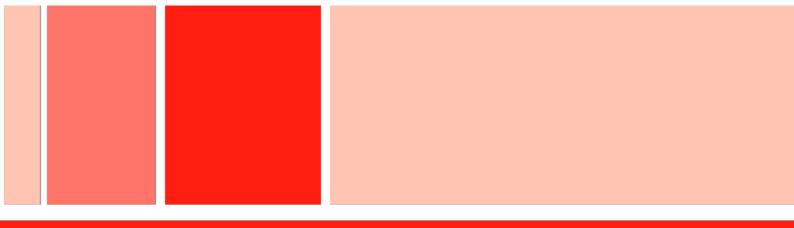




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## **EVALUATION OF THE WELSH-MEDIUM EDUCATION STRATEGY**

## **FINAL REPORT**



Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

# **Evaluation of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy Final Report**

10 March 2016

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The opinions expressed in this report are those of the researchers and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government.

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## Glossary

Acronym/Key	Definition
word	
ACCAC	Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for
	Wales
ALN	Additional Learning Needs
CACHE	Council for Awards in Care, Health and Education
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CSSIW	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales
CYDAG The Association of Schools for Welsh-medium	
	Education (CYDAG): works with primary and secondary
	schools to promote and develop Welsh-medium and
	bilingual education
DfES	Department for Education and Skills, Welsh
	Government
ELWa	Education and Learning Wales
Estyn	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Training in
	Wales.
EWC	Education Workforce Council
EIG	Education Improvement Grant
FE	Further education
GCSE	General Certificate in Secondary Education
HE	Higher education
HEFCW	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
Hwb	Hwb is the national digital content repository
Implementation	Implementation Programme included in the Welsh-
Programme	medium Education Strategy
Interim report	Interim evaluation report on the Welsh-medium
	Education Strategy, published in November 2014
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
Mudiad Meithrin	The largest provider of Welsh-medium pre-school

	provision. Mudiad delivers a range of provision Wales-
	wide, including <i>cylchoedd meithrin</i> , <i>Ti a Fi</i> groups and
	after-school clubs.
NGfL	National Grid for Learning
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census
PLC	Professional Learning Community
Sgiliaith	Organisation providing training courses for further
	education tutors and work-based learning tutors.
Welsh-language	Training programme for education practitioners to
Sabbatical	enhance their Welsh language skills, funded by the
Scheme	Welsh Government
WESP(s)	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan(s)
WfA	Welsh for Adults
WJEC	Welsh Joint Education Committee awarding body

#### 1 Introduction

#### An overview of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy

1.1 The Welsh-medium Education Strategy ('the Strategy') was published by the Welsh Government in April 2010. It includes a commitment to the 'continuing growth of Welsh-medium education and training in all sectors and age ranges'. The Strategy's vision is:

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

- 1.2 The Strategy's aim is to build on the growth of Welsh-medium education seen during the second half of the twentieth century, ensuring that 'a stronger framework and policy infrastructure is established and developed' (p.5). It also places an emphasis on effective forward planning to support Welsh-medium education across all phases of education and training, accurately assessing the demand for Welsh-medium education, and responding to that demand.
- 1.3 In a statement to the National Assembly in April 2010, the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning at the time said:

'For the first time, the Government is issuing a national strategy for further development of Welsh-medium provision and for learning the language in our education and training system.'

In the same statement, the Minister described the process of drawing up the Strategy as 'a historic milestone in the development of Welsh-medium education'.<sup>2</sup>

1.4 The Strategy acknowledges that this is a long-term policy agenda. The Strategy contains five and ten-year targets, and the intention is for these to be reviewed in 2015. This evaluation will feed into the process of reviewing these targets and identifying priority areas for the future.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> National Assembly for Wales, Record of Proceedings 20 April 2010: *A Statement on the Welsh-medium Education Strategy by the Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong Learning.* Available at: <a href="www.senedd.cynulliad.cymru">www.senedd.cynulliad.cymru</a> [accessed 10 July 2015]
<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

#### The research programme

- 1.5 Arad Research was commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the Strategy on behalf of the Welsh Government in October 2012. The aim of the evaluation was to measure the effectiveness and impact of the Strategy, considering to what extent the Strategy has achieved its expected aims, objectives and outcomes.
- 1.6 A series of objectives were set out in the original research specification.
  Following discussions between the research team and the evaluation
  Steering Group about the scope of the study, it was agreed to focus on the following research questions:
  - whether the strategic aims and objectives are appropriate;
  - to what extent the Strategy has provided Welsh Government with a platform to promote the growth of Welsh-medium education;
  - to what extent the Strategy enables the desired changes within the education and training system;
  - the effectiveness of specific programmes implemented in the name of the Strategy.
- 1.7 The structure of this report corresponds to the Strategic Aims of the Strategy (see 1.13 below) and consideration of the questions above runs throughout the discussion in Chapters 4-9 of the report.
- 1.8 The evaluation is based on a wide-ranging programme of research that combines a number of evaluation methods (further details on the research methods can be found in Chapter 2). An evaluation of the Strategy in its entirety sits alongside reviews of some of the individual programmes included in the Strategy's Implementation Programme. As part of the research programme, reviews have already been published on the Welsh-language Sabbatical Scheme for education practitioners, the Welsh-medium resources commissioning programme, and the Bilingual Champions project in further education. Reports have also been completed on two projects relating to Welsh second language, namely a review of the *Everyday Welsh (Cymraeg Bob Dydd)* pilot project, and a review of a project to encourage the use of

Welsh-medium teaching in English-medium primary schools. Both reviews provided useful evidence about the delivery and influence of the projects. However, as these were pilot projects on a relatively small scale, it is not possible to quantify their contribution towards achieving the aims of the Strategy.

#### **Interim Report**

- 1.9 An interim evaluation report on the Strategy was published in November 2014 ('the interim report'). This provided an update on the progress of the research programme, along with an analysis of the evidence gathered in relation to the Strategy's aims and objectives between January 2013 and February 2014.<sup>3</sup> The interim report concluded that:
  - Practitioners and stakeholders support the Strategy's vision and aims.
  - The Strategy has led to a wide range of actions which support schools and the development of the Welsh-medium education infrastructure.
     However, evidence suggests that the Strategy is not as high a priority to schools as some other education priorities and policies.
  - Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) have created a more robust planning and monitoring framework than the one that existed previously. However, the impact of the new planning system is not expected to become fully apparent during the lifetime of this Strategy (2010-2015).
  - The power Ministers have to intervene and insist on amendments to the WESPs provides a more formal system of accountability between local authorities and Welsh Government.
  - Strong leadership from individuals and senior management teams within the local authorities are crucial to supporting effective planning and implementation processes.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A summary of the timetable for the stages of the evaluation is provided in section 1.13.

- Progress against the Strategy's outcomes and targets has been slower than expected.
- The aim of the Strategy is to create growth in Welsh-medium provision, by planning in response to demand. Planning based on response to demand does not necessarily ensure an increase in provision. Some examples have been seen of education institutions proactively encouraging demand for Welsh-medium provision, rather than responding to demand from students as the basis for planning provision.
- The quality of the provision, and the quality of learners' experiences of the education system are likely to influence a wide range of the Strategy's aims, including: continuity within Welsh-medium education; the level of demand for Welsh-medium education; Welsh language skills; and academic attainment. However, quality is a relatively marginal consideration in the context of the Strategy's aims and objectives.
- Stakeholders and practitioners feel that the Welsh-medium education system is poorer in terms of the infrastructure available to support it (including the size of the workforce, and the number of qualifications and resources). There are other challenges associated with teaching through the medium of a language which is not the mother tongue for a vast number of the learners in question.
- One of the aims of the Strategy is to create a Welsh-medium education system which nurtures truly bilingual young people. A variety of factors influence the development of language skills amongst young people, and these are beyond the influence of schools. They include the use of Welsh at home, the availability of informal opportunities to use the language, social usage amongst peers, and crucially, the will to use the language.
- 1.10 This report adds to the evidence base provided in the interim report, and presents final conclusions in relation to the planning of Welsh-medium provision; leadership and accountability; the quality of provision; and young

people's use of Welsh language skills. The conclusions of the report are based on field work carried out up to the end of March 2015. The research team are aware of policy developments in relation to Welsh-medium education since the completion of the research programme. Although the report refers to some relevant developments, it does not consider them in full.

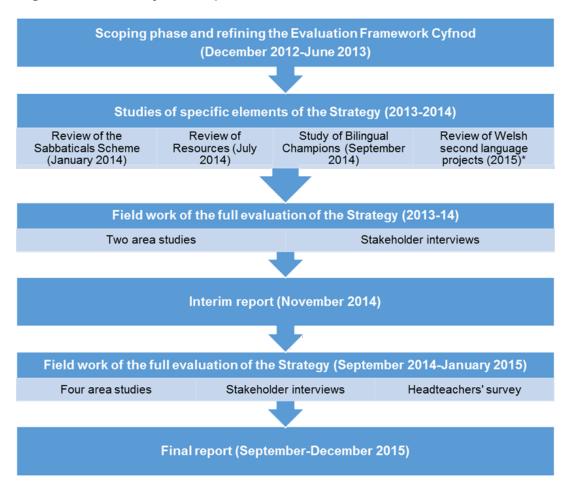
#### Scope of the report

- 1.11 This report provides a holistic assessment based on evidence gathered from a range of sources during the evaluation period. Figure 1 summarises the timetable for various phases of the evaluation, including the publication dates of reports already completed. Further information on these phases can be found in Chapter 2 of this report (Research methods)
- 1.12 Some elements of the Strategy are beyond the scope of the evaluation. Welsh for Adults, higher education and work-based learning are not included, as they were the subject of separate reviews or evaluations. A review of Welsh for Adults, Raising Our Sights,<sup>4</sup> was published in July 2013; an evaluation of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol was published in January 2015,<sup>5</sup> and a tendering process for work-based learning was in progress during the period of this evaluation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/wagreviews/review-welsh-for-adults/2lang=en

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/policy areas/welsh medium/centre wm he.aspx

Figure 1: Summary of the phases and timetable of the evaluation



<sup>\*</sup> This work began in 2014, before the completion of the interim report. The reports were published in January 2016.

1.13 The field work for the evaluation of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy was carried out between September 2014 and January 2015. In reporting on the Strategy's outcomes 2013/14 data was used, as this was the most recent data available during the period of the field work. Consequently, it is this data that forms the basis for this report. However, 2014/15 data is now available for some of the Strategy's outcomes on the Welsh Government's website (<a href="http://gov.wales/statistics">http://gov.wales/statistics</a>).

## Structure of the report

## 1.14 The report is structured as follows:

Chapter	Purpose	
1. Introduction	To provide an overview of the study, referring to previous publications in the research programme	
2. Research methods	To outline the research methods used during the evaluation, including studies of individual programmes.	
3. Background and context	To provide the historical and policy context for the Strategy and the evaluation	
Implementation of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy	To outline the structure of the Strategy, and the monitoring and funding arrangements. Commentary is provided on the effectiveness of its implementation; data is also presented on progress made against the Strategy's targets following its implementation.	
5. Planning provision	To provide evidence corresponding to the Strategy's six Strategic Aims: a summary of	Strategic Aims 1, 2, and 3.
6. Developing the workforce	the evidence gathered from various sources, and conclusions on the progress made against the relevant aims	Strategic Aim 4
7. Central support		Strategic Aim 5
Language skills and the use of Welsh	and outcomes.	Strategic Aims 3 and 6
Conclusions and recommendations	The study's conclusions and recommendations for the future.	

#### 2 Research methods

2.1 This chapter outlines the research methods used during the research programme. It also explains the rationale behind the use of the methodology and the strengths and limitations of the methods used.

#### The rationale for the methodology

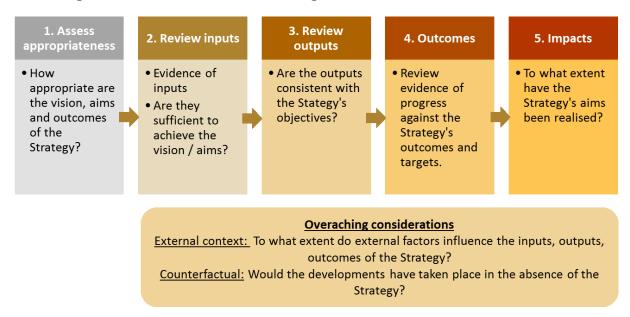
- 2.2 In discussions with the evaluation Steering Group at the beginning of the project, a number of principles were agreed which led the process of planning the methodology:
  - The need to develop and tailor different research methods for the different elements of the research programme:
  - To aim to achieve a comprehensive picture of the impacts of the Strategy by considering quantitative evidence based on administrative data, alongside evidence from a range of respondents (practitioners, local policy planners and stakeholders);
  - To build an evidence base that combines detailed research in specific areas with data from school headteachers and college principals from across Wales;
  - The need to draw on secondary documentation to supplement the evidence base.

#### Building on the Proposed Evaluation Framework

2.3 The *Proposed Evaluation Framework for the Welsh-medium Education Strategy* ('the Framework') was published in 2011 as a tool to help assess the influence of the Strategy, and research the impacts, effectiveness and efficiency of the policies implemented in its name (Welsh Government, 2011). The *Framework* presented a logic model to demonstrate the anticipated links between investment made in the education system (inputs), the activities carried out through the implementation of the Strategy, and the anticipated outcomes and impacts.

2.4 During the evaluation's scoping phase, the research team refined this logic model to identify the main elements and issues to be examined, without overlooking some of the important research questions set out in the *Framework*. Figure 2, below, summarises the final logic model.

Figure 2: Main elements of the logic model



- 2.5 The Framework also provides a variety of methods for carrying out a research and evaluation programme, and the methods adopted during the research programme follow a number of these suggestions. The following sub-sections summarise the research methods used for the different elements of the research programme:
  - scoping phase and refining the evaluation framework;
  - interviews with stakeholders, a headteachers' survey, six area studies and desk-based research carried out as part of the main Strategy evaluation;
  - Review of the Use and Quality of Resources Commissioned by the
     Welsh Government's Welsh in Education Unit, (Review of Resources);
  - A Study of the work of the Bilingual Champions in Further Education (Bilingual Champions Study);

- Review of the Welsh-language Sabbatical Scheme for educational practitioners (Review of the Sabbatical Scheme);
- reviews of two Welsh as a second language projects: a project to encourage the use of Welsh-medium teaching in English-medium primary schools; and the Everyday Welsh pilot project.

#### **Evaluating the Strategy**

- 2.6 The analysis set out in this final report is based on evidence collected as part of the evaluation of the Strategy in its entirety, along with the conclusions of individual reviews listed in 2.5. A brief description of the methods employed is provided below, along with the rationale for their use, their advantages and limitations.
- 2.7 When reporting on evidence, we have explored the changes witnessed (along with perceived changes) in relation to the Strategy's outcomes since its publication in 2010. However, there are a number of considerations to be taken into account when assessing progress in this way, namely:
  - some of the interventions named in the Strategy were being delivered before 2010;
  - some of these interventions are likely to take longer than others to implement and, consequently, will take longer to influence outputs and outcomes;
  - those who contributed their views to the evaluation would not necessarily view 2010 as a significant year or as a baseline.
- 2.8 As such, the limitations of setting 2010 as a baseline for measuring progress must be borne in mind.

#### Desk-based research

2.9 The evaluation team reviewed background documents relating to the Strategy, namely the *Proposed Evaluation Framework*, the Strategy's Annual Reports and Welsh Government guidelines for Welsh in Education Grants and Welsh in Education Strategic Plans. Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) produced by all 22 local authorities were reviewed in draft form, along with the final agreed plans, and local authorities' progress reports. Other relevant documentation was also reviewed, namely: Welsh Government strategies, action plans and guidelines relating to education policy; evaluation reports and strategic reviews of relevant programmes and projects; Welsh Government statistical publications; Estyn annual and thematic reports; local authority and further education institutions' plans and monitoring reports. The complete list of the documents reviewed is provided in the bibliography (see Appendix 1).

#### Stakeholder interviews

2.10 A list of national stakeholders was agreed to be invited for interview in order to discuss the impact and influence of the Strategy. The purpose of this was to explore the evaluation questions in detail with experienced individuals who had a strategic overview of Welsh-medium education. A topic guide was drawn up as a basis for the semi-structured interviews. Interviews were carried out with 37 individuals, representing 14 stakeholder organisations, in order to gather evidence at a strategic level regarding the implementation of the Strategy. Second interviews were held with a number of these individuals in order to look at the impacts and effectiveness of specific actions. A copy of the topic guide used is attached at Appendix 2, and the list of national organisations interviewed is attached at Appendix 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> See the guidelines on the *Welsh in Education Strategic Plans*<a href="http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/welshstrategicplan/?lang=en\_">http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/welshstrategicplan/?lang=en\_</a> and the *Welsh in Education Grant* (<a href="http://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/131108-welsh-in-education-grant-en.pdf">http://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/131108-welsh-in-education-grant-en.pdf</a>)

#### Area studies

- 2.11 The aim of the area studies was to carry out detailed research at a local level, in order to consider the Strategy's influence on provision, planning and learner attainment in different areas. Six areas were selected for the studies, based on a purposive sampling approach to ensure a geographical, linguistic and rural/urban cross-section, with research in each area involving a range of methods:
  - Data analysis at a local level (including priorities and targets for supporting Welsh-medium education as set out in relevant local authorities' WESPs);
  - Interviews with local authority representatives in each of the areas (12 local authority officers);
  - Visits to secondary and primary schools to interview headteachers, teachers and learners across the range of education phases. Ten secondary schools and 20 primary schools across the six areas were visited.
  - Discussion groups and interviews with 27 parents (a combination of primary and secondary parents). These were set up in five of the six areas, using two methods of recruitment. In three of the areas, parents were recruited using a free find method (where recruiters selected parents through the use of a screening questionnaire); <sup>7</sup> in the other two areas, local networks were used to assist recruitment (e.g. Mentrau laith language initiatives). The purpose of this element of the research was to explore parents' views and experiences of the Welshmedium education system in the areas in question, in order to supplement the evidence from other sources. There are clear limitations to the evidence provided by parents in this report, as the sample of parents who contributed was very small.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The aim of the screening questionnaire was to ensure that respondents were parents of schoolaged children attending a Welsh-medium or bilingual schools in the local area. A decision was made to omit individuals working in the following fields: teaching or lecturing; education administration; local councillors; national government; political party administration.

- 2.12 The area studies were based on the main themes of the Strategy, namely planning provision, linguistic continuity, language skills, the workforce, central support for Welsh-medium education, and links with families and the community. There was an emphasis predominantly on gathering qualitative evidence (see Appendix 4 for further information on the area studies and the topic guide used for this area of work).
- 2.13 The main advantage of the area studies was that they offered a means of collecting qualitative evidence on the Strategy's influence at a local level, drawing on the perspectives of a range of stakeholders (e.g. practitioners, learners and parents). One of the key features of qualitative research is that it is exploratory and provides insight into people's perceptions and behaviours. The evidence collected is not based on representative samples, and although the schools visited did represent a broad cross-section (in terms of primary/secondary sector, geographic location and size) the area studies were not planned to offer statistically reliable data. Rather, the intention was to support a better understanding of the issues facing practitioners in different local contexts.

#### Headteachers' survey

- 2.14 The headteachers of all primary and secondary schools in Wales, including special schools and further education colleges, were invited to take part in a survey in the autumn of 2014. The aim of the survey was to collect quantitative and qualitative data on their perceptions of the progress made in implementing the Strategy. The data, which is based on responses from the headteachers/principals and senior manager of 331 schools and colleges, adds to the qualitative evidence gathered through other methods and elements of the evaluation. Further details on the survey's methodology and a copy of the survey are attached at Appendix 4.
- 2.15 The survey was used to collect information and perceptions from a wider range of headteachers than would be possible through area studies. This also offered an opportunity to gather quantitative data from a representative sample of headteachers across the different sectors. The sample enables us

- to report with 95 per cent certainty that the results are within 10 per cent of the 'true' picture of the perceptions of all headteachers in Wales.
- 2.16 The sample was weighted to be representative according to sector and medium, and a quota method was used to ensure that it was possible to analyse the results by sub-sector. The sample was not planned with the intention of being representative geographically or in terms of school size. Nevertheless, a good cross-section of responses was received, with responses from at least five headteachers in each local authority in Wales.
- 2.17 The main limitation of the headteachers' survey was that it collected evidence of headteachers' perceptions of the Strategy's influence, rather than concrete evidence of progress. The survey's findings should therefore be considered alongside quantitative data that shows progress against the Strategy's outcomes and targets.
- 2.18 Headteachers were asked about developments in a number of areas since 2010 (the year the Strategy was published) in an attempt to assess progress. However, it must be acknowledged that headteachers were not necessarily aware of the significance of the year in question. A note explaining the reasons for referring to 2010 was included with the questionnaire in an attempt to address this (see also 2.7 above).

## Review of the Welsh-language Sabbatical Scheme for education practitioners: 2011-2012 participants' experiences

2.19 This review was based on a combination of desk-based research and field work. A survey of past participants in the Scheme was carried out, with responses received from 158 of the 268 participants contacted. Telephone interviews were carried out with 21 participants to obtain more detailed views of their experiences, and interviews were also held with a sample of these participants' line managers. The views of 12 Bilingual Champions from further education colleges were sought on the Scheme and its effect on their work in the colleges. Finally, interviews were held with representatives of six training centres, and with four education officers from local authorities (one from each consortium) in order to set participants' comments in a wider

context. They were questioned about planning and recruitment issues, postcourse support, and their recommendations for the future of the Scheme. The review report was published in January 2014.

## Review of the Use and Quality of Resources Commissioned by the Welsh Government's Welsh in Education Unit;

2.20 The methodology for this review included a scoping period and desk-based research, qualitative research with practitioners and learners, and a survey of practitioners (primary, secondary and further education). The practitioners' survey was the key element of this study, and 313 questionnaires were completed, providing responses to questions on the use of specific resources in their subject area. The views of publishers were also gathered through a survey seeking views on their experiences of the commissioning process. Data on sales and expenditure on resources projects provided by the Resources Commissioning Branch was analysed. The report on the review was published in June 2014.

#### A study of the work of the Bilingual Champions in Further Education

2.21 Further education institutions' strategic plans, Bilingual Champions project monitoring reports submitted by colleges to Welsh Government, and other documentation relating to the Bilingual Champions project were reviewed. Sixteen Bilingual Champions were interviewed (13 during visits to colleges and three by telephone), along with nine college directors or managers, 13 tutors and 33 learners. Representatives from Welsh Government, CollegesWales and the Welsh Language Commissioner's office were also interviewed. The findings of this study were published in September 2014.

#### Review of Welsh second language projects

2.22 Two projects aimed at supporting Welsh second language activities were reviewed. The aim of the first of these, the *Everyday Welsh* project, is to extend the use of Welsh outside the classroom in English-medium secondary

- schools. Arad visited five of the 11 schools that participated in the project in the 2013-2014 academic year. During these visits discussions were held with groups of learners who had participated in activities relating to the project (36 learners across the five schools), in addition to interviews with teachers and senior management team members.
- 2.23 The focus of the second review was the impact of a project providing courses for Key Stage 2 (KS2) teachers in two areas between 2013 and 2016. Data was collected through visits to five of the primary schools taking part in the project, and through a questionnaire distributed to the teachers who had attended training courses. The findings of these reviews were published in January 2016.

#### 3 Background and context

3.1 This chapter briefly sets out the context of the study. It refers to some of the key milestones in the development of Welsh-medium education, and to the main relevant policy developments.

#### Overview of the historical context

- 3.2 The Strategy states that 'the growth of Welsh-medium education is one of the most remarkable developments in Wales' education system during the second half of the twentieth century' (Welsh Government, 2010:4). The first Welsh-medium schools were established in response to parental demand and campaigning and the determination of key individuals (elected members and officials) (Williams, 2002:11) It could be said that Welsh-medium education grew organically in some areas during the decades following the opening of the first Welsh-medium state primary school in 1947. In other areas, local authorities were more proactive (Welsh Government, 2010:5), and progressive efforts were made to establish and implement 'comprehensive and ambitious' language policies to support the provision of Welsh-medium education (Williams, 2002:266). However, there was no national strategy in place to drive growth in a planned way.
- 3.3 Over time, legislation was passed that gave learners the right to receive education according to their parents' wishes (Education Act 1944), which improved the status of Welsh-medium education (Education Reform Act 1988). National institutions were established that succeeded in supporting and strengthening the status of Welsh-medium education. These included the Welsh Language Board, the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) and ELWa (Education and Learning Wales). These served to strengthen the infrastructure and support structures for Welsh-medium education on a national level.
- 3.4 Since devolution, the Welsh Government has been responsible for formulating and implementing education policy nationally. The Welsh Government committed to creating a national Welsh-medium Education

Strategy in its programme for government in 2007.<sup>8</sup> The subsequent publication of the three-year Strategy was a historic development as the Welsh Government presented its strategic vision along with an Implementation Programme to ensure the continued growth of Welshmedium education and training.

3.5 Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide school places and are responsible for determining the scale of provision in terms of Welshmedium school places. The Strategy refers to variations in the way local authorities respond to the demand, with some forward-planning more effectively than others. This has led to 'a number of inconsistencies' in provision (Welsh Government, 2010:5). The Strategy provides an opportunity to address this by establishing a planning framework that supports more coherent and co-ordinated provision.

#### The policy context

3.6 The Strategy is being implemented during a period of change in the education system in Wales. Since the publication of the Strategy, a range of new education policies have been announced. Legislation has been introduced; changes have been made to the configuration of school support and improvement services; funding systems have been reformed; and national policy reviews have been carried out. The most significant developments introduced in recent years are outlined below in order to illustrate the breadth of the changes to the education policy landscape. The implementation of a number of these policies is ongoing. Relevant sections of this report refer to recent developments.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> One Wales: A progressive programme for the government of Wales (June 2007), an Agreement between the Labour and Plaid Cymru Groups in the National Assembly.

#### Raising School Standards (February 2011)

3.7 Raising School Standards, a comprehensive policy plan, was published in February 2011. This led to a number of significant policy developments including a new 'banding' system for schools (Welsh Government, 2011b).

#### Regionalisation (2011-12)

3.8 Four regional education consortia were established with responsibility for planning and implementing school improvement plans focussing on raising standards in literacy and numeracy, and reducing the effect of poverty on educational attainment. The services provided by regional consortia

'enabl[e] the aims of the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Strategy (WMES) to be delivered by ensuring the alignment of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESP) and the Welsh in Education Grant (WEG) across each of the local authorities within the regional consortia. (Welsh Government, 2014e:11)

#### Review of qualifications (November 2012)

3.9 The aim of the Review of Qualification for 14 to 19 year-olds in Wales was to ensure the availability of qualifications that are understood and valued and meet the country's needs. The principal recommendation of the review was that the Welsh Government should set up one body (Qualifications Wales) with responsibility for the regulation and quality assurance of all non-degree level qualifications in Wales.

#### Post-16 planning and funding review (May 2013)

3.10 The Welsh Government announced a review of post-16 planning and funding in Wales. At the core of the new system is a shift towards funding organisations on the basis of learning programmes rather than qualifications. One of the principles behind the planning of the new system is 'to facilitate the introduction and development of Welsh-medium provision' to support the aims of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy.

#### Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013

3.11 The Act places Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) on a statutory basis and gives Welsh Ministers the power to require local authorities to measure demand for Welsh-medium education amongst parents under specified circumstances. The Act was given Royal Assent in February 2013. Under the provisions of the Act, Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welsh-medium Education (Wales) Regulations 2013 were also introduced.

#### The Hill Report (June 2013)

3.12 Consultant Robert Hill was commissioned to carry out a review of education services in Wales, looking specifically at the effectiveness of the current systems for delivering education services, both at school level and at local authority level. The report 'The Future Delivery of Education Services in Wales' was published in June 2013, and includes a series of recommendations relating to the teaching Welsh and methods of improving the quality of the support available to Welsh-medium schools (Robert Hill 2013:33).

#### Review of Welsh for Adults (July 2013)

3.13 Raising our Sights, a review of Welsh for Adults, was published in July 2013. The report presented recommendations with the aim of ensuring sufficient opportunities for people to become Welsh speakers. The Welsh Government published its response to Raising our Sights in November 2013. The process of implementing those recommendations has now begun.

#### Review of Welsh second language (September 2013)

3.14 One language for all, the review of Welsh second language in Key Stages 3 and 4 was published in September 2013. This report set out a series of recommendations aimed at tackling low standards and attainment in the subject. (Welsh Government, 2013c). The Donaldson review (see below)

considers the way forward for the implementation of the recommendations made in *One language for all*.

#### Qualified for Life (October 2014)

3.15 Welsh Government published an education improvement plan for 3-19 yearold learners in Wales in October 2014. The four strategic aims of the plan
focus on developing an excellent professional workforce; a curriculum that
develops learners' ability to apply knowledge and skills independently; young
people gaining qualifications that are nationally respected; and education
leaders on every level working together to raise standards in all schools.

#### Review of curriculum and assessment arrangements (February 2015)

3.16 In March 2014, the Minister for Education and Skills announced a review of curriculum and assessment arrangements led by Professor Graham Donaldson. Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales was published in February 2015, and concluded that 'the Welsh language's place in the curriculum needs to be strengthened' (Welsh Government, 2015:108).

#### The Furlong Report, Teaching tomorrow's teachers (March 2015)

3.17 Professor John Furlong was commissioned to present options for the future of initial teacher training in Wales. The report, which was published in March 2015, identifies the challenges facing the initial teacher training sector. It also presents a range of options to the Welsh Government to improve the quality of provision in this area (Furlong, 2015).

#### Estyn Reports

3.18 Estyn's Annual Reports present information on standards in Welsh-medium and English-medium schools and further education colleges. They also report on the support available to learners, local authority education services, access to and the planning of school places, and leadership. Estyn has also published other thematic reports relevant to this evaluation, in particular Welsh Language Development in the Foundation Phase (January 2013);

Welsh in the Foundation Phase (December 2013); and Linguistic progression and standards of Welsh in ten bilingual schools (November 2014).

#### Developments in Welsh language policy

- 3.19 Since the publication of the Strategy in 2010, there have also been important developments in Welsh language policy, including:
  - the introduction of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011,
     creating a new legal framework in relation to the use of Welsh in public service delivery;
  - the publication in 2012 of A living language: a language for living, the Welsh Government's five-year strategy to support the Welsh language;
  - the A living language: a language for living Moving Forward (2014)
    policy statement which sets out the policy objectives for the Welsh
    language for the period up until 2017;
  - the introduction of the first round of Welsh Language Standards to set the language on a firm footing, in those organisations to which the standards make reference, namely Welsh Government, local authorities and National Park authorities.<sup>9</sup>

Significant attention has been given to the 2011 Census results and, specifically, the data on the numbers of Welsh speakers. Despite a population increase in Wales, the data shows a decline in the number of Welsh speakers, from 582,000 in 2001 to 562,000 in 2011, a decrease from 20.8 per cent in 2001 to 19.0 in 2011. A decline in the percentage of Welsh speakers was seen in many of the language's traditional heartlands.

3.20 The developments above underline, across the education system and beyond, the dynamic and complex nature of the policy context that provides a backdrop to the implementation of the Strategy. They also clearly show that the objectives and projects implemented in the name of the Strategy exist in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> http://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2015/welshlangstandards/?lang=en

parallel with a wide range of education policies, plans and programmes, and the wider language planning context. Other sections of this report look at the implications of the implementation of the Strategy during a period of change.

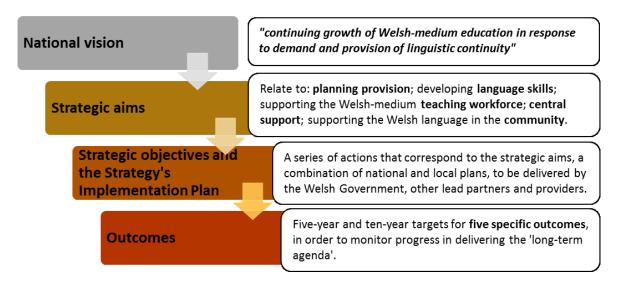
#### 4 Implementation of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy

- 4.1 This chapter presents an overview of the implementation of the Strategy. The chapter comprises three parts, namely:
  - an outline of the structure of the Strategy and overview of its different elements, funding allocations and monitoring arrangements;
  - commentary, based on the evidence collected, on the effectiveness of implementation;
  - data and commentary on progress seen against the Strategy's targets following implementation.

#### Structure of the Strategy

4.2 The Strategy outlines a vision for Welsh-medium education, along with a series of strategic aims, an Implementation Programme, and specific outcomes. Figure 3 below summarises these different strands and the interrelationships between them. The Strategy states the need for consistency and coherence between the national strategic direction and implementation. The Strategy's Implementation Programme identifies the expectations on partners, including national organisations, local authorities, education and training providers and area fora. The Strategy refers to the importance of 'sharing responsibilities' and 'integrated planning' and all relevant partners are expected to incorporate the Strategy into their work, in order to ensure effective implementation at 'the three levels of the education system' – at national, local authority level, and provider level.

Figure 3: Implementation of the Strategy: the links between different strands of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy



#### Strategic aims

4.3 The six strategic aims of the Strategy seek to strengthen planning methods and improve the infrastructure to support Welsh-medium education nationally and at local level. Progress is reported against the strategic aims in the Annual Reports on the Strategy.<sup>10</sup>

**Strategic aim 1:** To improve the planning of Welsh-medium provision in the pre-statutory and statutory phases of education, on the basis of proactive response to informed parental demand

**Strategic aim 2:** To improve the planning of Welsh-medium provision in the post-14 phases of education and training, to take account of linguistic progression and continued development of skills

**Strategic aim 3:** To ensure that all learners develop their Welsh-language skills to their full potential and encourage sound linguistic progression from one phase of education and training to the next

**Strategic aim 4:** To ensure a planned Welsh-medium education workforce that provides sufficient numbers of practitioners for all phases of education and training, with high-quality Welsh-language skills and competence in teaching methodologies

**Strategic aim 5:** To improve the central support mechanisms for Welsh-medium education and training

**Strategic aim 6**: To contribute to the acquisition and reinforcement of Welsh-language skills in families and in the community

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup>Annual Reports on the Strategy: http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/wmesreport/?lang=en

#### Strategic objectives and the Implementation Programme

4.4 There are 43 strategic objectives associated with the strategic aims above, which form the basis of the Strategy's Implementation Programme. The Implementation Programme has been amended during the life of the Strategy in response to wider policy developments.

#### Outcomes and targets

- 4.5 The Strategy includes five outcomes to enable progress to be monitored as the Implementation Programme is rolled out:
  - Outcome 1: More seven-year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh
  - **Outcome 2:** More learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school
  - Outcome 3: More learners studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh
  - **Outcome 4:** More learners aged 16–19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh, in schools, colleges and work-based learning
  - Outcome 5: More learners with higher-level Welsh-language skills

There are specific indicators and targets for each outcome in the Strategy.

4.6 Sections 4.28-4.48 below consider the evidence in relation to progress against the outcomes and the targets.

#### Implementing and monitoring the Strategy

- 4.7 The Welsh in Education Unit (the Unit) is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Strategy. In terms of the organisational structure of the Welsh Government, the Unit is located within the Welsh Language Division of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Until 2012, the Unit was located within the Curriculum Division (DfES).
- 4.8 The Unit holds a dual role in relation to the Strategy. Firstly, it is responsible for implementing and monitoring the Strategy, by leading on certain policy and planning developments e.g. Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Welsh for Adults, and by commissioning projects to support the aims and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Since 1 July 2015, the Department for Education and Skills has been part of the Education and Public Services Group

- objectives included in it. Linked to this, the Unit is responsible for publishing an annual progress report. Secondly, the Unit works to influence education policy more broadly to ensure the needs of the Welsh-medium education sector are mainstreamed.
- 4.9 The Advisory Group to the Minister for Education and Skills on the Strategy was established to advise the Minister on the principal elements of the Implementation Programme for the Welsh-medium Education Strategy. The group meets three times a year and has the following functions:
  - 'receive and consider the Annual Report on progress against the
     Welsh-medium Education Strategy Implementation Programme;
  - advise on the principal elements of the Implementation Programme;
  - identify any research or evaluation that could be considered essential or desirable to support the Strategy;
  - identify strategic priorities for future development; and bear in mind the Welsh Government's key principles, namely, equal opportunities; sustainable development; and social justice.'

(Source: Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group to the Minister for Education and Skills on the Welsh-medium Education Strategy)

#### Funding allocations to support the implementation of the Strategy

- 4.10 The Unit is responsible for administering a budget for a range of plans and programmes to support Welsh-medium education that form part of the Strategy, including the Welsh in Education Grant, the Welsh-medium resources commissioning programme, Welsh for Adults and the Sabbatical Scheme for practitioners.
- 4.11 Launching the Strategy in 2010, the then Minister for Education and Skills announced an additional £1.725m to support the implementation of the Strategy during 2010-11. As a result of the additional allocation, the Unit's budget rose to over £10m that year. Table 1 below shows the Unit's allocations during the past six years. It shows that the Unit's annual allocation and expenditure have increased significantly since the publication of the

Strategy. The main reason for the increase is the fact that the Unit took responsibility for administering programmes which were hitherto managed by other departments or organisations, including the Athrawon Bro budget and the grant to Mudiad Meithrin administered by the Welsh Language Board until 2011-12.<sup>12</sup>

Table 1: Welsh in Education Unit budget allocation, 2009-10 to 2014-15 (£)

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12*	2012-13**	2013-14**	2014-15***
Total WEU allocation	8,372,000	10,097,000	12,377,000	16,412,000	16,030,000	21,278,587

Source: Welsh Government

- 4.12 If the amounts transferred into the Unit's allocation are disregarded, the 2014-15 allocation was lower than the corresponding amount in 2010-11 (£10.1 million in 2010-11 compared to £9.6 million in 2014-15).
- 4.13 It is important to note that the Unit's budget represents a small percentage of the public expenditure on Welsh-medium education. The Unit's expenditure supports developmental activities which aim to influence the work and capacity of the Welsh-medium education sector and improve Welsh language provision specifically.

## Relationship between the different elements of the Strategy

4.14 One important element which influences the implementation and impact of the Strategy is the inter-relationship between different elements of the Implementation Programme. The Strategy includes a wide range of different projects and interventions, some of which are projects that were inherited from the period prior to 2010 and which have been sustained, and others are more recent developments which aim to influence planning processes across

<sup>\*</sup> The 2011-12 allocation increased following the transfer of £2.28m from the former Better Schools Fund

<sup>\*\*</sup> Total 2012-13 to 2014-15 allocations include grants administered previously by the Welsh Language Board.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Total 2014-15 allocation includes regular funding for Welsh for Adults

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> The Welsh Language Board was abolished in 2012 under the provisions of Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. The Board's duties were conferred to the Welsh Government and to the Welsh Language Commissioner, a new office created by the Measure.

the system. Another key feature of the Strategy is the fact that it encompasses all elements of the education system. One notable factor (and challenge) in implementing such a wide-ranging policy document is ensuring that the central vision (of continuous growth and proactive planning) permeates all aspects of the Welsh-medium education system and all strands of the system at an operational level. In order, therefore, to facilitate the effective implementation of the Strategy all aspects of the education system need to encourage continuous growth that is proactively planned, from the pre-statutory sector, to the post-statutory sector together with all the necessary infrastructure.

#### Effectiveness of the implementation of the Strategy

4.15 During the field work for the evaluation, a number of issues that influence the implementation of the Strategy were highlighted. The section below refers to these issues, and is based predominantly on the evidence offered by Welsh Government officials and national stakeholders.

# Awareness and understanding of the Strategy within the Welsh Government Department for Education and Skills

- 4.16 Interviews were conducted with 10 officials from the Department for Education and Skills. Some officials offered a view on the effectiveness of the Strategy in promoting growth in Welsh-medium education. These officials reported that the attention given to planning Welsh-medium education within the Welsh Government has increased. Several factors to support this were reported.
- 4.17 Firstly, it was noted that Welsh-medium education is one of the key actions of the Welsh Government's Programme for Government and that this has raised awareness of the Unit's work, and the implementation of the Strategy, across the Department for Education and Skills. Secondly, the Strategy's Implementation Programme drives the work of the Welsh in Education Unit and is monitored by Senior Civil Service officials within the Department for Education and Skills. Thirdly, it was reported that the Unit was included in discussions earlier in the policy development process and are able to

influence the content of Welsh Government policy documents and strategic plans. Finally, some officials reported that the links with officials in other branches and divisions within the Department for Education and Skills had been strengthened, partially as a result of the process of formulating and publishing Annual Reports on the progress of the Strategy. In formulating the Annual Report, branches and divisions across the Department for Education and Skills are required to report on their contribution towards the Strategy's delivery. This process facilitates internal discussion among officials and Annual Reports are scrutinised by elected members of the National Assembly.

- 4.18 Although a wide range of policy documents published since 2010 make reference to the Strategy, there are also examples where no reference is made to planning and the provision of Welsh-medium and bilingual education.<sup>13</sup> Questions were raised by some Welsh Government officials and national stakeholders regarding the level of understanding among officials of the requirements when planning policy that is appropriate for a bilingual education system. Welsh Government officials and other national stakeholders stated that policy documents and strategies tended to treat the Welsh-medium and English-medium sectors in the same way without adequate consideration of the provision of specialist support for the Welsh-medium education sector.
- 4.19 Echoing the above, one representative of a national organisation underlined that there was an important difference between awareness of a strategic document and an understanding of the implications of implementing policies and plans in a way that supports that Strategy's vision and central aims.
- 4.20 The evidence collected has shown that procedures have been introduced which ensure more discussion of Welsh-medium education by a wider cohort of Welsh Government officials. However, there is no strong evidence that these processes have had a clear impact on the way in which policy is planned to support Welsh-medium education.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> See an analysis of references to the Strategy in other policy documents in section 3.23-3.24 of the interim report.

# Leadership and accountability in implementing the Strategy

- 4.21 Two related issues that were emphasised frequently by stakeholders and practitioners when discussing the implementation of the Strategy were:
  - the importance of establishing robust systems of accountability at all levels; and
  - ii) the need for strong leadership (at all levels) to ensure that methods and quality of delivery are challenged if they do not contribute towards the Strategy's outcomes.

The Strategy states that the Welsh Government is responsible 'for determining and leading national policy'. There is agreement among those who contributed to this evaluation that effective leadership – at a national level and in formulating and delivering local plans – is crucial in realising the Strategy's vision. Figure 4 below shows the different channels of accountability in relation to the provision of Welsh-medium education.

Regulatory & Political & social governmental accountability accountability Welsh Government Aims and delivery of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy / responsibility for policy Delivery of the Strategy **Education planning organisations:** LAs, consortia & FE sector Local authorities' WESPs 14-19 regional plans FE sector strategic plans **Education and training providers** Quality of provision The public, communities, parents, learners

Figure 4: Welsh-medium education channels of accountability

4.22 During the evaluation, consideration was given to the extent to which the 'system of accountability' are sufficiently robust to ensure the effective delivery of the Strategy. Questions were raised by Welsh Government officials regarding the leadership of senior Department for Education and Skills officials in supporting the implementation of the Strategy. Some of the

- stakeholders interviewed expressed a view that Senior Civil Service officials within the Department for Education and Skills had not shown sufficient attention in challenging or scrutinising the implementation of the Strategy.
- 4.23 There are arrangements in place within the Department for Education and Skills to ensure that local authorities and providers take action to meet statutory requirements, including the preparation of WESPs. However, Welsh Government officials stated that there was currently inadequate evidence to show how the WESPs were leading to activity that delivers the Strategy's aims and outcomes. Welsh Government officials recognise that there is a need to improve the way in which the quality of local delivery is scrutinised in order to better understand the impacts that derive from the implementation of the local Plans.

#### Implementing the Strategy during a period of change

- 4.24 Reference was made in Chapter 2 to the significant policy developments seen since the publication of the Strategy in 2010. Although the policy landscape has changed in light of a variety of policy reviews, Welsh Government officials stated that the new policies introduced have not resulted in a change of direction for the Strategy's Implementation Programme.
- 4.25 There have also been organisational changes during the time of the Strategy's implementation, namely the relocation of the Welsh in Education Unit (see 4.7 above). There is a difference of opinion among Welsh Government officials on the effect of this change. Some feel that relocating the Unit to the Welsh Language Division, following the abolition of the Welsh Language Board, distanced staff somewhat from education policy colleagues and made the task of building closer links with officials in other branches within the Department for Education and Skills more difficult. However, other Welsh Government officials did not feel that this change had made a difference to the implementation of the Strategy.

#### Integrated policy planning

- 4.26 Referring to integrated planning, the Strategy states: 'We expect to see local authorities and their regional consortia developing effective methods of cooperating on planning'. It states also that 'coherent planning is needed by local authorities and their partners [and] Welsh-medium education will be viewed as an integral part of such planning' (Welsh Government, 2010:11).
- 4.27 A number of respondents (particularly schools visited during the area studies) referred to situations that have arisen where guidelines, policies and decisions at a local level militate against the aims and objectives of the Strategy. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 places a duty upon local authorities to plan to increase Welsh-medium provision and ensure growth. Nonetheless, a number of local authorities have recently announced changes to transport policies with the introduction of travel costs which, in the view of some of those interviewed, were a financial barrier to accessing Welsh-medium education.

'There have been several examples where different elements of the education system have not pulled in the same direction – at times, government policy is undermined by local decisions. I feel that it is the lack of consistency that frustrates schools – and parents.' (Secondary school headteacher)
[Translation]

#### **Progress against outcomes**

4.28 The sections below offer an overview of progress against the Strategy's outcomes. A further discussion of the evidence associated with the individual outcomes can be found in Chapters 5-8 of the report.

#### Progress against Outcome 1

4.29 Firstly, we consider progress against Outcome 1, namely "More seven-yearold children being taught through the medium of Welsh'. In order to measure progress against this outcome, the following indicator is used: 'percentage of Year 2 learners assessed in Welsh (first language)'. The table below shows the progress made since 2009, which is the baseline year included in the Strategy. There has been an increase in the number of seven year-olds assessed in Welsh during the years since the publication of the Strategy. The number of seven year-old learners assessed in Welsh (first language) rose from 6,365 in 2009, to 7,594 in 2014, an increase of 1,229 (or 19.3 per cent). During this period there was an increase in the total cohort of seven yearolds in all schools in Wales. As a result, only a moderate increase was seen in the percentage of the cohort assessed in Welsh over the same period, from 21.0 per cent to 22.2 per cent. It is clear therefore that the percentage of Welsh learners (of all ages) from year to year depends to a large extent on trends and the overall cohort number (which are influenced by birth and migration rates). This suggests that there is a need to consider setting annual targets for growth in the number of learners as well as growth in the percentage of the overall cohort.

Table 2: Percentage of Year 2 learners assessed in Welsh (first language) 2009-2014

							Tar	gets
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
Number	6,365	6,560	6,728	7,229	7,468	7,594		
Cohort	30,329	30,061	30,655	32,960	33,398	34,175		
%	21.0%	21.8%	21.9%	21.9%	22.4%	22.2%	25%	30%

Source: Welsh Government, Welsh-medium Education Strategy Annual Report (2014-15)

4.30 An increase was seen in the number of children receiving Welsh-medium education at age seven and this figure increased to its highest ever level in 2014. However, although this increase occurred during its lifetime, the growth cannot be attributed to the influence of the Strategy. These children were either already in the education system by the time the Strategy was published, or it is very likely that their parents had chosen Welsh-medium

- provision for them without their decision having been influenced by the Strategy.
- 4.31 Furthermore, the percentage is short of the target set for 2015. The Welsh Government noted the following in 2013:

'very little progress has been made against the strategy's target.... [and] we are unlikely to see 25 per cent of seven year-olds educated through the medium of Welsh by 2015.' (Welsh Government, 2013e:3)

4.32 It is important to note that the growth seen has not been consistent across Wales. Since 2010, there has been an increase in the percentage of Year 2 learners assessed in Welsh in 14 local authorities: the highest percentage point increase was recorded in Caerphilly (5.4 percentage points) and in Neath Port Talbot (3.8 percentage points). There was a decrease in the percentage of Year 2 learners assessed in Welsh in eight local authorities: Pembrokeshire saw the biggest percentage point reduction (2.2 percentage points) and Ceredigion (2.1 percentage points). The Strategy's Annual Report 2014-15 states that the eight local authorities that have recorded a reduction in Outcome 1 since the publication of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy will need to demonstrate in their revised WESPs in 2015 how they will address the decrease recorded.

#### Purpose of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy national targets

4.33 Several of the national stakeholders raised questions as to i) the purpose of the national targets and ii) the relationship between national targets and local authority targets. The Strategy models the required progress at an individual county level in order to reach the national target figure, taking into account the wide variety of Welsh-medium provision that has existed historically across Wales. As part of this evaluation, an analysis was completed of the 2017 targets included in all local authorities' WESPs. Some local authorities had set definitive targets for increasing provision. Others had used projections or current trends as the basis for their targets. If all local authorities reached their targets by 2017, around 24 per cent of seven year-old learners would be taught in Welsh across Wales. This is short of the original target for 2015 and is well below the target of 30 per cent by 2020. A

number of stakeholders and practitioners voiced their concerns in relation to the ability of these targets to drive the scale of change needed to achieve the Strategy's vision. This suggests that the Welsh Government needs to undertake an assessment of the contribution made by individual local authorities to identify which local authorities should be setting more challenging targets.

'The targets in the Strategic Plans overall display a lack of ambition at a local level and a lack of challenge at a national level when scrutinising these plans.' (National stakeholder) [Translation]

4.34 Looking at the target for 2020, namely that 30 per cent of seven year-old learners are assessed in Welsh (first language), it is interesting to consider the requirements and implications of this target in terms of the number of additional learners who will be needed within the education system to meet the target. Figure 5 below shows the necessary increase (based on a linear increase) between 2009 and 2020 to meet the 30 per cent target. The increase to date falls short of the expected benchmark and if the trend line were to continue in a similar manner to that seen between 2009 and 2013, it is estimated that a figure of approximately 24.5 per cent will be reached by 2020. In order to meet the 2020 target (of 30 per cent), it is estimated that an additional 1,900 seven year-old learners (or more than 60 additional classes of 30 children) would be needed in the education system by 2020. This underlines the need for far-reaching planning and action at a local level if the national target is to be met.

35 Percentage of Year 2 learners in Welsh-medium 30 25 20 It is estimated that this gap education which is the difference between the Welsh Government's target 15 (green line) and the forecast trend line (dotted line) based on 10 progress between 2009-2013 equates to 1,900 seven year-old 5 learners. 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 Progress 2009-13 Progress required to reach 2020 target, based on 2009 baseline ..... Linear (Progress 2009-13)

Figure 5: Progress against the 2020 target for the percentage of seven yearold learners being educated through the medium of Welsh<sup>14</sup>

Sources: Welsh Government, Welsh-medium Education Strategy Annual Report (2014-15), Welsh in Education Strategic Plans

## **Progress against Outcome 2**

4.35 Outcome 2 of the Strategy is 'more learners continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school'. The indicator used by the Welsh Government to measure progress against this Outcome is the percentage of Year 9 learners assessed in Welsh (first language). Progress has been seen over time in relation to this indicator, although it appears unlikely the 2015 target will be met.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> This analysis is based on a scenario whereby the number of seven year-old learners remains constant between 2013 and 2020 (there were variations in seven year-old learner numbers from around 30,000 to 34,000 in the years between 2003 and 2013). Growth in the number of seven year-old learners would mean the need for a corresponding growth in the number of seven year-old learners being educated in Welsh.

Table 3: Percentage of Year 9 learners assessed in Welsh, 2009-2014

	Tar	gets						
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
Number	5,594	5,550	5,862	5,787	5,668	5,540		
Cohort	35,221	34,717	35,903	34,520	33,380	32,354		
%	15.9%	16.0%	16.3%	16.8%	17.0%	17.1%	19%	23%

Source: Welsh Government, Welsh-medium Education Strategy Annual Report (2014-15)

4.36 This indicator is a measure of the number receiving Welsh-medium education but does not measure language skills specifically or progress in terms of Welsh teaching and learning standards. There is further discussion of the evidence gathered in relation to progression in Chapter 5 of this report.

#### **Progress against Outcome 3**

- 4.37 Outcome 3 of the Strategy aims for 'more learners studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh'. This outcome, and the relevant indicators, offer a measure of the effectiveness of the planning system in supporting the growth of the sector. There are two indicators that measure progress against Outcome 3:
  - Percentage of learners entered for GCSE Welsh First Language being entered for at least two further Level 1/2 qualifications through the medium of Welsh (Indicator 3a); and
  - Percentage of learners entered for GCSE Welsh First Language being entered for at least five further Level 1/2 qualifications through the medium of Welsh (Indicator 3b).
- 4.38 Data in relation to Indicator 3a shows variations in recent years. The 2015 target was attained early in 2012, with 85.3 per cent of first language Welsh learners sitting at least two further qualifications through the medium of Welsh. Nonetheless, the percentage slipped back to 79.3 per cent in 2014 (see Table 4).

Table 4: Percentage of learners entered for GCSE Welsh (first language) being entered for at least two further Level 1/2 qualifications through the medium of Welsh, 2009-2014

							Tar	gets
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
%	80.9%	79.5%	81.0%	85.3%	81.6%	79.3%	84%	88%

Source: Welsh Government, Welsh-medium Education Strategy Annual Report (2014-15)

4.39 A similar pattern can be seen for Indicator 3b, with an increase between 2009 and 2012. The 2015 target was once again attained early (in 2011), before the percentage dropped significantly in 2014.

Table 5: Percentage of learners entered for GCSE Welsh (first language) being entered for at least five further Level 1/2 qualifications through the medium of Welsh, 2009-2014

							Tar	gets
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
%	58.4%	59.7%	62.2%	64.9%	55.5%	52.5%	62%	68%

Source: Welsh Government, Welsh-medium Education Strategy Annual Report (2014-15)

4.40 The Strategy's Annual Reports over the past two years note that an increasing number of learners studying vocational subjects affects the targets associated with this outcome. The growth in the number of learners studying BTEC courses, in particular, is a factor that influences the most recent data. This is a consequence of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 and demonstrates the influence of external developments (i.e. factors beyond the implementation of the Strategy) on the national targets (there is a further discussion on the number of Welsh-medium and bilingual subjects offered in Key Stage 4 in sections 5.82-5.83). Stakeholders in some local authorities referred to ongoing efforts to increase Welsh-medium vocational provision, in addition to attempts to encourage demand among learners aged 14-19. Some stated that the lack of Welsh-medium assessors in examining boards could be a barrier, along with a lack of resources for some subjects.

 $<sup>^{15}</sup>$  The Strategy's Annual Report 2014-15 states that 36,300 learners were entered on BTEC courses in 2014 compared to 11,900 in 2011.

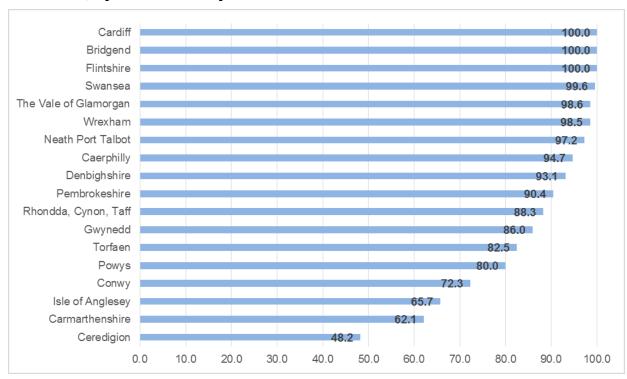
## Variations in data at local authority level

4.41 In considering data on progress against Outcome 3, it is important to draw attention to the variations in data across Welsh local authorities. In the report, Linguistic progression and standards of Welsh in ten bilingual schools, Estyn presented data showing substantial differences across local authorities. Estyn stated in this report:

'the proportion of pupils following at least two level 1 or level 2 courses through the medium of Welsh is notably higher in the areas that have Welsh-medium schools, for example Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Wrexham, in comparison with areas that have bilingual schools.' (Estyn, 2014a:10)

4.42 Data in Figure 6 below, which is based on more recent 2014-15 data from the Welsh Government, shows that the relatively low percentages in Ceredigion, Anglesey, Carmarthenshire and to some extent Conwy, bring down the percentage nationally. In order to reach the 2020 target, the percentage in these counties which perform lower than the average nationally will need to be increased.

Figure 6: Data on the percentage of learners following Welsh first language, entered for at least two Level 1/2 qualifications through the medium of Welsh in 2014-15, by local authority\*

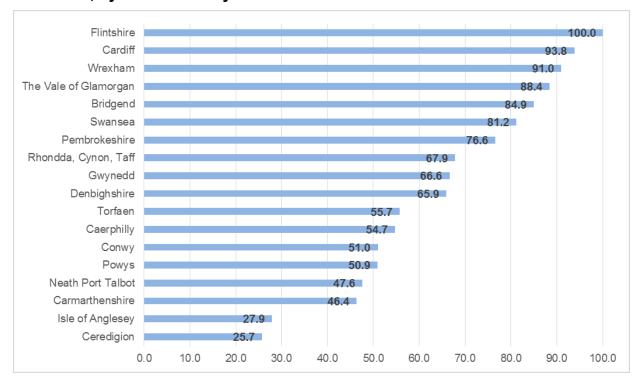


Source: Welsh Government

\*Note: Only data for 18 local authorities is included in this chart. In four of the authorities, fewer than five learners were entered for GCSE Welsh first language.

4.43 Figure 7 shows data relating to Indicator 3b, which refers to the percentage of learners sitting GCSE Welsh first language, and entered for at least five further qualifications through the medium of Welsh. There is some consistency in the authorities showing the highest and lowest percentages in Figure 6 and Figure 7, although the percentages in Figure 7 are substantially lower. The highest percentages of learners entered for at least five Welshmedium qualifications can be seen in Flintshire, Cardiff and Wrexham. Anglesey and Ceredigion local authorities have the lowest proportions of Welsh first language learners following at least five Level 1 or Level 2 courses through the medium of Welsh in Wales, areas where there is a high proportion of bilingual schools.

Figure 7: Data on the percentage of learners following Welsh first language, entered for at least five Level 1/2 qualifications through the medium of Welsh in 2014-2015, by local authority\*



Source: Welsh Government

\*Note: Only data for 18 local authorities is included in this chart. In four of the authorities, fewer than five learners were entered for GCSE Welsh first language.

# **Progress against Outcome 4**

- 4.44 Outcome 4 of the Strategy aims for 'more learners aged 16–19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh, in schools, colleges and work-based learning'. There are three indicators in the Strategy that measure progress against this outcome, namely:
  - Students' Welsh-medium and bilingual activities according to the medium of teaching in:
    - Schools;
    - Further education institutions; and
    - Work-based learning.
- 4.45 The Strategy presents separate targets for Welsh-medium provision and bilingual provision for the three sectors. The evidence presented in the

Strategy's Annual Reports aggregates data on Welsh-medium activities and bilingual provision. <sup>16</sup> The data paints a positive picture in relation to this outcome, with the 2020 target for schools met. Taking Welsh-medium and bilingual provision together, an increase was also seen against the baselines for further education and work-based learning.

Table 6: Welsh-medium and bilingual students' education activities by sector, 2009-2014

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
Schools	17.0%	17.1%	21.0%	17.4%	20.1%	20.5%	18%	20%
FE Institutions	6.1%	6.2%	5.7%	6.7%	8.4%	8.5%	7%	10%
Work-based learning	1.8%	1.5%	3.0%	3.9%	3.6%	3.0%	2.5%	4%

Source: Welsh Government, Welsh-medium Education Strategy Annual Report (2014-15)

4.46 However, data for Welsh-medium provision alone (i.e. not including bilingual provision) in the further education sector and work-based learning continues to be very low. In 2013/14, only 1.7 per cent of education activities in further education institutions was through the medium of Welsh. In the same year, 0.3 per cent of work-based learning activities was undertaken in Welsh.

# **Progress against Outcome 5**

- 4.47 Outcome 5 of the Strategy relates to 'more learners with higher-level Welsh-language skills'. There are two indicators in the Strategy for measuring progress against Outcome 5, namely:
  - Total A Level Welsh (first language) entries as a percentage of GCSE
     Welsh (first language) entries, two years earlier (Indicator 5a);
  - Total A Level Welsh (second language) entries as a percentage of full and short course GCSE Welsh (second language) entries, two years earlier (Outcome 5b).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> The Strategy contains targets to increase Welsh-medium education activities and bilingual activities. The Strategy's Annual Reports report on progress on the basis of these targets combined (i.e. Welsh-medium and bilingual learning activities).

4.48 The data shows that progress against both these indicators has fallen short of the targets set in the Strategy. The number of A Level Welsh entries has decreased slowly and gradually over recent years, while GCSE Welsh first language numbers have varied from 5,199 to 5,583 between 2009 and 2014 (without there being a clear trend in the data). The data shows that this trend has not changed during the life of the Strategy. A similar pattern was seen in the context of A Level Welsh second language figures, with the 2014-15 Annual Report stating that the number of learners studying Welsh as a second language 'has been in decline over the past three years, and has now reached its lowest number in the past ten years' (Welsh Government, 2015b:28).

Table 7: Total A Level Welsh (first language) entries as a percentage of GCSE Welsh Language entries, two years earlier, 2009-2014

							Tar	gets
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
Number	345	363	357	303	315	279		
%	6.7%	6.7%	6.8%	5.5%	5.9%	5.3%	7%	9%

Source: Welsh Government, Annual Report 2014-15

Table 8: Total A Level Welsh second language entries as a percentage of full and short course GCSE Welsh second language entries, two years earlier, 2009-2014

							Tarç	gets
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
Number	593	497	542	511	434	409		
%	2.9%	2.4%	2.6%	2.3%	1.9%	1.8%	3.5%	4%

Source: Welsh Government, Annual Report 2014-15

## Conclusions in relation to the implementation of the Strategy

4.49 The Strategy presents the Welsh Government's vision in relation to developing Welsh-medium education, and makes a commitment to supporting the growth of the sector. The Strategy also sets out clear measures to chart progress against the outcomes and targets.

- 4.50 The Welsh in Education Unit is responsible for administering the budget for a number of plans and programmes that are central to the Strategy. Some additional funding was allocated during 2010-11 to support the implementation of the Strategy. During the period of the Strategy, grants previously administered by the Welsh Language Board were transferred into the Unit's budget. However, taking these transfers into account, there was no increase in the budget to support the implementation of the Strategy during the five year period between 2010 and 2015.
- 4.51 Procedures were established within the Welsh Government for implementing and monitoring the Strategy and its outcomes. This has led to increased scrutiny of Welsh-medium education by Welsh Government officials and elected members (through the process of discussing the Strategy's Annual Reports). In addition, systems exist within the Department for Education and Skills to ensure that Welsh-medium education is taken into account when planning other policies and strategies. However, there is no clear evidence of the impact of the Strategy on the implementation of the Department for Education and Skills' policies and programmes. Some officials and stakeholders from national organisations were of the view that there was a lack of understanding among a number of officials within the Department for Education and Skills of the need to plan policy in a way which ensured due consideration of the specialist needs of the Welsh-medium education sector. This strongly suggests that there is room to improve understanding across the Department for Education and Skills of the requirements imposed by the Strategy on education policy planners in general.
- 4.52 There is a relatively high level of awareness of the Strategy among national stakeholders and local authority officers. However, there is a difference between having awareness of the Strategy and an understanding of what is required when planning policy and programmes in a manner consistent with the principles and vision of that Strategy.
- 4.53 In conclusion, there is room to strengthen leadership within the Department for Education and Skills in driving the implementation of the Strategy. In working towards increasing provision in line with the Strategy's expected

- outcomes, progress needs to be challenged by senior officials and all implementation partners need to be held to account for their contributions towards targets.
- 4.54 Data shows varying levels of progress in relation to the Strategy's outcomes. The number of seven year-olds receiving Welsh-medium education has increased during the life of the Strategy. Nonetheless, data shows that the percentage of Year 2 learners assessed in Welsh falls short of the target set for 2015. It can also be seen from the data that the situation varies across Wales with some local authorities showing a decrease in the percentage of seven year-old learners assessed in Welsh. The pattern was similar in relation to the percentage of Year 9 learners assessed in Welsh: although there was some increase the 2015 target was not met. Across the majority of indicators, progress to the extent anticipated by Welsh Government when the Strategy was published has not been seen.
- 4.55 The Welsh Government should revisit the national targets set in the Strategy and consider their purpose and validity. If the targets set for 2020 continue to be 'live' targets, radical planning and action is needed to accelerate the growth in provision. There is a need for a clear link between local targets that are set for provision across the education phases and national targets.

# 5 Planning provision

5.1 This chapter considers actions and progress in relation to Strategic Aims 1 and 2, namely:

**Strategic Aim 1:** To improve the planning of Welsh-medium provision in the pre-statutory and statutory phases of education, on the basis of proactive response to informed parental demand

**Strategic Aim 2:** To improve the planning of Welsh-medium provision in the post-14 phases of education and training, to take account of linguistic progression and continued development of skills.

It also discusses evidence and data relating to some aspects of Strategic Aim 3, namely:

**Strategic Aim 3 (extract):** ... encourage sound linguistic progression from one phase of education and training to the next.

- 5.2 The chapter begins by offering an overview of the principal elements of the Welsh-medium education planning system. This is followed by evidence in relation to the following:
  - Welsh-medium provision in the early years;
  - Planning Welsh-medium provision and continuity;
  - 14-19 Welsh-medium education provision;
  - Welsh-medium education provision for learners with additional learning needs.

#### The Welsh-medium education planning system

#### Welsh in Education Strategic Plans

5.3 Strategic objective 1.1 states that 'local authorities are expected to plan effectively for Welsh-medium provision'. The WESPs are the planning instruments to support this, and to ensure 'strategic planning, joint working between providers, systematic analysis of demand and a commitment to act on the evidence of demand' (Welsh Government, 2010: 12). WESPs are at the core of the process of realising the Strategy's vision as they outline how

- local authorities are working to drive the growth of Welsh-medium education at a local level and achieve the Welsh Government's aims and targets.
- 5.4 WESPs build on the previous arrangement of Welsh-medium Education Schemes that were introduced under the provisions of the Welsh Language Act 1993. In December 2011, local authorities submitted their first WESPs to the Welsh Government, on a non-statutory basis, outlining how they would contribute towards the Strategy's aims. The guidelines published by Welsh Government note the relationship between the Strategy and the new planning process, stating that local plans should 'demonstrate progress against the specific targets of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy' (Welsh Government, 2013a:1).
- 5.5 The Strategy refers to 'considering options for future legislation' (Welsh Government, 2010: 31). The Welsh Government went beyond considering options and, by now, under the School Standards and Organisation Act (Wales) 2013, WESPs are a statutory requirement for local authorities, with plans fully operational since April 2014. Under the provisions of this Act, local authorities must draw up Plans that include:

'the local authority's targets for improving the planning of the provision of Welsh-medium education in its area and for improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area.' (School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, Section 84)

5.6 Local Authorities are required to submit their plans to Welsh Ministers, who have the power to approve the plans (with or without amendments) or reject them, requiring the preparation of other plans in their place. The Act has also provided Welsh Ministers with powers to publish Regulations which determine the format and content of the plans, and requirements for consulting on the plans (Welsh Government, 2013h). The Regulations, published in 2013, require authorities, in certain circumstances, to assess the demand for Welsh-medium education, stating in their WESPs the action the local authority intends to take to meet the demand in their area for Welsh-medium childcare and education, as identified in an assessment they have undertaken.

Planning and committing capital funding to support plans to extend Welshmedium provision is central to delivering the objectives of the Strategy. In
drawing up WESPs, local authorities are required to consider the interrelationship between plans to increase the number of Welsh-medium places
and proposals as part of the 21st Century Schools Programme. Authorities
must 'ensure that proposals for 21st Century Schools include full
consideration of Welsh-medium education' (Welsh Government, 2013a:9).
The School Organisation Code notes requirements in relation to school
reorganisation proposals and states the need to consider the Strategy and
local WESPs when developing plans (Welsh Government, 2013h:3).

## Improving access and planning for continuity

- 5.8 The Strategy aims to improve access to Welsh-medium provision. Objective 1.4 of the Strategy '[expects] improved assessment of parental preference for language medium of childcare, early years provision and provision in the statutory sector'. Emphasis is placed in the Implementation Programme on ensuring there are opportunities in the child's community and encouraging local authorities to work together with providers to identify gaps in provision. There is a specific reference also to 'ensuring sufficient Welsh-medium childcare opportunities within the Flying Start programme' (Welsh Government, 2010:29).
- 5.9 The Strategy states that ensuring opportunities for linguistic continuity is one of its 'cornerstones'. Local authorities, in completing their WESPs, are expected to set out their plans to ensure continuity in Welsh-medium education as children transfer between education phases, including from the pre-statutory phase into statutory education. They are required to state how they intend to ensure continuity as children transfer from:
  - non-maintained nursery education to funded nursery education
  - the Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2
  - Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3
  - Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4.

5.10 An Estyn review in 2014 reported that there was a direct link between linguistic continuity through the education phases and the development of Welsh language skills (Estyn, 2014a). Learners who transfer between education phases within the Welsh-medium education system develop the best ability to speak and write in Welsh. Ensuring high continuity rates within the Welsh-medium education system across all Key Stages and on to post-statutory education is vital to the Strategy's vision of 'developing future bilingual citizens'. The Strategy states that:

'ensuring that there are opportunities for suitable linguistic progression is one of the cornerstones of the Strategy, and is relevant to all phases from the early years onwards.' (Welsh Government, 2010:7)

## Welsh in Education Grant

- 5.11 Since April 2012, the Welsh in Education Grant has combined funding previously administered by a number of grant schemes that were managed by Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Board. The Grant provides funding to support the implementation of the Strategy locally and regionally. The Grant Guidelines state that the grant funding should be used to deliver the outcomes of local authorities' WESPs which, in turn, contribute to the implementation of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy.
- 5.12 Grant applications are submitted by regional consortia, setting out how plans and activities are to be implemented across relevant authorities. The Grant amount for the period April 2014 to March 2015 was £5.63 million in direct allocation to consortia, who administer allocations to local authorities and schools. Further information on the Welsh in Education Grant can be found in Chapter 6 of the report (*Developing the workforce*, see 6.25).

## **Early Years Provision**

- 5.13 The Welsh-medium Education Strategy notes the importance of three core issues in terms of developing Welsh-medium provision in the early years:
  - i. improving methods of assessing parental preference;
  - ii. improving planning based on the findings of these assessments; and

iii. encouraging increased access to early years provision.

These themes are central to the Strategy and contribute to the first outcome, which is to increase the number of seven year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh. WESPs are also a key part of the planning process and developing provision in the early years. WESPs are informed by the Childcare Sufficiency Assessments local authorities complete in order to measure the nature and extent of the need for childcare in their area (see sections 5.24 and 5.25).

- 5.14 There is an emphasis in *Building a Brighter Future*, the Welsh Government's early years and childcare plan published three years after the Welsh-medium Education Strategy, on ensuring positive experiences for children. The early years are defined as 'the period of life from pre-birth to the end of the Foundation Phase or 0 to 7 years of age' and it is recognised that 'early childhood experiences are crucially important for children's long-term development' (Welsh Government, 2013i:5). Building a Brighter Future states that the various provisions offered have to be beneficial in terms of supporting children's development. As a result, health and wellbeing, secure and positive families, high-quality early education and childcare and good primary education are discussed, as well as raising standards.
- 5.15 Welsh Government officials reported that one of the challenges in implementing the Strategy alongside the *Building a Brighter Future* strategy is to meet the needs of children and their parents while supporting the development of an effective planning system. These officials referred to difficulties in trying to plan the system, due to the complexities of provision for the early years. Officials stated that a number of factors needed to be considered when planning provision, including:
  - parents' needs when selecting children's daycare on the basis of convenience and cost;
  - the relationship between childcare and early education;
  - the range of providers including the non-maintained and private sectors;

- the entitlement for children to receive 10 hours of early education free of charge once the child reaches age two and a half;
- continuity to primary education, and
- schemes aimed at children and families in deprived areas.

There are also considerations in relation to the Welsh language and the child's linguistic development. Certain types of provision in Welsh were established before the system of assessing needs, planning and delivery in this area was formalised, and before education places for three year-olds were funded and there were so many Welsh-medium schools available.

5.16 Mudiad Meithrin is the principal Welsh-medium pre-school provider for children in Wales. Mudiad provides a number of different provisions including cylchoedd meithrin nursery groups, day nurseries, Ti a Fi parent/carer and child groups and after school clubs. Mudiad Meithrin report that they work to create 'models to encourage progression from their provisions to Welsh-medium education' (Mudiad Meithrin, 2015). Almost 60 per cent is Foundation Phase education provision and is therefore subject to 'Estyn' inspections and also to the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW). Both regulatory bodies guarantee a baseline standard and quality for each cylch group. A number of cylch meithrin nursery groups are part of the Flying Start programme, one of the Welsh Government's tackling poverty programmes (see also 5.23-5.26). Mudiad Meithrin receives grants from Welsh Government to support their activities.

#### Evidence in relation to the early years

5.17 The evidence in this section is based on desk-based research (including a review of WESPs content in relation to early years provision), and discussions with national stakeholders, local authorities, providers and parents as part of the area studies. This evaluation has not been able to research in depth different arrangements and local procedures to support Welsh-medium early years provision. The evidence relates predominantly to early years provision, namely provision for children aged 3 and above. There

- are also some references to the provision of childcare under the Flying Start scheme.
- 5.18 Local authorities are required to report on current performance, progress and targets in relation to Welsh-medium early years education provision as part of their WESPs. The way in which authorities report on their current performance and their targets for the period up to 2017 varies. Some authorities commit 'to ensuring the resources required for Welsh-medium provision in the early years are considered'. Others are more definitive, with one authority referring in its WESP to 'proactively offering provision in order to generate parental demand for Welsh-medium provision in the early years'. The nature of these statements suggests differing levels of commitment to increasing provision and makes it difficult to complete a strategic assessment of the provision at a national level.
- 5.19 Some local authorities set specific targets in their WESPs for improving continuity rates between Mudiad Meithrin provision and Welsh-medium schools. Authorities' Plans show that some also present data on variations in rates on a per area basis, which enables them to identify which areas to target when seeking to improve continuity.
- 5.20 In the area studies, some parents commented in discussion groups that there was insufficient support and encouragement during the early years to motivate parents to choose Welsh-medium education and that the process was overly dependent on 'enthusiastic individuals'. The majority of parents across the six areas believed that not enough was being done to promote the advantages of Welsh-medium education, particularly to non-Welsh speaking parents or in cases where only parent was Welsh speaking. In one area, all non-Welsh speaking parents (six out of nine) who attended a discussion group had been encouraged to select Welsh-medium education by the same health visitor. There was a perception among these parents that a number of them would not have chosen Welsh-medium education as an option for their children were it not for this one key worker.

'My husband was worried about sending [learner's name] to [name of Welsh-medium school] but I pushed it because it was important to me. But there are so many jobs around here where Welsh is needed so someone

needs to tell parents that Welsh can help your child to get a job.' (Parent) [Translation]

'You have to go out of your way to look for information [about Welsh-medium education], and that's not right because most parents don't 'pick' a school, it's just a natural process of going to the local school.' (Parent)

- 5.21 Evidence was also provided by parents and stakeholders of a lack of Welsh-medium early years provision in two of the six areas. In one area, the majority of parents in a discussion group (a group of six parents) stated that there was a shortage of places in schools and that this presented a significant barrier to parents interested in Welsh-medium education. This was echoed by some practitioners in primary schools in that area.
- 5.22 Local authority representatives who contributed to the evaluation stated that WESPs had helped to formalise links between themselves and external organisations when discussing Welsh-medium early years provision. WESPs commit to building on these links by holding regular meetings between Mudiad Meithrin officers and early years and childcare provider managers in order to discuss opportunities to develop Welsh-medium provision.

The link between early years provision and childcare provision, including Flying Start

5.23 Although this evaluation has not researched Welsh-medium childcare provision in depth, some evidence was gathered regarding the processes used to plan provision, and questions were raised about the reliability of available information on the extent of current provision. This, in turn, raises a question about local authorities' ability to provide appropriately in response to demand. In 2012, parents and carers in 17 Local Authorities stated 'that there was insufficient Welsh-medium provision in their area' as part of an analysis of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessments by Welsh Government.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Local Authorities, under the provisions of the Childcare Act 2006 (Local Authority Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2013, are required to assess the demand and supply of local childcare provision on a regular basis. A joint assessment was undertaken by the Department for Health, Social Services and Children and the Department for Education and Skills, and this was reported in the Strategy's Annual Report for 2012/13.

- 5.24 During the evaluation of the Strategy, a minority of stakeholders reported weaknesses in the information provided on the number of places available in nurseries at a local level and the process of measuring the demand for Welsh-medium places. Those stakeholders stated that there were variations in the methods used to measure the demand for places in nurseries in the Childcare Sufficiency Assessments, which feed into WESPs. This was also supported by desk-based research completed during the evaluation to review the contents of a sample of local authority assessments. The data collected is based on guestionnaires that ask about parental language preferences in different ways. These questionnaires use varied terminology when referring to preferences (e.g. use is made of Welsh-medium, Welsh-medium/bilingual, a combination of both, bilingual). Some stakeholders suggested that ensuring a more consistent method of collecting and recording information in relation to the demand for Welsh-medium early years provision would mean that more standardised data and indicators could be drawn up, which would form the basis of local authorities' WESPs.
- 5.25 Flying Start is a programme for families with children under 4 who live in Wales' most deprived areas. There are four elements to Flying Start, and one of those is the provision of good quality part-time childcare, free of charge to 2-3 year-olds. Some WESPs state that they consult parents to understand the demand for Flying Start services through the medium of Welsh. One authority reports that their early years team revises its local handbook on Flying Start in partnership with Mudiad Meithrin in order to include further information on Welsh-medium education. However, WESPs contain generic references to the programme in the main, without specific clarification from local authorities as to how they intend to ensure that Welsh-medium Flying Start provision meets demand among parents and contributes towards local targets to ensure the growth of Welsh-medium education.
- 5.26 During the evaluation, a minority of stakeholders raised questions around the number of Welsh-medium places available through the Flying Start programme. Data was submitted by one stakeholder that showed that the percentage of Welsh-medium Flying Start childcare places was notably lower than the percentage of children receiving Welsh-medium education in over

half of the local authorities. This stakeholder suggested that the growth of that programme could work against authorities' plans to extend Welshmedium provision in the statutory phases.

# Evidence in relation to planning Welsh-medium education provision in the statutory phase

5.27 This sub-section contains evidence collected from local authorities, headteachers and school senior managers during the area studies, as well as evidence from the headteachers' survey in relation to planning.

#### Improving the planning process

- 5.28 Across the six areas visited, officers agreed that the new planning process had led to a more structured system, something 'that was much-needed', in the words of one senior local authority officer. Officers across the six areas stated that the process of developing the plans with a consistent template and national guidelines had been useful. Officers in all local authorities referred to the 'constructive' and 'supportive' relationship between Welsh Government officials and authorities during the process of drawing up and agreeing the Plans. In each of the six areas, officers stated that the process of drafting the WESPs, receiving feedback and amendments had formalised and strengthened planning arrangements. They also acknowledged that placing the WESPs on a statutory basis had raised the status of Welshmedium education and ensured more attention than the plans would otherwise have had. Local authority officers noted that Welsh Government had set out amendments to the content and targets included in draft plans and had worked with authorities to strengthen the documents (see Consultation and collaboration below).
- 5.29 Headteachers in all schools in the six areas visited as part of the area visits supported the aims of the Strategy to improve the process of planning provision. They were all supportive of the efforts made to formalise the planning process through the WESPs but there were varying views on how effective those processes had been thus far.

- 5.30 In two of the six area studies, schools thought that developing the WESPs in the local authority had contributed to improving the process of planning Welsh-medium education. In three other areas, the schools doubted whether the WESPs had led to any significant changes in terms of action.
- 5.31 All stakeholders who contributed to the evaluation stated that they supported the emphasis in the Strategy on improving planning processes. Stakeholders expressed their support for the fact that the WESPs were statutory and that they offered an opportunity for authorities to forward plan based on an understanding of the demand for Welsh-medium education.

#### Consultation and collaboration

- 5.32 In each of the six areas, local authority officers stated that the process of developing WESPs had ensured the input of a greater number of officers and elected members as part of discussions on planning Welsh-medium provision. Officers in half of the areas stated that this process had ensured that officers who used to work independently on specific elements of Welsh-medium education planning (e.g. supporting attainment, early years provision) collaborated more effectively. Officers across the authorities reported that the process of establishing Welsh-medium education fora with representation from schools, colleges and local organisations had also facilitated discussions on Welsh-medium education planning. Some authorities were still in the process of establishing fora during the period of the evaluation.
- 5.33 The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welshmedium Education (Wales) Regulations 2013 refer to the need for authorities
  to consult a number of organisations, namely: the Welsh Language
  Commissioner; the Early Years and Childcare Development Partnership;
  school councils; Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in
  Wales (Estyn); 'such organisations providing services to children and young
  people as the local authority considers appropriate'; and 'such other persons
  or bodies as appear to the local authority to be appropriate'.

- 5.34 Half of the local authorities interviewed reported that they consulted with all schools and headteachers when drawing up their WESPs. In two area studies, the schools stated that they had been included in the process of developing the WESP and that the authority supported growth in the Welshmedium education sector by taking proactive action. In three of the area studies, the schools had less input into the content of the WESP. One area study was undertaken at a regional level (including schools from across several local authorities) and within that area there were diverging views among schools and local authorities. In one of the local authorities, the schools stated that they had had considerable input into developing the local WESP and that developing the plan had been a positive step in planning provision. The views of the schools in two other local authorities in the region were less positive, and they stated that they had not seen any significant change in action since the WESP had been developed.
- 5.35 A minority of school headteachers visited in the area studies stated that they had not been part of the consultation process on developing the WESPs nor were they aware that the planning arrangements had changed over recent years. Those headteachers had a higher level of awareness of the Strategy and the outcomes. Some were of the opinion that headteachers needed a stronger role in the process of formulating the content of the WESPs, particularly in areas where there was a perception that the authorities did not forward plan for the growth of Welsh-medium education. This suggests that there is scope to improve the way in which some local authorities engage with schools when developing their WESPs and when planning future provision.

'Primary pupil numbers have grown incredibly quickly and the authority has not dealt with the shortage of [secondary] places for these children in two or three years' time. Everyone knows that secondary places need to be extended but is there the political will to do so? There is nothing in the local plan.' (Secondary school headteacher) [Translation]

We are lucky here. The relationship with the authority is good because the school is considered to be successful. The come to us with the WESP and

ask us what should be in it, so this gives us influence over the planning process. That doesn't happen in [neighbouring authority] mainly because of local politics and that's a great pity.' (Secondary school headteacher) [Translation]

5.36 In the majority of area studies, officers stated that developing the WESPs across all local authorities had led to increased discussions and joint planning at a regional level in relation to Welsh-medium education. However, despite efforts to plan jointly, stakeholders and headteachers reported a lack of capacity to support Welsh-medium provision in local authorities which was, in their opinion, a barrier to collaboration and forward planning of provision. This was echoed in an Estyn report in June 2015 which stated that there was insufficient support for Welsh-medium schools in two of the four consortia.

#### Accountability

- 5.37 All officers agreed that the statutory process had improved internal scrutiny within their local authority. The majority stated that this had ensured that senior officers and elected members at a county level paid more attention to the sector than previously. Some national stakeholders and representatives of local organisations stated that the Plans had been a tool for them to challenge local authorities' decisions. There is evidence that the process of formulating and monitoring the Plans has extended the opportunities for discussion on Welsh-medium education planning between county officers, schools and colleges, and local stakeholders.
  - 5.38 Stakeholders and Welsh Government officials stated that the new planning mechanism had been a mechanism to 'put pressure' on local authorities to include robust proposals for new schools in certain areas. There had been other significant developments: for example one local authority has committed in its WESP to 'move primary and secondary schools along the language continuum'. This involves working with governing bodies and schools to set firm timetables to enable the transition of dual-

stream/transitional schools to Welsh-medium schools.<sup>18</sup> Stakeholders and practitioners in that authority area were of the view that this was an important development with the potential to increase Welsh-medium education provision in the county.

#### Influence and outcomes of the planning process

- 5.39 National stakeholders reported some degree of frustration in relation to the ambition and impact of the Plans to date. The most common messages voiced by stakeholders and representatives from national organisations were:
  - the gap between the vision/strategic aims, and action at a local level: stakeholders reported that the Strategy had not led to fundamental change in the way the majority of authorities operate or plan;
  - inconsistency in the quality of data at a local level on the demand for Welsh-medium education, which influences the nature of authorities' plans: stakeholders suggested that some authorities do not hold current data on the level of parental demand, nor are they committed to undertaking assessments to measure the demand in order to establish a firm baseline for planning provision;
  - the need for local authorities, when planning, to ensure they increase Welsh-medium provision in the pre-statutory and statutory phases.
- 5.40 Local authorities, stakeholders and practitioners cited examples across
  Wales of gaps in provision (and evidence of demand) and in their opinion,
  neither the Strategy nor the process of drawing up WESPs has yet led to
  action to fill these gaps. One secondary school headteacher stated that
  creating a new planning system on a statutory basis does not in itself ensure
  sound strategic plans. A representative from a national organisation echoed
  this, stating that it was possible to comply with all requirements in the
  regulations in relation to the Strategic Plans 'yet there could still be
  shortcomings in the plans'. This underlines the importance of taking

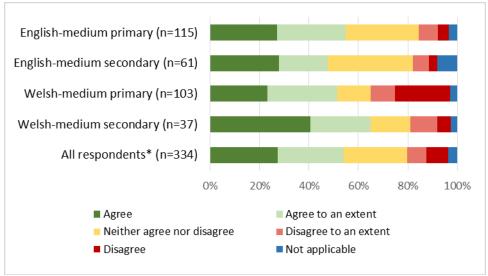
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup>Transitional schools are defined as predominantly Welsh-medium schools but with significant use of English in *Defining schools according to Welsh-medium provision* (Welsh Government, 2007). Schools are usually only in this category temporarily.

- ownership of the plans (and support for the aims of the national Strategy) among local authority senior managers, elected members and relevant local stakeholders.
- 5.41 In the areas where schools felt that the process of developing WESPs had not had any obvious influence, some headteachers were of the view that their local authority had 'neither the capacity nor the will' to develop sufficiently ambitious WESPs nor were they able to ensure an increase in provision. Some believed their local authority saw the WESPs as a process of complying with administrative requirements rather than an opportunity to take progressive action to ensure growth in the Welsh-medium sector. One secondary school headteacher stated that there was 'an attitude of apathy' among officers within the authority towards Welsh-medium education planning and that this had not changed since the Strategy had been published.

School headteachers' views on the Strategy's influence on planning provision

5.42 Primary and secondary headteachers were asked to respond to a series of statements in relation to Welsh-medium education planning as part of the headteachers' survey (see Appendix 5 for survey details). Figure 8 below shows the responses to the statement, 'The process of planning Welsh-medium provision in the local authority has improved since 2010'. The majority of headteachers (54 per cent) agreed with this statement (27 per cent agreed and 27 per cent agreed to an extent). A quarter (26 per cent) neither agreed nor disagreed, and a minority (17 per cent) disagreed or disagreed to an extent with the statement. There were some variations by sector. Firstly, a higher percentage of Welsh-medium secondary schools agree that provision planning has improved, compared to the average across all schools. On the other hand, the percentage of Welsh-medium primary headteachers who disagree with the statement is notably higher than other groups, with almost a third (32 per cent) disagreeing or disagreeing to an extent.

Figure 8: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'The process of planning Welsh-medium provision in the local authority has improved since 2010'

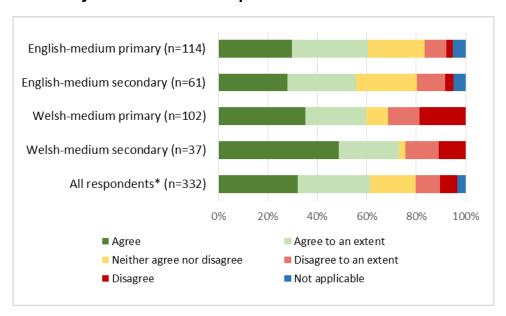


Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

5.43 Headteachers were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the statement that their local authority 'plans effectively for Welsh-medium provision'. The majority of headteachers (61 per cent) agreed with the statement (32 per cent agreed and 29 per cent agreed to an extent; see Figure 9 below). Once again, a higher percentage of Welsh-medium secondary schools agree that local authorities plan effectively for Welsh-medium provision, with 31 per cent of Welsh-medium primary schools disagreeing or disagreeing to an extent that planning was effective in their local authorities.

<sup>\* &#</sup>x27;All respondents' includes Pupil Referral Units and Special Schools

Figure 9: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'The local authority plans effectively for Welsh-medium provision'



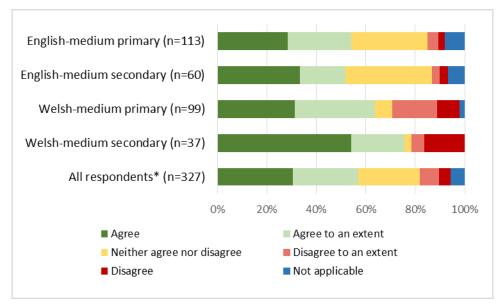
Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

Views on the way in which local authorities respond to the demand for Welshmedium provision

5.44 School headteachers were asked for their response to the statement 'The local authority responds effectively to parental demand for Welsh-medium provision'. The data in Figure 10 shows that 57 per cent of all respondents agree or agree to an extent with the statement. However, there are variations in the data between the Welsh-medium and English-medium sectors. A sizable proportion of English-medium school headteachers stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed. Among Welsh-medium school headteachers, a high percentage agreed or agreed to an extent that the local authority responded effectively to parental demand for Welsh-medium education (75 per cent of Welsh-medium secondary school headteachers and 64 per cent of Welsh-medium primary school headteachers). A minority of Welsh-medium practitioners disagreed (22 per cent of Welsh-medium primary school headteachers).

<sup>\* &#</sup>x27;All respondents' includes Pupil Referral Units and Special Schools

Figure 10: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'The local authority responds effectively to parental demand for Welsh-medium provision'



Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

5.45 There is some contrast between the message conveyed by the above data and the qualitative evidence presented during other elements of the research programme. Evidence was received during school visits and interviews with stakeholders that some local authorities were still 'slow' or 'reluctant' to respond to the demand for Welsh-medium education.

'Not a single Welsh-medium school has opened [in the local authority] since 1997. We understand there is increasing parental demand for Welsh-medium education, but there has been no response so far.' (Primary school headteacher) [Translation]

'I feel that a long-term plan is needed to meet the demand for Welshmedium education across the city. I am concerned about the numbers turning to non-Welsh-medium education due to a lack of places.' (Primary school headteacher) [Translation]

'There are weaknesses in the information on the number of places available and the processes for measuring the demand for Welsh-medium places. There is a lot of variation in the methods used to measure the demand for nursery places in particular.' (National organisation representative) [Translation]

<sup>\* &#</sup>x27;All respondents' includes Pupil Referral Units and Special Schools

Evidence of the Strategy's influence on planning at a school level

- 5.46 As part of the area studies, 10 Welsh-medium secondary schools and 20 Welsh-medium or bilingual primary schools were visited during the evaluation, where there was an opportunity to discuss with headteachers, teachers, senior management team members, subject teachers and learners. This provided an opportunity to consider to what extent schools' internal priorities and plans reflect the 'national policy direction', namely objective SO1.3 of the Strategy.
- 5.47 The majority of headteachers and teachers stated that the Strategy was not the main strategic driver of policies and activity within the school. There was a greater emphasis on meeting the requirements and targets of other national strategies and policies, with the focus mainly on standards and attainment. These are schools' main priorities according to the views expressed by the majority of practitioners.

'It is the standards agenda that drives our work more than anything else in school. This is what we are measured against by the local authority, by the Inspectorate and by parents.' (Secondary school headteacher) [Translation]

- 5.48 There was no evidence to demonstrate that the Strategy had changed the way in which Welsh-medium education is planned and delivered at a school level. There is an awareness of the Strategy (moreso among secondary headteachers than primary school headteachers) but it is not clear whether the Strategy has influenced provision in the classroom or learners' experiences (although the research programme did note the influence of actions and projects that are part of the Strategy e.g. via resources that have been commissioned). However, Welsh-medium schools, through their mission statements, their procedures, the support given to learners and the work of promoting the advantages of bilingualism, operate in a way which is consistent with the vision of the Strategy.
- 5.49 The small cohort of parents who contributed to the evaluation were not aware of the influence of the Strategy, nor indeed of other national policies, on school priorities. Parents in the different areas agreed that the quality of

provision was the most important factor to their minds when selecting a school.

'If the Welsh-medium schools perform to a high standard and prove themselves in terms of results and reputation, then this will stimulate growth.' (Parent with children in secondary and primary school) [Translation]

'When parents speak to each other about different schools, they discuss how well a school is doing, not national plans.'

(Parent of secondary school children) [Translation]

#### Planning provision for latecomers

- 5.50 During the evaluation, some evidence was gathered relating to provision for latecomers, namely provision for those who enter late into an education system where Welsh is the main medium of teaching. Evidence was gathered through desk-based research and interviews with local authorities as part of the area studies. The evidence is summarised in the sections below.
- 5.51 In three of the six area studies, authorities provided services to latecomers in language centres. These centres offer varied provision, based on intensive immersion courses and post-course support by specialists whose aim is to transfer learners to their Welsh-medium schools following a period of support.
- 5.52 Several local authorities reported that responding to the needs of latecomers to Welsh-medium education had been a challenge in planning provision over recent years. The population growth in some rural counties has meant that local authorities have extended the provision for latecomers, including investing time and resources to maintain language centres in some authorities. The importance of such provision was emphasised by local authorities, with one stating in its WESP that language centres for latecomers offered an opportunity for incomers to Wales 'integrate into bilingual society and participate fully in bilingual education experiences'.

- 5.53 Discussions were held during the evaluation with representatives from local authorities that provide programmes for latecomers. These representatives underlined the importance of establishing good links between language centres and schools: examples were offered where centres share progress reports and information on learners' language levels with the relevant 'home school' headteachers.
- 5.54 The majority of stakeholders and a number of parents agree that such provision is vital, particularly in areas where Welsh is a strong community language. Parents in two areas spoke very highly of the schemes for latecomers which they had experience of.
- 5.55 In two of the areas, latecomer immersion schemes for secondary learners were discussed. This is provision for those who wish to experience Welsh-medium education later in their education career. Local authorities can use the Welsh in Education Grant to support their work in this area. According to practitioners who work in immersion centres, learners make good progress and develop confidence in their use of Welsh in a relatively short period of time. Estyn reports that the quality of the provision through immersion schemes is high and that learners are effectively integrated following the support.

#### Evidence in relation to continuity between Key Stages 2 and 3

- 5.56 The Strategy commits to supporting sound linguistic continuity through all phases of education, stating that this is one of the cornerstones for developing future bilingual citizens.
- 5.57 The Welsh Government published guidelines in 2012, 'Promoting linguistic progression between Key Stages 2 and 3', outlining the main issues local authorities and schools should consider when promoting continuity between primary and secondary schools. The key factors the guidelines identify for supporting continuity are:
  - a commitment by headteachers and teachers responsible for transition to the principle of linguistic continuity;

- an awareness among headteachers and teachers responsible for transition of the benefits of Welsh-medium education and bilingualism as a skill;
- an understanding between the primary and secondary sectors that a strategic plan is needed to facilitate continuity;
- guidance and support from the local authority;
- support from governors for Welsh-medium education;
- an awareness among parents/carers and learners of the benefits of bilingualism in the world of work and community life.
- 5.58 The data reviewed during the evaluation shows that the Welsh-medium education system continues to lose a number of learners to the Englishmedium sector. The Strategy's Annual Reports refer to the number of Welsh-medium learners lost across Wales between Key Stages 2 and 3 and the need to reduce the 'drop-off' in certain specific authorities in order to achieve the Strategy's targets. The data shows improvements over the period of the Strategy in continuity rates and that the gap between the percentage of learners assessed in Welsh in Year 9 compared to the percentage assessed in Welsh three years earlier, when they were in Year 6, is reducing. Nonetheless, data from the Strategy's Annual Report for 2014-15 shows that there were 820 fewer learners assessed at age 13 than were assessed in Welsh when that cohort was aged 11 (which equates to 12.9 per cent of the total). The greatest number of Welsh-medium learners are lost in the south west and mid Wales region (385, which equates to 16.5 per cent of the cohort in 2011).
- 5.59 Data published in an Estyn report in November 2014 shows that the proportion of learners studying Welsh as a first language fell from 19.8 per cent in Key Stage 2 to 16.3 per cent in Key Stage 3, and then to 15.3 per cent in Key Stage 4. (Estyn, 2014a:9-10).

Table 9: Percentages of learners studying Welsh as a first language transferring from Key Stages 2 to 4 (based on learners aged 11 in 2008)

Area	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Percentage
	2008*	2011*	2013*	of the county
				population
				able to
				speak
				Welsh**
Gwynedd	99.8%	83.0%	80.0%	65.4%
Anglesey	96.9%	63.3%	67.5%	57.2%
Ceredigion	73.5%	61.2%	56.6%	47.3%
Carmarthenshire	48.6%	35.4%	33.0%	43.9%
Denbighshire	21.8%	20.7%	20.3%	24.6%
Conwy	21.2%	16.4%	15.6%	27.4%
Pembrokeshire	17.4%	12.7%	12.3%	19.2%
Rhondda Cynon Taff	16.2%	17.0%	15.8%	12.3%
Neath Port Talbot	15.3%	9.6%	9.6%	15.3%
Powys	14.2%	12.2%	11.3%	18.6%
Merthyr Tydfil	14.1%	0.0%	0.0%	8.9%
Bridgend	11.9%	6.9%	6.1%	9.7%
Cardiff	10.8%	10.7%	10.3%	11.1%
Caerphilly	9.8%	9.4%	9.3%	11.2%
Swansea	9.1%	9.0%	8.8%	11.4%
Vale of Glamorgan	8.5%	7.5%	7.4%	10.8%
Flintshire	8.3%	6.0%	6.0%	13.2%
Wrexham	8.0%	8.9%	8.2%	12.9%
Blaenau Gwent	5.2%	0.0%	0.0%	7.8%
Torfaen	5.1%	11.5%	10.7%	9.8%
Monmouthshire	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	9.9%
Newport	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	9.3%
Wales	19.8%	16.3%	15.3%	19.0%

\*Source: Welsh Government [Reported in Estyn, 2014]

\*\* National census data 2011.

Note: in some areas, learners who receive their education through the medium of Welsh in Key Stage 2 move to other areas to continue Welsh-medium education in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.

5.60 The data in Table 9 above is revealing. Firstly, the greatest decline in the proportions of learners studying Welsh first language by Key Stage 4 is seen in the local authorities with the highest percentages of Welsh speakers, namely Gwynedd, Anglesey and Ceredigion. Ensuring higher percentages of learners continuing in Welsh-medium education on transition through the

- phases of education in these counties would have a considerable influence on attainment against Outcome 2 of the Strategy.
- 5.61 There is evidence that the planning mechanisms brought about as a result of the Strategy have raised awareness of the need to introduce activity to improve continuity. WESPs introduce plans to support linguistic continuity across the different phases of education (continuity in the 14-19 phase is covered later in this chapter). However, no evidence was found to demonstrate a link between the implementation of the Plans and changes in rates of continuity in Welsh-medium provision.
- 5.62 A broad range of comments in relation to continuity from primary and secondary school headteachers. It was reported that authorities were strongly supportive of assisting continuity in some schools. One secondary school headteacher stated that 'education officers had an excellent understanding of schools' needs in supporting Welsh-medium progression'. It was reported also that authorities and bilingual and dual-stream schools' endeavours to ensure a higher proportion of learners continued to study Welsh first language 'were beginning to bear fruit' with a small number of headteachers identifying an increase in the numbers of learners transferring to Welsh-medium streams.
- 5.63 Another cohort of headteachers stated that they had seen no change to the situation since 2010 and that a number of key issues influencing continuity rates continued to exist.

'The pupils in this school receive their education through the medium of Welsh yet there is no necessity for them to continue with Welsh-medium education when they transfer to the secondary sector.' (Primary school headteacher) [Translation]

'There has not been much change - we still lose pupils between phases, particularly between Key Stages 2 and 3.' (Secondary school headteacher) [Translation]

5.64 A number of headteachers were of the view that schools' organisation and language categories influenced continuity patterns and some parents'

decisions to change medium. Half a dozen secondary headteachers referred to the influence of bilingual teaching methods which are common in some areas of Wales where it is 'quite common for learners to move between streams - almost always from Welsh to English'.

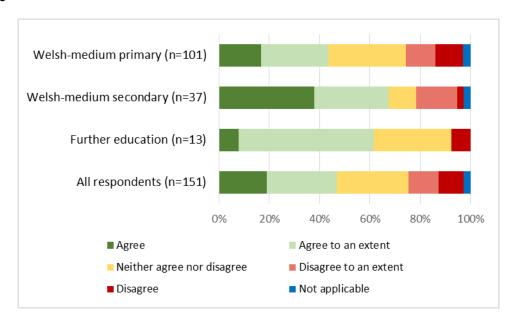
'There is confusion over the categorisation of some schools. This leads to a lack of understanding among parents and therefore a number of children slip through the net and do not receive Welsh-medium Education.' (Secondary school headteacher) [Translation]

'In a bilingual school the challenge is to ensure parental support to encourage linguistic continuity. The authority does not have an appropriate policy for ensuring relevant continuity from KS2 to KS3. This means that a high percentage of pupils change medium when transferring to secondary school.' (Secondary school headteacher)

- 5.65 A number of related issues were raised during visits to schools and during interviews with local authority representatives. Headteachers stated that they felt a number of parents made the decision to move their children to English-medium streams at the beginning of Key Stage 3 without fully realising the impacts on their children's Welsh language skills by the time they complete formal education. The need for schools and authorities to work together with governors and parents when discussing local policies involving linguistic continuity was emphasised. In two areas in particular, headteachers frequently referred to the need to do more to improve parental awareness of the advantages of bilingualism and the loss of learners' Welsh language skills when changing to English-medium education.
- 5.66 Data from the headteachers' survey on linguistic continuity mirrored the divergence of opinion seen in the qualitative comments made in interviews with practitioners and stakeholders. Just under half (47 per cent) responded that they agreed or agreed to an extent that linguistic continuity between phases of Welsh-medium education and training had improved since 2010. Over a quarter stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed that continuity had improved, with one in five respondents (21.9 per cent) disagreeing or disagreeing to an extent.

5.67 Looking at the data on a 'by sector' basis, a higher proportion of Welsh-medium secondary school headteachers reported that Welsh-medium linguistic continuity had improved, with two thirds of respondents agreeing or agreeing to an extent.

Figure 11: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'Linguistic continuity between stages of Welsh-medium education and training has improved since 2010'



Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

#### Planning 14-19 provision

5.68 The following section presents evidence in relation to 14-19 provision. It begins by outlining briefly the role of WESPs in supporting 14-19 provision. It considers the impact of the 14-19 Learning Pathways programme, including the grant funding, on Welsh-medium or bilingual provision, and the external factors that could be influencing Welsh-medium provision as the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 is implemented.

The introduction of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 and the interrelationship with the Strategy

5.69 The Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 was introduced with the aim of ensuring a curriculum that offered a broader range of high quality subjects to 14-19 year-old learners across Wales. The document, *Learning and Skills* (Wales) Measure 2009: Local Curriculum for Pupils in Key Stage 4 Guidance, states:

'The Measure has secured the creation of local curricula that will contain a wide range of courses and opportunities which learners aged 14-19 in Wales have the right to elect from. The Measure also sets out the entitlement of learners to follow their elected course of study.' (Welsh Government, 2014f:2)

- 5.70 The Regulations published to support the implementation of the Measure state that each local curriculum must offer a minimum of 25 level 2 courses to learners in Key Stage 4 in Wales (originally, the minimum curriculum offer in Key Stage 4 was set at 30 but this was changed in February 2014 following a review of provision). Three of these courses must be vocational courses.

  Under the Regulations there must be 30 options for 16-18 year-old learners, and five of these courses must be vocational courses.
- 5.71 Section 23 of the Measure refers specifically to the development of local Welsh-medium curricula:

'The Welsh Ministers must exercise their functions in relation to local curricula so as to promote access to and availability of courses of study which are taught through the medium of the Welsh language.' (Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009)

5.72 There are clear links between the curriculum guidelines arising from the provisions of the Measure and Strategic Aim 2 of the Strategy. When planning local curricula, local authorities must promote access to courses through the medium of Welsh and 'demonstrate that full consideration has been given to linguistic continuity and progression in developing courses for the local curriculum at Key Stage 4 (Welsh Government, 2014f:6). This is consistent with the emphasis in the Strategy on improving 'opportunities for learners to take courses taught in Welsh' and 'planning provision which enables linguistic continuity from the statutory education phase into post-16

courses' (Welsh Government, 2010:15). The documentation supporting the implementation of the Measure sets a direction for developing and planning Welsh-medium provision:

'No action should be taken that would unfavourably affect the existing proportion of Welsh-medium courses within Welsh speaking schools. Any increase in local curriculum courses offered via a Welsh speaking school should therefore entail an increase in Welsh-medium course provision.' (Welsh Government, 2014f:8)

In considering the implementation of the Measure from the point of view of the individual learner, it notes:

'Where a pupil attends a Welsh speaking school, then in forming the local curriculum for that school, a local authority should ensure that the pupil is able to access a local curriculum that meets the minimum entitlement.' (Welsh Government, 2014f:8)

5.73 There is consistency, therefore, between the provisions of the Measure and the strategic direction of the Strategy. Below we consider evidence collected in relation to planning procedures for 14-19 provision.

## Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and 14-19 provision

- 5.74 Local authorities are required to demonstrate in their WESPs how they will take action to support Outcomes 3 and 4 of the Strategy, i.e. to ensure that more 14-16 year-old and 16-19 year-old students study subjects through the medium of Welsh. Welsh Government guidance on WESPs state that these outcomes will be combined 'in order to reflect the nature of planning and provision within 14-19 Learning Pathways'. As noted in section 5.9 of this report, WESPs also need to include plans to ensure continuity between Key Stages 3 and 4. Welsh Government guidelines on WESPs emphasise the need for local authorities to support collaboration between schools, further education colleges and work-based learning providers.
- 5.75 WESPs outline a broad range of commitments by authorities to support 1419 provision. There are references in WESPs to increasing the percentages of 14-19 year-old learners who study subjects through the medium of Welsh; to improving collaboration between strategic partners and regional networks as a basis for improving planning; to improving data collection procedures at

a regional level to facilitate planning; to 'identifying future linguistic needs and developing appropriate Programmes of Learning'. Authorities set targets for increasing provision in the 14-19 phase. Nonetheless, the WESPs of only a minority of local authorities describe specific action to explain how the commitments will be realised, with providers and areas of provision for development named. Reporting on progress against the WESPs, authorities outline specific activities and developments that are under way to support 14-19 provision.

#### 14-19 Regional Networks

- 5.76 14-19 Regional Networks prepare Annual Network Development Plans (14-19 Regional Plans) and submit these to the Welsh Government for approval. These cross-border plans outline how authorities will jointly plan and collaborate to support 14-19 provision, including Welsh-medium provision and ensuring appropriate progression pathways.
- 5.77 Welsh Government guidance on Annual Network Development Plans refer to the inter-relationship between these Plans and other policies (and planning processes) to support Welsh-medium education, specifically the WESPs.
- 5.78 Another element of 14-19 Welsh-medium provision planning arrangements is the work carried out by the three Welsh-medium education Fora (the Fora) in north Wales, south west and mid Wales, and south Wales. The 14-19 Regional Plans state how the Fora will add value to Welsh-medium provision by promoting collaboration across the sectors. They support a number of the Strategy's strategic objectives, including promoting and sharing good practice in supporting Welsh-medium provision. The following provide examples of the most common activities identified in Fora plans in 2014/15:
  - developing and supporting Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), targeting priority subjects which offer opportunities for practitioners to come together, collaborate on planning and create resources for learners;
  - holding extra-curricular activities for learners and students to enrich their learning;

 subject conferences for learners and students who are following Welshmedium courses to reinforce the teaching that takes place in the classroom.

#### Funding Welsh-medium provision in the 14-19 phase

- 5.79 Since 2008/09 specific funding has been ringfenced to support the growth of a range of Welsh-medium vocational courses. The purpose of this funding was to ensure there was an adequate choice of vocational courses available in the Welsh-medium sector and that they complied with the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure.
- 5.80 Table 10 below sets out how this funding has increased and then reduced significantly during the life of the Strategy. The reason for the reduction in 2014/15 was the transfer of funding for post-16 courses to the new National Planning and Funding system. As a result, only 14-16 provision was eligible to receive Learning Pathways grant funding, and there was a corresponding reduction in the ringfenced budget for Welsh-medium provision. The Welsh in Education Unit has contributed towards this budget since 2008/09. It should be noted that funding for Welsh-medium provision was not drawn from the ringfenced grant alone, and that a number of local authorities used the principal revenue grant also to support provision.

**Table 10: 14-19 grant funding for Welsh-medium provision** 

							(£)
Financial Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Welsh in Education Unit Contribution		200k	400k	400k	300k	250k	180k
Ring-fenced grant	1.2m	1.4m	1.6m	1.6m	1.45m	1.341m	455k

Source: Welsh Government

5.81 Changes were made to the post-16 National Planning and Funding System in 2014/15 which influence the way in which schools and colleges arrange and forward plan provision. This system now funds schools and further education colleges on the basis of complete programmes, rather than learning

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activities. Under the new system, an element of the funding continues to be ringfenced for Welsh-medium provision, which is based on the level of post-16 Welsh-medium and bilingual provision recorded by schools and colleges. This ensures that allocations for providers reflect how much Welsh-medium teaching and assessment takes place in schools and colleges. Linked to the National Planning and Funding system, the Minister for Education and Skills outlines his priorities in an annual letter to local authorities and further education colleges (see section 5.97).

#### Desk-based research evidence: data on Welsh-medium and bilingual subjects

5.82 An analysis of administrative data was undertaken to consider changes to the Welsh-medium provision in the 14-19 phase during the life of the Strategy. Data was provided by Welsh Government Knowledge and Analytical Services and by Careers Wales to enable comparison of the Welsh-medium subjects offered in Key Stage 4 during the year the Strategy was launched and the situation two years later. This data provides an overview of the supply of Welsh-medium and bilingual subjects and is therefore different from the Outcome 3 measures (see section 4.42) which are based on learner entries in two/five Welsh-medium subjects. No data was available to enable an equivalent comparison for 16-19 provision. Data is presented in Table 11 below on a regional and national basis. The data shows that there was an increase in the number of Welsh-medium subjects offered across each of the four consortia between 2010/11 and 2012/13. The table contains data on bilingual subjects but the data should be treated with caution. 19 It is clear from the data that the number of bilingual courses in north Wales and south west and mid Wales is higher than other regions, reflecting the linguistic profile of schools in parts of the north and west where there are more dualstream and bilingual schools. Looking solely at Welsh-medium provision in Key Stage 4, an increase of 17.6 per cent can be seen in the number of subjects offered across Wales between 2010/11 and 2012/13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> The core data shows variations in the way schools report on bilingual courses, with a minority recording Welsh second language as a bilingual course, although the grant has never supported this subject.

Table 11: Number of Welsh-medium and bilingual subjects offered in Key Stage 4 2010/11-2012/13

Region	Number of subje 2010/1		Number of subj 2012/ (Number of entered on thes	Number of subjects offered	
	Welsh-	Bilingual	Welsh-	Bilingual	Welsh-medium
	medium		medium		+/- (%)
North Wales	198	738	246	762	+24.2
			(12,543)	(23,212)	
Central	274	10	336	14	+22.6
south Wales					
			(14,283)	(847)	
South east	74	8	84	10	+13.5
Wales					
			(3,473)	(911)	
South west	313	253	344	198	+9.9
and mid					
Wales			(15,443)	(7,777)	
Wales	859	1,009	1,010	984	+17.6

Source: Welsh Government and Careers Wales

5.83 The data above supports evidence presented by headteachers who stated that the Learning and Skills Measure had created a requirement for providers to offer a wide range of subjects, even if there was no clear evidence of demand for all options offered. Although providers share responsibility for offering the minimum of 25 courses at level 2 by collaborating and delivering jointly, this still creates costs to schools and colleges.

#### Evidence from practitioners in relation to 14-19 provision planning

5.84 Evidence was heard during interviews with schools as part of the area studies that supports the data set out in the previous section, namely that the range of Welsh-medium options available to learners in the post-16 phase has increased since the introduction of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009. Practitioners explained that the requirements to extend the choice of subjects had encouraged greater collaboration between schools and that the majority of schools in those areas felt that collaboration had improved. One secondary school headteacher stated that Welsh-medium schools discussed provision planning 'in a more strategic way' than

previously. This headteacher did not attribute this change to the influence of the Strategy, however.

'It reflects the situation we are in - funding is tight, we as providers are required to offer learners greater choice and work at a regional level. Of course, it makes sense to collaborate and consider joint provision where this is possible.' (Secondary school headteacher) [Translation]

- 5.85 There was evidence to show that the activities funded by the 14-19 Welshmedium education fora had facilitated collaboration between schools in some
  areas. As part of the area studies, one school headteacher provided an
  example where four secondary schools share a Psychology teacher 'and
  therefore offer the subject in Key Stage 5 to everyone for 25 per cent of the
  cost'. There were a number of other similar examples in different parts of
  Wales where collaboration has led to a wider choice of subjects for 14-19
  learners. However, it was noted that this had been a shift across the sector
  over a number of years in response, to some extent, to the requirements of
  the Learning and Skills Measure.
- 5.86 Headteachers referred to a number of joint developments that have supported collaboration and introduced provision in new areas. Professional Learning Communities (supported by the 14-19 Fora) were said to be beneficial in building schools' and colleges' expertise and capacity to introduce new subjects.
- 5.87 Some headteachers reported that discussions about opportunities to collaborate between schools, and in the 14-19 Fora had meant they took a lead role in planning provision 'at a grass roots level'. Several headteachers stated that they were pleased to have these opportunities to contribute directly to planning provision strategically, as it was headteachers and senior managers who 'knew where the gaps and opportunities were, and the teachers with the appropriate skills'.
- 5.88 The majority of secondary schools visited stated that local authority support had been good in implementing the 14-19 Learning Pathways policy.

  Nonetheless, it was reported that the link with local 14-19 network coordinators was not as strong as it had been in the past. One headteacher

- suggested that regionalisation had created 'an extra layer of administration, discussions and joint planning' and that it was 'difficult to keep close links with everyone'.
- 5.89 Turning to collaboration between schools and colleges, the evidence suggests that the situation varies. Evidence was seen during the review of the Bilingual Champions project that new partnerships were developing between colleges and Welsh-medium schools. Reference is made in the WESPs to examples where schools and colleges collaborate to develop new provision in vocational subjects and offer new progression pathways to learners. This is often based on activities that involve sharing resources and staff. However, there was evidence during area study interviews and in responses to the headteachers' survey that competition between colleges and secondary schools continued, and it was noted that this could obstruct new developments or threaten sixth form provision in some secondary schools.

'What creates an increasing problem is the continuity from KS4 to KS5 with the growth of the colleges, significant financial investment in the sector, all to the detriment of the future and existence of the sixth form. [secondary school] is losing significant numbers to the local college.' (Secondary school headteacher) [Translation]

- 5.90 Further education institution principals referred in their responses to the survey to the 'damaging competition' between colleges and schools which, some believe, is leading to ineffective provision and classes with small numbers of learners. One headteacher's conclusion, pointing to classes of five learners in Welsh-medium schools while local colleges were offering similar provision, was, 'this doesn't feel like effective planning'. One secondary headteacher, however, stated that that competition could be a positive thing if it prompted FE colleges to respond by increasing their Welsh-medium provision.
- 5.91 There is reference in section 5.80 to the reduction in ringfenced funding to support Welsh-medium provision as part of the 14-19 Learning Pathways.This was a cause for concern for several Welsh-medium secondary school

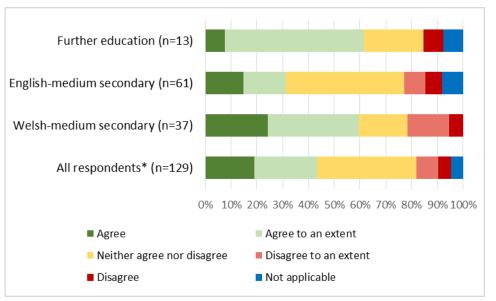
headteachers. The need for the various plans and programmes to 'pull in the same direction' was noted, if the national aims are to be met.

'Welsh-medium provision needs to be prioritised and Welsh-medium 14-19 Learning Pathways funding safeguarded if we are to succeed in realising the objectives of the WESP.' (Secondary school headteacher) [Translation]

#### Evidence from the headteachers' survey in relation to 14-19 provision planning

5.92 The majority of Welsh-medium secondary school headteachers (59 per cent) who completed the evaluation survey reported that they agreed or agreed to an extent that the process of planning 14-19 provision had improved since 2010 (see Figure 12 below). A minority (22 per cent) disagreed or disagreed to an extent that provision planning processes had improved. A number of respondents referred in their comments to the success of the 14-19 Learning Pathways policy, and commented specifically on the support of local authorities and consortia.

Figure 12: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'The process of planning Welsh-medium provision in the 14-19 phase has improved in the local authority/region since 2010'



Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

<sup>\* &#</sup>x27;All respondents' includes Pupil Referral Units and Special Schools

#### <u>Learning pathways in post-16 provision</u>

5.93 The evidence collected during the area studies and through the survey is consistent with the study findings from the Bilingual Champions project. That report concluded that the contribution and commitment of key individuals within institutions, particularly senior leaders and managers in further education institutions, was vital in supporting new post-16 Welsh-medium provision and progression pathways. School headteachers and further education representatives referred to inconsistencies in the provision and progression pathways.

'The linguistic progression for education and training continues to rely too heavily on the whim of individuals who lead centres beyond schools. In several cases in the region, there has been a genuine attempt to improve linguistic progression for less academic pupils. There are a number of other cases where this does not happen, with organisations doing the least amount possible.' (Further education institution principal) [Translation]

- 5.94 Officers from further education institutions reported that progression and opportunities for learners who wish to receive Welsh-medium post-16 education have improved but that 'significant barriers remain'. A number of examples are given as to the barriers institutions face, the most common of which are noted below:
  - difficulties in anticipating the demand for Welsh-medium courses;
  - a shortage of practitioners available to deliver courses on time and in settings convenient to learners;
  - a lack of resources and opportunities to assess through the medium of
     Welsh which limits what the colleges can offer;
  - the challenge of encouraging sustainable demand among learners for Welsh-medium provision.
- 5.95 A new national system of applying for places was introduced in the further education sector (the common application process), which provides an opportunity to measure the demand for Welsh-medium provision across the sector. Welsh Government officials stated that this new approach offered the

- potential to create a more systematic method of assessing demand for courses through the medium of Welsh in order to support further education institutions' planning processes.
- 5.96 The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (The Coleg) Strategic Plan identifies supporting linguistic continuity from the school and further education sectors on to higher education as a priority area and states the need to work in partnership with other providers. A representative of the Coleg Cymraeg noted in an interview that they were working to strengthen links with further education colleges. It was reported in the *Evaluation of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's Progress to Date* that the Coleg supported projects to raise awareness and encourage progression into Welsh-medium higher education among students in further education institutions). This evaluation identifies the need for the Coleg and individual further education colleges to promote the Welsh-medium provision they offer, 'ensuring the coherence of these arrangements across departments within individual HEIs and between HEIs' (HEFCW, 2015:123).

# <u>Priorities for improving the planning and continuity of post-16 Welsh-medium education</u>

- 5.97 The Minister for Education and Skills outlines his priorities in an annual letter to local authorities and further education colleges. The Minister has identified 'increasing provision and the numbers learning through the medium of Welsh/bilingually' as one of his priorities and providers, when planning programmes of learning under the new planning and funding framework, need to demonstrate how they are responding to this priority.
- 5.98 Evidence was collected from school headteachers and college principals and national stakeholders in order to understand the priorities for improving the planning and continuity of post-16 Welsh-medium education. Firstly, the need was identified for better support and direction to draw Welsh-medium schools and colleges together to collaborate in a strategic way that supports their mutual objectives. Secondly, the need for financial support was underlined to release staff to improve their skills and develop the curriculum. The

Sabbatical Scheme is ongoing. However, the review of that Scheme concluded that the programme needed to be implemented more strategically and purposefully, ensuring there was a link to WESP priorities across local authorities and consortia. Some were of the view that there was a need to go further by drawing up and implementing a workforce development scheme for post-16 provision, targeting the development of Welsh language skills among lecturers, assessors, validators and moderators. Thirdly, headteachers and stakeholders emphasised the need to raise the profile of post-16 Welshmedium education provision by marketing and promoting the advantages of maintaining and improving Welsh language skills.

- 5.99 The Study of the work of the Bilingual Champions in Further Education drew conclusions on provision planning in the further education sector. It concluded that further action was needed to improve strategic planning across the further education sector to support Welsh-medium and bilingual provision and that colleges should complete action plans for developing Welsh-medium provision. The need for senior managers to demonstrate leadership and support in driving the process and developing new provision was outlined. The study report presented a series of other recommendations stating the following:
  - the need to improve the quality of data collected on Welsh-medium and bilingual provision and the number of students selecting those options;
  - colleges should ensure that there are opportunities available for learners with Welsh language skills to experience some modules or elements of their course in Welsh, as a way of maintaining their skills;
  - the need to do more to promote the benefits of bilingualism and encourage students to follow part of their courses through the medium of Welsh;
  - colleges should ensure they consider the need for Welsh language skills when advertising new posts;

 Welsh Government should consider what further support could be offered to encourage colleges to market and promote Welsh-medium provision in priority subjects or areas of strategic significance.

#### Transport for post-16 learners

5.100 One factor frequently raised by practitioners, parents and stakeholders during the evaluation was transport. Reference was made to the importance of transport policies during interviews with each of the area studies, and quantitative data was presented by one school headteacher demonstrating the significant impact that authorities' transport plans were deemed to have had on parents' and learners' decisions to continue in Welsh-medium education. Another secondary school headteacher stated that the decision of one local authority to introduce a substantial increase in travel costs to post-16 learners had led to a fall in the number of learners transferring from year 11 to year 12 in that school. It was reported that the school attributed this decline directly to the increase in travel costs. It was reported that schools and stakeholders had raised the issue with the relevant local authority, who stated in response that Welsh-medium schools were treated the same as English-medium schools.

'...the truth is, that English-medium schools are far closer to pupils' homes. Maybe the treatment is equal, but the knock-on effects are considerably greater on Welsh-medium education.' (Welsh-medium secondary school headteacher) [Translation]

'There is great financial pressure on local authorities – but some of their policies mean that they are not fulfilling their duties to promote access to Welsh-medium education.' (National stakeholder) [Translation]

# Supporting Welsh-medium provision for learners with additional learning needs

5.101 Local Authorities are required to state in their WESPs how they will improve Welsh-medium additional learning needs (ALN) provision. WESPs set out a number of areas where local authorities have identified the need to extend provision. These include cross-border working to provide services not

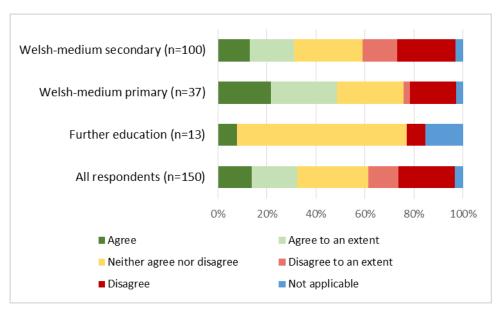
- available in Welsh in some areas (Behaviour Support Service, and services for learners with sight/hearing impairments, learners on the autistic spectrum, and learners with other medical needs).
- 5.102 The nature of the targets in the WESPs in relation to ALN vary. There are some ambitious targets, particularly in areas with a high percentage of Welsh speakers. For example, one authority aims to ensure that all learners with ALN have access to Welsh-medium services. However, variations to the targets and plans cannot always be attributed to different linguistic contexts. There are variations between areas with similar socio-economic and linguistic profiles, which suggests that these variations depend on the levels of commitment and forward planning in the relevant authorities. One authority in the south Wales valleys offers specialist Welsh-medium provision in a designated intensive needs centre. In a county bordering this authority, with almost twice as many ALN learners in the Welsh-medium sector, the authority states in its WESP that there is no evidence to support the need for specialist Welsh-medium (classroom) provision. This is one example of the variation in provision across the country. During visits to schools, practitioners provided anecdotal examples of the knock-on effects of specialist provision shortages, stating that learners had transferred from the Welsh-medium sector to English-medium provision.
- 5.103 All local authorities who contributed to the evaluation through the area studies reported that they had endeavoured to improve Welsh-medium Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision since the publication of the Strategy. The commonest examples identified by authorities visited as part of the area studies were:
  - undertaking reviews of current provision, measuring the demand for provision for Welsh-medium ALN;
  - encouraging more collaboration across clusters of schools in order to share good practice, resources and ensure consistent provision;
  - arranging for teachers and ALN Coordinators in Welsh-medium schools to attend training so that they were confident in supporting children/young people with additional needs.

5.104 On the basis of our analysis of the qualitative evidence gathered and the information identified by local authorities in their WESPs, the evaluation has found that the most forward-thinking authorities have established specialist centres which provide services for learners with intensive needs in different age ranges; in some cases, provision is offered at a regional level through such centres. The evidence suggests that authorities that plan proactively also ensure that services and support are available to learners with additional needs by specialist practitioners including Education Psychologists, Advisory Teachers (Learning and Behaviour) and Classroom Assistants. Finally, some forward-thinking authorities were seen to be making arrangements to ensure that school admissions processes identified children with ALN whose parents' wishes were for them to receive Welsh-medium education. This permits early intervention and contact with other services, including the 'team around the family' locally.

#### Opinions on ALN provision and services

5.105 Welsh-medium secondary school headteachers and further education college principals were asked to respond to the statement 'The provision of Welsh-medium education and services for learners with additional learning needs (ALN) has improved since 2010'. 32 per cent of respondents agreed with the statement (14 per cent agreed and 18 per cent agreed to an extent). 29 per cent of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. 35 per cent of respondents disagreed with the statement (23 per cent disagreed and 12 per cent disagreed to an extent). This data reveals the difference of opinion among leaders in relation to the improvements to Welsh-medium services for learners with ALN. Views among secondary headteachers were more positive than respondents from primary schools.

Figure 13: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'Welsh-medium education provision and services for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) have improved since 2010'



Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

- 5.106 There were a number of comments made by headteachers on ALN provision in their responses to the survey in response to an open question inviting comments on provision in general rather than a question asking specifically about ALN provision. While there was some evidence to suggest that there had been improvements in the way some local authorities planned for Welshmedium provision and services for learners with ALN, it appears that provision is not consistent in different local authorities in Wales.
- 5.107 Headteachers are concerned about the level of provision and the impact on learners and practitioners (in light of the additional preparation time needed). The comments below are typical of the points raised by headteachers in relation to ALN provision:

'There is no provision for Welsh-medium learners with additional learning needs. Schools have to translate, prepare or create suitable materials for them from scratch. Welsh-medium provision is needed to support pupils on the autism spectrum.' (Primary school headteacher) [Translation]

'The physical resources are not available to support ALN in the Welsh Unit, compared to the range of resources available in English. As a result

Welsh-medium learners are disadvantaged.' (Headteacher of a dual-stream primary school)

'Welsh-medium ALN provision is available in one part of the county but not across the whole county. I don't anticipate there will be an improvement to the provision - there is a lack of support among councillors to ensure improvement and changes quickly enough (Primary school headteacher) [Translation]

5.108 Evidence was collected on resources for learners with additional learning needs in the *Review of the Use and Quality of Resources Commissioned by the Welsh Government's Welsh in Education Unit*. Practitioners noted that there were gaps in the resources available to learners with ALN across all key stages. Evidence was received from practitioners that a limited choice of resources meant they were using resources aimed at younger learners in order to find suitable resources and language for lower ability learners. Practitioners stated that the less mature format of this content had a negative impact on learners' engagement.

#### Conclusions in relation to planning provision

#### Early years

- 5.109 Although this evaluation has not researched in detail local arrangements to support Welsh-medium early years provision, the evidence suggests that there are a number of issues worthy of further attention. Evidence was collected from practitioners, parents and secondary data sources that provision for Welsh-medium early years was not meeting the demand in a number of areas. This situation undermines the Welsh Government's commitment to ensure the growth of Welsh-medium education.
- 5.110 In conclusion, the Welsh Government's vision for Welsh-medium provision in the early years is not expressed consistently across all relevant policies, programmes and action plans. WESPs, local Flying Start Strategic Plans and the action plans of other relevant programmes need to state clearly how this vision will be implemented and realised. The possibility of ensuring that

- all authorities set targets to increase Welsh-medium early years provision and include them in the WESPs should be explored.
- 5.111 There are variations in terminology used by local authorities in their Childcare Sufficiency Assessments when referring to the options available to parents (e.g. use of Welsh-medium, Welsh-medium/bilingual, a combination of both, bilingual). Ensuring a more consistent method of collecting and recording information in relation to the demand for Welsh-medium early years provision would mean that more standardised data and indicators could be drawn up, which could form the basis of local authorities' WESPs.
- 5.112 Information should be shared with parents/carers about the opportunities and advantages of Welsh-medium childcare and early years education. There have been national campaigns to promote the advantages of bilingualism and the messages at the heart of these campaigns should be shared frequently by Family Information Services and as part of relevant programme marketing material.

### Statutory phase planning

- 5.113 Evidence shows that the Strategy has strengthened planning processes for Welsh-medium education in the statutory phases. Local authorities' planning arrangements are more structured and evidence was seen of a more coherent approach when planning Welsh-medium provision across the six area studies in the evaluation.
- 5.114 Placing Welsh in Education Strategic Plans on a statutory basis was an important development and the Plans provide a focal point for local authorities and the Welsh Government in discussing, preparing and delivering activities to increase provision. They enable the Welsh Government to hold local authorities to account for their delivery plans on a local level.
- 5.115 The evidence suggests a mixed picture in terms of local authorities' effectiveness in planning provision. Data from the headteachers' survey shows that schools, on the whole, are satisfied with the way local authorities

- plan provision. However, during interviews, headteachers and stakeholders in some areas reported that authorities were 'slow' or 'reluctant' to respond to the increasing demand for Welsh-medium education.
- 5.116 Local planning processes for Welsh-medium education have improved, become more consistent and are now established on a statutory basis. However, the effectiveness of local plans and activity is still heavily influenced by the level of commitment and understanding of key individuals (directors of education, elected members, senior officers). This underlines arguably the most important and most influential feature of the process of planning provision is that local leaders must have ownership of WESPs and demonstrate the determination to drive growth in a way which supports the Strategy's national vision.
- 5.117 Data show that the Welsh-medium education system continues to lose a number of learners as they move forwards to secondary education. A number of learners transfer from Welsh-medium provision, moving to study in English-medium or bilingual streams and follow Welsh second language courses in Key Stages 3 and 4. There have been improvements in continuity rates during the Strategy's lifetime and the gap between the percentage of learners assessed in Welsh in Year 9 compared to the percentage assessed in Welsh three years earlier, when they were in Year 6, is reducing. School organisation and the existence of bilingual schools is an important factor in the continuity patterns seen in Wales: the lowest continuity rates are seen in the areas with the greatest number of bilingual schools. Improving continuity rates in those areas should be prioritised.
- 5.118 Local authorities set targets in their WESPs for improving linguistic continuity between education phases, with particular attention paid to continuity between Key Stages 2 and 3. In implementing plans to improve continuity rates, local authorities and schools need to ensure they have an understanding of the reasons behind a large number of parents' and children's decisions to change medium. Evidence was received during the evaluation by parents and practitioners who described the change of medium as the 'norm' and a common pattern in a number of communities. Local

education policy officers will need to consider what action can be taken to change the situation, working closely with parents and school governors.

#### Planning Welsh-medium 14-19 provision

- 5.119 The provision of 14-19 education and training has seen significant changes since the introduction of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009. Implementing the Measure has supported the Strategy's aim of strengthening Welsh-medium provision in the 14-19 phase. The work of the 14-19 Regional Networks and the cross-border Welsh-medium fora has led to better collaboration between providers in relation to activities to share good practice and develop the workforce in some areas. The data shows that there has been an increase in the number of Welsh-medium and bilingual subjects offered in all regions of Wales since the Measure was implemented.
- 5.120 It appears that collaboration between schools has improved in a number of areas. However, this has been seen as a result of the financial situation schools are facing (which compels further strategic planning to share resources), rather than the influence of the Strategy. Collaboration between schools and colleges varies: although evidence was collected across the research programme showing an increase in collaboration between colleges and schools (with Bilingual Champions working to strengthen links), damaging competition between schools and colleges continues in several areas.
- 5.121 Following the review of post-16 planning and funding, a new funding framework was introduced in the 2014/15 academic year, with institutions funded on the basis of programmes, rather than qualifications. The framework continues to provide additional funding for Welsh-medium provision. It is still early days in terms of understanding what effect the new funding arrangements will have on Welsh-medium provision. How providers adapt to the new framework will need to be monitored, and particular attention given to its influence on institutions' ability to plan for an increase in Welsh-medium provision and programmes.

5.122 The Bilingual Champions project has supported the process of planning Welsh-medium provision in the further education sector and has led to an increased focus on supporting the Welsh language in colleges. Various developments have been seen in some organisations, but we have concluded that the results of the developmental work cannot be seen fully yet. We have also concluded that one of the shortcomings of the planning process in the further education sector is the lack of action plans at an institutional level. Although there is support for the Strategy's aims among principals, the action taken is not sufficiently purposeful and strategic and, as a result, very little progress has been seen in relation to Welsh-medium provision in the FE sector during the life of the Strategy.

#### Welsh-medium education for those with additional learning needs

- 5.123 Some forward-thinking authorities have extended Welsh-medium provision for learners with ALN by establishing specialist centres. Examples were seen of authorities working at a cross-border level to strengthen provision.
- 5.124 However, the research has identified a number of weaknesses in the provision. Inconsistency in the provision is a feature of ALN provision: there are variations in the services available between counties and even within counties. There is a need to continue to invest in the skills and capacity of the workforce to ensure equal opportunities for Welsh-medium learners who need additional and specialist support. Headteachers report concerns that a shortage of specialists and suitable resources has a detrimental effect on learners.

## 6 Developing the workforce

6.1 This chapter focuses on progress made in implementing Strategic Aim 4 of the Strategy:

'To ensure a planned Welsh-medium education workforce that provides sufficient numbers of practitioners for all phases of education and training, with high-quality Welsh-language skills and competence in teaching methodologies.'

- 6.2 The Strategic Objectives associated to this aim encompass a number of areas: the need to plan the Welsh-medium workforce based on analysis of supply and demand, sharing and developing good practice; ensuring appropriate initial training for teachers (ITT) which supports the growth of Welsh-medium education; developing a national and regional infrastructure to deliver high quality Continuous Professional Development; developing expertise in teaching and learning methodologies; and improving the skills of Welsh for Adults tutors.<sup>20</sup>
- 6.3 With these objectives in mind, two research questions provide a framework for this chapter:
  - Has the Strategy ensured that the Welsh-medium and Welsh language education workforce is planned strategically to provide sufficient numbers of practitioners for each phase of education and training?
  - To what extent has the Strategy led to ensuring that practitioners have the necessary skills (both linguistic and in terms of methodology) to teach through the medium of Welsh or bilingually?
- 6.4 This chapter is in two parts: the first refers to the arrangements that exist to ensure that there is an adequate supply of teachers for the Welsh-medium education system (considering ITT and alternative training schemes); and the second refers to training and projects to support the skills of the current Welsh-medium workforce. The chapter refers to desk-based research carried out as part of the evaluation, and summarises the evidence gathered from practitioners and stakeholders.

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 20}$  Welsh for Adults is outside the scope of this evaluation.

# Planning to ensure a supply of Welsh-medium and Welsh language practitioners

#### The context of current provision

- Initial teacher training in Wales is provided through three collaborative university centres the north and mid Wales centre led by Bangor and Aberystwyth Universities, the south-east Wales centre led by Cardiff Metropolitan University and the University of South Wales, and the south west centre led by the University of Wales Trinity St David. All three centres offer Welsh-medium provision for primary and secondary programmes, although the models of Welsh-medium provision vary between them. Within these arrangements, the Welsh Government offers training incentives to graduates in their priority recruitment subjects, including Welsh. In 2014-15, secondary trainees were offered incentives of up to £15,000. Primary trainees with a first class honours degree in Welsh were eligible for an incentive of £4,000 to improve literacy standards in maintained primary schools.
- 6.6 The Welsh Government provides specific support to students to help build their confidence to enable them to teach effectively through the medium of Welsh. Further incentives and training are offered to trainees through the Welsh-medium Improvement Scheme. This scheme is available to students following their Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) courses through the medium of Welsh.
- 6.7 There have been policy developments in relation to ITT in recent years. A review of initial teacher training in Wales was carried out in 2013 (the Tabberer Review), looking at the standard and consistency of teaching, training and assessment within ITT. The review concluded that:
  - 'The current quality of ITT in Wales is adequate and no better.... This assessment is largely shared by providers, officials and the leading stakeholders. (Tabberer, 2013:14)
- 6.8 More recently, *Successful Futures* (the Donaldson Report) was published in February 2015, setting out recommendations for reform of the curriculum in

Wales. Soon after the publication of the Donaldson Report, *Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers* (The Furlong Report, March 2015) emphasised that these proposals have important implications for the teaching workforce, especially in light of the growing focus on the Welsh language. The Furlong report noted:

'all teachers should have responsibility for literacy, numeracy and digital competence, that there should be an increased focus on the use of the Welsh language in all schools, and that there should be a much greater emphasis on teacher led assessment than at present.' (Furlong, 2015:7)

#### Students qualifying through ITT courses

- 6.9 The Welsh Government publishes annual statistics providing data on students qualifying through ITT courses. The data shows the number of students qualified to teach through the medium of Welsh as a result of the training. The number of enrolments on ITT courses in Wales has fallen year on year in recent years in light of the action taken since 2006 to manage the numbers following the courses.
- 6.10 Table 12 below shows the number of students who completed ITT courses in Wales between 2005/06 and 2013/14, and the numbers qualified to teach bilingually. There has been a decline in the total numbers of students completing ITT courses since 2007/08. However, there has been an increase in the numbers qualified to teach bilingually over the same period, so the percentage of students completing ITT courses and who are able to teach bilingually or through the medium of Welsh has grown.

Table 12: Students completing initial teacher training courses in Wales 2005/06 to 2013/14

		Year							
	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
Total numbers completing ITT courses in Wales	1,935	1,880	1,935	1,900	1,860	1,735	1,645	1,470	1,425
Qualified to teach bilingually, or awarded a bilingual teaching certificate	210	330	190	225	230	220	210	255	300
% of all students qualified to teach bilingually	10.9	17.6	9.8	11.8	12.4	12.7	12.8	17.3	21.1

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

#### Workforce supply

- 6.11 Welsh Government data on the number of qualified teachers teaching through the medium of Welsh presents a picture of the education workforce supply. Based on an analysis of primary school data (Table 13), the number of qualified teachers teaching Welsh as a first language saw an increase of 135 between 2009/10 and 2013/14.<sup>21</sup> This equates to an increase of 4.8 per cent, which is greater than the increase in the total number of all qualified teachers teaching in primary schools in Wales (0.4 per cent in the same period). During the same period, the number of qualified teachers teaching Welsh as a second language in primary schools also saw a small increase (of 1.8 per cent).
- 6.12 In 2013/14, there were 357 primary teachers able to teach Welsh or through the medium of Welsh, but were not doing so. This number has decreased significantly over the last decade.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Although the Strategy was launched in 2009/10, it is important to note that changes to the number of training places would not lead to a change in the size of the workforce for at least two years due to the length of the courses in question. As such, 2009/10 is not necessarily a significant baseline in the context of teacher numbers.

Table 13: Teachers in primary schools in Wales 2005/06 to 2013/14

Qualified teachers:	Year 2005/06 to 2013/14								
	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
teaching Welsh as a first	2,835	2,819	2,838	2,791	2,799	2,812	2,872	2,869	2,934
language									
teaching Welsh as a second language only	9,228	9,269	9,319	9,192	9,149	9,039	9,068	9,176	9,317
teaching other subjects through the medium of Welsh	167	150	137	186	228	199	193	215	179
able to teach Welsh / through the medium of Welsh, but not doing so	862	722	674	598	478	423	414	378	357
who are not qualified to teach Welsh or through the medium of Welsh	407	352	287	255	204	180	157	158	127
Total number of qualified teachers teaching in primary schools	13,499	13,312	13,255	13,022	12,858	12,653	12,704	12,796	12,914

Source: Welsh Government

- 6.13 The data relating to the education workforce in the secondary sector shows an increase in the numbers teaching Welsh as a first language, or other subjects through the medium of Welsh. Since 2009/10, the year in which the Strategy was published, there has been an increase of 11.6 per cent in the number of qualified teachers teaching Welsh first language. The numbers teaching other subjects through the medium of Welsh have increased, but to a lesser extent (0.9 per cent).
- 6.14 There has been a decrease in the number of qualified teachers able to teach through the medium of Welsh but not doing so: from 501 in 2009/10 to 430 in 2013/14.

Table 14: Teachers in secondary schools in Wales 2005/06 to 2013/14

Qualified teachers:	Year 2005/06 to 2013/14								
	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
teaching Welsh as a first language	341	360	368	337	398	400	385	388	444
teaching Welsh as a second language only	730	731	708	714	684	656	663	617	593
teaching other subjects through the medium of Welsh	1,751	1,792	1,805	1,884	1,835	1,848	1,779	1,870	1,851
able to teach Welsh / through the medium of Welsh, but not doing so	458	496	439	496	501	570	564	525	430
who are not qualified to teach Welsh or through the medium of Welsh	10,100	9,977	9,780	9,739	9,639	9,418	9,213	9,079	9,016
Total number of qualified teachers teaching in secondary schools	13,380	13,356	13,100	13,170	13,057	12,892	12,604	12,479	12,334

Source: Welsh Government

#### The Teacher Planning and Supply Model

- 6.15 The Education Workforce Council (EWC) is the regulatory body for practitioners in Schools and Further Education (FE) in Wales. Data collated by EWC through its registration process is one of the sources used for the Teacher Planning and Supply Model, the workforce planning tool used to determine the number of students beginning Initial Teacher Training and Education programmes in Wales.
- 6.16 The Welsh Government has been considering how the Teacher Planning and Supply Model can be used to measure and steer the demand for, and supply of, practitioners across the education sector as a whole. Officials from the Welsh in Education Unit reported that there were currently some limitations

- on the model's ability to provide comprehensive information for the Welshmedium sector. The officials responsible for administering the Teacher Planning and Supply Model within the Department for Education and Skills acknowledge that more clarity is needed in relation to Welsh language skills in the education workforce.
- 6.17 Discussions between Welsh Government officials and the EWC have explored the possibility of amending some of the questions asked during the registration process. At the moment, teachers are asked to self-assess their Welsh language skills; however, consideration is being given to the introduction of a method based on stating their highest qualifications in the Welsh language and their level of training to teach through the medium of Welsh. Welsh Government officials said that these changes could lead to a more robust method of mapping the profile of practitioners across the sectors (including the ability to identify teachers with Welsh language skills working in the English-medium sector). A comprehensive mapping process could help to identify gaps in the workforce, and potential gaps in the future (e.g. by assessing the age profile of Welsh-medium practitioners in different areas).
- 6.18 Officials from the Department for Education and Skills reported that the Teacher Planning and Supply Model, including the method of determining Welsh-medium ITT places, had not changed in light of the Strategy's commitment to ensure growth in the Welsh-medium education system. The Strategy refers to 'effective forward planning' across the system in order to secure growth. A minority of national stakeholders were of the opinion that the process of determining ITT places could not secure an adequate supply of practitioners to see growth in the Welsh-medium sector. A minority of stakeholders saw a link between this and the relatively low numbers of applicants for vacancies in the Welsh-medium sector (see 6.21).
- 6.19 The Welsh Government has asked the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) to develop and implement a certificate of competence for prospective teachers wishing to teach through the medium of Welsh. Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol are facilitating this work. The Coleg are also considering proposals for the introduction of an access requirement for

Welsh-medium ITT courses. This certificate builds on the success of the current Welsh Language Skills Certificate: the scheme is open to teachers studying in Wales and enables them to gain a certificate which shows evidence of their ability to communicate confidently and work through the medium of Welsh. The certificate of competence for prospective teachers is being piloted for the first time in 2015/16.

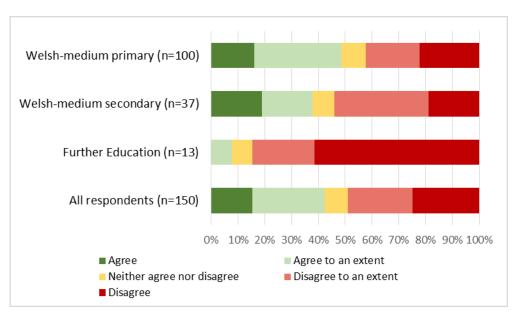
## Welsh Government data on the number of applications for teaching vacancies

- 6.20 There is significant divergence between the number of applications for Welsh-medium and English-medium teaching vacancies. Between January and December 2014, 275 vacant posts were advertised in Welsh-medium primary schools, and these posts attracted 2,105 applications. This means that, on average, each Welsh-medium vacancy attracted 8 applicants. During the same period, 11,747 applications were made for 510 vacancies in English-medium schools, equating to an average of 23 applicants per post.
- 6.21 The picture is similar in the secondary sector. Across all subjects, vacant Welsh-medium posts attracted an average of 4 applications in 2014, compared to 11 applications for English-medium posts.
- 6.22 Since the publication of the Strategy, the number of applications for all Welsh-medium vacancies has remained considerably lower than the number of applications for posts in the English-medium sector. There has been an overall decline in the number of applications per vacancy, across both the Welsh and English-medium sectors, between 2007 and 2014, although there was an increase in some individual years (e.g. there was a notably higher number of applications for vacancies in the Welsh-medium sector in 2010, meaning that the number of applications per post was higher on average). This data suggests that the Strategy has not had an influence on the supply of Welsh-medium teachers.

Evidence from the headteachers' survey and stakeholders' evidence on the supply of Welsh-medium and Welsh language practitioners

6.23 The survey asked headteachers of Welsh-medium schools and further education institutions if they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: 'There is a sufficient number of Welsh-medium practitioners in the primary/secondary/further education sector'. A greater percentage of respondents disagreed or disagreed to an extent with this statement (49 per cent) than agreed or agreed to an extent (42 per cent). Only one further education principal agreed that there were sufficient numbers of practitioners, with a clear majority disagreeing or disagreeing to an extent. The majority of Welsh-medium secondary school headteachers responded by disagreeing with the statement (35.1 per cent disagreed to an extent and 18.9 per cent disagreed).

Figure 14: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'There is a sufficient number of Welsh-medium practitioners in the primary/secondary/further education sector'.



Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

- 6.24 The respondents to the questionnaire expressed concerns regarding the supply of practitioners with Welsh language skills. The most prevalent points raised by Welsh-medium primary school headteachers were:
  - That the numbers of applicants for posts in the Welsh-medium sector are low compared to the number of applicants for posts in English-medium schools.
  - Where there are sufficient numbers applying for posts, the standard of the language is not 'always satisfactory'.

'This can sometimes affect the quality of the applications received, and as a result, the quality/availability of first class teachers. There may be scope to look at ways of attracting young students into the profession by making it attractive to enable us to secure qualified teachers of the highest standard.' (Welsh-medium primary school headteacher) [Translation]

- A shortage of teaching assistants with a high standard of Welsh language skills;
- A shortage of supply teachers able to teach through the medium of Welsh.
- 6.25 Welsh-medium secondary school headteachers offered other examples of the problems they faced in appointing practitioners, with the evidence showing a serious shortage in some areas of the curriculum, and in some parts of Wales. The most frequently raised points in their comments were:
  - A shortage of teachers with Welsh language skills to teach mathematics, physics, chemistry and English in the secondary sector. Headteachers referred to other subjects where they had faced difficulties in recruiting, including food/catering.
  - Headteachers were concerned about the future supply of practitioners.
     Respondents referred to a shortage of high quality trainees, and the detrimental effects of the changes to ITT provision in recent years, with cuts in the number of places (see 6.11).

'There is a serious shortage of Welsh-medium practitioners, particularly in the secondary sector. Opportunities to train in Welsh are few and far between. Similarly, there are few Welsh-medium assistants of a sufficient standard to work in the secondary sector.' (Welsh-medium secondary school headteacher) [Translation]

 Difficulties in recruiting Welsh-speaking practitioners of the highest standard in bilingual schools, where teachers are expected to teach through the medium of both Welsh and English;

'Some [teachers] prefer to teach solely through the medium of Welsh.

That's fair enough, but it could affect the quality of the Welsh-medium provision in bilingual or dual-stream schools.' (Welsh-medium secondary school headteacher) [Translation]

- 6.26 Headteachers' comments were echoed by a range of stakeholders. The majority of stakeholders interviewed referred to the challenges of securing an adequate supply of practitioners for the sector. Representatives of national education organisations and teacher organisations acknowledged the importance of the schemes and financial incentives to support prospective teachers to teach through the medium of Welsh. However, stakeholders did not feel that the Strategy had led to a fundamental or marked change in the process of workforce planning. A minority expressed deep reservations regarding the workforce's capacity to cope with what the Strategy seeks to achieve, namely significant growth in the Welsh-medium sector.
- One national stakeholder shared the results of their own surveys over a period of two years, looking at the staffing situation in Welsh-medium secondary schools. In the survey in question, examples were seen across Wales where schools faced difficulties in appointing subject specialists, shortages of good quality applicants, schools having to re-advertise before appointing, and schools reporting that they had been compelled to appoint non-Welsh-speaking teachers to fill gaps. In addition, the survey reported that schools faced difficulties in appointing senior management teams and deputies. This information was supported by the Welsh Government's administrative data: in 2014, 3 vacant headteacher or deputy headteacher posts were advertised across Wales, and these attracted a total of 5 applicants.

- 6.28 In half of the local authorities covered by the area studies, officers stated that they were aware of the difficulties that Welsh-medium schools in both the primary and secondary sectors faced in recruiting staff. The evidence submitted by a variety of participants (headteachers, school senior managers and national stakeholders) supported this, and reference was made to a shortage of teachers in the Welsh-medium education workforce in several subjects in the secondary sector: namely Mathematics, English and Science. A shortage of leaders/senior managers in the primary and secondary sectors was also noted.
- 6.29 Headteachers of English-medium schools raised a number of points regarding the supply of Welsh language practitioners. Cuts to the number of Athrawon Bro were said to have had a detrimental effect on schools' ability to provide Welsh lessons to a high standard. A number of headteachers reported that teachers had taken responsibility for leading Welsh lessons, although they did not have the necessary skills to do this. This evidence is consistent with the findings of the One language for all report which stated that: 'the Welsh Government should take steps to ensure that every primary and secondary school has sufficient numbers of teachers qualified to teach Welsh and that it is a requirement for schools to ensure that all teachers of Welsh second language have received appropriate methodology training and are therefore competent to teach the subject' (Welsh Government, 2013c: 38).
- 6.30 The qualitative data submitted through the survey shows that the majority of English-medium school headteachers support the need to improve Welsh language provision. They support the vision for promoting bilingualism, but a minority felt that the support and resources are not in place to realise this vision. This raises questions about the capacity of some English-medium primary schools to teach Welsh as a second language to the necessary standard, although it is a statutory subject in the curriculum (these issues were also raised in the *One language for all* report and in Estyn publications. See Chapter 8 for further discussion on this issue).

6.31 It was reported that English-medium secondary schools faced difficulties in appointing Welsh-speaking teachers, and finding supply teachers able to teach Welsh. This is consistent with the data shown in Table 14, which shows a decrease in the number of teachers teaching Welsh as a second language.

'It is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit any teacher of Welsh [second language] teachers, let alone good quality Welsh teachers. This is, in my opinion, a significant area of concern that needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. (Headteacher of an English-medium secondary school)

# Training and programmes to support the language skills of the Welsh-medium workforce

6.32 The sections below outline the various provisions and grants available to support Welsh language skills training among practitioners.

## The Welsh in Education Grant

6.33 The Welsh in Education Grant was established in April 2012, bringing together funding that had previously been provided through a variety of grant schemes. 22 Originally, the Grants were allocated to be administered by local authorities. However, following the establishment of the four regional education consortia, the Grants have been allocated by the Department for Education and Skills since April 2014 for the consortia to administer them. In 2014, the level of Grant was £5.3m, and the Guidelines for that year stated that local authorities were expected to contribute at least 33 per cent in matched funding. The consortia were also expected to delegate at least 50 per cent of the grant to schools in 2014-15, targeting the allocations in the ways most likely to support the outcomes of the WESPs and the Welshmedium Education Strategy. Three categories of eligible activities can be funded through the Welsh in Education Grant: these categories are Welsh first language, Welsh-medium and Welsh second language. Improving

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> The following were combined: the former Better Schools Fund (Priority Area 2); the Welsh Language Board's grant for athrawon bro; and the Welsh Language Board's grant for immersion education pilot projects for latecomers and linguistic continuity from primary to secondary school.

- practitioners' Welsh language skills is an area of activity in all three categories.
- 6.34 The Guidelines stated that the proportion delegated to schools should be targeted 'strategically and appropriately'. This was supported by Welsh Government officials: it was noted that, in administering the Grant, a concerted effort had been made to ensure that delivery partners (and particularly consortia and local authorities) tied the Grant to the strategic aims and objectives of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy.
- 6.35 The Grant is used to support a wide range of activities and courses. In the local authorities that participated in the area studies, it was reported that the Grant had supported: training courses for practitioners to improve their Welsh language skills; professional learning communities for developing and sharing good practice in terms of Welsh-medium teaching; and training courses for practitioners to promote methodologies for teaching Welsh (in both the Welsh-medium and English-medium sectors).
- 6.36 Representatives of local authorities and the consortia reported that the Grant had been the focus for operating in a more collaborative way, with consortia prioritising allocations to support activities which contribute to the objectives of both the WESPs and the Strategy.
- 6.37 The consortia have scrutiny arrangements in place to support the process of administering the Grant: local authorities reported that the consortia's officers monitor local authority and school expenditure in order to ensure a link between the activities and local Strategic Plans. Based on the evidence gathered by local authorities in the area studies, the planning and scrutiny processes introduced during the life of the Strategy have enabled the alignment of the WESPs and Grant schemes.
- 6.38 The funding arrangements have been changed for the year 2015/16. Eleven different funding streams were combined from April 2015 to create one main grant, the Education Improvement Grant (EIG). The process of implementing the WESPs continues to be supported by funding for the Welsh in Education Grant, which has been transferred to the new EIGs for schools from 2015-16.

## Training provision for practitioners and providers

- 6.39 There is a wide range of training provision available to support and strengthen the capacity of the Welsh teaching workforce. In addition to the support provided through EIGs, other support and training available includes training to support the implementation of the curriculum, leadership support, teaching and learning methodologies, Welsh language skills training for the workforce, training and activity to support collaboration between practitioners, and continuous professional development plans. The evaluation has not sought to quantify all of the courses provided. Below is a summary of the main sources of training available to practitioners.
  - Provision supported by schools: there is a statutory requirement for schools to provide In-Service Training for teachers during every school year. These training activities are an important part of their continuous professional development (CPD). This training is routinely provided by local authority representatives and regional consortia.
  - Other national grants from the Welsh Government (e.g. the School Effectiveness Grant, which is now part of the Education Improvement Grant - see above) which provide funding to enable regional consortia to undertake a wide range of activities, including delivering CPD opportunities.
  - Training for early years practitioners: Cam wrth Gam is Mudiad
    Meithrin's training branch. It provides training for people wishing to work
    in early years settings leading to a CACHE Level 3 Diploma in Children's
    Care, Learning and Development (CCLD).
  - The Sabbatical Scheme: the Sabbatical Scheme continues to provide intensive language training and methodologies for practitioners at a variety of levels and locations across Wales (see Section 6.40 below).
  - Sgiliaith Support: Sgiliaith provides a range of training courses for further education tutors and work-based learning tutors. The courses focus on supporting bilingual teaching methodologies and awareness-

raising for governing bodies and senior management teams at further education colleges. Sgiliaith works in partnership with CollegesWales, who also provide opportunities for tutors to work together to develop Welsh-medium and bilingual provision.

Training by stakeholders and other education bodies: CYDAG and teaching unions offer occasional training to support the implementation of the curriculum in Welsh-medium schools.<sup>23</sup>

### The Sabbatical Scheme

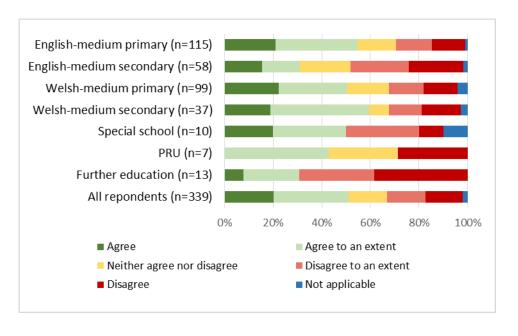
6.40 As stated above, a study of the Sabbatical Scheme was completed in 2014, to gain an understanding of the impact of the Scheme on practitioners' ability to teach through the medium of Welsh on their return to their schools and colleges. The Review of the Sabbatical Scheme concluded that it had developed the Welsh language skills and confidence of the practitioners who attended the courses. The Scheme has evolved over time as Welsh Government has adapted and refined its methods of delivering and introducing new courses for different target groups (e.g. an entry level course for teaching assistants). As a result, the participant profile has changed as the courses have appealed to a wider range of practitioners (classroom assistants and more participants from the further education sector). However, the report states that the processes for planning and recruiting to the Sabbatical Scheme need to be tightened, and that authorities and regional consortia should be required to make connections between those attending the courses and how they are expected to contribute to local strategic priorities.

 $<sup>^{23}</sup>$  CYDAG (The Association of Schools for Welsh-medium Education) works with primary and secondary schools to promote and develop all aspects of bilingual education. It does this by promoting collaboration, organising activities to facilitate professional development, providing means to discuss bilingual education and communicating the aspirations and concerns of its members to the relevant organisations and public bodies.

# Headteachers' views on Welsh language skills training

6.41 Just over half of the respondents to the headteachers' survey agreed (20 per cent) or agreed to an extent (31 per cent) that the training available to support Welsh language skills fulfilled their institution's needs (see Figure 15). The data shows some variation across the different sectors. Nineteen per cent of Welsh-medium secondary school headteachers agreed that the training available to them was suitable, with 41 per cent agreeing to an extent. English-medium secondary school headteachers' responses were less positive: 16 per cent agreed that the training fulfilled their needs, and the same proportion (16 per cent) agreed to an extent. A higher proportion of English-medium secondary school headteachers disagreed (24 per cent) or disagreed to an extent (22 per cent). The responses given by primary school headteachers convey a different pattern. A slightly higher percentage of English-medium primary school headteachers agreed or agreed to an extent that the training fulfilled their needs, than the corresponding percentage from Welsh-medium primary schools.

Figure 15: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'Workforce training meets the needs of our organisation in supporting Welsh language skills'



Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

- 6.42 Within the local authorities that participated in the evaluation's area studies, the majority of Welsh-medium school headteachers stated that continuous training was needed to sustain and improve Welsh language skills. Some headteachers reported that they used the Welsh in Education Grant to support access to courses. In response to open questions in the headteachers' survey, some headteachers said that they planned training and language refresher activities for their staff including staff who are fluent in Welsh. However, a minority of other headteachers stated that financial limitations and other factors (e.g. schools' lack of capacity to provide training; or the inability to release practitioners to participate in external training) restrict schools' ability to invest in improving the skills of the current workforce.
- 6.43 School headteachers in the local authorities that participated in the area studies were supportive of training schemes for practitioners, including the Sabbatical Scheme; however, a minority of the headteachers were of the opinion that more 'far-reaching' interventions were needed to tackle the situation and improve the quality of training provision. Some headteachers suggested that consideration should be given to ensuring that Welsh language training is open to all members of staff, or ensuring that teachers who are fluent in Welsh work in English-medium schools to ensure the quality of the provision.
- 6.44 A minority of Welsh-medium school headteachers who responded to the open questions in the headteachers' survey echoed the points raised above. One headteacher stated the following requirements: an increase in the number of Welsh-medium places on ITT, frequent and carefully targeted sabbatical courses, language refresher courses coordinated by local authorities/consortia and peer support within schools. Another headteacher referred to the importance of training that ensures high standards of Welsh amongst teachers, as teachers are the only contact that children have with the Welsh language in a number of communities.
- 6.45 In response to open questions in the headteachers' survey, headteachers of some English-medium schools reported that the Sabbatical Scheme for

practitioners had been valuable in supporting the development of skills. These headteachers said that the courses were 'excellent', 'intensive' and 'effective' and that they had succeeded in building practitioners' confidence and improving the quality of provision. Some headteachers reported that practitioners were interested in attending further courses to further develop their language skills, and this evidence supports the study of the Sabbatical Scheme carried out as part of this research programme. Other headteachers said that the Sabbatical Scheme had been beneficial, but that it could not develop the language skills of the majority of teachers as it was impossible for schools to release staff for such extended periods.

6.46 Some English-medium school headteachers referred to a lack of capacity and inadequate language standards within the workforce in their responses to the open questions in the headteachers' survey. In some English-medium schools, headteachers said that Welsh department staff offered support to improve colleagues' language skills. Some headteachers said that schools needed to take the lead on quality assurance processes, with strategic support from Welsh Government and training organisations to invest in the skills of the education workforce.

#### Conclusions in relation to the workforce

- 6.47 The aim of the Strategy was to increase the capacity and skills of the Welshmedium workforce to ensure an adequate supply of practitioners across all
  phases of education and training. There has been an increase in the number
  and proportion of students completing ITT courses and who are able to teach
  bilingually or through the medium of Welsh during the Strategy's lifetime.
- 6.48 However, the evidence does not suggest that the Strategy has made a significant direct contribution to the critical mass of the Welsh-medium workforce, nor has it led to fundamental changes in terms of the Welsh-medium education workforce supply. Half of the headteachers who contributed to the evaluation feel that the supply of Welsh-medium practitioners is insufficient. There is a shortage of practitioners in some

- subjects in the Welsh-medium secondary sector, and headteachers report that they continue to experience difficulties filling some vacancies.
- 6.49 The Welsh Government use the Teacher Planning and Supply Model to set the number of places on Initial Teacher Training and Education programmes in Wales. There is no evidence to suggest that this model is being used as part of a purposeful forward planning strategy to support growth in the Welshmedium education system on the scale of the commitment made in the Strategy.
- demand in the Welsh-medium sector is incomplete, since the methods used to gather the information are neither comprehensive nor systematic at present. Welsh Government officials have been working in partnership with the Education Workforce Council to improve the process of systematic data collection on the Welsh skills in the education workforce, but these processes are not yet operational. Data shows that the number of applicants for posts in the Welsh-medium sector is significantly lower than the English-medium sector, and that on average, the number of applications for vacancies in Welsh-medium primary and secondary schools has halved since 2010.
- 6.51 Language standards across the workforce are a cause for concern among some school and college leaders and headteachers/principals. There is a need to examine anguage standards in initial teacher training courses and as part of continuous training in order to raise standards amongst practitioners already working in the education system.
- 6.52 The Sabbatical Scheme, which provides periods of intensive study for practitioners to enable them to develop their Welsh language skills, is a project which has led to positive outcomes for both individuals and schools. There is a direct correlation between the Sabbatical Scheme and Strategic Aim 4, and both headteachers and practitioners consider it to be a worthwhile project. However, the Sabbatical Scheme is just one element of the process of supporting 'a Welsh-medium education workforce that provides sufficient numbers of practitioners for all phases of education and training' (Strategic Aim 4 of the Strategy). It provides an opportunity to fill gaps in language

- skills, and build the confidence of a number of practitioners who have some Welsh language skills, but mainstream training and continuous professional development arrangements are necessary in order to ensure an adequate supply of high calibre fluent practitioners to support growth in Welsh-medium provision.
- 6.53 Steps must be taken to ensure that actions and the related funding to increase and support the skills of the workforce are an integral part of strategic plans at a local level, and at an institutional level where appropriate. The report on the Sabbatical Scheme concluded that schools and local authorities were not using the Scheme as a means to support the priorities set in the WESPs consistently enough.
- 6.54 The data shows that there are Welsh language skills which are not currently being used within the workforce. No evidence came to light to show that this 'extra capacity' was discussed when planning numbers. An understanding of the areas of expertise and location of qualified teachers able to teach Welsh/through the medium of Welsh, but who are not doing so, should be important information when planning numbers.

# 7 Central support

- 7.1 This chapter looks at activities relevant to Strategic Aim 5:
  - 'To improve the central support mechanisms for Welsh-medium education and training.'
- 7.2 The Strategy includes strategic objectives that refer to 'encouraging awarding organisations to develop Welsh-medium qualifications'; 'improving the range of Welsh-medium and Welsh language resources'; and supporting 'new technological developments' in Welsh-medium education. The following sections refer to the evidence gathered in relation to these issues, and consider whether or not the central support available for the Welsh-medium education system has supported growth in provision.

#### Qualifications

## **Background**

- 7.3 The availability of Welsh-medium qualifications was considered as part of a Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19 year-olds published by the Welsh Government in 2012.<sup>24</sup> The report concluded that there was a need for *'clear pathways for progression through the medium of Welsh'* and that GCSE and A Level qualifications should be available simultaneously in Welsh and English by 2015. The report stated that a shortage of staff, assessors and moderators had contributed to a lack of choice in terms of vocational qualifications, and that awarding bodies needed continued support to enable them to continue to expand their provision and choices to learners.
- 7.4 As stated in Chapter 3, the key recommendation of the Review of Qualifications was that the Welsh Government should set up one body (Qualifications Wales) with responsibility for the regulation and quality assurance of all non-degree level qualifications available in Wales.
- 7.5 Under the provisions of the Welsh Language Act of 1993, there was no statutory obligation for awarding bodies to offer Welsh-medium qualifications.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> <u>http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/121127reviewofqualificationsen.pdf</u>

However, the Welsh Language Measure has created a new legal and regulatory framework for the Welsh language and its use in the delivery of public services. The Measure identifies awarding bodies as organisations on which standards can be imposed, and as such, the Measure could affect the expectations placed on awarding bodies in terms of future Welsh-medium provision.

- 7.6 The majority of awarding bodies offering qualifications in Wales are based in England, and operate on a UK-wide basis. Two are based in Wales the WJEC and Agored Cymru and both have mission statements which state that they are committed to providing qualifications through the medium of Welsh in a variety of subject areas.
- 7.7 As stated in Chapter 5, the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 was introduced with the aim of ensuring a curriculum that offered 14-19 year-old learners a wider choice of subjects of a high standard across the whole of Wales. The Regulations published to support the implementation of the Measure require every local curriculum in Wales to offer at least 25 level 2 courses for learners at Key Stage 4. Three of these courses must be vocational. Under the Regulations, at least 30 options must be available to learners aged 16-18, and 5 of these must be vocational courses.

#### General qualifications

- 7.8 The Welsh-medium Qualifications Grant Support programme for 14-19 yearolds offers financial support to awarding bodies and pays costs which are
  additional to those relating to the provision of English-medium qualifications.
  The Grant is offered to awarding bodies that offer general qualifications, in
  order to enable them to provide their qualifications in Welsh for the same cost
  to applicants as English qualifications.
- 7.9 New GCSE qualifications were introduced in September 2015. Specifications were published simultaneously in Welsh and English in line with the recommendations of the Review of 14-19 Qualifications (Welsh Government, 2012) accepted by Welsh Government in 2013.

7.10 Officials from the Welsh Government Department for Education and Skills interviewed during the evaluation reported that they were continuing to work with awarding bodies to ensure that the new A and AS Level qualifications will be available through the medium of Welsh.

## Vocational qualifications

7.11 Vocational qualifications are mainly provided by awarding bodies in England, who do not routinely offer a bilingual service. Welsh Government provides grant aid to awarding bodies to encourage them to respond to the demand for Welsh-medium vocational assessment opportunities, in the same way as the general qualifications outlined above (7.6).<sup>25</sup> Any awarding body may apply for financial support when they become aware of demand from centres and candidates for Welsh-medium opportunities. Welsh Government will pay any costs that are additional to those relating to the provision of English-medium qualifications, providing that there is evidence of demand and appropriate quality assurance.<sup>26</sup>

#### Stakeholders' evidence on qualifications

- 7.12 A number of stakeholders referred to new developments in terms of the introduction of new qualifications, including: the Essential Skills Wales qualification in Communication at levels 1 to 3 to develop and report on bilingual proficiency. Some stakeholders felt that the establishment of Qualifications Wales would provide an opportunity to place requirements on awarding bodies operating in Wales to ensure the availability of qualifications in Welsh.
- 7.13 A number of stakeholders stated that they anticipated an increase in demand for apprenticeships (including Welsh-medium apprenticeships), following the increase seen in numbers of apprentices in recent years. The Welsh Government has already awarded grants to awarding bodies to develop

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Qualifications Wales, in its new form, will manage the grant from September 2015 onwards.

Welsh Government officials reported that an annual total of £120,000 has been available through these grants in recent years.

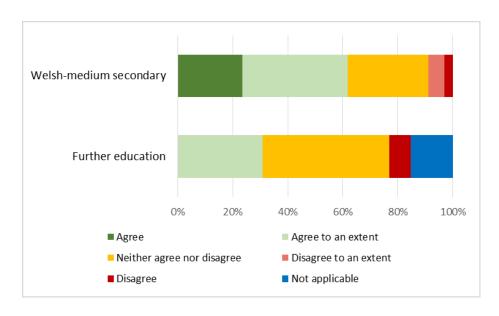
- Welsh-medium qualifications to support Welsh-medium apprenticeships. Stakeholders said that the Welsh Government, Skills Sector Councils, Awarding bodies and training providers needed to work together to identify the demand for qualifications in new areas of learning.
- 7.14 A Welsh Government representative reported that some awarding bodies had been proactive, and had 'led the way in terms of Welsh-medium vocational provision'. It was noted that this stemmed from the enthusiasm and commitment of individual officers in the field, who had persuaded companies' senior management teams to invest in the development of Welsh-medium qualifications. However, the view of the stakeholders who took part in the evaluation was that this was not always the case. Stakeholders reported that strategic planning between providers and awarding bodies required improvement in terms of developing Welsh-medium vocational qualifications.
- 7.15 During interviews, stakeholders referred to the need to encourage to provide the same level of support to develop Welsh-medium qualifications as is available to support English-medium provision. Several stakeholders referred to the vital role of Qualifications Wales in supporting these developments, and to the fact that the Welsh Language Standards provide an opportunity to 'set clear requirements for Awarding Bodies to support the development of Welsh-medium qualifications and provision' (national stakeholder).
- 7.16 Awarding bodies stated that the process of applying for, and receiving, grants from Welsh Government was slower now than it had been in the past.

'It takes longer to apply for and receive (small) grants for, e.g. translating qualification specifications. This can cause a delay in terms of when qualifications are available in Welsh.' (Representative of an Awarding Body)

# Headteachers' views on qualifications

7.17 Responding to a question about qualifications in the headteachers' survey, the majority of Welsh-medium secondary school headteachers said that they agreed (24 per cent) or agreed to an extent (38 per cent) that the overall range of Welsh-medium qualifications had improved since 2010. Only a small minority disagreed that there had been an improvement. Around a third of further education institution principals said that they agreed to an extent that the range of qualifications had improved, with a large proportion of respondents stating that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

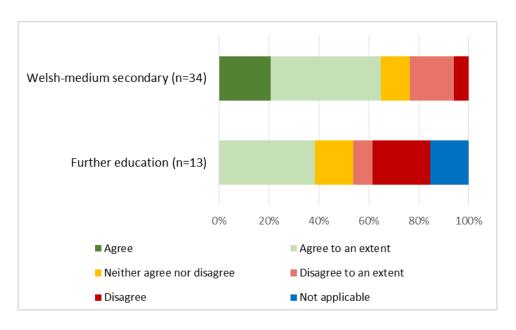
Figure 16: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'The range of Welsh-medium qualifications (e.g. GCSEs, A Levels) has improved since 2010'



Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

7.18 Sixty-five per cent of Welsh-medium secondary school headteachers agreed or agreed to an extent that they had seen an improvement in the range of Welsh-medium vocational qualifications since 2010 (see Figure 17 below). Around a quarter disagreed, or disagreed to an extent, with this statement. A smaller percentage of further education institutions agreed (to an extent) that the range of vocational qualifications had improved, with around a third disagreeing, or disagreeing to an extent.

Figure 17: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'The range of Welsh-medium vocational qualifications has improved since 2010'



Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

- 7.19 Headteachers and practitioners offered further comments regarding vocational qualifications (through the survey and during school visits), and the issues most frequently raised were as follows:
  - Headteachers reported that they had seen an increase in the number of Welsh-medium vocational qualifications available. However, a shortage of assessors and verifiers in some areas means that learners have no other choice but to complete their assessments in English. This is a barrier to the expansion of Welsh-language provision.

'The lack of resources and assessment opportunities limits colleges' ability to provide Welsh-medium education.' (Further education institution principal)

 Opportunities exist to expand the courses/qualifications available to learners through collaboration and resource-sharing (between schools, and between schools and colleges).

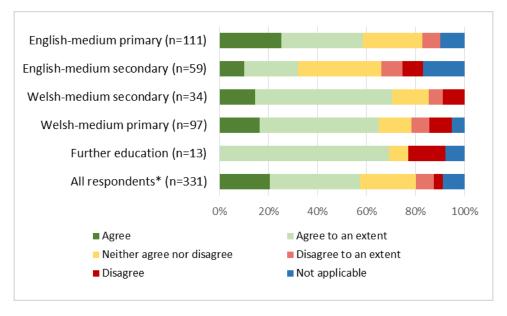
#### Resources

- 7.20 The Resources Commissioning branch of the Welsh in Education Unit is responsible for commissioning teaching and learning resources for all subject areas, ages and abilities, from the Foundation Phase to 14-19 subjects and Welsh for Adults. The resources in question are classroom materials for learners that are not provided by the commercial market, and are commissioned through a procurement process using a framework of approved contractors or through a single tendering process.<sup>27</sup>
- 7.21 The Review of the Use and Quality of Resources Commissioned by the Welsh Government's Welsh in Education Unit (Review of Resources) was carried out as part of the research programme to support the evaluation of the Strategy. The headteachers' survey also included questions about Welsh-medium and Welsh language resources.<sup>28</sup>
- 7.22 Evidence from the *Review of Resources* shows that practitioners acknowledge that the choice of resources available has developed significantly over the years, and that the quality of the resources and range of choice have improved. However, evidence from the review also shows that there is a limited range of resources in a number of areas, such as electronic and interactive resources in Welsh (including video clips), up-to-date Welshlanguage resources for Key Stage 3, and resources for the further education sector. Evidence from the headteachers' survey supports these perceived shortages in some areas. The majority of headteachers agreed (21 per cent), or agreed to an extent (37 per cent) that the range of Welsh-medium teaching and learning resources had improved since 2010 (see Figure 18).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> The Welsh Government awarded 295 contracts worth £9.6m (approx) between April 2010 and March 2014

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> The review was limited to resources produced for the 3-19 age group.

Figure 18: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'The range of Welsh-medium teaching and learning resources has improved since 2010'

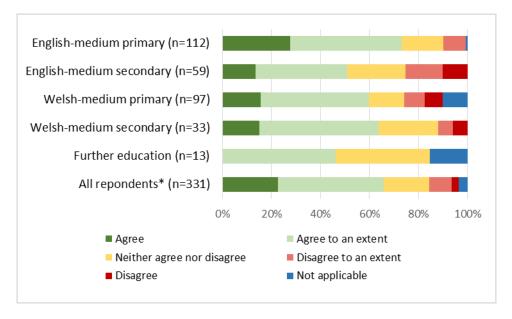


Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

7.23 The majority of headteachers felt that the range of resources to support Welsh as a subject had improved since the publication of the Strategy. Twenty three per cent of headteachers agreed, and 43 per cent agreed to an extent, that the range of teaching and learning resources to support Welsh as a subject (first or second language) had improved since 2010. Four per cent disagreed and nine per cent disagreed to an extent with this statement (see Figure 19).

<sup>\* &#</sup>x27;All respondents' includes Pupil Referral Units and Special Schools

Figure 19: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'The range of teaching and learning resources to support Welsh as a subject (first or second language) has improved since 2010'



Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

- 7.24 Nonetheless, practitioners stated that there was a shortage of resources for the further education sector, a lack of interactive resources, and a limited choice in terms of Welsh-medium resources in some subjects at Key Stage 3. Fifty-two headteachers offered comments on Welsh-medium or Welsh-language resources in their questionnaire responses. The majority of these described what was needed, or referred to limited resources in specific areas. However, around a third referred to an improvement in the choice or quality of resources since 2010.
- 7.25 The *Review of Resources* concluded that there was scope to simplify the processes for sharing resource information. Practitioners felt that one comprehensive central source of information for all Welsh-medium educational resources would be useful. This view was supported by some of the comments made in the headteachers' survey, which noted that finding information on the choice of resources available was not easy.
- 7.26 The Study of the work of the Bilingual Champions in Further Education also referred to the need to improve resource-sharing systems to support tutors in

<sup>\* &#</sup>x27;All respondents' includes Pupil Referral Units and Special Schools

- the further education sector. That report stated that a lack of resources could be problematic, and that a mechanism for mapping the resources available across the different subjects in FE could help practitioners to discover what is already available and potential opportunities for sharing learning materials.
- 7.27 It concluded that the resources commissioning programme makes a valuable contribution to the efforts being made to 'improve the central support mechanisms for Welsh-medium education and training'. While the process of identifying needs, commissioning projects and publishing resources takes time, the programme nevertheless enables the sector to respond to national strategic priorities.

## **Technological developments**

- 7.28 One of the strategic objectives related to Strategic Aim 5 is to 'ensure that up-to-date, standardised Welsh-language terminology is available to support all aspects of Welsh-medium provision'. In 2011, the Language Technology Unit at Bangor University was awarded a grant to complete a three-year project to develop a Glossary of Education Terminology, building on earlier work led by ACCAC. In light of this, an online Glossary of Education Terminology (Y Termiadur Addysg) was developed, providing standardised terminology for use in Welsh-medium examinations, assessments and resources. The glossary of terminology has been available online since 2012<sup>29</sup> and, according to the Annual Report on the Welsh-medium Education Strategy for 2013-14, has attracted almost a million searches since its publication. An app was also created and is available for download, and by 2014, the app had been installed on 20,000 devices. The Welsh Government has extended the grant to further support and develop this service.
- 7.29 The Welsh Government encourages the Language Technology Unit and the WJEC to work together to ensure that standardised terms are used consistently in examination papers and publications.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> www.termiaduraddysg.org

- 7.30 There have been other technological developments to support Welsh-medium and Welsh language education in recent years, including the establishment of Hwb, the National Digital Content Repository, which hosts a collection of digital resources.<sup>30 31</sup>
- 7.31 The Welsh Government has also provided funding to the RNIB to develop Welsh synthetic voices for use by blind and partially sighted Welsh speakers and learners. The voices, which are available free of charge to individuals and non-commercial organisations, enable users to read text in Welsh. Welsh Government reported that schools and colleges were using the resource to help learners with additional needs.

## Conclusions in relation to central support

- 7.32 The evidence shows that the central support for the Welsh-medium education sector has improved since the publication of the Strategy. The implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has led to an increase in the choice of Welsh-medium qualifications available, thereby supporting the aims of the Strategy. The evidence shows a constant demand amongst practitioners for support from Welsh Government and awarding bodies to provide new qualifications through the medium of Welsh. Awarding bodies need to ensure they have sufficient capacity to provide qualifications bilingually, most specifically assessors and moderators who have Welsh-language skills.
- 7.33 We also conclude that it is essential that awarding bodies and the Welsh Government plan ahead to allow sufficient time to develop Welsh-medium resources to coincide with the launch of new qualifications. The conclusion of the Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales (Welsh Government, 2012) that new GCSE and A Level qualifications (and as such the supporting resources) should be available in Welsh and English simultaneously is consistent with this finding. Evidence from the area studies

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> In addition to new resources, Hwb has an archive of resources which used to be available on the National Grid for Learning's website (NGfL).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> An evaluation of the Learning in a Digital Wales programme was carried out in 2015, looking at the influence and effectiveness of Hwb. The evaluation report is due to be published in 2016.

- and the *Review of Resources* shows that a large proportion of practitioners feel that the time between the production of English and Welsh versions of resources needs to be reduced.
- 7.34 The evidence shows that the Welsh Government's Welsh in Education Unit's resources commissioning programme is the main force driving the increase in choice of Welsh-medium resources. The resources commissioning programme makes a valuable contribution to efforts to 'improve the central support mechanisms for Welsh-medium education and training'. Although the process involved in identifying needs, commissioning projects and publishing resources takes time, the programme nonetheless provides a solution to national strategic priorities. Although the commissioning programme is a central part of the work in support of Strategic Aim 5, the limited range of resources in a number of areas remains problematic for headteachers and practitioners. Shortages were reported of electronic and interactive resources in Welsh, up-to-date Welsh-medium resources for Key Stage 3 and resources for the further education sector.
- 7.35 Evidence gathered in the course of the evaluation demonstrates that there is a continuing demand for a Welsh-medium and bilingual educational resource commissioning programme to meet practitioners' and learners' needs. The evidence shows that practitioners in the Welsh-medium sector still face an additional workload in preparing Welsh-medium resources to fill gaps.

# 8 Language skills and the use of Welsh

- 8.1 Both the Welsh-medium Education Strategy and A living language: a language for living (laith fyw: iaith byw), the Welsh Language Strategy for 2012-17 recognise the inter-relationship between the development of Welsh language skills through the education system and the use of the language at a social and community level. The Welsh-medium Education Strategy refers to the need to ensure a system 'which offers the best conditions for developing young people who are truly bilingual' (Welsh Government, 2010:15). Although the Strategy does not define what is meant by being 'truly bilingual', this suggests a level of skills and competence which enable young people to use the language confidently at school and beyond. Most learners who receive Welsh-medium education do not speak the language at home, and therefore acquire the language through the education system. 32 Young people's continued development of Welsh language skills relies on how schools nurture these skills, alongside the young people's confidence in using the language. It is clear therefore that the education system has a key influence on young people's potential to use the Welsh language in their everyday lives.
- 8.2 This chapter considers two research questions linked to the considerations above. Firstly, has the Strategy facilitated the process of improving the standard of teaching and learning in Welsh? And secondly, do learners' Welsh language skills enable them to use the Welsh language in different situations, both within education and beyond? It should be recognised that providing a comprehensive answer to the second question would require a far broader study than has been possible within the context of this evaluation. Nonetheless, the evidence collected raises important questions about the relationship between improving Welsh language skills and the use of those skills in contexts outside the classroom.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Based on Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) figures, Welsh Government. In 2013/14 38 per cent of children in Welsh-medium primary schools spoke Welsh at home (21,034 of learners aged 5 years or over). The corresponding figure ten years ago, in 2003/04, was 46 per cent (23,511 of learners aged 5 year or over).

8.3 These questions are relevant to two of the Strategic Aims, namely:

**Strategic Aim 3 (extract):** To ensure that all learners develop their Welshlanguage skills to their full potential...;<sup>33</sup> and also

**Strategic Aim 6:** To contribute to the acquisition and reinforcement of Welsh-language skills in families and in the community

8.4 This chapter includes an overview of attainment data in relation to an element of Strategic Aim 3, specifically Welsh-language skills (both first and second language) before moving on to consider the evidence gathered during the area studies, the stakeholder interviews and the headteachers' survey.

## Evidence in relation to Strategic Aim 3: Welsh-language skills

### Attainment and standards in Welsh first language

8.5 Welsh Government data shows an increase in the percentage of learners attaining the expected level in Welsh first language in Key Stages 2 and 3 since the Strategy was published (Table 15). The increase seen in levels of attainment for Welsh first language in Key Stages 2 and 3 cannot be specifically attributed to the Strategy, since a wide range of other factors also influence attainment. The increase in attainment levels since 2010 reflects the continued increase in attainment for Welsh first language since 1999. In Key Stage 4, the percentage of learners attaining grades A\*-C in Welsh first language has remained constant during the last five years (Table 15).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Another aspect of Strategic Aim 3 is discussed in Chapter 5 of this report.

Table 15: Percentage of learners achieving the expected level in Welsh first language at Key Stages 2 and 3, and the percentage attaining grades A\*-C at Key Stage 4 (%)

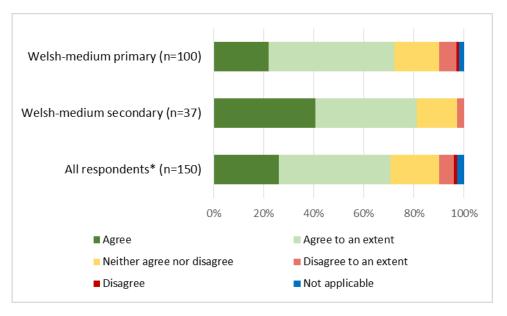
Key Stage	Percentage of learners (%)						
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014		
Key Stage 2: Percentage achieving level 4+	81.0	82.0	84.0	86.7	88.1		
Key Stage 3: Percentage achieving level 5+	76.8	81.3	84.2	87.6	90.1		
Key Stage 4: Percentage achieving grades A*-C	73.4	74.6	73.8	73.5	73.7		

Source: Welsh Government

## Practitioner and stakeholder views on standards in Welsh first language

8.6 During the area studies, most practitioners and stakeholders felt that teaching and learning standards in Welsh first language had improved since 2010, in line with the attainment data above. Although this improvement cannot be attributed to the Strategy, data from the headteachers' survey shows that the majority feel that teaching and learning standards have improved in Welsh first language since 2010. Almost three quarters of headteachers (71 per cent) agreed or agreed to an extent that standards had improved, with a minority (9 per cent) disagreeing or disagreeing to an extent (see Figure 20).

Figure 20: Headteacher responses to the statement: 'Standards in Welsh first language teaching and learning have improved since 2010'



Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

8.7 Although the evidence shows an increase in attainment in Welsh first language at Key Stages 2 and 3 (Table 15), the evidence from the area studies and the headteachers' survey suggests that this increase has been brought about mainly by factors other than the Strategy. The majority of headteachers and practitioners who participated in the area studies referred to the national emphasis on the Literacy and Numeracy Framework, the focus on standards and PISA assessments as factors that, in their opinion, have driven improvements in attainment generally, including attainment and standards in relation to the Welsh language. Of those headteachers who disagreed with the statement, a minority offered qualitative comments, stating that they had seen no significant improvement or change in standards of Welsh first language during the years since the Strategy was launched.

<sup>\*</sup> All respondents includes data from further education principals

Factors that support and hinder improved standards in Welsh first language and use of the Welsh language

- 8.8 A range of comments were received from headteachers and practitioners in relation to the factors which they see as supporting or hindering the raising of standards in Welsh amongst learners and use of the Welsh language (e.g. learners' linguistic background; their general educational attainment; schools' emphasis on promoting the use of Welsh). Although the evidence in terms of attainment shows that standards of attainment have improved in Welsh, a number of headteachers and practitioners in the area studies were uncertain whether this was leading to an increase in social use of the Welsh language amongst young people.
- 8.9 During the area studies, a topic of discussion was the influence of sociocultural factors on learners' standards and use of Welsh. The majority of stakeholders, headteachers and practitioners stated that practitioners are facing a constant challenge in raising language standards and ensuring use of the language when a substantial proportion of learners come from non-Welsh-speaking homes. Around half of the practitioners stated that learners needed to have further opportunities to practise their spoken Welsh skills in schools, in order to improve their skills and gain confidence in using Welsh. In three of the six areas, these comments reflected the fact that the majority of learners in Welsh-medium schools do not speak the language at home, and that the school, therefore, is the only place where many have the opportunity to hear and use the language. These comments were echoed by practitioners in the other three areas, however, where a higher proportion of learners speak Welsh at home. This suggests that further consideration is needed of how opportunities to develop spoken Welsh skills can be increased in Welsh-medium schools in order to improve standards and promote use of the language.
- 8.10 During the area studies, all headteachers and most practitioners emphasised that practitioners' language skills were a crucial factor in sustaining and improving standards of Welsh. During the area studies and the headteachers' survey, a minority of headteachers expressed concerns regarding

- practitioners' language skills (reinforcing the evidence presented in Chapter 6).
- 8.11 A minority of headteachers and practitioners referred in the area studies and the headteachers' survey to other factors which, in their opinion, have a positive influence on the standards of spoken Welsh and the use of Welsh:
  - the ethos of schools and the extent to which schools proactively attempt to raise and maintain standards and plan specifically for informal use of Welsh;
  - the expectations schools set in relation to raising standards and attainment, and consistency in terms of explaining the reasons for extending the informal language use amongst learners;
  - the need for continuity and consistency in standards between Key Stages, particulary Key Stages 2 and 3.

## Attainment and standards in Welsh second language

8.12 The evidence regarding standards in Welsh second language (which has been a statutory subject since 1988) paints a mixed picture. Estyn Annual Reports have been critical of standards in Welsh second language at Key Stage 2 for a number of years. Referring to provision at Key Stage 2 in their 2013-14 Annual Report, Estyn came to the conclusion that standards in Welsh second language had not improved during the year in question. The report stated that learners were not confident in using spoken or written Welsh.

'In most schools, pupils do not use their Welsh oracy and writing skills beyond Welsh lessons. They lack confidence and are reluctant to participate in short exchanges about everyday subjects.' (Estyn, 2015:63)

8.13 The One language for all report (Welsh Government, 2013) a review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4, published in September 2013, focussed in considerable detail on attainment and standards in Welsh second language. This report presented a series of 24 recommendations in an attempt to tackle low standards and attainment in the subject, including

- the need to ensure Welsh second language 'has the same status as core subjects in schools'. Professor Graham Donaldson referred to this report in his review of the Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements, and the Minister for Education and Skills made a statement on the way forward for Welsh second language in October 2015.
- 8.14 The picture at Key Stage 3 is somewhat more positive than at Key Stage 2 in relation to improved standards. Estyn reports that standards in Welsh second language at Key Stage 3 have improved in recent years (Estyn, 2015:6).

  Attainment data supports this: a constant increase has been seen from 2007-14 in the percentage of learners attaining the expected levels at Key Stage 3 (Table 16). However, the improved attainment in Welsh second language since 2010 cannot be attributed to the Strategy.

Table 16: Percentage of learners achieving the expected level (level 5+) in Welsh second language at Key Stage 3, 2007-2014 (%)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total learners achieving the expected level	50.6	54.1	56.0	59.4	64.6	68.2	73.3	77.8

Source: Welsh Government

- 8.15 Estyn recognises the increase in the percentage achieving the expected level (Table 16), but also refers to the fact that learners generally do not practise and develop their Welsh often enough outside the classroom (Estyn, 2015:72).
- 8.16 Key Stage 4 learners follow either the GCSE short course or the full course.

  The short course has a narrower scope and includes fewer hours of teaching.

  One Language for all (Welsh Government, 2013c) reported on the reasons why a number of schools choose to offer the short GCSE course for Welsh second language at Key Stage 4:
  - offering the short course rather than the full course could be seen as a means of freeing up contact hours on the timetable when schools wish

- to offer a wider range of options (e.g. vocational options/Welsh Baccalaureate);
- the limited number of specialist Welsh second language teachers means that offering the full GCSE course to more learners in more schools is a challenge.
- 8.17 The number of candidates entered for the Welsh second language GCSE short course is higher than for the full course: in 2014, 10,183 learners were entered on the full course, compared to 11,478 on the short course.
- 8.18 The percentage of learners achieving grades A\*-C in their Welsh second language at GCSE has gradually increased, but this is based on a low baseline. Table 17 shows the difference in the percentage of candidates achieving A\*-C in the full course compared to the short course: a difference of 30 percentage points in 2014.

Table 17: Percentage of learners achieving A\*-C grades in the Welsh second language full course and short course at Key Stage 4 between 2009 and 2014 (%)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Full course	70	72	71	74	76	77
Short course	45	47	47	47	48	47

Source: Welsh Government

8.19 When reporting on Welsh second language provision at Key Stage 4, Estyn has questioned the effectiveness of the GCSE courses in developing Welsh language skills.

'Standards in Welsh second language in secondary schools are good in only a few schools' (Estyn, 2014b:45)

'GCSE Welsh second-language courses do not produce bilingual pupils nor young people who are sufficiently confident to use the language in their everyday lives.' (Estyn, 2014b:44)

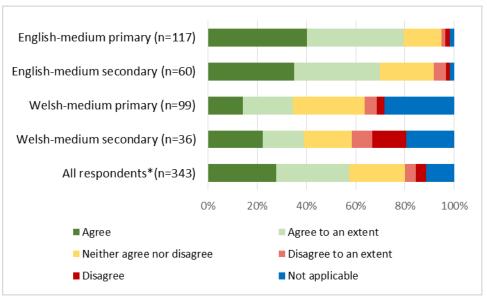
## <u>Practitioner and stakeholder views on standards in Welsh second language</u>

8.20 During the area studies, headteachers, practitioners and stakeholders expressed different opinions regarding progress in Welsh second language

standards since 2010. Most practitioners in the Welsh-medium schools (the majority of schools visited in the area studies) did not have a clear view, and a number noted that this was not relevant to them. In bilingual schools, the majority of headteachers and practitioners believed standards had improved in their schools. The majority of national stakeholders were critical of Welsh second language standards, and noted that in their opinion standards had not improved.

8.21 In their responses to the survey over half (58 per cent) of headteachers agreed, or agreed to an extent, with the statement 'Standards in Welsh second language teaching and learning have improved since 2010'. The responses of English-medium school headteachers in Figure 21, below, are worth noting. Around three quarters of English-medium school headteachers responded by agreeing or agreeing to an extent that Welsh second language standards had improved during the last five years. Very few headteachers in English-medium schools disagreed (or disagreed to an extent) with the statement (4 per cent of English-medium primary headteachers and 7 per cent of English-medium secondary headteachers).

Figure 21: Headteachers' responses to the statement: 'Standards in Welsh second language teaching and learning have improved since 2010'



Source: Headteachers' survey (Arad 2015)

<sup>\* &#</sup>x27;All respondents' includes Pupil Referral Units and Special Schools

# Factors which support and hinder the raising of standards in Welsh second language

- 8.22 This evaluation has not examined in detail the progress seen in the planning of Welsh second language provision since the publication of the *One Language for All* report (Welsh Government, 2013c). However, during the area studies and the headteachers' survey, headteachers referred to a number of issues which are relevant to efforts to raise standards in Welsh second language. Headteachers were keen to draw attention to the progress and positive developments seen in their schools. Since the evaluation did not include visits to English-medium schools, most of the evidence in the paragraphs below is based on visits to bilingual schools in the area studies and English-medium school headteachers' qualitative responses to openended questions in the headteachers' survey. It should be acknowledged that only a minority of headteachers offered qualitative responses as part of the survey.
- 8.23 During the area studies, all headteachers and most of the practitioners in bilingual schools referred to the importance of local authority and regional education consortia support when delivering Welsh second language (e.g. developing and distributing learning materials and schemes of work). While most headteachers and practitioners in the area studies referred to valuable examples of support, the majority expressed concerns that there was now less support available as a result of budget cuts, and concerns about how much support was available from local authority and consortia staff. This evidence was echoed in the responses to open-ended questions in the headteachers' survey, where a minority stated that they did not receive sufficient support from the local authority to develop provision. Similarly, a minority of headteachers expressed concerns that a reduction in the support provided by Athrawon Bro as a result of budget cuts will lead to a drop in standards over time.

'The Local Authority has lost its Welsh language advisor, which is a cause for concern. The regional development service does not provide specific support for teaching in Wales.' (English-medium secondary school headteacher)

- 8.24 All bilingual school headteachers and practitioners in the area studies referred to challenges schools face when trying to improve standards in Welsh second language. A number of these assertions were reinforced in the responses to the headteachers' survey. A minority of headteachers stated that repeating elements of the Welsh second language curriculum at the start of Key Stage 3 had a negative impact on learners' attitudes to the subject. Those headteachers stated that this created a lack of progression in (Welsh second language) provision between Key Stages 2 and 3.
- 8.25 When responding to open-ended questions in the headteachers' survey, a minority of primary headteachers stated that the introduction of the Foundation Phase had given children more opportunities to develop Welsh language skills in English-medium schools. A small minority of Englishmedium primary school headteachers reported that they made an effort to ensure that the Welsh language was delivered across the curriculum, in various areas of learning. A minority of headteachers who offered responses to the survey's open-ended questions referred to time pressures within the curriculum as a result of having to implement the requirements of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework and other developments across the curriculum. Those headteachers reported that they found it hard to set 'appropriate time' aside for Welsh second language provision. The views of this minority of headteachers raise questions about how some headteachers view the status of Welsh second language, and to what extent they take ownership of the subject.

'The emphasis on driving up standards in Welsh Second Language teaching and learning would be laudable if it weren't for the fact that a huge number of other significant changes are happening at the same time e.g. implementation of the LNF, changes to assessment and the curriculum in other subjects etc. As usual, too much is being implemented at the same time... and the danger is that valuable initiatives are just paid lip service rather than being given the necessary amount of time and attention to enable them to bed in.' (English-medium secondary school headteacher)

- 8.26 A minority of headteachers offered responses to open-ended questions in the survey, stating that there was a direct link, in their opinion, between quality and progress in Welsh language skills and the quality of teaching. Some stated that it was difficult to appoint and retain high quality Welsh second language staff. A small minority of English-medium secondary headteachers in the survey reported that one fundamental challenge when attempting to raise attainment levels in Welsh second language are the negative attitudes towards the subject found amongst Key Stage 4 learners.
- 8.27 Although this evaluation has not examined Welsh second language provision in detail, the secondary evidence reviewed and the opinions expressed by practitioners and stakeholders correspond to the findings of the *One Language for All* report (Welsh Government, 2013c). The evidence suggests that the weaknesses in Welsh second language provision across Key Stages remain, and that no significant progress was seen in terms of implementing the key recommendations.

# Welsh second language projects

- 8.28 As part of the Strategy Implementation Programme, Welsh Government has funded two projects to support Welsh second language skills in schools. The first of these, the *Everyday Welsh* (*Cymraeg Bob Dydd*) project, aims to extend the use of Welsh outside the classroom in English-medium secondary schools. The second project provides courses for Key Stage 2 teachers in two areas between 2013 and 2016. Reviews of both projects were undertaken as part of this evaluation, and the reports were published in January 2016.
- 8.29 The evidence suggests that the Welsh second language pilot projects introduced as part of the Strategy Implementation Programme have been welcomed by practitioners and learners. The evidence suggests that interventions based on residential / immersion courses are likely to lead to further opportunities for learners to use Welsh and develop their language skills outside the classroom. However, it should be noted that the pilot

projects reviewed as part of this research programme were on a comparatively small scale, and have not been of sufficient scope to enable an assessment of their contribution towards achieving the aims of the Strategy.

# Evidence in relation to Strategic Aim 6: Welsh language skills in families and in the community

8.30 During the area studies, learners, practitioners and stakeholders were questioned about the opportunities available for learners to use the Welsh language at school beyond the confines of formal education, and in the community beyond the confines of the school. Questions were also asked as part of the headteachers' survey regarding informal, occasional use of Welsh by learners. The evidence from these sources is presented below.

# Use of Welsh at school

- 8.31 During the area studies, a majority of practitioners, stakeholders, learners and parents stated that it was difficult to increase the use of Welsh amongst learners at school. This point was raised across the six areas, but more frequently in the three areas where there were higher percentages of learners from non Welsh-speaking homes. The majority of practitioners in those three areas stated that learners, in their opinion, did not make sufficient use of Welsh at school to develop their spoken skills. This viewpoint was supported by a number of practitioners in the other three areas, as well as a majority of national stakeholders. Acknowledging that this evidence is partly based on respondents' perception of learners' linguistic behaviour, this suggests that further consideration needs to be given to ways of increasing the opportunities available to develop learners' oral skills particularly learners from non Welsh-speaking homes.
- 8.32 In the discussion groups held during the area studies, most learners recognised and appreciated their schools' efforts to arrange Welsh-medium social activities beyond the confines of formal education. This was more

- apparent in three of the areas where the percentage of Welsh speakers was not high. Learners in areas that had higher percentages of Welsh speakers also appreciated their school's efforts to organise activities through the medium of Welsh, stating that corresponding activities were not available in English-medium schools.
- 8.33 During the area studies it was reported that embedding the Welsh language as part of learners' identity and encouraging use of Welsh beyond formal situations calls for additional effort on the part of teachers. Some practitioners in different areas referred to schools' 'responsibility' to encourage the use of Welsh on the school yard and beyond the confines of the school. The Strategy recognises that Welsh language skills need to be reinforced in the community or by families. However, it does not refer directly to schools' responsibility to ensure this. Reinforcing similar comments by practitioners across the six areas, one headteacher in the area studies expressed doubt whether national policy gives sufficient recognition to the 'added value teachers in Welsh-medium schools [provide]' in order to support the Welsh language.
- 8.34 These comments raise questions regarding the role of schools in offering opportunities to ensure use of the Welsh language. As stated in this evaluation's interim report, in some areas that are largely non-Welsh-speaking, the school is to all intents and purposes the 'Welsh-speaking community'. Similar comments were made by the majority of practitioners in three of the six area studies (areas where there are lower percentages of Welsh speakers). One headteacher stated, for example, that there were 'very few extra-curricular or social activities' available through the medium of Welsh, and as a result, the school organises after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities to encourage use of the Welsh language in informal contexts.
- 8.35 In three of the area studies (areas with higher percentages of Welsh speakers) practitioners were more likely to refer to schools' links to external organisations (e.g. the Urdd, Language Initiatives *Mentrau laith* and Young Farmers Clubs) than in the other three areas. The majority of practitioners

(and some learners) across the area studies emphasised that the opportunities offered by such organisations are important in order to show that the Welsh language is relevant in different social and cultural contexts. The evidence shows that schools are keen to develop these links in order to offer a wider range of social opportunities and activities to learners through the medium of Welsh.

8.36 In their responses to the open-ended, qualitative questions in the headteachers' survey, some headteachers commented on learners' use of the Welsh language, referring to examples of individual projects which were in operation within their schools. A minority of Welsh-medium school headteachers commented on the Supporting Language Use Project (*Prosiect Cefnogi Arferion laith*), stating that, in their opinion, the project had increased the use of Welsh amongst learners.<sup>34</sup>

'The Supporting Language Use Project has been beneficial. Such schemes should continue to be supported, and consideration given to applying language planning principles in the primary sector as well.' (Welsh-medium secondary school headteacher) [Translation]

8.37 A minority of headteachers from English-medium schools commented on the informal, occasional use of Welsh at school in their responses to the headteachers' survey. Some headteachers emphasised that their schools took action to encourage all learners to use Welsh socially and informally within the school. Headteachers referred to efforts to support a strong Welsh ethos within the school, to organise bilingual activities, and to employ teachers who are able to promote the language.

'As a school, we have made a clear commitment to use the language in everyday situations, from the Nursery to Year 6. Our documentation is bilingual

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> The Supporting Language Use Project for young people, which has been in operation since 2007, aims to increase young people's social use of the Welsh language, particularly amongst learners who neither use the language naturally nor regularly. As part of the project, the learners themselves take responsibility for promoting the Welsh language in their schools.

(in fact polylingual) and staff use the language between themselves to show its importance.' (English-medium primary school headteacher)

- 8.38 The Welsh Language Use Survey, 2013-15 was published by Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner in November 2015.<sup>35</sup> Among the key findings in the survey were the following:
  - that young Welsh speakers are more likely to have learnt to speak
     Welsh at school than anywhere else;
  - that young people are more likely to always or almost always speak
     Welsh at school than with friends or at home;
  - that there is a clear link between fluency and frequency of Welsh language use.

These findings, alongside the evidence collected during the evaluation, raise important questions about the role of the education system in terms of developing the Welsh language skills of learners and offering opportunities for them to use the language.

### Conclusions in relation to language skills and use of Welsh

8.39 Evidence shows an increase in attainment and standards for Welsh first language and second language as subjects at Key Stages 2 and 3, reflecting the trends in the data before the Strategy was published in 2010. There is no evidence that the Strategy has directly influenced the quality of provision and standards. Evidence from the area studies and the headteachers' survey suggests that it is the national emphasis on the Literacy and Numeracy Framework, PISA assessments and improving standards generally, including Welsh language attainment and standards, which has been largely responsible for driving these changes, rather than the Strategy. During the area studies practitioners stated that the Strategy's objectives were consistent with more general policy and inspection frameworks, but that it

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Welsh Government 2015, Welsh language use in Wales, 2013-15

- was not 'driving' efforts to improve standards nor 'directly influencing classroom provision' (secondary school headteacher).
- 8.40 Evidence from the evaluation demonstrates that Welsh first language standards have improved since 2010 in Key Stages 2 and 3, with progress visible in the attainment data. Attainment data for Key Stage 4 has remained comparatively constant over the same period. Generally speaking, therefore, the attainment data is positive, as reflected in the results of the headteachers' survey and the area studies, since most practitioners felt that standards had improved in Welsh first language. As stated above, however, this increase cannot be attributed to the Strategy.
- 8.41 The evidence presents a mixed picture in relation to standards in Welsh second language. On the one hand, attainment data shows an improvement in Key Stages 3 and 4 since 2010, as reflected in the results of the headteachers' survey, where most headteachers of English-medium schools agreed that standards had improved. On the other hand, the data shows that this improvement was based on a low baseline. Qualitative evidence gathered in the headteachers' survey and in the area studies expressed criticism of standards in Welsh second language. There was also considerable criticism of Welsh second language standards across the Key Stages in other publications during the period of the evaluation (Estyn, 2012-13; Welsh Government, 2013c).
- 8.42 This evaluation has not looked in detail at the progress seen when planning Welsh second language provision since the publication of the *One Language* for *All* report (Welsh Government, 2013c). Two pilot projects presented as part of the Strategy's Implementation Programme have been reviewed and evidence suggests that these pilot projects have been welcomed by practitioners and learners. However the reviews do not enable us to demonstrate their impact, nor have these pilot projects been implemented on a large enough scale to measure their contribution towards achieving the Strategy's aims.
- 8.43 Evidence suggests that the Welsh-medium education sector does not always give learners sufficient opportunities to develop their spoken skills in a way

that enables them to use them in a range of social and more informal settings. The evidence shows the importance of schools in providing opportunities to use the Welsh language outside formal education. The evidence also underlines how crucially important this role is in areas where the percentage of Welsh speakers is not high, where schools are seen as the focal point of the 'Welsh-speaking community'. If we are to nurture Welsh speakers who are confident in using their spoken skills in the community and the workplace, we can conclude that learners need to be offered further opportunities to practise their spoken skills in formal and informal contexts.

#### 9 Conclusions and recommendations

# 1. Embedding the Strategy's vision

- 9.1 Evidence from this evaluation shows that there is support for the Strategy's vision and aims amongst the officers (at national and local level), stakeholders and practitioners who have been involved in its delivery. They responded positively to the commitment to the growth of the Welsh-medium education system and to ensuring that the education system supports an increase in the number of people of all ages and backgrounds who are fluent in Welsh. The formalised expression of a national vision for Welsh-medium education has assisted some organisations and individuals in planning to support Welsh-medium education. The vision, aims and outcomes of the Strategy have been a focus for discussions on planning provision within the Welsh Government Department for Education and Skills and at a local level.
- 9.2 However, the evidence suggests that the Strategy's vision has not been embedded consistently across all delivery partners and throughout the various layers of the education system, from Welsh Government down to local authorities and providers. Although there is general support for the Strategy and recognition of the vision for the growth of Welsh-medium education, the evidence does not show the vision as having permeated in such a way as to have driven significant changes in the way partners plan provision. The Strategy has failed to ensure effective forward planning across the various stages of education and training, in order to realise the outcomes and targets presented in 2010.
- 9.3 One of the most apparent reasons for this is the fact that the education policy landscape has been subject to continuous change during the period since the publication of the Strategy. The Strategy has not been an obvious priority for stakeholders in light of the attention given to policy reviews, the regionalisation of school improvement arrangements and the emphasis on raising standards. We could conclude, therefore, that the Strategy's vision has been neither sufficiently robust nor sufficiently mainstreamed to withstand the influence of other external developments. This underlines the

need to ensure integrated policy development, so that changes to the education system consider current commitments to developing Welsh-medium education and contribute to achieving the Strategy's aims. This is relevant in the context of current policy developments. For example, the Welsh Government and its partners, in responding to the recommendations of Professor Donaldson's *Successful Futures* report on the curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales, should ensure that the vision for Welsh-medium education is maintained and reinforced.

- 9.4 Another reason why the Strategy has not become embedded is the variation in the amount of attention given to it by different delivery partners. Some local authorities and providers have worked proactively to ensure that their own Strategic plans are aligned with the Strategy's vision and aims. On the other hand, a number of local authorities and providers have demonstrated a lack of strategic forward planning to support continuing growth in Welsh-medium education.
- 9.5 Bearing in mind that the Strategy's aim is to set a long-term strategic direction, this evaluation has found that the vision needs to be reaffirmed, along with a commitment to developing Welsh-medium education provision, and an emphasis on the key role of all partners across Wales in realising this vision.
- 9.6 The evaluation has found improvements in how local authorities and some other delivery partners plan in order to support Welsh-medium education provision. However, the steps taken to date have not led to growth on the scale intended by the Welsh Government (see 'Progress against targets' 9.10-9.15). Evidence gathered through the evaluation shows that planning on the basis of responding to demand, which is one of the Strategy's principles, does not necessarily ensure growth in provision.
- 9.7 In reaffirming its vision for Welsh-medium education, the Welsh Government should clearly state its expectation that delivery partners should plan ahead in a purposeful way to increase provision and, where appropriate, encourage increased demand in order to realise the Welsh Government's vision for growth in Welsh-medium education. The challenge facing the Welsh

Government is to ensure that partners take full ownership of its vision, and implement it decisively across all tiers of the education system in Wales.

#### Recommendation 1: for the Welsh Government

The Welsh Government should publish a policy statement which confirms and reinforces its vision for the continuing growth of Welsh-medium education. This statement should emphasise the duty on all partners to plan proactively to increase Welsh-medium education provision.

# 2. The Strategy's outcomes and targets

- 9.8 The Welsh Government published a Strategy with a series of targets for 2015 and 2020, recognising that work to ensure the growth of Welsh-medium education is a long-term agenda. Growth has been seen in the Welsh-medium education system during the years since the publication of Strategy. However, progress against the Strategy's original targets for 2015 is variable (see section 3 below).
- 9.9 The Strategy's targets fulfil two purposes. Firstly, they provide measures of progress in the Strategy's Implementation Programme and are an important part of the accountability and scrutiny arrangements. Before the publication of the Strategy, there were no national targets for increasing Welsh-medium education. Secondly, there is an aspirational element to the targets: they provide a direction for partners who are part of the provision planning process. During the evaluation we heard that delivery partners (local authorities, regional consortia and providers) felt that the Strategy specifically the existence of its outcomes and targets had been a tool to facilitate improvements.

### 3. Progress against the targets

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

9.10 There has been an increase in the number of 7 year-old learners being assessed in Welsh during the years since the Strategy was published, and

the figure has risen to its highest level ever. However, the percentage falls short of the target for 2015 and the 2020 target seems very challenging without intervention and far-reaching action.

Table 18: Percentage of Year 2 learners assessed in Welsh (first language), 2009-2014

							Tar	gets
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
%	21.0%	21.8%	21.9%	21.9%	22.4%	22.2%	25%	30%

Outcome: Progress against the 2009 baseline, but falling short of the 2015 target. Data for the most recent year shows a drop against the target.

Source: The Welsh-medium Education Strategy Annual Report (2014-15)

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

9.11 A gradual increase has been seen in the percentage of Year 9 learners assessed in Welsh (first language), although it seems unlikely that the 2015 target will be reached. The Welsh-medium education system is still losing a substantial proportion of learners between Key Stages 2 and 3. The data shows that the greatest reduction occurs in the local authorities with the highest percentages of Welsh speakers. Ensuring that higher percentages of learners stay in Welsh-medium education when transferring from primary to secondary school in Gwynedd, Anglesey, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire would have a substantial impact on progress in relation to this outcome.

Table 19: Percentage of Year 9 learners assessed in Welsh, 2009-2014

							Tar	gets
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
%	15.9%	16.0%	16.3%	16.8%	17.0%	17.1%	19%	23%

Outcome: A gradual increase against the 2009 baseline, but falling short of the 2015 target.

Source: The Welsh-medium Education Strategy Annual Report (2014-15)

# Outcome 3: More learners studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh

9.12 The Strategy contains two sets of indicators for measuring progress against Outcome 3; these refer to the percentages of learners registered for Welsh-medium qualifications. The 2015 targets for these indicators were reached three years early, but the percentages had slipped back by 2013. An increasing number of learners have been studying vocational subjects, such as BTEC courses, in recent years and it was suggested that a shortage of Welsh-speaking assessors and lack of resources for some subjects have had some influence on these percentages.

Table 20: Percentage of learners entered for GCSE Welsh (first language) being entered for at least two further Level 1/2 qualifications through the medium of Welsh, 2009-2014

							Tar	gets
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
%	80.9%	79.5%	81.0%	85.3%	81.6%	79.3%	84%	88%

Outcome: The target was attained early, but the expected level was not maintained, and the percentage has dropped since 2012.

Source: The Welsh-medium Education Strategy Annual Report (2014-15)

Table 21: Percentage of learners entered for GCSE Welsh (first language) being entered for at least five further Level 1/2 qualifications through the medium of Welsh, 2009-2014

							Tar	gets
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
%	58.4%	59.7%	62.2%	64.9%	55.5%	52.6%	62%	68%

Outcome: The target was reached early, but the level was not maintained, and the percentage has dropped since 2012.

Source: The Welsh-medium Education Strategy Annual Report (2014-15)

- Outcome 4: More learners aged 16–19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh, in schools, colleges and work-based learning
- 9.13 An increase was seen in the percentage of Welsh-medium and bilingual education activities in schools, further education institutions and work-based learning, and the 2015 targets were reached. However, it should be noted that the data reported by the Welsh Government in relation to this outcome combines Welsh-medium and bilingual provision. Welsh-medium provision in FE colleges and work-based learning is considerably lower.

Table 22: Welsh-medium and bilingual students' education activities by sector, 2009-2014

							Tarç	gets
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
Schools	17.0%	17.1%	21.0%	17.4%	20.1%	20.5%	18%	20%
FE Institutions	6.1%	6.2%	5.7%	6.7%	8.4%	8.5%	7%	10%
Work-based learning	1.8%	1.5%	3.0%	3.9%	3.6%	3.0%	2.5%	4%

Outcome: Targets achieved. However, the data reported by the Welsh Government in relation to this outcome combines Welsh-medium and bilingual provision. Welsh-medium provision in FE colleges and work-based learning is considerably lower.

Source: The Welsh-medium Education Strategy Annual Report (2014-15)

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

9.14 The Outcome 5 indicators refer to the total entries for Welsh A Level first language and second language. Progress against both indicators has fallen short of the targets set, with fewer learners choosing to study these subjects than when the Strategy was published.

Table 23: Total A Level Welsh (first language) entries as a percentage of GCSE Welsh language entries, two years earlier, 2004-2014

						Tar	gets
2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
6.7%	6.7%	6.8%	5.5%	5.9%	5.3%	7%	9%
Outcome: A decrease in the percentage since the 2009 baseline.							

Source: Welsh Government, Annual Report 2014-15

Table 24: Total A Level Welsh (second language) entries as a percentage of full and short course GCSE Welsh second language entries, two years earlier, 2004-2014.

2004 2014.						Tar	gets
2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
2.9%	2.4%	2.6%	2.3%	1.9%	1.8%	3.5%	4%
Outcome: A decrease in the percentage since the 2009 baseline.							

Source: Welsh Government, Annual Report 2014-15

9.15 When progress against the targets is examined, it is evident that the anticipated change in terms of Welsh-medium assessments, learning activities and entries has not been realised. Indeed, the picture is less positive in the case of several indicators than when the Strategy was published, leading us to question how realistic the achievement of the 2015 targets was. The Strategy's main emphasis is on strengthening planning mechanisms, assisting the process of capacity building in the Welsh-medium sector, and ensuring that appropriate support is available for partners and providers. Developmental action such as this does not necessarily lead in the short term to an increase in provision across the different phases of education, namely the focus of the Strategy's outcomes and indicators. Measuring progress against the targets is likely to be a more telling exercise in the period up to 2020 as the implementation of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) moves forward.

#### Recommendation 2: for the Welsh Government

The national targets for 2020 should be reviewed, and included as part of the policy statement on Welsh-medium education. Sub-targets for outcomes at a regional level should be included where appropriate.

# 4. Implementation of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy

- 9.16 In addition to outlining a vision and outcomes for Welsh-medium education, the Strategy includes an Implementation Programme which places expectations on partners, including national organisations, local authorities, education and training providers and area fora.
- 9.17 The Strategy has been useful as a policy instrument for some Welsh Government officials, local authorities and stakeholders in raising awareness of Welsh-medium education amongst different audiences. The new procedures introduced as a result of the Strategy, including the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and associated monitoring arrangements, have contributed to raising the profile of Welsh-medium education.
- 9.18 In order to support the implementation process, the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 was introduced, placing planning arrangements on a statutory basis. This is an important step which ensures that a long-term planning infrastructure is in place.
- 9.19 Across all elements of this evaluation, the importance of the drive, attitude and commitment of individuals in key roles when supporting the implementation of the Strategy was highlighted. While planning mechanisms have been strengthened, the leadership of Directors of Education, elected members, senior officers and heads of education institutions continues to be very influential in terms of the effectiveness and impact of actions taken. Ensuring effective action calls for leadership and ownership across the different tiers of the education system, from the Welsh Government to local authorities and providers. The Welsh Government and its partners (local authorities, regional consortia and providers) could have provided greater strategic direction order to drive the Strategy's implementation proactively, and as a mainstreamed part of the education system.

9.20 There are strong links between the Strategy and other education policies. During the evaluation examples were provided that suggested that Welsh-medium education is not always an integral consideration within the Welsh Government's education policies. Steps should be taken to ensure that the specific requirements of the Welsh-medium education sector, and the commitment to support the sector, are considered as other programmes and strategies are planned.

#### Recommendation 3: for the Welsh Government

Senior leaders within the Welsh Government should ensure that Welshmedium education is considered as a core element throughout the process of planning and implementing education policies. This should include careful consideration of the likely contribution and impact of policies on the outcomes to which the Welsh Government has committed in the Strategy.

## Recommendation 4: for delivery partners

Local authorities, regional consortia and education and training providers should ensure that:

- a) leaders sign up to the Strategy's vision and act in a way which is consistent with the Strategy's aims and outcomes;
- b) the Strategy's aims and outcomes are prioritised as part of their organisational strategic plans.

### 5. Planning provision

- 9.21 The evaluation has found improvements in how local authorities and some other delivery partners plan in order to support Welsh-medium education provision. However, the steps taken to date have not led to growth on the scale intended by the Welsh Government. This links to the matter of planning Welsh-medium provision 'on the basis of a proactive response to informed parental demand', one of the principles of the Strategy.
- 9.22 As discussed in the interim report this principle raises a key question about the difference between (i) planning in response to demand and (ii) purposeful planning with the clear intention of increasing provision and encouraging

growth in demand. A further consideration is whether planning in response to demand is a suitable basis for planning in every sector, including the further education sector where the level of demand for Welsh-medium provision has been historically weak.

# Planning Welsh-medium provision in the early years

- 9.23 Ensuring the growth of Welsh-medium early years education provision is a crucial step in the process of increasing Welsh-medium education in the statutory phases. This evaluation has not carried out a detailed review of the Strategy's influence on pre-statutory provision. However, the evidence suggests that Welsh-medium provision in the early years is not meeting demand in a number of areas. This situation is undermining the Welsh Government's commitment to ensuring the growth of Welsh-medium education.
- 9.24 Despite some exceptions in areas where there is proactive planning, WESPs do not present clear strategies for increasing access to Welsh-medium provision in the early years. It is essential that key stakeholders, including Mudiad Meithrin and groups representing the voices of parents, are able to influence WESPs, and support the process of identifying priorities in relation to increasing access points to Welsh-medium provision in the early years.

#### Recommendation 5: for the Welsh Government

The Welsh Government should ensure that all authorities set targets for the growth of Welsh-medium early years provision, and include them in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

### **Recommendation 6: for the Welsh Government**

A specific study should be carried out on planning Welsh-medium provision in the early years, focussing on the following issues:

- assessing to what extent local authorities plan for Welsh-medium early years provision as an integral part of Welsh in Education Strategic Plans;
- the steps that need to be taken for authorities and delivery partners to ensure clear progression pathways for families, from the pre-statutory

phase to schools;

- guidelines/methods that could be used at a local level to generate demand for Welsh-medium provision in the early years;
- the variations in how authorities gather information about the demand for Welsh-medium provision as part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessments;
- the priorities and requirements when developing the Welsh-medium early years workforce.

# Planning provision in the statutory phase

- 9.25 Evidence provided by local authorities shows that the Strategy has led to more structured planning arrangements, and there was of a more coordinated approach to planning Welsh-medium provision across in the six area studies included in the evaluation.
- 9.26 Placing WESPs on a statutory basis has been an important development in a local and national context. One of the key objectives of the Strategy was to strengthen the planning infrastructure for Welsh-medium education, and the WESPs are a focus for local authorities and the Welsh Government when discussing, preparing and taking action to increase provision. These reporting and monitoring arrangements mean that the Welsh Government can hold local authorities to account for their action plans at a local level.
- 9.27 However, despite the additional focus on planning processes, the evidence raises doubts regarding local authorities' capacity to formulate and implement strategic plans which will lead to growth in Welsh-medium education. Evidence collected from stakeholders and headteachers suggests that there are different levels of commitment (in the various authorities) towards drawing up and implementing robust and ambitious plans. Some local authorities are slow to respond to the increasing demand for Welsh-medium education.
- 9.28 The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welshmedium Education (Wales) Regulations clearly state the requirements for local authorities to consult on their Plans. However, there is inconsistency in

local authorities' approaches to consulting with schools, providers and local stakeholders. There is scope to improve the way in which a number of authorities secure the input of partners to the process of drawing up their plans.

### Recommendation 7: for local authorities

Local authorities should carry out comprehensive, open consultations when revising Welsh in Education Strategic Plans in future, in line with the provisions of the relevant Regulations.

9.29 Since the publication of the Strategy, the Welsh Government's emphasis has been on ensuring that delivery partners (local authorities, regional consortia and providers) establish robust strategic planning processes for Welshmedium education. Delivery partners plan provision in compliance with the relevant statutory and administrative requirements. So far, the same level of attention has not been given to monitoring the quality and impact of implementing the schemes. The next step for the Welsh in Education Unit is to ensure that robust arrangements exist to scrutinise the quality and effectiveness of local authority, provider and other delivery partners' actions and interventions.

#### Recommendation 8: for the Welsh Government

The Welsh Government should publish an annual monitoring report on the progress and effectiveness of the implementation of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans. This report would be an opportunity to identify which authorities have succeeded in increasing Welsh-medium provision, and to challenge authorities that have underperformed against their local targets and plans. This report could be a means of sharing good practice when implementing plans.

9.30 There were examples of a lack of connection between the objectives of the Strategy and wider plans. There needs to be better integration between the aims of the Strategy, WESPs and other relevant local policies, such as transport policies and early years plans. The Welsh Government needs to

convey this message to local authority leaders, as there is evidence that decisions made by some authorities are undermining local authority statutory plans to support Welsh-medium education.

### Recommendation 9: for local authorities

Local authorities should ensure that local decisions, policies and procedures reflect the Welsh Government's vision for Welsh-medium education and that this is articulated in the content and implementation of their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and other relevant plans.

9.31 In some parts of Wales the Welsh-medium education system is still losing a substantial number of learners as they transfer to secondary education. The data shows that a proportion of learners transfer from Welsh-medium provision to study in English-medium or bilingual streams, and follow Welsh second language courses at Key Stages 3 and 4. The existence of bilingual schools is an important factor in the patterns of linguistic continuity found in Wales: the lowest rates of continuity are found in the areas which have the highest number of bilingual schools.

#### Recommendation 10: for the Welsh Government and local authorities

The Welsh Government should continue to work closely with local authorities to prioritise improving progression rates in Welsh-medium education across the Key Stages.

In order to support this work:

- a) policymakers and officers working at a local level should ensure they understand the reasons why parents and children decide to change medium;
- b) clear targets should be set to increase the percentage of learners who continue in Welsh-medium education up to Key Stage 4 in those areas where progression rates are lowest.

# Planning Welsh-medium 14-19 provision

- 9.32 The provision of 14-19 education and training has seen numerous changes since the introduction of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009. Implementing the Measure has supported the Strategy's aim of strengthening Welsh-medium provision in the post-14 phase, by requiring local authorities to prepare local curricula which promote access to Welsh-medium courses. The work of the 14-19 Regional Networks and the cross-border Welsh-medium fora has led to improved collaboration between providers in relation to activities to share good practice and develop the workforce in some areas. The data shows that there has been an increase in the number of Welsh-medium and bilingual subjects offered in all regions of Wales since the Measure was implemented.
- 9.33 It appears that collaboration between schools has improved in a number of areas. However, it was noted that this was a result of the financial situation schools are facing (which compels further strategic planning to share resources), rather than the influence of the Strategy. It was reported that damaging competition continued between schools and colleges in several areas.
- 9.34 A new funding framework was introduced in the 2014/15 academic year, with institutions funded on the basis of programmes, rather than qualifications, thereby placing greater emphasis on the quality of learning and learner outcomes. The framework continues to provide funding for Welsh-medium provision. It is still early days in terms of understanding what effect the new funding arrangements will have on Welsh-medium provision. There will be a need to monitor how providers adapt to the new framework with particular attention given to its influence on institutions' ability to plan for an increase in Welsh-medium provision and programmes.
- 9.35 The Bilingual Champions project has supported the process of planning Welsh-medium provision in the further education sector and has led to an increased focus on supporting the Welsh language in colleges. By working with senior management teams and other partners, the Champions have

succeeded in raising awareness of the opportunities to increase provision. Various developments have been seen in some organisations, but we have concluded that the results of the developmental work cannot yet be fully seen. We have also concluded that one of the shortcomings of the planning process in the further education sector is the lack of action plans at provider level. The action taken is not sufficiently purposeful and strategic, although principals support the aims of the Strategy. As a result, very little progress has been seen in relation to Welsh-medium provision in the further education sector during the life of the Strategy.

#### Recommendation 11: for further education institutions

Further education institutions should ensure that they have action plans which clearly set out priority areas for the development of Welsh-medium provision. The institutions' strategic plans should state how they will expand Welsh-medium provision in colleges to support growth in the sector.

#### Recommendation 12: for the Welsh Government

The Welsh Government should ensure there is coherence and consistency between Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Welsh-medium provision action plans in further education institutions. Where this does not happen, the Welsh Government should propose improvements to the plans in order to support progress towards outcome 4 of the Strategy, namely 'more learners aged 16–19 studying subjects through the medium of Welsh, in schools, colleges and work-based learning'.

9.36 There is inconsistency in the method used to measure the demand for post16 Welsh-medium provision at present, with too much reliance on information from practitioners, rather than consistent methods of recording the learner's chosen language of study. A new national system of applying for places was introduced in the further education sector (the common application process), which provides an opportunity to measure the demand for Welsh-medium provision across the sector. This could improve organisations' planning processes by identifying demand earlier.

#### **Recommendation 13: for the Welsh Government**

The Welsh Government should consider how to measure the demand for post-16 Welsh-medium provision more systematically, looking at ways of ensuring that learners record their preferred language of study as part of a new common application process.

# Planning Welsh-medium provision for learners with additional learning needs

- 9.37 The evidence provides a mixed picture in relation to changes to Welsh-medium provision for learners with ALN since the publication of the Strategy. Examples were seen in some of the areas visited where specialised support has been developed, with some authorities planning ahead in order to offer specialist Welsh-medium provision in a designated centre for intensive needs. However, in other areas there were examples of a lack of capacity to support learners with ALN. One of the repercussions of the lack of specialist support is the additional pressure on practitioners as they try to respond to learner needs in a reactive manner. Anecdotal examples were provided where a lack of support had led to learners transferring from the Welsh-medium sector to English-medium provision.
- 9.38 The contents of WESPs also included considerable variation, with some examples of forward-thinking authorities developing new ALN centres, sharing resources across schools, and ensuring joint working at a regional level in order to provide specialist support, while others tended to place more emphasis on support in individual schools. The evidence suggests that further research needs to be carried out in this area specifically, in order to consider how support for learners with ALN should develop in the context of overall growth within the Welsh-medium sector.

#### Recommendation 14: for the Welsh Government

The Welsh Government should conduct a further review in relation to Welshmedium provision for learners with additional learning needs. The review should explore examples of good practice at a local and regional level. The review should also consider the capacity of the Welsh-medium workforce in this field.

#### 6. The workforce

- 9.39 The aim of the Strategy was to develop the capacity and skills of the Welsh-medium workforce to ensure an adequate supply of practitioners across all phases of education and training. There is no evidence to show that the Strategy has made a significant contribution to the critical mass of the Welsh-medium education workforce.
- 9.40 Arrangements have been in place since before the Strategy was published that provide valuable support for prospective qualified teachers and practitioners. The financial incentives for students following teacher training courses in Welsh are an important contribution to supporting the workforce, and there has been an increase in the number and percentage of students completing an ITT course and being able to teach bilingually or through the medium of Welsh.
- 9.41 The evidence in relation to practitioner supply and demand in the sector is incomplete, since the methods used to gather the information are neither comprehensive nor systematic at present. Welsh Government officials have been working in partnership with the Education Workforce Council to improve the process of systematic data collection on Welsh-language skills in the education workforce, but these processes are not yet operational. Heads of schools and colleges expressed concerns regarding the supply of practitioners with Welsh-language skills. Evidence showed that the number of applications for vacancies in the Welsh-medium sector was substantially lower than in the English-medium sector, and there was a reported shortage in some secondary sector subjects, as well as a lack of classroom assistants who have high-level Welsh-language skills.

#### Recommendation 15: for the Welsh Government

The Welsh Government should continue to work in partnership with the Education Workforce Council to develop a comprehensive and systematic method of assessing the supply of, and demand for, Welsh-medium practitioners within the sector. This should lead to more strategic planning for the workforce in future and support the process of increasing the supply and quality of practitioners in the Welsh-medium sector.

9.42 The Sabbatical Scheme, which provides periods of intensive study for practitioners to enable them to develop their Welsh-language skills, has led to positive outcomes for both individuals and schools. It must be ensured that actions and associated funding to increase and support the skills of the workforce are an integrated part of local strategic plans and also, where appropriate, at provider level. The conclusion of the *Review of the Sabbatical Scheme Review* was that schools and local authorities were not using the Scheme as a means of supporting the priorities set in the WESPs.

#### Recommendation 16: for the Welsh Government

In order to ensure that the Welsh language Sabbatical Scheme is used in a purposeful and strategic way, the Welsh Government should encourage local authorities to identify indicators to measure the Scheme's success which support the priorities set out in their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

9.43 Following changes to funding arrangements, regional consortia receive funding through the Education Improvement Grant to enable them to undertake a wide range of activities, including the provision of continuous professional development opportunities. The Grant is an important source of support for a wide range of activities, including training to support the implementation of the curriculum, support in relation to leadership, teaching and learning methodologies, workforce training in Welsh-language skills, training and activities to support joint working amongst practitioners and continuing professional development schemes. It is vital that sufficient funding and support are available to support the aims of the Strategy and targets found in local WESPs.

### **Recommendation 17: for the Welsh Government**

The Welsh Government should monitor the funding provided to the Welshmedium sector as part of the new Education Improvement Grant procedures. There is a need to ensure that the level of funding allocated to consortia and local authorities for training the Welsh-medium workforce enables them to meet the targets of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans, and respond to priorities when increasing provision.

# 7. Central support

- 9.44 The evaluation has found that the central support for the Welsh-medium education sector has improved since the publication of the Strategy. The implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 has led to an increase in the choice of Welsh-medium qualifications available, thereby supporting the aims of the Strategy. The evidence shows a continued demand amongst practitioners for support from the Welsh Government and awarding bodies to provide new qualifications through the medium of Welsh. Awarding bodies need to ensure they have sufficient capacity to provide qualifications bilingually, most specifically assessors and moderators who have Welsh-language skills.
- 9.45 Awarding bodies and the Welsh Government need to plan ahead to allow sufficient time to develop Welsh-medium resources to coincide with the launch of new qualifications. The conclusion of the *Review of Qualifications* for 14 to 19 year olds in Wales (Welsh Government, 2012), that new GCSE and A level qualifications should be available in Welsh at the same time as the English versions, is consistent with this finding. Evidence from the area studies and the *Review of Resources* shows that a substantial proportion of practitioners feel this is not happening at present.

#### **Recommendation 18: for Qualifications Wales**

Qualifications Wales should co-operate with awarding bodies to ensure that learners in the Welsh-medium sector can access equal support, and that they are not disadvantaged compared to the support and resources available to learners in the English-medium sector.

9.46 The Welsh Government's Welsh in Education Unit's resources commissioning programme is the main force driving the increase in choice of Welsh-medium resources. The evaluation has found that the resources commissioning programme makes a valuable contribution to efforts to 'improve central support mechanisms for Welsh-medium education and training' (Welsh Government, 2010:18). Although the process involved in identifying needs, commissioning projects and publishing resources takes time, the programme nonetheless provides a solution to national strategic

priorities. The commissioning programme is a central part of the work in support of Strategic Aim 5. However, the limited range of resources in a number of areas remains problematic for headteachers and practitioners. Practitioners reported shortages of electronic and interactive resources in Welsh, up-to-date Welsh-medium resources for Key Stage 3 and resources for the further education sector.

9.47 There is a continuing demand for a Welsh-medium and bilingual educational resource commissioning programme to meet practitioners' and learners' needs. The evidence shows that practitioners in the Welsh-medium sector still face an additional workload in preparing Welsh-medium resources to fill gaps.

#### Recommendation 19: for the Welsh Government

The Welsh Government should continue to provide a commissioning programme for Welsh-medium resources and ensure that the programme provides resources in a timely manner to support the requirements of the curriculum and Welsh-medium qualifications.

### **Recommendation 20: for the Welsh Government**

The Welsh Government should continue to encourage schools, local authorities and regional consortia to share Welsh-medium and bilingual resources. To facilitate this, the Welsh Government should continue to encourage subject practitioners to take advantage of opportunities to create online subject networks (e.g. through Hwb+).

### 8. Language skills and use of Welsh

9.48 Evidence shows an increase in attainment and standards for Welsh first language and second language as subjects at Key Stages 2 and 3, reflecting the trends in the data before the Strategy was published in 2010. There is no evidence that the Strategy has directly influenced the quality of provision and standards. Evidence from the area studies and the headteachers' survey suggests that it is the national emphasis on the Literacy and Numeracy Framework, PISA assessments and improving standards generally, including Welsh language attainment and standards, that has been largely responsible

- for driving these changes, rather than the Strategy. Despite the fact that the objectives of the Strategy are consistent with more general policy and inspection frameworks, it is still not driving efforts to improve standards nor directly influencing classroom provision.
- 9.49 The evidence presents a mixed picture in relation to standards in Welsh second language. On the one hand, attainment data shows an improvement in Key Stages 3 and 4 since 2010, and this was reflected in the results of the headteachers' survey, where the majority of English-medium school headteachers agreed that standards had improved. On the other hand, the data shows that this improvement was from a low baseline. Qualitative evidence collected through the headteachers' survey and in all the area studies included criticism of standards of Welsh second language. There was also considerable criticism of Welsh second language standards across the key stages in other publications during the period of the evaluation (Estyn, 2012-13; Welsh Government, 2013).
- 9.50 The evidence suggests that the Welsh second language pilot projects introduced as part of the Strategy's implementation programme have been welcomed by practitioners and learners. The reviews carried out as part of this evaluation do not enable us to demonstrate the impact of these projects. However, the evidence suggests that interventions based on residential/immersion courses are likely to lead to further opportunities for learners to use the Welsh language and develop their language skills outside the classroom.
- 9.51 There is evidence to suggest that the Welsh-medium education sector does not always give learners sufficient opportunities to develop their spoken skills in a way that enables them to use them in a range of social and more informal settings. Ensuring such opportunities is important in order to improve language skills and nurture confident Welsh speakers who use the language in the community. The evidence underlines the importance of schools in providing opportunities to use the Welsh language outside formal education. The evidence shows the key importance of this role in areas where the percentage of Welsh speakers is not high, where schools are seen as the

focal point of the Welsh-speaking community. In order to nurture Welsh speakers who are confident in using their spoken skills in the community and the workplace, learners need to be offered further opportunities to practise their spoken skills in formal and informal contexts.

#### **Recommendation 21: for the Welsh Government**

As part of a policy statement reinforcing the message of the Strategy, the Welsh Government should recognise the need for additional action to develop and strengthen spoken Welsh language skills in the Welsh-medium sector. This action should focus on improving skills in order to prepare learners for the workforce. Welsh Government should carry out a review of how such new opportunities should be presented in formal and informal contexts.

# **Appendices**

# **Appendix 1: References**

# Publications by public bodies

Estyn (2013a) Welsh Language Development in the Foundation Phase.

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Estyn (2015) The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2013-2014.

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Mudiad Meithrin (2015) Annual Report 2014-2015.

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Robert Hill Consulting (2013) The future delivery of education services in Wales.

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Welsh Government (2009) Welsh-medium Education Strategy: Consultation.

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Welsh Government (2011b) Raising School Standards.

Welsh Government (2012a) Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales.

Welsh Government (2012b) A living language: a language for living – Welsh Language Strategy 2012-2017.

Welsh Government (2012c) 2011 Census: First results on the Welsh language.

Welsh Government (2013a) Welsh in Education Strategic Plans – guidelines.

Welsh Government (2013b) Evaluation of the Welsh Language Strategy.

Welsh Government (2013c) One Language for all: A review of Welsh second language at key stages 3 and 4.

Welsh Government (2013d) Raising our sights: review of Welsh for Adults.

Welsh Government (2013e) Welsh-medium Education Strategy: Annual report 2012–13.

Welsh Government (2013f) Youth Engagement and Progression Framework Implementation Plan.

Welsh Government (2013g) Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing the Demand for Welsh-medium Education (Wales).

Welsh Government (2013h) School Organisation Code.

Welsh Government (2013i) *Building a Brighter Future: Early Years and Childcare Plan.* 

Welsh Government (2014a) Welsh-medium Education Strategy: Review of the Welsh-language Sabbatical Scheme for educational practitioners: participant experiences 2011-2012.

Welsh Government (2014b) Welsh-medium Education Strategy: Review of Use and Quality of Resources commissioned by the Welsh Government's Welsh in Education Unit.

Welsh Government (2014c) Welsh-medium Education Strategy: A study of the Bilingual Champions in Further Education, Welsh Government.

Welsh Government (2014d) Welsh-medium Education Strategy: Annual Report 2013–14.

Welsh Government (2014e) National model for regional working: guidance.

Welsh Government (2014f) Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 Local curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 4 guidance.

Welsh Government (2015a) Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales.

Welsh Government (2015b) Welsh-medium Education Strategy: Annual Report 2014–15.

# Legislation

Learning and Skills Measure (Wales) 2009 (nawm 1). Available here: <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2009/1/contents">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2009/1/contents</a>

School Standards and Organisation Act (Wales) 2013. Available here: <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2013/1/contents/enacted">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2013/1/contents/enacted</a>

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welsh Medium Education (Wales) 2013, No. 3048 (W. 307). Available here: <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/cy/wsi/2013/3048/contents/made">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/cy/wsi/2013/3048/contents/made</a>

### Other relevant publications reviewed

Roberts, G. a Williams, C. (gol) (2003), *Addysg Gymraeg Addysg Gymreig*. Bangor University.

Thomas, H.S. (2010), *Brwydr i Baradwys? Y Dylanwadau ar Dwf Ysgolion Cymraeg De-ddwyrain Cymru*. University of Wales Press.

Williams, I.W. (gol.) (2002) Hanes Sefydlu Ysgolion Cymraeg 1939-2000. Y Lolfa.

# Appendix 2: Topic guide used during stakeholder interviews

### Introduction

As part of the Evaluation of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy, we are carrying out interviews with organisations with close links to education in Wales. The discussions will be based around the following broad questions:

- Is there any evidence of progress against the aims of the Strategy?
- What would have happened if the Strategy did not exist?
- How appropriate are the aims and objectives of the Strategy?
  - Your opinion on any other strategic goals or priorities that should form part of the Welsh Medium Education Strategy.

Theme	General questions	Supplementary questions
BACKGROUND	1. What broadly is your role?  2. To what extent does the Strategy impact on / link to the work of your organisation?  3. Did you feel that there was a need for a Welsh-medium Education Strategy? Why?	<ul> <li>Did you contribute towards the development of the Strategy (e.g. through the consultation process)?</li> <li>What level of awareness is there of the Strategy within your organisation / your sector?</li> <li>To what extent did the Strategy build on the previous work of your organisation?</li> </ul>
THE STRATEGY'S VISION	4. What is your opinion on the vision for the Strategy?  The vision To have an education and training system that responds in a planned way to the growing demand for Welsh-medium education, reaches out to and reflects our diverse communities and enables an increase in the number of people of all ages and backgrounds who are fluent in Welsh and able to use the language with their families, in their communities and in the workplace.  Welsh-medium education from the early years, with robust linguistic progression through every phase of education, offers the best conditions for developing future bilingual citizens.	Is this vision still appropriate?  If the Strategy was being prepared today, would you recommend a different vision / emphasis?
THE STRATEGY'S AIMS	5. What is your opinion on the aims that underpin the Strategy?	<ul> <li>Are they suitable / appropriate in your opinion?</li> <li>Were the aims sufficiently / too ambitious?</li> <li>Are they attainable? If not, what</li> </ul>

		,
		are the main barriers in your experience?
		<ul> <li>What are your impressions of the work completed to date in respect of these aims?</li> </ul>
		What factors support or hinder efforts to realise the Strategy's aims?
OUTCOMES	6.What is your opinion on the outcomes of the Strategy?	Can any progress be seen to date against these outcomes?
		<ul> <li>What are your impressions of the progress seen to date against the targets set?</li> <li>Are the outcomes attainable?</li> </ul>
		Would this progress have occurred had the Strategy not existed?
		Are these outcomes appropriate?
PLANNING PROVISION	7. What is your opinion on the way that the Strategy supports planning for the provision of Welsh-medium education?	<ul> <li>Has there been progress to date in relation to planning for the provision of Welsh-medium education?</li> <li>Can you think of any specific examples?</li> </ul>
		Would this progress have occurred if the Strategy didn't exist?
		What are the key factors that facilitate / hinder changes in planning (e.g. locally / nationally / at school level)?
CONTINUITY	8. What in your opinion are the key factors in facilitating linguistic continuity between education phases?	Has there been progress to date in relation to supporting linguistic continuity?
		Would this progress have occurred if the Strategy didn't exist?
		What in your opinion are the key factors in seeking to facilitate linguistic continuity between educational phases?
LANGUAGE SKILLS	9. What is your opinion on the way that the Strategy supports progress in linguistic skills in Welsh across all phases of education?	Has there been progress to date in relation to supporting language skills?
		Would this progress have occurred if the Strategy didn't exist?
		What are the key factors that facilitate / hinder the development

		of language skills?
THE WORKFORCE	10. What is your opinion on the way the Strategy supports the development of the Welsh-medium education workforce?	<ul> <li>Can any progress be seen to date in terms of ensuring a workforce with high level Welsh language skills?</li> <li>Would this progress have occurred if the Strategy didn't exist?</li> <li>What are the key factors that facilitate / hinder this?</li> </ul>
CENTRAL SUPPORT	11. What is your opinion on the way in which the Strategy improves central support for Welsh-medium education and training? (e.g. resources, technology)	<ul> <li>Has there been progress to date in central support for Welsh-medium education and training?</li> <li>Would this progress have occurred if the Strategy didn't exist?</li> <li>What are the key factors that facilitate / hinder this?</li> </ul>
FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY	12. What is your opinion on the way that the Strategy contributes towards reinforcing Welsh language skills in families and in the community?	<ul> <li>Is this objective appropriate? (i.e. that the Strategy seeks to influence Welsh language skills in families and the community?)</li> <li>What should the link be between this Strategy and the Welsh Language Strategy A Living Language: a Language for Living?</li> </ul>
OTHER COMMENTS	13. Do you have any further comments on the Welsh-medium Education Strategy?	

# Appendix 3: National organisations and stakeholders who contributed to the evaluation

Organisation	Representatives
ATL Cymru	X 1
Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol	X 1
CollegesWales	X 3
CYDAG	X 2
Estyn	X 4
Federation of Awarding Bodies Wales	X 6
(FAB Wales)	
Mudiad Meithrin	X 1
Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity	X1
(NPLD)	
Niace Dysgu Cymru	X 1
Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg	X 2
UCAC	X 2
Welsh Government	X 10
Welsh Language Commissioner	X 1
Welsh Language Cross-party Group,	X 2
National Assembly for Wales	

## Appendix 4: Area studies: details on the area studies and research tools

#### Introduction

This appendix presents further information on the area studies that were undertaken as part of the evaluation of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy.

The *Proposed Evaluation Framework for the Welsh-medium Education Strategy* (Welsh Government, 2011) proposed that area studies would

[add] a qualitative dimension to analyses of quantitative data in order to provide a more objective and rounded assessment of the effects of the Strategy at a local, regional and national level. The reviews will lead to a deeper understanding of the challenges faced in responding to the Strategy (including those faced by schools in responding to local authorities' agendas and the education and training community more widely in responding to the regionalisation agenda) (Welsh Government, 2011:22)

The research team agreed that such studies provided an opportunity to collect important evidence to support the data collected through other methods during the research programme, including the headteachers' survey and interviews with national stakeholders.

## Sample

A sampling framework was agreed to support the process of selecting a crosssection of areas for the studies. Areas were chosen that represent each of the regions of Wales (north Wales, south west and central Wales, central south Wales, south east Wales) and that represent a range of factors in terms of:

- Linguistic profile;
- The type of local authority (rural/urban); and
- Structure of post-16 provision (high/low number of schools with 6th form provision).

The table below sets out the number of schools, parents and learners that contributed to the area studies. Two secondary schools were visited in each area with the number of primary schools varying.

	Number of	Number of	Number of
	schools	parents	learners
Area 1	4	6	24
Area 2	5	4	44
Area 3	5	9	24
Area 4	6	4	34
Area 5	6	4	51
Area 6	4	0	22
Total	30	27	199

## **Topic guides**

Semi-structured topic guides used in interviews with school representatives, parents and learners are included below. It was not possible to ask every question on these guides during interviews with some participants and it was therefore necessary to prioritise / restrict the themes discussed.

#### **TOPIC GUIDE: School visits**

As part of the evaluation of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy, Arad is visiting primary and secondary schools in six areas of Wales. The aim of these studies is to complete indepth research at a local level into Welsh-medium education, in order to consider the influence and impacts of the Strategy on provision, planning and attainment.

## The objectives of the visits are:

- i. To answer the key question to what extent has the Strategy influenced Welshmedium education in this area?
- To enable the research team to collect mainly qualitative evidence that provides an insight into the progress and challenges in implementing a number of the Strategy's aims and objectives in different contexts;
- iii. To collect evidence and opinions from a sample of the Strategy's key audiences, including:
  - a. Evidence from headteachers and local authority representatives in order to understand the nature of local partnerships and local planning processes.
  - Evidence from practitioners, learners and the wider community to gather opinion on Welsh-medium education and the profile of Welsh-medium education more generally.

Theme/area	Notes on the	Questions			
i ileille/alea	theme	Questions			
BACKGROUND	theme	<ol> <li>What is your role in the school and how long have you been in this role?</li> <li>What is the size of the school?</li> <li>What age group do you teach? (if applicable)</li> <li>What is the medium of teaching at the school? (Welsh-medium, dual stream, bilingual)</li> <li>(Primary) Which secondary school(s) does the school feed?</li> <li>(Secondary) Which primary schools feed the school?</li> </ol>			
AWARENESS OF THE STRATEGY		<ul> <li>7. Are you aware that the Welsh Government has a Welsh-medium Education Strategy?</li> <li>If yes, have you read the Strategy?</li> <li>What is your opinion on the Strategy?</li> <li>What is your opinion on the Strategy's aims?</li> <li>Are the aims sufficiently ambitious / too ambitious?</li> </ul>			
•		eries of themes to steer the research. The first of these is the discussion follows these themes.			
PLANNING PROVISION	Refers to the way in which Welsh-medium provision is: - organised - promoted - developed	<ul> <li>8. What is your opinion on the way Welsh-medium education is planned locally?</li> <li>9. Has anything changed in the way Welsh-medium education is planned in recent years (in the last 3-5 years)? <ul> <li>[If 'yes'] What has changed in the way Welsh-medium education is planned?</li> <li>What effect have these changes had?</li> <li>What has driven / caused these changes? [Arad to provide prompts if needed: parental demand; information about Welsh-medium education; planning on a regional level]</li> </ul> </li> <li>10. Are you aware of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans? <ul> <li>[If 'yes'] Did you contribute to the process of producing the local plan?</li> <li>[If 'no'] Would you have liked to have been given the opportunity to contribute to the process of planning provision locally?</li> </ul> </li> <li>11. Which aspects of the Welsh-medium education system are planned effectively? And which aspects are less effective?</li> </ul>			

	Τ	
		<ul> <li>12. Are there sufficient opportunities locally for people to receive Welsh-medium education along all phases of education (e.g. from nursery education / pre-statutory education to statutory phases)?</li> <li>13. Is there appropriate provision locally for</li> </ul>
		latecomers?  o i.e. including provision for individuals who wish to transfer to Welsh-medium education.
		Questions relating to the Learning and Skills Measure (for secondary schools) The Learning and Skills Measure presented by the Welsh Government in 2009 places an emphasis on cooperation between learning providers to ensure a wide choice for learners aged 14-19.
		14. Has the Learning and Skills Measure changed the way in which the curriculum is planned in your school?
		<ul> <li>15. Has the range of Welsh-medium courses available in your school/local area increased during recent years?</li> <li>[If 'yes'] What in your opinion has led to this increase?</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>16. Have you seen any other effects locally through closer collaboration between schools and colleges?</li> <li>If yes, what have these effects been?</li> </ul>
		17. Have learner travel arrangements changed?  o If so, what effect has this had on learners?
CONTINUITY	Continuity in Welsh-medium education	18. How do you support continuity between your school and the secondary school?  [Transmission activities; encouraging parents to ensure their children remain in Welsh-medium education]
		19. Are there sufficient opportunities for learners to continue in Welsh-medium education once they leave this school?
		20. What in your opinion are the key factors in relation to facilitating linguistic continuity between different phases of education?

WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS	Development of spoken and written skills	One of the Strategy's aims is "to ensure that all learners develop their Welsh-language skills to their full potential"  21. How do you seek to ensure that this happens in your school?  22. What are the main factors that impact on the development of Welsh language skills in your experience?  • What is your view on the emphasis placed on developing Welsh language skills acro the curriculum?  • How do you plan in order to promote informal use of the Welsh language in you school? (including encouraging use of the language between learners)				
FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY	Opportunities to use the language outside school	23. Are you aware of opportunities for learners or families to use the language / develop language skills outside school?  o Is this important? Why? o Is there a link between schools and other organisations that promote the Welsh language locally?				
WORKFORCE	Ensuring sufficient numbers of practitioners for all phases of education and training	<ul> <li>24. In your experience, are there sufficient numbers of practitioners able to teach through the medium of Welsh? <ul> <li>Have you experienced any difficulties in recruiting?</li> <li>Are there any specific gaps in the workforce? [Subjects; key stages?]</li> <li>How have you dealt with any problems in recruiting?</li> </ul> </li> <li>25. What is your opinion on the training that is available to practitioners to support the Welsh teaching workforce? <ul> <li>Have there been any changes to the training that is available in relation to Welsh-medium education?</li> <li>Is training available through the medium of Welsh?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
CENTRAL SUPPORT	Resources, Support from the local authority (in relation to Welsh-medium education), regional School Improvement	26. What is your opinion on the central support that is available to your school to support Welshmedium education? (e.g. resources, technology, support from athrawon bro, support from specialist teams / Additional Learning Needs)  Has the level of support changed? If 'yes', how?  What factors have caused / driven this				

	Service	change?
		27. Is there any support (linked to Welsh-medium provision) that you would like to access and that isn't currently available?
FURTHER COMMENTS		28. Do you have any further comments on Welsh- medium education locally or on the Welsh- medium Education Strategy?

#### **TOPIC GUIDE: Parents**

### 1. INTRODUCTIONS AND BACKGROUND

- Tell me your name, where you live and your children's ages.
- Do you understand Welsh? Who speaks Welsh at home?

### 2. GENERAL OPINIONS

- What's the image of Welsh-medium education generally?
- What's the image of Welsh-medium education in this area?

#### 3. SELECTING WELSH-MEDIUM EDUCATION

- What influenced your decision to choose Welsh-medium education for your child?
- What is your view on the overall quality of the education your child is receiving?

#### 4. AWARENESS AND INFORMATION

- Is there enough information to parents in this area about Welsh-medium options?
- Did you receive any information about the benefits of Welsh-medium education?
- Are learners / parents given information about opportunities to use Welsh in the future....in the workplace/FE/university?

### 5. THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND PLANNING

- In this area, does the local authority plan effectively for providing Welshmedium education?
- In this area, does the local authority market and promote Welsh-medium education effectively?
- In this area, do you think the local authority have a full understanding of the level of demand for Welsh-medium education?

#### 6. SPECIFIC ISSUES

#### Travel

- What are the typical travel-to-school journeys in this area? Is that reasonable? Was that a factor in deciding schools?

## **Choice of Welsh-medium courses**

- Do you have any comments on the choice of subjects available in your child's school?
- Are there any subjects that aren't provided through the medium of Welsh which you would like your child to have the opportunity to study?

#### Latecomers

 Are there opportunities locally for non-Welsh speaking families to opt for Welsh-medium education if they move into the area (i.e. when the child is older than 4)?

## Thank you and close

#### **TOPIC GUIDE:** interviews with learners / students

#### Introduction

[Explain the purpose of the research and why we visit the school. Note that we have been talking with young people across Wales]

- 1. Is the fact that you receive a Welsh education important to you?
  - If yes, why?
- 2. Are there advantages to being able to speak Welsh?
  - [For older children] Has your attitude towards the Welsh language changed over time?
  - Is there anything that you find difficult about following your education in Welsh? If so, what?
- 3. Are all your subjects available in Welsh? [Secondary mainly]
  - If not, what subject is not available?
  - [14-19] Do you have to travel to another school / college / campus to receive some lessons? What are your thoughts on these arrangements? Is this a problem / an opportunity to meet other learners / students?
- 4. Language skills
  - How does the school support your skills in Welsh?
  - How does your Welsh skills compare to your English skills, for example?
- 5. Progression
  - Do you think it's important to continue receiving Welsh-medium education until you have finished education?
  - Until when would you like to continue your Welsh-medium education (college, university?)
- 6. What opportunities are there to use Welsh outside school?
  - Do you take part in any activities or clubs in Welsh outside school?
  - Why / why not.
- 7. Do you know what job you would like when you leave school?
  - Is the fact that you speak Welsh an advantage to those jobs?
  - Do you think you will use your Welsh skills in those jobs?

## **Appendix 5: Headteachers' survey**

This appendix outlines our approach for conducting the survey completed as part of headteachers full evaluation of the Strategy.

## The purpose of the survey

The purpose of the survey was to collect quantitative data mainly on the findings of headteachers of schools (primary and secondary), colleges of further education (FE), special schools and pupil referral units in terms of progress against strategic goals of the Strategy.

## Scope of the survey

We invited all headteachers of schools and colleges in Wales (the survey's population) to participate in the survey.<sup>36</sup> Table A1 below shows the number of schools and colleges that were within the scope of the survey and Table A2 shows the number of heads within the survey population. 54 headteachers are responsible for two or more schools, as shown in Table A3, hence the difference between the survey population (i.e. the number of headteachers) and the number of schools.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Based on contacting headteachers of all schools that appeared on the Welsh Government's database of contacts for schools in Wales in July 2014. See <a href="http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/address-list-of-schools/?lang=en">http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/address-list-of-schools/?lang=en</a>

Table A1: The number of schools in the scope of the survey heads

	Welsh-medium	English-medium	Total
Primary schools	447**	909	1356
Secondary schools*	54***	162	216
FE colleges			15
Special schools			42****
Pupil referral units			33****
Total	501	1071	1662

<sup>\*</sup> Includes four middle schools

Table A2: The survey sample framework: number of headteachers

	Welsh-medium	English-medium	Total
Primary headteachers	411**	889	1300
Secondary headteachers*	54***	159	213
Headteachers in FE			
Colleges			15
Headteachers in Special			
schools			38****
Headteachers in pupil			
referral units			33****
Total	465	1048	1599

<sup>\*</sup>Includes four middle schools

<sup>\*\*</sup> Includes dual-stream and transitional schools

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Includes bilingual schools type BA, BB and BC

<sup>\*\*\*\*</sup> Based on information from the Welsh Government website

<sup>\*\*</sup>Includes dual-stream and transitional schools

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Includes bilingual schools type BA, BB and BC

<sup>\*\*\*\*</sup>Based on information from the Welsh Government website

Table A3: Distribution of headteachers: the difference between the survey population and the number of schools.

	Welsh	English	Welsh Primary	English Primary	Special	Pupil referral	Further	Total
	Secondary*	Secondary*			schools	units	Education	
Number of	0	3	31	17	3	0	0	54
headteachers in								
charge of more								
than one school /								
organisation								
Number of	-	6 (3	67 (26	37 (15	7 (2	-	-	117
schools /		headteachers	headteachers	headteachers in	headteachers			
organisations		in charge of 2	in charge of 2	charge of 2	in charge of 2			
that share a		schools)	schools	schools	schools			
Headteacher			5 headteachers	1 headteacher in	1 headteacher			
			in charge of 3	charge of 3	in charge of 3			
			schools)	schools	schools)			
				1 headteacher in				
				charge of 4				
				schools)				
Total number of	54	162	447	909	42	33	15	1,662
schools /								
organisations								
Total	54	159	411	889	38	33	15	1,599
headteachers								

<sup>\*</sup>Includes four middle schools

<sup>\*\*</sup>Includes dual-stream and transitional schools

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Includes bilingual schools type BA, BB and BC

<sup>\*\*\*\*</sup>Based on information from the Welsh Government website

## Sampling method

A combination of census method and quota sampling was used for the survey. We invited all headteachers in the population (census method) to complete the survey. An online link to the questionnaire was distributed by email directly to the heads in September 2014. The survey was open between September and November 2014. During that period, several reminders were sent to headteachers to encourage them to complete the questionnaire.

Targets were set for the number of responses in the total sample and specific subsamples (quota sampling method) in order to analyse the data on a sound statistical basis (see 'Analysing data' below). The targets required higher response rates in some sectors than others. To achieve these targets, reminders were sent by email to the headteachers who had not completed the questionnaire. The targets were reached for primary schools by this method but hard copies were sent out to the heads of secondary and FE institutions that had not responded to reach specific target subsamples for those sectors. Phone calls were completed with headteachers of secondary schools and FE institutions who did not respond to raise awareness of the survey and encourage them to respond.

#### The survey sample

The survey was completed by 331 of 1,599 headteachers which equals a response rate of 21 per cent (of the total sample). Table A4 below shows the number of respondents by sector and media school / organisation. The percentage who completed the survey by sector (sub-samples) as follows:

- Welsh-medium
   Secondary 24 per cent
   Secondary 63 per cent
   Primary 12 per cent
   Secondary 37 per cent
   Further Education 80 per cent
  - Special Schools 24 per cent
  - Pupil referral units 24 per cent

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Table A4: The survey sample: number (and percentage) of respondents by sector and type of school/organisation

	Welsh-mediur	n		English-medium			Total		
	Number of headteachers	Number (percentage) that started the survey	Number (percentage) that completed the survey	Number of headteachers	Number (percentage) that started the survey	Number (percentage) that completed the survey	Number of headteachers	Number (percentage) that started the survey	Number (percentage) that completed the survey
Primary	411	110 (27%)	98 (24%)	889	132 (15%)	111 (12%)	1,300	242 (19%)	209 (16%)
Secondary	54	46 (85%)	34 (63%)	159	86 (54%)	59 (37%)	213	132 (62%)	93 (44%)
Headteachers of FE colleges							15	12 (80%)	12 (80%)
Headteachers of special schools*							38	11 (29%)	9 (24%)
Headteachers of pupil referral units*							33	8 (24%)	8 (24%)
Total	465	156 (33%)	132 (28%)	1,048	218 (21%)	170 (16%)	1,599	405 (25%)	331 (21%)

<sup>\*</sup> We do not report on these individual sub-samples, but the size of the sub-samples will make our total sample representative of the population of headteachers.

## **Analysing data**

The total sample of responses from headteachers was analysed, as well as the sub-samples of the following headteachers:

- Welsh-medium Primary
- Welsh-medium Secondary
- English-medium Primary
- English-medium Secondary
- Further education

The total sample includes the above sub-samples as well as headteachers of pupil referral units and special schools. The sample size and sub-samples allowed us to report the results of the survey based on a confidence interval of 10 percent and a confidence level of 95 percent. Statistically, this means that we can state with 95 per cent confidence that our sample responses and sub-samples are within 10 per cent of the 'true' percentage for the population of headteachers.

#### Weighting the data

The data were weighted in the total sample to ensure that the sample is representative of the population by sector and the medium of education of the school. As we have set targets for specific sub-samples, some sectors where there was a smaller proportion of headteachers in the population (e.g. Welsh-medium secondary heads) are over-represented within the total unweighted sample. A simple weighting method was used to adjust the size of the sub-samples within the total sample. The main implication of this was to increase the weighting given to responses by English-medium primary schools and reduce the weighting given to other sectors.

This report presents survey results, weighted, for the total sample. However, the survey results presented for the specific sub-samples are unweighted. The exact

modifications made to weight the results varied by question but there is a brief description of the weighting method below.

Table A5 below shows the proportion of the population of headteachers within each sub-sample. For each question, each of those proportions were split, (the proportion of the population within the sub sample) with the proportion of respondents within the sub-samples (lower proportion of respondents from the sample). This enables us to calculate a factor to multiply sub-sample results to be weighted within the total sample. The multiplication factor and proportions of responses vary by each question as not all respondents answered each question in the survey. In addition, some questions were asked to only some sectors.

Table A5: Proportion of the population within each sub-sample

	Percentage of the population				
Sector	Welsh- medium	English- medium	Total		
Primary headteachers	0.26	0.56	0.81		
Secondary headteachers*	0.03	0.10	0.13		
Headteachers of FE colleges	0.00	0.00	0.01		
Headteachers of special schools	0.00	0.00	0.02		
Headteachers of pupil referral units	0.00	0.00	0.02		
Total	0.29	0.66	1.00		

#### The structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire contains a combination of open and closed questions that are structured around the strategic goals of the Strategy. A number of questions based on the content of the strategy, drawing on the views of headteachers on statements relevant to the strategic goals and objectives.

Some questions are addressed to all heads and some to the heads of primary, secondary, Welsh-medium or English-medium only. The questionnaire is provided below, noting which questions were aimed at headteachers in different sectors.

### Headteachers' survey

## Introduction page

#### Introduction

Arad Research has been commissioned by the Welsh Government to conduct a review of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy published in 2010. As part of this review, we are collecting the views of headteachers of primary and secondary schools together with principals of Further Education (FE) colleges on progress against the strategic aims of the Strategy. The data collected will support and reinforce the evidence gathered through qualitative methods and other elements of the evaluation.

We would appreciate it if you would complete this questionnaire to ensure that we gather the views of as many headteachers and principals as possible. It should take about 10 minutes to complete.

All responses will be treated confidentially. Respondents will not be named in our report and neither will individual responses be passed to any third party, including the Welsh Government, nor used for marketing or promotional purposes. We will delete personal data at the end of the evaluation, which will report in March 2015.

If you would prefer to complete the questionnaire over the 'phone or if you have any questions regarding this questionnaire, please contact Arad on 029 2044 0552.

If you would prefer to complete this questionnaire in Welsh please click here.

Os yw'n well gennych gwblhau'r holiadur hwn yn Gymraeg, cliciwch fan hyn.

## 1. Profile questions

Your name:	
Your role (e.g.	
teacher/headteacher/*	
head of year):	
Name of school/college:	

Sector	Primary		Secondary		Further education	
	Special school		Middle school		Pupil Referral Unit	
			_			
(Filter que	stion to direct resp	onc	dents to relevant	aue	estionsl	
L dans				9		
		,				
2. Med	dium of provisior	1 (S	chools only)			
					Welsh-medium	
					Dual stream	
					Transitional	
			В	iling	ual – AB/BB/CB/CH	
Predomina	ntly English-mediu	ım þ	orimary but with	sign	ificant use of Welsh	
			Predominantly E	∃ngli	ish-medium primary	

[Filter question to direct respondents to relevant questions]

3. Local authority	Blaenau Gwent
(schools only)	Bridgend
	Caerphilly
	Cardiff
	Carmarthenshire
	Ceredigion
	Conwy
	Denbighshire
	Flintshire
	Gwynedd
	Isle of Anglesey
	Merthyr Tydfil
	Monmouthshire
	Neath Port Talbot
	Newport
	Pembrokeshire
	Powys
	Rhondda Cynon Taf
	Swansea
	Torfaen

Vale of Glamorgan
Wrexham

[The following questions were asked to headteachers in the sections that have been identified by the grey shaded boxes below]

## 4. Planning provision

The questions below ask you to comment on the way in which the provision of Welsh-medium education or training is planned. Some of the statements ask you to consider how the planning process has developed since the publication of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy in 2010.

Answer the questions by considering your experiences in your local authority (or broader region where relevant).

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

 Agree; Agree to an extent; Neither agree nor disagree; Disagree to an extent; Disagree; Not applicable

	Sector				
Statements	Primary		Seco	ndary	
	Welsh-	English-	Welsh-	English-	FE
	medium	medium	medium	medium	
The process of planning					
Welsh-medium provision					
in the local authority has					
improved since 2010					
The local authority plans					
effectively for Welsh-					
medium					
provision					
The process of planning					
Welsh-medium provision in					
the 14-19 phase has					
improved in the local					
authority/region since 2010					
The local authority					
responds effectively to					
parental					
demand for Welsh-medium					
provision					
Welsh-medium education					
provision and services for					

learners with Additional			
Learning Needs (ALN) have			
improved since 2010			

Enter any comments to support your responses on planning provision in the space below

## 5. Linguistic continuity and standards

The questions below ask you to express a view on continuity (i.e. the process of enabling learners to continue to study Welsh and through the medium of Welsh as they move through the education system) and language standards.

Answer the questions taking into account your experiences in your local authority (or wider region where appropriate).

To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

 Agree; Agree to an extent; Neither agree nor disagree; Disagree to an extent; Disagree; Not applicable

			Sector			
Statements	Primary Secondar		ndary			
	Welsh-	English-	Welsh-	English-	FE	
	medium	medium	medium	medium		
Linguistic continuity						
between stages of Welsh-						
medium education and						
training has improved since						
2010						
Standards in Welsh first						
language teaching and						
learning have improved						
since 2010						
Standards in Welsh second						
language teaching and						
learning have improved						
since 2010						

Enter any comments to support your responses on linguistic progression and skills
in the space below

## 6. Workforce

The questions below ask you to express a view on matters relating to the workforce. Answer the questions below based on your experiences in your sector (i.e. primary, middle, secondary, special, PRU or further education).

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

• Agree; Agree to an extent; Neither agree nor disagree; Disagree to an extent; Disagree; Not applicable

	Sector				
Statements	Prin	nary	Secondary		
	Welsh-	English-	Welsh-	English-	FE
	medium	medium	medium	medium	
There is a sufficient number					
of Welsh-medium					
practitioners in the primary					
sector					
There is a sufficient number					
of Welsh-medium					
assistants in the primary					
sector					
There is a sufficient number					
of Welsh-medium					
practitioners in the					
secondary and further					
education sector					
There is a sufficient number					
of Welsh-medium assistants					
in the secondary and further					
education sector					
There is a sufficient number					

of practitioners to			
teach Welsh as a subject			
Workforce training meets			
the needs of our			
organisation in supporting			
Welsh language skills			

Enter any comments to support your responses including any specific gaps in the
supply of practitioners to teach through the medium of Welsh in the space below

## 7. Central support

The questions below ask you to express a view on the central support mechanisms available to your school.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

• Agree; Agree to an extent; Neither agree nor disagree; Disagree to an extent; Disagree; Not applicable

	Sector				
Statements	Primary		Secondary		
	Welsh-	English-	Welsh-	English-	FE
	medium	medium	medium	medium	
The range of Welsh-					
medium qualifications (e.g.					
GCSEs and A levels) has					
improved since 2010					
The range of Welsh-					
medium vocational					
qualifications has improved					
since 2010					
The range of Welsh-					
medium teaching and					
learning					
resources has improved					
since 2010					
The range of teaching and					
learning resources to					

support Welsh as a subject			
(first or second			
language) has improved			
since 2010			

Enter any comments to support your responses regarding central support in the space below

## 8. Use of Welsh outside formal education settings

The questions below ask you to express a view on the use of Welsh outside formal education settings. Answer the questions taking into account the experiences of learners in your school.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

 Agree; Agree to an extent; Neither agree nor disagree; Disagree to an extent; Disagree; Not applicable

	Sector				
Statements	Primary		Secondary		
	Welsh-	English-	Welsh-	English-	FE
	medium	medium	medium	medium	
The opportunities for young					
people to take part in					
activities through the					
medium of Welsh outside					
formal education settings					
have increased since					
2010					
There is adequate					
assistance available to					
support young people's use					
of Welsh outside school					
The informal use of the					
Welsh language by learners					
in our organisation has					
increased since 2010					

One of the school's key						
roles is to nurture young						
people who are confident in						
the use of Welsh						
outside school						
Enter any comments to support your responses in the space below						
9. Priorities for the Welsh-medium Education Strategy in the future						
What do you consider to be the priorities for any new strategy to support Welsh-						
medium education in the future	re?					
10. If you have any other comments, please note them in the box below						