

**SUBJECT: WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE 23/24**

**MEETING: PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2024**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

**1. PURPOSE:**

To update members on the progress against our targets in the Monmouthshire Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) during the period 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That the performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee note the update and the progress made in meeting the aspirations of the WESP and scrutinise remaining risks and challenges.

**3. BACKGROUND:**

- 3.1 The WESP is our long-term language planning tool which sets the strategic direction for the planning, delivery, and growth of Welsh medium education in Monmouthshire over the next ten years. The WESP must contain:

The local authority's proposals on how it will carry out its education functions to:

1. Improve the planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh ("Welsh-medium education") in its area.
  2. Improve the standards of Welsh-medium education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area.
  3. The local authority's targets for improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in its area and for improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area.
- 3.2 The local authority must produce a WESP five-year action plan setting out the actions it plans to take to meet the targets in the WESP. The local authority has a statutory duty to submit an Annual WESP Review Report to Welsh Ministers on 31<sup>st</sup> July each year.

3.3 The Monmouthshire Annual Review Report Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2023/24 (Appendix 1) outlines the progress made against Monmouthshire's five-year action plan. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the start date for WESPs moved from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022. As a result, this is the second annual review, covering the period from 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024.

3.4 The report details the progress made in all seven outcomes as set in the WESP.

**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

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

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

**Outcome 6:** 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

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

3.5 Welsh Ministers provide feedback to local authorities on their Annual Review Report. However, at the time this report is presented to Members the local authority has not received feedback for the current plan.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES 2023/24:**

4.1 The opening of Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy on the site of Overmonnow Primary school in September 2024 with 19 pupils, is a significant achievement for the local authority. This is because we have faced many significant challenges along the way, including staff recruitment and unexpected construction challenges. However, our collaborative work with regional, wider partners and the temporary governing body has been a strength in supporting us to open the new school.

4.2 Immersion provision is well-established in Ysgol Y Ffin, in the south of the county. This provision continues to have a positive impact on the number of parents choosing Welsh-medium education. For example, numbers in the Cylch Meithrin show an increasing trend and this year there are 25 pupils in

reception, which is the highest since the school opened. We plan to open a second immersion during the coming year which will enable pupils from year 3 and upwards to transfer into Welsh-medium education and in doing so support an increase in demand.

- 4.3 GCSE Welsh second language is offered in all four of Monmouthshire's secondary schools, with nearly all pupils being assessed in the subject with many achieving a GCSE. Pupils within Pupil Referral Services such as the Pupil Referral Unit and EOTAS, and those following a range of alternative provisions are generally not entered for this examination.
- 4.4 Expertise in the teaching of Welsh Second Language at A level has been further developed through the collaborative delivery of the A Level across the county and an E-sgol supported professional learning group. E-sgol are a Welsh Government funded organisation who support the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum across schools in many local authorities and regions in Wales.
- 4.5 All four secondary schools are core stakeholders in the Monmouthshire E-sgol Network scheduled to commence the delivery of learning in September 2024. In preparation, all schools have attended the E-sgol annual learning conference and several professional learning and planning sessions. A Level Second Language Welsh will be at the core of the Monmouthshire universal E-sgol offer. This means that more students in Monmouthshire will be able to study Welsh AS and A level in their community school and alongside their other chosen subjects. The expectation is that we will see an increase in the number of students choosing Welsh at AS and A level over the next five-years.
- 4.6 During the last year we have made good progress in many aspects of each of the outcomes, and particularly in outcomes 2, 4 and 7 as detailed above. However, there are some areas where progress remains limited for example, in developing systems to track linguistic progression between years 6 and 7 and establishing a Cylch Meithrin in Monmouth.
- 4.7 Overall, progress towards our five-year plan is on track in most areas and in the few areas where it is not, firm plans are in place to accelerate progress and milestones agreed as follows:
1. Secure Cylch Meithrin provision in Monmouth to support growth in Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy.
  2. Open a second immersion class within the county.
  3. Develop a process, in collaboration with Torfaen and Newport, to monitor learner progression on transition from Year 6 to 7, and up to Year 11.
  4. Understand why learners do not transfer from a Welsh-medium primary school to a Welsh-medium secondary school and take appropriate action to improve transition rates.

## **5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1 See attached integrated impact assessment (Appendix 2)

## **6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

- 6.1 The costs to amend the site at Overmonnow to provide the space for the new Welsh-medium primary in Monmouth will be met with Welsh-medium capital funding from Welsh Government.
- 6.2 The on-going cost of staffing and resources in the new school is an additional revenue pressure for the local authority. This is expected to remain a pressure in Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy until pupil numbers increase to reflect school budget formula funding.
- 6.3 The on-going cost of staffing for immersion provision to support latecomers to Welsh is included in the Local Government Education Grant from September 2024. Currently, the grant is sufficient to meet the costs for two immersion classes. However, as the grant is a fixed amount, increased staffing costs may mean that the costs will become an additional revenue pressure for the local authority in future years.

## **7. CONSULTEES:**

- RhAg
- Urdd
- Coleg Gwent
- Menter Iaith
- Mudiad Meithrin
- Education Achievement Service
- DMT

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Prosperity for All: the national strategy
- Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers 2017
- Education in Wales: Our National Mission, Action Plan 2017-21
- The Welsh in Education, Action Plan 2017- 21
- Taking Wales Forward 2016-2021
- Guidance on Welsh in Education Strategic Plans
- Monmouthshire Welsh Language Strategy 2017 -2022
- Welsh-medium Education Strategy: next steps

## **9. AUTHOR:**

**Sharon Randall-Smith**

**Head of Service Children and Young People Directorate**

**APPENDICES:**

**Appendix 1**

# **ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN**

Reporting Year 2023/24

**Name of Local Authority**

**Monmouthshire County Council**

<b>Author:</b>	Sharon Randall-Smith
<b>Approver:</b>	
<b>Date</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> July 2024

## Introduction to the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Review Report

As you are aware, it is a statutory requirement for you to submit your report to the Welsh Government by July 31, 2024.

We know that several of you have already started collating information using the template provided last year. We've made some minor amendments to the form and content of the template to reflect changes to Welsh Government plans, programmes or policy developments since the last reporting period. Feedback provided after the first reporting year is also reflected.

Your annual review report is used as an important information and evidence base to evaluate plans and programmes such as: Flying Start; Mudiad Meithrin' s Cymraeg i Blant and Sefydlu a Symud (Set up and Succeed) programmes; E-sgol; the Anti-Racism Action Plan, Siarter Iaith/ Welsh Language Charter; the Sustainable Communities for Learning investment programme and the Welsh Language Education Workforce Plan (amongst others). The reports are also considered in relation to wider education policy and reforms e.g. duties under the Additional Learning Needs and Curriculum and Assessment Acts, as well as to inform research to evaluate learners' linguistic outcomes and prioritisation of funding needs. This template reflects those priority areas.

We will consider progress on your targets and commitments against your 5-year action plan. We are mindful to the fact that the degree and pace of progress on different aspects of your WESP will be different. The prompts in the template are to guide you rather than limit you.

### **Some issues to note**

**Use of Data:** We ask that you use local data (quantitative and qualitative) to report on your progress. We know that PLASC data will not be published in time for you to use in this report. However, you have access to the core data (which was submitted to the Welsh Government for validation in January) and we encourage you to use that to make a comparison with the data provided in your 2022-23 report.

**Local Authority Education Grant (LAEG) - Cymraeg 2050 element:** The grant guidance sets out the need for any expenditure under this element to be used to support our strategy for the Welsh language - *Cymraeg 2050*: One million speakers. You'll be expected to demonstrate alignment with your WESP (including your late immersion provision); Welsh in Education workforce plan; Curriculum for Wales; The National Framework for the Siarter Iaith and the expectations and responsibilities set out in the ALN Act and the ALN Code in relation to Welsh-medium provision.

In accordance with the conditions agreed in our *Funding Award letter in relation to the Welsh Medium Late Immersion Grant* dated 30 August 2022, you are expected to report on the progress of your late immersion projects, include your progress

report from 1 April 2024 to 31 July 2024 in this annual review report. A final report, summarising 2022-25 activity, will be expected at the end of March 2025. Thereafter, this annual review report will be the only reporting requirement on the Cymraeg 2050 element of the LAEG.

**Information about your local curricular offer:** Data on subjects offered and assessed in Welsh is collected to cross-reference with the language category of schools within your area and to monitor progress against your 10-year WESP. Arrangements for collecting the local curricular data vary from county to county, with the data collected directly by some local authorities with others using regional education consortia to support with this work. For this reporting year, we ask you to continue with your current arrangements. We are reviewing the current arrangements with a view to introducing a more streamlined and accessible approach to collecting this data in the near future.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS / HIGHLIGHTS

1. The opening of Ysgol Gynradd Trefynwy in September 2024 with 16 pupils is a significant achievement for the local authority, particularly because we have faced and overcome many challenges along the way. Our work with regional and wider partners has been a strength in supporting us to achieve this goal.
2. Immersion provision is well-established in the south of the county and is having a positive impact on the number of parents choosing Welsh-medium education. For example, numbers in the Cylch Meithrin are increasing and this year, we have 25 applications for reception, the highest we have seen. We will open our second immersion class this year and expect to see similar growth in our third Welsh-medium school and in Ysgol Fenni as they prepare to move to larger premises.
3. Through collaboration with E-sgol and all four of our secondary schools, we will be able to deliver four A level subjects, with A level second language Welsh being at the core of the Monmouthshire universal offer from September 2024.
4. We have seen the number of teachers successfully completing the Welsh-in-a-year sabbatical course double in the last two years. The impact of this work has been significant in improving Welsh as a second language in our schools and has been noted by Estyn in a few inspection reports. This is further enhanced by the sharing of good practice across clusters and partnerships between Welsh and English-medium schools to provide further Welsh immersion for graduates through teacher exchanges.

## OVERALL PLAN SUMMARY

We have made strong progress in many aspects of each outcome and particularly in outcomes 2, 4 and 7 as detailed above. However, there are some areas where progress is limited for example, in developing systems to track progression between years 6 and 7 and establishing a Cylch Meithrin in Monmouth.

As a result, we feel that progress overall this year is orange,

## FOREWARD LOOK MILESTONES

1. Secure Cylch Meithrin provision in Monmouth to support growth in Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy.
2. Open a second immersion class within the county.
3. Develop a process, in collaboration with Torfaen and Newport, to monitor learner progression from Year 6 to 7, and up to Year 11.
4. Understand why learners do not transfer from a Welsh-medium primary school to a Welsh-medium secondary school and take appropriate action to improve transition rates.



## Outcome 1

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

### KEY ANNUAL DATA

2222/23 position	2023/24 target	23/24 uptake
2 settings offering Welsh-medium early education places	2 settings	2 settings (Summer 2024)
61 Welsh-medium early education places	67(5.6%%)	74 (6.45%) (Summer term 2024)
63 Welsh-medium childcare places in Cylchoedd Meithrin settings	63 places	47 places (March 2024)
2 settings offering Welsh-medium Flying Start childcare places	2 settings	2 settings (July 2024)
23 children (82.1%) transferring from Cylchoedd Meithrin settings to Welsh medium primary schools	40 pupils (80%)	37 pupils (74%) 2022/23
15 Flying Start Welsh-medium childcare places	30 Flying Start places	21 places (Summer term 2024)

### OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

#### Welsh-medium early years provision

- Progress in 2023-24 has been limited in relation to developing a Cylch Meithrin in each of the five towns of Monmouthshire during the life of this WESP. There are well developed plans to establish a Cylch Meithrin Trefynwy on the site of the Welsh medium seedling school as soon as there is a suitable space to accommodate it, but this is unlikely to be until September 2025 because of the lack of suitably qualified staff and premises.
- We plan to expand early years provision to the Chepstow area in 2025/26 and are working with external partners to keep to this timescale. However, we fully recognise the challenge we will face to identify premises and secure suitably qualified Welsh-speaking staff to work in the Cylch Meithrin. Currently, there is some demand for Welsh-medium provision, but further work needs to be carried out to evaluate future demand and the sustainability of a Cylch Meithrin in the area.
- Both of our Cylch Meithrin settings are signed up to offer Flying Start childcare places. Any new Cylch Meithrin settings developed will be encouraged to sign up for Flying Start and the Childcare Offer and we consider including this as part of the tendering process.

#### Uptake of Welsh-medium childcare places.

- Mudiad Meithrin and the other Cwlwm partner organisations are members of our Early Years Development and Childcare (EYDCP) Partnership. We meet with them regularly

to discuss plans to develop new childcare provision and to support existing settings expand their intake.

- We fund a Ti a Fi Officer through Mudiad Meithrin to raise the profile of the Welsh Language with families and encourage them to consider Welsh medium education and childcare. As a result, Cylch Ti a Fi Trefynwy has been well attended in 2023-24 and this has impacted positively on the number of families applying for a nursery place at Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy from September 2024. This year 55 children attended the Ti-y-Fi in Monmouth.
- The Promotion Group and the Family Information Service actively promotes Welsh-medium childcare provision.

#### Childcare Adequacy Assessment

- The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) is used effectively to inform WESP targets for outcome 1. The CSA action plan includes a target to develop a Cylch Meithrin in each of the five towns of Monmouthshire as indicated above.

#### Tendering arrangements

- Currently, there is an established tender process in place for early education providers, but not for Flying Start childcare. Both existing Cylch Meithrin settings decided not to tender to become early education providers because there were sufficient places available in the maintained school nursery. Our next tender process planned for 2025 will incorporate both early education and Flying Start and we will provide support to both Cylch Meithrin Y Fenni, Cylch Meithrin Cil y Coed and Cylch Meithrin Trefynwy if opened, to encourage and assist them to complete this tender.

#### Collaboration with wider organisations

- Basic Welsh language training for childminders took place in July 2023 and childcare practitioners are actively encouraged to take up Welsh language training provided by Cwlwm partners.

#### Please indicate how you ensure that information and work with the Family Information Service, your admissions teams, and external agencies

- Representatives from MCC Early Years, Admissions and Communications teams sit on the Promotion Subgroup alongside external partners. We are creating a calendar of activities to promote the Welsh language. During 2023-24, both MCC Communications and the Family Information Service have promoted the new Welsh medium seedling school and application dates through social media on numerous occasions.
- Welsh medium groups and activities are regularly promoted through social media, as well as the benefits of being bilingual. We have attended events such as the Usk Show and Miri Mynwy to promote Welsh medium education and childcare.

#### Promoting access to education and training

- We provide discretionary transport to Welsh medium education subject to meeting the distance eligibility criteria, which is currently 1.5 miles for primary and 2 miles for secondary. Journey times are limited to 45 minutes for primary and 60 minutes for secondary which is a reduction from the 1 hour 15 minutes in

previous years. We also guarantee concessionary seats for Post 16 learners at a subsidised cost of £488 from September. The cost can be paid in instalments throughout the academic year.

- Please note that we are currently consulting on reversion to statutory distances, which if agreed will potentially impact on 10 Welsh medium primary aged learners, subject to a walking route being available. Any changes would be implemented from September 2025.

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

- Targets in outcome 1 align well with those in our Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.
- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership; this is also fed into the CSA Annual Report.
- The WESP is taken to scrutiny on an annual basis

## **RISKS**

- The most significant risk to our progress in this areas is the ability to identify and recruit suitably qualified Welsh speaking staff to establish additional Cylch Meithrin settings.
- Current demand for Welsh medium childcare is not sufficient to establish and as a result, there is a risk that Welsh medium childcare provision may not be sustainable in all five Monmouthshire towns.
- If building work isn't completed on schedule, there is a risk that the Cylch Meithrin Trefynwy will not be able to open in September 2025 because suitable accommodation will not be available.

## **ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION**

- We have funded Mudiad Meithrin to recruit a Ti a Fi Officer to raise the profile of the Welsh language with families in Monmouthshire and to increase demand for Welsh medium childcare and education.
- We are working closely with Mudiad Meithrin to identify staff and establish a committee for Cylch Meithrin Trefynwy.
- We are exploring the feasibility of putting a demountable building on the site of the Welsh medium seedling school to house Cylch Meithrin Trefynwy.
- We are negotiating with a school in the Chepstow area to establish a Cylch Meithrin within their grounds.

## **FORWARD LOOK**

- It is our intention to establish Cylch Meithrin Trefynwy on the site of the Welsh medium seedling school from September 2025.
- MCC Officers will work closely with Mudiad Meithrin and continue conversations with interested parties in relation to options to develop and locate a Cylch Meithrin in the Chepstow area.
- The promotion sub-group will lead on an enhanced campaign in the Chepstow area to encourage parents to consider Welsh medium early years provision and education.
- We will work with existing Cylch Meithrin settings and offer financial incentives for them to extend their provision.
- Information and support will be provided to Cylch Meithrin Y Fenni and Cylch Meithrin Cil y Coed to enable them to complete the tender to continue to offer Flying Start places. We will continue to encourage and support Cylch Meithrin leaders to consider becoming early education providers if they wish to develop their setting in this way.

## Outcome 2

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

### KEY ANNUAL DATA

KEY ANNUAL DATA		
2022/23 Position	2023/24target	Current position
48 reception learners (September 2022)	69 reception learners	50 Reception learners on roll as at the mid-year check point (January 24 PLASC) The above is 6.1% of the reception population across Monmouthshire (cohort of 814) Current projection: 57 learners for September 2024
35 reception learners Y Fenni (Sept 22)	45 reception learners Y Fenni	29 reception learners on roll as at the mid-year check point (January 24 PLASC) Current projection: 30 learners for September 2024
13 reception learners Y Ffin (Sept 22)	19 reception learners Y Ffin	21 reception learners on roll as at the mid-year check point (January 24 PLASC) Current projection: 25 learners for September 2024
0 Monmouth (seedling)	5 Monmouth (seedling)	Projected numbers September 24: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 Meithrin</li> <li>• 2 Reception</li> <li>• 2 Year1</li> <li>• 3 Year 2</li> </ul> Total 18 learners
48 /115 (55.2%) (WG target 2030)	69 /115 (79.35%) (WG target 2030)	57/115 (65.5%) Current projection for September 2024
Number of learners in Late Immersion provision	16 Cumulative	22 Cumulative
Surplus places data Welsh- medium Schools Monmouthshire	10% surplus places	<u>Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni</u> Capacity – 317 (R-6) NOR – 236 (R-6) Surplus – 81 / 25.5%  <u>Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin</u> Capacity – 210 (R-6)

		<p>NOR – 113 (R-6) Surplus – 97 / 46.1%</p> <p><u>Combined</u> Capacity – 527 (R-6) NOR – 349 Surplus – 178 / 33.7%</p> <p>Overall, 5.65% of learners attend WM primary education (Cohort of 6139)</p>
Data is needed on the number of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic learners within WM education in Monmouthshire.	Not applicable	<p>White and any other ethnic group - 8 White and Asian - 1 White and Black African - 1 White and Black Caribbean - 1 Other mixed background – 1</p> <p>Total 3.1% (12 out of 389)</p>

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## OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

### Reception and year 1 targets

- The demand for reception in 23/24 is below our target of 69 Welsh medium reception learners. 50 reception learners were recorded as being on roll as at January 2024 PLASC with the greatest differential seen in Y Fenni. However, at the end of the summer term, projected figures based on applications to Y Fenni and Y Ffin and the inclusion of Y Trefynwy show an increase of 7 learners.
- However, current allocations indicate that reception numbers in Y Fenni are lower than the previous year, whilst the number of reception pupils in Y Ffin show a growing trend.
- Overall, this means that we are currently at 65.55% of our target for 2030 (Reception number 2024 v Reception places 2030). Whilst this is an increase of 10.35pp from 2022, it is below our target of 79.35% which is due to a decline in applications to Y Fenni this year.
- To maintain this upward trend, we will continue to focus on promoting the benefits of a Welsh education and our immersion provision as widely as possible. At the same time, we will ensure that our new school, Y Trefynwy, and the relocation of Y Fenni to a larger site will be a central feature of our promotion strategy and a regular feature from our central communications team.

### Strategic outline programme (9-year investment)

- The consultation process to establish a new Welsh Medium seedling primary school in Monmouth is now complete with Cabinet taking their final decision on the 6th of September 2023. The seedling school will open on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024 and will provide Welsh medium provision for Nursery to Year 2 learners within the Monmouth area.
- The new seedling school will be located on the Overmonnow Primary School site they will have their own classroom, office and secure entrance.
- There have been 14 pupils allocated places at the school from September 2024 which includes 10 nursery, 2 Reception and 2 year 1.
- As we have been progressing through the design development it became apparent that the concept design could not be delivered due to site constraints that would be both costly and time-consuming impacting on the budget and programme. Therefore, there has been a need to look at alternative design options to ensure the project is affordable.
- The seedling school building will be distinctly separate from Overmonnow Primary School, it will be attractive, have its own entrance, headteacher's office, staffroom, administrators' office, 2 mainstream classrooms and one classroom that will be shared by the Cylch Meithrin and the Meithrin albeit slightly smaller than originally anticipated. The building will facilitate a completely immersive education for children being educated through the medium of Welsh.
- Unfortunately, there have been delays at the design stages of the project which have impacted on the programme of works, we are currently on track to submit a full planning application on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024.
- There will be a complex program of works and phasing strategies required, some of which can only be undertaken during school holidays. As a result of this the construction work will not be completed until December 2025.
- Our 9-year Strategic Outline Programme includes determining provision for Welsh medium secondary pupils from north Monmouthshire. Discussions have started with Blaenau Gwent Council to determine a collaborative approach to delivering a Welsh medium secondary school. Pupils from north Monmouthshire currently travel to Ysgol Gyfyn Gwynllyw in Torfaen. The distance pupils travel to access WM secondary education means that for some pupils their journey can be over an hour long each way. For this reason, we are seeing an increase in pupils not transferring to secondary education.
- Torfaen County Borough Council have also informed us that there will be a restriction on the number of pupils they will be able to admit from Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent schools by 2028, this is another contributing factor to discussions for Partnership working with Blaenau Gwent and other neighbouring LA's

### Impact of wider school organisation proposals

- The Council is mindful of the requirement to consider the impacts that School Organisation proposals have of Welsh medium education and the aims and objectives set out with our WESP. For every School Organisation proposal, an integrated impact assessment is completed which requires the lead officer to consider the impact of proposals on various areas including the Welsh language.

- In addition, the Council has developed a specific Welsh language assessment template which is completed for every School Organisation proposal to identify the positives outcomes, risks and counter measures that proposals would have on Welsh medium education within the county.
- Finally, the survey's that we use to capture feedback from consultees during the statutory consultation process include specific questions that ask for their feedback on what they feel would be the impact of proposals on Welsh medium education. This information is then used to update our assessment prior to any final decisions being taken on School Organisation proposals.

### Surplus places

- The PS has created an action plan to identify key priorities whilst providing ownership to group members. The MCC website has been updated to include videos that promote WM education, all existing promotional material has been updated and the group are working on creating new. The group is working closely with MCC communications team to create a timetable for social media posts.
- The PS have reviewed the MCC website and up-dated the Welsh-medium Education pages. A new page for the Welsh-medium school in Monmouth has been created and a marketing campaign is being launched to inform parents about the new provision. The promotion of the childcare facility at Ysgol Y Ffin is included in a revised PS plan.
- The actions regarding the promotion of childcare have been added to the action plan that the Promotion Subgroup (PS) has developed to ensure they remain a priority.
- The statutory processes concerning the relocation and increase in capacity of Ysgol Y Fenni continues. The consultation stages are complete, with the Council publishing statutory notices on 21st June 2024. It is anticipated a final decision will be taken by Cabinet in September 2024. This proposal allows the school to move to a two-form entry allowing 60 children per year group. Whilst this is likely to increase surplus places in the short term, it will support the growth in Welsh-medium education.
- Surplus places in our Welsh medium primary schools currently stand at 33.7%. Whilst this is higher than we would like, it is indicative of our investment to build capacity within our Welsh medium sector. The Council continue to work with the promotion subgroup to promote the benefits of Welsh medium education and we hope that this will lead to an increase in the numbers applying for places. It is hoped that the proposed relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni away from their current location with temporary accommodation into a building with excellent teaching and learning facilities will impact positively on the number of children applying for places at the school.

### Welsh-medium provision in English-medium schools



- We do not have any immediate plans to increase Welsh-medium provision in our schools that are not Welsh-medium during the next academic year. This is because our current priority is to establish and grow our new school in Monmouth. However, we have approached all Monmouthshire schools to consider and indicate if they are considering increasing Welsh-medium provision and/or looking to transition to a different category within the next two years. No schools have approached us to date.
- Given the level of surplus places we have in our schools currently, there is no immediate pressure on Welsh-medium places. However, this will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure we plan effectively to manage an increased demand for places.
- A total of 21 practitioners from Monmouthshire have engaged with sabbatical training at all levels over the last 4 years. As a result, most English-medium schools across Monmouthshire are developing their use of Welsh incidentally and across the wider curriculum areas. Estyn has identified the approaches being taken by St Mary's RC, Chepstow and Undy Primary School to build capacity and raise the profile of spoken Welsh within the school are being shared widely.
- Three of the four EAS strategic cluster leads for Welsh are past sabbatical graduates. They promote professional learning, including the Sabbatical Scheme and have a role in providing basic training to the education workforce, which includes TAs. As a result of the above, Welsh-language in English-medium schools is improving appropriately in Monmouthshire schools.

#### Late immersion.

- The local authority has been successful in its bid to secure grant funding to continue the immersion provision for the next three years. Over the last two years we have seen 22 pupils benefit from late immersion provision and successfully integrate into WM education. In addition, the number of applications for Reception in Y Ffin has increased year on year and is highest this year. As part of our initial grant bid, both WM schools have received funding to train all staff in late immersion techniques to support learners in their home school.
- We have seen the uptake of places in our immersion class in Y Ffin and as a result, this is having a positive impact on pupil numbers with 25 pupils joining the school in reception in September 2024. The location of the Cylch on the site of the school is also contributing to increase in numbers and demand for school places.
- We plan to establish a second Immersion Class within Monmouthshire to support an increase access to Welsh-medium education for more pupils. We expect this to increase the demand for Welsh-medium places and contribute to a reduction in surplus places.
- Good practice established in the immersion class in Y Ffin will be shared and developed in the new immersion class. As numbers and demand for late immersion is increasing, we will need to review the model practice in other local authorities and adjust accordingly. This will include reviewing the number and age of pupils in the immersion class, dates of admission and support for transition into secondary.

#### Collaboration with your local equality networks and partners

- We continue to promote our Welsh medium primary schools to all eligible pupils, and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils for part of this cohort. We have not yet completed any direct marketing with these group, however, we plan to discuss good practice strategies with our neighbouring authorities which we can then take forward.

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

- Targets in Outcome 2 align well with the actions in the Promotion group Action Plan.
- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and the Departmental Management Team.

## **RISKS**

- Demand for Welsh-medium primary education is not sufficient to establish and maintain sustainable Welsh-medium childcare provision in three towns in Monmouthshire currently.
- The decline in applications for reception in Y Fenni is a concern and particularly if this becomes a trend as the school moves to the new site when the number of surplus places would increase significantly.
- We are unable to secure enough suitably qualified Welsh-medium teaching staff to provide high quality education.
- Transfer levels between nursery WM education into primary WM education do not increase in line with our expectations.
- Delays to the build for the new Welsh-medium seedling school in Monmouth due to budgetary pressures, pandemic inflationary costs, construction constraints and contractor going into administration.
- Transport policy and time taken to travel remains a barrier to parents choosing a Welsh medium school.

## **ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION**

- Promote Welsh-medium education in the Abergavenny area to support a growth in numbers in Y Fenni.
- Open a second Immersion centre within Monmouthshire to continue to support growth in Welsh-medium schools.
- WEF to work with the school and community to identify and remove any barriers or misconceptions relating to a Welsh medium education.
- At the same time, the Promotion group will deliver an enhanced and sustained programme to encourage parents to choose Welsh-medium education in the Abergavenny area.

## **FORWARD LOOK**

- Open Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy in September 2024.
- Complete the construction work at Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy and ensure the project is delivered on time and within budget.
- Complete the statutory consultation for Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni.
- Complete the refurbishment works on the existing Deri View primary school site for Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni to move to in September 2025.
- Open a second Immersion centre within Monmouthshire.
- Identify good practice strategies with neighbouring authorities and adapt to strengthen our promotion of Welsh-medium education to all eligible pupils and particularly for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils.

## Outcome 3

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

### KEY ANNUAL DATA

KEY ANNUAL DATA		
2022/23 Position	2023/24target	Current position
40 children attending Welsh-medium nursery provision. (September 22)	40	61 children attending WM nursery provision at the mid-year check point (PLASC 24) 14.9% attending WM LA Nursery (Cohort of 408)  62 learners expected in September 2024 30 at Y Fenni 21 at Y Ffin 11 at Y Trefynwy  19.7% of LEA WM nursery cohort (309 cohort)
23 children transferred to a Welsh-medium primary school from Welsh medium pre-school	69	37 Reception (September 23) Current projection 55 learners (September 2024)
27 pupils transferred to a Welsh-medium secondary school. (September 2022)	41	27 pupils transferred to WM secondary September 23 (60% of WM cohort)  10 / 14 (71.4%) transferred from Y Ffin to Is Coed  17 / 31 (54.8%) transferred from Y Fenni to YGG  Current projection September 2024 22 learners to transfer

		(50% of WM cohort) 9 / 14 transferring from Y Ffin to Is Coed (64.2%) 13 / 30 transferring from Y Fenni to YGG (43.3%)
30 Welsh-medium secondary school places available for Monmouthshire pupils in YGG	30	30
30 Welsh-medium secondary school places available for Monmouthshire pupils in YGIC	30	30

## OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

### Linguistic progression

- We review learner progress with our Welsh-medium schools as part of our Professional Discussions, thematic reviews and School Improvement Partner reviews. Both schools have data from National Assessments. However, they have different ways of tracking pupil progress and use different diagnostic assessments which makes it very difficult to compare progression. Although many of our learners come from English-speaking homes and overall, most make good progress whilst in our schools and the immersion class. Currently we have not established a consistent way of tracking this progression into either of the two secondary schools. This is partly because the schools sit in two different local authorities and have developed different systems.
- We have a well-established, six-week transition programme that we offer to all year 6 learners in Welsh-medium education as they transition into year 7. This is run by the Youth Service and helps pupils develop the skills and confidence they need to make a successful transition into Year 7.
- The programme includes the following themes: team building, equality and diversity, peer pressure, on-line safety (including bullying), positive mental health and healthy relationships. The programme is delivered by a Welsh-speaking Youth worker who works in the school, and this ensures that learners have a familiar person they can go with any worries or concerns when they start secondary schools. The programme usually runs in both Welsh-medium schools however, this year it only ran in Y Ffin because Y Fenni decided not to participate.

### Work with other local authorities

- We have not engaged well enough with other authorities in this area. This is because we feed into two secondary schools in different authorities. This means that we would have to manage two processes even within our schools and are reliant on the goodwill of the feeder schools to engage. Currently there is not capacity within the Monmouthshire team to engage purposefully in this work. However, we do plan to prioritise and progress this work during the coming year.

### Transition arrangements from primary to secondary schools.

- Good progress has been made in increasing numbers of children attending nursery provision, particularly in Y Ffin. From September 2024, 61 children are expected to start at a Welsh-medium nursery compared to 40 in September 2022.
- Good progress has been made in securing effective transition with 100% number of children transferring from nursery into WM primary schools in September 2023.
- The proportion of pupils transferring into secondary WM education remains low at 60% for September 2023. This is particularly evident in Y Fenni, where just over half of pupils transfer to YGG.
- Currently, the number of places available for MCC pupils to continue their education through the medium of Welsh is sufficient to meet the demand.
- However, we are working in collaboration with Blaenau-Gwent, Torfaen, Merthyr and Powys to monitor pupil numbers transferring from Primary to Secondary school and whether an additional secondary school is required if Ysgol Gwynllyw reaches capacity. We have included this in years 7-9 of our SOP rolling programme.
- Preliminary discussions have taken place with MCC Early Years and Finance Managers on Welsh Government funded qualification routes within the Childcare Sector and these will form part of the MCC Post 16 curriculum from September 2024.
- The Youth service deliver a six-week enhanced transition programme at Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni and Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin to support transition from primary to secondary school. However, despite this and the work of the primary school to promote the benefits of continuing education through the medium of Welsh, rates of transition remain low, particularly into Ysgol Gwynllyw.

#### Work with transitional schools

- There are no transitional Welsh-medium schools in Monmouthshire at present. We have reached out to schools to encourage them to consider increasing their provision of Welsh and to meet with us to develop a plan to support them in doing so. However, to date, there are no schools who wish to pursue this option currently.
- During informal discussions with schools, the major barrier to increasing Welsh medium provision in Monmouthshire appears to be the recruitment of suitably qualified staff. Our recent experience in recruiting staff for Y Trefynwy emphasised the difficulties schools are facing in this area.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and DMT.
- The WESP is taken to scrutiny on an annual basis where we give account for progress during the year.

#### **RISKS**

- 
- Transition rates between primary and secondary schools continue to decline, particularly in the north of the county. Further work is required to understand the reasons why parents are not opting for their child to transition to secondary Welsh medium.

- The lack of progression information for learners in Welsh-medium education in our secondary schools means that we are unable to monitor how well our learners are progressing from Year 7 upwards.
- Both Newport and Torfaen have confirmed that there are enough school places available for Monmouthshire pupils to attend YGG / YGGIC over the next 5 years. However, further work is needed to secure continuity in Welsh medium education in the longer term. Discussions with our partners on a long-term solution have commenced.

#### **ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION**

- Survey parents of WM pupils to determine the reasons for not choosing a transition into a Welsh-medium secondary school. Develop an action plan to address these areas where appropriate.
- We will continue to offer enhanced transition for year 6 pupils at our WM primary schools to support their move into a Welsh medium secondary school.
- Consider additional Welsh language immersion provision for Year 5 pupils in the summer term to support enhance transition arrangements and give pupils and parents greater confidence to continue their education through the medium of Welsh.
- Welsh language training has been offered to all childcare practitioners to increase the level of Welsh used in our English medium early education and childcare settings. We will continue to promote the benefits of bilingualism with these families and encourage them to consider Welsh medium education when they transition to primary school.  
Level 2 childcare qualifications will be offered in our secondary schools from September 2024 as part of their post 16 curriculum, with the aim to increase the number of qualified childcare practitioners in the authority.

#### **FORWARD LOOK**

- Develop an action plan to address these areas reasons for not choosing a transition into a Welsh-medium secondary school. appropriate.
- Level 2 childcare qualifications will be offered in our secondary schools from September 2025 as part of their post 16 curriculum.
- Review immersion provision to include additional support to Year 5 learners.
- Ensure both Welsh-medium primary schools engage in the Youth Service six-week transition programme.
- Develop a regional approach to monitoring learner progression for Monmouthshire pupils from Year 7 upwards,

## Outcome 4

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

### KEY ANNUAL DATA

The following table shows the language category for each school in Monmouthshire based on PLASC data.

School Type	English-medium	Welsh-medium
Primary School	28	2
Secondary School	4	0
PRU	1	0

2022/23 position	2023/24target	Current Position
26 students transferred to Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw or Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed.	41	27 (September 23)
20 students remaining in Welsh-medium sixth form. (Y12+Y13)	25	15 (Jan 24)
677 (91 %) pupils registered for GCSE second language Welsh	91%	90% (Summer 23)
72 (9%) pupils not registered for GCSE second language Welsh	9%	10% (Summer 23)
0 (0%) pupils registered for GCSE first language Welsh	1%	0%
12 students studying AS and A level Welsh language in Monmouthshire schools.	18	20 (June 24)
6 bilingual units available in Coleg Gwent in childcare, health and social care and public services (updated information required)	2	6
All four of our secondary schools are part of our developing MCC E-sgol network planning for first delivery in September 2024	4 subjects to be offered in Sept 2024	NA until 2025

### OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

#### Welsh courses and qualifications

- There are no Welsh-medium secondary schools in Monmouthshire. This means that all courses in secondary schools are delivered in English except for Welsh as a



second language. As we roll out our E-sgol offer from September 2024, we will be able to monitor the number of courses on offer and the uptake across the authority.

#### Collaboration with schools for external examinations

- GCSE Welsh second language is offered in all four of Monmouthshire's secondary schools, with nearly all pupils being assessed in the subject with many achieving a GCSE. 677 or 90% of the Year 11 cohort achieved a GCSE in Welsh in 2022/23. Pupils within Pupil Referral Services such as the Pupil Referral Unit and EOTAS, and those following a range of alternative provisions are generally not entered for this examination.
- Expertise in the teaching of Welsh Second Language at A level will be further developed through the collaborative delivery of the A Level across the county and an E-sgol supported professional learning group. E-sgol are a Welsh Government funded organisation who support the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum across schools in many local authorities and regions in Wales. Their expertise in hybrid learning was developed through the delivery of Welsh first and second language courses.

#### E-sgol provision

- All four secondary schools are core stakeholders in the Monmouthshire E-sgol Network scheduled to commence the delivery of learning in September 2024. In preparation, all schools have attended the E-sgol annual learning conference and several professional learning and planning sessions. A Level Second Language Welsh will be at the core of the Monmouthshire universal E-sgol offer.

#### Promotion of Welsh as a subject

- We have engaged with directorates across Monmouthshire County Council, our schools and further stakeholders, to develop post 16 Pathways to Employment programmes in Sport, Leisure, Play and Childcare. These innovative courses, based both in schools and in the workplace, were offered as part of the sixth form curriculum for 2024-25. Students following the Childcare programme have the opportunity to be placed in Welsh speaking settings as part of their course. Although sustainable cohorts did not coalesce for the coming academic year, all stake holders are committed to evaluate programmes ready for the 2025-26 post 16 transition cycle.
- The promotion group has identified capacity to support schools to promote the benefits of a bilingual education in future careers during the time when learners are making choices about options, A levels and further education pathways.

### **IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and DMT.

- The WESP is taken to scrutiny on an annual basis where we give account for progress during the year.

## **RISKS**

- The number of pupils transferring into WN secondary school does not increase at the expected rate, particularly in the Abergavenny area.
- Schools may not have the specialist teaching capacity to support an increase in the number of pupils studying and gaining a GCSE in Welsh.
- Students do not value the Welsh language enough to continue to study Welsh at AS or A level.
- The number of pupils choosing Welsh A level continues becomes too small to make it an affordable and sustainable course for most of our schools.

## **ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION**

- Develop a comprehensive strategy to ensure all learners appreciate the value of Welsh in future careers. For example, through social media and by supporting school careers events. All schools have included the benefits of studying Welsh language in their KS4 and Sixth Form prospectus, 'Next Step' assemblies, parents' meetings, sample lessons, careers events and open evenings.
- Continue to work with all four secondary schools to establish and embed the Monmouthshire E-sgol Network to commence the delivery of learning in September 2024. In preparation a Welsh Second Language Professional Learning Group has been set up with E-sgol's support. Expertise in Welsh teaching will be shared across Monmouthshire and with Welsh speaking networks across Wales.
- Include A Level Second Language Welsh at the core of the Monmouthshire universal E-sgol offer. Current data indicates that all four secondary schools have potential Year 12 AS cohorts for September 2024.

## **FORWARD LOOK**

- Monitor and evaluate the impact of MCC E-sgol network on the availability and take up of Welsh Second Language A level in our secondary schools.
- Quality assure the learning and progress within collaboratively delivered E-sgol courses.
- Promote the benefits of collaborative learning programmes with all stakeholders including teachers, students and parents.
- Promote the availability, sustainability and uptake of Pathways to Employment programmes in our sixth forms, with a particular focus on Childcare and Welsh speaking placements.

## Outcome 5

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

#### KEY ANNUAL DATA

KEY ANNUAL DATA		
2022/23 position	2023/24target	Current position
Urdd use funding from MCC to deliver a range of courses and activities for young people. These include Youth clubs, transition programmes and residential courses	2 days a week support worker  2 six-week transition courses for Y Fenni and Y Ffin  25 young people to attend Welsh Language residential course	Average 1 day a week overall due to Urdd staff shortage  2 courses completed.  No Monmouthshire young people attended the Welsh Language residential course.
2 (100%) of Welsh-medium primary schools with Siarter Iaith Silver	2 (100%)	2 (100%)
0 (0%) of Welsh-medium primary schools with Siarter Iaith Gold	1 (50%)	0 (100%)
2 Welsh-medium schools working towards the gold award		
30(100%) Primary engage in Siarter Iaith	30 (100%)	30(100%)
24(80%) of EM primary schools achieved Cymraeg Campus Bronze	24 (100%)	22 (78%)
2 EM primary schools awaiting verification. 4 English-medium primary schools working towards the bronze award.		
2 (7%) English-medium primary schools have achieved Cymraeg Campus Silver	12 (40%)	3 (11%)
23 English-medium primary Schools are working towards the silver award		
3 (11%) English-medium primary schools have achieved Cymraeg Campus Gold	3(11%)	0(0%)
3 English-medium primary schools are working towards the gold award		
100% secondary schools and PRU are working towards Cymraeg Campus Bronze	5(100%)	3(60%)
2(40%) secondary schools and PRU have achieved Cymraeg Campus Bronze	2 (40%)	2 (50%)
There are no secondary schools or the PRU engaged in Cymraeg Campus silver or gold award		

## OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

### Support provided to schools

- To support schools, the EAS holds termly network meetings for Siarter Iaith coordinators in Welsh medium schools and for Welsh language leads in English medium schools. These opportunities provide delegates with updates on national developments, information about how to access partner support including the Urdd and Mentrau Iaith, regional resources and opportunities to hear about best practice from partner schools. Opportunities are also offered for visits to EAS partner schools within and beyond the local authority to observe best practice in action. St Mary's RC, Chepstow is a regional partner school (English medium)
- In the Welsh medium sector, school visits are offered to Ysgol Y Fenni and Ysgol Y Ffin on a termly basis.

### Mapping of activities

- The EAS has held a partnership meeting with the Urdd and Mentrau Iaith to be able to share information about available opportunities with schools. Following a meeting between the EAS, Urdd Gwent and the Mentrau Iaith in the region, the EAS shared a one-page overview of the support available from the Urdd and two of the three Mentrau Iaith. Drop-in sessions were also offered for schools to get to know Urdd and Mentrau Iaith personnel and initiatives.
- The EAS has worked with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to run two regional 'Pam Cymraeg?' (Why Welsh?) events for Yr. 10 and 11 pupils in English medium schools and organised a joint session with Swansea and Aberystwyth universities for Year 12-13 pupils and their teachers. Pupils from Monmouthshire Comprehensive attended the event. Secondary schools in the region are encouraged to take advantage of the Welsh Language fund to support the teaching of A level Welsh.
- As part of their progress towards specific Siarter Iaith targets for culture, community and leadership of the learners, the Monmouth Cluster held their 2nd Cluster Eisteddfod at the Bridges Centre, Monmouth which was led by the Criw Cymraeg from each school. The EAS supported adjudication.
- Information is shared about the provision of Cewri Cymru and a number of schools in the region take advantage of this provision.
- Information received from Welsh Government and other network meeting partners are also shared via MS Teams (regional and national).
- We have mapped out provision for pupils and families in each main town. Currently there is a range of provision available in Abergavenny and Caldicot however provision is limited in both the Chepstow and Monmouth area. Coleg Gwent offer a wide range of Welsh language courses that are easily accessible to students and adults and could support the development of language skills across the board.

- This information is used to develop our action plan to ensure that we have provision in all four main towns and particularly in Monmouth where our seedling school will be established.
- We are trialling the feasibility of delivering some of the summer courses available to young people in Monmouthshire bilingually. We hope to do this by recruiting Welsh Language speakers from our secondary schools and our partner Welsh language schools to deliver the courses through the medium of Welsh as well as in English.
- In Monmouthshire, 200 pupils are members of the Urdd across the following primary schools: Y Fenni, Y Ffin, Cross Ask, Archbishop Rowan Williams, Goytre Fawr and Cantref and in King Henry VII 3-19 school. As a result, many pupils benefit for the opportunity to participate in the Urdd Eisteddfod, sporting activities and residential visits where they can practice their Welsh language skills.
- Unfortunately, no Monmouthshire young people participated in the Welsh language residential course.
- The Urdd provide a Welsh-speaking Youth worker through our service level agreement. This means that they can support our learners well to make a successful transition into secondary school. This year, Y Fenni withdrew from this programme and as a result, opportunities to provide opportunities to use the Welsh language were missed.

#### Impact of Siarter Iaith

- The EAS continues to evaluate progress and conducted an evaluation of impact on schools across the region in summer 2023. Progress is slow in English medium schools. The impact of COVID has meant a need to re-establish Welsh language teaching in schools and this has been the main priority for schools. However, the ethos and culture of a school is a vital step in encouraging positive attitudes towards the language therefore slow progress may be reflective of the priority given to Welsh in schools. Where the Siarter Iaith framework is fully implemented and adopted by all school stakeholders, the impact is strong.

#### Support for learners

- All schools are encouraged to be involved in regionally coordinated celebrations of the Welsh language and culture e.g. Dydd Miwsig Cymru, St David's day. Regional certificates of engagement were shared with participating schools with their school based celebratory activity shared on social media.

#### Engagement with regional celebrations (WM &EM):

Seren a Sbarc Day (May 2024): 1 school

Dydd Miwsig Cymru Celebration (February 2024): 7 schools

Diwrnod Shwmae Su'mae Celebration (October 2023): 15 schools

#### Celebrating success

- The EAS uses the X platform to celebrate Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus activity daily. Tweets celebrating new Siarter Iaith school awards involve the local authority to provide the opportunity to promote successes.

- The local authority uses its website and social media platforms to promote school activities and those organised by wider partners to promote opportunities to speak Welsh in a range of contexts.

#### Training for the school workforce

- In the Welsh-medium sector, training is provided through Headteacher meetings, Language Charter, and literacy leaders meeting. Provision in the English-medium primary sector includes staff meetings, senior leadership meeting, language coordinator meetings, and cluster strategic leads network meetings.
- The professional learning programme for leaders in English medium Welsh schools includes a section about developing a school's vision and ethos and includes a section about the Language Charter/Welsh Campus. In the English medium secondary sector, specific professional learning sessions are held for members of the senior leadership team and Welsh departments. Tailored sessions are offered to respond to the needs of individual organisations. The school based open door practice sharing sessions are rich and popular experiences that add to the above provision across sectors.
- A project was actioned with the region's Welsh-medium primary schools: creating a Padlet for parents and carers to share information about the Siarter Iaith and Sbarc a Seren, annual celebrations. The resource refers parents and carers to materials that can support their children's linguistic development as well, e.g., Tric and Chlic materials and reading resources. The resource was launched by the schools as part of their St David's Day celebrations.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and DMT.
- The WESP is taken to scrutiny on an annual basis where we give account for progress during the year.

#### **RISKS**

- Changes to the regional support model may reduce the level of Welsh language support for our Welsh and English medium schools.
- We rely on external partners such as the Urdd to offer a broader range of experiences for our learners. If this was reduced, this would limit the opportunities for learners to use Welsh in their communities.
- Reduction in school budgets may mean that participation in residential courses and regional eisteddfods is less frequent due to costs.

#### **ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION**

- The LA will explore additional funding structures and programmes to ensure continuation of provision.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of the Urdd on learner and young peoples' engagement in opportunities to use the Welsh language in a range of contexts.

## **FORWARD LOOK**

- Ongoing school support in line with the regional approach and regional networking.
- Ongoing opportunities for schools to see best practice in action in regional Curriculum Partner schools for Welsh.
- Ongoing verification activity in line with schools' progress in the Starter Iaith programme.
- Work with internal and external partners to increase the range of opportunities for learners to use Welsh purposefully in all Monmouthshire four clusters.

## Outcome 6

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

### KEY ANNUAL DATA

The number of children with school-based IDPs in Monmouthshire Welsh medium provision are,

- Ysgol y Fenni – 6 (2.2% of school population)
- Ysgol y Ffin – 2 (1.4% of school population)
  - Neither setting has any LA IDPs.
  - There are no MCC pupils with LA IDPs in either Gwynllyw or Is Coed.

### OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

#### Progress against your duty under section 63 of the ALNET (Wales)

- A review of Welsh-medium ALN provision took place over the spring and summer term 2024. A report has been written, which includes a gap analysis of the existing resources and where there are 'insufficiencies' in Monmouthshire Welsh medium primary schools. This has been submitted to be considered by Monmouthshire's Children and Young People's Directorate Management Team
- The report describes how coordinated meetings were arranged with the Additional Learning Needs Coordinators (ALNCOs) and Head Teachers at Ysgol Y Fenni and Ysgol Y Ffin schools. During these meetings, school staff audited their existing Welsh language resources and the impact these resources / interventions have on children to meet their identified ALN. Subsequently, recommendations have been provided to address the insufficiencies in Welsh resources for pupils with ALN, focusing on literacy, numeracy, and wellbeing.
- Recommendations contained in the report include investment in additional Welsh language ALN resources to ensure comprehensive support for ALN pupils in Monmouthshire and release time for collaboration between the two Welsh medium primary schools and the new 'seedling' Welsh medium setting. The report recognises the importance of collaboration, including the allocation of release time for educators facilitating effective teamwork and resource sharing. Specifically offering professional learning time for broader collaboration and training would enhance professional development and foster a cohesive approach to supporting ALN pupils.

#### Progress of actions arising from the review

- As a result of the ALN / ALP review, a gap in Welsh language resources specifically tailored for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) was identified. The report identifies that this is a Wales wide insufficiency and although money has been granted to fund projects to remedy this, not all projects are completed.



### Use data to identify patterns and trends.

- A majority of children with ALN in Monmouthshire are educated in mainstream provision. Monmouthshire's Early Years Team, comprising of Advisory Teachers and Educational Psychologists, would identify children with ALN and support their transition into school. Where highly complex ALN has been identified, parents may consider English medium specialist provision, however if parental choice is to remain in mainstream Welsh medium provision, this would be supported by the local authority and school.
- There is a pattern emerging regarding transition of pupils with ALN from Welsh medium primary education to secondary education, which appears to favour English medium secondary education over Welsh medium secondary education. forward.
- Between 2022- 2024 five pupils with Statements of SEN or IDPs have transferred from Welsh medium primary schools to English medium secondary schools. In 2024 one pupil with an IDP will be transferring from a Welsh medium primary school to a Welsh medium secondary school. This will be monitored and analysed going

### Work with other local authorities

- As part of the review, discussions were held with colleagues regionally and nationally. The Officer responsible for undertaking the review is committed to continuing to work with colleagues across Wales and the ALN National Implementation Lead (Welsh Language) to share expertise and develop Welsh language provision and resources.

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

- Progress with regard to ALN provision will be monitored through the local authority ALN Quality Assurance process, which applies to all maintained mainstream schools, including Welsh Medium primary schools.
- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and DMT.
- The WESP is taken to scrutiny on an annual basis where we give account for progress during the year.

## **RISKS**

- There are several competing demands on Monmouthshire's education budget. Financial resources are required to fund improvements to Welsh medium resources and training and will need to be prioritised.
- Difficulties in recruiting Welsh-speaking staff to support ALN pupils in Welsh medium schools mean that in some cases pupils may not receive support in their preferred language.

## **ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION**

- Monmouthshire will be proactive in looking at ways of maximising available resources to ensure provision for ALN resources for Welsh medium primary schools are enhanced, this will include collaboration with regional and national partners.

- The ALN team will continue to provide ALN training and support for staff in Welsh-medium schools to build the skills of the existing workforce.

#### **FORWARD LOOK**

- Monmouthshire's CYP DMT will consider recommendations from the ALN ALP review report and request to fund Welsh-medium ALN resources/training
- Monmouthshire LA /Schools to look at how release time for collaboration between the Welsh-medium schools can be agreed and sustained.
- ALNCOs from the Welsh medium primary schools will work with Monmouthshire's Quality Assurance and Partnership lead on quality assurance policies and processes.

## Outcome 7

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

### KEY ANNUAL DATA

Welsh language skills in English-medium primary schools PLASC

	Baseline (%)	2023-24 Target (%)	2023-24 Actual (%)
<b>No Skills</b>	1.0	0	1.5
<b>Entry Level Skills</b>	24.4	20	27.3
<b>Foundation Level Skills</b>	55.6	40	43.9
<b>Intermediate Level Skills</b>	15.1	35	15.2
<b>Advanced</b>	1.9	3%	1.5
<b>Proficient</b>	1.6	2	9.1

Welsh Language Skills in English-medium secondary schools PLASC.

	Baseline (%)	2023-24 Target (%)	2023-24 Actual (%)
<b>No Skills</b>	66.1	40	63.9
<b>Entry Level Skills</b>	19.0	30	21.3
<b>Foundation Level Skills</b>	7.1	15	6.6
<b>Intermediate Level Skills</b>	0.6	5	1.6
<b>Advanced</b>	2.3	5	1.6
<b>Proficient</b>	4.8	5	3.3

Welsh Speaking Teachers working in Monmouthshire Schools.

	2023-24 Target	2023-24 Actual
<b>Welsh speaking teachers work in Welsh-medium schools in Monmouthshire.</b>	20	25
<b>Welsh speaking support staff work in Welsh-medium schools in Monmouthshire.</b>	23	24

Welsh Language Skills Across LA (not including school staff):

Level of Language skills	2023-24 Target	2023-24 Actual
<b>Beginner</b>	188	212
<b>Advanced Beginner</b>	36	25
<b>Intermediate</b>	50	38
<b>Advanced</b>	7	5
<b>Fluent</b>	49	43
<b>Total</b>	330	323

Teacher Participation in Sabbatical Courses

2022/23 Position	2023/24 target	Current position
10 teachers completed Welsh in a year intensive sabbatical	30 teachers complete the Welsh in a year intensive sabbatical	21 teachers have completed Welsh in a year intensive sabbatical (5 in 2023/24)

## OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

### Vacancies in the local authority

- During 2023-2024 97 school vacant school posts were advertised as being Welsh language desirable and 20 posts advertised as Welsh language essential.
- In the case of Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy, attracting suitable candidates for the Headteacher post and successfully recruiting for the position has proven challenging.

### Identifying additional workforce needs

- We have reviewed staffing across our two existing schools and Y Trefynwy. During this current WESP/5-year work plan, we anticipate we will need the following based on the current growth profile in all three schools, current staffing levels and the projected reduction in the birth rate across the county.

#### Y Fenni

- The school has sufficient staff capacity to manage current pupil numbers and to manage an increase of up to 80 pupils based on current staffing levels and class sizes. It is unlikely that the school will increase its pupil numbers significantly until after it moves onto the new site, which is anticipated to be towards the end of 2025 and near to the end of our WESP/5-year plan.

#### Y Ffin

- The school population is growing and whilst staffing is sufficient at present, we are likely to need another teacher and teaching assistant within the next two years.

#### Y Trefynwy

- We have sufficient staffing for the first two years. However, we will need to appoint a substantive Headteacher, and it is likely that we will need to appoint another teacher and a teaching assistant within this current WESP/5-year plan.

#### Late Immersion

- We will need to appoint a Teacher and Teaching assistant to lead the second immersion class.
- Overall, this means that we will need to recruit the following additional staff

Headteacher	1
Teacher	3
Teaching Assistant	3

- We will be working with the National Centre for Learning Welsh to enhance the Welsh language skills of teachers who have completed the Welsh in a year course, so that they can work in a Welsh-medium school if they wish to do so. In this way we will begin to develop our Welsh-medium capacity within the county.

#### Identifying specialist workforce for Additional Learning Needs.

- Recruitment of Welsh speakers is a challenge when looking to fill specialist positions. Within the broad Inclusion Service there is one Welsh speaking Specialist Teacher. We continue to follow recruitment guidance to try to attract Welsh speakers, and always highlight the importance of Welsh, as well as continually promoting our offer around professional learning for Welsh language to all interested existing staff, potential applicants and new starters.
- In terms of Welsh language specialists including Educational Psychologists, this remains a national challenge, but we do have access to a Welsh speaking EP if needed.
- We include consideration of Welsh medium provision, as part of our tracking/ forecasting our most complex learners with ALN to support us to ensure we have 'sufficient' provision in the future (i.e. SRB provision) as needed.
- As part of our ongoing partnership work with the Autism Education Trust, we have developed materials, resources and training in both Welsh and English to enhance our good autism practice and to develop our workforce in English and Welsh medium provision for children with additional learning needs.

#### Progression for students

- We have engaged with directorates across Monmouthshire County Council, our schools and further stakeholders, to develop post 16 Pathways to Employment programmes in Sport, Leisure, Play and Childcare. These innovative courses, based both in schools and in the workplace, were offered as part of the sixth form curriculum for 2024-25. Students following the Childcare programme have the opportunity to be placed in Welsh speaking settings as part of their course.

- Although sustainable cohorts did not coalesce for the coming academic year, all stake holders are committed to evaluate programmes ready for the 2025-26 post 16 transition.
- Expertise in the teaching of Welsh Second Language at A level will be further developed through the collaborative delivery of the A Level across the county and an E-sgol supported professional learning group. E-sgol are a Welsh Government funded organisation who support the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum across schools in many local authorities and regions in Wales. Their expertise in hybrid learning was developed through the delivery of Welsh first and second language courses.

#### Working with other local authorities to secure school leadership

- We have mapped out leadership needs within the local authority but have not yet extended this work across the region. However, after struggling to recruit a suitably qualified Welsh speaker to lead new school despite significant efforts to promote the role and making the salary very competitive. We successfully worked with regional partners to secure a secondment for an Executive Headteacher to enable us to open Y Trefynwy in September 2024. However, this process identified the fact that there are limited numbers of suitably qualified Welsh speaking leaders available in Monmouthshire area and potentially across the region and was particularly evident during our recruitment processes when several schools in the region were competing for a small number of candidates.
- During the process, we gained useful information about the challenges other partners are having in securing Welsh-medium leadership. As a result, we have revisited our requirements for our five-year plan as indicated above. We know that we will need to secure long-term substantive leadership for Y Trefynwy in the future and have started work to secure this which includes continuing to work with our regional partners. As part of this work, we hope to identify the needs across the region as well as looking at growing the number of NPQH qualified future school leaders over the next year. This will include mapping out Headteacher needs with other local authorities and considering alternative models of leadership.
- The EAS is supporting the development of education practitioners along the professional learning pathway. Practitioners from Welsh medium schools are supported to progress to HLTA status, middle leadership, senior leadership, preparing for headship and NPQH. Provision is available through the medium of Welsh or bilingually.

#### Collaboration with wider partners to promote training

- The EAS continues to successfully promote and recruit to the Sabbatical Scheme and supports schools and clusters to build capacity based on the expertise of trained practitioners post programme. Estyn has captured a best practice case study on the approach being taken by St Mary's RC, Chepstow to building capacity within the school and this is being shared widely. The St Mary's case study refers to regional partnership working.
- Schools are provided with additional delegated funding, through EAS business planning, to enable practitioners develop their expertise, skills and increase capacity within school's post programme. Initiatives such as the regional

Sabbatical Champion's model provides funding for past participants to develop resources for other schools and engage in regional promotional activity such as the sharing of experience at networks and professional learning to encourage application for the Sabbatical Scheme. 3 of the 4 EAS strategic cluster leads for Welsh are past sabbatical graduates. They have a role in promoting professional learning, including the Sabbatical Scheme and the provision from the National Centre for Learning Welsh. They also have a role in providing basic training to the education workforce, this includes TAs. The EAS continues to promote the offer from the National Centre for Learning Welsh via headteacher bulletins, networks, their own professional learning offer, website and @EAS\_Cymraeg.

#### Collaboration with wider partners to improve data collection

- To support the accurate collection of data, the purpose of the SWAC in relation to planning professional learning has been outlined by the EAS via networking support opportunities to the Strategic Cluster Leads for Welsh and Welsh language coordinators. A video to support this understanding has been shared via cluster leads and via MS Teams for senior leaders.  
[Planning for the development of staff language skills Welsh.mp4 - Google Drive](#)
- Grant planning sessions for Headteachers include guidance on the appropriate expenditure of delegated Welsh in education funding and this is discussed in relation to needs identification via SWAC. The EAS regional professional learning sessions for Headteachers 'Strategic development and evaluation of Welsh', includes guidance on SWAC and all supporting leadership documentation includes questions to prompt the effective audit of practitioners' language skills along the Welsh language competency framework and the use of SWAC.  
[Supporting Welsh in EM Schools.pdf - Google Drive](#) and [SLO Welsh EAS FINAL \(new branding\).pdf - Google Drive](#)

#### Work with partners to improve teaching skills through the medium of Welsh.

- The EAS has developed a professional learning offer that supports education practitioners with opportunities to develop their understanding and ability to teach Welsh and through the medium of Welsh (Welsh and English medium schools). This includes universal and bespoke support to schools and clusters on language acquisition and immersion techniques. The EAS professional learning offer for 2024-25 has been shared with all Monmouthshire schools in a bespoke EAS LA Marketplace event for Monmouthshire on 12.7.24.
- Cross consortia working enables Welsh medium schools to engage with professional learning from other providers e.g. collaboration between EAS and CSC on secondary Welsh medium development (the Gyda'n Gilydd partnership). It also enables access to professional learning from further afield e.g. the recent GWE Ein Llais Ni provision.

#### Further information

- The local authority has completed a staff survey to determine the Welsh language skills of the workforce and is in the process of analysing the information. This is being used to designate additional posts as Welsh language

essential which in turn will give residence a higher degree of confidence that they can interact with the Council in Welsh as well as see the benefit of the language.

- LA Staff are incentivised to take Welsh language lessons as they are provided free from the authority and are given the time to study. We have explored options for other incentives, but these are limited by the existence of National terms and conditions as set out in the Green Book. However, all staff have opportunities to participate in Welsh language courses from beginner level to advanced level. From Sept 23 we had 40 staff members sign up for a Welsh language course which is an increase from the previous year. It is too early to determine the impact of this training.

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and DMT.
- The WESP is taken to scrutiny on an annual basis where we give account for progress during the year.

## **RISKS**

- There will not be enough school staff to work in our Welsh medium schools as the demand grows.
- There will not be enough Welsh speaking specialist staff to support learners with ALN and their families.
- Secondary schools will be unable to fulfil a statutory element of the curriculum if there are not enough teachers with the skills to deliver Welsh GCSE.

## **ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION**

- Continue to analyse the Welsh language skills of the local authority workforce to identify training needs and gaps in service areas for example by targeting certain posts as Welsh essential and actively promoting on Welsh language recruitment sites.
- Undertake regular analysis of data sources including staffing lists and pupil projections to understand the trends in demand for Welsh-medium teachers and project future needs as demand increases, particularly when our third Welsh-medium school opens in Monmouth.
- Further develop opportunities through joint working between Initial Teacher Training and Education (ITET) providers, the regional consortia and other work-based learning providers to recruit suitably experienced and qualified staff.
- Engage with careers events in schools and colleges as well as in the community to promote the opportunities in teaching with the Welsh Language.
- Continue to provide and promote Welsh language courses at all levels for local authority staff to increase the number of staff able to speak Welsh which in turn will increase the confidence of the public to be able use the Welsh language within their interactions with the Council. We will be able to tell this by measuring the number of calls to the authorities contact centre using the dedicated Welsh language line.
- Recruitment of Welsh speakers is a challenge when looking to fill specialist positions. Within the broad Inclusion Service there is one Welsh speaking



Specialist Teacher. We continue to follow recruitment guidance to try to attract Welsh speakers, and always highlight the importance of Welsh, as well as continually promoting our offer around professional learning for Welsh language to all interested existing staff, potential applicants and new starters.

- In terms of Welsh language specialists including Educational Psychologists, this remains a national challenge, but we do have access to a Welsh speaking EP if needed.
- We include consideration of Welsh medium provision, as part of our tracking/ forecasting our most complex learners with ALN to support us to ensure we have 'sufficient' provision in the future (i.e. SRB provision) as needed.
- As part of our ongoing partnership work with the Autism Education Trust, we have developed materials, resources and training in both Welsh and English to enhance our good autism practice and to develop our workforce in English and Welsh medium provision for children with additional learning needs.

## **FORWARD LOOK**

- We will continue to work closely with EAS to encourage school-based staff to develop their Welsh language skills. The Cwrs Sabothol will continue to be promoted as well as courses offered through learnwelsh.cymru for the education workforce.
- The LA will soon be launching our new training platform Thinqi, which is a part of a consortia which will not only improve the way Welsh language training is provided to staff but will also allow us to offer a wider variety of training materials. The new platform will also allow us to monitor more easily which members of staff have completed training and mandatory training such as Welsh Language Awareness will be assigned as a mandatory requirement within staff's personal development plans.
- We look to integrate LA staff reporting of their Welsh language skills into our new training platform, Thinqi. Staff will be able to annually report their Welsh language proficiency upon completing their Welsh language awareness training. This will allow for a better understanding of the Welsh language skills across the authority and can help us better identify where further skills are needed.
- We have developed a new People Strategy for the organisation. This re-enforces the strategic aspirations in the WESP with a clear commitment to improve workforce planning and promotion to help us overcome skills shortages.
- Recruitment of Welsh speakers is a challenge when looking to fill specialist positions. Within the broad Inclusion Service there is one Welsh speaking Specialist Teacher. We continue to follow recruitment guidance to try to attract Welsh speakers, and always highlight the importance of Welsh, as well as continually promoting our offer around professional learning for Welsh language to all interested existing staff, potential applicants and new starters.
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