

New Welsh School for Tenby

Tenby - traditionally the heart of 'Little England Beyond Wales' - will see the opening of its first Welsh language medium primary school next year.

The new Welsh school, which can cater for up to 210 pupils between three and 11, is due to open in the south Pembrokeshire town in September 2016.

A temporary governing body is already in place and it will be advertising for a new head teacher this month.

"This is a very exciting and historic opportunity for primary education in the town," said Councillor Huw George, Cabinet Member for the Welsh language.

"It will strengthen and develop primary and Welsh medium provision in the area and - along with the new English medium school - will provide children in the area with the very best educational start in life."

The new Welsh school is the result of growing demand for Welsh medium education in the traditionally English speaking town.

The current Welsh unit in the town's Infants School already has 71 pupils while numbers at the Junior School stand at 39.

And while the new school's main intake will come from these current Welsh units, it will also take in pupils from a wider catchment area across the south of the county.

Julie Jones, Chair of the Temporary Governing Body, said there had been a sea-change in attitude towards the Welsh language in Tenby over the last few decades.

"Some 37 years ago, one of our new governors - Ann Griffiths - was the first in the area to campaign for a Welsh unit within the existing Infants School, which was eventually established with a handful of children. She is now on the temporary governing body of a brand new Welsh school, which will open its gates in September 2016 with over 110 children on the roll," she said.

"Where once there was a handful of parents waiting to pick up their children from the Welsh units at the end of the school day, we are now in triple figures, waiting at five different class rooms across the Infants and Junior schools.

"The difference is tangible, and the demand for choice to be able to educate one's child fully in the Welsh language has been recognised by the County Council.

"All we need now is to appoint an excellent new Head Teacher with the enthusiasm and drive to take up this exciting challenge - such is the local demand, the numbers in the new Welsh School will only go one way, and that is up. No more little England beyond Wales."

The new school is part of a £8.37 million investment in primary education in Tenby by Pembrokeshire County Council.

As well as the new Welsh medium school, a new English medium VC primary school, catering for 390 pupils from three to 11, will also be set up.

The cost of the £8.37 million project will be shared between the County Council and the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools programme. ID: 32969 Revised: 16/12/2015