

Scrutiny Investigation Report

Welsh-medium Education

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FOREWORD BY THE CHAIRMAN

“It gives me great pleasure to present the outcome of our investigation into the reality and performance of Welsh language education in Gwynedd and its contribution towards the continued use of the language in the community.

The 2011 Census was very much a wake-up call for many. It became apparent that sustainability of the Welsh language could no longer be taken for granted even in its traditional strongholds. A concerted effort was called to which schools would have a key role. Even though Gwynedd has a long-standing school’s language policy it became clear during our investigation that its implementation very much depended on individual teachers’ interpretation. The word bilingualism in itself means something different to different people. There is a dire need for clear definitions, for sharing good practice and for highlighting the positive impact of bilingualism on our children and young people.

As a result we have compiled a report that includes twenty recommendations that we hope will be adopted at the earliest opportunity.

I take this opportunity to thank all those professionals that assisted us with our enquiries. Their input and experience in the field of bilingual education was invaluable. Thanks also to Council Officers that kept us focused on the work at hand and for preparing a full and concise written report based on our deliberations. Lastly I thank my co-members for their enthusiasm and vision in their goal of making bilingualism a way of life that makes the communities of Gwynedd so unique.”

Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd
Chairman of the Scrutiny Investigation Group

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Welsh-Medium Education Scrutiny Investigation was established by the Services Scrutiny Committee in order to assess:

- how the Authority's Language Policy is being implemented at grass roots level in individual schools;
- the extent to which the provision assists in promoting the social use of Welsh by children and young people.

It was intended to form recommendations to improve the consistency and quality of Welsh-medium language education provision within the catchment area now and for the future.

It was not possible to concentrate on all schools and catchment areas. The investigation concentrated on three catchment areas, namely Arddudwy, Bangor and Botwnnog. It was hoped that these varying catchment areas would be a medium to reflect all Gwynedd catchment areas and that this investigation's recommendations would be relevant to all schools.

It should be borne in mind that the information in this report is a snapshot in time during the period of the scrutiny investigation unless otherwise noted.

The report draws attention to the situation of the Welsh language in Gwynedd and Gwynedd Council main documents which were considered as background to the scrutiny investigation along with national legislation and strategies. Attention is also drawn to the Authority's Language Policy, the Gwynedd Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014-2017 and the Gwynedd Primary Schools Welsh Language Charter. Attention is also drawn to the report commissioned by the Trywydd company, namely the Report on Increasing Social Use of the Welsh Language by Gwynedd Secondary Schools' Children and Young People (Trywydd 2014).

In addition, attention is drawn to performance comparisons across Wales and audit reports produced by external bodies on the performance of Local Authorities. Attention is also drawn to statistics regarding progression in Welsh-medium education from the Foundation Phase / Key Stage 2 to Key Stages 3 and 4 and the ESTYN report (November 2014) on 'Linguistic Progression and Standards in ten bilingual schools'.

The scrutiny investigation considered written evidence submitted by headteachers of the Primary and Secondary Schools of the three catchment areas in question as well as verbal evidence submitted in interviews. Verbal evidence of interviews with the headteachers of all Language Centres in Gwynedd and Language Co-ordinators was considered. Verbal evidence from an interview with lecturers from the School of Education, Bangor University was also considered.

Responses to questionnaires provided for parents of primary and secondary school pupils were considered.

The report of Iaith Cyf. which held focus groups with children and young people from a sample of schools in the catchment areas in question was considered.

Data from a number of sources were considered: the Education Department, Language Centres, Language Co-ordinators, language levels and cohorts of the catchment areas and a language web for the catchment areas of Ardudwy, Bangor and Botwnnog was received.

1.2 Following detailed consideration of the background documents, data and all evidence collected, the following recommendations were made:

Measureable Recommendations	Area	Responsibility	The possible measure / Outcome
<p>1. To strengthen and reconcile the Council's (Education) Language Policy, the Council should define what bilingual learning is and collaborate with schools and teacher training institutions to establish a strong bilingual pedagogy which is appropriate for all the Authority's schools and pupils and to nurture translanguaging skills amongst staff.</p>	Policy	Education Department	A) The revised Policy Language in place.
<p>2. In order to strengthen and reconcile the Council's (Education) Language Policy, there is a need to clearly define the linguistic nature of all Gwynedd secondary schools so that it is clear to all stakeholders what is the linguistic nature of schools and by holding the schools and the Governors accountable for its implementation.</p>	Policy	Education Department (Gwynedd Secondary School Headteachers)	<p>A) The Education Department has ensured a standard linguistic definition for every secondary school and made it clear to all stakeholders.</p> <p>B) All school governors have received training to ensure their understanding of the linguistic definition of the schools and the requirements of the language policy.</p> <p>C) The Education Department operates a robust monitoring arrangement to ensure that all</p>

			secondary schools comply with the definition and Language Policy (Education) of the County.
3. To try to increase the number of pupils who are fostering proficiency skills in both Welsh and English, the Council should collaborate with schools to amalgamate the policy to develop proficient bilingual skills with the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework.	Policy (Implementation)	Education Department	A) Implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework corresponds with the Language Policy (Education).
4. It should be ensured that English exam results are as good as the Welsh exam results as this in turn will ensure the success of the Language Policy.	Policy (Implementation)		A) The Governors and the Council monitor examination results in detail and regularly.
5. To maintain and develop pupils' Welsh language skills in accordance with the Language Policy, Ysgol Friars should, with Council support, identify opportunities to make further progress in the use of the Welsh language across the curriculum and life of the school.	Policy (Implementation)	Ysgol Friars / Education Department	A) The Council supports Ysgol Friars regularly to make further progress in the use of the Welsh language across the curriculum and life of the school. B) The Council has ensured the understanding of the Governors and have established a robust monitoring procedure. C) The Services Scrutiny Committee has programmed its work to monitor the situation on a regular basis.
6. Ensure that the Governors of every	Training	Education Department	A) Every Governor has received training on

school in Gwynedd receive training on the requirements of the Language Policy.			the requirements of the Language Policy.
7. To strengthen the Welsh language environment of the schools, the Council should ensure support for assistants and ancillary staff to learn Welsh, understand the requirements of the Language Charter, and receive Language Awareness training.	Training	Education Department	A) The Council has established a training programme for assistants and ancillary staff to learn the Welsh language, understand the requirements of the Language Charter and language awareness.
8. To standardize the Council's (Education) Language Policy across the county, there is a need to ensure that all Gwynedd schools adhere to the Policy holding the schools and Governors accountable for its implementation.	Monitoring and accountability	Education Department	A) The Council has set up a regular monitoring procedure. B) The Services Scrutiny Committee has scrutinised relevant data on a regular basis to ensure implementation of the (Education) Language Policy.
9. To try to increase the number of pupils who are fostering proficiency skills in both Welsh and English, the Council should collaborate with schools to establish the practice of every subject teacher in the primary and secondary sectors monitoring and reporting on the development of every pupil's Welsh and English skills in progress reports and discussing their development with pupils and their parents during parent evenings.	Monitoring and accountability	Primary / Secondary Schools	A) A monitoring procedure is in place for each subject teacher to prepare progress reports (primary and secondary) on the development of Welsh and English skills of every pupil. B) The progress reports have been discussed with the pupils and parents.
10. Ensure robust linguistic progression between	Monitoring and	Education Department	A) The Council has ensured a robust

<p>KS2, KS3, KS4 and KS5 by implementing consistent and appropriate monitoring methods which would also track language medium across the curriculum.</p> <p>(Recommendation of ESTYN Report November 2014: “track the percentages per school of key stage 4 pupils who follow courses through the medium of Welsh and set targets to increase this according to the objectives of their Welsh-medium education strategy”.</p>	<p>accountability</p>	<p>/ Primary / Secondary Schools</p>	<p>procedure is in place for monitoring the linguistic progression and also for the tracking of language medium across the curriculum by reporting regularly to the Services Scrutiny Committee.</p>
<p>11. Clarity and consistency should be ensured in the schools’ bilingual teaching methods by fostering translanguaging skills among staff and defining clearly what bilingual learning is and providing details on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) how much Welsh and English should be used to teach ii) language used by pupils to write in bilingual lessons iii) what are the expectations in terms of using Welsh/English in classroom conversations and discussions. 	<p>Bilingual teaching</p>	<p>Education Department</p>	<p>A) The Council has established a suitable training programme for teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bilingual teaching - And build translanguaging skills
<p>12. Ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the Language Charter is used in every primary school in Gwynedd 	<p>Social use of the Welsh language by children and young people</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council (Education Department/ Hunaniaith)</p>	<p>A) The Council regularly monitors the implementation of the Language Charter in the</p>

<p>ii) good practices are shared between schools on implementing the Language Charter and supporting and encouraging pupils' use of Welsh in a constructive manner</p> <p>iii) there are better opportunities for pupils to use the internet through the medium of Welsh to support one of the Language Charter's objectives. Schools should make more extensive use of Welsh websites and online materials and resources. Schools should be supported to achieve this where appropriate.</p>			<p>County's primary schools, and provides support to the schools.</p> <p>B) The Council and the schools are creating opportunities.</p> <p>C) The Council provides support to schools to enable pupils to make greater use of the Welsh websites and online resources.</p>
<p>13. Some of the Scrutiny Investigation's findings appear in the Trywydd report and it is recommended that the Council and the Schools act on the recommendations in the report.</p>	<p>Social use of the Welsh language by children and young people</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council (Education Department / Leisure / Youth Service / Hunaniaith)</p>	<p>A) The Council has established an action plan to respond to recommendations of the Trywydd report.</p>
<p>14. To ensure that the Welsh language is not pushed on pupils in a forceful manner, schools should include the pupils in discussions on:</p> <p>i) the Language Policy</p> <p>ii) the Language Charter</p> <p>iii) the school's language practices and ensure their ownership of the policy. Every school should ensure that there are opportunities for pupils to understand and discuss the advantages</p>	<p>Involving pupils</p>	<p>Primary / Secondary Schools</p>	<p>A) The pupils are involved in discussions about the Language Policy, the Language Charter and the language practice of the school.</p> <p>B) Processes in place to ensure pupils' ownership of the policy.</p> <p>C) Opportunities have been established for pupils to understand and discuss the benefits of</p>

of bilingualism, multilingualism and to embrace the Welsh language.			bilingualism, multilingualism and embrace the Welsh language.
15. In order to keep students, who are trying for a second degree, in Wales, the Services Scrutiny Committee should lobby the Welsh Government to provide a grant for the second degree as well as is happening in England.	Student Grants		A) The Services Scrutiny Committee has lobbied the Welsh Government to provide a grant for the second degree.
16. The advantages of bilingualism should be promoted and marketed in collaboration with every school across the county, with schools also marketing those advantages on their websites, among parents and pupils.	The benefits of bilingualism		A) The Council has conducted a review to identify opportunities to market the benefits of bilingualism. B) The Council has established a system to monitor that all schools in the County are marketing those benefits on their websites, among parents and pupils.
17. The Council should celebrate the successes of the county's schools and pupils (that test results in Welsh and English are as good as each other) and ensure that all schools raise awareness of those successes on the school website.	The benefits of bilingualism		A) The Council has established a system to celebrate the successes of the schools and pupils of the County via the latest popular methods. B) The schools have posted the successes on the school's website.
18. To support pupils from non-Welsh homes to support the Welsh language, schools and the Council should develop methods (such as Language	The benefits of bilingualism		A) The Council has established a programme of language awareness sessions. B) The schools have a procedure in place

Awareness sessions, chats with prospective pupils/parents, etc.), to establish attitudes which puts a value on the Welsh language and bilingualism. It should be ensured that existing good practices are shared.			to hold conversations with prospective pupils / parents. C) The Council has shared good practice with all the schools across the County.
19. To strengthen the Welsh language environment of the schools, the Council should strengthen the procedure of establishing the language requirements of posts in schools when appointing new staff.	Staff Appointment Procedures	Education Department	A) The Council has established a robust procedure for the appointment of new staff.
20. It should be ensured that every school makes full use of the Language Centres, ensuring every school's accountability for implementing the after-care packages.	Language Centres / Monitoring and accountability	Primary / Secondary Schools	A) The Council monitors the use of Language Centres and the operation of the after-care packages on a regular basis.
21. The Council should consider establishing a specific Language Centre for the Bangor catchment area in order to support the implementation and delivery of the Language Policy.	Language Centres	Gwynedd Council / Welsh Government	A) The Council in conjunction with the Welsh Government has given full consideration to the establishment of a specific Language Centre for the catchment area of Bangor.
22. Ensure that good practices are shared between the Language Centres and the schools.	Language Centres	Language Centres / Primary / Secondary Schools	A) The Council and the Language Centres share good practice with all the schools on a regular basis.
23. The Council should consider establishing a specific provision of immersion education for the Ysgol Ardudwy (and schools located in similar demographic catchment areas) in	Immersion education	Gwynedd Council / Welsh Government	A) The Council in conjunction with the Welsh Government has given full consideration to the establishment of immersion education provision at Ysgol

order to support the implementation and delivery of the Language Policy.			Ardudwy (and others).
24. The Council should discuss with Bangor University the possibility of setting a specific standard to develop skills in Welsh and a standard to develop bilingual skills for prospective teachers as part of the standards for a Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).	Bangor University		A) The Council has discussed and has come to an agreement with Bangor University.

1.3 Members of the scrutiny investigation appreciate that any action will be a matter for the Cabinet Member but they are eager for the Scrutiny Committee to receive a report on its response to the recommendations at its next meeting along with a progress report within 6 months.

1.4 It was agreed to present the report to the Language Committee following the Scrutiny Committee.

2. Purpose of the Scrutiny Investigation

2.1 The Scrutiny Investigation was established by the 13 February 2014 [Services Scrutiny Committee](#) to assess:

- How the Authority's Welsh Language Policy is implemented at grassroots level in individual schools
- The extent to which the provision assists in promoting the social use of the Welsh language by children and young people (the link with the work of the Gwynedd Schools' Welsh Language Charter)

(a) Specifically:-

1. Detailing on the operation of the Authority's [Language Policy](#) at the primary and secondary schools of specific catchment areas.
2. Examining how key elements of the policy are applied to the different schools' policies and especially within the School Development Plan.
3. Examining how the guidance and requirements of "[The Welsh Language in Education Strategic Plan](#)" are implemented at every school.
4. Examining how the guidance and requirements of the "[Gwynedd Primary Schools' Welsh Language Charter](#)" are implemented.

(b) In terms of the order of the work, the aim of the Investigation was to gain a county-wide picture of the way in which the Authority's Language Policy is implemented in each catchment area by establishing an understanding of

- the linguistic pattern within the catchment area based on Census statistics and individual schools
- the educational structure of the catchment area and the perception of parents and others of a school's linguistic nature
- the schools' relationships with each other in terms of the Welsh language
- the use of the Language Centres
- the use of the Welsh language in the classroom, on the corridor, in the cafeteria and on the school yard
- the activities held to celebrate and promote Welsh heritage and culture
- the area's linguistic strategic priorities (in the context of the development of the Gwynedd Language Strategy)
- the local context in terms of community linguistic work
- linguistic achievement of the children of the catchment area
- good practice

(c) Form recommendations to improve the consistency and quality of Welsh-medium language education provision within the catchment area now and for the future.

2.2 Main Activity of the Investigation

The Investigation commenced by holding a discussion with the members on the catchment area(s) that the investigation should focus

upon. The members acknowledged that it was not possible for the investigation to focus on all schools and catchment areas, and therefore it was sought to identify various catchment areas to focus on as part of the investigation, in the hope that they would reflect all Gwynedd catchment areas, and therefore; the recommendations of this investigation would be relevant to every school.

Following the advice and guidance of Mr Dewi Jones, Head of Education (at the time), it was agreed that the investigation would focus on three catchment areas, namely:

- Ardudwy
- Bangor
- Botwnnog

The investigation's work programme was agreed upon to address the brief, and an understanding of the background of the field was established through presentations by the following:

Dewi Jones, Head of Education (at the time)

- Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Strategy
- Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2013-2017

Debbie Anne Williams Jones, who was responsible for commissioning:

- [Gwynedd Schools Organisation Plan Linguistic Impact Assessment 2008](#)
- [Report on Gwynedd Primary Children's Social Use of the Welsh Language \(2009\)](#)
- [Gwynedd Primary Schools' Welsh Language Charter 2014](#)
- 'Living in Wales' Plan, Gwynedd Language Centres
- Report on Increasing the Social Use of the Welsh Language by Children and Young People at Gwynedd's Secondary Schools 2014 (Trywydd) ¹

Garem Jackson, Education Quality Improvement Officer on

- Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014/15

2.3 The following were consulted with through questionnaires, interviews and catchment area meetings in order to gain an understanding of the way in which the county's Education Language Policy is implemented:

- Headteachers of Ardudwy, Botwnnog, Friars and Tryfan Secondary Schools. **Appendix 1.**
- Headteachers of Nefyn, Tan y Castell, Dyffryn Ardudwy a Thalsarnau, Cae Top, and Hiracl Primary Schools. **Appendix 2.**
- Primary Headteachers from the Bangor Catchment Area **Appendix 2.**

¹ Contact us for a copy.

- Primary Headteachers from the Botwnnog Catchment Area **Appendix 2.**
- Headteachers of Primary and Secondary Sector Language Centres **Appendix 3.**
- Primary School Language Co-ordinators **Appendix 4.**
- Secondary School Language Co-ordinators **Appendix 4.**
- Lecturers from the School of Education, Bangor University **Appendix 5.**

- 2.4 At the request of members of the Scrutiny Investigation, the Chairman and Arfon members of the investigation were invited to meet Primary Headteachers from the Bangor Catchment Area. The intention was to secure an opportunity to have a discussion with all the catchment area's schools, as there was a feeling that every school in Bangor was different in the context of the Language Policy.
- 2.5 Interviews were held with the Headteachers of Dyffryn Ardudwy a Thalsarnau, Tanycastell, Hirael, Cae Top and Nefyn Primary Schools; and the Headteachers of Ardudwy, Botwnnog, and Tryfan Secondary Schools as well as the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher of Ysgol Friars.
- 2.6 At the request of members of the Scrutiny Investigation, an invitation was received to interview the headteachers of primary schools in the Botwnnog catchment area at one of the catchment area's regular meetings.
- 2.7 Interviews were held with the workforce of the Language Centres (primary and secondary), the Primary Co-ordinators, and the Secondary Language Co-ordinators in three different groups. Data was provided to members of the scrutiny investigation about the numbers that had attended the Language Centres, language levels and cohorts, together with the initial tracking work.
- 2.8 The parents of pupils were consulted with through an online questionnaire on the Gwynedd Council and Gwynedd Ni websites. A message was sent to the schools' headteachers with a link to the questionnaires, and hard copies were sent to the schools that asked for them. Also, the consultation was advertised on the Council's website and in the press.
- 2.9 [laith Cyf](#) was commissioned to hold focus groups with children and young people with a sample of the schools from the catchment areas in question.
- 2.10 Consultation occurred with the Governors of the schools in the catchment areas in question. The Education Department co-operated in circulating the questionnaires to the Clerks of the Governing Bodies of each of the schools in the three catchment areas in question.

3. Background

3.1 The Welsh Language in Gwynedd

According to the 2011 Census, 65.4% of Gwynedd residents speak Welsh, which is the highest percentage of Welsh speakers of all of Wales' counties, and the language is an integral part of daily life here. However, the 2011 Census shows that the percentages of people who are able to speak Welsh across the county vary significantly, with the highest percentages seen in the Llanrug ward (87.8%) and Peblig ward (87.4%) in Caernarfon. The percentages are lower towards the Bangor area (36.4%) and the coastal areas of Meirionnydd, such as Aberdyfi (35.5%). Despite this, the proportion of Welsh-speakers represents at least 30% of the permanent population in all wards apart from two, namely Menai ward (18.6%) and Deiniol ward (22.8%) in Bangor.

The 2011 Census showed an increase in the percentages of those who are able to speak Welsh in the 3-4 years old and the 5-15 years old age groups in Gwynedd, namely:

CENSUS	2001		2011		CHANGE	
3-4 years old	1,997	70.9%	1,997	73.0%	0	+2.1%
5-15 years old	14,468	91.8%	13,038	92.3%	-1,430	+0.5%

2011 Census data from the Office for National Statistics provides information regarding Welsh language skills and age. In 2011, the information for the catchment areas of the scrutiny investigation was as follows:

Area	Number of those who speak Welsh (3 to 15 years old)	Percentage of the population 3 – 15 years old
Gwynedd	15,035	89.1
Arudwy Catchment Area	1,128	90.5
Bangor Catchment Area	1,876	73.3
Botwnnog Catchment Area	1,170	92.6

Source: *Talel KS208 Census 2011, Office for National Statistics*

3.2 [Gwynedd Council's Welsh Language Plan](#)

In December 1996, Gwynedd Council published a Welsh Language Plan in accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993. It was approved by the Welsh Language Board, and it notes how the Council, when dealing with the public, treat both Welsh and English languages on an equal footing.

The Council's basic objectives regarding the Welsh language are:

- to enable everyone who receives or uses the Council's services, or contributes to the democratic process, to do so through the medium of Welsh or English according to personal choice

- to promote the use of the Welsh language in the life of the area and to be an anchor for the language in its resurgence throughout Wales
- to promote the use of the Welsh language by other public bodies which have dealings with the Council, and to support and promote the use of Welsh by organisations and businesses which provide services for the public in the area of the Council
- to establish Welsh as the official internal administrative language of the Council by providing facilities for in-post training to enable staff to develop their linguistic skills in Welsh and English
- to develop the ability of pupils and students to be confidently bilingual in order that they can be full members of the bilingual society of which they are a part of.

3.3 [The Council's Strategic Plan 2015 - 2017](#)

The Welsh language is one of the main priorities in the Council's Strategic Plan. Through the Strategic Plan, the Council is eager to see a situation where Gwynedd remains a stronghold for the Welsh language, and that Welsh is an everyday language that is heard and spoken naturally by children, young people and adults across the county.

3.4 [Gwynedd Language Strategy 2014-2017](#)

This Strategy's Vision is: "To see the Welsh language thriving in Gwynedd". To coincide with the vision, a long-term quantitative target was set in the previous language strategy which is reiterated in this Strategy, namely: "Ensure an increase of 5% in the percentage of the Welsh-speaking population in Gwynedd by 2021".

This Strategy is based on six strategic areas

- Strategic Area 1: The Family
- Strategic Area 2: Children and Young People
- Strategic Area 3: Communities
- Strategic Area 4: Welsh-language Services
- Strategic Area 5: The Workplace
- Strategic Area 6: The Infrastructure

The vision for Strategic Area 2: Children and Young People is "Increase the use of the Welsh language amongst children and young people, improve their awareness of the value of Welsh, and ensure better access to Welsh-medium social events and services. The outcome for this Strategic Area is "Children and young people speaking Welsh on a daily basis and realizing the value of the language".

4. Legislation and National Strategies

4.1 [Welsh Government Welsh Medium Education Strategy 2010](#)

This strategy builds on [Iaith Pawb – A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales](#), by focusing on developing Welsh medium education and training for the future. The strategy's vision is to "To have an education and training system that responds in a planned way to the growing demand for Welsh-medium education, reaches out to and reflects our diverse communities and enables an increase in the number of people of all ages and backgrounds who are fluent in Welsh and able to use the language with their families, in their communities and in the workplace."

The document includes 6 strategic aims:

1. To improve the planning of Welsh-medium provision in the pre-statutory and statutory phases of education, on the basis of proactive response to informed parental demand.
2. To improve the planning of Welsh-medium provision in the post-14 phases of education and training, to take account of linguistic progression and continued development of skills.
3. To ensure that all learners develop their Welsh-language skills to their full potential and encourage sound linguistic progression from one phase of education and training to the next.
4. To ensure a planned Welsh-medium education workforce that provides sufficient numbers of practitioners for all phases of education and training, with high-quality Welsh language skills and competence in teaching methodologies
5. To improve the central support mechanisms for Welsh-medium education and training
6. To contribute to the acquisition and reinforcement of Welsh-language skills in families and in the community.

The document also includes 5 specific outcomes:

1. More 7 year old children being taught through the medium of Welsh.
2. More learners continuing to improve their language skills when transferring from primary school to secondary school.
3. More learners studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh.
4. More learners aged 16-19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh in schools and colleges and work-based learning.
5. More students with higher-level Welsh language skills.

Gwynedd Council has agreed upon progress targets and has submitted them as part of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans to the Education Department, and Skills are annually monitored.

4.2 School Standards and Organisation Act (Wales) 2013

This Act became law in Wales on 4 March 2013. The Act makes Local Authorities accountable for planning Welsh medium provision by giving Welsh in Education Strategic Plans a statutory foundation. The first plans under these statutory arrangements are active from 1 April 2014 up to March 2017 (a period of 3 years). These plans outline how local authorities intend to achieve the Welsh Government objectives and targets, which have been outlined in the Welsh-medium Education Strategy.

Local Authorities are required to review their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans annually, together with reporting on the progress of the Strategic Plan to the Welsh Government. The authority reports on progress against studying through the medium of Welsh and the information on the numbers and percentages that study through the medium of Welsh can be seen in **Appendix 6**.

5. Gwynedd's Education Language Policy and Local Strategic Plans

5.1 Gwynedd Schools Education Language Policy

The aim of the Language Policy [1996] is to ensure that all the County's pupils grasp balanced age-relative bilingualism to enable them to be well-rounded members of the bilingual community that they are part of. What is meant by age-relative bilingualism is that pupils grasp adequate linguistic skills in both Welsh and English.

As well as developing pupils' proficiency in both languages, all the county's education establishments are expected to reflect and reinforce the Language Policy in their administration, their social lives and their pastoral arrangements as well as in their curricular provision.

Although the Policy's overall objective is bilingualism, the balance is in favour of the Welsh language during the early years so as to establish firm foundations for further development. At the other key stages, schools are expected to plan purposefully so as to develop pupils' grasp of the Welsh language.

The Language Policy's objective is the same across all of the county's primary schools, namely to develop the ability of each pupil to be confident in both languages by the end of KS2. Welsh is the official language of assessment at schools at the end of the Foundation Phase. However, most schools will commence formally introducing English in the last term at the end of KS1. In the more Anglicized areas, schools are expected to provide an opportunity for pupils to learn Welsh as soon as possible, acting on the following documents:

'Setting the Foundations of Bilingualism in the Early Years' and 'Planning Linguistic Development in the Anglicized areas'.

At secondary school, every pupil who has reached the necessary level (3+) at the end of KS2 will be expected to take Welsh as a First Language in KS3 to ensure appropriate progression and continuation. The hope is that these pupils can study Welsh and English as subjects up to the end of Year 11, receiving a formal Welsh assessment at the end of KS3, and sitting a suitable external exam at the end of KS4. The secondary schools are expected to build on the foundation that was created at primary level by ensuring that every pupil continues to develop skills in Welsh and English, using both languages as a teaching medium to varying degrees.

Every Headteacher, in consultation with the staff and the Governing Body, is expected to review the school's Language Policy regularly. It is the duty of the Headteacher to ensure the success of the Language Policy in the school, every Headteacher is expected to provide firm leadership in order to establish a thorough understanding of the aim of the Policy and to ensure that the efforts of classroom teachers are reinforced by ensuring that an appropriate Welsh ethos exists in the school.

The Education Language Policy defines pupils' linguistic development in Welsh and English as they work towards the objective of bilingualism:

COHORT	DEFINITION OF THE TYPE OF PUPIL ACCORDING TO HIS/HER LINGUISTIC ABILITY
A	Pupils with age-relative proficiency in Welsh and English
B	Pupils with appropriate proficiency in Welsh, but who need to reinforce some aspects of their linguistic skills in English.
C1	Pupils with appropriate proficiency in English, but who need to reinforce some aspects of their linguistic skills in Welsh.
C2	Pupils with appropriate proficiency in English, but who do not have the age-relative appropriate skills in Welsh.
CH	Pupils without age-relative appropriate skills in either language.

See **Appendix 7** for full details.

Every school should establish a procedure to track and measure the pupils' linguistic development according to the Language Cohorts with the aim of ensuring that each pupil moves towards Cohort A.

In this context, it is necessary to use the information transferred about the linguistic grouping of each pupil by the Catchment-area Language Co-ordinator to ensure purposeful linguistic planning. In practice, it will be necessary to implement in the following way:

In the case of pupils from cohorts A and B, a large proportion of their curriculum will be through the medium of Welsh. In practice, at least 70% of their curricular experiences will be in Welsh.

In the case of learners who need to develop and improve their skills in Welsh (Cohort C1), the curriculum will be planned in a way that will allow them to practise and develop the Welsh language across the curriculum. In practice, at least 50% of their curricular experiences will be in Welsh.

In the case of the minority of pupils who have appropriate skills in English but do not possess the appropriate skills in Welsh (Cohort C), an emphasis will be placed on planning opportunities across the curriculum to develop their oral skills in Welsh. In such cases, at least 30% of their curricular experiences will be in Welsh.

Every school should establish a procedure to track and measure the pupils' linguistic development according to the Language Cohorts with the objective of ensuring that each pupil moves towards Cohort A.

In addition, schools are expected to ensure that pupils who are Welsh language learners at the early years of KS3 learn the language as soon as possible, either by attending the Language Centre or through intense provision at the school, so that they can follow aspects of the curriculum through the medium of Welsh / bilingually.

5.2 [Gwynedd Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014 - 2017](#)

The main objective of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is to ensure the development of Welsh as a subject and as a medium of teaching from a pre-school age onwards, as well as promoting our children and young people's use of Welsh as a social language.

The 2013-17 Strategic Plan focuses on the following aspects in terms of Welsh as a language and as a medium:

- Set a robust foundation for Welsh during nursery and early years education
- Ensure progression in Welsh as a subject and as a learning medium from KS2 to KS3
- Ensure progression in Welsh as a subject and as a learning medium from KS3 to KS4
- Strengthen implementation in the areas/establishments/schools where data indicates the need by equipping headteachers and training our workforce to fully achieve the Plan's objective
- Strengthen the use of the language cohorts as a progression planning tool at secondary schools
- Develop the Welsh baccalaureate at levels 1, 2 and 3 in the secondary schools
- Confirm implementation of the Language Charter in every one of our primary schools, giving due attention to workforce training, developing medium elements and methodology.

- Promote the use of Welsh as a social language for young people at our secondary schools by establishing and developing a similar scheme to the primary schools Language Charter.

5.3 Gwynedd Primary Schools' Welsh Language Charter

The Gwynedd Primary Schools' Welsh Language Charter was published in 2014. The objective of the Language Charter is simply to lead to an increase in children's social use of Welsh. Simply, to get the children to speak Welsh. To do this, participation from every member of the school's community is essential - the school council, the pupils, parents, governors, the workforce and the wider community.

The seven aims of the charter are used as tools to measure the progress in the use of the language together with the success of the school plans.

So that everyone is awarded based on their efforts, the principle that each school sets its own challenging and achievable vision was established. This acknowledges that every school's circumstances are different, and gives schools an opportunity to realise their own vision and action programme.

The Language Charter includes an Action Programme that every school can complete to aim for the Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. The Action Programme is based on the unique vision of every school, and the steps that are considered good practice that each school should nurture.

A baseline is set to measure the success of realising the objective of increasing social use of the Welsh language among children. An online questionnaire has been created for KS2 children to complete to record their social use of Welsh at the school, the yard and in the community. The data from the questionnaire provides definitive evidence of the linguistic situation in every school in the form of a language web. See **Appendix 8** for a language web for the three catchment areas. The questionnaire will be revisited with the same questions after a period of time.

5.4 Report on Increasing the Social Use of the Welsh language by Children and Young People at Gwynedd's Secondary Schools (Trywydd)

In March 2014, the Working Group commissioned the Trywydd company to conduct a review of the situation of the Welsh language as a social language amongst the secondary schools of Gwynedd's young people.

In terms of the commission in question, the work was split as follows:

- Conduct a comprehensive review of young people's current use of the Welsh language outside the classroom at the 14

secondary schools in Gwynedd, and determine the main factors that influence young people's language use;

- Plan and hold a workshop to gain the input of the young people themselves in planning and developing progression for the Gwynedd Primary School's Welsh Language Charter;
- Based on the findings of the review, form a series of innovative proposals to positively influence young people's social use of the Welsh language;
- Submit proposals regarding how to measure the success of any plans implemented, i.e. the increase in the use of the Welsh language compared with the current situation as a result of any interventions made.

In response to the brief's requirements, visits were arranged with all of Gwynedd's secondary schools for a full day each to conduct the whole-school review. Broad and representative focus groups were arranged with all the schools' stakeholders, and a quantitative electronic questionnaire was conducted with year 9 pupils in every school (through Qwizdom machines). As well as the Research days, additional meetings were held during the period with staff from Hunaniaith, Gwynedd Primary Schools' Language Charter, community leaders in the county (the Urdd, YFC, the Council's Youth Service Manager and the Leisure Centres), and the Gwynedd Council Increasing the Social Use of Welsh Working Group.

The findings largely vary between different schools and areas, but seven main fields were identified on a county level, namely:

i) Defining the linguistic nature of the schools

There is uncertainty amongst stakeholders about the linguistic nature of the schools. It is not clear to stakeholders (in some cases) whether it is a naturally Welsh-medium School, a Bilingual School or an English-medium School.

ii) The way in which the schools promotes and facilitates the use of the Welsh language. It is necessary to be clear about the advantages that belong to Welsh/bilingual education, and to share those extensively with parents and pupils.

iii) The Use of Language and the Curriculum

There are disparities within the county's schools in terms of the language used in different situations:

- Welsh is the main/only language
- English is the main/only language
- Bilingualism in its broad sense

iv) The pupils' use of language beyond the classroom

The schools are a microcosm of the use made of the Welsh language in the communities surrounding them, and that linguistic range is very broad.

v) The factors that influence the children's use of language

The main ones were identified as follows:

- The home/family
- Friends and peers
- The local community
- Their confidence in using language
- Language practices (including primary school)

vi) Attitudes towards the Welsh language

Generally, pupils' attitudes towards the Welsh language are very positive. There were individual examples of challenging attitudes towards the Welsh language (amongst pupils and adults in some schools).

vii) The Welsh Language beyond the school

57% of the pupils who took part in the quantitative review use the Welsh language every day outside school life in different contexts in Gwynedd.

6. Performance Comparisons and External Audits

6.1 One national performance indicator exists:

EDU/006ii - Percentage of pupils assessed in schools maintained by the local authority, and who receive a Teacher Assessment in Welsh (as a first language) at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Key Stage 3 (11-14 years old). The [Gwynedd Council Performance Report](#) for 2013/14 reports on the performance of this indicator as follows:

2011 / 12	2012 / 13	2013 / 14	Target 2013/14	Wales Average	Family Average	Trend	Performance against Wales
83.10	86.10	82.50	88	17.01	32.78	Worsen	↑

The Welsh Government's Data Unit website '[My Local Council](#)' shows that Gwynedd Council's performance in 2013-14 is the best in Wales in terms of the EDU/006ii indicator (Key Stage 3).

6.2 [Welsh Government Data Unit Report](#) on the performance of Local Authorities (2013-14)

As is noted in pages 18-19 of the report: 'The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 2, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator increased again from 82.8% in 2012-13 to 84.6% in 2013-14. This ranged from 89.3% in Monmouthshire to 80.1% in Blaenau Gwent.

Over the same period, the percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 3, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving

the Core Subject Indicator also increased from 72.7% to 77.2%. This ranged from 85.4% in Gwynedd to 64.5% in Blaenau Gwent.

In 2013-14, 52.5% of pupils achieved the level 2 threshold, including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Mathematics (compared to 50.7% in 2012-13). This ranged from 62% in Flintshire to 39% in Blaenau Gwent.'

6.3 [Welsh Government National Performance Report 2013/14](#)

Achievement in terms of examinations show that the "Percentage of pupils at Key Stage 4 achieve the Level 2 inclusive threshold, 2013/14 (a)" in Gwynedd is in the highest quartile.

6.4 [Statiath - Statistics website involving the Welsh language](#)

It is noted that 'progression in Welsh-medium education more often than not refers to the movement of pupils from primary school where they are educated through the medium of Welsh to secondary school, i.e. from the Foundation Stage/Key Stage 2 to Key Stages 3 and 4'. The National Curriculum's Assessments charts show the percentage of pupils assessed in Welsh at each key stage, and also shows the relevant targets. It also includes evidence of progression from 1999-2014 up to Key Stage 3. This information shows that Welsh-medium education in secondary school varies greatly.

Attending a Welsh-medium or bilingual school does not necessarily mean that a pupil, even if he or she does follow a first language course in Welsh language (the subject), will study many other subjects through the medium of Welsh.

Evidence regarding this was seen in a response to a [freedom of information application](#) regarding how many 15 year old pupils sat GCSE examinations through the medium of Welsh per subject, in Anglesey, Gwynedd and Ceredigion secondary and middle schools in 2013.

6.5 [ESTYN Report \(November 2014\)](#)

The purpose of the '**Linguistic progression and standards of Welsh in ten bilingual schools**' was to

- Report on the linguistic progression of pupils in key stage 4 in terms of studying Welsh as a first language and other qualifications through the medium of Welsh;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of curricular models and teaching methods that are in place in bilingual schools; and
- identify and share good practice in relation to bilingual education.

The report's main focus is the local authorities where most bilingual teaching occurs, namely Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Anglesey and Gwynedd authorities. Four Secondary Schools in Gwynedd were visited.

The report, published in November 2014, reports that the highest percentages of pupils at key stage 4 who study Welsh as a first language are in Gwynedd, Anglesey and Carmarthen. The largest decrease in the number of pupils who study Welsh as a first language from key stage 2 to key stage 4 over the last six years can also be found in these authorities. The decrease is around one in every five pupils or more. Around half of the Welsh first language pupils follow five additional GCSE courses through the medium of Welsh in Gwynedd and Carmarthen.

Gwynedd is the only local authority which places expectations on schools to increase the percentage of pupils who continue to study subjects through the medium of Welsh at key stage 4 and which supports schools to achieve ambitious targets.

7. The Work of the Investigation

It was found that the Ardudwy, Bangor and Botwnnog catchment areas are very different to each other from a linguistic perspective. There are also variations within the catchment areas; for example, the north of the Ardudwy catchment area is a Welsh area, while the south of the area is more Anglicised. Of the catchment areas in question, the Botwnnog catchment area is the most Welsh. There are other variations in Bangor, with Welsh areas, English areas and areas that feed into the University and Ysbyty Gwynedd.

The definition of the linguistic nature of Gwynedd Council Schools is different to that of the Welsh Government's definition which is part of the confusion in terms of interpreting the definition. The vagueness creates uncertainty for staff, parents and pupils. It was found that implementation of the Language Policy is inconsistent across the county and that it was a challenge to implement the Policy without clarity for staff, parents and pupils on the linguistic definition. These findings are confirmed in the Trywydd report where the variety that exists in the implementation of the Language Policy is reported on, as well as on the uncertainty that exists in terms of the linguistic definition of schools.

The need was found for the Council to support Ysgol Friars to identify further opportunities to make progress in the use of the Welsh language across the curriculum and life of the school.

It was found that accountability of schools and governors for implementing the Language Policy needed to be strengthened.

The need was seen to market the advantages of bilingualism in the schools, on school websites and among parents.

It was understood that bilingual materials were very scarce in some subjects and that there was a need for digital / computerised materials and Welsh text books.

It was found that bilingual teaching varied from school to school and as a result there is no consistency in bilingualism teaching methods across the county.

The Language Centres are succeeding especially in the primary sector, with the Centres' after-care very effective. The need was seen for a similar provision to the Language Centre in Maesincla for Bangor and an immersion scheme in Ysgol Ardudwy. It was found that some schools made more use of the Language Centres than others and that schools were not taking the opportunity to visit the Language Centres to see the work that was done there. It was found that school staff required Council support to implement the after-care package with the need to hold suitable training for some teachers and assistants to use the Language Centres' language patterns.

The role of Primary Language Co-ordinators is essential to lead the staff in terms of the latest developments, changes to the curriculum, to monitor lessons and implementation of the linguistic priority in the School's plans.

It was found that no robust arrangement was in place to share the Language Centres' good practices which would enable schools to support and rationalise the implementation of the Language Policy across the county.

It was found that tracking pupils' linguistic progress took place in the primary sector but no robust arrangement was in place for the secondary sector.

The need was found for the Council to ensure opportunities for pupils to use the internet through the medium of Welsh and to support Schools to make more extensive use of their Welsh websites and online materials and resources.

The general message was that there was a need for Leisure, Youth and other services to be conducted through the medium of Welsh.

It was found that most of the parents who completed the questionnaire were convinced of the advantages of bilingual education for their children, with a small number of the opinion that the policy should enable schools to teach through the medium of English, teaching the Welsh language as a subject only. Only a small number of parents were of the opinion that some subjects such as mathematics and science should be taught through the medium of English. A small number from the Bangor and Botwnnog catchment area stated that there was too much focus on the Welsh language and that the Welsh language should not be forced.

It was seen that the responses of parents in the Bangor catchment area showed a low level of awareness of the school's Language Policy, the Language Charter and the advantages of bilingualism. It was seen that there was a substantially low number in the Bangor catchment area who believed that schools managed to achieve the aim of ensuring that pupils have skills / abilities that are as good in Welsh and English.

A number of other Bangor parents were noting that there was a need to strengthen Gwynedd Council's Language Policy ensuring that every school in Gwynedd adhered to the Policy. In addition, observations were made on the need to promote the Welsh language.

The pupils' evidence confirmed that the headteachers and teachers in every school except Ysgol Friars embrace the Welsh language. Whilst there are headteachers and teachers who are able to speak Welsh and embrace the Welsh Language, it was seen that there was a number of schools where the Welsh language environment of the school is influenced by the lack of ability to speak Welsh by some assistants and other staff.

For some pupils, the practice of speaking Welsh with friends and at every opportunity outside the classroom is very strong and in some schools more than others. The tendency for children from non-Welsh speaking families to restrict their use of Welsh to a range of restricted teaching contexts is a general phenomenon.

In general, pupils supported the Welsh language. Data from the focus groups suggest that there are negative values towards the Welsh language from some pupils from non-Welsh backgrounds in some schools. It was also highlighted that pupils were not necessarily included in discussions regarding the Language Charter nor were they given an opportunity to offer their own ideas for the language practices in the school. It was also seen that criticising and punishing children for speaking English was counterproductive.

The use of Welsh and English when teaching and learning is mixed with some schools and some teachers making more use of both languages than others.

7.1 Meetings with Primary Headteachers

Generally, there was an opinion that the Language Policy was a success, given that children come to the school from a non-Welsh background and then leave the school able to speak Welsh, and that there was a goodwill to learn the language amongst the children and their families. The benefits of the Language Policy are clear, and success is demonstrable when non-Welsh children are immersed in the Welsh language, then becoming Welsh speakers in a mere few months.

There was a Welsh ethos in the primary schools although the pupils tended to speak English socially in the schools where Welsh was a second language for the majority of pupils.

It was given to understand that the Governors were generally very supportive of the Welsh language, and eager for children to be bilingual, considering bilingualism an advantage.

The headteachers considered the Language Charter as a medium to enable them to make a difference. The headteachers were of the opinion that the Language Charter was a medium to encourage the children and raise

awareness amongst parents of the importance and advantages of bilingualism. It was suggested that more activities such as jamborees should be held, as well as the promotion of role models as was undertaken with Malcolm Allen and Ed Holden.

The headteachers were of the opinion that the Language Centres were very successful and that more aftercare would be advantageous to pupils. In addition, the need to collaborate with Welsh for Adults providers was noted, as well as the need to promote the Language Centres more. A concern was noted that parents tended to encourage their children to take subjects through the medium of English in Secondary School.

In general, we should strive to make the Welsh language 'cool' and encourage children to use more of the Welsh language socially and use Welsh Apps.

The headteachers were of the opinion that the confidence of school staff needed to be nurtured by providing training for

- break time supervisors, lunch time staff, teachers and parents
- teachers on improving bilingual teaching skills.

Ardudwy Catchment Area

At the meeting, the Headteacher of Ysgol Tanycastell noted that it was increasingly difficult to implement the language policy when children arrive later in the educational year. Reference was made to an example of three pupils who attend the Language Centre, and although they now speak Welsh in school, they do not speak Welsh at home. Apart from the pupils who migrate to the area and start school in one of the later years, every other child leaves the school when he or she is 11 years old, and is able to speak Welsh.

At our meeting with the Headteacher of Ysgol Dyffryn Ardudwy and Talsarnau, it was given to understand that both schools are completely different to each other in terms of their linguistic nature. At Ysgol Dyffryn Ardudwy, 80% of the pupils come from non-Welsh homes and parents tend not to choose to speak Welsh with their children. Families who feed into the school come from the Birmingham area, and some former pupils choose to speak English with their children. Staff speak Welsh with the children at all times in Ysgol Dyffryn Ardudwy and English instructions are provided to ensure that children understand. The school gives pupils specific opportunities to learn about Welshness and Welsh identity, and encourages them to compete in the *Eisteddfod* etc. In Ysgol Talsarnau, around 50-60% of pupils come from Welsh households and Welsh is the school's naturally spoken language.

In terms of promoting the language, it was noted that it was a very hard task to promote the Welsh language in the community and with some parents in the south of the Ardudwy catchment area. It was noted that the area's Welsh parents tended to speak English with the children.

Bangor Catchment Area

The headteachers of the Bangor catchment area felt that there was an unfair prejudice about Welsh-language provision in the catchment area, and that the good work that schools achieved needed to be acknowledged. A great deal of households in Bangor are non-Welsh, however, the children speak Welsh in school. It was noted that there was generally no Welsh culture in Bangor households. Children from middle class families speak Welsh with their parents but English with other children, with some bringing up their children through the medium of English.

In the case of Ysgol Cae Top, pupils speak 5 or 6 languages, and the Welsh language is an additional language for them. Over 20 different languages are spoken in Ysgol Cae Top and the school works closely with the Secondary Language Co-ordinator. It was noted that the schools work hard to immerse the pupils in the Welsh language and Welsh culture. Members of staff from every school have been on yard sports training and the pupils receive an award if they discuss in Welsh. It was confirmed that the headteachers take advantage of each opportunity to promote the Welsh language, and fully acknowledge the challenge that is facing them. It was noted that some pupils would not likely receive high grades in the Welsh language, even though they have the skills to speak and use the Welsh language.

At one time, there was great competition for numbers for schools in the catchment area, but by now there is no competition as everyone works towards the same language policy. Some headteachers found it difficult to implement the Language Policy in light of objection from a small number of parents. Some parents are concerned about not being able to assist their children with homework.

Botwnnog Catchment Area

Of the catchment areas in question, the Botwnnog catchment area is the most Welsh and pupils feel strongly about the Welsh language. At our meeting with the Headteacher of Ysgol Nefyn, he stated that the Welsh language was a natural part of the children's every day language. Pupils very rarely turn to English in school. As a result, according to the headteacher the school did not need to make a large effort to realise the objective of the Language Charter.

At the meeting with headteachers of the catchment area, it was given to understand that the area was a Welsh one and that the schools worked hard to protect and maintain the language. It was noted that 74% of Ysgol Llanbedrog pupils came from non-Welsh homes, however, it was noted that most parents found the Welsh language valuable, although it was difficult to change the attitudes of some parents. The pupils are encouraged to learn the language naturally and through Welsh cultural celebrations. It was noted that non-Welsh pupils are immersed in the language immediately, and large use is made of the Language Centre in Llangybi which should be applauded. It was noted that the parents were eager for their children to attend the Language Centre. There were examples of unconfident pupils who had taken advantage

of surplus places in the Centre to improve their language and that nine latecomers who attended the Centre were now fluent in the language.

7.2 Meetings with Secondary Headteachers

There was a strong opinion that guidance was needed on what exactly a 'Bilingual School' is, and to ensure that every school conforms to the Language Policy, using the Council's power to ensure implementation.

The need for schools to work with each other rather than compete against each other for pupils was noted.

In order to strengthen bilingual learning, it is believed that consistency needs to be ensured in terms of the bilingualism teaching methods across the schools, clarity and a definition of what is meant by bilingual learning, promoting translanguaging skills amongst the workforce.

The work done at the Language Centres is appreciated and praised, as well as the aftercare once pupils have returned to school.

An opinion was expressed that pupils should not be forced to or awarded for using the Welsh language but rather that a Welsh ethos should be secured at every school.

The advantages of bilingualism should be marketed better, promoting that there are real advantages for pupils by being fluent in two languages and studying subjects through the medium of Welsh.

Ysgol Ardudwy

The School is located in a Welsh-language area with more use of the Welsh language to the north and less to the south. The school's ethos is Welsh and the school does not give pupils the choice to study subjects through the medium of English and because of this, some pupils choose to attend other secondary schools.

Ysgol Ardudwy is naturally a bilingual school and the school's Language Policy states 'At least 80% of the subjects, except Welsh and English, are taught through the medium of Welsh'. It was noted that only 32% of pupils come from Welsh homes, and 9% have one parent who speaks Welsh but these homes are not considered Welsh in language. Realising the school's language policy is therefore a real challenge.

The school does not implement an immersion scheme, as those pupils who transfer to secondary without a level 3 qualification in Welsh are usually children with additional learning needs or latecomers.

There are three learning groups, 2 groups are completely Welsh-medium, and another small group is taught through the medium of English. At Key Stage 4, there is more bilingualism as a result of the need to place pupils in sets in the

core subjects. The lowest set is usually bilingual, but at least 80% of the teaching occurs through the medium of Welsh. Several subjects are taught through the medium of Welsh and English. The school has changed and strengthened its Language Policy by now, with the majority of pupils sitting core examinations through the medium of Welsh. Each pupil who studies Welsh as a first language is expected to sit examinations through the medium of Welsh. Some pupils sit one or two subjects through the medium of English. It was understood that materials to study subjects through the medium of Welsh are rare in some subjects, and the teachers had to create the Welsh resources themselves.

In terms of latecomers, the Welsh Department has a plan to seek to ensure the development of the Welsh language by taking pupils from service periods to try to promote the verbal use of the language. Each KS3 pupil who is a latecomer has attended the Language Centre, and parents have been very supportive and glad of the opportunity. There are pupils who speak Welsh although the parents are English.

The Governing Body is firm in its support of the Language Policy. Several activities are held to promote the use of the Welsh language e.g. musicals and after school clubs.

In terms of the school staff, all teachers have received training from Canolfan Bedwyr in 2013, and a further session was held during the Gwynedd INSET day in 2014. Teachers observe other teachers in order to share good practice, and this has led to an improvement. Individuals have had an opportunity to attend INSET courses to learn Welsh by being released one day per week, as well as Welsh Government Welsh language refresher courses. No formal training has occurred for ancillary staff apart from courses for Additional Learning Needs Assistants. A central school session on the implementation of the Language Policy is held for all school staff on the first day of each academic year.

It is believed that it is necessary to create a Welsh atmosphere in Ysgol Ardudwy as the Welsh language is weak in the community surrounding the school. Several events are held through the medium of Welsh, such as musicals etc.

Ysgol Ardudwy would welcome an immersion plan in order to develop more Welsh speakers, especially latecomers.

Ysgol Botwnnog

The school is a bilingual school in terms of teaching but has a Welsh ethos. There is a strong Welsh ethos in the school of 400 pupils; three quarters of those pupils come from Welsh homes and the other quarter come from non-Welsh homes, and 98% of pupils are fluent in Welsh. The numbers of those who attend the Language Centre are very small (around 8).

Every member of staff, including ancillary staff, is fluent in Welsh. The school's ancillary staff had received training to improve their language skills.

In terms of latecomers, KS3 and KS4 pupils will attend the Language Centre. When these pupils return to the school, they will have a language buddy and a specific member of staff to support them. There are examples of families from Birmingham in the school who speak Welsh for the most part. It is felt that the school does not push the Welsh language on them, but they assume that they should learn and speak the language.

Around 85% of examinations are sat through the medium of Welsh, with a large number of pupils in Years 10/11 (including several Welsh-learners) choosing to study their subjects through the medium of Welsh. Of the 8 pupils who attended the Language Centre in Llanybi, 5 of those sat a First Language Welsh Literature and Language examination, and this reflects the situation each year. Most pupils who have attended the Language Unit have created roots in the area and have succeeded in being employed locally; some of whom are tradesmen.

In terms of sharing resources, three lead schools namely Dyffryn Ogwen, Botwnnog and Tryfan collaborate on materials but it was acknowledged that there was room for improvement in terms of collaboration between the County's schools.

It was noted that Ysgol Botwnnog implemented a Learner of the Year Award and that anything which celebrated and honoured the language should be welcomed.

Ysgol Friars

Like Ysgol Tryfan, Ysgol Friars is in a complex area, as two secondary schools serve the catchment area. The Welsh Government defines the school as an English-medium School, but with substantial use of the Welsh language. It is different to the authority's other schools, apart from Ysgol Tywyn which is very similar from a linguistic perspective. It was acknowledged that considerable work needs to be undertaken to give the Welsh language more status.

50% of pupils come from ethnic minorities, and Welsh and English are additional languages for these pupils. This is likely to be because of the influence of the University and Ysbyty Gwynedd as employers. Several pupils come to the school in light of their parents' temporary employment, indeed several come from Africa, China, etc. Several pupils arrive the school at KS4 who can speak almost no word of English or Welsh. To prepare them, they are placed in a specific education group (for foreign students) in the school. Around two years ago, research was undertaken and it was discovered that if the school had one additional pupil who spoke Arabic, the amount of pupils who spoke Arabic would correspond to the amount of Welsh-speaking pupils in the school.

40%-48% of pupils attend Ysgol Friars from outside the catchment area, as they tend to want bilingual education or to be educated through the medium of English. There is a turnover of around 10% from the period at the beginning of the school year to the end of the school year.

Around 3.8% of pupils speak some Welsh at home, and 15% speak a language which is not English or Welsh at home. There are three classes - E, L and N, and the best pupils in terms of the Welsh language are in category E and study Art, Scripture and History through the medium of Welsh. The school holds a specific class for a naturally Welsh speaking group. The classes are timetabled with as much teachers who speak Welsh as is possible. When the pupils choose their subjects at KS4, the same model will not be adhered to as the provision is not available, but the pupils will continue to speak Welsh with the teacher.

Religious Education and Art are taught through the medium of Welsh and pupils come to Ysgol Friars from other schools to study some subjects through the medium of Welsh. Ysgol Tryfan will offer Music for pupils from Ysgol Friars next year. Not every pupil wants to learn other subjects through the medium of Welsh at KS4, but should the demand arise, it was noted that there were mechanisms in place to collaborate with other schools to address the need. The school will collaborate with other schools in terms of post-16 subjects. It was noted that some individuals had noted a desire to study Welsh as a First Language at A Level, and arrangements were made to enable them to study the subject in College.

In terms of the use of the Welsh language by pupils who feed the school from the primary sector, around 50% will have good verbal skills in Welsh (Level 4). Many of the pupils from non-Welsh households can recognise and have good listening skills in Welsh but poor writing skills. In terms of the process of levelling pupils, the weighting in the primary schools on speaking is as follows (50% speaking, 25% reading, 25% writing). When a teacher asks pupils a question in Welsh, they respond in Welsh.

The pupils' achievement in English is better than the Welsh language, but these were not fantastic either. From plotting work undertaken by the school, it was discovered that the pupils' English writing skills were not considerably better than their Welsh writing skills.

Recently, a Sub-committee of the Governing Body was established under the leadership of Councillor Mair Rowlands, in order to renew the school's Language Policy. It was noted that the Sub-committee met once every term and that several matters were focussed upon. Several activities are held to develop a Welsh ethos in the school and to develop the Welsh language around the school.

In the past, it was noted that the school had sought to promote the Secondary Language Centre amongst pupils and parents, but that the efforts to attract pupils to attend were unsuccessful. Both the Headteacher and deputy headteacher were of the opinion that the extended work that was undertaken

in the past with more able pupils and borderline pupils was a success, and that the school would welcome restoring this type of provision.

In terms of staff, it was noted that the school's specific policy conditions were that the Welsh language was optional and not compulsory. It was noted that the school would seek to appoint a bilingual individual for some subjects at KS3. It was understood that around 67% of staff could speak Welsh and used it socially, but that they did not feel confident enough to teach through the medium of Welsh. It was sought to arrange a course for staff at Nant Gwrtheyrn, but unfortunately it was unable to be held due to the range of Welsh-language ability amongst teachers. Five members of staff received after-school lessons and others attended lessons independently. The modern languages teacher has achieved GCSE level in Welsh. A course held by a former teacher who understands the educational vocabulary would be ideal.

In terms of the school's ancillary staff, around half the assistants can speak Welsh, half of the office staff and half of the caretakers. Some of the lunch staff can speak Welsh, but the cleaners are foreigners on the whole.

The linguistic element is a way of funding secondary schools, as the secondary schools receive the Welsh language grant. At present, the grant funding is allocated to the most Welsh schools in Gwynedd. The need for clarity regarding the grant's purpose was noted; was it to promote the use of the Welsh language or to buy books? The funding levels have an impact on matters such as translating, where the school would have to pay to have documents translated etc. The school does not even have funding to translate documents.

Ysgol Tryfan

The school is in a complex area, as two secondary schools serve the catchment area. It is a bilingual medium school but is known in the community as a Welsh-medium school.

All the school's curriculum and administration is Welsh-medium. The school succeeds in the objective that pupils leave the school proficient in both languages. Every subject is taught through the medium of Welsh.

The pupils will have achieved Level 3 in Welsh when transferring from primary to secondary. There is a pattern of which schools transfer pupils to Ysgol Tryfan, namely Garnedd, Cae Top, Glancegin, Llandygai and Pantyrhedyn (Conwy). This year, for the first time, pupils from Ysgol y Faenol attend the school. There is variation in terms of confidence in the Welsh language.

An immersion plan is implemented which is additional provision for pupils with a teacher who co-ordinates this scheme. A homework club is held to help the pupils linguistically.

In terms of examinations, they will register pupils with WJEC (Welsh Joint Education Committee), and pupils will select the language in which they choose to sit the exam.

It was noted that maintaining the Welsh language was a challenge, although the Welsh language is promoted at every opportunity. Pupils are reminded to speak Welsh, without excessively pushing the language, and the school seeks to create a Welsh ethos.

The need to market the advantages of bilingualism in an improved way is demonstrable.

It was noted that the school often translates for any large event.

7.3 Headteachers of Primary and Secondary Sector Language Centres

The purpose of the Language Centres is to provide an intensive course in the Welsh language for incomers to the area to enable them to integrate into the bilingual community, participate fully in bilingual education experiences and follow their education through the medium of Welsh when they return to their schools.

This provision is essential in assisting Gwynedd's primary and secondary schools to implement the Language Policy and for laying a firm foundation in the Welsh language for incomers.

There are four primary Language Centres in Gwynedd and one Secondary Language Centre.

Primary Language Centres:

- Dolgellau
- Llangybi
- Maesincla
- Penrhyndeudraeth

There is room for 16/18 pupils to attend each Language Centre for 12 weeks, apart from Dolgellau which only has room for 8 pupils. The courses are held three times per year, once per term. There are two teachers in each Centre apart from Dolgellau where there is one. See **Appendices 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14** for the numbers of pupils who have attended the Primary Language Centres. The aim is for every pupil to reach at least Level 2 / 3 in the Welsh language.

The Secondary Language Centre is on the Ysgol Eifionydd site. The Centre is open five days a week for a period of eight weeks in each of the three terms. Two teachers are employed and spaces are offered to a maximum of 16 pupils (latecomers) for these periods. A range of cross-curricular subjects are offered, as well as various extra-curricular activities and visits by members of the public. See **Appendices 15, 16 and 17** for the numbers of pupils who have attended the Secondary Language Centres.

Since September 2014, an aftercare plan has commenced for pupils who have attended the Language Centres.

A detailed report on the linguistic achievement and progression of each pupil in language skills is formed and sent to parents and teachers in the primary and secondary schools at the end of each period, with the comments related to the Level Descriptions in the National Curriculum. For the secondary sector, the report details eight aspects, including the pupil's ability to follow courses through the medium of Welsh, together with targets for ensuring further progress. For the secondary sector, a detailed aftercare strategy that the schools could use was presented.

See **Appendix 18** for Primary tracking information and see **Appendix 19** for further information on numbers who attend the Secondary Language Centre.

Courses are offered to Assimilate Parents in the primary language centres, see **Appendix 20** for the numbers of pupils who attended.

At a meeting with the headteachers of the Language Centres, an observation was made that schools did not realise the hard work that was done at the Language Centres. A concern was noted that teachers turned to English with the pupils after they attended the Language Centres. Teachers are invited to see the children at the Language Centres, but they did not take the opportunity for several reasons such as there is no other teacher to cover them at school. The need for teachers to use the Language Centres' language patterns to support pupils who attended the Centres was noted.

The headteachers of the Language Centres were of the opinion that there was a lack of consistency in terms of the implementation of the Language Policy. This needed to be formalised and it should be ensured that the schools were accountable for its implementation.

The headteachers of the Language Centres were very supportive of the Language Charter, and the need to ensure that Welsh yard games are played in every school was noted.

We were told: "It is necessary to strengthen the language patterns of some assistants and teachers. It was noted that some teachers were unconfident in Welsh."

It was noted that at Secondary level, the support in terms of pupils' progression prior to attending the Language Centres was rare and inconsistent, and that there was a dependency on the school's goodwill. It was understood that support, and accountability, were required in every area.

Several observations about the need to better sell the Welsh language and make it cool were made, as well as observations regarding improving the opportunities for good practice.

Headteachers of the Language Centres were of the opinion that after-school, one-day and full day courses / training for teachers on the Language Charter were required.

7.4 Primary School Language Co-ordinators

The language co-ordinators are responsible for ensuring that the Language Policy is implemented and developed in the schools, and that pupils are completely proficient in both languages, and that learners move quickly to cohort 'A' (language). They are also responsible for collecting information about language levels and cohorts at the end of year 6 and transferring it to the secondary sector. See **Appendix 6 - Language Cohorts Key, Appendix 21 - Summary of Language Cohorts and Levels, Appendix 22 - Language Cohorts and Levels 2013 and Appendix 23 - Language Cohorts and Levels 2014**).

Also, it was noted that they have a responsibility to ensure that the pupils do not slip back after achieving Cohort 'A' by visiting the secondary school in October to see how pupils have settled and to ensure that they follow the right linguistic track. An informal discussion with the schools will be held regarding linguistic progression beyond Year 7. They will also share good practices, resources and ideas at meetings.

It was understood that the role of the Language Co-ordinators was not to challenge schools, and that that was GwE and the Authority's roles. Collaboration with schools is sought to ensure a good relationship.

It was noted that the catchment areas varied, with variation within pockets of the county and some areas received a number of European immigrants who did not use English or Welsh. It is aimed to ensure that these pupils reach a strong Level 3 in writing.

Most primary pupils will go to secondary with a strong Level 4 in Welsh, and they understand that 70% of the KS3 lessons are taught through the medium of Welsh. The need to ensure and reconcile tracking from Primary to Secondary across Gwynedd was noted.

There was a unanimous opinion that the Language Centres succeeded, especially in the primary sector with the extremely effective after-care steps. There were examples of the successes of pupils from other countries who had attended the Language Centres and were by now fluent in Welsh and English.

There was a strong opinion that the Language Charter was successful, leading to implementing a general aim between schools.

It was noted that some catchment areas were under pressure from parents to provide bilingual worksheets for pupils.

It was understood that parents were completely happy that the children spoke Welsh and English as well as each other.

7.5 Secondary School Language Co-ordinators

The language co-ordinators are responsible for monitoring language cohorts and ensuring that pupils are on the right linguistic track.

The Language Co-ordinators were of the strong opinion that the Language Policy needed to be more robust as its interpretation varied in different schools. The variations in the Policy implementation give parents who move to the area the impression that some schools are more Welsh/English than each other. It was noted that the label of a 'bilingual' policy, namely the ability to communicate in both languages in the same manner, is misinterpreted by laymen and that they tended to believe that 'bilingual' meant conducting lessons in Welsh and English. There was room to educate the Governors of their responsibilities.

The Language Co-ordinators unanimously agreed that the secondary schools were successful in terms of ensuring continuation in the pupils' linguistic track from KS2 to KS3. However, it was noted that some pupils chose to sit examinations through the medium of English. By now, it was understood that there was no tracking in terms of which language the pupils sit their examinations, and as a result, a concern was noted that some pupils could sit an exam in Welsh as a subject only. It was noted that some pupils chose to sit some subjects e.g. Science and Mathematics through the medium of English, and it was felt that it was necessary to be firmer, as every pupil had received primary education through the medium of Welsh, and therefore there is no reason why that could not continue through the secondary in these subjects.

The challenges faced are maintaining the Welsh language, continuing with the Language Charter in the primary sector and collaborating with non-Welsh parents. It is acknowledged that creativity is needed to offer experiences and new methods of provision. The need to have the authority's support was noted, as schools cannot change the situation on their own.

The importance of ensuring that the English was as good as the English in England was confirmed, and we should be proud that English tests were equal to England. The need to try to get non-Welsh parents to support and market the Welsh language in an improved way through a variety of channels is clear.

7.6 Meeting with Officers from the School of Education, Bangor University

The School of Education hopes to generate the best teachers for Gwynedd. It was reported that teachers' training courses require a GCSE grade B in English language and Mathematics, but that a grade C or higher is required in Welsh. It was noted that if it is decided to set a requirement for a B grade in Welsh as well, fewer students would take the courses, which in turn would lead to a lack of teachers.

Officers from the School of Education noted that bilingual teaching and bilingual teaching methods varied from school to school. Provision during

their time as prospective teachers in the schools include support around the school, linguistic development on the yard and lessons. The University does not promote one method of bilingual teaching as the students must adhere to the language policy of the individual school - it is the individual school's responsibility to set the expectations involving students' bilingual teaching. The University is in partnership with the schools to train prospective teachers, and there are standards that the students must achieve in terms of experience of developing children's skills without Welsh nor English. It was understood that the standards must be achieved to receive the Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) but there is no specific requirements regarding developing children's Welsh-language skills. It was suggested that it was necessary to create a standard for teachers to develop bilingual skills.

The School of Education uses different learning models: one Welsh group, one separate non-Welsh group. Some use 'PowerPoint' and translanguage and others present through the medium of Welsh and English at the same time, and these models are the ones the University practices. It was understood that Cynllun Colegau Cymru trained students by using bilingual teaching modules.

By now, every teacher is expected to conduct the morning register through the medium of Welsh, using bilingual terms.

In terms of the support that is available for prospective Primary teachers, the second language Welsh lecturer will hold language refresher sessions and Occasional Welsh sessions for non-Welsh prospective teachers. For the prospective teachers who follow the bilingual course, training in linguistic aspects of bilingual teaching is provided in one session per week.

In general, students will come to refresher sessions and enjoy them very much. They say that they want the support. It was reported that some Welsh speakers chose to study the course through the medium of English for different reasons - lack of confidence, want to move to England etc.

In response to comments heard by some school headteachers about the quality of some new teachers' language, officers from the School of Education reported on the entry process. The process includes entry tests that are monitored with an assessment at the beginning and end of the course. Punctuation difficulties are often seen, and this will help these students.

The University is currently evaluating the Gwynedd Primary Schools Welsh Language Charter to see how successful it is. The Language Charter's mantra is 'Fire in their bellies' and it seems that people voted with their feet by wanting to study the course through the medium of Welsh. The local schools and the University are doing their best and the children want to learn Welsh. Apparently, the Welsh language needed to be normalised and for people to get used to hearing it, so that people are not afraid of the language.

To ensure the success of Gwynedd Council's Language Policy, officers from the School of Education reported that it was very important to ensure that

pupils achieve the expected levels and are on the same level in Welsh and English, and are of a higher standard in Gwynedd than the rest of Wales. The need to be aware of the individual child at all times was noted, and it was necessary to be more careful with those who did not have the same ability.

7.7 Consulting with Governors

Not enough responses to the Governors' questionnaires were received to interpret their opinions (**Appendix 24**). However, the headteachers of the schools were of the opinion that most Governors supported the Welsh language, but this is not true across the county. It was understood that there are some Governors who are responsible for the Welsh language but the term champion is not often used. It was suggested that there was room to educate Governors on their responsibilities, and on the requirements of the Language Policy and to hold them accountable for the Policy's implementation.

7.8 Parents' Opinion

The parents of pupils were consulted with through an online questionnaire on the Gwynedd Council and Gwynedd Ni websites. A message was sent to headteachers of the schools with a link to questionnaires and hard copies were sent to the schools that asked for them. Also, the consultation was advertised on the Council's website and in the press.

The work was completed during June and July 2015.

233 questionnaires were received across the three catchment areas. The table below shows the number of questionnaires received per catchment area and the percentage of responses against school population in the Arudwy, Bangor and Botwnnog catchment areas.

	Arudwy Catchment Area	Bangor Catchment Area	Botwnnog Catchment Area	Outside catchment areas of the scrutiny investigation
Parents with children in Primary only	22	51	31	5
Parents with children in Secondary only	1	37		8
Parents with children in Primary and Secondary	11	54	10	0
Did not name a school	-	-	1	2
Total Questionnaires	34	141	50	8
Percentage of responses against	0.04%	0.05%	0.04%	

school population				
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Analyses of the responses to the questionnaires for parents can be seen in **Appendix 25 – Results of Parents’ Questionnaire.**

Only a small number of questionnaires were received for the three areas and it should be remembered that they are not representative of the parents of these areas. The evidence collected by the parents varies. It was found that most were convinced of the advantages of bilingual education for their children, with a small number of the opinion that the policy should enable schools to teach through the medium of Welsh, teaching the Welsh language as a subject only.

It is clear that the information received by parents in the Bangor catchment area shows a low level of awareness of the school’s Language Policy, the Language Charter and the advantages of bilingualism. Based on the question, ‘Do you believe that the school manages to achieve the aim of ensuring that pupils have skills/abilities that are concurrent in Welsh and English?’ it was seen that a significantly lower number in the Bangor catchment area believed that schools successfully achieved this aim.

Language Policy

The following question was asked: ‘Are you aware of the School’s Language Policy and do you understand it?’. The results show that 77.68% of parents who answered the question were aware of the school’s Language Policy. In terms of the individual catchment areas in question, the following percentages of those who answered the question were aware of the School’s Language Policy and understood it:

- 85% - Ardudwy Catchment Area
- 71% - Bangor Catchment Area
- 88% - Botwnnog Catchment Area

The Advantages of Bilingualism

83.69% of all parents who answered the relevant question in the questionnaire were convinced of the advantages of bilingual education for their children. In terms of the individual catchment areas in question, the following percentages of those who answered the question were aware of the advantages of bilingual education:

- 85% - Ardudwy Catchment Area
- 80% - Bangor Catchment Area
- 90% - Botwnnog Catchment Area

The Language Charter

The questionnaire for parents asked the question ‘Are you aware of the Language Charter which is used in all primary schools in Gwynedd?’ (Parents who only had children in secondary schools were not expected to be aware of

the Language Charter). The figures below include the responses of parents who had children in primary schools only. Across the three catchment areas, 57.51% were aware of the Language Charter. In terms of the individual catchment areas in question, the following percentages were aware of the Language Charter which is used in all primary schools in Gwynedd:

- 71% - Arduwy Catchment Area
- 52% - Bangor Catchment Area
- 62% - Botwnnog Catchment Area

Support from schools

Across the three catchment areas, the following results show how much and how the schools help parents to support their children to achieve the expected levels in Welsh and English:

	Responses	Number of questionnaires - 233
Provide verbal information or correspondence on the advantages of bilingualism	105	45.06%
Discussion on the expected levels that my child(ren) must achieve	142	60.94%
Discussion about the assistance I need in order to help my child(ren) to reach the expected levels	97	41.63%
Other	52	22.32%

It was seen that parents had had the opportunity to discuss with schools the following matters which involve the Welsh language:

	Responses	Number of questionnaires - 233
The support available to my child(ren) at the Language Centres	30	12.88%
The support available to my child(ren) at school	55	23.61%
The Welsh language skills of my child(ren)	113	48.50%
Local Welsh lessons for parents	34	14.59%
The School's Language Policy	71	30.47%
The Language Charter that the primary schools have	46	19.74%
Teaching Welsh as a subject	61	26.18%
Teaching other subjects through the medium of Welsh	60	25.75%
Other	48	20.60%

Skills / abilities that are as good in Welsh and English

Across the three areas, data for the question 'Do you believe that the school manages to achieve the aim of ensuring that pupils have skills/abilities that are concurrent in Welsh and English?' showed that 39.91% believed that schools managed to achieve, with 41.20% believing that they do not manage to achieve, 14.16% not knowing and 4.72% unanswered.

In terms of the individual catchment areas, the following percentages believed that the schools managed to achieve the aim of ensuring that pupils have skills/abilities that are concurrent in Welsh and English:

	Ardudwy Catchment Area	Bangor Catchment Area	Botwnnog Catchment Area	Outside catchment areas of the scrutiny investigation
Believed that they manage to achieve	41%	34%	56%	43%
Believed that they do not manage to achieve	38%	48%	24%	57%
Did not know / no answer	21%	18%	20%	0%

Analysis of the additional observations received

Ardudwy Catchment Area

A small number of additional observations were received from parents in the Ardudwy catchment area.

- 6 observations were received regarding seeing advantages in learning Welsh and 6 observations stating that subjects should be taught through the medium of English and Welsh taught as a subject. The parents were concerned that subjects like mathematics and some other subjects were suffering as a result of them being taught through the medium of Welsh.
- 3 observations were received stating that children should be given the choice whether to receive their education through the medium of Welsh or English.

Bangor Catchment Area

- 32 observations agreed / saw advantages in bilingual teaching.
- 17 observations were made stating that the Welsh language and the advantages of bilingualism needed to be promoted and develop confidence in the use of Welsh and hold lively Welsh activities/promote the Urdd.
- 16 observations were made stating that Gwynedd Council's Language Policy needed to be strengthened and ensure that every school in Gwynedd adhered to the Policy.

- 11 observations were made stating that the parents were happy or very happy with their children's development.
- 14 observations were received regarding the need to give children a choice whether to receive their educations through the medium of Welsh or English.
- 9 observations stated that there was too much focus on Welsh and that Welsh should not be pushed.
- 5 negative observations about the Language Policy were received.
- 10 observations were made stating that an equal amount between Welsh and English should be ensured.
- 7 observations were received stating that English lessons should be started earlier in Primary Schools.
- 7 observations were made stating that Mathematics, Science and some other subjects should be taught through the medium of English.
- 5 observations were received stating that lessons should be taught through the medium of English and Welsh only taught as a subject.
- 5 observations were made stating that the Welsh language is an essential part of Welsh culture.
- 5 observations were received stating that all school staff and volunteers should be speaking Welsh with children and that teachers' standard of Welsh should be improved.
- 6 observations were received regarding the fact that parents needed bilingual help and information to enable them to help their children.

Botwnnog Catchment Area

- 32 observations were received supporting bilingual education.
- 8 observations stated that there was too much focus on the Welsh language and that Welsh was being pushed and English downgraded and that English also needed to be promoted.
- 5 observations were made stating that children's Welsh needed to be improved and that more Welsh needed to be heard on the school yard.
- 3 observations were made stating that every school needed to fully implement the Language Policy and that more publicity should be given to the Policy.

Observations outside catchment areas of the scrutiny investigation brief:

- 8 observations were received stating that the Language Policy needed to be strengthened and supported and ensure that every school adhered to it.
- 3 observations were made stating that the current Language Policy was not bilingual and that the English also needed to be promoted.

7.9 Children and Young People's Opinions

IAITH: The Welsh Centre for Language Planning was commissioned to conduct focus groups with pupils of primary and secondary schools to gather information about their experiences and opinions on Welsh medium education

and their use of the language in schools. The work was completed during June and July 2015.

A total of 18 focus groups (see **Appendix 26**) were held with pupils from the Foundation Phase (Year 2), KS2 (Year 6), KS3 (Year 9¹) and KS4 (Year 10²) in six primary schools and four secondary schools.

The schools were selected by Council officers in consultation with members of the scrutiny investigation to offer a range in the sample in terms of the school size, area and language profile of pupils and the local community, as follows:

Ardudwy Catchment Area

- Ysgol Cefn Coch
- Ysgol Tan y Castell
- Ysgol Ardudwy

Bangor Catchment Area

- Ysgol Glancegin
- Ysgol Cae Top
- Ysgol Tryfan
- Ysgol Friars

Botwnnog Catchment Area

- Ysgol Nefyn
- Ysgol Sarn Bach
- Ysgol Botwnnog

The pupils were selected at random jointly between the schools and the IAITH team. 63 pupils contributed to the primary schools focus groups. Of these, 38 were girls and 25 were boys. 20 of the primary school pupils came from English homes³, 16 from Welsh homes and 27 from bilingual homes⁴. Of the 50 secondary school pupils, there were 25 girls and 25 boys. Of these, 26 came from Welsh homes, 15 from English homes and nine from bilingual homes (Welsh and English). Every focus group was held in Welsh. A sound recording was made of the discussion, with the permission of the contributors, as a basis for the written record.

A series of questions and activities were prepared to stimulate a discussion and record language use, the perceptions and opinions of pupils on:

- language use patterns in the school;
- perceptions about their ability and confidence in Welsh and English;
- findings about the advantages of bilingualism / multilingualism;
- awareness of, and contribution to the Language Charter and its influence on them.

Whilst the core questions of the focus groups were consistent for each group, the questions and tasks were adapted to correspond with the age of the

pupils. A summary of the data collected per school and key stage is included in the report.

It must be borne in mind that the evidence gathered from the pupils is self-reported evidence. Although they were selected randomly, the pupils are not necessarily a representation of the school's population. Additionally, it must be considered that the pupils have not given a full and detailed picture of every aspect of the use of language in the school within the limitations of a focus group's discussion. When the words of the pupils are in quotations, we have not corrected linguistic errors.

The data from the 18 focus groups that were held in six primary schools and four secondary schools with KS1, KS2, KS3 and KS4 pupils provides a snapshot of the pupils' viewpoint on some of the issues involving implementing the Council's language policy.

Whilst there are headteachers and teachers who are able to speak Welsh and embrace the Welsh Language, there are a number of schools where the Welsh language environment of the school is influenced by the lack of ability to speak Welsh by some assistants and other staff. The Welsh environment of some schools could be strengthened by offering support for current staff to learn Welsh and to establish the language requirements of posts when appointing new staff.

In the primary schools group, evidence was gathered on the main pattern of language use of the whole class. In the secondary schools group, every pupil was asked to record his/her own individual experience of the use of the language in maths, science and other lessons. See the tables showing the Use of Language in Secondary Lessons in **Appendix 27**, that provide a more detailed picture per school of bilingualism in action when learning and teaching.

For some pupils, the practice of speaking English with friends and at every opportunity outside the classroom is very strong and in some schools more than others. The tendency for children from non-Welsh speaking families, to restrict their use of Welsh to a range of restricted teaching contexts is a general phenomenon. Research shows that there is a tendency for boys particularly to reject behaviour (including language behaviour) that is forced upon them by authority figures and this escalates during the teenage years.

In general, pupils supported the Welsh language. The data of the focus groups suggest that there are negative values towards the Welsh language from some pupils from non-Welsh backgrounds in some schools. It was also highlighted that pupils were not necessarily included in discussions regarding the Language Charter nor were they given an opportunity to offer their own ideas for the language practices in the school. It was also seen that criticising and punishing children for speaking English was counterproductive. Holding language awareness sessions and including the pupils in discussions on language practices in the school would be a means of responding to any

negative values and to foster the pupils' ownership of the school's language policy.

The number of pupils who consider that they have equally proficient skills in Welsh and English in every aspect of their lives is comparatively small. This does not necessarily signify a lack of success of the Language Policy. The linguistic skills of pupils are honed by daily social practices outside the school as well as their educational experiences. There is no foundation to the assumption that a bilingual person should possess the same 'level' in the Welsh language and the English language in every context such as a monoglot English individual would.

The use of Welsh and English when teaching and learning is mixed with some schools and some teachers making more use of both languages than others. More detailed research is required in order to contribute to the discussion regarding defining what is meant by bilingual education and check to what extent teachers translanguage intentionally and effectively to develop every pupil's bilingual abilities.

A number of recommendations were made by the Welsh Centre for Language Planning and they have been incorporated in the recommendations of this report.

8. Recommendations

Following giving detailed consideration to the background documents, the data and all the evidence collected the following recommendations are made:

Measureable Recommendations	Area	Responsibility	The possible measure / Outcome
1. To strengthen and reconcile the Council's (Education) Language Policy, the Council should define what bilingual learning is and collaborate with schools and teacher training institutions to establish a strong bilingual pedagogy which is appropriate for all the Authority's schools and pupils and to nurture translanguage skills amongst staff.	Policy	Education Department	A) The revised Policy Language in place.
2. In order to strengthen and reconcile the Council's (Education) Language Policy, there	Policy	Education Department (Gwynedd Secondary	A) The Education Department has ensured a standard linguistic definition

<p>is a need to clearly define the linguistic nature of all Gwynedd secondary schools so that it is clear to all stakeholders what is the linguistic nature of schools and by holding the schools and the Governors accountable for its implementation.</p>		<p>School Headteachers)</p>	<p>for every secondary school and made it clear to all stakeholders. B) All school governors have received training to ensure their understanding of the linguistic definition of the schools and the requirements of the language policy. C) The Education Department operates a robust monitoring arrangement to ensure that all secondary schools comply with the definition and Language Policy (Education) of the County.</p>
<p>3. To try to increase the number of pupils who are fostering proficiency skills in both Welsh and English, the Council should collaborate with schools to amalgamate the policy to develop proficient bilingual skills with the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework.</p>	<p>Policy (Implementation)</p>	<p>Education Department</p>	<p>A) Implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework corresponds with the Language Policy (Education).</p>
<p>4. It should be ensured that English exam results are as good as the Welsh exam results as this in turn will ensure the success of the Language Policy.</p>	<p>Policy (Implementation)</p>		<p>A) The Governors and the Council monitor examination results in detail and regularly.</p>
<p>5. To maintain and develop pupils' Welsh language skills in accordance with the Language Policy, Ysgol</p>	<p>Policy (Implementation)</p>	<p>Ysgol Friars / Education Department</p>	<p>A) The Council supports Ysgol Friars regularly to make further progress in the use</p>

<p>Friars should, with Council support, identify opportunities to make further progress in the use of the Welsh language across the curriculum and life of the school.</p>			<p>of the Welsh language across the curriculum and life of the school.</p> <p>B) The Council has ensured the understanding of the Governors and have established a robust monitoring procedure.</p> <p>C) The Services Scrutiny Committee has programmed its work to monitor the situation on a regular basis.</p>
<p>6. Ensure that the Governors of every school in Gwynedd receive training on the requirements of the Language Policy.</p>	<p>Training</p>	<p>Education Department</p>	<p>A) Every Governor has received training on the requirements of the Language Policy.</p>
<p>7. To strengthen the Welsh language environment of the schools, the Council should ensure support for assistants and ancillary staff to learn Welsh, understand the requirements of the Language Charter, and receive Language Awareness training.</p>	<p>Training</p>	<p>Education Department</p>	<p>A) The Council has established a training programme for assistants and ancillary staff to learn the Welsh language, understand the requirements of the Language Charter and language awareness.</p>
<p>8. To standardize the Council's (Education) Language Policy across the county, there is a need to ensure that all Gwynedd schools adhere to the Policy holding the schools and Governors accountable for its implementation.</p>	<p>Monitoring and accountability</p>	<p>Education Department</p>	<p>A) The Council has set up a regular monitoring procedure.</p> <p>B) The Services Scrutiny Committee has scrutinised relevant data on a regular basis to ensure implementation of the (Education) Language Policy.</p>
<p>9. To try to increase the</p>	<p>Monitoring</p>	<p>Primary /</p>	<p>A) A monitoring</p>

<p>number of pupils who are fostering proficiency skills in both Welsh and English, the Council should collaborate with schools to establish the practice of every subject teacher in the primary and secondary sectors monitoring and reporting on the development of every pupil's Welsh and English skills in progress reports and discussing their development with pupils and their parents during parent evenings.</p>	<p>and accountability</p>	<p>Secondary Schools</p>	<p>procedure is in place for each subject teacher to prepare progress reports (primary and secondary) on the development of Welsh and English skills of every pupil. B) The progress reports have been discussed with the pupils and parents.</p>
<p>10. Ensure robust linguistic progression between KS2, KS3, KS4 and KS5 by implementing consistent and appropriate monitoring methods which would also track language medium across the curriculum.</p> <p>(Recommendation of ESTYN Report November 2014: “track the percentages per school of key stage 4 pupils who follow courses through the medium of Welsh and set targets to increase this according to the objectives of their Welsh-medium education strategy”.</p>	<p>Monitoring and accountability</p>	<p>Education Department / Primary / Secondary Schools</p>	<p>A) The Council has ensured a robust procedure is in place for monitoring the linguistic progression and also for the tracking of language medium across the curriculum by reporting regularly to the Services Scrutiny Committee.</p>
<p>11. Clarity and consistency should be ensured in the schools' bilingual teaching methods by fostering translanguaging skills among staff and defining clearly what</p>	<p>Bilingual teaching</p>	<p>Education Department</p>	<p>A) The Council has established a suitable training programme for teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bilingual teaching - And build translanguaging skills

<p>bilingual learning is and providing details on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) how much Welsh and English should be used to teach ii) language used by pupils to write in bilingual lessons iii) what are the expectations in terms of using Welsh/English in classroom conversations and discussions. 			
<p>12. Ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the Language Charter is used in every primary school in Gwynedd ii) good practices are shared between schools on implementing the Language Charter and supporting and encouraging pupils' use of Welsh in a constructive manner iii) there are better opportunities for pupils to use the internet through the medium of Welsh to support one of the Language Charter's objectives. Schools should make more extensive use of Welsh websites and online materials and resources. Schools should be supported to achieve this where appropriate. 	<p>Social use of the Welsh language by children and young people</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council (Education Department/ Hunaniaith)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) The Council regularly monitors the implementation of the Language Charter in the County's primary schools, and provides support to the schools. B) The Council and the schools are creating opportunities. C) The Council provides support to schools to enable pupils to make greater use of the Welsh websites and online resources.
<p>13. Some of the Scrutiny Investigation's findings appear in the Trywydd report and it is recommended that the Council and the Schools act on the</p>	<p>Social use of the Welsh language by children and young people</p>	<p>Gwynedd Council (Education Department / Leisure / Youth Service /</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) The Council has established an action plan to respond to recommendations of the Trywydd report.

recommendations in the report.		Hunaniaith)	
14. To ensure that the Welsh language is not pushed on pupils in a forceful manner, schools should include the pupils in discussions on: iv) the Language Policy v) the Language Charter vi) the school's language practices and ensure their ownership of the policy. Every school should ensure that there are opportunities for pupils to understand and discuss the advantages of bilingualism, multilingualism and recognition of the Welsh language.	Involving pupils	Primary / Secondary Schools	A) The pupils are involved in discussions about the Language Policy, the Language Charter and the language practice of the school. B) Processes in place to ensure pupils' ownership of the policy. C) Opportunities have been established for pupils to understand and discuss the benefits of bilingualism, multilingualism and embrace the Welsh language.
15. In order to keep students, who are trying for a second degree, in Wales, the Services Scrutiny Committee should lobby the Welsh Government to provide a grant for the second degree as well as is happening in England.	Student Grants		A) The Services Scrutiny Committee has lobbied the Welsh Government to provide a grant for the second degree.
16. The advantages of bilingualism should be promoted and marketed in collaboration with every school across the county, with schools also marketing those advantages on their websites, among parents and pupils.	The benefits of bilingualism		A) The Council has conducted a review to identify opportunities to market the benefits of bilingualism. B) The Council has established a system to monitor that all schools in the County are marketing those benefits on their websites, among

			parents and pupils.
17. The Council should celebrate the successes of the county's schools and pupils (that test results in Welsh and English are as good as each other) and ensure that all schools raise awareness of those successes on the school website.	The benefits of bilingualism		A) The Council has established a system to celebrate the successes of the schools and pupils of the County via the latest popular methods. B) The schools have posted the successes on the school's website.
18. To support pupils from non-Welsh homes to support the Welsh language, schools and the Council should develop methods (such as Language Awareness sessions, chats with prospective pupils/parents, etc.), to establish attitudes which puts a value on the Welsh language and bilingualism. It should be ensured that existing good practices are shared.	The benefits of bilingualism		A) The Council has established a programme of language awareness sessions. B) The schools have a procedure in place to hold conversations with prospective pupils / parents. C) The Council has shared good practice with all the schools across the County.
19. To strengthen the Welsh language environment of the schools, the Council should strengthen the procedure of establishing the language requirements of posts in schools when appointing new staff.	Staff Appointment Procedures	Education Department	A) The Council has established a robust procedure for the appointment of new staff.
20. It should be ensured that every school makes full use of the Language Centres, ensuring every school's accountability for implementing the after-care packages.	Language Centres / Monitoring and accountability	Primary / Secondary Schools	A) The Council monitors the use of Language Centres and the operation of the after-care packages on a regular basis.
21. The Council should consider establishing a specific Language	Language Centres	Gwynedd Council / Welsh	A) The Council in conjunction with the Welsh Government

Centre for the Bangor catchment area in order to support the implementation and delivery of the Language Policy.		Government	has given full consideration to the establishment of a specific Language Centre for the catchment area of Bangor.
22. Ensure that good practices are shared between the Language Centres and the schools.	Language Centres	Language Centres / Primary / Secondary Schools	A) The Council and the Language Centres share good practice with all the schools on a regular basis.
23. The Council should consider establishing a specific provision of immersion education for the Ysgol Ardudwy (and schools located in similar demographic catchment areas) in order to support the implementation and delivery of the Language Policy.	Immersion education	Gwynedd Council / Welsh Government	A) The Council in conjunction with the Welsh Government has given full consideration to the establishment of immersion education provision at Ysgol Ardudwy (and others).
24. The Council should discuss with Bangor University the possibility of setting a specific standard to develop skills in Welsh and a standard to develop bilingual skills for prospective teachers as part of the standards for a Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).	Bangor University		A) The Council has discussed and has come to an agreement with Bangor University.

9. Report back

9.1 Members of the scrutiny investigation appreciate that any action will be a matter for the Cabinet Member but they are eager for the Scrutiny Committee to receive a report on its response to the recommendations at its next meeting along with a progress report within 6 months.

9.2 It was agreed to present the report to the Language Committee following the Scrutiny Committee.

Acknowledgement

We wish to thank the following for providing evidence, valuable information and their willing cooperation:

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Gwynedd Ni

Headteachers from the Bangor Catchment Area

Headteachers of Ardudwy, Botwnnog, Friars and Tryfan Secondary Schools

Headteachers of Nefyn, Tan y Castell, Dyffryn Ardudwy and Thalsarnau, Cae Top, and Hirael Primary Schools

Primary Headteachers from the Botwnnog Catchment Area

Headteachers of Primary and Secondary Sector Language Centres

Primary School Language Co-ordinators

Secondary School Language Co-ordinators

Lecturers from the School of Education, Bangor University