

Caerphilly
Welsh in Education
Strategic Plan
2022-2032

Planning for the future of Welsh
Medium Education in Caerphilly
County Borough

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The Vision for Welsh language

The year 2050: The Welsh language is thriving, the number of speakers has reached a million, and it is used in every aspect of life. Among those who do not speak Welsh there is goodwill and a sense of ownership towards the language and a recognition by all of its contribution to the culture, society, and economy of Wales. Our vision is to secure favourable circumstances throughout the country that support language acquisition and use of Welsh language skills. We want to see an increase in language transmission in the family, early introduction of Welsh to every child, an education system that provides Welsh language skills for all

Cymraeg 2050 – A million Welsh speakers (Welsh Government, 2017)

Our vision for Education in our Shared Ambitions strategy for Caerphilly county borough is:

Raise standards and ensure our learners are healthy, confident, proud, and ambitious and can benefit from high quality learning opportunities, settings, and experiences.

Introduction and aspirations

Caerphilly County Borough Council has demonstrated its commitment to developing high quality inclusive Welsh medium education provision for children and young people over many years. The ongoing commitment to Welsh medium education development is evidenced through our ambitious 21st Century School Band B programme as well as our Welsh medium and Childcare capital programmes to provide quality infrastructure for children, young people, and their families.

This Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is made under Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and complies with The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (Wales) Regulations 2019 and The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020. When setting targets, due regard has been given to the statutory guidance issued by Welsh Ministers.

This plan outlines how we intend to work with the Welsh Government and a wide range of stakeholders to work towards delivering the Cymraeg 2050 ambition of 1 million Welsh speakers as well as the Programme for Government 2021-2026. The funding will support our aspirations for the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act for a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language regardless of your socio demographic context. This plan is intrinsically linked to delivering our integrated targets, using the sustainable development principles, across the Caerphilly county borough including Childcare Sufficiency Assessment plan 2022-2027, the Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027 and our Caerphilly Corporate Plan 2018-2023 especially Objective 1 Improve Education Opportunities for All and the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 Objective 5 – Welsh Language. The plan demonstrates an importance of improving standards and enabling positive transition throughout education to positive education, training, and employment opportunities, as well as strong connections to

A More Equal Caerphilly, A More Prosperous Caerphilly as well as A Caerphilly of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language.

The plan will also reflect our Transformation Strategy #Team Caerphilly, Better Together, *“To create capacity and foresight to develop solutions to some of the County Borough’s biggest challenges, ensuring the Council understands and responds to the changing needs and priorities of our communities”*.

Involvement – there are many stakeholders critical to achieving our overarching targets of 26% Welsh medium education places in our year 1 by 2031. The Welsh Education Forum (WEF) involves various members from across Education teams, Policy, Senior Leadership Teams representing Schools, Councillors, Parent Network, Menter Iaith Caerffili, Mudiad Meithrin, Rhieni dros Addyg Gymraeg (RhAG), Cymraeg i Blant, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Coleg y Cymoedd, South East Wales Education Achievement Service, and Welsh Government. The old saying *‘it takes a village to raise a child’* holds true and the Welsh Education Forum is ever evolving to include new members who have an interest in delivering towards our targets in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and supporting our communication plan to promote the benefits of developing a bilingual community. There are good links between the Welsh Language forum and the Welsh Education Forum to ensure a consistent coordinated approach to promotional work.

Long term – this Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is over a ten-year period but also part of an ambitious longer-term commitment in the Education and Corporate Services directorate to develop our Education system to be of the highest quality to meet the progressive needs of our learners. The system recognises the importance of developing our school environments, embedding early years in education as well as opportunities outside of schools for young people and families to embed Welsh language in our communities.

Collaboration – there are a wide range of committed partners to delivering our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan starting with our children, young people, and families in our communities. There are many targets in our plan that will require different evolving collaborations to achieve. We have a long history of positive collaborations across the region to develop our early years Additional Learning Needs resources for the childcare sector, sharing good practice and resources across our school communities, as well as promotional activity through our Welsh policy officer’s group.

Integration – many outcomes are cross cutting over different plans and strategies with common integrated outcomes and indicators. It is essential to link across the various plans including Welsh Language Strategy, Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, Corporate Wellbeing Objective, and the Welsh Government programme for government to ensure we are effectively delivering on integrated outcome areas.

Prevention – the outcomes reach across all demographic contexts and family circumstances and are essential in preventing detrimental impacts for children and young people. The plan includes giving all children a best start in life, through to those who may follow a less traditional academic path and those who may wish to learn Welsh later in life. Over recent plans we have developed appropriate specialist provisions in Ysgol Cwm Derwen and Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni to ensure a holistic inclusive approach for all children throughout Education. The specialist provision will

enable children regardless of their circumstances, developmental or medical needs to access Welsh language provision. Our communication plan will promote the provision we have available within the borough to families to support their Education choices and encourage children and young people to embrace opportunities offered in bilingual communities.

The 2011 Census results showed a decline in the number of Welsh speakers in Wales and the South East region since 2001, however, the percentage of Welsh speakers in the county borough has remained constant. While the Welsh Language Commissioner's Welsh Language Use in Wales Survey shows that people fluent in Welsh are more likely to speak Welsh in everyday life, and twice as likely to attend a social event in the medium of Welsh, the 2013-15 survey states that the number of people who say that they can speak Welsh in the Caerphilly county borough areas has fallen from 46% to 38%. This emphasises that the period when young people leave Welsh medium education as a crucial one, in terms of establishing patterns of language use.

Caerphilly Welsh Education Forum meets minimum termly with the main purpose to:

- Monitor the objectives and partner operational plans towards meeting the targets of the Welsh Education Strategic Plan
- Provide updates in relation to objectives within their organisational remit
- Progress collaborative and partnership opportunities as they arise to increase the Welsh medium provision and community opportunities available in Caerphilly
- Share best practice and innovation locally, regionally, and nationally

Local Authorities have a statutory duty under section 10 of the Learner Travel Measure (Wales) to promote access to education and training through the medium of Welsh. Currently Caerphilly Council provides transport to the relevant school (i.e. catchment or nearest school) of 1.5miles primary and 2miles secondary as well as post-16 transport to schools / colleges.

It is clearly understood that to increase the number of children accessing Welsh medium education provision we need to focus on increasing opportunities for children and their families in the early years. Increasing the number of places in childcare and nursery education with a follow through to allow 100% transition throughout Welsh medium education will increase the numbers of Welsh speakers leaving school and entering employment, education, and training opportunities. There is a high demand across all roles in the workforce for Welsh speakers, so it is critical to increase the number of young people leaving school who speak Welsh as well as increasing the opportunities for adult learners.

Our 10year target over the lifespan of this plan is to increase the places in year 1 to between 26% (520) and 30% (600) of children in Welsh medium education by 2030/31. The Welsh Government guidance document, outlines the methodology in calculating the target, shows that in 2019/20 our percentage was 17.9% (we are in group 3). The other local authorities in Gwent are in group 4. This is a challenging target and needs to be considered across all aspects of our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

Our current position is based on actual places in reception in 2020 and includes ongoing estimates for places available and being created through our current capital

development programme. In 2020 there were 421 Welsh language places available which will increase to 466 places available in year 1 by 2031 through our current expansion capital programme. However, the current year 1 cohort actual take up is 366 Welsh language places, which is lower than those available. Based on current estimates for birth rate and applications the number in year 1 in 2031 the number is predicted to be 411. There is a clear need to develop a minimum additional 54 year 1 places which is likely to require a new Primary School and expansion of existing provision to achieve 26% (520) children in Welsh medium education in year 1 by 2032. Previously we have based our development on the parental demand survey which showed a demand of approx. 18% but we are moving towards setting a more stretching target of 26% by 2032 to direct future developments.

The analysis of the places in the borough show there are particular areas requiring development. The movement of Ysgol Cwm Gwyddon to Cwmcarn is anticipated to serve their catchment area more effectively from the more central location in the valley. The location should improve transition rates although it will possibly need development of Ti a Fi and Cylch in the north and south of the valley to serve the school's potential expansion. The site is also big enough to support the development of secondary provision in the future if needed. A pinch point for places in the Caerphilly basin area has been overcome initially by the expansion of Y Castell and YGG Caerffili but continues to necessitate the development of a Welsh medium primary in the Bedwas Machen area in line with the 21st century schools band B programme. Analysis of our school housing stock would show the need for development in Ysgol Trelyn and Ysgol y Lawnt to move towards 21st century schools in the areas alongside childcare provision. With all expansion or capital developments, we will consider how we can also develop childcare on site for 2-11 year olds to improve transition and support our families who need the provision.

The actions within this Welsh in Education Strategic Plan fit with our strategic aims in the Caerphilly 5year Welsh Language Strategy:

1. Increase the number of families where the Welsh language is spoken with children
2. Increase the use of Welsh among children and young people, increase their awareness of the value of the Welsh language, and ensure better access to social activities and events through the medium of Welsh
3. Support community groups and help them to increase the use of Welsh within their localities.
4. Promote and improve availability of Welsh-medium services in the borough

Outcome 1: More nursery children / 3year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

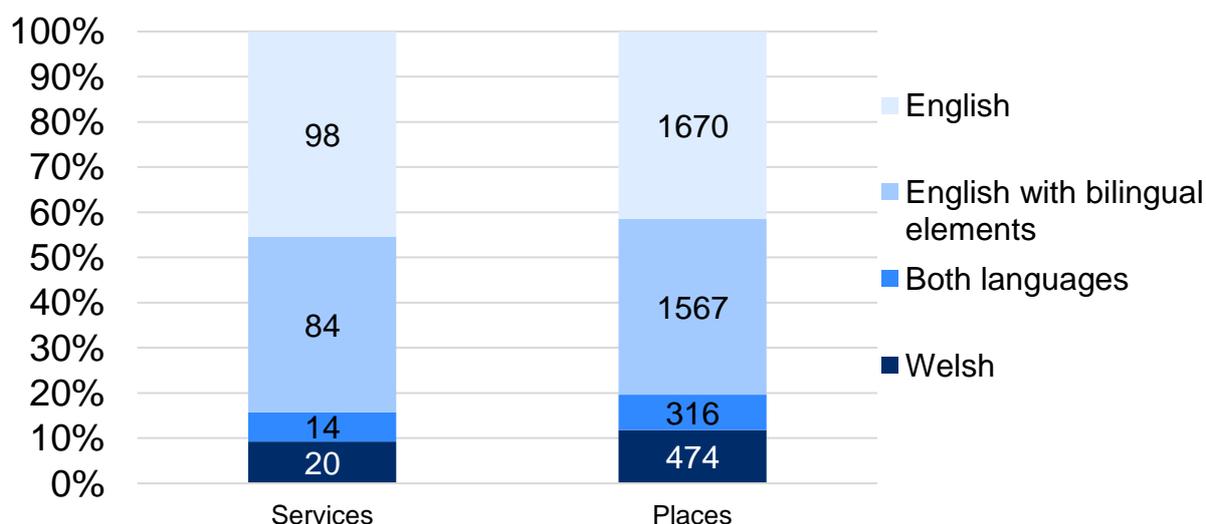
What is our current position?

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment data from the refresh 2020 has been analysed to understand our current position.

Childminder places fluctuate according to the age of children and registration number and so have been excluded from our calculation of percentage. However, the majority of our childminders state they are category 1 English language or English with some Welsh. There are 5 childminders who state they offer bilingual (category 2 English / Welsh language) places.

Group-based childcare provision includes a range of types of childcare including day nurseries, playgroup, wraparound, afterschool, breakfast, and holiday provision. All places have been counted based on their registered number and have only been counted once. The data shows in the 2019/20 data snapshot pre-covid, there were 4361 registered childcare places, of which 994 (22.8%) were category 3 Welsh language, and 128 (2.9%) were category 2 English / Welsh language based on the Caerphilly Childcare Sufficiency Assessment data refresh 2020. This is a positive position but still requires an increase in registered places by 2032. Analysis of the data shows areas where provision needs to be considered for development and which type of provision may be needed. Much of the current development has been on or near school sites to improve transition.

The graph below shows the number of childcare and play services and places according to the main working language of the service (Care Inspectorate Wales Data 2019-20)



Childcare continues to support more children to enter Welsh medium Primary as well as offer the wraparound services for working families.

Childcare Setting	Language Category	Registered places	Flying Start places	Childcare Offer	Early Years Education
Cylchoedd Meithrin	3 – Welsh	185	62	Yes	Yes
Clwb Meithrin, Carco a Gwyliau	3 – Welsh	233	0	Yes	No

Dechriau'n Deg Parc Y Felin	3 – Welsh	20	20	No	No
Broga Bach Day Nursery	2 – Welsh / English	12	0	Yes	No
Dewi Sant	2 – Welsh / English	24	40	Yes	Yes

The nursery cohort is primarily in Primary School in the September term and complemented by 14 contracted non-maintained settings who are registered to deliver Early Years Education in the Spring and Summer term each year. Of the 14 contracted settings, 7 are category 3 Welsh language and 1 is category 2 Welsh and English language. Based on our current capacity calculations there are 421 nursery places available in Category 3 Welsh language Primary Schools which will increase to 466 nursery places by 2032 with our current capital investment programme. However, the current numbers in Welsh language nursery in September 2020 were 344 which is below the capacity that could be available, although sometimes demand for places are not where there is surplus capacity. We understand the need to increase the number of children accessing Welsh language early years in Ti a Fi and Cylchoedd and good transition to Primary School in order to increase the number of children in Welsh language Nursery provision.

There is a long commitment to partnership working in the Caerphilly borough to develop early years provision. The Early Years Integration Transformation Programme is a pilot to bring services together for families removing the complexity of funding streams and enabling access to the right support at the right time by the right person. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan will link closely with the Midwifery and Early Years Strategy which is being developed for Caerphilly borough as well as the regional Early Years Integration Transformation Programme plan, which sits under the Gwent Public Service Board, Best Start in Life. Developing a closer working relationship with midwifery will improve accessible information to families from the very beginning.

Our Family Information Service remains at the heart of early years providing information and support for families. This has gained increased importance as we move to an early years' hub (antenatal to 7years early intervention) model. The early years' website is currently under development to update all the information and make it easier for families and professionals to find the information they need. Our commitment to developing accessible Welsh language provision will show through our updated early years website, which will make information easy, attractive, social, and timely and have Welsh language information easily available without the need to search specifically for it. The website features strongly in our communication plan and will have the links to the variety of Welsh Government resources including www.gov.wales/cymraeg-for-kids, www.youtube.com/cymraeg as well as wider social media channels especially Facebook which is an established media channel for our families.

Parents need easily accessible information to be able to apply for nursery places. The 'Starting School' booklet and our school admission webpages are being updated to enable families to make informed choices regardless of their linguistic

background. The Bod yn Ddwyieithog Becoming Bilingual booklet is hosted on relevant webpages to show the benefits of bilingualism. However, research has shown that families are influenced more by social lived experience stories and so this is where we need to develop our information moving forwards. The stories will be used in our communication plan which will link all resources together and target them appropriately to our target audiences. Previous parental demand surveys have shown an appetite for Welsh medium education across the borough, which will be built upon in our communication plan to enable accessible information to parents at the earliest opportunity.

Our admissions team have moved to online applications and are updating the information provided to parents and carers online. There needs to be information strategically placed throughout the online application system to ensure families are able to make informed decisions about the language of provision they want or able to contact the team directly for information and support.

Many families learn about the benefits of bilingualism through experiences. Cymraeg for kids, is a Mudiad Meithrin managed project which supports prospective and new parents when opting for Welsh medium childcare and Education. The Welsh Government project was set up in 2016 and was preceded by the Twf project which ran from 2002-2016 which focused on the importance of early language transmission in the home. The Cymraeg i Blant officer runs the following weekly Parent and baby sessions in each area: Welsh rhyme time & Sign group, Baby massage and yoga group, Cuppa & Chat Cymraeg (online group), Me and my baby sessions explaining in detail the bilingual journey (online group). The groups are advertised as being open to all; parents don't need to be able to speak Welsh. The officer will introduce simple Welsh rhymes and phrases on a weekly basis to help them acquire a basic knowledge as well as helping them to increase their confidence in using Welsh at home.

As we move out of the restrictions of coronavirus, community groups will reignite, and we will work with Cymraeg I Blant and Mudiad Meithrin officers to develop Ti a Fi to offer early Welsh language opportunities for very young children and families.

Mudiad Meithrin officers continue to work with the early years team to develop and expand Cylchoedd Meithrin across the borough especially through their Set up And Succeed programme. We will continue to encourage all new and existing Cylchoedd to tender to deliver on our early years' contracts including Flying Start, Early Years Education, Assisted and Supported Places as well as the Childcare Offer. This will ensure we have a Welsh language offer for families across the borough and work towards our minimum 26% target.

Flying Start offers an early intervention programme for children aged 0-3years living in disadvantaged communities. Within the programme there are funded part time childcare places for 2-3year olds prior to them starting school. The childcare supports child development and early identification of developmental delays. It is challenging to calculate a real term percentage of Flying Start places in Welsh or English language as many of our contracted non-maintained and maintained settings deliver a range of places and so using their registration number is not sufficient. Based on 2020/21 financial planning data based on trends of usage, there were 549 Flying Start childcare places per annum across our settings of which 82 (14.94%) were in category 3 Welsh language and 25 (4.55%) category 2 English/Welsh

language childcare settings equating to 19.49% for both categories. There are also other funded childcare places including Families First funded Assisted and Supported Places scheme which are not included in this number. The percentage for Flying Start childcare places is lower than the target percentage and so does need to be considered in the planning and development of places over the lifespan of this plan.

Menter Iaith Caerffili own and manage a number of category 3 Welsh language Clwb Meithrin, Clwb Carco, Clwb Gwyliau and a small number of Clwb Brecwast. They are based in or adjacent to the local Primary School to enable positive transition between provisions. Many of our Menter Iaith Caerffili registered childcare provisions also deliver on some of the contracts with Caerphilly Council allowing parents flexibility in their provision to meet their needs. Many of our Menter Iaith settings and Cylchoedd Meithrin deliver Childcare Offer places equating in July 2021 to 248 children in Welsh language provision out of 978 total children which is 25.36%.

While we are committed to the increase and development of Welsh language childcare provision, we also recognise that childcare providers are enthusiastic about offering more Welsh language opportunities in their setting which fits with our commitment to the linguistic continuum. We have contracted the voluntary sector organisation, Menter Iaith, to work with settings to improve the Welsh they offer through the Road to Bilingualism quality assurance scheme which includes access to training and drop-in Welsh language acquisition sessions. The change in categories may mean over time a move from category 1 English language settings to category 2 English / Welsh language settings.

We have had a significant commitment to Welsh language provision development in recent years with a number of ongoing capital projects in the 21st century schools' capital programme which includes the main scheme and subsidiary schemes under Welsh Language development and childcare development. The current capital programme will be completed during the life of this Welsh Education Strategic Plan and their contribution to the expansion of places has been factored in already to the projection of places by 2032. However, we still need increased development to meet our 26% (520 place) target.

Capital project	Brief outline of works	Estimated completion date
Ysgol Cwm Derwen	Increased classrooms and refurbish childcare	August 2022
Ysgol Penalltau	Increased nursery and reception unit	May 2022
Ysgol y Castell	New Nursery building, increased classrooms and increased childcare space	January 2022
Ysgol Bro Allta	Increased classrooms	June 2022
Ysgol Ifor Bach	Purpose built new childcare build increasing class space	January 2022
Ysgol Cwm Gwyddon	New Primary School and new childcare building	May 2023
New Welsh medium Primary School	Bedwas Trethomas Machen area	By the end of the Band B programme

Welsh medium day care provision	Purpose built extension to Pengam Library	February 2022
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Local Authorities have a statutory duty under section 10 of the Learner Travel Measure (Wales) to promote access to education and training through the medium of Welsh. Currently Caerphilly Council provides transport to the relevant school (i.e. catchment or nearest school) of 1.5miles primary and 2miles secondary as well as post-16 transport to schools / colleges.

What was the impact of Coronavirus?

During 2020/21 we have seen a substantial impact of coronavirus on early years and families. During the Summer term 2020 many Cylchoedd Meithrin and Clwbs closed for periods of time. Although many re-opened by September 2020 there was still a significant impact for Clwb Brecwast and Clwb Carco until summer 2021, with the challenge of not mixing bubbles on school sites for test trace and protect and compliance with the protective measures. The impact on out of school provision on school site was felt in both English and Welsh language settings. While sustainability grants have been used to help the whole sector to survive and revive in September 2021, we are yet to understand the full impact on demand for places and parental confidence. We will need to keep this under review as we move forward, so we do not lose ground on Welsh language places already developed and registered.

Where do we want to be by the end of our plan and how will we get there?

Our target in 2031/32 is to create 26% of childcare places in category 3 Welsh language childcare provision.

We will need to expand our Welsh language registered childcare places, including Flying Start childcare places, with a focus on any further school expansion to enable continuity for families as well as areas where there is currently no Welsh language childcare provision. Expansion of childcare provision will require a focus on capital developments submitted to Welsh Government, as well as workforce development to ensure sufficient staff to run high quality Welsh language childcare.

Increasing the places available is one aspect but we will also need to increase the take up of those places to make the provision sustainable and effective. Therefore, we will develop a promotional strategy that is innovative and relevant to our communities, building on the research around the use of effective language in publicity campaigns avoiding indirect negative messaging. In addition to promotional campaigns the admissions online application process and web presence will ensure there is sufficient information to support families to make informed decisions about the language of their child's education.

There has been a significant amount of collaborative work with Mentrau Iaith, Urdd, RhAG, Mudiad Meithrin and other WEF members previously in developing leaflets and booklets promoting the benefits of bilingualism, social media presence and campaigns as well as active involvement in consultations. The Grwp Deddf local authority officers are revising and updating their 5year Welsh Language Strategies and alongside the significant development and promotion for the Welsh in Education

Strategic Plan 2022-2032, there is an identified need for a regional Welsh medium promotion officer. The proposal has been developed and submitted by Grwp Deddf to Welsh Government to secure 3year initial funding for the post, to work across the 5 local authority's Welsh Education in Strategic Plan and Welsh Language Strategies in a coordinated approach to promotion of Welsh language education.

The Parent Network has been developing Parent Champions, who as volunteers undertake the required training to become accredited. The Parent Champions are linked to each other, Parent Network and early years to ensure consistency of messages and information to families across communities. Recently a number have undertaken Eiklan Lets Talk Under 5s training to become Language Champions and begin sharing and embedding the key speech and language messages in our communities. This concept will be expanded to develop Welsh language Champions who can embed the key messages around benefits of bilingualism and multilingualism in our communities. This is an area of work to explore and develop further during the life of this plan.

In the post recovery period following the pandemic, it has been noted that many previous community-based groups have stopped and there are challenges to restart volunteer led groups. We will work with Mudiad Meithrin, Parent Network, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations and Caerphilly Cares to support the rental of venues, while the volunteers are restarting and refinancing the community groups including Ti A Fi. We will work across grant funding streams to support the recovery of community groups.

What are the high-level actions required to improve the number of children entering Welsh language nursery?

- Use the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment data analysis when working with partners in the development of category 3 Welsh language childcare provision and keep under review annually. Work with Mudiad Meithrin officers to develop new provision under the Set up And Succeed scheme.
- Continue to work collaboratively across partners to maximise capital investment funding particularly focussed on category 3 Welsh language provision.
- Develop a 10year communication plan with annual promotional milestones/tasks, which will be supported by the regional publicity officer post. The plan will include capturing lived experiences to change the cultural conversation with communities, and development of Welsh language parent champions, children story books from Petra and learning materials, and timed to target the areas of the capital programme implementation. The promotional plan needs to look at how we use different tools or information for targeting different groups including late entry or transfers from English medium, children with emerging developmental needs or disabilities, and new births.
- Work with parents and carers to understand what information they need to inform their choices of language provision for education, including resources, web presence, activities, etc. building this into our communication plan.

- Work with Mudiad Meithrin, Cymraeg I Blant, Parent Network and Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations to support community-based peer support groups to be developed and run by volunteers.
- Work with the admissions team to consider the parent journey when applying for school places, ensuring parents have information about Welsh language education throughout the online process including benefits of bilingualism / multilingualism and the latecomers' policy.
- Support the Road to Bilingualism for English language childcare settings to progress through the continuum towards category 3 Welsh language childcare provision.
- The above actions will link with the Welsh language 5year strategy targets.

Outcome 2: More reception class children / 5year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

What is our current position?

When calculating the data for our current position we have used the actual places in reception in 2020 and included ongoing estimates for places available and being created through our current capital development programme. In 2020 there were 421 Welsh language places available which will increase to 466 places available in year 1 by 2031. However, the current year 1 cohort actual take up is 366 Welsh language places, which is lower than those available and based on current estimates for birth rate and applications the number in year 1 in 2031 is predicted to be 411.

The data shows a need for promotion of category 3 Welsh language places available, which may need to be targeted specifically to areas where the places are available as they are not uniform across the borough. This work will be built into our communication plan with specific targeted promotional milestones.

The data also shows that if we are to reach our target of minimum 26% children in Welsh language education, we will need 520 places in year 1 which is an additional 54 places and equates to approximately 2 classes per year group. This could equate to a new category 3 Welsh language Primary School plus expansion of existing provision. The development of a new Welsh language Primary School in Bedwas Trethomas Machen area during the Band B 21st century schools programme is essential to moving towards reaching our minimum 26% target alongside expansion of places in our current schools. We will work collaboratively across stakeholders and seek to maximise funding made available by Welsh Government to develop the Welsh language places needed.

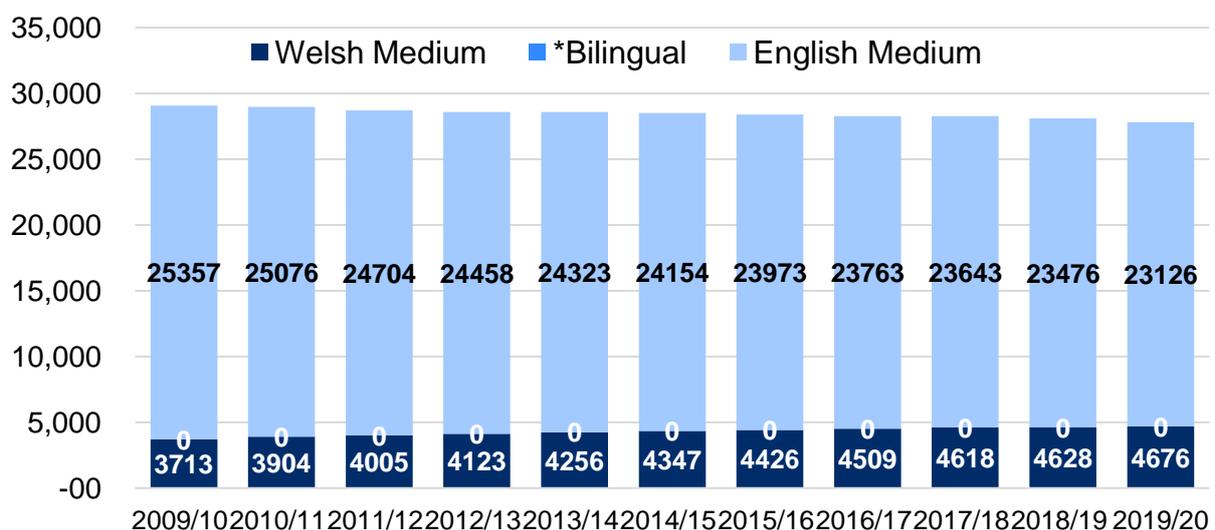
Currently our Primary Schools accept children into the Foundation Phase supporting their Welsh language acquisition through immersion techniques in the classroom. Children and young people are able to transfer to Welsh language at any point in their education, although there are few who do so, even though our Secondary School is well equipped to support transition. However, as promotion increases over

the life of this plan and attitudes positively seek Welsh language education, there is likely to be an increase in demand for Welsh language places and the need for a formal late comers policy as well as specific immersion provision to support this. This is a development need during the first five years of this plan.

In Caerphilly borough we currently have 2 main categories of school, either Category 1 English language school or Category 3 Welsh language school. We do not have any category 2 English / Welsh language schools delivering 50% English and 50% Welsh. During the review of school places and the requirement to increase the number of Welsh language school places there may be a need to consider a transition from category 1 to category 2 English / Welsh language school. However, this would need further development and integrated impact assessments to understand the implications for communities.

The latecomers' policy will need to be formalised to support transition of children and young people to Welsh language education. There will also be the need to develop specific provision to support Welsh language acquisition and immersion.

Number of learners by language medium of school, and by year. Source [Pupil Level Annual School Census, StatsWales](#)



What was the impact of coronavirus?

Coronavirus left its impact on all our communities. Parents and carers were worried that they were not able to support their children to use their Welsh language skills and so considered moving children out of Welsh language school to English language school. Our Primary and Secondary Schools, Urdd and Menter Iaith reached out to families to offer them support and relevant online resources to support them to support their children and reduce anxiety. This helped to maintain the numbers in Welsh language Primary and Secondary school on their return and has built support mechanisms that need to be retained for families moving forwards.

Where do we want to be and how will we get there?

According to the data in the PLASC returns and predicted estimates from the 21st schools planning team, there is a need to develop an additional 54 Welsh language

school places which equates to 2 classes or at least one new Welsh language Primary School and expansion of existing Primary School provision.

When we promote the benefits of bilingualism or multilingualism development there is an anticipation that children and young people may choose to move to Welsh language provision. We will need to ensure the children and young people who choose to transition to Welsh language are supported to do so through the latecomers' policy and the provision specific to support Welsh language acquisition.

We need to ensure there are sufficient places for children and young people entering Welsh language education to continue throughout their education lifetime. Data shows the need to have additional Welsh language Secondary school places by 2029.

What are the high-level actions required to increase the number of children entering Welsh medium education at 5years?

- Meeting the minimum target 26% to 30% of children in Welsh medium education by 2032 is a challenging ambition. We will need to apply for funding to Welsh Government as it becomes available and maximise funding for school and childcare places in order to meet the target number required to be available. This will necessitate 2 classes per year group and will require a new Primary School to be developed.
- We will formalise the latecomers' policy and publish this online alongside information on Welsh medium education and the application for school places to admissions. There is also a need to explore and develop specific provision to support latecomer immersion to enable children and young people to enter the appropriate cohort at a suitable linguistic stage.
- Ensure the 466 places are taken up or admissions monitored towards the take up of 466 places. If showing concerns in take up, we need to use the communication plan to support specific promotional work.

Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

What is our current position?

Our transition rate between key stages in statutory education is good and has improved over recent years to close to 100% and we aim to continue this ability for all children starting their Category 3 Welsh language education journey. Therefore, our task is to increase the number of children entering Welsh language provision at nursery 3year old age range, in order to increase the number transitioning through the education stages and completing qualifications through the Welsh language.

Year	Year 6 number	Year 7 number	Percentage transition to year 7
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2017	352	334	94.89%
2018	355	337	94.93%
2019	336	331	98.51%
2020	329	320	97.26%
2021	356	352	98.88%

All of our category 3 Welsh language schools offer all provision and qualifications through the Welsh language due to research showing the need for Welsh immersion where many children are from English language family homes.

We are planning expansion of our Welsh language Primary provision, but with a nearly 100% transition rate between statutory education stages, there will soon be the need to plan for additional secondary education places. By 2027 the capacity in secondary education will outstrip demand and so we will need to plan for additional secondary school places.

Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rymni organises a series of transition activities to ensure that they continue to be innovative in attracting pupils back to the sixth form. e.g. hosting two virtual open evenings for year 11 pupils and their parents; introducing a comprehensive options handbook and website for all pupils; arranging for all departments to present information about their courses as well as opportunities to answer any questions that arise on a virtual basis. Support is further enriched by offering bespoke appointments with the welfare team in order to receive further advice. In addition, the school arranges a coffee morning and registration for pupils, from both sites, where they have the opportunity to meet informally with the key stage 5 team and ensure that transition arrangements are as smooth as possible before September.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>KS4</u>	<u>6th Form</u>	<u>Percentage transition</u>
2020	579	207	35.75
2021	640	270	42.19
2022	676	332	49.11
2023	660	369	55.91
2024	687	385	56.04
2025	715	376	53.00
2026	718	394	54.87
2027	744	407	54.70
2028	734	410	55.86
2029	729	425	58.30
2030	750	416	55.47
2031	744	417	56.05

Mudiad Meithrin officers measure the transition rates from Welsh language Cylchoedd Meithrin to Welsh language nursery school and this is an area of ongoing improvement needed. However, not all Welsh language provision in the borough are members of Mudiad Meithrin and so their transition rates, while a good indicator, are not reflective of the whole picture in the borough. There is a continued need to understand why parents may choose Welsh language childcare provision and not

continue to Welsh language nursery education. We anticipate that as more childcare provision is moved onto school sites this will improve transition rates. This will need to be monitored once these are operational.

Transition rates between the 11 Welsh language Primary schools remain high at 100% which is due to the close working relationships within the cluster. Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni teams work closely with the 11 Primary schools to ensure all pupils are ready to build on the progress already made. There are clear transition plans with joint activities and events (activity days, science projects and music days as well as transition days and evenings to include their families) alongside joint mentoring plans for children who are vulnerable.

Caerphilly has always worked closely with regional partners to enable all to share resources and improve quality, for example, schools working closely on development of resources including ALN resources with the development of the new Act. Another example is the early year partnership steering group to develop ALN, integrated working with Aneurin Bevan Health Boards for the most vulnerable families, etc. We will continue to work with others to improve transition rates and access for families to Welsh language provision.

What was the impact of coronavirus?

Coronavirus had limited impact on transition rates between statutory education stages, but it did limit the transition and other activity events that happen throughout the school year.

Coronavirus impacted delivery of some childcare provisions in particular Clwb Carco and some Cylch Meithrin during lock down peaks. However, it is hoped that these provisions all remain sustainable to restart moving forwards.

We do not yet understand the impact coronavirus may have had on applications to Welsh language education nursery places as well as how it may impact those parents choosing to move children from Welsh language to English language education provision.

Where do we want to be and how will we get there?

Mudiad Meithrin support many of the Welsh language Cylchoedd provisions although not all Welsh language childcare provision in Caerphilly borough. We will work with Mudiad Meithrin officers and our own early years team to increase the transition rate towards 100% from Welsh language childcare to Welsh language nursery at 3years by 2032.

Transition rates for childcare provisions on school sites will be monitored to understand if alternative choices are made by parents for language of school.

Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni will continue to work with the 11 cluster primary schools to continue to secure the 100% transition rate between stages of education.

We will work with families to understand the impact of coronavirus on transition rates and application rates and keep this under review over the coming years.

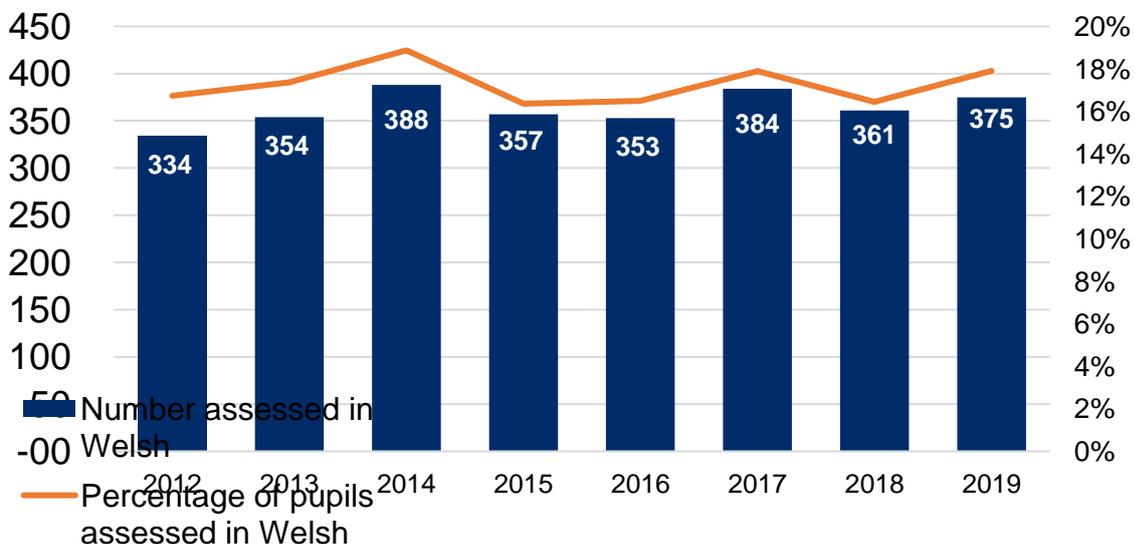
What are the high-level actions required to enable children to improve their Welsh language skills?

- We will monitor transition rates for all Welsh language childcare provision on school site to understand where parents do not wish to continue Welsh language education for their child.
- We will monitor transition rates where possible for those settings who are not members of Mudiad Meithrin to complete the picture of transition to Welsh language education. We will work with colleagues in other local authority areas with better transition rates to develop possible Caerphilly solutions.
- We will work with families to understand the impact of coronavirus on transition rates and application rates and keep this under review over the coming years.
- We will work with Welsh Government and the 21st century schools' team to plan childcare provision alongside primary school development as well as plan for secondary school places expansion to continue the 100% transition rate through statutory education.
- Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni will continue to work with the 11 Primary schools in the cluster to continue its 100% transition rate.

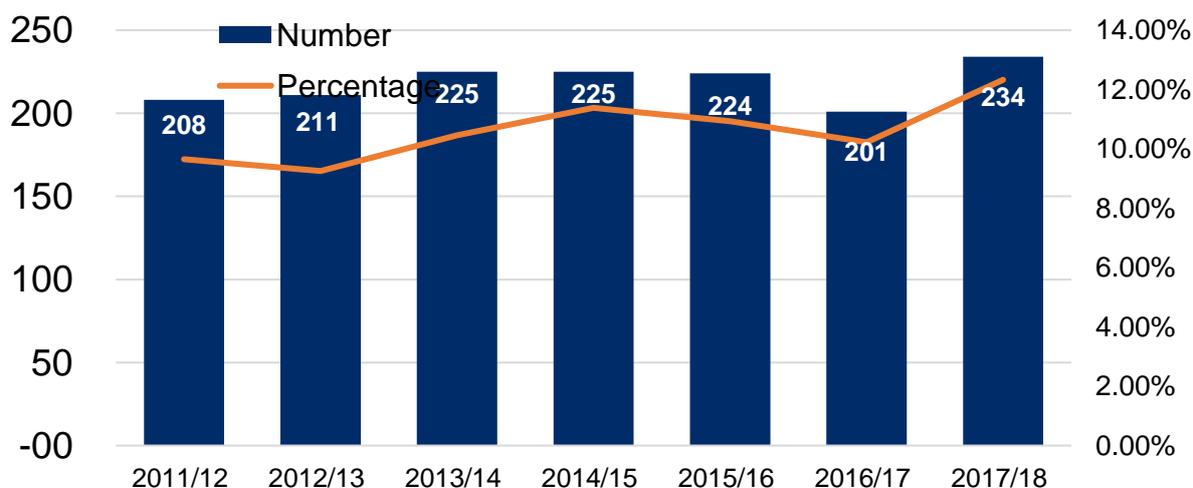
Outcome 4: More learners study for their assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

What is our current position?

Percentage of learners assessed in Welsh as a first language at the end of the Foundation Phase. Source [End of Key Stage 2 teacher assessments, StatsWales](#)



Number and percentage of Year 11 learners registered for GCSE in Welsh first language.
 Source [Welsh Examinations Database, StatsWales](#)



Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni is split over two sites: Gellihaf and Y Gwindy. The capacity of the two sites combined is 2318. From the projected numbers the capacity will be reached by 2029, and if we continue to fill spaces within our current Welsh language Primary schools the potential demand will increase to 3280 as the children move through Primary and transition to Secondary over future years. This will require development of more secondary school provision, which will also increase the number of learners assessed for qualifications in Welsh in the future.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>KS3</u>	<u>KS4</u>	<u>6th Form</u>	<u>Total</u>
2020	989	579	207	1775
2021	1006	640	270	1916
2022	1025	676	332	2032
2023	1065	660	369	2093
2024	1083	687	385	2155
2025	1083	715	376	2174
2026	1096	718	394	2208
2027	1094	744	407	2245
2028	1110	734	410	2254
2029	1144	729	425	2298
2030	1176	750	416	2342
2031	1219	744	417	2380

Pupils in key stage 4 and the sixth form at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni are offered a wide range of subject options, academic and vocational courses and the number of Welsh medium courses is higher than expected at both key stages (36 courses at key stage 4 and 32 courses at key stage 5). In this way, the school curriculum meets the needs of all pupils. This is done imaginatively through very effective collaboration with a key partner, e.g. specific courses such as hairdressing and construction at Coleg Cymoedd in Ystrad Mynach. However, the sixth form is delivered on one site (Gelli Haf) and may impact learners returning to sixth form in Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni,

moving instead to Further Education colleges closer to home or easier travelling distance.

In 2020/21 Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni continued to teach an additional 'Pass' course with 52 pupils who did not succeed in some GCSE subjects. This enables the school to provide them with a tailored curriculum ensuring that they develop their skills and receive a recognized qualification that will help them in the future. However, it was not possible to offer a 'personal finance' qualification this year due to the lockdown period but firm plans are in place, including appropriate staffing, to deliver this along with Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) level 1/2 cookery skills courses, National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 1 / 2 woodwork, a Wales, Europe and the World level 2 certificate, and a work-related education level 2 certificate, for target pupils. The key stage 4 curriculum is thoughtfully designed in order that effective use is made of expertise and resources on both sites for practical subjects e.g. textiles and design and technology. Provision for pupils at risk of becoming Not engaged in Education Employment or Training (NEET) is seen as important element of the school's provision.

Provision at key stage 5 is a very strong feature of Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni's work. The school succeeds in establishing a broad, rich and balanced curriculum that includes a wide range of AS, A Level and BTEC Level 3 courses. In addition, the school plans effective provision for the very few pupils who do not meet the entry threshold for level 3 courses of 5A*-C via the level 2 courses in the sixth form. This course offers an extra year of transition to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to fulfill their potential. Last year, half of these pupils took advantage of this transition route before moving on to study Level 3 subjects.

Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni collaborates creatively with local Welsh language secondary schools and a nearby college (e.g. Coleg y Cymoedd, Gartholwg, Llanhari and St Woolos) to offer a wide range of courses including a full-time vocational Child Care (CACHE) course for pupils year 13.

Coleg y Cymoedd supports Welsh language learners to continue their use of Welsh in some of the courses through customer service modules being delivered in Welsh language. In 2019-20, Iaith ar Waith (Welsh-medium Customer Care) units were delivered in Childcare, Health and Social Care, Catering, Business, Travel and Tourism, The Creative Industries, Engineering, Construction, Hairdressing, Beauty, Public Services and Sport courses. Coleg y Cymoedd have also recently appointed a Welsh speaking lecturer in health and social care who will be able to deliver the Childcare Play Learning and Development and Health and Social care courses bilingually as needed moving forwards.

English language Secondary schools are supported by the Education Achievement Service to deliver Welsh GCSE courses as well as the commitment to supporting the Siarter Iaith.

While there are good connections between Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni and Coleg y Cymoedd there is a need to improve connectivity with Coleg Gwent moving forward. There is also a concern that young people who may need to access Education Other Than At School may not be able to continue their education through Welsh language, although it is supported by Urdd to continue use of Welsh language while

they are not in school. This needs to be considered moving forward to ensure young people can continue their Welsh language while in alternate education provision.

What was the impact of coronavirus?

During 2020 the teaching teams developed a wide range of curriculum resources for children and families to support the continuation of Welsh language education and support transition through the statutory stages of education.

Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni and the 11 Primary Schools have developed a project to support children and young people to improve their Welsh language skills in September 2021 through arts and musical performance. During coronavirus children and young people from English language homes who attend Welsh language school were impacted by not being immersed in the language despite the best efforts of teaching teams and parents to maintain the language skills. This project will encourage children and young people to use the Welsh language in creative activities.

Where do we want to be and how will we get there?

We want all young people who access Welsh language education to study qualifications through the Welsh language in a broad range of subjects.

We want all children and young people who are accessing Education Other Than At School to continue to access subjects through the Welsh language if they have been in Welsh language education as well as offer opportunities to those who wish to transition from English language to Welsh language.

What are the high-level actions required to increase the number of learners studying qualifications in Welsh and through the medium of Welsh?

- Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni will continue their partnership with Coleg y Cymoedd and strengthen the relationship with Coleg Gwent to ensure all learners have a broad range of Welsh language qualifications available to them.
- Education Other Than At School teams will consider how the alternative education opportunities will continue to offer support for Welsh language to ensure young people can continue using Welsh language and access qualifications through Welsh language if they choose, for example, recruiting a Welsh speaking tutor or developing an innovative solution with the Welsh schools' cluster.
- School planning team will monitor take up of secondary places and plan for the expansion of secondary provision before the maximum capacity is reached in order to increase the number of pupils studying qualifications through Welsh language.
- Develop appropriate promotional materials in a range of media to encourage more young people to consider studying Welsh as a subject including taking Welsh at A level. This will link with the Welsh language 5year strategy targets.

Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

What is our current position?

In Caerphilly we have close working relationships with Urdd, Menter Iaith and the Youth Service. The partnership with Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni enables young people to use their Welsh language skills in social contexts within and outside of school.

Urdd offers a wide range of Welsh language experiences for children and young people across the borough including community arts clubs, a wide range of sports provisions including competitions at local to national level, digital resources and clubs as well as the residential Urdd camps which enable our children and young people to have immersive Welsh language social experiences. Urdd also deliver the Urdd Eisteddfod which is a wonderful Welsh language experience for the whole county and especially important in our borough where many homes are English speaking. Urdd have also developed Welsh language apprenticeships and encourage young people to take up volunteering opportunities within Caerphilly.

In Caerphilly we also have an Urdd Youth Officer linked to Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni who works very closely with Menter Iaith and the Youth Service to deliver extra-curricular activities in Welsh language, complementing the school provision. The Urdd and Menter Iaith also work closely with the Sports Caerphilly to ensure that all our school holiday activities also support children and young people in using Welsh language. The Urdd officer funded jointly by the Urdd, Menter Iaith and the Youth Service supports delivery of Welsh language activities outside school as well as within English language Secondary schools and at the Innovate project which is one of our Education Other Than At School provisions.

In Caerphilly our Menter Iaith work with a range of partners to deliver Welsh language activities after school and during school holidays. In addition, our Menter Iaith employ Welsh speaking qualified childcare and play staff to run registered after school and holiday childcare provision. This Welsh language childcare provision supports working families as well as enabling children and young people to have social experiences through the medium of Welsh.

Currently the Youth Service is working with Menter Iaith and Urdd to develop Welsh language youth provision in the newly developing Youth Hub in the Caerphilly basin. While this is planned to be one evening per week in the beginning, this may need to increase in the future. The need for any additional provision will be identified through the pilot project they are currently completing. The decision on introducing additional Welsh language sessions or integrating Welsh speakers into the existing sessions will need to be considered carefully. Current thoughts are Welsh speaking sessions encourage Welsh to be spoken during the sessions and not revert to substantive amounts of English as the home / peer friendship language which happens frequently in bilingual provisions locally.

The collaborative project between Menter Iaith, Urdd and Youth Service will include a mapping exercise completed with young people from September 2021 (including the percentage youth work delivered in Welsh language), assess the needs of young Welsh speakers across the borough, assess how these opportunities support the Welsh Language Charter, and use this information to develop Welsh language youth project moving forward. This project will identify what support or provision young people want to access and identify the gaps in this support or provision, which will need us to work collaboratively to address.

The Siarter Iaith or Language Charter (which is known as Cymraeg Campus in English language primary schools) is a framework for encouraging the use of the Welsh language. The Education Achievement Service has a primary role in supporting the Language Charter across all our schools, through facilitating professional learning for Charter Coordinators, sharing best practice and resources, offering bespoke support, as well as evaluating and validating progress towards the awards. 35 of 58 English language Primary Schools are working towards the awards in Cymraeg Campus, while all 11 Welsh language Primary Schools have achieved silver award in the Language Charter with Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni progressing to phase 3 (out of 5 phases).

What was the impact of coronavirus?

During 2020/21 there was significant disruption to our children and young people accessing school and out of school activities. Much of the provision and support went online. This was a positive development and there are many more resources now available to children, young people and families which can be easily accessed. However, there was a detrimental impact on children using the Welsh language when they predominantly came from English speaking homes and where families were not confident to try the Welsh language with the children and young people. Schools supported families as far as possible to increase their confidence in using Welsh but as a response to this impact on children's use of Welsh, the schools have developed an arts and drama literacy project which starts in September 2021. This will result in videos to be developed to showcase the pupil's experiences and Welsh language development. The videos may support us in the development of our promotional work.

Where do we want to be and how will we get there?

In Caerphilly we want all our Welsh speaking children and young people to have opportunities to use their language informally outside of school. We need to understand the percentage of Welsh language youth opportunities of the whole youth service offer and work to increase the percentage in line with the target 26% by 2031 to ensure parity of offer to all our young people.

We want all our children and young people to be able to access play experiences in the school holidays through the language of their choice. We will work collaboratively to identify more consistent funding streams

We want all our children and young people to have positive experiences of using the Welsh language in their school and outside of school. Therefore, the Education Achievement Service will continue to work towards all Primary schools becoming involved in Cymraeg Campus and progressing through the award stages.

What are the high-level actions required to increase the opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts?

- Continue to work in partnership with Yr Urdd, Menter Iaith, Youth Service and Sports Caerphilly to deliver Welsh language social extra-curricular opportunities within and outside of school and during school holidays.
- Continue to work with members of the Welsh language Strategy forum to ensure promotional work and targets are coordinated efficiently and effectively.
- Develop an action plan in response to the young people engagement project to ensure wider Welsh language opportunities for children and young people. There is likely to be a need to increase the Welsh language provision for young people aged 11years upwards. This will be taken forward in the partnership between Urdd, Menter Iaith and Youth Service.
- Work with Welsh Government and partners to identify ongoing funding streams for Welsh language opportunities outside of school moving from reactive or responsive grants to more strategically planned funded projects for consistency in delivery.
- Youth Service to work with Menter Iaith, Urdd and wider partners to map the percentage of youth provision delivered through Welsh language and work collaboratively to increase the offer to 26% target by 2032.
- The Education Achievement Service will work with all Primary Schools to get 100% of English language Primary Schools involved and progressing through the award stages by 2032.

Outcome 6: An increase in Welsh medium education provision for learners with additional learning needs (in accordance with the duties determined by the ALN Act)

What is our current position?

Our Caerphilly Corporate Objective is to improve Education opportunities for all. This has been a guiding principle and inclusion remains a top priority for our Education Strategy.

It is important to identify emerging developmental delays at the earliest opportunity. During the last few years, we have had a focus on ensuring all registered childcare providers have a suitable Additional Learning Needs (ALN) lead who has accessed the ALN modules to provide inclusive provision for children in their care. In early years we have worked with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to build a robust pathway of support for families from early identification in health visiting to support from early intervention teams to more specialist health support. ISCAN (Integrated Service for Children with Additional Needs) remains our centralised coordination of professionals for children with complex needs.

There is a range of support for families to identify if the children can access mainstream learning provision with the right support / strategies in place or if there is a need for more specialist provision. The publicity of support for children, young people and their families is being developed currently and will be taken forward as an action to ensure support is available in Welsh and English.

The Education advisory teams have a range of professionals and a number of Welsh speaking staff to support children across our mainstream Welsh language Primary Schools. Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Derwen have a specialist resource base for children with complex needs who need more specific support to access the learning environment.

In recent years we have formalised the specialist support at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni to complement their Additional Learning Needs department with the Ganolfan and the Hafan. Y Ganolfan is a well-established complex needs unit at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni offering differentiated and individualised support for pupils to access as much of the curriculum as possible. The Hafan is a specifically designed room staffed by trained experienced teachers and assistants to support young people with complex social emotional behavioural difficulties. In addition, the Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo) in Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni leads our Welsh medium ALN cluster development, supporting Primary Schools' ALNCo ensuring inclusive provision as well as upskilling of staff across all our Welsh language schools in the borough to be fully prepared for the implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.

There are very experienced ALN professionals across the region including in our regional Sensory and Communication service (SENCOM). The regional development work is developed in our regional South East Wales Consortia ALN group led by the Leads for Inclusion in each local authority.

What was the impact of coronavirus?

During 2020/21 there was significant disruption to our children and young people accessing school and out of school activities. Much of the provision and support went online. This was a positive development and there are many more resources now available to children, young people and families which can be easily accessed. However, for children with complex needs and their families, the impact of disruption in school was felt more acutely. While there was a range of support for our most vulnerable learners, the need for consistency in access to education moving forward is vital. Schools are focussed on innovative methods to catch up the time lost for all our children and young people.

Where do we want to be and how will we get there?

In Caerphilly we want all children and young people to be able to access the learning environment appropriate to their needs. We want to ensure we offer interventions at the earliest opportunity to ensure children are given the best start in life and identify the most appropriate provision to meet the child's educational needs.

We want to ensure there are sufficient skilled Welsh speaking staff to meet the needs of learners and build succession within our workforce.

What are the high-level actions required to improve Welsh medium education provision for learners with additional learning needs?

- Audit all early intervention to identify and address any gaps in support for Welsh speaking families.
- Develop appropriate accessible information for families to promote support available through Welsh language to remove concerns or perceived barriers.
- Work with the PETRA team to develop or use children’s books and learning materials to support parents in making choices for their child’s language of Education.
- Develop case studies and lived experiences of families with children with Additional learning needs who have thrived in Welsh language provision.
- Audit the capacity of the Welsh speaking workforce to identify and address any gaps in Additional Learning Needs support and develop sustainability within the model of support.
- Work across the region to share relevant resources that have been developed.

Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff to be able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

What is our current position?

The below table shows our current workforce for our 10 Welsh medium Primary Schools and our Secondary school according to the November 2020 Schools Workforce Annual Census data on the StatsWales.gov.uk website and Welsh Government website [School Workforce Census results: as at November 2020 | GOV.WALES](#)

Full person equivalent figures are used in the table which would be lower than full time equivalent but reflect whole roles that are term time only for more comparative numbers.

Staff types	Caerphilly borough	Welsh medium schools	Primary	Secondary
Total qualified teachers	1410	235	120	115
Executive head teachers	10	0	0	0
Head teachers	65	10	10	*
Deputy head teachers	80	10	10	*
Assistant head teachers	45	0	0	*
Qualified classroom teachers	1215	210	100	110
Total support staff	1310	180	140	40
Higher level teaching assistants	100	20	20	0
Teaching assistants	720	120	100	20

SEN support staff	150	*	*	0
School business manager	20	*	*	*
Pastoral support staff	40	*	0	*
ICT staff	20	*	0	*
Administration staff	175	20	15	10
Science and laboratory staff	20	*	0	*
Exam officer / invigilators	10	0	0	0
Other support staff	55	5	5	*

* this number is above zero but less than five

We will use this data to plan for the future needs of the workforce for Welsh medium schools planning in line with the development of new or expanded school provision through the 21st Century Schools team.

As a matter of course, Caerphilly Council always evaluates the potential for collaboration with another school when recruitment occurs. This is particularly applicable to schools with small student roll, decreasing finance budgets and/or schools that are not considered to be achieving their potential. Collaboration has proved a useful tool for sharing best practice across Caerphilly Council and the retention of effective and ambitious headteachers. At present there are seven collaborations across Caerphilly borough; one of which involves Ysgol Bro Sannan with Ysgol Gymraeg Gilfach Fargoed. Following a period of collaboration previously an additional four schools have federated; all of whom are English language schools.

Currently Caerphilly Council does not have concerning issues with headteacher recruitment. Out of the 86 schools, at present, only one Welsh medium has an acting headteacher (DHT acting up into role). Where we perceive that there may be an issue, we actively seek collaboration with an experienced head. However, we understand concerns from schools and Welsh Education Forum members regarding developing sufficient Welsh speaking staff entering the workforce and we will need to work with the Education Achievement Service, National Academy of Educational Leadership and initial teacher education to promote Education as a career to our young people leaving Secondary school.

Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni has a proven track record of developing their own staff and leadership team through their vocational schemes and links with wider Education institutions supporting student placements. This needs to be expanded into our wider schools to encourage the ability to grow our education teams. Canolfan Dysgu Cymraeg Cenadlaethol has a play list to support professional learning. Similarly, Mudiad Meithrin and the early years team have supported vocational placements and qualifications to grow our childcare workforce. The Cam Wrth Gam scheme with Mudiad Meithrin has had some success in developing qualified childcare staff with placements in Cylchoedd Meithrin. The vocational qualification Children's Care Play Learning and Development has also been supported by Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni and Coleg y Cymoedd to encourage our Welsh speaking young people to enter the childcare and education workforce. There is a concern that in order to be eligible for the level 2 or 3 childcare qualification, students need to be employed a minimum 16 hours per week but as they are unqualified they are not included in the ratio unless they have been in placement for

more than 12 weeks. Some sessional providers find this a challenge if they operate less than the required 16 hours. This needs consideration at Welsh Government level if it becomes a blockage for new people to enter the childcare workforce.

Mudiad Meithrin in partnership with Urdd Gobaith Cymru are offering a new apprenticeship opportunity to qualify as a Level 3 Child Care, Play, Learning and Development practitioner. This apprenticeship is suitable for staff who are employed (or who will be employed from the start date of the apprenticeship) by settings who are members of Mudiad Meithrin, Welsh medium private Day Nurseries, and Welsh medium schools. The duration of the course is 18 months, and learners will have to be employed in the setting for at least 16 hours per week.

The Education Achievement Service forms part of the University of South Wales Partnership. There is a dedicated model of support for Welsh medium schools and for the development of Welsh in English medium schools running as part of the Initial Teacher Training at the University.

On entering the workforce there are many mechanisms to support further development in their professional career. The early years team works with Mudiad Meithrin to promote further childcare qualifications and continuing professional development to provide quality childcare environments. The Education Achievement Service supports professional learning along the pathway through the medium of Welsh, in partnership with the other regions and accredited by NAEL, as appropriate. The courses delivered include Welsh medium provision for Higher Level teaching Assistants and Middle Leaders at both primary and secondary level as well as the senior leadership programme supported by a bespoke Welsh medium coaching model.

Menter Iaith work with settings to increase the use of Welsh language by staff with the children through the Road to Bilingualism. Caerphilly Council's equality team facilitates Welsh language courses to increase the Welsh speaking workforce across wider sectors which complement the education workforce in schools.

The Education Achievement Service support a regional professional learning and networking programme for practitioners in Welsh and English medium schools. In English medium schools there is support for staff to teach language patterns relevant to their teaching phase and to improve their language and language teaching methodology. The Welsh sabbatical scheme continues to be supported but there are limited places regionally circa 10-14 per course and a limited number of courses per year, which equates to approximately 3 per year for Caerphilly borough. During 2017-18 there were 2 staff who completed the Welsh in a Year scheme, 2018-19 there were 3 and for the last two years this has increased to 4 staff per year.

What was the impact of coronavirus?

During the coronavirus pandemic many courses went online in the virtual world and staff had some capacity to complete professional development. However, in many cases placements were static or paused which impacted vocational qualifications.

Where do we want to be and how will we get there?

We want to proactively work with our workforce to develop sufficient Welsh speakers to support children and young people in using the Welsh language both within school and their wider communities.

What are the high-level actions required to increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh and through the medium of Welsh?

- We will use our school places planning alongside our school workforce census data to plan the need for staff in new or expanded Welsh medium schools.
- We will work with the Education Achievement Service, National Academy of Educational Leadership, and initial teacher education providers to support the development of the education workforce.
- We will continue to work with our schools to explore opportunities for collaboration and federation as opportunities arise.
- We will work with our young people in secondary school and Careers Wales to promote careers in childcare, education, and wider workforce opportunities for Welsh speakers.
- We will work as an early years' team with Mudiad Meithrin and Menter Iaith along with secondary schools across the region, Coleg y Cymoedd and Coleg Gwent to develop our childcare workforce.
- We will raise our concerns for new entrants to the childcare workforce of sessional providers not being able to employ unqualified staff on 16 hours to be able to access the qualification course.