

29. Cymraeg 2050

Background

1.Cymraeg 2050

The Welsh Government's strategy for the Welsh language, [Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers](#), introduces a long-term vision for a Wales where the Welsh language thrives. The statutory education system has a vital role to play in increasing the number of Welsh speakers. It is crucial to increase the number of school learners who have the opportunity to develop Welsh-language skills in school and the opportunity to use it in their everyday lives, significantly, to achieve these goals.

The Welsh Government wants to increase the proportion of all school year groups that receive their education through the medium of Welsh as well as increasing the proportion of learners being taught through the medium of Welsh. The Welsh Government also wants to transform how Welsh is taught to all learners to ensure that at least 70% of those learners report by 2050 that they can speak Welsh by the time they leave school; and increase the number of primary and secondary teachers who can teach through the medium of Welsh and Welsh as a language.

This is the overarching strategy driving all Welsh medium developments within the education system and within individual schools. Therefore, governors have a critical role to play in helping achieve this vision.

2. Welsh in Education Strategic Plans

Section 84 of the [School Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act 2013](#) requires all local authorities to prepare a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and outlines that a Plan must contain the local authority's proposals to improve the planning and standards of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh and of the teaching of Welsh in its area. The [Welsh in Education Strategic Plans \(Wales\) Regulations 2019](#) and supporting guidance provide the detail and context to support local authorities in their planning. Every local authority in Wales is now implementing a 10-year plan.

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) are central to the growth of Welsh-medium education. The WESPs are driven by ambitious 10- year targets aligned with the *Cymraeg 2050* Strategy's education milestones. For example, the Welsh Government wants to see the percentage of year 1 learners predominantly educated through the medium of Welsh to increase from 24% to 30% by 2031 and for learners in schools where Welsh is taught as a subject only, that 70% report they can speak Welsh by the time they leave school.

The Welsh Government understands that each local authority is different, in terms of the percentage of learners taught in Welsh in the area; the models of Welsh-medium education provision adopted by the local authority and the linguistic nature of the area. This is reflected in the targets. More information can be found in the [WESP guidance](#).

Whilst WESPs are developed and implemented under a statutory requirement in which the authority must take a strategic lead, school governors have a key role to play within their individual schools by supporting the school's Welsh medium developments and by working in close partnership with the local authority to help them achieve their WESP targets.

To respond to their statutory duties as part of the WESP, local authorities need to know what Welsh medium provision is available in all schools within their areas. This can include the time spent learning Welsh as a subject as well as other subjects taught through the medium of Welsh. It can also include schools' participation in the *Cymraeg Campus* or *Siarter Iaith* schemes (to develop learners' informal use of Welsh) as well as the type of Welsh language professional learning activities undertaken by teaching and support staff to enable increased use of Welsh in line with Curriculum for Wales.

Local authorities are expected to report on the increase in the amount of Welsh medium education provided in its maintained schools which provide education through the medium of both English and Welsh. They are also expected to report on how they improve the Welsh language skills of learners receiving Welsh medium education in any school it maintains in order to improve the standards of Welsh medium education.

This is alongside the increased focus in the [Curriculum for Wales](#) on developing the Welsh language for all learners. Providing the information outlined above is crucial for local authorities to plan for the growth of their overall Welsh medium provision, as well as enabling them to accurately reflect the continuous progress made.

Local authorities are also expected to report within their WESPs how they are supporting the increase in the number and percentage of learners in year 10 and over in their maintained secondary schools who are studying for qualifications and are assessed through the medium of Welsh. Schools will need to provide data detailing the subject offer through the medium of Welsh as well as the take up of learners studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh.

A governing body's role is crucial in supporting and encouraging school leaders not only to take action to increase and improve the provision of Welsh within their schools, but also to ensure that their school provides accurate and timely information. Specifically, the [School Workforce Annual Census \(SWAC\)](#) and the [Pupil Level Annual School Census \(PLASC\)](#) returns are important to demonstrate the progress made on their WESP actions annually. This will assist local authorities and the Welsh Government to better assess and plan the support needed in schools.

3. School categories according to Welsh medium provision

The Welsh Government published new [guidance on categorising schools according to Welsh medium provision](#) in 2021. Whilst local authorities, through their statutory duties under the WESPs have overall responsibility for implementing the categorisation policy, its successful implementation will depend on working closely with governing bodies to gain their support for Welsh medium developments.

There is specific legislation that sets duties and requirements on schools and local authorities to provide parents/carers with information about the language medium in which the curriculum is delivered. [The School Information \(Wales\) Regulations 2011](#) set out the information to be published by schools and local authorities in their individual school and authority wide composite prospectus. This includes information about school language categories for the purposes of PLASC. Schedule 2 to the regulations sets out the general information to be published by local authorities in their school prospectus which includes the language category used by the school governing body in the most recent PLASC return which most closely describes the school.

The school prospectus for parents and prospective parents should include information regarding the arrangements for categorising schools according to the amount of Welsh-medium provision in the school and the linguistic outcomes for pupils. The local authority admissions information and arrangements should also include information regarding the categorisation of schools according to the amount of Welsh-medium provision and the linguistic outcomes for pupils.

The school categories as described in PLASC are as follows:

Category	Description
C1	English medium school/provision
T2	English medium school/provision or those with a high proportion of Welsh provision transitioning to being a dual language (Welsh and English) school/provision over time
C2	Dual language (Welsh and English) school/provision
T3	Dual language (Welsh and English) school/provision transitioning to being a Welsh medium school/provision over time
C3	Welsh medium school/provision
CP	Designated Welsh medium secondary school/provision

There will be some schools looking to change their language category. Some local authorities as part of their WESP commitments will also be encouraging schools with the capacity to change their language category to do so. There are a number of factors that need to be considered for schools to successfully undertake this process and leadership and commitment will be key. This leadership needs to come from the school governing body, head teacher and senior management team, and the local authority must support this leadership throughout the school's journey.

4. Welsh in the Curriculum for Wales

Welsh and English are both mandatory elements in the Curriculum for Wales, with further detail set out in [Chapter 11](#) of this guide. In summary, Welsh is mandatory from age 3 to 16 in all schools and settings whilst English is mandatory from age 7 to 16. This means that a curriculum designed and adopted by a school or setting must contain provision for the teaching of Welsh and English to those age groups. The teaching of English before age seven is discretionary for schools and settings.

A school or setting should design and adopt a curriculum that includes both languages using the statutory Curriculum for Wales framework guidance, especially the guidance for the [Languages, Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience](#). This curriculum must also be designed to ensure that learners make appropriate progression in their learning. Additional guidance for including the mandatory cross-curricular skill of literacy within a curriculum is available and further support is available for English-medium schools teaching Welsh on Hwb.

5. Welsh language education Bill

The [Cymraeg 2050 Work Programme \(2021 to 2026\)](#) and the [Co-operation Agreement](#) with Plaid Cymru commits the Welsh Government to introducing a Welsh Language Education Bill during the course of the sixth Senedd.

The Bill will take steps to enable all pupils in Wales to become confident Welsh speakers through the statutory education system.

The main proposals include:

- Reflecting the target of a million Welsh speakers in law
- Creating a single Welsh language skills continuum to describe skill levels so that learners, teachers, parents, and employers have a common understanding of the journey towards learning Welsh
- Establishing a statutory system of categorising maintained schools according to language-medium
- Over time, enhance Welsh language provision in maintained schools that are not already designated Welsh-medium schools
- A requirement for the Welsh Ministers to create a statutory National Plan for the acquisition and learning of Welsh, and review it in each Senedd term
- Reform how local authorities plan Welsh language provision in schools in order to meet targets set by the Welsh Ministers
- Requirements on local authorities to proactively promote Welsh-medium education, including late immersion provision; and
- Providing specialist support for schools with Welsh language learning

Governing bodies will have an important role to play in supporting school leaders in prioritising this work over the coming years.

The law

[School Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act 2013](#)

[Welsh in Education Strategic Plans \(Wales\) Regulations 2019](#)

[The School Information \(Wales\) Regulations 2011](#)