

<b>Committee</b>	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
<b>Title of Report</b>	Language Centres' Pilot Scheme
<b>Date of meeting</b>	10 October 2019
<b>Relevant Officer</b>	Debbie Jones Education Corporate Services Manager
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Cemlyn Rees Williams

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 2 April 2019, Gwynedd Council's Cabinet resolved to implement a pilot scheme at one Language Centre of a teacher and assistant staffing structure, in order to identify whether it affected the quality of the education and the children's attainment.
- 1.2 In order to be able to implement the pilot scheme, the Cabinet also approved bridging funding to address the funding deficit between the budget available and the cost of maintaining the service for the same period.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to present the considerations that will be a part of the research in order to assess the impact of implementing this pilot at one Language Centre.

## 2. MEASURING THE IMPACT OF THE LANGUAGE CENTRES' PILOT SCHEME

- 2.1 Every Language Centre will be a part of the research that will form the basis to measuring the impact of the pilot scheme implemented this year at Maesincla Language Centre.

### a) The Daily Structure of the Language Centres

- 2.2 The research will consider the day-to-day arrangements for teaching and learning at every Language Centre, namely at which times during the working day does every Centre hold:

- one learning group with two teachers (maximum ratio of 2:16)
- one learning group with a teacher and assistant (maximum ratio of 2:16)
- one learning group with one teacher (maximum ratio of 1:16)
- one learning group with an assistant (maximum ratio of 1:16)
- two learning groups (maximum ratio of 1:8)
- other

- 2.3 The numbers of pupils attending Language Centres can vary up to a maximum of 16 pupils. This means that the numbers of pupils in the learning groups at every Centre can vary, based on the total number of children, and due consideration is given to this as part of the research.

### b) Background Information

- 2.4 As well as the general information gathered about every pupil, the research will also consider additional background information about the children and their families who have

moved to Gwynedd, along with their connection or previous or current experiences with the Welsh language before attending the Language Centre.

2.5 This information will include:

- When did they move to Gwynedd?
- Have they lived in Gwynedd previously?
- Main reasons for moving to Gwynedd?
- Can any members of the family or the extended family speak Welsh?
- Do they attend Welsh-medium community activities?
- Do they believe that it is advantageous for them to learn Welsh?
- Does the child have experience of the Welsh language before moving to Gwynedd?
- Does the child have a connection with anyone outside school who is able to speak Welsh?
- What does the child hope to achieve from learning the Welsh language?

2.6 This information will be a way of establishing a baseline of the children's backgrounds, ages, school year, their attitudes as well as their previous connection with the Welsh language, that will be a basis for the research across the Language Centres.

### **c) Visits to the Language Centres**

2.7 Another key element of the research will be to attend the Language Centres in order to consider, see and measure the linguistic progress made by the children during their period at a Centre.

2.8 A Team representing the Education Department will attend the Language Centres at three specific periods during the course in order to measure the children's linguistic progress. This will be approximately:

- Primary: Weeks 4, 8 and 12
- Secondary: Weeks 3, 6, 8

The Language Centres will draw up criteria based on the course's content regarding the progress and language patterns that the children should have mastered by those agreed key periods during the course.

2.9 The team will come to an opinion as to whether the children have achieved the expected progress or not, in discussion with teachers and assistants at the Language Centres, in order to ensure a full context to the opinion.

2.10 In accordance with the Language Centres' Business Plan, the research will measure to what extent do Language Centres achieve their purpose by means of the following measure:

### ***Number / % of children reaching Level 2 at the end of their period at a Language Centre***

and for this to be considered in parallel with:

- The Daily Structure of the Language Centres
- Background information and children's profile

- Visits to the Language Centres

#### **ch) Feedback from Schools**

- 2.11 The schools are obvious stakeholders for the Language Centres as they refer and receive latecomers back to the schools following their time at a Centre.
- 2.12 Therefore, the schools' feedback regarding the children's linguistic progress, and their success to fuse into mainstream school life, will be a key consideration as part of the research, as well as the demographic picture around those schools where the latecomers return to.

### **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 This research will be undertaken to provide a basis to assessing the impact of implementing the pilot scheme for the first time during the 2019 Autumn Term, and it will be undertaken again with a new cohort of latecomers at the Language Centres in the 2020 Spring Term.
- 3.2 The Education Department and the Language Centres acknowledge that undertaking this research for the first time during this term will be a learning curve, and possibly, some adjustments will be made to aspects of the research by the second term, as a result of that learning.
- 3.3 The Education Department welcomes an open and ongoing discussion with the Language Centres' staff, in order to ensure that the research report submitted - which will provide a basis to the structure of the Language Centres in the future - will be based on scientific, balanced and fair research.

### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are asked to:

- present ideas and suggestions that could contribute to the research intended to be undertaken to measure the impact of implementing the pilot at one Language Centre;
- express an opinion on how it is intended to measure the impact of implementing the pilot at one Language Centre.