



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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# Welsh language linguistic infrastructure policy: children's rights impact assessment

An assessment of how the Welsh Language Infrastructure Policy affects children's rights.

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## Policy objectives

The 'Cymraeg 2050' strategy commits us to maintaining and improving our linguistic infrastructure to facilitate the journey towards a million Welsh speakers.

Including children in this is essential if we are to reach the Welsh Government's target of a million Welsh speakers and increase the use of the language.

One of the aims of the 'Welsh linguistic infrastructure policy' is to creating favourable conditions to make it easier for everyone, including children and learners of all ages, to use the Welsh language.

This includes ensuring that everyone can easily access the resources that help us use the Welsh language in our day to day lives, for example:

- dictionaries
- terminology bases
- corpora.

Long-term investment in this infrastructure needs to continue in order to ensure a solid foundation for the future, and in that regard, raising awareness amongst children is vital.

## Gathering evidence and engaging with children and young people

This is a high-level policy, but we will engage more widely with children and young people as the policy work moves forward and as we assess its effects. For example, engaging with users will be vital as we develop the website described in the policy, that aims to help people find Welsh words and terms.

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In the process of developing this policy, we have been in contact with policy departments across Government, especially the Education department. That liaison work is ongoing. The proposals in the policy will be important in relation to the new curriculum, and in terms of helping children and their parents use the Welsh Language (further details below).

Outreach work with children and young people has shown that in order to increase their confidence with the Welsh language, they would like better access to dictionaries and improve the accuracy of Welsh translation websites and apps.

You may, for instance, consider how your policy would affect the following groups of children and young people differently:

- early years, primary, secondary, young adults
- children with additional learning needs
- disabled children
- children living in poverty
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic children
- Gypsies, Roma and Travellers
- migrants
- asylum seekers
- refugees
- Welsh-language speakers
- care experienced children
- LGBTQ+ children

Please note that this is a non-exhaustive list and within these cohorts there will not be one homogenous experience.

Coordinating linguistic infrastructure resources is vital in terms of Welsh medium education on a wider level. For example, we have been consulting on a White Paper that includes proposals that will form the foundations of a programme of

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work, including the Welsh Language Education Bill. Underpinning the proposals in the White Paper is improving linguistic outcomes for learners aged 3 to 16, but it also proposes to expand the role of the National Centre for Learning Welsh to be a specialized organisation that supports Welsh language acquisition and learning for learners of all ages in Wales. Ensuring that coordinated and easy to use dictionaries and terminology bases are available to learners of all ages, as well as teachers, pupils and parents, is essential to ensure the success of these proposals, and the success of the Curriculum for Wales in its entirety.

We have also established a new company called Adnodd, which will oversee the provision of teaching and learning resources, and commission suitable resources for the Curriculum for Wales and the new qualifications. These will be suitable for use by teachers and learners in the classroom, as well as in the home for self-study and revision. There's a need for consistent terminology in these educational resources so that they can be published simultaneously in Welsh and English. The relationship between our unit, the Language Technologies Unit in Bangor University that's responsible for the Termiadur Addysg project, and Adnodd will be vital in this regard.

More generally, the new linguistic infrastructure unit in Welsh Government is responsible for funding the Termiadur Addysg and Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru. All these resources are being developed with a view of the statutory education system.

Article 12 of the UNCRC stipulates that children have a right to express their views, particularly when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.

During the consultation, we received comments from organisations representing children, for example, Mudiad Meithrin, y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, Pupils 2 Parliament.

We will consult with children and young people as we develop the new website

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mentioned in the policy, and we look forward to having discussions through groups like the Urdd youth forum, SyrIfanC.

We will market and promote the resources that already exist through a central website, doing so through schools, Hwb, Dysg newsletter and other methods that are appropriate to different age groups (for example, an information pack for teachers will be developed in the future, so that they can be aware of the resources that are available to children,).

We will market and engage with the stalwarts of the policy, and make sure that we target engagement with young people as they are essential if we are to increase the use of the Welsh Language.

## **Analysing the evidence and assessing the impact**

The policy will ensure that children and young people in Wales have more access to the Welsh language and to resources that will help them use Welsh.

Over time, this will offer them opportunities to develop their Welsh language skills and become more confident Welsh speakers, whatever their initial language category.

Ensuring more consistency as a result of standardisation work will increase the confidence of children, and people of all ages, as they use the Welsh language. In turn, this could lead to more people feeling confident enough to communicate together in Welsh, for example, in formal and informal environments in school.

### **UNCRC articles or optional protocol**

Article 30: In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is

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indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language:

- Enhances or challenges: enhances
- Explanation: one of the aims of this policy is to promote the rights of children and young people to further benefit on the Welsh language and culture by promoting informal opportunities to use the language according to their rights to cultural participation

Consider whether any EU Citizens Rights (as referenced in the Equality Impact Assessment) relate to young people up to the age of 18.

## **Ministerial advice and decision**

This analysis will not steer our ministerial advice, as we have, since beginning developing the policy, recommended actions to improve resources for every user in Wales, with a particular focus on school children and learners. As is noted in the 'Cymraeg 2050' strategy, the statutory education system is our main mechanism for creating new Welsh speakers, so targeting and included this group is essential to ensure the success of that strategy, as well as the success of this policy, that feeds into the strategy. Our ministerial advice will therefore remain consistent with that initial aim.

## **Communicating with children and young people**

We will give young people the chance to voice their opinions as we implement the policy, especially as we develop and improve the website, that will offer access to a wide range of Welsh resources. We will ensure that they can do this

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by:

- Targeting young people, through groups like the Urdd's youth forum SyrIfanC, Young Farmers Clubs, local schools, and Children in Wales.
- As part of this, we will need to know what would encourage them to use standardised Welsh resources rather than, for example, on-line translation tools like MS Translate and Google Translate.
- In relation to research, we will specifically note the need to seek and consider young people's opinion.
- A key part of the strategy is improving the way Welsh language resources are marketed, and engaging with those who use them. We will focus specifically on communicating with children and young people as part of this, as fostering good practice in terms of dictionary use early in their Welsh language journey will lead to a positive pattern for the future.
- We are eager to engage with appropriate Teaching Practitioners to discuss the best way of giving simple information to children about how to use dictionaries and raise awareness of the resources that are available.

## Monitoring and review

It is essential to revisit your CRIAs to identify whether the impacts that you originally identified came to fruition, and whether there were any unintended consequences.

Where you are taking forward secondary legislation, it will not be sufficient to rely on the CRIA for the primary legislation, you will need to update the CRIA to consider how the details of the proposals in the regulations or guidance may affect children.

The policy lead can revisit the published version of their CRIA, rename it as a review of the original CRIA, and update the evidence of impact. The reviewed

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impact assessment should be presented to Ministers with any proposals to amend the policy, practice or guidance. This review CRIA should also be published.

After the initial phase, we will consider the best way of evaluating the policy to ensure that we assess what effects the proposed interventions have had. In time, this will give us a better understanding of the effectiveness of the steps we take, as well as helping us note the lessons learnt.

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