



Cyngor Sir  
**CEREDIGION**  
County Council

## **Schools Service**

### **Consultation Response Report**

**Proposal to build a new area school on a  
new site in the Aeron Valley and  
discontinue**

**Ciliau Parc Primary School**

**and**

**Dihewyd Primary School**

**and**

**Felinfach Primary School**

**August 2019**

## **Introduction**

A formal statutory consultation was undertaken between 5 June and 16 July 2019 regarding the proposal to build a new area school on a new site in the Aeron Valley resulting in the closure of Ciliau Parc Primary School, Dihewyd Primary School and Felinfach Primary School at the end of the summer term 2022.

The consultation complies with the Welsh Government guidelines – School Organisation Code Q11/2018.

The purpose of this document is to:

- Summarise each of the issues raised by consultees;
- Respond to the issues by means of clarification, amend the proposal or reject the concerns, with supporting reasons;
- Confirm Estyn's response to the consultation in full;
- Respond to Estyn's response by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal or rejection of the concerns, with supporting reasons; and
- Provide a further assessment of the proposal, the alternative options included within the consultation document and any alternative proposals presented during the consultation period.

## **Consultation Responses**

In total, 10 responses were received during the consultation period. A comprehensive list of questions submitted, proposed alternatives and comments on the alternative options presented together with the Local Authority's response are listed in Appendix A.

## **Children's Responses**

A children's version was published and distributed to the school councils. A consultation meeting was held with the pupils of Ciliau Parc, Dihewyd and Felinfach School Council members on the 5 July 2019. The responses are summarised in Appendix A.

## **Estyn's Response**

In accordance with the code, a copy of the Consultation Document was sent to Estyn for their observations. In their response, Estyn considered a range of key questions in relation to the proposal.

Estyn's summary and conclusions were:

Estyn believes that the proposal is likely to maintain or improve the current standards in terms of education, provision, and leadership and management for children in the area.

The in-depth response from Estyn is acknowledged.

The report in full can be found in this document in Appendix B.

## **Rural Schools**

Ciliau Parc, Dihewyd and Felinfach Schools are defined as rural schools according to the Welsh Government – ‘School Organisation Code’ – 011/2018.

The code requires the Local Authority as the proposer to undertake a further assessment of the proposal and each of the alternatives that were included in the proposal document, and to consider any further information presented during the consultation or otherwise.

The assessment is as follows:

## **Alternative Options**

### ***Establish a new area school in the Aeron Valley located on the Professional Education Campus, Felinfach for the pupils of Ciliau Parc, Dihewyd and Felinfach***

#### **The likely impact on quality and standards in education**

It is anticipated that there would be a positive impact on the quality and standards in education as pupils would benefit from improved facilities in closer age range classes.

In addition, pupils would benefit from nursery provision however the proposal would be subject to a statutory consultation to amend the age range to 3 – 11.

#### **The likely impact on the community**

The proposal could reduce the facilities located within local communities, however, enhanced facilities provided by an area school would be available for community use.

The theatre is also located on the same site.

#### **The likely effect of different travelling arrangements**

It is anticipated that some pupils may have to travel further to attend school. The distance however should not be more than 5 miles on average.

### **Formal Federation between Ciliau Parc, Dihewyd and Felinfach Schools**

#### **The likely impact on quality and standards in education**

It is anticipated that there would be little impact on the quality and standards in education however, it is acknowledged that the schools would be able to share resources, expertise, and best practice.

Pupils would continue to be taught in wide age range classes with no provision for 3 year old pupils.

A school that has formally federated would have one Head teacher and one Governing Body which could provide an effective and accountable mechanism for the schools to pool resources, including staff specialism and budgets, release capacity in the senior management team and gain economies of scale and efficiencies.

#### **The likely impact on the community**

It is anticipated that there would be no impact on the community as all 3 schools would remain and be available for community events.

#### **The likely effect of different travelling arrangements**

No impact on travelling arrangements as all 3 schools would remain.

### **Multisite School**

#### **The likely impact on quality and standards in education**

It is anticipated that there would be little impact on the quality and standards in education however, it is acknowledged that the 3 schools would be able to further share resources, expertise and best practice.

Pupils would continue to be taught in wide age range classes with no provision for 3 year old pupils.

A multisite school would also have one Head teacher and one Governing Body which could provide an effective and accountable mechanism for the schools to pool resources, including staff specialism and budgets, release capacity in the senior management team and gain economies of scale and efficiencies.

In order to create one school on 3 separate sites, a statutory consultation would need to be undertaken to close all three schools and open as one.

### **The likely impact on the community**

It is anticipated that there will be no impact on the community as all 3 schools would remain and be available for community events.

### **The likely effect of different travelling arrangements**

It is anticipated that there will be no impact on traveling arrangements as all 3 schools would remain.

### **Extend Ciliau Parc School and Felinfach School to accommodate the pupils from Dihewyd School and close Dihewyd School**

### **The likely impact on quality and standards in education**

It is anticipated that there could potentially be a positive impact on the quality and standards in education as pupils would benefit from improved facilities in closer age range classes

### **The likely impact on the community**

The proposal could reduce the facilities located within the community of Dihewyd

### **The likely effect of different travelling arrangements**

It is anticipated that some pupils would be required to travel further however the distance should not be more than 5 miles on average. It is likely that more pupils would be entitled to free transport.

### **Establish a new area school in the Aeron Valley for the pupils of Ciliau Parc School and Felinfach School with Dihewyd School remaining as a stand alone school and not forming part of the proposal**

### **The likely impact on quality and standards in education**

It is anticipated that there could potentially be a positive impact on the quality and standards in education as pupils would benefit from improved facilities in closer age range classes for the pupils currently attending Ciliau Parc School and Felinfach School.

For Dihewyd School, this proposal does not address an entire key stage being in a single class.

Projected pupil numbers at Dihewyd School indicate a potentially vulnerable future for the school.

### **The likely impact on the community**

The proposal could reduce the facilities located within the communities of Ciliau Parc and Felinfach however, enhanced facilities provided by a new school would be

available for community use. The availability of Dihewyd School as a community facility would continue.

### **The likely effect of different travelling arrangements**

It is anticipated that pupils would have to travel further however the distance should not be more than 5 miles on average. It is likely that more pupils would be entitled to free transport.

### **Alternative options presented during the consultation**

Build an extension on the two schools which have the least surplus places – Ciliau Parc School and Dihewyd School.

| Advantages  | Disadvantages  |
|---|--|
| Potential financial efficiencies with a reduction in the number of sites                      | Welsh Government 21 <sup>st</sup> Century funding has been approved in principle to build a new area school and not undertake refurbishment projects |
| Retention of school identities and presence in the community for both Ciliau Parc and Dihewyd | No provision for 3 year olds without undertaking a statutory consultation to amend the age range of both schools                                     |
| Capital receipt from the sale of Felinfach would be reinvested in education                   | Potential site restrictions on both sites  |

### **Likely impact on the quality and standards in education**

There could potentially be a positive impact on the quality and standards in education if pupils could be taught in closer age range classes.

### **Likely impact on the community**

The proposal could reduce the community use of Felinfach School

### **Likely impact on different travelling arrangements**

Some pupils would be required to travel further however transport costs would increase as more pupils could be entitled to free transport

### Build a new school for the pupils of Ciliau Parc School

| Advantages  | Disadvantages   |
|---|---|
| Capital receipt from the sale of the existing site would be reinvested in education                 | Welsh Government 21 <sup>st</sup> Century funding has been approved in principle to build a new area school to include both Dihewyd School and Felinfach School |
| Retention of school identities and presence in the community for Ciliau Parc, Dihewyd and Felinfach | No provision for 3 year olds without undertaking a statutory consultation to amend the age range  |
|   | Dihewyd School and Felinfach School would remain vulnerable due to low pupil numbers  |
|   | Cost per pupil at both Dihewyd and Felinfach based on their current pupil numbers would remain over the Ceredigion average                                      |
|   | Pupils would continue to be educated in wide age range classes at Dihewyd and Felinfach   |

#### Likely impact on the quality and standards in education

There could potentially be a positive impact on the quality and standards in education for the pupils of Ciliau Parc as pupils could continue be taught in closer age range classes.

#### Likely impact on the community

The proposal could have a positive effect on the community of Ciliau Parc as a new school could provide enhanced community facilities.

#### Likely impact on different travelling arrangements

No impact envisaged on travelling arrangements

Having considered the alternative options presented during the consultation, it remains that they would not address the key challenges faced by Ciliau Parc, Dihewyd and Felinfach Schools as summarised below:

- Projected pupil numbers at Ciliau Parc are expected to increase significantly over the next 4 years with a decrease in pupil numbers projected at both Dihewyd and Felinfach
- Both Dihewyd and Felinfach schools currently have one class within the foundation phase and one class in key stage 2. Ciliau Parc has 2 classes within the foundation phase and 2 classes at key stage 2
- Significant variation between one school being over capacity and two under capacity as at PLASC 2019;
  - Ciliau Parc – oversubscribed by 4 places
  - Dihewyd – capacity for 3 pupils
  - Felinfach – capacity for 20 pupils
- Significant variation in the cost per pupil 2018/19 – Ceredigion average of £3,761;
  - Ciliau Parc - £3,186
  - Dihewyd - £5,346
  - Felinfach - £4,216

The most appropriate response to the challenges highlighted is the implementation of the proposal as presented to create a new area school on a new site in the Aeron Valley and to discontinue the education provision at Ciliau Parc School, Dihewyd School and Felinfach School due to the following factors:

- Provision for key stages will be maintained separately, with pupils taught in closer age range classes
- An area school would be better able to cater for the demand in pupil places within the area
- There would be a reduction in the average cost per pupil at the new area school – estimated to be £3,298

Responses received during the consultation period held between 5 June and 16 July 2019.

| Response   | Schools Service Response   |
|--|--|
| <p>Support the proposal to build a new area school to replace the three schools on the condition that the location is suitable and within the catchment for Aberaeron Secondary School.</p> <p>Concern however with regards the projected pupil numbers quoted for Ciliau Parc school by 2023</p>  | <p>The proposal is to build a new school on a new site and it will be within the catchment for Aberaeron Secondary School.</p> <p>It is proposed that the new school will be open by 2023 if the proposal is approved therefore projected numbers at Ciliau Parc are not a concern.</p>  |
| <p>It is sad that in order to achieve the proposal for a new area school that 3 primary schools that have served the communities will eventually close.</p> <p>It is however acknowledged that financial constraints, building condition and pupil numbers are all factors that contribute to the requirement for a new area school in the area.</p>   | <p>In order to achieve the vision of the Council which has been endorsed by the Councillors in the Corporate Strategy, some small rural schools have to close in order to deliver 21<sup>st</sup> Century facilities. It is acknowledged that these schools have and continue to serve their communities well.</p> <p>The comment is acknowledged.</p> |
| <p>Fully support the proposal as long as it is a new school on a central site in the Aeron Valley with facilities that the pupils are worthy of and located within the catchment for Aberaeron Secondary School</p>  | <p>The proposal is to build a new school on a new central site in the Aeon Valley which will be located within the catchment area for Aberaeron Secondary School.</p>  |
| <p>The opportunities that a new area school will provide for the pupils and families of the area is acknowledged.</p> <p>The hope is that the school will encourage other developments in the area to enrich and benefit the inhabitants of the area. In addition, the school will ensure that the Welsh language will have a stronghold in the community and contribute to its sustainability.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that the closure of small schools in an area is a great loss</p> | <p>Comment noted</p>   |

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| <p>however every effort must be made locally to sustain and bring new life to the communities.</p> <p>Staffing levels need to be maintained at their current level to ensure that the pupils continue to receive the best possible education and to secure and promote the Welsh language In the area.</p>   | <p>Whilst class sizes may, on average, be larger in an area school than in the three schools currently, larger pupil numbers can generally allow for more flexibility in staffing to meet the needs of pupils.</p>   |
| <p>The Council needs to consider and pay due regard to the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and provide a safe route to school.</p>   | <p>The requirements of the act are duly considered when developing projects and a safe route to school is a mandatory condition when building new schools.</p>   |
| <p>The closure of a small rural school will have a detrimental effect on the community and transport would need to be provided to an area school.</p> <p>Research suggests that small, mixed age classes are better for students.</p> <p>An assumption has been made that the reasons for closure are financial and acknowledgement that rural schools exceed the county average cost per pupil.</p> | <p>The Authority recognises and values the contribution to every community that small rural schools make. It is acknowledged that school transport will have to be provided in accordance with the Authority's Home to School Transport Policy.</p> <p>A lot of research has been carried out into the impact of class sizes, much of which is contradictory. Andreas Schleicher, Director of Education and skills at the OECD says: "Everywhere, teachers, parents and policy-makers favour small classes as the key to better and more personalised education... and yet, Pisa results show no relationship between class size and learning outcomes, neither within nor across countries."</p> <p>Financial viability is only one of the considerations taken into account. The School Organisation Code confirms that it is important that funding for education is cost effective. The number of pupils, curriculum delivery, the number of surplus places and the condition of the buildings also have to be taken into account.</p> |
| <p>Unable to form an opinion about the proposal without the knowledge of the proposed site. Withholding details of the site shows disrespect to the community</p>  | <p>Until the consultation has been completed and the proposal approved by Council members, a suitable site cannot be identified or purchased. The</p>  |

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|---|---|
| <p>council.</p> <p>Upon receipt of the details of the proposed school, a response can then be formed to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The effect on the nature and quality of formal education</li> <li>• The effect of the nature and quality of informal education</li> <li>• Planning and impact on the environment</li> <li>• Compliance with health and safety regulations to include the campus and traffic assessment</li> <li>• The relationship with the local economy</li> </ul>  | <p>information is not therefore being withheld from the community council.</p> <p>The proposal for both formal and informal provision will be advised and supported by qualified relevant personnel from within the authority. The environmental impact and health and safety compliance are all considerations that will be considered during the development and planning stages.</p> <p>The above will be supported by a Shadow Governing Body on which the community will be strongly represented. Community benefits and the relationship with the local communities and the local economy are included within the tender process,</p>   |
| <p>The proposal to build an area school is opposed as the closure of small rural schools will force parents to send their children to schools that have a large number of pupils per class.</p> <p>Pupils will never receive the rich, supportive education in a larger school that they benefit from now. In a small school, pupils develop into confident individuals which was also highlighted by the recent Estyn inspection which referenced to the supportive behaviour of pupils.</p> <p>Estyn also made reference to the community integration and the role of the school in various community and charity events. It would be impossible to replicate this in an area school.</p> | <p>All the new area primary schools in Ceredigion have been classified as rural schools by the Welsh Government. The Ceredigion average teacher/pupil ratio in 2018 was 19.2 against an average for the whole of Wales of 22.</p> <p>A recent Estyn inspection report for a new school delivered in Ceredigion using Band A 21<sup>st</sup> Century funding quotes 'the school is inclusive and extremely caring. At the heart of its work is its special provision for care, support and guidance. Pupils treat others with respect and care, and show very positive attitudes towards their learning'</p> <p>An inspection of a new area primary school in Ceredigion also quotes' the headteacher, staff, pupils, governors and members of the local communities work together extremely effectively to create a successful school. This has led to creating a happy and inclusive community school.</p> |
| <p>Parents have confirmed that they should have the choice of whether to send their children to a small rural school or a large area school. If the</p>   | <p>Over 75% of the schools in Ceredigion have been classified as being small rural schools. Support and guidance is provided by the Local Authority for all</p>   |

choice was taken away, they would send their children to another small school or home educate.

Compared to recent new builds, it is believed that Dihewyd School is already fit for purpose to deliver 21st Century education.

The school is the heartbeat of the village – encourages the younger generation to remain and move into the area, vital to the local economy, Church, Chapel Young Farmer’s Club, village hall and provides the only shop in the village.

The option to create a Formal federation should be implemented.

The constant reference to pupil numbers decreasing at Dihewyd is not true. The numbers already registered with the Admissions Office and siblings should be as follows:

| Jan 2019 | Jan 2020 | Jan 2021 | Jan 2022 |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 32       | 32       | 33       | 32       |

parents who decide to home educate.

The aims and objectives of the 21st Century Band B programme is to:

- deliver learning environments for children and young people that enable the successful implementation of strategies for school improvement and better educational outcomes;
- a sustainable education system through better use of resources to improve the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the education estate; and
- a 21st Century Schools standard which reduces recurrent costs, energy consumption and carbon emissions.
- Dihewyd School is located in an old building which has poor energy efficiency. Consequently it does not conform to many of the aims and objectives of the 21st century Band B programme.

Community integration and the varied educational experiences both inside and outside the classroom is acknowledged.

The option to create a formal federation has been included in the consultation document however the preferred option by Cabinet and the one they believe will address the challenges is to build a new area school on a new site.

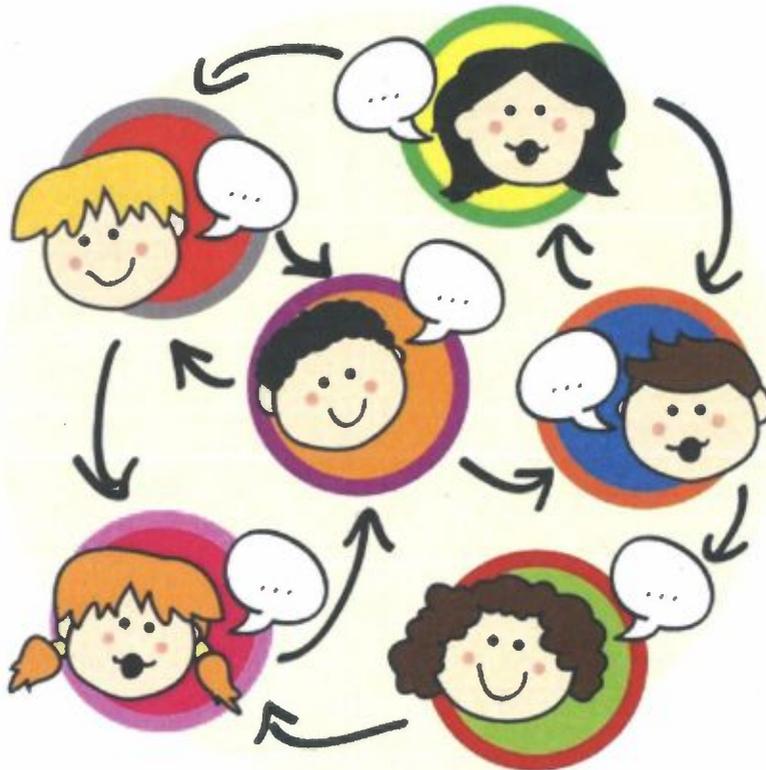
Based on figures provided by the admissions department which include all admission forms received to date and taking into account the year 6 pupils who leave every year, the pupil figures are as follows:

| Jan 2019 | Jan 2020 | Jan 2021 | Jan 2022 |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 32       | 31       | 32       | 29       |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>As an individual working in a support role in various large schools, including area schools it is noted that pupils do not like area schools.</p> | <p>Two area schools were inspected by Estyn during the 2018/19 academic year and pupils' attitudes towards learning and wellbeing was judged to be excellent in both schools. Pupils' response to the proposal is positive.</p> |
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# ADBORTH YMGYNGHORIAD Y PLANT

Ynglŷn â'r cynnig i gau Ysgolion Cynradd Ciliau Parc,  
Dihewyd a Felinfach ac agor Ysgol Ardal newydd yn  
Nyffryn Aeron



## CHILDREN'S CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

On the proposed closure of Ciliau Parc, Dihewyd and  
Felinfach Primary Schools and to build a new Area  
School in the Aeron Valley

Ymwelwyd â phlant Ysgolion Cynradd Ciliau Parc, Dihewyd a Felinfach ar 5 Orffennaf 2019 i gasglu eu barn ar y cynnig.

The pupils of Ciliau Parc, Dihewyd and Felinfach Primary Schools were visited on 5 July 2019 to obtain their opinions on the proposal.

### YMATEB Y DISGYBLION / PUPIL RESPONSES

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Beth fydddech yn colli am eich ysgol?</b></p>  | <p><b>What will you miss about your school?</b></p>  |
| <p>Dim<br/>Edrych ymlaen i'r ysgol newydd<br/>Hapus<br/>Crysau-T<br/>Ffrindiau<br/>Athrawon<br/>Bwyd / ffreutur<br/>Lle Chwarae<br/>Popeth<br/>Cwtch<br/>Pêl droed</p> | <p>Nothing<br/>Looking forward to the new school<br/>Happy<br/>T-shirts<br/>Friends<br/>Teachers<br/>Food / Canteen<br/>Playing area<br/>Everything<br/>'Cwtch'<br/>Football</p> |
| <p><b>Faint o amser mae'n cymryd i chi fynd i'r Ysgol?</b></p>   | <p><b>How long does it take you to get to school?</b></p>  |
| <p>Llai na 5 munud: 80%<br/>Mwy na 10 munud: 20%</p>   | <p>Less than 5 minutes: 80%<br/>More than 10 minutes: 20%</p>  |
| <p><b>Pa mor aml ydych chi'n siarad Cymraeg yn yr ysgol?</b></p>   | <p><b>How often to do you speak Welsh in the school?</b></p>   |
| <p>Bob amser/bob dydd</p>  | <p>All day/all of the time</p>   |

**Sut yr ydych yn teimlo am  
wneud ffrindiau newydd gyda  
phlant o ysgol arall?**

Hapus / Hyderus / Diolchgar / Da /  
Edrych ymlaen  
Ofnus / Swil  
Ofn colli ffrindiau  
Bwlio  
Drist  
Siaradus / 'Giggly'  
Rhyfedd

**How do you feel about making  
new friends with children  
from another school?**

Happy / Confident / Thankful /  
Good / Looking forward  
Nervous / shy  
Afraid of losing friends  
Bullying  
Sad  
Talkative / 'Giggly'  
Odd

**A ydych eisoes yn gwneud  
gweithgareddau gyda'r ysgolion  
cyfagos?**

Ydyn

**Do you already participate in  
activities with the  
neighbouring schools?**

Yes

**Sut allwn eich helpu i ymuno  
gyda phlant o ysgol arall?**

Diwrnod chwarae  
Celf  
Ymarfer corff  
Canu / Cerdd  
Pêl droed / Tennis  
Trip - Llangrannog / Oakwood  
Bwyd / te prynhawn

**How can we help you to meet  
children from other schools?**

Play days  
Art  
Physical exercise  
Singing / Music  
Football / Tennis  
Trip - Llangrannog / Oakwood  
Food / afternoon tea

**Beth sy'n eich cyffroi am fynd i  
ysgol ardal newydd?**

Iard fwy o faint / adnoddau chwarae  
Crys-T newydd  
Mwy o le tu fewn  
Mwy o ddarpar ymarfer corff  
Mwy o mathemateg  
Mwy o ffrindiau / plant gwahanol  
Mwy o blant - dim ond 5 nawr yn  
Blwyddyn 6 felly fwy mewn blwyddyn  
Cystadlu mewn Eisteddfodau  
Pêl droed a rygbi / Chwaraewyr  
newydd  
Bydd cefndryd yn yr ysgol  
Bwyd  
Coed  
Teithiau  
Darganfod pethau newydd  
Archwilio  
Ysgol newydd

**What excites you about going  
to a new area school?**

Bigger yard / playground  
New T-shirts  
More room inside  
More physical exercise equipment  
More maths  
More friends / different children  
More children - only 5 now in Year 6  
so more children in a year group  
Competing in Eisteddfodau  
Football and Rugby / new players  
Having cousins in the school  
Food  
Trees  
Trips  
Discovering new things  
Exploring  
New school

**A oes gennych unrhyw ofidion  
am fynd i'r ysgol newydd?**

Colli ffrindiau / ffrindiau ddim i gyd  
gyda'i gilydd  
Bwliau  
Athrawon newydd  
Ymweliad i'r ysgol  
Na

**Do you have any concerns  
about going to a new school?**

Loosing friends / friends not being  
all together  
Bullying  
New teachers  
Visit to the school  
No

**A ydych yn gofidio am deithio  
i'r ysgol newydd?**

Ddim gwybod y ffordd / mynd ar goll

Na

**Are you worried about  
travelling to the new school?**

Not knowing the way / getting lost

No

**A oes gennych unrhyw  
gwestiynau neu sylwadau eraill?**

Be fydd maint yr ysgol newydd?

Faint o erwau fydd?

Faint o blant fydd?

Faint o athrawon fydd?

A fydd gennym toiledau newydd?

Gwisg Ysgol?

Be fydd yn digwydd i'r ysgol yma?

Pryd fydd yr ysgol yn agor?

**Do you have any other  
questions or comments?**

The size of the new school?

How many acres will there be?

How many children will there be?

How many teachers will there be?

Will we have new toilets?

The school uniform?

What will happen to our existing  
school?

When will the school open?

