

Agenda – Children, Young People and Education Committee

Meeting Venue:

Hybrid – Committee room 2 Senedd
and video conference via Zoom

Meeting date: 24 October 2024

Meeting time: 10.30

For further information contact:

Naomi Stocks

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

SeneddChildren@senedd.wales

Hybrid

Private pre-meeting

(10.15 – 10.30)

Public meeting

(10.30)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(10.30)

2 Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill – evidence session 16

(10.30 – 12.30)

(Pages 1 – 48)

Mark Drakeford MS, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language

Bethan Webb, Deputy Director, Cymraeg 2050

Sioned Tobias, Lawyer, Welsh Government

Attached Documents:

Research Brief

Survey findings

3 Papers to note

(12.30)



3.1 Children and Young People on the margins

(Pages 49 – 51)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee from the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip and Minister for Children and Social Care

3.2 Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill

(Pages 52 – 65)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language

3.3 Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement

(Page 66)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee from the Cabinet Secretary for Education

3.4 Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill

(Page 67)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language

3.5 Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill

(Pages 68 – 72)

Attached Documents:

Additional information from Estyn following the evidence session on 02 October 2024

3.6 P-06-1403 Reconsider cuts to Postgraduate funding and increase Doctoral Loans to match UKRI Stipend

(Pages 73 – 74)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee, Chair of the Finance Committee and the Chair of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee from the Chair of the Petitions Committee

3.7 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025–26

(Pages 75 – 80)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee to the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, the Minister for Children and Social Care and the Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing

3.8 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025–26

(Pages 81 – 91)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Minister for Further and Higher Education

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of this meeting and for the whole of the meeting on 6 November

(12.30)

Private meeting

(12.30)

Break

(12.30 – 12.45)

5 Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill – consideration of the key issues

(12.45 – 13.30)

Document is Restricted

Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill

Survey findings

October 2024

Background

1. As part of the Children, Young People and Education Committee's consultation on the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill, a survey was conducted to gather the views of children and young people who attend English-medium schools in Wales on learning Welsh at school.

Method

2. A self-completion survey was open for approximately a four week period, between Monday, 2 September – Friday, 27 September 2024. The survey was available to complete online, and in paper format upon request.

3. A self-completion survey allowed respondents a degree of anonymity that other engagement methods, such as face-to-face, interviewer administered surveys, would not. All quotes which appear in this paper are anonymised, with any identifiable information removed.

4. To compile this paper, an analysis of a complete data set was conducted. All data can be sourced to individual responses and further analysis can be undertaken upon request.

Audience

5. The survey was designed to capture the views of children and young people who attend English-medium schools in Wales.



6. Given the amount of time available to complete this engagement work, and the proximity to the start of the school term, a focused approach to promotion was taken. The survey was shared with existing contacts who work with children and young people in English-medium settings. The survey was also promoted by the Senedd’s Education team during scheduled sessions with school groups, both in the Senedd and as part of their outreach work. The Senedd’s Front of House team also promoted the survey during tours and sessions booked by appropriate groups.

7. We would like to thank everyone who shared their views with us.

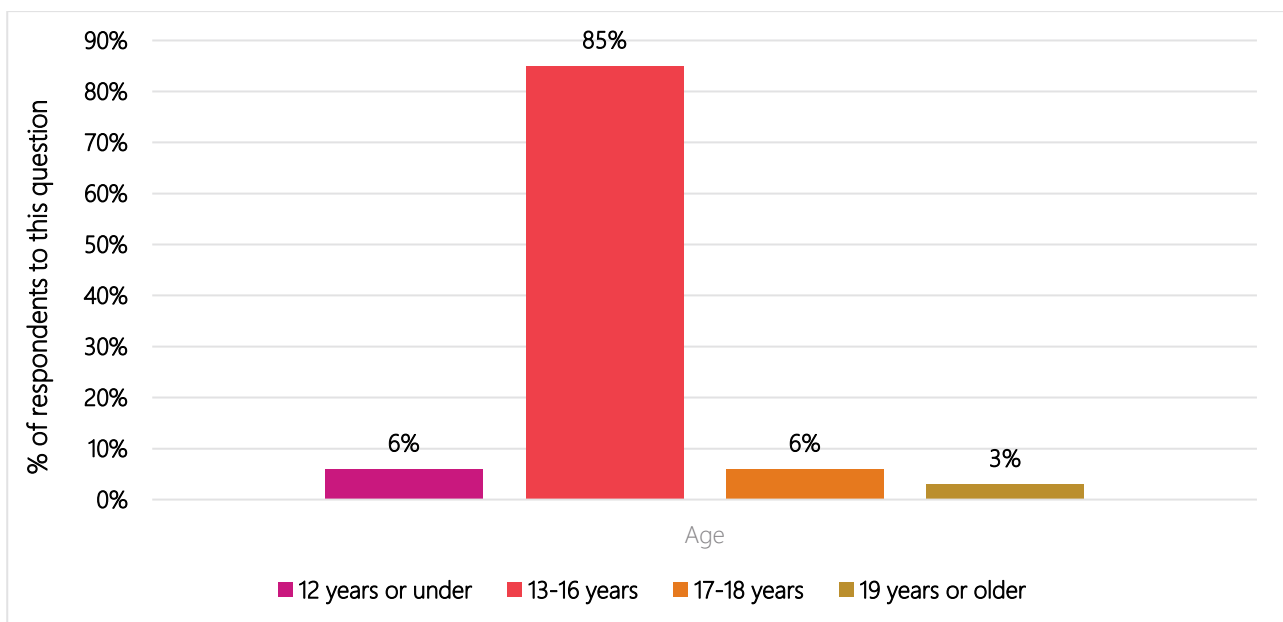
Findings

8. The survey comprised 12 questions and was split into 3 sections. 35 responses were received to the survey. 2 responses were not eligible to continue with the survey due to age or not attending an English-medium setting.

9. On average, the survey took 5 minutes and 19 seconds to complete. All responses were received online.

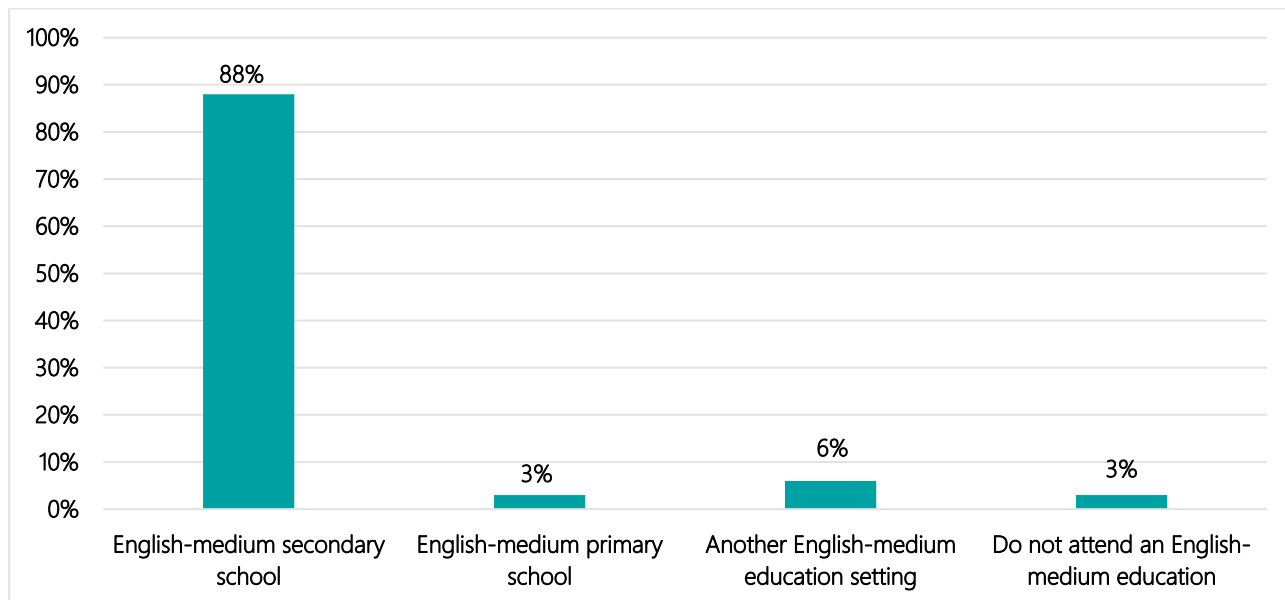
Age

10. 30 respondents (85%) to this question were **13-16 years of age**. 2 respondents (6%) were **12 years or under**. 2 respondents (6%) were aged **17-18 years of age**. 1 respondent (3%) was aged **19 years or older** and was not eligible to continue with the survey.



Do you attend an English – medium education setting?

11. 30 respondents (88%) to this question said they attended an English-medium secondary school. 1 respondent (3%) said they attended an English-medium primary school. 2 respondents (6%) said they attended another type of English-medium education. 1 respondent (3%) said they didn't attend an English-medium setting and was not eligible to continue with the survey.



Where do you live?

12. Responses were received from 5 local authority areas. 2 respondents answered 'Other' to this question and 2 respondents chose not to answer.

13. 21 respondents (64%) to this question said they lived in Bridgend, 4 respondents (12%) were from Swansea, 2 respondents (6%) said they lived in Flintshire, 1 respondent (3%) was from Rhondda Cynon Taf, and 1 respondent (3%) said they lived in Neath Port Talbot.

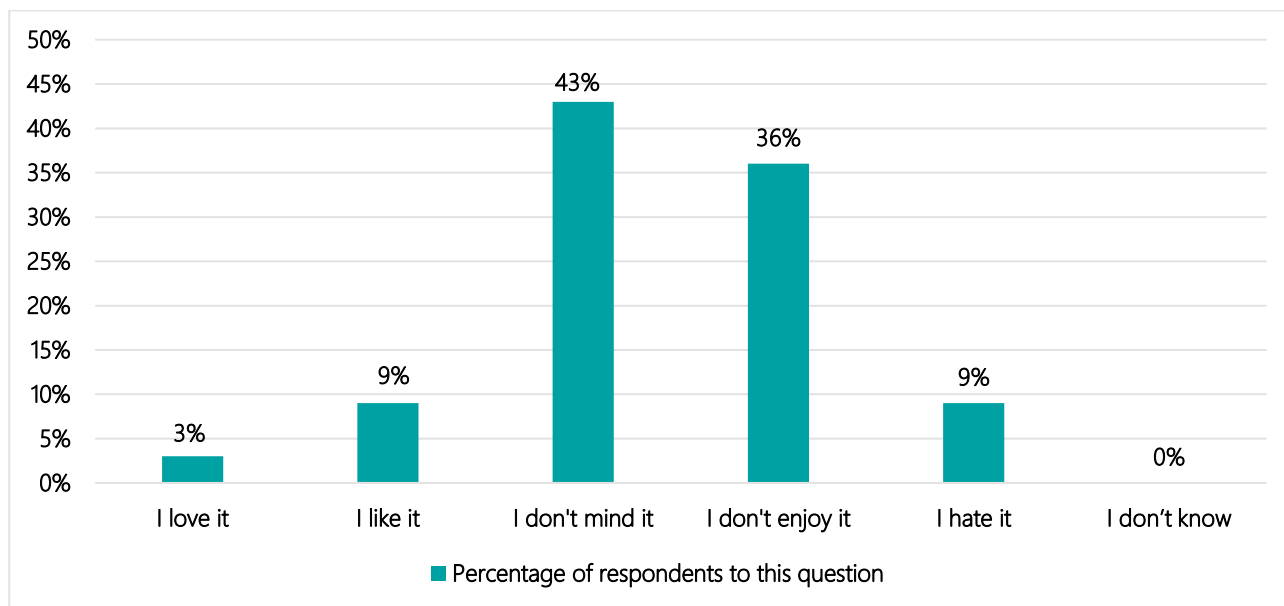
Learning Welsh

14. Questions 5 and 6 sought to explore the respondent's personal experience of learning Welsh in school.

15. Which of the following best describes your opinion of learning a subject in Welsh?

14 respondents (43%) to this question said they didn't mind learning a subject in Welsh, with 12 respondents (36%) answering that they didn't enjoy it. 3 respondents (9%) liked learning a

subject in Welsh and 3 (9%) **hated** it. 1 respondent (3%) answered that they **loved** learning a subject in Welsh.



Tell us why you gave this answer

16. The respondent who answered 'I love it' said:

"It is fun learning new languages."

17. The respondents who answered 'I like it' said:

"Although it's not my favourite I still enjoy learning about my country's language and being able to speak it."

"Well it is difficult and it is not my first language"

18. Of those who answered 'I don't mind it', some found the language difficult:

"I like it but I find it a little bit hard."

"It's difficult for me to do."

"It can be difficult with spelling and pronunciation - English is easier."

19. Others felt more positive about learning Welsh:

“Because it's important to know because some jobs require people knowing Welsh but the lessons aren't exactly fun.”

“I think it's good that we have our own language, however not many people speak it here.”

“I think it is a good skill to have another language.”

“It is fun to change up the language every now and then.”

20. Other comments from those who answered ‘I don't mind it’ included:

“I like the subject Welsh, but I'm not sure how I would feel if other subjects started teaching it in Welsh.”

“The topics we do are not topics that you would use in a conversation and are really odd.”

“I don't speak Welsh but I don't hate it.”

“It's ok but I wouldn't choose to do it in my own time.”

“Welsh isn't exactly the most exciting or boring subject.”

21. Of those who answered 'I don't enjoy it', finding the language difficult was also a theme:

“Because it would be easier in English.”

“I find it hard to understand and to speak and write it.”

“I find it harder to learn than other subjects and more confusing.”

“Because its hard and confusing.”

“It's pretty boring and hard as I've just moved schools so it's a lot harder in this school.”

“Because I'm not good at it.”

22. Others felt learning the language was boring:

“It's boring.”

“I find Welsh boring and complicated.”

“I don’t enjoy leaning Welsh because I find it boring and I prefer to speak English.”

23. One respondent didn’t feel it was necessary to learn Welsh:

“Because I find it unnecessary if the main language is English. If we used it more often, or certain areas of our part of Wales spoke more of it, I would understand.”

24. The respondents who answered ‘I hate it’ also made reference to the language being boring and not understanding it:

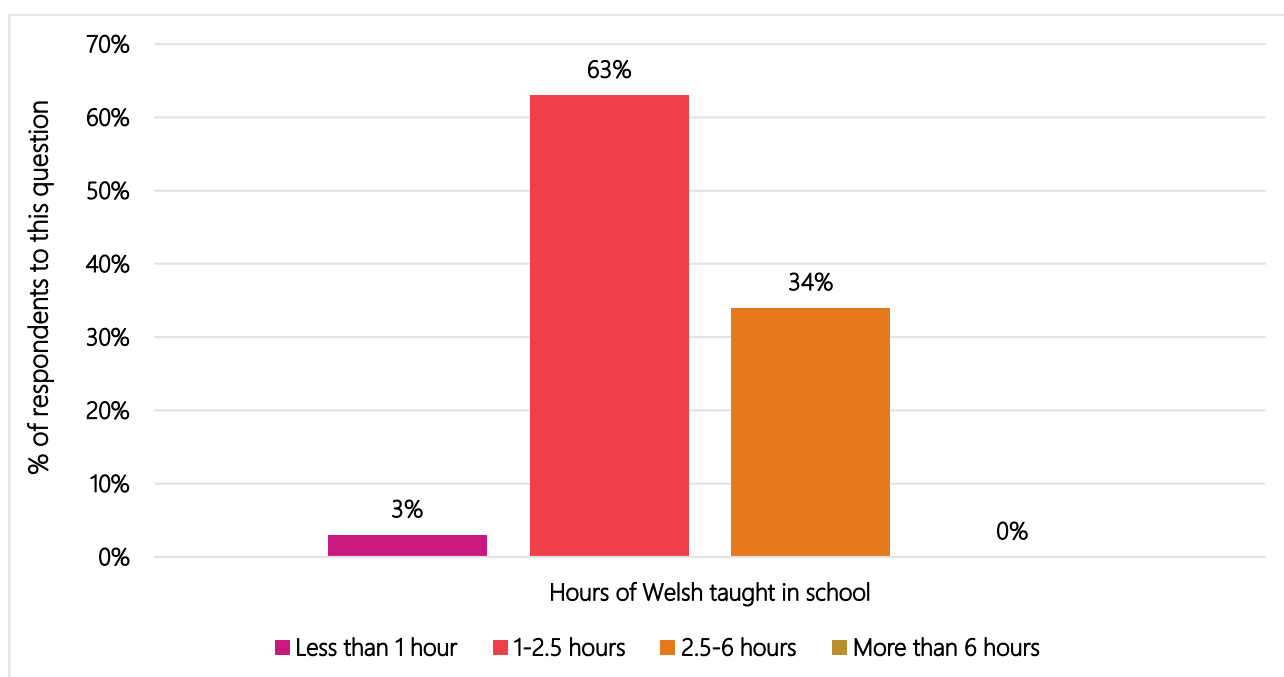
“It is boring.”

“I don’t really understand Welsh that well.”

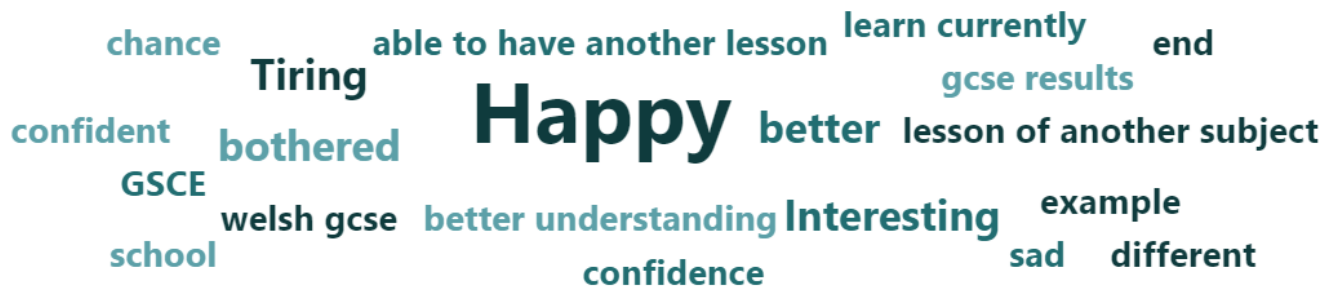
How many hours a week are you taught in Welsh at school?

25. Questions 7 and 8 sought to find out how many hours a week respondents were learning Welsh in school, and how they would feel if they were to learn Welsh for 10% of their school week should the Bill be implemented.

26. 20 respondents (63%) to this question said they were taught Welsh for **1-2.5 hours a week**. 11 respondents (34%) said they were taught Welsh for **2.5-6 hours a week**. 1 respondent (3%) said they were taught Welsh for **less than 1 hour a week**. No respondents answered that they were taught Welsh for **more than 6 hours a week**.



27. When asked how they would feel if they were taught in Welsh for 10% of the school week (which could be from 2-2.5 hours depending on age), respondents answered with a variety of feelings, which are represented in this word cloud.



28. A more detailed analysis shows that some responses include some positive reactions around having a better understanding of Welsh when they leave school and increasing confidence levels. The more positive responses included:

"Happy as I could have a better understanding when coming out of school and in GSCE's."

"Interesting"

"I wouldn't mind it because it is not too different to how I learn currently."

"Ok"

"Relieved"

"I wouldn't mind it I would feel more confidence."

"Alright"

"I wouldn't mind, as long as there would be something at the end of it - for example a chance of better Welsh GCSE results."

"Happy"

29. Some respondents didn't know how they would feel or had indifferent or mixed feelings towards the proposal:

"I would feel less confident but would be happy because I would be able to have another lesson of another subject."

“Indifferent”

“I dont know”

“Neutral”

30. A number of respondents expressed negative feelings towards the proposal, with some making reference again to finding the language difficult or boring.

“Confused”

“Sad because I would struggle to understand it.”

“Annoyed”

“Hate”

“Tiring”

“Bothered”

“Unfair”

“Bored”

“Exhausted”

“Depressed”

Confidence levels

31. Question 9 asked those who are under 16 how confident they would be to complete a number of tasks once they reached 16 if they had been taught in Welsh for 10% of the school week. For those who were already 16, the question asked how confident they were completing these tasks now.

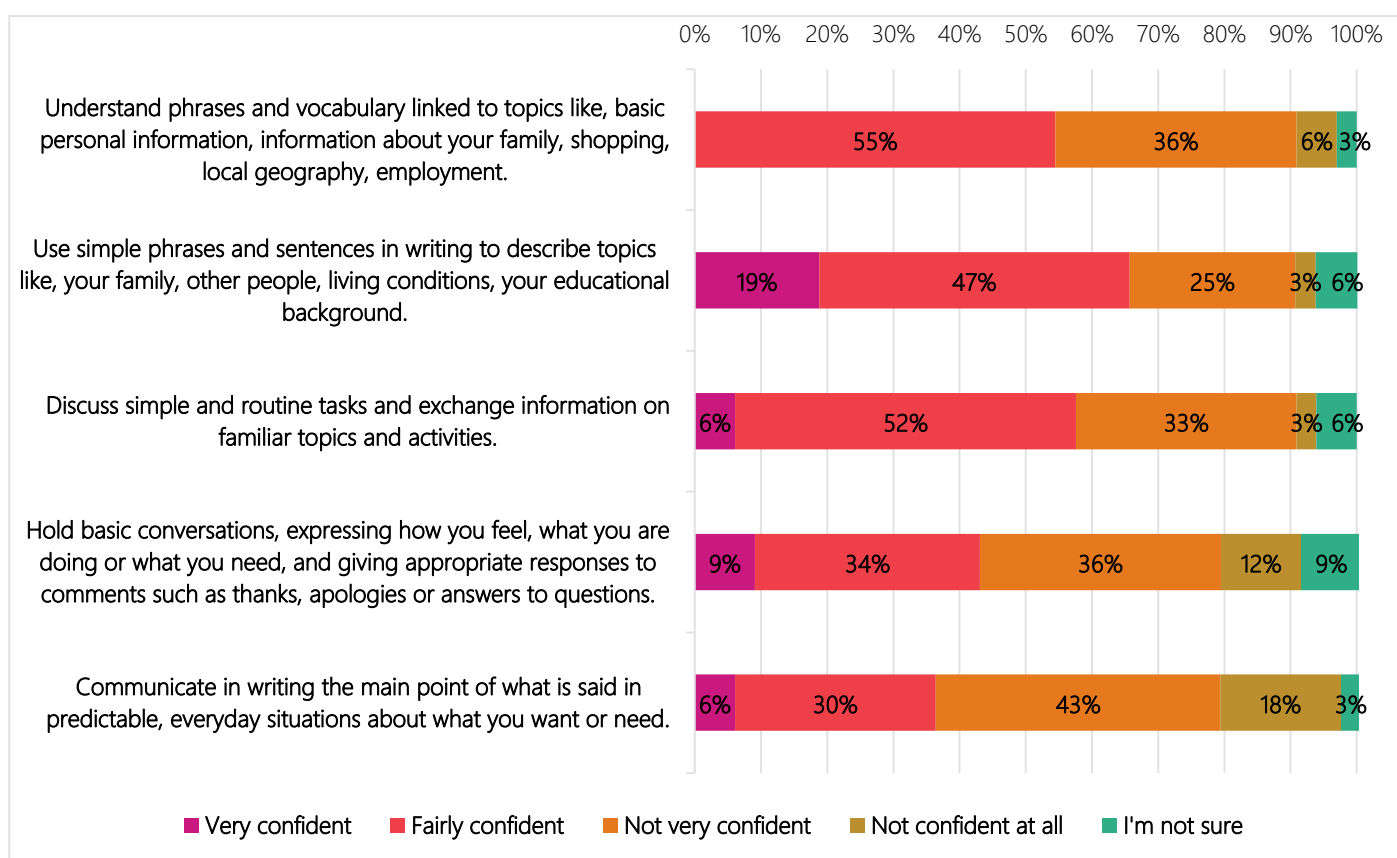
32. In considering their ability to *‘Understand phrases and vocabulary linked to topics like, basic personal information, information about your family, shopping, local geography, employment’* - 18 respondents (55%) were **fairly confident**, or felt they would be if they learnt Welsh for 10% of their school week. 12 (36%) answered **not very confident**, 2 (6%) were **not confident at all** and 1 respondent (3%) was **not sure**.

33. In considering their ability to *‘Use simple phrases and sentences in writing to describe topics like, your family, other people, living conditions, your educational background’* – 6 respondents (19%) said they felt **very confident**, 16 (47%) said they were **fairly confident**, 8 (25%) were **not very confident** and 1 respondent (3%) was **not confident at all**. 2 respondents (6%) were **not sure**.

34. When asked about their confidence to *‘Discuss simple and routine tasks and exchange information on familiar topics and activities’* – 2 (6%) answered that they were **very confident**, with 17 (52%) saying they were **fairly confident**. 11 (33%) said they were **not very confident** and 1 respondent (3%) was **not confident at all**. 2 respondents (6%) were **not sure**.

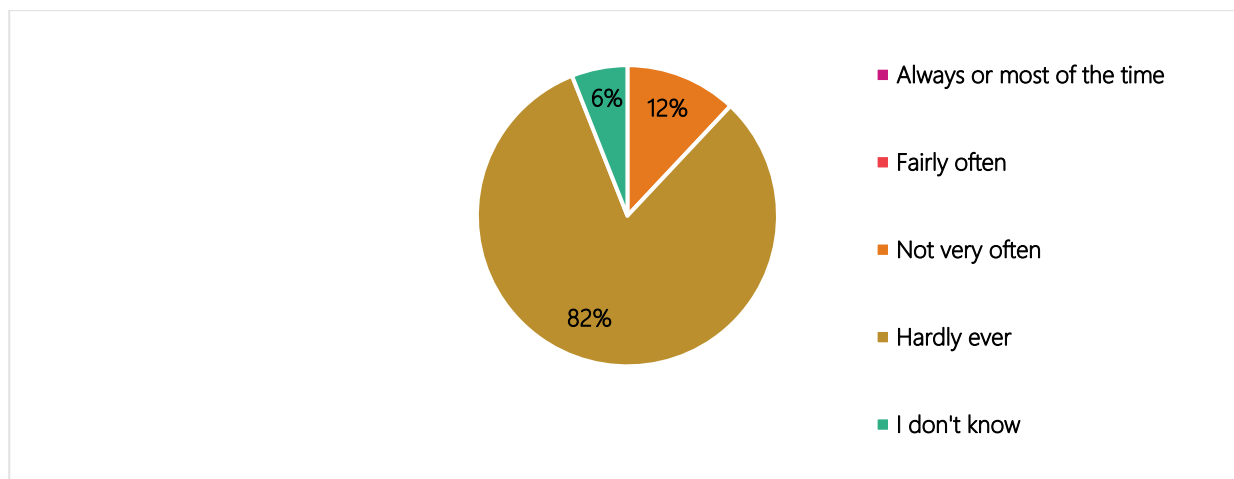
35. In considering if they could *'Hold basic conversations, expressing how you feel, what you are doing or what you need, and giving appropriate responses to comments such as thanks, apologies or answers to questions'* – 3 respondents (9%) said they were **very confident**, 11 (34%) were **fairly confident**, and 12 (36%) were **not very confident**. 4 respondents (12%) were **not confident at all** and 3 (9%) were **not sure**.

36. Finally, when asked about their ability to *'Communicate in writing the main point of what is said in predictable, everyday situations about what you want or need'* – 2 respondents (6%) said they were **very confident**, 10 (30%) were **fairly confident**. However, 14 (43%) did not feel very confident and 6 (18%) were **not confident at all**. 1 respondent (3%) was **not sure**.



Using Welsh outside of school

37. Question 10 asked how much respondents used Welsh outside of school. 27 respondents (82%) of respondents said they **hardly ever used Welsh outside of school**. 4 respondents (12%) said they **didn't use Welsh very often**, and 2 respondents (6%) **didn't know**. No respondents answered **always or most of the time** or **fairly often**.



How can schools help students feel more confident to use Welsh?

38. Question 11 asked for ideas about how schools can help all students have the confidence to use Welsh independently by the time they can leave school at 16.

39. Some of the comments suggested using Welsh in more lessons and across different topics.

"Use Welsh more often in different subjects."

"Use Welsh more in different classes."

"Use Welsh more often in other subjects but not too much."

"Schools could introduce more Welsh lessons during the week or for teachers to encourage using Welsh instead of English in the classroom."

"Little bit of Welsh everywhere."

"Use incidental Welsh in every lesson regardless of the subject - this means that our teachers will need to speak more Welsh in lessons too. Include more Welsh in assemblies - e.g. Welsh hymns."

"Ease into using Welsh more regularly rather than making a huge change one day."

40. Others talked about the subjects they were learning through Welsh and making them more interesting.

"Do Welsh topics that we may be interested about."

“Use topics that the whole class is interested about.”

“Do topics that is interesting for us.”

“Just make it more fun.”

41. Some respondents suggested there is more time for Welsh lessons in the week or additional recap lessons to revisit what has been learnt.

“More Welsh lessons a week.”

“More Welsh lessons.”

“Let students have conversations in Welsh often.”

“Use more Welsh with teachers who can speak it.”

“More time for lessons.”

“Once a month do a recap lesson?”

“Do a recap lesson or make them do conversations with each other in Welsh.”

“Do recap lessons occasionally.”

42. Others talked about making the Welsh that is taught more useful for learners so they would be more likely to use it.

“More Welsh clubs and then making posters on how to ask for equipment and other simple vocab we can use.”

“Teach topics that would pop up in conversations.”

“Teach them simple phrases.”

43. A couple of comments made reference to Welsh being discussed in terms of long-term benefits. However, they weren't in agreement on how this should be used.

“Not state that it's going to be the most important thing that they must learn in order to be employed.”

“For it to be made a big deal about learning Welsh. That you have better job opportunities etc.”

Additional comments

44. Respondents to the survey were given the opportunity to share any further comments about learning Welsh and how the Welsh Government could help students. Some of the comments suggested additional support for those who are struggling with learning the language.

“I would like to see it more accessible to people who struggle with Welsh to learn it.”

“There should be things in place for students who fall behind in Welsh so they can catch up.”

45. Some respondents provided some practical suggestions for learning Welsh:

“Let the students create posters about the topics they find tough.”

“Welsh homework.”

“More conversation.”

“More conversations and teamwork.”

46. One respondent suggested that learning Welsh should be optional.

“Don't make it a pressured topic and allow people to choose if they want to take it or not.”

Agenda Item 3.1

Jane Hutt AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol, y Trefnydd a'r
Prif Chwip
Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip



Dawn Bowden AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Plant a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Minister for Children and Social Care

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Buffy WilliamsMS
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee
Welsh Parliament

9 October 2024

Dear Buffy,

Following our appearance at the Children and Young People's Committee on 19 September please see the below further evidence to inform the Committee's enquiry on 'Children on the Margins'.

We agreed to write to you to answer the following queries:

1. Provide further information on whether there are any regional variations in relation to criminal exploitation referrals.
2. 2024 figures on the number of social workers registered with Social Care Wales
3. 2024 figures on the numbers going through social work training
4. How often safeguarding boards meet; *[on this point it would be useful to know for both the national board and the 6 regional boards how often they have met]*
5. Outcomes of discussions with the UK Safeguarding Minister on 23 October 2024 about the recommendations of the Jay Review.

1. Provide further information on whether there are any regional variations in relation to criminal exploitation referrals.

Over 2022-23 there were a total of 28,256 Initial Strategy Meetings for children suspected of being at risk of abuse or neglect. Over that same period, 1,471 reports of suspected abuse included child sexual exploitation as a factor. This suggests that approximately 5% of reports included child sexual exploitation as a factor.

However, this varies between regions, with the proportion in Cardiff and Vale being 2.3% of reports including child sexual exploitation as a factor and 6.4% in North Wales. However, it

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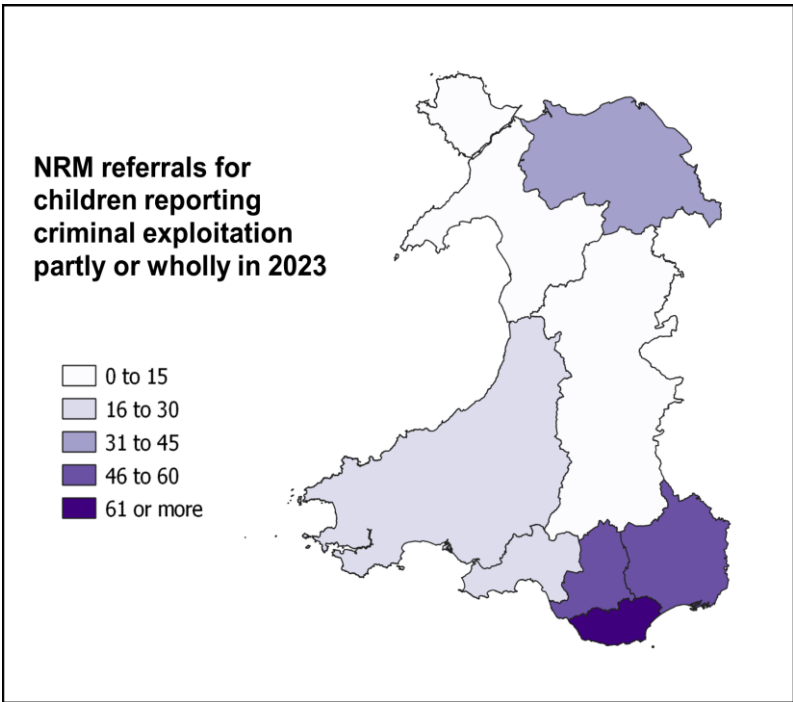
Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

should be noted that there are some concerns with the way in which local authorities are recording and reporting this data. Further work is ongoing to make sure this data is captured reliably and consistently across all regions.

The Home Office records data on referrals to the National Referral Mechanism for potential victims of modern slavery. This includes potential victims of child criminal exploitation. The table below shows the number of referrals for child criminal exploitation in Welsh preserved counties in 2023:

Preserved county	Referrals of children to the National Referral Mechanism in which criminal exploitation was reported
South Glamorgan	75
Mid Glamorgan	47
Gwent	47
Clwyd	40
West Glamorgan	28
Dyfed	17
Gwynedd	13
Powys	12



Please note these statistics including referrals in which additional forms of exploitation were also reported. These statistics should not be combined as people can report exploitation in multiple areas.

Criminal exploitation in Wales is linked to the distribution of illicit drugs through local criminal gangs and County Lines networks. Criminal exploitation is linked to cuckooing and other forms of crime. The largest number of potential victims identified are male British nationals aged 13 to 17 years. Other nationalities identified include Albanian nationals.

2. 2024 figures on the number of social workers registered with Social Care Wales

As at 30 September 2024 there are currently 6,774 social workers registered with Social Care Wales. This compares to 6,736 who were registered in September 2023.

3. 2024 figures on the numbers going through social work training

As at September 2024 there are 655 students currently enrolled with social worker training. These will include traditional students, those accessing our Welsh Government social worker bursary and Local Authority Grow your own scheme, as well as open university courses.

4. How often safeguarding boards meet; [on this point it would be useful to know for both the national board and the 6 regional boards how often they have met]

Regional Safeguarding Boards meet on a quarterly basis though they have substantial sub structures that meet in between for specific issues e.g. training and development, protocols and procedures and quality assurance and performance.

The National Independent Safeguarding Board meets monthly. Members also attend Regional Safeguarding Board meetings in their role of supporting development.

Welsh Government facilitates meetings between the Regional Safeguarding Board Chairs and members of the National Independent Safeguarding Board in which the Chairs and Members provide updates, and we provide an update from Welsh Government.

These meetings are held on a quarterly basis and between those meeting Welsh Government representatives also meet with the Regional Safeguarding Board Business Managers.

5. Outcomes of discussions with the UK Safeguarding Minister on 23 October 2024 about the recommendations of the Jay Review.

The meeting regarding this is scheduled to take place on October 23rd so we will provide an update to the Committee once this has taken place via letter.

Yours sincerely,



Jane Hutt AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros dros Gyfiawnder
Cymdeithasol, y Trefnydd a'r Prif Chwip
Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd
and Chief Whip



Dawn Bowden AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Gofal Cymdeithasol
Minister for Children and Social Care

Agenda Item 3.2

Mark Drakeford AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language



Buffy Williams MS
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

11 October 2024

Dear Buffy,

Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill

Thank for your letter dated 20 September, following my attendance to your Committee the previous day, to provide you with evidence in relation to the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill. I trust the Committee found the session to be informative.

Your letter deals with a number of issues which I will deal with in turn. Firstly, the matters that I agreed to provide further information to the Committee.

Indicative timeline

The Regulatory Impact Assessment at part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum gives a high-level overview of the current illustrative timetable for the implementation of the Bill and sets out in which financial years following Royal Assent we would expect costs to fall arising from the implementation of the provisions of the Bill. I appreciate the Committee would find it useful for the key implementation dates to be extracted from the RIA. As such, I provide the current high-level implementation milestones, which is provided alongside this letter at document 1 in a tabular format and as a visual at document 2. In sharing these documents, I wish to highlight to the Committee that these dates represent the current planning assumptions. Further work will be undertaken over the coming months in relation to the detailed implementation arrangements. The indicative timetables do not set out the entirety of the work required to implement the Bill e.g. there will be a need to prepare additional items of subordinate legislation such as Commencement Orders.

Consultation requirements within the Bill

There are certain consultation requirements within the Bill:

- a) The Code to describe Welsh language ability: Section 7(2) – the Welsh Ministers must consult on the Code with any persons they think appropriate.
- b) The National Framework for Welsh Language Education and Learning Welsh: Section 26 - the Welsh Ministers must consult the persons listed when

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

preparing/amending the Framework. This includes any persons they think appropriate.

- c) Local Welsh in education strategic plans: Section 28(4)(b) - local authorities must consult the persons listed when preparing/amending their plan. The Welsh Ministers may specify other persons in Regulations.
- d) School Welsh language education delivery plans: Section 14(2)(b) – a school's governing body must consult with the persons listed when preparing their delivery plan. This includes the school's pupils, the pupils' parents and staff. The Welsh Ministers may specify other persons in Regulations.

Section 47 amends the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. This will mean that changing the language medium in a maintained school is not a regulated alteration for the purposes of that act. As a result the process involved in giving effect to a regulated alteration will not apply. This is because they are replaced by the consultation requirements listed above, together with the requirement that an implementation plan sets out the governing body's proposals to maintain the amount of Welsh language education, and increase the amount when that is reasonably practicable (section 14(1)(e)). A governing body must take all reasonable steps to implement those proposals (section 15(9)). A school may not change from a "Dual Language" category to a "Primarily English Language, partly Welsh" category, nor from a "Primarily Welsh Language" category to a "Dual Language" category or a "Primarily English Language, partly Welsh" category (section 17).

In terms of the current situation with regulated alterations, section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 states that there must be consultation regarding school organisation proposals in accordance with the School Organisation Code. That Code lists the persons to whom a copy of the consultation document must be sent. As the Bill would remove the requirement to treat a change in language medium as a regulated alteration, the new arrangements would mean that there would be opportunities to consult with the school community and more widely when preparing the local Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, and when governing bodies prepare the Welsh language education delivery plans at school level.

Consideration of the UNCRC

In developing the Bill officials have considered the requirements of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This analysis was published upon introduction of the Bill on 15 July 2024 and can be found on pages 36 – 38 of the [Integrated Impact Assessment](#), as it appears on the Welsh Government's website. My officials have since drawn the Committee's attention to the IIA. The Welsh Government does not believe that the proposals will challenge any articles.

Secondly, Annex 1 of your letter of 20 September poses a number of further questions. Please find attached at Annex 1 my response to each of those questions.

Finally, I have taken the opportunity in writing to you to clarify two further matters, which were raised at the Committee session on 19 September.

Transitional schools

Paragraph 295 of the [transcription](#), states:

There is a reference to transitional schools in the Bill. There are two steps in going from category 1 to category 2, and then there is a transitional stage there, before going from category 2 to category 3. There is no mention, from

what I can see, of a timetable for continuing in this way. It's clear that we would all want to see the schools moving sooner rather than later. In your mind, is there some sort of general timetable regarding how long they can remain transitional?

I wish to note that there is no reference in the Bill to transitional schools. The term 'transitional schools' derives from the non-statutory guidance on school categories according to language medium published in 2021. In that guidance, transitional sub-categories were created as bridging categories helping to encourage an increase in Welsh-medium provision. In that guidance, it was stated that a school's placement within a transitional sub-category should not exceed a maximum period of 10 years.

However, in the Bill we only propose three statutory categories: Primarily Welsh Language; Dual language; Primarily English Language, partly Welsh.

Schools will be able to indicate that they are currently in a transitional phase within their Welsh language delivery plan. Section 14(1)(g) of the Bill requires the governing body to set out its proposals on how it will prepare for a change in its school's language category if it intends to do so. Welsh language delivery plans will be in effect for three year periods, and will be subject to local authority approval. This will allow the local authority to have a robust overview of the Welsh language provision of its schools, and have sufficient influence in its role as a consultee to the plan and in its final approval role. This is necessary as it provides the local authority with the levers required to meet its WESP targets.

Requirements on special schools, special units in schools and in relation to pupils with additional learning needs

In terms of special schools, section 20 provides that they must have a delivery plan. This will be a statutory requirement. Their plan must state:

- a) the amount of Welsh language education provided by the school, and
- b) the governing body's proposals on how it will—
 - (i) promote a Welsh language ethos and culture within the school;
 - (ii) promote use of the Welsh language within the school.

The content of a special school's delivery plan is therefore different to what must be included in a delivery plan under section 14. This is to recognise that the circumstances of special schools are different to mainstream schools, and that they face additional demands as a result. It was felt that the requirement for a delivery plan more similar to what is described above strikes the right balance between recognising the role that special schools can play in creating Welsh speakers and any profound needs they also deal with.

The Welsh Ministers may by regulations make further provision for special school delivery plans – see section 20(2).

In terms of a language category, there is no statutory requirement for a special school to have a designated category. This is because the designation of a category gives rise to a duty to provide in accordance with the requirements of that category, and it was felt that it could be unreasonable to expect such a duty to be met in the unique circumstances of special schools. However, a special school may – if it wishes to do so – designate itself within a category. Section 20(3) deals with this. The Welsh Ministers have a duty to make regulations in relation to voluntary

designation, including the application of Part 3 with modifications. That could include, for example, applying the Welsh language learning goals with modifications so that special schools have different learning goals if they have voluntarily designated themselves a category.

Mainstream schools with specialist units will be required to designate a category for the school, and they will have to prepare a delivery plan in accordance with sections 9 to 19.

In terms of the requirement on the school with a specialist unit to ensure that it provides Welsh language education in accordance with the range specified by its language category, this requirement applies over a school year. The requirement to provide the minimum of 10%, for example, does not mean that every individual pupil within the school must receive 10%. Referring to the education provided over a school year allows flexibility for a school to provide less than 10% in some circumstances where necessary, and to provide more than 10% in other circumstances. This will likely apply in the context of specialist units in mainstream schools.

In terms of additional learning needs provision through the medium of Welsh, the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 makes specific provision for the Welsh language. Consideration must be given to whether additional learning provision should be provided in Welsh for the child or young person, and if it is decided that a specific type of additional learning provision should be provided in Welsh, this must be specified in the child or young person's individual development plan. There is a duty to provide the additional learning provision described in an individual development plan.

In addition, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019 require a local authority to include in its WESP a statement setting out how the local authority will use the findings of its reviews under section 63 of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018(11) to improve Welsh language provision for persons with additional learning needs and for workforce planning within the additional learning needs sector.

I thank the Committee for their interest in this Bill and look forward to returning to the Committee to provide further evidence on 24 October.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mark Drakeford AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language

Annex 1: Questions

Promotion and facilitation of use of the Welsh Language (Part 1)

1. What testing has the Welsh Government undertaken to ensure that the proposed new framework and process of self-assessment provides an effective and robust method of assessing Welsh language ability?

The guidance on self-assessment referred to in section 3(3) will be developed and tested once the Code to describe Welsh language ability is published. The principle of calculating the number of Welsh speakers based on self-assessment is important and it is protected in the Bill (section 3(2)).

The concept of self-assessing Welsh language skills is not new. Individuals already self-assess their Welsh language skills for the Census and the Language Use Survey used for the 'use' indicator in Cymraeg 2050. Many public bodies comply with their statutory duty to record the Welsh language skills of their employees (under the Welsh language standards) by asking employees to self-assess. Many have adopted frameworks based on the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) skill levels (a framework anchored to the first CEFR levels that was developed to relate examinations for different European languages to each other). The Welsh Government's [School Workforce Annual Census](#) (SWAC) already uses a Welsh language competency framework aligned with CEFR levels to enable education practitioners to self-assess and report their skills.

There is evidence of inconsistencies between different data sources regarding how people currently self-assess their Welsh language skills, suggesting that some individuals under-report and others over-report their skill levels. When the Chief Statistician published the first data from the 2022 Census about the Welsh language she noted that a person's assessment of how well they speak a language can be subjective. For some people, the ability to say a few words in Welsh is enough for them to say they speak. For others, despite speaking it regularly, they may say that they can't speak it if they feel more comfortable speaking another language. The comments highlight the need to have a more sophisticated narrative around how individuals self-assess their Welsh language proficiency. The provisions in section 3 on preparing guidance on self-assessment, alongside the duty in section 3(5), will raise the Welsh population's awareness over time of how to self-assess.

The Bill enables the Welsh Ministers by regulations to specify any other method, other than self-assessment or the assessment of the child's parent or carer, to decide whether children under 16 are Welsh speakers for the purposes of section 1 and 2 of the Bill. .t.

The CEFR is widely used across Europe and further afield. In preparing the Code, work will be done to draw upon the experiences of other countries and languages with regard to effective application of self-assessment. In turn, this will inform the guidance prepared under part 1.

Describing Welsh language ability (Part 2)

2. Could you define what constitutes a Welsh speaker under the new framework, and the threshold that needs to be met in order to be included in the calculation on the numbers of Welsh speakers?

As I noted in the evidence session on 19 September, if Welsh belongs to everybody, then it is the individual's own assessment of the extent to which they believe themselves to be users of the Welsh language that we have to rely on. That principle is at the heart of this Bill as well.

Having said that, I am mindful that the target of a million Welsh speakers must be meaningful, and that people have sufficient skills and confidence to use their Welsh language skills day to day. For the purposes of calculating the number of Welsh speakers as we measure progress towards the target of a million Welsh speakers, we will consider the results of the census alongside any other relevant data that we may specify by regulations.

3. The descriptions don't seem to cater for everyone, for example those with no level of Welsh ability. Has there been consideration for those who aren't on the CEFR scale or could be considered higher than C2 or below A1 of the CEFR?

The CEFR recognises that its Global Scale A1-C2 levels, reproduced in Schedule 1 to the Bill are a necessary simplification of language proficiency levels.

The CEFR notes that A1 is probably the lowest “level” of generative language proficiency that can be identified but also acknowledges that A1 is not the lowest imaginable level of proficiency in an additional language. As such, when the CEFR was updated in 2020 pre-A1 level descriptors were added to the framework. At the pre-A1 level an individual can use isolated words and basic expressions in order to give simple information about themselves. This would include someone at the beginning of their journey to learn a language.

The pre-A1 level in the CEFR is referred to as a sub-level and it is not relevant to all of the CEFR descriptive scales. It is not included in the CEFR Global Scale and as such does not feature in the Table reproduced in Schedule 1 to the Bill.

The CEFR also recognises that there are levels above C2 – although not identified specifically in the framework – these levels describe advanced mastery of a language gained by individuals who work in professions immersed in language e.g. literary translators, simultaneous translators.

The CEFR states that C2 is not intended to imply the highest imaginable level of linguistic proficiency. The framework recognises that simultaneous interpreters at European institutions and professional translators operate at a level well above C2. The CEFR intends to characterise the ability of those who have been highly successful learners.

The CEFR also includes ‘plus’ level descriptors, (such as B1.1 and B1.2), developed to represent a very strong competence at a level that does not yet reach the minimum standard for the next level.

The provisions in section 6 of the Bill allow for the ‘Code to describe Welsh language ability’ to include anything else related to describing ability in Welsh, including the CEFR’s pre-A1 and ‘plus’ level descriptors. When developing the Code under Section 6 the extent to which the CEFR’s entire ‘menu’ of descriptor scales can be used to describe Welsh language ability will be considered.

It is important for the standard method of describing ability in Welsh to facilitate people's capacity to self-assess their ability in the language, regardless of how much Welsh they speak. This will allow them to see what the next stage of their Welsh learning journey will be. It will show that any Welsh language skills are valuable and allow us to celebrate everyone's language journey.

4. Could you clarify comments made during the session which suggested that you believe almost everyone speaks some Welsh? Were you saying that this therefore

means almost everyone would be on at least level A1 on the CEFR?

The Welsh language is so visible in our everyday lives and is used regularly in so many domains. As such I believe that all people living in Wales will have knowledge of some common words such as 'Diolch', 'Bore da' and many names and placenames. I also base my belief on the fact that the Welsh language has been a mandatory element of the curriculum in Wales since 1990. Although not included in the CEFR Global Scale reproduced in Schedule 1 to the Bill, this basic level of ability is catered for in the CEFR at the Pre-A1 level. Pre-A1 descriptors have been available in the framework since it was updated in 2020. The extent to which the CEFR's entire 'menu' of descriptor scales will be used to describe Welsh language ability will be considered when developing the Code. Section 6 of the Bill enables the pre-A1 level to be included in the Code to describe this basic level of Welsh language skill.

5. Could you also clarify comments made during the session which suggested that A1 equates to GCSE level?

An important part of achieving the Bill's aims will be to develop more meaningful ways of assessing the Welsh language ability of school pupils. At present there is generally a lack of data about the Welsh language proficiency achieved by learners who have been awarded A*-F grades in GCSE Welsh language or GCSE Welsh second language. The 2021 Census reported that 38,800 of young people between 16 and 19 years old did not identify themselves as Welsh speakers. A large majority therefore reported that they did not speak Welsh even though the Welsh language was a mandatory element of their school curriculum. A small-scale study undertaken by the National Centre for Learning Welsh to identify its needs for post-16 course provision suggests that proficiency of a group of 16-17 yr old participants who had sat the GCSE Welsh second language qualification the previous academic year varied roughly between bottom A1 and bottom B1 of the CEFR, between the start of Entry and Intermediate in Learn Welsh for adults terms. Spoken interaction competence proficiency was generally lower.

6. The CEFR has been designed specifically for the learning of foreign/second languages. How appropriate is it to apply this to the context of Welsh language learning, and what consideration was given to developing descriptors specifically for the Welsh language?

While the CEFR was originally designed with second/foreign languages in mind, it has since been adopted more generally. Through our membership of the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD) we have learnt from colleagues working in the field of language policy and planning for constitutional, regional and small-state languages across Europe that the CEFR framework is used in contexts to describe linguistic ability in both first, second and other languages.

For example, in the new 2023 Basque country education act the CEFR framework is used to describe ability in first and additional language contexts, introducing a duty for learners to achieve minimum CEFR B1 level in both official languages by the end of primary education/B2 by the end of secondary education. Similarly in Finland the CEFR is used to set the criteria for both mother tongue and the second official language and other languages. So, we believe it is appropriate to use the CEFR for our purposes for the Welsh language in Wales.

The CEFR is one of the best-known and most used Council of Europe policy instruments. It was designed to provide a framework for all European languages. Because it is language-neutral it can be used for any language in the world. There are

advantages to aligning our framework for describing Welsh language ability with the CEFR – the question should really be, why aren't we using it?

We **are** developing descriptors specifically for the Welsh language. The CEFR is simply a reference tool used to facilitate this process. The Code will include descriptors developed specifically for the Welsh language. As the descriptors are developed they can be tailored to take account of any unique considerations required in relation to the Welsh language.

The CEFR is already used as a reference tool to provide descriptors specifically for the Welsh language, to inform the National Centre for Learning Welsh curriculum and WJEC's Welsh language qualifications for adults.

7. Have you sought assurances from the Council of Europe that the Framework is not likely to change?

The CEFR's A1-C2 six level Global Scale, reproduced in Schedule 1 to the Bill, was first published in the CEFR Framework in 2001 and updated in 2020. The changes made to it at that time were minimal, mainly to ensure that the language was gender neutral and to delete references to 'native speakers'. We believe it is unlikely the Council of Europe will make change to the six- level proficiency scale for many years to come, if at all. Welsh Ministers can however amend the Table in Schedule 1 by regulations in response to a change made to the CEFR (sections 5(2) and (3) of the Bill). We cannot think of any situation, other than responding to any changes to the CEFR framework, where it would be desirable to have the ability to amend the Table.

Section 6 of the Bill already enables the 'Code to describe Welsh language ability' (that will explain the levels in more detail) to be amended at any time and to include any part of the CEFR framework. The Code can also include anything else related to describing ability in Welsh beyond the CEFR framework if required.

Welsh language education (Part 3)

8. Can you confirm whether the Welsh Ministers have a duty, or rather a power, to make regulations setting a date for the upgrading of the Welsh Language Learning Goals of "Primarily English language, partly Welsh" schools and "Dual language schools"? What factors will the Welsh Ministers consider when doing so and, if it is a power rather than a duty, is there a risk that such goals will never be upgraded and made more ambitious?

Section 11 sets the Welsh language learning goals and the prospective upgraded learning goals. The learning goals are to be upgraded by regulations. The intention is for the learning goals to be upgraded when a systemic change is underway i.e. when our workforce targets are being met and when effective practice shows evidence of progress towards meeting and surpassing the initial learning goal.

As there are variables and unknowns at play here, it was decided that it was more appropriate to create a power to be exercised when suitable, rather than a duty with an unspecified date. Further, under section 13(5), there is a duty on the Welsh Ministers to decide every 5 years whether to exercise the power to make regulations to increase the minimum of 10%, and this could also affect when the goals are upgraded.

Having said this, it should be highlighted that section 11(3) specifies that the learning goal for primarily English language, partly Welsh schools is that pupils are basic Welsh language users (i.e. A1-A2), at least, by the time they cease to be of compulsory school

age, until a date specified by the Welsh Ministers by regulations. Therefore, the goal is that they will be basic users, at least, up until a specified date when the goal will be upgraded to independent user. These regulations will be in place by the time the statutory categories come to effect, thereby giving assurance that the learning goal will be upgraded by a certain date.

9. To what extent is the requirement for schools to have their Welsh language education Delivery plan approved by the local authority entirely in line with the ethos and provisions of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021, which emphasises school autonomy? For example, schools are not required to have their curriculum approved by the local authority or anyone else.

As the Local Authority will be subject to targets set by the Welsh Ministers in the National Framework, it is imperative that they have sufficient levers to ensure that they are well-placed to deliver on those targets.

In requiring Local Authorities to:

- o approve delivery plans
- o approve them with modifications, or
- o reject them with a direction to reconsider,

this means the Local Authority will have sufficient influence on the actions proposed by schools to ensure progress.

As the Welsh language education delivery plans are required to include the language category of the school, it is appropriate that the Local Authority has an approval role to the plans, as this will allow the Local Authority to ensure that language categories are applied correctly and consistently across their area.

In the White Paper for the Bill, we consulted on giving Local Authorities an approval role to school categories, and this was welcomed by the majority of the respondents.

If the Local Authority had no approval role, they would have less influence in their attempts to drive progress across schools in its area..

Planning Welsh Language Education and Learning (Part 4)

10. In regulations in 2019, following a recommendation by the Rapid Review of WESPs, the Welsh Government extended the timespan of WESPs from 3 years to 10 years in order to facilitate longer term planning. The Bill reduces this back to 5 years, although the plans will need to set out steps to be taken over a 10-year period. How has the government weighed up the need for WESPs to be short enough to ensure sufficient accountability, while giving local authorities flexibility to plan over a long enough period?

We are keen that local authorities continue to implement their WESPs with a 10-year vision, but with a 5-year implementation cycle to align with the National Framework. A similar 10-year vision and 5- year planning approach is proposed with the National Framework.

As Local authorities are currently implementing 5-year action plans to support their existing WESPs this is a reasonable expectation that is already in place. Responses to the White Paper generally supported this approach.

National Institute for Learning Welsh (Part 5)

11. Does the EM provide sufficient clarity and assurances about the role of the new Institute in both the post-compulsory sector and in particular, within the compulsory education sector?

The Explanatory Memorandum makes it clear our policy is that the Athrofa will not be providing courses and activities directly to school pupils, rather the provision it plans and organises for the education workforce will improve provision for children 3-16 and help bring the provision into line with the new Welsh language skills continuum.

The Athrofa will be responsible for developing and maintaining a national Welsh language learning curriculum for people over compulsory school age. It will also provide or facilitate the provision of high quality resources to support the curriculum it develops.

This consistent offer for learners over compulsory school age will provide greater clarity for learners and allow for recognition of prior learning, enabling learners to progress seamlessly between providers and/or learning levels.

The Athrofa will not be responsible for the curriculum taught in schools but will plan and organise specialist training and support to develop the Welsh language skills of the education workforce and share good pedagogical practice in relation to the learning and transmission of Welsh.

12. The EM states that it isn't possible to identify where the resource will be moved from or an accurate cost for the new Institute until the Review of School Improvement – the roles and responsibilities of education partners in Wales has concluded. When will you be able to provide the Committee with an accurate analysis of costs for the Institute in order for the Committee to undertake detailed scrutiny?

As outlined in the EM, the costs are a best estimate at this point in time. The second phase of the Review of School Improvement is expected to conclude by early 2025, when roles and responsibilities and plans are expected to have been agreed by the Cabinet Secretary. Work has already commenced on planning the transition to the new arrangements. We expect to be able to provide a more accurate analysis of the costs once the new arrangements have been agreed by the Cabinet Secretary for Education.

13. How much influence will the new Institute have over the statutory education sector to ensure the effective implementation of the single Welsh language skills continuum and therefore "improving the linguistic outcomes of learners aged 3-16"?

The Athrofa will be expected to plan for the development of the education workforce in order to support the development of Welsh language teaching in all schools. Specific interventions may include training on how to use the continuum; specialist training and support to upskill the education workforce; and sharing good pedagogical practice in relation to Welsh language teaching methods, including literacy.

The Athrofa will support schools specifically by providing opportunities for school staff to learn Welsh and improving levels of ability so that they are more confident to teach Welsh, to use Welsh when teaching other subjects, and to use Welsh in the wider school environment. The Athrofa will also provide or facilitate the provision of materials to support learning and training on implementing the new continuum.

The Athrofa will work with the Welsh Government, partner organisations from the education sector, and local authorities to provide expert advice and support for schools to reach their Welsh language learning goals.

Costs of the legislation

14. The Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) sets out three possible scenarios, which will have an impact on costs – scenario 1 that everything is generally already on track for Cymraeg 2050 and the Bill will simply support and ensure that continues; scenario 2 where things are not fully on track and the Bill will correct that and ensure Cymraeg 2050 can be delivered; scenario 3 where things are substantially off track and meeting the requirements of the Bill will require big changes and considerable funding. The RIA says the Welsh Government anticipates scenario 2 and presumably the estimated costs of the Bill - £103 million over the next ten years – reflect scenario 2. The RIA doesn't estimate the costs of the other two scenarios but can you give any indication of just how much the Bill will cost, if indeed scenario 3 materialises?

The RIA focuses on the costs and benefits associated with the preferred option (i.e. the Bill). Scenarios were developed as a means of articulating what might reasonably happen to existing arrangements once the Bill/preferred option becomes law. Based on our understanding of current arrangements and progress towards key targets, Welsh Government officials anticipate that the degree of change when compared with BAU is likely to fall within Scenario 2. This essentially means that the Bill will strengthen the current BAU infrastructure and would set reasonable but challenging expectations to ensure that current arrangements (e.g. WESPs, school categorisation, late immersion) deliver enhanced progress.

If scenario 3 materialises instead, we anticipate that there would be additional costs in the following areas -

- o Supporting schools to continuously improve or increase their Welsh language provision
- o Late immersion

However, mitigations included in the Bill mean that Scenario 3 is unlikely to materialise. These mitigations include temporary exemptions for “Primarily English Language, partial Welsh” category schools and a commitment consult on key Bill provisions, including the National Framework.

Indicative timeline for implementation of the Bill

This document reflects the current planning assumptions for the implementation of the Bill and will be updated as we continue to work on the Bill's implementation and as dependencies between activities are identified.

Year	Financial year	Date	Activity
1	2025-26	May/June 2025 (Upon Royal Assent)	Duty on the Welsh Ministers to include the Million Welsh Speakers target in strategy on promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh under section 78 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 comes into force. [This is already in place therefore, there will be no action required to implement].
		October 2025	Consultation on the Code
2	2026-27	July 2026	Finalise Code
		October 2026	Consultation on the language categories and WESP regulations
3	2027-28	July 2027	Finalise regs relating to language categories and WESPs
		July 2027	Complete review of standards
		August 2027	Establish National Institute of Learning Welsh
		October 2027	Consultation on the revised Welsh Language Strategy (to include targets on use, education and other requirements of section 1 of the Bill) and the National Framework.
4	2028-29	July 2028	Publication of the revised Welsh language Strategy and the National Framework
		August 2028 onwards	Local Authorities prepare the new WESP
5	2029-30	July 2029	Welsh Ministers approve the new WESP
		August 2029 onwards	Schools prepare Delivery Plans (taking the WESP into account)
6	2030-31	July 2030	Deadline for Local Authorities to approve the Delivery Plans (including school categories)
		August 2030	School Delivery Plans in place
7	2031-32		
8	2032-33	October 2032	Revise the National Framework
9	2033-34	January 2033	2nd Delivery Plan submitted to local authority for agreement
		July 2033	End of Delivery Plans (and end of first exemption, if applicable)

10	2034-35		
11	2035-36	July 2036	End of any further exemption

Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill

Indicative Timeline for Implementation of the Bill

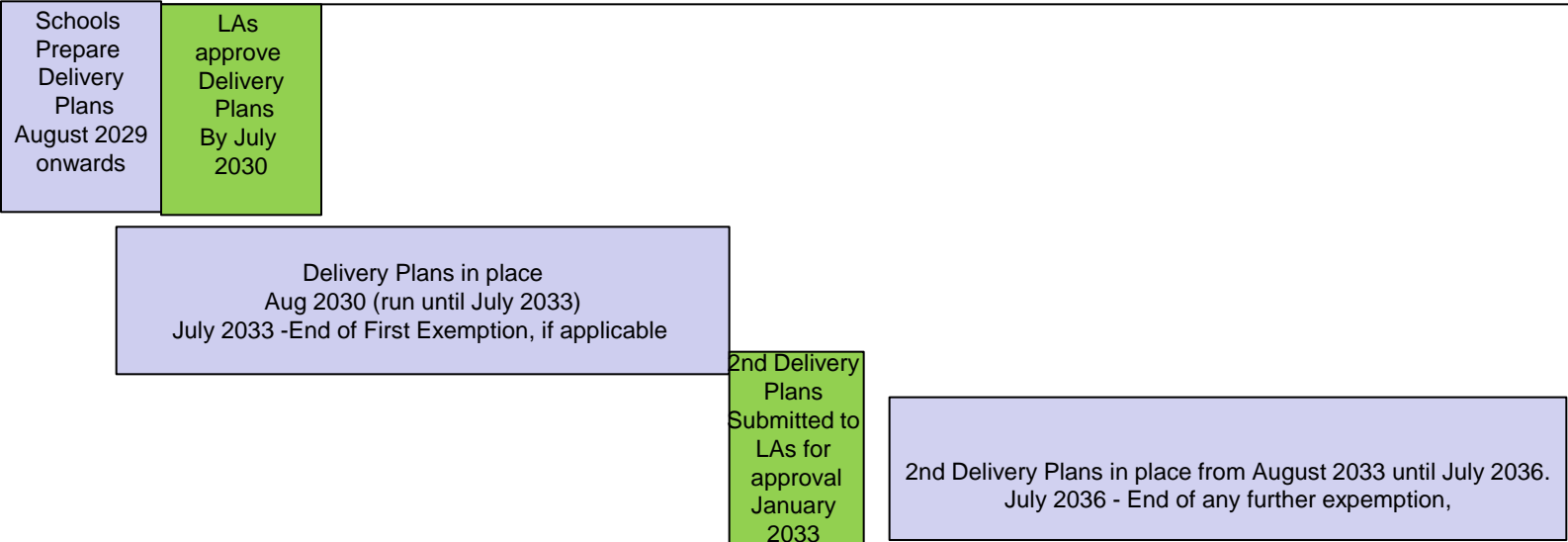
Key	
	Activity for Welsh Ministers
	Activity for Local Authorities
	Activity for schools
	No activity required to implement



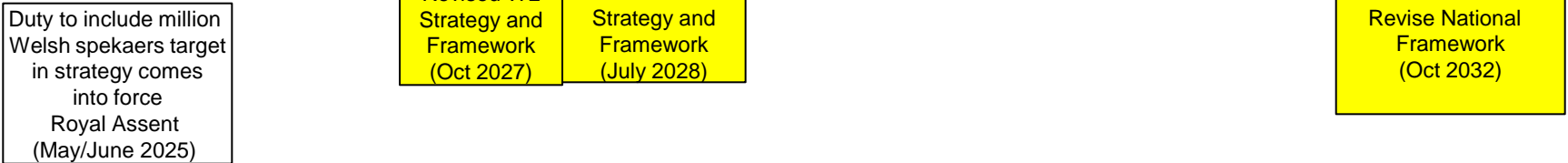
Code

Consult on Code Oct 2025	Finalise Code July 2026
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Language categories
Pack Page 65



Strategy and Framework



Other



Agenda Item 3.3

Lynne Neagle AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Buffy Williams MS
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee
Senedd Cymru

Seneddchildren@senedd.wales

15 October 2024

Dear Chair

Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement: Education Ministers Council meeting – 20 November 2024

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement to notify you of a meeting of the Education Ministers Council, which will take place in Lisburn, Northern Ireland on 20 November 2024.

The in-person meeting will be hosted by the Northern Irish Government. The meeting agenda will include discussions on teacher professional learning, recruitment and retention.

An update will be provided after the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Lynne Neagle AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

Back Page 66
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Mark Drakeford AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Buffy Williams MS
Chair
Children, Young Persons and Education Committee

16 October 2024

Dear Buffy,

Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill

Thank you for your letter dated 10 October 2024, seeking clarification on the drafting in section 23(3) of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill.

I can confirm that the wording '*annog dilyniant*' in section 23(3)(e) of the Welsh version of the Bill is correct and reflects the policy intent.

I will bring forward a technical amendment for consideration during Stage 2 of the scrutiny process which will change the wording of the English version to better reflect the Welsh text. That amendment will omit the words "*to facilitate*" in 23(3)(e) in the English version of the Bill, as introduced and will insert the word "*encouraging*".

We think the above change would also deal with the second point raised in your letter about the flow of the wording in the English text.

We will also consider whether any other amendments are required as a result of this change.

I'm grateful to you for drawing this matter to my attention and look forward to working with you through the remainder of the scrutiny process.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Drakeford AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Agenda Item 3.5



Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

How realistic is the goal of every pupil being an 'independent user' of the Welsh language by the time they complete compulsory education? How difficult will it be for mainly English language, partly Welsh language schools to support their pupils to become 'basic users', which is their goal in the first instance under the Bill?

We believe it is realistic for nearly all pupils to become independent users of the Welsh language by the time they complete statutory education. However, to do so, there is a need to ensure improvement and consistency in provision across Wales to ensure that we create Welsh speakers. Robust arrangements need to be in place to ensure that pupils make progress and are given appropriate progression opportunities throughout their time in statutory education. It must also be ensured that effective professional development is in place for teachers and assistants, and that leaders prioritise Welsh and set a clear vision for the language.

In our annual report last year, it was noted that 'Where the support and enthusiasm to develop learners' Welsh language skills was robust, leaders prioritised the Welsh language and set a clear vision and a strategic and purposeful improvement plan to develop provision. In settings with the most effective practice, leaders provided valuable professional learning opportunities and support for practitioners to develop their skills to support learners to acquire the Welsh language constructively over time. This fostered enthusiasm and confidence among practitioners, which had a positive effect on learners' readiness to speak and use the Welsh language spontaneously in a variety of situations. For example, schemes such as the Welsh Language Sabbatical Scheme played a key role in developing practitioners' Welsh language skills and their ability to teach through the medium of Welsh in some schools and clusters ([Welsh Government, 2021a](#)). In the best examples, we saw the effect of provision not only on individual teachers, but on how they used what they had learned to influence others. Most importantly, this had a positive effect on the teaching and standards of Welsh in these schools. Read about how St David's R.C. Primary School, Cwmbran [developed the Welsh language supported by purposeful professional learning](#).

In settings with less effective practice, leaders did not prioritise the Welsh language or promote the benefits of being bilingual and multilingual sufficiently. Often, they did not properly consider pupils' progress or provision for the Welsh language when self-evaluating and planning for improvement. Too often, they considered that using a very few Welsh greetings and words with pupils was sufficient and there was no plan to develop Welsh language provision beyond a few specific lessons. In addition, very little professional learning was provided to help staff develop their skills and confidence in using the Welsh language with pupils. It is a cause for concern that this situation has continued in some schools over a long period of time.'

You suggest in your written evidence that the wording of section 22(2)(b) could be strengthened so that local authorities would be required to “promote and encourage” late immersion education in Welsh, rather than only “providing information and advice” in relation to it. Could you elaborate on how necessary this is, in your opinion, bearing in mind that section 22(2)(a) already requires local authorities to “encourage demand” and “participation” in late immersion education in Welsh?

We believe that a duty should be placed on local authorities to promote late immersion provision to parents, carers and learners. We suggest strengthening the wording of ‘make arrangements to provide information and advice... to children of compulsory school age in its area and parents of children in its area’ in 22(2)(b)(i) and (ii) to promote and encourage. If we are to increase the use of the Welsh language within families, promoting and emphasising the importance of immersion to parents is necessary. See the following case studies:

[Effective immersion: supporting learners to make swift progress when supporting them to learn about and appreciate Welsh history and culture - Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#)

[Using the Welsh language: purposeful and unique extra-curricular activities that support learners to speak Welsh increasingly spontaneously on the Nant site and in the local community - Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#)

We feel it is crucial for authorities to promote and encourage immersion arrangements so that they can make the advantages of immersion clear to parents in developing their children’s Welsh language skills. This is stronger than ‘providing information and advice’ and places an expectation on Local Education Authorities to develop immersion work, consider immersion in its wider sense (e.g. when developing the skills of pupils in English-medium schools, developing pedagogy and preparing pupils for education in Welsh-medium schools).

You state in your evidence that you welcome the principle of centralising specialist support for lifelong learning of the Welsh language within a single body. Could you elaborate on your reason for this and why you state that this should include school education?

We agree strongly with the principle that specialist support for lifelong learning of the Welsh language, including school education, should be centralised within a single body, namely the ‘National Institute for Learning Welsh’. The aim here is to ‘support people to learn Welsh, and facilitate their progress, so that more people (of all ages) are learning the language’ 37 (1). Establishing the institute will enable experts from all sectors to come together to plan linguistically across all sectors, providing consistency in the journey of learners of all ages along the language continuum.

We have inspected the National Centre for Learning Welsh twice during the last inspection cycle. The National Centre has had a significant influence on the landscape of learning Welsh over recent years – in addition to maintaining and

extended good or better standards within the Welsh for adults sector, we have seen it, through partnerships with numerous partners, become a linguistic influencer. The Work Welsh scheme has evolved rapidly – for example in supporting government policy in the health sector (More than Words, a tutor has been appointed in every health board in Wales to support the workforce to provide a Welsh service to patients). They have worked with Mudiad Meithrin – Clwb Cwtsh and a wide range of other partners.

There is a need to build and expand on the expertise and work of the National Centre for Learning Welsh when establishing this body, which will be a powerhouse to disseminate good practices, raise the expectations of all sectors and ensure consistency in what is happening across statutory education sectors and, in fact, non-statutory sectors, for example adult learning. We believe that the role of the National Centre for Learning Welsh in its new form is key, not only in terms of training the education workforce but also in terms of improving the pedagogy of that workforce and the successful acquisition of a second language as a means of communication. The emphasis on oral communication rather than teaching as a subject with examinations is the main aim and a crucial one. Below are examples of what is currently available through the Centre.

[Learn Welsh Nant Gwrtheyrn Inspection Report 2023 \(gov.wales\)](#)

[Effective immersion: supporting learners to make swift progress when supporting them to learn about and appreciate Welsh history and culture - Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#)

[Using the Welsh language: purposeful and unique extra-curricular activities that support learners to speak Welsh increasingly spontaneously on the Nant site and in the local community - Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#)

The National Centre for Learning Welsh has expertise in language learning and acquisition and, during our inspections, we have noted that such expertise should be shared with other sectors. We have also published case studies on the way in which the Welsh for adults sector produces active Welsh speakers, for example:

[Effective support helps learners become fluent Welsh speakers - Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#)

[Turning learners into users of the Welsh language - Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#) in addition to providing valuable training for the education workforce:

[Increasing the number of Welsh speakers in the education workforce - Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#)

The Centre and the Welsh for adults sector are very familiar with the expectations and levels of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). As a result, it would be possible to consider and adapt the sector's national curriculum, which is based on the CEFR, as a basis for the language continuum in each sector. The National Centre is already responsible for Welsh language training for workforces

through Work Welsh programmes. We therefore believe that it would be logical to expand the function of the National Centre, by taking advantage of its experience and expertise, to create a body that would provide strategic and practical guidance across the education sectors. Please see the latest inspection report (April/May 24), which sets out how the role of the National Centre has evolved very quickly and it is an effective body. In establishing the Institute, there will be a need to ensure that roles and responsibilities are identified clearly, showing how the Institute is interwoven with any other relevant bodies.

We believe it is vital for learners of all ages to have opportunities to begin or continue their journey towards becoming active speakers. Creating a single language continuum, in addition to specific schemes, such as the new scheme to offer free courses to people aged 16-25, would provide truly equal opportunities for learners of all ages to do so. We also believe that lifelong education, including adult community learning partnerships, need to do much more than they are currently doing to provide equal opportunities for Welsh speakers, whether they are proficient learners or fluent Welsh speakers, to learn through the medium of Welsh and, as a result, improve and use their linguistic skills. We feel that there is a need to understand effective pedagogy in terms of teaching and acquiring Welsh as a second language, for example as seen in the Welsh for adults sector. The case study [Increasing the number of Welsh speakers in the education workforce - Estyn \(gov.wales\)](#) shows the type of work that has taken place and which has now grown to be an increasingly broad offer to the education workforce through the Welsh for Adults Learning Centre. There is another case study as a result of the Centre's inspection (not yet published), namely 'How the Learn Welsh sector influences pedagogy and language acquisition in other sectors in Wales and beyond.'

We appreciate seeing 'The Learning Welsh Institute may... give financial assistance to any Welsh language learning provider in relation to teaching or learning Welsh' 37 (3) (c). We believe strongly that money should not be an obstacle to learning the Welsh language for the people of Wales.

There will be a need to consider within the Bill whether Estyn has the appropriate powers to maintain and possibly extend its inspection work when the National Centre for Learning Welsh is abolished and the Institute is created.

Estyn supports the provisions in the Bill which set a continuum of Welsh language skills (based on the CEFR) on a statutory basis but has also called for a "comprehensive programme of professional development" for teachers and classroom assistants. Do the Bill and the Explanatory Memorandum provide the necessary assurance that this will be the case and how it could be strengthened?

In introducing a language continuum, we believe strongly that an intensive programme of professional development is needed. There is room to strengthen

expectations, for example in setting expectations for the immersion of new teachers into the system in Wales, by ensuring that teachers and assistants have the confidence and ability to develop pupils' Welsh language skills in line with the language continuum, to ensure that there is professional development to improve the teaching of Welsh e.g. the best pedagogy for introducing language.

We would like to see a decisive role for the Institute in leading on pedagogy and being at the heart of the professional development of the pre-, during and post-statutory education workforce – and accept that the pedagogy will need to be adjusted according to age/ability. This would support and enrich the concept of one continuum.

Agenda Item 3.6

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau

Petitions Committee

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS, Chair, Finance
Committee

Buffy Williams MS, Chair, Children, Young People
and Education Committee

Paul Davies MS, Chair, Economy, Trade and Rural
Affairs Committee

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16 October 2024

Dear Committee Chairs,

Petition P-06-1403 Reconsider cuts to Postgraduate funding and increase Doctoral Loans to match UKRI Stipend

The Petitions Committee met on the 16 September to consider the above petition, submitted by Micaela Panes.

In correspondence sent to the Petitions Committee, the petitioner stated that she did not believe that the Minister of Education at the time had thoroughly explored the impact of cutting postgraduate grants and bursaries and that as a result of the cuts, under-represented students would miss out on opportunities for education. She indicated that there had been an increase in the number of home students choosing not to undertake postgraduate degrees due to a lack of financial support, citing a Russell Group Students Union survey¹.

We would like to highlight the concerns raised in advance of Committee scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget for 2025-26.

The full details of the Committee's consideration of the petition, including the correspondence and the actions agreed by the Committee can be found here:

¹ <https://russellgroupstudentsunions.org/cost-of-living-report>

<https://business.senedd.wales/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=42854#:~:text=With%20the%20current%20cost-of-living%20crisis,%20the%20decline%20in>

I would be grateful if you could send any response by e-mail to the clerking team at petitions@senedd.wales.

Yours sincerely



Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Agenda Item 3.7

**Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc
ac Addysg**

**Children, Young People
and Education Committee**

Jeremy Miles MS
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care

Dawn Bowden MS
Minister for Children and Social Care

Sarah Murphy MS
Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing

17 October 2024

Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26

Dear Jeremy, Dawn and Sarah,
As last year, we would like written information to support our scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2025-26. The annex to this letter sets out in detail the information that we would like to receive.

I would be grateful to receive the written information no later than 13 December 2024. I note that the Welsh Government intends to publish the Draft Budget on 10 December 2024. Please contact my clerks if you are concerned about meeting our proposed deadline in light of the budget timetable.

Given the shared interest across committees in some of the areas listed in the annex to this letter, I have copied in the chairs of the Health and Social Care Committee and the Equality and Social Justice Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Buffy Williams MS
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

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We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Annex A: Request to the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding CYPE Draft Budget scrutiny 2025-26

1. Allocations for children and young people

Allocations in the Health MEG by Action, and Budget Expenditure Line (as directly relevant to children and young people):

- Draft Budget 2025-26
- Final Budget 2024-25 allocations
- 2024-25 First Supplementary Budget
- 2026-27 indicative budget (if set)
- A description of any changes to baselines used in the Draft Budget 2025-26 from the First Supplementary budget June 2024.

2. New Ministerial Portfolio: children and social care

Narrative explanation of the role of the new portfolio holder of Minister for Children and Social Care in respect of budget allocations for children across government.

3. Impact assessments

- **Combined CRIA across all portfolios:** The overall Child's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) undertaken to inform allocations in the draft Budget 2025-26.
- **CRIA for Health and Social Services MEG:** The CRIA for the Health and Social Services MEG for 2025-26.
- **Other impacts:** Details and/or examples of any changes made to allocations within the Health and Social Services MEG following considerations of equalities, sustainability, the Welsh language, and the Wellbeing of Future Generations.

4. Programme for Government

Allocations in the Draft Budget 2025-26 and the latest position on funding in the context of the latest [Welsh Government Annual Report](#) for:

PFG Commitment	Requested allocations and narrative detail
Advocacy services for parents whose children are at risk of coming into care.	Allocations and accompanying narrative setting out desired outputs and outcomes for 2025-26.
Fund regional residential services for children with complex needs.	Allocations and accompanying narrative setting out desired outputs and outcomes for 2025-26.
Eliminating private profit from the care of children looked after.	A breakdown of the £68 million commitment over 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allocations and spend by year ▪ Outputs / new placements by local authority at the end of the three year period
Specialist support for children with complex needs who may be on the edge of care.	Allocations and accompanying narrative setting out desired outputs and outcomes for 2025-26.
Fund childcare for more families where parents are in education and training or on the edge of work.	Allocations and accompanying narrative setting out desired outputs and outcomes for 2025-26.
Phased expansion of early years provision to include all 2 year olds, with a particular emphasis on strengthening Welsh medium provision.	Allocations and accompanying narrative setting out desired outputs and outcomes for 2025-26. Flying Start Childcare: An estimate of the current of 2 years old offered the 15 hours by local authority. A Flying Start Childcare: timeline for roll out of to 2026 across each local authority, from the current baseline.
Flying Start (the four entitlements).	Allocations and accompanying narrative setting out desired outputs and outcomes for 2025-26 (revenue and capital).

5. Children's social care

Children's Social Care workforce

Any allocations associated with additional support to local authorities to address the instability of the workforce in children's social care, such as vacancy rates and the use of agency staff.

Sustainable Social Services Grant Scheme

The total amount for the Scheme and a breakdown of all grants relevant to children and young people.

Care Experienced Children Change Fund

The total amount for the Fund and a breakdown of all allocations.

6. Children's health

- Allocations in the Draft Budget 2025-26 and the latest position on funding for:
- Tackling NHS paediatric waiting times
- Public health as it relates to children and young people, including vaccination
- Obesity strategy
- Mental health services, including child and adolescent mental health services, and services to support perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationships
- Eating disorder services
- Suicide prevention as it relates to children and young people
- Substance misuse, including vaping among children and young people
- Neurodevelopmental services
- Any changes in WG funding arising from the new arrangements for mental health at Hillside Secure Unit. You recently confirmed to us in writing that from February 2025 a Service Level Agreement (SLA) will be in place between Hillside and Swansea Bay "enabling a more holistic approach to the mental health needs of the young people residing at Hillside."

7. Cost of living

General commentary about the impact of cost of living on:

- **Health boards:** the delivery of services to children and young people by the Health Boards in Wales and the impact of the rising costs of energy on this provision.
- **Social services:** the provision of all social service activities of Local Authorities in Wales and any associated discussions with the Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government.
- **Child poverty:** details of what discussions have taken place with other relevant cabinet colleagues in respect of allocations which have a significant impact on children's health and social care, for example the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip in terms of the budget of the Children's Commissioner for Wales and broader policy issues such as child poverty.

8. Costs of legislation

- Financial implications or anticipated in of any subordinate legislation relevant to children and young people within the Minister's portfolio.
- Information on the financial impact of any relevant UK Parliament legislation.

Agenda Item 3.8

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

Children, Young People and Education Committee

Lynne Neagle MS
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Vikki Howells MS
Minister for Further and Higher Education

17 October 2023

Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26

Dear Lynne and Vikki,

As last year, we would like written information to support our scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2025-26. The annex to this letter sets out in detail the information that we would like to receive.

I would be grateful to receive the written information no later than 13 December 2024. I note that the Welsh Government intends to publish the Draft Budget on 10 December 2024. Please contact my clerks if you are concerned about meeting our proposed deadline in light of the budget timetable.

Given the shared interest across committees in some of the areas listed in the annex to this letter, I have copied in the chairs of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Buffy Williams MS
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

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Annex A: Request to the Cabinet Secretary for Education, and Minister for Further and Higher Education regarding the CYPE Committee's Draft Budget scrutiny 2025-26

Cross-cutting areas

Transparency of budget presentation

As in previous years, we request a clear, transparent explanation of changes to the overall Education and MEG in 2025-26, from 2024-25, including both a comparison with the actual budget in addition to any revised baseline which is used. We would also appreciate a summary of the key changes between 2024-25 and 2025-26.

If a revised baseline is used, we request a breakdown of amounts which have been removed from or added to the 2024-25 budget and an explanation in each case of why it is deemed appropriate to use the revised baseline rather than the actual budget set in 2024-25 for comparisons.

For significant changes to budget lines, we request an explanation of whether money is being taken from/returned to central reserves or allocated from/to other budget lines either within or outside the MEG.

Commentary on Actions and detail of Budget Expenditure Line (BEL) allocations

We request commentary on each of the Actions within the 2025-26 Education MEG, including an analysis and explanation of significant changes since the 2024-25 First Supplementary Budget (October 2024). In the past, this has been provided in an annex – last year it was Annex B.

We also request a breakdown of the 2025-26 Education MEG by Action, and Budget Expenditure Line (BEL), with Final Budget 2024-25 allocations, First Supplementary Budget 2024-25 allocations, forecast 2024-25 outturns, and 2023-24 final outturns all included. If indicative budgets are being set beyond 2025-26, we request details of those as well.

If the Welsh Government uses a revised baseline budget for comparative purposes, we request that the actual 2024-25 First Supplementary Budget allocations are also presented alongside 2025-26 draft budget allocations as well as an explanation of the reasons for the re-calculation of the baseline (as mentioned earlier).

Education priorities and other strategic priorities

Information on how the Education MEG aligns with, and is prioritised according to, the Welsh Government's relevant priorities and key objectives, including:

- An updated assessment from the Cabinet Secretary on the extent to which she believes the Education MEG contains the resources necessary to deliver Welsh Government priorities and key objectives,
- Information on any ongoing negotiations with the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language to maximise the level of resources available for education, including funding for schools' core budgets through the Local Government Settlement.
- Details of how allocations to and within the Education MEG align with the Programme for Government.
- Whether, and if so how, the Cabinet Secretary intends to target resources at addressing any cross-cutting themes or priorities across the MEG as a whole, for example the First Minister's vow to "boost standards in schools and colleges", and the Cabinet Secretary's own priorities set out in Plenary on 14 May 2024.

Children's rights and other cross-cutting considerations

In line with assessing whether 'due regard' has been given to article 4 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Welsh Government's duties under the Rights of the Child and Young Persons (Wales) Measure, we request:

- The overall Children's Rights Impact Assessment for this draft Education MEG for 2025-26, which sets out how children's rights are put into effect in these budget allocations, with reference to specific articles in the UNCRC as relevant.
- If a specific CRIA has not been undertaken, the reasons for this.
- A copy of any alternative integrated impact assessment as well as assurances that this assessment demonstrates that the duty of "due regard" to the UNCRC has been exercised.
- Details and/or examples of any changes made to initial allocations within the Education MEG following considerations of children's rights, equalities, sustainability, the Welsh language, or the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as a result of impact assessments, or where these assessments have had a direct influence on the setting of budgets.

Costs of legislation

- Details of allocations within the 2025-26 budget intended for the implementation of or the implementation of primary legislation passed in the past two Senedd terms, including the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022, the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021, and the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.

- Information on the financial impact of any relevant UK Parliament legislation.
- Financial implications in 2025-26 of any relevant subordinate legislation.

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

- Information on any remaining provision in the Education MEG in 2024-25 and 2025-26 for dealing with and recovering from the impact of the pandemic, for example whether the “Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards (RRRS)” programme is continuing in 2025-26.

Impact of cost of living pressures on delivery of education services

- An update on the implications of cost of living pressures and energy prices on the operational delivery of education institutions – across early years, schools, colleges, universities and training providers.

Budget monitoring and the current financial context

- Information on the processes in place for monitoring budgets within the Education MEG throughout the year, identifying potential deficits and surpluses, and taking remedial action or allocating additional funds to cover any shortfalls, particularly in light of the pandemic.
- Details of any changes to the 2024-25 Education MEG that are already anticipated in the Second Supplementary Budget.
- The implications for the Education MEG of the UK Government’s Budget of 30 October 2024.

Specific areas

Funding for school budgets

- An explanation of how the Welsh Government has prioritised funding for schools in the 2025-26 Draft Budget (in both the Housing and Local Government MEG and the Education MEG) and taken account of the Sibieta review of school spending in its approach to setting this budget.
- An update on the review of local authority mainstream school funding, which the Welsh Government is carrying out, and potential amendments to the School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010.
- The Minister’s perspective on the level of school budget reserves, in the context of the 31 March 2024 data due to be published in late October 2024.

- An explanation of how the Draft Budget 2025-26 supports school improvement and raising standards of education.
- Details of the Local Authority Education Grant (LAEG) in 2025-26, including a breakdown of its four strands.
- Details of how much LAEG was paid to each local authority in 2024-25, including a breakdown by the four strands.
- Any assessment undertaken on whether the amalgamation of the individual grants into the LAEG in 2024-25 has resulted in any dilution of previously ring-fenced activities and interventions.
- Information on budget allocations to support efforts to improve standards of literacy and numeracy and any assessment that has been made of their efficacy and value for money.

The cost of living and reducing the impact of deprivation on educational outcomes

- Information on how resources within the Education MEG are being used to meet the Welsh Government's long-term commitment to reduce the impact of deprivation on educational outcomes – including from the "Tackling barriers to attainment" BEL or from the LAEG.
- Information on budget provision for the School Essentials Grant and expenditure in 2023-24 and projected in 2024-25.
- Information on how resources within the Education and Welsh Language MEG are being used to support learners in post-16 education with the impact of cost of living pressures, and to address the impact of deprivation on outcomes (including, for example, through additional hardship funding for providers, or through existing student support funding such as the Education Maintenance Allowance).
- Budget provision for the roll out of universal free school meals in primary schools in 2024-25 and whether any budget is needed for this in 2025-26, given the roll out completed in September 2024.
- A further breakdown of the funding provided to local authorities in 2024-25 for the universal provision of free school meals.
- Any other funding within the Education MEG for initiatives to tackle the cost of living and the deprivation/attainment negative correlation, for example school holiday

enrichment/summer of fun/food and fun projects, including an explanation of how these projects and funding streams relate to each other

Education workforce

- Details of budget allocations to finance Initial Teacher Education (ITE), including funding and initiatives targeted at addressing shortages in particular subjects or areas, and any assessment that has been made of their efficacy and value for money.
- Details of budget allocations to support professional learning for current teachers, including in light of the ongoing implementation of education reforms.
- Information on funding provided by the Welsh Government to the Education Workforce Council.
- Details of any budget provision for meeting the costs of the teachers' pay award for academic year 2024/25 including a breakdown between the 2024-25 and 2025-26 financial years and the respective mechanisms used (whether direct grant or incorporated into the local government settlement).
- Information on any funding to support policy regarding the supply teaching workforce.

Curriculum reform

- Information on funding to support the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales.

Emotional and mental health of children and young people

- Budget provision from the Education MEG in 2025-26 for the whole-school/system approach to emotional and mental health.
- Details of funding from the Health and Social Care MEG to complement work in schools on this area.
- Information on any budget provision to support the emotional and mental health of young people in post-16 education.
- Budget provision for the action plan and wider response to tackle peer on peer sexual harassment among learners.

Pupil absence

- Information on any specific budget provision to address rates of pupil absence or an identification of which budget lines support such work more generally.

Sport and physical activity

- Information on how the Education MEG supports the provision of sport and physical activity for children and young people, whether inside or outside school, and how this relates to any funding in the Health and Social Care MEG such as for Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales.

Support for Minority Ethnic and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller learners

- Details of funding to support the education of Minority Ethnic and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller learners in 2025-26 and how this is being distributed as part of the LAEG.

Additional Learning Needs

- An updated assessment of the pressures facing local authorities, schools, and colleges in delivering current SEN/ALN provision, the impact of additional funding in previous years and whether further additional funding will be maintained/provided in 2025-26.
- Information on funding provision for the implementation of the 2018 Act, including an updated assessment of whether the ALN reforms are proving to be cost-neutral.
- Information on how funding for ALN provision is featuring in the review of local authority mainstream school funding.
- The latest position on funding for the training of educational psychologists in Wales and any grant funding arrangement with higher education institutions.

Estyn

- Details of Estyn's core budget allocation for 2025-26 and which MEG this is located in, as well as the rationale for this.
- Details of any additional funding from the Education MEG for Estyn's role in education reforms.

Qualifications

- Details of funding allocated to Qualifications Wales in 2025-26 and details of any additional funding for its work on qualifications reform in the context of the new Curriculum for Wales and vocational qualification reforms.

Welsh in education

- Details of allocations in the Education MEG to support the Welsh Government’s policies for Welsh in education, and the education sector’s role in meeting the Cymraeg 2050 target of one million Welsh speakers.
- How allocations in the Education MEG relate to other budgets supporting the Welsh language, for example the Welsh Language Action in the Central Services and Administration MEG (as of the 1st Supplementary Budget 2024-25).
- Whether there is specific ring-fenced funding for implementing the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill or if this will be met within existing Welsh Language and Welsh in Education BELs.
- Information on funding allocated for enhancing the Welsh in education workforce.

Early years education and childcare

- Whether the funding in the LAEG to ensure harmonisation of funding rates of early childhood education in non-maintained settings with the Childcare Offer is continuing in 2025-26.
- Details of any other funding from the Education MEG to support the non-maintained sector’s delivery of early childhood education and the Curriculum for Wales, and how this relates to funding for the responsibilities of the Minister for Children and Social Care in relation to early years and childcare.

Youth work

- Details of how the 2025-26 Education MEG supports statutory and voluntary youth services and budget provision for meeting the Programme for Government commitments in respect of strengthening youth services.
- Details of how the 2025-26 Education MEG supports the Youth Work Strategy for Wales and the work of the Implementation Board.

Offender learning

- Information on budget provision in 2025-26 and any changes to how this will be spent compared to previous years.

Further education, sixth forms and adult community learning

- Details of the complete 2024-25 allocations to further education colleges, to include the amounts of all components of the allocation (i.e. full-time, part-time, part-time allowance,

deprivation, sparsity and Welsh-medium allowances, maintenance allowance and the Adult Learning Wales adjustment).

- Details of any hypothecated funding to further education institutions or Sixth Forms beyond their usual core grants.
- Details of any funding provided in the 2025-26 budget for achieving pay parity and/or to meet any pay award to further education institutions and Sixth Forms, including an explanation as to the sufficiency of the funding to meet in full any agreed pay award / pay equivalency over the period of this budget.
- The allocation for Adult Community Learning.
- The complete 2023-24 and 2024-25 programme values used in the calculation of FE and Sixth Form funding.

Higher education, and post-16 student financial support

- Details of the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER) allocation, including details of any hypothecated funding, or funding which is intended for specific activities including mental health and student well-being.
- Details of any 2025-26 allocation intended for the delivery of degree apprenticeships and if it is intended to be used to recruit new apprentices or to teach out existing apprentices.
- Details of any capital funding to be made available to CTER, including any conditions to be placed on it by the Welsh Government.
- Details of any contingencies / reserves / non-allocated funds within any of the 2025-26 tertiary education related BELs, including the BELs within the post-16 Learner Support Action; details of how the funds are / can be deployed; and details of any deployment of them during 2023-24 and 2024-25.

Other post-16 education provision

- Details of Personal Learning Account funding.
- Details of the Welsh in Education budget including any allocation for the Coleg Cenedlaethol.
- Details of funding for the International Learning Exchange Programme (Taith).

Young Person's Guarantee

- Details of budget provision from the Education MEG which contributes to the Young Person's Guarantee and how this relates to funding from the Economy, Energy and Planning MEG.

Capital funding for school and college infrastructure

- Information on budget provision for the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme and progress of the programme to date, including expenditure and numbers of projects completed/approved to date under Band B.
- Confirmation that Band A is now complete and the final expenditure and number of projects.
- An updated assessment of the implications of the cost of living, for example energy prices and construction costs, for the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme, including any impact on the progress and costs of projects.
- The financial implications from the Welsh Government's carbon net zero policies and how this affects the 2025-26 draft Education MEG.

Capital funding for childcare

- Information on capital funding from the Education MEG for the Childcare Offer and Flying Start programme and any allocations for the purposes of the commitment to roll out Flying Start childcare to all 2 year olds.

Capital funding for the Community Focused Schools initiative

- Information on arrangements for funding aimed at increasing the community focused nature of education estates and adapting premises for community use.