

Meeting	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Title	Secondary Sector Language Strategy
Date of Meeting	20 June 2019
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Cabinet Member	Councillor Cemlyn Rees Williams

1. **BACKGROUND**

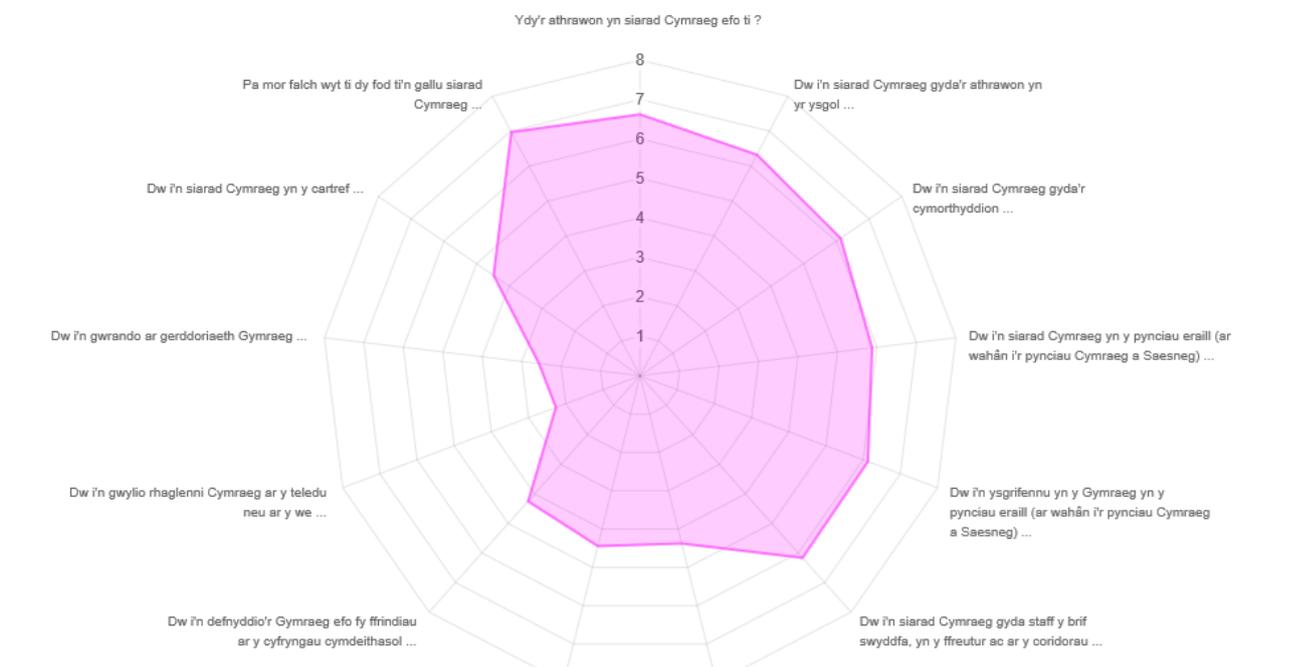
- 1.1 One of the main aims in establishing the Secondary Sector Language Strategy in Gwynedd is to ensure a firm succession for the Welsh Language Charter (Primary), which was established in order to influence children's social use of Welsh. One of the Language Strategy's objectives is to provide clear guidance to the 14 secondary schools within the Authority on potential techniques and strategies which can positively influence the linguistic habits of pupils socially, during and outside school hours. The Secondary Sector Strategy also looks at curricular aspects of the language e.g. medium of subjects.
- 1.2 As is the case with the Primary Sector Language Charter, a contribution is expected from each and every member of the school community - the school council, the pupils, the workforce, the parents, the governors and the wider community must take full ownership of the Strategy if it is to succeed.

2. **DEVELOPMENTS**

- 2.1 Monitoring of the Strategy's implementation:
Each school is required to draw up action plans to demonstrate how they plan to satisfy the requirements of the Language Strategy. In order that this should be done in an effective manner, the existing template was amended following discussions with representatives of Headteachers and Language Co-ordinators. The effect of this will be to ensure that clear evidence of achievements and fields for further development are available in order to act upon them. Visits to each school had been arranged by the Strategy Co-ordinator, in order to discuss their plans before the end of June.
- 2.2 Language Web:
This is the on-line questionnaire used to measure children's social use of the Welsh language. It was piloted in 2016/17; however, in the 2018 autumn term,

it was ensured that every year 7 and 8 pupil from each secondary school had completed it. Gratitude must be expressed to the schools for their willing co-operation in ensuring that this happened. The results were shared with the schools and with Hunaniaith officers for their designated schools.

This is an image of the Language Web (Autumn 2018), which is a baseline for the comparing and contrasting of any changes which may happen the next time it is filled in July. The data collected will feed into school self-evaluations, and will be a foundation for their future actions. Ensuring the input of every pupil in years 7 and 8 will be a way to make sure that the data collected is valuable in looking at the changes to patterns and tendencies between schools.



Secondary Sector Language Web, autumn 2018

2.3 Language Practices Support Project (PCAI):

Each of the 14 schools applied for the funding (£1000) this year. The purpose of the grant is to encourage the schools' older pupils to organise activities that will attract the younger pupils to want to be involved, with the intention of trying to encourage their use of the Welsh language. Various activities were seen to be organised - gigs, a poetry workshop, and a clog dancing workshop, to name but a few. A report was received from each school in order to be able to share successes and good practices. The schools' enthusiasm was clear to see, and it is hoped that this will be maintained in order to fire up the children's interest and to promote their collaborative skills.

2.4 Materials for the promotion of bilingual education:

Following a request from a number of the schools' Language Co-ordinators, a sub-group convened to co-design resources which could be used by the schools

at parents' evenings, for example, to promote the benefits of bilingual education and, perhaps more importantly, linguistic continuity when moving from one key stage to the next. Representatives of each school were invited to be part of a video filmed at Gwersyll yr Urdd Glan-Ilyn. An excellent day was had, and it is hoped that the visual resources - booklets and posters, along with the video - will be launched soon.

By emphasising the Welsh language, the aim is to satisfy the objective for the children and young People of Gwynedd to be bilingually proficient and confident, taking pride in the additional value bestowed upon them through the ability to communicate in two languages, socially and professionally, once they leave the education system; and for them to be able to proudly pass that on to the next generation in Gwynedd.

2.5 Regional Collaboration:

Meetings of the following project teams were attended: Project Team for the Planning of Welsh-medium Education and Welsh-medium/Bilingual Learning, Project Team for the Informal/Social use of the Welsh Language, and the Project Team for Workforce Training. In addition, Language Psychology Training led by Gareth Ioan at Ysgol Bro Idris, Dolgellau, was attended in March.

3. **PRIORITIES FOR 2019/20**

- Implementation of the Language Strategy: Further cascade good practices by reporting on progress and cross-county developments by the end of the summer term. These reports will be provided by the schools' Language Coordinators.
- Language Web: Further amend the questions asked in order to collect data around learners' language habits as they grow older. This will offer evidence which will allow us to plan effectively in order to influence older pupils within the schools, and will provide an opportunity to consider whether or not the strategies used with the schools' younger pupils are as relevant in the case of this target audience.
- Language Medium of Subjects: Present a questionnaire to Headteachers, which will focus on the language medium of teaching subjects at the school. It is intended that attention will be given to the language medium of subjects in Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 - thus establishing a baseline of the current situation as the first step. This will enable the Authority to identify priorities and draw up targets for the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, which will be a language planning document over a period of 10 years.