continue to receive their education at a school within reasonable distance to their homes and will receive transport in accordance with the Council's policy.

The report presented to the Cabinet on **28 September 2021** and then on **9 November 2021** elaborates on the background, and the statutory process including the consultation and objection period, as well as the above considerations. This report along with other relevant documents can be found at [www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/ModernisingEducation](http://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/ModernisingEducation).

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In accordance with the above decision, **Ysgol Abersoch will close on 31 December 2021**, and pupils will transfer to Ysgol Sarn Bach, unless parents choose to apply to transfer to another school. Ysgol Sarn Bach will be the catchment school for the current catchment area of Ysgol Abersoch in future.

Yours sincerely,



**Garem Jackson**  
Head of Education