

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Draft WESP

WELSH in EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

Statutory Consultation Report



November 2021



STATUTORY CONSULTATION REPORT: DRAFT WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statutory Consultation Report presents the findings of the statutory consultation on the draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).
- 1.2 Section Three, Background, outlines the background.
- 1.3 Section Four, Methodology, details the method used to undertake this statutory consultation.
- 1.4 Section Five, Consultation Results, presents an analysis of the responses to the statutory consultation.
- 1.5 Section Six, Conclusions, concludes this Statutory Consultation Report.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Section 84 of The School Standards and Organisation Act 2013¹ requires Local Authorities to prepare a WESP. The WESP must contain proposals and targets to improve the:
 - Planning and standards of Welsh medium education and teaching; and
 - Report on progress made to meet the targets of the previous WESP.
- 2.2 Since our first WESP was submitted to the Welsh Government in 2016, there have been significant changes in the Welsh medium education sector at both local and national levels. These changes have been mainly influenced by Welsh Government legislation, in particular the Welsh in Education Action Plan² and further implementation of the 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme³.
- 2.3 The Welsh Government has also updated the regulations regarding WESPs, with the WESP (Wales) Regulations 2019⁴ and the WESP (Wales) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020⁵ focusing on four key proposals. The principal two being:
 - Extending the duration of the WESP from its current three-year implementation cycle to a ten-year implementation cycle.
 - The removal of the current duty on Local Authorities to plan their provision of Welsh medium education based on demand, with the requirement that Local Authorities achieve targets set by the Welsh Government which aim to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education over the duration of the WESP.

¹ [School Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act 2013](#)

² [Welsh in Education Action Plan](#)

³ [21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme](#)

⁴ [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan \(Wales\) Regulations 2019](#)

⁵ [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan \(Wales\) \(Amendment\) \(Coronavirus\) Regulations 2020](#)

- 2.4 Our target, during the ten year lifespan of this WESP, that has been set by the Welsh Government, is to:

Increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education by between 8.0% to 12.0% during the ten year lifespan of this WESP. This equates to an increase from 506 year one learners in Welsh medium education to between 720 and 825 year one learners in Welsh medium education.

- 2.5 This target is based on contributing to the overall long term target, set out in Cymraeg 2050 – A Million Welsh Speakers⁶ of one million people in Wales being Welsh speakers by 2050.

- 2.6 As well as the target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education, the WESP includes seven outcomes or areas setting out how Local Authorities are expected to improve Welsh medium and Welsh language education in their locality. The priorities are:

1. **Outcome 1:** More nursery / three year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
2. **Outcome 2:** More reception / five year old learners receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
3. **Outcome 3:** More learners continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another.
4. **Outcome 4:** More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh.
5. **Outcome 5:** More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.
6. **Outcome 6:** An increase in the provision of Welsh medium education for learners with additional learning needs.
7. **Outcome 7:** Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and through the medium of Welsh.

- 2.7 Although the statutory responsibility for the WESP sits with Local Authorities, several other external groups and organisations have a role in contributing to formulating, implementing and evaluating it. These include, but are not limited to:

- Central South Consortium Joint Education Service.
- Coleg y Cymoedd.
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board.
- Menter Iaith.
- Mudiad Meithrin.
- RhaG.
- The Urdd.
- University of South Wales.
- Welsh Government.

⁶ [Cymraeg 2050 – A Million Welsh Speakers](#)

2.8 A WESP Strategic Group will be established, in partnership with external groups and organisations, to assist in the formulation, implementation and ongoing evaluation of the new WESP. To ensure effective governance arrangements are in place, members of the WESP Strategic Group will be asked to agree to a Terms of Reference.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 The purpose of this statutory consultation was to gather views on the draft WESP.

3.2 The draft WESP was subject to a comprehensive public statutory consultation with a wide range of stakeholders for no less than an eight week period, in line with guidance outlined with in the Welsh Government Guidance on Welsh in Education Strategic Plans⁷ (WESP Guidance). The statutory consultation period ran from Monday 13th September 2021 to Monday 8th November 2021.

3.3 Of the statutory consultees listed within the WESP Guidance, the following organisations submitted timely responses. Their responses are attached as annexes:

- Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (Annex 1A (English) Annex 1B (Welsh)).
- Estyn (Annex 2A (English) Annex 2B (Welsh)).
- Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RhAG) (Annex 3A (English) Annex 3B (Welsh)).
- Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (Annex 4A (English) Annex 4B (Welsh)).
- Welsh Language Commissioner (Annex 5A (English) Annex 5B (Welsh)).

3.4 These organisations responded generally to the draft WESP consultation process and, where applicable, their responses are included in this Statutory Consultation Report. Their responses have also been incorporated into the proposed WESP and will form part of the proposed WESP's Annual Work Plan, which is intended to be a practical working document to help keep track of progress in the short term and will be utilised by the WESP Strategic Group to track progress of the proposed WESP.

3.5 In addition, the draft WESP was scrutinised by the Welsh Language Cabinet Steering Group on [19th July 2021](#) and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the [13th October 2021](#).

3.6 An online survey was designed and made available via the Local Authority's consultation webpage.

3.7 Current circumstances inevitably limited the opportunity for face to face engagement, however, the Local Authority made the best use of the variety

⁷ [Welsh Government Guidance on Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.](#)

of social media, remote meetings and digital tools to engage with stakeholders.

3.8 In total, 38 responses to the online survey were received. The results are outlined in this Statutory Consultation Report.

3.9 39.5% (15) responses were submitted through the medium of Welsh and 60.5% (23) responses were submitted through the medium of English.

4. CONSULTATION RESULTS

4.1 Respondents were asked to give their views on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve the WESP target and each of the seven outcomes.

OUTCOME 1: MORE NURSERY / THREE YEAR OLD LEARNERS RECEIVE THEIR EDUCATION THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

4.2 The table that follows outlines a summary of the responses received for this outcome, along with percentage of responses received – where more than one response has been submitted by a respondee, it has been recorded.

OUTCOME 1: MORE NURSERY / THREE YEAR OLD LEARNERS RECEIVE THEIR EDUCATION THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH	
RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
We must ensure that the quality and the facilities in Welsh medium schools are of the highest standard.	21.6%
Must create an ambitious Marketing Strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of the Welsh language.	15.7%
No response.	13.7%
Provision must be local.	11.8%
More Ti a Fi, Cylch Meithrin and childcare is needed.	9.8%
All younger children should have the opportunity to be at least exposed to the Welsh Language.	5.9%
I agree with this outcome.	3.9%
More financial support should be made available from the Welsh Government.	3.9%
I believe in incidental Welsh but there are so many English speaking families that I fear this proposal is enforcing Welsh as the choice the Welsh Government choses and not the choice of parents.	2.0%
Importance of parent / carer choice.	2.0%
Important to provide a continuum of Welsh language education provision.	2.0%
More interested in my child having a good basis of English and Maths.	2.0%

More support should be made available to parents / carers.	2.0%
The benefits of the Welsh language should be promoted through ante and post-natal period via midwives and Health Visitors more.	2.0%
We focus too much on pushing Welsh in Wales.	2.0%

4.3 Of the responses received, 73.7% agreed, 7.9% disagreed and 18.4% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.

4.4 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *we must ensure that the quality and the facilities in Welsh medium schools are of the highest standard* (21.6%), *must create an ambitious Marketing Strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of the Welsh language* (15.7%) and *provision must be local* (11.8%).

OUTCOME 2: MORE RECEPTION / FIVE YEAR OLD LEARNERS RECEIVE THEIR EDUCATION THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

4.5 The table that follows outlines a summary of the responses received for this outcome, along with percentage of responses received – where more than one response has been submitted by a respondee, it has been recorded.

OUTCOME 2: MORE RECEPTION / FIVE YEAR OLD LEARNERS RECEIVE THEIR EDUCATION THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH	
RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
No response.	20.9%
Provision must be local.	16.3%
A Welsh Language Immersion Class would assist in the transition for some learners.	9.3%
Must create an ambitious Marketing Strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of the Welsh language.	7.0%
More support should be made available to parents / carers.	7.0%
I agree with this outcome.	7.0%
There is not enough provision in the north Pontypridd area for this.	4.7%
Need for more Welsh medium primary schools.	4.7%
More financial support should be made available from the Welsh Government.	4.7%
All younger children should have the opportunity to be at least exposed to the Welsh Language.	4.7%
We must ensure that the quality and the facilities in Welsh medium schools are of the highest standard.	2.3%

We focus too much on pushing Welsh in Wales.	2.3%
More interested in my child having a good basis of English and Maths.	2.3%
Important to provide a continuum of Welsh language education provision.	2.3%
Importance of parent / carer choice.	2.3%
I believe in incidental Welsh but there are so many English speaking families that I fear this proposal is enforcing Welsh as the choice the Welsh Government choses and not the choice of parents.	2.3%

4.6 Of the responses received, 68.4% agreed, 7.9% disagreed and 23.7% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.

4.7 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *provision must be local* (16.3%), *a Welsh Language Immersion Class would assist in the transition for some learners* (9.3%) and *must create an ambitious Marketing Strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of the Welsh language* (7.0%).

OUTCOME 3: MORE LEARNERS CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THEIR WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS WHEN TRANSFERRING FROM ONE STAGE OF THEIR STATUTORY EDUCATION TO ANOTHER

4.8 The table that follows outlines a summary of the responses received for this outcome, along with percentage of responses received – where more than one response has been submitted by a respondee, it has been recorded.

OUTCOME 3: MORE LEARNERS CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THEIR WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS WHEN TRANSFERRING FROM ONE STAGE OF THEIR STATUTORY EDUCATION TO ANOTHER	
RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
No response.	24.4%
<i>Provision must be local.</i>	13.3%
<i>Progression routes to Sixth Form / Further Education and thereafter to universities and the world of work need to be addressed.</i>	8.9%
I agree with this outcome.	6.7%
<i>There is not enough provision in the north Pontypridd area for this.</i>	6.7%
All younger children should have the opportunity to be at least exposed to the Welsh Language.	4.4%
A Welsh Language Immersion Class would assist in the transition for some learners.	2.2%

If the amount of time given to Welsh increases, then this outcome will be automatic. However, do learners and parents / carers lose their choice.	2.2%
Importance of parent / carer choice.	2.2%
Important that schools work at transition and establish improved partnership working.	2.2%
Important to provide a continuum of Welsh language education provision.	2.2%
More interested in my child having a good basis of English and Maths.	2.2%
More support should be made available to parents / carers.	2.2%
Must create an ambitious Marketing Strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of the Welsh language.	2.2%
The CSC JES should fund projects to improve transition.	2.2%
Transition from Welsh medium childcare needs to be improved.	2.2%
We focus too much on pushing Welsh in Wales.	2.2%
We must ensure that the quality and the facilities in Welsh medium schools are of the highest standard.	2.2%

4.9 Of the responses received, 65.8% agreed, 5.3% disagreed and 28.9% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.

4.10 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *provision must be local* (13.3%), *progression routes to Sixth Form / Further Education and thereafter to universities and the world of work need to be addressed* (8.9%) and *there is not enough provision in the north Pontypridd area for this* (6.7%).

OUTCOME 4: MORE LEARNERS STUDY FOR ASSESSED QUALIFICATIONS IN WELSH (AS A SUBJECT) AND SUBJECTS THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

4.11 The table that follows outlines a summary of the responses received for this outcome, along with percentage of responses received – where more than one response has been submitted by a respondent, it has been recorded.

OUTCOME 4: MORE LEARNERS STUDY FOR ASSESSED QUALIFICATIONS IN WELSH (AS A SUBJECT) AN SUBJECTS THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH	
RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
No response.	25.0%
I agree with this outcome.	20.0%

Must promote the Welsh medium opportunities available to learners and how this links to the world of work.	12.5%
Provision must be local.	10.0%
There is recognition that greater collaboration is needed in order to expand options.	10.0%
Need to support and develop the Welsh language as a subject. Any learners who wish to study the subject at GCSE / A Level must have the opportunity to do so.	7.5%
A larger number of learners studying in Welsh now will benefit the learners of the future.	2.5%
Importance of parent / carer choice.	2.5%
More financial support should be made available from the Welsh Government.	2.5%
More interested in my child having a good basis of English and Maths.	2.5%
We focus too much on pushing Welsh in Wales.	2.5%
We need to have the qualified teachers in place to take Welsh language forward.	2.5%

4.12 Of the responses received, 68.4% agreed, 5.3% disagreed and 26.3% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.

4.13 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *must promote the Welsh medium opportunities available to learners and how this links to the world of work* (12.5%), *provision must be local* (10.0%) and *there is recognition that greater collaboration is needed in order to expand options* (10.0%).

OUTCOME 5: MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNERS TO USE WELSH IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS IN SCHOOL

4.14 The table that follows outlines a summary of the responses received for this outcome, along with percentage of responses received – where more than one response has been submitted by a resondee, it has been recorded.

OUTCOME 5: MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNERS TO USE WELSH IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS IN SCHOOL	
RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
I agree with this outcome.	33.3%
No response.	28.2%
We need more funding to fund enrichment projects for learners with organisations such as the Urdd and Menter Iaith.	15.4%
Importance of parent / carer choice.	2.6%

More financial support should be made available from the Welsh Government.	2.6%
More interested in my child having a good basis of English and Maths.	2.6%
Provision must be local.	2.6%
If there is support, then the learner's confidence will grow and encourage the use of the language in wider contexts.	2.6%
It essential to ensure that as many subjects as possible can be studied through the medium of Welsh.	2.6%
More support should be provided for primary school aged learners.	2.6%
This is not encouraged enough.	2.6%
Welsh medium youth workers are needed in the English medium schools as well as in Welsh medium schools.	2.6%

4.15 Of the responses received, 68.4% agreed, 2.6% disagreed and 28.9% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.

4.16 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *we need more funding to fun enrichment projects for learners with organisations such as the Urdd and Menter Iaith* (15.4%), *Welsh medium youth workers are needed in the English medium schools as well as in Welsh medium schools* (2.6%) and *if there is support, then the learner's confidence will grow and encourage the use of the language in wider contexts* (2.6%).

OUTCOME 6: AN INCREASE IN THE PROVISION OF WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION FOR LEARNERS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

4.17 The table that follows outlines a summary of the responses received for this outcome, along with percentage of responses received – where more than one response has been submitted by a respondee, it has been recorded.

OUTCOME 6: AN INCREASE IN THE PROVISION OF WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION FOR LEARNERS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS	
RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
I agree with this outcome.	43.6%
No response.	28.2%
Provision must be local.	5.1%
Excellent work has been undertaken by the ALN department.	2.6%
I haven't seen evidence of this, and I don't feel a good job is done of making this known to the general public.	2.6%
Importance of parent / carer choice.	2.6%
More financial support should be made available from the Welsh Government.	2.6%

More interested in my child having a good basis of English and Maths.	2.6%
This is aspirational, there are not enough staff in the Welsh medium sector with the appropriate skills to assist the numbers of learners with Additional Learning Needs	2.6%
This will need to be handled carefully as change affects these learners far more and can make management of the learners more difficult and will increase the need for support.	2.6%
We focus too much on pushing Welsh in Wales.	2.6%
Yes, but sometimes English has to be priority.	2.6%

4.18 Of the responses received, 65.8% agreed, 5.3% disagreed and 28.9% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.

4.19 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *provision must be local* (5.1%), *yes, but sometimes English has to be priority* (2.6%), and *this is aspirational, there are not enough staff in the Welsh medium sector with the appropriate skills to assist the numbers of learners with Additional Learning Needs* (2.6%).

OUTCOME 7: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TEACHING STAFF ABLE TO TEACH WELSH (AS A SUBJECT) AND THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

4.20 The table that follows outlines a summary of the responses received for this outcome, along with percentage of responses received – where more than one response has been submitted by a respondee, it has been recorded.

OUTCOME 7: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TEACHING STAFF ABLE TO TEACH WELSH (AS A SUBJECT) AND THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH	
RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
I agree with this outcome.	35.9%
No response.	20.5%
Dependent on national, as well as, to some extent, regional and local plans.	7.7%
We must use our influence in our political system to put pressure on the Welsh Government to prioritise this.	7.7%
This is key, as without teachers, the future is looking very fragile.	5.1%
Consideration must be given to experienced staff, ensuring that teachers do not leave the profession as well as recruiting more teachers.	2.6%
English is more important.	2.6%
Importance of parent / carer choice.	2.6%

In English medium schools a Welsh first language teacher should teach the Welsh lessons as children in English medium schools are not getting a fair chance to learn Welsh from teachers that can barely speak it themselves.	2.6%
Lessons must be interesting in order to spark more interest and inspire.	2.6%
More financial support should be made available from the Welsh Government.	2.6%
More interested in my child having a good basis of English and Maths.	2.6%
Must create an ambitious Marketing Strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of the Welsh language.	2.6%
There are a lot of teachers who can speak Welsh or just need a little further training, who are already in the education system. Maybe offer them some sort of mentorship or the opportunity to work for a short period of time in a Welsh medium school to improve their skills and confidence.	2.6%

4.21 Of the responses received, 73.7% agreed, 5.3% disagreed and 21.1% gave no response on how the Local Authority and its partners aim to achieve this outcome.

4.22 The top three responses received (other than *no response* and *I agree with this outcome*) were, *dependent on national, as well as, to some extent, regional and local plans* (7.7%), *we must use our influence in our political system to put pressure on the Welsh Government to prioritise this* (7.7%) and *this is key, as without teachers, the future is looking very fragile* (5.1%).

UNDER THE EQUALITY ACT 2010 AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTIES, THE LOCAL AUTHORITY HAS A LEGAL DUTY TO LOOK AT HOW ITS DECISIONS IMPACT ON PEOPLE BECAUSE THEY MAY HAVE PARTICULAR CHARACTERISTICS. HOW WOULD THE WESP AFFECT YOU?

4.23 Of the responses received, 44.7% commented that the WESP would not affect them and 55.3% gave no response.

WITH REGARDS TO THE WESP AND THE IMPACT IT MAY HAVE, PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU FEEL IT COULD IMPACT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE TO USE AND PROMOTE THE WELSH LANGUAGE (POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE) AND IF IN ANY WAY, IT TREATS THE WELSH LANGUAGE LESS FAVOURABLY THAN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE?

4.24 Of the responses received, the table that follows outlines how the WESP could impact opportunities for people to use and promote the Welsh language.

IMPACT	PERCENTAGE
Positive	42.1%
Negative	5.3%
No Response	52.6%

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Local Authority has set an ambitious target to increase the percentage of year one learners in Welsh medium education. The proposed WESP sets out the action the Local Authority will take over the forthcoming ten years, by 2032, to make progress towards the achievement of this target.
- 5.2 In order to meet the target by 2032, the Local Authority, along with officers from a number of external groups and organisations who form the WESP Strategic Group need to work collectively. The Local Authority remains committed to ensuring the availability of Welsh medium education, from the initial early years through to primary and secondary education before progressing through to higher and further education, so that all learners whatever their learning needs are able to access Welsh medium provision. This is in line with Welsh Government's vision for one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 as set out in Cymraeg 2050.
- 5.3 The feedback provided via this statutory consultation process will be incorporated into the Local Authority's final WESP. The final WESP will inform the WESP Annual Work Plan, which will have very clear performance measures for evaluating progress. This will be monitored by the WESP Strategic Group, with regular updates provided to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.