

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**  
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Minister for Education and Welsh Language



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref  
Ein cyf/Our ref JMEWL/1464/22

Lynette Lovell  
Director of Education  
Powys County Council

18 May 2022

Dear Lynette

Thank you for submitting your draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for my consideration.

This work took place during an unprecedented global pandemic. Despite amending [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans Regulations](#) so that the WESP planning and implementation cycle could start a year later, I fully understand that it remains a challenging time for local authorities.

I would also like to thank you for your willing co-operation on the WESP more generally, not only during this recent period, but since the publication of our long-term strategy for the Welsh language, [Cymraeg 2050: A million speakers](#), in 2017. For the first time, an ambitious target was set to reach a million speakers by 2050 and that simple and clear message has taken hold. This led to a review of the strategic plans, with a recommendation to amend the regulations so that they support the Cymraeg 2050 ambition. [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans \(Wales\) Regulations 2019](#) ("the 2019 Regulations") followed shortly after.

Among the main changes was the decision to extend the WESP planning cycle to ten years driven by the Cymraeg 2050 milestones of 30% of learners receiving their education through the medium of Welsh by 2031. Focus on planning to stimulate growth was the clear message. A methodology was introduced to explain how those individual targets were calculated.

**I'm pleased to see that your draft WESP sets out your clear commitment to achieving your 10-year target, by increasing the percentage of year 1 learners taught in Welsh from 22.2% (2019/20) to between 32% - 36% by the end of the Plan.**

This is an important statement that confirms your commitment to our national vision of a million speakers by 2050, as well as your contribution to the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)'s aim of 'A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language'.

Your Plan is expected to outline how this target is to be met, and the 2019 Regulations set out a series of statements and targets that you need to include. I have assessed your draft

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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.

Plan in accordance with these requirements, together with feedback collated across the Education, Social Justice and Welsh Language Group.

To meet your 10-year target, you are proposing a number of positive commitments which I welcome. However, I believe that there is scope for you to strengthen your Plan. Section 85(5)(a) of the [School Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act 2013](#) ("the 2013 Act") requires me to consult with you on any modifications I consider appropriate before approving your Plan.

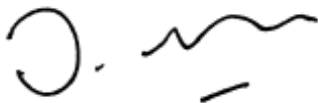
The annex to this letter outlines per outcome the matters I would like you to address. I urge you to consider the comments carefully and take steps to modify your draft Plan accordingly.

I understand that you will need time to consider the comments and to implement any internal approval processes. With that in mind, I'm asking you to send me your revised Plan by **24 June 2022**. If your revised Plan addresses the issues outlined in this letter, I'll consider approving it.

Once I have made a decision to approve your Plan, I'd like you to turn your attention to the implementation. For the purposes of monitoring progress, I'd like to see an action plan for the first 5 years drawn up by the **end of the Autumn term**. This will be monitored annually in the form of a review report.

I want to assure you that my officials will provide any necessary support, advice or guidance during this period. Your local officer will be in touch within a few days to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke at the end.

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Number/ Percentage of Year 1 learners being taught through the medium of Welsh in 2019/20	283/ 22.2%	
Target for 2030/31	Lower range 410/ 32%	Upper range 460/ 36%
Outcomes	Feedback	
<b>Your vision</b>	<p>The draft WESP makes it clear that you're aiming to increase by 14% to 36% and this would equate to an additional 163 Year 1 pupils receiving their education through the medium of Welsh. This is the highest target for the range suggested by Welsh Government for Powys. The WESP further states that the Council's ambition is to go beyond this target.</p> <p>As part of discussions relating to the programme of transformational changes there have been suggestions around establishing 3 secondary schools as Welsh-medium, but no reference or confirmation of their language category. Clarity is needed on this point in order to understand the county's vision.</p> <p>The purpose of this feedback is to be constructive and offer you the opportunity to strengthen elements of your WESP rather than change your vision to meet your 10-year targets.</p>	
<b>Outcome 1:</b> More nursery children/ three year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh	<p>Data is needed for progression from individual Cylchoedd Meithrin to Welsh-medium education (as is provided by Mudiad Meithrin) rather than the total numbers so that any problems can be identified and addressed. Recognition of wider Mudiad Meithrin programmes for children such as Cymraeg i Blant is also needed.</p> <p>Noting that there is an 'increase in the number of children using Flying Start provision through the medium of Welsh' is not good enough. Information is needed about all providers in Welsh and English, with numbers and percentages, at county level. As a result, it's not clear what the current county percentage is in terms of Welsh-medium provision.</p> <p>The plan states that the county will 'continue to work with Mudiad Meithrin to provide Flying Start provision'. However, a growth target needs to be included and to clearly identify in which areas those places will be provided.</p> <p>You will be aware of the recent announcement of the expansion of the Flying Start programme in Wales, with particular emphasis on strengthening Welsh-medium</p>	

	<p>provision. You will be expected to include details of how you have incorporated plans for delivering a phased expansion of Welsh medium early years provision, to include all 2 year olds, via the Flying Start programme within the WESP.</p> <p>A significant number of proposed actions are provided for outcome 1. However, there is a lack of clear, measurable targets with a clear timescale for delivery and a trajectory of how they will contribute to achieving the outcomes of the Plan as a whole.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 2:</b> More reception class children/ five year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh</p>	<p>There is discussion in terms of changing the language category of schools, but the reference is too general. Details of the current linguistic category of each school are required and then to which linguistic category you anticipate that those schools will transfer to.</p> <p>The section here is somewhat ambiguous with regard to the "developments". There needs to be more clarity regarding what is considered here. What is the nature of the developments? Will consultation be required? When will this happen? Can there be a programme for the proposed changes?</p> <p>Can it be noted how you intend to use immersion funding in the future? How will you go about building on the work already established at Ysgol Dafydd Llwyd?</p> <p>You need to change the references to 21 Century Schools and Colleges Programme to Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 3:</b> More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another</p>	<p>It is noted that transfer rates from Yr6 to Yr7 are variable, but areas of concern must be detailed and a proposed way to improve the situation put forward. We need better data and better analysis. There must be a strong commitment in the WESP to establish Welsh-medium secondary provision in order to offer continuity and a wide range of subjects through the medium of Welsh and to avoid the great losses from the Welsh-medium sector.</p> <p>The link needs to be made between the outcome 2 target and the realisation of outcomes 3 and 4. The transition target for 2031-2032 which is 102% needs to be explained.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 4:</b> More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh</p>	<p>We need better data and better analysis of provision. It would be good to have numbers and percentages for each school detailing the subjects offered in each KS and the numbers studying in the Welsh and English medium sector. Information about "the offer" can be misleading and very different from what is actually being delivered and this needs to be absolutely clear.</p> <p>Welsh-medium provision in secondary schools and between key stages within those schools is variable. There is a need to identify the current linguistic category of schools and map the</p>

	<p>linguistic category of these schools in the future so that the changes in provision are absolutely clear.</p> <p>Monitoring the offer through the medium of Welsh in dual stream schools has been problematic for years. There is a need to be robust in terms of the changes and what this will mean in terms of increasing the offer in the future with a definite timetable. In Caereinion 55% of pupils receive "Welsh" education however at KS4 only 12 subjects are available in Welsh compared to 20 subjects in the English stream. There must be clear targets for increasing the numbers of Welsh-medium subjects available by the opening of the new school in September 2022. It will not be acceptable to expect the growth to occur gradually because moving along the continuum has not worked in these dual-stream schools. Caereinion does not require a vision if the school is established as a Welsh-medium school from the outset.</p> <p>Your intention is to: 'We will review our achievements after 5 years and plan activities for the next 5 years to achieve the targets outlined below' but no targets have been outlined. Targets must be set.</p> <p>There is also a need to set targets for the Welsh-medium post-16 sector and develop a joint strategy with the College and also working with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 5:</b> More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school</p>	<p>More data is needed.</p> <p>Targets must be set for partners with a definite timetable. The link must be made to the 5-year Promotional Strategy, as required by the Welsh Language Standards.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 6:</b> An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018</p>	<p>The Plan recognises that there is a risk due to the lack of a Welsh-medium ALN workforce.</p> <p>Can the targets be made more robust and avoid words such as "strive" or "consider"?</p> <p>There is reference to "reasonable steps" and "improvement" of provision in the WESP. There is a need to be clear and set concrete targets for the next 5 and 10 years.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 7:</b> Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and</p>	<p>The comments regarding this outcome are very general. There is a need for more detail and better analysis of the situation to be able to address the needs of this outcome.</p> <p>There needs to be more detail about the teaching staff with a clear analysis of the Welsh language skills of the workforce.</p>

teach through the medium of Welsh

What is the target for the additional staff that will be needed to support the developments of the WESP?

A baseline needs to be set to measure progress on this outcome over 5 and 10 years.

In order to achieve the targets for increasing the number of learners in Welsh-medium education, we need a partnership approach to planning the workforce needs. I feel this could be better reflected in your WESP and therefore ask you to work with us and other relevant stakeholders to:

1. Undertake regular analysis of all data sources to understand trends in the demand for Welsh-medium teachers. This will require projecting annual transition rates of learners from primary to secondary education and looking at trends in terms of number of teachers moving into leadership roles, moving schools or leaving / retiring from the profession, for example.
2. Based on the data analysis of the Welsh language skills of the workforce we would like you set targets for increasing the proportion of your workforce with language skills at foundation level, and at intermediate level or higher and report on these as part of your WESPs annual monitoring. This will help us to plan provision of Sabbatical Scheme courses and work with the National Centre for Learning Welsh to provide a range of courses to enable practitioners to develop their Welsh language skills in accordance with the professional standards.