

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

On the establishment of:

**A New Welsh Medium Primary School in the
North of the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil**

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Introduction

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council is undertaking a formal consultation on a proposal to establish a third Welsh-medium primary school for learners aged 3-11 years. The proposal forms part of the Council's long-term strategy for developing Welsh-medium education and supporting Welsh Government's ambition of creating one million Welsh speakers by 2050 through the Cymraeg 2050 programme.

The Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) sets out a commitment to increasing participation in Welsh-medium education and ensuring that sufficient Welsh-medium places are available to meet current and future demand. As part of these commitments, the Council has set ambitious targets to increase the proportion of learners accessing Welsh-medium education and to strengthen Welsh-medium educational pathways across the County Borough.

To support these objectives, Safle'r Gurnos was established in April 2022 as a Welsh-medium seedling provision operating as a satellite of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful. The provision was deliberately created as part of a planned approach to supporting Welsh-medium growth within the northern part of the County Borough and expanding access to Welsh-medium education.

Alongside the seedling provision, a co-located Cylch Meithrin was established to provide a Welsh-medium pathway from early years provision into primary education. Together, these arrangements have supported learner progression and helped create increased opportunities for children and families to access Welsh-medium education from an early age.

Following the establishment of the co-located Cylch Meithrin in January 2023, Safle'r Gurnos has grown steadily and has become an important part of the Council's wider Welsh-medium education strategy, helping to inform future planning for Welsh-medium school places.

The proposal set out within this consultation document represents the next planned stage in the development of Welsh-medium education within Merthyr Tydfil. The Council proposes to formally establish a third Welsh-medium primary school, building upon the success of the Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision and providing a clear pathway towards a fully established Welsh-medium primary school supported by permanent accommodation, dedicated governance arrangements and a distinct school identity.

Statutory Consultation

This consultation document has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2026), issued under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. In developing this proposal, the Council has had regard to the procedures and factors set out within the Code, including educational standards, the need for school places, learner accessibility, community impacts, financial implications and the potential impact on the Welsh language. The Council has also undertaken an Integrated Impact Assessment, including a Welsh Language Impact Assessment, to support consideration of these matters.

This consultation provides an opportunity for learners, families, staff, governors, local residents and other stakeholders to learn more about the proposal and share their views before any decision is made. All responses received during the consultation period will be carefully considered before the Council determines whether to proceed to the next stage of the statutory process.

As part of this consultation, the Council is seeking views on:

- the formal establishment of a third Welsh-medium primary school for learners aged 3-11 years;
- the proposed catchment arrangements for the school;
- the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language; and
- any other comments relating to the proposal, including the future development of Welsh-medium education within Merthyr Tydfil.

Before reaching a decision, the Council is committed to ensuring that everyone with an interest in the proposal has an opportunity to express their views.

Details of how to participate in the consultation process are provided within this document.

The Council is consulting with the following groups:

Headteachers and Governors at Ysgol Santes Tudful, Safle'r Gurnos and Ysgol Rhyd Y Grug	Headteachers and Governing Bodies of all maintained schools within Merthyr Tydfil County Borough.
Staff at Ysgol Santes Tudful and Safle'r Gurnos	Headteacher and Governors at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Rhydywaun
Parent/Carers of children attending Ysgol Santes Tudful, Safle'r Gurnos and Ysgol Rhyd Y Grug	Pupils attending Ysgol Santes Tudful, Ysgol Rhyd Y Grug, Safle'r Gurnos and Ysgol Rhydywaun
Cylch Meithrin Safle'r Gurnos Management Committee / Provider	Members of the Senedd (MSs) and Members of Parliament (MPs)
Addysg Education Directorate MTCBC	Local Councillors
Other Departments MTCBC	Estyn
Welsh Language Commissioner	Menter Iaith Merthyr Tydfil
Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RhAG)	Mudiad Meithrin
Central South Consortium Joint Education Service (CSCJES)	Directors of Education in Neighbouring LA's
Welsh Government Ministers	Trade Unions
Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)	Archdiocesan Director of Education for Cardiff & Menevia
Local Police and Crime Commissioner	

Explanation of Terms used in this Consultation Document

Pupil Admissions Number (PAN) – All maintained schools must admit pupils up to at least their published admission number. The admission number is the number of pupil places available in each year group.

Character of a School – The overall profile of the school. For example; Welsh medium primary school admitting children between the ages of 3 to 11 years.

Compulsory School Age – The start of the term following a child's fifth birthday.

The Council – Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Trochi – The Council's Welsh-language Immersion programme, which provides a range of support to help learners access, develop and strengthen their Welsh-language skills within Welsh-medium education.

Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion) – A strand of Trochi that supports learners in Years 1 to 6 who are new or returning to Welsh-medium education. The provision helps learners develop the Welsh-language skills and confidence needed to access the curriculum and participate fully in Welsh-medium education.

IIA – An Integrated Impact Assessment [IIA] is an impact assessment designed to ensure that a policy, project or scheme does not discriminate against any disadvantaged or vulnerable people and that the potential impacts are considered understood and mitigated where required.

eFSM – Pupils eligible for Free School Meals

LA – Local Authority means Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Number on roll – the number of pupils attending a school

PLASC – Pupil Level Annual School Census. In January of every year, verified information is collected by schools for submission to the Welsh Government. This includes the number of pupils enrolled in each school, their age groups, home addresses, ethnicity and data on Welsh language, free school meals eligibility, special education needs and first language.

Statutory Notice – A statutory notice is the formal publication of a finalised proposal, if approved by the Council's Cabinet and will only be considered once they have received all the responses from the consultation process. This is a legal requirement as outlined in the School Organisation Code 2026.

Nursery Education provision - It is Council policy that every child has access to free part-time nursery education from the term following their third birthday, and to a full-time nursery education place the September following their third birthday.

Primary Education – The Council's Admissions policy allows all children who have reached their fourth birthday on or before 31 August to attend full-time school in Reception class that September. This is not a legal requirement. Some parents / carers choose to send their child to school at the compulsory school age of five years old.

WM – Welsh-medium school where the first language taught is in Welsh.

Involving Children and Young People in the Consultation

The Council believes it is important that children and young people should be given the opportunity to express their views on this proposal and participate in decisions that may affect them.

The Council has prepared age-appropriate consultation materials to support engagement with children and young people affected by the proposal. These include child-friendly and youth-friendly summaries of the proposal designed to explain the proposed changes, potential benefits, matters for consideration and how views can be submitted as part of the consultation process.

Feedback received through these engagement activities will be considered alongside all other consultation responses and summarised within the Consultation Report for consideration before a decision is made.

Involving Parents, Governors and Staff – How you can find out more and Have Your Say

As part of the consultation process, the Council intends to hold drop-in sessions for parents/carers and other interested stakeholders. These sessions are intended to provide an opportunity to learn more about the proposal, speak with Council officers, and ask any questions you may have.

Details of the date, time and venue for the drop-in session(s) will also be published on the schools' notice board and, on the schools, and Council websites.

Details of the drop-in sessions are given below:

Venue	Date / Time	Drop-in Sessions
Safle'r Gurnos	12 th November 2026, 3.30pm-5.30pm	Parent / Carer
Ysgol Santes Tudful	3 rd November 2026, 3.30pm-5.30pm	Parent / Carer
Ysgol Rhyd Y Grug	2 nd November 2026, 3.30pm-5.30pm	Parent / Carer

Consultation meetings will also take place with the following stakeholders:

Ysgol Santes Tudful Governing Body
Ysgol Santes Tudful and Safle'r Gurnos Staff

Please note that we will always ask that you complete a consultation response form, as we can only accept views in writing.

This document and further supporting information can also be found on the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council website - [Consultation](#)

Links to this document can be found on social media through the Merthyr Tydfil Council X feed and via the Merthyr Tydfil Council Facebook page.

The consultation period will run from **Monday 19th October – Sunday 29th November 2026**.
You can respond to our proposals at any time during this period.

Your views are important to us, and there are a number of ways that you can let us know.

You can:

- Complete the online response form at: MTCBC Consultation pages. [Consultation](#)
- Attend a drop-in session and speak to us in person. This is a good way to be able to get answers to any questions you may have about the proposals. We will still ask that you complete a consultation response form, as we can only accept views in writing.
- Complete the consultation response form and put it into the consultation response boxes found in the reception areas of Safle'r Gurnos, Ysgol Santes Tudful, and Ysgol Rhyd y Grug.
- Complete and return the consultation response form to the address given at the bottom of the form at the end of this document and return to:

**Third Welsh Medium Primary School
Planning of School Places Team
Addysg Education
Civic Centre
Castle Street
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8AN**

Alternatively, you can respond to the following email address: schoolorganisation@merthyr.gov.uk

All responses given to us in writing, using the consultation response form, will be considered by the Council's Cabinet before it decides whether or not to publish a statutory notice about the proposals.

Responses received from consultees who are opposed to these proposals, although considered as part of the consultation report, will not be treated as statutory objections. A statutory objection would form part of the statutory notice period, if it is approved at the next stage, by the Council's Cabinet.

If you wish to object to the notice at the next stage of the process, should it proceed, you will need to do so in writing during the statutory objection period.

Please note that all comments sent in writing must contain the full name and full postal address of the person making the comments.

The closing date for responses to this consultation is midnight on Sunday 29th November 2026.

Unfortunately, responses received after this date will not be considered by the Council.

What are we proposing?

The Proposal: Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council proposes to establish a new maintained Welsh-medium primary school for learners aged 3 to 11 years from September 2027.

This will be achieved through the formal establishment of the existing Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision, which currently operates as a satellite of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful, as a distinct and separate Welsh-medium primary school serving the northern area of the County Borough.

The school will be established with a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 30, a capacity of 210 places for pupils in Reception to Year 6, and a Nursery Education capacity of 40 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) places.

During the establishment phase, whilst operating from interim accommodation at the former St Aloysius Primary School site, the school will initially admit pupils on the basis of a PAN of 15 and operate at an initial capacity of 105 places for pupils in Reception to Year 6 and 20 FTE Nursery places.

The Council will continue to monitor pupil numbers, admissions and demand for Welsh-medium education as the school develops and will keep operational capacity arrangements under review.

The proposal would:

- formalise the existing Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision as a separate maintained Welsh-medium primary school from September 2027;
- establish the school at the former St Aloysius Primary School site from September 2027;
- establish a dedicated catchment area for the school;
- provide nursery and primary education for learners aged 3 to 11 years;
- support the continued year-on-year growth of the school towards its planned long-term capacity;
- provide a dedicated base for the Council's Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion) provision from September 2027;
- support the intention for the school to operate during the establishment phase under:
 - a federated Governing Body with Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful (subject to the outcome of separate statutory processes); and
 - an Executive Headteacher leadership model; and
- support the school's growth into a sustainable and independent Welsh-medium primary school with its own governing body and Headteacher.

The proposal has been developed to ensure that sufficient Welsh-medium places are available to meet current and future demand and to improve accessibility to Welsh-medium education by providing local Welsh-medium primary school provision within each of the three broad areas of the County Borough: south, central and north.

The proposal represents the next planned stage in the development of Welsh-medium education within Merthyr Tydfil and is critical to supporting delivery of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan aspirations and commitments.

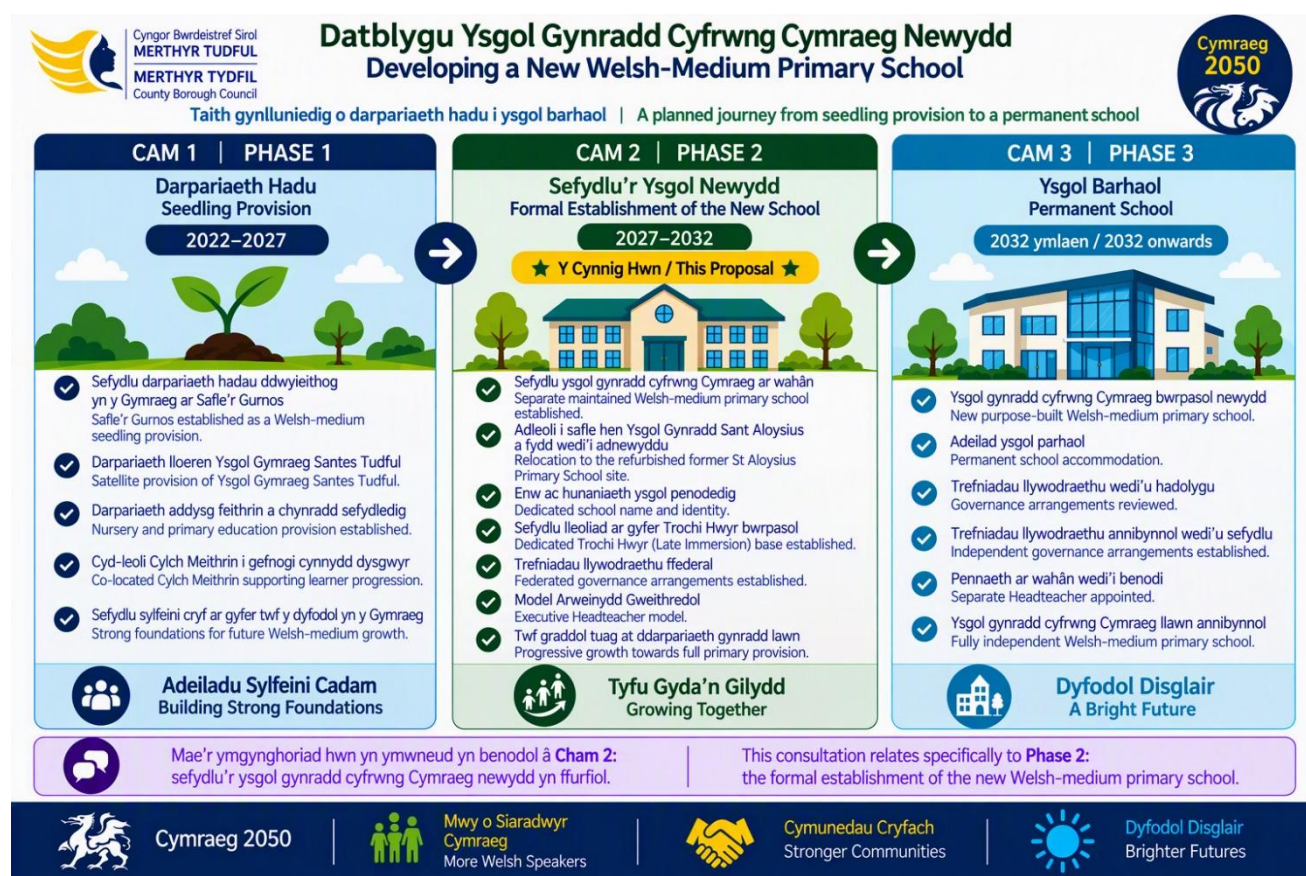
The Development of the School

The proposed school will grow progressively over time in line with learner demand and approved admissions arrangements. The Council's intention is that:

- the school will formally open at the St Aloysius site from September 2027;
- the first admissions to the new school will be Nursery and Reception learners from September 2027;
- learners currently attending the Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision will transfer to the new school from September 2027 and continue their education within the appropriate year group, with the first cohort of learners progressing into Key Stage 2 through entry to Year 3;
- learner numbers and staffing structures will increase progressively as the school develops;
- the school will also host the Council's Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion provision), supporting learners who wish to transition to Welsh-medium education after previously attending a different school;
- governance and leadership arrangements will support the successful establishment and growth of the school; and
- the provision will relocate to a permanent new-build Welsh-medium primary school from September 2032, subject to ongoing review through the Council's capital investment and school place planning processes.

Overall, the proposal provides a clear pathway from the existing Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision to a sustainable standalone Welsh-medium primary school serving families within the northern area of the County Borough. It also supports the Council's wider ambition to increase participation in Welsh-medium education and deliver the objectives of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

The Council proposes three phases of development as follows:



This proposal represents Phase 2 of the Council's planned Welsh-medium expansion programme and would formally establish the existing Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision as a separate maintained Welsh-medium primary school from September 2027.

In addition to mainstream nursery and primary provision, the school is intended to provide a dedicated base for the Council's Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion) provision from September 2027. Trochi Hwyr forms part of the wider Trochi Welsh-language immersion programme, supporting learners in Years 1 to 6 who are new or returning to Welsh-medium education and will remain a whole-authority provision supporting access to Welsh-medium education across the County Borough.

Since September 2026, immersion provision has been coordinated through a dedicated Welsh-medium immersion teacher working across Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful and Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug. The proposal therefore builds upon arrangements that are already established and provides an opportunity to create a dedicated teaching and learning environment for Trochi Hwyr within the new school.

School Identity and Naming

As part of the school's development, the Council intends to work with the leadership and Governing Body, learners, families and staff of Safle'r Gurnos and Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful, together with wider stakeholders, to identify an appropriate name for the school. The Executive Headteacher and Governing Body will be invited to play a leading role in developing proposals for the school's name and in engaging learners, the community and stakeholders as part of that process.

Learners will be encouraged to contribute ideas that reflect the Welsh language, local heritage, community identity and educational vision of the school. A final school name will be determined through the Council's established approval processes following consideration of recommendations received. This approach will ensure that the school's identity is shaped by those with the closest connection to the new school whilst providing opportunities for learners and the wider community to contribute to the process. This will help foster a sense of ownership, belonging and pride long before the school officially opens.

Every great school has a beginning, and this school's journey began as a seedling provision, nurtured and supported by the community of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful. As the seedling grows into a thriving school in its own right, what better way to continue this school's story than by allowing the children of Safle'r Gurnos and Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful to help choose the name by which it will be known for generations to come. It is hoped that this will be a memorable and exciting experience for learners, families and the wider school community, whilst helping to shape a school identity that reflects its origins, aspirations and connection to the communities it serves.



Governance & Leadership Arrangements

Subject to approval of the proposal to establish the new school, the Council intends to pursue governance arrangements whereby the new school and Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful would operate within a federation led by a single federated governing body and an Executive Headteacher.

Any federation arrangements would be progressed separately in accordance with the requirements of the Federation of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2014 and associated Welsh Government guidance, including any consultation and stakeholder engagement requirements applicable to that process. The establishment of a federation would not alter the status of the schools as separate schools, each retaining its own identity, pupils, delegated budget, admissions arrangements and catchment area.

The proposed school will be established as a separate maintained Welsh-medium primary school from September 2027.

The Council considers that a federated governance and Executive Headteacher model would provide continuity, stability and leadership capacity during the establishment and growth of the new school, whilst enabling both schools to benefit from shared expertise, collaborative working and the efficient use of resources.

These arrangements are expected to support:

- continuity of leadership;
- organisational stability;
- shared professional expertise;
- educational improvement and support;
- effective deployment of resources; and
- collaboration across both school communities.

The Council's long-term strategic ambition is for the new school to develop into a fully independent school with its own Governing Body and substantive Headteacher. Governance and leadership arrangements will therefore be reviewed as the school grows and develops.

Subject to future review, stakeholder engagement and the completion of any required statutory processes, it is anticipated that a separate Governing Body and substantive Headteacher would be established at an appropriate stage in the school's development.

Impact on Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful

Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful will continue to play a central role in Welsh-medium education within the County Borough. The Council recognises that the proposal is likely to influence the future distribution of Welsh-medium learner numbers and may result in lower future admissions to Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful in the short to medium-term than would otherwise have occurred.

However, the proposal will enable the school to focus on meeting demand within its revised catchment area, whilst continuing to provide access to high-quality Welsh-medium education at an established and successful school. The increased availability of places resulting from the revised catchment arrangements will also create opportunities to expand participation in Welsh-medium education that would not be possible if the school continued to serve the current wider catchment area.

Existing pupils attending Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful will not be required to transfer schools as a result of this proposal. The proposed catchment arrangements are intended to support the long-term success of both schools and increase the overall supply of Welsh-medium primary school places across the County Borough.

During the establishment phase, collaboration between the schools through federated governance arrangements and executive leadership will support continuity, stability and the sharing of expertise, helping to ensure the successful development of the new school whilst maintaining support for Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful.

The Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful community will have an important role in supporting the future of Welsh-medium education across the North and Central areas of the County Borough. This includes supporting the successful establishment of the new school whilst continuing to promote and strengthen Welsh-medium education within its revised catchment area.

Overall, the proposal is intended to strengthen Welsh-medium education across the areas currently served by Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful by increasing capacity, improving accessibility and supporting the long-term development of both schools.

Capital Project

The proposal includes both an interim accommodation solution and a proposed long-term permanent accommodation solution.

Interim Site: St Aloysius

The former St Aloysius site will undergo refurbishment works to provide high-quality accommodation suitable for Welsh-medium primary education from September 2027. Funding for these works has been secured through Welsh Government investment programmes and approved by the Council.

The refurbishment programme is expected to include improvements to classrooms, pupil toilet facilities, internal learning environments and external areas to ensure that the accommodation is fit for purpose and capable of supporting the delivery of high-quality Welsh-medium education.

Consideration will also be given to the reconfiguration of outdoor areas to support safe and efficient transport arrangements, including pupil drop-off and collection arrangements, helping to ensure the safety of pupils, staff and visitors. The proposed works will create a modern and welcoming learning environment capable of supporting the continued growth of Welsh-medium education within the County Borough.

The accommodation will also provide a suitable dedicated base for the Council's Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion) provision, which forms part of the wider Trochi Welsh-language immersion programme. The provision will support eligible learners from across the County Borough who are new or returning to Welsh-medium education in Years 1 to 6. Co-locating Trochi Hwyr within a Welsh-medium school will provide access to an immersive Welsh-language environment, strengthen progression pathways and support delivery of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan objectives.

AI generated image of the Refurbished Former St Aloysius Site

Illustrative image showing the potential refurbishment of the former St Aloysius site for use as a Welsh-medium primary school.



Final design subject to detailed design development and engagement with Safle'r Gurnos leadership.

Project Benefits

The project will:

- improve the quality and suitability of educational accommodation;
- provide modern teaching and learning environments;
- improve accessibility and inclusivity;
- enhance outdoor learning and play opportunities;
- support the continued growth of Welsh-medium education;
- provide capacity for future learner growth; and
- provide a dedicated teaching and learning base for the Council's Trochi Hwyr provision, serving eligible learners from across the County Borough

Permanent School Accommodation – Proposed New Build

The Council has approved the former Goetre Primary School site as the preferred site for the permanent location of the proposed Welsh-medium primary school from September 2032.

The anticipated delivery date for a new build school reflects the Council's current planning assumptions and will remain subject to ongoing review through the Council's wider school investment and school place planning processes, including consideration of future demand and accommodation requirements as the school develops.

The permanent school project would be funded through a combination of Welsh Government and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council capital investment, subject to business case approval processes. There will be future opportunities for pupils, parents, staff, governors and the wider community to participate in engagement activities and help shape the design and facilities for the proposed new build school.

Programme Timescales

The current programme anticipates:

- occupation of the interim school from September 2027; and
- occupation of the permanent school from September 2032, subject to the relevant business case approval processes

Background to the Proposal

Historically, Welsh-medium primary education in Merthyr Tydfil has been provided through Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful and Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug. These schools continue to play an important role in providing Welsh-medium education and supporting the development of Welsh language skills across the County Borough.

In April 2022, Safle'r Gurnos was established as a Welsh-medium seedling school operating as a satellite of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful. The provision was created to support the growth of Welsh-medium education in the north of the County Borough and to assess and develop demand for additional Welsh-medium school places.

Since January 2023, a co-located Cylch Meithrin has further strengthened opportunities for children and families to engage with Welsh-medium education from an early age. The Cylch admitted its first children in January 2023 and, from April 2023, has provided an established pathway into the Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision. Together, the Cylch Meithrin and seedling school have created a clear progression route from Welsh-medium childcare into Welsh-medium primary education.

The seedling school has provided an important foundation for the future growth of Welsh-medium education in Merthyr Tydfil. However, the current accommodation was established to support a developing seedling school and was not intended to accommodate the longer-term operation of a full primary school. Consequently, provision is currently limited to learners from maintained nursery through to Year 2 (ages 3 to 7).

In July 2025, the Council's Cabinet approved proposals to progress an interim accommodation solution for the school at the former St Aloysius Primary School site in readiness for September 2027. In the same month, Full Council approved the former Goetre Primary School site as the preferred

location for a permanent new-build Welsh-medium primary school and agreed the inclusion of the project within the Council's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.

The Council's approved approach provides for the school's development in three phases:

- the existing Safle'r Gurnos seedling school;
- the formal establishment of a separate maintained Welsh-medium primary school operating from the former St Aloysius Primary School site from September 2027; and
- proposed relocation to a permanent purpose-built school on the former Goetre Primary School site, currently planned for September 2032.

The proposal that is the subject of this consultation represents the next stage in that planned development. It would formally establish the existing seedling school as a separate maintained Welsh-medium primary school, providing the governance, organisational and accommodation arrangements necessary to support its continued growth and future development.

The proposal would also provide continuity for children currently attending the seedling school, enabling learners to continue their educational journey within the new school as it grows year by year. In doing so, it would establish a clear and sustainable pathway for future generations of learners and support the long-term development of Welsh-medium education in Merthyr Tydfil.

Development of Welsh-medium Education in Merthyr Tydfil

The Council is committed to increasing participation in Welsh-medium education and ensuring that sufficient school places are available to meet current and future demand.

The Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-2032 sets out its approach to increasing access to Welsh-medium education and strengthening pathways from early years provision through to primary and secondary education. Through the WESP, the Council is working towards increasing the proportion of Year 1 learners receiving Welsh-medium education to between 22% and 26% of the overall Year 1 cohort.

The baseline used to establish this target was the January 2020 Pupil Level Annual School Census, when 14% of Year 1 learners in Merthyr Tydfil attended Welsh-medium primary education. Participation has subsequently fluctuated and, whilst showing some recovery in recent years, remained at 13.0% of the Year 1 cohort in January 2026. Achieving the WESP target will therefore require sustained growth in participation in Welsh-medium education across the County Borough.

Historically, demand for Welsh-medium primary education increased steadily in the period leading up to the 2020 baseline. Between January 2016 and January 2020, the number of primary-aged pupils attending Welsh-medium schools increased from 596 to 663 learners, whilst surplus primary school places reduced from 10.9% to 0.9%. This demonstrated that existing Welsh-medium provision was approaching full utilisation and contributed to the Council's decision to increase capacity and plan for further expansion of the Welsh-medium sector.

From 2020 onwards, the Council implemented a number of measures to increase the availability of Welsh-medium school places. These included the expansion of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful through a Welsh Government-funded extension delivered under the Reducing Infant Class Sizes Programme, capacity increases at Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug through the repurposing of accommodation within the school, and the establishment of Safle'r Gurnos as a Welsh-medium seedling school in 2022.

At the same time, pupil projections and admission trends have been affected by a reduction in birth rates across the County Borough. As a result, surplus places across the Welsh-medium sector increased to 13.0% by January 2026.

The increase in surplus places should therefore be viewed in the context of both a planned expansion of Welsh-medium provision and a reduction in the overall size of pupil cohorts. The additional capacity created through these measures has ensured that Welsh-medium education is well placed to accommodate future growth in learner numbers and support delivery of the Council's long-term Welsh in Education Strategic Plan objectives.

Welsh-medium primary education is currently provided through:

- Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful;
- Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug; and
- Safle'r Gurnos, which currently operates as a satellite of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful.

Learners can subsequently continue their education through the medium of Welsh at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Rhydywaun.

The establishment of Safle'r Gurnos in 2022, together with the co-located Cylch Meithrin, represented a planned expansion of Welsh-medium education into the north of the County Borough. This has created a pathway through which children can begin their Welsh-language journey in the early years and progress into maintained Welsh-medium education. It has also enabled the Council to assess and develop the supply of Welsh-medium school places as part of its longer-term strategic planning to grow participation in Welsh-medium education.

The Council's approved plans include the continued development of Safle'r Gurnos, the current expansion of Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug and the proposed future development of a permanent purpose-built Welsh-medium primary school. Together, these proposals are expected to provide sufficient Welsh-medium primary capacity to support delivery of the Council's long-term WESP objectives.

However, providing sufficient places alone will not achieve the Welsh Government participation targets. Continued growth in Welsh-medium learner numbers across all three Welsh-medium primary schools will also be required. The formal establishment of Safle'r Gurnos as a separate maintained Welsh-medium primary school forms an important part of the Council's strategy to support that growth.

In addition to increasing Welsh-medium school capacity, the Council has strengthened Welsh-language immersion arrangements through Y Trochi, its Welsh-language immersion programme. Trochi supports learners at different stages of their Welsh-language journey through a range of immersion approaches delivered across the Welsh-medium sector. Since September 2026, immersion provision has been coordinated through a dedicated Welsh-medium immersion teacher working across Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful and Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug.

One strand of this programme is Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion), which supports learners in Years 1 to 6 who are new or returning to Welsh-medium education.

These arrangements support the Council's wider Welsh in Education Strategic Plan ambitions by creating additional opportunities for learners to access Welsh-medium education beyond the traditional points of admission. The development of a dedicated base for Trochi Hwyr forms part of the Council's longer-term approach to strengthening progression into Welsh-medium education across the County Borough.

Why Has This Proposal Been Developed?

The proposal has been developed in response to a combination of national, local and educational considerations.

National Drivers

The Welsh Government's *Cymraeg 2050* strategy sets out the national ambition of achieving one million Welsh speakers by 2050. Increasing participation in Welsh-medium education is a key element of achieving that ambition.

Local Drivers

The Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 includes ambitious targets for increasing participation in Welsh-medium education and requires long-term planning of school places to support future growth.

Safle'r Gurnos was established in 2022 as a seedling school operating as a satellite of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful. The provision has successfully established a Welsh-medium education pathway in the north of the County Borough and formed an important part of the Council's wider strategy to expand Welsh-medium provision.

The Council's approved strategy provides for the school's development in three phases:

- the existing Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision;
- the formal establishment of a separate school operating from the former St Aloysius Primary School site from September 2027; and
- proposed relocation to a permanent purpose-built school on the former Goetre Primary School site, currently planned for September 2032.

This proposal represents the next stage in that planned development.

Educational Drivers

Whilst successful, the current arrangements were established to support a developing seedling school and were not intended as a long-term solution for a growing primary school.

Formal establishment would:

- provide the school with its own identity and catchment area;
- establish appropriate governance and leadership arrangements;
- support the phased growth of the school beyond its current age range;
- provide accommodation capable of supporting future expansion;
- strengthen progression from childcare into primary and secondary education;
- provide continuity for existing learners as the school grows year-by-year;
- provide a suitable base for the Council's Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion) provision serving learners from across the County Borough;
- create a stronger sense of school community and belonging; and
- provide a clear pathway towards a permanent purpose-built school.

The proposal therefore forms an important part of the Council's wider strategy to increase participation in Welsh-medium education, strengthen progression pathways from early years to primary and secondary education, as well as pathways from English-medium to Welsh-medium, improving geographical access to Welsh-medium provision and support delivery of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and Cymraeg 2050 ambitions.

Ultimately, the proposal will help ensure that sufficient Welsh-medium provision is available to meet the future needs of learners in Merthyr Tydfil.

Why Formal Establishment Is Required

Safle'r Gurnos was established in 2022 as a Welsh-medium seedling provision operating as a satellite of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful. The provision has successfully fulfilled its intended purpose by supporting the growth of Welsh-medium education within the north of the County Borough and establishing a sustainable foundation for future Welsh-medium provision.

The success of the provision has provided confidence that a sustainable third Welsh-medium primary school can be developed to serve communities in the north of the County Borough.

While the current arrangements have been effective in supporting the early development of Welsh-medium provision, they were not intended to provide a long-term solution for a fully established primary school. Future growth in learner numbers will require larger accommodation, dedicated governance and leadership arrangements, and an organisational framework capable of supporting the school's continuing development.

Formal establishment is therefore required to:

- create a separate maintained Welsh-medium primary school with its own identity;
- establish a dedicated catchment area;
- support appropriate governance and leadership arrangements;
- provide accommodation capable of supporting the school's future growth;
- strengthen longer-term planning of Welsh-medium school places; and
- provide the organisational framework required for the future permanent school.

Formal establishment therefore represents the next planned stage in the development of Welsh-medium education in Merthyr Tydfil, enabling the successful Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision to develop into a sustainable Welsh-medium primary school capable of meeting future demand and supporting future generations of learners.

Site Selection and Accommodation Strategy

Prior to developing this proposal, the Council undertook a detailed options appraisal to identify the most appropriate interim and long-term accommodation solutions to support the future development of Welsh-medium education in the north of the County Borough. A range of options were considered, including the continued use of Safle'r Gurnos, the refurbishment of former school buildings and the development of a new-build Welsh-medium primary school.

The appraisal assessed each option against a range of factors, including educational suitability, capacity, accessibility, value for money, deliverability, long-term sustainability and the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan objectives.

Following this assessment, the Council identified:

- the former St Aloysius Primary School site as the preferred interim accommodation solution from September 2027; and
- a new-build Welsh-medium primary school on the former Goetre Primary School site as the preferred long-term solution, currently anticipated from September 2032.

The former St Aloysius Primary School site was identified as the preferred interim solution because it provides sufficient capacity for projected pupil numbers, allows the school to remain within the Gurnos community and can provide suitable accommodation following refurbishment works.

The former Goetre Primary School site was identified as the preferred long-term solution because it provides a large site capable of accommodating a purpose-built Welsh-medium primary school and supporting the long-term growth of Welsh-medium education within Merthyr Tydfil.

Current & Projected Pupil Numbers

Current Pupil Numbers

The pupil numbers attending the seedling school provision at Safle'r Gurnos since the establishment of a fully operational Welsh-medium pathway from Cylch Meithrin into nursery and primary education in 2023 are shown below

Numbers are taken from the September count date of each academic year to reflect full-time pupils only. However, there have also been part-time nursery admissions each January and April, with these learners subsequently progressing into full-time nursery places each September.

Safle'r Gurnos: Pupil Numbers - 2024 to 2027

Year Group	Pupil Numbers Jan 2024	Pupil Numbers Jan 2025	Pupil Numbers Jan 2026	Pupil Numbers Jan 2027
Pre-Nursery	5 (2.5 FTE)	8 (4 FTE)	3 (1.5 FTE)	5 (2.5 FTE)
Nursery	8	9	10	5
Reception		8	9	10
Year 1			8	10
Year 2				7
Total	13	25	30	37

The pupil numbers demonstrate continued growth since the pathway became fully operational in 2023. Overall, the provision has grown from 8 pupils in September 2023 to 32 pupils in September 2026.

As would be expected within a developing seedling school operating with relatively small cohorts, annual admissions have fluctuated from year to year. Whilst the September 2026 Nursery cohort is smaller than the equivalent cohort in previous years, this has been offset by the continued progression and retention of learners across the existing year groups, resulting in overall growth in the total number of pupils attending the provision.

The September figures reflect full-time pupils on roll and do not include part-time pre-nursery admissions during the academic year. There are currently five pre-nursery places allocated for January 2027, with further admissions anticipated during April 2027 and September 2027. Collectively, these admissions are expected to support growth to the projected Nursery cohort of 10 pupils by September 2027.

Learner numbers have also been influenced by parental preference and individual circumstances, with some families joining the provision at different stages (either Pre-Nursery, Nursery or Reception). To date, there have been no mid-term entry requests.

Feedback received from some parents has indicated that uncertainty regarding longer-term progression beyond the existing age range of the seedling provision, together with the limitations associated with accommodation designed for a developing school, have been factors influencing those decisions.

Despite these challenges and short-term fluctuations in individual cohorts, the overall growth trajectory of the provision has remained positive and demonstrates the continuing development of Welsh-medium education within the northern area of the County Borough.

The table below sets out the current and previous pupil numbers for Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful since January 2023.

Ysgol Santes Tudful: Pupil Numbers – 2023 to 2027

	Pupil Numbers	Pupil Numbers	Pupil Numbers	Pupil Numbers	Pupil Numbers
	Jan 2023	Jan 2024	Jan 2025	Jan 2026	Jan 2027
Pre-Nursery	10 (5 FTE)	15 (7.5 FTE)	18 (9 FTE)	19 (9.5 FTE)	15 (7.5FTE)
Nursery	46	34	29	33	43
Reception	51	46	36	30	33
Year 1 to Year 6	326	323	311	281	246
Total	433	418	394	364	337

The pupil population at Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful has been influenced by a range of factors including demographic trends, fluctuations in birth rates, parental preference and, since 2023, the establishment and growth of Welsh-medium provision at Safle'r Gurnos.

The development of the provision at Safle'r Gurnos has enabled an increasing number of learners residing within the northern area of the County Borough to access Welsh-medium education closer to home, resulting in a proportion of pupils attending Safle'r Gurnos who may otherwise have attended Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful.

Whilst this has influenced the distribution of learners between the two sites, both provisions have continued to operate as part of a single school and the development of Safle'r Gurnos has increased overall access to Welsh-medium education within the County Borough.

The proposal would formalise the existing pattern of provision by creating a separate school and establishing clear catchment arrangements for both schools.

Projected Pupil Numbers

The table below sets out the projected pupil numbers for the new Welsh-medium Primary School from September 2027 onwards, following the establishment of the school as a separate Welsh-medium primary school operating from the former St Aloysius site.

New Welsh-medium Primary School: Projected Pupil Numbers – 2028 to 2032

Year Group	Pupil Numbers Jan 2028	Pupil Numbers Jan 2029	Pupil Numbers Jan 2030	Pupil Numbers Jan 2031	Pupil Numbers Jan 2032
Pre-Nursery	5 (2.5 FTE)	5 (2.5 FTE)	5 (2.5 FTE)	4 (2 FTE)	5 (2.5 FTE)
Nursery	10	12	14	16	18
Reception	5	10	12	14	16
Year 1	10	5	10	12	14
Year 2	10	10	5	10	12
Year 3	7	10	10	5	10
Year 4		7	10	10	5
Year 5			7	10	10
Year 6				7	10
Total	47	59	63	88	100

The projections indicate continued growth in learner numbers following the establishment of the school. Annual growth is projected to increase progressively over the period, from approximately 10 additional pupils in September 2027 to 18 additional pupils by September 2031. This reflects the introduction of additional year groups, the development of the school across the full primary age range, and the anticipated benefits of providing a clear progression pathway through to Year 6 within a dedicated school setting.

The projections also assume that the establishment of a separate school, together with improved accommodation and a distinct school identity, will enable the school to attract and retain learners from within the proposed catchment area who wish to access Welsh-medium provision as the school develops.

This is informed by feedback received from some parents, which indicated that uncertainty regarding future progression arrangements and the limitations associated with accommodation designed for a developing school were factors influencing decisions to transfer from the provision.

Collectively, these projections indicate that the school is capable of growing into a sustainable full primary provision serving the northern area of the County Borough.

The projections are informed by the growth achieved by Safle'r Gurnos since 2023, current pre-nursery and nursery admissions, anticipated progression through the existing year groups and the additional certainty that will be provided through the establishment of a standalone school with a clear catchment area and progression pathway to Year 6."

The projected pupil numbers remain below the school's planned capacity throughout the establishment phase and indicate sufficient accommodation will be available to support continued growth as the school develops.

The table below sets out the projected pupil numbers for Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful from 2027 onwards.

Ysgol Santes Tudful: Pupil Numbers – 2028 to 2032

	Pupil Numbers	Pupil Numbers	Pupil Numbers	Pupil Numbers	Pupil Numbers
	Jan 2028	Jan 2029	Jan 2030	Jan 2031	Jan 2032
Pre-Nursery	15 (7.5 FTE)	16 (8 FTE)	16 (8 FTE)	16 (8 FTE)	16 (8 FTE)
Nursery	36	31	42	43	42
Reception	41	39	35	45	47
Year 1 to Year 6	253	253	240	227	235
Total	345	339	333	331	340

The projected pupil numbers indicate that Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful is expected to remain a sustainable Welsh-medium primary school following the establishment of the new school. Whilst the introduction of separate catchment arrangements will result in a proportion of learners being allocated to the new school, Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful will continue to serve the southern and central areas of the County Borough and will retain capacity to accommodate future growth.

As with all schools across Wales, future pupil numbers will be influenced by demographic trends and fluctuations in birth rates. However, the revised catchment arrangements, together with ongoing work to promote Welsh-medium education and improve transition rates from Welsh-medium childcare into statutory education, including the establishment of a new Cylch Meithin collocated on the Ysgol Santes Tudful site, provide opportunities for future growth in pupil numbers.

The Council will continue to monitor admissions, pupil projections and transition rates across both schools as part of its ongoing planning of school places and delivery of its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

Overall Position

Taken together, the projected pupil numbers for both schools demonstrate that the proposal is intended to establish and maintain two sustainable Welsh-medium primary schools serving different geographical areas of the County Borough. The proposal will create a more geographically accessible pattern of Welsh-medium provision, increase overall capacity within the sector and support future growth in participation in line with the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

Condition and Suitability of School Buildings

The Council aims to provide high-quality learning environments that support the delivery of education and promote positive outcomes for learners.

As part of its ongoing programme of asset management, the Council commissions condition and suitability assessments of school buildings. These assessments help inform investment priorities and consider both the physical condition of buildings and their suitability for delivering modern educational requirements.

Condition surveys assess the state of repair of school buildings and identify any significant defects or maintenance liabilities. Suitability assessments consider how effectively accommodation supports teaching and learning, including the availability of appropriate classrooms, specialist facilities, outdoor learning environments, recreation space and opportunities to deliver the Curriculum for Wales.

School Building	Age Range	Condition	Backlog Maintenance	Suitability
Safle'r Gurnos	3 - 7	C	£220,451	B
St Aloysius	3 - 11	C	£406,409	A

Safle'r Gurnos

Condition C - Operational but major repair or replacement needed in the short to medium term (generally within three years).

Suitability B – Satisfactory. Performing as intended but does not effectively support the delivery of the curriculum in some areas.

The existing Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision was established to support the initial development and growth of Welsh-medium education within the area.

Whilst the accommodation has successfully fulfilled this role and remains suitable for the delivery of Foundation Learning and the early years of primary education, it was not designed to accommodate the long-term operation of a full 3-11 primary school.

As the school grows and establishes Key Stage 2 provision, the limitations of the current accommodation become increasingly evident. The site does not provide sufficient capacity or the range of teaching and learning environments required to support learners from Nursery through to Year 6.

In particular, it does not offer the breadth of indoor and outdoor facilities normally expected of a full primary school and required to support the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales across all age groups.

Former St Aloysius Primary School

Condition C - Operational but major repair or replacement needed in the short to medium term (generally within three years).

Suitability A - Good facilities suitable for teaching, learning and wellbeing in school.

The former St Aloysius Primary School site has been identified as the preferred interim accommodation solution because it was designed and operated as a full primary school.

As such, it provides significantly greater capacity and a wider range of facilities capable of supporting learners from Nursery through to Year 6.

Although the site currently requires investment, the proposed Welsh Government funded capital works will address identified condition issues and further enhance the suitability of the accommodation for educational purposes.

The refurbishment programme is expected to:

- improve the overall condition of the building and reduce identified maintenance liabilities;
- provide accommodation suitable for a full primary school serving learners from Nursery to Year 6;
- improve teaching and learning environments;
- create facilities that better support delivery of the Curriculum for Wales;
- enhance accessibility and inclusion;
- improve opportunities for outdoor learning, play and recreation;
- provide appropriate accommodation to support the continued growth of the school; and
- create a learning environment more consistent with that expected of a fully established primary school.

The investment in the former St Aloysius site will provide learners with access to improved educational facilities and a learning environment better suited to the needs of a growing 3-11 primary school.

This will also support the continued development of Welsh-medium education in the northern area of the County Borough by providing accommodation capable of supporting the school's planned growth from its current seedling provision into a fully established primary school.

Standards and Educational Benefits

The Council works closely with school leaders and governing bodies to ensure that teaching and learning is of a high quality and that appropriate arrangements are in place to support learner progress, wellbeing and achievement.

Since its establishment, Safle'r Gurnos has benefited from operating as part of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful, enabling learners to access the school's established curriculum, leadership arrangements, teaching expertise and wider educational support. This has provided continuity and stability during the development of the seedling provision and has supported the successful introduction of Welsh-medium education within the northern area of the County Borough.

Schools are inspected by Estyn, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales, as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify strengths and areas for development and support continuous improvement in educational standards.

Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful was most recently inspected by [Estyn](#) in November 2023 under the current inspection framework and received one recommendation:

R1: Develop pupils' independent Welsh writing skills

This proposal is being brought forward in response to the strategic aim for continued growth of Welsh-medium education within the County Borough and the need to establish appropriate long-term arrangements for future provision.

Educational Benefits

The development of the Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision has already demonstrated the benefits of establishing Welsh-medium education within the northern area of the County Borough. Since the establishment of the Cylch Meithrin pathway, learner numbers have grown steadily and increasing numbers of families have been able to access Welsh-medium education closer to their communities.

The proposal would build upon these foundations and provide a number of additional educational benefits for learners and families, including:

- a clear and continuous Welsh-medium pathway from early years through to Year 6;
- improved continuity of learning for pupils currently attending the seedling provision;
- greater certainty for families regarding future progression arrangements;
- access to accommodation capable of supporting the delivery of the full primary curriculum from Nursery through to Year 6;
- access to a dedicated base for the Council's Trochi Hwyr provision, supporting learners in Years 1 to 6 who are new or returning to Welsh-medium education;
- teaching and learning environments designed specifically to meet the needs of primary-aged learners at all stages of their education;
- improved access to outdoor learning, physical education, recreation and play facilities appropriate for a full primary school;
- enhanced opportunities to support learner wellbeing, play-based learning and the wider Curriculum for Wales;
- opportunities to further strengthen the school's identity, ethos and sense of community;
- governance and leadership arrangements focused on supporting the school's continued development;
- increased capacity to support the future growth of Welsh-medium education; and

- a sustainable framework for the long-term development of Welsh-medium education within the north of the County Borough.

The Council considers that the proposal would provide the organisational, leadership and accommodation arrangements necessary to support the continued development of high-quality Welsh-medium education. In particular, it would provide teaching and learning environments suitable for learners throughout the full primary age range, together with access to outdoor learning, recreation and play facilities that are more consistent with those expected within a fully established primary school.

The proposal would also address a number of the factors identified by some families as influencing decisions to transfer from the seedling provision, particularly in relation to future progression arrangements and the limitations associated with accommodation designed for a developing school.

The proposal would also strengthen opportunities for learners to access Welsh-medium education beyond the traditional points of admission by providing a dedicated base for the Council's Trochi Hwyr provision. As part of the wider Trochi programme, Trochi Hwyr will support learners to develop the Welsh-language skills and confidence required to participate fully in mainstream Welsh-medium education.

Ultimately, the proposal will provide learners with a clear and sustainable pathway to access Welsh-medium education within a growing school community, whilst supporting improved learner progression, enhanced educational opportunities and the Council's wider ambitions for Welsh-medium education in Merthyr Tydfil.

Catchment Areas

At present, Welsh-medium primary education within the northern and central areas of the County Borough is provided through Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful, which serves a wide geographical catchment area.

The existing Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision currently operates as a satellite provision of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful and therefore falls within the school's existing catchment arrangements.

As Welsh-medium education provision continues to expand, the Council considers it appropriate that the proposed third Welsh-medium primary school operates with its own dedicated catchment area. This will support the long-term development of both schools and provide greater clarity for families when making decisions regarding school admissions.

Why a New Catchment Area Is Required

The establishment of a third Welsh-medium primary school represents a significant expansion of Welsh-medium educational provision within the County Borough.

As the proposed school develops and grows, a dedicated catchment area is required to:

- support the formal establishment of the school;
- provide clarity regarding future admissions arrangements;
- support longer-term place planning;
- ensure sustainable learner numbers across Welsh-medium schools; and

- improve accessibility to Welsh-medium education for families living within the northern part of the County Borough.

The creation of a dedicated catchment area will also support future forecasting of learner numbers and assist the Council in ensuring sufficient Welsh-medium places are available to meet demand.

Proposed Catchment Arrangements

The catchment area for the proposed new Welsh-medium primary school will be established through a revision of the existing catchment area for Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful.

This approach will ensure that both schools have clearly defined and sustainable catchment boundaries, providing greater clarity for parents/carers regarding school admissions and supporting the Council's future pupil place planning. The catchment area for Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug would remain unchanged.

The proposed catchment boundaries have been developed to support:

- equitable access to Welsh-medium education;
- effective planning of school places;
- sustainable learner numbers across both schools;
- efficient use of educational resources; and
- the continued growth of Welsh-medium education within Merthyr Tydfil.

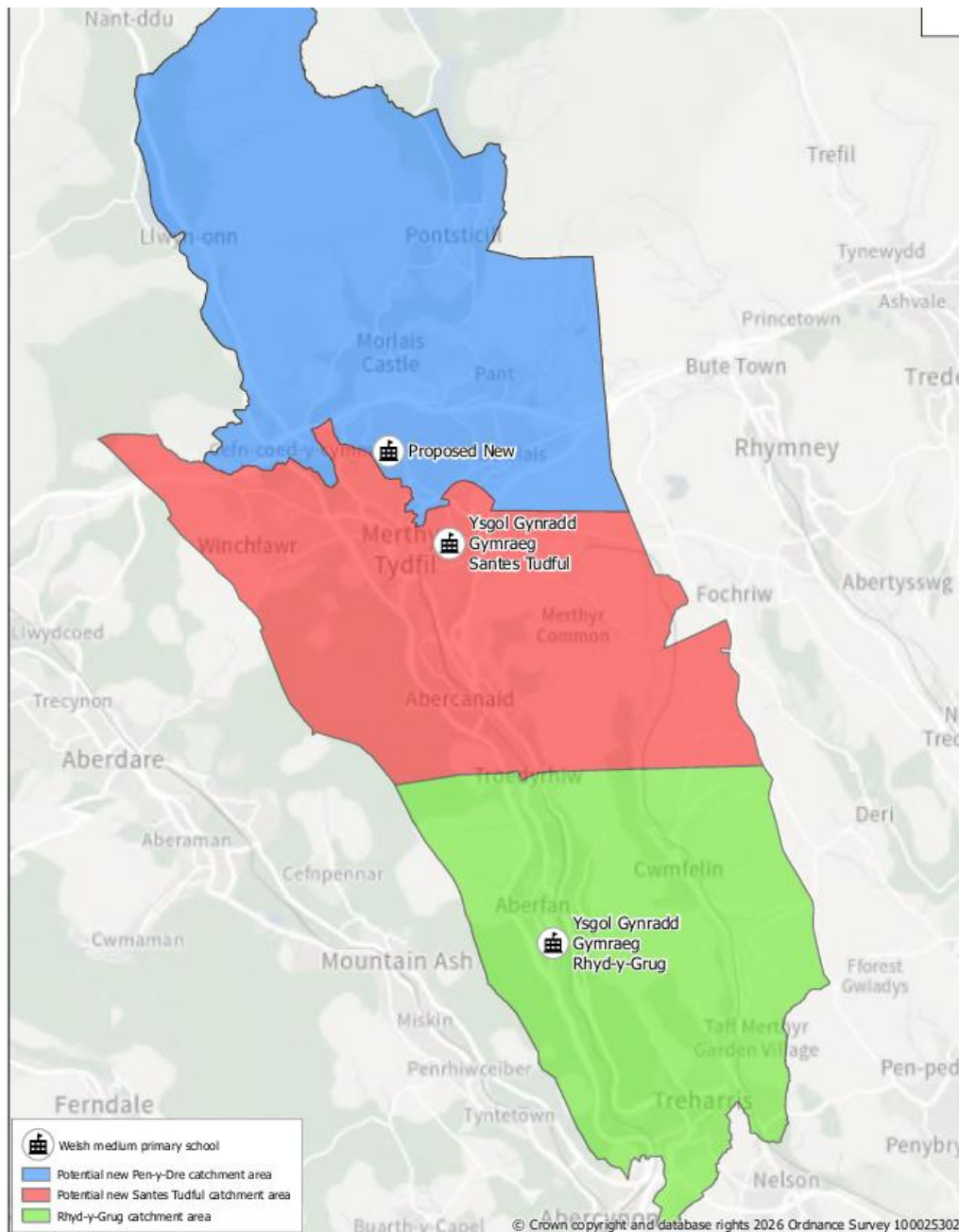
Catchment Methodology

When developing the proposed catchment area, the Council has considered a range of factors including:

- current patterns of Welsh-medium school attendance;
- existing and projected learner numbers;
- population distribution;
- geographical accessibility;
- transport considerations;
- future housing development; and
- the long-term sustainability of Welsh-medium education provision.

The proposed catchment arrangements are intended to support both existing and future learners whilst creating a sustainable framework for the continued growth of Welsh-medium education.

Map of Proposed Catchment Areas for Welsh-medium Primary Schools in Merthyr Tydfil



New Welsh Medium Primary – Proposed Catchment Area

Welsh-medium Nursery & Primary Education Provision

Welsh-medium nursery and primary education will be provided by the new Welsh-medium primary school being formally established from the existing Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful.

English-medium Nursery & Primary Education is provided by:-

Dowlais Primary School
 Gellifaelog Primary School
 Goetre Community Primary School
 Gwaunfarren Primary School

Ysgol y Graig Primary

Secondary Education Provision

Welsh-medium secondary education is provided by Ysgol Gymraeg Rhydywaun.

English-medium secondary education is provided by Pen Y Dre High School

Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful – Revised Catchment Area

Welsh-medium Nursery & Primary Education Provision

Welsh-medium nursery and primary education will continue to be provided by Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful.

English-medium Nursery & Primary Education is provided by:-

Caedraw Primary School

Coed Y Dderwen Community Primary School

Cyfarthfa Park Primary School

Heolgerrig Primary School

Twynyroddyn Community Primary School

Abercanaid Community Primary School

Secondary Education Provision

Welsh-medium secondary education is provided by Ysgol Gymraeg Rhydywaun.

English-medium secondary education is provided by Cyfarthfa High School and Afon Taf High School

Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd Y Grug - Existing Catchment Area (Unchanged)

The current catchment area for Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug is not affected by this proposal and will remain unchanged.

Faith-based English-medium education for learners aged 3 to 16 is provided by Saint Carlo Acutis Catholic School across all three Welsh-medium primary catchment areas.

Admission Arrangements

The Council will remain the admission authority for the proposed school. Admissions will continue to be administered in accordance with the Council's published admission arrangements and relevant statutory guidance. Applications for places at the proposed school will continue to be managed through the Council's existing admissions processes.

As part of this proposal, a dedicated catchment area will be established for the new Welsh-medium primary school. The catchment area has been designed to support the long-term development of Welsh-medium education within the northern part of the County Borough and to provide greater clarity for families regarding future school admissions.

The proposed school will initially operate from the former St Aloysius site from September 2027 and will continue to grow incrementally year-on-year. Additional year groups will be admitted annually, enabling the school to develop progressively into a full primary school provision.

Admissions arrangements for the proposed school will be applied in accordance with the approved catchment area and the Council's published oversubscription criteria, should applications exceed the number of places available.

Existing Learners

Learners currently attending Saffle'r Gurnos will continue their education as part of the formal establishment of the new school and will not be required to reapply for places as a consequence of this proposal.

Similarly, existing pupils attending Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful will not be required to transfer schools as a result of the proposed catchment changes and may continue their education at the school until the end of Year 6.

Future Admissions

From September 2027 onwards, applications for nursery and reception places will be determined in accordance with the revised Welsh-medium catchment arrangements proposed within this consultation.

Parents and carers should note that admission to a school does not automatically confer eligibility for free home to school transport. Transport entitlement will continue to be assessed separately in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy and relevant statutory requirements.

Please refer to *Learner Travel and School Transport Arrangements* section for further information.

Trochi Hwyr

The proposed school is intended to provide a dedicated base for the Council's Trochi Hwyr provision. Access to Trochi Hwyr will be managed separately from the ordinary nursery and reception admission arrangements for the proposed school.

Detailed admission, registration and transition arrangements for learners accessing Trochi Hwyr will be developed ahead of September 2027. These arrangements will determine where learners are registered whilst accessing Trochi Hwyr and how they transition into mainstream Welsh-medium provision following completion of the programme

The purpose of Trochi Hwyr will be to support successful transition into Welsh-medium education. The Council will ensure that families receive clear information about registration, attendance, transport and the learner's intended destination school before a placement begins.

Capacity and Admission Numbers

The school will initially operate with a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 15. Based on the Welsh Government Methodology for Calculating School Capacity (MCSW), this equates to an operational capacity of 105 places during the establishment phase.

The school is being established with an ultimate capacity of 210 places and a PAN of 30. During the period in which the school operates from the former St Aloysius site, the Council may review the operational PAN and capacity in response to demand for places.

The former St Aloysius site is capable of accommodating up to 175 pupils (PAN 25) and any changes would be considered through the Council's normal school place planning and admissions processes.

Admissions will be administered in accordance with the Council's School Admissions Policy and admission arrangements will be published annually as part of the Council's coordinated admissions process.

The Council will continue to monitor pupil numbers, admissions and demand for Welsh-medium education as the school develops and will keep admission arrangements and operational capacity under review.

Learner Travel and School Transport Arrangements

The proposal does not amend the Council's Home to School Transport (HTST) Policy. Eligibility for transport assistance will continue to be determined in accordance with the Council's approved policy and relevant statutory requirements.

Current Arrangements

Home to school transport is currently provided in accordance with the Council's approved HTST Policy. Free transport is available to eligible pupils attending their nearest suitable school where the distance between home and school exceeds 2 miles for primary-aged children (3-11 years).

Free transport may also be provided where a pupil meets the eligibility criteria for Special Transport, including where a pupil has ALN, a disability and/or a medical condition and has been assessed as requiring transport assistance.

Arrangements for pupils attending the Proposed School

Transport entitlement for learners attending the proposed Welsh-medium primary school at the interim St Aloysius site will be assessed in accordance with the Council's HTST Policy and relevant statutory requirements.

The Council will have regard to the importance of continuity for existing learners where eligibility may be affected solely as a consequence of the relocation of the school now or in the future.

Arrangements for pupils attending Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful

Pupils who are already in receipt of free home to school transport to Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful, but who would fall outside the revised catchment area as a consequence of this proposal, will

continue to receive free transport assistance, provided they remain continuously enrolled at the school and their circumstances remain materially unchanged.

New pupils admitted to Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful from September 2027 onwards who reside outside the revised catchment area will not ordinarily be eligible for free home to school transport.

Transport Arrangements for Trochi Hwyr

The proposed school is intended to provide a dedicated base for the Council's Trochi Hwyr provision, supporting eligible learners from across the County Borough. As a result, additional transport arrangements may be required to enable some learners to access the provision.

Detailed transport arrangements will be developed as part of the implementation planning for Trochi Hwyr. These arrangements will consider learner needs, travel distances, journey times, operational requirements and the Council's transport policies and statutory duties.

Equality, Inclusion and Vulnerable Learners

Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (eFSM)

The table below shows the number and percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals attending Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful and Safle'r Gurnos.

Ysgol Santes Tudful Primary Main site	Jan 2024	Jan 2025	Jan 2026
Pupil numbers	413	386	363
No. eFSM	36	34	30
% eFSM	8.7%	8.8%	8.3%

Safle'r Gurnos	Jan 2024	Jan 2025	Jan 2026
Pupil numbers	13	25	28
No. eFSM	0	3	6
% eFSM	0.0%	12.0%	21.4%

The proportion of learners eligible for free school meals provides an indication of the level of socio-economic disadvantage within a school community. As Safle'r Gurnos currently operates with relatively small pupil cohorts, care should be taken when interpreting percentage changes from year to year, as relatively small changes in pupil numbers can result in significant fluctuations in reported percentages.

Pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

The table below shows the number of pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) attending Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful and Safle'r Gurnos.

Ysgol Santes Tudful Primary Main site	Jan 2024	Jan 2025	Jan 2026
Pupil numbers	413	386	363
School Action	4	5	N/A
School Action Plus	7	2	N/A
Statemented	1	N/A	N/A
School Maintained IDP	2	7	8
LA Maintained IDP	0	3	0
Safle'r Gurnos	Jan 2024	Jan 2025	Jan 2026
Pupil numbers	13	25	28
School Action	0	0	N/A
School Action Plus	0	0	N/A
Statemented	0	N/A	N/A
School Maintained IDP	0	2	1
LA Maintained IDP	0	0	0

As with free school meal data, the relatively small size of cohorts currently attending Safle'r Gurnos means that modest changes in pupil numbers can have a noticeable impact on reported percentages.

The Council does not believe that the proposal would have a negative impact on pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils with Additional Learning Needs or other vulnerable learners. The proposal does not change existing arrangements for supporting vulnerable learners, and appropriate support and interventions would continue to be provided in accordance with statutory requirements, Council policies and individual learner needs.

The proposed refurbishment of the former St Aloysius site is expected to provide a learning environment better suited to supporting learners across the full primary age range and to contribute positively to the delivery of inclusive educational provision.

Late Immersion Pathway into Welsh-medium Education

Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion) forms part of the Council's wider Trochi Welsh-language immersion programme. The availability of a dedicated base for Trochi Hwyr may increase opportunities for learners currently attending English-medium education to transfer into Welsh-medium education during their primary education, beyond the traditional points of admission.

The Council considers that Trochi Hwyr supports equality of access by providing an additional pathway into Welsh-medium education and structured support to help learners develop the Welsh-language skills and confidence required to participate fully in mainstream Welsh-medium provision.

Human Resources Implications

The establishment of the proposed school will require staffing structures capable of supporting learners during each stage of the school's development. During the establishment phase, leadership arrangements are intended to operate through an Executive Headteacher model, providing strategic leadership across the federated schools and supporting the successful establishment of the new school.

The current staffing resource supporting Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful and Safle'r Gurnos has been developed to meet the needs of an established school and a satellite seedling school operating across two sites. As the seedling school develops as a separate identifiable school as part of this proposal, additional staffing capacity will be required to support its growth and operation as a standalone school.

Staffing structures will therefore grow progressively in line with learner numbers, operational requirements and the phased development of the school.

This phased approach will support:

- continuity of learning;
- workforce sustainability;
- effective deployment of resources;
- access to Welsh-medium teaching expertise;
- the gradual development of leadership and staffing structures appropriate to two separate schools.

It is not anticipated that the proposal will reduce the overall staffing requirement across Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful and the satellite school provision at Safle'r Gurnos. As the seedling school develops as a separate school, additional staffing capacity will be required to support its growth and operation as a standalone provision.

Existing staff will continue to be supported throughout the implementation process and any staffing implications arising from the proposal, including the establishment of staffing arrangements and employment contracts for the new school, will be managed in accordance with applicable employment policies, consultation requirements and agreed procedures.

Subject to future review and statutory processes, it is anticipated that a substantive Headteacher would be appointed when the school becomes fully independent.

Separate staffing arrangements will be required to support the Council's Trochi Hwyr provision. These will be developed in accordance with the final operating model and anticipated level of demand. Staffing and funding associated specifically with Trochi Hwyr will be considered separately from the mainstream staffing structure required for the phased growth of the proposed school.

Finance

The Council has considered both the capital and revenue implications associated with the proposal.

Capital Implications

The capital funding implications are covered by WG grant funding (former St Aloysius refurbishment) and a combination of WG grant and MTCBC core capital funding for the proposed new build school on the former Goetre primary school.

These financial implications are already factored into the Council's medium-term financial planning.

Revenue Implications – School Funding

The new school will receive annual revenue funding through the Council's school funding formula. This includes funding linked to pupil numbers, school premises, additional learning needs, deprivation and other locally determined funding factors.

As the school will initially operate as a seedling provision and grow gradually over time, the funding generated through pupil numbers alone would not be sufficient to support the staffing structure required to deliver an appropriate curriculum and effective leadership arrangements. Seedling funding will therefore be required during the growth phase to support appropriate leadership, staffing and curriculum delivery arrangements until the school reaches a sustainable size.

Welsh-medium seedling provision is already established within Safle'r Gurnos and currently receives formula funding and seedling funding associated with operating as a split-site satellite provision of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful.

The Council has undertaken initial financial modelling of the anticipated costs of operating the proposed school from September 2027 and compared these with the funding that would be generated through the normal funding formula.

The modelling indicates that some seedling funding is likely to continue to be required during the establishment phase of the school whilst pupil numbers continue to grow. The level and duration of this funding requirement will depend on a range of factors, including pupil numbers, staffing arrangements and the operating model adopted by the school.

A significant proportion of the total funding required for the proposed school is already being incurred by the Council through the current seedling arrangements and is already factored into the Council's medium-term financial planning.

The detailed revenue implications will continue to be refined as the proposal progresses and will be considered through the Council's annual budget-setting processes, including confirmation of the level of seedling funding required during the establishment phase. Formula funding will then be reviewed annually as pupil projections, staffing requirements, formula factors and other relevant assumptions are updated.

Trochi Hwyr

The school will also provide a dedicated base for the Council's Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion) provision. The Council is currently funding the provision through Welsh Government grant support.

Trochi Hwyr funding requirements from September 2027 will be identified separately from the funding required to operate the proposed school and any funding requirements beyond the current Welsh Government grant allocation will be assessed as part of the Council's medium-term financial planning and annual budget-setting processes.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Proposal

Advantages

- Creates a clearly identifiable Welsh-medium primary school serving the northern area of the County Borough.
- Increases choice and accessibility for families wishing to access Welsh-medium education.
- Provides a clear and continuous Welsh-medium pathway from early years provision through to Year 6.
- Supports the continued growth of Welsh-medium education and delivery of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.
- Provides accommodation better suited to the delivery of the full primary curriculum from Nursery through to Year 6.
- Improves teaching and learning environments, including access to outdoor learning, play and recreation facilities.
- Provides continuity for learners currently attending Safle'r Gurnos as the school grows year-by-year.
- Creates a stronger school identity, community and sense of belonging.
- Establishes a sustainable long-term framework for Welsh-medium education within the northern area of the County Borough.
- Supports progression from childcare, through primary education, and onwards to Welsh-medium secondary education.
- Provides a dedicated county-wide base for the Council's Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion) provision, supporting learners wishing to transfer into Welsh-medium education after the traditional points of admission.
- Contributes to the Council's Cymraeg 2050 and Welsh in Education Strategic Plan ambitions.

Disadvantages

- The school will initially operate from an interim site before the proposed relocation to a permanent new-build school.
- Learners attending the school may experience two periods of transition during its development: relocation to the St Aloysius site and then to the permanent school.
- It will take several years for the school to develop into a full primary school operating across all year groups from Nursery to Year 6.
- The proposal is likely to reduce future admissions growth at Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful in the short to medium term.
- Revised catchment arrangements may affect the preferred Welsh-medium school available to some families making future admissions applications.
- Revised catchment arrangements may affect future eligibility for home-to-school transport for some families.

Benefits and Risks of the Proposal

Benefits

The proposal offers a range of educational, strategic and community benefits.

These include:

- increased Welsh-medium capacity across the County Borough;
- improved geographical access to Welsh-medium education;
- strengthened progression pathways from early years through to primary and secondary education;
- improved educational accommodation and learning environments;
- greater certainty for families regarding Welsh-medium educational pathways;
- enhanced provision within the northern area of the County Borough;
- a dedicated base for the Council's Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion) provision;
- increased opportunities for learners to access Welsh-medium education beyond the traditional points of admission;
- support for Welsh Government, Cymraeg 2050 and WESP objectives; and
- the creation of a sustainable long-term Welsh-medium primary school.

Risks

As with any significant school organisation proposal, a number of risks have been identified. The Council has considered these risks and identified measures to reduce or mitigate their potential impact.

Risk	Mitigating factor
Demand is lower or higher than forecast.	The Council will continue to monitor admission trends, learner participation rates, demographic changes, catchment arrangements and WESP targets. Admission numbers, capacity planning and future accommodation proposals will be reviewed as required.
Future admissions at Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful are lower than would otherwise have been expected.	New Cylch Meithrin provision for YST is being established from January 2027 and opportunities to improve transition rates from existing Meithrin will be explored. The Council has considered current and projected pupil numbers, birth rates, housing growth and Welsh-medium participation rates. Revised catchment arrangements are intended to support the long-term sustainability of both schools.
The new school takes longer than anticipated to establish sustainable learner numbers.	The school will grow incrementally through planned admissions arrangements and will continue to benefit from federated governance

	and executive leadership arrangements during the establishment phase.
Recruitment and retention of suitably qualified Welsh-speaking staff	Workforce planning arrangements will be developed alongside the phased growth of the school. The federated model will support collaboration, professional development and deployment of expertise across schools.
Demand for Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion) provision exceeds or falls below current expectations.	The Council will continue to monitor participation levels through Trochi and review staffing, accommodation and operational arrangements as demand develops.
Additional transport requirements associated with Trochi Hwyr provision.	Detailed operational and transport arrangements will be developed prior to implementation. Learner numbers, travel distances and operational requirements will be considered as part of future planning and budget setting processes.
Increased traffic and transport activity at the interim St Aloysius site.	The refurbishment project will consider site access, traffic management and dedicated drop-off arrangements to support the safe movement of pupils, staff and visitors.
Capital project costs exceed approved budgets.	The project has been commissioned as a two-stage design and build and will be scoped and designed within the approved budget envelope. The project is being delivered through an established project governance structure and risks and contingency arrangements will be monitored throughout delivery.
The school is expected to relocate twice during its development, resulting in periods of change for learners and families.	Phased implementation planning, stakeholder engagement and transition arrangements will be developed to support learners, families and staff through each stage of the school's development.

Integrated Impact Assessment

An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been undertaken to assess the potential impacts of the proposal on equality, the Welsh language, socio-economic disadvantage, wellbeing, decarbonisation, biodiversity and other relevant considerations.

The assessment identifies an overall positive impact, particularly through increasing access to Welsh-medium education, supporting delivery of the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), improving educational opportunities within the north of the County Borough and contributing towards the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 ambition to increase the number of Welsh speakers.

The full Integrated Impact Assessment is available alongside this consultation document on the Council's website and has been shared with consultees together with this document.

Welsh Language Impact Assessment

A Welsh Language Impact Assessment is set out within Section 4 of the Integrated Impact Assessment and will be reviewed and updated, where appropriate, in response to consultation responses and any additional evidence received.

This proposal has been developed having regard to the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), Cymraeg 2050, the Council's Welsh Language Standards and wider strategic objectives for promoting the Welsh language. The Council recognises that Welsh-language impacts extend beyond educational provision alone and will continue to engage with Welsh Government, the Welsh in Education Forum and other key stakeholders throughout the consultation period.

In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 2026, consultees are invited to comment on the Welsh Language Impact Assessment and its conclusions included within the IIA as part of this consultation process. Feedback received will be considered when finalising the assessment and preparing the Consultation Report.

Key Dates

The feedback from this consultation will be collated and summarised and a report presented to the Council's Cabinet. The consultation report will be available for everybody to view on the Council website. Copies can also be obtained on request by using the contact details within this document.

There are a number of further stages that the Council have to go through before a final decision is made. These stages are set out below:

Timescale	Statutory Process
19 th October 2026	Consultation Document published
29 th November 2026	Consultation closing date for receipt of comments / points of view on the proposal
10 th December 2026	Publication of Consultation Report
16 th December 2026	Cabinet Decision to Proceed to Statutory Proposal <i>Cabinet to decide whether to approve publishing a statutory notice. If approved - proceed to statutory notice. If not approved - proposal to be withdrawn / re-assessed</i>
4 th January 2027	Publish Statutory Notice <i>If approved, the statutory notice will be published on the Council's website and posted in the named school. Copies of the notice will be made available to the relevant school to distribute to pupils, parents/carers and members of staff</i>
4 th January – 31 st January 2027	28-day Objection Period
24 th February 2027	Cabinet Decision to determine statutory proposal
25 th February 2027	Publication of Cabinet Decision

Please note that the above proposed timetable may be subject to change.

Consultation Period

The consultation period for this proposal starts on **Monday 19th October 2026 - Sunday 29th November 2026**.

Following the consultation period, a full report will be published on the Council's website. Hard copies of the report will also be available on request. The report will summarise the response provided by consultees during the consultation period and provide the Council's response to these responses.

The Council's Cabinet will consider the consultation report and decide whether or not to proceed with the proposals.

If the Cabinet decides to continue with the proposals, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council must publish a statutory notice.

Statutory Notice

The statutory notice would be published on Merthyr Tydfil Council's website and posted at or near the main entrance of the school named as part of the consultation process. Copies of the notice would be made available to Ysgol Santes Tudful, Safle'r Gurnos and Ysgol Rhyd y Grug to distribute to pupils, parents/carers, and staff members (the schools may also distribute the notice by email). The notice will set out the details of the proposals and invite anyone who wishes to object to do so in writing within the period specified.

Determination of the Proposal

The Cabinet will determine the proposals. Cabinet may decide to approve, reject or approve the proposals with modifications. In doing so, Cabinet will take into account any statutory objections that it has received.

Decision Notification

Following determination of proposals, all interested parties will be informed of the decision which will be published electronically on Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's website.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is this a completely new school?

No. The proposal builds upon the existing Safle'r Gurnos seedling provision, which has been operating since 2022, and would formally establish it as a Welsh-medium primary school for learners aged 3 to 11.

Why can't Safle'r Gurnos continue indefinitely?

The existing accommodation was never intended to support the long-term development of a full primary school and future growth requires larger accommodation.

Will pupils attending Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful move schools?

No.

Will pupils attending Safle'r Gurnos move schools?

Learners will continue their education as the school develops into a separate Welsh-medium primary school and relocates to its future accommodation.

Will transport arrangements change?

School transport arrangements will continue to operate in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy. The proposed catchment changes may affect future transport eligibility for some families. Separate transport arrangements may also be required for learners accessing the Council's Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion) provision.

Further details are provided in the Learner Travel and School Transport Arrangements section.

Can parents still choose a different Welsh-medium school?

Yes. Parents may express a preference for any Welsh-medium school when applying for a school place. Admissions will continue to be administered in accordance with the Council's published admissions arrangements. However, catchment areas are used when determining admissions priorities and transport eligibility.

Will the school have its own identity?

Yes. The proposal establishes a separate Welsh-medium primary school with its own identity, name, staffing, uniform, catchment area and formal governance arrangements.

Will the school have its own Governing Body?

Initially governance arrangements are intended to operate through a federation with Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful. This establishes a single Governing Body over both schools.

The long-term intention is for the school to have its own independent Governing Body as it develops into a fully independent school.

Will the school have its own Headteacher?

Initially the Headteacher of Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful will operate as an Executive Headteacher across both schools. Staff employed at the new school will be appointed directly to that school. The proposed federated governance model will provide opportunities for collaboration, professional learning and the sharing of expertise across both school communities whilst enabling each school to retain its own identity.

The longer-term intention is for the school to have its own substantive Headteacher once it becomes fully independent under a separate Governing Body in readiness for the proposed move into new build premises.

Will the proposal result in redundancies?

The proposal is intended to support the continued growth of Welsh-medium education. It is not anticipated that the proposal will reduce the overall staffing requirement across Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful and Safle'r Gurnos. Staffing arrangements will be developed as the new school grows and any staffing implications arising from the proposal will be managed through appropriate consultation and employment processes.

Will existing staff be required to apply for their jobs?

Staff are not expected to have to apply for their existing roles at Ysgol Gymraeg Santes Tudful.

Existing staff will continue to be supported throughout the implementation process and any staffing implications arising from the proposal, including any formal appointments to roles at the new Welsh-medium primary school, will be managed in accordance with applicable employment policies, consultation requirements and agreed procedures.

The Council will work closely with affected staff and trade union representatives throughout the implementation process to ensure that staffing arrangements at the proposed new school are developed in a fair and transparent manner.

When will the new build school be ready?

The school is currently expected to relocate to a permanent new-build Welsh-medium primary school from September 2032, subject to ongoing review through the Council's school investment and school place planning processes.

Has the school name already been chosen?

No. The proposed school name has not yet been determined.

How will the new school be named?

The Headteacher and Governing Body will be invited to lead the process of identifying and recommending a name for the new school. Learners, families, staff and stakeholders will have opportunities to contribute ideas.

When will the new school's name be decided?

The Council intends to confirm the school's name at the same time as formally approving the establishment of the new school, following the statutory notice period. This is expected to take place during the Spring Term 2027.

What is Trochi Hwyr?

Trochi Hwyr (Late Immersion) is part of the Council's wider Welsh-language immersion programme, Y Trochi. It supports learners who wish to transfer into Welsh-medium education after the normal point of admission and helps them develop the Welsh-language skills and confidence needed to participate fully in Welsh-medium education.

Does this proposal establish a new Trochi Hwyr provision?

No. Trochi Hwyr provision already exists within the County Borough and has been coordinated through a dedicated Welsh-medium immersion teacher since September 2026. The proposal would provide a dedicated base for the provision within the new school from September 2027.

Will learners attending Trochi Hwyr become pupils of the new school?

Detailed operational arrangements for Trochi Hwyr are still being developed. These arrangements will determine whether learners remain registered at their catchment Welsh-medium school whilst attending Trochi Hwyr, or whether alternative registration arrangements are used. Further information will be provided before the provision relocates to the new school.

What improvements will be made to the former St Aloysius site?

The former St Aloysius site will undergo refurbishment works prior to opening in September 2027.

The works are expected to improve the condition and suitability of the accommodation, enhance teaching and learning environments, support accessibility and inclusion, and provide a learning environment capable of supporting learners from Nursery to Year 6.

What will happen to the Cylch Meithrin currently based at Safle'r Gurnos?

The Cylch Meithrin currently operating from the Safle'r Gurnos site will continue to do so whilst the school is located at the former St Aloysius primary. Any future decisions regarding the accommodation requirements of the Cylch Meithrin, including whether provision remains at Safle'r Gurnos or is co-located with the proposed new build school, currently anticipated in September 2032, will be considered separately as part of the Council's wider planning for early years provision.

Will learners and families have an opportunity to influence the future development of the school?

Yes. Learners, families, staff, governors and the wider community will have opportunities to contribute to the ongoing development of the school, including its identity, name, future accommodation and other aspects of its development as it grows into a fully established Welsh-medium primary school.

How does this proposal support the future of Welsh-medium education in Merthyr Tydfil?

The proposal forms part of the Council's wider strategy to increase participation in Welsh-medium education and deliver the ambitions of its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy.

Together with the continued development of Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug and the Council's Welsh-language immersion programme, Trochi, the proposal will help create additional opportunities for learners to access Welsh-medium education across the County Borough.

Establishment of a Third Welsh Medium Primary School in the North of the County Borough.

Your views matter, please tell us what you think about the proposals by:

- completing the online response form at MTCBC Consultation Page, or
- answering the consultation questions below, and
- returning the form to the free post address at the bottom of the form.

Please note that all comments must contain the full name and full postal address of the person making the comments.

The closing date for responses to this consultation is 29th November 2026.

Unfortunately, no responses received after this date can be considered by the Council.

Consultation responses will not be counted as objections to the proposals, although considered by Cabinet when making its decision.

Objections can only be registered following publication of a **statutory notice**.

Please tell us whether you are responding as:

		✓	Name of School
1.	Parent		
2.	Pupil		
3.	Governor		
4.	Member of staff		
5.	Local resident		
6.	Other (please specify)		

Consultation Questions

Question 1: Do you support the proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium primary school in the northern area of the County Borough from September 2027?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ No opinion

Please explain why

Question 2: Do you support the proposed catchment arrangements associated with the proposal?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ No opinion

Please explain why

Question 3: Having considered the Council's Welsh Language Impact Assessment, what overall impact do you consider the proposal would have on the Welsh language?

- ☐ Positive impact
- ☐ Negative impact
- ☐ No impact
- ☐ Unsure

Please explain your answer.

In particular, please indicate whether you agree with the Council's assessment and identify any additional impacts, opportunities, risks or mitigation measures that you believe should be considered.

Question 4: Do you have any other comments regarding the proposal, including the future development of Welsh-medium education within Merthyr Tydfil?

Thank you for your comments.

Please tick the box below if you wish to be notified of publication of the consultation report.

☐

If you wish to be notified of the publication of the consultation report, please supply your contact details:

Your Name:.....
Address:
.....
Postcode:
Email Address:
Date:

Any responses received can be requested under the Freedom of Information Act and may have to be made public. However, any information that would identify an individual such as name, email address and postal address would be removed.

Third Welsh Medium Primary School
Planning of School Places Team
Addysg Education
Civic Centre
Castle Street
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8AN

Please return this form to Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council no later than Sunday 29th November 2026

Notes on Consultation Document

About You

In order to ensure we capture the views and lived experiences of all protected characteristic groups, it would be really helpful if you could answer the following questions about yourself. These questions are optional.

All answers remain totally anonymous and are purely for data collection purposes. By completing all/some of the questions it gives us a better understanding of who has completed the questionnaire as we want to hear from different people.

1. WHICH WARD DO YOU LIVE IN?

- ☐ Aberfan/Merthyr Vale
- ☐ Bedlinog/Trelewis
- ☐ Cyfarthfa
- ☐ Dowlais/Pant
- ☐ Gurnos
- ☐ Park
- ☐ Penydarren
- ☐ Plymouth
- ☐ Town
- ☐ Treharris
- ☐ Vaynor
- ☐ I don't live in Merthyr Tydfil

2. I AM

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe Please describe:

17. WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR GENDER?

- ☐ Man
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe. Please describe:

18. AGE

- ☐ 16-25
- ☐ 26-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-65
- ☐ 66-75
- ☐ 76-85
- ☐ 86-95
- ☐ 96+
- ☐ Prefer not to say

19. SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- ☐ Asexual
- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ Gay or Lesbian
- ☐ Heterosexual
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Please describe:

20. MARITAL STATUS

- ☐ Civil Partnership or Married
- ☐ Living with a Partner
- ☐ Single
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Separated
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Widowed
- ☐ Please describe:

1. DISABILITY

- ☐ I am not disabled
- ☐ Hearing Impaired
- ☐ Learning Difficulties

☐ Physical/Mobility Impaired

☐ Speech Impaired

☐ Visually Impaired

☐ Prefer not to say

☐ Please describe:

22. MAIN LANGUAGE

☐ English

☐ Welsh

☐ British Sign Language (BSL)

☐ Prefer not to say

☐ Please describe

23. PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY

☐ Pregnant

☐ Maternity

☐ Not applicable

☐ Prefer not to say

24. WHAT IS YOUR ETHNIC GROUP:

☐ WHITE - Welsh

☐ WHITE - English

☐ WHITE - Scottish

☐ WHITE - Northern Irish

☐ WHITE - British

☐ WHITE - Irish

☐ WHITE - Gypsy or Irish Traveller

☐ WHITE - Other background

MIXED/MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS - White and Black Caribbean

☐ MIXED/MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS - White and Black African

☐ MIXED/MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS - White and Asian

☐ MIXED/MULTIPLE ETHNIC GROUPS - Other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background

- ☐ ASIAN/ASIAN BRITISH - Indian
- ☐ ASIAN/ASIAN BRITISH - Pakistani
- ☐ ASIAN/ASIAN BRITISH - Other Asian background
- ☐ BLACK /AFRICAN/CARIBBEAN/BLACK BRITISH - African
- ☐ BLACK /AFRICAN/CARIBBEAN/BLACK BRITISH - Caribbean
- ☐ BLACK /AFRICAN/CARIBBEAN/BLACK BRITISH - Other background
- ☐ OTHER ETHNIC GROUP - Arab
- ☐ OTHER ETHNIC GROUP - Other ethnic background
- ☐ If you answered 'Other', please describe:

25. RELIGION OR BELIEF

- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Christian
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Humanist
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Sikh
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ No Religion
- ☐ Please describe: