

# Welsh immersion education: strategies and approaches to support 3 to 11-year-old learners



Consortiwm Canolbarth y De  
Central South Consortium

Gwasanaeth Addysg ar y Cyd  
Joint Education Service





## Background & Objectives

This report was in response to a request for advice from the Welsh Government in the Education Minister's annual remit letter to Estyn for 2021-2022. It presents information about effective practice in immersion education. It encompasses immersion approaches in the foundation phase in Welsh-medium and bilingual non-maintained settings and primary schools, in addition to immersion approaches for latecomers to Welsh-medium education for 3 to 11-year-old learners. It reports on the findings from visits to a sample of providers across Wales.

Immersion education principles are relevant to the Welsh Government as using immersion methodology can help to contribute to the targets identified in 'Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers'. This was outlined specifically when it was stated that 'curriculum planning and pedagogy will be more informed by research and evidence about effective language teaching and learning, including approaches to language immersion' (Welsh Government, 2017).

The report identifies best practice in relation to immersing learners in the Welsh language, while setting the context of the current use of language immersion in Wales. The report builds on work undertaken previously by Estyn, including the recent report Welsh language acquisition (Estyn, 2021) and the report Welsh in key stage 2 and key stage 3 in Welsh-medium or bilingual schools (Estyn, 2018).

Contained within Estyn's [report](#) was 1 recommendation (R4) for Consortia in relation to:

R4 - Strengthen and ensure consistency in the professional learning offer on the principles and methods of immersion education for all practitioners.

# Progress against recommendations

- Following the launch of CSC's primary Welsh language immersion resources in 2021/22, a new secondary Welsh language immersion resource was published in December 2022 and is now available on CSC's website. This resource has been viewed 242 since its launch and nearly all Welsh medium secondary schools state that the resource will be effective in supporting the language immersion of pupils.
  - Associated professional learning has been provided during a launch session with nearly all Welsh medium secondary schools in the region in attendance. High quality and age-appropriate resources are now available to support the immersion of pupils in Welsh medium secondary schools.
  - Strong feedback has been received and evaluation comments include: "An excellent resource...An outstanding set of resources...really appealing and current material".
  - CSC initiated a network for Welsh language immersion practitioners (Immersion unit leads) during 2022/23 focused on sharing practice, pedagogy, resources and supporting collaboration for Welsh language immersion. Immersion practitioners from all local authorities within the region have engaged strongly.
  - Most practitioners state that collaboration is effective and promotes professional dialogue, the sharing of best practice and resources for teaching Welsh oracy to late comers.
  - All immersion practitioners have access to a support network focused on their specific roles and responsibilities in developing Welsh oracy skills of late comers to Welsh medium education.
- CSC has recently launched Welsh language methodology professional learning for Welsh medium schools. 10 practitioners have already taken advantage of this provision and nearly all practitioners state that the professional learning has improved their knowledge and skills and will impact upon behaviours.



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**Empowering schools to improve outcomes for all learners**