

**PROPOSAL TO
AMEND LANGUAGE MEDIUM OF THE
FOUNDATION LEARNING AND ADMIT
3-YEAR-OLD PUPILS ON A PART TIME
BASIS AT COMINS COCH PRIMARY
SCHOOL**



LEARNING SERVICES

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT
Supplementary Information

October 2023

Ceredigion County Council

Proposal: **proposal to amend language medium of the foundation learning and admit 3-year-old pupils on a part time basis at Comins Coch Primary School**

Details of affected schools

The following is a list of the schools likely to be affected by the proposal.

School Name	School Category	School Language Category	Age Range	Number of Nursery Places
Comins Coch	Community Primary	T2	4 - 11	No nursery provision
Rhydypennau	Community Primary	Category 3	3 - 11	Nursery provision
Penrhyncoch	Community Primary	Category 3	3 – 11	No nursery provision

Welsh Government Guidance on school categories according to Welsh-medium provision (December 2022)

T2: *To help encourage an increase in Welsh-medium provision, we have included what we call, ‘transitional sub-categories’ which are created as bridging categories. These transitional arrangements enable schools to plan how they will realise an increase in Welsh medium provision over time. We emphasise here that the aim of the transitional sub-category is to increase the Welsh-medium provision in order to facilitate schools moving to the next category. A transitional category should not be permanent. Local authorities’ plans for categorising schools according to Welsh-medium provision should be agreed between schools and local authorities and thereafter, outlined in the local authority’s WESP. Local authorities are expected to plan intensively during the first five years of their Plan. Similarly, it is expected that decisions that will move a school along the continuum will be made during the first five years. A transitional category should not exceed a maximum period of 10 years.*

3: Welsh Medium: *Welsh is the school’s main language of internal communication. Communication with parents and carers is in either English, Welsh or bilingually as needed. This is a school with a strong Welsh language ethos at its core, supporting and enabling learners’ Welsh language use in all social context in and outside of school.*

In a Welsh immersion setting all learners are taught fully in Welsh, with English being used on occasion to ensure understanding during early immersion.

From aged 7 onwards at least 80% of learner’s school activities (both curricular and extra-curricular) will be in Welsh.

The standard of nursery education and the sufficiency of accommodation and facilities offered, both in the classroom and outdoors, and the viability of any school that wishes to add nursery places:

Gofal Plant Mês Bach-Little Acorns Childcare is an English-medium setting for 2-12-year-olds. It meets in a purpose-built building next to the grounds of Ysgol Comins Coch.

The setting is managed by a voluntary committee and is registered with the Charity Commission to support pre-school and school aged children in Comins Coch.

The childcare service is registered and inspected by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) and is working towards the Welsh Language 'active offer'.

The setting offers the childcare element of the Welsh Government 30-hour Childcare Offer for Wales to 3-4-year-olds.

Gofal Plant Mês Bach-Little Acorns Childcare are able to support Flying Start childcare that offers funded places for 12.5 hours of childcare for 2-year-olds per week. Support is provided by the Flying Start Advisory Teacher for 2-year-olds.

It is also registered to operate an Out of School service, dependent on demand. The Holiday Club runs during the school holiday weeks – half terms, Easter, and Summer.

The setting has benefitted from the Childcare Offer Capital Grant (2018-2022) to improve its indoor and outdoor environment and play resources. The terms and conditions of this grant is the assurance of providing a childcare service for 5 years after its receipt.

Children aged 2-4 with additional learning needs benefit from additional support through the Cynllun Cyfeirio scheme which is not available in schools.

An Additional Support Grant can also be accessed for children eligible for the Childcare Offer for staff support with their additional learning needs, and Ymuno funding for the Out of School Provision.

The setting has not delivered Early Years Education since the Summer term 2022.

Most recent reports are available here:

Gofal Plant Mês Bach-Little Acorns Childcare | Care Inspectorate Wales

Gofal Plant Mes Bach Little Acorns Childcare Inspection Report 2023
(careinspectorate.wales)

“This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.”

“People who run the setting have an understanding of their responsibilities to promote the Welsh language. They are working towards many elements of the Active Offer of the Welsh language.”

Whether there is a need for additional nursery places in the area:

The current provision (44 places) is sufficient to local demand.

Birth rates remain consistent in the area. However, there is a large housing development site proposed in the area.

The levels of demand for certain types of nursery education e.g. Welsh medium or provision with a religious character:

Mes Bach can accept children from the age of 2.

The Early Education for 3–4-year-olds was delivered bilingually and funded via an Agreement / Cytundeb by Ceredigion County Council between Spring Term 2003 and Summer 2022.

Support is provided by the Flying Start Advisory Teacher for 2-year-olds.

The effect of the proposals on other institutions, including private and third sector providers:

Each Playgroup/Cylch is an independent charity / business with a voluntary management board responsible for their independent bank accounts, annual accounts, recruitment, staffing responsibilities and business management.

They pay membership to an umbrella organisation for support and advice (Early Years Wales).

This setting no longer delivers the Early Education to 3 year olds.

Staffing ratios will need to be met to ensure walking the children safely from the school back to playgroup for wraparound care including funded Childcare Offer places.

Providing Flying Start childcare alone is not financially viable due to higher staffing costs of adult to child ratio.

The lack of childcare in Ceredigion has been identified in the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, and provision is necessary for children in the area.

If the early education is moved from the Cylch to the School, the staff cannot be TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment rights) over as they may not have qualified teacher status.

The extent to which proposals will integrate early years education with childcare services or are consistent with an integrated approach:

If the proposal is approved, parents will have the choice for their child to remain in the non-maintained setting or attend the school nursery provision on a part time basis. The integration of early education with childcare services will be monitored and supported.

Staffing ratios will need to be met to ensure walking the children safely from the school back to playgroup for wraparound care including funded Childcare Offer places.

Revised consultation timetable:

Date	Activity
15 September 2023	Formal consultation period begins: A period of formal consultation will take place, during this time interested parties can make their views known regarding the proposal.
17 November 2023	Extension to Formal Consultation Ends
6 February 2024	Formal Consultation Report: At the end of the formal consultation period, responses will be collated and presented to Cabinet in the form of a Formal Consultation Report including a recommendation from Officers. This will be published on the Ceredigion website.
19 February 2024	Statutory Notice period begins: If the proposal is accepted by Cabinet, a Statutory Notice is issued. During the statutory Objection period, objections must be made in writing and sent to the proposer within 28 days of the date on which the proposal was published.
18 March 2024	Statutory Notice period ends.
4 June 2024	Cabinet: Report the number of objections received and decision as to whether to implement the proposal

