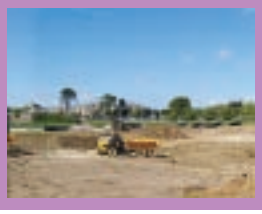
Pethau Powys yn poethi



Ysgolion newydd yn blodeuo yn y Fro

Cylchlythyr Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg
Rhifyn 26, Mehefin 2011
Cyhoeddir Rhagolwg gan Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg,
Tŷ Cymru, Greenwood Close,
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rhieni dros addysg gymraeg
parents for Welsh medium education

30c

rhagolwg

Fflam Abertawe yn llosgi o hyd

Mae datblygiadau cyffrous ar y gweill yn Abertawe. Bydd Ysgol Gymraeg Tan-y-Lan, ysgol Gymraeg newydd Treforys, yn cychwyn ym mis Medi 2011. Sefydlir yr ysgol ar ôl blynyddoedd o ymgyrchu dyfal gan RhAG, a daeth y cyfle wrth i addysg Saesneg gael ei had-drefnu, gyda hen Ysgol y Graig yn dod yn wag.

Ar hyn o bryd mae 100 o ddisgyblion o Dreforys yn teithio i ysgolion Lôn-las a Thirdeunaw i gael addysg Gymraeg, ond o fis Medi bydd plant yr ardal yn gallu cael addysg Gymraeg heb orfod teithio. Mae'r ddwy ysgol hynny'n orlawn, ac ugeiniau o blant wedi'u gwrthod i addysg Gymraeg yn ystod y blynyddoedd diwethaf.

Mae corff llywodraethu'r ysgol newydd wedi'i sefydlu, ac mae RhAG, mewn cydweithrediad â'r Fenter Iaith leol a Mudiad Meithrin wedi cynhyrchu taflen hyrwyddo a gaiff ei dosbarthu i holl dai'r ardal.

Roedd diffyg ysgol Gymraeg yn Nhreforys yn drawiadol o gofio i'r galw am addysg Gymraeg yn Abertawe gychwyn yno, yn 1947, o dan arweiniad y Parch Trebor Lloyd Evans. Roedd Cyngor Eglwysi Rhyddion Treforys wedi bod yn galw am ddosbarth Cymraeg yn Ysgol Pentrepoeth cyn 1945.

Yr ail ddatblygiad yw'r bwriad i sefydlu ysgol Gymraeg newydd yn y Cwm, Bonymaen. Mae rhyw gant o blant o ardal Bonymaen a St Tomos ar hyn o bryd yn cael addysg Gymraeg yn Lôn-las a Bryn-y-môr. Daeth Ysgol y Cwm yn rhydd trwy ad-drefnu addysg Saesneg yr ardal.

Prif lun: hen Ysgol Y Graig a fydd yn ffurfio cartref ysgol newydd Treforys; llun bach: Ysgol y Cwm, darpariaeth newydd ar gyfer Bonymaen.

Bwriad Abertawe yw cychwyn yr ysgol hon ym mis Medi 2012. Daeth y cyfnod ymgynghori cyntaf i ben ddechrau mis Mai, a'r gobaith yw y bydd y broses yn mynd yn ei blaen yn ddirwystr.

Mantais y ddau ddatblygiad hyn i'r sir yw nad oedd cost cyfalaf, gan mai adeiladau gwag sy'n cael eu defnyddio i gychwyn yr ysgolion Cymraeg newydd. Y gobaith yw y bydd addysg Gymraeg yn blodeuo mewn dwy ardal arall yn Abertawe.

Nid yw'r sir, fodd bynnag, wedi datrys y pwysau yn ardal Tregŵyr a gogledd Gŵyr, ac mae RhAG yn edrych ymlaen at drafodaethau pellach gyda'r sir ar hyn.

Heini Gruffudd

Dyn y dyslecsia

Mae Michael Davies o Lechryd ger Aberteifi, prif weithredwr Dyslecsia Cymru (swydd wirfoddol) wedi ei ddewis i dderbyn gwobr genedlaethol Marion Welchman am ei gyfraniad i ddyslecsia yng Nghymru a'r Gymraeg dros y deng mlynedd ddiwethaf.

Dim ond pedwar person arall sydd wedi derbyn yr anrhydedd yn y ddeuddeg mlynedd ers pan sefydlwyd y wobr.

Yn ôl yn 2008, cafwyd deg o argymhellion gan bwyllgor Menter ac Addysg Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru ynglŷn â chefnogi dyslecsia yng Nghymru ond serch hyn dim ond un sydd wedi ei gwblhau hyd yn hyn. Felly aeth Dyslecsia Cymru at y Gweinidog Addysg a gofyn a fyddai'n barod i ariannu'r gost o ddatblygu prawf sgrinio yn y Gymraeg. Gwrthodwyd y cais ac felly aeth Dyslecsia Cymru ati ar ei liwt ei hunan i godi'r arian.

Yn dilyn dros flwyddyn o waith caled llwyddwyd i ddenu cyllid o wahanol ffynnonellau. Derbyniwyd grant o £8,040 oddi wrth Ymddiriedolaeth Ivor ac Aeres Evans (o Gaerfyrddin) a fydd nawr yn eu galluogi i gyrraedd y targed ariannol, cwrdd â chostiau datblygu'r prawf, ac i fwrw ymlaen â'r gwaith o gasglu a sefydlu normau cenedlaethol ar gyfer Prawf Sgrinio Dyslecsia Cymraeg (ysgolion cynradd).

Derbyniwyd grantiau a chyfraniadau hefyd tuag at y gwaith oddi wrth ymddiriedolaeth Cronfa Glyndŵr ynghyd â nifer helaeth o gynghorau Bro a Thref yn sir Gaerfyrddin a Ceredigion.

Gobeithir y bydd y prawf ar gael i ysgolion ei ddefnyddio cyn diwedd tymor yr Hydref 2011. Ar hyn o bryd mae Dyslecsia Cymru'n chwilio am ysgolion sydd yn fodlon cydweithio â'r mudiad i beilota'r prawf yno. Os oes diddordeb - cysyllter â Michael Davies drwy ebost: llechryd1@btconnect.com

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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

Blwyddyn newydd dda Caerdydd

Ers dechrau'r flwyddyn mae'r newyddion o'r brifddinas wedi bod yn dda.

Mae problem ddybryd Ysgol Treganna wedi'i datrys gyda phenderfyniad y Ddinas mewn cydweithrediad â Llywodraeth Cymru i adeiladu ysgol newydd sbon ar safle bron yn y dalgylch i agor ym Medi 2013. Golyga hyn gau'r ysgol lloeren i Dreganna, sef Ysgol Tan-yr-eos fel oedd y bwriad o'r cychwyn ond bydd Tan-yr-eos yn cael aros ar agor tan Gorffennaf 2013 i gartrefi ail ffrwd Treganna. Bydd Treganna ar ei safle newydd yn ysgol 3 ffrwd ond nid hi fydd ysgol Gymraeg 3 ffrwd gyntaf Caerdydd. Mae'r galw cynyddol am lefydd wedi golygu y bydd Ysgol Pwll Coch yn cael 3 ffrwd o Fedi 2011 ymlaen pan fydd o leiaf 78 plentyn yn dechrau yno. Mae'r sir yn rhagweld bydd nifer y plant am ddechrau yn cyfiawnhau darparu 180 lle ar gyfer dalgylchoedd Treganna a Phwll Coch o 2013 ymlaen. 18 plentyn fynychodd Ysgol Gymraeg Caerdydd ar ei chychwyn ym 1949 yn yr adeilad lle mae Tan-yr-eos dros dro. Bu tipyn o dwf ers hynny.

Problem ddybryd arall sy wedi'i datrys yw diffyg lle yn Ysgol Melin Gruffydd. Mae'r Gweinidog Addysg wedi cadarnhau cynllun Caerdydd i drosglwyddo'r ysgol i adeilad Ysgol Gynradd yr Eglwys Newydd sydd i'w chau â'r plant yn ymuno â phlant Eglwys Wen. Fe werir dros £4m i ehangu adeilad Eglwys Newydd i dderbyn ysgol dwy ffrwd Melin Gruffydd a dosbarthiadau meithrin yn ogystal. Mae'r rhieni Saesneg wedi dechrau achos am arolwg barnwrol â golwg ar ddiddymu penderfyniad y sir a'r llywodraeth ond does fawr o obaith iddynt ennill.

Mae twf y niferoedd yn parhau gyda'r cyfanswm o blant yn dechrau ym Medi eleni yn barod wedi cyrraedd 628, ffrwd gyfan yn uwch na chyfanswm 2010 o 598. Eleni yr unig ddarpariaeth ychwanegol yw agor y drydedd ffrwd ym Mhwll Coch. Mae'r anhawster wrth ddenu ymgeiswyr am swydd y pennaeth yn golygu bod yn well gan y sir ehangu ysgolion sy'n bodoli yn hytrach nac agor ysgolion newydd. Nid yw'n gyfrinach bod gan y sir gynllun hir-dymor i ymestyn Ysgol y Wern hefyd i dair ffrwd nawr bod yr Ysgol Saesneg drws nesaf ar fin cau, eleni neu yn 2012. Nid yw'r polisi hwn yn gyfyngedig i ysgolion Cymraeg; mae tair ffrwd yn Ysgol Saesneg Rhiwbeina ers blwyddyn neu ddwy erbyn hyn.

Yn y sector uwchradd mae Ysgol Glantaf wedi dathlu agor Neuadd Chwareuon newydd, ysblennydd a chanddi lain "astroturf" at ddefnydd y timoedd hoci a phêl-droed. Mae'r contractwyr allanol yn bwrw ymlaen â gwaith codi'r adeiladau fydd yn ffurfio wyneb newydd Glantaf i'r byd ac adlewyrchu'n well safon yr addysg sydd yno yn lle'r adeiladau oes llymder fu yno ynghynt. Mae dalgylchoedd y dair ysgol uwchradd (Plasmawr, Glantaf a'r un newydd) wedi'u penderfynu gan y sir ac felly mae'r sir wedi dechrau trefnu penodi

Safle trydedd ysgol uwchradd arfaethedig Caerdydd, hen ysgol Babyddol Teilo Sant.

aelodau'r corff llywodraethu cysgodol i weithredu nes y bydd yr ysgol yn agor ym Medi 2012. Bydd y corff cysgodol yn gyfrifol am awgrymu enw'r ysgol newydd, am benodi ei phennaeth cyntaf a, gydag ef/hi, am benodi staff i ddysgu a gweinyddu yno. Bydd y pennaeth yn ei swydd erbyn Ionawr 2012 yn ôl y bwriad. Ysgol pedair ffrwd fydd yr ysgol newydd am gyfnod o ddwy flynedd gan dderbyn plant o ysgolion Bro Eirwg a'r Berllan Deg. O 2014 bydd plant yn dod hefyd o ysgol Pen-y-pil ac o 2016 o ysgol Penygroes yn ychwanegol. Tua 2018 bydd dros 20 ffrwd o blant yn ceisio lle mewn addysg uwchradd Gymraeg ac erbyn 2020 yn sicr ni fydd modd i'r tair ysgol uwchradd barhau i dderbyn dros 20 ffrwd a fe ellir edrych ymlaen at sefydlu'r bedwaredd ysgol uwchradd yng Nghaerdydd.

Michael Jones

Cyfundrefn addysg dair lefel i Gaerffili

Pan roedd yn Fardd Plant Cymru, ymwelodd y Prifardd Ceri Wyn Jones ag Ysgol y Castell yng Nghaerffili. Fe'i cyfareddwyd o glywed plant cymoedd y de ddwyrain yn bwrw ati i ddysgu'r iaith ac wrth ddod o hyd i un cymeriad hoffus, cafodd ei ysbrydoli i ganu,

Nid côr plant yn cerdd danta yw harddwch
ond bwrdd y rhai lleia'n
dweud yn browd iawn 'Bore da'
yn acen Craig y Rhacca.

Byddai Ceri Wyn yn sicr wedi'i gyfareddu petai wedi ymweld â'r un ysgol ar noson ola mis Mawrth eleni. Roedd y neuadd fawr newydd bron yn llawn o rieni wedi dod i glywed cynigion yr awdurdod lleol ar gyfer dyfodiad addysg uwchradd yn y sir.

Bai'r rhieni yw hyn i gyd, wrth gwrs... oherwydd nhw sydd wedi creu'r galw am addysg Gymraeg yn y cyffiniau, a hwnnw wedi cyrraedd uchelderau na fyddai neb wedi dychmygu pump, heb sôn am ddeg mlynedd yn ôl. Daeth 414 o blant bach i mewn i ddosbarthiadau meithrin yr Ysgolion Cymraeg mis Medi diwethaf. Mae'n debyg y caiff y rhif hwn ei gynnal am y blynyddoedd nesaf. A bydd hyn yn golygu y bydd dros 3,300 o blant ein hysgolion cynradd Cymraeg ymhen wyth mlynedd - rhyw fil yn fwy na sydd yno nawr.

Yr ateb, llawer yn rhy aml, gan yr awdurdodau yw darparu ystafelloedd dros dro - y terrapins. Ond, ar gyfer twf mor fawr byddai hyn yn galw am agos i bedwar deg terrapin. A does dim lle i fwy o derrapins bellach yn y rhan fwyaf o'n hysgolion. Felly, mae'n rhaid ail strwythuro.

Ond wrth i'r niferoedd dyfu yn yr ysgolion cynradd mae hyn yn cael effaith ar yr Ysgol Uwchradd. Petai 414 yn dod i mewn bob blwyddyn dros y cyfnod uwchradd o saith mlynedd byddai yno bron i 2,900 o blant - ddwywaith y nifer sydd yno nawr. Felly, mis Medi eleni fydd y tro olaf y gall Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni dderbyn pob un o blant Blwyddyn 6 Ysgolion Cymraeg y sir. Er bod hyn yn destun dathlu, mae hefyd yn achos gofid i rieni plant sydd i fynd i'r ysgol gyfun yn 2012 ac wedi hynny.

Bu RhAG yn gwthio, ar hyd y blynyddoedd, am gael ail ysgol gyfun yn ardal tref Caerffili, a hynny yn adeiladau ysgol Sant Ilan. Ond mae'r awdurdod wedi cynnig cynllun sy'n rhagori ar hynny. Gyda chynllun y sir caiff pob un o'n plant fynd i Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni i fyny yn Gellihaf - yn y pen draw. Bydd plant yn mynd i safle'r Gwyndy (sef adeiladau'r hen Sant Ilan) ar gyfer eu haddysg ym Mlynyddoedd 7,8 a 9 cyn trosglwyddo i ganlyn y Cwricwlwm 14 - 19 yn Gellihaf.

Ond nid yng Nghaerffili yn unig y bydd hyn yn digwydd. Gweledigaeth y sir yw y bydd yn rhaid wrth ddwy safle arall debyg, y naill yng nghwm Rhymni, a'r llall ochr draw i'r afon yng Nghwm Sirhywi neu Gwm Ebwy. Bydd y rhain wedyn yn bwydo i mewn i safle Gellihaf a fydd yn ganolfan addysg 14 - 19.

Lle mae'r cynlluniau yn wych mae problemau'n dal i fod ar gyfer ariannu'r holl beth. Bydd y rhan gyntaf o'r cynllun, sef darpariaeth ar gyfer plant Blwyddyn 7 yn y Gwyndy yn barod erbyn Medi 2012 er na fydd yr ymestyniad a'r cyfleusterau ymarfer corff yn barod tan ychydig wedi hynny. Yna, erbyn 2013, bydd yr hen adeilad ym mhen blaen y safle wedi'i addasu ar gyfer Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili.

Mae'n hen bryd i Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili gael adeilad mwy addas. Agorwyd yr ysgol bresennol ym mis Ionawr 1970 a dechreuodd y terrapins gyrraedd y flwyddyn ganlynol - maent wedi bod yn cyrraedd o bryd i bryd ers hynny. Efallai ein bod ni yn RhAG wedi bod yn rhy barod i fodloni ar gael mynediad i'r holl blant sy'n dymuno addysg Gymraeg, ond heb roi digon o sylw i ansawdd y ddarpariaeth. Mae gan Ysgol Ifor Bach adeilad newydd sbon; moderneiddiwyd Ysgol y Castell i safon uchel yn 1995 a'r llynedd cwblhawyd gwaith hyfryd i adfer y brif neuadd a darparu pum ystafell ddosbarth ychwanegol. Tro Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili yw hi bellach.

Beth am weddill y sir? Er y ddarpariaeth yn y Gwyndy, fydd dim lle eto yn Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni ymhen rhyw dair blynedd ac, felly, bydd yn rhaid darparu ymhellach. Ond, hefyd, bydd angen llawer mwy o le ar gyfer plant cynradd, yn enwedig yng nghanol Cwm Rhymni.

Nerfus ac ansicr oedd nifer o'r rhieni yn ystod y cyfarfod. Peth digon naturiol o gofio mai dyfodol addysg eu plant oedd ar yr agenda. Ond erbyn y diwedd roedd pawb wedi cynhesu at y syniad ac, yn wir, roedd nifer am wybod a oedd unrhyw ffordd ymarferol y gallent sicrhau llwyddiant i'r fenter.

Newyddion Diweddaraf: Ni chafwyd unrhyw wrthwynebiad i benderfyniad cabinet y cyngor i neilltuo'r £3.5 miliwn ar gyfer y prosiect.

Ben Jones

Uned Gymraeg Ysgol Uwchradd Llanfair-ym-Muallt, darpariaeth uwchradd cyfrwng Gymraeg bresennol de'r sir.

Pethau Powys yn poethi

Mae dyfodol addysg uwchradd cyfrwng Cymraeg yn ne Powys wedi cyrraedd croesffordd bwysig gyda'r awdurdod addysg wrthi ar hyn o bryd yn cynnal ymgynghoriad anffurfiol ar foderneiddio addysg uwchradd.

Yr amserlen arfaethedig wedyn fydd i'r swyddogion ddadansoddi'r ymatebion a chyflwyno argymhellion pendant i fwrdd y Cyngor eu trafod ym mis Rhagfyr. Yn ddibynnol ar benderfyniad y bwrdd y bwriad fydd i fynd allan i ymgynghoriad llawn yn y flwyddyn newydd.

Mae rheidrwydd ar yr awdurdod addysg i edrych ar drefniadaeth eu ysgolion uwchradd gan nad yw'r gyfundrefn bresennol yn gynaladwy oherwydd nifer sylweddol o lefydd gwag, goblygiadau cyllidol a gofynion o ran y cwricwlwm. Mae'r awdurdod hefyd yn cydnabod nad yw'r ddarpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg yn ddigonol a phlant mewn sawl rhan o'r sir yn methu a chael mynediad at addysg Gymraeg gyflawn.

Cynhaliwyd cyfres o gyfarfodydd cyhoeddus ledled y sir yn ystod yr wythnosau diwethaf fel rhan o'r broses o ymgynghori gyda'r cyhoedd. Mae'r opsiynau arfaethedig a gyflwynwyd gan yr awdurdod ar gyfer ad-drefnu addysg uwchradd wedi ennyn ymateb ffyrnig gan bobl leol a'r trafodaethau yn y cyfarfodydd yn adlewyrchu hynny.

Mae'r argymhellion hefyd wedi codi tipyn o ddiddordeb o safbwynt addysg Gymraeg yn y sir gyda chynigion i sefydlu ysgolion penodedig Gymraeg yn y gogledd a'r de.

Mae ymgyrchwyr o blaid addysg Gymraeg wedi gweld bod cyfle euraidd yma i wireddu'r cynnig hwn gan nad oes gan Bowys ysgol o'r fath ar hyn o bryd. Gyda hynny mewn golwg, mae Mudiad Addysg Gymraeg Gogledd Ddwyrain Powys wrthi'n cynnal arolwg i ganfod barn rhieni dros sefydlu ysgol uwchradd Gymraeg. Bwriedir llunio ymateb yn seiliedig ar y canfyddiadau i'w gyflwyno i'r awdurdod fel rhan o'r ymgynghoriad. Mae canghennau RhAG De Powys yn cynnal arolwg tebyg i'r un perwyl yn ne'r sir.

Mewn ymgais i geisio rhannu gwybodaeth i rieni'r ardal mae canghennau RhAG Aberhonddu/ Pontsenni a RhAG Llanfair-ym -Muallt hefyd yn cynnal cyfarfod arbennig ar y cyd yn Ysgol y Bannau ar 26 Mai. Y siaradwr gwadd ar y noson fydd Mr David Williams, Pennaeth Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera, Castell-nedd Port Talbot, a fydd yn rhoi cyflwyniad ar ei brofiadau ef fel arweinydd ysgol gyfun Gymraeg lwyddiannus. Hyderwn y bydd y noson yn ysgogi trafodaeth fywiog ac yn gyfraniad i'r ddeialog bwysig am ddyfodol addysg uwchradd Cymraeg yn Ne Powys.

Canghennau newydd RhAG

Mewn cyfarfod cyhoeddus a gynhaliwyd yn Ysgol Plas Coch, Wrecsam, fis Rhagfyr diwethaf cytunodd rhieni lleol i sefydlu cangen RhAG yn yr ardal. Amcan y gangen fydd i sianelu cefnogaeth o blaid cynllun arfaethedig i sefydlu ysgol cyfrwng Cymraeg yn Delamere Avenue, Gwersyllt, ynghyd ag ysgogi datblygiadau pellach ledled Wrecsam.

Cafodd Jeremy Salisbury ei ethol yn gadeirydd. Roedd rhieni am weld datblygu darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg newydd yn Wrecsam ac o blaid cefnogi ymroddiad Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Wrecsam i sefydlu ysgol newydd sbon. Pwysleiswyd bod Ysgol Plas Coch yn methu â diwallu'r galw cynyddol.

Yn y cyfamser, bu i gyfarfod cyhoeddus fis Ebrill ym Mhont-y-pŵl gytuno yn unfrydol i sefydlu cangen RhAG ar gyfer Torfaen, cangen RhAG gyntaf erioed i'w sefydlu yn yr ardal.

Cadeirwyd y cyfarfod gan Jeff Rees a chafwyd cyflwyniadau gan Tony Walker o Gyngor Torfaen ar gyflwr presennol addysg Gymraeg yn yr awdurdod a gan Ceri Owen o RhAG ar brif nodau ac amcanion y mudiad. Etholwyd Tom Davies yn gadeirydd a Phil Daniels yn ysgrifennydd.

Cafwyd trafodaeth ddwys ar un pwnc llosg yn benodol sef polisi Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Torfaen ynglŷn â derbyn brodyr a chwiorydd i'r un ysgol.

Roedd hyn yn arbennig o berthnasol eleni yng nghyd-destun derbyn plant i Ysgol Bryn Onnen yn sgîl agor Ysgol Panteg, Griffithstown, y llynedd.

Bwriedir mynd ati i ddadansoddi polisi cyfredol y sir ac i wneud cais ar gyfer ail-werthuso'r ddogfen os bydd angen.

Mater arall fydd o flaenoriaeth i'r gangen yw dyfodol addysg uwchradd Gymraeg yn siroedd yr hen Went ynghyd â chydweithio'n agos gyda changhennau lleol eraill RhAG yn yr ardal wrth ddatblygu eu gweithgarwch.

Loteri addysg Sir Gaerfyrddin

Mae RhAG wedi galw ar Gyngor Sir Gâr i fynd i'r afael ar unwaith â phroblem argyfyngus diffyg llefydd yn ysgolion cynradd penodedig Cymraeg y sir.

Yn ystod y misoedd diwethaf cafodd nifer o deuluoedd sy'n byw yng nghyffiniau Ysgol Gymraeg Rhydaman ar ddeall nad oedd eu plant wedi derbyn lle ar gyfer mis Medi nesaf. Rhif mynediad swyddogol Ysgol Gymraeg Rhydaman yw 31 disgybl a siomwyd sawl teulu na fydd modd i'r ysgol dderbyn eu plant am eu bod yn byw tu allan i ddalgylch swyddogol yr ysgol. Cysylltodd y rhieni hyn â RhAG yn ystod y misoedd diwethaf yn gofidio am y sefyllfa. Yn wir, gohebodd RhAG gyda'r awdurdod yn Ebrill 2010 i rybuddio fod arwyddion clir bryd hynny am y pwysau cynyddol ar gynhwysedd Ysgol Gymraeg Rhydaman i'r dyfodol.

Yr unig ysgol yn nalgylch Rhydaman sy'n darparu'r cwricwlwm llawn trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yw Ysgol Gymraeg Rhydaman. Yn syml iawn, nid oes modd cymharu'r ddarpariaeth ieithyddol a gynigir mewn Ysgol Benodedig Gymraeg â'r hyn mewn ysgolion trosiannol neu ysgolion dwy ffrwd. O dderbyn hynny felly mae cynnig darpariaeth nad yw'n cyfateb i'r addysg a gynigir yn Ysgol Gymraeg Rhydaman yn gynnig anghydradd ac yn gwahaniaethu disgyblion a theuluoedd ar sail daearyddol.

Dywedodd Ceri Owen, Swyddog Datblygu Cenedlaethol RhAG, "Y ffaith amdani yw bod nifer cynyddol o blant Sir Gâr yn methu a chael mynediad i addysg gynradd gyflawn Gymraeg. Sut gellir cyfiawnhau rhoi darpariaeth ieithyddol gynhwysfawr i rai plant ac yna ar yr un gwynt amddifadu eraill o'r un gymuned rhag yr un cyfleoedd? Mae dyletswydd ar y cyngor sir i ymateb i ddyheadau rhieni, ac os yw rhieni yn dynodi blaenoriaeth dros addysg gyflawn Cymraeg yna mae'n ofyniad arnynt i fodloni hynny. Ar hyn o bryd loteri yw cael mynediad i addysg gynradd cyflawn Gymraeg yn Sir Gâr, yn seiliedig ar god post."

Penderfynodd pedwar teulu apelio'r penderfyniad a chynhaliwyd gwrandawiadau'r apêl yn ystod mis Mai. Ymhob achos cafwyd dyfarniad o blaid apêl y teuluoedd a'r panel yn gwyrdroi penderfyniad y sir gan gytuno i ganiatáu mynediad i'r pedwar plentyn.

Meddai Miss Owen, "Mae'r sefyllfa dan sylw'n tanlinellu pwysigrwydd yr angen i gynllunio llefydd digonol yn yr ardal er mwyn cydweddu â'r amcanion cenedlaethol a osodwyd gan Lywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru yn eu Strategaeth Addysg Cyfrwng Cymraeg. Yr egwyddor sylfaenol yma yw bod cynnydd aruthrol yn y galw o du rhieni am addysg gyflawn Gymraeg ac amharodrwydd ymddangosiadol o du'r Cyngor Sir i flaengynllunio'n strategol i ddiwallu hynny. Mae'n gwbl amlwg bod rhaid mynd i'r afael â hyn ar fyrder gan fabwysiadau datrysiadau tymor byr a hir-dymor i'r sefyllfa. Does dim amheuaeth mai parhau i dyfu fydd y galw, ac heb lefydd digonol, parhau i gael eu siomi a'u trin yn anghydradd fydd rhieni Sir Gâr sydd am addysg gyflawn Gymraeg i'w plant. Mae cynnig darpariaeth sydd wedi'i glastwreiddio'n ieithyddol yn annerbyniol."

Ysgolion newydd yn blodeuo yn y Fro

Safle ysgol gynradd Gymraeg newydd y Barri: *Ysgol Bro Morgannwg* *Ysbyty Cymunedol y Barri* *Cyd-fynedfa'r ysgolion*

Mae Bro Morgannwg yn derbyn yr anochel wrth i'r sir fynd ati i greu dwy ysgol gynradd newydd, un yn Llanilltud Fawr a'r llall yn y Barri.

Fel y cyfaddefodd Paula Ham, Pennaeth Cynllunio Strategol a Pherfformiad y sir, "Roedd y rhagamcaniadau yn dangos y byddai'r galw am lefydd mewn derbynfeydd cyfrwng Cymraeg yn uwch na'r llefydd hynny oedd yn bodoli yn ysgolion Cymraeg y Fro.

"Yn 2009 dechreuwyd y broses i gwrdd â'r galw yn y Barri ac i ddarparu, am y tro cyntaf, addysg gynradd Gymraeg yn Llanilltud Fawr. Rhoes Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru sêl ei bendith yn Ionawr 2011, ac yn ei sgîl felly hefyd y pwyllgor cynllunio, sydd yn ein galluogi i ddechrau ar yr adeiladu er mwyn bod yn barod erbyn dechrau'r tymor ym mis Medi 2011."

Lleolir ysgol newydd y Barri ar dir yr ysgol uwchradd Gymraeg, Ysgol Bro Morgannwg, ac ysgol newydd Llanilltud Fawr ar dir yr ysgol uwchradd cyfrwng Saesneg yn y dref honno. Yn y ddwy ysgol ar y dechrau, derbynnir disgyblion meithrin a derbynfa yn unig gan gynyddu'r dosbarthiadau fesul mis Medi nes bod ganddynt y saith blwyddyn arferol.

Tir glas i addysg Gymraeg yw Llanilltud Fawr, er bod y datblygiad yn unioni cam hanesyddol a esgorodd flynyddoedd lawer yn ôl ar ysgol yn y Bontfaen oherwydd nad oedd adeilad gwag ar gael yn Llanilltud. Mae ysgol y Bontfaen, sef Iolo Morgannwg, wedi hen ennill ei phlwyf ei hun erbyn hyn, felly mae'r ffordd yn glir i adennill y bwrlwm yn nhref fwyaf y Fro wledig.

Sefyllfa dipyn bach yn wahanol a geir yn y Barri. Bydd yr ysgol newydd, ymhen hir a hwyr, yn disodli Ysgol Sant Baruc, er y bydd ganddi ddwy ffrwd yn hytrach nag un. Dwywaith y llefydd, felly, ac mewn ardal gwbl wahanol yn ogystal: mae hyn yn cywiro sefyllfa sydd ymhell o fod yn ddelfrydol lle mae dwy ysgol Gymraeg, Sant Baruc a Sant Curig, ar bennau ei gilydd yng nghanol y dref.

Gofynnwyd i ddisgyblion Sant Baruc ddyfeisio enw ar gyfer yr ysgol newydd, ac allan o'r saith enw a ddaeth i'r fei, dewiswyd "Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynfor" gan y llywodraethwyr i dalu teyrnged i un o feibion enwocaf y dref, sef Gwynfor Evans. Fodd bynnag, nid oedd hwn at ddant cabinet y cyngor a aeth am "Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Talwg".

Ysgolion yn llawn? Addysg Saesneg amdani...

Bu'r wythnosau diwethaf yn rhai cythryblus iawn mewn sawl ardal o Rhondda Cynon Taf wrth i rieni geisio sicrhau llefydd i'w plant mewn dosbarthiadau meithrin cyfrwng Cymraeg.

Mae nifer uchel o ddosbarthiadau meithrin ysgolion de'r sir yn llawn gan gynnwys Castellau, Dolau, Beddau, Llwyncelyn a Llantrisant.

Cyrhaeddodd y sefyllfa bwynt argyfyngus yn ardal Llantrisant gyda 22 o blant yn cael eu gwrthod i uned feithrin yr ysgol yn ogystal ag 16 yn nalgylch Ysgol Llwyncelyn.

Mewn ymateb i hyn, sefydlwyd dwy gangen RhAG newydd gyda rhieni'n awyddus i frwydro yn erbyn y penderfyniad ac i amlygu'r diffyg cynllunio amlwg o du'r sir i ddiwallu'r galw cynyddol am ddarpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg.

Mae'n arwyddocaol mai yn 1990 yr agorwyd yr ysgol Gymraeg ddiwethaf yn RhCT, sef Ysgol Bronllwyn, y Gelli.

Cafwyd cydnabyddiaeth gan y sir eu hunain mewn llythyr gan y Cynghorydd Eudine Hanagan, yr aelod cabinet â chyfrifoldeb dros addysg, y gallai'r awdurdod wedi bod yn fwy rhagweithiol wrth gynllunio ar gyfer llefydd meithrin cyfrwng Cymraeg yn y gorffennol.

Ffaith arall sydd wedi cythruddo a phryderu rhieni yw bod swyddogion yr adran addysg wedi bod yn awgrymu iddynt ystyried addysg cyfrwng Saesneg fel opsiwn amgen.

Yn sgîl brwydro ffyrnig gan y canghennau newydd llwyddwyd i gael datrysiadau byr dymor gan y sir ar gyfer Medi 2011. Mae 13 plentyn o'r 22 gwreiddiol a wrthodwyd yn Llantrisant wedi derbyn lle yn uned feithrin yr ysgol a'r gweddill wedi derbyn llefydd mewn darpariaethau Cymraeg cyfagos. O safbwynt Ysgol Llwyncelyn, mae pob un ond un o'r 16 wedi derbyn llefydd mewn ysgolion Cymraeg cyfagos neu yn Llwyncelyn ei hun.

Mae'r canghennau yn awyddus i sicrhau bod y sir yn cynllunio'n gadarn ac yn ddigonol i'r dyfodol er mwyn cyflawni eu dyletswyddau i fodloni dymuniadau rhieni dros ddewis addysg Gymraeg i'w plant.

Addawodd y cyfarwyddwr addysg fynd â chynigion gerbron y cabinet y mis yma i osod y weledigaeth, ond cafodd cyfarfod arfaethedig y cabinet ei ohirio.

Rhaid adeiladu ar yr adeiladau

Ym mis Medi 2010 agorwyd drysau adeilad newydd sbon Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg yn Nantyglo am y tro cyntaf. Mae'r ysgol yn gartref i dros 300 o ddisgyblion ac yn disodli Ysgol Gymraeg Brynmawr, unig ysgol Gymraeg Blaenau Gwent a sefydlwyd yn 1991.

Fel dengys y llun, mae'r ysgol yn adeilad modern, blaengar a hynny ar gost o £6m gyda Llywodraeth y Cynulliad yn cyfrannu'r mwyafrif o'r cyllid.

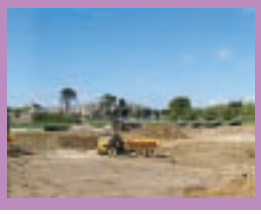
Mae'r ysgol hefyd yn gartref i gylch meithrin.

Tra'n croesawu'r buddsoddiad aruthrol yma gan yr awdurdod gyda'r bwriad o sicrhau'r adnoddau gorau ar gyfer addysg Gymraeg ym Mlaenau Gwent mae angen parhau i bwyso am ddatblygiadau

pellach. I'r perwyl hynny cynhelir cyfarfod cyhoeddus gyda'r nod o sefydlu cangen RhAG ym Mlaenau Gwent ar nos Iau 26 Mai yng Nghanolfan 'TCIC' yn Nhredegar.

Ymhellach i hynny, er mwyn cydnabod a dathlu dyfodiad yr adeilad newydd penderfynodd Mudiadau Dathlu'r Gymraeg gynnal noson hystyngau yn yr ysgol ar nos Fawrth 3 Mai ynghlwm ag ymgyrch etholiadau Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru.

Powys secondary rethink



All rosy in the Vale

The newsletter of RhAG, Parents for Welsh Medium Education
Issue 26, June 2011
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30p rhagolwg

Swansea still keeps flame aloft

There have been a number of exciting developments in Swansea. Ysgol Gymraeg Tan-y-Lan will open in Morriston in September 2011. The school will be established following years of hard campaigning by RhAG. The former Ysgol y Graig buildings have become available due to the reorganisation of English medium education in the area.

There are 100 pupils from Morriston who currently travel to Ysgol Lon-las and Ysgol Tirdeunaw to receive Welsh-medium education, but from September onwards, the area's children will be able to receive Welsh-medium provision without having to travel. Both schools are full, and as a consequence, numerous children have been refused access to WM education during the last few years.

The school's governing body has now been established, and RhAG, in co-operation with the local Menter Iaith (Welsh Language Initiative) and Mudiad Meithrin have created a leaflet to promote the new school to be distributed to all homes.

The absence of a Welsh-medium school in Morriston has been striking as the demand for Welsh-medium education in Swansea originated there in 1947, under the leadership of the Revd Trebor Lloyd Evans. Previously the Morriston Council of Free Churches called for the establishment of a Welsh class at Pentrepoeth school.

The second development is the proposed establishment of a Welsh-medium school in Cwm, Bonymaen. A further 100 children from the Bonymaen and St Thomas areas currently receive Welsh-medium education at Lon-las and Bryn-y-mor. Ysgol y Cwm also became available due to the reorganisation of English-medium education.

Main picture: the former Ysgol y Graig will house Morriston's new school; inset: Ysgol y Cwm, a new facility for Bonymaen.

The Authority's intention is that the school will open in September 2012. The initial consultation period came to an end in May, and it is hoped that the process will go ahead without any objections.

Neither development has incurred capital costs since both are located in empty buildings. Welsh-medium education can now flourish in two more areas of Swansea.

The Authority is however yet to resolve the increasing pressures seen in the areas of Gowerton and the north of Gower, and RhAG looks forward to further discussions regarding these situations in the near future.

Heini Gruffudd

Dyslexia man

Michael Davies from Llechryd near Cardigan, who is the Chief Executive of Dyslexia Wales/ Dyslecsia Cymru (a voluntary role) has been chosen to receive the Marion Welchman national prize in recognition of his contribution to dyslexia in Wales and the Welsh language over the last 10 years.

Only 4 other individuals have been honoured with the prize since its establishment 12 years ago.

Back in 2008, the National Assembly's Education and Enterprise Committee presented a report which made a total of 10 recommendations to support dyslexia in Wales, however, as of yet, only one of these has been accomplished. Dyslexia Wales approached the Education Minister to enquire if he would finance the development of a Welsh language national screening test. The request was rejected so Dyslexia Wales decided to proceed independently to raise the necessary funds.

Following more than a year of dedicated fundraising, the money was secured from a number of different sources. A grant of £8,040 was given from the Ivor and Aeres Evans Trust, (Carmarthenshire) which will now allow the organisation to reach its targets; meet the costs of developing the test and proceed with the work of collecting and establishing national norms for the Welsh Language Dyslexia Screening Test (primary schools).

Grants and contributions were also received from a number of other organisations, including Cronfa Glyndŵr and numerous town and community councils in Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion.

It is now hoped that the screening test will be available for use by schools at the end of the 2011 autumn term. Dyslexia Cymru are currently looking for schools who would be interested in working with the organisation to pilot the test. If you are interested then please contact Michael Davies via email: llechryd1@btconnect.com

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The Welsh Language Board has kindly supported both this publication and RhAG's website, www.rhag.net.

If you need information of any kind about the Welsh Language, please ring the Board's Link Linke to Welsh:

0845 6076070
(local call rate)
Monday-Friday
10.00am-12.30pm/1.30-3.30pm

Happy new year for Cardiff

There have been positive developments in the capital since the beginning of the year.

The significant problems at Ysgol Treganna have now been resolved due to the council's decision, in co-operation with the Welsh Assembly Government, to build a new school which will be located on council owned land near to the catchment area and will open in September 2013. This will mean that Treganna's satellite and sister school, Ysgol Tan-yr-eos will close, as originally intended, remaining open until July 2013 to accommodate Treganna's second stream. Treganna will eventually open in its new home as a 3-form entry but will not be Cardiff's first 3-form Welsh-medium school. The increasing demand for places has meant that Ysgol Pwll Coch will have 3 forms from Sept 2013 onwards, with 78 children starting in reception. The authority's projections suggest that the number of children wanting Welsh-medium education in the Treganna/Pwll Coch catchment areas will justify providing 180 places from 2013 onwards. A total of 18 children attended Ysgol Gymraeg Caerdydd in 1949 in the building which is currently the home of Ysgol Tan-yr-eos. How things have changed.

Another situation which has finally been resolved is the lack of spaces at Ysgol Melin Gruffydd. The Education Minister has approved the authority's proposals to transfer the school over to Eglwys Newydd Primary's buildings and amalgamate that school with Eglwys Wen Primary. Over £4m will be spent on expanding the Eglwys Newydd building as a two form entry for Ysgol Melin Gruffydd and establishing a nursery unit as part of the new school. The parents of the English-medium schools have started proceedings for a judicial review with the aim of striking out the decision but it does not appear that they will be successful.

The growth in numbers continues to increase with the total number of children starting in September 2011 already having reached 628, an increase of a whole class compared to the 2010 intake of 598. The only additional provision this year will be the opening of the third form at Ysgol Pwll Coch. The difficulties faced by the authority in trying to attract applicants for head teacher posts has meant that they prefer the option of expanding current provision rather than establishing new schools. It is no secret that the authority also has a long-term plan to expand Ysgol y Wern as a three form entry now that the English-medium school located next door will close during either 2011 or 2012. This policy is not restricted to Welsh-medium schools; the English-medium Ysgol Rhiwbeina has been a three form entry school for a couple of years.

Turning to the secondary sector, the catchment areas of all three (Glantaf, Plasmawr and the future third school) have been finalised and the authority has now started appointing members of the new shadow governing body which will be in place until the school opens in Sept 2012. The shadow

The site of Cardiff's proposed third Welsh medium secondary, the former St Teilo's RC school.

body will be responsible for deciding on the school's name, appointing the new head teacher and working with him/her to appoint members of staff. The new head teacher is expected to be in post by January 2012. The school will begin as a four form school for two years serving Ysgol Bro Eirwg and Ysgol Berllan Deg. From 2014 onwards, children from Ysgol Pen-y-pil will also join them and in 2016, children from Ysgol Penygroes. In 2018, close to 20 streams of children will apply for Welsh-medium education and by 2020 the capacity of the three secondary schools will be unable to accommodate this number which will bring about the necessity for a fourth WM secondary school in Cardiff.

Michael Jones

Three tier system for Caerphilly

The newly modernised hall of Ysgol y Castell in Caerphilly was packed one evening last March to hear the local authority's proposals for Welsh medium education at secondary level in the County.

It's the parents, of course, who are to blame for the situation we find ourselves in... Because it is they who have created such an overwhelming demand for Welsh medium education in the area. The demand has now reached a peak unimaginable five, not to mention ten, years ago. 414 children presented themselves to our nursery classes last September. The trends had led to this number over several years and they are likely to continue into the foreseeable future. This will mean over 3,300 children in our Welsh medium primary schools in eight years' time - about a thousand above the present number.

The solution, all too often, by authorities has been to provide temporary accommodation - the dreaded terrapins... But to cater for such a huge rise in numbers this would call for close on forty terrapins. There's no room for any more terrapins in most of our schools. So there's a pressing need for restructuring.

And as the numbers grow in our primary schools there is a knock-on effect on the secondary sector. If 414 pupils enter that sector every year over a school's seven year span they would add up to nearly 2,900 children - twice the number presently being educated at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni. So this September will be the last time that Year 6 children can be admitted from all the county's Welsh medium schools. While this is a cause for celebration, it is also a matter for concern to the parents of children due to go on to Cwm Rhymni in 2012 and after that.

RhAG had been pushing for a second Welsh medium secondary school on the site of the former St Ilan comprehensive school. But the authority has come up with a superior scheme. Under the county's scheme all our children will be able to attend Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni at the Gellihaf site - eventually. Caerphilly children will go to the Gwyndy site (the former St Ilan) for their education in Years 7, 8 and 9 before transferring to pursue the 14-19 curriculum at Gellihaf.

But this will not only happen in Caerphilly. The county's vision is that there will be another two similar sites, one further up the Rhymney Valley and another on the other side of the river in either the Sirhywi or Ebwy valleys. All three will then feed into the Gellihaf site, which will specialise as a 14 -19 centre.

While the plans are excellent, problems remain in terms of finance. The first part of the scheme, the provision for Year 7 pupils at Gwyndy will be ready by September 2012, even though the extension and the PE facilities won't be completed until shortly after that date. Then, by 2013, the old building at the front will have been adapted for the use of Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili.

It's high time that Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili was housed in more suitable buildings. The present school was opened in January 1970 and terrapins started arriving the following year - and they've been arriving, from time to time, ever since.

Perhaps we in RhAG have been too easily satisfied with getting places for all children wanting a Welsh medium education without paying enough attention to the quality of that provision. Ysgol Ifor Bach now has a brand new building; Ysgol y Castell moved into modernised premises in 1995 and last year the main hall was modernised with additional teaching spaces provided. Now it's the turn of Ysgol Gymraeg Caerffili.

So, the Caerffili basin seems to be well catered for during the next five to ten years. But what about the remainder of the county? Even after the Gwyndy provision, Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni will again be short of space in some three years, and further provision will be called for. But there is also a need for more accommodation for primary aged children in the mid Rhymney Valley area.

Many parents were both nervous and uncertain during the meeting - perfectly natural. By the end everyone started to warm to the idea and, indeed, many wanted to know if there was any practical way that they could ensure its success.

What would the pioneers of the mid twentieth century make of this? There was a little over a hundred pupils in total by the mid nineteen sixties in their schools. Would they ever believe that this number is now nearing 4,000 - and likely to double again in less than fifteen years?

Late news: There was no opposition to the Council Cabinet's decision to allocate the £3.5 million for the project.

Ben Jones

The Welsh medium unit at Builth Wells, the current Welsh medium secondary provision in the south of Powys.

Powys secondary rethink

Welsh medium secondary education in the south of Powys has reached an important crossroads as the education authority currently holds an informal consultation on modernising its seconday education provision.

In the proposed timetable, officials will next analyse the responses and present definite proposals for the council cabinet to discuss in December. Depending on the cabinet's decision, the intention is to go out to full consultation in the new year.

The education authority has been forced to look at its secondary school organisation since the current system is not sustainable owing to the considerable number of empty places, budgetary obligations and curriculum requirements. The authority also recognises that the Welsh medium provision is not sufficient and that children in many areas of the county are unable to gain access to full Welsh medium education.

A series of public meetings throughtou the county have been held during recent weeks as part of the public consultation process. The proposed options suggested by the council have provoked a furious response from local people and this has been reflected in the discussions taking part in the meetings.

The proposals have also provoked quite a lot of interest in Welsh medium education in the county with proposals coming forward to establish designated Welsh medium schools both in the north and the south of the county.

Campaigners for Welsh medium education see this as a golden opportunity to make such provision a reality since Powys has no such schools ar present. With this in mind, the Welsh Medium Education Organisation for North East Powys is carrying out a survey of parents' opinions on the establishment of a Welsh medium secondary school. It is the intention to present a document to the authority as part of the consultation process based on the findings of the survey.

RhAG groups in the south of Powys are carrying out a similar survey.

RhAG groups in Brecon/Pontsenni and Builth Wells are holding a joint meeting in Ysgol y Bannau on 26th May. The invited speaker will be Mr David Williams, Head of Ysgol Gyfun Ystalyfera in Neath Port Talbot, who will give a presentation on his experiences as head of a successful Welsh medium school. It is be hoped that the evening will provoke some interesting and lively debate and be an important contribution to the dialogue on the future of Welsh medium secondary education.

New RhAG groups formed

In a public meeting held in Ysgol Plas Coch in Wrexham last December, local parents agreed to establish a RhAG group in the area.

The aim of the group will be to channel support for the proposal to establish a Welsh medium school on Delamere Avenue, Gwersyllt, as well as being a springboard for campaigns throughout the county borough.

Jeremy Salisbury was elected chair. Parents were anxious to see new Welsh medium provision in Wrexham and expressed their support for Wrexham County Borough's proposal to establish a brand new school. It was emphasised that Ysgol Plas Coch was unable to meet the growing demand.

Meanwhile, a public meeting in April in Pontypool agreed unanimously to establish a RhAG group for Torfaen, the first ever for this area.

The meeting was chaired by Jeff Rees and there were presentations by Tony Walker from Torfaen council on the current state of Welsh medium education in the authority and by Ceri Owen of RhAG on the main aims and objectives of the organisation. Tom Davies was elected chair and Phil Daniels secretary.

There was intense discussion on one issue in particular which was Torfaen County Borough Council's policy towards accepting siblings into the same school. This was especially relevant this year in respect of children gaining entry to Ysgol Bryn Onnen following the opening of Ysgol Panteg in Griffithstown last year.

The intention is to analyse the county's current policy and press for a complete re-evaluation if necessary.

Another issue of importance for the group is the future of Welsh medium secondary education in the counties of the former Gwent as well as working with other local RhAG groups in the area.

Carmarthenshire postcode lottery

RhAG has called on Carmarthenshire County Council to address the problem of lack of spaces in designated Welsh medium schools which has hit crisis point.

During recent months a number of families living near to Ysgol Gymraeg Rhydaman in Ammanford were told that their children would not be offered a place next September. Rhydaman's official intake is 31 pupils and many families were disappointed that the school would not be able to take their children as they live outside the school's official catchment area. The parents contacted RhAG over recent months expressing their concern about the situation. In fact, RHAG wrote to the authority in April 2010 to warn it of the signs then of the growing pressure on capacity at Rhydaman.

The only school in the Ammanford catchment area which provides full Welsh medium education is Ysgol Gymraeg Rhydaman. Put simply, there is no way of comparing the linguistic provision offered in a designated Welsh medium school to that provided in 'bilingual' or two stream schools. Consequently, offering provision that does not equal the standard of education offered by Ysgol Gymraeg Rhydaman is unreasonable and represents discrimination towards pupils and parents on the the basis of their location.

Ceri Owen, National Development Officer for RhAG, said, "The fact is that a growing number of children in Carmarthenshire are unable to gain access to full Welsh medium primary education. How can they justify providing comprehensive linguistic provision to some children and at the same time deprive others in that community of the same opportunity? There is a duty on the county council to respond to parents' wishes, and if parents indicate a preference for full Welsh medium education then there is a requirement for them to satisfy that desire. At the moment, it is a lottery whether you can obtain full Welsh medium education in Carmarthenshire, based on your postcode."

Four families decided to appeal against the decision and their appeals were heard this May. In evey case, the families' appeals were approved with the panel overturning the council's decision and places having to be found for the four children.

Miss Owen said, "This situation underlines the importance of planning for enough places in the area in order to match the national aims set by the Welsh Assembly Government in their Welsh Medium Education Strategy. Basically there is a huge growth in the demand from parents for full Welsh medium education for their children and a reluctance by the council to set out plans to satisfy that demand. It's quite clear that the council needs to address this situation urgently and should investigate both short and long term solutions to the problem. There is no doubt that the demand will continue to grow, and without enough places being provided by Carmarthenshire, parents who want full Welsh medium education for their children will continue to be disappointed and treated unequally. An offer of a linguistic compromise is simply unacceptable in south Powys."

New Vale schools going up apace

Work at the site of Barry's new Welsh medium primary: *Ysgol Bro Morgannwg* *Barry Community Hospital* *Joint entrance to the schools*

The Vale of Glamorgan has bowed to the inevitable and moved to create two new primary schools, one in Llantwit Major and the other in Barry.

As Paula Ham, Head of Strategic Planning and Performance, admitted, "Pupil projections had demonstrated that by September 2011 demand for Welsh medium reception places would exceed the number of places available in existing Vale schools. In 2009 the process was started to meet the demand in Barry and provide, for the first time, Welsh medium primary education in Llantwit Major. The Welsh Assembly Government gave its approval in January 2011, followed by the planning committee recently, which now puts us in a position to start building works ready for the beginning of term in September 2011."

The new school in Barry will be located on land adjoining the Welsh medium secondary, Ysgol Bro Morgannwg, whilst the Llantwit school will be on land next to that town's English medium secondary. To begin with, both schools will take nursery and reception class pupils only. The schools will grow incrementally to take an additional year group each September until they comprise seven year groups.

Llantwit Major is virgin territory for Welsh medium education, although the move will right an historic wrong which meant that a school was established many years ago in Cowbridge because there was no appropriate empty building in Llantwit. The Cowbridge school, Ysgol Iolo Morgannwg, is now firmly ensconced in its community so the field is clear to reawaken interest in the largest town in the rural Vale.

The situation is slightly different in Barry. The new school will eventually replace Ysgol Sant Baruc, although with two form intrake rather the one, meaning there will be twice the number of places in the system, and what's more in a completely different area, a big improvement on the present situation where Sant Baruc and Sant Curig are almost on top of each other in the centre of town.

Sant Baruc pupils contributed names for the new school, and out of the seven top submissions, the governors plumped for "Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynfor" (after Gwynfor Evans, one of Barry's most famous sons). This was not to the taste of the council cabinet, however, who insist on "Ysgol Gymraeg Nant Talwg".

School's full? Try English medium instead...

Recent weeks have been hectic for parents in many areas of Rhondda Cynon Taff trying to get their children into Welsh medium nurseries.

Many of the nursery classes in schools in the south of the county are full up, including Castellau, Dolau, Beddau, Llwyncelyn and Llantrisant.

The situation has reached such a point in Llantrisant that 22 children had to be turned away whilst in the Ysgol Llwyncelyn catchment area the figure was 16.

In reponse to this situation, two new local RhAG groups have been set up by parents furious at the decision and anxious to draw the council's attention to its failure to plan for increasing demand for Welsh medium provision.

Significantly, the last time RCT opened a new Welsh medium school was as far back as 1990 - Ysgol Bronllwyn in Gelli.

Acknowledgement by the council itself of its shortcomings came in a letter from Cllr Eudine Hanagan, the cabinet member with responsibility for education, who admitted that the authority could have been more proactive in the past when planning for Welsh medium places.

What has also angered and concerned parents is that education department officials have even been suggesting that they should consider English medium education for their children as an alternative.

Following fierce opposition by the new RhAG groups, the county has offered a short term solution for September 2011. 13 of the original 22 who were refused places at Llantrisant have now been offered places in the nursery unit and the rest have been offered places in neighbouring Welsh medium provision. At Ysgol Llwyncelyn, all but one of the 16 have taken up places in neighbouring Welsh medium schools or Llwyncelyn itself.

The new branches are anxious to ensure that the county sets out definite and adequate plans for the future and that it fulfills its duty to meet the wishes of parents who choose Welsh medium education for their children.

The education director of the council had offered to take their vision and ideas before the cabinet this month, but the scheduled meeting had to be postponed.

Building on the buildings

In September of 2010 the doors of the brand new buildings of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg in Nantyglo were opened to a new intake. The school is home to over 300 pupils and replaces Ysgol Gymraeg Brynmawr, Blanau Gwent's only Welsh medium school established in 1991.

As can be seen from the picture, the school is in a modern state-of-the-art building which was built at a cost of £6m, mostly provided for by the Assembly Government out of its budget.

The building also houses a nursery group.

Whilst this significant investment by the authority to provide the best conditions for Welsh medium education in Blaneau Gwent is to be welcomed, further advances are needed.

To this end, a public meeting is to be held with aim of establishing a RhAG group for Blaenau Gwent on Thursday 26th in the TCIC Centre, Commercial Road, Tredegar.

By way of celebrating the arrival of the new building the "Celebrating our Language" forum (Mudiadau Dathlu'r Gymraeg) held a hustings night in the school on Thursday 3rd May in advance of the Welsh Assembly elections.