

**Consultation on the
proposal to close
Ysgol Betws y Coed**



Introduction

Conwy County Borough Council has been reviewing current pupil numbers, equality of funding for pupils and the fitness for purpose of current school buildings across the Authority.

The Welsh Government's Statutory Code of Practice (School Organisation Code – Second Edition) gives guidance to local authorities that can help with this process.

*Where there are more than 10% surplus places in an area overall, local authorities **should** review their provision and **should** consider whether to make proposals for their removal if this will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of provision. A significant level of surplus provision is defined as 25% or more of a school's capacity (as defined in Circular 21/2011) **and** at least 30 unfilled places.*

Although local authorities are asked to manage excessive surplus places this does not automatically mean closing schools. Sections 1.7 and 1.8 of the Code encourage proposers to look at other options available to them and their schools, for example clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools to increase the school's viability or making use of the existing buildings as a community resource. They are also encouraged to rationalise school space by co-locating services within the school to offset costs.

Ysgol Betws-y-Coed is a designated rural school situated on the outskirts of the village of Betws-y-Coed in Conwy County. Since March 2016, the school has been part of a formal federation with Ysgol Dolwyddelan and Ysgol Capel Garmon, which share one headteacher and one governing body.

Ysgol Betws y Coed has the capacity to accommodate 100 pupils between the ages of three to eleven. The school plan below shows the layout and accommodation available.

At the meeting on 11th November 2025, Conwy County Borough Council's Cabinet granted approval to commence a consultation to consider the potential closure of Ysgol Betws y Coed.

This period of consultation will last from 28th November 2025 to 9th January 2026.

The Cabinet will carefully consider any comments and observations made in writing.

As a result of the consultation the Cabinet may decide:

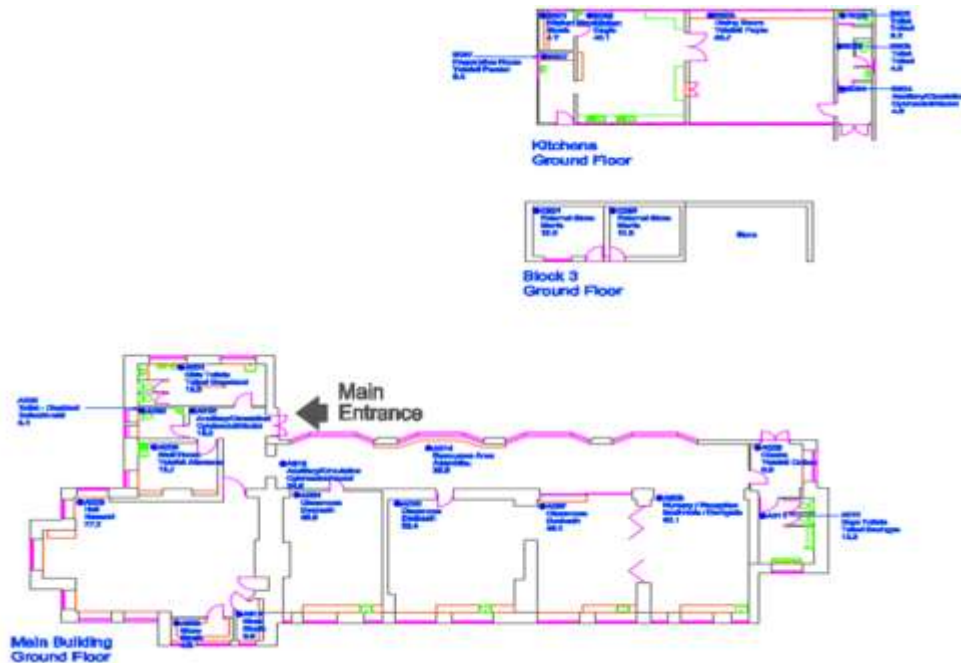
1. That the Local Authority will not proceed any further with the proposal,
2. That the Local Authority go ahead with the proposal or
3. That the Local Authority move ahead with a modified version of the proposal.

Any formal proposal would be set out and published in the form of a public statutory notice.

The Local Authority has the powers to propose expansions or closures of schools in line with the School Organisation Code.

Conwy County Borough Council will publish a consultation report for Cabinet to consider in the Spring School Term

Ysgol Betws y Coed - School Plan



Consultation on the proposed closure of Ysgol Betws y Coed

This report presents a clear and well-founded rationale for consulting on the proposed closure of Ysgol Betws y Coed, in line with the School Organisation Code

The proposal is based on the premise that, if approved, Ysgol Betws y Coed will close as soon as practicable, following completion of all required statutory procedures.

Determination of the proposal rests with Conwy County Borough Council. If any formal objections are received during the statutory consultation period, they will be considered and decided upon by the Council's Cabinet.

A Statutory Notice regarding the proposed school closure will be published, initiating a 28-day objection period from the date of publication, during which formal objections may be submitted.

The reasons for the proposal

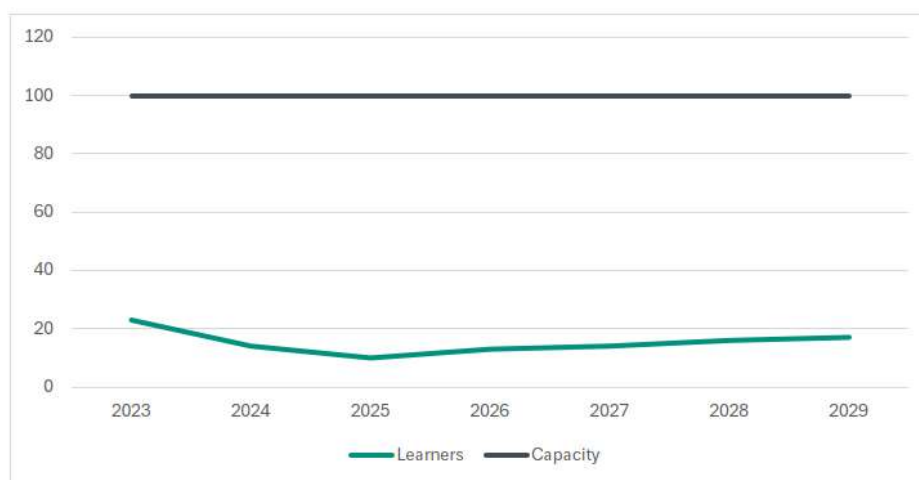
Pupil Numbers and Sustainability

Ysgol Betws y Coed has the capacity to accommodate 100 pupils and currently has 14 registered pupils as at the Welsh Government PLASC collection data in January 2025.

A consultation is being considered for Ysgol Betws y Coed due to its status as one of the largest sites with the highest capacity, yet consistently recording the lowest number of learners, making it the least efficient in terms of educational resource utilisation.

The number of registered pupils at Ysgol Betws y Coed has remained relatively stable over the last 5 years.

Projected pupil numbers / School Capacity



Total Learners on Roll as of PLASC											
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Learners on roll	25	29	36	28	27	28	29	29	25	18	14

Current School Capacity / Projection (Full Time learners only)					100
PLASC	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Full time Learners (Projection)	13	14	16	17	18
School Capacity	13%	14%	16%	17%	18%

The data in this consultation is based on the most recent Welsh Government PLASC data (January 2025). While there is a new housing development, there is no evidence of a significant or immediate increase in pupil numbers. The projections indicate that numbers will remain with a significant level of surplus provision, which is defined as 25% or more of a school's capacity (as defined in Circular 21/2011) and at least 30 unfilled places.

Financial Viability

The overall revenue allocation for Ysgol Betws y Coed for the 2025/26 financial year was £250,277; this equates to a cost per pupil of £20,856, one of the highest in the primary sector in Wales. This is compared to the current average cost per pupil of £5,148.

Delegated school budget per pupil:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Conwy Overall	£5,209.124	£5,613.083	£5,913.92	£6358.167
Conwy Primary	£4,269.964	£4,623.167	£4,847.315	£5,147.938
Ysgol Betws y Coed	£7,956.372	£9,810.801	£13,671.50	£20,856.38

Rank as cost per pupil for Primary school cost per pupil in **Wales** (1 being the highest cost):

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Ysgol Betws y Coed	24	17	13	2
Total Primary Schools in Wales	1218	1212	1211	1198

Rank as cost per pupil for Primary school cost per pupil in **Conwy** (1 being the highest cost):

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Ysgol Betws y Coed	5	3	2	1
Primary Schools in Conwy	52	51	51	50

Building Condition

Ysgol Betws y Coed is Grade 2 listed and is in good condition, with no fundamental issues requiring attention. It has a current backlog maintenance total cost of £34,293.77 following a programme of improvements over the last 5 years, which included improved toilets, windows and an upgraded school kitchen and canteen.

Educational and Wellbeing Outcomes

The proposal aims to secure Welsh-medium education and pupil wellbeing in the long term.

Pupils will continue to receive appropriate learning opportunities within the Local Authority

Consultation and Engagement

Discussions have taken place with the Headteacher, staff, and Governors to inform and engage them in the process.

Supporting Evidence

A range of factors have been considered and are detailed within the supporting documentation accompanying this proposal.

2. Community Impact

School admissions in Conwy are governed by parental preference, as outlined in the Local Authority's Admissions Policy 2025–2026. Parents are entitled to express a preference for any school, and the Local Authority prioritises applications according to the criteria listed in section 1.7 of the policy.

2.1 Out of School Childcare

Clwb Mes Bach (run by the school) offers 4 sessions every term

2.2 Community facilities used by the school

There are no community facilities currently utilised by Ysgol Betws y Coed.

2.3 Community use of school facilities

The school (in partnership with the Community Council) provides a pensioner's lunch and home-delivered meals, which started in March 2025. This occurs on average once every month, with 11 sit in meals provided and 6 meals delivered.

2.4 Facilities at Alternative Schools

The nearest alternative schools within the Local Authority are shown in the table below.

Each of these schools caters for children aged 3 to 11 years and currently have sufficient capacity to accommodate additional pupils. Based on current enrolment figures, no building works or physical adaptations would be required at any of these schools to facilitate the transition.

Alternative Provision:

School	Distance from Ysgol Betws y Coed and Approximate journey time	Pupils on Register Jan Plasc 2025 (Excluding Nursery)	Capacity	Language Category
Ysgol Capel Garmon	3.1 miles / 11mins	16	46	Welsh Medium – Category 3
Ysgol Bro Gwydir	4.3 miles / 12mins	284	311	Welsh Medium – Category 3
Ysgol Penmachno	5.2 miles / 13 mins	35	56	Welsh Medium – Category 3
Ysgol Llanddoged	5.8 miles / 16 mins	33	97	Welsh Medium – Category 3
Ysgol Dolwyddelan	7.0 miles / 16 mins	18	59	Welsh Medium – Category 3
Ysgol Pentrefoelas	7.7 miles / 16 mins	38	71	Welsh Medium - Category 3

Wrap around provision:

School	Is wraparound provision available?
Ysgol Capel Garmon	Not on school site, Twt Lol day nursery picks up from the school
Ysgol Bro Gwydir	Cylch Ysgol Feithrin Llanrwst (Ffrindiau Bach) no wrap around from Cylch on school site (they offer childcare for 2- and 3-year-olds and offer Flying Start and Early Education) Meithrinfa Traed Bach, Llanrwst pick up from Ysgol Bro Gwydir and offer a 'wrap around provision'
Ysgol Penmachno	Twt Lol nursery pick up from Penmachno
Ysgol Llanddoged	Yes – Mon / Tues / Wed / Thurs 09:00 – 01:00pm lunch club available for those attending school (Cylch Meithrin Llanddoged)
Ysgol Dolwyddelan	No
Ysgol Pentrefoelas	Cylch Meithrin Pentrefoelas is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays 13:00 – 15:15 no wrap around from the Cylch Twt Lol nursery pick up from Pentrefoelas

3. Staff

Current full time equivalent staffing levels for Ysgol Betws y Coed are as follows:

Head Teacher	Assistant Head	Qualified Teacher	Teaching Assistant	Admin Staff
0.34	1.00	1.28	0.80	0.15

Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR):

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
School PTR	10.2	11.7	10.6	9.9	6.3	4.6
Conwy Primary PTR	20.4	21.2	19.8	20.3	20.2	20.9
Wales Primary PTR	22	21.9	21	20.9	21.3	21.4

In the event of a school closure officers from the Local Authority's HR team will be available to discuss relevant processes and procedures and provide advice and support.

Closure of Rural Schools

Ysgol Betws y Coed is designated as a rural school under the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (Second Edition).

This designation introduces a procedural presumption against closure, meaning that Conwy County Borough Council must follow a more rigorous and detailed process when proposing closure. While closure is not prohibited, the case must be robust, and all viable alternatives, including federation, must be conscientiously considered.

The case for closure, and the procedures and requirements of the School Organisation Code are detailed below.

Under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, the requirement to consult does not apply to proposals to discontinue schools with fewer than 10 pupils at the preceding January census. However, local authorities must still consider the factors outlined in Chapter 1 of the Code, including section 1.8, which sets out the presumption against closure of rural schools.

When making this proposal, the following points have been taken into consideration.

Where considerations are required as defined in the School Organisation Code, the relevant code section is marked in brackets after the heading for reference.

Quality and standards in education (1.3)

Estyn Inspections

Schools are inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of an inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils (Estyn).

Following Ysgol Betws y Coed's ESTYN inspection in September 2019, the school received the following report, which judged the provision as follows:

Inspection area	Judgement
Standards	Good
Wellbeing and attitudes to learning	Good
Teaching and learning experiences	Good
Care, support and guidance	Good
Leadership and management	Adequate and needs improvement

ESTYN made five recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Strengthen leadership at all levels in order to promote close co-operation between all staff in the federation
- R2 Strengthen self-evaluation procedures and planning for improvement across the federation
- R3 Ensure that governors discharge their statutory duties fully
- R4 Raise standards of reading and writing in Welsh
- R5 Ensure that teachers' feedback enables pupils to improve their work

[Inspection report Ysgol Betws-y-Coed 2019](#)

The school produced an action plan to show how it was going to address the recommendations and were taken out of special measures in March 2021.

Following on from this, in March 2021, ESTYN

It is considered that the school has made good progress in terms of the key issues for action following the inspection Section 28. We will now remove the name of the school on the list of schools that need to be reviewed by Estyn. There will be no more of visits by Estyn in relation to this inspection.

[Estyn Inspection Report - Ysgol Betws-Y-Coed 2021](#)

In September 2024 ESTYN carried out an interim visit, with particular focus on the following areas:

- Strengthen self-evaluation and planning for improvement procedures across the federation
- Ensure that teachers' feedback enables pupils to improve their work

Details of this visit are available here:

[Interim visit letter Ysgol Betws-y-Coed 2024](#)

Impact of the proposals on vulnerable groups, including children with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

Conwy will ensure that ALN provision is considered in accordance with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and our statutory duty as a local authority. The impact of the proposals on vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), will be fully considered.

Need for places and the impact on accessibility of schools (1.4)

All alternative schools identified have sufficient capacity and offer accommodation of at least equivalent quality to meet both current and projected pupil numbers. Accessibility considerations have been factored into the assessment to ensure equitable access for all learners.

The extent to which the proposal would support the targets in the approved Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).

The proposal has been considered in the context of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), with particular attention to how it aligns with the Local Authority's long-term objectives for Welsh-medium education. While the closure of the school will result in the cessation of Welsh-medium provision at that site, pupils within the revised catchment area will continue to have access to Welsh-medium education at alternative schools.

How the proposal would expand or reduce Welsh language provision and in the case of the latter, set out why provision will be reduced.

The proposal will result in the cessation of Welsh-medium provision at the school due to its closure. However, pupils within the revised catchment area will have access to Welsh-medium education at alternative schools.

Nature of journeys to alternative provision and resulting journey times for pupils:

All alternative schools are less than 8 miles away from Ysgol Betws y Coed with a journey time of no more than 16 minutes each way.

Transport provision:

The current Home to School Transport Policy provides free transport for Primary school pupils who reside over 2 miles from their nearest appropriate school.

There is currently 1 pupil registered at Ysgol Betws y Coed that requires school transport.

Free home to school transport is provided in line with our statutory duties and the criteria set out in our home to school transport policy.

The Local Authority has discretionary criteria within the home to school transport policy to provide transport to the nearest denominational school subject to it being 2 miles or further from the home address. Evidence of faith (such as a baptismal certificate, proof of faith certificate or letter from a faith leader) will need to be provided for new pupils starting at denominational schools from September 2025.

For information:

- The nearest category 3 Welsh medium primary school to Betws y Coed is Ysgol Capel Garmon
- The nearest Church in Wales school to Betws y Coed is Ysgol Llanddoged

Resourcing of education and other financial implications (1.5)

The proposal is expected to have minimal impact on surplus places in the area. The school currently has 14 pupils, and all alternative schools have sufficient capacity to accommodate them.

Plans for the school building (if proposal accepted)

Estates would lead on exploring appropriate next steps in line with corporate property procedures.

Other general factors (1.6)

- The proposal will not impact educational attainment among children from economically deprived backgrounds.
- The school is not subject to any trust or charitable interests that would be affected by the proposal.

Identifying reasonable alternatives

Several reasonable alternatives have been identified, explored, and carefully considered for their merits and viability.

The school and its alternatives have been assessed not only from an educational perspective but also in the context of the Local Authority's broader responsibilities.

7. Language Impact

Conwy's language strategy has committed to the Welsh Government's aspiration to continuously increase the numbers and percentages of the population who can speak Welsh. The aim is that all the county's pupils have appropriate language skills in Welsh and English.

There is sufficient capacity in the Welsh medium community primary schools identified, where most pupils are fluent Welsh speakers. Welsh is the main teaching medium at junior stage with at least 70% of the teaching through the medium of Welsh

8. Equality Impact

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is included in the consultation paperwork and will be reviewed and updated throughout the process.

The impact of this proposal has been considered throughout the process and is a key requirement of the School Organisation Code (Second Edition).

Equality Strand	
Race	White British – 93%, Indian – 7%
Disability	Not collected
Gender	Male – 50% (5 Learners) Female – 50% (5 Learners) Nursery data not included on PLASC
Age	Ages Range from 3-11
Religion & Belief	Unable to provide additional detail as this could potentially identify individual learners.
Sexual Orientation	Not collected
Welsh Language	100% taught Welsh as first language
Other (Please state)	ALN – Unable to provide additional detail as this could potentially identify individual learners.

9. Consultation

This consultation will commence in accordance with the relevant School Organisation Code timelines.

Consultation Process

In line with the School Organisation Code, this consultation document has been published on a school day, and consultees will be given at least 42 calendar days to respond, with a minimum of 20 school days included within that period.

The consultation will run from 28 November 2025 to 9 January 2026.

Following the consultation, if the Council decides to proceed, a statutory notice will be published, triggering a 28-day objection period. During this time, formal objections must be submitted in writing or via email to be considered as statutory objections.

Regardless of whether objections are received, the proposal will be determined by the Local Authority at the conclusion of the statutory objection period.

Legal Powers and Responsibilities

The Local Authority holds the statutory powers to propose the reorganisation, expansion, or closure of schools. In cases where school land or buildings are held in trust or have a designated religious character, the Local Authority must consult with the relevant trustees or religious body prior to publishing the consultation.

How can you comment on the proposal?

- Online at www.conwy.gov.uk/YsgolBYCConsultation
- By writing to Dr Lowri Brown, Head of Education Services, Coed Pella, Colwyn Bay LL29 7AZ
- By e-mailing your views to school.modernisation@conwy.gov.uk
- Completing form overleaf and returning to school.modernisation@conwy.gov.uk or Education Services, Coed Pella, Colwyn Bay LL29 7AZ

**Consultation Feedback Form on the proposed closure of
Ysgol Betws y Coed**

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN 9th JANUARY 2026

To: Dr Lowri Brown, Head of Education Services

By Post: Coed Pella, Colwyn Bay, LL29 7AZ.

Online: www.conwy.gov.uk/YsgolBYCConsultation

You can also email your views to: School.Modernisation@conwy.gov.uk

Do you agree with the proposal to close Ysgol Betws y Coed?

Yes

☐

No

☐

I am: -

The parent of a child currently at the school

☐

The parent of a child previously at the school

☐

A member of staff at the school

☐

A governor of the school

☐

Member of the local Community

☐

Other interested party

☐

The parent of a child at another school

☐

A member of staff at another school

☐

A governor of another school

☐

Member of the wider local Community

☐

My comments are as follows:

Do you wish to receive notification via email link of the Consultation Report once published on Conwy County Borough Council Education Services webpage?

Yes

☐

No

☐

If 'Yes' please provide email address: _____

If you do not have an e-mail address, a copy of the report will be available to you from the school upon request.

Data Protection: Conwy County Borough Council is the data controller for the purposes of the General Data Protection Regulations 2016/Data Protection Act 2018. Conwy County Borough Council will manage the information you provide in a manner that complies with the Data Protection Regulation General Data 2016 / Data Protection Act 2018. The information you provide will only be used to provide you with feedback on the above. In order to see the privacy notice and more visit <https://www.conwy.gov.uk/en/Council/Access-to-Information/Privacy-Notices/How-Conwy-County-Borough-Council-uses-your-Information.aspx>