

County aims to make it possible for pupils to study in Welsh Language centre is at heart of policy



Language chiefs: (back row) Gloria Davies, Welsh Language consultant, Dr Gwynne Jones, Gwynedd Council's head of schools, Dafydd Whittall, retiring strategic director – development, and Iwan Trefor Jones, Gwynedd's new strategic director – development; (front row) Meirion Prys Jones, chief executive of the Welsh Language Board, and Cllr Penri Jones, education leader on Gwynedd Council. z290705Cynllunaiath

PORTHMADOG'S flagship secondary school language centre will play a vital role in the next few years to ensure that all Gwynedd pupils are able to take their subjects in Welsh or bilingually.

Opened at Ysgol Eifionydd in September 2004, the centre will help Gwynedd Council deliver its ambitious Welsh Education Scheme which builds on firm foundations already in place in the county.

Formally launching the scheme with the Welsh Language Board, Gwynedd Council's retiring strategic director – development, Dafydd Whittall, said: "The council is committed to providing Welsh and bilingual education of the highest possible quality for every child in the county from pre-school age upwards, so that all pupils possess the appropriate skills."

The scheme will map and analyse the demand for Welsh medium and bilingual education and provide linguistic continuity between early years education and all the key education stages. It also outlines the facilities for pupils who are late arrivals to develop their bilingual skills.

By IAN SPINDLEY

Leader on Education, Cllr Penri Jones, said: "In September 2004 a flagship secondary school language centre was opened in Porthmadog. Over the coming years, this centre will play a vital role in helping the council meet the targets set out in the scheme of ensuring that all Gwynedd pupils are able to take their subjects through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. This builds on firm foundations already in place in the county."

"As I present the scheme to the Welsh Language Board, I would like to take the opportunity to wish Dafydd Whittall the very best on his retirement. As this scheme clearly shows, Mr Whittall has worked tirelessly in the field of education here in Gwynedd – our debt to him as a council is significant," he added.

Meirion Prys Jones, chief executive of the Welsh Language Board, said: "It is a privilege to accept this prized scheme. It shows again that Gwynedd Council sets a high standard in terms of Welsh and bilingual education, and our hope is that other counties will follow its example."