

# The Independent Review Report to re-define schools according to their Welsh-medium education provision

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The Independent Review Report to re-define schools according to their Welsh-medium education provision

- Cwmni LinguaNi Cyf

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## **Expert Panel**

In accordance with this contract, a panel of experts in the field of education and language planning was established to offer advice and guidance as the work progresses.

The members were:

Rhiannon Lloyd  
Professor Colin Baker  
Geraint Roberts  
Gethin Thomas

### **Background and experience of members of the consultation panel**

Rhiannon Lloyd is a former secondary school head teacher, HM Inspector of Schools and Welsh Language Consultant in a local authority. Geraint Roberts is a former secondary school head teacher and Gethin Thomas is a former head teacher of various primary schools. Gethin Thomas was also Chair of the Association of Primary Schools in favour of Welsh-medium Education. Both worked as education officers in local authorities. Colin Baker is a prolific author and is an internationally recognised authority on bilingualism and bilingual education.

We consulted informally with a number of local authorities, education bodies, and statutory and non-statutory bodies and associations active in the field of education. Thank you all for being so eager to help.

### **Informal consultation on the draft categories**

As part of the process of forming the new draft categories, a series of meetings was held with representatives from local authorities in Wales and the Welsh Joint Education Committee. Constructive talks were held with the following local authorities and an officer from the Welsh Joint Education Committee: Monmouthshire, Cardiff, Denbighshire, Anglesey, Gwynedd, Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Neath Port Talbot. Helpful comments were received, all of which were considered when forming the draft definitions in this document.

In the section below are a number of issues considered after the informal consultation process and when thinking about a more appropriate framework to define and categorise schools. At the end of the report, many recommendations are contained in a schedule, which consultees believed were worth considering when introducing the new system of categorising schools. Even though these matters do not directly relate

to categorising schools, they do relate to ensuring the appropriate conditions that would lead to the operational success of these proposed changes.

### **Main recommendations of this report and relevant observations.**

1. In order to put a robust and developing system in place to promote the growing bilingualism in Wales, and to offer more clarity to parents regarding the potential provision in terms of language, it is recommended that schools in Wales should be organised into three categories distinguished by their provision and by their ambition regarding their pupils' bilingual skills. It is also recommended that figures should be used as headings for these categories that is categories 1, 2 and 3, ensuring that they are accompanied by an explanatory paragraph on this method of identifying the different sorts of schools. This will provide an opportunity to explain the parameters of the provision to parents and what they can expect their children to accomplish linguistically.
2. While three categories are recommended for both the primary and secondary sectors, the same criteria aren't used to define the nature of their provision.
3. In primary schools, we recommend that the *language provision offered* should be put in categories rather than the whole school as an institution, so that a primary school could be a Category 1 and 2 or Category 2 and 3 school according to the provision it offers. In the secondary sector, we recommend that schools be categorised as whole institutions, although it is possible that specific development plans will be necessary for secondary schools which presently have a Welsh language stream.
4. In the primary sector, it is recommended that a new category of schools be established which does not exist at present. This new category would build on the existing English provision by giving children new opportunities to acquire more Welsh by receiving an education in which Welsh and English carry equal weight.
5. Since one of the intentions of the new categorisation system is to increase Welsh-medium and bilingual provision, we recommend that schools be given the opportunity to have a transition period as they move from one category to another. This will allow schools to grow their Welsh language provision over an extended period.
6. The report recommends that systemic changes resulting from the school categorisation process should reflect the content of each local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). It is recommended, therefore, that each school submits a Welsh language development plan, that is in line with the local WESP, to be agreed upon by the local authority. We recommend also that it is the local authorities which specify each school's category as the new categorisation system is introduced. While schools plan for transition, consideration will need to be given to when a public consultation should be

held regarding the proposed change to the school's category. In order to be transparent and fair, it's possible that this should be done at the start of the transition period rather than towards its end.

7. With regard to the new categorisation method, we strongly recommend that one of the core principles should be that schools may not offer less Welsh language provision than was offered in the past.
8. Cymraeg 2050 offers challenging targets in terms of increasing the numbers who can speak Welsh and use it in their everyday lives. In the light of these targets, we recommend that this method of defining Welsh-medium education and the language provision in Wales be robustly revised after operating for ten years.
9. Linked to these definitions, and aligned with them, are the new developments regarding the New Curriculum for Wales and the concept of being able to assess pupils' language development using a single language continuum. These elements will be expected to coalesce to support the work done to offer a new method for categorising schools.
10. In the course of discussing the proposals in this document with a number of stakeholders, other related matters arose which go hand in hand with reforming the method of categorisation, and which would be considered to require attention if the new system is to work effectively. These included the need for trained teachers, and for appropriate funding to run pilot programmes and to secure new resources and technology to support learning. The other elements seen most frequently in comments were the need to ensure a better understanding of bilingualism amongst teachers along with a better definition of the exact nature and principles of immersion education in Wales.

<b>Primary Education (Draft definition)</b>				
<b>Category 1</b> English School/ Stream/Class  (Within the 80%-90% English range and 10% to 20% Welsh)		<b>Category 2</b> Welsh/English School/Stream/  Class  (50%English/ 50% Welsh)		<b>Category 3</b> Welsh/School/Stream/Class  (100% Welsh up to 7 years old and then  20% English  80% Welsh  From 8-11 years old)
	<b>Sub-Stream</b>  Transformational School/ Stream/ Class  Schools will be in this category for no more than 8 years whilst they implement their plan to transfer to category 2 (or 3)		<b>Sub-stream</b>  Transformational School/Stream/Class  Schools will be in this category no more than 8 years whilst they implement their plan to transfer yo category 3.	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils will be educated mainly in English.</li> <li>• Welsh will be taught and assessed as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of Learning Experience and across some other areas of Learning Experience.</li> <li>• Pupils will achieve the appropriate progression steps in Welsh and English by the time they are 11 years old.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The transformational schools will agree a Transformation Plan with the local authority on the timetable and approach for the transition period.</li> <li>• The transformation plan will outline how the Welsh language will increasingly be introduced as a medium of teaching and learning within the school.</li> <li>• Pupils entering these schools will join groups where some immersion education methods are used to learn Welsh.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils are taught in both English and Welsh and equal time is given to learning and developing literacy in both languages.</li> <li>• Welsh and elements of the areas of learning and experience taught in Welsh are tested in Welsh and elements of the areas of learning and experience taught in English are tested in English.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The transformational schools will agree a Transformation Plan with the local authority on the timetable and approach for the transition period.</li> <li>• The transformation plan will outline how the Welsh language will be introduced as the main medium of learning in Category 3 schools.</li> <li>• Welsh only is introduced during a pupil's early years, from the beginning of the transition period.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to the age of 7/8 children are taught through the medium of Welsh either through immersion education methods or learning as a first language (100%).</li> <li>• Between the ages of 7/8-11 English is introduced as a language and as a medium for some elements of the curriculum. Pupils are assessed mainly in Welsh with some assessment in English as appropriate.</li> <li>• Pupils will be reaching the appropriate stages of progress in Welsh and English by the age of 11.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pupils starting in these schools will join groups where immersion education practice is used to teach Welsh.</li></ul>			
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<b>Secondary education (Draft definitions)</b>				
<b>Category 1</b> English School		<b>Category 2</b> Welsh/English/Bilingual School		<b>Category 3</b> Welsh/Bilingual School
	<p><b>(Category 1T)</b> <b>Sub-stream</b> Transformational bilingual school</p> <p>(Specific period of 6 years)</p>		<p><b>(Category 2T)</b> <b>Sub-stream</b> Welsh/Bilingual Transformational School</p> <p>(Specific period of 6 years)</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh is taught as part of the area of learning and experience for languages, literacy and communication for all pupils up to the age of 16 to enable them to achieve the appropriate stages of progress.</li> <li>• Developmental opportunities/expectations within this category schools have a developmental opportunity to experiment by offering a little more Welsh-medium learning to extend pupils' language skills. During this developmental phase, schools will ensure that at least 20% of pupils will follow one study area through the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The transformational schools will agree a Transformation Plan with the local authority on the timetable and approach for the transition period.</li> <li>• Welsh is taught as a subject and some subjects are offered through the medium of Welsh.</li> <li>• Welsh is taught as part of the area of learning and experience for languages, literacy and communication for all pupils up to the age of 16 to enable them to take the appropriate action.</li> <li>• At least 20% of pupils will follow a study area through</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh is taught as a subject and a range of subjects is offered (50%-75%) through the medium of Welsh.</li> <li>• Welsh is taught as part of the area of learning and experience for languages, literacy and communication for all pupils up to the age of 16 to enable them to take the appropriate action.</li> <li>• At least 40% of pupils will follow a field of study through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 in at least 3 subjects (or equivalent within</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The transformational schools will agree a Transformation Plan with the local authority on the timetable and approach for the transition period.</li> <li>• Welsh is taught as a subject and an increasing and extensive range of subjects are offered through the medium of Welsh.</li> <li>• Welsh is taught as part of the area of learning and experience for languages, literacy and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching is mainly through the medium of Welsh. All subjects apart from English/Welsh are offered in Welsh.</li> <li>• Welsh is taught as part of the area of learning and experience for languages, literacy and communication for all pupils up to the age of 16 to enable them to take the appropriate action.</li> <li>• At least 70% of pupils will follow a field of study through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 in at least 5 subjects (or equivalent within</li> </ul>
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<p>medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps.</p>	<p>the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 in at least 3 subjects (or the equivalent within the current curriculum, not including English and English Language and/or Literature).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary schools are expected to provide a diverse range of areas of learning and experience through the medium of Welsh during the early years of Secondary Education so that there is a sufficient selection of subjects available to study up to the age of 16.</li> </ul>	<p>the current curriculum and excluding English and Welsh Language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary schools are expected to provide a diverse range of areas of learning and experience through the medium of Welsh during the early years of Secondary Education so that there is a sufficient selection of subjects available to study up to the age of 16.</li> </ul>	<p>communication for all pupils up to the age of 16 to enable them to take the appropriate action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over a 6 year period the percentage of pupils following a field of study through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 will be in at least 5 subjects (or equivalent within the current curriculum and excluding English and Welsh Language).</li> </ul>	<p>the current curriculum and excluding English and Welsh Language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary schools are expected to provide a diverse range of areas of learning and experience through the medium of Welsh during the early years of Secondary Education so that there is a sufficient selection of subjects available to study up to the age of 16.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 20% of pupils will follow a study area through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 in at least 3 subjects (or the equivalent within the current curriculum, not including Welsh and English Language and/or Literature).</li> <li>• Secondary schools are expected to provide a diverse range of areas of learning and experience through the medium of Welsh during the early years of Secondary Education so that there is a sufficient selection of subjects available to study up to the age of 16.</li> </ul>			
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## **Key issues considered when drawing conclusions on categorising schools**

1. Noted below are those issues that were discussed in reaching a decision on the recommendations of this report. They are set out in order to explain a number of the decisions made. The definitions proposed are essentially short pieces of text but nevertheless took considerable discussion and consideration before agreeing upon these recommendations.
2. In a discussion with the Education Minister, prior to the commencement of this research, the Minister indicated her desire to see a categorisation regime, in terms of the linguistic nature of schools, which was simple, clear and easily understood by parents, schools and education authorities. She also noted her wish to see fewer categories than were already in place, as this would help parents to better understand the nature of the provision their children received. In drawing up the new draft categories, these principles have been closely adhered to, bearing in mind the ambition contained in the Welsh Government's policy document, *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers*. The work was also informed by the recommendations arising from Aled Roberts' urgent review of the existing Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) together with the recommendations proposed by the group set up to consider evolving the existing WESP plans. One of the recommendations of that group's report is very relevant in the context of defining schools and the strategic process of growing the Welsh-medium sector, namely that the new WESPs should include a strategic plan that spans a decade rather than the current three-year period. This will undoubtedly lead to much more purposeful strategic planning, given that language development planning and the securing of purposeful changes within the education system is a long-term issue and requires careful planning over a significant period of time.

## **Number of categories**

3. It was agreed that the categorisation regime required was a simple one to ensure that parents particularly understood what provision was being offered and what they could expect in terms of their children's language skills level. Professor Colin Baker's research, in analysing the PLASC data, identified that six different categories of schools could be created when looking at the secondary sector. From the data itself two obvious categories appeared - one category of schools teaching mainly through the medium of English and one category teaching mainly through the medium of Welsh. In the middle there was a group of schools that were in areas where the Welsh language is a prominent feature of the communities that feed the schools. The schools reflected the linguistically mixed community that existed around them. This group could have been divided into a number of different categories, but it was decided that placing them all in one group was wiser, challenging them all to increase their Welsh language provision over the coming years.

## **What terminology should be used when deciding on the category names?**

4. There was a very substantial discussion on the issue of naming the different categories. One view was that the current names should be broadly adhered to as they were familiar. But it was generally agreed that there was too much variation in the terms currently used and also that there had been a lot of misinterpretation in the past. It was agreed that it would be wiser to use more neutral terms, terms which did not have a variety of meanings that are currently misinterpreted. It was proposed to use letters such as A, B or C, or a set of letters that would form a word. The word and letters TWF (growth) have been considered in this context. The possibility of using encouraging words to describe the categories was also considered. The conclusion at the end of the discussion was that the approach to be recommended was to use numbers in categorising, namely Category 1, 2 and 3.
5. There was a proposal during the negotiations that 5 categories of schools should be created. Having five numbers was perhaps better, as 1 or 5 could be interpreted as a high number! However, with 1, 2 and 3, the number 3 may be interpreted as a lower number than 1. But it was agreed that explaining the numbers and their meaning would be an important part of the introduction of the new categories. In discussing with stakeholders in the field the idea of categorising using a number to denote a category, there was a very positive response. It was agreed that there would be significant benefits in not using the existing summary headings as they were consistently misinterpreted. It was also agreed that the number would need to be coupled with a comprehensive description, and this description would identify a child's linguistic journey and what the parent(s) and child would be able to expect in terms of linguistic proficiency at the end of that journey.

## **Transitional schools/streams**

6. One of the intentions of the reconsideration of how schools are categorised in terms of language was to try to put in place a system that would motivate schools to move along the linguistic continuum. To this end, we sought to construct categories that offer a developmental pathway for primary and secondary schools. In Category 1 in the primary sector there is a place within the definition for English schools primarily to increase their Welsh language provision and to encourage the use of Welsh as a medium for some of the areas of learning and experience. The next developmental stage for schools in Category 1 is to move into Category 2 or 3. It was assumed that the jump from one category to another could be too much development for some schools, so it was decided to propose that two transitional categories or sub-categories be created, one between Category 1 and 2 and another between Category 2 and 3. It was concluded that these should be developmental subcategories. It was therefore agreed that it should be recommended that three categories be established with two transitional sub-categories,



providing an opportunity for schools wishing to further develop their Welsh language provision to do so over an extended but realistic period of time. It was also agreed that this pattern was also an appropriate pattern for the secondary sector. For those schools wishing to move into this transitional period, the need for them to agree upon a developmental plan with a local authority is noted, and for this to be specified in the relevant authority's WESP.

### **The differences in categories between the primary and secondary sector**

7. In determining the number of categories, and concluding that three categories was appropriate for the secondary sector, it was agreed that it would be good to try to establish the same number for the primary as well. That said, the categories do not correspond exactly to each other. In the primary sector it was decided to recommend building on what already exists, namely, schools that teach primarily through the medium of Welsh and schools that teach mainly through the medium of English, offering a model that sits in between the other two models. The inspiration for this model was obtained from the school categorisation method seen in the Basque autonomous community. In their Model B, which would correspond to the proposed category 2 in Wales, this pattern of bilingual learning has been practised for over thirty years. The numbers of parents who have opted for this model have been significant and many pupils in that country have become fluent in Basque by following the provision of the bilingual model of language learning. From their evidence it was observed that many parents feel more comfortable with this model as the starting point in learning the language and changing language practices. This model is recommended for the primary sector here in Wales with the intention that pupils attending these schools would be able to choose whether they wish to continue with Welsh-medium or bilingual education when moving to the secondary sector.

### **Characteristics of Category 2 schools/streams**

8. These schools/streams would be bilingual schools/streams. Apart from introducing English and Welsh as languages, both languages would be used equally in the delivery of the areas of learning and experience in the new curriculum. The characteristic of this procedure is that pupils make the usual progress in their first language, usually English, while at the same time making much more significant progress in the Welsh language than they would in a predominantly English-medium school. Careful consideration will need to be given to how these schools will be structured in terms of curricular time. There were experiments among schools of this kind in Wales some years ago, many of which were very successful. Where they were not as successful, this reflected a lack of understanding of the model and the type of planning required in the organisation of the curriculum and the linguistic balance. For further details on this model, see

*Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism.* Colin Baker.  
Multilingual Matters.

### **Dual stream/ dual school**

9. As we plan the development of this category of schools, the following developmental issues will need to be considered:

#### **Strategic planning** (vision; principles; structures)

- Agreeing on the principles and vision needed to ensure the bilingual nature and disposition of these schools.
- How schools will be staffed appropriately to ensure these schools are getting suitable leadership from the head and in terms of specialist staff. Will all staff need to be high level bilinguals? What sort of training and support will staff be provided with while these schools are established and maintained?

#### **Pedagogy**

- How will learners in the schools learn best? Will everyone receive the same linguistic provision with the educational methods and input varying according to children's ages and abilities? How should this be structured?
- Creating an integrated language learning plan so that using both languages leads to a better understanding of how languages can reinforce one another
- The length of the learning programmes which will be associated to these schools and what kind of linguistic and educational progression learners are offered?
- The practical balance between the two languages in these schools and what will be the schools' day-to-day language of communication..
- In which language will pupils learn to read and to develop specific skills in literacy? Can a plan be made to further develop children's translingual skills?

#### **Assessment**

- The nature of assessment procedures for these schools and deciding upon the criteria for success

#### **Infrastructure** (education workforce; resources)

- The learning resources which will need to be devised and provided

#### **Communication** (parents and other partners)

- Outlining the educational and linguistic commitments which will offer parents reassurance and will make the choice attractive to parents who would not have considered sending their children to Welsh-medium education.

## **Is there a need to have input and output models for the primary and secondary sector?**

10. When considering how to ensure that more pupils become completely fluent and confident in Welsh through the language immersion schemes, consideration has been given to methods to ensure that pupils continue to follow subjects through the medium of Welsh. Looking at the primary sector, we found that continuity within that sector did not cause significant difficulties in many areas. The lack of linguistic progression in terms of following subjects through the medium of Welsh is seen to begin as pupils transfer to the secondary sector and increases as pupils move through that sector. It was therefore agreed that, in categorising secondary schools, it would be good practice to use two criteria that would motivate schools and governing bodies to plan for improving progression levels. Therefore, it is proposed that Category 2 and 3 models be defined according to an input and output model, namely:
- the number of areas of learning and experience offered through the medium of Welsh by the school;
  - the percentage of pupils following those areas of learning and experience through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16.

## **Should the hours of learning be identified as percentages?**

11. The issue of identifying percentages and how much learning should be done in both Welsh and English within the categories was raised. It was decided to avoid that as much as possible. It was agreed, however, that a policy document or best practice in relation to Welsh medium education needed to be drawn up and that the time percentages for using Welsh and English should be dealt with within that document.

## **Could schools be included in more than one category?**

12. It was agreed that a primary school could be in more than one category. For example, a primary school could be in Category 1 and 2 or 1 and 3. A stream or school is therefore referred to when talking about categorising the primary provision. It was envisaged that indicating that secondary schools could be in more than one category would cause difficulties in using the input and output model, so it is proposed that secondary schools should be categorised as one unit in terms of the new categorisation regime.

## **Using PLASC data to categorise schools in Wales according to language provision.**

13. As part of this research on the definition of Welsh-medium education, it was decided to commission Professor Colin Baker, an international expert

in bilingualism, bilingual education and statistical studies, to put the PLASC data in Wales under detailed scrutiny. The intention here was to see whether the data showed different methods of clustering or categorising schools in Wales which could be considered, on the basis of the current records collected.

In the past, Welsh-medium education was described or categorised on the basis of concepts rather than data. It was decided, therefore, to use the data available about schools in PLASC to find classes empirically. Professor Baker clearly notes at the beginning of his reports that the empirical method is not an answer complete in itself since this data-based method informs the work but doesn't offer a complete solution.

While examining PLASC data, Professor Baker used 10 specific variables to analyse that data and to see whether patterns appeared when the different types of schools were examined according to their linguistic profile.

### **The PLASC database**

The data used for analyses are derived from the Pupil Level Annual School Census for 2017/2018 (PLASC).

Ten PLASC Welsh language variables were used to classify 1261 primary schools and 194 secondary schools.

These variables are:

#### **Variable 1: TEACHERS\_TCTO**

- % Teachers in a School (Full Time and Part Time) who are:
- TC Qualified teachers teaching Welsh as a first language and
- TO Qualified teachers teaching other subjects through the medium of Welsh.

#### **Variable 2: TEACHERS\_NW**

- % Teachers in a School who are:
- NW Qualified and able to teach Welsh or through the medium of Welsh, but not doing so.

#### **Variable 3: PUPIL\_FLUENT**

- % Pupils in a School who are fluent in Welsh

#### **Variable 4: PUPIL\_NOTFLUENT**

- % Pupils in a School who can speak Welsh but not fluently

#### **Variable 5: WELSH\_AT\_HOME**

- % Pupils in a School who can speak Welsh at home.

**Variable 6: STUDY\_OF\_WELSH\_L1**

- % Pupils in a School who are taught Welsh as a first language.

**Variable 7: CLASS\_MAIN**

- % Classes in a School where Welsh is the sole or main medium of instruction.

**Variable 8: CLASS\_PART**

- % Classes in a School where Welsh is used as a teaching medium for part of the curriculum (i.e. less than half).

**Variable 9: CLASS\_L2**

- % Classes in a School where Welsh is taught as a second language only.

**Variable 10: Welsh Governors**

- % Governors of a School who are Welsh speaking.

**Cluster Analysis**

- The statistical procedure used for classification of schools is Cluster Analysis. Professor Baker's report contains a detailed and technical discussion of this technique and its limitations. Cluster Analysis considers each primary school and finds out which group (cluster) they best fit using the 10 PLASC dimensions. A dendrogram and other statistics are used to find the number of clusters that best fit the data. The K-Means procedure was used for the cluster analyses (see the secondary school report for details) with one exception where a hierarchical analysis was preferable for the sake of interpretability.

**How many Clusters?**

- Professor Baker notes in his reports on the primary and secondary sectors that various statistical tests and graphs of 'best fit' plus interpretability of the information suggest that either a three, four or a five-cluster solution is appropriate for the primary school data and that three to six clusters are possible for the secondary sector. Professor Baker notes that interpretation of cluster solutions is very important and, therefore, that examining several solutions is sensible. For example, a dendrogram for this dataset of 10 variables and 1261 primary schools suggests a 'best fit' of three, four or five clusters while a Scree graph suggests five clusters. A six-cluster solution was found to be inappropriate in the primary sector as one cluster contained only five schools. Also, a two-cluster solution was found to be too insensitive to 'Welsh' school differences, containing 171 'Welsh language' primary schools and 1090 'English language' schools. A three-cluster hierarchical cluster analysis provided a superior solution and one which is easy to interpret.
- Professor Baker's reports contain detailed analyses of the various models in the primary and secondary sectors which set out the variations possible

between the different models. No hard and fast solutions are provided in relation to how many categories would be appropriate for the school sector, but it's clearly noted that two categories in the primary and secondary sectors divide into two relatively stable clusters, being schools where learning is mainly done in English and schools where the majority of learning is done in Welsh. It is between these two categories, ie amongst the schools offering more bilingual provision, that ambiguity arises. The question this raises is how best to divide that sector, since it is quite small, statistically speaking. It is here that minor divisions arise in terms of data analysis and offering solutions which will make sense of the data and of our subjective and objective knowledge of the schools sector in Wales.

### **The need to amend the current definitions for Welsh-medium education**

14. In its recent report the *Welsh in Education Strategic Plans Advisory Board*, whilst submitting its comments for the Minister's attention on proposals to strengthen the planning infrastructure for Welsh-medium education, noted that:

‘the current definitions for categorising schools according to their linguistic nature should be revisited.’ The Rapid Review concluded that it was time to simplify the process of categorising our schools in terms of language. It is now clear that the current method of categorisation does not deal appropriately with the linguistic provision in many of our schools. This creates some confusion in the understanding of parents of the linguistic nature of some schools but also creates a blurred picture of the nature of local provision. The result is that it is unclear to parents what Welsh-medium provision can be expected in different categories. This was referred to in the Estyn report in 2014: "Official categorisation [...] is not always used correctly<sup>1</sup>."

15. The purpose of this report, therefore, is to consider the need to amend the current definitions for teaching through the medium of Welsh and teaching the Welsh language as a study area, and to propose new models of defining the provision in Welsh schools according to their linguistic nature. In achieving this, we must keep in mind the exciting but significant challenges inherent in the vision of the Welsh Government's Welsh language Strategy, *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers*. It is the need to ensure that parents and school governors completely understand the nature of the schools that they are dealing with that has led to the request to review the definitions, and it is important for them to understand what language opportunities those schools can offer children in Wales. To that end, the amended definitions must be far clearer and simpler than the

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.estyn.llyw.cymru/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Linguistic\\_progression\\_and\\_standards\\_of\\_Welsh\\_in\\_ten\\_bilingual\\_schools\\_-\\_November\\_2014.pdf](https://www.estyn.llyw.cymru/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Linguistic_progression_and_standards_of_Welsh_in_ten_bilingual_schools_-_November_2014.pdf)

present definitions so that the choices available to parents are easy to explain and understand.

## **Education and language planning in Wales**

16. One of the main strengths of Welsh as a minority language, that has not been a language of state in modern times, is that literacy levels in Welsh are traditionally relatively high. Historically, this was strongest during the period of developing the circulating schools in the eighteenth century and during the golden age of the development of Sunday schools in Wales. The Welsh language has a long and rich history of cultural and literary tradition, and it is a great advantage that Welsh has, to a large extent, been standardised some centuries ago. This, of course, is invaluablely beneficial in this digital age, where we are so dependent on the written language, in e-mails, text messages or pictures.
17. We are of course hugely indebted for this to the teaching regimes developed in Wales over the last 250 years. Welsh literacy saw a substantial rise in 1731 with the establishment of Griffith Jones' circulating schools, and within 30 years or so, between 1731 and 1761, in a period where education was not compulsory, it is estimated that around 200,000 ordinary people in Wales learnt to read Welsh. By the second half of that century, over half of the population of Wales were literate. We should be mindful of that extraordinary feat when considering the Welsh Government's policy document *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers* and the ambitious target contained in that document to increase the number of Welsh speakers.
18. This interest in education and learning continued throughout the centuries in Wales. As education became compulsory, a number of counties in West Wales, at the turn of the century, revived this practice of teaching through the medium of Welsh. This happened mainly in the primary sector in rural areas, usually where the population verged on being monolingual Welsh speakers. By the beginning of the 1930s, the Welsh language was the main medium of teaching in primary schools in some areas of North Wales and Ceredigion.

## **Welsh-language demographics**

19. At the beginning of the last century, Wales had a population of two million and around one million people in Wales spoke Welsh, despite the fact that not many people had a Welsh-medium education. Over the last century, the Welsh language lost ground during the two world wars, and by the beginning of this millennium, only around 20% of the population noted that they could speak Welsh, ie around 600,000 people out of a population of 3 million. Despite this, a significant percentage of the population continue to speak Welsh today in every region of Wales, including a significant percentage of young people that speak Welsh daily. The percentage of

speakers continues to be higher in North and West Wales, but the largest numbers of Welsh speakers live within three quarters of an hour's travel from Swansea.

20. The last few decades have seen an increasing number of young people receiving Welsh-medium education in the east of the country. This, along with the demographic shift that is to be seen as Welsh speakers move from the country to the larger villages, towns and cities, has led to a new pattern in terms of where Welsh is spoken, a pattern that changes constantly and rapidly.
21. The higher numbers who speak Welsh in the West and North are reflected in the nature and diversity of Welsh-medium and bilingual educational provision in those areas. Much more Welsh-medium provision can still be seen in West and North Wales and it is there that we see the greatest numbers receiving their education in Welsh.

### **The development of Welsh education**

22. Welsh-medium education has developed significantly over the last century, and specifically after passing the Education Act 1994, when local authorities were allowed to consider establishing Welsh-medium schools. The new provision developed, in the main, thanks to the effect of innovative policies by some education authorities, leadership by some of Her Majesty's school inspectors and pressure from parents wishing their children to receive a Welsh-medium education. The first designated Welsh-medium school in Llanelli was opened in 1947 and the first Welsh-medium secondary school, Ysgol Glan Clwyd, in Rhyl in 1956. These schools provided Welsh-medium education for children from Welsh-speaking homes in the first instance. But, with the increasing interest in Welsh-medium education, and ideas about immersion education adopted in Canada in the 1960s, a significant increase was seen in the number of children from non-Welsh speaking households choosing immersion education in the Welsh-medium sector. By now about 2 out of 3 children in the Welsh-medium sector come from homes where Welsh is not spoken. That said, one has to remember that two language elements co-exist within the Welsh education regime, especially in respect of the early years. A programme of immersion education is provided for children who come from non-Welsh speaking homes together with provision for children from Welsh speaking homes for whom Welsh is their first language. The belief among non-Welsh speaking parents, as well as the Welsh speakers, that Welsh-medium education has value has been a cornerstone of the success of this sector in growing and developing across Wales.
23. Although Welsh-medium schools were developed in the first instance for Welsh-medium education for children who were Welsh speakers, considerable attention was given to learning English using both Welsh and



English as mediums of learning especially from the age of 7 onwards. Different patterns of introducing Welsh were experimented with across Wales, resulting in a situation described by Colin Baker (1993) as 'Kaleidoscopic variety'.

### **Welsh language immersion education**

24. Immersion education in Wales developed in a different manner from that seen in Canada during the 1960s, although it was, to some extent, its inspiration. It developed through a fundamentally different structural approach here in Wales. In Canada, the French immersion experience is provided in the English-medium schools, whereas here in Wales, the immersion education is provided within the Welsh-medium sector.
25. Immersion education in Wales developed its own pattern. The general pattern was that all the learning up to the age of 7 was through the medium of Welsh, and more than three quarters of the education given to 7-11 year olds was also provided through the medium of Welsh. Similar patterns have not been established for immersion education in secondary school although there would have been significant benefits in doing so for pupils from non-Welsh-medium homes in particular. Doing so would have helped to improve and maintain pupils' linguistic skills as they are given more linguistic choice in the study of various subjects.
26. There would be tangible benefits in defining immersion education more fully and the commitment required of children and their parents as they undertake the linguistic journey involved. In this respect a better understanding and appreciation of the commitment and expectations of parents and governors could be achieved along with an understanding of what parents can expect their children to achieve linguistically by the age of 16 following a course of Welsh language immersion education. There would be a particular advantage in doing so at present as the revised curriculum is introduced here in Wales.
27. One other area needing attention when considering immersion education is late immersion education. This provision was first developed in Ysgol Maes Garmon, Mold. This was an opportunity for children aged 10-11, when they transferred from primary school to secondary school, to change the medium of their education and to follow an intensive course to learn Welsh and use it as the medium of their education from then on. Academic research has shown that this aspect of immersion education has been successful. (Dr Cen Williams' doctorate. A study of the recent situation with regard to immersion education in Ysgol Maes Garmon, Mold. He followed a group of learners that came to the school from the non-Welsh primary sector for 5 years between July 1994 and March 1999.) Grant funding has been available over the past two decades to experiment in other schools with this method of introducing the Welsh language. As part of the study of immersion education in Wales, it would be useful to see

how this provision could be used to increase access to Welsh-medium education and also to see how the provision could either be funded in a meaningful way through grant funding, or mainstreamed in Wales. This experimental provision was another example of Wales' innovation and it would be a shame not to take advantage of our own creativity.

## **Planning Welsh education**

28. In terms of the process of planning the provision of Welsh-medium education, from the 1940s onwards, policies for Welsh-medium education developed mainly at local or county level. Innovative schemes were introduced by some counties that extended Welsh-medium provision and ensured that the main language of teaching, particularly in primary schools, was Welsh. However, in 1993 only 6 of the 8 counties in Wales had a specific policy regarding the development of the Welsh language in education.
29. With the establishment of the Welsh Language Board, it was agreed that language schemes should be created under the Welsh Language Act 1993. The requirement for each local education authority to produce a Welsh Education Scheme was developed at the same time to be agreed with the Board. In principle, it was agreed from the outset that parents wishing their children to receive Welsh-medium education could be sure of realising that intention. The plans were the counties' own, and their main aim was to give the counties a chance to introduce their strategic plans to provide enough spaces for children whose parents wished them to receive Welsh-medium education. These plans highlighted how varied the education regimes were in the different counties, with vastly varying terminology being used to describe the Welsh provision, without there being any legal or national basis for that terminology.
30. Following pressure from the Welsh Language Board and the *Iaith Pawb* report in 2003, the Welsh Government agreed that there was a need to look in earnest for national definitions/descriptions for the Welsh education regime. Therefore, a group of experts was convened under the chairmanship of the Board to present a report to the Government that led to publishing *Defining schools according to Welsh-medium provision (2007)*<sup>2</sup>

## **Bilingual Education**

31. Although bilingualism and multilingualism have been a feature of the teaching regimes of a number of countries, thorough research has only been conducted over the last few decades in the field of bilingual education. This research has shown that, despite opposition from some

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<sup>2</sup> <https://gov.wales/defining-schools-according-welsh-medium-provision>

educators, the use of two languages in the delivery of the curriculum is a successful process. The development of bilingual education and the immersion schemes in Canada are success stories. That provision grew from the bottom up with lobby groups such as *Canadian Parents for French* pushing the boundaries and forcing the education authorities to create comprehensive and imaginative programmes. By the beginning of this century, there has been less scepticism and much more information about the value and potential of bilingual education, and the idea that having skills in two languages benefits children and young people is now well established.

32. Bilingual regimes have been developing in Canada, Britain, the Netherlands, Spain, Estonia, Kazakstan etc. As bilingual education develops in these countries, it has been observed that a number of factors must also be taken into account when planning for the revised provision. This included consideration of curriculum and assessment requirements, bespoke learning resources, initial and continuing training of teachers together with funding, surveying and measuring the success of the various elements of the bilingual system. It was clear that if this did not happen, the proposed growth would slow down. It was understood that if holistic planning did not take place across the whole system, then the increase would be hindered. A good example of this was that if the universities did not have the expertise and resources to train teachers and educators, then success would not follow.

### **Designing a Bilingual Education Regime**

33. Therefore, in designing a bilingual education regime over an extended period of time, those forces that can promote or hinder growth must be considered very carefully. The bilingual education system often grows from a regime that has essentially been a monolingual regime. A sound strategy is therefore needed that integrates the concept of planning for the introduction of two languages into the educational and linguistic planning processes of the relevant state. This is often not a straightforward process and requires considerable political support, parental support and purposeful planning by state services.

To succeed there must be a constructive climate which:

- Believes in the value of bilingualism.
- Involves all stakeholders in the evolving debate.
- Integrates the planning process into mainstream planning.
- Considers the forces driving the mainstream, adapting or offering additional support where these are strongly opposed to the development of the bilingual regime.

These are principles that are recognised at an international level when planning for a bilingual situation. They are, of course, equally true here in

Wales. We must remember that the Welsh Government fully acknowledged very recently that strategic planning for Welsh-medium and bilingual education at an all-Wales level is a matter for government, and for government alone. This was confirmed with the publication of the Welsh Government's first *Welsh-medium Education Strategy* in 2010, nine years ago. In that strategy, for the first time, the government made clear the nature of Welsh-medium and bilingual education in Wales. Specific targets were also set for measuring the growth of provision and what would be the characteristics of success over the period 2010 to 2015.

## **Current context**

### ***Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers***

34. In 2017, Welsh Government published their strategy: *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers*. The aim of this strategy is to ensure that the number of Welsh speakers is to increase from around 600,000 to 1 million by 2050 and that the percentage of the population that speak Welsh daily, and can speak more than just a few words of Welsh, increases from 10 per cent (in 2013–15) to 20 per cent by 2050.
35. In order to reach these targets, the individual schools, as well as the education regime in Wales, must play an essential role in introducing essential linguistic skills to children and young people in Wales, so that they can speak Welsh. At least 438,000 new Welsh speakers will be required to achieve the target of one million speakers by 2050. The statutory sector will therefore need to make a very significant contribution towards realising this target. In order to prepare for this task, some basic changes need to be made to ensure that the education sector, the primary sector and the secondary sector can achieve this.
36. *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers* also emphasises that Welsh-medium immersion education is the main method of ensuring that children can develop their Welsh-language skills, and of creating new Welsh-speakers. According to the strategy, there will also be a need to increase the number of learners in English-medium and bilingual schools that are learning Welsh successfully. This must be a part of the new curriculum, which will include one continuum for learning Welsh. The aim through the new curriculum will be to encourage an increase in the number of confident Welsh speakers in the statutory education system, and to ensure that an increasing number of future learners will be able to use the Welsh language after leaving school.

## **The new curriculum**

37. The new curriculum for Wales is establishing a very different educational system. The ways in which pupils learn at the primary and secondary level will change. A change can be seen in many of the boundaries and timetables and there will be a greater emphasis on developing skills and on experiences rather than primarily focusing on information. Familiar terminology will change, replacing phrases such as *key stages*, and the curriculum will be one continuous programme from 3-16 years old. Despite this, the present method used for teaching in the foundation phase will continue (but there is no certainty that foundation phase will be used as a phrase in the future). This will connect directly to the new ways of learning and the following stages.
38. These changes will create some new challenges for the immersion education programmes and consideration will have to be given to how the learning approaches associated with immersion education combine with the new philosophies currently being developed. One of the areas where additional thinking and analysis will be needed will be the early years (foundation phase), developing a better understanding of how the immersion process and language acquisition fit into the learning through play process. In fact, it will be necessary to analyse how all aspects of immersion education tie in with the new curriculum, its terminology and aspirations. It should blend well if there is scope for schools to adapt curriculum plans and learning methods and give teachers the opportunity to experiment in an integrated approach. However, it must be ensured that there is sufficient emphasis on speaking and discussing to improve the oral skills and confidence of young children within the immersion method. It would be interesting to compare with the processes used in Finnish education in Finland when Swedish is introduced using immersion education methods, with their emphasis on learning through play.
39. There will also be a need to consider how to secure the appropriate new resources in Welsh for the more technology-reliant process of learning. Schools will therefore need to be helped to better understand how to place the Welsh language system within this new arrangement.
40. As part of the process of creating the new Curriculum, a new Bill will be published in due course. As part of the planning for that, it must be ensured that the new definitions for Welsh-medium education form part of that bill if Welsh-medium and bilingual education is to grow and prosper.

## **Why is there a need to better define the nature of Welsh education at present?**

41. *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers* sets targets that mean that there is a need to refine the present methods of planning and preparing for Welsh medium education in Wales. This was noted clearly by Aled

Roberts in his urgent review of WESPs, by the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans Advisory Board, and during informal discussions held with local authority representatives regarding the draft categories.

42. It was noted that the Government needed to:

- fully adopt the process of planning for Welsh-medium and bilingual education in Wales;
- open a new chapter of experimentation with Welsh medium and bilingual education;
- build on past success and provide opportunities for more pupils to be fluent Welsh speakers;
- see if there are models that could be developed from scratch, considering the lessons learned in West Wales in developing Welsh language provision in communities that are more Welsh-speaking;
- lead on outlining the provision and be proactive in offering the choice;
- offer a choice and a reason for schools to follow the development continuum with regard to the Welsh language;
- in East Wales, promote moving towards a situation where the Welsh-language provision would be a realistic choice to everyone, ensuring that the journey towards the provision is not a reason for not taking advantage of the opportunities available;
- establish a national pattern with regard to provision, which is clear and simple for parents, and consistent across Wales.

When doing this, and driving the agenda forward, it was emphasised that the structures providing the different models of Welsh and bilingual education need to be better defined, with definitions that:

- make schools think differently about their relationship with the Welsh language and how that relationship could be developed to benefit the pupils;
- ensure that these innovative changes can be used throughout Wales to encourage and inspire others to increase their Welsh-medium and bilingual provision;
- ensure the best support for schools and local education authorities in developing Welsh-language provision;
- support the work of local authorities in proposing experimental schemes as part of their revised WESPs.

### **The current legal basis for describing Welsh education**

43. The legal basis for defining a Welsh-speaking school can be seen in the Education Act 2002. Under section 105(7) of that Act—  
*‘...a school is Welsh-speaking if more than one half of the following subjects are taught (wholly or partly) in Welsh—*  
*(a) religious education, and*

*(b) the subjects other than English and Welsh which are foundation subjects in relation to pupils at the school.'*

In order to implement the new curriculum and realise the ambitions of *Cymraeg2050: A million Welsh speakers* and the intentions of the new WESPs, amended regulations need to be put in place, which are more relevant to the new educational and linguistic context.

44. In addition to the above legal definition, the Welsh Government's 2007 publication, *Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision* contains more detailed descriptions of the provision and of Welsh education generally. The intention here was to try and organise the Welsh and bilingual education regime more effectively. It is clearly noted at the outset that this is an information document that 'sets out definitions and categories of schools in Wales according to the language which is used as the medium of instruction and the normal business of the school.' The document goes on to emphasise: '*Although the new definitions have no basis in legislation they have been devised to provide better information for parents and for local and national government on the extent to which pupils are learning through the medium of Welsh.*' It is also emphasised that the main purpose of the document is to collect statistics, and it is noted when Welsh Government will first collect the data under these headings. It is also noted that the definitions are to be contained in the prospectus of each school.

45. By publishing *Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision* in 2007, the Welsh Government tried, for the first time to set a useful and purposeful direction to the task of forming definitions of a Welsh-medium or bilingual school, or the definition of the Welsh-medium provision in an English-speaking school. This was not a policy document, nor was it statutory, but there was an attempt to sort out these elements that were not laid out in any previous regime. This attempt to establish a regime was a good basis for forming the *Welsh-medium Education Strategy* in 2010, a year or two later.

**In accordance with the guidance in the 2007 document, *Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision*, primary schools fall into one of the five groups stated below:**

#### **Welsh-medium schools**

Foundation phase pupils are taught through the medium of Welsh and at least 70% of the teaching in Key Stage 2 is through the medium of Welsh.

#### **Dual Stream schools**

English-medium provision and Welsh-medium provision exist more or less side by side.

### **Transitional schools: Welsh medium with significant use of English**

Foundation phase pupils are taught through the medium of Welsh and both languages are used to teach Key Stage 2, but more emphasis is given to the Welsh language, so that it is used to teach over 50%, and up to 70% of the curriculum.

### **Predominantly English-medium schools but with significant use of Welsh**

Foundation phase pupils and Key Stage 2 pupils are taught in both languages, but more emphasis is given to the English language. The Welsh language is used to teach between 20%-50% of the curriculum generally.

### **English-medium schools**

Foundation phase pupils are taught through the medium of English. English is the main medium of teaching Key Stage 2, but Welsh is taught as a second language, and perhaps some aspects of some subjects may be taught through the medium of Welsh.

### **Secondary schools fall into one of the four groups below:**

#### **Welsh-medium schools**

Every subject, apart from English, is taught through the medium of Welsh.

#### **Bilingual schools**

There are four sub-categories to this category, according to the percentage of subjects taught through the medium of Welsh, and whether or not the same provision is offered in English.

**Type A:** At least 80% of the subjects (apart from English and Welsh) are taught through the medium of Welsh only to every pupil. One or two subjects may be taught to some pupils through the medium of English or in both languages.

**Type B:** At least 80% of the subjects (apart from English and Welsh) are taught through the medium of Welsh, but they are also taught through the medium of English

**Type C:** 50%-79% of the subjects (apart from English and Welsh) are taught through the medium of Welsh, but they are also taught through the medium of English

**Type D:** Every subject (apart from English and Welsh) is taught to every pupil using both languages.



## **Predominantly English-medium schools but with significant use of Welsh**

Both languages are used to teach subjects, with 20-49% of the subjects taught through the medium of Welsh. Also, every subject will usually be taught through the medium of English as well.

## **English-medium schools**

The pupils are mainly taught through the medium of English and Welsh is taught as a second language up to Key Stage 4.

## **Strengths and weaknesses of 2007 definitions**

- As noted at the outset of *Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision*, it is an information document. Its main aim is to use the definitions for statistical purposes and "schools will need to use the new definitions and decide to which category they belong when completing statistical returns".

It goes on to say that:

*"the categories are designed to be mutually exclusive and capable of consistent application across Wales"*.

## **Strengths of the existing definitions**

- The main strength of *Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision* is that it provides definitions for the Welsh medium and bilingual sectors at a national level for the first time. In doing so, the document has introduced order and put a structure in place that can be built upon. Instilling order was considered important in a situation where there was no consistency with regards to terminology and no structure.
- Clear headings were provided for the different categories in order to ensure consistent terminology. The term 'designated Welsh language school' was removed and all schools who followed the same pattern for delivering Welsh as a first language were included under the same heading of Welsh medium primary school. This was done as there was no precedence for the term 'designated' in law or in any regulations.
- In terms of secondary schools, there was an attempt to introduce order where there was very little before. But this may have resulted in simply recording the lack of organisation rather than trying to rectify it and provide an explanation.
- One particular strength in looking at the definitions today, is that they did more than just define schools. They also attempted to outline what the linguistic ethos of the schools should be within the different categories, which set a challenge for many schools.
- In addition to this, and possibly more far-reaching, the likely outcomes for pupils in each linguistic provision were noted for the first time as well as the expectations in terms of their skills in Welsh and English. The document emphasises that each pupil, in each category, is expected to meet the required standards in English. It was noted that pupils who received primary

education in Welsh met the required standards in both languages and were able to continue in Welsh medium education at secondary level.

- Following the publication of the document, it became easier for the Welsh Government to monitor the diverse linguistic provision and compile consistent data across the different categories based on appropriate linguistic input. Data was collated successfully over time and statistics produced that were more accurate and reliable.

### **Weaknesses of the existing definitions**

- The main weakness of the new definitions was that they were not statutory and therefore there was no requirement for education authorities to consider them. However, some counties made significant use of the new definitions as a central part of their own definitions.
- For local reasons, some local authorities ignored them and continued to use their own terminology to describe provision. Therefore, the confusion that existed previously was able to continue.
- As the definitions were not statutory and were seen by the Government as a way of submitting information for data collection, no attempts were made to explain them publicly or to promote the different categories. A marketing or information campaign would have been useful to raise awareness of the definitions amongst parents and the different outcomes that could be expected when choosing the various options.
- Each local authority was asked to note the different categories in school handbooks but this had little impact except when disputes occurred, specifically in the secondary sector.
- The new definitions were generally ignored. There was some reference to them when schools were reorganised in some areas of south-west Wales. In east Carmarthenshire, there were debates as to whether a secondary school should be in category 2a or 2b. There was also a reluctance in some cases to move schools along the linguistic continuum, with schools who should have been able to achieve up to category 2a placed in the 2b category.
- One of the main weaknesses of the definitions was that they weren't used in their entirety for planning purposes by most local authorities nor central government.
- This meant that the document had limited influence in terms of progressing the new arrangements. In reality, when coupled with the *School Organisation Code* (see below), this document made the task of planning the development of Welsh-medium education much harder.
- Parents were not included in the process of setting the original definitions which meant that even though these definitions were available, parents did not know much about them and were certainly not provided with an explanation of their content. Nevertheless, some counties such as Denbighshire and Conwy made a commendable effort to interpret the definitions for parents which made them more accessible and easier to understand.
- Generally, even though the publication of the 2007 definitions was an important and significant step forward, the definitions did not become part of

the national discourse on the organisation of education in Wales in terms of its linguistic nature. The main problem was that no one had taken ownership of the definitions and the Government itself was just as guilty of this as anyone.

- After the definitions were introduced, it was noted that the schools' task was to decide in which category they belonged based on the definitions. An opportunity was lost here. If the local education authorities had been given the responsibility for placing schools in the relevant category, some schools could have been challenged to join a category where more Welsh is provided or even the 'transitional school' category. This would certainly have stimulated more growth and development in the education system as a whole.

Therefore, the 2007 definitions were analytical rather than developmental. They provided some structure for a system that was already in place. But the majority of local authorities ultimately kept to their own descriptions.

### **School Organisation Code (Revised version 2018)**

- When developing Welsh-medium provision in schools, one document that will need to be considered is the School Organisation Code. The Welsh Government published the School Organisation Code in 2013 and it was revised in 2018. This document refers to the regulations for changing the medium of teaching and when consultation is needed. These regulations have led to a reluctance within local authorities to go through the consultation process as it can be contentious and lengthy.

The relevant sections of the Code are provided below.

#### **Overview**

*The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires that the Welsh Ministers issue a School Organisation Code. The Code imposes requirements in accordance with which relevant bodies (the Welsh Ministers, local authorities, governing bodies and other promoters) must act. It also includes practical guidance to which relevant bodies must have due regard and sets out the policy context, general principles and factors that should be taken into account by those bring forward proposals to reconfigure school provision and by those responsible for determining proposals.*

#### **1.12 (p16) Specific factors in the consideration of proposals for the change of language medium**

Relevant bodies should take into account the following specific factors:

- the extent to which existing provision by the local authority of education in the medium of English and/or Welsh exceeds or falls short of demand or projected demand from parents for that type of provision, and the contribution the proposal would make to remedying that situation.

- the extent to which the proposal would support the targets in the approved Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).

### 2.3 (p22-23)

#### ***Regulated alterations to community, foundation, voluntary schools, and community special schools.***

- the alteration of the medium of instruction of a class of pupils in an age group or groups (including nursery pupils) at a primary school (or primary education in relation to middle or special schools) which falls within the description in column 1 of the table below so that it falls within the description in the corresponding entry in column 2.

Column 1	Column 2
At least 20% but no more than 80% of the teaching is conducted through the medium of English.	An increase or decrease of more than 20% in the teaching which is conducted through the medium of Welsh.
At least 20% but no more than 80% of the teaching is conducted through the medium of Welsh.	An increase or decrease of more than 20% in the teaching which is conducted through the medium of English.
More than 80% of the teaching is conducted through the medium of English, and some teaching is conducted through the medium of Welsh.	An increase of more than 10% in the teaching which is conducted through the medium of Welsh.
More than 80% of the teaching is conducted through the medium of Welsh, and some teaching is conducted through the medium of English	An increase of more than 10% in the teaching which is conducted through the medium of English.
No teaching is conducted through the medium of Welsh	More than 10% of the teaching is conducted through the medium of Welsh.
No teaching is conducted through the medium of English	More than 10% of the teaching is conducted through the medium of English.
Some teaching is conducted through the medium of English.	No teaching is conducted through the medium of English.

Some teaching is conducted through the medium of Welsh.	No teaching is conducted through the medium of Welsh.
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- the alteration of the teaching of pupils in a year group at a secondary school (or secondary education in relation to middle or special schools) which falls within the description in column 1 of the table below so that it falls within the description in the corresponding entry in column 2.

Column 1	Column 2
Five or more relevant subjects are taught (wholly or mainly) through the medium of Welsh to any pupils.	A decrease by four or more in the number of the relevant subjects taught (wholly or mainly) through the medium of Welsh to any pupils.
Five or more relevant subjects are taught (wholly or mainly) through the medium of English to any pupils.	A decrease by four or more in the number of the relevant subjects taught (wholly or mainly) through the medium of English to any pupils.
Every relevant subject is taught (wholly or mainly) through the medium of Welsh to all pupils.	Three or more relevant subjects are taught (wholly or mainly) through the medium of English to any pupils.
Every relevant subject is taught (wholly or mainly) through the medium of English to all pupils.	Three or more relevant subjects are taught (wholly or mainly) through the medium of Welsh to any pupils.
One or more relevant subject is taught (wholly or mainly) through the medium of Welsh to any pupils.	No relevant subject is taught (wholly or mainly) through the medium of Welsh to any pupils.
One or more relevant subject is taught (wholly or mainly) through the medium of English to any pupils.	No relevant subject is taught (wholly or mainly) through the medium of English to any pupils.

*(Relevant subjects are defined as any subjects apart from English and Welsh which are taught at a school).*

- To redefine schools and their Welsh-medium provision, we will need to look again at the wording of this Code as the current wording makes it difficult to move schools across the linguistic continuum in a practical and sensible way. The Code will need to be revised to achieve this and we will need to consider a much simpler and clearer approach that doesn't hinder further teaching in Welsh. As it stands, the Code could create much dispute in communities and difficulties for local authorities as they fulfil their role in ensuring that appropriate educational provision is available.
- Therefore, in terms of the ambitious targets in *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers*, it is clear that we need to look in detail at the definitions of the current categories and the conditions for consulting on changes to language medium. The contents of the *Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision* and *School Organisation Code* documents will need to be revised in order to encourage more schools to be creative in increasing Welsh-medium teaching.

### **Welsh in Education Strategic Plans**

- Before the 2013 regulations, planning for Welsh-medium education was based on the Welsh-medium Education Strategy 2010. This strategy set the Welsh Government's national strategic direction for planning Welsh-medium education between 2010 and 2015. These plans required local authorities to report on progress against the national targets in the Welsh-medium Education Strategy.
- A consultation has now been undertaken on introducing regulations for Welsh in Education Strategic Plans for 2019 onwards with the intention of laying the regulations before the Assembly in December 2019. The main changes proposed are that plans will now cover a 10 year period and each local authority will agree on new targets with the Welsh Government for this extended period. This will lead to better strategic planning over a longer period which is much more practical in terms of education and language planning.

### **Draft revised definitions**

For the current education and linguistic context, and as a result of discussions with specialists in the field and stakeholders within the education authorities, the following principles were adhered to when setting the draft definitions in this report.

- To provide definitions that can be used to describe the linguistic situation of each maintained school in Wales.
- To set definitions that are simple and clear.
- To introduce definitions that would ensure parents, governors, teachers, headteachers and local authorities can easily understand the nature of the provision provided by or for them.

- To set definitions that would help to develop Welsh-medium and bilingual provision in the education system and facilitate schools' progress along their linguistic journey.
- When creating local policies, to ensure local authorities consider the new structure as an asset to their planning processes and easy to adopt.
- In terms of population mobility, to provide a set of consistent definitions across Wales in order to make it much easier to ensure appropriate continuity for people who move within Wales or from outside Wales.
- To provide new definitions that are easier to understand when explaining the unique characteristics of Wales to new parents and the general public.
- To set simple definitions that explain provision clearly using a limited number of categories and therefore gain commitment for the new structure.
- To create a new arrangement that would facilitate the process of moving a school from one category to another and allow the success of the different categories to be measured.

### **Preparatory work before forming the new draft categories**

- It was decided that various ways of categorising should be considered and from every direction, by:
  - Evaluating the existing definitions and identifying their strengths and weaknesses.
  - Analysing PLASC data to see whether different types of primary and secondary schools tend to cluster together when using some language criteria.
  - Convene a small group of specialists to provide detail advice on categorising schools.
  - Liaising informally with a number of other experts in the field as well as a selection of local authority education officers to discuss their response to possible categories and their suggestions for improving and refining the system. This was also an opportunity to assess whether there was a desire for change locally and what the advantages and disadvantages of this would be.
  - Working closely with Government staff involved in the development of the new curriculum to see how the revised curriculum would affect the current structures.
  - Considering whether there are any language communities outside Wales that have dealt with school categorisation in a situation where bilingualism and multilingualism is an important factor.

### **Definitions for Welsh language provision**

- When setting the definitions, the principles were that they should be simple, clear and easy to describe and understand and also limited in number.

## Number of categories

- For the revised structure, it is proposed that Welsh and English medium provision should be summarised into three categories for primary schools and three categories for secondary schools. Even though the same number of categories are recommended for both sectors, they do not correspond entirely as the structure of the educational provision and the pattern of progression are slightly different in each sector. Having only three categories would mean that the provision would be easier to explain and easier for parents and school governors to understand. This also takes into consideration the analysis of PLASC data which shows that schools in Wales roughly fall into three groups.

## Terminology used to describe the new categories

- As the regime for Welsh medium education has been developed over quite a long period of time and has been influenced by a number of factors, there is no consistency in terms of the terminology used to describe provision. It varies from the terms used in the Education Act 2002 and the definitions in the information document *Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision*, to the terminology used by individual authorities. As there were no full and official definitions, there was some uncertainty regarding what exactly was meant by a 'Welsh school' or a 'bilingual school'. Some parents believed, for example, that an ability to speak Welsh was a requirement for these schools and, according to recent work, one group thought that they were private schools and fees would be payable to attend them.
- Therefore, in order to rectify these misunderstandings, it is recommended that more neutral terms are used to describe the provision e.g. Categori 1, 2 and 3. Letters could also be used for the same purpose i.e. A, B and C, or three letter words like TWF. The main advantage of using figures is that counting to three in both languages is easy for everyone. However, the disadvantage is of course that there are values attached to numbers. It is interesting to note that the Basque Country use the letter A for predominantly Spanish medium schools and D for predominantly Basque schools, and the letter B for models that use both languages equally.
- If this approach was used to categorise schools, the Welsh Government and local authorities would have to hold a marketing or information sharing campaign to ensure that parents and prospective parents are familiar with the meaning and implications of the new terminology. This would also be an opportunity to raise awareness of the Welsh medium and bilingual provision that is available.
- Categorising the provision in this way in the primary sector would allow the provision itself to be categorised rather than the whole school. There could, therefore, be more than one category in a school. A school that provides English medium education in one stream and Welsh medium provision in



another stream, could be Category 1 and Category 3. An understanding of the categories would ensure that the provision offered is clear to parents. A situation could also develop where dual stream schools offer an English medium stream and a bilingual or Welsh medium stream.

## **Draft definitions and categories**

Below is the draft framework for the new approach to categorising schools according to language provision. As well as the draft definitions, a brief description is provided of the 'language of the school' and 'what parents can expect'. These are examples only and will need to be checked and amended. These examples are noted in italics.

- **Primary sector**

### **Category 1**

- Pupils will be taught mainly in English, within the 80%-90% English and 10%-20% Welsh range.
- Welsh will be taught and assessed as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience, and across the other areas of learning and experience.
- Schools can teach aspects of the areas of learning and experience beyond the languages, literacy and communication area, using Welsh increasingly as the medium of teaching, in accordance with the school's development plan and the local authority's WESP.
- Pupils will achieve the appropriate progression steps in Welsh and English by the age of 11.

### **Language of the school**

- English is the school's language of communication on a day-to-day basis.
- In order to reinforce pupils' language skills, some Welsh is used occasionally and as a medium of teaching in some aspects of the curriculum.

### **What parents can expect?**

- Your child will be able to speak, read and write in English according to their age and ability.
- They will be able to speak Welsh in familiar and personal situations, hold a simple conversation, express an opinion and give brief reasons.
- Your child will be able to use the vocabulary and terms for the areas covered in Welsh.
- As a rule, your child will transfer to a Category 1 or 2 secondary school and continue to learn primarily through the medium of English, whilst continuing to learn Welsh and follow some elements of areas of learning and experience through the medium of Welsh where appropriate.

## **Category 2**

- Pupils will be taught in Welsh and English, and equal time will be allocated to learn in both languages.
- Generally, Welsh and elements of the areas of learning and experience taught in Welsh will be experienced in Welsh, and elements of the areas of learning and experience taught in English will be experienced in English.
- Many common terms across all areas of learning and experience will be introduced in both languages.

### ***Language of the school***

- Creating a Welsh language ethos in the school is given high priority, and Welsh will be the language of the school on a day-to-day basis.
- Both languages are used to ensure information is understood where necessary.
- The school communicates with parents in both languages.

### ***What parents can expect?***

- Your child will be able to speak, read and write in English according to their age and ability.
- Your child will be able to speak Welsh in a broad range of familiar and unfamiliar situations, and express opinion clearly and simply.
- Your child will have a broad vocabulary and good basic skills enabling them to continue with elements of their education through the medium of Welsh in secondary school.
- Children receiving education in Category 2 schools will be able to transfer to secondary schools providing education in both languages.
- The pattern of linguistic development of a child receiving education through two languages is slightly different to that of a child receiving education through one language, but by the time they reach 11 years old, the language skills of a child in this category achieve the appropriate progression steps in English and they are fluent orally in Welsh.

## **Category 3**

- Pupils will be taught mainly in Welsh.
- Up until 7 years old, children will be taught through the medium of Welsh through immersion education methods or on a first language basis.
- Between 7 and 11 years old, English will be introduced and possibly as a medium of teaching some elements of the curriculum. (In terms of time, 80% Welsh and 20% English).
- Pupils will be mainly assessed in Welsh, with some assessment in English as appropriate.
- Common terms within areas of learning and experience will be introduced in both languages.

- Pupils will achieve the appropriate progression steps in Welsh and English by the age of 11.

### **Language of the school**

- School - Welsh is the day to day language of the school.
- English is used at times to ensure understanding, specifically during the early period of immersion education.
- Welsh is used as the language of communication with the pupils and for the school's administration.
- There will be a strong emphasis on creating a Welsh ethos within the school.
- The school communicates with parents in both languages

### **What parents can expect?**

- Your child will be able to speak, read and write in English according to their age and ability.
- Your child will be able to speak, read and write in Welsh according to their age and ability.
- Your child will be able to move confidently from one language to the other, applying translingual skills with ease within the school and beyond.
- As a rule, whatever the language in a pupil's home, they will easily transfer to a secondary sector offering areas through the medium of Welsh.
- The pattern of linguistic development of a child receiving education through both languages, following an immersion programme, is slightly different to that of a child receiving education through one language, but by the time they reach 11 years old, a child receiving bilingual education achieves appropriate and equal progression steps in Welsh and English.

### **Transitional periods**

- One of the reasons for introducing a revised system for defining the language provision of schools in Wales is to provide a structure that encourages and facilitates the process of moving schools across a linguistic continuum. The incentive for this development comes from the vision in the Government's policy document *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers*. To give local authorities and schools time to plan for this process of moving across the language continuum, we recommend that two transitional sub-categories are created as temporary categories. These would provide schools with some flexibility to test the system and plan their own path as they change the language category of the school. We propose that the first transitional period is for schools who wish to move from Category 1 to Category 2 or 3. The second period would be for schools moving from Category 2 to Category 3.
- These transitional categories would not be permanent. The transitional period in the primary sector would continue for 8 years and would be agreed with the local authority. Therefore, the usual pattern here would be as follows:

- transitional schools will agree on a language transition plan with the local authority. This plan would cover the timescale and method for the transition period.
- the transition plan will set out how Welsh will be introduced increasingly as medium of teaching within the school.
- pupils starting at these schools will join groups where immersion education methods are used to learn Welsh in the early years

Before starting the process of moving a school to the transitional period, there would need to be a full consultation with parents and prospective parents on the proposed changes to the medium of teaching within the school, in accordance with the current regulations.

These plans would be reviewed regularly/yearly by the schools themselves, by the relevant local authority and also by the Welsh Government when reviewing the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

- **Secondary sector**

We recommend placing secondary schools in Wales in three categories - the same number of categories as the primary sector. However, as the nature of primary schools in Wales is very different to secondary schools, the categories do not correspond entirely though many aspects are similar.

### **Category 1**

- Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate progression steps.

### ***School ethos***

- English is the school's language of communication on a day-to-day basis.
- The school will provide a Welsh environment and will aim to use some Welsh for communication in order to help pupils improve their ability to use Welsh in the areas of learning and occasionally when socialising.

### **What parents can expect**

- The majority of pupils will follow the areas of learning and experience in English.

- Any pupil who follow these areas in Welsh will be able to be assessed in Welsh.
- Generally, all pupils will be able to speak, read and write in English according to their age and ability.
- Pupils will be able to speak some Welsh in familiar situations and in some subject contexts using subject-specific terms and vocabulary depending on the parts of the curriculum provided in Welsh.

## **Category 2**

- Welsh is taught as a subject and a range of subjects (50%-75%) are offered through the medium of Welsh. Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps.
- At least 40% of pupils aged 16 will be assessed through the medium of Welsh in at least 3 subjects.

## **School ethos**

- Welsh is used significantly in the everyday life of the school and high priority is given to creating a Welsh ethos.
- English is used according to the linguistic context of the school.
- Every school in this category will develop its own prospectus which outlines the ethos of the school and considers its linguistic environment and the language balance between the pupils.
- Both languages are used as languages of communication with the pupils as appropriate.

## **What parents can expect**

- Most of the areas of learning and experience will be delivered in Welsh and English.
- A significant percentage of pupils will follow some subjects through the medium of Welsh and will be assessed in Welsh at 16 years of age.
- Pupils assessed in Welsh will be able to move confidently into Welsh medium post-16 provision.
- A pupil who chooses to study some subjects through the medium of Welsh will be able to speak, read and write Welsh easily
- and can move confidently from one language to the other.
- The pupil can read a varied of texts in both Welsh and English. The pupil can write about personal experiences and experiences within subjects in both Welsh and English.

## **Category 3**

- Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps.

- At least 70% of pupils aged 16 will be assessed through the medium of Welsh in at least 5 subjects.

### **School ethos**

- Welsh is the main language of the school.
- Welsh is used as the language of communication with the pupils on a daily basis and for the school's administration.
- The environment of the school is of a Welsh nature.

### **What parents can expect**

- Most of the pupils are taught and assessed through the medium of Welsh
- English and related subjects are taught in English.
- Some subjects are offered in English or bilingually as pupils choose their areas of study.
- Your child can speak, read and write Welsh and English easily.
- Your child can move confidently from one language to the other both orally and in written form.
- Your child can write about personal experiences and experiences within subjects in one language and can also present them in another language.

**Draft definitions in a table**

**Primary education (draft definitions)**

<p><b>English language School/Stream/Class</b></p> <p>(Within the 80%-90% English and 10%-20% Welsh range)</p> <p><b>Category 1</b></p>		<p><b>English/Welsh language School/Stream/Class</b></p> <p>(50% English/ 50% Welsh)</p> <p><b>Category 2</b></p>		<p><b>Welsh language School/Stream/Class</b></p> <p>(100% Welsh language until 7 years old and then 20% English 80% Welsh from 8-11 years old)</p> <p><b>Category 3</b></p>
	<p><b><i>Sub-stream</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Transitional School/Stream/Class</i></b></p> <p><i>The school will be in this category for no more than 8 years as the school moves to Category 2 (or 3).</i></p>		<p><b><i>Sub-stream</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Transitional School/Stream/Class</i></b></p> <p><i>The school will be in this category for no more than 8 years as the school moves to Category 3.</i></p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils will be taught mainly in English.</li> <li>• Welsh will be taught and assessed as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience, and across the other areas of learning and experience.</li> <li>• Pupils will achieve the appropriate progression steps in Welsh and English by the age of 11.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Transitional schools will agree on a transition plan with the local authority, in terms of the timescale and method for the transition period.</i></li> <li>• <i>The transition plan will set out how Welsh will be introduced increasingly as medium of teaching within the school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Pupils starting at these schools will join groups where immersion education methods are used to learn Welsh.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils will be taught in Welsh and English (language programmes similar to Category 3) and equal time will be allocated to learn in both languages.</li> <li>• Generally, Welsh and elements of the areas of learning and experience taught in Welsh will be experienced in Welsh, and elements of the areas of learning and experience taught in English will be experienced in English.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Transitional schools will agree on a transition plan with the local authority, in terms of the timescale and method for the transition period.</i></li> <li>• <i>The transition plan will outline how Welsh will be introduced as the main medium of teaching, in a similar way to the provision in Category 3 schools</i></li> <li>• <i>Only Welsh will be introduced in a pupil's early years from the beginning of the transition period.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up until 7 years old, children will be taught through the medium of Welsh through immersion education methods or on a first language basis. (100%)</li> <li>• Between 7 and 11 years old, English will be introduced and possibly as a medium of teaching some elements of the curriculum. Pupils will be mainly assessed in Welsh, with some assessment in English as appropriate</li> <li>• Pupils will achieve the appropriate progression steps in Welsh and English by the age of 11.</li> </ul>
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**School category according to linguistic provision**

**Primary Sector**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>School ethos</b>	<b>What parents can expect</b>
<b>Category 1</b>	<p>English language School/Stream/Class</p> <p>(Within the 80%-90% English and 10%-20% Welsh range)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Pupils will be taught mainly in English, within the 80%-90% English and 10%-20% Welsh range.</i></li> <li><i>Welsh will be taught and assessed as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience, and across the other areas of learning and experience.</i></li> <li><i>Schools can teach aspects of the areas of learning and experience beyond the languages, literacy and communication area, using Welsh increasingly as the medium of teaching, in accordance with the school's development plan and the local authority's WESP.</i></li> <li><i>Pupils will achieve the appropriate progression steps</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>English is the school's language of communication on a day-to-day basis.</i></li> <li><i>In order to reinforce pupils' language skills, some Welsh is used occasionally and as a medium of teaching in some aspects of the curriculum.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Your child will be able to speak, read and write in English according to their age and ability.</i></li> <li><i>They will be able to speak Welsh in familiar and personal situations, hold a simple conversation, express an opinion and give brief reasons.</i></li> <li><i>Your child will be able to use vocabulary and terms in relation to areas discussed in Welsh.</i></li> <li><i>As a rule, your child will transfer to a Category 1 or 2 secondary school and continue to learn primarily through the medium of English, whilst continuing to</i></li> </ul>

		<i>in Welsh and English by the age of 11.</i>		<i>learn Welsh and follow some elements of areas of learning and experience through the medium of Welsh where appropriate.</i>
<b>A transitional school</b>	<i>Sub-stream  Transitional School/Stream/Class</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Transitional schools will agree on a transition plan with the local authority, in terms of the timescale and method for the transition period.</i></li> <li>• <i>The transition plan will set out how Welsh will be introduced increasingly as medium of teaching within the school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Pupils starting at these schools will join groups where immersion education methods are used to learn Welsh.</i></li> </ul>		
<b>Category 2</b>	Welsh/English language School/Stream/Class  (50% English/  50% Welsh)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Pupils will be taught in Welsh and English, and equal time will be allocated to learn in both languages.</i></li> <li>• <i>Generally, Welsh and elements of the areas of learning and experience taught in Welsh will be experienced in Welsh, and</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Creating a Welsh language ethos in the school is given high priority, and Welsh will be the language of the school on a day-to-day basis.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Your child will be able to speak, read and write in English according to their age and ability.</i></li> <li>• <i>Your child will be able to speak Welsh in a broad range of familiar and unfamiliar situations,</i></li> </ul>

		<p><i>elements of the areas of learning and experience taught in English will be experienced in English.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Many common terms across all areas of learning and experience will be introduced in both languages.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Both languages are used to ensure information is understood where necessary.</i></li> <li>• <i>The school will communicate with parents in both languages.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>and express opinion clearly and simply.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Your child will have a broad vocabulary and good basic skills enabling them to continue with elements of their education through the medium of Welsh in secondary school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Children receiving education in Category 3 schools will be able to transfer to secondary schools providing education in both languages.</i></li> </ul>
<b>A transitional school</b>	<p>Sub-stream</p> <p>Transitional School/Stream/Class</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Transitional schools will agree on a transition plan with the local authority, in terms of the timescale and method for the transition period.</i></li> <li>• <i>The transition plan will outline how Welsh will be introduced as the main medium of teaching, in a similar way to the</i></li> </ul>		

		<p><i>provision in Category 3 schools.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Only Welsh will be introduced in a pupil's early years from the beginning of the transition period.</i></li> </ul>		
<b>Category 3</b>	<p>Welsh language School/Stream/Class</p> <p>(100% Welsh language until 7 years old and then</p> <p>20% English language</p> <p>80% Welsh language</p> <p>8-11 years old)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils will be taught mainly in Welsh.</li> <li>• Up until 7 years old, children will be taught through the medium of Welsh through immersion education methods or on a first language basis.</li> <li>• Between 7 and 11 years old, English will be introduced and possibly as a medium of teaching some elements of the curriculum.</li> <li>• Pupils will be mainly assessed in Welsh, with some assessment in English as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welsh is the main day to day language of the school.</li> <li>• English is used at times to ensure understanding, specifically during the early period of immersion education.</li> <li>• Welsh is used as the language of communication with the pupils and for the school's administration.</li> <li>• There will be a strong emphasis</li> </ul>	<p>Your child will be able to speak, read and write in English according to their age and ability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your child will also be able to speak, read and write in Welsh according to their age and ability.</li> <li>• Your child will be able to move confidently from one language to the other, applying translingual skills with ease within the school and beyond.</li> <li>• As a rule, whatever the language in a pupil's home, they will easily transfer to a secondary</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common terms within areas of learning and experience will be introduced in both languages.</li> <li>• Pupils will achieve the appropriate progression steps in Welsh and English by the age of 11.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on creating a Welsh and Welsh language ethos within the school.</li> <li>• The school will communicate with parents in Welsh and English.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sector offering areas through the medium of Welsh.</li> <li>• The pattern of linguistic development of a child receiving education through both languages, following an immersion programme, is slightly different to that of a child receiving education through one language, but by the time they reach 11 years old, a child receiving bilingual education achieves appropriate and equal progression steps in Welsh and English.</li> </ul>
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## Secondary Schools (Draft Definitions)

English language School/Stream		Welsh/English language/Bilingual School/Stream		Welsh language/Bilingual School/Stream
Category 1		Category 2		Category 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate progression steps.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sub-stream</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Bilingual Transitional School/Stream</b> <i>(Specified period of 6 years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Welsh is taught as a subject and some subjects are offered through the medium of Welsh.</i></li> <li><i>Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welsh is taught as a subject and <b>a range of subjects (50%-75%) are offered through the medium of Welsh.</b></li> <li>Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy and communication</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sub-stream</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>School/Stream</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Welsh language/Bilingual Transitional</b> <i>(Specified period of 6 years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Welsh is taught as a subject and <b>an increasing and vast range of subjects are offered through the medium of Welsh.</b></i></li> <li><i>Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching is mainly through the medium of Welsh. Apart from English/English Literature, all subjects are offered in Welsh.</li> <li>Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy</li> </ul>

	<p><i>experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>At least 20% of pupils</b> will follow a study area through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 (<b>10% of curriculum time</b> not including Welsh itself within the areas of learning and experience) to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps.</li> </ul>	<p>area of learning and experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>At least 40% of pupils</b> will follow a study area through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 in <b>at least 3 subjects</b> (or the equivalent within the current curriculum, not including Welsh and English Language and/or Literature).</li> </ul>	<p><i>learning and experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over a period of 6 years, <b>the percentage of pupils</b> following a study area through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 <b>in at least 5 subjects</b> (or the equivalent within the current curriculum, not including Welsh and English Language and/or Literature) <b>will increase from 40% to 70%.</b></li> </ul>	<p>and communication area of learning and experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>At least 70% of pupils</b> will follow a study area through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 in <b>at least 5 subjects</b> (or the equivalent within the current curriculum, not including Welsh and English Language and/or Literature).</li> </ul>
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**School category according to linguistic provision**

**Secondary Sector**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>School ethos</b>	<b>What parents can expect</b>
<b>Category 1</b>	<b>English language School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate progression steps.</i></li> <li><i>Some limited Welsh medium provision can be offered (which normally includes learning Welsh as mother tongue).</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>On a day-to-day basis, English is the language of communication at the school.</i></li> <li><i>In order to reinforce pupils' language skills, some Welsh is used occasionally and as a medium of teaching in some aspects of the curriculum.</i></li> <li><i>As well as Welsh, other aspects of the areas of experience are used to show the relevance of Welsh and Welshness to pupils' lives.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Your child will be able to speak, read and write in English according to their age and ability.</i></li> <li><i>Your child will be able to speak Welsh in an increasing range of familiar and unfamiliar situations.</i></li> <li><i>Your child will be able to use terms and vocabulary in relation to subjects dealt with at school.</i></li> <li><i>Most areas of learning and skills will be studied in English.</i></li> <li><i>Your child will be able to understand a lot of Welsh.</i></li> </ul>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The school can communicate with parents in both English and Welsh.</i></li> </ul>	
<b>A transitional school</b>	<p><b>Sub-stream Transitional School</b></p> <p><b>(Specified period of 6 years)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Welsh is taught as a subject and some subjects are offered through the medium of Welsh.</i></li> <li>• <i>Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps.</i></li> <li>• <b><i>At least 20% of pupils will follow a study area through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 (10% of curriculum time not including Welsh itself within the areas of learning and experience) to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps</i></b></li> </ul>		
<b>Category 2</b>	<b>Welsh/English language/Bilingual School</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Welsh is taught as a subject and a range of subjects (50%-75%) are offered</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Creating a Welsh and Welsh language ethos in the school is given</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Your child will be able to speak, read and write in English according to their age and ability.</i></li> </ul>

		<p>through the medium of Welsh.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps.</i></li> <li>• <b>At least 40% of pupils</b> will follow a study area through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 in <b>at least 3 subjects</b> (or the equivalent within the current curriculum, not including Welsh and English Language and/or Literature).</li> </ul>	<p><i>high priority, and Welsh will generally be the language of the school on a day-to-day basis.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Some of the school's administration will be undertaken in both languages.</i></li> <li>• <i>Both languages are used to ensure information is understood where necessary.</i></li> <li>• <i>The school will communicate with parents in both languages.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Your child will be able to speak Welsh in a broad range of familiar and unfamiliar situations, and express opinion clearly.</i></li> <li>• <i>Your child will have an increasingly broad, good vocabulary, enabling them to continue with their education through the medium of Welsh.</i></li> <li>• <i>Your child's Welsh language skills will depend on their exposure to Welsh as a medium of learning.</i></li> <li>• <i>Following a significant percentage of subjects through the medium of Welsh will provide your child with language skills similar to those expected for Category 3 below. They will therefore be able to move confidently from one language to the other in a range of different situations.</i></li> </ul>
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Following a percentage of subjects through the medium of Welsh will enable your child to move into Welsh medium post-16 provision.</i></li> </ul>
<b>A transitional school</b>	<p><b>Sub-stream</b></p> <p><b>Welsh language/Bilingual Transitional School</b></p> <p><b>(Specified period of 6 years)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Welsh is taught as a subject and <b>an increasing and vast range of subjects are offered through the medium of Welsh.</b></i></li> <li>• <i>Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps.</i></li> <li>• <i>Over a period of 6 years, <b>the percentage of pupils</b> following a study area through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 <b>in at least 5 subjects</b> (or the equivalent within the current curriculum, not including Welsh and English Language and/or Literature) <b>will increase from 40% to 70%.</b></i></li> </ul>		

<p><b>Category 3</b></p>	<p><b>Welsh language/Bilingual School</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Teaching is mainly through the medium of Welsh. Apart from English/English Literature, all subjects are offered in Welsh.</i></li> <li>• <i>Welsh is taught as part of the languages, literacy and communication area of learning and experience to all pupils up to 16 years old to enable them to achieve the appropriate steps.</i></li> <li>• <b><i>At least 70% of pupils will follow a study area through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 in at least 5 subjects (or the equivalent within the current curriculum, not including Welsh and English Language and/or Literature).</i></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Welsh is the main day to day language of the school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Welsh is used as the language of communication with the pupils and for the school's administration.</i></li> <li>• <i>There will be a strong emphasis on creating a Welsh and Welsh language ethos within the school.</i></li> <li>• <i>The school will communicate with parents in Welsh and English.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>What parents can expect?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Your child will be able to speak, read and write in English according to their age and ability.</i></li> <li>• <i>Your child will also be able to speak, read and write in Welsh according to their age and ability.</i></li> <li>• <i>Your child will be able to move confidently from one language to the other, applying translingual skills with ease within the school and beyond.</i></li> <li>• <i>The range of situations where your child can use both languages will expand and deepen.</i></li> <li>• <i>Your child will follow study areas primarily through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16.</i></li> </ul>
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Your child will be able to move into Welsh medium post-16 provision.</i></li></ul>
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## Annex 1

### Recommendations regarding implementation

1. In discussing these proposed developments, many said that a new method of categorising schools was not possible without considering some of the difficulties faced by schools and local authorities currently in developing the Welsh medium education regime. Below are some suggestions and recommendations that would help in realising Welsh Government's policy aim of securing a million Welsh speakers by the year 2050.
2. As this is a developmental, experimental scheme in seeking to revise the current definitions and create new categories, it would be good to consider the purpose of the definitions themselves and when it would be appropriate to look again at the new definitions and see whether they are fit for purpose.
3. The aim of revisiting the definitions is twofold. Firstly, in order it would ensure the definitions relating to the Welsh language in schools across Wales continue to be current, and secondly it would reinforce the policy aim in *Cymraeg 2050* of creating a million Welsh speakers by 2050. In terms of the second aim, the revised definitions will clearly need to be reconsidered within a specific period in order to see whether they have helped in moving Welsh schools along a linguistic continuum. It is highly likely that definitions will need to be adapted in order to address the exciting challenge of ensuring many more pupils attending primarily English medium schools become increasingly able to hold meaningful and useful conversations in Welsh.

**It is therefore recommended that a full review is held of the above definitions within a decade in order to see whether they are still relevant and useful.**

4. One of the greatest miracles of Welsh education is seeing young children from non-Welsh speaking homes becoming Welsh speakers during the early years of primary school, and becoming fluently bilingual over a short period. Those Welsh medium primary schools that do not provide immersion education for children during those years are now very rare exceptions. But as this was bottom-up growth generally, ie based on the desire among non-Welsh-speaking parents for Welsh education for their children, we did not develop a national policy in Wales adopting this teaching method, developing national policies identifying principles and best practice that should be adopted. Until recently, very little training was given to teachers on conducting classes where children in immersion education were present as well as children who could already speak Welsh. A number of practices relating to immersion education developed that are now considered fundamental and meaningful principles. When creating policy and guidance in future, it would be good to consider also

how best to structure immersion education in the foundation phase where emphasis is placed on learning through play, which is based on a philosophy that is a little different to the methods generally used in immersion education.

5. Another element that needs to be very carefully considered is when immersion education begins and when it ends. There is a presumption that immersion education ends when children become fluent. But should we consider whether pupils' language skills need to be maintained more systematically than this, especially among those children who do not have contact with the Welsh language beyond the school walls? Should it be noted, for example, that it would be helpful for pupils to continue to receive at least half their education through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16 if they are to maintain and use their language skills in the workplace and socially when they leave school?
6. When revisiting immersion education, it would also be helpful to outline best practices in terms of educating children that are first language Welsh speakers. Most of these will be in early years classes where immersion education is implemented. Yet, guidance available to teachers on dealing with this linguistic situation is hard to find. With the introduction of the new curriculum, this could be looked at and practical guidance offered to teachers on how to structure linguistically mixed classes like these in the early years.

**It is recommended that a policy document is published by the Government identifying its policies in terms of immersion education, the fundamental principles and best practices.**

### **Additional Learning Needs**

7. When revisiting definitions of school categories, consideration should also be given to how the school sector dealing with Additional Learning Needs is categorised. This sector was not included in *Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision (2007)*.

*The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans Advisory Board report stated:*

*The approach taken by most WESPs to this was very weak although the published guidance asks councils to consider how they would increase their capacity to provide education for pupils with additional learning needs through the medium of Welsh. At the time of the Rapid Review, given their most recent audits, very few of them had done so.*

## Teacher training

8. Until now, very little attention has been given to planning the entire education workforce from the standpoint of developing Welsh language provision. This deficiency will be underlined as more schools provide more Welsh over these next few years. In future, the Government will need a far clearer picture of the needs in relation to teachers able to teach through the medium of Welsh, setting specific and ambitious targets in terms of recruiting Welsh speaking teachers for providers of initial teacher education. Welsh Government also needs to keep an eye on the situation and decide who should collect data on the Welsh medium sector, that the data is current and that it can be used as a meaningful planning tool. Without the relevant education workforce, we cannot move forward.
9. In a report on newcomers to the Initial Teacher Education courses, published by the Welsh Government on 30th May 2019, it was noted that the number of students able to teach through the medium of Welsh has dropped slightly, and that the number is at its lowest since 2007/08.

This could cause fundamental difficulties in the future development of Welsh and bilingual education.

**It is recommended that a comprehensive and progressive strategy is established to train teachers in all aspects if the redefining of schools in Wales is to be successful.**

## Welsh medium examinations

10. In considering secondary sector definitions, one matter that will need attention is the confusion in relation to data when pupils are registered for examinations in bilingual schools. Firstly, it would be good to know exactly how many pupils sit their examinations through the medium of Welsh, answering the Welsh language papers, so that the objective and clear baseline is available in order to plan and measure progress. And secondly, it would be good to know what rules are applied by the WJEC and other awarding bodies in terms of recording registration language and the language in which individual examination papers are answered.

## Language progression

11. One of the challenges facing Welsh medium education is to ensure enough pupils take advantage of the opportunities to be fluently bilingual offered through Welsh education, and that they continue to follow their areas of learning and experience through the medium of Welsh up to the age of 16. Without this consistency of progression, pupils are in danger of losing their confidence and language skills before leaving statutory



education and afterwards, especially those from homes where Welsh is not spoken. One of the aims behind these definitions, then, is to encourage the increase of Welsh language provision, but also to address the second challenge in *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers*, which is to increase the daily use of Welsh by 10% over the next decade.

**It is recommended that schools, in encouraging the language continuum, should not take steps to reduce the provision of Welsh, thus, rather than developing along the continuum, placing less emphasis on learning Welsh and learning through the medium of Welsh. It is proposed that this should be clearly stated in the regulations that will support these definitions.**

### **Provision for latecomers or parents looking for a second opportunity to choose Welsh education**

12. Although this is not a matter directly relating to the categorisation of Welsh education, it is an element of the education regime in Wales. Since the mid-1980s, provision for latecomers has grown in Wales. This innovative and extremely successful provision began in Gwynedd, then spreading to those areas where a significant percentage of the population spoke Welsh. Very recently, the provision developed to include other areas in Wales where there was demand among parents for further opportunities for access to Welsh education, after the age at which pupils usually begin school. For reasons mainly relating to finance and the organisation of finance, this provision is no longer as powerful as it once was. This is a shame as Wales has pioneered in this area on a worldwide level, demonstrating how children are able to learn a language very quickly over a short period, by using appropriate learning techniques.

**It is recommended therefore that consideration should be given to how the provision for latecomers, or parents looking for a second opportunity to choose Welsh education, is a part of the education regime so that this provision should be available consistently across Wales.**

### **PLASC Data Collection**

13. If we accept the recommendations in this report in terms of new definitions, consideration will need to be given to how PLASC data will be collected, based on these definitions. As the report recommends that data on streams or classes within a primary school can be categorised as well as schools generally, careful consideration will need to be given to how data will be collected in order to record variations that could stem from these new patterns of defining educational provision.

### **Schools for 3-19-year-olds**

14. With the increase in the number of schools for 3-19-year-olds, it is recommended that a specific category for those particular schools should not be created. They should be referred to, rather, in relation to the recommended categories. A school for 3-19-year-olds will therefore be categorised as a Category 3 school in the primary sector and as Category 2 in the secondary sector.