

CYNGOR GWYNEDD: EDUCATION LANGUAGE POLICY IN GWYNEDD SCHOOLS.

Introduction:

This document consists of two parts:

1. Cyngor Gwynedd's Education Language Policy (2026).
2. Proposed guidance for headteachers and governors regarding the meeting of the requirement by Cyngor Gwynedd and the Welsh Government that, under the conditions of the *Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025*, each governing body provide a Language Education Policy together with a Welsh Language Education Delivery Plan. Cyngor Gwynedd's strong recommendation is that all schools in the county use the wording of Gwynedd Council's Model Education Language Policy. That meets the requirement in the new law for all governing bodies to pay due attention to the local authority's Education Language Policy when drawing up their Welsh Education Delivery Plan. Cyngor Gwynedd's role is to approve each governing body's Welsh Education Delivery Plan as well as monitoring its implementation.

Context:

Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Strategy 2023-2033:

Cyngor Gwynedd's Education Language Policy is a core part of Cyngor Gwynedd's Language Strategy and is in line with the strategy's central priority, which is to maintain and empower the Welsh language. The aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils in Gwynedd, by the end of their period of statutory education, have sound skills in Welsh and English. This ensures the prosperity of the Welsh language in the communities of the County and ensures pupils of Gwynedd step confidently into a multilingual world.

The aim of the wider policy is *“to create an inclusive strategy with the main aim of increasing opportunities for all residents of Gwynedd to see and use the Welsh language in a wide range of different contexts. By working on raising the status and increasing people's use of the language in all parts of their lives, we will increase the incentive for others to learn the language. We want to pay particular attention to young people's language use over the coming years, including highlighting their use of Welsh with technology, showing them the value of the language as a skill in the world of work, and increasing the informal opportunities for them to use Welsh in their daily lives.”*

1: Cyngor Gwynedd's Education Language Policy (2026)

1.1: Pre –school provision

Welsh is the medium of education for maintained pre-school provision throughout Gwynedd. This formative stage is crucial in introducing children to the Welsh language through play and natural experiences, providing a strong foundation for language acquisition and use.

1.2: Primary Schools

All primary schools in Gwynedd, except for the *transitional school, provide 'Main Language – Welsh' education, corresponding to Category 3 schools according to the current definition of school language categories.

Foundation Phase up to Year 2

- Welsh is the only medium of education, assessment, and extra-curricular activities.
- Sustained and purposeful opportunities for pupils to use Welsh within lessons, across the wider school environment, and in social contexts are provided.

Provision for New Speakers:

- Schools ensure that all new speakers from Year 2 onwards access the Immersion Regime, supporting full engagement with the curriculum.

Years 3–6:

- A minimum of 80% of all pupils' education, assessment and extra-curricular activities are provided through the medium of Welsh.
- English is delivered as a subject, and as a medium for certain tasks within specific work units determined by the school, in accordance with the school's Delivery Plan.

Provision for New Speakers:

- Schools ensure that all pupils who are new speakers (Years 3 - 6) access the Immersion Regime to ensure full access to the curriculum.

Welsh is the language of internal communication in Gwynedd's primary schools. Communication with parents and carers is always in Welsh or bilingual, as required.

Every school has a Welsh ethos.

1.3: Secondary Schools

All secondary schools in Gwynedd, except for two *transitional schools, provide 'Main Language – Welsh' education, which corresponds to Category 3 schools according to the current school language classification system.

- A minimum of 80% of all pupils' education, assessment and extra-curricular activities are delivered through the medium of Welsh.
- English is delivered as a subject, and as a medium for certain tasks within specific work units determined by the school, in accordance with the school's Delivery Plan.

Provision for New Speakers:

- Schools ensure that all pupils who are new speakers (Years 7 - 9) are referred to the Immersion Regime to ensure full participation in the curriculum.
- Schools provide appropriate support to new speakers who register during years 10 and 11, in accordance with the School's Delivery Plan.

Welsh is the medium of internal communication in Gwynedd's secondary schools. Communication with parents and carers is in Welsh or bilingual, as required.

Each school has a Welsh ethos.

1.4: Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

Learners with ALN receive an equal linguistic opportunity to receive education through the medium of Welsh in accordance with this policy. The provision set out in each Individual Development Plan (IDP) is implemented in the appropriate medium, in full compliance with the Additional Learning Needs and Tribunal for Wales Act (2018) and the Equality Act (2010).

*Transitional Schools:

Primary: Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes. Bangor

Secondary: Ysgol Friars, Bangor ac Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn

Our long-term vision is for all schools in Gwynedd to become Primary Welsh Language Schools in accordance with the latest legislation. Cyngor Gwynedd is committed to supporting schools in achieving this objective.