

Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2031

DRAFT



Our ten-year vision

- In following the aim of a bilingual Carmarthenshire, we want to ensure that Carmarthenshire will be a County where the Welsh language is a living, prosperous and vibrant language within bilingual, strong and sustainable communities.
- We wish to ensure significant growth in Welsh-medium education and training, to increase the number of people of all ages who become fluent in Welsh, English and other languages and who can use their languages confidently with their families, friends, neighbours and in the workplace.
- We aspire that, through this plan, Carmarthenshire contributes significantly to the national goal of a million Welsh speakers by 2050



Key Objectives

We shall endeavour to:

- Continue to promote of the advantages of bilingualism and active promotion of multilingualism
- Ensure that education in Carmarthenshire provides the opportunity for all learners to have acquired two 'first languages' by 11 years of age i.e. that pupils are as fluently and confidently bilingual as possible by the end of primary schooling, which is perpetuated and further developed in secondary schooling
- In ensuring that more children have the opportunity to become totally bilingual, the preferred and recommended option is immersion education in Foundation Phase. In certain circumstances, other viable options which promote the strategy could be considered.
- Delivery of immersion education in the early years can ensure that pupils are already bilingual by the age of 7, with the introduction of elements of a third global language by the end of the Foundation Phase - in pursuit of dual and triple literacy, especially with respect to oracy
- Raise the bar in second language learning, to treat Welsh as one continuum of learning or on one progression pathway
- To realise the vision and key objectives, move all schools along the language continuum, with the level of challenge appropriate to their initial context, but at a rate of development that is both purposeful and decisive
- Adopt a proactive approach to the school linguistic categorisation system, so that schools' progress along the continuum can be better contextualised, understood, supported and measured
- Arrange for Welsh-medium education to be available to all learners within reasonable travelling distance of their homes and ultimately within their own catchments
- Extend the range and geographical reach of the Language Centres for latecomers, language confidence boosting and More Able and Talented learners at both Primary and Secondary year groups, by opening more centres as funding and circumstances dictate
- Develop digital on-line learning and language training as well as the use of new information technology platforms
- Create a central platform to share Welsh language resources for Additional Learning Needs pupils along with Welsh language standardised assessments



Links with Other WG Policies

Re-designation of schools' linguistic categories

At time of writing, the proposed new national school linguistic categories have not been finalised. In anticipation, the categories adopted for various schools in Carmarthenshire will be reflective of the WESP strategy and reasonable expectations to move each school along the language continuum.



At the appropriate time, we will migrate our schools from their designations to the new categorisation system:

- On a basis that is not detrimental to current bilingual provision
- In a way that gives schools a sufficiently developmental journey along the language continuum
- Carmarthenshire County Council will discuss and agree the new categorisation with each school, prior to ratification by the Governing Body

The 2021 Curriculum Bill received Royal Assent in April 2021.

- Mandating Languages - Welsh is mandated from age 3, whereas English is mandated from 7 years' age. This allows:
 - Well-established Welsh immersion education to continue unhindered
 - Current English medium schools to introduce English from age 3
- This will entail that schools who do not currently deploy Welsh immersion pedagogy will have an onus to introduce Welsh from age 3/4 onwards

New Curriculum for Wales

- The languages and communication area of learning strongly promotes bilingualism, multilingualism and plurilingualism

Welsh Government Draft Strategy - a million Welsh speakers by 2050

- This national goal continues to be a policy objective of the Senedd Government. Carmarthenshire's decade long WESP strategy is designed to ensure that the County's education system will provide a boost to attaining this goal

Modernising Education Programme

- The Modernising Education Programme and the WESP will be aligned. Investment in new schools and buildings will fully consider the strategic aims of the WESP over the next decade.
- Welsh Government capital investment is routinely deployed, which has been invested for instance in establishing a Canolfan Iaith in the Drefach area, scheduled to open in 2021 as a resource in support of the new WESP

Our Vision for the 10-year WESP 2022-2032

Whilst retaining strategic elements of the existing WESP, we will also develop provision along lines summarised below, by following new outcomes determined by Welsh Government:



Outcome 1: More nursery children / three-year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

- It is our aim that all pre-school and childcare provision is delivered bilingually or through the medium of Welsh within the 10-year plan.
- A strong commitment to Welsh immersion education is a key building block of this strategy
- Consideration to the age range of schools and potentially creating a space for providing Welsh medium very early years' provision
- Continue to monitor the demand in urban areas
- The redesignation of all schools will be imperative in the improvement of the numbers in pre-school and childcare provisions.
- Support our current dual stream and transitional schools with the possibility of evolving to become Welsh medium schools
- Consider developing new Welsh medium/dual stream schools utilising available space when applicable
- We will continue to work with early years providers including Mudiad Meithrin to strengthen and expand Welsh medium childcare provision.
- We will continue to strengthen our work with Flying Start and with the Dysgu Cymraeg Sir Gaerfyrddin team.
- We will work with the admissions team to ensure that clear, comprehensive and up to date information is included in the Information for Parents booklet
- We will increase the use of social media to ensure that parents and carers can make informed decisions on choosing a school for their children

Outcome 2: More reception class children/ five-year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

- In addition to proposals subsumed in outcome 1:
- Supporting English medium schools to develop Welsh Foundation Phase provision.
- Continue to monitor spare capacity in Carmarthenshire Schools on a regular basis and ensure plans are put in place to address any issues.
- We will consider housing and economic developments and impact on school places and expand provision as required.
- We will provide support and guidance to schools via our Athrawon Datblygu'r Gymraeg team in how to respond to parental enquiries.
- Address the need for intensive language training for all staff across all key stages as well as subject language skills training
- Ensure positive experiences of language learning for parents and guardians to enable them to support their children in learning Welsh at school and to assist with consolidating their learning at home.



Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another



- It is the vision of Carmarthenshire's Education Authority that all pupils continue to improve their language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another.
- Adhere to the clear progression protocol to increase the number of pupils who continue to study through the medium of Welsh at each key stage and ensure that this is communicated clearly to all stakeholders
- Transition matters will be guided by an appropriate placement consistent with the learner's aptitude and ability, which will be:
 - Suitably challenging for the purposes of linguistic progression
 - Applied on a linguistic no detriment basis i.e. prior levels of bilingual teaching and acquisition need to be perpetuated into the next learning phase
- We will adhere to the protocol which outlines our expectations that learners who have followed the Welsh 1st language programme (i.e. up until the introduction of one Welsh language continuum) in the primary school will continue with this programme when transferring to the secondary phase.
- It is also our expectation that all learners who have attended primary schools defined as bilingual will study at least 3 (initially), curricular areas through the medium of Welsh at Key Stage 3 in order to embed and further develop their linguistic competency
- Latecomers' provision is paramount. We have invested in a new Language Centre which will, from September 2021, provide lessons for latecomers from both the Primary and Secondary sector:
 - Ensure that all pupils who are latecomers to Carmarthenshire become bilingual by providing immersion education – at primary and secondary level
 - Offer language refresher (improving/polishing language) to latecomers and native learners at essential transition points such as the end of the Foundation Phase and at the Key Stage 2/3 interface.
 - To deliver catch up programmes for pupils in Year 6/7 where language skills need to be improved to ensure a smooth transition into Welsh medium secondary education.
 - Provide professional development to improve the skills of teachers and supporting school staff to enable them to teach bilingually in and outside the classroom.
 - Also, to improve the Welsh language skills of staff, particularly those on the language continuum journey.
- The transition process will be supported by:
 - Early immersion (FP)
 - Later immersion (KS2), as deemed necessary
 - Gloywi (Yr. 7), as deemed necessary
 - Hwyrddyfodiaid / Latecomers – immersion support on entry to Carmarthenshire, as described above

Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

Moving all schools along the language continuum will be delivered by:



- Curriculum development, affording opportunities for more learners to have access to Welsh medium and bilingual teaching
- Adopting a strategic approach to the subject offer
- Increasing the volume of learners pursuing Welsh medium and bilingual options and, ultimately, more progressing to take qualifications at age 16 years
- Support the further development of Partneriaeth Addysg Gymraeg (PAG). PAG has evolved as a potent partnership between our post-16 category 1 and 2A schools, now being extended to encompass our 2B schools
- Work with employers and higher education to promote bilingualism as a key skill for further education, higher education, apprenticeships and the world of work
- Support and promote bilingualism and multilingualism as skills for local, regional and global career opportunities
- Promote improved skills for the lifelong use of the Welsh language (research into and develop a Professional Welsh module for post-16 students e.g. through Welsh Bac)
- We intend discussing ways of recruiting more young people to A Level/AS Level
 - Welsh, especially boys.
- Develop and promote the contribution older students in 11-18 schools can make as role models and mentors

Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

- Maintain and increase language charter work across the Primary Secondary sector and introduce a Language Charter for pre-school settings.
- Extend the Secondary Schools' Language Charter to all secondary schools. The Language Charter emphasises the advantages of bolstering acquisition of Welsh by using and practicing the language in social situations.
- We will extend the language proficiency of workers within the Youth Support Service, especially based in schools, to promote informal use of Welsh
- We will continue to support a range of Welsh medium extra-curricular activities which provide opportunities for learners to socialise through the medium of Welsh.
- Further develop opportunities to use Welsh in informal activities (e.g. volunteering, Duke of Edinburgh, Youth Clubs)
- Working with Youth Support Services, the Urdd, Mentrau Iaith and YFC we will map out the current opportunities available for school age children to use their Welsh Language skills outside the classroom
- We will work with Further Education colleges to ensure that Welsh language provision across all learning areas is a given, including apprenticeships.
- We will continue to work with employers and higher education to promote bilingualism as a key skill for further education and the world of work.
- Market specific language days i.e. Diwrnod Shwmae?
- Encourage schools to use Cymraeg Bob Dydd / Everyday Welsh.

Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN)

- To ensure that there is equity of provision for all learners with ALN in all settings and services.
- Continue to develop a bilingual system to respond to the ALN reform agenda
- Work with our Special Schools/Units and Behavioural Support Team to further develop bilingual provision.
- Further develop the skills of our Additional Learning Needs Coordinators to support learners.
- All support services and interventions are available bilingually and we commit to ensuring that all resources developed within Carmarthenshire are available in both Welsh and English.
- We will continue to monitor requests for specialist support and work with school leaders, ALNCoS and inclusion officers to identify areas to develop and incorporate these developments in our school modernisation scheme.
- We will reflect the new way of working and supporting learners with ALN (Child-centred, Individual Development Plan, and Voice of the Child) ensuring that the approach is available bilingually.
- We recognise that bilingual provision in our Special Schools and Units is currently limited. However, we are working with these settings in developing bilingual provision to ensure that learners with complex additional needs can access bilingual provision and support

Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh



- Continue to use language skills questionnaires to identify the Welsh skill levels of all staff.
- Continue to develop the skills and confidence of the current school workforce
- A programme of Continuing Professional Development will be available to cater flexibly for identified training needs, in support of the WESP's implementation.
- We will work with partners (regionally, National Centre for Learning Welsh, Trinity St David's University Sabbatical Courses) to help deliver training programmes with a specific focus on teaching through the medium of Welsh.
- We will explore opportunities to work with Welsh Government on piloting routes into teaching for Welsh speaking graduates
- Continue to work with partners on the future recruitment, development and training of the schools' workforce in order to be able to deliver this Plan and the Welsh Government's 'A million Welsh speakers by 2050' aspiration.
- Continue to support and provide advice to Governors and school leaders on staff appointments and development.

