
Local authority Welsh in Education Strategic Plans

September 2016



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Introduction

This report is published in response to a request for advice in the Minister's annual remit letter 2015-2016 to Estyn. The review considers:

- 1 the impact of Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) on improving planning for Welsh-medium education
- 2 the influence that WESPs have had in stimulating and supporting actions to raise standards of Welsh and Welsh second language
- 3 the degree to which the statutory responsibility of local authorities in producing WESPs allows for co-operation with, and support from, regional consortia school improvement services

This report is intended for the Welsh Government, local authorities and regional consortia. It may be of interest to parents, to staff in schools and in other sectors, and members of the public. The report draws on the evidence noted in Appendix 1.

Background

The Welsh Assembly Government published its Welsh-medium Education Strategy in April 2010. The strategy's stated vision is to:

'have an education and training system that responds in a planned way to the growing demand for Welsh-medium education, reaches out to and reflects our diverse communities and enables an increase in the number of people of all ages and backgrounds who are fluent in Welsh and able to use the language with their families, in their communities and in the workplace' (p.4).

The first strategic objective is 'to expect local authorities to plan effectively for Welsh-medium provision' (p.13)'.

Every local authority is required to produce and submit their Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) to the Welsh Government to demonstrate how they aim to achieve the outcomes and targets outlined in the Welsh-medium Education Strategy.

In December 2011, local authorities presented their first WESPs to the Welsh Government, on a non-statutory basis. WESPs are now a statutory requirement for local authorities under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, with the first statutory plans operational from the April 2014. There is a requirement for local authorities to present their plans to Welsh Ministers, who have the power to approve the plans (with or without adaptations) or reject them, and require other plans in their place.

The Act also sets out the arrangements that a local authority must make in terms of public consultation about the plan, its submission to Welsh Ministers and the subsequent publication of the approved WESP.

The WESPs include seven specific outcomes that outline how local authorities are expected to improve Welsh-medium education in their area. These are:

- Outcome 1: More seven-year-old learners being taught through the medium of Welsh
- Outcome 2: More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school
- Outcome 3: More learners aged 14-16 studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh
- Outcome 4: More students aged 16-19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh, in schools, colleges and work-based learning
- Outcome 5: More students with higher-level Welsh-language skills
- Outcome 6: Welsh-medium provision for learners with additional learning needs (ALN)
- Outcome 7: Workforce planning and continuing professional development (CPD)

Main findings

- 1 The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) are providing a useful framework for local authorities to plan their Welsh-medium education provision. While the WESPs have the potential to support the delivery of the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium education strategy, at present there are weaknesses in how many of the plans are being developed and implemented. This is borne out by the slow progress being made against many of the targets within the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium education strategy.
- 2 Many of the initial WESPs required extensive modifications when presented for Ministerial approval. This is partly because they were not aligned well enough with the Welsh Government's vision for Welsh-medium education. The partnership between local authorities and the Welsh Government in developing the WESPs, particularly in relation to setting targets, has been weak. The targets set by local authorities when aggregated do not align with many of the aspirations of the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium education strategy.
- 3 All local authorities have consulted with key stakeholders at relevant stages when developing their WESPs in accordance with the statutory guidance. The effectiveness of this engagement varies greatly and the overall awareness of the WESPs by education practitioners within local authorities is limited.
- 4 In most authorities, Welsh-medium education fora contribute to developing and monitoring of the WESPs. The membership of the fora includes parents, governors, local authority officers, elected members, education professionals and representatives from groups with a particular interest in Welsh-medium education. In a few cases, local authority officers use these fora effectively, for example to plan and monitor outcomes and to help in setting suitable targets. In a few local authorities, fora meetings are held too infrequently, roles and expected contributions of stakeholders are unclear, and proposed actions are not stated precisely enough or evaluated adequately.
- 5 In local authorities where the progress made against the targets in the WESPs is good, there is a strong commitment by strategic leaders, elected members and senior officers to support Welsh-medium education. In these local authorities, the emphasis placed on delivering the WESP is high and improving Welsh-medium provision is a strategic priority. In a few local authorities where developing Welsh-medium provision is not a strategic priority, the WESP is often the responsibility of middle-tier officers. As such they do not feature prominently in strategic planning, progress is not scrutinised robustly at a high enough level, and progress against targets is slow.
- 6 A few authorities lack systematic approaches to measuring demand for Welsh-medium education. These local authorities tend to be reactive rather than proactive to increases in the demand for Welsh-medium education, resulting in provision having to catch up with the demand.

- 7 Most local authorities take appropriate steps to promote and raise awareness of Welsh-medium education provision in their area. In a minority of authorities, the information available to parents is limited and does not explain the longer-term provision from the early years to key stage 4.
- 8 Several terms are used for schools where Welsh is used extensively as the medium of teaching, such as 'Welsh schools', 'bilingual schools', 'traditional Welsh schools' or 'natural Welsh schools'. These terms do not explain well enough the extent of the provision for pupils through the medium of Welsh and English. Official Welsh Government categorisations (see appendix 2) are not always used consistently by schools and local authorities. This makes it challenging for parents to make informed decisions about their children's education.
- 9 There is considerable variation in the emphasis given by local authorities to increasing the proportion of learners taking GCSE subjects through the medium of Welsh. Only a minority of local authorities see this as a priority. Although half of the local authorities track the number of Welsh-medium courses in key stage 4, only a very few set targets for individual schools to increase the number of pupils who follow them.
- 10 Most local authorities' WESPs explain the actions they propose to take to increase the percentage of 16-19 learners who study subjects through the medium of Welsh in schools. Although further education institutions and work-based learning providers are outside the scope of local authorities' WESPs, there are a few examples where effective partnerships through 14 -19 learning pathways networks result in collaborative Welsh-medium courses being provided in key stage 4 and in some cases in post-16.
- 11 Most of the eight local authorities visited have undertaken an appropriate audit of Welsh-medium additional learning needs (ALN) provision during the last five years. However, the majority do not conduct these audits regularly enough or in enough detail to evaluate provision in terms of quality or capacity. As a result, they fail to identify gaps in provision or to implement improvement plans in a timely manner.
- 12 Partnership working between local authorities and regional consortia in relation to developing the WESPs is at a very early stage. The WESPs provide a useful framework to facilitate conversations between officers and to promote collaborative working within and between local authorities. There are a few examples of good cross-authority work impacting well on provision and standards.
- 13 All the local authorities visited had undertaken a linguistic skills audit of their teaching workforce. Only in a few instances do local authorities consider their current Welsh-medium workforce capacity, along with their recruitment and retention challenges, when considering their school organisation projects and longer-term provision planning.

- 14 Progress against the targets in the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Strategy varies across the seven outcomes:

Outcome 1: More seven-year-old learners being taught through the medium of Welsh

Over 1,200 more Year 2 learners in the Foundation Phase were assessed in Welsh language (language, literacy and communication skills – Welsh) in 2015 compared to 2011. However, as the overall number of Year 2 learners in Wales has also increased, the proportion being assessed through the medium of Welsh has remained at around 22% (Welsh Government, 2011, Welsh Government, 2015a). The Welsh Government target for 2015 of 25% has not been met (Welsh Government, 2015b).

Outcome 2: More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school

Since 2011, the number of learners at Year 9 (14-year-olds) assessed in Welsh has declined, and so has the overall number of learners. There has been a slow but steady upward trend in the proportion of Year 9 learners assessed in Welsh, from 16.3% in 2011 to 17.8% in 2015 (Welsh Government, 2015c). The Welsh Government target for 2015 of 19% has not been met (Welsh Government, 2015b). Across Wales, despite the small increase in the proportion of learners who are being assessed in Welsh at Year 9, around 13% of learners who are in Welsh-medium education in Year 6 do not continue in Welsh-medium education in Year 9 (Welsh Government, 2015b). This figure has stayed generally static since 2011. As a result, these learners do not develop their Welsh language skills to the best of their ability.

Outcome 3: More learners aged 14-16 studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh

Between 2011 and 2015, there has been an overall decline in the proportion of learners who take two or five level 1 or level 2 GCSE subjects through the medium of Welsh (in addition to GCSE Welsh first language). The decline is steepest for learners taking five additional subjects. Welsh Government targets for 2015 for both these indicators have not been met (Welsh Government, 2015b).

Outcome 4: More students aged 16-19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh, in schools, colleges and work-based learning

Since 2011, the proportion of learning activities carried out by learners aged 16-19 through the medium of Welsh or bilingually has stayed generally static in schools, at around 21%. There is also a largely static picture in work-based learning, with the proportion remaining between 3 and 4%. In further education institutions, the proportion of learners studying in Welsh or bilingually has increased by around three percentage points to 8.5% in 2014 (Welsh Government, 2015b). These Welsh Government targets for 2015 have been met by schools, further education institutions and work-based learning providers.

Outcome 5: More students with higher-level Welsh-language skills

The proportion of learners taking both A level Welsh first language and A level Welsh second language, in comparison to the take up of their respective GCSEs, has declined since 2011. Welsh Government targets for 2015 for both A level qualifications have not been met. The number of entries for A level first language has fluctuated between around 250 and 300 since 2011. The number of entries for A level Welsh second language has declined substantially over the same period (Welsh Government, 2015d).

Outcome 6: Welsh-medium provision for learners with additional learning needs (ALN)

No data is collected at a national level to measure the availability of Welsh-medium provision for pupils with ALN.

Outcome 7: Workforce planning and continuing professional development (CPD)

Around a third of registered teachers in Wales are Welsh speakers, with slightly fewer able to teach through the medium of Welsh. The proportion of teachers joining the profession as newly qualified teachers (NQTs) who are Welsh speakers is marginally higher than this proportion, as is the proportion of NQTs who are able to teach through the medium of Welsh (Education Workforce Council, 2015).

Recommendations

Local authorities should:

- R1 ensure that the WESPs are a strategic priority
- R2 have systematic processes in place to measure the demand for Welsh-medium provision
- R3 work with schools to explain the advantages to pupils and parents of Welsh-medium education and of following courses through the medium of Welsh
- R4 work with schools to set targets to increase the proportion of pupils in key stage 4 who continue to study Welsh as a first language and follow specific subject areas through the medium of Welsh
- R5 make effective use of their Welsh-medium education fora to help to develop their WESP and to monitor progress
- R6 evaluate their Welsh-medium additional learning needs provision to identify any gaps

The Welsh Government should:

- R7 ensure that the targets agreed in the WESPs reflect the aspirations in their Welsh-medium education strategy
- R8 ensure that all local authorities place enough strategic importance on delivering the targets within the WESPs
- R9 monitor the implementation of the WESPs rigorously

Local authority strategies for Welsh-medium education

Partnership with the Welsh Government

- 15 Overall, the introduction of WESPs is creating a more consistent planning and monitoring framework for local authorities across Wales. The arrangements have led to greater scrutiny of local authorities' plans to support Welsh-medium provision by the public and the Welsh Government. However, their effectiveness as a mechanism to achieve the targets within the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium education strategy has been limited.
- 16 As part of the consultation process for WESPs in 2014, local authorities were required to submit their draft plans to the Welsh Government for review. This provided a useful opportunity for the local authorities to receive early feedback on their quality. Welsh Ministers considered the WESPs from each local authority. At the end of this exercise, three plans were approved as presented and 18 plans were approved with adaptations, while one authority was given an extension to submit their final plan.
- 17 Many of the initial WESPs, when presented for Ministerial approval, required extensive modifications, suggesting that they were not sufficiently aligned with the Welsh Government's vision for Welsh-medium education. The issues raised by the Welsh Government varied across the local authorities. One of the most common issue was the need for many local authorities to review their targets so that they were more specific and challenging. A few local authorities were required to clarify how they planned to increase Welsh-medium provision within English-medium secondary schools. A minority of local authorities were required to refine their processes for measuring the demand for Welsh-medium school places and provision.
- 18 Overall, the partnership between local authorities and the Welsh Government in developing the WESPs, particularly in relation to setting targets has been weak. As a result, the targets set by local authorities when aggregated to a national level are not aligned with the aspirations of the Welsh-medium education strategy and are unlikely to be realised.

Communication and consultation

- 19 All authorities have consulted with key stakeholders at relevant stages when developing their WESPs in accordance with the statutory guidance. The effectiveness of this engagement varies greatly and the overall awareness of the WESPs by education practitioners within local authorities is limited. In general, not enough people are aware of how their local authorities plan to develop Welsh-medium education in their local area.
- 20 In most local authorities, Welsh-medium education fora contribute to developing and monitoring the WESPs. The membership of the fora includes parents, governors, local authority officers, elected members, education professionals and representatives from groups with a particular interest in Welsh-medium education. In

a few examples, local authority officers use the fora effectively, for example to plan, set and monitor suitable targets. In all of the authorities visited, most officers, headteachers and parents feel that the fora are helpful in securing a greater ownership of the WESPs and their implementation. However, the effectiveness of the fora varies widely across Wales. In a few local authorities, the fora meetings are held too infrequently, the roles and the expected contributions of the stakeholders are unclear, and the points for action are not precise enough or evaluated adequately.

Leadership

- 21 In local authorities where progress made against the targets in the WESPs is good, there is a strong commitment by strategic leaders, elected members and senior officers to support Welsh-medium education. In these local authorities, where the emphasis placed on delivering the WESP is high and improving, Welsh-medium provision is a strategic priority. In a few local authorities, where developing Welsh-medium provision is not a strategic priority, the WESP is often the responsibility of middle-tier officers. As such, the WESPs tend to be marginalised and do not feature as a prominent theme in their corporate plans. Consequently, they are not scrutinised robustly at a high enough level and progress against targets is slow.

Measuring the demand for Welsh-medium education

- 22 All local authorities visited have conducted sufficiency audits to measure the demand for Welsh-medium education in accordance with the guidance. The effectiveness of these audits varies greatly. Where they are effective, local authorities use a range of useful activities to evaluate demand. These include using targeted surveys and audits to measure demand in more localised areas within their local authority, forecasting trends from demographic information and evaluating the impact of house building projects. A few local authorities do not have rigorous and systematic approaches to measuring demand and they do not undertake the exercises regularly enough. In a few local authorities, where the demand for Welsh-medium education is increasing rapidly, they are often reactive rather than proactive in their approach to changing or increasing the provision, resulting in provision having to catch up with the demand. This is particularly, but not exclusively, the case when primary Welsh-medium provision is greater than that of the secondary sector within the local authority.
- 23 Most local authorities ensure that increasing Welsh-medium provision features in their schools re-organisation proposals and in some cases is a key driver for the re-organisation. However, a very few local authorities do not plan for sufficient places in a timely manner. For example, a local authority may have increased its Welsh-medium primary school provision over a number of years, but has not planned adequately to increase the Welsh-medium secondary provision for when these pupils move into key stage 3 and beyond.
- 24 Although the availability of school places for Welsh-medium provision has increased in many local authorities, the provision is not always easily accessible. This can result in parents who may initially indicate a preference for their child to attend a Welsh-medium setting opting for an English-medium setting because of the longer

distances involved in travelling to the Welsh-medium school. Most WESPs do not analyse the accessibility of the provision or the convenience of the transport arrangements on learners' ability to access Welsh-medium education.

Promoting progression from Welsh medium primary school to Welsh-medium secondary school

- 25 The emphasis placed by local authorities on promoting progression between key stages 2 and 3 varies greatly. Whereas many local authorities set clear targets for increasing the number of pupils continuing their education through the medium of Welsh in secondary schools, other local authorities do not consider this to be a priority.
- 26 Most local authorities take appropriate steps to promote and raise awareness of Welsh-medium education provision in their area through information booklets, promotional material and specific local events. Welsh-medium education fora work well alongside the local authority to promote the provision further. In a minority of local authorities, parents are not provided with enough information about the extent of the Welsh-medium provision available from the early years to key stage 4.
- 27 It is also often unclear to parents what Welsh-medium provision can reasonably be expected in different categories of Welsh-medium or bilingual schools. Most parents are unfamiliar with the different linguistic characteristics of schools (see Appendix 2). Estyn's (2014) report on *'Linguistic progression and standards of Welsh in ten bilingual schools'* found that 'official categorisation is not always used correctly by schools and local authorities. For example, some designated Welsh-medium schools offer many subjects to pupils through the medium of English as well as Welsh (p.3)'. As a result, the lack of information presented to parents in these situations makes it difficult for them to make informed decisions about their children's education.
- 28 Several terms are used for schools in which Welsh is the medium of teaching, such as 'Welsh schools', 'bilingual schools', 'traditional Welsh schools' or 'natural Welsh schools'. These terms do not give a clear picture of the extent to which pupils are taught through the medium of Welsh or English or bilingually. For example, some designated Welsh-medium schools offer many subjects to pupils through the medium of English as well as Welsh.

Increasing the number of learners studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh

- 29 Many local authorities have suitable targets for increasing the number of pupils who follow their education through the medium of Welsh in key stage 2 and key stage 3. Only a minority of local authorities do so in key stage 4. Most local authorities' WESPs do not include enough detail about how they plan to increase the number of Welsh-medium entries within specific GCSE subjects.
- 30 A few local authorities support schools and providers with an analysis of labour market intelligence. This analysis enables schools and providers to consider the relevance and the potential take-up of subjects through the medium of Welsh based on the likely demand for future qualifications in an area.

- 31 Most local authorities and consortia promote, facilitate and develop partnerships between schools, local colleges and other providers to enable more learners to study subjects through the medium of Welsh. However, progress in increasing the number of 14-16 pupils studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh is variable across local authorities.

Increasing the number of learners aged 16-19 studying through the medium of Welsh

- 32 Most local authorities' WESPs indicate appropriately how they propose to increase the percentage of learners aged 16-19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh in schools. Although further education institutions are outside the scope of local authorities' WESPs, there are examples, especially in vocational areas such as Care and Personal Development, Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care and Media, communication and publishing, where effective partnerships through 14-19 learning pathways networks provide courses in key stage 4 and in some cases post-16 through the medium of Welsh.
- 33 Across Wales, the availability of Welsh-medium or bilingual courses for post-16 learners varies from one college to the next depending on the nature of the area it serves. A few colleges have developed a wide range of bilingual provision while others have developed some courses and modules in priority areas such as childcare, health and social care, and leisure and tourism.

Increasing the number of learners with higher-level language skills

- 34 In addition to entries for A level Welsh, the outcome for higher-level language skills focuses on improving provision to address literacy in Welsh and to raise standards of Welsh first and second language. Most WESPs include a summary of the performance of pupils at the expected levels for Welsh and Welsh second language. However, a few of these summaries lack detail in evaluating performance over time and do not compare their performance with that of similar local authorities. This makes it difficult for elected members and the public to gauge how well the local authority is performing and whether the improvement targets are appropriate.
- 35 The majority of WESPs contain appropriate quantifiable targets up to 2017 for the main performance indicators (such as the Foundation Phase Indicator at outcome 5 in literacy and the expected levels at key stage 2, 3 and 4 in Welsh or Welsh second language). In a few cases, the rationale for setting targets at particular levels is unclear. For example, one local authority's plan reports that the percentage of learners reaching the Foundation Phase Outcome 5 in literacy had fallen by five percentage points in the period 2011 to 2013, but offers no commentary on the reasons why or how this might be addressed.

Welsh-medium provision for learners with additional needs

- 36 Outcome 6 of the WESP requires local authorities to outline how they plan to extend additional learning needs (ALN) provision through the medium of Welsh for learners during all the key stages.

- 37 Most of the eight local authorities visited had undertaken an appropriate audit of Welsh language ALN provision at some point during the last five years. Where these are done well they include a comprehensive evaluation of the type of ALN provision and its accessibility across the local authority. These audits are updated annually.
- 38 The majority of local authorities in the sample do not conduct audits of their Welsh language ALN provision regularly enough or in enough detail to evaluate its quality or capacity. Gaps in provision are not identified, resulting in a lack of Welsh-medium provision in particular areas such as speech therapy, psychiatry and dyslexia support.
- 39 A minority of local authorities collaborate well to secure appropriate provision or share best practice. For example, Bridgend local authority shares its Welsh-medium education psychologist with the Vale of Glamorgan local authority.
- 40 Most local authorities and schools have clear processes for sharing information about pupils with ALN which helps to evaluate the future resource requirement. Generally, local authorities can accommodate the changes in demand for Welsh-medium ALN provision through flexibility in staffing arrangements, extending a resource base provision within a school or introducing a nurture group facility. However, in a minority of local authorities, pupils requiring additional support have to travel considerable distances to access appropriate provision.
- 41 The availability of ALN support is an important factor when parents are considering the choice of school and language medium for their child. A minority of parents noted that they would be more likely to choose an English-medium school for their child with ALN if they perceived that there were more resources, support and provision through that medium. A common concern among a few non-Welsh-speaking parents was that opting for a Welsh-medium education for their child with the additional learning needs would be too much of a challenge and they would be more inclined to choose an English-medium school for their child.

Workforce planning and continuing professional development

- 42 Estyn's report on 'Linguistic progression and standards of Welsh in ten bilingual schools' in November 2014 noted that:
- 'In order to provide a rich range of courses and provision through the medium of Welsh, there is a need for enough teaching and support staff who are proficient and confident to teach and support through the medium of Welsh. Recruitment difficulties are an obstacle to expanding Welsh provision in several schools and authorities. In 2012, only 13% of trainees who gained a post-graduate certificate in education were qualified to teach through the medium of Welsh. In some areas, the situation is more serious. For example, in 2012, only 4% of trainee teachers in biology and 2% of trainee teachers in modern foreign languages were able to speak Welsh' (p.24).
- 43 All the local authorities in the sample had undertaken a linguistic skills audit of their teaching workforce. In most cases, this information is used to inform appropriate continued professional development and training programmes which are well tailored

to improve practitioners' Welsh-medium teaching skills. However, local authorities and consortia do not evaluate the effectiveness of these programmes well enough, especially in terms of their impact on standards.

- 44 Only a few local authorities use the evidence from the linguistic skills audit, when considering their school organisation projects and longer-term provision planning.
- 45 Many local authorities have challenges in recruiting and retaining Welsh-speaking staff including teachers, school leaders, teaching support staff and auxiliary staff. They encounter particular challenges in recruiting Welsh-speaking teachers to specific subjects, such as the sciences. In a very few cases, schools have deployed non-specialist Welsh-speaking teachers rather than suitably qualified specialist Welsh teachers to teach Welsh as a second language.
- 46 The Welsh Government's Welsh-language Sabbatical Scheme (WLSS) courses have made a positive contribution to improving the quality and capacity of their Welsh-medium provision. The WLSS is a Welsh language programme, which offers training to practitioners to enable them to teach, lecture or train bilingually or through the medium of Welsh. The WLSS offers periods of study to develop Welsh-language skills and develop confidence in bilingual and Welsh-medium teaching methodologies.

Collaboration between local authorities and regional consortia

- 47 Partnership working between local authorities and regional consortia in relation to developing the WESPs is at a very early stage. The WESPs provide a useful framework to facilitate conversations between officers and to promote collaborative working both within and between local authorities.
- 48 The Education Advisory Service (EAS) in south-east Wales has worked closely with the local authorities within its region in developing their WESPs. They are developing a good understanding of the Welsh-medium provision needs of the different local authorities, the resource implications and issues of joint concern. This sharing of information between the local authorities is supporting a greater understanding of where resources can be pooled together, and where it is possible for developing provision across the region.
- 49 There are a few good examples where expertise is used effectively to develop provision across local authorities, in co-operation with regional consortia and regional networks. An example is the development of the 'Siarter Iaith' in Gwynedd. This language charter aims to provide a framework to promote and increase the use of Welsh by pupils in a social context. There are early indications that the 'Siarter' is beginning to impact positively on increasing the social use of Welsh by pupils in Gwynedd schools. The 'Siarter' is currently being introduced in schools across Wales.

Progress against the strategic outcomes

Outcome 1: More seven-year-old learners being taught through the medium of Welsh

- 50 Table 1 and Chart 1 show the number and proportion of Year 2 (seven-year-old) learners assessed in Welsh (first language) from 2011 to 2015. The number of learners assessed in Welsh (first language) over this period has increased (by more than 1,200), but so has the overall number of learners. There has been a very slight increase in the proportion of Year 2 learners assessed in Welsh (first language), from 21.9% in 2011 to 22.2% in 2015 (Welsh Government, 2011, Welsh Government, 2015a). This is an increase of 0.3 percentage points.
- 51 The Welsh Government target for 2015 is 25%, meaning that the target has not been met. The Welsh Government has also set a target of 30% by 2020 (Welsh Government, 2015b). At the current rate of increase, this target will not be met by 2020.

Table 1: Year 2 (seven-year-old) learners assessed in Welsh (first language)

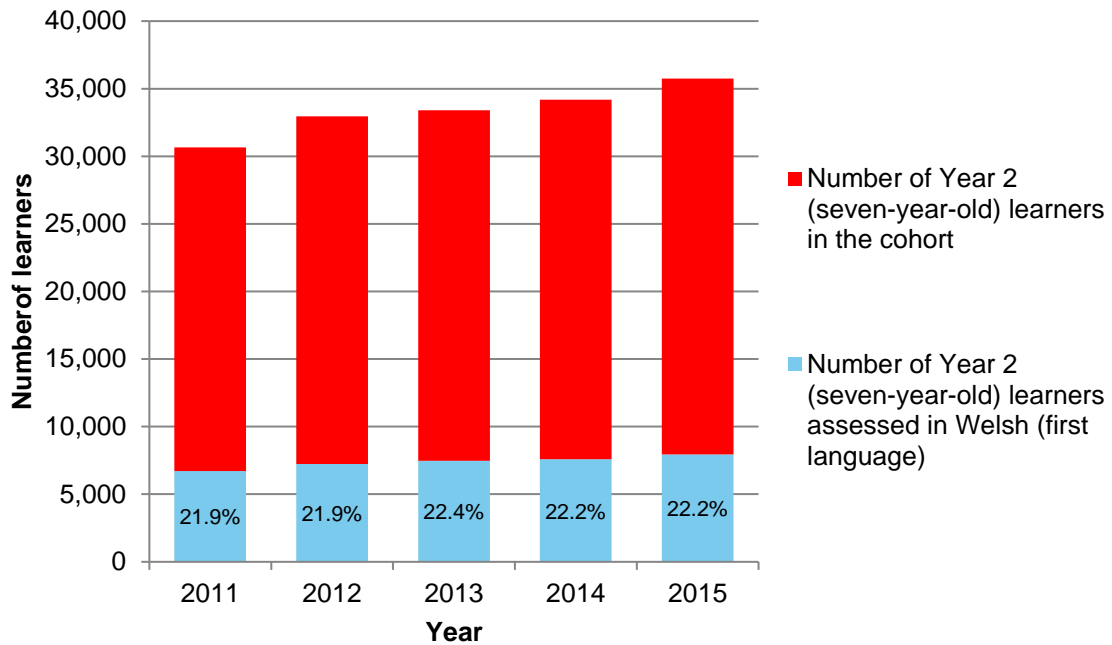
	Welsh Government targets	
	2015	2020
Indicator: The percentage of Year 2 learners assessed in Welsh (first language)	25%	30%

Source: Welsh Government, 2015b

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2011-2015
Number of Year 2 learners assessed in Welsh (first language)	6,728	7,229	7,468	7,594	7,937	+ 1209
Number of Year 2 learners in the cohort	30,655	32,960	33,398	34,175	35,757	+ 5102
Percentage of Year 2 learners in the cohort assessed in Welsh (first language)	21.9%	21.9%	22.4%	22.2%	22.2%	+0.3% points

Source: Welsh Government, 2011, Welsh Government, 2015a)

Chart 1: Year 2 (seven-year-old) learners assessed in Welsh (first language)



Source: Welsh Government, 2011, Welsh Government, 2015a

Outcome 2: More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school

- 52 This outcome can be measured by the proportion of learners who are assessed in Welsh (first language) at secondary school, and by comparing the numbers of learners who continue from Welsh-medium primary education into Welsh-medium secondary education. Across Wales as a whole, 12.8% of learners who were in Welsh-medium education in Year 6 were no longer in Welsh-medium education in Year 9 (Welsh Government, 2015b). The reasons for the decrease are complex and varied.
- 53 Table 2 and Chart 2 show the number and proportion of Year 9 (14-year-old) learners assessed in Welsh (first language) from 2011 to 2015. The number of learners assessed in Welsh (first language) over this period has declined, but so has the overall number of learners in the cohort. There has been a slow but steady upward trend in the proportion of Year 9 learners assessed in Welsh (first language), from 16.3% in 2011 to 17.8% in 2015 (Welsh Government, 2015c). This is an increase of 1.5 percentage points. This figure is below the Welsh Government’s target of 19% for 2015. The Welsh Government has set a target of 23% by 2020 (Welsh Government, 2015b) and the current rate of increase indicates that this target will not be met.

Table 2: Year 9 (14-year-old) learners assessed in Welsh (first language)

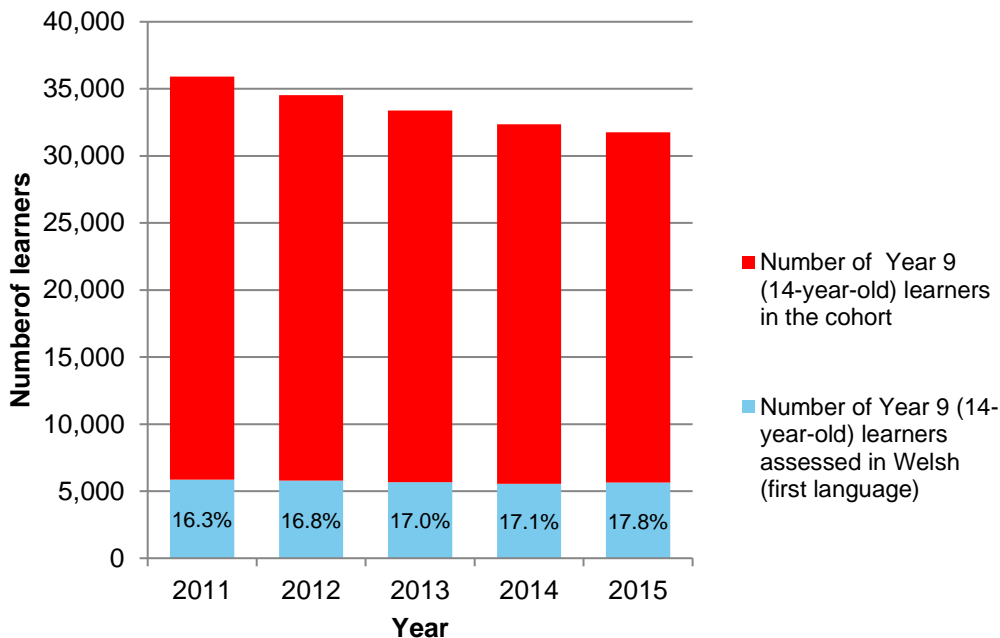
	Welsh Government targets	
	2015	2020
Indicator: The percentage of Year 9 learners assessed in Welsh (first language)	19%	23%

Source: Welsh Government, 2015b

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2011-2015
Number of Year 9 learners assessed in Welsh (first language)	5,862	5,787	5,668	5,540	5,638	-224
Number of Year 9 learners in the cohort	35,903	34,520	33,380	32,354	31,755	-4148
Percentage of Year 9 learners in the cohort assessed in Welsh (first language)	16.3%	16.8%	17.0%	17.1%	17.8%	+1.5% points

Source: Welsh Government, 2015c

Chart 2: Year 9 (14-year-old) learners assessed in Welsh



Source: Welsh Government, 2015c

Outcome 3: More learners aged 14-16 studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh

- 54 The focus of Outcome 3 is on increasing the proportion of learners in Year 11 (15-year-olds) studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh. Table 3 and Chart 3 show the proportion of learners entered for GCSE Welsh first language and who are also entered for at least two, or five, additional level 1 or level 2 qualifications through the medium of Welsh.
- 55 The table shows an overall decline between 2011 and 2015 in the proportion of learners who take level 1 or level 2 GCSE subjects through the medium of Welsh in addition to GCSE Welsh first language. In 2011, 81.0% of learners took two further qualifications. In 2015, this figure was 80.3%. The proportion of learners taking five further level 1 or 2 qualifications shows a steeper decline, with the proportion falling from 62.2% in 2011 to 54.0% in 2015 (Welsh Government, 2015b).
- 56 These figures are below the Welsh Government targets for 2015, which were 84% of learners taking two further qualifications and 62% taking five. The Welsh Government has set targets of 88% and 68% for these measures by 2020 (Welsh Government, 2015b) and the current rate of progress indicates that these targets will not be met.

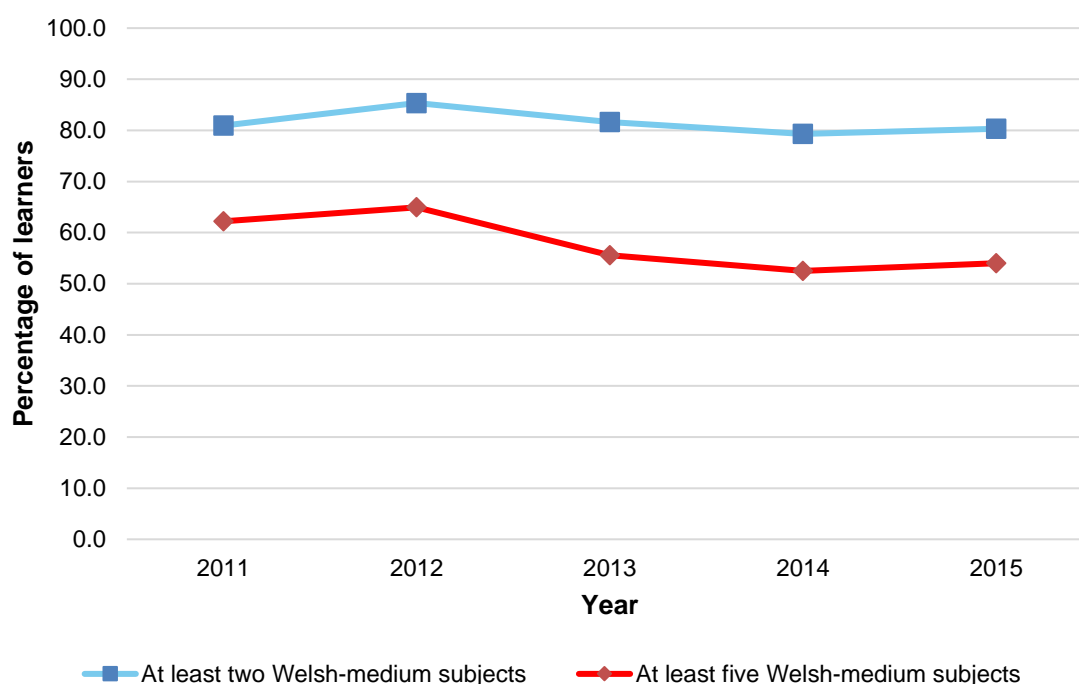
Table 3: Learners in Year 11 studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh

	Welsh Government targets	
	2015	2020
The percentage of learners entered for GCSE Welsh first language entered for at least two further level 1 or 2 qualifications through the medium of Welsh	84%	88%
Percentage of learners entered for GCSE Welsh first language being entered for at least five further level 1 or 2 qualifications through the medium of Welsh	62%	68%

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
At least two further Welsh-medium subjects	81.0%	85.3%	81.6%	79.3%	80.3%
At least five further Welsh-medium subjects	62.2%	64.9%	55.5%	52.5%	54.0%

Source: Welsh Government, 2015b

Chart 3: Learners in Year 11 studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh



Source: Welsh Government, 2015b

Outcome 4: More learners aged 16-19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh

- 57 Outcome 4 measures post-16 Welsh-medium or bilingual provision across Wales. It measures the proportion of learning activities by medium of delivery in schools, further education institutions and within work-based learning providers. The activities in the data include those carried out in Welsh or bilingually.
- 58 Table 4 and Chart 4 shows the percentage of learning activities carried out by learners aged 16-19 through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. In schools, the percentage has remained at around 20% to 21% over the last four years, apart from 2012 where the percentage dropped to 17.4%. In work-based learning, the percentage has remained between 3 and 4%. In further education institutions there has been an increase in the proportion of learners studying in Welsh or bilingually, from 5.7% in 2011 to 8.5% in 2014 (Welsh Government, 2015b).
- 59 The Welsh Government targets for 2015 have been met by schools, further education institutions and work-based learning providers. Schools have already exceeded their target for 2020 of 20%. At the current rate of progress, further education institutions are projected to meet their target of 10% by 2020 (Welsh Government, 2015b). However, at the current rate of progress, work-based learning providers will not meet their target of 4% by 2020.

Table 4: Learning activities carried out by learners aged 16-19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh and/or bilingually, in schools, further education institutions and work-based learning

Student learning activities by medium of delivery (LA26)*	Welsh Government targets	
	2015 WM+B**	2020 WM + B**
Schools	18%	20%
Further education institutions	7%	10%
Work-based learning	2.5%	4%

Student learning activities by medium of delivery (LA26)*	2010-11 WM+B**	2011-12 WM+B**	2012-13 WM+B**	2013-14 WM+B**	2014-15*** WM+B**
Schools	21.0%	17.4%	20.1%	20.5%	20.4%
Further education institutions	5.7%	6.7%	8.4%	8.5%	7.2%
Work-based learning	3.0%	3.9%	3.6%	3.0%	6.7%

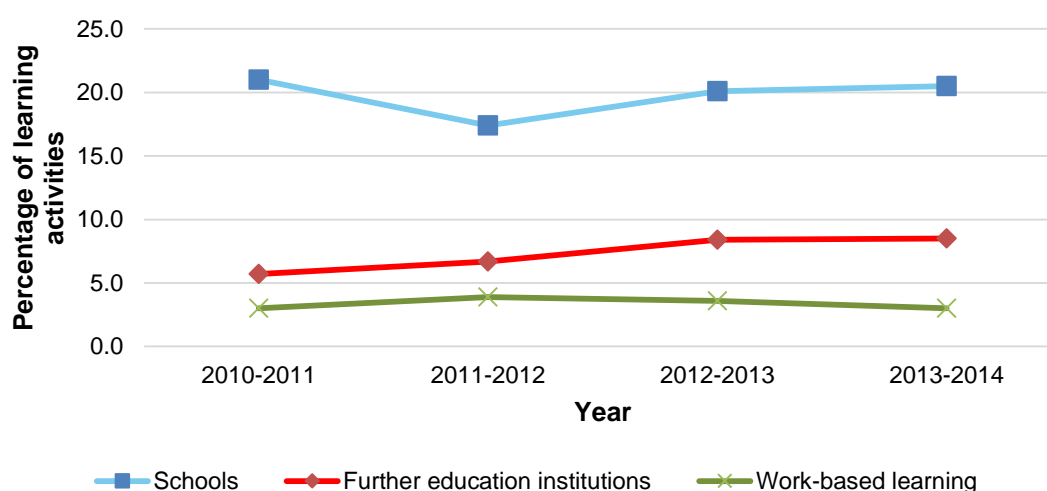
*Excluding Welsh language learning

**WM = Welsh-medium, B = Bilingual

***The Lifelong Learning Wales Record definition for Welsh-medium and bilingual learning post-16 has been revised and became operational in 2014-2015. Now, the learning is recorded according to the medium of learning and the language of assessment of individuals, rather than the language that takes place in which the whole classroom cohort. As a result there has been a drop from 8.5% in 2013-2014 to 7.2% in 2014-2015 data. Bilingual learning activities include any activity with any amount of Welsh-medium activity.

Source: Welsh Government, 2015b

Chart 4: Learning activities carried out by learners aged 16-19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh and/or bilingually, in schools, further education institutions and work-based learning



Source: Welsh Government, 2015

Outcome 5: More learners with higher-level Welsh-language skills

- 60 This outcome focuses on performance in Welsh as a first language and Welsh as a second language in statutory teacher assessments and external examinations across the key stages. The Welsh Government use two main indicators to measure progress against this outcome. These are:
- the total A level Welsh first language entries as a percentage of GCSE Welsh first language entries, two years earlier
 - the total A level Welsh second language entries as a percentage of full and short course GCSE Welsh second language entries, two years earlier
- 61 Table 5 and Chart 5 show that the percentage of learners taking both A level Welsh first language and A level Welsh second language, in comparison to their respective GCSEs, has declined since 2011. For A level Welsh first language there has been an uneven decreasing trend from 6.8% in 2011 to 5.5% in 2015. For A level Welsh second language, the decreasing trend has been steadier, with a decline from 2.6% in 2011 to 1.5% in 2015.
- 62 The Welsh Government's target for 2015 is 7% for A level Welsh first language and 3.5% for A level Welsh second language (Welsh Government, 2015b). Neither of these targets has been met. At current rates of progress, targets for 2020 of 8% and 4% respectively will not be met.

Table 5: Proportion of learners taking A levels in Welsh first or second language compared to those taking GCSE Welsh first or second language, two years earlier

	Welsh Government targets	
	2015	2020
Total A level Welsh first language entries as a percentage of GCSE Welsh first language entries, two years earlier	7%	8%
Total A level Welsh second language entries as a percentage of full and short course GCSE Welsh second language entries, two years earlier	3.5%	4%

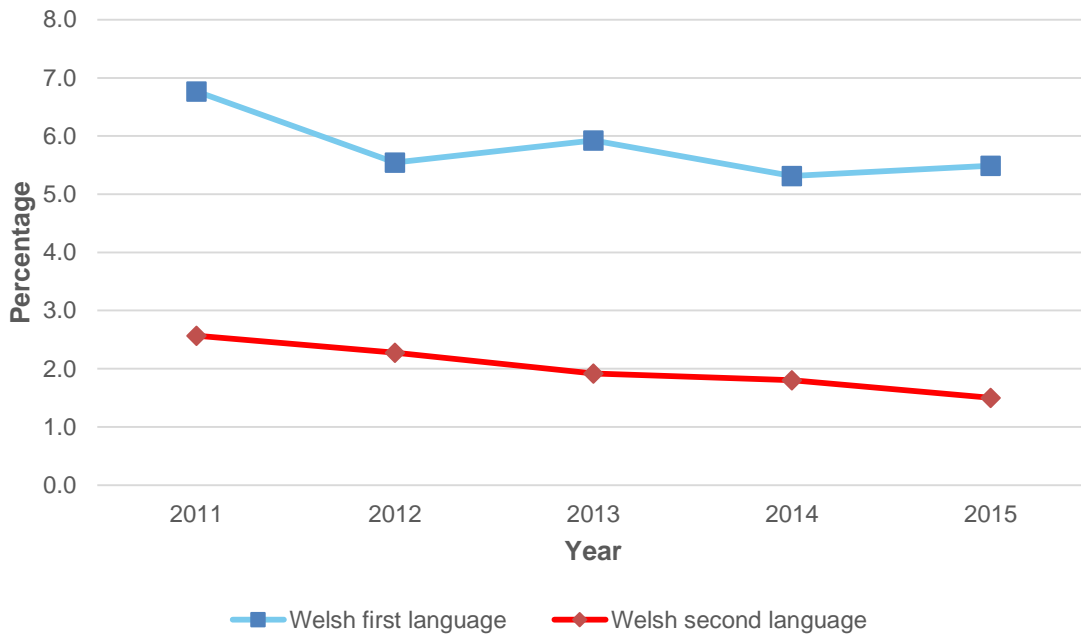
Source: Welsh Government, 2015b

Total A level Welsh first language entries as a percentage of GCSE Welsh first language entries, two years earlier					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
%	6.8%	5.5%	5.9%	5.3%	5.5%
Number	357	303	315	279	310

Total A level Welsh second language entries as a percentage of full and short course GCSE Welsh second language entries, two years earlier					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
%	2.6%	2.3%	1.9%	1.8%	1.5%
Number	542	511	434	409	363

Source: Welsh Government, 2015d

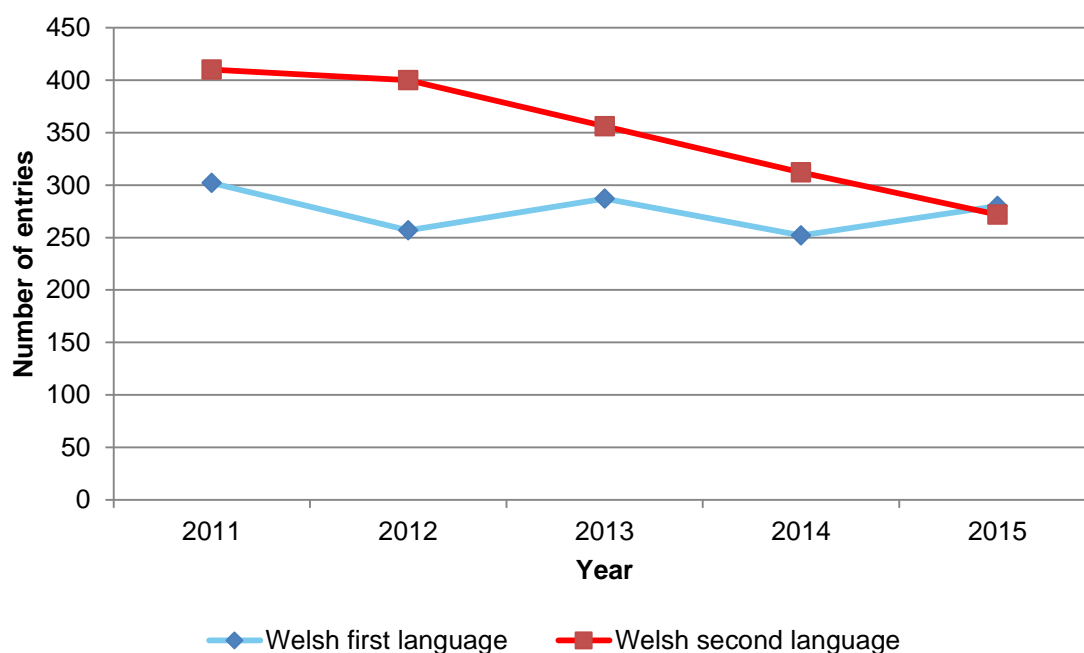
Chart 5: Proportion of learners taking A levels in Welsh first or second language compared to those taking GCSE Welsh first or second language, two years earlier



Source: Welsh Government, 2015d

63 Chart 6 shows the number of entries for both Welsh first and second language A level over the past five years. The number of entries for the first language qualification has fluctuated between around 250 and 300 per year. However, the number of entries to the second language qualification has declined steadily over the period, from 410 in 2011 to 272 in 2015 (Welsh Government, 2015d).

Chart 6: Welsh first and second language A level entries (pupils aged 17 only), 2010-2011 to 2014-2015



Source: Welsh Government, 2015d

Outcome 6: Welsh-medium provision for learners with additional learning needs (ALN)

64 No national published data is available for this outcome.

Outcome 7: Workforce planning and continuing professional development (CPD)

65 Table 6 shows recent data from the Education Workforce Council for Wales (EWC). In 2015, around a third (33.1%) of registered teachers in Wales consider themselves Welsh speakers. However, only 27.3% are confident to teach through the medium of Welsh. Since 2011, the proportion of school teachers who are Welsh speakers has increased by 1.1 percentage points. However, the proportion of these who are able to teach through the medium of Welsh has increased by slightly less, at 1.0 percentage point.

Table 6: Proportion of school teachers registered with EWC by Welsh language

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2011-2015
Welsh speaker	32.0%	32.3%	32.5%	32.9%	33.1%	+1.1 p
Able to teach through the medium of Welsh	26.3%	26.7%	26.9%	27.2%	27.3%	+1.0pp
Difference	5.7pp	5.6pp	5.6pp	5.7pp	5.8pp	

Source: Education Workforce Council, 2015

- 66 Since 2011, the proportion of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) who are Welsh speakers has increased by 2.8 percentage points and the proportion able to teach through the medium of Welsh has increased by 5.5 percentage points (see Table 7). The difference in the proportion of NQTs who are Welsh speakers and are able to teach through the medium of Welsh compared to those who are not able to teach through the medium of Welsh has decreased from 8.5 percentage points in 2014 to 5.0 percentage points in 2015 (EWC, 2015).
- 67 There has been an increase of 8.7 percentage points in the proportion of NQTs who are able to teach Welsh as a second language since 2011 (EWC, 2015).

Table 7: Proportion of NQTs registered with EWC by the Welsh language

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2011-2015
Welsh speaker	32.5%	31.8%	32.8%	36.3%	35.3%	+2.8pp
Able to teach through the medium of Welsh	25.2%	25.1%	25.3%	27.8%	30.3%	+5.1pp
Difference	7.3pp	6.7pp	7.5pp	8.5pp	5.0pp	
Able to teach Welsh as a second language	53.2%	58.3%	57.2%	61.2%	61.9%	8.7% points

Source: Education Workforce Council, 2015

Appendix 1: Evidence base

This report considered evidence from:

- a research visit to sample of eight local authorities, two in each consortia region [Gwynedd; Flintshire; Ceredigion; Pembrokeshire; Bridgend; Newport; Cardiff; Torfaen] – interviews with senior and lead officers and elected members and/or Welsh language if applicable; regional consortia lead officer or similar; 14-19 lead officer; ALN inclusion and other relevant officers
- analysis of all 22 Local Authorities' WESPs – including the final post-consultation WESPs and the modifications suggested by the Welsh Government
- further analysis to gather evidence of their appropriateness and the details of the actions for certain aspects of the plans (especially for the eight sample local authorities)
- scrutiny of other related documentation linked with/to WESPs, such as minutes of meetings of scrutiny and cabinet meetings; Welsh-medium forum minutes; teaching and learning resources; Welsh-medium programmes and support initiatives; related local authority strategic and business plans
- analysis of data, as used to measure each of outcomes 1 to 5 of the WESPs and additional data
- gathered views of specific stakeholders – a sample of parents; focus group of primary and secondary headteachers.
- analysis of related thematic reviews by Estyn

Appendix 2: Defining schools according to Welsh language provision (source: Welsh Government, 2007)

Primary schools

1 Welsh-medium primary school

Curriculum – All pupils in the Foundation Phase experience the areas of learning through the medium of Welsh. Welsh is the main teaching medium at key stage 2 with at least 70% of the teaching through the medium of Welsh. English is introduced formally as a subject at key stage 2 and is taught through the medium of English, and English may occasionally be used for some aspects of some subjects.

Language of the school – Welsh is the language of the day to day business of the school. Welsh is used as the language of communication with the pupils and for the school's administration. The school communicates with parents in both languages.

Outcomes – The normal expectation is that pupils, regardless of home language, will be able to transfer easily to Welsh-medium secondary provision and by the end of key stage 2 will have reached a standard in English equivalent to that reached by pupils in predominantly English medium schools.

2 Dual stream primary school

Curriculum – Two types of provision exist side-by-side in these schools. Parents/pupils opt either for the mainly Welsh-medium or mainly English-medium provision, which is usually delivered as in categories and 5 respectively.

Language of the school – Both Welsh and English are used in the day to day business of the school. The language of communication with the pupils is determined by the nature of the curricular provision, but in some schools high priority is given to creating a Welsh-language ethos throughout the school. The school communicates with parents in both languages.

Outcomes – For pupils in the Welsh stream, normal expectations are as for category 4. For pupils in the English-medium stream, normal expectations are as for category 5.

3 Transitional primary school: Welsh-medium with significant use of English

Curriculum – Pupils in the Foundation Phase experience the areas of learning mainly through the medium of Welsh. Both languages are used in teaching at key stage 2 but with greater emphasis on Welsh, so that Welsh is used as the medium of instruction for over half and up to 70% of the curriculum. (Schools would usually only be in this category on a temporary basis.)

Language of the school – Welsh is the language of the day to day business of the school. A high priority is given to creating a Welsh ethos. The school communicates with parents in both languages.

Outcomes – The normal expectation is that some pupils, particularly from Welsh speaking homes may be able to transfer to Welsh-medium secondary provision and by the end of key stage 2 all pupils will have reached a standard in English equivalent to that reached by pupils in predominantly English medium schools.

4 Predominantly English medium primary school but with significant use of Welsh

Curriculum – Pupils in the Foundation Phase experience the areas of learning in both languages but with greater emphasis on English. In key stage 2, both Welsh and English is used in teaching but there is greater emphasis on English. Welsh is used as the medium of teaching or learning for between 20% and 50% of the primary curriculum overall.

Language of the school – The day to day language or languages of the school are determined by the school's linguistic context. Both languages are used as languages of communication with the pupils and for the school's administration. A high priority is given to creating a Welsh ethos. The school communicates with parents in both languages.

Outcomes – The normal expectation is that pupils will transfer to English medium secondary provision, but will have attained enhanced Welsh second language skills. Some pupils may be able to pursue a limited number of subjects through the medium of Welsh at secondary level where these are offered.

5 Predominantly English-medium primary school

Curriculum – All pupils in the Foundation Phase experience the areas of learning mainly through the medium of English. English is the main teaching medium at key stage 2. Welsh is taught as a second language in key stage 2, and some aspects of some subjects may be taught in Welsh. Less than 20% of the teaching is through the medium of Welsh.

Language of the school – English is the language of the day to day business of the school, but some Welsh is also used as a language of communication with the pupils with the aim of improving their capacity to use every day Welsh. The school communicates with parents either in English or in both languages.

Outcomes – The normal expectation is that pupils will transfer to English medium secondary provision and continue to learn predominantly through the medium of English, learning Welsh as a second language.

Secondary schools

1 Welsh-medium secondary school

Curriculum – All subjects (including RE and PSE), apart from English, are taught through the medium of Welsh to all pupils, although some schools may introduce English terminology in one or two subjects.

Language of the school – Welsh is the day to day language of the school. Welsh is used as the language of communication with the pupils and the school's administration. The school communicates with parents in both languages.

Outcomes – For all pupils, the normal expectation is that assessment in key stage 3 and key stage 4 will be through the medium of Welsh in all subjects, apart from English or other languages, and that pupils will be able to progress easily to Welsh-medium post-16 provision.

2 Bilingual secondary school

Curriculum – This category has four sub-sections according to the percentage of subjects taught through the medium of Welsh and whether there is parallel provision in English. The categories and definitions do not reflect the number or proportion of pupils who take advantage of provision in Welsh in a school. Governing bodies will be expected to provide information in the school prospectus on the extent to which choice of provision is available and whether access to Welsh-medium provision is conditional on the level of the pupil's competence in Welsh. The prospectus should also indicate the number of pupils who take up the choices that are available.

Category 2A – At least 80% of subjects, apart from English and Welsh, are taught only through the medium of Welsh to all pupils. One or two subjects are taught to some pupils in English or in both languages.

Category 2B – At least 80% of subjects (excluding Welsh and English) are taught through the medium of Welsh but are also taught through the medium of English.

Category 2C – 50-79% of subjects (excluding Welsh and English) are taught through the medium of Welsh but are also taught through the medium of English.

Category 2CH – All subjects (except Welsh and English) are taught to all pupils using both languages.

Language of the school – The day to day language or languages of the school will be determined by its linguistic context. Both languages are used to communicate with pupils and for the school's administration. A high priority is given to creating a Welsh ethos. The school communicates with parents in both languages.

Outcomes – For pupils in categories 2A, 2B and 2C who follow the maximum number of courses through the medium of Welsh, the normal expectation is that assessment in key stage 3 and key stage 4 would be through the medium of Welsh

in those subjects and that they would be able to progress easily to post-16 provision through the medium of Welsh in their chosen subjects. For pupils in Category 2Ch, the normal expectation is that assessment in key stage 3 and key stage 4 would be through the medium of Welsh in all subjects except English, and that they would normally be able to progress easily to study at post-16 through the medium of Welsh in their chosen subjects.

3 Predominantly English-medium secondary school but with significant use of Welsh

Curriculum – Both languages are used in teaching with 20-49% of subjects taught through the medium of Welsh. All subjects would normally also be taught through the medium of English.

Language of the school – The day to day language or languages of the school will be determined by its linguistic context. Both languages are used for communication with the pupils and for the school's administration. A high priority is given to creating a Welsh ethos. The school communicates with parents either in both languages or in English.

Outcomes – The normal expectation is that pupils who choose Welsh-medium options could be assessed through the medium of Welsh in those subjects at all levels and may be capable of progressing to study at post-16 through the medium of Welsh for those subjects.

4 Predominantly English-medium secondary school

Curriculum – Pupils are mainly taught through the medium of English. Welsh is taught as a second language up to key stage 4. One or two subjects (which would include Welsh as a first language) may be taught as an option through the medium of Welsh or by using both languages.

Language of the school – English is the day to day language of the school, but some Welsh is also used as a language of communication with the pupils, with the aim of improving their ability to use every day Welsh. The school communicates with parents either in English or in both languages.

Outcomes – The normal expectation is that any pupils who choose Welsh-medium options could be assessed through the medium of Welsh in those subjects at all levels, and may be capable of progression to study at post-16 through the medium of Welsh for those subjects. Most pupils would be assessed in English in most subjects and would progress to English-medium post-16 study.

Glossary

EAS	The regional school improvement service (consortium) for South East Wales (the local authorities of Newport, Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen and Caerphilly)
ERW	The regional school improvement service (consortium) for South West Wales (the local authorities of Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Carmarthenshire)
Mudiad Meithrin	Mudiad Meithrin is a voluntary organisation and a provider of Welsh-medium early years care and education in the voluntary sector through 'cylchoedd meithrin' (Welsh-medium playgroups) throughout Wales.
WM	Welsh-medium

An explanation of the words and phrases used to describe our evaluations

nearly all	with very few exceptions
most	90% or more
many	70% or more
a majority	over 60%
half or around half	close to 50%
a minority	below 40%
few	below 20%
very few	less than 10%

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