

DYDD MAWRTH 19EG MAWRTH 2024

AT: HOLL AELODAU'R CABINET

YR WYF DRWY HYN YN EICH GALW I FYNYCHU CYFARFOD AML-LEOLIAD O'R CABINET A GYNHELIR YN Y SIAMBR, NEUADD Y SIR, CAERFYRDDIN, SA31 1JP NEU O BELL AM 2.00 Y.P. AR DDYDD LLUN, 25AIN MAWRTH, 2024 ER MWYN CYFLAWNI'R MATERION A AMLINELLIR AR YR AGENDA SYDD YNGHLWM

Wendy Walters

PRIF WEITHREDWR

Swyddog Democrataidd:	Michelle Evans Thomas
Ffôn (Ilinell uniongyrchol):	01267 224470
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Cyfarfod aml-leoliad yw hwn. Gall aelodau'r pwyllgor fynychu'n bersonol yn y lleoliad a nodir uchod neu o bell drwy'r ddolen Zoom a ddarperir ar wahân.

**Gellir gwylio'r cyfarfod ar wefan y cyngor drwy'r ddolen canlynol:-
<https://carmarthenshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>**

Wendy Walters Prif Weithredwr, *Chief Executive*,
Neuadd y Sir, Caerfyrddin. SA31 1JP
County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP

Y CABINET

AELODAETH – 10 AELOD

CYNGHORYDD	PORTFFOLIO
Cynghorydd Darren Price	Arweinydd
Cynghorydd Linda Evans	Dirprwy Arweinydd ac Aelod Cabinet dros Gartrefi
Cynghorydd Glynog Davie	Addysg a'r Gymraeg
Cynghorydd Ann Davies	Materion Gwledig, Cydlyniant Cymunedol a Pholisi Cynllunio
Cynghorydd Hazel Evans	Adfywio, Hamdden, Diwylliant a Thwristiaeth
Cynghorydd Philip Hughes	Trefniadaeth a'r Gweithlu
Cynghorydd Alun Lenny	Adnoddau
Cynghorydd Edward Thomas	Gasanaethau Trafnidiaeth, Gwastraff a Seilwaith
Cynghorydd Jane Tremlett	Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Cynghorydd Aled Vaughan Owen	Newid Hinsawdd, Datgarboneiddio a Chynaliadwyedd

AGENDA

1. **YMDDIHEURIADAU AM ABSENOLDEB**
2. **DATGANIADAU O FUDDIANNAU PERSONOL**
3. **CWESTIYNAU Â RHYBUDD GAN YR AELODAU**
4. **CWESTIYNAU A RHYBYDD GAN Y CYHOEDD**
5. **DERBYNIADAU YSGOLION - ADOLYGIAD DERBYNIADAU YSGOLION CYNRADD (CODI 4)** 5 - 18
6. **CYMERADWYO NEWIDIADAU'R GRWP LLAFUR I AELODAETH PANELAU YMGYNGHOROL Y CABINET FEL A GANLYN:-**
 - Y Cynghorydd Tina Higgins i gymryd y lle gwag ar y Panel Ymgynghorol y Gweithgor Gwledig
 - Y Cynghorydd Michael Thomas i gymryd y lle gwag ar y Panel Ymgynghorol Datblygu'r Cynllun Datblygu Lleol
 - Y Cynghorydd Edward Skinner i gymryd y lle gwag ar y Panel Ymgynghorol Rhianta Corfforaeth & Diogelu
 - Y Cynghorwyr Crish Davies ac Edward Skinner i gymryd y lleoedd gwag ar y Panel Ymgynghorol Trawsbleidiol Newid Hinsawdd & Argyfwng Natur
7. **CYMERADWYO NEWIDIADAU'R GRWP PLAID CYMRU I AELODAETH PANELAU YMGYNGHOROL Y CABINET FEL A GANLYN:-**
 - Y Cynghorydd Russell Sparks i gymryd lle'r Cynghorydd Hefin Jones ar y Panel Ymgynghorol Newid Hinsawdd
 - Y Cynghorydd Meinir James i gymryd lle'r Cynghorydd Liam Bowen ar y Panel Ymgynghorol Newid Hinsawdd
8. **UNRHYW FATER ARALL Y GALL Y CADEIRYDD OHERWYDD AMGYLCHIADAU ARBENNIG BENDERFYNU EI YSTYRIED YN FATER BRYN YN UNOL AG ADRAN 100B(4)(B) O DDEDDF LLYWODRAETH LEOL, 1972.**

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol

CABINET

25^{eg} Mawrth 2024

DERBYNIADAU YSGOLION

Adolygiad derbyniadau ysgolion cynradd (Codi 4)

Argymhellion / penderfyniadau allweddol sydd eu hangen:

Argymhellir bod y Cabinet yn ystyried cynnwys yr adroddiad a'i argymhelliad.

Rhesymau:

Darparu gwybodaeth am ganlyniadau ymgynghoriad ar gael gwared ar y Polisi Codi 4 yn ystod yr ymarfer ymgynghori derbyn blynyddol ym mis Ionawr 2024, i'w weithredu o bosibl ym mis Medi 2025.

Ymgynghorwyd â'r Cabinet Rhagarweiniol: OES

Ymgynghorwyd â'r Pwyllgor Craffu Perthnasol: NA

Angen penderfyniad y Cabinet OES

Angen Penderfyniad y Cyngor NA

Aelod Cabinet deilydd Portffolio: Cyng. Glynog Davies (Addysg a'r Gymraeg)

Gyfarwyddiaeth:

Addysg a phlant

Enw'r Pennaeth Gwasanaeth:

Simon Davies

Awdur yr Adroddiad:

Allan Carter

Dynodiadau:

Pennaeth Mynediad i Addysg

Rheolwr Trawsnewid a Newid
Ysgolion

Ffôn Rhifau / Cyfeiriadau e-bost:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CABINET

25th March 2024

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Primary School Admissions Review (Rising 4s)

Background

In 2018/19 the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee completed a Task & Finish Review of the current provision for early years education, childcare and play opportunities.

One of the conclusions identified in the report was that that the Authority's 'Rising 4s' policy is markedly different to other neighbouring local authorities' and that the 'Council undertake a formal review of its current admissions policy for full time education for 4-year-olds (the rising 4s policy).'

Cabinet has already considered:

- A report into the rationale for potential removal of the policy
- An assessment of the implications of removal of the Rising 4s Policy in individual schools in the form of a gap analysis.

As a result, on the 11th December 2023 Cabinet resolved to consult on the removal of the Rising 4s Policy during the annual admissions consultation exercise in January 2024, for potential implementation in September 2025.

An extensive consultation exercise took place between 19th January and 1st March 2024.

Purpose

The attached document presents the results of the consultation exercise.

Conclusion

The review of the full-time education admissions policy forms only part of an overall review of early years education and childcare provision across the County.

The Cabinet's Vision statement outlines a desire to 'improve the availability of early years education and childcare settings across the county, particularly in rural areas; with a particular focus on providing and strengthening Welsh-medium childcare in all areas'.

Via a thorough analysis of gaps in the provision of the early years' education and childcare offer across Carmarthenshire, officers have identified communities where there is currently a limited offer i.e. a lack of early years education and/or childcare provision. As part of implementing a revised Admissions Policy officers will develop proposals to address those gaps and present these to Cabinet for their consideration.

This will include working with partners on the delivery of early years education or creating 3-11 schools to provide the education offer across the County. Officers will also work on enhancing the childcare offer in those communities, to ensure that families are able to access the Welsh Government's 30-hour free Childcare Offer locally.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Carmarthenshire as the Admissions Authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled primary schools proceeds to remove the Rising 4s Policy and implement the following:

- From 1st September 2025, admit full time learners to primary schools in the school term following their fourth birthday (OPTION B).

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	YES: Consultation Report
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Signed: *S. Lewis* Head of Access to Education

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Any changes to primary school admission arrangements will affect Carmarthenshire's School Admissions Policy and require the appropriate consultations as laid out in the Welsh Governments School Admissions Code.


2. Legal

Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and amended by Section 40 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced the requirement for the Welsh Ministers to issue a Code in respect of the discharge of admissions functions. In particular, the Code also sought to safeguard the interests of parents, children and young people by ensuring that school admissions are administered in the fairest and most equitable way possible.

The most recent School Admissions Code was issued in 2013 and is intended to clarify the process for everyone with an interest in school admissions and school admission appeals, help admission authorities to fulfil their duties correctly and improve working practices.

<p>3. Finance</p> <p>There is an opportunity to explore altering the full-time admission of pupils, creating more 3-11 schools to offer part time nursery provision in their locality, provide more business opportunities to the non-maintained sector to provide early years provision/wrap around care and make budget efficiencies. This would require further detailed financial modelling as recommended by the task and finish report.</p>
<p>4. ICT</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>5. Risk Management Issues</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>6. Staffing Implications</p> <p>A change to the primary school's admissions policy and a more detailed review into the impact on each school may have staffing implications which will be addressed in accordance with the County Council's Policy and Procedures.</p>
<p>7. Physical Assets</p> <p>N/A</p>

CONSULTATIONS

<p>I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:</p>		
Signed:	 Head of Access to Education	
<p>1. Scrutiny Committee request for pre-determination</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">NO</td> </tr> </table>	NO
NO		
<p>Scrutiny Committee</p>		
<p>Date the report was considered:-</p>		
<p>Scrutiny Committee Outcome/Recommendations:-</p>		
<p>2. Local Member(s) – Not applicable at this stage.</p>		
<p>3. Community / Town Council – Not applicable at this stage.</p>		
<p>4. Relevant Partners – Not applicable at this stage.</p>		
<p>5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – Not applicable at this stage.</p>		

EXECUTIVE BOARD PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED YES	N/A
Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:	
Title of Document	File Ref No. / Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
PRIMARY SCHOOLS Admissions Review (Rising 4s) – Gap Analysis	https://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=131&Mid=7042&Ver=4
PRIMARY SCHOOLS Admissions Review (Rising 4s)	https://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=405&Mid=7154&Ver=4
SCHOOL ADMISSIONS - Primary School Admissions Review (Rising 4s)	https://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=131&Mid=5719&Ver=4
Carmarthenshire County Council School Admissions Policy 2021-22	https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1225137/school-admissions-policy-2021-22.pdf
School Admissions Code (Wales) 2013	https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/school-admissions-code.pdf

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol

Rising 4s Policy Review

Consultation Report



sirgar.llyw.cymru
carmarthenshire.gov.wales

Cyngor Sir Gâr
Carmarthenshire
County Council



Rising 4s Policy Review

Consultation Report

Background

Carmarthenshire is the only one of the 22 Local Authorities in Wales to have a Rising 4s Policy, whereby children can leave part-time nursery education and enter full-time primary education in the term of their fourth birthday. A policy change would mean the implementation of either of the following options:

- Children enter full-time provision in the term following their fourth birthday. This is the case in three other LAs, which include Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire's nearest neighbours.
- Children enter full-time provision in the September following their fourth birthday. This is the case in eighteen other LAs.

The rationale for change was presented to Cabinet in October 2022 and although there was broad agreement that consulting on removing the Rising 4s Policy would be desirable, Cabinet understandably wished to explore the implications in more detail. Carmarthenshire operates a very mixed economy of pre-school provision across the Authority. There is a mixture of maintained and non-maintained early years settings and a combination of both 3-11 and 4-11 schools. Between them they provide 10 hours per week of statutory education for nursery children and a range of wrap around care options to meet varying demand across the county. Provision is further complicated by the geographical context of Carmarthenshire with schools in urban, rural, and often remote rural settings.

Removing the Rising 4s Policy would mean that children currently in part-time provision in both maintained and non-maintained settings would remain in that provision for a longer period of time before becoming eligible for full-time depending on which of the above options were to be implemented. This could have implications for existing capacity to meet wrap around care requirements as well as provision of the 10 hours education element in some settings.

A gap analysis has been undertaken to identify the potential impact of removing the Rising 4s Policy in each individual school. The gap analysis illustrates the complexity of the picture in Carmarthenshire but enables the Authority to provide recommendations for schools where gaps in provision may be created by removal of the Rising 4s.

On the 11th December 2023 Cabinet considered the Gap Analysis Report and resolved to consult on the removal of the Rising 4s Policy during the annual admissions consultation exercise in January 2024, for potential implementation in September 2025.

An extensive consultation exercise took place between 19th January and 1st March 2024.

The purpose of this report is to summarise the results of the consultation.

Options

Consultees were asked to consider three options:

- **OPTION A:** Admit full time learners to primary schools in the school term of their fourth birthday (current arrangements)

- **OPTION B:** Admit full time learners to primary schools in the school term following their fourth birthday.
- **OPTION C:** Admit full time learners to primary schools in the September following their fourth birthday.

Consultees were also asked an additional standard Welsh Language question:

- We would like to hear your thoughts on the **possible impact on the Welsh language**. Please provide any additional mitigation measures below regarding the proposals:

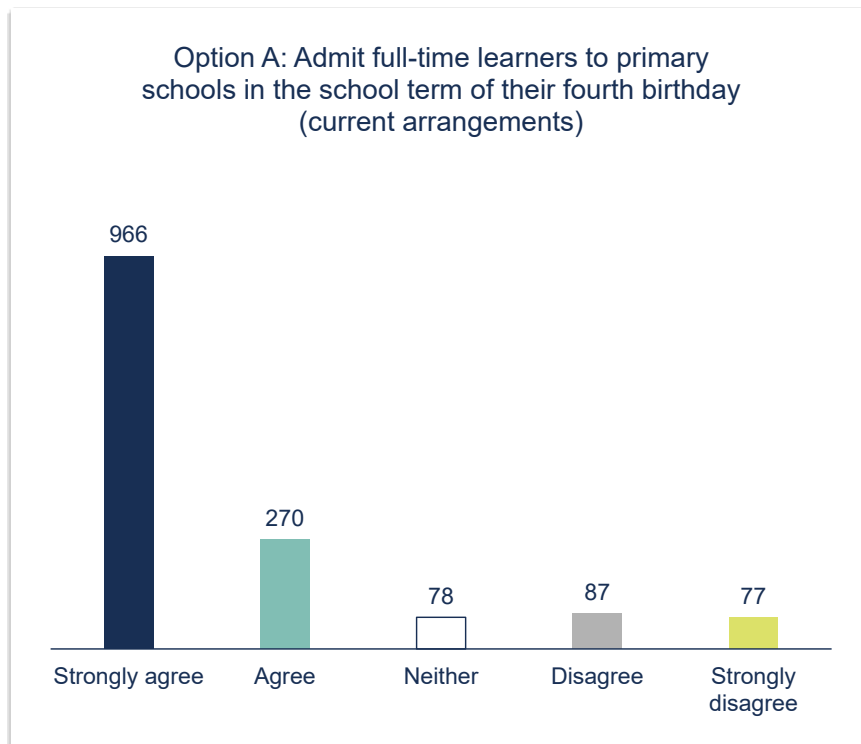
Responses

Overall, a total of **1494** responses were received for the consultation.

The responses to the individual questions are provided below.

Question 1 - OPTION A: Admit full time learners to primary schools **in the school term of their fourth birthday** (current arrangements).

A total of **1478** responses were received for **Option A**.



From the table above over 80% of respondents strongly agreed/agreed that **Option A** (current arrangements) should remain. Whilst just over 10% disagreed / strongly disagreed.

A summary of the reasons given by respondents as to why they strongly agreed / agreed for **Option A** to remain is as follows:

- Full time education at an earlier age advantageous to those children that find nursery provision is not challenging enough.
- Childcare costs are high and do not encourage two-parent families in full-time employment.
- Supports parents to continue working part or full time.
- Allows part-time workers to increase their working hours.

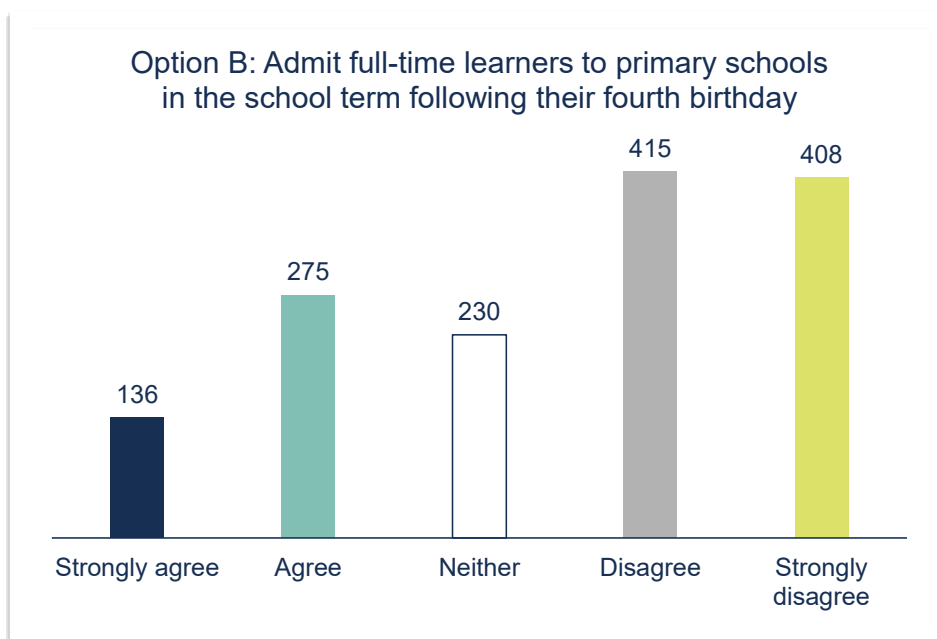
- Not all childcare provision supports the wraparound childcare needs of working parents.
- Development of Welsh language skills may suffer for those from non-Welsh speaking families starting later.
- Admission of pupils to school allows staff in non-maintained nurseries to support younger learners.
- Lack of full-time Welsh language childcare provision.
- Waiting lists for childcare settings.
- Risk of English language families not sending their children to Welsh language schools.
- Lack of childcare in rural areas.
- Benefits a child's social development.

A summary of the reasons given by respondents as to why they disagreed / strongly disagreed for **Option A** to remain is as follows:

- Learners should be full time after turning 3.
- Children physically and mentally unready to start school at 4.
- Potentially distressing for young children starting school full time.
- Pupils should not start school until they are 5.

Question 2 - OPTION B: Admit full time learners to primary schools **in the school term following** their fourth birthday.

A total of **1464** responses were received for **Option B**.



From the table above just under 30% of respondents strongly agreed / agreed that **Option B** should be implemented. Whilst just over 55% disagreed / strongly disagreed.

A summary of the reasons given by respondents as to why they strongly agreed / agreed for **Option B** to be implemented is as follows:

- Allows children to start full time education as soon as they are ready.

A summary of the reasons given by respondents as to why they neither agreed nor disagreed for **Option B** to be implemented is as follows:

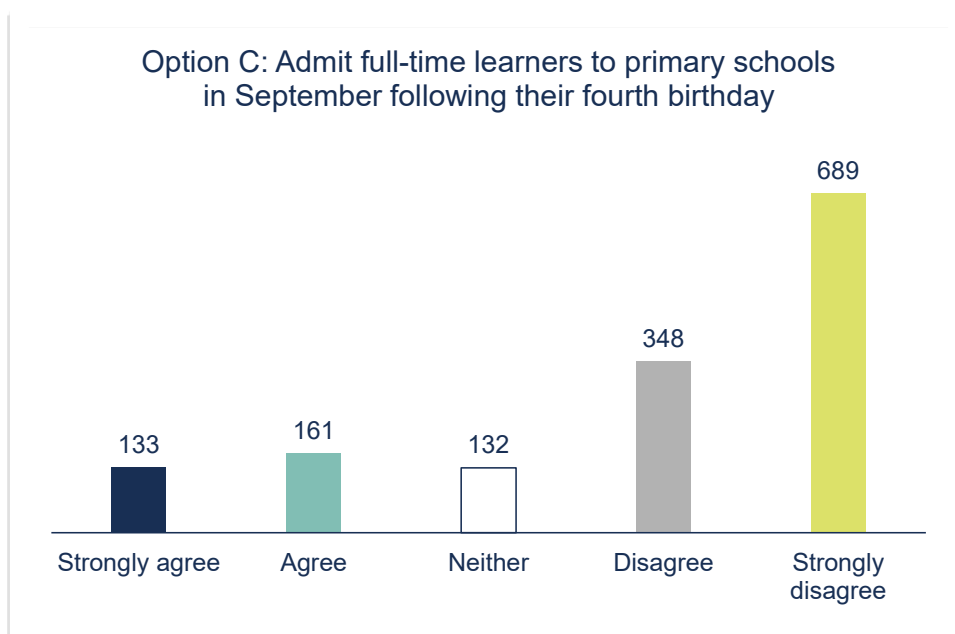
- Allows children to familiarise themselves with attending school before they become full time.
- Full time education may not be suitable for all 4 year olds.

A summary of the reasons given by respondents as to why they disagreed / strongly disagreed for **Option B** to be implemented is as follows:

- Childcare costs and availability.
- Children should be admitted to full time education as soon as possible.
- Challenging for working parents.
- Later start may be detrimental to children with ALN.
- Losing the opportunity to be immersed in the Welsh language early.
- Children may lost developing their social skills.
- Pupils should not start school until they are 5.

Question 3 - OPTION C: Admit full time learners to primary schools **in the September following** their fourth birthday.

A total of **1463** responses were received for **Option C**.



From the table above just over 20% of respondents strongly agreed / agreed that **Option C** should be implemented. Whilst just over 70% disagreed / strongly disagreed.

A summary of the reasons given by respondents as to why they strongly agreed / agreed for **Option C** to be implemented is as follows:

- Parity with the admission policies of surrounding counties.

A summary of the reasons given by respondents as to why they disagreed / strongly disagreed for **Option C** to be implemented is as follows:

- Missed learning opportunities and experiences of learners who start school later.
- Challenging for working parents to maintain employment and make career choices.
- Childcare costs and availability.
- Pupils should not start school until they are 5.

Question 4 - We would like to hear your thoughts on the possible impact on the Welsh language. Please provide any additional mitigation measures below regarding the proposals:

A summary of the responses provided by respondents to Question is as follows:

- Adoption of Welsh by pupils from non-Welsh speaking households is better because of the current policy.
- Introduction of Welsh to children from non-Welsh speaking households may suffer from starting school later.
- Welsh language schools may suffer as parents of non-Welsh speaking families may choose other language provision at another school.
- Working parents may opt to send their children to childcare settings for wraparound care instead of children attending Welsh medium schools as they currently do under Option A.
- The number of non-Welsh speakers arriving at school is already significant and early structures assist in developing their Welsh language skills.
- Difficulty meeting the 1,000,000 Welsh speakers by 2050.
- May result in a lower requirement for Welsh language provision across the county.
- No impact – children will absorb when they become full time, regardless of when that is.
- Negative impact on the availability and quality of Welsh medium childcare settings.
- Loss of learners to other catchments where Welsh language childcare provisions can cater to need.

Summary

A summary of the number of responses is provided below.

Option	Response				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	966	270	78	87	77
B	136	275	230	415	408
C	133	161	132	348	689

Option	Response		
	Agree	Neither	Disagree
A	1236	78	164
B	411	230	823
C	294	132	1037

A summary of the number of responses in percentage terms is provided below.

Option	Response				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A	65.4%	18.3%	5.3%	5.9%	5.2%
B	9.3%	18.8%	15.7%	28.3%	27.9%
C	9.1%	11.0%	9.0%	23.8%	47.1%

Option	Response		
	Agree	Neither	Disagree
A	83.6%	5.3%	11.1%
B	28.1%	15.7%	56.2%
C	20.1%	9.0%	70.9%

Conclusion

It is clear from the responses received that the majority of respondents wish for the status quo (**Option A**) to remain the Primary full time Admission Policy of Carmarthenshire.

Second to the status quo is **Option B** which would mean that pupils would start full time primary education the term after their 4th birthday.

The least popular option is **Option C** which would mean that pupils would start full time primary education in the September after their 4th birthday.

Recommendation

The gap analysis information considered previously suggests that removal of the Rising 4s Policy so that children move from nursery to reception classes and begin full-time education later, would mean there would be opportunities redistribute funding to enhance childcare, create more 3-11 schools across the county where required and therefore increase equity in provision.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of Officers that the Authority proceed with the implementation of **OPTION B**: - Admit full time learners to primary schools in the school term following their fourth birthday.

Mae'r dudalen hon yn wag yn fwriadol