

## Transforming Education Team

# Options Appraisal

## Ysgol y Cribarth language category

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to consider options for the future language category of Ysgol y Cribarth.

Ysgol y Cribarth is located in Abercraf in the Ystradgynlais catchment in South Powys. The school opened in 2012 following the reorganisation of schools in the area, which saw 4 new schools open to replace the 10 previous schools.

Ysgol y Cribarth currently operates as a single stream English-medium school. However, since September 2021, the school has also operated a Welsh-medium Foundation Phase class on a pilot basis as part of a scheme supported by Powys County Council. This class has continued to operate in the 2022/23 academic year. There are currently 20 pupils in the Welsh-medium class. Current pupil numbers at the school are as follows<sup>1</sup>:

	<b>R</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Total</b>
Welsh-medium	9	6	5	0	0	0	0	20
English-medium	6	12	19	18	13	15	21	104
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>124</b>

Following introduction of the Welsh Government's new Welsh language categories in 2021, the school has been categorised as T2 – Transitional, to reflect the pilot Welsh-medium provision which is currently operating in the school. However, the Welsh Government's guidance document<sup>2</sup> is clear that schools should not be in transitional categories permanently, so there is a need to consider the school's future language category, so that any necessary processes can be carried out.

The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys sets out a number of aims and objectives to transform the Powys education system over the next few years, in order to provide the best possible opportunities to Powys learners now and in the future. One of the objectives included in the strategy is to 'improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages'. Within this objective, the Strategy includes an aim to 'Move schools along the language continuum'.

The purpose of this paper is to consider options in respect of Ysgol y Cribarth's future language category, given the success of the recently established Welsh-medium pilot class.

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<sup>1</sup> Teacher Centre, 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022

<sup>2</sup> [WG43283 \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/WG43283)

# **PART A – THE CASE FOR CHANGE**

## **2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

### **2.1 POLICY CONTEXT**

#### **i) Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2022-32**

The Council has recently developed a new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for 2022-32, which sets out how it will develop Welsh-medium provision in Powys over the next 10 years, with the aim of meeting the Welsh Government aspiration to increase the number of pupils accessing Welsh-medium education.

The Council's WESP includes an ambitious target to increase the percentage of Year 1 pupils taught through the medium of Welsh from 22% to 36% by 2032.

To achieve this, the WESP includes a commitment to develop new Welsh-medium primary provision, and in particular states that:

'The authority will focus on developing more Welsh-medium provision in the following catchment areas:

- Llanfair Caereinion
- Llanfyllin
- Ystradgynlais
- Brecon
- Llandrindod Wells/Builth Wells
- Newtown
- Llanidloes'

#### **ii) Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys**

Following the inspection of Powys Education Services carried out by Estyn in the summer of 2019, the Council carried out a strategic review of schools during 2019-20, which led to the development of a new Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys. The strategy, which was developed following engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, was approved in April 2020. It was subsequently reviewed and updated in the summer of 2022 following the Council elections held in May, and relaunched in July 2022.

The strategy sets out a Vision Statement and Guiding Principles which will underpin the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. The Vision Statement is as follows:

***All children and young people in Powys will experience a high-quality, inspiring education to help develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that will enable them to become healthy, personally fulfilled, economically productive, socially responsible and globally engaged citizens of 21<sup>st</sup> century Wales.***

In addition, the strategy outlines a number of aims and objectives to shape the Council's work to transform the Powys education system over the coming years. One of the Strategic Aims is to 'improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages'. Within this aim, the Strategy sets out a Strategic Objective to 'Move schools along the language continuum.'

In July 2022, the Council published a work programme for Wave 2 of implementation of the Strategy, which will run from 2022-27. This outlines the activity which will be taken forward to implement each of the Strategic Aims outlined in the Strategy. In respect of the Strategic Aim to 'improve access to Welsh-medium provision across all key stages', the work programme includes actions to improve access to Welsh-medium across the county, including an action to 'Further develop Welsh-medium early years and primary provision at Ysgol y Cribarth'.

## **2.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN POWYS**

Powys is a large, rural authority. Covering a quarter of the landmass of Wales, it contains only 4.2% of the population, making it the most sparsely populated county in Wales. Delivering services across such a large, sparsely populated area is challenging and expensive.

The Council's Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys outlines a number of challenges facing education in Powys, which were identified following engagement with key stakeholders during the autumn term 2019 and spring term 2020. This information was updated when the Strategy was relaunched in July 2022.

The following is a summary of the main challenges facing the Council:

### **i) High proportion of small schools**

Based on PLASC 2021 figures, there are 33 small primary schools in Powys – this is approximately 43% of the primary provision in the county. 15 schools had fewer than 50 pupils, and for those schools the budget share per pupil is generally higher than the Powys average for primary schools.

### **ii) Decreasing pupil numbers**

Pupil numbers have decreased over the past decade, and are expected to continue to decrease over the next five years. Pupil numbers in the

primary sector in Powys are expected to decrease by approximately 5% by 2026.

**iii) High number of surplus places**

Based on PLASC 2019 figures, there was 14% surplus capacity in Powys primary schools. With pupil numbers across Powys projected to decrease overall over the coming years, the proportion of surplus places across the county will continue to increase.

**iv) Building condition**

Whilst the Council has invested in its school's estate through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme and the Asset Management Plan, building condition remains an issue across Powys, with associated maintenance costs.

**v) Financial pressures**

The Council is currently facing significant financial pressures in general. This is affecting all service areas, including the schools' sector. There are significant variations in the budget share per pupil across Powys schools, ranging from £3,512 to £11,689 in the primary sector.

**vi) Inequality in access to Welsh-medium education**

In contrast to other areas of Wales, there has been no growth in total Welsh-medium pupil numbers across Powys over recent years. Significant changes are needed to the Welsh-medium offer in Powys to reverse the trend of the last few years and ensure that all Powys learners can access comprehensive Welsh-medium provision throughout their educational careers.

**vii) Limited post-14 and post-16 offer**

In September 2019, the Council's Cabinet considered a report on post-16 provision, which outlined a number of challenges facing the sector, including decreasing learner numbers, financial challenges and sustainability of the curriculum offer, including Welsh-medium provision.

**viii) Inequality in access to SEN provision**

Within Powys, pupils with special education needs (SEN) attend a range of settings, including special schools, specialist centres, the pupil referral unit (PRU) as well as mainstream schools.

Currently, not all pupils are educated in the setting that meets their needs best, and depending on where pupils live, they have access to a different quality and type of provision.

**ix) Historical lack of political decision making**

Although there have been some developments in terms of the schools' infrastructure over recent years, the Council's failure to implement a number of high-profile proposals in the last few years has left a legacy in Powys, and there has been a reluctance to embark on large scale reorganisation of education provision since then.

The Council's recently approved Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for 2022-32 further elaborates on the challenges in respect of Welsh-medium provision:

'The challenges of delivering equitable Welsh-medium provision in Powys are recognised in the Vision for Developing Fully Bilingual Learners in Powys, which was approved by Cabinet in December 2020:

- Not all parts of Powys have easily accessible primary or secondary education through the medium of Welsh – currently there is no provision in the Presteigne, Crickhowell or Gwernyfed areas.
- Many schools that do provide a dual-stream approach do not deliver enough of their curriculum in Welsh to satisfy their learners. Provision is patchy, and unequal in too many of the secondary schools. It is common for under half of the curriculum to be available in their language of choice for learners in the Welsh stream of secondary education from year 7.
- The choice of subjects taught through the medium of Welsh becomes smaller as the learner gets older, and at post-14 the provision is very poor or non-existent. This includes deficiencies in the provision by the Further Education provider. In some secondary Welsh streams, fewer than 5 GCSE subjects are delivered through the medium of Welsh, and in one case only one non-language course is taught in Welsh.
- There is evidence that some parents in Powys avoid choosing an education through the medium of Welsh because they are concerned that the progression available for their child within the authority will be limited.
- At a time when bilingual/Welsh education has grown across Wales and is often a showcase sector for other counties, Powys has been stagnant, and in some key indicators the local authority has been going backwards. This has happened despite commitments made in the Powys Welsh in Education Strategic Plans over recent years.
- Powys has a smaller percentage of its children learning through the medium of Welsh than the percentage of Welsh speakers in the wider population. It is believed to be the only authority in Wales where this is the case.'

### 3. WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED AT YSGOL Y CRIBARTH

#### 3.1 THE CURRENT SITUATION

Ysgol y Cribarth is located in Abercraf in the Ystradgynlais catchment in South Powys, and serves the village of Abercraf and the surrounding area. The school opened in a new building in 2012 following the closure of a number of smaller schools in the locality.

Ysgol y Cribarth currently operates as a single stream English-medium school. However, since September 2021, the school has also operated a Welsh-medium Foundation Phase class on a pilot basis as part of a scheme supported by Powys County Council. This class has continued to operate in the 2022/23 academic year. There are currently 20 pupils in the Welsh-medium class. Following the introduction of the Welsh Government's new Welsh language categories in 2021, the school has been categorised as T2 – Transitional, to reflect the pilot Welsh-medium provision which is currently operating in the school.

The following is a summary of key data relating to Ysgol y Cribarth:

	School Type	Language Category	Admission Number <sup>3</sup>	Rural School? <sup>4</sup>
<b>Ysgol y Cribarth</b>	Community Primary School School building owned by Powys County Council	T2 – Transitional	21	No

#### Pupil Numbers

##### i) Current pupil numbers<sup>5</sup>

Current pupil numbers at Ysgol y Cribarth are as follows:

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
<b>Welsh-medium</b>	9	6	5	0	0	0	0	20
<b>English-medium</b>	6	12	19	18	13	15	21	104

<sup>3</sup> Powys Admissions Information and Arrangements 2022-2023

<sup>4</sup> Annex F of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018)

(<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/school-organisation-code-second-edition.pdf>)

includes a list of 'rural schools', to which the 'Presumption against the closure of rural schools' applies.

<sup>5</sup> Teacher Centre, 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022



<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>124</b>
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ii) **Historical pupil numbers<sup>6</sup>**

	<b>Jan. 2016</b>	<b>Jan. 2017</b>	<b>Jan. 2018</b>	<b>Jan. 2019</b>	<b>Jan. 2020</b>	<b>Jan. 2021</b>	<b>Jan. 2022</b>
<b>Ysgol y Cribarth</b>	145	139	143	126	127	142	135

iii) **Projected pupil numbers<sup>7</sup>**

	<b>Jan. 2023</b>	<b>Jan. 2024</b>	<b>Jan. 2025</b>	<b>Jan. 2026</b>	<b>Jan. 2027</b>
<b>Ysgol y Cribarth</b>	142	139	143	151	147

**Building Capacity and Condition**

i) **Capacity**

	<b>Current Capacity<sup>8</sup></b>	<b>Currently Filled</b>	<b>Surplus Capacity</b>
<b>Ysgol y Cribarth</b>	148	124 (83.8%)	24 (16.2%)

ii) **Building condition**

	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Suitability</b>	<b>Access to hall on site</b>
<b>Ysgol y Cribarth</b>	A Good	A Good	Yes

**Standards of Education**

i) **Estyn**

	<b>Ysgol y Cribarth</b>
<b>Date of Inspection</b>	March 2015
<b>Standards</b>	Good

<sup>6</sup> PLASC

<sup>7</sup> Powys Schools Service Projections based on PLASC & Birth Rates

<sup>8</sup> Welsh Government Planning of School Places Return – October 2022

<b>Well Being</b>	Good
<b>Learning Experiences</b>	Good
<b>Teaching</b>	Good
<b>Care, Support and Guidance</b>	Good
<b>Learning Environment</b>	Good
<b>Leadership</b>	Good
<b>Improving Quality</b>	Good
<b>Partnership Working</b>	Good
<b>Resource Management</b>	Good
<b>Outcome</b>	The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

### Financial information

#### i) Cost per pupil<sup>9</sup>

	<b>Budget share per school</b>	<b>Budget share per pupil</b>	<b>Notional SEN budget</b>	<b>Non ISB funds devolved to the school</b>
<b>Ysgol y Cribarth</b>	£493,114	£4,287	£20,348	£26,450
<b>Powys average (Primary)</b>	N/A	£4,656	N/A	N/A

### Equalities Information

#### i) Free School Meals<sup>10</sup>

	<b>Number of pupils who had a free school meal on Census day</b>
Ysgol y Cribarth	35 (27.5%)

#### ii) Pupils in care<sup>11</sup>

	<b>Number of pupils in care</b>
Ysgol y Cribarth	0

<sup>9</sup> Powys Section 52 Budget Statement, 2022/2023

<sup>10</sup> PLASC 2022

<sup>11</sup> PLASC 2022

iii) **SEN/ALN<sup>12</sup>**

	<b>School Action</b>	<b>School Action Plus</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>IDP</b>
Ysgol y Cribarth	5.9%	2.9%	0%	0%

### 3.2 WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED IN YSGOL Y CRIBARTH

A Welsh-medium Reception / Year 1 class was established at the school at the start of the 2021/22 academic year as part of a pilot scheme that was supported by Powys County Council. There are currently 20 pupils in the Welsh-medium class. Current pupil numbers at the school are as follows<sup>13</sup>:

	<b>R</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Welsh-medium</b>	9	6	5	0	0	0	0	20
<b>English-medium</b>	6	12	19	18	13	15	21	104
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>124</b>

To provide continuity of provision for pupils attending the pilot provision and to provide clarity for the school going forward, the Council is keen to explore options for the school's future language category, with the aim of ensuring that Welsh-medium provision continues to be offered at the school permanently, to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to choose this provision, which would give them the opportunity to become fluent in Welsh and English. This would support the Council's aims and aspirations as outlined in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) for 2022-32 and the Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys.

In addition to this, the Council has recently been reviewing the language categories of its schools to reflect the new definitions published by the Welsh Government in 2022. To reflect the pilot Welsh-medium provision which is currently operating at the school, Ysgol y Cribarth has been categorised as T2 – Transitional. However, the Welsh Government's guidance document<sup>14</sup> is clear that schools should not be in transitional categories permanently, so there is a need to consider the school's future language category, so that any necessary statutory processes required to achieve this can be carried out.

<sup>12</sup> PLASC 2022

<sup>13</sup> Teacher Centre, 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022

<sup>14</sup> [WG43283 \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/WG43283)

## PART B – OPTIONS FOR YSGOL Y CRIBARTH

### 4. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

The following options have been identified in respect of the future language category of Ysgol y Cribarth:

Option	Description
1	<p><b>Status quo – Ysgol y Cribarth continues as an English-medium school.</b></p> <p>The Welsh-medium pilot currently operating at the school comes to an end. Pupils either transfer to English-medium provision or move to alternative Welsh-medium provision.</p> <p>Based on the new Welsh Government definitions of schools, the school would be a Category 1 English-medium school.</p>
2	<p><b>Formally establish a Welsh-medium stream in the school to operate alongside the English-medium provision.</b></p> <p>The Welsh-medium pilot currently operating at the school would become a Welsh-medium stream and would provide Welsh-medium education up to year 6.</p> <p>English-medium provision would continue to be available in the school's English-medium stream.</p> <p>Based on the new Welsh Government definitions of schools, the Welsh-medium stream would work towards meeting the definition of a Category 3 Welsh-medium school, the English-medium stream would meet the definition of a Category 1 English-medium school.</p>
3	<p><b>Change the language category of Ysgol y Cribarth to Dual Language</b></p> <p>Based on the new Welsh Government definitions of schools, the school would meet the definition of a 'Dual Language' school. This is as follows:</p> <p>'At least 50% of learners' school activities (both curricular and extra-curricular) will be in Welsh. This could be achieved in different ways depending on the school context. It could be by using full Welsh-medium immersion up to age 7 with choice offered in the other year groups, or that 50% of school activities are in Welsh throughout.'</p> <p>All new pupils joining the school would be taught through the medium of Welsh up to age 7. A choice of Welsh-medium or English-medium provision would then be offered from Year 3 onwards.</p>

4	<p><b>Change the language category of Ysgol y Cribarth to Welsh-medium on a phased basis.</b></p> <p>New pupils to the school would join the Welsh-medium class/es. The English-medium classes would be phased out as the current English-medium pupils at the school move through the school.</p> <p>Once fully implemented, all pupils at the school would be taught through the medium of Welsh and would become fully bilingual. Pupils wishing to access English-medium provision would need to attend alternative schools.</p> <p>Based on the new Welsh Government definitions of schools, the school would be a Category 3 Welsh-medium school.</p>
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## 5. SWOT ANALYSIS OF EACH OPTION

### Option 1: Status quo – Ysgol y Cribarth continues as an English-medium school

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No impact on English-medium pupils at Ysgol y Cribarth or their parents</li> <li>- Minimal impact on staff at Ysgol y Cribarth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Disruption for pupils currently accessing the Welsh-medium pilot at the school – they would need to either transfer to English-medium provision or transfer to a different school</li> <li>- No opportunity for pupils at the school to access Welsh-medium provision and become fully bilingual</li> <li>- Would not provide access to additional Welsh-medium primary provision in the Ystradgynlais catchment</li> <li>- Would not meet the aims and objectives of the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education</li> <li>- Would not contribute towards meeting the Council’s targets to increase the number of pupils taught through the medium of Welsh as outlined in the WESP</li> <li>- Does not support the Welsh Government aspiration to have a million Welsh speakers by 2050</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parents who want their children to have Welsh-medium education might take their children to other schools</li> </ul>
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**Option 2: Formally establish a Welsh-medium stream in the school to operate alongside the English-medium provision.**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would provide continuity for pupils currently accessing Welsh-medium provision at the school</li> <li>- Would provide an additional opportunity for pupils in the catchment to access Welsh-medium provision</li> <li>- Welsh-medium provision would be more accessible to pupils living in the north of the catchment</li> <li>- Pupils at the school would have the opportunity to study through the medium of Welsh and develop full bilingual skills, if they so wished</li> <li>- Potential to increase the number of pupils studying through the medium of Welsh in the locality and in Powys</li> <li>- Potential to increase the pupil numbers at the school</li> <li>- Would provide continued access to English-medium provision at the school alongside Welsh-medium provision</li> <li>- Positive impact on the school's Welsh ethos, which could provide more opportunities for English-medium pupils</li> <li>- Supports the aim in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education to support schools to move along the language continuum</li> <li>- Would contribute towards the targets in the Council's WESP</li> <li>- Would contribute towards the Welsh Government's 2050 target of £1m Welsh speakers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Additional cost to the Council of funding the school as a dual stream school</li> <li>- Additional pressures for the school's leaders related to running a dual stream school</li> <li>- Not all pupils at the school would become fluent in Welsh and English</li> <li>- Possible impact on other schools in the catchment – in particular Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn y Glowyr should pupils choose to attend Welsh-medium provision at Ysgol y Cribarth instead of travelling to Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn y Glowyr</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity to further promote the Welsh-medium provision available to attract more pupils to Welsh-medium provision</li> <li>- Opportunity for the school to plan ahead as the Welsh-medium stream is phased in, and to consider any additional requirements e.g. training requirements, staffing implications</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop and promote the Welsh language in the north of the Ystradgynlais catchment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of take up of places in the Welsh-medium stream</li> <li>- Possible difficulty recruiting staff able to teach through the medium of Welsh / support the Welsh-medium provision</li> </ul>
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### Option 3: Change Ysgol y Cribarth's language category to Dual Language

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would provide continuity for pupils currently accessing Welsh-medium provision at the school</li> <li>- Would provide an additional opportunity for pupils in the catchment to access Welsh-medium provision</li> <li>- Welsh-medium provision would be more accessible to pupils living in the north of the catchment</li> <li>- Potential to increase the number of pupils studying through the medium of Welsh in the locality and in Powys</li> <li>- Potential to increase the pupil numbers at the school</li> <li>- Supports the aim in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education to support schools to move along the language continuum</li> <li>- Would contribute towards the targets in the Council's WESP</li> <li>- Would contribute towards the Welsh Government's 2050 target of £1m Welsh speakers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Does not align with the current Welsh-medium pilot being offered at the school</li> <li>- Potential disruption to pupils currently at the school</li> <li>- Impact on staff at Ysgol y Cribarth who may not have the Welsh language skills needed to support this type of provision</li> <li>- Additional pressures for the school's leaders during the transition phase</li> <li>- Additional funding would need to be provided to support this model</li> <li>- This is a new model for Powys – no other schools operating in this way who would be able to provide support</li> <li>- Parents not wishing their children to have Welsh-medium education might choose to send their children to other English-medium schools</li> <li>- Could lead to a decrease in pupil numbers at the school</li> <li>- Possible impact on other schools in the catchment – in particular Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn y Glowyr should pupils choose to attend Welsh-medium provision at Ysgol y Cribarth instead of travelling to Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn y Glowyr</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity to further promote the Welsh-medium provision available to attract more pupils to Welsh-medium provision</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop and promote the Welsh language in the north of the Ystradgynlais catchment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possible reduction in pupil numbers at Ysgol y Cribarth as pupils from the area may choose to attend alternative English-medium schools</li> <li>- Likely to be opposition to this change within the local area / the school itself, which would make it more challenging to implement</li> <li>- Possible difficulty recruiting staff able to teach through the medium of Welsh / support the Welsh-medium provision</li> </ul>

#### Option 4: Change Ysgol y Cribarth's language category to Welsh-medium

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Would provide continuity for pupils currently accessing Welsh-medium provision at the school</li> <li>- Would provide an additional opportunity for pupils in the catchment to access Welsh-medium provision</li> <li>- Welsh-medium provision would be more accessible to pupils living in the north of the catchment</li> <li>- All pupils at the school would eventually be taught in Welsh and would become fully bilingual in Welsh and English</li> <li>- Potential to increase the number of pupils studying through the medium of Welsh in the locality and in Powys</li> <li>- Potential to increase the pupil numbers at the school</li> <li>- Supports the aim in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education to support schools to move along the language continuum</li> <li>- Would contribute towards the targets in the Council's WESP</li> <li>- Would contribute towards the Welsh Government's 2050 target of £1m Welsh speakers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parents not wishing their children to have Welsh-medium education might choose to send their children to other English-medium schools</li> <li>- Could lead to a decrease in pupil numbers at the school</li> <li>- Impact on staff at Ysgol y Cribarth who may not have the Welsh language skills needed to work in a Welsh-medium school</li> <li>- New resources would be needed throughout the school to support teaching all pupils in Welsh</li> <li>- Possible impact on other schools in the catchment – in particular Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn y Glowyr should pupils choose to attend Welsh-medium provision at Ysgol y Cribarth instead of travelling to Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn y Glowyr</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity to further promote the Welsh-medium provision available to attract more pupils to Welsh-medium provision</li> <li>- Opportunity for the school to plan ahead as the Welsh-medium provision is phased in, and to consider any additional requirements e.g. training requirements, staffing implications</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop and promote the Welsh language in the north of the Ystradgynlais catchment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Possible reduction in pupil numbers at Ysgol y Cribarth as pupils from the area may choose to attend alternative English-medium schools</li> <li>- Likely to be opposition to this change within the local area / the school itself, which would make it more challenging to implement</li> <li>- Possible difficulty recruiting staff able to teach through the medium of Welsh / support the Welsh-medium provision</li> </ul>
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## 6. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The options have also been assessed against the following Critical Success Factors:

Critical Success Factor	Description
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The option must align with the Council’s Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys 2020-2032</li> <li>• The option must align with the Council’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)</li> </ul>
2 – Value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The option must optimise the resources available for the delivery of learning</li> <li>• The option must provide value for money in the delivery of learning</li> </ul>
3 – Potential achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The option must be achievable within current legislation</li> <li>• The option must be operationally achievable</li> <li>• The option must be physically achievable</li> </ul>
4 – Potential affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent to which the option is affordable within the Council’s forecasted revenue</li> <li>• The extent to which the option is affordable within the forecasted capital funding available to the Council</li> </ul>

Each option has been assessed against the Critical Success Factors based on the following criteria:

✓ – Meets    ? – Could meet    x – Does not meet

The assessment for each option is as follows:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
1 – Strategic fit and business needs	X	✓	✓	✓
2 – Value for money	✓	?	?	✓
3 – Potential achievability	✓	✓	?	?
4 – Potential affordability	✓	✓	?	✓
<b>Total ✓</b>	3	3	1	3
<b>Total x</b>	1	0	0	0
<b>Outcome</b>	Discount	<b>Possible</b>	<b>Possible</b>	<b>Possible</b>

## 7. EMERGING PREFERRED OPTION

The assessment against the Critical Success Factors in section 6 above indicates three possible options for the future language category of Ysgol y Cribarth.

By also considering the SWOT assessments of these two options, Option 2 is identified as the emerging preferred option, as there are less weaknesses / threats associated with this option than Options 3 and 4.

Based on the work carried out so far, the emerging preferred option for Ysgol y Cribarth's language category is:

**Option 2: Formally establish a Welsh-medium stream in the school to operate alongside the English-medium provision.**

The reasons for this are:

- Would provide continuity for pupils currently accessing Welsh-medium provision at the school
- Would provide an additional opportunity for pupils in the catchment to access Welsh-medium provision
- Welsh-medium provision would be more accessible to pupils living in the north of the catchment
- Pupils at the school would have the opportunity to study through the medium of Welsh and develop full bilingual skills, if they so wished

- Potential to increase the number of pupils studying through the medium of Welsh in the locality and in Powys
- Potential to increase the pupil numbers at the school
- Would provide continued access to English-medium provision at the school alongside Welsh-medium provision
- Positive impact on the school's Welsh ethos, which could provide more opportunities for English-medium pupils
- Supports the aim in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education to support schools to move along the language continuum
- Would contribute towards the targets in the Council's WESP
- Would contribute towards the Welsh Government's 2050 target of £1m Welsh speakers

It is recommended that the emerging preferred option would be implemented on a phased basis, year by year, building on the Welsh-medium pilot class which is currently operating in the school. The Welsh-medium provision would increase annually as these pupils move through the school, until it was provided up to year 6.

Further consideration of this option will now be carried out, to include consideration of the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code.

## **PART C – FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF PREFERRED OPTION**

The Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2018) outlines factors to be considered when developing school organisation proposals.

Consideration is given below to the impact of the preferred option, to establish a Welsh-medium stream at Ysgol y Cribarth which would operate alongside the school's English-medium stream, on the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code.

### **8. QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION**

#### **8.1 Likely impact on standards and progress overall, of specific groups and in skills**

The Council would not expect changing Ysgol y Cribarth's language category to have a negative impact on standards and progress overall. The change would provide an opportunity for pupils to choose to access Welsh-medium education at the school, however English-medium education would also continue to be available. This would apply to all pupils, including any pupils belonging to specific groups such as English as an Additional Language, eligible for Free School Meals, Looked After Children, Additional Learning Needs.

The Council would expect changing the school's language category to have a positive impact on the Welsh language skills of all pupils at the school. Pupils choosing to attend the Welsh-medium stream would have the opportunity to become fully bilingual in Welsh and English, however the Council would also expect the introduction of a Welsh-medium stream to have a positive impact on the Welsh language skills of pupils attending the English-medium stream too.

#### **8.2 Wellbeing and attitudes to learning**

It is not anticipated that changing the school's language category would have a significant impact on wellbeing and attitudes to learning. Pupils would be able to choose to access Welsh-medium or English-medium provision at the school.

#### **8.3 Teaching and learning experiences**

##### **8.3.1 Quality of teaching**

Pupils taught through the medium of English would continue to be taught through the medium of English by the same teachers. It is not anticipated that

changing the school's language category would impact on the quality of teaching for English-medium pupils.

Pupils accessing the Welsh-medium stream would be taught through the medium of Welsh. Formally establishing a Welsh-medium stream at the school would provide an opportunity to build on and further develop the Welsh-medium pilot class which is currently operating at the school. This would include continuing to improve the quality of teaching for pupils in the Welsh-medium stream as the provision expands, by employing specialist teachers to educate pupils receiving education through the medium of Welsh.

### **8.3.2 The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum**

The breadth, balance and appropriateness of the curriculum would improve due to the school being able to offer provision through both Welsh and English. Staff from both streams would be able to work together to plan and share ideas and activities which could be adapted to the language through which pupils are educated.

### **8.3.3 The provision of skills**

The provision of skills would be increased as the school would be able to offer provision through both English and Welsh medium provision.

## **8.4 Care, support and guidance**

### **8.4.1 Tracking, monitoring and the provision of learning support, personal development and safeguarding**

It is not anticipated that changing the school's language category would have a significant impact on tracking or personal development as the school has established systems and procedures which can be adapted to both Welsh and English. The school would need to ensure they have provision through the medium of Welsh to support pupils with additional learning needs.

## **8.5 Leadership and Management**

### **8.5.1 Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers, self evaluation processes and improvement planning**

It is not anticipated that changing the school's language category would have a significant impact on self-evaluation processes and improvement planning as the leaders have effective systems and processes which can be adapted to either language. The school would need to ensure that there are available staff to monitor the standards and provision through Welsh.

### **8.5.2 Professional learning**

Changing the school's language category would provide greater opportunities for professional learning through both English and Welsh medium. Teaching staff would be able to work collaboratively across both languages, sharing opportunities, experiences and activities to support all teachers.

To support any change to the school's language category, opportunities would also be provided to support current staff to improve their Welsh language skills so that they can move along the language continuum. This would be through access to sabbatical courses for both teaching staff and non-teaching staff.

### **8.5.3 Use of Resources**

Should the change be implemented, the school would be funded as a dual stream school and would receive additional funding.

## **8.6 Impact on vulnerable groups, including children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

It is not anticipated that changing the school's language category would impact on vulnerable groups, including children with Special Educational needs (SEN). Any pupils belonging to these groups attending the school in future would be able to choose to attend either the Welsh-medium stream or the English-medium stream.

## **8.7 Ability of the school/schools which are the subject of the proposals to deliver the full curriculum at the foundation phase and each key stage of education, including the quality of curriculum delivery and the extent to which the structure or size of the school is impacting on this**

Since September 2021, the school have piloted a Welsh medium foundation phase class. This has proved to be successful in delivering a high quality curriculum, impacting positively on those pupils that have accessed the provision over that time.

Should the proposal be implemented, this provision would be gradually extended throughout the school as the pupils currently attending the pilot move through the school. The school would be in a position to deliver Welsh-medium provision over the full primary age range as needed as the pupils move through the school.

Introducing the provision on a phased basis provides an opportunity for the school to plan for delivering education through the medium of Welsh

throughout the primary age range, to ensure that the full curriculum can be delivered effectively through the medium of Welsh to pupils in all years when needed.

## **9. NEED FOR PLACES AND IMPACT ON ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS**

### **9.1 Is the alternative provision sufficient to meet existing and projected demand for schools of the same language category and (if relevant) designated religious character?**

Welsh-medium education is available in the Ystradgynlais catchment at Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn y Glowyr. Pupil numbers at this school have increased consistently since it opened in 2012, showing a growing demand for Welsh-medium education in the catchment. Establishing additional Welsh-medium provision at Ysgol y Cribarth would increase the local authority's Welsh-medium places in the catchment, ensuring that the growth in demand for Welsh-medium education can be accommodated, and that further growth can be facilitated.

This school is located in the southern part of the catchment, whilst Ysgol y Cribarth is located in the north of the catchment.

Education through the medium of English would continue to be available at Ysgol y Cribarth, as well as being available at two other primary schools in the catchment – Ysgol Golwg y Cwm and Ysgol Bro Tawe.

Ysgol y Cribarth is a community primary school, as are all other schools in the Ystradgynlais catchment. Changing the school's language category would have no impact on access to educational provision that has a designated religious character.

### **9.3 What will be the nature of journeys to alternative provision and resulting journey times for pupils including SEN pupils?**

It is not anticipated that the proposed change to the school's language category would have a negative impact on the nature of journeys / journey times for pupils, including SEN pupils.

Introducing a Welsh-medium stream at Ysgol y Cribarth would mean that Welsh-medium provision would be available at a second location in the Ystradgynlais catchment. Provision would be available closer to home for pupils living in the north of the catchment, which could lead to shorter journey times for pupils living in this part of the catchment who wish to access Welsh-medium education. This would include SEN pupils.

English-medium provision would continue to be available at the school, so there would be no impact on journey time for English-medium pupils, including SEN pupils.

## **10. RESOURCING OF EDUCATION AND OTHER FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **10.1 What effect will the proposals have on surplus places in the area?**

It is not anticipated that introducing a Welsh-medium stream at Ysgol y Cribarth would impact on surplus places in the area. Whilst it is possible that this could lead to an increase in pupil numbers at Ysgol y Cribarth, which would reduce surplus places at that school, there could be an increase in surplus places at other schools in the catchment should pupils choose to attend Ysgol y Cribarth instead of attending one of the other schools. However, the overall level of surplus places in the area would not change.

### **10.2 Do the proposals form part of the local authority's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme and contribute to the delivery of sustainable schools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and to the better strategic management of the school estate?**

Introducing a Welsh-medium stream at Ysgol y Cribarth is not currently part of the local authority's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. However, the school is located in a new building which was provided as part of Welsh Government's previous capital programme in 2012.

### **10.3 What are the recurrent costs of proposals over a period of at least 3 years and is the necessary recurrent funding available?**

In the initial two years it will cost an estimated extra £92,100 per annum but once fully established, the change of category would be estimated to cost an additional £40,000 per annum more than the estimated costs of the current provision in future years.

### **10.4 Will additional transport costs be incurred as a result of the proposal?**

It is not anticipated that additional transport costs would be incurred as a result of the change.

### **10.5 What are the capital costs of the proposal and is the necessary capital funding is available?**

There are no capital costs associated with changing the language category of Ysgol y Cribarth.



**10.6 What is the scale of any projected net savings (taking into account school revenue, transport and capital costs)**

There are no projected net savings associated with the proposal to introduce a Welsh-medium stream at Ysgol y Cribarth.

Establishing a Welsh-medium stream at the school would mean that the school would be funded through the Council's funding formula as a dual stream school, which would mean that the school would receive a higher level of funding. Based on current numbers, it is anticipated that this would cost an additional £92,100 per annum for the initial two years but once fully established the change of category would be estimated to cost an additional £40,000 per annum more than the estimated costs of current provision in future years.

**10.7 Without the proposals, would the schools affected face budget deficits?**

Ysgol y Cribarth is not currently projecting to be in a deficit budget position.

**10.8 Will any savings in recurrent costs be retained in the local authority's local schools budget?**

It is not anticipated that there would be any savings, and therefore no opportunity for reinvestment of savings.

**10.9 Will the proceeds of sales (capital receipts) of redundant sites be made available to meet the costs of the proposal or contribute to the costs of future proposals which will promote effective management of school places?**

Establishing a Welsh-medium stream at Ysgol y Cribarth would not result in any redundant sites, therefore there would be no capital receipts.

## **11. OTHER GENERAL FACTORS**

**11.1 What impact will the proposals have on educational attainment among children from economically deprived backgrounds?**

Changing the school's language category to dual stream will mean that any pupils from economically deprived backgrounds attending the school would be able to choose either Welsh-medium or English-medium provision. This will provide an additional opportunity for these pupils to choose Welsh-medium education and become fully bilingual in Welsh and English. It is not anticipated that there would be a negative impact on these pupils.

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process in respect of the preferred option, impact assessments will be carried out and regularly reviewed throughout the process to ensure that any issues are identified and fully considered.

### **11.2 Any equality issues, including those identified through equality impact assessments**

Changing the school's language category to dual stream is not likely to have an impact on pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups, nor children with additional learning needs, as English-medium provision will continue to be provided at the school. Any pupils belonging to the protected characteristic groups would be able to choose either Welsh-medium or English-medium provision at the school.

Should the Council proceed with the statutory process in respect of the preferred option, equality impact assessments will be carried out and regularly reviewed throughout the process to ensure that any issues are identified and fully considered.

### **11.3 Whether the school / schools involved are subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the proposals, for example in relation to the use or disposal of land.**

Ysgol y Cribarth is not subject to any trust or charitable interests which might be affected by the plans to change the school's language category.

## **12. SPECIFIC FACTORS IN THE CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR THE CHANGE OF LANGUAGE MEDIUM**

### **12.1 The extent to which existing provision by the local authority of education in the medium of English and/or Welsh exceeds or falls short of demand or projected demand from parents for that type of provision, and the contribution the proposal would make to remedying that situation**

Welsh-medium education is available in the Ystradgynlais catchment at Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn y Glowyr. Pupil numbers at this school have increased consistently since the school opened in 2012, showing a growing demand for Welsh-medium education in the catchment. Establishing additional Welsh-medium provision at Ysgol y Cribarth would increase the local authority's Welsh-medium places in the catchment, ensuring that the growth in demand for Welsh-medium education can be accommodated, and that further growth can be facilitated.

This school is located at the southern end of the catchment, whilst Ysgol y Cribarth is located in the north of the catchment.

Education in the medium of English would continue to be available at Ysgol y Cribarth, as well as being available at two other primary schools in the catchment – Ysgol Golwg y Cwm and Ysgol Bro Tawe.

## **12.2 The extent to which the proposal would support the targets in the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)**

Introducing a Welsh-medium stream at Ysgol y Cribarth would support the local authority to meet the targets in its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan to increase the percentage of Year 1 pupils taught through the medium of Welsh.

## **13. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

Based on the options appraisal carried out and further consideration of the emerging preferred option against the factors outlined in the School Organisation Code, the preferred option is as follows:

### **Option 2: Formally establish a Welsh-medium stream in the school to operate alongside the English-medium provision.**

The reasons for this are:

- Would provide continuity for pupils currently accessing Welsh-medium provision at the school
- Would provide an additional opportunity for pupils in the catchment to access Welsh-medium provision
- Welsh-medium provision would be more accessible to pupils living in the north of the catchment
- Pupils at the school would have the opportunity to study through the medium of Welsh and develop full bilingual skills, if they so wished
- Potential to increase the number of pupils studying through the medium of Welsh in the locality and in Powys
- Potential to increase the pupil numbers at the school
- Would provide continued access to English-medium provision at the school alongside Welsh-medium provision
- Positive impact on the school's Welsh ethos, which could provide more opportunities for English-medium pupils
- Supports the aim in the Council's Strategy for Transforming Education to support schools to move along the language continuum
- Would contribute towards the targets in the Council's WESP

- Would contribute towards the Welsh Government's 2050 target of 1m Welsh speakers

It is recommended that this would be implemented on a phased basis, year by year, building on the Welsh-medium pilot class which is currently operating in the school. The Welsh-medium provision would increase annually as these pupils move through the school, until it was provided up to year 6.

It is recommended that a paper is considered by the Council's Cabinet, requesting approval to commence consultation on a proposal to establish a Welsh-medium stream at Ysgol y Cribarth.