



**Consultation on the
proposal to close
Ysgol Ysbyty Ifan**



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 Ysbyty Ifan is a Voluntary controlled, Church in Wales Primary School in the rural village of Ysbyty Ifan. It serves the village and the nearby agricultural community.

The school provides education for pupils aged between 3 and 11 years. Welsh medium is the school's everyday language and the main medium of teaching and learning.

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 Ysbyty Ifan.

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:

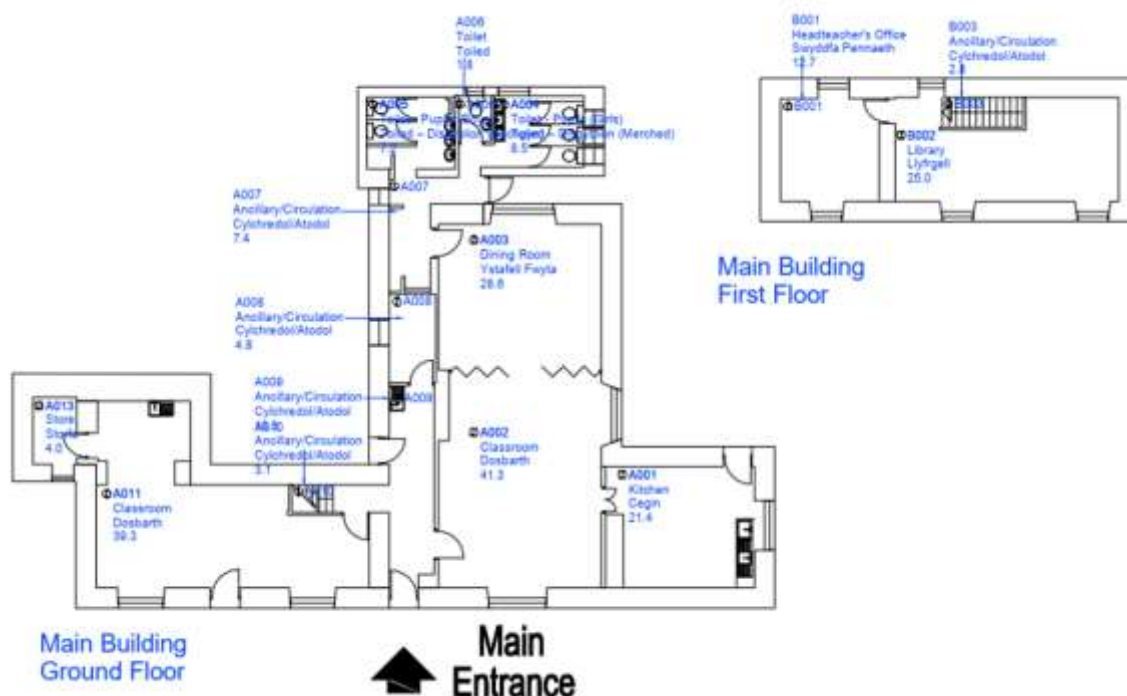
1. That the Local Authority will not proceed any further with the proposal,
2. That the Local Authority go ahead with the proposal or
3. That the Local Authority move ahead with a modified version of the proposal.

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 Ysbyty Ifan – School Plan



Consultation on the proposed closure of Ysgol Ysbyty Ifan

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

The proposal is based on the premise that, if approved, Ysgol Ysbyty Ifan 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

As of PLASC 2025, there are 14 learners on roll.

Over the past five years, pupil numbers have remained consistently low, with no evidence of significant future growth.

The school has a capacity of 40 pupils, but current enrolment is significantly below this, undermining its long-term sustainability.

Pupil Numbers have remained low over the past years. The below table demonstrates that pupil projections over the next 4 years are projected to remain comparable to previous years:

Total Learners on Roll as of PLASC											
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Learners on roll	27	23	20	17	15	17	16	17	18	18	17

Current School Capacity / Projection (Full Time learners only)						40
PLASC	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Full time Learners (Projection)	14	17	16	17	16	16
School Capacity	35%	43%	40%	43%	40%	40%

The data in this consultation is based on the most recent Welsh Government PLASC data (January 2025). The projections do not indicate a reversal sufficient to address the school's sustainability issues and 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.

Current Education Provision

The school is currently placed in an Estyn statutory category of special measures, due to concerns around teaching, learning, and leadership.

Whilst enhanced support from the Local Authority has led to some improvement, Ysgol Ysbyty Ifan is judged to have made insufficient progress in relation to the recommendations following the most recent core inspection. As a result, the school is considered to still require special measures.

Leadership Challenges

The school is currently led by an acting headteacher, employed on a short-term basis.

This arrangement is not sustainable, and the school has been unable to appoint either a substantive headteacher or a full-time acting headteacher, despite efforts from both the school and the local authority.

Financial Viability

The 2025/26 revenue allocation for the school is £242,368, equating to a cost per pupil of £15,637.

This is three times higher than the Conwy average cost per pupil, which is £5,148.

Delegated school budget per pupil:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Ysgol Ysbyty Ifan	£12,134.49	£12,795.60	£13,193.43	£15,636.63
<i>Conwy Primary Average</i>	<i>£4,269.96</i>	<i>£4,623.17</i>	<i>£4,847.32</i>	<i>£5,147.94</i>
Rank in Conwy	2	1	3	2
<i>Number of Conwy schools</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>50</i>
Rank in Wales	5	7	14	11
<i>Number of Wales schools</i>	<i>1218</i>	<i>1212</i>	<i>1211</i>	<i>1198</i>

The financial challenge is exacerbated by:

- The inability to share leadership costs with another school.
- The need for additional support and intervention due to the Estyn category, which places further pressure on the school's budget.

Educational and Wellbeing Outcomes

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

Pupils will continue to receive a high standard of education in age-appropriate and ability-suitable environments elsewhere within the local authority.

Consultation and Engagement

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

Building Condition

Ysgol Ysbyty Ifan is in relatively good order, with no fundamental issues pertaining to suitability of accommodation or Statutory compliance.

It has a current backlog maintenance total of £72,768.78.

2. Community Impact

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

2.1 Out-of-School Childcare Provision

Ysgol Ysbyty Ifan does not currently offer any out-of-school childcare services.

2.2 Use of Community Facilities by the School

The school use the community hall twice a week for physical education and monthly for other activities such as workshops, meetings and fundraising events. Hafan Ifan church is also used to hold services and concerts during the year.

2.3 Community Use of School Facilities

The school does not provide access to its facilities for community use, such as youth clubs or playgroups.

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 has sufficient capacity to accommodate additional pupils. Based on current enrolment figures, no building works or physical adaptations would be required at any of the receiving schools to facilitate the transition.

Alternative Provision:

School	Distance from Ysgol Ysbyty Ifan and Approximate journey time	Pupils on Register Jan Plasc 2025 (Excluding Nursery)	Capacity	Language Category
Ysgol Pentrefoelas	3.1 miles / 8 mins	38	71	Welsh Medium - Category 3
Ysgol Llanddoged	12.7 miles / 25 mins	33	97	Welsh Medium - Category 3
Ysgol Penmachno	7.4 miles / 14 mins	35	56	Welsh Medium - Category 3

Wrap around provision:

School	Is wraparound provision available?
Ysgol Pentrefoelas	Cylch Meithrin Pentrefoelas is open – Tues / Wed / Thursdays 13:00 – 15:15 no wrap around from the Cylch Twt Lol nursery pick up from Pentrefoelas
Ysgol Llanddoged	Yes – Mon / Tues / Wed / Thurs 09:00 – 01:00pm lunch club available for those attending school (Cylch Meithrin Llanddoged)
Ysgol Penmachno	Twt Lol nursery pick up from Penmachno

3. Staff

Ysgol Ysbyty Ifan is currently led by the Headteacher and supported by the following staff:

- 1 Full-Time Teacher
- 1 Midday Supervisor/Teaching Assistant
- 1 Cleaner
- 1 Cook

Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR):

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
School PTR	7.9	6.7	7.3	8.2	8.7	7.0
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 Ysbyty Ifan 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 (Section 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 Ysbyty Ifan's ESTYN inspection in November 2024, the school was placed in special measures.

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

- R1 - Address the safeguarding issue raised during the inspection
- R2 - Ensure that teachers plan purposefully to develop pupils' skills in full
- R3 - Improve teaching and give particular attention to raising teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to achieve and increasing the level of challenge for pupils of all abilities
- R4 - Strengthen the school's strategic leadership and improve self-evaluation and planning for improvement procedures to raise standards and strengthen provision

The school, with support from the Local Authority has drawn up a post inspection action plan to demonstrate progress against the recommendations.

<https://estyn.gov.wales/app/uploads/2025/01/Inspection-report-Ysgol-Ysbyty-Ifan-2025.pdf>

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.

Transport provision:

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

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 are currently 13 pupils registered at Ysgol Ysbyty Ifan that require 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.

Conwy also has discretionary criteria in our home to school transport policy where we choose 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 Ysbyty Ifan is Ysgol Pentrefoelas
- The nearest Church in Wales school to Ysbyty Ifan 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 attached as Appendix D which 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 – 100%
Disability	Not collected
Gender	Male – 57% (8 Learners) Female – 43% (6 Learners)
Age	Ages Range from 3-11
Religion & Belief	Christian – 65% (11 learners) 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 Council 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 Council 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/YsgolYIConsultation
- 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 Ysbyty Ifan**

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/YsgolYIConsultation

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

Do you agree with the proposal to close Ysgol Ysbyty Ifan?

Yes

☐

No

☐

I am: -

The parent of a child currently at the school

☐

The parent of a child previously at the school

☐

The parent of a child at another school

☐

A member of staff at the school

☐

A member of staff at another school

☐

A governor of the school

☐

A governor of another school

☐

Member of the local Community

☐

Member of the wider local Community

☐

Other interested party

☐

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 your 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>