

Success! Gwynedd Council rethinks plan to impose church school on community

Posted: Tue, 14th Feb 2017

Plans for a new 'super school' in Bala to have a religious designation have been shelved following widespread opposition to the proposal.

In January the National Secular Society wrote to Gwynedd Council, urging it to protect community school provision and respect the wishes of non-religious parents.

At a meeting of Gwynedd Council's Cabinet on Tuesday the decision was made to restart the consultation process with the governing bodies of local schools over abandoning the proposal to establish a Church in Wales school in the town of Bala.

The decision to rethink the religious status of the school follows strong local opposition from councillors, parents and governors of existing schools that would be closed to make way for the new school.

In a [report to Gwynedd Council's Cabinet](#) ahead of the meeting it was made clear that the Actions of the Church in Wales during the consultation process has led to a "lack of confidence" in the partnership between the Diocese and the Governing Bodies. The report cited unease amongst Governors and Local Members that the Church was "mainly motivated by safeguarding the interests of Church resources".

A majority of governors at one local school, Ysgol Y Berwyn, refused to support any governing body established if it serves a church school and called on the Council to "review the status of the new school with the desire to have a community school that is not formally connected to any specific religious body."

Speaking at the meeting, Councillor Gareth Thomas said a "loss of trust between church and community" represented a substantial change that meant the Council needed to rethink their plans.

Gwynedd Council chairman and Bala Cllr Dilwyn Morgan welcomed the Council's decision.

"I cannot of course preempt the outcome of that consultation but considering a petition of 1,022 was organised asking for a new consultation then hopefully the voice of the community will be loud enough."

"Hopefully now we can make the education of our children a priority", he said.

Cllr Morgan had previously called on Church in Wales to "step back gracefully" and allow a new school to have a community status rather than be given any religious status.

Stephen Evans, National Secular Society campaigns director, commented. "Schools are at the centre of our communities and it's totally inappropriate to impose church schools, paid for from public funds, on communities that don't want them. We hope Gwynedd will now move forward with a truly inclusive community school that everyone can get behind, irrespective of their religious outlook.

"In this day and age religious schools simply aren't able to serve religiously diverse and increasing non-religious local communities."

- [Share on What's App](#)
- [Share on Facebook](#)
- [Share on Twitter](#)
- [Share on Email](#)
- [Subscribe to RSS Feed](#)

Tags: [Faith schools](#)

Related Campaigns

-

[No more faith schools](#)

We need inclusive schools free from religious discrimination, privilege or control.

[Read More](#)

Related Articles

[NSS announces major conference on protecting liberal values](#)

Kenan Malik, Joan Smith and more speaking at NSS Secularism 2024 conference in London. [Read More »](#)

[Allowing more religious selection in schools would be a big mistake](#)

Abandoning the 50% admission cap would exacerbate the discrimination, disadvantage and division inherent with faith schools, argues Stephen Evans. [Read More »](#)

[NSS joins open letter against faith school discrimination](#)

Education experts, politicians, religious leaders and public figures unite to call on Education Secretary to keep the faith school admissions cap. [Read More »](#)

Faith school found inadequate for ten years fails inspection again

Jewish school where teachers slapped children criticised for poor secular education in latest inspection. [Read More »](#)

NSS urges PM to retain cap on faith-based admissions

Supporters of inclusive schools encouraged to tell MPs to protect the 50% cap. [Read More »](#)