

PROPOSED WELSH MEDIUM 3-11 PRIMARY SCHOOL IN PEMBROKE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

This document should be read in conjunction with the Consultation Document published as part of the proposal to establish a new 3-11 Welsh Medium Primary School in Pembroke.

Why do you need to do this?

We want to be able to expand Welsh medium primary education in Pembrokeshire. We have already established a stand-alone Welsh medium school in Tenby and this has been very successful and we want to do the same in the Pembroke area. Increasing this provision is both a local and a national strategy and establishing a new Welsh medium school in Pembroke will contribute to this.

Why can't Ysgol Gelli Aur / Golden Grove School expand?

The school was last inspected in July 2018. Estyn's report states that "*leaders do not always ensure that the Welsh language has a high enough status in the life and work of the school*".

In a dual stream setting the pupils' exposure to both English and Welsh potentially make it difficult to fully immerse the pupils in the Welsh language particularly during times when the pupils interact outside the classroom. Dual stream schools face the challenge of functioning as two schools under one roof in terms of the linguistic categories of Welsh Medium and English Medium, despite functioning as one school. Such schools run the potential risk of pupils opting out of Welsh Medium education to continue their education in the English Medium stream, thereby limiting linguistic continuity.

This is 'Little England Beyond Wales'; surely there's no need for a Welsh medium school in Pembroke?

That is what we were led to believe from consultees in Tenby, but the number of pupils receiving Welsh medium provision there has increased significantly since the provision changed from Dual Stream to stand-alone Welsh medium. We are confident that this will be mirrored in the Pembroke area.

Where will the new school be built?

We have looked at a number of sites which are in the Council's ownership in the Pembroke / Pembroke Dock areas. We have commissioned a detailed feasibility on two of those sites, both in the vicinity of Bush, Pembroke. Our preferred site, subject to obtaining the usual planning consents is that known as Old School Farm.

When will the new school be ready for occupation?

We are aiming to have the new school ready for occupation by September 2022.

<p>Will children currently attending the Welsh stream at Ysgol Gelli Aur be able to attend the new school? Yes – all pupils attending the Welsh stream will transfer to the new school. They will not be required to apply via School Admissions as this will be done automatically.</p>
<p>Where will children go for Welsh medium at 11 years of age? The new school will be a feeder school to Ysgol Caer Elen in Haverfordwest. That does not prevent them from attending Ysgol y Preseli, but no transport would be provided.</p>
<p>If my child wanted to go to a Welsh medium Sixth Form, where would that be? Pembrokeshire’s only Welsh medium sixth form is in Ysgol y Preseli.</p>
<p>How big will the new school be? The new school will be single form entry. This means that it will have sufficient capacity for year groups up to 30 in number. It will therefore have room for 210 full time pupils from Reception to Year 6 (inclusive) and a 30 place nursery.</p>
<p>Can we expect standards to improve in Ysgol Gelli Aur? There is no reason why they shouldn’t. The school may be better placed to improve standards if it concentrates on English medium provision only.</p>
<p>Will the new school have ‘wrap around’ childcare, e.g. Cylch Meithrin, After School Clubs, etc? Yes. The school will accommodate childcare facilities and it is hoped that we can work with Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin to establish a Cylch Meithrin in the school.</p>
<p>What will happen to the staff who currently teach in the Welsh stream at Ysgol Gelli Aur? The governing bodies of schools are responsible for setting staffing structures and the recruitment of staff. It will be a matter for the governing body to determine the staffing need of the new school and it is reasonable to expect that staff currently at Ysgol Gelli Aur will be considered.</p>
<p>Would my child be able to go to Ysgol y Preseli instead of Ysgol Caer Elen, particularly if s/he wanted to stay in a school with a Sixth Form? Yes, but there would be no transport provided to Ysgol y Preseli. On the basis of current arrangements, transport is provided to pupils attending school sixth forms.</p>
<p>Will my child be eligible for school transport? Possibly, but the Council’s school transport policy would apply</p>

Will I need to buy a new school uniform if my child attends the new school?

Many primary schools in Pembrokeshire have a school uniform and it is likely that the governing body of the new school will want the school to have its own identity, and therefore it is reasonable to expect that there will be an expectation on pupils to wear a school uniform. If this is the case, the governing body will be expected to consider ways of keeping down the costs of the uniform. Since September 2019, there is a requirement for governing bodies and headteachers to have regard to the statutory guidance provided by Welsh Government on this matter.

What facilities will the new school have?

The school will be of the appropriate 21st century specification and will have the necessary facilities for a single-form-entry school. There will be provision for on-site childcare facilities (Cylch Meithrin) and there will be suitable soft and hard outdoor play areas.

Is this what my increased Council Tax is paying for?

No. The funding to be obtained to build the new school comes from a specific capital grant from Welsh Government aimed at increasing Welsh medium provision. It is specifically linked to its strategy to have one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Will the new school share the same catchment as Ysgol Gelli Aur?

This is what is being proposed initially. However, we recognise that the new school is likely to draw pupils from a wider area and extending the catchment may become an option which is considered following the consultation process.

Will Ysgol Gelli Aur receive any investment to upgrade buildings as part of this proposal?

Given the current main sources of capital funding, this is unlikely.

How will the governing body of the new school be appointed?

The Governing Body of the new school will be appointed according to The Government of Maintained School (Wales) Regulations 2005 and will include the following governor categories: Community, Additional Community, Local Authority, Parents, Staff, Teachers. The appropriate appointment or election process will be applied to each category.

What will happen to the governing body of Ysgol Gelli Aur?

The governing body of Ysgol Gelli Aur will remain the same.

Won't pupils miss their friends from the English stream?

Quite possibly. However, there is no reason why children from both schools cannot continue to meet and be friends outside of school.