

Statutory Consultation Responses Ysgol Chwilog

Statutory Consultation Responses

Proposal to increase the school's capacity from 65 to 95 learners by adding a class to Ysgol Chwilog to be active 1 September 2023

Responses to the Statutory Consultation to increase the school's capacity from 65 to 95 learners by adding a class to Ysgol Chwilog to be active 1 September 2023

(Statutory Consultation Period 19 October – 30 November 2022)

18 written responses were received during the statutory consultation period

NOTE – The comments have been quoted directly from the responses.

	Response to the Consultation	Gwynedd Council's response
1.	Support for the Proposal	
1.1	Agree that an additional class should be added at Ysgol Chwilog.	The Council notes the comments.
1.2	I have been asked to inform you that the Community Council prefers the option of having a new class at Ysgol Chwilog and not the other two options.	The Council notes the comments.
1.3	Welcome the offer	The Council notes the comments.
1.4	Increasing the school's capacity and facilities is going to lead the way to improving the quality of learning.	The Council notes the comments.
2.	Numbers of children	
2.1	I feel very strongly that the school needs this investment. Permission has been given to build three new estates of houses in Chwilog, with one now built and people having moved into their houses. This has increased the population of the village, which has resulted in many more children living here, and wanting to attend the school. This will increase again. The village is thriving, and the whole school needs to be adapted to this. The Welsh feel of the school attracts young families to the village, and it would be a great disappointment not to be able to offer a place for every child who lives in the village to attend the school.	The arrival of the new housing estates is the main driver of the need for additional places at Ysgol Chwilog as we anticipate that a number of families with primary school age children will live in them. We are therefore planning for them by creating 30 more places in the school.

2.2	The first comment is that the proposal does not seem to address the question in full in terms of what the objective will be the number of children at the school by September 2027 (109), that affects the question not only on the number of classes, but also about the size of the current classes.	The projections are based on information we have received from the school in September 2022 and an estimate of any possible new primary age children who will live in the new houses following their construction. It must also be noted that the projections of 109 learners for September 2027 are for nursery children - year 6. We are therefore of the opinion that increasing capacity to 95 (reception - year 6) + 13
2.3	I welcome the proposal as a temporary solution. The school is in dire need of increasing its capacity. The school has already experienced a significant increase in the number of pupils and there are forecasts of a further increase past 95 pupils in the coming years. It will therefore be necessary to look at increasing the capacity further in the future and at developing the school's existing buildings and resources to meet the increase.	nursery, which is 108 learners, is sensible to respond to the projections as there is no guarantee that the numbers will be realised. Nevertheless, we will monitor any progress annually and respond promptly to any need to further increase capacity.
2.4	Although welcoming this proposal as a temporary solution to the school's capacity situation, it is also necessary to think about long-term options as the numbers are increasing well over 95 by 2027.	
2.5	We welcome the principle of this proposal as a temporary solution, but in the long term it is quite clear that it does not meet the school's capacity forecasts of 109 by 2027, which is now only four educational years away.	
2.6	The option is fine as a temporary solution, but with the increase in people coming to live in the village and two other housing estates on the way it is important that long-term consideration is given.	
3.	Impact on transport	
3.1	I fully support the idea of increasing the capacity of Ysgol Chwilog. The only concern I have is what the situation will be regarding transport. The parking provision at the moment is extremely inadequate and the idea of encouraging the children of the village	As stated in the consultation document, the Council has recognised the possibility that increasing capacity will create additional parking/traffic problems.

	to walk to school is also unsuitable as that is already happening in most cases. A site over the road and the turn for the school has come up for sale again - would it be possible for the Council to make a compulsory purchase on part of that site?	As the new housing estates, which is the main driver of the need for additional places at Ysgol Chwilog, are located within a reasonable distance of the school, and there are footpaths between the estates and the school, in accordance with Welsh Government policies, we will encourage learners to use active travel to school e.g. walking and
3.2	Increase parking problems, which will not be short-term, but permanent.	cycling. Doing this would ensure that the increase in pupil numbers will not lead to an increase in the use of cars for the school.
3.3	Need to ensure that consideration is given to the safety of the children when arriving and leaving the school, with the traffic that is there when transporting children and general traffic that drives through the village. By increasing the capacity the problem will probably get worse	We will also commission a survey in order to understand the problems that are created as a result of using cars to transport children to school identifying and assessing any ways to overcome the problems.
3.4	Parking has been an ongoing problem here - there is no room for parents to turn around etc. It can be a dangerous situation at times. Lorries and vans will also come here with goods for the kitchen etc and there is not much room for them to turn. Without a doubt education standards would improve and school would be a nicer place to be.	
3.5	Travel Arrangements - Parking is a problem. There is no place for parents to turn around or park at the school. This means that the parents stop their cars in unsuitable places, outside the school gate. This causes traffic and is a hazard.	
3.6	There is no parking space for parents to fetch their children, it can be quite dangerous when children come to school and home, many people end up in the staff car park because they have nowhere to turn.	

3.7	There is no suitable place for parents to bring a car up the school road to fetch the children, lack of parking space.	
3.8	There is not a lot of concern about the traffic as it is a very narrow little lane that leads to the school, and in that respect it is a pity that it would not be possible to identify a narrow strip of land to create a footpath to the school from the main street in the village so that pedestrians do not have to come up the narrow lane to the school at all. That would also reduce traffic that turns up the small narrow lane outside the school	
3.9	Access to the school on a small, narrow road is a concern, could mitigating options for traffic be considered. The safety of pupils and parents and their families must be ensured when walking to school. One option worth considering is to identify a suitable plot of land for the Council to purchase in order to create a footpath from the main street up to the school yard.	
3.10	Consider offering trasnport to pupils attending outside of the Chwilog area.	Gwynedd Council's transport policy offers free transport for learners who live 2 miles or further from the school in their catchment area, or the nearest school (not including nursery class pupils). If the Council were to extend the offer to children outside the Chwilog catchment area, the same offer would have to be given to all schools across the county and that would not be sustainable.
4.	Suitability of the school	
4.1	Although it is a fairly acceptable short-term solution, it is difficult to see how a cabin meets the needs of the school as a single entity. Increasing the capacity will have an impact on the kitchen and canteen, and there is no dedicated teachers/staff room in the school. It is not clear if there are toilets in the 'caban', possibly taking the children back to the Victorian era with the need to cross the yard to get a toilet. As you have noted that the school's	Officials from the Education and Property Departments have visited Ysgol Chwilog to carry out a suitability assessment in order to identify any adjustments that need to be made to ensure a suitable and sufficient environment for the school's needs.

4.7	That the Council is looking to further develop and upgrade the school in the coming years	
4.6	It must be ensured that the size of the classes is suitable to ensure high quality and standards of education. Some classrooms are currently too small. This has an impact on staff wellbeing.	From the point of view of the question of what year/s will be placed in the Unit, this will be a decision for the Head and Governing Body of Ysgol Chwilog.
4.5	No accessible toilet on site at all at present.	your concerns with them.
4.4	It is necessary to look at the suitability of the school as a whole. For the safety of children and staff it would be beneficial to consider that there is a link between the cabin and the main school building.	Due to the fact that the Unit will create additional space in the schoo will mean that there will be enough space to receive the children of t nursery class back to the school site. One thing that we will not be able to do under this plan is to adjust the size of any class that already exists as doing so would mean structural changes that would be beyond the project's budget. Damp is a matter for the Maintenance Department and we will share
4.3	Is it also possible to consider the suitability of the hall which is extremely small for a school of 109 children, along with other more practical issues that arise such as storage space / space to carry out 1 to 1 work. It would also be very nice to link the cabin to the main building some way.	
4.2	I naturally welcome the proposal but a few things need to be considered in addition to the new classroom which are - Extend the hall to be able to offer enough space for the children to eat their lunch and have physical education lessons etc Get a sensible staff room: at the moment there is no suitable space for break times etc Toilets for adults rather unsuitable in this day and age.	 Create an additional class in the new offit Create additional children's toilets in the Unit Create new staff toilets in the Unit Create a room in the Unit for PPA work and 1:1 work Create a staff room in the Unit Create more space to hang coats We will create an indoor link from the Unit to the main building so no one will need to cross the yard to reach the main building. We will extend the canteen/hall in order to create sufficient
	numbers have increased over a number of years, a more permanent structure to improve the school should be in place for some time, rather than an 11th hour caban.	As a result, we can confirm that we will respond to the need to adapt resources by either locating them as part of the new Unit or by carrying out modifications to the main building. This will include: • Create an additional class in the new Unit

school and its pro where the childre meals.considering will increase to 10 I would laos raise toilet faciltiies.	ned in regards to the propsed capacity of the prtion to the class room sizes, the main hall, an n would likely be able to receive their school that the amount of pupils attending the school following the next 4 academic years. concern regaridng staff room and cleaning/
size as well - along the hall, teachers'	I not only about the number of classes but their with the rest of the school building including room, staff toilets, suitable accommodate target groups.
and the school en field and extend t	
need more space comfortable. There is currently hall, some of the composition of the classe where there are young to a cabin would be would be an idea are more independent offers plenty of the composition of the classe where there are young to an idea are more independent of the composition of the	a very valuable extension to the school and it to put the older years of the school here as the dent and mature. a specific room that is quiet and comfortable

and coats. We also have to use one of the classrooms to eat our lunch.

The staff would appreciate a suitable toilet which is more private in terms of its location - at the moment, the toilet is right by the main entrance and next door to the office which is not very ideal! Men and women share the same toilet.

There is no separate room for the nursery here - at the moment they are taught in the village hall - this is not an ideal situation. As there are now large numbers in each class, there is unfortunately no room for everyone to put their coats on pegs. The result of this is that there are often coats and bags all over the floors which is messy and extremely dangerous. I wonder if lockers would be more suitable or a larger coat hall for each class - but again there is not enough space!

As we encourage parents not to use their cars when collecting their children, they often have to stand in the wind and rain on the school grounds. I wonder if it would be possible to get some kind of shelter for them?

I also suspect that the children's toilet room is now too small - when leading them to wash their hands before lunch, rows and rows of children have to wait their turn.

Dampness can be seen in the year 4, 5 and 6 class at the moment - it was treated a while ago, but it's back again. plaster falls off the walls.

- 4.12 It is certainly necessary to consider investing in the development of the school.
 - There is no specific place for the staff to have PPA time.
 - There is no room for the nursery on the school grounds, they are currently being taught in the village hall. This is not ideal.
 - Not enough toilets for the children, the youngest children have to share 2 toilets between 31 children.

- No large enough area to keep the children's bag and coats throughout the school, some Foundation Phase children have to move their coats and bags up to the top of the school in order to have space. This is not appropriate as the children can wander.
- The hall is small for the numbers we have. Some children who are on lunch boxes have to eat their lunch in the corridor.
- The year 2 and 3 class is very limited for the numbers we have coming up from the Foundation Phase. We will certainly benefit greatly from having a cabin to accommodate the number of pupils we have.
- The staff toilets are at the main entrance, this is not ideal. And men and women have to share the same toilet.
- We don't have a staff room to sit there to have a cup of tea/coffee and lunch. We have to use one of the classrooms to eat our lunch.
- There is no space in the hall to hold assembly and meetings as a whole school.
- A lot of dampness around the windows in the classrooms
- 4.13 The school has grown since I started, and I feel that we need more space for pupils on staff. There is not enough space for everyone to eat their lunch at the same time, there is also not enough space at service time. There is not a teacher's room for us to eat our food and have a break it would be nice for us as staff to have our own lockers to keep personal things and coats etc. at the moment we have to eat our lunch in one of the classrooms.

All staff would appreciate a more private toilet in terms of space, especially since it is right by the main entrance and next door to the headteacher's office and we also have to share it with men. there is no separate room for the nursery class, feeling that they do not belong to the school as they are in the village hall. there are not enough pegs for the children to put their bags and coats, so at the moment many of them are on the floor in a mess.

	not big enough.
	The hall is too small for everyone to have lunch together and is also unsuitable for holding school assemblies because the hall is
	another member coming in to get resources.
	the period of teachers' planning periods there is no suitable room to have quiet time without having to answer the phone or
	dedicated break as there is no suitable room for us. Also during
	or lunch as we use a classroom to eat our lunch and do not have a
	There is no suitable place for staff members to have a cup of tea
	and tend to leave the bags on the floor which is a tripping hazard.
	is no suitable place for the children to hang their coats and bags
	room for the nursery and they have to use the village hall and therefore they do not feel that they are part of the school. There
	toilets for children in the Reception year and Year 1. No dedicated
	therefore lack of space is a major problem. There are not enough
4.14	The number of children attending have increased significantly and
	size of the classes etc.
	things in the school as well - stores, the size of the hall, toilets, the
	consideration needs to be given to increase the size of other
	With an increase in the school numbers, that naturally means that
	consider a corridor or link from the main building to the cabin.
	the school and not be seen as a separate resource. Possible to
	it is very important that the cabin wants to be a natural part of
4.13	As a parent of a Nursery child who is in an off-site class this year,
	There is damp in class 4,5 and 6 at the moment.
	children. There is damp in class 4,5 and 6 at the moment.
	There are not enough toilets for year one and reception class
	wind and rain.
	some kind of shelter would be nice for parents to shelter from

	It would be convenient to have a dedicated place for staff members to keep personal things safe as there is no place/room for us to keep our coats and bags. The staff toilet is not in a suitable place either as it is next to the office and too close to the entrance.	
4.15	Having a cabin will solve the problem of lack of space for one class of children.	
4.16	Quality and standards of education - If there were more space available I am confident that the pupils would succeed in working better. That is, the classes would be larger and areas for quiet interventions would be possible.	
5.	Alternative options	
5.1	Other options should have been considered years ago, as it is now rather late to even consider other possibilities unfortunately. Considering parking problems, a lack of teachers' rooms, and a kitchen/canteen that may prove insufficient, perhaps relocating the school would have been the best idea, if it had been considered soon enough.	The need for more places at Ysgol Chwilog was not obvious years ago. Only relatively recently have the numbers shown a significant increase from 52 in 2019, which was 19 under the school's capacity, to 76 in September 2021. Your comment is noted that relocating the school might have been the best idea but considering doing so would have meant a process that would take years when an urgent solution to the school's situation is needed.
5.2	Another option rather than a cabin would be a proper extension to the school so that all the pupils are under the same roof.	Because we need to create this additional class by 1 September 2023, in order to respond to an urgent situation for additional places at Ysgol Chwilog. The intention is to do this by using MMC Units (Modern
5.3	A permanent extension to the school rather than a cabin.	Methods of Construction). These have already been used in other
5.4	A proper extension for having all the pupils under the same roof	schools in the county and are proving to be effective and popular classes.
5.5	An option instead of a cabin is to have an extension to a school where children can all be under the same roof.	There are many benefits to using the MMC Units including:

5.6	Having an extension would be more suitable in order to give the	 More consistency in the materials that are used lighter materials that save energy
3.0	pupils the best possible teaching opportunities as well as having	The buildings can be built to any size and shape.
	everyone from the school family under the same roof to have a feeling of belonging.	Buildings are much easier to heat, with less energy consumption than traditional buildings.
		 The buildings comply with, or exceed, the energy requirements of the Building Regulations.
		 modular structure of the buildings means that there is more
		flexibility when designing the interior space.
		Construction period on site much shorter than a building of
		traditional construction
6.	Impact on the Welsh language	
6.1	A number of parents who know Welsh wish not to speak it to	The Education Department has Language Centres located across the
	their children. Some of the children arrive at the school, with	County, including one in Dwyfor, which accepts latecomers who arrive
	insufficient Welsh to be able to blend into the natural flow of the school. Do we therefore need another class in order to improve these children's Welsh so that their shortcomings do not have a negative effect on the classes of those who speak Welsh?	at local schools such as Ysgol Chwilog, and Headteachers and teachers
		of mainstream schools in the catchment area are able to refer learners
		who do not speak Welsh or lack confidence in their speaking, writing
		and listening skills in Welsh to the attention of the Immersion Education
		System. Recently, the staff of the Immersion Education System have
		also been holding training sessions on the principles of language
		immersion in the Foundation Phase for teachers and school assistants
		throughout the county, to ensure that appropriate immersion takes
		place in the Foundation Phase. In addition, the Language Centres have a
		long tradition of providing "Gloywi laith" support to mainstream
		learners who need an extra boost with their skills and confidence in the
		Welsh language. As the new Immersion System has become operational
		since the beginning of January 2023, the Department will ensure the
		continuation of this practice of being able to offer language refresher
		sessions to children and young people in our schools, in order to

reinforce their skills and confidence in Welsh further.

		This service is available to offer support to those children who need to improve their Welsh, and to schools that need help with immersing learners in the mainstream.
6.2	Is it time to designate the school as "Ysgol Gymraeg" in order to protect interests?	The national system of categorising schools according to the Welshmedium provision has come into force since September 2022. In accordance with the Welsh Government's guide on the categorisation system, together with the requirements of the Gwynedd Education Language Policy, Gwynedd's primary schools fall into Category 3 Welsh medium, as the criteria reflect our current education language policy in terms of curriculum provision and the administrative language of our schools, namely a school where Welsh is the main language for internal communication, and a school with a strong Welsh ethos, by support and enable the learners to use the Welsh language in all social contexts in the school and outside it. From the age of 7 onwards, at least 80% of the learner's school activities (both curricular and extra-curricular) will be in Welsh.
6.3	As long as the school continues to offer Welsh as a first language then I do not consider this as a concern	Ysgol Chwilog will continue to offer education through the medium of Welsh in accordance with the Gwynedd Education Language Policy.
7	Impact on Wellbeing	
7.1	Is it possible to consider the current staff area in any development in terms of their well-being? The current area is very small as the number of staff has grown. This is also true of the number of facilities such as toilets for staff and children, together with a place to eat lunch	Adding a Unit will create an option to create space for the staff. It is also intended to locate additional toilets in the Unit and create new staff toilets. We will extend the existing hall/canteen in order to create more space for children to eat their lunch.
7.2	Staff well-being - need a dedicated space for them to have their lunch (suitable teachers' room). Staff and pupil toilet facilities need to be reviewed.	
7.3	Pupils' well-being - need a suitable space to hold target group sessions.	The creation of the Unit will offer an opportunity to be able to locate resources in addition to a class including a space for holding target group sessions.

7.4	Posisbly cosnider pupils who may be physically disabled and offer appropriate facilities	The needs of any child with physical disability needs will be considered in accordance with the Education Department's Accessibility and Equality policies.
7.5	The cabin will offer more space for the pupils and staff which will create a nicer and safer atmosphere to work in. So basically affecting everyone's welfare. We can then have more private rooms for PPA, intervention groups etc	The creation of the Unit will offer an opportunity to be able to locate resources in addition to an additional class including space for PPA, intervention groups etc.
7.6	There will be much more space which means there will be more fair play for the pupils e.g. quietness to work and areas to hold various intervention sessions.	
7.7	The cabin will certainly ensure a nicer atmosphere for the pupils and staff.	The Council notes the comments.
7.8	cabin would have been nicer for children on staff, also they would have felt that it belonged to the school seeing us all under the same roof.	The Council notes the comments.
8	Estyn's response	

Estyn's response to the proposal by Gwynedd Council to increase the capacity of Ysgol Chwilog from 65 to 95 pupils, by adding an additional classroom to be operational from 1 September 2023. This will be an increase of over 25% to the existing capacity.

Introduction

This is a proposal by Gwynedd Council to increase the capacity of Ysgol Chwilog from 65 to 95 pupils, by adding an additional classroom to be operational from 1st September 2023.

The proposer notes that the number of pupils at Ysgol Chwilog has increased consistently for several years, and the school has reached its full capacity of 65 pupils since 1 September 2022.

The proposer states that during recent years, a new housing estate has been built in in the village and there is planning consent for another two. This could result in a total of up to 39 additional houses and it is anticipated that this will lead to further demand in the need for places at Ysgol Chwilog

The proposer clearly explains the reasoning behind the proposal.

These include a lack of space in the school to meet the current increases in pupil numbers and to meet the projection of further pupil increases as a result of new housing located within the

Summary/Conclusion

school's catchment area.

Estyn believes that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards in terms of education, provision, and leadership and management.

Description and benefits

The proposer has identified a clear rationale for the proposal and gives reasons why change is necessary.

The proposer has suitably identified strengths and weaknesses of the current situation. Strengths include recognition by Estyn of the use made of the Welsh language by pupils and the clear improvements in the use of ICT across many of the school's activities. The main weakness, and what the consultation is The Council notes the comments.

seeking to respond to, is the lack of space as a result of an increase in the number of children attending the school. The proposer recognises the need to include the details and statistics of each of the four nearby schools that may be affected by the proposal in the consultation document. The proposer clearly states that none of the schools would be adversely affected by the proposal, since increasing the capacity of Ysgol Chwilog is the only aim of the consultation. The proposer includes current data that relates to new housing developments, projecting that the number of children in 39 new houses could translate into approximately 16 primary age pupils. The proposer includes a detailed, options appraisal, that explores potential models to respond to the problems facing Ysgiol Chwilog. The 3 options include, to do nothing; to create capacity for increased pupil numbers by locating a new classroom at Ysgol Chwilog; or to create capacity for an increase in the number of primary pupils in the Chwilog catchment area, by locating a new class on the site of another nearby school. After comparing the 3 options against 8 key factors, the proposer concluded that the preferred option was to create capacity for the increase in primary pupils in the Chwilog catchment area by locating a new class on the Ysgol Chwilog site, to be operational from September 2023.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposer has considered appropriately the effects of the proposal on the quality of outcomes, provision, and leadership and management of the school. The local authority states its aim to providing an education of the highest possible quality that will give pupils the experiences, skills and confidence to enable them to develop into bilingual, successful and well-rounded citizens. The proposer has given purposeful consideration to the latest Estyn inspection report, including the main points of the report, such as, the strong leadership, a dedicated and supportive

governing body, high levels of staff teamwork, staff who deliver high quality learning experiences and the promotion of the Welsh language and culture of Wales. It has also referred to the 2 recommendations. The proposer believes that by implementing the proposal of increasing the school's capacity by creating an extra class, it will support the school to achieve further, for example by offer a better learning environment for teaching staff and learners at the school thus enabling the school's pupils to have better educational experiences and opportunities. The proposer has ensured that there would be minimal disruption to all pupils as work to increase capacity would take place during the summer break. All costs would be within budget, including funding to employ a teacher for 2 years. This would allow time for the numbers at the school to increase as a result of housing developments and for the school to plan an appropriate staffing structure in response to the increase.

9.	Children's Response		
A con	A consultation session was held with the representation of the School's pupils (responses can be seen in Appendix B) and one independent response		
was r	was received below		
9.1	Have more space in the school so that the nursery doesn't need to go to the village hall. Nothing worries me about this. The most important things for me at school are going to school every day and learning new things	The Council notes the comments.	