Estyn

Support for Welsh in Initial Teacher Education:

How initial teacher education partnerships support student teachers to improve their Welsh language skills, including teaching through the medium of Welsh

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- ⋏ nursery schools and settings that are maintained by, or receive funding from, local authorities
- ⋏ primary schools
- ⋏ secondary schools
- ⋏ special schools
- ⋏ pupil referral units
- ⋏ all-age schools
- ⋏ independent schools
- ⋏ further education
- ⋏ independent specialist colleges
- ⋏ adult learning in the community partnerships
- ⋏ local government education services
- ⋏ teacher education and training
- ⋏ Welsh for adults
- ⋏ work-based learning
- ⋏ learning in the justice sector

Estyn also:

- ⋏ reports to Senedd Cymru and provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the Welsh Government and others
- ⋏ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence

Contents

Executive summary

This report focuses on the support initial teacher education (ITE) partnerships provide to develop student teachers' Welsh language skills, including teaching through the medium of Welsh. We gathered evidence from all ITE partnerships in Wales, including through interviews with leaders, school visits and interviews with groups of students. We also developed questionnaires for students and newly qualified teachers (NQTs). We analysed evidence from inspections of ITE partnerships and maintained schools. In addition, we interviewed officers from local authorities, school improvement services and other key partners.

We found that ITE partnerships provide specific sessions to improve students' Welsh language skills while at university. However, the effectiveness of these sessions varies considerably. In a few cases, they are not regular enough or do not respond specifically enough to students' needs to prepare them to use their Welsh language skills when teaching in schools. The sessions provided by the universities to develop students' Welsh language skills are often unrelated to subject or phase specific learning, especially in secondary programmes. This limits their effectiveness. In addition, only a few partnerships provide opportunities for students to make clear links between what they have learnt about the methodology of Welsh language teaching in taught sessions and classroom practice when on school experience. As a result, although many students make suitable progress in their personal Welsh skills in Welsh skills sessions, they do not always apply their learning when on school experience.

In many partnerships, there isn't a shared vision or a clear and consistent understanding of the partnership's expectations for Welsh amongst partner schools. Partnerships often do not plan strategically enough the provision for the development of the Welsh language across the programmes. This means that provision is fragmented, or the Welsh language aspect is seen as a separate unit. In general, partnerships do not evaluate the provision for Welsh language development across programmes effectively enough. They do not consider the progress students make in using their Welsh language skills when teaching. In addition, they do not consider the impact of students' teaching on pupils' skills and experiences. As a result, they do not identify strengths and areas for development sharply enough to enable them to make improvements.

The report includes examples of effective practice. In a few partnerships, the role of the language mentor has a positive influence on students' experiences and helps them develop their language skills while on school experience. Often, where the provision for the development of students' skills and pedagogy is particularly effective, developing students' Welsh language skills is included within the partnership's vision and improvement plan. In addition, partnerships benefit if lead and wider partnership schools have a clear vision and improvement plan for the development of the Welsh language. In these instances, school leaders act strategically to ensure that their school community understands the importance of the Welsh language. They provide high quality professional learning to help staff use

Welsh and develop their language acquisition pedagogy. This has a positive influence on the experiences of students placed in these schools and on pupils' progress.

The professional learning offered by school improvement partners in local authorities and regional consortia to support education practitioners to develop their Welsh language skills and teach through the medium of Welsh varies across Wales. This means that teachers, particularly in the secondary sector, are not always confident in supporting pupils to acquire and develop their Welsh language skills within the curriculum subjects. In addition, this has an impact on their confidence when mentoring ITE students. There are few links and opportunities for progression between the support given to students to develop their Welsh skills in ITE programmes and the professional learning offer for newly qualified teachers (NQTs).

There are few opportunities for schools and partnerships to collaborate and share effective practice about their provision to support the Welsh language skills of students and their wider staff. In a few examples, schools collaborate with their university partners to support efforts to recruit students into ITE programmes. Partnerships are developing their recruitment practices to meet the challenge of attracting students to train as teachers and complete programmes through the medium of Welsh.

In this report, we provide recommendations for ITE partnerships, school leaders, and the Welsh Government.

Key findings

1   Overall, there is little consistency in the ways ITE partnerships operate to support the development of the Welsh language. The main focus for partnerships is the development of students' personal Welsh skills. There is often less consideration of how students use their skills to support pupils' progress in Welsh while on school experience.

2   What is meant by 'studying through the medium of Welsh' varies across the partnerships. Where students have opportunities to experience Welsh-medium education early in their programme, it has a positive impact on their confidence and willingness to teach through the medium of Welsh. Often, students who are unsure about teaching through the medium of Welsh benefit from opportunities to work with peers who have opted to study in Welsh and access the support of Welsh tutors and mentors.

3   Partnerships generally focus on providing specific sessions to improve students' Welsh language skills during the university-based programme. These sessions often provide valuable opportunities for students to practise their personal linguistic skills under the guidance of a Welsh language tutor. In a few cases, sessions are not timetabled throughout the programme to allow students to develop their skills regularly enough, or sessions do not respond specifically enough to students' needs to prepare them to use their Welsh language skills when teaching in schools.

4   Partnerships use the Welsh language competency framework for education practitioners suitably to help students self-assess their language ability and progress. This self-assessment is often used to group students for taught Welsh sessions. Where student numbers are small, meeting the range of language needs within groups is challenging.

5   Many partnerships provide valuable opportunities for students to develop their knowledge and understanding of Welsh culture, identity, and history. They support this by organising visits and opportunities for students to experience the Welsh language and culture.

6   Taught sessions to develop Welsh language skills provided by the university are often unrelated to the learning in subject or phase specific sessions. This means that students do not develop a full understanding of how to apply their Welsh language skills when using language acquisition pedagogy in classrooms. The availability of secondary subject sessions through the medium of Welsh varies. In a very few cases, ITE partnerships work together to enable Welsh-medium students to work with students from other institutions in subjects where numbers are low.

7   In a few partnerships, lead schools provide specific sessions to help students consider how to develop the Welsh language with pupils, and to make connections between theory and practice.

8   Although schools have a suitable general understanding of the expectations of the

partnerships, there is no clear and consistent understanding of the expectations regarding the Welsh language. There are variations in practice and support between and within lead and wider partnership schools, within and across sectors and between Welsh and English-medium schools. Where the support for the development of students' Welsh language skills is robust, leaders are prioritising the language within the school's vision and improvement plan.

9   While there are examples of effective practice where mentors pay good attention to developing students' personal skills and language pedagogy, this is inconsistent within and across the partnerships.

10   Around half of partnerships have a specific role of 'language mentor' to support students to develop their Welsh language skills while on school experience. Where this role is developed effectively, it influences students' experiences positively, helping them to make connections between the university-taught sessions and their school experiences. This means that students effectively apply what they have learned to influence pupils' progress in their Welsh language skills.

11   Students are expected to complete tasks to demonstrate their progress in relation to the Welsh language competency framework for education practitioners and to meet qualified teacher status (where students must demonstrate their commitment to incremental development of personal skills in the use of the Welsh language). The requirements of tasks vary across partnerships and students do not always understand their relevance to their school experiences.

12   In general, partnerships do not evaluate their provision for the development of the Welsh language sharply enough. They do not fully consider university teaching, theory and practice sessions and students' experiences while on school experience when evaluating strengths and areas for development in Welsh language provision. In addition, they do not consider in sufficient detail the impact of provision on how well students use Welsh when on school experience, and the impact on pupils' progress in Welsh.

13   There are few opportunities for partnerships and schools to collaborate and share effective practice around their provision to support and develop the Welsh language across partnerships and with other education providers.

14   Many students make suitable progress in their personal Welsh skills during ITE programmes. In a few instances where students are making very strong progress, leaders often prioritise the Welsh language alongside developing teaching. Where student progress is not as strong, very little Welsh is used with pupils or there is little focus on effective pedagogy, limiting pupils' progress in Welsh skills.

15   A majority of students on primary programmes develop a suitable understanding of how they can support pupils' Welsh language skills. In general, students teaching secondary subjects through the medium of Welsh do not fully understand how to support and develop pupils' Welsh language skills. There are fewer links between Welsh language development sessions, subject sessions and experiences in schools in secondary programmes. In addition, due to a general lack of professional learning for the development of Welsh, secondary mentors are often not confident enough in modelling and supporting students to develop language pedagogy.

16 There are few obvious links between the support given to students to develop their Welsh skills in ITE and programmes for NQTs. There is considerable variance in the professional learning offer across Wales to support education practitioners to make progress in their linguistic skills and to teach through the medium of Welsh.

17 The number of students choosing to complete an ITE programme through the medium of Welsh remains too low and does not meet the Welsh Government's ambitions. This is particularly evident in secondary programmes. Partnerships are increasingly developing their recruitment practices to attract students to train as teachers and complete programmes through the medium of Welsh.

Recommendations

Initial teacher education partnerships should**:**

R1 Plan purposeful opportunities to develop students' Welsh language skills and pedagogy in all aspects of ITE programmes to ensure consistent support throughout the programme, including when on school experience

R2 Ensure that provision to support the Welsh language focuses on the development of students' personal skills and teaching to develop pupils' Welsh skills; this should include language acquisition pedagogy in Welsh-medium, English -medium and bilingual schools

R3 Monitor and evaluate the impact of provision for Welsh language development taking into account how students use their Welsh language skills and language acquisition pedagogy to support pupils' progress in schools

R4 Create opportunities for collaboration between ITE partnerships to develop and expand support for teaching through the medium of Welsh

Leaders in partnership schools should**:**

R5 Prioritise and develop a strategy for the development of the Welsh language in response to the expectations set out by partnerships and Welsh Government policies

The Welsh Government should**:**

R6 Ensure clarity of expectation in the professional standards for teaching and leadership to focus on how teachers and leaders develop practice that impacts positively on pupils' Welsh skills

R7 Ensure that ITE partnerships collaborate with school improvement partners to develop a more consistent, coherent and specialised provision for the development of the education workforce's Welsh language skills and pedagogy as part of the professional learning continuum

Introduction

This report is written in response to a request for advice from the Minister for Welsh Language and Education in his annual remit letter to Estyn for 2022-2023. The report aims to provide an overview of how initial teacher education (ITE) partnerships support student teachers to develop their Welsh language skills and those of pupils, including teaching through the medium of Welsh. This review was postponed from the Minister of Education's remit letter for 2020-2021 due to the pandemic.

The report will be of interest to practitioners and leaders of ITE partnerships, school practitioners and leaders and local authority officers, regional consortia and Welsh Government. The report's findings will also help inform the implementation of Curriculum for Wales as the Welsh language is a mandatory element of the curriculum for pupils aged 3 to 16.

The report focuses on how ITE partnerships assist and support student teachers to:

- improve their personal Welsh skills
- teach through the medium of Welsh
- develop pedagogies that support pupils to acquire and develop Welsh in Welsh-medium, English-medium and bilingual schools
- make connections between the support offered during ITE programmes and professional learning for NQTs

The report contains descriptions of common features of effective provision with a focus on:

- provision for the development of Welsh in the university-taught programme
- provision for the development of the Welsh language in lead and wider partnership schools
- the impact of leadership on the development of the Welsh language

The review also outlines examples of effective practice in infographics, cameos and brief case studies.

The report draws on the findings of three ITE partnership inspections conducted between 2021 and 2023 and visits to ITE partnerships including five universities and 17 partner schools. Questionnaires were distributed for student teachers and NQTs. One hundred and eight students and 106 NQTs responded to these questionnaires. The survey questions are included in Appendix 2. Inspectors also consulted with a range of stakeholders, including staff from local authorities, school improvement services and representatives from national organisations such as the Centre for Learning Welsh and Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.

Background

Seven partnerships (involving universities and their partner schools) are accredited by the Education Workforce Council (EWC) to provide initial teacher education (ITE) in Wales. The partnerships offer undergraduate and postgraduate pathways. Since September 2020, a part-time and employment-based pathway has been available through the Open University (OU) Partnership. Provision within these programmes to support the development of student teachers' Welsh language skills, including teaching through the medium of Welsh, is key to achieving the Welsh Government's vision to see one million people who enjoy speaking and using Welsh by 2050 (Welsh Government, 2017a).

'Cymraeg 2050: the Welsh language strategy' (Welsh Government, 2017a) outlines the Welsh Government's plans to realise one million speakers by 2050 including increasing the proportion of all year groups receiving Welsh-medium education over time and transforming the way Welsh is taught to all learners. In July 2021, the Welsh Government (2021) published its second five-year work programme for Cymraeg 2050 in which it acknowledges the 2021 targets to increase the education workforce to meet the need of Welsh-medium education and develop the Welsh language skills of all learners were not realised. To address this, the work programme includes the introduction of a 10-year plan to increase the number of Welsh and Welsh-medium teachers and improve the linguistic skills of the education workforce. In addition, it refers to the expansion of the role of the Centre for Learning Welsh to support Welsh language learning in English-medium schools and creating a pilot project to incentivise Welsh speakers to help with the teaching of Welsh in schools. The Welsh Government publishes an annual action plan for Cymraeg 2050 to respond to the work-programme.

The Welsh in education workforce plan (Welsh Government, 2022a) sets out the steps the Welsh Government have taken and will take to develop a high-quality education workforce, which will enable all learners to develop their Welsh language skills and use the language confidently in everyday life. This includes increasing the number of teachers able to teach Welsh as a subject, and other subjects through the medium of Welsh by setting a requirement that ITE partnerships work towards an intake of 30% of students preparing to teach through the medium of Welsh. It also sets out expectations around ITE provision to support Welsh language skills and pedagogy. In addition, it outlines objectives and actions to implement the vision.

In December 2022, the Welsh Government (2022b) published the results of the 2021 Census for the Welsh language skills of people aged three years or over living in Wales. On census day in March 2021, 538,300 people three-years or older reported being able to speak Welsh, representing 17.8% of the population. This is a decrease of 23,700 people since the 2011 census (1.2%). There was a six percentage point drop in children aged 5 to 15 who were identified as being able to speak Welsh between 2011 and 2021.

In March 2023, the Welsh Government (2023a) published a white paper to consult on proposals for a Welsh Education Bill. The document recognises that developing an education workforce with the necessary Welsh skills to enable the expansion of Welsh-medium education and improve the linguistic outcomes of pupils in all schools faces significant challenges. In addition, it refers to the need to increase the number of pupils receiving education through the medium of Welsh and to improve provision and pupils' contact with Welsh in all schools. Pupils should have the opportunity to reach the expected linguistic outcome set out as level B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Council of Europe). The white paper outlines proposals including the development of the professional learning offer for the Welsh language and workforce planning.

In 2022-2023, around a quarter of Estyn inspections in maintained schools resulted in a recommendation for Welsh. In Welsh-medium schools, recommendations often refer to provision for speaking and listening. In English-medium schools, recommendations refer more generally to provision for pupils' skills. In very few schools, recommendations include references to provision to develop pupils' awareness of Welsh culture and identity. In a few schools where the provision for Welsh has been identified as a particular strength, case studies have been requested. For example, St Mary's R.C. Primary School: [Using professional learning to raise standards of Welsh for pupils across the school | Estyn (gov.wales)](#)

In September 2018, the Welsh Government commissioned an evaluation of Welsh-medium provision in ITE partnerships (Bryer and Duggan, 2018). The report highlights challenges and areas for development. A number of these issues continue to impact the support given to the development of the Welsh language following the pandemic. For example, the report cites discrepancies in provision for Welsh language development as well as deficiencies in provision for developing students' Welsh language skills as they enter the workforce (p. 87).

In February 2018, the Welsh Government published criteria for the accreditation of new initial teacher education programmes in Wales. It outlined the responsibilities of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for student teachers, including the support they must provide to develop student teachers' skills in Welsh. In May 2023, the Welsh Government (2023b) published new criteria for accreditation of ITE programmes in Wales from September 2024. Expectations around the development of a strategic approach for Welsh, provision to improve the Welsh language skills of all ITE students and provision for Welsh for those wishing to pursue careers in Welsh-medium or bilingual schools have been strengthened. This includes the provision of 35 hours of Welsh language skills development.

The criteria state that ITE partnerships should:

- assess the Welsh language skills of all student teachers upon entry against the Welsh language competency framework for education practitioners
- provide a minimum of 35 hours of Welsh language skills development per year as part of their programme; partnerships should utilise and deploy a range of approaches and methodologies across the range of learning environments within the Partnership for building individual students' skills during the programme –

partnerships may also wish to consider utilising national provision such as the National Centre for Learning Welsh as appropriate
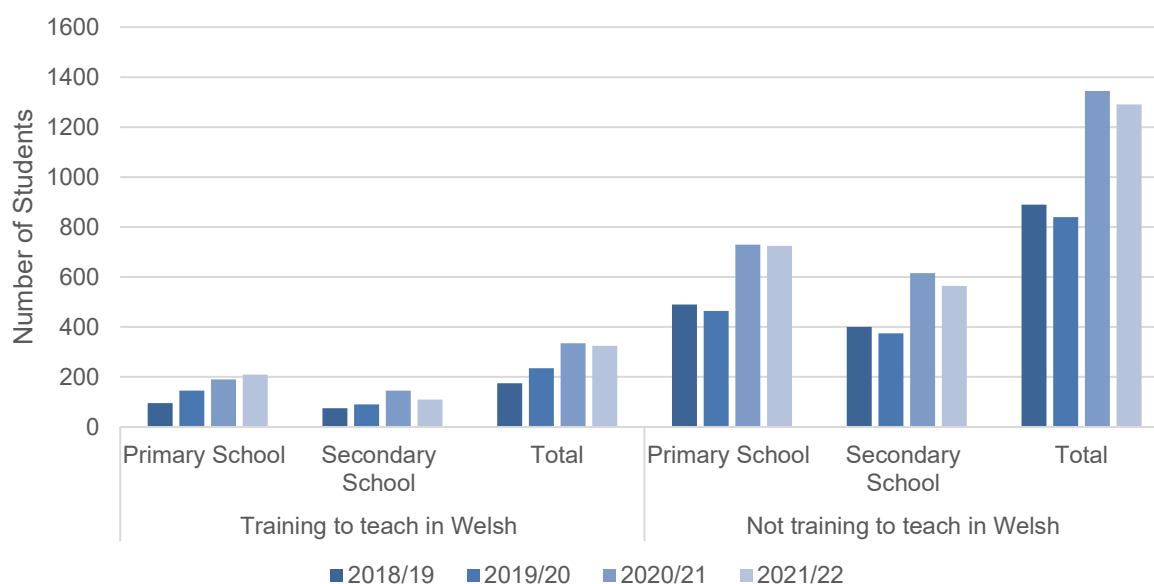
- assess the Welsh language skills of all student teachers on completion of their programme in accordance with the Welsh language competency framework for education practitioners and submit evidence to Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol on an annual basis for moderation purposes; this assessment should feed into the career entry profiles to enable all Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) to inform their ongoing development as they enter induction
- ensure that student teachers are familiar with Siarter Iaith, and the development of learners' Welsh literacy skills including familiarity with the strategies to normalise the use of Welsh and embed Welsh language across the curriculum
- encourage all Welsh-speaking student teachers (regardless of whether they are on a course preparing them to teach in Welsh) to undertake at least one school experience in a Welsh-medium or bilingual school. (Welsh Government, 2023b, p 22-23)

In addition, ITE programmes for students intending to work in Welsh-medium and bilingual schools should include the following basic requirements:

- support for students to develop the pedagogic skills and methodologies related to learning and teaching through the medium of Welsh or bilingually, preparing them to teach relevant subjects / Areas and age ranges
- support for student teachers to develop strategies to normalise the use of Welsh and embed Welsh language across the curriculum
- support student teachers, where necessary, to build confidence in their own language skills
- all mainstream school experiences are conducted in a Welsh-medium or bilingual setting. (Welsh Government, 2023b, p23)

In 2020-2021, after several years of poor recruitment rates, there was an overall increase in the number of students recruited onto ITE programmes in Wales, although this varied from partnership to partnership. Since 2020, the Welsh Government has asked partnerships to work towards recruiting 30% of all cohorts as Welsh-medium students. According to data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency published by Welsh Government (2023c) the proportion of ITE students who train to teach through the medium of Welsh has remained fairly consistent since 2013-2014. In 2020-2021, 19.9% of new ITE students trained to teach through the medium of Welsh, while in 2021-2022, the overall proportion of students training to teach through the medium of Welsh was 20%. The numbers of secondary students training through the medium of Welsh is a particular cause for concern. Following an improvement in the proportion training through the medium of Welsh during the pandemic (19% in 2020-2021), the proportion fell to 16% in 2021-2022. Unverified data suggests a decrease in the overall number of students training to be teachers in 2022-2023.

Number of entrants onto ITE courses in Wales, by course language and sector, 2018-2019 to 2021-2022

Data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency's student record in Welsh Government's Statistical Bulletin on Initial Teacher Education Wales 2021-2022 (Welsh Government 2023c).

Since September 2019, the Welsh Government has funded the 'Iaith Athrawon Yfory' scheme to provide a financial incentive of £5000 for ITE students on secondary postgraduate programmes to teach through the medium of Welsh or Welsh as a subject. The payment is awarded in two instalments: the first on completion of a PGCE programme leading to the award of qualified teacher status (QTS) and the second upon successful completion of induction in a maintained Welsh-medium or bilingual secondary school or as a teacher of Welsh in a maintained secondary school.

In September 2017, the Welsh Government published professional standards for teaching and leadership. Student teachers gather evidence to show their progress against the standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) in a Professional Learning Passport (PLP) hosted on the Education Workforce Council (EWC) website. Newly qualified teachers (NQTs) gather evidence against induction standards within their PLP. Teachers are encouraged to capture, reflect, share and plan professional learning using the PLP (Welsh Government, 2017b).

The EWC also publishes annual statistics for the teaching workforce. In 2022, the number of registered NQTs with the ability to speak Welsh fluently or reasonably fluently was identified at 28.3%. Twenty-two point two per cent said they had either trained, worked or felt confident to work through the medium of Welsh. According to the statistics, 33.2% of teachers in Wales are Welsh speakers with 26.6% able to work through the medium of Welsh (Education Workforce Council, 2022).

Support for the development of the Welsh language in initial teacher education partnerships

Initial teacher education partnerships are increasingly focused on developing their vision and provision for improving student teachers' Welsh language skills in response to Welsh Government policies, EWC accreditation procedures and findings from Estyn visits. The way ITE partnerships plan and implement provision to develop the Welsh language varies considerably. This means that there is little consistency in the support offered across Wales.

Overall, partnerships focus mainly on the development of students' personal Welsh skills. This responds to the expectations of the professional standards for teaching and leadership. To meet Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) a teacher is expected to demonstrate a 'commitment to incremental development of personal skills in the use of the Welsh language' within the professional learning standards. The overarching values and dispositions within the professional standards refer to the need for teachers to support learners in gaining skills in Welsh (Welsh Government, 2017b).

What is meant by 'studying through the medium of Welsh' varies across the partnerships. In a few cases, it means that students complete all school experiences and assessments through the medium of Welsh. In these instances, valuable support is given to build students' confidence in their academic writing and to develop their Welsh skills in the classroom. In other cases, students choose to complete subject or phase assignments in English while teaching through the medium of Welsh when on school experience. They do not, therefore, take every opportunity to develop and use their knowledge and understanding of subject and educational terminology in Welsh. This is affected by the availability of subject sessions through the medium of Welsh, particularly in secondary programmes. In addition, a few students choose to complete a single school experience or enrichment opportunity through the medium of Welsh. When a school experience in Welsh language context is completed early in the programme, this can influence positively students' confidence and attitudes towards teaching through the medium of Welsh. This helps students transition to complete further school experiences through the medium of Welsh and to consider career opportunities in Welsh-medium schools.

Provision of Welsh language development sessions in taught programmes (university)

Generally, partnerships focus mainly on providing specific sessions to improve students' Welsh language skills in taught sessions in the university. Most ITE partnerships ensure that students receive approximately 25 hours[1] of provision to develop their personal skills in Welsh in Post-graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) programmes. Many partnerships schedule regular sessions to help students improve their Welsh language skills while at university. However, provision for the

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[1] New accreditation criteria include the requirement to increase provision to 35 hours. Programmes that are reaccredited or newly accredited from September 2024 will be subject to this requirement.

development of students' Welsh language skills varies in taught programmes. For example, provision for undergraduate students varies across the period of their degree or students are expected to develop their Welsh skills independently. In these cases, students do not benefit from regular opportunities to practise their Welsh skills and make more limited progress in their personal skills. They focus mainly on meeting the professional standard for Welsh in QTS rather than developing pedagogical practices to ensure that their pupils make progress in their Welsh language skills.

Welsh subject specialists are often responsible for teaching the Welsh sessions although there are variations in tutors' experience of teaching Welsh to adults. The sessions provide valuable opportunities for students to build their confidence and practise their personal linguistic skills. Students studying through the medium of Welsh appreciate the opportunity for 'refresher' sessions where they re-visit aspects of grammar that they may not have studied since school. For example, they revise how to use verb tense correctly or how to use encompassing and concise forms of verbs. Students assessed as having no Welsh skills, entry level or foundation level skills and are following English-medium programmes enjoy and benefit from the opportunities to use the language for example, by practising Welsh phrases and commands.

Students note that their understanding of the importance and value of the language sessions increases over the course of their programme, particularly where there are clear expectations in partnership schools about how staff should model and develop pupils' language skills. Where students do not see as much value to the sessions, they are too general or simple and do not serve the purpose of the ITE programme, which is to prepare students to teach in schools.

In our questionnaire for ITE students:

79% of students agreed that the sessions taught at university helped them develop their Welsh language skills.

78% of students agreed that they felt confident to use their Welsh language skills in the classroom.

72% agreed that they felt confident the training had helped them develop their pedagogy to support pupils' Welsh language skills.

(108 ITE students responded to our survey)

Although many students are positive about the provision to develop their Welsh language skills, they are less clear about the expectations around the development of pupils' Welsh language skills when teaching. They often consider using basic greetings and commands as sufficient in English-medium settings. In Welsh-medium settings they do not always put enough emphasis on the development of pupils' language skills when teaching subjects across the curriculum, particularly in the secondary sector.

One hundred and six newly qualified teachers (NQTs) responded to our survey. Sixty-one per cent agreed that the sessions taught at university helped them develop their Welsh language skills. This may reflect the changes made by partnerships to strengthen provision this year as well as the continued impact of the pandemic on ITE programmes in 2021-2022. For example, Welsh skills sessions were often online where there was less opportunity for students to interact with tutors and other peers.

Almost all partnerships ensure that students complete an audit of their Welsh skills on entry to the programmes and, for the most part, group students suitably according to their needs and abilities. The Welsh language competency framework for education practitioners is used to support students to self-assess their language ability and to identify progress during the programmes. A few partnerships create specific groups for students who are able to speak Welsh but lack confidence. They offer personal support to develop students' competence in Welsh and encourage them to consider teaching through the medium of Welsh.

Cardiff Partnership for ITE: Grouping students to develop the confidence and competence of Welsh-medium teachers

The Cardiff Partnership for ITE places students in differentiated language groups including a 'Pontio' and 'Gloywi' group. Welsh language tutors target Welsh speakers for these groups in an effort to increase the numbers of students choosing a Welsh-medium route. On an annual basis, a small cohort of PGCE students who are Welsh speakers choose an English-medium pathway. They are placed in a 'Pontio' group to give them specific support to develop their Welsh confidence and competence. The 'Pontio' sessions focus on conversation and developing verbal fluency. This is an opportunity for students to resurrect their language skills following a period of study through the medium of English. The sessions also include opportunities to meet with school staff who have learnt Welsh and now work in the Welsh-medium sector. As a result, many 'Pontio' students opt for Welsh-medium enrichment experiences, a three-week experience at the end of the programme developing their confidence and use of Welsh with pupils. This means that students are increasingly confident to consider working in Welsh-medium schools.

Ysgol Gynradd Dolau

Ysgol Gynradd Dolau is a bi-lingual setting providing a unique Welsh language development opportunity for ITE students on placement at the school. Staff in both the English-medium and Welsh-medium departments are committed to providing an inclusive curriculum, ensuring that the Welsh language pervades naturally throughout the school. To ensure ITE students receive a high quality experience, they begin both clinical practice placements with an initial workshop, which shares expectations and reinforces the importance of the Welsh language at Dolau. This workshop provides support and helps strengthen students' understanding of expectations. Commands and sentence patterns are explored with students. These can then be transferred into practice immediately. Students use the Language Competence Framework, to develop confidence, expertise and positive attitudes, and highlight areas for development to provide a baseline. Additional, fortnightly

workshops are specifically designed to improve the confidence levels of students and to target any additional support required. This comprehensive support has a direct impact on students' confidence, and their ability to integrate Welsh into their daily routines.

In those partnerships where the number of students is small, the groups include a range of linguistic needs. Meeting the various needs can be challenging. In a few examples, students are grouped according to which language medium they choose. This means that a few students, who speak Welsh fluently but have chosen to study through the medium of English, are placed in groups where provision is not suitable for their language ability.

Where provision is at its strongest, students make good progress. In a few cases, sessions are used very effectively to develop the students' personal skills in tandem with their knowledge and understanding of language acquisition methodology. In these cases, the students apply what they have learned about language acquisition purposefully when on school experience. In addition, sessions are carefully designed to develop students' confidence in their language skills. This has a positive impact on their teaching and on the progress pupils make in their Welsh skills. Where the language skills sessions are not as useful, they focus on overly basic or very general aspects of Welsh which aren't always relevant to the classroom. In these instances, students do not understand the links to their subject or phase studies well enough and are unable to relate the sessions to their practical experiences in school. The diagram below outlines the key features of effective practice to help pupils develop their Welsh language skills.

Where practitioners effectively help pupils to develop their Welsh language skills they:

create a learning environment where pupils feel safe	use the Welsh language regularly and consistently	introduce and model language correctly
intonate, repeat and gesture regularly	use visual cues effectively	map vocabulary and syntactical patterns
plan for progression and continuity	support pupils to apply skills in different contexts	prioritise listening and speaking skills, then reading and writing

(Adapted from Thematic Report on Welsh Immersion Education Estyn 2022)

A majority of partnerships provide valuable opportunities for students to develop their understanding of Welsh culture, identity and history alongside the benefits of bilingualism as part of language skills sessions and their wider provision. For example, they host cultural events such as an Eisteddfod and Twmpath or organise opportunities for students to attend events such as Tafŵyl or visit Glan-llyn. A few partnerships organise events to celebrate students' progress in Welsh. For example, Cardiff ITE partnership organised a celebration for students featuring Dafydd Iwan.

English-medium and Welsh-medium students appreciate opportunities to work together to develop their use of Welsh. They feel that this has a positive impact on their progress in the language.

University of South Wales visit to St Fagans: Developing an understanding of Welsh and Welsh culture and identity

The University of South Wales organises an opportunity for students to visit St Fagans National History Museum. During the visit, students develop their knowledge and understanding of Welsh history, identity and culture beneficially whilst also using their Welsh language skills. Students are asked to produce a resource to tell the story of various buildings using as much Welsh as possible.

This is a valuable opportunity for students to use the language with purpose while recognising its wider significance. As a result, students develop their confidence in using the language. They also develop awareness of the importance of Welsh in Curriculum for Wales. This has a positive impact on their planning and attitudes to the Welsh language.

Developing the Welsh language in the context of subject or age-group/phase

Each partnership provides specific sessions for subject study or age-group (phase) as part of their provision within the taught programme. Often there are few links between what is presented in sessions to develop Welsh language skills and the content of subject or phase sessions. As a result, students do not make strong enough connections in their learning and struggle to link theory to practice. For example, they do not understand how they can apply strategies modelled by their Welsh tutors to help pupils develop their Welsh language skills when on school experience.

The number of sessions available through the medium of Welsh in undergraduate BA and PGCE primary programmes varies. Nearly all partnerships offer some percentage of the programme through the medium of Welsh. Primary programmes include sessions about how children develop linguistically, and, in the best examples, connections are made with how pupils develop bilingually and multilingually. Students benefit from these opportunities to study how children develop linguistically and how to incorporate pedagogy which focuses on developing the Welsh language into lesson planning and teaching. In a few subject or phase sessions taught through the medium of English, tutors model how to use Welsh in an English-medium school context effectively.

The availability of secondary subject sessions in Welsh often depends on the numbers of students who can speak Welsh and if the subject tutor is able to speak Welsh. Secondary subject sessions are often taught in English. In a few instances, Welsh-medium students form groups to discuss the subject in the language and often use translated resources. In general, Welsh-medium secondary students do not have enough opportunities to discuss information specific to their subject through the medium of Welsh. For example, while secondary programme taught sessions discuss the development of pupils' literacy skills, they often do not specifically

address the methodology of Welsh language acquisition in a subject context. Students are not given enough opportunities to plan for pupils' language development. In addition, students note that the availability of English resources and lectures through the medium of English leads them to think that completing assignments in English is more convenient. As a result, they do not take advantage of all opportunities to develop their Welsh language skills during their programmes and students do not develop a secure understanding of how to support pupils' Welsh language needs.

Only in a very few cases do ITE partnerships work together to enable students to discuss topics with peers from different institutions. This is due in part to the variations in approaches to programme design and student schedules. The perceived competition to attract student teachers is an additional barrier to collaborative working.

In a few partnerships, a few lectures for all students are delivered in Welsh. In these cases, a simultaneous translation service is provided for English-medium students. Students believe that this demonstrates the importance of the language and increases its status within the programme.

Provision within taught programmes: features of effective practice

Tutors ensure that students have a solid understanding of the purpose of Welsh sessions including how to use what they have learned when on school experience.

Sessions ensure that students understand the importance of developing the Welsh language and their role in promoting pupils to use and develop the language. This can include ensuring an understanding of Welsh history, identity and culture and that the Welsh language belongs to all.

The university provides opportunities for students to develop their confidence to use the language in various contexts beyond taught sessions.

Welsh sessions respond purposefully to students' specific language needs and consider how they will develop this aspect when on school experience, for example how to correctly use encompassing verbs and verb tense when teaching within a topic/phase or pay attention to how to pronounce words and phrases correctly.

Tutors skillfully use language acquisition and development methodology to develop students' Welsh skills. In addition, tutors develop students' understanding of effective pedagogy to develop pupils' Welsh language skills. In the few most admirable examples, the impact of this is evident in students' teaching and the progress pupils make in the classroom.

Students receive regular taught Welsh sessions to allow them to practice their language skills and receive feedback or support to develop their skills.

Welsh sessions are differentiated effectively to meet the needs of all students.

Subject or phase sessions are increasingly available through the medium of Welsh. The provision ensures that Welsh students can contribute and complete their work in the language.

Subject or phase sessions include specific references on how to develop pupils' language skills including their Welsh skills. Tutors effectively model how to use Welsh language acquisition and development methodology.

Linking theory and practice

In most partnerships, lead schools provide sessions to help students make connections between what they learn in taught sessions at university and practice in schools. In many partnerships, there are no specific opportunities to consider the Welsh language as part of these sessions. This means that provision for the

development of Welsh is seen as an isolated aspect and there are few opportunities for students to discuss how to use and develop the Welsh language in their classes/subjects with lead mentors. This reinforces the misconception that the purpose of Welsh sessions is to satisfy a professional standard.

A few partnerships are developing the link between university sessions to develop students' Welsh language skills, theory and practice days in lead schools, and students' school experience. In these cases, partnerships have begun to provide valuable opportunities for students to make connections in their learning. As a result, students have a firmer understanding of the importance of developing their Welsh skills and language pedagogy.

Caban Partnership: Linking theory and practice through the role of the language mentor

The CaBan ITE programme includes the role of language mentor in all lead schools as a part of its structure. These lead language mentors contribute to the partnership's three-year development plan and priorities for the Welsh language.

The language mentor works closely with the university tutor to design and deliver five lead school sessions on the Welsh language. These sessions discuss the context of the Welsh language, including the context of the lead school, developing students' understanding of the importance of the language and how Welsh language teaching methodology can be used with pupils. Students have opportunities to discuss strategies such as 'Siarter Iaith' and 'Ein Llais Ni' and language acquisition pedagogy. In addition, language mentors organise opportunities for students to observe language development methodology when visiting classes and contributing to activities.

Ysgol yr Hendre, Caernarfon; Ysgol Cae Top, Bangor; and Ysgol Alun, Mold are lead schools for CaBan.

Ysgol yr Hendre

Ysgol yr Hendre is a Welsh-medium primary school in Caernarvon. The language mentor effectively interweaves lead school sessions to discuss Welsh language methodology with opportunities for students to visit classes. Students observe language acquisition and development strategies in action in classes before having the opportunity to work with small groups of pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding of strategies. This is supported through discussions with classroom teachers and the language mentor. This means that students build a solid understanding of how to design and use language acquisition pedagogy.

In addition, students placed in the school receive preparation periods with their mentors and other classroom teachers to facilitate co-planning for the development of pupils' language skills. This particular focus on Welsh language methodology has a positive impact on the pedagogy of students and helps pupils make progress in their Welsh skills.

The language mentor works closely with cluster mentors to ensure support for

students. He leads the 'Ein Llais Ni' project providing valuable professional learning opportunities for teachers and students.

Ysgol Cae Top

Ysgol Cae Top is a Welsh-medium primary school in Bangor. Mentors provide specific sessions to develop pedagogy and planning for Welsh literacy with their undergraduate BA students. The school presents a visual planning frame to break the planning process into clear steps:

- Read text
- Present a model of the genre pupils will write highlighting features of the genre
- Design language games to build vocabulary and grammar
- Plan tasks to apply vocabulary, grammar and structure
- Design role-playing opportunities to continue to build vocabulary and sentence patterns
- Co-author a whole-class model
- Plan opportunity for pupils to write independently

Opportunities are provided for students to discuss pedagogy while planning, observing planning in action in classes and applying what they have learned to their own practice during their time at school. In addition, the school provides students with a pack of resources about Welsh history to ensure that they use their knowledge and understanding of Welsh history and identity when planning lessons.

Ysgol Alun

Ysgol Alun is an English-medium school in Mold. Here, the language mentor provides bespoke sessions to develop students' understanding of the importance of the Welsh language and their confidence in using the language with pupils. This includes providing resources to support students new to the language to pronounce words and phrases correctly through voice recordings. The school uses CaBan's '10 Point Plan' strategy to develop students' use of Welsh. These stages of progress include basic strategies as a starting point, before going on to identify questioning strategies and hold a learning conversation in Welsh as the culmination of the developing language journey for students. This means that students have a better understanding of the expectations around developing their use of Welsh during the programme.

Support for the development of the Welsh language while on school experience

Schools generally have a suitable understanding of the expectations of their ITE partnership. Lead schools often have a more nuanced understanding because they have contributed to the development of the programmes, are members of partnership committees and attend regular meetings with their university colleagues. However, there is often no clear and consistent understanding of the expectations regarding the development of the Welsh language across each partnership. There are variations in understanding between lead and wider partnership schools, phases

(primary and secondary) and Welsh-medium and English-medium schools. This variance is particularly evident in those schools where school leaders do not prioritise the Welsh language and there is no strategy to develop it across the school. In addition, variations may exist within schools, particularly where support depends on the mentor's interest and desire to discuss the Welsh language. This means that students' experiences of Welsh when on school experience varies widely.

In our **questionnaire for ITE** students, **69%** agreed that they had been supported to develop their Welsh language skills while on school experience.

In our questionnaire for **NQTs**, **58%** say they received support to develop their Welsh language skills while on school experience. Less than half **(46%)** agreed that they had received support for Welsh at lead school sessions.

(108 students responded to our survey)

(106 NQTs responded to our survey)

In those lead and partnership schools where there are examples of strong support for students to develop their personal Welsh skills and where this leads to development in pupils' skills, the Welsh language features prominently in the school's vision and improvement plan.

The Open University: All Saints Primary School, Gresford Wrexham

All Saints Primary School is an English-medium primary school within the Open University Partnership for ITE. Leaders and staff at the school are passionate about promoting pupils' sense of identity, including the Welsh language and culture. Welsh is a whole-school priority within the school's improvement plan and staff are committed to developing pupils' skills in the language. The student teacher placed at the school is included in all professional learning and planning for Welsh and works with school staff to develop and produce resources for lessons. Professional discussions with school staff help the student make links between theory and practice. This has a positive impact on the student's contribution to sessions with university tutors to further develop her understanding of pedagogy.

As a result, the student has a clear understanding of the importance of developing Welsh and is developing pedagogy to support pupils to use and develop the language in lessons.

Across the partnerships, there are a few examples of good practice where class/subject mentors invest significant time to support and help their students develop their personal Welsh skills and increase their confidence. These mentors spend time discussing and nurturing students' language development while providing additional resources to support them. In the best cases, they pay very good attention to the development of students' pedagogy for language acquisition and development to ensure that their practices impact on pupils' progress in Welsh. These mentors often model teaching approaches very effectively and use mentoring strategies

sensitively to support students' practice. They provide opportunities for students to develop their Welsh language teaching skills in class and in wider activities. For example, in the primary phase, students are able to apply these skills when leading 'yard games' during play times. In a few examples, mentors set effective targets that focus not only on developing the students' personal Welsh skills but on improving teaching and, as a result, pupils' learning. However, there is too much variation in the quality of mentoring across the partnerships.

Effective school leaders in partnership schools ensure extensive support for the development of Welsh. They:

prioritise the development of the Welsh language as part of the school's vision and development plan

plan purposefully and strategically to consider how strategies will impact pupils' progress in Welsh

ensure that school staff place emphasis on modelling language patterns and using the methodology of language acquisition and development

clearly communicate high expectations about how staff should use and develop the Welsh language

ensure specific professional learning opportunities to develop staff Welsh skills and pedagogy to develop the Welsh language
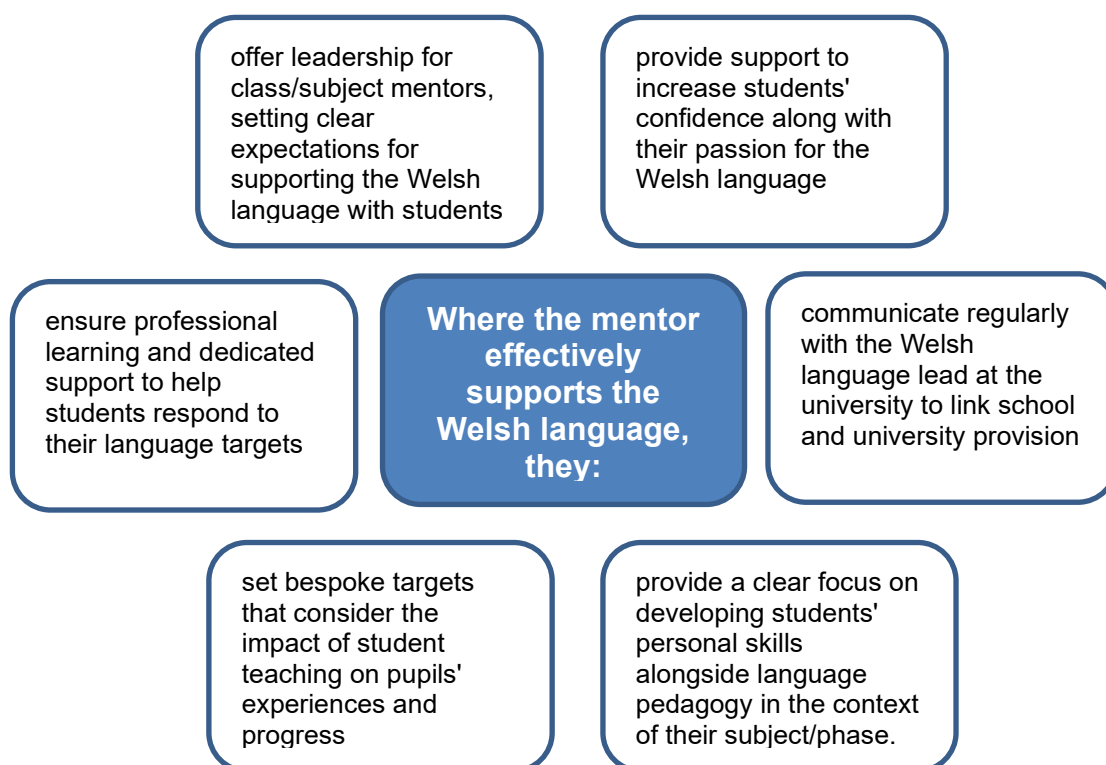
ensure that class/subject mentors support students to develop pupils' skills; emphasise effective mentoring, and positive and constructive encouragement

focus on very effective teaching including the pedagogy of Welsh language acquisition and development

ensure that students understand the vision using induction sessions to deliver the necessary professional learning; provide opportunities for students to promote this in lessons

evaluate by taking into account the impact of teaching on pupils' Welsh skills

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In about half of partnerships, a language mentor plays a specific role in the support for students to develop the Welsh language. The role of language mentors varies across partnerships. In some cases, they are responsible for checking the linguistic accuracy of student-produced materials and resources. They observe students to discuss and set language targets. In other cases, they are responsible for lead school language mentor sessions and arranging opportunities for students to apply what they have learned in classes. In a few schools, they have wider leadership responsibility for the development of the Welsh language and contribute to the school's professional learning strategy. In these cases, they help set the school's strategic direction for the development of the Welsh language. This positively influences the students' experiences, helping them to make a connection between the partnership's provision and wider professional learning programmes. For example, Ysgol yr Hendre's language mentor contributes to the 'Ein Llais Ni' programme by collaborating with GwE and CaBan.

offer leadership for class/subject mentors, setting clear expectations for supporting the Welsh language with students

provide support to increase students' confidence along with their passion for the Welsh language

ensure professional learning and dedicated support to help students respond to their language targets

Where the mentor effectively supports the Welsh language, they:

communicate regularly with the Welsh language lead at the university to link school and university provision

set bespoke targets that consider the impact of student teaching on pupils' experiences and progress

provide a clear focus on developing students' personal skills alongside language pedagogy in the context of their subject/phase.

However, there is a general lack of professional learning for teachers on the pedagogy of language acquisition and how to develop pupils' Welsh language skills. Many staff teaching across secondary subjects in Welsh-medium and bilingual schools do not understand language acquisition pedagogy well enough, and therefore do not model practice and support student teachers well enough. There is a lack of subject-specific professional learning across the curriculum and often provision does not focus well enough on the development of the Welsh language within subjects. Professional learning often does not focus well enough on pedagogy to support the development of pupils' skills in Welsh.

In most partnerships, students are expected to complete specific tasks to demonstrate their progress in Welsh using the Welsh language competencies framework for education practitioners and to meet the professional standards for Welsh. Students are often asked to produce a portfolio of work to demonstrate their progress in this area using evidence from their work at university and in schools. Task requirements vary across partnerships and students feel that the requirements do not always apply to their school experiences. Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's work to moderate the quality of portfolio tasks is valuable. The reports submitted to partnerships are useful to evaluate the effectiveness of the tasks set and to highlight aspects for further development, for example developing the focus on language acquisition pedagogy.

In addition, the development of students' Welsh language skills is part of the criteria of partnership school observation forms and school experience reports. These forms focus on the professional standards for teaching and leadership. This means that targets tend to focus on students' personal skills. As a result, there is little detailed consideration of the impact of language acquisition pedagogy on pupils' Welsh skills.

The Welsh language competency framework for education practitioners is used to identify the competencies of NQTs at the start of their induction period. However, there is no obvious link between the training offered in ITE programmes and the support for NQTs. Some professional learning provision is available from local authorities and regional consortia for Welsh as a subject or as part of the Languages, Literacy and Communication area of learning and experience. This also includes programmes to support staff to develop their personal Welsh skills. In a few instances school improvement partners offer specific programmes to discuss teaching Welsh. However, the offer is not consistent across Wales. Increasingly, Welsh-medium schools are working together with their local authorities and school improvement partners to offer support to develop NQTs' Welsh language and pedagogical skills. This is part of their efforts to recruit teachers to shortage subjects and increase the confidence of young teachers to teach in the Welsh language sector.

In our questionnaire for **NQTs,** less than half **(46%)** agreed that they had received support to develop their Welsh language skills since achieving Qualified Teacher Status.

In addition, **43%** disagreed that they had received support to develop pedagogy to target pupils' Welsh skills. **10%** of NQTs said they did not know if they had received support.

(106 NQTs responded to our survey)

Appendix 1 includes a Continuum of Welsh language development in initial teacher education partnerships. The focus on schools reflects the need for them to develop their practice in this area to support student teachers within partnerships.

Self-evaluation and planning for improvement

Partnership self-evaluation processes are often led by the university. Partnerships generally do not evaluate their provision for the development of the Welsh language sharply enough. They often do not consider all aspects of the provision and how they integrate. This means that they do not consider in sufficient detail the impact of provision on how students use Welsh when on school experience and the impact on pupils' progress in Welsh. They do not specifically identify aspects of the provision that need improvement, particularly aspects of students' pedagogy. In very few cases, mentors contribute to the evaluation of lead school sessions for Welsh and identify developmental steps to share with their university partners. Where this works well, language mentors and senior mentors identify specific aspects of the lead school's provision to support the Welsh language as areas for development. This has a direct impact on refining the provision of theory and practice sessions.

In a few cases, there are valuable opportunities for schools to collaborate and share effective practice about their provision to support the Welsh skills of students and their staff. For example, lead English-medium schools work together to deliver language mentor sessions and new language mentors are linked with an experienced practitioner at another lead school in the CaBan partnership. In general,

there are not enough opportunities for collaboration and sharing of practice for Welsh. In the very few best examples, school improvement partners, including regional consortia, play a significant role in identifying schools where there is effective practice around teaching through the medium of Welsh in both Welsh-medium and English-medium schools. This allows partnerships to facilitate the sharing of good practice across their networks of schools.

Impact of provision

Many students make suitable progress in their personal Welsh skills during their ITE programmes. In those examples where students make strong progress, they make effective links within their learning and can apply their skills and understanding of pedagogy when on school experience. This has a positive impact on pupils' progress in their Welsh language skills.
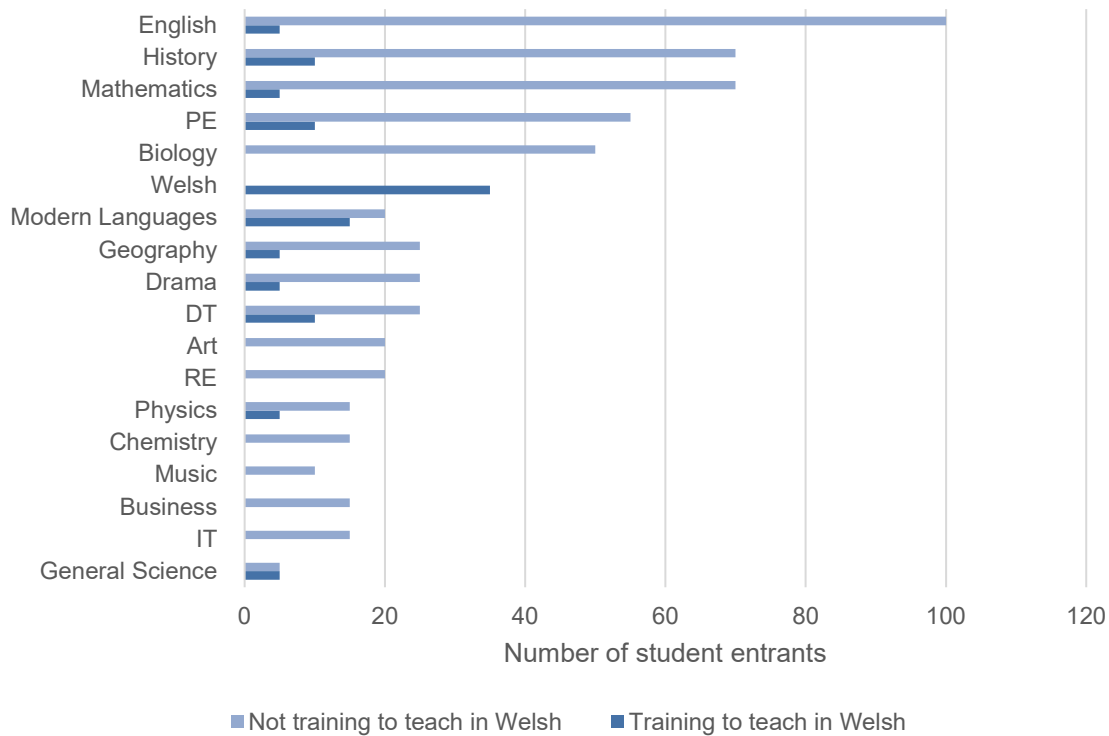
Where students complete their programme through the medium of Welsh, in a majority of instances they make good progress in the development of their Welsh skills. In these cases, students understand how to design bespoke opportunities for pupils to develop their oracy, reading and writing skills alongside knowledge, comprehension and subject skills. This is more evident in primary programmes. In a few examples, students consider and plan for specific Welsh needs, including the needs of latecomers to Welsh. These students have a very good knowledge and understanding of how to introduce and develop language, for example vocabulary, sentence structures, syntax and new idioms. They use language acquisition pedagogy effectively to support pupils, particularly in settings where a high proportion of pupils come from English-speaking homes. Often, where students make very strong progress, school leaders prioritise the development of pedagogies to support language acquisition amongst staff, the quality of mentoring is excellent, and purposeful links are made between learning in university and in school. Where less progress is seen amongst students studying through the medium of Welsh, they are poorer language models and do not pay adequate attention to the development of their pupils' language skills.

Where student progress is not as good, the Welsh language is not used regularly enough in lessons. It is limited to simple commands and greetings and there are very few opportunities for pupils to use their Welsh oracy skills. There are few references in English-medium students' planning about how they intend to develop pupils' Welsh skills.

Recruitment

The numbers completing initial teacher education programmes through the medium of Welsh are low, particularly on secondary programmes and fall short of the targets set by Welsh Government.

Number of entrants on secondary school ITE programmes in Wales, by subject and ability to teach in Welsh, 2021/2022

Data from Welsh Government Statistical Bulletin Initial Teacher Education (Welsh Government 2023c).

A few Welsh speaking students across partnerships choose not to complete their programme through the medium of Welsh. In 2021-2022 this was 7% of the total number of students on ITE programmes (Welsh Government 2023c). This is often because they lack confidence following a period where they have studied through the medium of English. They are not always aware of the support available to develop their skills within ITE programmes. In addition, too often students are unaware of the Welsh Government incentive grant, Iaith Athrawon Yfory. Partnerships are developing their recruitment practices to try to attract students to train as teachers. As many of these developments are recent, there is limited evidence of their effectiveness.

Recruitment practices include:

using university careers fairs to promote and advertise PGCE programmes

PGCE programme taster opportunities for the partnership's university undergraduates; this may include a module on education within specialist subjects

promotion of grants to teach through the medium of Welsh during the interview process

work experience opportunities in lead schools for sixth form pupils and undergraduates

offer specific support for Welsh for example, Swansea University offers support through Academi Hywel Teifi

producing podcasts to discuss how teachers can help pupils develop into confident Welsh speakers for example, CaBan's 'AmFiliwn' podcast

appointment of dedicated marketing officer to promote study through the medium of Welsh

bursaries to graduates within the university to encourage them to continue studying for a PGCE with the linked partnership

promotion of ITE programmes within professional learning provision for teaching assistants

events for sixth formers to promote education as a career, including career fairs in lead schools, virtual events and sessions in Welsh-medium schools

working with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to develop and promote Welsh-medium provision within ITE programmes

promotion of education as a career through marketing work at events such as the Urdd and National Eisteddfod

identifying students who have the Welsh language ability to complete a school experience through the medium of Welsh during interviews; partnerships offer bespoke support to develop students' confidence and accelerate their progress in the language

The following diagram outlines the features of effective support for the Welsh language in ITE and schools.

Features of effective support for the Welsh language in Initial Teacher Education and beyond

Welsh is an integral part of the partnership's vision and is considered in all aspects of its work

The partnership evaluates provision for the Welsh language by considering the impact of the support on students' pedagogy and how this impacts pupils' experiences and progress.

The partnership has high expectations for the provision of support for the Welsh language. This is made clear in lead and partnership schools agreements including how they will develop provision over time.

Leaders work strategically to ensure consistency in student experience. This includes reducing variance in opportunities to develop Welsh within and across schools.

Leaders in all partnership schools prioritise the development of the Welsh language and set clear expectations about its use in lessons and extra-curricular activities and its development over time.

Leaders provide purposeful professional learning opportunities to help staff develop their Welsh language skills (university and school staff).

Guidance for the professional standards for teaching and leadership emphasises the development of teachers' personal Welsh skills and how staff use language acquisition pedagogy to support pupils to develop their Welsh language skills.

The professional learning offer provided by local authorities and regional consortia considers the development of Welsh language skills of education practitioners in addition to the development of pedagogy for Welsh language acquisition and development.

Purposeful support for NQTs to build on the Welsh skills and pedagogy developed during ITE

University sessions develop students' skills and pedagogy and are clearly linked to lead school provision and students' school experiences.

Regular opportunities for schools to work together and share effective practice within and across partnerships

Taught Welsh sessions are clearly linked to taught subject and phase sessions. Particular attention is given to developing an understanding of the pedagogy of language acquisition in the context of Welsh and how this can be developed in practice.

Enrichment opportunities ensure that all students taste Welsh-medium education. This can be facilitated through peer support activities.

Welsh language education taster opportunities encourage students to consider teaching through the medium of Welsh. Bespoke / intensive support and opportunities for students to transition to teach in Welsh-medium schools are considered integral to the programme.

Appendix 1

Continuum of Welsh language development in initial teacher education partnerships				
	Beginning the journey	**Making progress**	**Building momentum**	**Maintaining high standards**
Current situation Initial Teacher Education	• Welsh sessions taught by the university focus on developing students' personal Welsh skills. • The provision is very general and often does not respond specifically enough to the needs of the students or discuss language acquisition pedagogy. • Developing Welsh skills is seen as an isolated aspect. It is not associated with subject or phase pedagogy. • There are no clear expectations around the support offered to students to develop their Welsh language skills by mentors and staff while in schools. • Support for Welsh is not considered in the partnership's quality assurance and self-evaluation activities.	• Developing Welsh language skills is identified as a priority within the partnership. Leaders are beginning to plan strategically to develop the Welsh language. • Welsh sessions focus on developing students' personal skills in Welsh as well as their understanding of language acquisition pedagogy. • Welsh sessions respond to the linguistic and developmental needs of the students with a focus on developing a sound teaching methodology. • Welsh sessions are held regularly. • There are a few links between the Welsh sessions and wider sessions (subject and phase) • The Welsh language is covered in the partnership guidance including outlining	• The partnership has a firm vision for the development of the Welsh language. There is deliberate strategic planning for this aspect. • Regular Welsh sessions focus on developing students' personal skills in Welsh as well as their understanding of language acquisition pedagogy. They respond to the linguistic and developmental needs of the students with a focus on developing effective educators. • There are clear and well-planned links with the wider sessions of teaching provision. This includes theory and practice sessions at university (subject or phase), lead school sessions and partnership school support. • All partnership mentors consider Welsh in their work with students but there is little consistency.	• The partnership has an established vision for the development of the Welsh language. There is consistent and highly effective strategic planning for this aspect. • Welsh sessions focus on developing students' personal skills in Welsh as well as their understanding of language acquisition pedagogy. They respond to the linguistic and developmental needs of the students with a focus on developing effective educators. • Clear and deliberate links are made with the wider sessions of the taught provision. This includes theory and practice sessions at university (subject or phase), lead school sessions and partnership school support. • Supporting students' Welsh development is an integral part of the mentors' work. They model effective pedagogical practice and

		the role of mentors and schools. • Quality assurance and self-evaluation activities take into account the provision for the Welsh language. This often involves questioning students' opinions.	They are beginning to model effective practice. • Professional learning for mentors is beginning to consider how to support Welsh. • The partnership uses a range of quality assurance and self-evaluation activities to identify strengths and areas for improvement in Welsh language provision.	support students to apply their learning about Welsh. • The professional learning for mentors programme includes how to effectively support students' language skills and language acquisition pedagogy. • The partnership uses a range of quality assurance and self-evaluation activities to identify strengths and areas for improvement in Welsh language provision. Partners consider the impact of skills development and pedagogy on student practice and pupils' progress.
Current situation provision in partnership schools	• Expectations for the development of the Welsh language are insufficient. • There are very few opportunities for pupils to develop and use their Welsh skills in lessons other than specific Welsh lessons. • Very little focus on planning to ensure pupils' progress over time in response to Curriculum for Wales learning expectations. • Very little planning for the development of pupils' Welsh skills during transition from one phase to another.	• The school recognises the need to develop pupils' Welsh language skills and is beginning to act strategically to do so. • There are suitable opportunities for pupils to develop and use their skills in Welsh lessons where bilingualism is promoted. • The school is starting to plan to ensure that pupils progressively develop their Welsh skills, but this is not sharp enough and does not reflect curriculum learning expectations for Wales.	• Leaders show genuine support and commitment to the strategic development of the Welsh language across the school. This is implemented well. • The school responds suitably to Welsh Government school categorisation guidelines. • Careful planning to develop pupils' Welsh skills is increasing over time. It reflects the learning expectations of Curriculum for Wales. • The curriculum has a suitable balance including a	• The school has a Welsh and Welsh ethos. Welsh culture and heritage together with the language are integral to the school's vision. • The school has a definite strategic plan to respond firmly to the Welsh Government's school categorisation guidelines. • There is careful planning to develop pupils' Welsh language skills across the age range including transition periods. • There are deliberate and growing opportunities for pupils to use their Welsh

• Staff have little awareness of the need to develop the Welsh language with pupils. They do not develop pupils' Welsh language skills across curriculum areas. • The school does little to promote Welsh culture and heritage and the benefits of multi-lingualism. • There are very few opportunities for pupils to study Wales and make connections between local, Welsh and international contexts across the curriculum.	• There is some deliberate planning to develop pupils' Welsh language skills during transition from one phase to another. • There are a few opportunities for pupils to hear Welsh across the curriculum. • A few staff are responsible for teaching Welsh to pupils and take responsibility for the subject. • The school hosts a few events to promote Welsh culture and heritage, for example celebrating St David's Day, School Eisteddfod, St Dwynwen, Welsh Music Day. • Pupils have a few opportunities to study Wales and make connections between local, Welsh and international contexts across the curriculum.	prominent place for the Welsh language and opportunities to communicate in Welsh in subjects across the curriculum, for example the use of basic phrases and questions in lessons across the curriculum. There are extra-curricular opportunities to use Welsh. • Planning for the development of pupils' Welsh language skills is increasingly considered as they transition from one stage to the next and across the curriculum. • The majority of staff commit to improving their Welsh and using it with pupils. They develop their pedagogy to consider how pupils acquire and develop the Welsh language. • The school has a calendar of events to promote Welsh culture and heritage. Regular attention is given to this aspect during the school year. • Pupils have frequent opportunities to study Wales and make connections between local, Welsh and international	language skills in subjects across the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities. • Almost every single member of staff is committed to the Welsh language and strive to use it regularly and increasingly. • Staff have a solid understanding of the pedagogy of language acquisition and development. • There are constant and rich opportunities for pupils to study the local area, Wales and beyond making sophisticated connections between these contexts.

			contexts. These opportunities are intentionally planned.	
Current situation: Learning in English-medium schools (focus on oracy)	The minority of pupils are making appropriate progress in their Welsh language skills. They often do not progressively develop their skills. Pupils are generally very insecure when using their Welsh skills and rely too much on scaffolded activities.	The majority of pupils are making suitable progress in their Welsh skills. They are beginning to show progress over time in their Welsh lessons. They are able to follow instructions and answer simple questions in Welsh in subjects across the curriculum and in more informal situations.	Many pupils are making good progress in their Welsh skills. They are confident when contributing verbally in their Welsh lessons. They respond suitably to more complex instructions and questions in lessons across the curriculum and are increasingly able to use Welsh subject terminology.	Most pupils are making very good progress in their Welsh skills. They are confident in using Welsh to answer questions and hold conversations across the curriculum. They use subject terminology with confidence.
Welsh language development continuum in schools				
	Beginning the journey	**Making progress**	**Building momentum**	**Maintaining high standards**
Strategic vision	• Establish a vision for the development of the Welsh language in the school. • The Welsh language is part of the School Improvement Plan.	• The school has a strong vision for the development of the Welsh language over time. • The Welsh language is a core part of the School Improvement Plan. • School staff understand this vision.	• School staff understand their role and are committed to making the vision for the Welsh language a reality. They are working together to implement the school's improvement plan for the Welsh language.	• The school continues to realise its vision for the Welsh language. • Leaders regularly review the vision and set high expectations. • All staff contribute to making the vision a reality.
Workforce development Professional Learning	Establish professional learning arrangements to provide support for staff to: • improve their personal Welsh skills • use basic Welsh with pupils (simple words and commands) • plan opportunities for pupils to learn about Wales and the benefits of bilingualism	The school has robust professional learning arrangements to: • help staff progressively improve their personal Welsh skills over time • help staff to use simple commands in Welsh in lessons; there is a clear plan to develop this	The school has robust professional learning arrangements to: • help staff progressively improve their personal Welsh skills over time • help staff use commands and questions designed to encourage pupils to use their Welsh skills across some curriculum subjects	The school has robust professional learning arrangements that support continuous improvement to: • help staff progressively improve their personal Welsh skills over time • help staff use designed commands and questions to ensure pupils use their Welsh

		• plan a curriculum which ensures that pupils have regular opportunities to learn about Wales and the benefits of bilingualism	• develop the pedagogy of the acquisition and development of the Welsh language • provide consistent opportunities for staff to work together to design a curriculum where pupils have opportunities to learn about Wales and the benefits of multilingualism	language skills across curriculum subjects • develop the pedagogy of Welsh language acquisition and development across the curriculum • provide consistent opportunities for staff to work purposefully to design and revise the curriculum to ensure rich opportunities for pupils to learn about Wales and the benefits of multilingualism
Strategic planning to improve leadership capability	Designate roles and responsibilities to develop the Welsh language including: • leading the strategic development of the Welsh language • developing provision for the development of Welsh language skills for staff and pupils • developing the awareness of Welsh culture and heritage together and the benefits of bilingualism	Leaders understand their roles and responsibilities in developing the Welsh language including: • specific strategic responsibility for the development of the Welsh language in the school including professional learning • self-evaluating the provision and beginning to identify its impact on pupils' Welsh skills and identify appropriate improvement steps	Leaders at all levels understand their responsibilities to ensure the development of the Welsh language including: • responsibility for the progressive development of the Welsh language including professional learning focused on developing an effective language teaching methodology • effectively self-evaluating Welsh language provision to identify specific improvement steps for improving pupils' Welsh language skills	Leaders at all levels understand the links between: • effective self-evaluation processes • Bespoke improvement planning • high quality professional learning for the development of pupils' Welsh skills Leaders focus on continuous improvement and development meaning the school increasingly enables pupils to develop into confident Welsh speakers.
Teaching and Curriculum	• Ensure that staff understand how to establish basic practices of using Welsh in	• Ensure that staff use Welsh regularly in the classroom including greetings and	• Ensure that staff use Welsh regularly in class and around the school including	• Ensure that staff consistently use language acquisition methodology to develop

the classroom e.g. greetings, short commands. • Develop the curriculum to include Welsh language and references to local, Welsh and international contexts.	commands which ask pupils to action a response. • Plan a curriculum to develop pupils' Welsh language skills and their understanding of the links between local, Welsh and international contexts.	commands, bilingual subject vocabulary and simple questions. • Develop a curriculum in which pupils' Welsh language skills are progressively developed and deliberate connections are made between phases and subjects. • Plan a curriculum which develops pupils' Welsh language skills alongside their understanding of Welsh identity and heritage.	vocabulary and pupils' ability to respond using Welsh, e.g. modelling, drilling, reinforcement. • Develop a curriculum where there is an increasing focus on the progressive development of pupils' Welsh language skills so that there are intentional links between phases and curriculum subjects. • Staff are aware of the expectations for each cohort of pupils in Welsh and plan their teaching to respond to the pupils' specific needs.

Appendix Two – Survey Questions

Survey Questions – Student Teacher Survey

1. I am completing my initial teacher education through the medium of:

☐ Welsh

☐ English

2. I have completed school placements through the medium of:

☐ Welsh

☐ English

☐ Both languages

3. I am completing my initial teacher education at:

☐ Aberystwyth Partnership

☐ Yr Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP)

☐ CABAN

☐ Cardiff Partnership

☐ Open University in Wales

☐ Swansea University Schools' Partnership

☐ University of South Wales ITE Partnership

☐ I am training outside of Wales

☐ Prefer not to say

4. The Welsh Language Competency Framework for Education Practitioners provides a framework to help you decide how to describe your Welsh language skill level.

I would describe my Welsh language skills as:

☐ Proficient

☐ Higher

☐ Intermediary

- [ ] Foundation
- [ ] Entry
- [ ] No Welsh language skills

5. To what extent do you agree, or disagree, with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
The university-led Welsh language sessions helped me develop my Welsh language skills	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
I received support in placement schools to develop my Welsh language skills during my ITE programme	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
I received support during lead school sessions to develop my Welsh language skills	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Following the training I received to develop my Welsh language skills, I am confident to use my Welsh language skills in the classroom	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Following the training I received to develop my pedagogy to support pupils' Welsh language skills, I am confident in this aspect of my teaching	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

If you would like to explain further, please do so here:

Survey Questions – NQT Survey

1. I completed my initial teacher education through the medium of:

- [ ] Welsh
- [ ] English

2. During my initial teacher education, I completed school placements through the medium of:

☐ Welsh

☐ English

☐ Both languages

3. I completed my initial teacher education at:

☐ Aberystwyth Partnership

☐ Yr Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP)

☐ CABAN

☐ Cardiff Partnership

☐ Open University in Wales

☐ Swansea University Schools' Partnership

☐ University of South Wales ITE Partnership

☐ I didn't train in Wales

☐ Prefer not to say

4. The Welsh Language Competency Framework for Education Practitioners provides a framework to help you decide how to describe your Welsh language skill level.

I would describe my Welsh language skills as:

☐ Proficient

☐ Higher

☐ Intermediary

☐ Foundation

☐ Entry

☐ No Welsh language skills

5. I currently work in:

☐ Primary/Nursery

☐ Secondary

☐ All Age

☐ Special

☐ Not applicable

6. Which local authority do you currently work in?

7. In my current post, I teach through the medium of:

☐ Welsh

☐ Bi-lingual

☐ English

☐ Not applicable

8. To what extent do you agree, or disagree, with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
The university-led Welsh language sessions helped me develop my Welsh language skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I received support in placement schools to develop my Welsh language skills during my ITE programme	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I received support during lead school sessions to develop my Welsh language skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Since achieved Qualified Teacher Stats (QTS) I have received support for the development of my Welsh language skills through professional learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Since achieving Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) I have received support to develop my pedagogy to teach pupils Welsh language skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

If you would like to explain further, please do so here:

9. Which of the following have been barriers to the development of your personal Welsh language skills?
Please rank the factors from most significant to least significant (1= most significant barrier, 2= least significant barrier).

You can use the drop-down to select a number for each statement, or drag and drop the statements into your preferred order.

I don't feel that the development of Welsh language skills is relevant to my subject area
Lack of resources
Lack of professional learning available to support the development of personal Welsh language skills
Welsh language development is not a priority at my school
Lack of time

If you would like to explain further, please do so here:

10. What would help you develop your personal Welsh language skills?

11. What would help you support pupils to develop their Welsh language skills?

Methods and evidence base

The findings and recommendations in this report are based on:

- inspection findings from Cardiff Partnership for ITE, yr Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership, Aberystwyth Partnership of ITE
- visits and meetings with Swansea University Schools Partnership, the Open University, CaBan, Cardiff Partnership for ITE, University of South Wales ITE Partnership including:
  - meetings with partnership leaders in universities and schools
  - visits to 17 partnership schools including virtual and face-to-face meetings, learning walks and observation of mentoring sessions.
- interviews with local authority officials and regional consortia
- interviews with leaders from the Centre for Learning Welsh and Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol
- survey responses from 108 ITE students
- survey responses from 106 newly qualified teachers (NQTs)
- school inspection reports from September 2022 to July 2023

The sample of schools visited reflected their role as an initial teacher education partnership school. The partnerships identified schools where they considered the provision for supporting students' Welsh language skills a strength.

Activities included:

- interviews with headteachers, senior mentors, classroom mentors and language mentors where this was a feature of the partnership's provision
- interviews with students
- interviews with NQTs
- learning walks to observe students teaching
- observations of mentoring sessions
- scrutinising relevant documentation

List of schools

Primary schools

All Saints Primary School
Ysgol Cae Top
Clase School
Coed Eva Primary School
Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmllynfell
Dolau Primary School
Ysgol yr Hendre
Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael
Canton School
Ystrad Mynach Primary School

Secondary schools

Alun School
Ysgol David Hughes
Dwr-y-Felin Comprehensive School
Fitzalan High School
Pontypridd High School
Stanwell School

All-age schools

Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera – Bro Dur

Glossary

Initial Teacher Education	A sector that ensures training for individuals who want to become teachers. It can include undergraduate and post graduate programs along with part-time programmes.
Ein Llais Ni	A GwE-led project in collaboration with schools across the northern region and Bangor University
Enrichment experience	Opportunity for student to experience a different sector or school to the experience school
Language mentor	A teacher at the school with particular responsibility for supporting students to develop the Welsh language
Lead Schools	Schools which have entered into a partnership agreement to play a leading role in initial teacher education. They contribute to the leadership of the partnership and have joint responsibility for self-evaluation and quality assurance. They provide professional learning, observation and teaching opportunities for students.
Mentor	A member of partner school staff who guides, supports, supervises and provides feedback to student teachers
Partnership	The formal arrangement between a university and partnership schools where they work collaboratively as equal partners in designing and facilitating a programme of ITE
Partnership schools	Schools that are part of the initial teacher education partnership. This can mean lead or wider partnership schools.
Pedagogy of language acquisition	The theory and practice of teaching. The pedagogy of language acquisition guides the teacher's strategies and actions to develop pupils' linguistic skills.
Wider partnership schools	Schools within the wider partnership that provide school experience for students. Lead Schools can also provide school experience.
Senior mentor	A mentor at the school with overall responsibility for mentoring at the school
Students	Student teachers, sometimes referred to as trainees on initial teacher education programmes

Tutor	Lecturer at the university with responsibility for students of the initial teacher education programme
Welsh Language competency framework for education practitioners	The framework was published in 2020 to support teachers to recognise and describe their competence in Welsh. Partnerships use the framework to identify students' starting point and progress in Welsh.
Welsh sessions	Sessions to develop students' Welsh language skills usually taught by the university

Numbers – quantities and proportions

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

Where survey findings are referred to, response options have been combined. For example, the response options 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree', and 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Disagree' were combined to Agree and Disagree, to summarise the findings.

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