

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL Scrutiny Report Template	
Committee:	Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
Date:	19.06.24
Subject:	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan: 2022-2032 Progress Report [2023/2024]
Purpose of the Report:	To provide an annual update on the progress of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan WESP-for the year 2023/24
Scrutiny Chair:	Councillor Dylan Rees
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Dafydd Roberts, Portfolio Holder Education and Welsh Language
Head of Service:	Marc Berw Hughes Director of Education, Skills & Young People
Report Author: Phone Number: Email:	Owen Davies Senior Manager Primary Sector owendavies@ynysmon.llyw.cymru
Local Members:	Applicable to all Scrutiny Members.

1 – Recommendation(s)

The Committee is requested to:

A1 Receive an update on the Isle of Anglesey Welsh in Education Strategic Plan [WESP] **2023-2024** data

2 – Link to Council Plan / Other Corporate Priorities

There is a direct link to the aims and objectives of the Council Plan 2023-2028:

1. Corporate

- The Welsh Language – Increase opportunities to learn and use the language.

2. Learning Service

- Education – Ensure effective provision for today and for future generations.

3 – Guiding Principles for Scrutiny Members

To assist Members when scrutinising the topic:-

3.1 Impact the matter has on individuals and communities [focus on customer/citizen]

3.2 A look at the efficiency & effectiveness of any proposed change – both financially and in terms of quality [focus on value]

3.3 A look at any risks [focus on risk]

3.4 Scrutiny taking a performance monitoring or quality assurance role [focus on performance & quality]

3.5 Looking at plans and proposals from a perspective of:

- Long term
- Prevention

- Integration
- Collaboration
- Involvement

[focus on wellbeing]

3.6 The potential impacts the decision would have on:

- protected groups under the Equality Act 2010
- those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage in their lives (when making strategic decisions)
- opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language

[focus on equality and the Welsh language]

4 - Key Scrutiny Questions

1. To what extent is the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan on track and likely to achieve what is required?
2. What plans are in progress to ensure linguistic progression and equality across Anglesey is facilitated?
3. To what degree does the Language Centre service fully respond to the immersion needs across the Isle of Anglesey?
4. The progress report discusses financial challenges facing the Local Authority. What risks and challenges is the Council endeavouring to mitigate?

5– Background / Context

WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN [WESP] UPDATE 2023-2024

WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan) data reports on the situation of the Welsh language in education on Anglesey over the period of 06/23 – 06/24.

- The 2024 report notes the **stability of outcomes 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6**.
- **Decrease** this year in Outcome 4 (2022 (68%) 2023 (70.44%) 2024 (68.46%)).
- **Increase** this year in Outcome 7 (2022 (89%) 2023 (90.57%) 2024 (93.36%)).

A copy of the WESP Data Dashboard: 2023/24 is attached [**Appendix 1**]

1. Categorisation Update

Categorisation status of Anglesey schools during 2023-2024:

	Category 1 (English Medium)	Category 2 (Bilingual)	Transitional Category 3 (T3)	Category 3 (Welsh Medium)
Primary		1		39
Secondary			1	4

Over this year, schools have received the support of the Learning Service, the language centres, the Language Charter and GwE to ensure provision of standard that reflects school categories and the needs of the county's children.

A WESP Project Group has been established to support Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi to move towards Category 3 within five years. The Learning Service has facilitated the Group's work with the school's governors, members of the senior team and teaching team and also including the catchment's Language Coordinator. The Senior Team for the National Centre for Learning Welsh is also part of the Group to ensure partnership effectiveness to support members of staff on their linguistic continuum.

The Learning Service has developed the Cynllun y Llan app for the language centres. This app was launched on 3.6.24 and will include standard immersion resources for digital use of Cynllun y Llan.

2. Efficiency and effectiveness of any potential changes – financially and in terms of quality

INSET

- The Learning Service collaborates with stakeholders to offer training and sessions to support improvement and progress based on the priorities of schools and non-maintained settings. For example:

The non-maintained sector and the early years

- The early years Makaton and 'Taith yr Iaith' programme is developing well, with 22 settings having received the Bronze award in April, and 11 settings due to receive the Silver award.
- Non-maintained settings receive grant funds based on education provision including standards and experiences through the medium of Welsh, and the early years support team supports and monitors the quality of settings' education provision.

Primary and Secondary Sector

Language Cohorts

The Language Cohorts system (through the school SIMS system) is used as a main style of monitoring schools' diction. In time, this framework will evolve side by side with CEFR (*Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*) developments.

- This system will be updated again this year for 23-24.
- The Yr.6 language cohort information transfer guidance means that all schools have received guidance and support to report on the language cohort of each child in year 6. This information will feed into catchment language coordinators and schools to ensure that children who should be following Welsh First Language do follow this pathway.

Language Centre

- Anglesey's language centres are essential to ensure that newcomers receive timely immersion intervention. We will continue to use Immersion Grant 2 funds (2022-2025 cycle).
- This year, **96** primary pupils have been immersed, **150** have received aftercare and use the Google Classroom package.
- Use of the Immersion Grant means that we continue to employ 6 members in the centre. The contracts of 2 of them will come to an end on 31 March 2025.
- The centre has led on a national immersion centre meeting (April 24) and facilitates supportive resources and networks.
- From September 24, 1 member of the centre will be sustained on Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi's site strategically as part of the transitional plan support to move from Category T3 to Category 3.

Language Charter

- Most schools have completed autumn term Language Charter questionnaires.
- Some schools have taken advantage of the offer to receive a service to provide pupils with information and updates on the Language Charter: Ysgol Pencarnisiog, Ysgol Llandegfan, Ysgol y Borth, Ysgol Henblas.
- Many schools celebrate events such as Diwrnod Shwmae, Dydd Santes Dwynwen, Dydd Miwsig Cymru.
- Language Charter Officer has been providing yard game sessions in some catchment areas: Ysgol Amlwch, Ysgol Goronwy Owen, Ysgol Rhosybol, Ysgol Penysarn, Ysgol Cemaes, Ysgol Llanfechell, Ysgol Biwmares, Ysgol Parc y Bont, Ysgol Llanerchymedd, Ysgol Bryngwran, Ysgol y Ffridd.
- Coordinators have been busy planning and preparing for Welsh Language Grant projects and the impact of this has been noted and presented to the Council's Language Forum and Senior Team Committee.

Admissions

The success of categorisation and the language cohort system has meant that more Holyhead catchment pupils wish to attend a Category 3 school. Although this movement is a positive one in terms of parents wishing for Welsh medium education (and remaining on the island for their children's secondary education), it has meant that the Learning Service has had to carry out the emergency process of securing a placement for the pupils this year.

To support the regime, offering based on vacant spaces is important but the service will also be working closely with Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi and Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern to ensure Category 3 education in Ysgol Uwchradd Bodedern and a unique plan for Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi. This plan includes creating a Category 3 stream in Year 7 from September 2024. By 2029, every year (Yr. 7 to Yr. 13) will have a Category 3 stream. From September 2024, a member of the Language Centre will immerse groups of children at the school, so that the number of children sitting GCSE first language increases on an annual basis.

Our aspiration and plan are that Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi reaches Category 3 status in 5 years. This will mean that each pupil will be able to transfer from a Category 3 primary school to a Category 3 secondary school.

3. Collaborating with Partners

- **National Centre for Learning Welsh** works closely with the Learning Service to ensure that the education workplace receives opportunities and clear guidance on teaching skills through the medium of Welsh.
- **Gwynedd and Anglesey Music Service** works closely with the Learning Service to ensure that primary school experiences are held through the medium of Welsh and that secondary projects support Welsh medium.

The Learning Service is investing to increase the number of children who choose Music GCSE by paying for the lessons of each child who chooses GCSE music. The impact of this is an increase in the number of pupils who have chosen Music between 2023 and 2025 (e.g., Llangefni's numbers have increased from 6 to 22 pupils). The Music Grant allows us the ability to do so until 2025-2026.

4. Looking at any risks

- Financial challenges are a risk to the island's immersion strategy, such as:
 - National Immersion Grant comes to an end on 31 March 2025 – losing 2 members of staff.

- National changes to LAEG grants – Welsh language allocation for Anglesey Local Authority is smaller from 2024 onwards and is condensed into one grant.
- Transport finances are increasingly challenging.
- Linguistic success in the primary schools creates a situation where a secondary school doesn't respond to Category 3 needs in some schools.
- Financial cuts to schools mean fewer members of staff to ensure sufficient immersion intervention for pupils.

5. Next steps 2024-2025

- Ensure that the Learning Service completes and reports on our WESP in July 2024.
- Amend the Anglesey WESP document to update based on the situation and current developments.
- Ensure that language cohorts are operational and suitable for the island's needs.
- Invest in technology and ensure that immersion training for each INSET day includes immersion pedagogy and responds to the priorities of schools.
- Self-evaluation of admission processes and arrangements for 2024-2025. Amend documentation for parents and school arrangements.
- Re-grasp the Language Charter award system (launch of the new Language Charter at the Meifod Eisteddfod) and implement across the education sector.
- Ensure that schools include WESP in their SDP, update it annually and report on the plan to the governing body.

6 – Equality Impact Assessment [including impacts on the Welsh Language]

The potential effects this decision would have on:

- opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and to not treat Welsh less favourably than English.

The strategy ensures equality in terms of equal admission and provision for the language across the island. The plans support areas recognised as areas requiring further support.

6.1 Potential impacts on protected groups under the Equality Act 2010

The potential effects this decision would have on:

- protected groups under the Equality Act 2010

6.2 Potential impacts on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage in their lives (strategic decisions)

The potential effects this decision would have on:

- those who experience socioeconomic disadvantage in their lives (when making strategic decisions)

The strategy recognises areas requiring further attention while ensuring there are systems and high expectations in place across the island.

6.3 Potential impacts on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language

The strategy includes several plans which align to ensure clarity on the Council's ambition and commitment to a million Welsh speakers 2050. Re-categorising schools will ensure Anglesey's understanding and status as one of the language's strongholds and parents' expectations in terms of education provision across the island.

7 – Financial Implications

The Learning Service uses funds to support language centres and uses the Immersion Grant to increase the provision for engaging with secondary schools. If there is any change to this grant after 2025, this provision will be at risk.

Need to consider the increasing costs of transport (taxis) and re-visit the idea of purchasing an electric minibus to cut costs in the long term and to demonstrate the Council's commitment to becoming carbon neutral.

The Learning Service has requested an additional allocation of the Immersion Grant to recruit a Welsh Language Encourager for Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi and Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones to support staff (to develop and/or learn the language if required) with language skills, Welsh ethos beyond the classroom and maintaining a more intensive immersion centre in both schools. If this request is unsuccessful, other financial sources will need to be considered.

8 – Appendices

- WESP Data Dashboard 2023-2024 [**Appendix 1**]

9 - Background papers (please contact the author of the Report for any further information):

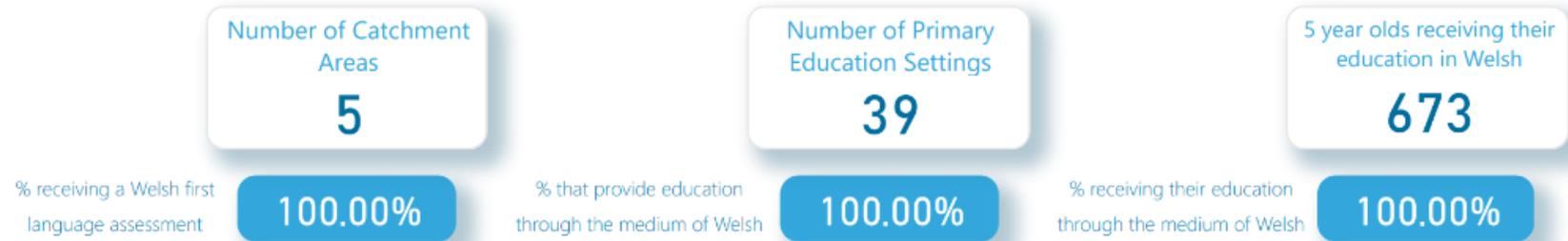
N/A



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



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



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

Number of learners continuing to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

Not Statutory





Outcome 4

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

2021-2022

Number of Learners

429

68.10%

2022-2023

Number of Learners

448

70.44%



2023-2024

Number of Learners

419

68.46%



Outcome 5

More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

Increasing opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

On Track

Outcome 6

An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs

% of primary / secondary pupils receiving a bilingual service

100.00%

Outcome 7

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

2021-2022

Number of Staff

503

89.03%

2022-2023

Number of Staff

528

90.57%



2023-2024

Number of Staff

534

93.36%

