

Addysg / Education

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30 September 2026

To: All consultees in relation to the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn in accordance with the School Organisation Code.

Dear Stakeholder,

Proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn – Decision Notification

On Tuesday, 15 September 2026, the Cabinet of Cyngor Gwynedd formally approved the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and to offer places for its learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards. In accordance with the Cyngor Gwynedd Constitution, the Cabinet's decision became operational on 30 September 2026.

In accordance with the decision, Ysgol Baladeulyn will close on 31 December 2026. Current learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn will transfer to Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards, unless parents/guardians choose to make an application for a transfer to another school through the Admissions process. From that date onwards, Ysgol Talysarn will become the catchment school for the current catchment area of Ysgol Baladeulyn.

The Statutory Process and Consideration of the Proposal

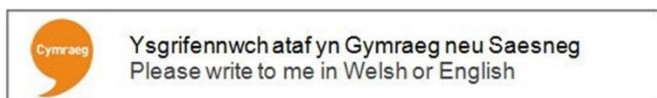
A statutory consultation on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn was held between 10 December 2025 and 28 January 2026. Following the consultation, a Consultation Report was prepared and published, summarising the issues raised by consultees and setting out the Council's responses to those issues. On 19 May 2026, Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet considered the contents of the Consultation Report together with other relevant information before deciding to proceed with the proposal by publishing a statutory notice.

The statutory notice was published on 3 June 2026, commencing the statutory objection period, which ended on 30 June 2026. 25 objections to the proposal were received. A petition objecting to the proposal was also received, containing 500 signatures.

In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, an Objection Report was prepared and published, setting out the objections received and the Council's responses to the matters raised. The Objection Report, together with the appendices and other relevant information, was presented to the Cabinet on 15 September 2026 for consideration prior to reaching a final decision on the proposal.

The Objection Report and associated appendices are available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation. All other documents relevant to the statutory process are also available on the same webpage, including the consultation document, the Consultation Report, the Statutory Notice and relevant impact assessments.

In accordance with the School Organisation Code 011/2018, copies of the Objection Report are also available on request by e-mailing ModernisingEducation@gwynedd.llyw.cymru or by telephoning 01286 679247.



Mae Cyngor Gwynedd yn gweithredu yn ddwyieithog, ac ni fydd unrhyw wahaniaeth yn ein hymateb i ohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

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In reaching its decision, the Cabinet gave consideration to the relevant factors in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (11/2028), including:

- Quality and standards in education
- The need for places and the impact on school accessibility
- Education resources and other financial implications
- Other general factors
- Specific factors when considering school closures
- The presumption against the closure of rural schools and the associated impact assessments, namely:
 - The likely impact on travel arrangements
 - The likely impact on the Community
 - The likely impact on the quality and standards of Education
- Equality
- The Welsh Language
- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Quality and standards in education

According to the most recent Estyn reports, the alternative school, Ysgol Talysarn, offers an education of a minimally equivalent quality and standard to that currently provided at Ysgol Baladeulyn. As a result, the Council considers that the implementation of the proposal would provide learners with greater opportunities to collaborate and socialise with peers, as well as benefit from a broader range of curricular and extracurricular experiences.

The need for places and the impact on school accessibility

Ysgol Baladeulyn faces very low learner numbers together with a high level of surplus places. Based on the January 2026 PLASC figures, it is predicted that in September 2026 there will be 4 surplus places (and 3 surplus places for the Nursery) at Ysgol Talysarn. Based on this information, it is anticipated that Ysgol Talysarn will have sufficient capacity for the current learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn who live in the Baladeulyn catchment area. It is acknowledged that, if all Ysgol Baladeulyn learners were to decide to transfer to Ysgol Talysarn, it is possible that the number of learners would exceed the capacity.

Education resources and other financial implications

It is estimated that implementing the proposal would result in annual savings of approximately £120,000 in revenue costs, after taking into account additional transport costs of up to £30,000 per year. This estimate of transport costs is based on the assumption that all learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area who would be eligible for transport under the Council's current policy would attend Ysgol Talysarn.

Implementation of the proposal would rationalise the cost per learner in schools and reduce variations in per-learner costs across Gwynedd's primary schools. Based on the 2026-27 budget, the cost per learner at Ysgol Talysarn is estimated at £5,883, compared with £25,123 per learner at Ysgol Baladeulyn at present. The county average for the same period is £5,998 per learner.

Specific factors when considering school closures

The Council has given careful consideration to a range of alternative options, including federation, a multi-site school model, and options submitted by stakeholders during the statutory process. Following a detailed assessment, it was concluded that none of those options would adequately address the challenges facing the school, including low learner numbers, a high percentage of surplus places, small classes with broad age ranges, and associated financial challenges.

The Council recognises that closing the school would have an impact on the local community and on the community use of the Welsh language. However, having weighed all relevant factors, it concluded that implementing the proposal is the most appropriate response to the challenges facing the school.

The presumption against the closure of rural schools

Ysgol Baladeulyn is designated as a rural school for the purposes of the School Organisation Code 011/2018. Consequently, specific consideration was given to the procedural presumption against the closure of rural schools and the requirement to consider all reasonable options before bringing forward a closure proposal.

The proposal was developed in response to the following challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn, namely:

- very low learner numbers, with 6 Reception to Year 6 learners and two Nursery learners on roll in January 2026, declining further to 7 Reception to Year 6 learners and no Nursery learners by September 2026;
- a very high percentage of surplus places, with 49 surplus places from a total capacity of 55 for Reception to Year 6 learners, representing 89% of the school's capacity, together with 5 surplus places in the Nursery;
- small classes and broad age ranges, including age spans of up to eight years within a single class;
- projections showing that numbers would remain low, with 7 Reception to Year 6 learners and 1 Nursery learner forecasted for September 2028;
- a high proportion of children from the catchment area attending other schools, with only 2 of the 8 children living in the catchment area, representing 25%, attending Ysgol Baladeulyn in January 2026;
- the school's dependence on additional funding above the school's core budget allocation, namely £74,446 through the Council's Minimum Staffing Protection Policy during the 2026/27 financial year; and
- an average cost of £25,123 per learner, compared with a county average of £5,998 during the same financial year.

In reaching its decision, the Cabinet considered all of the evidence alongside the objections received, the alternative options submitted and the conclusions of the relevant impact assessments. The Cabinet was satisfied that the alternative options, including federation, did not adequately address the reasons for formulating the proposal nor provide a sustainable long-term solution for educational provision.

The Cabinet was satisfied that implementing the proposal would respond to these challenges by:

- Responding to the low learner numbers at Ysgol Baladeulyn, the projections indicating that numbers would remain low, and the high percentage of surplus places;
- Enabling learners to be educated in classes of a more appropriate size and with narrower age ranges than at present;
- Enabling learners to be educated alongside a broader peer group;
- Bringing the cost per learner closer to the county average and removing the need for funding through the Minimum Staffing Protection Policy at Ysgol Baladeulyn;
- Ensuring continuity of Welsh-medium education by providing places at Ysgol Talysarn, which is also a Welsh-medium Category 3 community school;
- Providing places for learners at a school that would not require any learner from the Baladeulyn catchment area to travel an unreasonable distance, with transport provided in accordance with the Cyngor Gwynedd Education Transport Policy, where applicable.

Consequently, having considered all relevant information, evidence and assessments, the Cabinet was satisfied that implementing the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for the learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards was the most appropriate response to the reasons noted for formulating the proposal, and that it would secure an educational provision that is more sustainable for the future.

In accordance with this decision, Ysgol Baladeulyn will close on 31 December 2026 and learners will transfer to Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards. Cyngor Gwynedd will work with learners, parents, staff and the relevant schools to ensure appropriate transition arrangements.

Referral of Local Authority decisions to Welsh Ministers

In accordance with Section 54 of the 2013 Act, within 28 days of the Cabinet's decision, the following bodies may refer the proposal to the Welsh Ministers for consideration:

- i. Another local authority affected by the proposals;
- ii. The appropriate religious body for any school affected;
- iii. The governing body of a voluntary or foundation school that is the subject of the proposals;
- iv. A trust holding property on behalf of a voluntary or foundation school that is the subject of the proposals;
- v. A further education institution affected by the proposals.

The body making the referral will need to explain why it considers the decision taken by the local authority to be incorrect. The Welsh Ministers will determine whether the proposal affects the body concerned and whether the proposal should be considered by them.

Should you require further information, please contact ModernisingEducation@gwynedd.llyw.cymru.

Yours faithfully,

Gwern ap Rhisiart
Head of Education
Cyngor Gwynedd