

Wrexham County Borough Council

Post Consultation Objection Report



Proposal to establish a new specialist provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) in Hampden Way, Plas Madoc, Wrexham

This document is available in Welsh.

Contents

Statutory Notice	3
Publication of the Statutory Notice	5
List of Consultees	6
Objections	8
Local Authority Response to the Objections	9
Naming the New Provision.....	14
Conclusion	14
Executive Board Decision	14

Statutory Notice

To establish a new special school

Hampden Way, Plas Madoc, Wrexham, LL14 3US

School Standards and Organisations (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (2018)

Wrexham County Borough Council

Notice is given in accordance with section 44 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018 that the local authority of Wrexham County Borough Council, having consulted such persons as required, proposes to:

Establish a new English-medium community special school maintained by Wrexham County Borough Council from 1 April 2026.

Location: Hampden Way, Plas Madoc, Wrexham, LL14 3US.

The new school will provide mixed sex education for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) who present as neuro-diverse, with autism as their primary area for support. The proposed number of planned school places once the proposal is implemented will be up to 18. The school will be for pupils of secondary school age.

Wrexham County Borough Council will be the admissions authority for the school and admission arrangements will be made via the local authority's Additional Learning Needs Panel.

Transport for pupils shall be dealt with by reference to the Local Authority's School Transport Policy. Details of the Local Authority's Admission Policy and School Transport Policy are available on [Wrexham County Borough Council](#)

Wrexham County Borough Council undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposer's responses, and the views of Estyn's full response is available on the local authority's website at [Consultation: New Specialist Provision for Pupils with Additional Learning Needs](#)

Objection Period

Within a period of 28 days after the date of publication of these proposals, that is to say by **20 September 2025** any person may object to the proposals.

Objections should be sent to:

Chief Officer Education & Early Intervention
Wrexham County Borough Council
Crown Buildings
31 Chester Street
Wrexham
LL13 8BG

Or by email to: copaconsultation@wrexham.gov.uk

Signed:

Chief Officer Education & Early Intervention

Dated: 16 July 2025

Publication of the Statutory Notice

On the 16th July 2025, Wrexham County Borough Council published the Statutory Notice in relation to establishing a new specialist provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) in Hampden Way, Plas Madoc, Wrexham.

The publication of the Statutory Notice saw the start of a 28-day formal Objection Period which came to an end on 20 September 2025.

The Statutory Notice has been published in accordance with Section 44 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 which requires the School Organisation Code 2018 to be issued to and give guidance to relevant bodies (Welsh Ministers, Local Authorities, Governing Bodies).

Copies of the Statutory Notice were sent out to all consultees via emailed hard copies and were also accessible via website link.

The Statutory Notice was also published on the Wrexham County Borough Council webpage.

[Consultation: new specialist provision for pupils with additional learning needs](#)

Below is the list of consultees who received a copy of the Statutory Notice, in accordance with the School Organisation Code 2018.

List of Consultees

A range of individuals were asked for their views about the proposal including:

- Elected Members of Wrexham County Borough Council
- The Church in Wales and Catholic Dioceses
- Other Local Authorities: Flintshire County Council, Shropshire County Council, Denbighshire County Council, Powys County Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council
- The Governing Body at Rhosymedre County Primary School
- All Wrexham Primary and Secondary School Governing Bodies
- All Wrexham Primary and Secondary Schools, including Welsh medium schools, English medium schools, Faith schools and Special schools
- Parents/Carers and prospective parents/carers of the new provision and Rhosymedre County Primary School
- Staff members at Rhosymedre County Primary School
- Cefn Community Council
- The Welsh in Education Forum, including Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam, RhAG and Mudiad Meithrin
- Welsh Ministers and Senedd Members: Lesley Griffiths MS, Ken Skates MS, Llyr Gruffydd MS, Mark Isherwood MS, Carolyn Thomas MS, Sam Rowlands MS
- Local Members of Parliament: Andrew Ranger MP, Gill German MP, Becky Gittins MP
- Estyn
- Trade unions representing teachers and staff
- Wrexham Council's School Transport Department
- The Police and Crime Commissioner
- Local Communities First Partnerships
- Local Independent Nursery Providers, Playgroups, Childminders and Flying Start Providers
- The Children and Young People's Partnership
- The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
- Little Sunflowers Childcare
- The Association of Voluntary Organisations (AVOW)
- SNAP Cymru
- Senedd yr Ifanc

- Educational Psychology Service
- Health, including Speech & Language Service, Occupational Therapy Service, Physiotherapy Service, Pre-school Development Service, paediatrics
- North East Wales Sensory Support Service
- Early Entitlement/Flying Start Service
- Out of county schools

The above list is not exhaustive and the consultation was open to all who wished to take part.

Objections

Between 16 July 2025 and 20 September 2025, **two letters** were received in relation to the proposal:

Letter 1

Received from NASUWT-The Teachers' Union Wales (NASUWT Cymru) on 28th July 2025

The NASUWT has advised that it is broadly supportive of the proposal and that its members locally (in Wrexham) and nationally (in Wales and the UK) notify them that their schools are often struggling to meet all the needs of their ALN learners. The NASUWT has advised that the opening of a provision that aims to meet the needs of these learners is most welcome. Of this part of the consultation the NASUWT has advised it is 100% supportive. The NASUWT requested further information in relation to the cost of the provision and the consultation process. The union requested that for future consultations the NASUWT is made aware at the earliest possible juncture.

Letter 2

Received from RhAG-Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg/Parents for Welsh Medium Education on 19th September 2025

RhAG requested further details on how the provision will be available to learners through the medium of Welsh. RhAG requested that previous comments, received in May 2025, be restated for the purposes of the statutory objection. RhAG stated that they oppose the scheme on the following grounds:

- Lack of clarity in the language medium of the provision
- Lack of concrete commitment to Welsh-medium ALN provision
- Lack of financial transparency
- Lack of specific engagement with parents who choose Welsh-medium education
- Lack of compliance with the Welsh Language Standards
- Risks to the sustainability of Welsh-medium education
- Lack of response to a call for a rewrite of the proposal

Local Authority Response to the Objections

In response to queries regarding how the provision will be funded, the Local Authority can advise that the new specialist provision will be funded from the Individual Schools Budget (ISB) funding. The initial business case used an assumption that on average each pupil with the needs to be catered for by Copa would cost £60k each to be educated in out of county provision, based on 18 pupils. The estimated annual cost for these pupils would be £960k per annum, based on similar specialist provision already operating in Wrexham. Officers are confident that Education provision to be provided at the new provision could be delivered at much less than the £60k per pupil annual cost. Further information is outlined below:

Projected Cost Summary - New Provision

Staffing Costs	£583,114
Premises Costs	£38,748
Supplies & Services	£15,750
Overall Cost	£637,612

Cost Comparison

Existing Cost 18 Pupils in External Placements	£1,080,000
Proposed Cost Proposed New Provision Annual Cost	£637,612
Estimated Annual Saving	£-442,388

The average daily cost to transport a pupil typically costs £36.49 per pupil per day (£656.82 per day for 18 pupils). A local provision based within the County Borough of Wrexham should reduce the need to look further afield for placements and therefore reduce transportation costs.

Regarding the consultation process, the Local Authority can advise that school organisation consultations involve several stages and are conducted in accordance with the Welsh Government’s School Organisation Code 2018. We respectfully advise that the NASUWT are routinely included as key stakeholders at each stage of the process for all consultations relating to any changes to schools. The first stage of this consultation took place between 24th March 2025 and 11th May 2025. All stakeholders, including the NASUWT, were emailed on 24th March 2025 to advise that the consultation had gone live. Links to the relevant consultation documentation were provided in this email.

All stakeholders, including the NASUWT, were emailed again on 2nd July 2025 with a link to the post-consultation report. A further email was sent to all stakeholders, including the NASUWT, on 16th July 2025 to advise that the consultation was entering the objection period (the final phase) of the consultation. A link was provided in this email to the Statutory Notice. The email advised that the objection period would end on 20th September 2025.

In response to the second letter received by the Local Authority on 19th September 2025 from RhAG, the Local Authority has set out its response below:

RhAG Comment	Local Authority Response
Lack of clarity in the language medium of the provision	The language of the provision has always been English-medium, as stated in the Welsh Language Impact Assessment published in March 2025 and in the Statutory Notice published in July 2025.
Lack of concrete commitment to Welsh-medium ALN provision	The Local Authority is fully committed and supportive of Welsh-medium ALN provision. The Local Authority continues to take reasonable steps to ensure that pupils are able to access special education through the medium of Welsh, in accordance with Outcome 6 in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.
Lack of financial transparency	See explanation above

Lack of specific engagement with parents who choose Welsh-medium education

The Education Department's approach to involvement and engagement for parents /carers to understand school organisation proposals and the support that is available through the medium of Welsh includes:

- A number of consultation meetings in-person and online.
- Emails to all Welsh schools in Wrexham asking them to share the information with parents and carers of children attending Welsh schools with the following message:
A fyddech cystal â rhannu'r wybodaeth gyda rhieni, gofalwyr a gwarcheidwaid ac aelodau staff.
Please could you kindly share the information with parents, carers, guardians and staff members
- Emails to the Welsh Language Commissioner, Menter Iaith Fflint a Wrecsam, WCBC Advisory Teachers for Welsh, WCBC Welsh Language Strategic Officer, WCBC Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Lead, Mudiad Meithrin Welsh medium playgroups, RhAG, Welsh Latecomers Outreach Coordinator, Welsh in Education Forum.
 - 24th March 2025 Consultation 'Go Live' Date – links to surveys and consultation webpages. Prompt to ask any questions and tell us their views regarding the consultation proposal.
 - 2nd July 2025 Consultation Feedback – Links to Consultation Feedback Report
 - 16th July 2025 – Links to Statutory Notice and prompt to ask any questions / tell us their views about the consultation proposal.
- Press releases / news bulletins.
- Frequently Asked Questions on the Council's consultation webpage.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions relating to the Welsh language (developed in line with the Welsh Language Standards and in collaboration with the Welsh Language Commissioner) included in adult and children surveys. <p>School Organisation consultations are open to all who wish to be involved.</p>
Lack of compliance with the Welsh Language Standards	<p>The suite of consultation documentation, including the impact assessments and survey questions pertaining to the Welsh Language, ensure compliance with the Welsh Language Standards 91–93. The survey questions were developed in collaboration with the Welsh Language Commissioner. The Welsh Language Impact Assessment is an in-depth document which provides sufficient information in relation to the proposal and forms part of the overall consultation documents. The robust public statutory consultation process ensures the Local Authority considers impacts on the Welsh language and seeks opinions on how to increase the positive impacts and mitigate negative impacts.</p>
Risks to the sustainability of Welsh-medium education	<p>The Local Authority is committed to the sustainability of Welsh-medium education, as evidenced by the number of successfully completed capital investment projects in existing and new Welsh-medium schools over several years. The Sustainable Communities for Learning 9-year Rolling Programme recognises Welsh-medium education as a strategic driver for future capital investment projects.</p> <p>Learners who choose Welsh education will benefit from this scheme because learners can remain in Wales for their education rather than attending out-of-county schools across</p>

	<p>the border in England. These learners will have increased opportunities to access the Welsh curriculum and be fully immersed in Welsh language, Welsh culture and heritage, which will be made fully accessible.</p>
<p>Lack of response to a call for a rewrite of the proposal</p>	<p>A full written response was previously provided to RhAG in July 2025, and a further full written response has been provided. The Local Authority is of the view that the consultation documents presented include sufficient reasons and information for this proposal to enable intelligent consideration and response. To re-run the consultation would further delay the project and jeopardise the opening of a much-needed provision for pupils with ALN in Wrexham.</p>

Naming the New Provision

Following feedback from the public consultation, the local authority recognised that the proposed name of the school 'Copa', the Welsh word for Summit, and the meaning behind it, was not easily understood. In order to address this, the Council worked with the Senedd yr Ifanc Wrexham's Youth Parliament, to assist us in choosing a new name for the school. The Senedd yr Ifanc is made up of volunteers aged between 11 and 25 who have a connection to Wrexham. The Senedd yr Ifanc are currently considering a new name for the new school. Suggestions will be put forward to the shadow governing body once in place who are responsible for naming the school.

Conclusion

The proposals are being introduced within the context of policies and plans that are already in progress, both locally and nationally, to transform services that are provided for children, young people and their families. Executive Board Members were informed on 8th July 2025 that 76% of adults and 94% of children and young people were in support of the proposal and gave their approval for Officers to proceed to Statutory Notice stage.

If the status-quo is maintained, it is likely that the authority will be unable to meet the rising demand for special school places. There would be insufficient capacity based on current and projected demand for pupils with additional learning needs. The Local Authority believes that despite some concerns raised, the proposal to establish a new specialist provision in Plas Madoc for pupils with additional learning needs within the County Borough of Wrexham is much needed. Our learners will remain in Wales for their education, where the Welsh language, culture and heritage are made readily accessible to them.

Executive Board Decision

Wrexham County Borough Council Executive Board will meet on **11th November 2025** to discuss the Objection Report for the proposal to proceed in establishing a new specialist provision for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) in Hampden Way, Plas Madoc, Wrexham.

The Executive Board will be asked for approval to proceed with the proposal as published. This will be the final decision in relation to the proposal.

A final decision notice shall be published on the Wrexham website and all consultees will be notified.