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Department	Education
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1. What policies and plans are in place within your department to contribute to the objectives of the language strategy? Identify the priority area (early years, learning, work and service, community or research and technology)

e.g.

Name

Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (*Early years and learning*):

This area is specifically addressed in the Welsh Language in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and specific measures have been formulated to monitor progress.

Brief summary

It is ensured that every Early Years setting sets a strong foundation for Welsh, ensuring that every child is given a Language, Literacy and Communication skills assessment in Welsh on entry and at the end of part-time nursery education, and at the end of the Foundation Phase.

Relevant strategic policies and plans:

Gwynedd County Council's Welsh In Education Strategic Plan:

Gwynedd WESP reflects the Council's vision to create a Welsh and bilingual education system that puts the needs of all learners in the county at the centre. The plan sets a clear commitment and direction for ensuring that Gwynedd learners achieve the highest standards to maintain the language, culture and economy locally.

Gwynedd Education Language Policy:

Gwynedd's Education Language Policy aims to ensure that all pupils in the county have appropriate language skills in both Welsh and English. The provision is expected to be suitable to enable all pupils to develop bilingual proficiency. In this context schools are expected to continue to build the skills of those pupils who are Welsh speakers, and to introduce Welsh to those who are newcomers to the county.

All education institutions in the county are also expected to reflect and reinforce the policy in their administration, social life and pastoral procedures as well as their curricular and extra-curricular provision.

Cymraeg 2050 National Strategy - A Million Welsh Speakers:

As the title of the strategy suggests, the Welsh Government wants to see the number of Welsh speakers rise to one million by the year 2050.

National Language Charter Framework:

The Language Charter programme contributes to Cymraeg 2050 by aiming to inspire children and young people to use and enjoy the Welsh language in all aspects of their lives. The Language Charter is part of a series of Welsh Government programmes which aim to increase children and young people's use of Welsh in informal situations.

Curriculum for Wales:

The Language Charter programme supports the Curriculum for Wales with the principles of the programme supporting the four purposes in order to create ambitious learners, enterprising contributors, principled citizens and healthy and confident individuals who

are prepared to live a fulfilled life as valued members of their society. The Charter is an integrated part of the Curriculum for Wales, bridging between elements of the curriculum and adding to educational experiences as well as enriching extra-curricular experiences and informal playtime.

Welsh Language and Education Bill:

It is the Welsh Government's intention to put on the Statute Book legislation relating to the further development of aspects of Welsh-medium Education. It is set out in the White Paper published by the Government that the Bill will take steps to enable all pupils in Wales to become confident Welsh speakers through the statutory education system. The Welsh Government will expect to see an increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education over these next few years and there will be a statutory imperative for local authorities to plan for this growth.

Well-being of Future Generations Act:

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to consider the long-term impact of their decisions. Seven Well-being Goals are included in the act; the purpose of which is to ensure that everyone is working towards achieving the same goals. One of those goals is to work towards a Wales with a vibrant culture where the Welsh language thrives.

[Projects in the Council's plan](#)

Gwynedd Yfory: *How does the new Youth provision work across the county and what outcomes does it achieve for young people?*

Joint project with the Urdd

A joint project between Gwynedd Youth Service and the Urdd is aimed at increasing opportunities for young people to take part in activities through the medium of Welsh. This collaboration involves the employment of a joint Youth Officer, who organises activities through the medium of Welsh during and after school hours. This aims to encourage young people to use Welsh in social and informal situations, helping to strengthen the use of the language outside the classroom. In addition, Gwynedd Youth Service offers a range of opportunities for 11-25 year olds to develop language, personal, social and educational skills in places where the use of Welsh is not as widespread. The service focuses on health and wellbeing, skills development and community inclusion, with the aim of helping young people become confident and self-sufficient adults.

- five Community Aelwydydd have been developed in Felinheli, Bangor, Caernarfon, Ardudwy and Bala

- Various sessions are run outside of the school timetable at six of the county's secondary schools.

Welsh Bands Gigs

Have collaborated with the voice of young people forums and Hunaniaith to arrange gigs featuring Welsh bands. These events have offered a platform for young bands to introduce their music to broader audiences, fostering a lively music culture for local young people and having the opportunity to enjoy the biggest Welsh bands singing in their home area.

3420 Welsh-medium sessions organised by the Youth Service. A wide range of activities including community youth clubs, outings, occasional trips, workshops in schools, small group work, one-to-one work and commissioned provision for partners.

- What kind of data has been collected about the activities?
 - 19625 participations

- 1018 accreditations completed
 - 98% report enjoying the sessions
 - 97% report feeling their well-being has improved
 - 97% have learned a new skill/experience
 - 97% want to continue attending
- Reporting on Youth Service outcomes
 - monthly to Cyngor Gwynedd on the data outlined above
 - annually to the council's scrutiny committees
 - to the Welsh Government every six months, by providing an update on the service
 - Receives £20,000 annually from the Welsh Government to tackle increasing the Welsh-language provision for young people
- Language and location of activities
 - All activities we offer in Welsh/bilingual
 - Youth Worker based at every single high school and special school and working through transitioning into the community
 - Community projects taking place across Gwynedd
- Number of young people who attended (or estimated where statistics are not available)
 - 19625 year-round participations

Gwynedd Gymraeg (A Welsh-speaking Gwynedd):

Modernise and extend the immersion provision for teaching Welsh to children

The work of constructing and monitoring Phase 1, at the value of 1.1 million, i.e. the Primary/Secondary Transition immersion units, has been completed and the Tywyn Immersion Unit, the final one to be completed, will open its doors to the learners on 20 January 2025. This provision ensures that learners who are newcomers to the county have opportunities to learn Welsh as quickly as possible within their region, through up-to-date, state-of-the-art provision. In addition, construction and modernisation of the primary immersion units at the value of 1.1 million is also underway on time and the new unit at Ysgol Cymerau, Dolgellau and Maesincla will open to learners at the start of the summer term 2025. This provision will ensure the best opportunity for all our learners to become confident Welsh speakers who can use the language in all walks of life.

[Other projects and schemes](#)

Engagement Meetings to discuss Gwynedd's Education Language Policy:

During the winter term 2024, Cyngor Gwynedd representatives held a series of engagement sessions to discuss Cyngor Gwynedd's current Education Language Policy. Meirion Prys Jones, a freelance language consultant, was commissioned to facilitate the meetings. Meirion is known for his work in language planning and has advised Education Authorities nationally and internationally and has also worked closely with the Welsh Government. These sessions were an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss, and to gather ideas and suggestions about the policy and to consider whether it needs to be revised in light of the results of the 2021 Census and a number of policy developments in language and education at the national level. 20 meetings were held with a

cross-section of engagers; primary and secondary children, Special Schools pupils, Headteachers from across sectors and regions, Elected Members from the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee and the Language Committee along with Representation from the Gwynedd Governors' Forum and Language Commissioner officers. Early in the new year a draft policy and strategy will be drawn up to be presented to members of the Scrutiny Committee.

Evaluating the Immersion Education System

The Immersion Regime has now completed a cycle of one year and two terms since its inception in January 2023. It was therefore timely to evaluate the change and also consider the views of stakeholders by carrying out an Impact Study. Bangor University was commissioned to carry out the evaluation.

The aim of this comprehensive case study was to evaluate the impact and scrutinise the provision of the current Immersion Education System to see if it delivers on the promise and provides pupils in Gwynedd with the necessary foundation to acquire Welsh when embarking on their linguistic journey to becoming new speakers.

Stakeholder engagement meetings were held, e.g. headteachers and mainstream teachers; teachers of the immersion units, parents and learners. Time was also spent observing the learners in the immersion units and back in the schools on the transition days at the beginning and end of the immersion course.

The final report of the Evaluation will be submitted to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee during the spring term 2025. The final report will provide robust research evidence on the efficiency of the immersion model in Gwynedd, along with recommendations for potential developments and improvements in Gwynedd and beyond for the future.

Education Strategy

The purpose of the strategy is to set out an ambition for education in Gwynedd over the next decade. A child only has one chance to receive an education and it is absolutely key that the education system in Gwynedd enables our children to be whatever they want to be. Our education system should not restrain our children's ambition. The strategy will incorporate the priorities of the Council's Plan and in the context of the Welsh language ensuring that all children in Gwynedd have access to Welsh confidently in school and socially, and by supporting efforts to create new speakers of all ages.

2. What more needs to be addressed in the next year to raise the status of the Welsh language and ensure opportunities for people to use Welsh?

(e.g. education, resources, families, promoting service use through Welsh)

- Implementing Recommendations following the engagement process regarding the Language Policy.
- Implementing the Recommendations of the Gwynedd Immersion Education System Evaluation Final Report.

3. Has the development of technology interfered with your ability to provide opportunities to use Welsh? If applicable please provide an example. How do you ensure that the development of technology does not affect your ability to provide opportunities to use the Welsh language?

Our virtual ICT project Aberwla is evolving rapidly and is now a village full of locations offering learners varied activities as they practise and reinforce vocabulary and Welsh-language patterns. There is a farm including a Glamping Field, supermarket, garage, gadgets shop, Café, Leisure

Centre and Library and we are currently developing a Forest and Weather Station. This innovative resource is used in our immersion centres and children love to use it and learn through play. We are also trialling it in the immersion unit at Ysgol Morgan Llwyd Wrexham, Glan Clwyd immersion unit, secondary immersion units in Anglesey, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Carmarthenshire, Vale of Glamorgan and Ceredigion.

This is a high quality, appealing provision of contemporary immersive education for learners to develop and practise their Welsh-language speaking, listening and reading skills. It offers newcomers the opportunity to increase their use of Welsh, posing a challenge to extend the more able and talented learners and is a resource that bridges primary and secondary learners. This resource undoubtedly fosters healthy attitudes towards Welsh as an everyday and everything language. It normalises the Welsh language on an exciting Digital platform.

4. How do you keep a record of the people who use your service through the medium of Welsh? Can you share relevant data?

e.g. Early years

- 1. The reach data of WESP in terms of the number of childcare placements and the number of children receiving Welsh-medium education.*
- 2. Number of Ti a Fi groups and Parent and Child groups that are supported/maintained.*
- 3. Number of activities specifically targeted towards young families/parents and infants by Council services.*
- 4. Number of family activities arranged by the language initiative.*
- 5. Number of campaigns to share resources and information.*

Learning

1. WESP monitoring statistics
2. Number of Council staff receiving training to improve skills
3. Number of apprenticeships being offered by the Council
4. Number of training/accreditation opportunities being offered by the youth service

Work and service

1. Number of businesses receiving financial support through Arfor scheme
2. Number of staff supported to learn Welsh or develop skills
3. Number of staff participating in buddy/champion schemes

The community

1. Number of activities held by Council services and the language enterprise for different groups
2. Number of enterprises supported by means of Regeneration and Economy schemes

Research and technology

1. Number of research projects undertaken by the Council, or commissioned by the Council

Any other relevant data

In the area of Early Years there is a specific target within the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022-27 for 'Ensuring Welsh/Bilingual Language provision for all children in the County'.

The 2024 Progress Report states that, in line with the information DEWIS retains in relation to the language of our provision, 47.49% of our provision is monolingual with 47.10% providing bilingually and 3.86% providing in English with bilingual elements.

(The information below counts all the service that provisions have indicated on Dewis - one provision may be offering more than one service, e.g. nursery group and after-school club).

Below is our current situation regarding the percentage of nursery/three-year-olds educated through the medium of Welsh.

Gwynedd Nursery Groups Data

Area	Number of Cylchoedd Meithrin	Number/ % of nursery three-year-old children transferring to Welsh-medium education
Arfon	28	99%
Dwyfor	18	100%
Meirionnydd	19	100%

Summer Term 2024 – 388 three-year-olds receive their Nursery Education claim in 51 Welsh-medium locations within the County.

The 16 Flying Start childcare settings within the County are all Welsh-medium.

Linguistic designation data of the other childcare provisions in the County:-

Provision	Welsh	Bilingual	English
Nurseries	13	5	1
Cylchoedd Meithrin / Playgroups - that do not provide NE	7	1	
Childminders	37	5	10
After-school/Holiday Clubs	10	2	

98.21% of the county's five-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh and effective practical support is in place to increase provision in one particular primary school to realise the 100% target within the lifetime of the WESP. We are using a portion of a late immersion grant to employ an experienced teacher to collaborate with Reception and Year 1 class staff and learners at a particular Bangor school to model successful immersion methods and collaborate with Foundation Phase staff to map learners' Welsh-language development along the language continuum. The teacher is also supporting at two other Bangor schools to embed early immersion methods in Reception. At the transitional school 25 learners from Reception and 13 from year 1 have had access to early immersion intervention.

According to PLASC 2024 data there are 67 Black, Asian and minority ethnic five-year-old learners enrolled in Gwynedd Schools. 58 of them are taught through the medium of Welsh at 87%. The rest of this cohort of nine attend the primary school which is in the transitional category and receive a proportion of their education through the medium of Welsh under the auspices of a

Welsh Government Latecomers Immersion grant. This is the second year since the process of increasing Welsh-language provision at the school began. There were 1290 learners in the year 6 cohort across Gwynedd schools transferring to secondary in September 2023. The table below sets out teachers' assessments of language cohorts that summarise learners' levels and language skills across the speaking, reading and writing thread.

A	pupils proficient in both languages	825	64%
B	pupils stronger in Welsh than English	113	8.8%
C1	pupils stronger in English than Welsh	275	21.3%
C2	pupils with limited Welsh - learners/latecomers	55	4.2%
CH	pupils limited in their use of both languages	22	1.7%

Milestones were set in the previous WESP report to increase the number of learners in cohort A and B. This priority was realised this year and it can be seen from the above table that 74.8% had been assessed as bilingually proficient. This is an increase of 7.8% since 2022-2023 when both cohorts were 67%.

41% of the Bangor Cluster children fall into cohort A which is an increase of 2% and 41% in cohort C1 which is a reduction of 6%. Refresher and confidence boosting projects have taken place within the cluster, targeting year 5 and 6 learners, to raise standards and confidence of learners in Welsh. Additional support is provided between September 2024 and March 2025 for schools in the Bangor and Tywyn catchment area to focus their Welsh provision in the context of categorisation in order to strengthen this provision and equip the workforce to use immersion methods successfully with the learners who arrive at the schools with their parents as they migrate here to work for the university, at the hospital and at care and nursing homes.

During the 2023-2024 academic year, 195 learners from years 2-9 were provided with support and access on an intensive 10-week immersion course in the immersion units across the three regions within the county which averages 65 pupils each term. In addition, 101 learners were provided with aftercare support during the academic year in 44 mainstream schools. 42 year 7, 8 and 9 learners attended a short course to regain confidence over three weeks in the secondary schools that host the Primary/Secondary Transition immersion units. This is the first time we as a system have offered this course. As the feedback is positive, we will re-run the course in September 2025. We prioritise access to the Regaining Confidence course for learners who have been assessed as cohort C1 by primary school teachers.

We work closely with the Hunaniaith Language Initiative to hold specific meetings in target areas, e.g. Pen Llŷn, to raise awareness of the Welsh language and include the parents of latecomers in community activities as well as immerse them in the Welsh-language culture in the area. An evening of fun was organised at the community hall in Botwnnog, and Anni Llŷn was commissioned to run language awareness workshops with the learners at the school which was then shared amongst the parents. Pupils at the school were invited to perform. This was a very inclusive community event. The proposal is to use this collaboration model in similar communities in the future. Collaboration is also taking place with Menter Iaith Bangor, amongst communities

from ethnic backgrounds to be included in Welsh and Welsh-language community activities to raise awareness of the Welsh language and Welsh culture.

There were 1303 learners in the Year 11 cohort in Gwynedd secondary schools in the summer 2024. Detailed Welsh-language provision data is collected individually from each of the secondary schools in the county.

Here is the current data against the three indicators of Welsh qualifications at the end of the statutory age of 16 years old – which includes all pupils in the county:

WESP OUTCOME 4 INDICATOR	PERCENTAGE
Percentage of year 11 pupils who study at least three KS4 subjects through the medium of Welsh as well as GCSE Welsh First Language	73.6%
Percentage of year 11 pupils who study at least five KS4 subjects through the medium of Welsh as well as GCSE Welsh First Language	73.2%
Percentage of year 11 pupils who sit the GCSE Welsh First Language exam	84.2%
Percentage of year 11 pupils who sit the GCSE Welsh Second Language exam	14.35%
Did not register for GCSE Welsh	1.5%

79 Gwynedd schools are part of the Language Charter and one school is doing Cymraeg Campus and working towards the bronze award this year. Many national discussions have taken place and new resources and documents have been published for the charter's re-launch in September. 13 Gwynedd schools led by Gwynedd's Language Charter Coordinator and Secondary Language Strategy Officer will be validated for Bronze, Silver or Gold awards during the 2024-2025 academic year.

All ALN/SEN pupils will receive input through the medium of Welsh within the Authority.

All staff providing from the ALN&I Central Service are fluent in Welsh and able to provide a bilingual service.

5. What are the language skills of your staff?

The starting point for our Welsh-language education workforce is good with 97.6% of primary teachers and 86% of secondary teachers being confident to teach through the medium of Welsh.

We are regularly sharing information with our schools about the provision available for improving the Welsh-language skills of the workforce. Our two transitional secondary schools are aware of the support available to them through the Welsh Learning Event of the National Centre for Learning Welsh.

The Ysgol Friars Welsh-language Promotion Teacher holds activities to increase confidence in Welsh with groups of staff at the school.

As reported in Outcome 6, a specialist Welsh-medium workforce is available in the county to respond fully through the Welsh language whilst supporting learners with Additional Learning Needs and their families. The authority and the county's secondary schools have been an integral

part of developing Welsh-medium training in collaboration with CYDAG and the WJEC on the new qualifications. The county's schools are also part of a new CYDAG North Wales forum promoting Welsh-language education across north Wales.

Discussions have commenced with Meirion Ebbw Vale and the National Centre for Learning Welsh as to the support that could be offered specifically and expertly to Gwynedd. The transitional schools have already engaged with their existing provision.

In the context of the Education Department's Language Designations, 95.4% of Department staff who have completed a language self-assessment meet their job's language designations. However a large number of school Catering and Cleaning staff have not completed the self-assessment due to a lack of easy access to the questionnaire on the Council's Self-Service system.

Education Department Staff Data:

Number having completed the language questionnaire: 1468 (44.43%)

Number who have not completed the language questionnaire: 1836 (55.57%)

Number who have received a language assessment (having completed the questionnaire or had a simple assessment from a line manager): 1496 (45.28%)

Number who have not received a language assessment: 1808 (54.72%)

Data for staff who meet the language designations of their jobs (for those with a language assessment only):

1361 (91%)-Reaching the language designations of their job

135 (9%)Not reaching the language designations of their job.

6. Please provide examples of any obstacles, complaints and commendations associated with the provision and promotion of Welsh-medium services.

There are current recruitment challenges for staff in the childcare field, and there is a need to monitor the workforce's Welsh-language skills over the next period to avoid any slippage in standards.

There are challenges to appoint Language Coordinators in some catchment areas - existing coordinators are stepping down from the role in two areas, and successors need to be appointed.

Staffing levels within the Educational Psychology Service are concerning in terms of being able to offer this provision through the medium of Welsh to the necessary level.

The challenging situation in recruiting teacher-leaders and teachers, particularly in some areas of expertise, is an ongoing challenge.

Similarly the challenge of recruiting and retaining assistants across our schools remains evident.

Finance is a huge challenge for schools. Cuts inevitably mean a reduction in staff and inevitably this has an impact on the Welsh language.

Lack of easy access for Catering and Cleaning staff to the Council's Self-Service System - a complete lack of data means we do not have full knowledge of the proficiency or language needs of this particular workforce within the Department.

On a positive note, the Cook in one primary school in Arfon has been accepted on a Welsh course at Nant Gwrtheyrn through the National Centre for Learning Welsh and the Catering Department has agreed to pay her salary whilst she attends the course.

The department's report to the Language Committee in 2024:
[Education Department Welsh Language Promotion Plan.pdf](#)