rhagolwg
CYLCHLYTHYR RHIENI
DROS ADDYSG GYMRAEG
RHIFYN 21, MAI 2009

Cyhoeddir Rhagolwg gan Rieni dros Addysg Gymraeg, Tŷ Cymru, Greenwood Close, Parc Busnes Porth Caerdydd, Caerdydd CF23 8RD ffôn: 029 2073 9207 ffacs: 02920 739201

Grwpiau Sir Gâr am ddewis y Gymraeg

Cefin Campbell yn annerch y dorf o flaen swyddfeydd y Cyngor

BU TUA 200 o rieni a chefnogwyr addysg Gymraeg Dyffryn Tywi a Chwm Gwendraeth mewn gorymdaith yn erbyn polisi addysg Gymraeg cyngor Sir Gâr ar brynhawn dydd Gwener, 13 Mawrth, 2009 yng Nghaerfyrddin.

Mae'r sir yn gwadu'r hawl i rieni Dinefwr ddewis addysg uwchradd cyfrwng Cymraeg lleol i'w plant, yn ôl canghennau RhAG yr ardal. Sefydlwyd y grwpiau unigol hyn (RhAG Dinefwr-Dyffryn Tywi a RhAG Cwm Gwendraeth) fel ymateb uniongyrchol i'r ad-drefnu arfaethedig gogyfer addysg uwchradd yn Ninefwr. Galwadau'r canghennau lleol hyn ydyw i ddiogelu ac i ddatblygu addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn Ninefwr.

Roedd yr orymdaith yn cyd-fynd gyda diwrnod olaf y cyfnod ymgynghori ar y cynigion arfaethedig. Amcan yr orymdaith oedd caniatáu rhieni, plant a phobl ifanc yr ardal i dynnu sylw at eu galwadau ac i gyflwyno deisebau a llythyrau gan rieni i sylw Cyfarwyddwr Addysg Sir Gâr. Bu i rai miloedd o rieni ac unigolion ddatgan eu cefnogaeth trwy lofnodi'r uchod er mwyn mynnu diogelu ac ehangu addysg Gymraeg yn Ninefwr o dan unrhyw ad-drefnu posib.

Ymgasglodd yr orymdaith ym maes parcio San Pedr yng Nghaerfyrddin am 4.15 p.m cyn cerdded i Neuadd y Sir erbyn 4.30 p.m i gyflwyno deisebau a llythyrau'r ymgyrchoedd i sylw'r Cyfarwyddwr Addysg. Cafwyd anerchiadau gan Adam Price AS a Rhodri Glyn Thomas AC yn ogystal â Cefin Campbell.

Egwyddor sylfaenol y ddwy gangen yw diogelu dyfodol a sicrhau parhad addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn Ninefwr. Yn erbyn y gefnlen yma mae dwy ymgyrch ar wahân ar droed yn galw'n benodol am y canlynol:

• Ar un llaw, mae RhAG Cwm Gwendraeth, yn mynnu gweld diogelu natur ieithyddol y ddarpariaeth bresennol a gynigir yn Ysgol Maes-yr-Yrfa sef darpariaeth categori 2A, yn ôl diffiniad y Cynulliad Cenedlaethol (ysgol yn dysgu o leiaf 80% o'r pynciau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg i bob disgybl). Ymhellach i hynny, gweledigaeth y gangen fyddai gweld sefydlu Ysgol Uwchradd Cyfrwng Cymraeg Categori 1 yn yr ardal, ble addysgir pob pwnc trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg heblaw am Saesneg i bob disgybl.

• Galwadau RhAG Dinefwr (Dyffryn Tywi) yw gweld sefydlu ysgol Gymraeg categori 2A, yn unol â diffiniad Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru, a hynny'n benodol yn Nyffryn Tywi.

Yr unig fodel sydd yn llwyddo'n gyson i greu dinasyddion sy'n meddu ar sgiliau ieithyddol dwyieithog cyfartal a llythrennedd cyflawn yn y ddwy iaith yw ysgolion Cymraeg. Diogelu'r ddarpariaeth bresennol yng Nghwm Gwendraeth ar y naill law a sefydlu ysgol uwchradd Gymraeg yn Nyffryn Tywi yw'r unig ffordd ddiogel o sicrhau dilyniant ieithyddol cadarn o'r sector cynradd i'r uwchradd yn Ninefwr.

Ymhellach i hynny, bydd gwireddu'r galwadau uchod o du rhieni lleol yn fuddsoddiad diamheuol yn nyfodol yr iaith Gymraeg yn Ninefwr.

Eirian Youngman: "Y prosesau presennol yn llesteirio twf addysg Gymraeg"

Targedau - ond pa fath o dargedau?

MAE RhAG wedi croesawu'r ffaith bod y strategaeth addysg Gymraeg newydd a lansiwyd gan Lywodraeth y Cynulliad yn gosod targedau ar gyfer y twf mewn addysg Gymraeg am y tro cyntaf.

Hyd yn hyn mae twf addysg Gymraeg wedi dibynnu ar bwysau rhieni, ond yn y strategaeth mae'r Llywodraeth yn derbyn mai ysgolion Cymraeg yw'r unig fodel o addysg sy'n cynnig dwyieithrwydd cyflawn i'w disgyblion.

Ond mae RhAG yn gresynu'r ffaith bod targedau'r strategaeth mor wan ac na chynigir ffordd o ddiwallu'r angen dybryd presennol. Mae RhAG yn nodi bod y galw am addysg Gymraeg mewn ardaloedd Seisnigedig yn gyson o gwmpas 40%, ond mae'r ddogfen strategaeth yn gosod fel targedau cynyddu canran y plant saith oed sydd yn derbyn eu haddysg trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg o 21% i 25% erbyn 2015.

Meddai Eirian Youngman, Cadeirydd RhAG, "Ni cheir unrhyw awgrym yn y strategaeth y bydd unrhyw gyflymu o ran y broses o greu lleoedd newydd. Mae'r prosesau presennol, sy'n golygu y gall gymryd saith mlynedd i agor ysgol Gymraeg newydd, yn araf ac yn llafurus, ac yn llesteirio twf addysg Gymraeg."

Mae'r strategaeth am weld y nifer sydd yn sefyll eu harholiadau TGAU trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yn cynyddu i 13% dros yr un cyfnod. Ond medd RhAG fod 13% o gofrestriadau arholiadau TGAU Cyd-bwyllgor Addysg Cymru eisoes trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Nid yw'r strategaeth felly yn rhagweld unrhyw dwf.

Gwendid arall sylfaenol yn y strategaeth yw'r targed ar gyfer dilyniant rhwng ysgolion cynradd ac uwchradd. Mae'r strategaeth am weld 19% o ddisgyblion yn trosglwyddo i addysg Gymraeg. Ond medd RhAG y byddai hyn yn golygu bod 20% o ddisgyblion yn dal i gael eu colli i addysg Saesneg, fel sy'n digwydd heddiw.

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Cydnabyddir cefnogaeth Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg i'r cyhoeddiad hwn ac i'r wefan www.rhag.net.

Os oes angen gwybodaeth o unrhyw fath am yr iaith Gymraeg, galwch y Llinell Gyswllt:

0845 6076070
(cyfradd galwadau lleol)
Llun-Gwener
10.00am-12.30pm/1.30-3.30pm

Torfa Torfaen yn galw am ysgolion

YN YSTOD tymor yr Hydref 2008 cynhaliodd Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Torfaen arolwg i fesur y galw am addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y sir.

Cafwyd canfyddiadau hynod o galonogol sy'n profi'n ddiamheuol fod dymuniad a dyhead ymysg rhieni yn Nhorfaen i'w plant dderbyn addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg.

Dychwelwyd 34% o'r holiaduron, gyda 33% yn nodi y byddent yn debygol/debygol iawn o anfon eu plant i dderbyn addysg Gymraeg os o fewn pellter rhesymol i'w cartref.

Wrth gyplysu'r canlyniadau uchod ynghyd â'r ffaith bod y ddwy ysgol gynradd cyfrwng Cymraeg bresennol yno eisioes yn orlawn, bydd angen trydedd ysgol i ddiwallu'r galw arfaethedig yn y byr dymor. Yn wir, mae'r rhagolygon yn argoeli y bydd rhaid cynllunio am bedwaredd ysgol gynradd yn fuan wedyn.

Dyma ddatblygiad cyffrous iawn yn hanes twf a datblygiad addysg Gymraeg yn Nhorfaen.

Yn sgîl hynny, aethpwyd ati i sefydlu Gweithgor Addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y sir gyda'r aelodaeth yn cynnwys yr holl fudiadau a phartneriaid hynny sy'n ymwneud ag addysg Gymraeg yn Nhorfaen. Cylch gorchwyl y gweithgor hwn fydd sicrhau trafodaeth agored a chynhwysol ymysg yr holl sectorau gan anelu i gefnogi a hwyluso'r datblygiadau hyn.

Law yn llaw â hynny mae grŵp marchnata arbennig wedi'i sefydlu i ymgymryd â'r dasg o lunio a chydlynu strategaeth benodol er mwyn cynyddu ymwybyddiaeth ymysg rhieni Torfaen ynglŷn â manteision addysg Gymraeg a dwyieithrwydd.

Abertawe: 8 ysgol arall?

MAE RhAG Abertawe yn galw ar Gyngor Dinas a Sir Abertawe i sefydlu wyth o ysgolion Cymraeg newydd er mwyn ymateb i'r galw yn y ddinas.

Gwnaeth RhAG y cais mewn dogfen a gafodd ei chyflwyno i gynghorwyr ac i swyddogion addysg y sir. Mae'r ddogfen yn crynhoi ffigyrau disgyblion sydd mewn addysg Gymreg yn Abertawe, ac yn nodi bod 38% o rieni Abertawe wedi dweud y byddent am roi addysg Gymraeg i'w plant, pebai ysgol Gymraeg ar gael yn hwylus.

Tua 11% o blant cynradd y ddinas sydd mewn ysgolion Cymraeg ar hyn o bryd. Mae RhAG am weld y nifer hwn yn treblu, fel bod addysg Gymraeg ar gael yn hwylus i bawb sydd am ei chael.

Mewn arolwg a gynhaliodd Menter Iaith Abertawe yn Nhreforys yn ddiweddar, roedd 39% o famau yn eiddgar i'w plant gael addysg Gymraeg a 10% arall yn 'eithaf eiddgar'.

Ar hyn o bryd mae 106 o blant Treforys mewn ysgolion y tu allan i'w hardal (does dim ysgol Gymraeg yn Nhreforys); mae 103 o blant Bonymaen/St Thomas mewn addysg Gymraeg er nad oes ysgol Gymraeg yno; mae rhyw 100 o blant hefyd o ardal y Gellifedw yn Lôn-las.

Mae RhAG yn galw am ysgolion Cymraeg i'r tair ardal yna, a hefyd am ysgolion Cymraeg mewn 5 ardal arall, i lenwi bylchau amlwg yn y ddarpariaeth.

Mae Rhag am weld ysgol Gymraeg yn ardal Pen-lan, ger Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe. Ardaloedd eraill sy'n cael sylw yn Cilâ/Dynfant, Llanmadog/Llanmorlais, Cwmbwrla/Glandŵr a Townhill/Mayals.

Conwy yn gosod esiampl wael

MAE ysgolion Sir Conwy yn enghraifft frawychus o'r ffordd y gwneir cam â'r iaith Gymraeg, yn ôl RhAG.

Yn ôl ym mis Ionawr rhyddhawyd Cynllun Addysg Gymraeg Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Conwy ar gyfer 2008-2013, sydd yn nodi bod 26.4% o ddisgyblion cynradd mewn addysg Gymraeg neu ddwyieithog, ond bod y ffigwr yn disgyn i 14.3% ar gyfer addysg uwchradd Gymraeg neu ddwyieithog. Ar ben hynny, daw'n amlwg bod y ffigwr hwn yn hanner cyfartaledd canran siaradwyr Cymraeg y sir (sef 29.4%).

O edrych ar y ffigyrau, gellir rhagweld tranc yr iaith Gymraeg o fewn byr o dro. Mae 46% o ddisgyblion cynradd oedd yn cael eu hystyried yn siaradwyr iaith gyntaf yn yr ysgol gynradd yn troi yn siaradwyr ail iaith yn yr uwchradd. Y pryder mwyaf ydy bod hyn yn digwydd i bob pwrpas yn ddiarwybod. Dydy'r rhan fwyaf o deuluoedd ddim yn dewis pa fath o addysg y mae eu plant i'w chael - dim ond derbyn y sefyllfa y maent.

Teimlad RhAG ydy nad ydy'r Cynllun Addysg Gymraeg presennol a gyflwynwyd gan y sir yn mynd i'r afael yn ddigon grymus â'r sefyllfa drychinebus hon. Mae'r prif bwyslais ar ddysgu'r Gymraeg fel ail iaith pan mae'n hysbys taw'r ffordd orau o ddysgu'r iaith ydy trwy drochi'r disgybl mewn awyrgylch gwbl Gymraeg.

Rhieni Pontsenni yn sefydlu'r hawl i dderbyn cludiant

BORE hanesyddol fu dydd Llun 20fed Ebrill, 2009 wrth i dri cyn-ddisgybl o ffrwd Gymraeg Ysgol Pontsenni ym Mhowys gael eu cludo am y tro cyntaf gan fws mini o'r pentref i gyfarfod bws ysgol swyddogol y sir sy'n teithio'n ddyddiol i Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera.

O Fedi 2008 hyd at y dyddiad hwn, roedd yn rhaid i'w rhieni drefnu eu cludiant. Doedd y rhieni ddim yn fodlon anfon eu plant i'r ysgol uwchradd naturiol i ddisgyblion ffrwd Gymraeg Pontsenni, sef Brecon High School, sydd wedi disgyn i gategori rhif 3 o ran diffiniadau Llywodraeth y Cynulliad - ysgol cyfrwng Saesneg i bob pwrpas. Cafodd cais gwreiddiol y rhieni i dderbyn cludiant gan y sir yn aflwyddianus a methiant fu apêl pellach.

Noder er hynny, dan drefn bresennol awdurdod addysg lleol Powys y caniateir cludiant i ddisgyblion sy'n mynychu ysgolion cynradd cyfrwng Cymraeg yn rhan fwyaf deheuol y sir i dderbyn addysg uwchradd cyfrwng Cymraeg yn Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera.

Trwy gefnogaeth RhAG ac yn enwedig Michael Jones, Ymgynghorydd Cyfreithiol RhAG, llwyddwyd i gael yr awdurdod addysg lleol i wyrdroi'i penderfyniad. Bygythiad i fynd i Adolygiad Barnwrol fu sbardun y newid meddwl hwnnw a hynny gyda chefnogaeth ariannol gan Gronfa Glyndŵr.

Roedd telerau'r cynnig newydd hwn gan Gyngor Sir Powys yn rhoi addewid o gludiant i Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera nid yn unig i'r disgyblion dan sylw ond yn ogystal i unrhyw ddisgybl o'r ffrwd Gymraeg ym Mhontsenni a fyddai'n trosglwyddo ym Medi 2009. Ymhellach i hynny, cafwyd addewid y byddai'r rhieni'n derbyn ad-daliad wedi'i ôl-ddyddio i Fedi 2008 am y costau teithio a ysgwyddwyd ganddynt dros y misoedd blaenorol.

Môr o Gymraeg yw Mynwy i gyd

YN YSTOD mis Chwefror a Mawrth eleni bu RhAG yn cydweithio mewn partneriaeth ar gynllun marchnata Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg 'Cymraeg Kids Soak it Up'.

Trefnwyd llu o weithgareddau amrywiol yn targedu'r blynyddoedd cynnar â'r bwriad i hyrwyddo manteision addysg Gymraeg ymysg darpar-rieni a rhieni newydd. Cynhaliwyd tri diwrnod penodol ar gyfer y gweithgareddau yn Nhrefynwy, Cil-y-coed a'r Fenni a chafwyd ymweliadau arbennig gan blant o gylchoedd Ti a Fi, Meithrin ac ysgolion cynradd Cymraeg y sir gyda'r cyfle i'r disgyblion gyfranogi yn y gweithgareddau.

Erbyn hyn deëllir bod partneriaeth Mynwy, sydd hefyd yn cynnwys Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, y Fenter Iaith a'r Ymddiriedolaeth GIG leol, wedi'i henwebu ar gyfer un o wobrau cystadleuaeth y Gymraeg mewn Gofal Iechyd, a bellach ar restr fer y categori 'Gweithio gyda phlant a phobl ifanc'. Cynhelir y seremoni wobrwyo yn Llandudno ddiwedd mis Mai.

Caerdydd yn ildio i'r pwysau

MAE Cyngor Caerdydd o'r diwedd wedi penderfynu symud Ysgol Treganna i adeilad Ysgol Lansdowne, a fydd yn cau a'r plant yno yn cael defnyddio llefydd gwag yn y tair ysgol cyfrwng Saesneg gyfagos.

Bydd yr adeilad newydd yn gallu derbyn y galw am le i 60 plentyn y flwyddyn. Mae'n amlwg y bydd rhieni Lansdowne yn apelio yn erbyn y penderfyniad i'r Gweinidog Addysg, a fydd yn gorfod wynebu'r ffaith bod y galw wedi cyrraedd 120 sef nifer plant yr ardal sydd am ddechrau addysg Gymraeg yn ysgolion Treganna a Phwll Coch yn 2009. Os bydd rhai rhieni yn dychwelyd eu ffurflenni yn hwyr bydd rhaid codi nifer y dosbarthiadau derbyn i bump ac yn ffodus mae lle yn ysgol atodol Tanyreos i'r perwyl. Mae'n amlwg y bydd rhaid i'r sir gynllunio ar gyfer ysgol ychwanegol arall yn yr ardal i dderbyn y twf arfaethedig yn 2010, yn bur debyg yn Nhrefynach (Grangetown).

Rhan o'r penderfyniad am Dreganna oedd rhoi awdurdod i agor dosbarth cychwynnol yn Ysgol Gabalfa i dderbyn plant ardaloedd Melin Gruffydd, Mynydd Bychan a Phencae sy'n methu cael lle yn y tair ysgol orlawn hynny. Mae'n bosibl y bydd cymaint â 12 yn mynd yno fis Medi.

Ysgol arall fydd yn agor i ddisgyblion newydd Fedi nesaf yw Ysgol Gymraeg Bryn Celyn lle bydd 12 plentyn nad oedd lle iddynt yn ysgolion y Wern a'r Berllan Deg.

Yn anffodus deallaf bod gwrthwynebiadau statudol wedi'u derbyn i'r cynllun i symud Ysgol Cefn Coed i adeilad Y Caerau ac Ysgol y Dderwen i adeilad Trowbridge. Does dim bygythiad i fodolaeth y 2 ysgol ond bydd eu lleoliad parhaol yn ansicr nes bod y Gweinidog yn penderfynu'r ddau apêl.

Michael L N Jones

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rhagolwg

NEWS FROM PARENTS FOR WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION

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Eirian Youngman: "The present system is inhibiting the growth of Welsh medium education."

Gwendraeth and Tywi want choice

Cefin Campbell addresses the crowd in front of the council offices

Around 200 parents and Welsh medium education supporters from Dyffryn Tywi and Cwm Gwendraeth marched against Carmarthenshire's Welsh medium education policy on Friday 13th March 2009 in Carmarthen.

The county is threatening to deny Dinefwr parents the choice of any local Welsh medium secondary education for their children, according to the RhAG. Two local groups have been established in direct response to the proposed reorganisation of secondary education in Camarthenshire. They are calling for the preservation and development of Welsh medium education in the area in the face of the threat that it could disappear completely.

The march was planned to coincide with the last day of consultation on the proposed changes. The aim was to give local parents, children and young people the opportunity to draw attention to their concerns and present a petition and letters from parents supporting the campaign to the Director of Education. Thousands of parents and inviduals have given their backing by signing the petition in support of protecting and expanding Welsh medium education in Dinefwr during any reorganisation that might take place.

The marchers gathered at 4.15pm before proceeding to County Hall by 4.30pm to present the campaign petitions and letters. Speeches were given by Adam Price MP and Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM as well as Cefin Campbell.

The basic principle of both RhAG branches is to preserve the continuity of Welsh medium education in Dinefwr. Against this background, the two campaigns taking place are calling for the following:

• On the one hand, RhAG Cwm Gwendraeth is calling for the maintenance of the current linguistic provision offered at Ysgol Maes-yr-Yrfa, i.e. Category 2A provision (according to the National Assembly of Wales definition - a school which teaches at least 80% of it subjects through the medium of Welsh to all pupils). Additionally, the group would also eventually wish to see the establishment of a Category 1 Welsh Medium Secondary School where every subject, apart from English, would be taught through the medium of Welsh to every pupil.

• RhAG Dinefwr (Dyffryn Tywi) wants to see the establishment of a Category 2A Welsh medium school, according to the Welsh Assembly Government definition, specifically for the Tywi Valley area.

The only educational model that consistently succeeds in producing citizens with equal written and spoken skills in the two languages are Welsh medium schools. To ensure linguistic continuity, preserving the current provision in Cwm Gwendraeth and a securing new Welsh medium secondary school in Dyffryn Tywi are essential. This would also be a major investment in the future of the Welsh language in the area.

Targets - but what kind of targets?

RhAG has welcomed the fact that the Welsh medium education strategy recently launched by the Assembly Government sets targets for the growth of Welsh medium education for the first time.

Until now, the growth of Welsh medium education has depended on pressure from parents, but in the strategy, the Government accepts that Welsh medium schools are the only educational model that transfers full bilingual skills to its pupils.

But RhAG condemns the fact that the strategy targets are so weak and that there are no proposals to solve the current under-provision. RhAG notes that the demand for Welsh medium education in Anglicised areas is regularly around 40%, but the Government strategy document sets as a target increasing the number of seven-year-olds in Welsh medium education from 21% to just 25% by 2015.

Eirian Youngman, RhAG Chairperson, said, "There is no suggestion in the strategy that there will be a speeding up of the process to create more places now. The present system, which means it can take seven years to open a new Welsh medium school, is slow and laborious and is inhibiting the growth of Welsh medium education."

The strategy provides for the number of pupils sitting their GCSE exams through the medium of Welsh to increase to 13% over the same period. But RhAG says that 13% of WJEC exam registrations are already through the medium of Welsh. So the strategy does not foresee any growth.

Another basic weakness in the strategy is the target for continuity between primary and secondary schools. The strategy provides for 19% of pupils transferring to the Welsh medium secondary sector. But this would mean still that 20% of pupils were losing out, as happens today.

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0845 6076070

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10.00am-12.30pm/1.30-3.30pm

Torfaen needs more schools

During the 2008 autumn term, Torfaen County Borough Council undertook a survey to measure the demand for Welsh medium education in the county.

The results were extremely heartening, thus proving without doubt that there is an overwhelming desire among Torfaen parents to give their children Welsh medium education.

Of the questionnaires 34% were returned, with 33% of them saying they would be likely/very likely to send their children to a Welsh medium school if there were one located at a reasonable distance from their home.

Putting the above results together with the fact that the two current Welsh medium schools there are already oversubscribed, a third school will be required to meet the expected demand in the short term. What's more, the forecasts suggest it will be necessary to plan for a fourth school shortly after that.

This is a very exciting development in the history of Welsh medium provision in Torfaen.

Following the survey, a Welsh medium education working group has been established with membership from organisations associated with Welsh medium education in Torfaen. This group will concentrate on keeping channels of communication open with the aim of supporting any developments.

Together with this, a marketing group has been established to put together and coordinate a strategy to raise awareness among parents of the advantages of Welsh medium education and bilingualism.

Swansea: 8 more schools?

RhAG ABERTAWE has called upon Swansea City and County Council to establish eight new Welsh medium schools in order to meet the demand in the city.

RhAG sets out its demands in a document recently presented to councillors and education officers recently. The document summarises statistics of the number of pupils in Welsh medium education in Swansea and notes that 38% of Swansea parents have said they would send their children to a Welsh medium school if it were conveniently located.

About 11% of the city's primary school children are currently in Welsh medium schools. RhAG wants to see this figure tripled so that Welsh medium education is convenient to all who want it.

In a survey conducted by Menter Iaith Abertawe in Morriston recently, 39% of mothers were keen on their children receiving Welsh medium education and another 10% 'quite keen'.

At the moment, 106 Morriston children are in schools outside of their area (there is no Welsh medium school in Morriston); 103 of Bonymaen/St Thomas children are in Welsh medium schools, although there is no school there; and around 100 children from Gellifdw area are at Lôn-Las school.

RhAG wants Welsh medium schools for those three areas, and also in five other areas to make up the lack of provision. Schools in: the Pen-lan area, near Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Bryn Tawe, in Killay/Dynfant, Llanmadoc/Llanmorlais, Cwmbwrla/Landore and Townhill/Mayals.

Conwy sets a poor example

CONWY'S schools are a dreadful example of the injustice often dealt out to the Welsh language, according to RhAG.

Back in January, Conwy County Borough Council's Welsh medium education scheme for 2008-2013 was released, noting that 26.4% of primary pupils are in Welsh medium or bilingual education, whilst the figure drops to 14.3% of Welsh medium or bilingual secondary school pupils. On top of that, it becomes clear that this figure is only half of the average percentage of Welsh speakers in the county (29.4%).

Looking at the figures, it is easy to predict the disappearance of the Welsh language over a short period. 46% of primary school pupils considered to be first language speakers at primary level become second language speakers at secondary level. The greatest concern is that people do not notice it happening. The majority of families do not choose what type of education their children receive - they merely accept the situation.

RhAG feels that the current Welsh medium education scheme does not address this lamentable situation. The main emphasis is on teaching Welsh as a second language when it is a well known fact that the best way of teaching the language is through complete immersion in a Welsh speaking environment.

Pontsenni parents establish the right to transport

IT WAS an historic moment when on the morning of Monday 20th April, 2009, three former pupils of the Welsh stream at Ysgol Pontsenni in Powys were taken for the first time in a minibus from the village to meet up with the official school bus travelling daily to Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera.

From September 2008 until this date, the parents had had to arrange their own transport. They were not happy to send their children to the normal secondary school, Brecon High School, which has dropped to Category 3 under the Assembly Government's classification scheme - an English medium school to all intents and purposes. The parent's intial bid for transport and an appeal wwere refused.

It should be noted, however, that the education authority currently runs a policy whereby transport is provided for pupils attending Welsh medium primaries in the southernmost part of the county to go to Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera.

With RhAG's backing, and especially the good offices of Michael Jones, RhAG's legal adviser, the local education authority was successfully persuaded to reverse its decision. The reason for this change of heart was the threat of a Judicial Review with the financial support of the Cronfa Glyndŵr.

The terms of the agreement by Powys County Council meant there was a promise to provide transport to Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera not only for the pupils in question, but for any others from Pontsenni's Welsh medium stream going up in September 2009. In addition, parents were promised they would be compensated for all the travel costs they had incurred in the preceding months with a back-payment to September 2008.

Monmouthshire soaks up Welsh

DURING February and March this year RhAG worked in partnership with other local bodies on the Welsh Language Board's 'Cymraeg Kids Soak it Up' marketing campaign.

A variety of events was organised targeting Early Years with the aim of promoting the advantages of Welsh medium education to parents and prospective parents. There were three days of events in Monmouth, Caldicot and Abergavenny with groups of children from Ti a Fi and nusery groups and the county's Welsh medium primaries taking part in the events.

It is now understood that the Monmouthshire partnership, which also includes Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, the local Menter Iaith and NHS Trust, has been nominated for a Welsh language award for Healthcare, and is now on the shortlist in the category 'Working with children and young people'. The awards ceremony takes place in Llandudno in May.

Cardiff bows to the inevitable

Cardiff County Council has finally decided to move Ysgol Treganna to the site of Lansdowne school, which will close and the children there will be able to take up empty places in the three neighbouring English medium schools.

The new building will be able to respond to the requirement of 60 children a year. It's obvious that Lansdowne parents will appeal against the decision to the Education Minister, who will have to face the fact that the demand has reached 120, which is the number of children from the area who will be seeking Welsh medium education in Treganna and Pwll Coch in 2009. If some parents return their forms late it will be necessary to increase the number of reception classes to five and fortunately there is space at the Tanyreos site for this purpose. Clearly the county will have to plan for an additional school in the area in 2010, most likely in Grangetown.

Part of the decision over Treganna was permission to open a starter class at Gabalfa school to take children from the Melin Gruffydd, Mynydd Bychan and Pencae catchment areas whose three schools are oversubscribed. There may be12 there in September.

Also opening next September is Ysgol Gymraeg Bryn Celyn which will take 12 who could not be accommodated at Ysgol y Wern and y Berllan Deg.

Unfortunately, I understand that statutory objections have been received to the proposal to move Ysgol Cefn Coed to the Caerau site and Ysgol y Dderwen to the Trowbridge site. There is no threat to the existence of the schools, but their long-term location will be in doubt until the minister decides the two appeals.

Michael L N Jones

Mudiadau Dathlu'r Gymraeg
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