



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 12TH MARCH 2024

SUBJECT: WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN – ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the progress made in the annual report and the Welsh Government response.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report identifies positive progress towards the target for the Local Authority of 26% of year 1 learners to be in Welsh medium education by 2032. However, currently the percentage has decreased slightly in 2023 to 17.17% of year 1 (reception age) from 17.89% in 2016 and 17.02% of nursery from 17.95% in 2016.
- 2.2 There was positive feedback from Welsh Government although more information was needed to understand our current picture. The work developing the website pages has moved much of this information into the public domain for increased transparency.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members receive the report and comment on the progress made in the first year of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Compliance with The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (Wales) Regulations 2019 and The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 Key Achievements / Highlights

- The Capital programme is moving forward to expand the provision across the borough in childcare and school places.
- The promotional animation video is nearing completion and will be published alongside the revised wording in the Starting School booklet for 2023-24.
- The transition rate between Primary and Secondary school remains high at 97%.
- There remains a substantial offer for out of school opportunities delivered through Menter Iaith, the Urdd and the Youth Service.
- All schools remain committed to further development of the Welsh language in their provision.

5.2 Overall Plan Summary

The target for the Local Authority by 2032 is 26% of year 1 learners to be in Welsh medium education. However, currently the percentage has decreased slightly in 2023 to 17.17% of year 1 (reception age) from 17.89% in 2016 and 17.02% of nursery from 17.95% in 2016.

5.3 Forward Look Milestones

During 2023-24 the priorities are:

1. Establish promotional campaigns to increase the numbers starting nursery in Welsh medium education as well as those transferring to Primary school and on to Secondary school.
2. Develop website and information available to parents to inform choices and enable improved monitoring and accountability by the Welsh in Education Forum using the data trend.
3. Complete a number of capital projects to increase places in childcare and Primary school.
4. Increase the Welsh speaking workforce across Education, childcare and school teams.
5. Increase the provision for children with ALN to meet the increasing demand.

The detailed annual report is in appendix 1.

5.4 The Welsh Government were generally positive about the progress made in the first year of the annual plan, although they required some additional feedback and discussion in each of the 7 outcome areas:

1. Two of the Cylchoedd Meithrin who had listed as Welsh and English with Care Inspectorate Wales have not returned to Welsh medium provision. The transition rates remain low in 3 Cylch. One will move closer to Ysgol Trelyn in 2024. One has had an increase in Flying Start eligibility and remains a focus to encourage greater links to Ysgol Trelyn. One has closed in January 2024 due to falling numbers and unsustainability.
2. Positive developments in Sustainable Communities for Learning including the proposal for Ysgol Y Lawnt. There have also been positive developments in promotional work, including the new Caerphilly website Welsh language pages.
 - [Welsh medium childcare - Caerphilly Early Years](#)
 - [Caerphilly - Caerphilly County Borough](#)
 - [Caerphilly - Caerphilly County Borough](#)

3. Whilst the transition rate from WM primary to secondary has decreased slightly, it's encouraging to see that it remains at almost 97%, and that Ysgol Cwm Rhymni is working with the feeder primary schools to understand the reasons for this slight decrease.
4. More information on the range of subjects/courses available at Ysgol Cwm Rhymni and Coleg Gwent is needed to track progress sufficiently.
 - [Find a Course \(caerphillypathways.co.uk\)](http://caerphillypathways.co.uk)
 - The school supports and drives numerous strategies initiatives in order to support and strengthen Welsh language provision in the post-16 education sector.
 - Listed below is many success stories that the school actively promotes:
 - Our special link with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol - x2 successful applicants from year 12 and year 13 won the prestigious accolade of being the Coleg's Welsh language ambassadors, our lucky two were chosen from over hundreds of applicants, they created a video and application letter before being chosen, they currently arrange the TickTok and Instagram accounts for the coleg, they arrange the college to come into the school to promote post 16 Welsh language opportunities and actively encourage our 6th form students to consider following courses through the medium of Welsh and raise awareness regarding some of the scholarships and bursaries that are available in order to study in Welsh. This really is an extremely prestigious role and we are extremely proud of our close association with the college via our two wonderful sixth formers who do great work in this important area.
 - Sixth form Option Evening – recently held in November, extremely well attended by our current year 11 pupils and parents, (HE) institutions in attendance were South Wales, Cardiff Met, Coleg Cymraeg, invites to Aberystwyth and Bangor (didn't attend due to the distance probably). Follow up action was that Cardiff Met are sending Recruitment Officer Rhys Morgan to arrange drop-ins at the school whereby Rhys will be meeting our sixth formers and promoting the Welsh language courses they have an offer.
 - Every Welsh university visit the school at least once a year.
 - Strong link with Coleg De Cymru who work closely with our UCAS application process.
 - Annually around 50% of our pupils chose to study in Welsh universities - a figure that is collected in August when we help pupils on A level results day with their pathway to universities and colleges. Our strong links forged with our partner universities help enable our pupils to secure a place in their chosen colleges.
 - Interestingly this year Bangor University, Medical school is available to pupils - previously only Cardiff was available for pupils who intend becoming doctors, medicine, etc – many previously tended to choose Cardiff as the only available place in Wales as it was one of the prestigious Russell Group universities.
 - Enhanced Transition evenings to year 10 pupils promoting our sixth form post 16 provision.
 - Weekly assemblies actively promote aspirations and the opportunities of further education with a strong emphasis on Welsh medium courses and opportunities within Wales - we often arrange ex-pupils to come into school to demonstrate how Welsh language courses have opened many doors for them in their careers and personal lives i.e. Ben Price S4C and BBC Wales Today reporter, Delyth Jewell Plaid Cymru AM.
 - Our extremely active School Council and in particular one of our sub-committees consisting of x6 members also raise awareness among the

older pupils i.e., this morning they have arranged a Cymreictod coffee morning in the school library with a welcome to all.

- One of the main assets promoting post 16 education (and beyond) and to remain in Cwm Rhymni is our extremely impressive A-Level results which are, annually, ranked among the top 10% of all schools in Wales and also England – a remarkable achievement which includes, please note, all private schools as well. This proves the phenomenal success of Welsh medium education.
5. It's positive to see that good work is being done within Caerphilly primary schools in relation to Siarter Iaith. Data and information around Cymraeg Campus within English medium schools needed. [Caerphilly - Caerphilly County Borough](#)
 6. It's good to see that investment has been made to upskill staff and expand the workforce. More information on when a review/audit of ALN provision will take place would be useful. [Caerphilly - Caerphilly County Borough](#)
 7. More data is needed in line with the review report template guidance to ensure that we have the most accurate reflection of the current position. This includes the number of staff who have taken advantage of the sabbatical scheme, as well as a figure on the number of staff anticipated to be needed to achieve the WESP target.

During 22-23 academic year, the following attended the sabbatical scheme:

2022-23	Welsh in a Year	Pantside Primary
2022-23	2 Term Course	Cwrt Rawlin Primary
2022-23	Welsh in a Year (Practitioner has left her post after completing the scheme)	Cwrt Rawlin Primary
2023-24	2 Term Course	Rhiw Syr Dafydd
2022-23	Intermediate Course	St Helen's

6 have been interviewed and successful in gaining places in 2023-24 for summer 2024.

5.5 Conclusion

- 5.5.1 There has been positive progress made in the first year of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan towards the 10 year target.
- 5.5.2 Full details are contained in the body of this Report and appendices.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 There are no specific assumptions.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan stimulates demand for Welsh medium provision and Welsh language Education to enable positive engagement across all communities with the Welsh language. There are substantive positive impacts for the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan including promoting and supporting development of the Welsh language across communities through Welsh medium schools and Further Education as well wider community support for parents to develop their Welsh language skills. There are substantive links to the Equalities, Sustainable Communities for Learning

and CCBC Welsh Language strategies as well as the Welsh Governments strategy for 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 has updated information regarding the current position in each outcome area and has identified high level actions in order to meet the minimum 26% of the year 1 cohort taught through the medium of Welsh target by 2032.

Link to IIA

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications of this report as any resources required have been incorporated into existing resources, plans or future bids.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications of this report. However, expansion of the workforce across the sector will be considered in the Action Plan and at Welsh Government level.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 All views in the consultation are contained within this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (Wales) Regulations 2019 and The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020.

Author: Sarah Mutch, Early Years and Partnerships Manager,
mutchs@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Richard Edmunds, Corporate Director, Education and Corporate Services
Keri Cole, Chief Education Officer
Sue Richards, Head of Education Planning and Strategy and Place Shaping Programme Director
Sarah Ellis, Lead for Inclusion and ALN
Paul Warren, Strategic Lead for School Improvement
Cllr Carol Andrews, Cabinet Member for Education and Communities
Cllr Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance
Cllr Teresa Parry, Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Brenda Miles, Vice Chair of Education and Social Services Scrutiny Committee
Jane Southcombe, Financial Services Manager
Lynne Donovan, Head of People Services
Rob Tranter, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Andrea West, Place Shaping and Sustainable Communities for Learning Service Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 WESP annual report 2022-23