



# Welsh-medium Education Strategy



## Consultation

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# Welsh-medium Education Strategy

- Audience** All bodies concerned with education and training in Wales, Headteachers and Governing Bodies of maintained schools, Local Authorities, Welsh Language Board, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, Higher Education Institutions, Further Education Institutions, Fforwm, work-based learning providers, employer organisations and forums, Estyn, Trade Unions, Welsh for Adults centres, Funky Dragon, Sector Skills Councils, Careers Wales, National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, Welsh Local Government Association, Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg, Children and Young People's Partnerships, Mentrau Iaith, voluntary and community organisations.
- Overview** This document consults on the Welsh Assembly Government's draft Welsh-medium Education Strategy.
- Action required** Responses to this consultation document should be sent to Rhiannon Jenkins, by 5 August 2009, at the address below or emailed to [welsh.education@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:welsh.education@wales.gsi.gov.uk)
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- Additional copies** Additional copies can be obtained by contacting Rhiannon Jenkins at the address above. This document is also available on the internet at: [www.wales.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.wales.gov.uk/consultations) and can be copied from there.
- Related documents** One Wales  
Iaith Pawb: A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales  
The Learning Country: Vision Into Action  
Skills That Work for Wales



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## MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

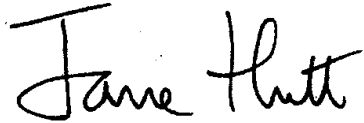
Wales is recognised on the international stage for its success in delivering Welsh-medium education. Welsh-medium primary and secondary schools were first established in the 1950s and 1960s, originally in response to the wishes of Welsh-speaking parents who wanted their children to be educated through the medium of the language. Now, many children who are not from Welsh-speaking homes also attend Welsh-medium and bilingual schools and settings throughout Wales. This Strategy aims to build on the considerable successes of the past and present, and on the good practice that already exists.

I applaud the considerable work that has already been undertaken by local authorities, providers and practitioners, both in terms of increasing access to Welsh-medium provision, and also in terms of consolidating the place of Welsh in the National Curriculum. However, some aspects of Welsh in education require further attention if we are to maintain and build on our successes. Provision has developed in different ways across Wales in response to different demands, and is consequently patchy. There are gaps and challenges requiring particular attention. Our aim is to provide the strategic direction to overcome these challenges, and establish a holistic and sustainable infrastructure to support and develop Welsh-medium education and training. I want to see an inclusive approach which ensures that Welsh-medium provision is available to, and accessed by, our diversity of communities in Wales, including those which are disadvantaged.

This is the first time that the Welsh Assembly Government has developed a national Welsh-medium Education Strategy. It delivers on our commitment in *One Wales: A Progressive Agenda for the Government of Wales* (June 2007) to ‘create a national Welsh-medium Education Strategy to develop effective provision from nursery through to further and higher education, backed up by an implementation programme’. It builds on previous policy documents of the Welsh Assembly Government, in particular *Iaith Pawb: A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales* (2003). Whilst *Iaith Pawb* presented an overview of the policy developments contributing towards revitalising Welsh, this Strategy focuses specifically on developing the Welsh-medium education and training infrastructure.

With the growing use of Welsh in the public sector and parts of the private sector, the language is now acquiring an increasingly significant presence in the workplace. Our skills and employment strategy, *Skills that Work for Wales*, addresses the need to create a well-skilled nation; improving and increasing bilingual skills now forms part of our distinctive agenda to improve the skills and employment opportunities of young people and adults in Wales.

This consultation exercise is your opportunity to help shape our agenda for Welsh-medium education and Welsh-language skills over the next 20 years and beyond. Our vision of continuing growth of Welsh-medium education provision in response to demand will only be achieved with the commitment of the Welsh Assembly Government, local authorities, providers and learners in Wales. We welcome all your ideas and views, particularly on those aspects where there is no single clear answer to the challenges.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Hutt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'H'.

**Jane Hutt**  
**Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills**

## Summary

This draft Strategy has been developed in response to the commitment in *One Wales: A Progressive Agenda for the Government of Wales* to 'create a national Welsh-medium Education Strategy to develop effective provision from nursery through to further and higher education, backed up by an implementation programme'. The document covers all phases of education and training and includes six Strategic Aims, together with supporting actions which could be marshalled into an implementation programme.

The main elements of the Strategy are laid out in pages 1-24, and include the following aims:

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Context and Considerations section (beginning at page 25) provides more detail on the evidence for, and rationale behind, the main Strategy proposals and draft implementation programme.

The consultation period ends on 5 August 2009. Responses to be sent to Rhiannon Jenkins, Welsh Assembly Government, Tŷ'r Afon, Bedwas Road, Bedwas, Caerphilly CF83 8WT or emailed to [welsh.education@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:welsh.education@wales.gsi.gov.uk). It should be noted that the responses to the consultation will be made public. Normally, the name and address (or part of that address) of the author are published along with the response. If you do not wish to be identified as the author of your response please state this expressly in your response.

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# THE WELSH-MEDIUM EDUCATION STRATEGY

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This Strategy sets out the ambition of the Welsh Assembly Government for a country where Welsh-medium education and training are integral parts of the education infrastructure. We want to ensure that our education system makes it possible for more learners of all ages to acquire a wider range of language skills in Welsh. This will enable them to use the language in their personal lives, socially and in the workplace. We want to see a system which is responsive to public demand for an increase in Welsh-medium provision. This Strategy sets out how education can play its part in achieving our aim in *laith Pawb* of 'a sustained increase in both the number and percentage of people able to speak Welsh'.

1.2 This Strategy benefits from the sound foundations already laid. Wales has seen considerable development of Welsh-medium education since the 1950s. By adapting the immersion techniques of countries like Canada in the 1960s and 1970s, Wales developed its own methods of using Welsh as a medium of learning. Today, bilingual and multilingual communities throughout Europe and the world recognise our success, and look to the Welsh-medium education system as an example of best practice to emulate.

1.3 In tracing the growth of Welsh-medium education, we see that some local authorities have shown a proactive approach to increasing opportunities for pupils to access Welsh-medium education, and have sought to strengthen their Welsh-language policies with regards to education. However, we can improve on strategic planning to facilitate growth and ensure that there is more coherent development and that needs are considered at the start of policy developments in a coordinated way. In several areas of Wales, pressure from parents and others has been the main driver in persuading education policy-makers to plan ahead in order to meet demand for Welsh-medium education. Speed of response to that demand is still an issue in some local authority areas. Such a situation is fragile, and tends to give rise to a number of inconsistencies.

1.4 Welsh-medium provision in the post-14 phase, and the structures that support the provision, are still underdeveloped. There has been some progress in the 14-19 phase in developing a broader range of learning opportunities, including vocational education. Numerous models of delivery and best practice have been developed in recent years, either through partnership working within the schools sector or through cooperation between schools and other providers. However, the 14-19 Learning Pathways programme will need significant development of the range of options to meet the requirements of the proposed Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure, and of the infrastructure to sustain them. In Higher Education there is considerable variation in the Welsh-medium provision offered both between institutions and across subjects. In some cases, there is the opportunity to undertake all or substantial parts of a course through the medium of Welsh, and in others it may be limited to part of a module, such as seminars or tutorial support.

1.5 We want the successes of the last half century to provide the basis for further development. We will ensure that a stronger framework and policy infrastructure is established and developed to sustain the strengths of the current system. We wish to see a Welsh-medium system that is based on forward planning across all phases of education and training through the medium of Welsh. Accurate assessment of demand, and the commitment and capacity to respond to that demand, are key principles of the process, at all stages from the early years through to higher education and lifelong learning.

1.6 Welsh-medium learning from the early years offers very favourable conditions for the development of skills in Welsh. Developing language skills is a process that happens over a period of time, however, and it is important that children and young people are able to build on their competence as they mature. Ensuring that there are opportunities for suitable linguistic progression is one of the cornerstones of the Strategy, and is relevant to all phases from the early years onwards. We wish to establish a framework that will ensure the momentum of the learning process as pupils and students move through the system. This does not currently happen in all cases, and as a result, we do not always succeed in deriving maximum benefit from the initial investment that is made.

1.7 A key focus of the Strategy, therefore, is on supporting learners to achieve fluency in Welsh and English through Welsh-medium education, from the early years onwards. For children from Welsh-speaking homes, Welsh-medium education involves reinforcing and developing their Welsh-language skills through a broad range of curricular experiences. For children from non-Welsh-speaking backgrounds, whose initial and main contact with Welsh is through school, this intensive Welsh-medium provision is through a process of linguistic immersion. The Strategy also allows for the possibility that some pupils will access Welsh-medium education at a stage after the age of three. This may occur through later entry points (mid and late immersion opportunities). In other cases, initial experiences of Welsh-language provision through the Foundation Phase may, over time, provide the basis and impetus for children to transfer to the Welsh-medium sector before the age of seven.

1.8 Welsh-medium education involves delivering provision through the medium of Welsh between the ages of three or four and approximately seven years. From 7 to 11 years of age (key stage 2 of the National Curriculum), English-language skills are developed through appropriate use of the language as a subject and medium. A key consideration is the nature of the linguistic balance between Welsh and English, and the intensity of Welsh-medium input required in order for pupils to reach fluency in both Welsh and English over time. It is generally accepted that at least around 70% of curricular time should be through the medium of Welsh if learners are to acquire a sufficiently sound command of the language to enable them to use it across a broad range of contexts with confidence and fluency. The definitions of schools according to Welsh-medium provision published by the Welsh Assembly Government (2007) support this principle.

1.9 The term 'bilingual provision' is used to refer to a wide range of teaching and learning settings which include varying amounts of Welsh language in the delivery. 'Bilingual schools' can include those where a large proportion of the curriculum is delivered through the medium of Welsh, those where there are two streams –

Welsh-medium and English-medium – taught separately (sometimes called ‘dual stream’ schools), and those where only a few elements of the curriculum are taught through the medium of Welsh. In further education colleges in particular, bilingual provision can refer to situations where classes are taught simultaneously in the two languages.

1.10 The linguistic outcomes of these different types of provision will vary significantly. Where the amount of Welsh used is limited, the learner may have some skills in the language, but may not achieve fluency. Bilingual provision, therefore, does not always ensure that an individual becomes a bilingual speaker. It is important that all policy developments are planned on the basis of a detailed understanding of the wide variety of outcomes for learners from bilingual provision.

1.11 Not all parents will wish their children to receive Welsh-medium education, however. Our aim is to see all pupils and students benefiting from opportunities to develop language skills which enrich their experience of living in a bilingual country. In order for this to be achieved, gradual but purposeful changes will need to be introduced to raise standards in the teaching and learning of Welsh second language. We will also extend opportunities for adults wishing to learn the language.

1.12 Developing skills in Welsh and in English are not mutually exclusive. Using more than one language is a normal feature of life for children and young people across Europe and the world, and there are numerous examples of education and training systems that successfully integrate bilingualism or multilingualism into their provision. It is important that we are aware of the patterns and models available in other communities and understand their relevance to our particular situation in Wales. This Strategy has been drafted in the context of an awareness of the international, multilingual context, and the importance of ensuring standards in the learning of English and Modern Foreign Languages as well as in Welsh, in line with the Welsh Assembly Government’s national modern foreign languages strategy, *Making Languages Count*.

1.13 The advantages that bilingualism can bring are well documented. These range from the direct advantages of being able to use particular languages (for example to communicate with family members and wider social networks, or to enhance career opportunities) to the more general advantages of promoting cognitive skills, increasing mental agility and broadening speakers’ range of cultural experiences. Research in Canada reveals that bilingualism enhances attention and cognitive control in children and older adults, and in 2007 highlighted the impact of bilingualism on delaying the onset of dementia symptoms. Research findings published by the University of Edinburgh in 2009 revealed that speakers of two languages found it easier to focus on a range of tasks, blocking out potential distractions. Providing opportunities for speakers to develop their bilingual skills through education therefore makes a valuable contribution to a broad range of social and cultural experiences.

## **2. Principles**

This Strategy is based on the following principles:

### **National Direction**

2.1 The Welsh Assembly Government is responsible for determining and leading national policy for Welsh-medium education and training. It will set the national strategic direction and establish and maintain the supporting structures.

### **Shared Responsibilities**

2.2 Responding to demand for Welsh-medium provision and strengthening the infrastructure to support the provision requires the cooperation of several partners. Local authorities are expected to plan Welsh-medium education in all its facets, and to work with other area partners, sectoral bodies and providers, including voluntary organisations, to recognise and respond to local needs and to implement policies to fulfil the national aims.

### **Integrated Planning**

2.3 The Welsh Assembly Government expects that the characteristics and contribution of Welsh-medium education will receive early and thorough attention in all policy developments at national, regional and local level. We expect to see local authorities, area networks and individual providers developing effective methods of cooperating on planning and resources.

### **Quality**

2.4 This Strategy aims to support consistent improvements in the quality of Welsh-medium provision and the way in which the language is taught ('Welsh-language provision'). We will strengthen a coherent approach to promoting and developing effective methods of delivery, in line with the policy on promoting best practice in pedagogical skills. Improvements in the training of practitioners at all levels to operate through the medium of Welsh will be essential in raising standards. Welsh-medium and Welsh-language provision will form an integral part of the School Effectiveness Framework and Further Education Quality and Effectiveness framework processes, and will be incorporated within the Estyn Inspection Framework. Within Higher Education, expectations on quality assurance, standards and enhancement apply equally to Welsh- and English-medium provision.

### **Sustainability**

2.5 This Strategy will bring about enduring change in the education infrastructure to ensure the sustainability of Welsh-medium education and the progression of learners from one stage to the next. In addition, it will address the principle of planning for sustainability by ensuring that the workforce of the future has the necessary Welsh-language and Welsh-medium vocational skills to maintain and develop the education system.

## Equality of Opportunity

2.6 Equality of opportunity is a cross-cutting theme integral to this Strategy and all policies of the Welsh Assembly Government. No one should be denied opportunities to access Welsh-medium education or learning Welsh as a language because of their race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age or religion. Welsh-medium education should reflect the composition of the Welsh population as a whole, and should be available to, and accessed by, all communities, including those characterised by disadvantage and ethnic diversity. We will expect our partners, providers and stakeholders to recognise this principle and take steps to make it a reality. This Strategy will contribute to the Welsh Assembly Government's Mainstreaming Equality Strategy.

## 3. Our Vision

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

## 4. Strategic Aims and Objectives

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

Ensuring the availability of Welsh-medium provision is dependent on strategic planning, effective joint working, systematic analysis of demand, and a commitment to act on the evidence of demand. This applies to all phases of education, from the early years and throughout primary and secondary provision. This means addressing the urgent need in some local authority areas where there are insufficient places to meet current demand for Welsh-medium provision, and planning proactively to meet future growth in demand. This includes factoring in of the additional demand which often appears when a new and convenient Welsh-medium school is opened. Success in delivering this Strategic Aim will be measured through Target 1 (see page 24). However, increasing access to Welsh-medium education involves several other factors, such as appropriate training of a suitably qualified workforce.

### Strategic Objectives

- To provide a national strategic direction for the planning of Welsh-medium provision while allowing flexibility to reflect regional or local differences and needs.
- To expect local authorities to embed Welsh-medium and Welsh-language provision in all policy developments.

- To reach agreement so that local authorities present their planning for Welsh-medium provision in Welsh in Education Strategic Plans to the Welsh Assembly Government (currently these go to the Welsh Language Board).
- To encourage local authorities to strengthen the delivery of services which support Welsh-medium provision through partnership and joint working across authorities.
- To expect Welsh-medium and bilingual schools, in their own planning and self-evaluation processes, to reflect the direction of local authorities' targets to safeguard and strengthen Welsh-medium provision.
- To strengthen monitoring of local authorities in measuring parental preference for the language medium of provision for childcare, early years provision and provision in the statutory sector, and to expect local authorities to act on the findings in planning provision at a ward or sub-authority level.
- To increase access to Welsh-medium early years and statutory provision within the child's community.
- To expect local authorities (as provided for in the draft circular on School Organisation Proposals) to consider demand for, and access to, Welsh-medium provision when planning and bringing forward statutory proposals to change school provision.
- To promote access to Welsh-medium statutory primary and secondary provision when exercising functions under the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008.
- To improve the communication of clear information to parents and carers about both the language provision and language ethos of schools and settings – including ensuring that the options are presented in a fair and reasonable way.
- To plan Welsh-medium education provision and services for learners with additional learning needs as an integral part of education provision at national, regional and local levels.
- To keep in view further levers for influencing strategic direction for Welsh-medium education, including possible legislation.

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisations</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Agree with local authorities the submission of Welsh in Education Strategic Plans, including targets for Welsh-medium education, to DCELLS for annual monitoring.	WAG, LAs, WLB	WAG, LAs	2010-11 onwards
Promote good practice in local authorities through encouraging establishment of a	WAG, LAs	WAG	2010 Implementation 2012-13 onwards

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisations</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Welsh-medium education forum within each authority, moving towards a statutory basis if necessary in the long term.			
Provide support to local authorities in order to coordinate improved regional consortia planning for Welsh-medium education.	WAG, LAs	WAG	2010-11 onwards
Arrange an annual meeting of local authority representatives to monitor progress on Welsh-medium provision and planning, to be chaired by the CELLS Minister.	WAG	WAG	2010-11 onwards
Expect Welsh-medium and bilingual schools or clusters of schools to reflect the direction and implementation of local authority Welsh-medium strategic planning in their planning and self-evaluation processes.	LAs, schools	LAs	2011-12 onwards
Encourage consistent and cohesive representation of Welsh-medium needs across Children and Young People's Partnership structures.	LAs, WAG	LAs	2010-11 onwards
Expect local authorities to undertake regular surveys to gather information on parental preferences with regard to language medium of childcare, and act on the findings.	LAs	LAs	2009 onwards
Strengthen joint planning of Welsh-medium provision for early years by sharing data and strategic mapping in order to meet the needs of children within their community.	LAs, voluntary and private sector providers	LAs	2011-12 onwards

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisations</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Work with local authorities to identify potential gaps in Welsh-medium early years provision, and consider appropriate support if required.	WAG, WLB	WAG	2010
Facilitate greater access to Welsh-medium opportunities within the Flying Start programme.	WAG	WAG	2010-11 onwards
Develop systems for collection of data and tracking of progression rates from Welsh-medium provision in the voluntary and private sectors into statutory provision.	LAs, voluntary and private sector providers	LAs	2011-12 onwards
Expect local authorities offering a choice between Welsh-medium and English-medium education to adopt robust methods of measuring demand for Welsh-medium education provision, and to act promptly on the findings.	LAs, WAG	WAG	2010-11 onwards
Resolve practical and technical issues surrounding parental surveys, and promote consistency in methodology and approach.	WAG, LAs, WLB	WAG	2009-10
Provide guidance to local authorities to consider demand for and access to Welsh-medium provision when planning and bringing forward statutory proposals to change school provision.	WAG, LAs	WAG	2010
Consider the impact on Welsh-medium education and training when exercising functions under the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008.	WAG, LAs	LAs	2009 onwards
Ensure that improved delivery of Welsh-medium provision and Welsh second language is an integral part of the School Effectiveness Framework.	WAG, LAs, schools	WAG	2009

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisations</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Consult with Estyn on ways of strengthening the focus on delivery of the Strategy in inspection of Welsh-medium provision and planning at local authority level, in the 2010 Inspection Framework.	WAG, Estyn	Estyn	2009 for implementation from 2010
Improve information to parents and carers with regard to language outcomes resulting from different settings.	WAG, LAs, all providers, Families Information Services	WAG	2010 onwards
Review of Welsh-medium provision and services for additional learning needs, and monitor progress.	WAG, LAs, ALN providers, WLB	WAG	2010-11 Implementation from 2011-12

### ***Consultation Questions:***

***This section focuses on ways of improving the planning of pre-statutory and statutory Welsh-medium education.***

- ***Do you agree with the intentions outlined above?***
- ***Are there other ways in which planning for these sectors could be improved?***
- ***Does the Strategy strike the right balance between the needs and responsibilities of learners, parents, providers and local authorities?***

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

Welsh-medium provision must be viewed as an integral element of cooperative planning and delivery of provision in the post-14 phase. This involves prioritisation of course options to ensure a minimum range of opportunities, creation of wider networks than those based on local authority boundaries, an increased contribution from the Further Education, Work-based learning and Adult Community sectors, and effective progression into course options in Higher Education. Proactive planning on the basis of improving access to Welsh-medium provision should be a guiding principle. Success in delivering this Strategic Aim will be measured in part through Target 3 (an increase in the percentage of Welsh-medium GCSE entries - see page 24). Further work will be required on targets to measure success of other aspects of this Strategic Aim.

## Strategic Objectives

- To increase high-quality opportunities to study or train through the medium of Welsh under the 14-19 Learning Pathways, in line with the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009.
- To secure linguistic progression from the statutory education phase into post-16 and post-18 course options that maintain and strengthen linguistic skills in Welsh in preparation for a workforce where skills in Welsh are increasingly valued.
- To encourage plans for Transforming Education and Training Provision which improve the extent and range of post-16 Welsh-medium provision.
- To establish Welsh-medium 14-19 partnerships or forums that plan and develop delivery across local authority boundaries.
- To consider appropriate ways of reflecting the findings of the Coleg Ffederal Planning Board in future developments for the Welsh-medium Higher Education infrastructure.
- To improve the planning of pathways for Welsh-medium progression into and within Higher Education, both in academic subject areas and in priority vocational areas.
- To develop further research and scholarship in the Higher Education sector across a broad range of areas relating to the Welsh language in education policy.
- To consider the options for taking forward Adult and Community Learning through the medium of Welsh.

Supporting Actions	Stakeholders	Lead Organisations	Implementation Date
Ensure compliance with the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 and guidance on 14-19 learning with regard to Welsh-medium provision, and monitor all Annual Network Development Plans for Welsh-medium provision.	WAG, LAs, FEIs, WBL providers, schools	WAG	2010 onwards
Strengthen the requirements for Further Education Institutions (FEIs) to report on Welsh-medium, bilingual and Welsh-language planning in WAG Quality and Effectiveness monitoring and Welsh Language Schemes.	WAG, FEIs, WLB	WAG	2010-11 onwards

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisations</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Consult with Estyn on ways in which the focus on planning and delivery of Welsh-medium provision by post-16 providers could be strengthened in the 2010 Inspection Framework.	WAG, Estyn	Estyn	2009 for implementation from 2010
Continue to develop new provision and innovative approaches to delivery by working with area networks and other Welsh-medium partners across local authority boundaries.	WAG, area networks, LAs, schools, FEIs, WBL providers	WAG/area networks	2009 onwards
Encourage Transforming Education and Training Provision proposals that improve the extent and range of Welsh-medium opportunities for learners.	WAG, LAs, all providers	WAG	2009 onwards
Increase the delivery of work-based vocational training through the medium of Welsh as part of the next contracting round.	WAG, WBL providers	WAG	2010 onwards
Continue to prioritise funding of key areas for development of Welsh-medium vocational provision, especially childcare, in the short term, and review priorities regularly.	WAG	WAG	2009 onwards
Review current interventions which build Welsh-medium capacity in the Further Education sector and consider other methods of development.	WAG	WAG	2009-10
Review the collection of data on Welsh-medium and bilingual provision in Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) and the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) in order to ensure accurate benchmarking and classification of linguistic provision.	WAG	WAG	2009-10

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisations</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Plan future development for Welsh-medium Higher Education (HE) provision in the light of the report of the Chair of the Coleg Ffederal Planning Board.	HEFCW, Centre for W-medium HE, WAG, Coleg Ffederal Planning Board	WAG	2009 onwards
Identify priority areas for HE research on Welsh in education, based on current strengths and potential for future development, and identify methods of funding.	WAG, HEFCW, HE providers	WAG/HEFCW	2010
Ensure Welsh-medium provision is fully considered in planning for adult and community learning following consultation.	WAG	WAG	2009 onwards

### ***Consultation Questions:***

***This section focuses on ways of increasing Welsh-medium provision in the post-14 sectors.***

- ***Does the Strategy identify the correct priorities in terms of developing the 14-19 Learning Pathways?***
- ***Are there any further ways of expanding Welsh-medium provision in the 14-19 phase which should be included in the Strategy?***
- ***How should local authorities, further education, work-based learning providers and higher education contribute to this agenda?***
- ***What should the priority actions be?***

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

Welsh-medium education from the early years, with robust linguistic progression through every phase of education, offers the best conditions for developing a broad range of language skills in Welsh. Schools, local authorities and other providers need to plan strategically to facilitate linguistic continuity. Those not opting for Welsh-medium education should also have better opportunities to develop Welsh-language skills which enrich their experience of living in a bilingual country. Increasing the use of Welsh as a medium of learning within English-medium settings is one way of doing this. The linguistic continuity aspect of this Strategic Aim will be

measured through Target 2 (see page 24). Further work will be carried out on targets to measure success of other aspects of this Strategic Aim.

### Strategic Objectives

- To increase numbers achieving fluency in a broad range of Welsh-language skills.
- To ensure that linguistic progression is a national, regional and local authority priority in all phases of education and training.
- To ensure that schools offering provision through the medium of Welsh provide sufficient Welsh-medium provision to maintain and develop the Welsh-language skills of all pupils.
- To maintain and develop opportunities for latecomers to access Welsh-medium provision.
- To increase access to Welsh-medium education through mid and late-immersion programmes where appropriate.
- To raise standards in the teaching of Welsh and Welsh second language.
- To consider the practicality of a system to accredit skills in Welsh along a language continuum across all phases of education.
- To develop further opportunities for learners in Further and Higher Education to maintain and improve their language skills in Welsh.
- To provide adults learning Welsh with appropriate opportunities to maintain and improve their skills in the language through further development of Welsh for Adults centres.

Supporting Actions	Stakeholders	Lead Organisations	Implementation Date
Expect Welsh-medium and bilingual schools to set targets for increasing Welsh-medium provision to develop the language skills of all pupils.	LAs, schools, WAG	LAs	2010 onwards
Continue to work on the national project to improve linguistic progression between Key Stages 2 and 3, and mainstream good practice.	WAG, Welsh Language Board (WLB)	WAG/WLB	2009-11
Continue to develop language immersion Centres for Latecomers in partnership with local authorities, and keep under review the impact of the Centres.	WAG, WLB, LAs	WAG/WLB, LAs	2009 onwards

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisations</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Continue to develop and expand the intensive Welsh and immersion teaching methods programme currently being piloted, with a view to further development where appropriate.	WAG, WLB, schools	WAG/WLB	2009-12
Develop the use of Welsh in the Foundation Phase through sharing of good practice and training, and keep under review the guidance and training materials available.	Early years providers, schools, WAG	WAG	2009 onwards
Continue to monitor standards in Welsh as changes to teaching, learning and assessment are implemented.	WAG, Awarding Bodies	WAG	2009 onwards
Develop training and resources in order to improve Welsh second language GCSE, in line with Estyn recommendations.	WAG	WAG	2010 onwards
Set appropriate targets for the short to medium term to increase percentages of pupils gaining an accreditation for Welsh second language.	LAs, schools	WAG	2010
Provide guidance and training to schools to support practitioners in raising standards in Welsh second language.	WAG	WAG	2010
Undertake further work on the feasibility of introducing a language continuum, initially focusing on curriculum continuity, and reassess the possibilities of a single assessment and qualifications framework, with trialling of possible models.	WAG	WAG	2011-12
Encourage FE and WBL providers to offer suitable Welsh-language support and courses appropriate for post-16 Welsh-speaking learners taking vocational courses.	WAG, FEIs, WBL	WAG	2010 onwards

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisations</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Build on the current 'Vocational Welsh' pilots to develop provision and accreditation for language courses suitable for learners taking vocational courses.	WAG, Fforwm, FEIs, WBL, schools, Awarding Bodies	WAG/Awarding Bodies/providers	2009-10
Provide opportunities for learners in Higher Education to learn, maintain or improve their Welsh-language skills, including through Welsh for Adults centres.	HEIs, HEFCW, WfA centres	HEIs/HEFCW	2011-12 onwards
Encourage greater participation in Welsh for Adults courses, particularly intensive courses.	WAG, WfA centres	WAG	2010 onwards
Continue the reconfiguration of Welsh for Adults through funded centres, plan the delivery of new provision and improve progression, completion and attainment rates.	WAG, WfA centres	WAG	2009 onwards
Review the collection of HESA and LLWR data in order to ensure accurate benchmarking for Welsh for Adults provision.	WfA centres, WAG	WAG	2009
Develop a tool for assessing Welsh-language skills of employees within the workplace.	WAG, Welsh for Adults centres	WAG	2012
Increase and target Welsh courses for specific workplaces in the public, private and voluntary sectors which have Welsh-language training requirements, and increase delivery of courses.	WfA centres, WAG	WfA centres	2009 onwards
Identify priorities for future development of Welsh for Adults following publication of the evaluation report, including e-learning, research on teaching and learning.	WfA centres	WfA centres	2010 onwards

## **Consultation Questions:**

***This section focuses on ways of enabling pupils and students to improve their language skills in Welsh.***

- ***Do you agree with the general direction of the actions noted above?***
- ***Are there any specific actions that need to be prioritised?***
- ***What scope, if any, is there for the use of Welsh as a medium of learning within English-medium settings?***

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

Ensuring an appropriate workforce for Welsh-medium education and training is fundamental to the success of this Strategy. The workforce must be sufficient in number to meet the growing needs of Welsh-medium provision in all sectors. Workforce training should also address the specific needs of the Welsh-medium sector in terms of language and methodological skills, and support the aim of improving standards in Welsh second language. Further work will be carried out on targets to measure the success of this Strategic Aim.

### **Strategic Objectives**

- To develop workforce planning for Welsh-medium qualified teachers in maintained schools and ensure that targets for initial teacher training are based on detailed analyses of supply and demand.
- To equip practitioners across all education and training sectors delivering, or intending to deliver, Welsh-medium and bilingual education or Welsh in the curriculum, with the necessary methodological skills.
- To increase training available for childcare and early years practitioners with Welsh-language skills in order to ensure sustainability of provision.
- To develop the national infrastructure and capacity for delivering training in Welsh-medium methodologies and Welsh-language skills as part of in-service training for practitioners in all sectors.
- To take forward developments in Welsh-medium and Welsh-language continuing professional development (CPD) within the wider context of a review of the opportunities for professional development from the completion of initial training through to leadership.
- To increase the number of higher education staff able to teach through the medium of Welsh.
- To improve skills of Welsh for Adults tutors through training and the National Qualification for Welsh for Adults practitioners.

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Examine the scope for workforce modelling for Welsh-medium numbers as part of the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Change Plan.	WAG	WAG	2009 onwards
Continue to ensure that work on the promotion of teaching as a career by the Training and Development Agency for Schools takes appropriate account of issues relating to Wales, including Welsh-medium issues.	WAG, TDA	WAG	2009 onwards
Build on current Welsh-medium training provision for childcare practitioners and classroom assistants to ensure delivery in all parts of Wales, and secure a cohesive infrastructure to support the training.	WAG, HEFCW, HE providers, FEIs, schools, early years providers	WAG	2010-11 onwards
Continue to fund training by Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and Trinity University College, Carmarthen, for Welsh-medium early years practitioners up to 2011.	WAG	WAG	2009-11
Consider options for supporting Welsh-medium and Welsh-language training provision for all childcare and early years providers.	WAG	WAG	2010
Consider options for ensuring that all trainee teachers and practitioners who intend to work in Wales at primary level, as Welsh second language teachers and practitioners, and in Welsh-medium or bilingual settings, receive tuition in Welsh language and language awareness during their initial training.	WAG, HEFCW, HEIs	WAG	2013-14 onwards
Develop a coordinated national approach to in-service training in Welsh-medium and Welsh-language methodological skills.	WAG, HEIs, LAs, Welsh for Adults centres	WAG	2011 onwards

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Consider developments in Welsh-medium and Welsh-language CPD within the wider context of a review of the opportunities for professional development from the completion of initial training through to leadership.	WAG	WAG	2013-14
Review the work of <i>athrawon bro</i> in the context of their contribution to training provision and support, in addition to their other areas of activity.	WAG, WLB, LAs	WAG	2011
Build on the Welsh Language Sabbaticals Scheme to provide different models and patterns of training for more practitioners in order to improve their language skills.	WAG, HEIs	WAG	2010 onwards
Continue to support the HE Postgraduate Scholarships Scheme and the Welsh-medium Teaching Fellowships scheme or successor schemes.	HEFCW, Centre for W-medium HE, WAG	HEFCW	2009 onwards
Continue the focus on developing an accredited framework of continuing professional development for Welsh for Adults tutors, and provide support for the National Qualification for Welsh for Adults tutors.	WAG, Welsh for Adults centres	WAG	2009 onwards

### ***Consultation Questions:***

***This section focuses on ways of preparing and supporting the workforce to deliver more effective and extensive Welsh-medium provision and Welsh-language teaching.***

- ***Are the intentions with regards to initial teacher training realistic and achievable?***
- ***Do you agree with the intention of developing a national infrastructure for in-service training in Welsh-medium methodologies and Welsh-language skills?***
- ***How can we effectively extend training in Welsh-medium teaching methodologies and Welsh-language skills throughout the workforce?***

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

In developing Welsh-medium education and training, mechanisms are required to support provision and learners. There needs to be improved access to a sufficient range of Welsh-medium qualifications, with assured assessment through the medium of Welsh. More teaching and learning resources to support Welsh-medium delivery are required, including materials for vocational areas and electronic resources. Students also need to be made more aware of the benefits of Welsh-language skills in the workplace through careers education and advice.

### **Strategic Objectives**

- To develop further the range and number of qualifications available through the medium of Welsh in response to learner needs and national strategic priorities.
- To increase the involvement of Sector Skills Councils and employers in ensuring and extending the availability of qualifications and skills frameworks through the medium of Welsh.
- To commission teaching and learning resources to meet the needs of the Welsh-medium sector, Welsh in the curriculum and Welsh for Adults.
- To develop the use of new technologies in delivery and support of Welsh-medium education.
- To secure better bilingual careers education, advice and guidance which increase learners' awareness of opportunities to use Welsh in the workplace and in further study or training.

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Promote the development of Welsh-medium qualifications to meet the needs of learners, in line with Welsh Assembly Government policies.	WAG, Awarding Bodies	Awarding Bodies/WAG	2009 onwards
Prioritise the development of qualifications relating to Childcare and Teaching Assistants.	WAG, Awarding Bodies	Awarding Bodies	2009 onwards
Develop online assessment in Welsh.	WAG, Awarding Bodies	WAG/Awarding Bodies	2010 onwards
Increase the numbers of Welsh-medium examiners, assessors, verifiers and markers to respond to demand, especially in vocational subject areas.	WAG, Awarding Bodies, providers	Awarding Bodies	2010 onwards

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Work with Sector Skills Councils to identify Welsh-language needs for their sectors.	WAG, SSCs, WLB	SSCs	2009-10 onwards
Ensure inclusion of Welsh-medium opportunities in the Skills Framework.	WAG, SSCs, UKCES, Wales Employment & Skills Board	WAG	2009-10
Continue to develop Welsh-language Basic/Essential Skills support and training for learners in all sectors including workplace learning.	WAG, FEIs, WBL, providers, employers	WAG	2009 onwards
Commission Welsh-medium and bilingual teaching and learning resources, and resources for Welsh for Adults.	WAG	WAG	2009 onwards
Develop e-learning, use of software and videoconferencing as a means of expanding Welsh-medium education and training, and provide Welsh-medium technical support and training on usage.	WAG, JANET Video conferencing Service, NGfL, providers	WAG	2009-10 onwards
Promote the provision of advice and services through the medium of Welsh by the six Careers Wales companies, and encourage them to be proactive in heightening clients' awareness of the need for Welsh-language skills in the workplace.	Careers Wales companies, WAG	WAG	2010 onwards
Provide continued funding uplift for post-16 Welsh-medium provision in the National Planning and Funding System.	WAG, LAs, FEIs	WAG	2010 onwards
Continue the funding of a national framework for assessment for Welsh for Adults to include the WJEC series of examinations.	WAG	WAG	2009 onwards
Consider the implications of any organisational changes or transformation on the capital investment plans for Welsh-medium and bilingual schools, in line with the <i>Schools</i>	WAG, LAs, FEIs, HEIs	WAG	2009 onwards

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
<i>for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century investment programme.</i>			
Take account of findings of all external evaluations of Welsh-medium interventions as future planning is undertaken.	WAG	WAG	2009 onwards

### ***Consultation Questions:***

***This section focuses on ways of building a support framework for Welsh-medium provision.***

- ***Do you agree with the actions identified?***
- ***Are there other areas which should be included here?***
- ***What targets could be used to measure the success of this Strategic Aim?***

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

Education and training alone cannot guarantee that speakers become fluent in Welsh, or choose to use the language in their everyday lives. This Strategy concludes by outlining informal learning activities which support and complement the formal process of developing Welsh-language skills, and identifies opportunities for collaborative work across Welsh Assembly Government Departments and with other agencies. A fundamental part of this is reaching across our diverse communities and to disadvantaged areas.

### **Strategic Objectives**

- To increase provision of the teaching of Welsh to families.
- To collaborate with partners to provide informal opportunities for learners to reinforce and embed their Welsh-language skills both within and outside formal settings.
- To encourage local authority Youth Services and voluntary sector organisations to increase and facilitate opportunities for young people to participate in activities through the medium of Welsh.
- To work with partners so that Welsh-language skills are seen to be relevant across culturally diverse communities and different socio-economic backgrounds.
- To work with partners on a joint marketing strategy for Welsh-medium and Welsh-language learning.

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Identify opportunities for collaboration with other WAG departments and external bodies on initiatives to increase informal/non-formal learning opportunities at community level.	WAG, Welsh Language Board and other external organisations	WAG	2010
Target Welsh courses for parents and families, especially parents with young children.	Welsh for Adults centres, WAG	WfA centres	2009 onwards
Encourage availability of informal and non-formal learning opportunities through the medium of Welsh within formal education settings both at compulsory and post-compulsory stages.	WLB, WAG, LAs, area networks, schools, FEIs WBL	Schools, FEIs, WBL	2011 onwards
Consider options for specific projects to expand Welsh-language non-formal and informal learning through national and community organisations.	WAG, voluntary sector bodies	WAG	2011
Expect Youth Services in each local authority to provide adequate opportunities for young Welsh speakers to have informal learning opportunities through the medium of Welsh.	WAG, Youth Services, LAs, voluntary sector bodies	WAG	2010 onwards
Promote engagement of Children and Young People's Partnerships in each local authority with voluntary sector organisations that work mainly through the medium of Welsh.	WAG, LAs	WAG	2010 onwards
Improve workforce planning for bilingual skills for the Youth Service and other youth support services, and develop more widely available training for youth services through the medium of Welsh.	WAG, LAs, HEIs, HEFCW	HEIs	2011-12 onwards
Ensure that Welsh for Adults centres plan and deliver increased informal learning opportunities for adult learners of Welsh.	Welsh for Adults centres, WAG, WLB	WAG, WLB	2009 onwards

<b>Supporting Actions</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>
Work with partners on a joint marketing strategy for Welsh-medium and Welsh-language learning, and continue to work with partners on campaigns to encourage adults to learn Welsh.	WLB, WAG, Mantais, Careers Wales, WfA centres	WLB, WAG	2009-11

### **Consultation Questions:**

*This section focuses on some key links between formal learning and use of the language in informal settings in the community.*

- *Have we identified the most important areas that provide opportunities for learners to reinforce their language skills outside the classroom?*
- *What are the most effective ways of engaging with parents, families and young people as these opportunities are developed?*

## **5. Outcomes and Targets**

5.1 In order to monitor progress we will set five-year targets based on outcomes that are central to the success of the Strategy. The Welsh Assembly Government will use this evidence as a contribution to a comprehensive review of the Strategy after the initial five-year period.

5.2 Local authorities already report on performance through the National Performance Indicators. EDU/006 NS13 represents an important element of this Strategy: this requires authorities to report on ‘the percentage of pupils assessed, in schools maintained by the local authority, receiving a Teacher Assessment in Welsh (first language) at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Key Stage 3’. This information on linguistic continuity will be considered as local authorities implement their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

5.3 Targets like those set out below are measurable using data sets that are already available. These targets are applicable to the three levels of the education system - provider, local authority and national - and will be monitored at these different levels. The first target deals with increasing numbers in Welsh-medium education and is based on challenging but realistic expectations in line with trends of the last five years. The second target deals with linguistic progression, and focuses on the transition from primary to secondary schools. The third target measures the extent to which Welsh is used as a medium of learning at age 16; Key Stage 4 assessment through GCSE is used as the criterion for this.

5.4 These targets focus specifically on statutory education provision. They do not cover attainment, nor do they cover provision in the pre-statutory and post-16 phases. In some of these areas, further work is required to establish firm benchmarking data. It is intended that further targets are set for the following areas:

- Welsh-language attainment;
- continuity from pre-statutory into Welsh-medium statutory education;
- Key Stage 4 assessment in vocational areas;
- post-16 Welsh-medium provision; and
- practitioner training.

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Targets</b>
<b>1</b>	More 7 year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh.	An increase in the percentage of Year 2 pupils, assessed in Welsh first language, from 21% in 2008 to 25% (assessed in Welsh in the Foundation Phase <i>Language, Literacy and Communication Skills</i> Area of Learning) in 2015.
<b>2</b>	More pupils continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school.	An increase in the percentage of Year 9 pupils assessed in Welsh first language, from 16% in 2008 to 19% in 2015.
<b>3</b>	More pupils studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh.	An increase in the percentage of Welsh-medium GCSE entries, from 10% in 2008 to 13% in 2015.

(The section in the Context and Consideration paper on Outcomes and Targets explains the statistical rationale on which the 3 targets above are based.)

### **Consultation Questions:**

- ***Are the targets noted above appropriate and realistic?***
- ***What other measurable outcomes or targets should be included to cover the other Strategic Aims?***

# CONTEXT AND CONSIDERATIONS

## The Legal, Policy and Linguistic Context

### 1. Language, Legislation and Formal Commitments

1.1 The legal basis for equality between Welsh and English in Wales is enshrined in the 1993 Welsh Language Act. This act is founded on two principles – the need to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language, and the treatment of the English and Welsh languages on the basis of equality. In February 2009, the Welsh Assembly Government published for pre-legislative scrutiny a draft Legislative Competence Order (LCO) on the Welsh Language. The proposed LCO would provide the National Assembly for Wales with the competence to legislate in future to respond to the challenges which the language faces and to make appropriate changes to the legislative framework on the language.

1.2 The Welsh Language Act 1993 established the principle that in the conduct of public business and administration of justice in Wales the English and Welsh languages should be treated on a basis of equality. The Act also made provisions for the preparation and approval of Welsh Language Schemes. Under Section 9 of the Welsh Language Act, the Welsh Language Board has a duty to issue guidelines to public and Crown organisations as to the form and content of their Welsh Language Schemes.

1.3 Under Section 5 of the Act, local authorities are required to produce and implement a Welsh Language Scheme dealing specifically with education. In these Welsh Education Schemes local authorities state how they intend to promote and develop access to Welsh-medium education, on the basis of a detailed understanding of forecast need.

1.4 The UK Government signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 2001. Under that Charter specific commitments have been made to make Welsh-medium education provision available at pre-school, primary and secondary levels, to provide technical and vocational education and training, and to ensure higher education through the medium of Welsh. It also includes a commitment to offer Welsh as a subject of adult and continuing education.

1.5 The Council of Europe's Committee of Experts (COMEX) carries out regular reviews of progress made under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The Department for Heritage is responsible for providing a report to COMEX on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government, and this report includes a detailed response to the clauses to which the UK Government has agreed with regard to the Welsh language in education.

## 2. Education Legislation

2.1 The 1944 Education Act first gave pupils the right to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents. This allowed local authorities to consider establishing Welsh-medium schools. This is now Section 9 of the 1996 Education Act.

2.2 Under the 1996 Education Act local authorities have a statutory duty to secure provision of sufficient school places and, in so doing, to have regard to the general principle that pupils should be educated in accordance with the wishes of parents, so far as that is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure.

2.3 'Welsh speaking' secondary schools are currently defined for the purposes of the school curriculum in Section 105(7) of the Education Act 2002 which states:

*[...] 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.'*

There is no statutory definition for 'Welsh-speaking' primary schools. For the purposes of data presentation, information is provided according to whether Welsh is the sole or main medium of instruction of first and second language pupils.

2.4 Welsh was included in the National Curriculum following the Education Reform Act 1988, and became a compulsory subject for all pupils in Wales in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 in 1990. Education Regulations issued in 1994 provided that the National Curriculum in Welsh (and Welsh Second Language) did not apply to pupils in Key Stage 4 attending a school which was not a Welsh-speaking school until August 1999. From September 1999 onwards Welsh also became compulsory at Key Stage 4. As is the case with all other national curriculum subjects, Welsh may be temporarily disapplied for a pupil, under sections 364-367 of the 1996 Education Act.

2.5 Section 26 of the Children Act 2004 provides that the Welsh Assembly Government may issue regulations requiring local authorities to prepare and publish a plan setting out the authority's strategy for discharging their functions in relation to children and relevant young persons. The Children and Young People's Plans (Wales) Regulations 2007, made under section 26 of the Children Act 2004, require every local authority in Wales to prepare and publish a Children and Young People's Plan, and provide that the Plans should be produced having regard to guidance produced by the Welsh Ministers. Relevant guidance has been issued, entitled 'Shared Planning for Better Outcomes' (Circular 31/2007). The Guidelines note that, in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993, *'partners need to set out in the CYPP their intentions in respect of Welsh-medium service provision and how they will work together to improve provision'*. Amongst the areas to be included

in Core Aim 2: Education and Learning Opportunities, is the provision of an appropriate number of Welsh-medium school places.

2.6 Local authorities also have to discharge their responsibilities under Sections 22 and 26 of the Childcare Act 2006, which places a duty on local authorities to measure whether childcare provision is sufficient; this includes assessing the sufficiency of Welsh-medium provision.

2.7 Directions under the Learning and Skills Act 2000 require local authorities to make provision for Youth Support Services. Other directions and guidance contained in *Extending Entitlement* (2002) and *Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes* are relevant to Children and Young People's Partnerships.

2.8 The Learning and Skills Act 2000, sections 32-35, sets out the Welsh Ministers' duties and powers in relation to post-16 and post-19 education and training.

2.9 The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 confers duties on local authorities to provide free transport to education for primary pupils living 2 miles or further and for secondary pupils living 3 miles or further from the nearest suitable school. Each local authority and the Welsh Ministers must promote access to education through the medium of Welsh when exercising functions under the Measure.

2.10 The Welsh Assembly Government has adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as the basis of all its work for children and young people. This is expressed in seven core aims that all children and young people:

- 1) have a flying start in life;
- 2) have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
- 3) enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
- 4) have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
- 5) are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
- 6) have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing; and
- 7) are not disadvantaged by poverty.

Most of these are relevant to this Strategy.

### **3. The Policy Context**

3.1 This Strategy has been drawn up to deliver the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment made in *One Wales: A Progressive Agenda for the Government of Wales* (June 2007):

*'We will create a national Welsh-medium Education Strategy to develop effective provision from nursery through to further and higher education, backed up by an implementation programme.'*

3.2 This Strategy also involves other commitments listed in *One Wales*: to ensure that local authorities measure demand for Welsh-medium education, to establish a Welsh-medium Higher Education Framework and to continue to develop aspects of the Welsh for Adults programme. This is reinforced by the underlying commitment in *One Wales*: *'We will work to ensure that more people, young and old, can learn Welsh and encourage it to thrive as a language of many communities all over Wales.'*

3.3 This Strategy also aligns with the wider objectives of *One Wales* by improving the bilingual skill levels needed by learners and employees to contribute to the economic and cultural growth of Wales.

3.4 The Strategy builds on previous policy documents of the Welsh Assembly Government, in particular *laith Pawb: A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales* (2003), and *The Learning Country: Vision into Action* (2005). *laith Pawb* stated that the Welsh Assembly Government wanted Wales to be a truly bilingual nation. This was defined as a country where people can choose to live their lives through the medium of either Welsh or English, and where the presence of the two languages is a visible and audible source of pride and strength. This Strategy takes the education and training elements of *laith Pawb* further by establishing a national vision and direction, as well as an Implementation Programme, to strengthen and develop the position of Welsh-medium education throughout the education and training system of Wales. Its aim is to establish a long-term direction and increase capacity, with an emphasis on sustainability and continuity. This recognises the crucial role that Welsh-medium education has to play in relation to the Welsh Assembly Government's aim of creating a bilingual Wales and, as such, this Strategy constitutes a cornerstone of a wider policy and legislative framework being developed in support of the Welsh language, building on the foundations laid by *laith Pawb*.

3.5 It develops the Welsh-medium dimension of our skills and employment strategy, *Skills that Work for Wales* (2008). It also takes account of *Promise and Performance: The Outcome of the Webb Review of the Mission and Purpose of Further Education in Wales* (2007). It takes account of the strategy for *14-19 Learning Pathways* and the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009. It will work in coordination with the *Transforming Educational Provision* programme for post-16 transformation of provision.

3.6 Developing opportunities to access Welsh-medium childcare is set within the context of the Welsh Assembly Government's 2005 Childcare Strategy *The Childcare Strategy for Wales: Childcare is for Children*.

3.7 The principles of the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales 2002* provide a basis for our work with additional learning needs pupils. Sections 1:7 and 1:15 of the code note the expectations under the terms of the

Welsh Language Act 1993. The Welsh Language Board report *Acknowledging Need* has provided the basis for further progress on this agenda.

3.8 This Strategy also has regard to policies beyond the Department of Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills. It recognises the essential role played in the maintenance of the language by the work of the Department for Heritage, and in particular of the Welsh Language Board in support of many aspects of maintenance, use and growth of the Welsh language throughout Wales.

3.9 The Welsh Assembly Government, through the work of other departments, is committed to maintaining and supporting Welsh in areas where Welsh is a community language, through the Wales Spatial Plan and the ten Language Action Plan areas, where the use of Welsh in areas of special linguistic significance is being supported.

3.10 The importance of the Welsh language in health and social care is recognised in the All-Wales Workforce for Welsh in the Health Service. This provides the context for the need for Welsh-medium vocational options for the health and care sectors and maintenance of language skills in the post-14 sectors.

## **4. Making the Connections**

4.1 *Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales* (2004) states that the Welsh Assembly Government must ensure that duplication and wastage of resources and efforts are eliminated, that partnership working at all levels can improve use of finite levels of funding, and that more effective working can make the best of capacity.

4.2 Until now, Welsh-medium education and the Welsh language in education have evolved without much specific planning at national level. The provision is therefore currently patchy, with significant gaps, and in some areas there is potential duplication. Future investment in developing Welsh-medium education over all phases will be in a context of improved and streamlined targeting within a clear national infrastructure. Further investment in Welsh-medium and Welsh-language education, and an increase in bilingual skill levels in Wales, will bring economic and cultural benefits to its citizens.

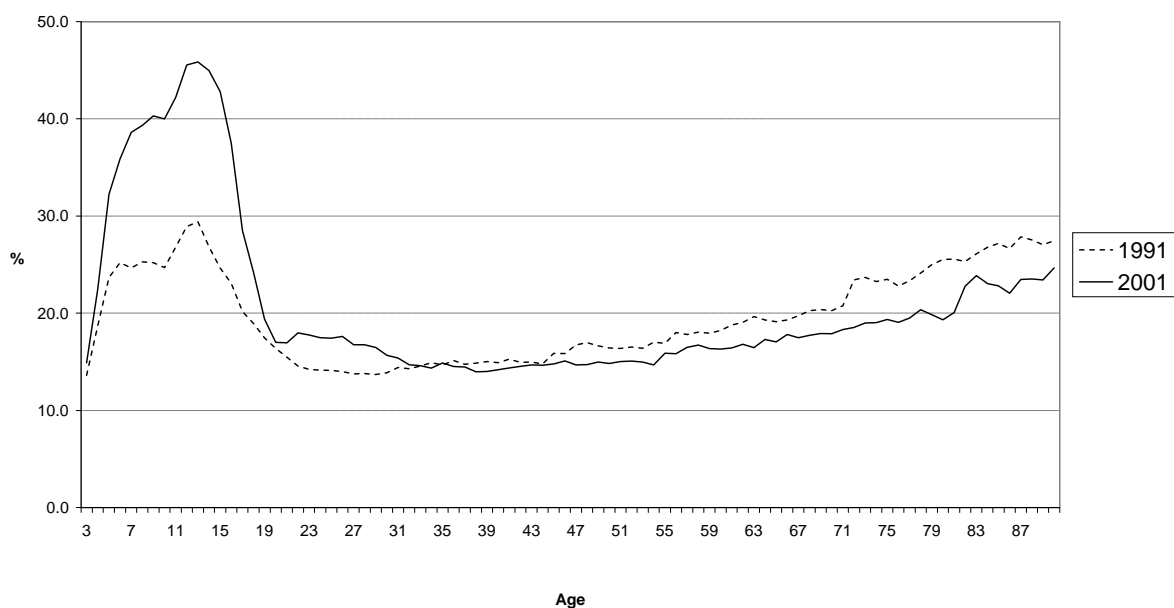
## **5. The National Linguistic Context**

5.1 The 2001 Census showed an increase of Welsh speakers in the younger age group (3-15), and this owes much to the growth in the demand for, and supply of, Welsh-medium education over the last 20 to 30 years, particularly in the more anglicised parts of Wales. Of 3-year-olds, 14.9 per cent could speak Welsh, representing 5,200 children. Some 7 per cent (2,400) of all 3-year-olds both spoke Welsh and lived in families where both parents, or the single parent, could speak Welsh. The effect of education was clearly apparent amongst the older children. Of those aged 5 to 15, 40.8 per cent were recorded as able to speak Welsh.

5.2 However, this does not mean that we can be complacent. Recent research demonstrates that the percentage of children living in households where all adults speak Welsh fell between 1991 and 2001, and this trend is set to continue. The out-migration of many young Welsh speakers, combined with a decline in the numbers of Welsh speakers in the older age group over time, poses a particular problem for the Welsh language in many rural communities in the north and west. This situation is exacerbated by inward migration on a significant scale. In this context, the education and training system will play a crucial role in the maintenance and strengthening of the language in Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government is therefore committed to giving this strategic lead on the Welsh language in education and training which will make a major contribution to the future of a bilingual Wales.

**% able to speak Welsh, by age, 1991 and 2001**

Source: Census of population



5.3 We recognise that education and training alone cannot ensure that speakers acquire fluency in Welsh. Furthermore, the extent to which people choose to use their skills is to a very large extent determined by factors beyond the classroom, including the success of language transmission in the home, use of the language in informal as well as formal contexts, and the extent to which speakers are ready to put their ability to use the language into practice. Nevertheless, education and training are central components of the process of developing speakers' skills across a range of functions, and extending their opportunities for using the language.

5.4 This Strategy works from the basis that the acquisition and development of language skills are most successful when that language is used as a medium of instruction in relevant learning environments. Our key priority, therefore, is to safeguard and strengthen the provision that will allow us to meet this aim, and respond to the increased demand for Welsh-medium provision.

## **6. The International Context**

6.1 The presence of two or more languages within education systems is a common feature of nation states and stateless nations across the world. These situations present considerable variety in terms of the political and demographic status of the languages involved, and also in terms of the extent to which the languages are used in teaching and learning. Whilst in some cases two or more languages are used as a medium of teaching, in other situations a second or third language feature as taught subjects only. Different policies determine whether pupils and their parents exercise choice with regard to the language medium of their education.

6.2 Policies differ as well in terms of whether pupils of different home language backgrounds receive the same language provision in a common language setting. For example, English-medium and French-medium immersion education in Canada is delivered within two parallel but separate systems: Anglophone pupils wishing to acquire fluency in French receive French-medium immersion provision that is quite separate from the French- language provision designed for Francophones. Swedish-medium education in Finland presents a similar picture, in that education for Swedish home language pupils is delivered through one system, whilst a separate form of provision is aimed at Finnish home language pupils wishing to learn Swedish through immersion methods. Welsh-medium education in Wales, along with numerous other cases such as Catalan and Basque-medium education in Spain, or Frisian-medium education in Friesland, the Netherlands, presents a different set of circumstances, in that education through the medium of the language in question is delivered to all pupils in the same setting, regardless of home language background.

6.3 Since the 1960s and 1970s a number of bilingual and multilingual communities have developed successful systems for the delivery of education through two or more languages. This has been particularly true of communities where smaller or lesser used languages co-exist alongside more powerful national or international languages. More recent developments, for example in the Baltic states and the Russian Federation, are further examples of the ways in which societal bilingualism and multilingualism can be incorporated within education systems.

6.4 Bilingualism and trilingualism in the curriculum, and within the wider extra-curricular and organisational context of schools and colleges, have led to the development of a range of teaching methodologies and planning models. These include ways of developing language skills by using languages as a medium of learning (content integrated language learning – CLIL), immersion teaching methodologies, and bilingual or trilingual literacy strategies. As models of good practice are shared, areas such as practitioner training, or the preparation and production of teaching materials, also provide scope for further development. The expertise that has developed in Wales over a number of decades is recognised within this international context. At a European level, Welsh-medium education provides a key reference point for other communities that have developed, or that are developing, the role of lesser used languages in education. Much of this work is currently undertaken both within the context of wider language planning networks (such as the Network for the Promotion of Linguistic Diversity – NPLD), and also within the framework provided by education-specific networks such as the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning (based at the Fryske Akademy, Ljouwert, Netherlands).



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

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Our aim in this Strategy is to enable more children, pupils and students across Wales to access Welsh-medium provision on a basis of equality. Under current education legislation, local authorities are to *'have regard to the general principle that pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents, so far as that is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure'*. We aim to promote access to Welsh-medium provision on the basis of this principle. Ensuring the availability of provision is dependent on strategic planning, effective joint working, systematic analysis of demand, and a commitment to act on the evidence of demand. These conditions apply through all phases of early years, primary and secondary provision.

## **2. Welsh-medium provision in the early years: the importance of strategic planning**

2.1 In view of the crucial importance of the early years in children's development, planning opportunities for them to access Welsh-medium provision is a key priority. Successful planning relies on a clear understanding of current and future demand. In order for this demand to be assessed accurately, parents need clear and comprehensive information about the linguistic provision that is available to them, and about the linguistic outcomes that can be expected from the different kinds of provision on offer.

## **3. Welsh-medium childcare provision**

3.1 Childcare provision for young children through the medium of Welsh is important as a contributor to the success of this Strategy. Intensive contact with Welsh during a young child's first years is advantageous, and establishes an ideal base for the development of fluency. It is also important that parents wishing to return to work or training can do so on a basis of arranging childcare in their language of choice. In addition, childcare practitioners, through being given opportunities to develop their language skills and to receive formal recognition of their achievement, further their professional development, and their contribution to the labour market is enhanced.

3.2 A Childcare Working Group was established by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2004 in order to build on the Childcare Action Plan (2002). In response to the Group's final report, the *Childcare Strategy for Wales: Childcare is for Children* was published (2005). That strategy acknowledged the difficulty faced by some parents when seeking accessible Welsh-medium childcare provision in some parts of Wales.

3.3 The Welsh-medium and Bilingual Childcare Task and Finish Group (June-September 2006) highlighted a number of areas requiring specific action: information on the extent of currently existing provision and targets to increase its availability; development of the childcare workforce; and guidance to local authorities and their partners.

3.4 Following the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group and their subsequent approval by the then Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, local authorities, through their Families Information Services, collect information from providers about the language provision of childcare settings. This information provides the basis for target-setting for the future. The five language categories adopted for this purpose cover varying degrees of Welsh-medium provision, and illustrate the complexity of the language medium situations that can characterise provision in this sector.

3.5 The Families Information Services therefore play a key role in collecting accurate data from providers about the extent to which Welsh is used in settings, and in communicating the information to parents. This information should also be viewed as a valuable planning tool for future development of provision. Close cooperation and sharing of data between the Families Information Services and Children and Young People's Partnerships should lie at the core of successful planning of provision.

3.6 The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to assess the sufficiency of childcare to enable parents to work or undertake further study. This includes assessing the sufficiency of childcare provision through the medium of Welsh. Positive steps have recently been taken by a number of authorities to obtain a more detailed picture of current provision and demand for the future. However, more needs to be done to ensure that this strategic approach is adopted systematically across Wales, and to ensure that authorities collect this information on the basis of a consistent understanding of the categories used to refer to language provision (avoiding the potential confusion that can arise from the term 'bilingual'). Authorities also need to view this aspect of planning as an integral element of the wider planning processes of the Children and Young People's Partnerships.

3.7 Providers of childcare in the voluntary and private sectors offer opportunities for childcare through the medium of Welsh. Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin (MYM) currently offers childcare in 34 day nurseries (30 of which are private nurseries affiliated to MYM). Provision is also available in two MYM Integrated Centres, and in another two that are maintained through a MYM/local authority partnership.

3.8 The National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA Cymru) is currently seeking to increase the level of Welsh-medium and bilingual provision available through its network of members. Data collected to date indicates that English is the main language used by children at home and in the nursery settings. However, 77% of the respondents included in the survey used Welsh at least once or twice a week. The findings of the same survey reveal that half of parents or guardians enquired whether the provision in the nursery was bilingual. These general figures do not, however, allow a detailed picture of the extent to which Welsh is used with different age cohorts, or in all-day childcare as opposed to sessional care. Since 2006-07 a

Welsh language support officer has been in post, part-funded by the Welsh Language Board, with the aim of increasing the use of Welsh with children in the nurseries. One of the Association's aims for 2009-2010 is to establish a method of data collection which will enable them to identify settings according to the extent to which Welsh is used, in line with the five categories established by the Welsh Assembly Government.

3.9 Childminders also represent an important element of childcare provision, and their contribution to the availability of Welsh-medium provision needs to be considered. Childminding provision is characterised by the fact that children of varying ages are very often cared for by the same childminder in the same setting. As a result, the linguistic nature of the childcare they provide for very young children cannot be considered in isolation from the language provision for all children, including children of three years and over, in the same setting.

3.10 The National Childminding Association (NCMA) does not hold central data on the Welsh language capacity of its members. However, the findings of an NCMA-commissioned report on *Research into the Use of the Welsh Language within Childminder Settings in Wales* (December 2006-January 2007) provide some insight into the extent to which Welsh is used in childminding. In the sample of respondents who took part in the research, 13% of the childminders stated that they were fluent in Welsh and able to provide a full childminding service in Welsh. An additional 31% said that they spoke some Welsh and were able to provide some service in the language. However, the nature of childminding provision means that not all fluent Welsh-speaking childminders are in a position to use the language consistently with all children in their care: groups of children can present varying combinations of linguistic backgrounds and abilities. Indeed, the findings illustrate that the potential to use Welsh does not appear to be fully realised, with 2% of childminders who are very competent in Welsh rarely or never using the language with the children. More frequent instances of the full potential for Welsh language use not being realised are seen as childminders who are unable to speak Welsh care for children who speak some Welsh (9%).

3.11 The Wales Pre-School Playgroups Association (WPPA) has a total of 226 members providing full day-care provision. Some information on the Welsh-language abilities of staff working in WPPA settings is available (see below), but as in the case of the NDNA this information does not allow a detailed picture of the extent to which Welsh is used in all-day childcare as opposed to sessional care.

3.12 Supporting access to Welsh-medium childcare provision should be an integral consideration of all initiatives to widen opportunities for young children. As part of the monitoring process for Flying Start, the availability and opportunities for Welsh-medium childcare will be collated to provide an informed picture of provision.

## **4. Welsh-medium Early Years Education Provision in a Mixed Economy**

4.1 The Welsh Assembly Government's policy is to ensure that part-time early years education provision is available in the term following a child's third birthday for any child whose parents wish such provision. There is a statutory requirement for

each local authority to ensure that adequate early years education provision is available in the authority, and to fund that provision, either in the maintained sector or in other registered settings.

4.2 The arrangements adopted to meet this requirement are a matter for local authorities to determine. In many authorities this involves a partnership between the maintained and non-maintained sectors. Arrangements can change from year to year, and the nature of the mixed economy can vary according to fluctuating demand for places. It is important that the infrastructure of the mixed economy is responsive in improving opportunities for children to access Welsh-medium provision in the early years. These should be available within the child's community.

4.3 Considerable variation exists across Wales in the way in which the mixed economy operates with regard to Welsh-medium education provision. A number of authorities have increased their provision for three-year-olds, and provide opportunities for young children to receive early years education provision in the maintained sector within reasonable distance from their home. In other counties provision in the maintained sector is more limited, and in these cases (funded) non-maintained Welsh-medium settings fulfil an important role in providing Welsh-medium opportunities.

4.4 The nature of the mixed economy means that a number of options are available to parents as they choose the most appropriate provision for their children. This can involve choosing between the Welsh-medium and the English-medium sector. Even if both sectors offer funded places through the local authority, differences in terms of distance or accessibility, the availability of full-time as opposed to part-time provision, or in terms of numbers of admission points during the year, can prompt some parents to favour the English-medium option. Even in cases where Welsh-medium provision is funded in the non-maintained sector, these settings can see their viability affected by declining numbers, as parents choose Welsh-medium provision in the maintained sector. The fragility of the voluntary sector when such situations occur can have the effect of limiting the opportunities available to children under three who wish to receive Welsh-medium provision within their communities.

4.5 All providers, in the maintained and non-maintained sectors, need to take joint responsibility for finding methods of working in partnership in order to ensure the sustainability of the Welsh-medium early years sector. Solutions will vary from one area of Wales to another, and it is inevitable that ways of implementing policy in this regard will vary as provision responds to local needs.

4.6 A dynamic partnership has to be promoted between the two sectors, in order for them to offer a network of provision for the early years. Welsh-medium playgroups provide an important element of the provision, generate demand for Welsh-medium education, and foster the participation of parents on an informal, community level. At the same time, ensuring that Welsh-medium nursery places exist in the statutory sector is essential if Welsh-medium provision is to be incorporated within the broader policy for early years provision.

4.7 This method of joint working means that the main focus of the voluntary and private sectors' work may vary according to area and region: where the statutory sector is strong, parent and toddler groups play an important role in working with young children under two and a half and their parents. Where the statutory sector does not provide so extensively for Welsh-medium provision, there will be a more important role for playgroups catering for children over three.

4.8 Sharing of information and data is a key component of this collaborative approach. Local authorities which are already expected to assess demand for Welsh-medium school places should also make the widest possible use of these survey results when planning for *pre*-statutory education. Information gathered through surveys to measure the sufficiency of Welsh-medium childcare should also be used to inform forward planning for children of three and above wherever possible. Close collaboration also needs to be nurtured between Welsh-medium providers in the voluntary and private sectors and all authorities in the sharing of data on children who have already entered the Welsh-medium sector.

4.9 Consistent and fair funding is also a key aspect of planning accessible and appropriate provision. Local authorities should be expected to ensure that their methods of funding provision for children of three and above do not limit access to Welsh-medium provision.

4.10 All authorities need to ensure that places are available where there is an identified need for them, and that duplication of provision, and possibly competition between them, is avoided. The Welsh Assembly Government wishes to work in partnership with local authorities to establish whether current levels of Welsh-medium provision are sufficient to meet demand. On the basis of the findings of this assessment, ways of providing appropriate support will be considered.

4.11 Since its establishment in 1971, Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin has opened and supported parent and toddler groups (*cylchoedd Ti a Fi*), and provides Welsh-medium care and education through *cylchoedd meithrin* (nursery groups) in all parts of Wales. The original aim was to provide for children and parents from Welsh-speaking homes, but by today MYM has developed and extended language immersion provision to thousands of young children from non-Welsh-speaking homes. Transmitting the values of a Welsh-language ethos, as well as nurturing Welsh-language skills, is a key component of MYM's objectives. In addition to its childcare provision, Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin currently supports 517 *cylchoedd meithrin* and 425 *cylchoedd Ti a Fi*. Core funding for this work is secured through grant allocation from the Welsh Language Board and from the Welsh Assembly Government's Children and Families Service, supplemented by a number of other grants for specific purposes and by income from its activities.

4.12 The WPPA also has a role to play in developing Welsh-language skills for young children. WPPA membership currently stands at 943, and includes playgroups, and parent and toddler groups, in addition to full day care provision. A survey into the Welsh-language abilities of staff and volunteers in 2006 revealed that 12% were confident in speaking, reading and writing Welsh in all aspects of their lives. The percentage able to read with the children, sing and interact with them was 17%. The percentage of respondents reporting that their staff were learning Welsh was 46.3%,

whilst a third stated that they had no Welsh at all. Some WPPA members prepare children for Welsh-medium education. In general, however, the main focus of the groups is on introducing elements of Welsh and preparing young children for non-Welsh-medium schools. However, the introduction of the Foundation Phase, and specifically the 'Welsh Language Development' Area of Learning will increase opportunities for children to develop and enhance their Welsh-language skills.

4.13 It is important that the nature of the provision offered by Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and the WPPA in terms of language is readily understood by parents, so that they can make informed choices.

4.14 Other providers of early years educational provision, including members of the NCMA and the NDNA Cymru, also contribute to the availability of Welsh-medium provision for children under compulsory school age (and after-school care for older children in the case of NCMA members).

## **5. Welsh-medium Education in the Statutory Sector: Patterns of Language Provision**

5.1 Patterns of Welsh-medium and bilingual delivery across Wales are complex. Significant variations exist between authorities in terms of the policies implemented to promote and develop language skills in Welsh and English. A number of these variations reflect patterns of linguistic usage and vitality in the wider community, and others reflect inconsistencies in the implementation of policy. Even within authorities there are significant differences between schools with regard to the extent to which Welsh and English are used as a medium of instruction. The education system needs to be suitably flexible to reflect the differing linguistic features of authorities and regions. At the same time, however, it is important that language provision is planned and delivered on the basis of a clear understanding of criteria and expectations.

5.2 The Welsh Assembly Government and local authorities have worked together on an appropriate way of defining schools according to the extent of Welsh-medium provision (*Defining Schools according to Welsh-medium Provision*, October 2007). In spite of the considerable complexities which became apparent during the process of reaching these definitions, they provide a valuable tool for ensuring clarity. A number of the steps outlined in this Strategy are dependent on a clear understanding of the nature of the linguistic provision of our education establishments. It is this understanding that should provide the basis for an increase in Welsh-medium provision if current provision falls below the expected intensity.

5.3 The categories were used to collect data from authorities for the first time in January 2008, and the previous method of collecting information continued side by side with the new definitions in January 2009. This will allow consistency and enable any difficulties arising from the new process to be analysed. To date, information on numbers and percentages of pupils receiving different kinds of linguistic provision have not been published to reflect these new categories. As the process of receiving information from authorities on the basis of the new definitions becomes more refined and comprehensive, analysis of the data will lead to a clearer understanding of the nature of the linguistic provision across Wales.

5.4 'Welsh speaking' secondary schools are currently defined for the purposes of the school curriculum in Section 105(7) of the Education Act 2002 which states:

*[...] 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'.*

This is the definition that is normally used in the context of the National Curriculum to determine whether Welsh is a core subject (Welsh) or a foundation subject (Welsh second language). There is no statutory definition for 'Welsh-speaking' primary schools. For the purposes of data presentation, information is provided according to whether Welsh is the sole or main medium of instruction of first and second language pupils.

5.5 In 2008 the percentage of primary-age children in classes where Welsh was the only or main medium of education was 20.6%. In that year 464 primary schools (30.7% of the total) were mainly Welsh-medium schools. Thirty-seven other schools (2.5%) used Welsh as a medium of instruction to some extent. The figures for 2007/08 show that a total of 53,822 pupils attend classes where they receive their education solely or mainly through the medium of Welsh. The corresponding figure for 1991 was 43,984 pupils. A total of 40,702 pupils in 2006/07 received their education in 54 Welsh-medium secondary schools (compared to 27,897 pupils in 1991). One further Welsh-medium secondary school was opened in 2008.

5.6 In the counties of north-west Wales (Gwynedd and Anglesey), the linguistic provision in primary and secondary schools is planned with the aim of enabling pupils to become proficient in both Welsh and English. Traditionally, the majority of pupils in many of these schools would have come from Welsh-speaking homes, and this continues to be the case in a number of areas. Ensuring a suitable balance between Welsh-medium and English-medium provision through bilingual education means that delivery varies between schools, and even within schools, in terms of the subjects taught through the medium of Welsh, and whether individual themes rather than subjects are Welsh-medium. The challenge for these local authorities is to respond appropriately to the changes in the linguistic profile of the children arriving in their schools. They need to continue to provide for learners whose main (if not only) language of the home and neighbourhood is Welsh. At the same time, they must ensure that learners whose Welsh is far less secure receive enough Welsh-medium input to enable them to become proficient bilingual speakers.

5.7 In other counties of the west (Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire mainly) Welsh is used as a medium of teaching and learning to varying degrees, and this variation exists both between and within schools. Ceredigion has now adopted a language policy where the emphasis is on encouraging growth in each school on a continuum, with a development plan to increase the provision over time. The aim of this policy is to offer the best possible opportunities to every pupil, and every school, to extend their potential to strengthen skills in Welsh as well as in English. The same concept of moving along a continuum operates in Carmarthenshire, and the

emphasis here too is on extending the Welsh-language skills of pupils in all schools. Here, however, there are more obvious differences in the linguistic nature of schools, with some offering mainly Welsh-medium provision, and other schools offering very limited Welsh-medium provision. Increasing the Welsh-medium input in these schools is a priority for the future. Another priority will be to encourage schools considered to be Welsh-medium to increase their Welsh-medium provision sufficiently to develop pupils' Welsh-language skills across a broad range of contexts.

5.8 Other counties in north, mid and west Wales (Conwy, Denbigh, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire and Powys) offer variations on the settings described above, including dual stream provision, where Welsh-medium and English-medium education are offered in parallel models within the same establishment. Circumstances vary from county to county, but they all share the challenge of ensuring that the Welsh-medium provision is of the required intensity to meet the aims that have been set for the school.

5.9 An additional challenge for counties in north-west and west Wales is the arrival of new pupils with no prior knowledge of Welsh. This occurs at any time during the academic year and at any age. Ensuring that these pupils gain communication skills in Welsh within a short timescale is vital in order for them to gain functional fluency in Welsh in their new schools. Latecomers' Centres were established in response to the considerable influx of non-Welsh-speakers to rural Wales in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Schools and local authorities in several areas of Wales view these centres as a key element of the process of integrating latecomers not only into schools but also into local communities. The nature of the provision in centres varies between counties, with all but one (in Gwynedd) providing primary age immersion. Following a period at the Centre pupils return to their schools to receive Welsh-medium or bilingual education. Over the years, good practice has developed in areas such as teaching methodologies, production of materials, and the development of support structures in collaboration with the schools receiving the pupils following their intensive period at the Centre. Centres are currently funded by local authorities together with grant aid through the Welsh Language Board *Grants to Local Authorities to Promote Welsh Education*.

5.10 In recent years authorities have adapted the provision offered in their Centres in response to circumstances such as fluctuating levels of in-migration, financial constraints and the cost of transporting pupils to centres, and new needs arising from changing language policies in schools. Some centres have recently piloted an extension of the traditional offer by providing intensive courses for other pupils requiring additional support to strengthen their confidence in Welsh-language skills, and by arranging for the services offered by the Centres to be delivered in the schools themselves.

5.11 The Centres for Latecomers in the north and west fulfil a key role in the process of assimilating pupils with no prior knowledge of Welsh. It is important that the present Centres continue to offer the most appropriate provision, and that the Welsh-speaking communities continue to consider the appropriateness of their provision for latecomers, as demographic patterns change.

5.12 The term 'latecomers' can also be used to include pupils throughout Wales who wish to access Welsh-medium education at a later entry point than the early years (age 3 or 4). In addition to the intensive provision offered at Centres for Latecomers, Wales has acquired valuable experience in a related field, by offering intensive periods of Welsh-medium provision in secondary schools, in partnership with the primary schools of their catchment areas. Secondary schools such as Ysgol Maes Garmon, Mold, have implemented late immersion programmes for a number of years. In doing this they have extended access to Welsh-medium education to pupils who would otherwise have remained in the English-medium sector.

5.13 Since 2003 an immersion and intensive language learning project has been piloted by the Welsh Language Board on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government. The aim of this project, operating in 9 secondary schools and their feeder primary schools, and in two primary schools, is to establish the most favourable conditions for the development of pupils' linguistic skills through mid and late immersion provision. Evaluation of the outcomes of the various methods employed to deliver the provision will inform further elaboration and implementation of the programme.

5.14 Whilst the processes of offering intensive provision in Centres for Latecomers and offering mid and late immersion through other intensive programmes share a number of common features, there are also important differences, particularly that it is the secondary schools that lead on delivering provision and planning subsequent support in the immersion programmes currently being piloted, whereas the Centres are the focus of delivery in the traditional 'latecomers' model. These points of contrast provide valuable opportunities for us to enhance our understanding of the factors involved in the two processes.

5.15 Additional entry points to Welsh-medium education through mid and late immersion are an important feature of provision in Wales, and provide a valuable means of increasing access to Welsh-medium provision. However, extension of this provision has to be based on a thorough understanding of the prerequisites of success, with regard to resources, support mechanisms and methods of delivery. The resources and best practice which have developed in the Latecomers' Centres need to be combined with the best practice that has been developed through the pilot immersion programmes for additional entry points to Welsh-medium education (see also Strategic Aim 3).

5.16 A particular element associated with the current division between Welsh and Welsh second language is the loss of skills which occurs as pupils move through the key stages. For various reasons, significant numbers of pupils become 'second language' learners as they start in secondary school (Key Stage 3), although they have been learning Welsh first language up to that stage. Research in the period 1999-2002 into the extent of the lack of progression found that 22% of pupils moved from Welsh to Welsh second language as they moved from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3. The extent of language drift varies from county to county, but is at its highest in the counties of the north and west that are traditionally Welsh-speaking.

5.17 Linguistic continuity is also interrupted as pupils reduce their contact with Welsh and choose to change their language medium and study subjects through the medium of English as they progress through their school career. There is further erosion as learners move to Key Stage 4 and beyond.

5.18 A Welsh Assembly Government funded project is currently being undertaken by the Welsh Language Board to explore and address the factors influencing linguistic continuity, in cooperation with a few sample bilingual schools and local authorities. The findings of this pilot will contribute to our understanding of the most appropriate ways of improving linguistic continuity (see also Strategic Aim 3).

5.19 In south-east and north-east Wales, the differences between Welsh-medium and English-medium schools are more clear-cut in the primary and secondary sectors. In the Welsh-medium schools the policy is that Welsh is used as a medium across the curriculum, but there is varied use of English in some subjects, especially in Science and Mathematics, in the post-16 phase. A notable feature of these schools is the high percentage of pupils from non-Welsh-speaking homes. These pupils, therefore, require immersion education although the schools also have to maintain and develop the skills of pupils from Welsh-speaking homes at the same time. In the schools that are not Welsh-medium, Welsh is taught as a second language. On the whole there is very little use of Welsh as a medium of education in these non-Welsh-medium schools, though a few secondary schools provide some subjects in a Welsh-medium stream.

5.20 In the south-east and north-east, designated Welsh-medium education is the most successful means of producing fluent bilingual speakers, and it needs to be maintained and strengthened. It is unlikely that the majority of learners in these areas will have sufficient contact with the language outside the classroom for them to become fluent in the language. The education system is the main, if not the only, contact point with the Welsh language for them. It is therefore vital that provision is planned in order to offer a full range of experiences through the medium of Welsh, if these learners are to become fluent speakers.

5.21 In planning for the future, we need to maintain the important balance between setting a clear national policy direction on the one hand, and allowing the flexibility for policy to reflect regional differences and needs on the other. In the north-west and south-west, provision needs to respond to the varying needs of pupils from a wide range of language backgrounds, including those from families where the only language of communication is Welsh, and others who have no contact with Welsh outside the school or setting. The balance between the use of Welsh and English as a medium of teaching and learning is a key consideration for these areas. Clear aims are needed to increase Welsh-medium delivery in schools where such provision is low at present. Changes may be needed in the intensity of Welsh-medium provision, in the face of demographic and linguistic changes, and where the numbers of pupils from Welsh-speaking homes are declining. In the south-east and north-east, the sharper contrast between Welsh-medium and non-Welsh-medium schools generally facilitates a clearer understanding of the features of designated Welsh-medium education. Even in these areas, however, issues surrounding the intensity of Welsh-medium provision are relevant to local authorities as they plan their provision.

## **6. Strategic Planning in the Statutory Sector on the Basis of Evidence**

6.1 A detailed picture of demand is essential for successful forward planning in the statutory sector, at primary and secondary level. Our guiding principle is that planning school places has to be undertaken on the basis of evidence. It is essential, therefore, that local authorities adopt systematic methods of measuring demand for Welsh-medium education amongst parents of very young children, well in advance of their entry into the school system.

6.2 Whilst there are currently gaps in our knowledge of the extent of the demand in some parts of Wales, we are aware of the potential need to increase significantly the numbers of Welsh-medium schools. In those counties where demand has been measured through rigorous survey methods, the overall demand from parents exceeds the current overall supply of places in the authorities. Also, we are mindful of the pattern that has characterised the growth of Welsh-medium provision to date, namely that schools have generally undergone rapid growth once they have opened in a community.

6.3 Young children who begin their learning and playing experiences through the medium of Welsh in playgroups need to continue within the Welsh-medium sector as they move to nursery provision for 3-year-olds and statutory education. At present, some young children are lost at this early stage, mainly because of factors relating to convenience and practicality. It is important that local authorities are in a position to provide the option of Welsh-medium education at the next stage, and for parents not to be deterred on grounds of distance, practicality or financial factors.

6.4 As the Foundation Phase is rolled out across Wales, there is a possibility that, over time, young children receiving increased Welsh-language input through the 'Welsh Language Development' Area of Learning will wish to transfer to Welsh-medium provision on entry to statutory education. The potential of this development in terms of increasing access to Welsh-medium provision in the statutory sector will become an additional consideration in the planning of school places.

6.5 The main statutory tool for planning Welsh-medium and bilingual provision in local authorities is provided by the Welsh Education Schemes, which are approved and monitored by the Welsh Language Board. These Schemes formalise the responsibility of the local authority, as in the case of all other public bodies in Wales under the 1993 Welsh Language Act, to treat Welsh and English on the basis of equality. In the particular context of education, this means ensuring that authorities plan provision in a way that meets demand for Welsh-medium education. The essence of this function involves thorough and reliable methods of measuring and forecasting demand, and the availability of appropriate provision within pupils' communities, or within reasonable travelling distance.

6.6 Statutory guidance under Section 26 of the Children Act 2004 requires every local authority in Wales to prepare and publish a Children and Young People's Plan setting out the authority's strategy for discharging their functions with regard to the welfare of children and young people (*Shared Planning for Better Outcomes*,

September 2007). The Children and Young People's Plans provide the overarching context for the planning and delivery of provision in the non-statutory and statutory sectors.

6.7 However, these Plans alone do not allow the required level of detail to bring about and monitor growth in the Welsh-medium sector. We see a continuing need for the detailed planning processes of the Welsh Education Schemes to ensure that local authorities and schools plan proactively to promote growth in the sector. We intend to consolidate the Welsh Assembly Government's role of providing a national strategic direction for the Welsh-medium sector by taking responsibility for approving and monitoring local authorities' strategic plans. It is intended that these new Welsh in Education Strategic Plans will develop to be the instrument for planning Welsh-medium school places, and for planning the delivery of Welsh-medium provision in schools and authorities.

6.8 Guidelines for producing Children and Young People's Plans note that, in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993, '*partners need to set out in the CYPP their intentions in respect of Welsh-medium service provision and how they will work together to improve provision*'. Amongst the areas to be included in Core Aim 2: Education and Learning Opportunities, is the provision of an appropriate number of Welsh-medium school places. Positive steps have been taken by some authorities in response to the requirements of the Children and Young People's Plans (and the Single Education Plans which preceded them during 2006-08) to measure demand for Welsh-medium education amongst parents of children under three, well in advance of their entry into the school system.

6.9 Close cooperation between the Welsh Language Board and these authorities has resulted in detailed audits being undertaken to ascertain the views of parents of very young children regarding their preferred options in relation to language provision. All authorities who offer a choice between Welsh-medium and English-medium provision should be undertaking detailed audits of this nature. They should be provided with the necessary guidance and advice to plan and undertake this work, and the technical difficulties that can hinder the sharing and collection of data need to be removed. It is crucial that the findings of surveys are followed by clear implementation steps to match provision with demand.

6.10 Local authorities will be expected to provide details on their methods of measuring demand for Welsh-medium education, together with an implementation plan to deliver on the findings, in their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans. In undertaking this work, local authorities should establish ways of ascertaining the level of demand for Welsh-medium provision according to ward or other appropriate geographic/demographic unit, and not solely at authority level. As in the case of measuring demand in the childcare and early years sectors, it is important that strategic planning for the assessment of demand for Welsh-medium provision in the primary and secondary sectors is included within the broader planning framework of the Children and Young People's Plans.

6.11 The transfer of information between sectors is as important for the thorough planning of places in the statutory sector as it is for the provision for three-year old children. The methods established for the sharing of data in the planning of provision

for three-year-olds should also be applied in the planning of places for children transferring from funded places in the voluntary sector to provision in the statutory sector.

6.12 Planning for the secondary sector also needs to be proactive. In areas where Welsh-medium primary education is growing, authorities need to monitor this growth and ensure that their secondary provision is in a position to respond promptly. In areas where there are secondary schools with varying degrees of Welsh-medium provision, the planning needs to correlate closely with steps to promote effective linguistic progression.

6.13 In some cases, ensuring linguistic progression for pupils calls for joint planning between counties. Four local authorities currently do not provide Welsh-medium education at secondary level, and in these cases joint planning with neighbouring authorities is required. There are a number of other authorities where cross-boundary arrangements are in place, either because of practical considerations of distance or ease of access, or because of the extent to which a particular school provides Welsh-medium opportunities. Local authorities are expected to apply the principle of regional collaboration to plan secondary education provision which is appropriate in terms of linguistic continuity and accessibility. At the same time, these cross-boundary arrangements should not detract from local authorities' duty to review their secondary sector provision at regular intervals, and to consider the need for additional provision within the authority if increasing numbers warrant such a development.

6.14 Guidance issued by the Welsh Assembly Government will include guidance on planning access to Welsh-medium provision, based on the findings of the Circular on School Organisation Proposals consultation.

## **7. Partnership and Joint Working**

7.1 Achieving optimal results and strengthening the infrastructure for effective delivery of services is often best achieved through partnership and joint working. Several local authorities are already working collaboratively in a range of areas, including Welsh-medium provision, and this practice needs to be extended through further cross-boundary and regional collaboration. Authorities will be expected to consider this principle across a range of fields, including planning and reorganisation of school places, transport, advisory services, training, additional learning needs, and the sharing of good practice. The Association of Directors of Education Wales (ADEW) already works through four consortium regions. Ways of promoting further joint planning on the basis of these regions will be explored.

7.2 Guidance published under *Children and Young People: Rights to Action – Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes* (2006) establishes the statutory responsibilities of local authorities and their partners in terms of local cooperation under the Children Act 2004. Paragraph 3.14 states: '*Local authorities need to ensure that all of the relevant services within the authority's area play their part in partnership working and co-operate to improve the well being of children and young people. Accordingly, Children and Young People's Partnerships should in addition include: ... representatives from Welsh-medium organisations/groups,*

*e.g. mentrau iaith, Urdd, local community groups.* The Children and Young People's Plans have led to a variety of partnership and committee structures in authorities across Wales. Whilst the needs of Welsh-medium provision are reflected in key discussions within the structures adopted by some authorities, the national picture is fragmented and inconsistent. As a consequence, covering the needs of the sector in the relevant fora can be unclear. Welsh-medium needs should be an integral element of all relevant planning mechanisms.

7.3 It is important that schools also understand their role in implementing this Strategy and in meeting the objectives determined at authority level. The framework for planning and monitoring at school level will be a matter for individual authorities to determine. Local authorities will be expected to act, however, in accordance with the principle of ensuring a central place for Welsh-medium education within the county's wider monitoring framework. Schools, or clusters of schools, will be expected to produce their plans for developing their Welsh-medium and Welsh-language provision, together with clear implementation steps. The purpose of this planning will be to determine school targets that reflect the starting position of the school, and that describe the contribution of the school to the wider targets of the authority in implementing the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans. The main emphasis of the school-level planning will be on developing the use made of Welsh as a medium of teaching, and also as a medium of communication within the school. Local authorities need to be conscious that some changes to the medium of teaching in schools requires statutory procedures.

7.4 The centrality given to Welsh-medium education provision at Welsh Assembly Government level should be reflected within local authorities and across consortia. Appropriate methods will be determined for placing a statutory duty on local authorities to establish a Welsh-medium education forum within each authority. In the first instance, ways of encouraging authorities to establish these fora on a voluntary basis will be explored. With the aim of ensuring that policy developments in education take full account of the needs of the Welsh-language sector as a matter of course across all authorities, mechanisms will be put in place for annual meetings of local authority representatives to be arranged, chaired by the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, to monitor progress on Welsh-medium provision and planning.

## **8. Access to Provision**

8.1 Facilitating access to appropriate learning institutions for learners wishing to pursue their learning through the medium of Welsh is essential to the success of this Strategy. The issue of transporting learners to suitable locations poses specific challenges for local authorities and Welsh-medium learners, particularly in rural areas and in the more anglicised areas of Wales. The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 confers duties on local authorities to provide free transport for all primary school pupils if they live two miles or further from the nearest suitable school, and for secondary school pupils where they live three miles or further from the nearest suitable school. The Measure also provides that each local authority and the Welsh Ministers must promote access to education through the medium of Welsh when exercising functions under the Measure. The Measure is therefore an important tool in enabling more learners to access Welsh-medium education.

## **9. Quality and Effectiveness**

9.1 Planning instruments to promote the development of Welsh-medium education need to be firmly embedded within broader monitoring frameworks that are already in existence, or that are in the process of being refined. Consultations with Estyn in preparation for the 2010 Inspection Framework are in progress to determine ways of strengthening the focus on delivery of this Strategy. It is intended that this will include inspection of Welsh-medium provision and planning at local authority level. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans, and the individual school plans emanating from them, will be included as part of this discussion. In this way, the objectives of individual schools and those of local authorities in terms of planning access to Welsh-medium provision, and in terms of delivering the expected amount of Welsh-medium provision, will be viewed as an integral element of the wider evaluation of performance and achievement.

9.2 The School Effectiveness Framework is another key mechanism in the process of securing cohesive planning. We will look at the scope for further development of the 'Bilingualism' area in the Framework (*School Effectiveness Framework: Building effective learning communities together*, Welsh Assembly Government 2008), and the most appropriate ways of consolidating the principles of joint planning and accountability. The aim in this respect should be to derive maximum potential from the tri-level approach to improved delivery.

## **10. Information to Parents and Carers**

10.1 Greater clarity is needed about the precise nature of different kinds of language provision and the linguistic outcomes that can be expected from them: the term 'bilingual', for example, can cause confusion. Local authorities' Families Information Services play an important role in communicating this information to parents and carers. Local authorities need to ensure that information about Welsh-medium provision, including additional learning needs provision if required, is given to parents by an officer who is sufficiently equipped to respond to such enquiries. It is also important that the information is offered to parents as a matter of course, at the same time as information about other provision is given to them.

10.2 Families Information Services also perform an important function in recording the nature of the enquiries received, according to age-sector or type of setting, and language provision. This information should in turn be used to its maximum potential to inform future planning of provision, through cooperation between the Families Information Services on the one hand, and the Children and Young People's Partnerships or other relevant mechanisms (including School Organisation) on the other. Information about the nature of parents' enquiries and concerns at local authority level should also contribute to a national overview of areas of particular interest to parents.

10.3 As the Foundation Phase is rolled out for 3-7 year-old children across Wales, conveying clear messages about the nature of the language provision that they can expect to find in different settings is of key importance. In schools and settings that do not offer Welsh immersion and Welsh-medium provision, the aim is to ensure that children are given the opportunity to hear, see and use Welsh more frequently

through their daily activities and learning, and acquire sufficient familiarity with Welsh to encourage further learning and positive attitudes towards the language. Successful delivery of the 'Welsh Language Development' Area of Learning could provide the opportunity for children to transfer to Welsh-medium provision at the beginning of statutory education. Welsh-medium provision aims to develop a full range of bilingual skills and places children on the path towards fluency. It is important that parents understand the implications and opportunities of these different types of provision offered in the Foundation Phase.

10.4 School and local authority prospectuses need to provide parents with clear information about the language provision that is available to them. Parents should expect to be informed about the extent of Welsh-medium provision on offer, and how the provision is made available at different key stages. They should also receive information about the linguistic outcomes that can be expected from the different kinds of provision available. This information should in addition include details of the school's language ethos and the use made of Welsh as a language of communication and for general activities.

10.5 In line with the provisions set out in *Defining schools according to Welsh-medium provision* (Welsh Assembly Government 2007), schools and local authorities are expected to use the categories and definitions published in 2007 in school and local authority composite prospectuses. In the case of primary schools, the individual school prospectus should detail what proportion of the curriculum is taught in Welsh. In the case of secondary schools, information should be given on the numbers of pupils following subjects through the medium of Welsh and English. Parents should also be informed regarding the extent to which choices are available at the different key stages.

## **11. Welsh-medium and Bilingual Provision for Pupils with Additional Learning Needs**

11.1 Providing for pupils with additional learning needs through the medium of Welsh involves a number of challenges. This area of provision is generally characterised by gaps in the availability of practitioners and professionals with the required level of language skills across a range of services. In addition, there is a lack of specific training to address the needs of the Welsh-medium sector, and diagnostic and support materials are not always available. In many cases financial constraints and issues relating to viability exacerbate the difficulty of securing appropriate support for pupils and their families.

11.2 The principles of the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales 2002* provide the basis for work in this area. Sections 1:7 to 1:15 of the Code note the expectations under the terms of the Welsh Language Act 1993. In accordance with the Act, every local authority, governing body and other public body is required to treat Welsh and English on the basis of equality. There is a statutory duty on these bodies to provide services and support for children and young people, and their parents, in their language of choice. In addition, a number of voluntary bodies play an important role in increasing access to services. The Welsh Language Schemes of these bodies also contribute to increasing the Welsh-medium opportunities available to those with additional learning needs.

11.3 The Welsh Language Board report *Acknowledging Need* (2001) provided a useful direction for progress across a range of services for pupils with additional learning needs. The report presented a national overview of Welsh-medium and bilingual provision and services for pupils with special educational needs in Wales. It spanned all areas of provision, across education, social services and health authorities, and identified both good practice and gaps in the planning and delivery of services. The main recommendations of the report highlighted a number of priorities at organisational level (for example strategic planning, sharing of good practice, cross-agency working), and in relation to a number of specific areas (including a training strategy for bilingual teachers and learning support assistants, recruitment policies to tackle shortages in speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and educational psychology).

11.4 Following the policy review of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee in 2003-04, *Review of Special Education Needs Part 1: Early Identification and Intervention*, a series of recommendations were published in November 2004. These included a timetable for implementing the recommendations of *Acknowledging Need*. Since 2003 a Steering Group chaired by the Welsh Assembly Government has been responsible for implementing the Action Plan for *Acknowledging Need*.

11.5 The Steering Group has provided an overview of developments in education, health and social services, providing a useful mechanism for guiding policy and sharing information. It has overseen a number of developments, including developing a bilingual e-learning course on additional learning needs available to higher education and schools through NGfL Cymru, the development of a Welsh vocabulary test by Bangor University, and the All Wales Reading Tests by Swansea University. A course for speech and language therapists will commence at Bangor University in September 2009. A bilingual training course for practitioners teaching children with severe learning difficulties is to be set up by special schools in north Wales. The group has worked closely with other partners including the Welsh Language Board, careers services, Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, Dyslexia Cymru and the voluntary sector in order to support the creation of bilingual training resources, guidance, standards and strategic documents. It has also supported developments in various Welsh Assembly Government internal strategy and task groups in the areas of inclusion, specific learning difficulties, autism, transition, and teacher and support staff training for Additional Learning Needs.

11.6 These successes offer a basis for further progress. In terms of developing education and training provision, this work will be undertaken according to the principle of including pupils with additional learning needs as an integral element of all planning processes, across each phase of education and training. Responsibility for ensuring appropriate provision through the medium of Welsh will be included as a cross-cutting theme. In order to obtain a detailed picture of current needs and prioritise areas of strategic importance, a review of Welsh-medium education additional learning needs provision will be commissioned in 2010-11, for implementation from 2011-12.

11.7 The National Assembly for Wales (Legislative Competence) (Education and Training) Order 2008 for education and training for pupils and students with additional learning needs provides the Assembly with the power to introduce Measures in this field.

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

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Education and training in the post-14 phase is a complex area, characterised by a wide range of providers, network and partnership structures, and changing student expectations and needs. Planning and delivering Welsh-medium provision within this context is a significant challenge.

1.2 Although secondary schooling up to the age of 16 forms part of the statutory sector, the new requirements for 14-19 Learning Pathways entail considerable changes to the 14-16 curriculum. This agenda requires increased cooperation, which necessitates greater strategic planning between schools, further education colleges and work-based learning providers. It is essential that Welsh-medium provision is an integral element of planning and delivering provision within this policy framework.

1.3 A number of interventions have been put in place in an attempt to build capacity and infrastructure. Teaching and learning resources have been commissioned in vocational subject areas; grant funding has been given to awarding bodies for the provision of more Welsh-medium examinations and assessment, and language and methodology training has been given to practitioners. In addition, partnerships for expanding Welsh-medium and bilingual 14-19 provision in cooperation between schools and some further Education (FE) colleges have been funded, and various models of partnership provision are now being built upon. Some have considerable challenges to surmount, and in these cases further work is required to establish what other avenues can be explored. There has been better progress in other areas, however, and it is important that these successes are used as examples of good practice and the basis for further growth.

1.4 Welsh-medium provision in the post-16 phase is significantly more limited than in statutory education, and this has a significant impact on levels of linguistic continuity. The limited range of opportunities available in FE institutions (FEIs), work-based learning and higher education means that many learners leaving Welsh-medium and bilingual schools have few opportunities to continue to use Welsh as a medium of learning after the age of 16 or 18.

1.5 The limited range of Welsh-medium opportunities in the 14-19 phase, and more generally in the post-16 sector, was identified by Estyn in its discussion paper *Welsh-medium and bilingual provision for 14-19 learners* (May 2008), and in its 2007-08 Annual Report: *'In terms of post-16 provision, there are problems with the availability of Welsh-medium provision in many parts of Wales'*. The Report also states: *'There are some real structural constraints on the expansion of Welsh provision. It is difficult for schools and other providers to increase Welsh-medium provision because they do not have enough teachers who are able to teach in Welsh. This is especially the case on courses for 16-19 year old learners. Against this*

*background, it is disappointing that 1,113 staff do not teach through the medium of Welsh although they are competent to do so.'*

## **2. Planning Education and Training in the Post-14 phase: National Strategic Direction**

2.1 Ensuring a broad range of options in the 14-19 phase and beyond is vital in improving the bilingual skills of the workforce, as noted in the *Skills that Work for Wales* Strategy, and also in preparing students for further study through the medium of Welsh.

2.2 The provision of high-quality opportunities to study or train through the medium of Welsh under the 14-19 Learning Pathways is addressed under the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009. A Government Amendment relating to education through the medium of Welsh was agreed by the Stage 2 Committee for the Measure. This amendment imposed a duty on local authorities and Welsh Ministers to promote courses taught in Welsh when exercising functions in the establishment of local curricula. This was extended and strengthened by a further Government Amendment at Stage 3 so that the duty will be to promote access to and availability of courses taught through the medium of Welsh.

2.3 In addition, statutory guidance issued under the Measure will stipulate that local authorities will be expected to demonstrate that full consideration has been given to linguistic continuity and progression in developing courses for the local curriculum at Key Stage 4. Welsh Ministers will ensure full consideration is given to linguistic continuity in relation to the local curriculum for 16 to 18 year olds.

2.4 Opportunities need to include access to an adequate range of vocational options. The Assembly Government's objective will be to raise the quality and volume of course options on the basis of clear and thorough planning in all parts of Wales. Further and rapid development of vocational provision between partnerships of Welsh-medium providers needs to deliver opportunities for Welsh-medium learners.

## **3. Planning Education and Training in the Post-14 Phase: Strategic Responsibilities of Local Authorities, Further Education Colleges and Work-Based Learning Providers**

3.1 Under the terms of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009, local authorities will be responsible for forming local curricular provision for 14 to 16 year olds. They will play a key role in the operation of the 14-19 Networks comprising schools, FEIs and other learning providers.

3.2 In school sixth forms in 2006-07, 16.2% of learning activities were Welsh-medium or bilingual. By contrast, in FEIs in the same year, 3.7% of learning activities were Welsh-medium or bilingual, with 1.2% in work-based learning and community learning providers. This highlights the distance that needs to be covered for further education and work-based learning providers to make an effective contribution to Welsh-medium and bilingual education in collaboration with schools.

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08 *
% learning activities in school sixth forms in Wales undertaken either entirely through the medium of Welsh or through bilingual provision	N/A	16.7	18.8	16.2	15.3
% FE learning activities undertaken either entirely through Welsh or through bilingual provision	2.6	2.1	4	3.7	4.4
% WBL learning activities undertaken either entirely through Welsh or through bilingual provision	0.7	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.4
% learning activities in FE institutions, Work-based Learning or LEA Community Learning providers either entirely through Welsh or through bilingual provision	2.7	2	3.1	3	3.3

\* Provisional

3.3 Key Stage 4 Welsh-medium provision (ages 14-16) relies on the traditional strengths of the Welsh-medium and bilingual secondary schools in the provision of more traditional 'academic' subjects. In the post-16 sector also the school sixth forms are the strongest element in Welsh-medium and bilingual education. They have a strong Welsh language and culture ethos, staff with high-level Welsh-language skills and a supportive infrastructure. Their challenge is to increase the range of options, particularly vocational options, in partnership with other providers, in line with the requirements of 14-19 Learning Pathways.

3.4 The main statutory approaches for monitoring the extent of Welsh-medium or bilingual provision in FEIs are their Welsh Language Schemes, which are approved and monitored by the Welsh Language Board in accordance with the requirements of the 1993 Welsh Language Act. In addition to dealing with customer service aspects of Welsh-language delivery, these Schemes set out the aims of each college in terms of Welsh-medium or bilingual education and training provision. These Welsh Language Schemes will continue to be a statutory requirement.

3.5 In addition, the Welsh Assembly Government has a statutory duty to secure the provision of facilities for education and training suitable to the needs of persons aged 16-19, which are of adequate quality to meet the reasonable needs of individuals. To discharge this function the Welsh Assembly Government carries out Quality and Effectiveness monitoring of post-16 providers (FEIs, work-based learning providers, community learning providers, Welsh for Adults centres, and higher education institutions delivering further education). To date, the provision of more Welsh-medium and bilingual courses has not been an important element of this

assessment. The requirement to plan for Welsh-medium and bilingual provision and for Welsh-language requirements will be strengthened in the new Quality and Effectiveness Framework being introduced from autumn 2009. Monitoring will be undertaken of providers' fulfilment of their responsibilities for working in partnership to secure Welsh-medium opportunities under the 14-19 Learning Pathways agenda and for offering continuity of linguistic skills in Welsh. It is proposed that annual self-assessment reports and quality development plans should include Welsh-medium and bilingual learning as a priority area. In order to avoid additional bureaucracy, ways will be explored of including the planning and provision elements of the Welsh Language Scheme required by the Welsh Language Board into the Quality and Effectiveness monitoring. FEIs also have a role in the development of Annual Network Action Plans and will be under a duty to assist local authorities or the Welsh Ministers in planning local curricula under the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009.

3.6 Welsh-medium post-16 provision in the 25 FEIs is fragmented. Demand from learners and employers can be very localised or niche-based, and consequently it is not clearly articulated or well understood. A few institutions have made considerable progress in developing bilingual provision, and the linguistic nature of their catchment areas or the priority given by college management to the agenda has ensured some positive strides.

3.7 National interventions to increase Welsh-medium or bilingual provision in the FE sector have had some success. Post-16 Welsh-medium or bilingual provision has been funded with a 25% uplift in recognition of the extra work involved in providing such courses. Central support for training and advice for Welsh-medium and bilingual provision has been in place through *Sgiliaith*. Support for developing a videoconferencing network that will allow schools and colleges to share courses has been provided. The Bilingual Champions pilot in three colleges is trialling methods of expanding Welsh-medium and bilingual provision through improved coordination with local schools and other network partners; the lessons learnt from this pilot about creating a supportive infrastructure within FEIs may be of wider use. New provision and preparation of some resources in colleges has been funded through Bilingual Partnership funding and 14-19 funding. Some of these current funded interventions which build capacity will need to be reviewed or evaluated with a view to refocusing or roll-out.

3.8 However, one of the constraints identified by many colleges is that they do not have staff with sufficient language skills to teach Welsh-medium and bilingual courses. This is also true of support staff, administrative staff and senior management. The LLUK survey data (2008) indicated that 5% (244) of all teaching staff in FEIs, local authorities and work-based learning who responded were able to teach through the medium of Welsh and/or bilingually but were not so teaching at the time of the survey. Of those teaching staff with Welsh-language skills that responded, 98% identified the need for training or support in order to teach through the medium of Welsh. These findings raise the possibility that the FE sector is not making sufficient use of Welsh speakers already on their staff for moving the agenda forward. In addition, the FEIs may need to review their priorities for recruitment. FEIs have been strongly encouraged to release lecturers with reasonably fluent Welsh-language skills, but who lack confidence to use the language professionally,

to attend the fully funded national Welsh-language Sabbaticals Scheme; to date only 13 colleges have responded.

3.9 Welsh-medium schools have expressed concerns about the provision of bilingual courses in the FE sector, since the amount of Welsh offered in such courses may not allow effective linguistic progression from full Welsh-medium provision. Wherever numbers wishing to access Welsh-medium provision allow, partnership planning within area networks and other collaborations should aim at provision of courses through the medium of Welsh. There should be a recognition that provision of bilingual courses should not necessarily be a permanent solution; bilingual provision is potentially a positive step towards the aim of providing more courses through the medium of Welsh.

3.10 Where it is not immediately possible to provide courses through the medium of Welsh because of staff linguistic skills, it is expected that FEIs will move forward in encouraging the development of bilingual skills in other ways. One of these could be the use of language courses connected to a vocational area. Such courses are currently under development or being piloted. The advantages of this would be to provide accreditation of language skills for the public sector and customer-facing work, and also to allow the possibility of creating viable groups for students studying a variety of different vocational courses. Alternatives might be to use the Communication Key Skill through the medium of Welsh, or to provide learning support for Welsh-medium learning.

3.11 Further discussions are needed with the FE sector about how to progress with this agenda. We recognise the difficulties of placing the same expectations on providers in all areas of Wales to expand the range of Welsh-medium opportunities. Partnerships with FE colleges are unlikely to make equal progress across all parts of Wales, since the situations of colleges, in terms of both staff skills and intake from local Welsh-medium and bilingual schools, vary greatly. Nevertheless, we wish to see movement on this agenda from all in the FE sector. In their strategic planning we expect to see colleges prioritising certain areas for action which will reflect their current situations and the nature of their intakes. We wish to see colleges in Wales reflecting a bilingual ethos that promotes the Welsh language.

3.12 The work-based learning sector has, with some exceptions, shown little progress in increasing Welsh-medium provision. Quality standards are monitored and the award of future contracts is based on evidence of performance amongst other things. The provision of Welsh-medium or bilingual courses has not been an important consideration in the current award of contracts which expire in 2011. Specific requirements for responding to demand for Welsh-medium provision will be included in future contracts from 2011.

## **4. Network and Partnership Planning**

4.1 Many education providers have made significant progress over the last few years in networking and partnership planning for 14-19 year olds, with some innovative solutions.

4.2 With the aid of Welsh Assembly Government interventions, area network partnerships have now moved forward on cooperative provision of Welsh-medium and bilingual options, though the extent and nature of developments vary according to area. In some, schools have been working with FE colleges and learning providers to provide more vocational options through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. In other areas, the difficulties of cooperation through the medium of Welsh with local schools or colleges have meant that schools have developed partnerships with other Welsh-medium schools, often over considerable geographical distances.

4.3 A particular issue that concerns many Welsh-medium schools is their relative isolation in area networks where there are few or no other Welsh-medium or bilingual schools, and where the local FE college does not currently provide many vocational courses through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. In these cases it is important that the schools ensure not only that they are fully represented in the local authority area network, but also that they are able to access wider networks of other Welsh-medium providers in order to cooperate on development and provision of courses. In many cases, these wider networks will operate across local authority boundaries. Work has already been undertaken on a toolkit for cross-boundary working. The issues of relative geographical isolation and lack of capacity in small schools will be given particular attention. Options will be considered for the establishment of flexible Welsh-medium forums either based on the four Association of Directors of Wales (ADEW) regional consortia or on other regional partnerships. Forums are already being established across regions for this purpose.

4.4 In implementing the strategic policy direction, the Welsh Assembly Government will make every effort to assist in developing appropriate models of provision based upon best practice, and assist networks to raise capacity by improving the infrastructure for Welsh-medium provision. To do this, funding will continue to be allocated for the near future to bring the range of options in all Welsh-medium partnerships as rapidly as possible up to the level required under the Guidelines that will accompany the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009. The issue of learner or tutor travel over considerable distances is particularly acute in rural areas and has some cost implications. Solutions such as those outlined in the discussion on the Transformation agenda (for example, the encouragement of more partnership working involving tutor travel rather than learner travel, and better use of technology) are particularly relevant in this context.

4.5 The current policy of prioritising six key areas for developing vocational provision (Childcare, Health and Social Care, Business and IT, Leisure and Tourism, Performing Arts/Media, and Agriculture) provides a realistic way of expanding the range of Welsh-medium options. These six areas will continue to be priorities for funding in the short term as they reflect the domains where the language is particularly important. Childcare (and related subject areas) is of particular significance as there is a growing need for Welsh-speaking practitioners in the childcare and early years education workforce in order to ensure effective implementation of the Foundation Phase. Health and social care are other areas requiring more Welsh-language skills, as noted in the work of the All Wales Taskforce for Welsh in the Health Service, which is currently concentrating on Welsh-language capacity and skills in the health workforce, and aims to increase the numbers of Welsh-speakers in the workforce. As more vocational options are now

becoming available in local 14-19 area partnerships, there will be a need in the near future to review priorities regularly and consider wider ranges of subject areas for development as national or local priorities.

4.6 Monitoring the response of schools, local authorities, further education and work-based learning providers to the 14-19 agenda will also be a matter for the Estyn Inspection Framework, and considerations of this issue will be included in the discussions on the 2010 Inspection Framework.

## **5. Planning for Transformation**

5.1 The policy *Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales* (June 2008) aims to improve learner outcomes and reduce economic inactivity by transforming provision and delivery.

5.2 There is a risk that some of the possible proposals for restructuring post-16 provision, such as the establishment of tertiary colleges, could undermine existing strengths in the delivery of Welsh-medium education. We must guard against this. Proposals for transforming provision should be drawn up in such a way that they improve the extent and range of Welsh-medium opportunities for learners. It is also important that the agenda is developed under conditions that recognise the specific needs of the sector. This involves understanding the need for different solutions in different parts of Wales, and exploring solutions which allow Welsh-medium providers to develop strong partnerships across local authority boundaries. Options for local or regional forums will be explored within this context.

5.3 As specific strategies are developed to improve the effectiveness and flexibility of Welsh-medium provision in line with the Transformation agenda, a number of approaches will need to be considered. These include the joint recruitment of peripatetic staff for economies of scale, and the development of a robust virtual learning strategy (use of on-line learning and enhancement packages, desk-based video-conferencing, on-line discussion fora, and assessment activities). Further consideration will also be given to ways of improving the opportunities available for learners to interact across local authorities and regional areas of Wales, through joint induction and extra-curricular activities.

## **6. Collecting and Sharing Data**

6.1 In order to aid the process of planning and monitoring of developments in Welsh-medium education, a review of the data collected nationally on Welsh-medium and bilingual provision is needed. Data that is collected or requested needs to be relevant and matched to policy drivers, and be methodologically consistent across all providers. A coherent and appropriate approach to data collection and analysis through the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) and the Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) will aid with the setting of targets and milestones for providers. This will be vital for placing developments on a sound evidence base, for ensuring achievement of targets and for facilitating quality improvements in benchmarking provision.

6.2 The data collection process for Welsh-medium and bilingual provision should ideally capture development towards achieving the threshold for bilingual provision as defined by the Welsh Assembly Government for funding purposes. We also need to review whether, in addition to the funding uplift for Welsh-medium or bilingual provision, there should be some financial incentive for development before the threshold is triggered for this funding. Since the allocation of funding is dependent on accurate capture of data on Management Information Systems, a review of data capture should assist providers. A project is already under way to evaluate current data collection systems on bilingual provision and to make recommendations to key stakeholders to improve relevance, accuracy and efficiency of data captured. The recommendations will be considered for future action. Effective data capture will enable the Assembly Government to set future national targets for post-16 provision on a sound evidence basis in the next Implementation Programme for this Strategy.

6.3 In order to assist linguistic progression at age 16 in particular, it is important that information about the linguistic skills of school-leavers from Welsh-medium and bilingual schools who proceed to further education, training or the workplace is as comprehensive as possible. Opportunities for sharing data between providers should be used to their full potential.

## **7. Welsh-medium Provision in Higher Education**

7.1 There has been little planning to develop Welsh-medium education in the Higher Education (HE) sector until recently. Following earlier developments, including the establishment by HEFCW in 2003 of a Welsh-medium Steering Group to develop an initial strategy, the universities committed in 2006 to establishing a Strategic Framework and National Development Plan. This provided a new driver for planning and extending Welsh-medium university education provision in a strategic way.

7.2 In 2000/2001, 5% of Welsh-domiciled students at Welsh Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) received some teaching through the medium of Welsh. The *Reaching Higher* strategy (2002) made a commitment to extending opportunities to learn through the medium of Welsh through flexible and collaborative working between institutions. *The Learning Country: Vision into Action* (2006) made the commitment to a target that the proportion of Welsh-domiciled students in Welsh HEIs undertaking some element of their courses through the medium of Welsh was to increase to 7% by 2010.

7.3 Within the new Strategic Framework, the Welsh-Medium Higher Education Sector Group (HE Sector Group) was established to act as a national planning body for the development of Welsh-medium provision, and the National Development Plan is implemented by Welsh universities with support from the Centre for Welsh-Medium Higher Education (the Centre for WM HE).

7.4 To support the work of the HE Sector Group, three sub-groups were established to focus on specific aspects of the National Development Plan, namely Marketing, Progression and Stimulating Demand, Staff Development, and E-learning and Blended Learning. There are twelve network panels which enable institutions to

collaborate on developing new resources and provision for Welsh-medium higher education in particular subject areas.

7.5 During 2007/08, the HE Sector Group agreed on a national pattern for developing a wide range of subjects and disciplines. This recognised that some subject areas are best delivered through a collaborative framework. Collaborative development plans have been agreed for Geography and the Environment, Law, and Sport and Leisure. Development plans are also currently being prepared in a number of areas, including the Creative Industries, Education and Training, Business and Health Related Studies. In other disciplines, one institution has been identified as the main or lead provider, as has happened in International Politics, Mathematics and Physics, Chemistry, Music, Modern European Languages, Social Sciences, Social Work and Theology/Religious Studies. In these areas, the main providers are responsible for preparing development plans, and all these developments are co-ordinated by the Centre for WM HE.

7.6 Significant investment is being made to provide more Welsh-medium lecturers via the Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme and the Welsh-Medium Teaching Fellowships Scheme which are administered by the Centre for WM HE. These programmes are now in their fourth year. Thirty-five students/prospective lecturers are being sponsored by the Scholarship Scheme, and a further twenty-one academics have been sponsored by the Fellowship Scheme. Ten lecturing posts have already been created as a result of the Fellowship Scheme and the first four posts arising from the Scholarship Scheme will commence in the academic year 2009/10.

7.7 In 2006, the Mantais brand and campaign was launched to broaden the work of the HE Centre and to promote Welsh-medium university education. This built on earlier marketing programmes and the Centre for WM HE works closely with the HE sector on the campaign. The scope is wide-ranging and varied, and in addition to general promotion activity, seven Education Conventions are held across Wales each year. The Annual Mantais Forum for stakeholders has been established, and the Mantais website was revamped in 2008 to make it more interactive and attractive to current and prospective students in order to encourage them to study through the medium of Welsh.

7.8 Following a Staff Development Pilot Scheme in 2007-08, the Centre for WM HE is offering an extended staff development programme in 2008-09, which includes a residential induction course and a series of workshops. This programme is mapped against the Professional Standards Framework of the UK Higher Education Academy.

7.9 In February 2009, the HE sector agreed to establish a national electronic resources portal and a Virtual Learning Environment for the Welsh-medium HE sector. This will consist of a central repository of Welsh-medium web-based resources that can be used by all Welsh-medium students and practitioners, and include a VLE to host learning materials for collaborative modules and guide the learner in an effective way. This resource will be managed by the Centre for WM HE in partnership with HEIs.

7.10 In summer 2006, in line with the commitment in *One Wales*, the CELLS Minister announced the establishment of a Federal College Planning Board, chaired by Professor Robin Williams. Building on existing developments, the role of the Board is to explore possible models for developing the Federal College within Higher Education. The Chair is due to report to the Minister in June 2009. Consideration will be given to the outcomes of the report and the Minister's response when considering issues relating to the Welsh language in the context and the recommendations presented in this Strategy.

7.11 Ensuring strong statements on the use of Welsh-medium provision within our HEIs will have a wide-ranging effect on the status of the language as a medium for education and training, and will lend further credibility to the efforts to ensure progression in the pre-18 Welsh-medium education sector.

7.12 The role of HEIs in developing Welsh-medium provision is vital to the entire education and training system and to the growth of a bilingual workforce, particularly in providing graduates who are able to operate in Welsh and English at a professional level. HEIs can contribute to the Welsh-medium education system by offering more courses that ensure effective Welsh-medium progression from pre-18 learning and training. This will enable learners to continue their linguistic development in their chosen subjects and also to gain high-level Welsh language and terminology skills in their specialist fields.

7.13 Specific Welsh-medium progression pathways in certain occupational areas would provide learners with opportunities to prepare for those vocations where Welsh-language skills are needed, for example in Care, Healthcare and related fields, Tourism and Media.

7.14 In addition, the HE sector has a crucial role in meeting Welsh-medium needs in the preparation of the education and training workforce of the future, in the training not only of teachers but also of childcare professionals and other practitioners. The role of HEIs in the development of the education workforce is explored more thoroughly under Strategic Aim 4.

## **8. Adult and Community Learning through the Medium of Welsh**

8.1 There is a widespread recognition of the need for a more strategic approach to the planning, delivery and funding of adult community learning, and this is reinforced by evidence from Estyn reports that a lack of clear national policy and strategic planning on a geographical basis have resulted in fragmented delivery, duplication of effort and variable quality in community learning.

8.2 To date, very few adult and community courses are taught through the medium of Welsh, as distinct from the Welsh for Adults programme. There has been little development of Welsh-medium adult learning, even in areas where Welsh is most used as a community language. A very limited number of adult courses through the medium of Welsh are offered on an accredited basis, and, although some informal adult courses in some areas may in fact be through the medium of Welsh, there is little advertised availability or accreditation. Estyn's Annual Report (2007-08)

states: 'Adult and community-based learning providers we inspected over the last two years are making slow progress in extending what they offer through the medium of Welsh.' Two pilot projects developing such provision in the north and south, and other anecdotal evidence, suggest that there is latent demand for more.

8.3 The policy document *Delivering Skills that Work for Wales: A New Approach to Adult Community Learning* (Sept 2008) recognised the need for a more structured and responsive approach to the provision of Welsh-medium learning opportunities in adult community learning. Further analysis of needs and demand from learners will be needed, as well as research into the numbers and abilities of Welsh-speaking staff currently operating in ACL in Wales. A strategy for moving forward will now be formulated on the basis of the consultation responses. Lifelong learning courses offered by higher education institutions also provide informal and formal Welsh-medium opportunities.



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

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 This Strategy is based on the principle that Welsh-medium education from the early years, with robust linguistic progression through every phase of education, offers the best conditions for developing a broad range of language skills in Welsh.

1.2 Not all parents will wish their children to receive Welsh-medium education, however. Such learners should benefit from opportunities to develop language skills which enrich their experience of living in a bilingual country. In order for this to be achieved, gradual but purposeful changes need to be introduced to non-Welsh-medium provision.

1.3 Language skills in Welsh are valued for a number of different reasons. In the context of social interaction, the workplace and educational achievement, developing these skills to the maximum is an important goal. There is a crucial link between the linguistic capacities of the workforce and the quality of services offered, in the public, private and voluntary sectors, in Wales.

1.4 In addition, the practitioners required to sustain the education and training provision of the future need to have appropriate language skills in Welsh. It is vital that objectives for improving language skills are viewed within the context of planning the teaching and training workforce of the future.

### **2. Developing Skills through Linguistic Continuity**

2.1 We are committed to linguistic progression as a national priority. Welsh-medium education (which involves Welsh language immersion for a significant proportion of pupils) from the early years provides an excellent base for subsequent development of a broad range of language skills in Welsh. If this Welsh-medium provision is sustained through Key Stages 3, 4 and beyond, pupils develop their skills, fluency and confidence in the language.

2.2 Linguistic continuity is currently not always secured. Large numbers of pupils change their language pathway and become 'second language' pupils as they progress through their education career (in particular in the transition point between Key Stages 2 and 3). Other pupils follow fewer subjects through the medium of Welsh as they move through their education career. Both these tendencies undermine much of the work achieved at primary level.

2.3 Pupils' language skills are consequently eroded. As pupils change pathways and begin following the Programme of Study for Welsh second language, their contact with Welsh is significantly reduced. Even if they continue to study Welsh as a subject but reduce the number of subjects studied through the medium of Welsh,

opportunities to enrich their vocabulary, their modes of expression and their linguistic registers in Welsh are more limited.

2.4 This, in turn, influences levels of fluency. There is clear evidence of the relationship between fluency and the extent to which a speaker uses Welsh. Results of the 2004 Welsh Language Survey, published by the Welsh Language Board in 2006, reveal that 88% of fluent speakers speak Welsh daily, whilst only 26% of those who are not fluent speak Welsh on a daily basis. In addition, lack of continuity may be currently limiting the ability of a number of our young people to undertake successfully those jobs which require a firm command of the language.

2.5 A number of complex factors can influence the ability or inclination of pupils to follow subjects through the medium of Welsh. The attitudes of individual pupils and their parents, including their perception of the usefulness of Welsh, are important factors. The policies and leadership of authorities and individual schools also play a key role in influencing levels of continuity. Lack of continuity tends to be more in evidence in specific areas of Wales; there are often tendencies that are characteristic of individual schools.

2.6 In accordance with one of the action points of *Iaith Pawb*, ACCAC was commissioned in 2003 to undertake research into the extent and causes of the lack of continuity between Key Stages 2 and 3. Initial statistical work was carried out, and further analytical work was completed on the varying factors influencing these trends. Since 2007 project-based work, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and undertaken by the Welsh Language Board, has been developed with the aim of exploring the underlying reasons for lack of linguistic continuity in order to bring about a change in patterns. This work is being undertaken through cooperation with individual schools and authorities (Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot, Anglesey and Conwy). Analysis of the current situation and initial findings of this work suggest that increasing levels of continuity involves work in several different fields. The policies of individual providers and counties need to be strengthened. Suitably qualified staff will need to be available to offer the relevant progression, and pupils and parents need to be convinced of the value of continuing to study subjects through the medium of Welsh.

2.7 Close cooperation between the primary and secondary sectors lies at the core of many of these issues. It is essential that transition arrangements include full consideration of pupils' previous linguistic experiences and provide appropriately for their further development. It is equally important that primary provision is planned with a view to enabling all pupils to benefit to the maximum from the Welsh-medium opportunities offered in the secondary sector. As they undertake this process, primary and secondary schools need to consider whether they provide the necessary amount of Welsh-medium provision for the language category of the school.

### **3. Intensity of Welsh-medium Provision**

3.1 Significant variation exists in how much Welsh-medium provision is offered in schools across Wales, and also in take-up of Welsh-medium provision when it is on offer. It is generally accepted that at least around 70% of curricular time should be through the medium of Welsh if pupils are to acquire a sufficiently sound command

of the language to enable them to use a broad range of skills with confidence and fluency. Opportunities for pupils to develop fluency in a broad range of skills are considerably reduced when subjects are not taught through the medium of Welsh. This is seen at Key Stage 2 in the tendency not to teach Mathematics and Science through the medium of Welsh. At Key Stages 3 and 4 this tendency can be exacerbated by the opportunities given in a number of schools to opt for varying percentages of Welsh-medium provision, through a linguistic streaming system. As a result, cohorts of pupils are faced with options that in effect reduce their contact with Welsh. In such cases their skills decline rapidly, and even if they continue to study Welsh (as opposed to Welsh second language), this alone is not sufficient to develop their skills.

3.2 The Welsh Assembly Government's document *Defining schools according to Welsh-medium provision* (October 2007) gives a series of definitions to describe the linguistic nature of primary and secondary schools in Wales. These definitions serve an important function in terms of providing clear information to parents and facilitating an understanding of the kinds of language provision available across Wales. They are also an important tool for assessing the appropriateness or sufficiency of Welsh-medium provision and for addressing any particular tendencies or patterns in terms of what is being provided. In the light of feedback from local authorities, and as linguistic provision evolves across Wales, we will consider changes to the definitions, in accordance with other actions in this Strategy.

3.3 In those schools that offer elements of Welsh-medium provision and other elements through the medium of English, careful planning is needed to ensure that the linguistic balance promotes the necessary progress in Welsh-language skills. A number of schools across Wales have already implemented successful plans to increase the number of curricular areas or subjects delivered through the medium of Welsh. These cases need to be used as examples of what is possible.

3.4 Schools will be expected to set targets for growth where their Welsh-medium provision is insufficient to develop pupils' linguistic skills in accordance with the objectives of the authority. In assessing their linguistic provision, schools and authorities will be expected to give consideration to the following:

- suitability of the provision in the light of new linguistic needs of pupils (for example less Welsh input in the home);
- suitable progression which builds on the gains made in the previous Key Stage (for example, introducing mathematics and science through the medium of Welsh in KS2); and
- practical and organisational considerations which deter pupils from taking advantage of Welsh-medium provision when it is available (for example, arrangements for linguistic streaming in the secondary sector).

3.5 The aim is that local authorities' Welsh in Education Strategic Plans will develop to be the key planning and monitoring tool for assessing the appropriateness of linguistic provision. Individual schools should contribute to the planning and monitoring process through their planning and self evaluation processes. School and authority objectives with regard to linguistic provision and

development of language skills will also be a core strand of the School Effectiveness Framework and Estyn's Inspection Framework.

#### **4. Centres for Latecomers and Mid and Late Immersion**

4.1 Although this Strategy is based on the principle that the early years provide very favourable conditions for the acquisition and development of skills in Welsh, opportunities should also be available for pupils to gain access to Welsh-medium education at a later stage of their school career, through intensive linguistic provision, where conditions are appropriate.

4.2 The Welsh-medium sector has considerable experience of providing intensive linguistic provision for pupils wishing to develop skills in Welsh at different stages of their education career, both in the Centres for Latecomers in north-west and west Wales, and also through mid and late immersion education programmes. We wish to build on our experience and expertise in these two areas (see also Strategic Aim 1).

4.3 Work carried out by the Centres for Latecomers has led to a wealth of good practice in teaching methodologies, linguistic support mechanisms and materials. A range of methods have also been used to ensure that the considerable investment seen during the intensive period spent at the Centre is developed to its full potential as pupils return to their schools to continue their studies. These methods need to be applied systematically by authorities and individual schools. There is further work to be done in evaluating the impact of the work carried out in the Centres, and any findings emerging from this work as it develops should enable the Welsh Assembly Government and local authorities to adjust aspects of delivery if necessary.

4.4 Tracking the progress of pupils throughout their school career is one key element of this process. The extent to which pupils use Welsh as a medium of learning on their return to school, and as they progress through school, is one important indicator of success. Authorities therefore need to ensure that methods used for tracking pupils allow information on pupils who have attended Centres for Latecomers to be identified easily.

4.5 Evaluating the impact of the work of the Centres should also involve systematic consideration of the additional and planned support required by pupils once they have left the Centre. The implications of this for the whole school need to be understood. Work carried out in this area to date illustrates the importance of ensuring that all teachers understand their role in developing these pupils' skills and confidence. In many cases this requires training and detailed guidance. Good practice emerging from the pilot programmes for mid and late immersion, where the secondary schools provide the focus for the provision, also needs to be shared and extended.

4.6 We are also committed to increasing access to Welsh-medium education through mid and late immersion programmes in other areas of Wales, where the appropriate conditions are in place to support the provision. The success of such provision is dependent on a number of criteria, including thorough training for subject

teachers in the secondary sector, sound transition arrangements, and appropriate support for pupils.

## **5. Fluency and Confidence in Welsh as a First Language**

5.1 Whilst Welsh-medium education in the early years and in the primary and secondary phases has shown clear signs of success in terms of growth since the 1950s, it is also important to evaluate the success of the provision in terms of the linguistic skills acquired by pupils.

5.2 Welsh shares many of the features of other lesser used languages, in that its use as a medium of learning prompts a number of questions, and occasional concerns, about pupils' linguistic accuracy and levels of fluency. For a significant proportion of pupils receiving Welsh-medium provision, the school environment represents the main, if not only source of contact with the language. This has important implications in terms of ensuring that these pupils are exposed to a sufficiently broad range of linguistic registers and contexts to enable them to reach functional fluency in the language. Even in the case of pupils who use Welsh within their families, communities and informal social networks, a number of factors can influence levels of accuracy, fluency and modes of expression. Irregular contact with fluent speakers, the influence of English language mass communication, and limited opportunities to use and hear Welsh in a varied range of contexts are often cited as factors influencing pupils' ability to master a full range of skills in Welsh.

5.3 It is also important to consider whether the extent of Welsh-medium learning and teaching is sufficient to provide the linguistic input required to develop and strengthen skills in the language (as discussed in 'Intensity of Welsh-medium Provision').

5.4 Welsh was included in the National Curriculum following the Education Reform Act 1988. The last national tests for Welsh first language at Key Stage 2 were held in 2004. Over the years, the percentages reaching level 4+ were similar to the percentages for English and mathematics (with science considerably higher). Since 2005, pupils' achievement has been measured against the level descriptions through statutory teacher assessments, and the data are collected at subject level by the Welsh Assembly Government. In 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 the percentages for Welsh were slightly lower than for the other core subjects.

5.5 At the end of Key Stage 3 there is a statutory teacher assessment. During 2008, 2009 and 2010 each school is required to provide evidence of pupils' work on specific levels in order for teachers' awarding of National Curriculum levels to be verified. At Key Stage 4 pupils following Welsh: First Language sit a language examination (GCSE), with the option of sitting a Welsh literature examination in addition. Numbers entered for Welsh language and literature for the last three years are as follows:

2006: language 5,209; literature 4,170;

2007: language 5,186; literature 4,136;

2008: language 5,430; literature 4,121.

Some pupils sit the entry level examination, the first level of the National Qualifications Framework. Welsh in the post-16 phase is not compulsory. Welsh 'A' level is available for students wishing to continue with the language (Level 3 of the Framework). This course covers both language and literature, and after one year's study pupils sit an AS level examination. In 2006/07, 344 pupils sat Welsh at AS level, with 340 going on to study Welsh at A level. Results compare favourably with those in other subjects.

5.6 ACCAC undertook an analysis of standards in Welsh: First Language over time in 1997 (A level: 1977-1997) and 1998 (GCSE: 1979-1998). The key findings were taken into account during a further study, covering the periods 1997-2003 (A level) and 1998-2003 (GCSE).

5.7 The evaluation of standards at GCSE level led to a number of key findings. Assessments had become more challenging since 1998, particularly with regard to reading requirements in the written paper. In terms of performance, standards in oral work across the grades had remained constant between 1998 and 2003, but standards in reading across the grades had fallen. Standards in writing across the grades - particularly in terms of grasp of linguistic expression - had fallen considerably. At A level, standards in oral work across the grades satisfied the requirements of the performance descriptors, but standards in reading across the grades had fallen. As in the case of GCSE, standards in writing across the grades - particularly in terms of grasp of linguistic expression - had fallen significantly.

5.8 The findings pointed in particular to a significant fall in the standard and quality of candidates' written expression. Recommendations were put forward to address these findings as new criteria, specifications and marking schemes were developed. It was also recommended that ACCAC and the WJEC should take steps to ensure that a detailed analysis was undertaken of the main errors characterising candidates' written work at every grade. These recommendations have been addressed in the recent revisions of GCSE and AS/A Level Welsh: First Language. New criteria developed for GCSE and AS/A Level Welsh: First Language require specifications to give greater weighting to written skills and grammatical accuracy. It is intended that this supports efforts to address the need for improved standards, as evidenced in the reports on standards over time. Analysis of standards in Welsh: First Language (in the same way as standards in Welsh Second Language) will continue.

## **6. Welsh Second Language in the National Curriculum**

6.1 Welsh became a compulsory subject for all pupils in Wales in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 in 1990. From September 1999 onwards it also became compulsory at Key Stage 4. Welsh Assembly Government policy is that all pupils should study Welsh up to and including Key Stage 4. This means that every pupil who is not studying Welsh as a first language studies Welsh second language during this phase of their education. The National Curriculum does not specify the number of hours per week that should be allocated to Welsh second language; as with all other National Curriculum Programmes of Study, this is a matter for schools to determine. Considerable variation exists across schools, both in terms of the schemes of work and work plans used and the number of hours allocated to the subject. A number of

different arrangements support the teaching of Welsh second language in primary and secondary schools, including in-service training programmes, language courses for teachers, and the preparation of materials. Local authorities' *athrawon bro* services have been instrumental in the delivery of a number of these interventions.

6.2 Whilst teaching Welsh second language has enabled some learners to achieve their potential, this is far from true in all cases. Concerns surface about levels of achievement in Welsh second language. Commenting on standards in Welsh second language, Estyn's 2007-08 Annual Report states the following: *'In English-medium primary and secondary schools, there are [also] many weaknesses in provision for Welsh [...] The most common shortcoming in many primary schools is that pupils do not make enough progress in Welsh as they move from key stage 1 to key stage 2. In secondary schools, the weak performance of Welsh second language continues from previous years, and it is worse now than it was in the past. We reported last year that almost half the work had some important shortcomings. This year, two-thirds of pupils' work in Welsh second language has important shortcomings. Teaching in Welsh second language is much worse than in other subjects.'*

6.3 Current lack of progress is attributed to a number of factors, including:

- limited status of Welsh within schools' timetables and priorities;
- issues relating to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and schools' Work Plans;
- insufficient progression arrangements leading to repetition of the same work and disillusionment amongst pupils;
- teachers' lack of confidence and linguistic skills; and
- Welsh second language GCSE short course leading to limited expectations.

6.4 These shortcomings are being addressed, but an enduring solution involves extensive planning and preparation. Changes are needed to bring about improved levels of skills, and pupils need to be provided with the necessary stimulus and motivation to aim for further progress. It is important also that the appropriate balance between written and oral communication skills is established. This involves possible changes to a range of associated areas, including the training needs of practitioners, teaching methodologies, and methods of accreditation.

6.5 In order to introduce improvements to the delivery of Welsh second language, guidance will be issued to schools on improving provision, including effective timetabling models, ensuring progression and variation of content, and on providing methodological training for teachers.

6.6 Language acquisition is generally at its most successful when the language is used as a medium of learning in practical and relevant contexts. There are already numerous examples of this in some parts of Wales. These practices need to be extended in the primary and secondary sectors, and creative methods of enriching pupils' Welsh language skills must be encouraged, where the appropriate conditions

are in place. Estyn's 2007-08 Annual Report echoes this need: *'In particular, there are too few opportunities for learners to use Welsh in other subjects, in extra-curricular activities and in informal situations.'*

6.7 In recent years a small number of schools have introduced new approaches to using Welsh as a medium of instruction, by including varying amounts of Welsh-medium provision in what would otherwise be regarded as English-medium schools. A small number of secondary schools have developed opportunities for a limited number of subjects to be taught through the medium of Welsh at Key Stage 3, by working in partnership with feeder primary schools to give intensive Welsh-language and Welsh-medium teaching during the transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3. Such opportunities provide possible methods of raising standards in Welsh as second language, and could be considered as a potential alternative to entirely Welsh-medium provision in these areas of Wales. The advantages of such models would be that opportunities to develop Welsh-language skills would be extended to a greater number of pupils.

6.8 These advantages would need to be weighed against the disadvantages that such provision does not necessarily produce fluent speakers of Welsh, may not be sustainable over time, and could undermine Welsh-medium schools in the area which provide a more holistic Welsh-medium experience, leading to greater fluency.

6.9 By 2011, the Foundation Phase will be fully operational across Wales. In schools and settings that do not offer Welsh immersion and Welsh-medium provision, this will involve an emphasis on giving children aged 3–7 the opportunity to hear, see and use Welsh in a range of playing and learning experiences, and to acquire sufficient familiarity with Welsh to encourage further language learning and positive attitudes towards the language. These developments offer a base for further growth, and have the potential of enabling some children to transfer to Welsh-medium provision before the age of seven. However, increased use of Welsh as a medium across the curriculum is likely to be gradual and limited, at least in the immediate future. Primary schools will determine targets to develop and increase their use of Welsh in the Foundation Phase. This will form part of schools' development and self-evaluation processes.

6.10 It is important that consistent messages are given to practitioners about the linguistic aims of the 'Welsh Language Development' Area of Learning in the Foundation Phase. Practitioner training needs to give clear and consistent guidelines about these expectations. All early years providers will be expected to ensure that concise and understandable information about the linguistic provision they offer, including 'Welsh Language Development' in the Foundation Phase, is cascaded to their practitioners in order to ensure consistent messages.

6.11 Schools will be expected to identify appropriate opportunities to use Welsh in learning situations across the curriculum, and to ensure progression from the skills learnt in the Foundation Phase. Steps to achieve this will be introduced and monitored through the development plans and self evaluation processes of primary and secondary schools.

6.12 There are considerable implications from this opportunity. Training practitioners in the appropriate skills is the first key step, and there are substantial needs in terms of developing suitable methodologies and teaching and learning resources.

## **7. Accreditation of Welsh Second Language**

7.1 Careful consideration needs to be given to whether the current assessment and accreditation systems provide the required impetus for pupils to see the value and relevance of Welsh second language.

7.2 Statutory Key Stage 2 assessment of Welsh second language will take place for the first time in the summer of 2010. Teachers will assess pupils' attainment against the level descriptions, and the Welsh Assembly Government will collect the data at subject level. Under current arrangements, schools report to parents on the attainment of Year 6 pupils, but not necessarily against the level descriptions.

7.3 At the end of Key Stage 3, teachers assess pupils' achievement against the level descriptions, and the Welsh Assembly Government collects the data at subject level. Between 2001 and 2008 Welsh second language had the lowest percentage of pupils reaching level 5, although that percentage had risen from 40.2% to 54.1% during that period.

7.4 At Key Stage 4, sitting an external examination in Welsh second language is optional, as for all other subjects. If pupils are entered for GCSE, schools either opt for the full course or the short course, the latter being first introduced in 1994/95. GCSE certificates do not indicate whether the grade awarded was obtained through following the full or short course. In 2006, secondary schools were invited to pilot two new GCSE courses in Welsh second language, namely *Byw'r Gymraeg*, which is similar to the current GCSE course, and a more vocational GCSE Welsh course *Cymraeg Ymarferol* which is similar to the Basic and Intermediate Award. The pilot is to run until August 2009.

7.5 Some pupils sit the Entry Level examination, the first level of the National Qualifications Framework. The Welsh second language A level course (Level 3 of the National Qualifications Framework) covers both language and literature, and after one year's study pupils sit the AS examination. In 2006/07, 608 pupils sat the AS examination. Of these, 421 pupils went on to study A level.

7.6 In addition, a small-scale pilot of the Languages Ladder/Asset Languages Welsh Second Language, developed by OCR, has been operational since October 2007. It is currently being piloted in five secondary schools, and evaluation of its impact is ongoing. Feedback from these five schools will assist the process of assessing the potential for extending this method of accreditation in the future.

7.7 The percentages of pupils not entered for external accreditation give cause for concern. Estyn's Annual Report 2007-08 states: *'Many pupils are not doing as well as they could in Welsh second language at key stage 4 because they do not receive enough teaching time and the quality of teaching is poor overall. Too many*

*pupils fail to attain a recognised qualification in Welsh second language at the end of key stage 4. Only 76% of those studying Welsh as a second language registered for examination in 2007. Most local authorities are not doing enough to help schools to set targets and to develop strategies to improve the provision for Welsh second language at key stage 4.'*

7.8 Steps to increase the percentages of pupils sitting an external examination in Welsh therefore need to be taken. This needs to happen, however, within the context of also seeking to increase the percentages of pupils sitting the full course. Over the years, the number of pupils entered for the full GCSE course has decreased. Estyn notes (Annual Report 2007-08): *'Eighty-four per cent of secondary pupils in Wales study Welsh as a second language, but the number of pupils studying the full GCSE course in Welsh second language continues to fall.'* Estyn's 2007 report *An evaluation of the GCSE Welsh second language course* states that in 2006, for the first time, the percentage of pupils following the short course was higher than the percentage following the full course (percentages for 2008 were: full course 47%, short course 53%). The report notes that few pupils who follow the GCSE Welsh second language short course make good progress towards becoming fluent Welsh speakers. The percentage of pupils who received A\*-C grades in the short course had increased to 46% in 2006. However, this compares unfavourably with the full course, where 69% of pupils obtained grades A\*-C in 2006. Few pupils following the short course choose to study Welsh as a second language in the post-16 phase.

7.9 According to Estyn, a number of factors contribute to underachievement amongst these pupils. Too many pupils following the short course are entered for the lower tier examination, despite their potential to obtain higher grades. The time allocated for teaching the short course is often less than the time recommended by the examining board. Only 15% of the schools inspected allocated time in accordance with the examination specification, namely two and a half hours every fortnight. In most schools, there are too few opportunities for pupils to hear and use Welsh outside the formal classroom environment, and in too many schools the short course is taught by teachers whose expertise is not Welsh, and who do not have the required second language teaching methodologies.

7.10 In the short to medium term the aim will be to increase the percentages of pupils gaining an external accreditation for Welsh second language. At the same time, however, plans need to be put in place for the longer term aim of reaching a situation where the GCSE Short Course in Welsh is no longer offered as a means of accreditation. We note Estyn's advice that this needs to occur when staff capacity and teaching methods have developed sufficiently for this change to be implemented, and in the context of the expectation that revisions to the current short course, and accreditation through the Languages Ladder if appropriate, will improve the situation in the immediate future. It is important that a further drift away from external accreditation through a lack of appropriate assessment for pupils is avoided.

7.11 Schools and authorities will be expected to set appropriate targets to increase the percentages of pupils gaining an external accreditation for Welsh second language, or to increase the percentages of pupils sitting the full

course where applicable. Both of these aims will be included in local authorities' Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and in individual schools' development plans.

## **8. Language Continuum**

8.1 The current distinction between 'Welsh' and 'Welsh second language' can be an obstacle to meaningful progress in Welsh language skills. A number of the weaknesses relating to Welsh second language stem from the fact that the present system does not necessarily promote progression. The decision made by a number of pupils to change direction to study Welsh second language is another tendency that is encouraged by the existence of two different language paths.

8.2 Establishing a language continuum for the purposes of planning delivery and recording attainment would be a means of resolving some of these difficulties. It would facilitate a system of cohesive accreditation across all phases of lifelong learning and give learners the necessary impetus to aim for improvement along a progression route. It would also have the advantage of providing employers, and education and training partners, with a readily understood account of the skill levels achieved by the student.

8.3 The possibility of measuring pupils' ability in Welsh along a linguistic continuum has been under discussion for a number of years. It is not straightforward, and the difficulties have been aired on a number of occasions in the past. The challenge of establishing correspondence between levels of competence, and accounting for the maturation factor in terms of pupils' development of skills over time, is not underestimated. The process of communicating the principles of the continuum to parents, other education institutions and employers would also require careful planning.

8.4 Although considerable work has already been done to determine how the concept could be applied in practice, it has not been completed. There is a need to build on it. Initially, we will focus on curriculum continuity, but with regard to the implications for assessment and qualifications. On the basis of this, the possibilities with regard to creating a framework across all key stages in the National Curriculum and the Welsh for Adults curriculum will be assessed, and possible models will be piloted. Such a framework would provide opportunities for continuation with improving skills in the workplace or in adult education.

## **9. Linguistic Progression Post-16**

9.1 Sustaining and developing the Welsh-language skills of all pupils in the post-14 and post-16 phases presents a number of challenges. It is important that linguistic progress during this stage of their education is planned, however, for it is during this time that students begin to make crucial decisions about entry to the workplace or further studies.

9.2 In planning for linguistic continuity for these students, it is necessary to take into account a wide variety of needs and aspirations. Learners who have received all or significant proportions of their education through the medium of Welsh need opportunities to follow their chosen subjects through the medium of Welsh. When

such opportunities are limited, pupils should at least be able to take advantage of opportunities to maintain their language skills in Welsh. For those who have had limited experience of Welsh-medium provision but who have made progress in developing their Welsh-language skills, careful consideration needs to be given to ways of sustaining that progress during the post-16 phase.

9.3 Ways of broadening the range of Welsh-medium opportunities and supporting linguistic progression are outlined under Strategic Aim 2. In terms of developing the skills of students through ways other than Welsh-medium provision, the emphasis needs to be on reinforcing their ability to use the language in meaningful and functional contexts.

9.4 As there are no compulsory elements to the post-16 curriculum, there is no statutory requirement for students to develop further their Welsh language skills. Welsh and Welsh second language are available as an option for AS and A-level. Pupils are also able to gain accreditation for their Welsh language skills through Communications as a Key Skill, NVQ Welsh Language units or the Modern Language element of the Welsh Baccalaureate. The A/AS level qualifications include a significant amount of Welsh literature and are often unsuitable for vocationally motivated students. Where the Welsh Baccalaureate is not available, such students might only be able to study Communication as a key skill or NVQ Welsh Language Units.

9.5 Further consideration needs to be given to the range and nature of accreditation of Welsh-language skills during this phase. It is essential for the development of a bilingual workforce that Welsh develops as a natural vocational medium at post-16 level. In the short term, whilst a wider range of Welsh-medium course options are developed, opportunities should be developed for pupils to maintain and improve their language skills.

9.6 Innovative vocational qualifications to develop and accredit the bilingual skills needed within the workplace, which maintain and improve language skills in the post-16 phase, are currently in development. The *laith ar Waith* and other Vocational Welsh OCN pilots will provide options for consideration in this context. A recognition and accreditation of spoken and written language skills in the context of vocational training for those who have been through Welsh-medium and bilingual schools will be the first stage of development, but this could be adapted for 'second-language' participants to acknowledge their level of skill.

9.7 It is also important to consider the needs of those first language Welsh speakers who have Welsh-language literacy levels below Level 1. Basic Skills Wales has responsibility for developing initial assessment tools to assess the level of need on entry to post-16 education. In addition, there needs to be a commitment to substantially increase the level of basic skills support through the medium of Welsh for these learners through planning provision to meet need, especially in the FE sector. The Basic Skills Strategy has established pilot projects, but progress to date has been slow. The same objective also applies to adult and community learning and workplace learning. Targeting should focus on those sectors where customer service is critical, for example the care sector, hospitality, administration and childcare. The

Employer Pledge programme is one of the ways in which this can be undertaken (see also Strategic Aim 5).

## **10. Higher Education**

10.1 In September 2008, a Welsh Language and Literature Network Panel was established by the Higher Education (HE) Sector Group to ensure liaison between Welsh departments and the network panels, and to create links with the Centre for Welsh-medium Higher Education's general planning and development work. In addition to ensuring that Welsh departments have an input into projects and schemes to develop Welsh-medium provision in general in the HE sector, the Panel also intends to address issues relating to students' linguistic skills and standards at sector level. One discussion already under way concerns the possibility of developing a qualification which will recognise students' linguistic skills when they receive HE degrees.

10.2 In order to develop and maintain students' linguistic skills, the HE sector will need to consider ways of providing for students who enter the sector without sufficient linguistic skills to study through the medium of Welsh at a higher level. It is important that universities provide appropriate support for students, especially those who have studied Welsh as a language to AS/A level standard, in order to enable them to undertake their studies through the medium of Welsh.

## **11. Welsh for Adults**

11.1 The Welsh for Adults (WfA) programme is one of the largest adult and community learning programmes in Wales, with 18,875 learners enrolled on WfA courses in 2006/07. Up until 2006 eight consortia, centred on the eight former counties of Wales, were charged with organising learning provision in their areas, which was delivered by a number of providers. Following a consultation period in late 2004, the programme was changed in order to ensure better delivery and outcomes. Six WfA centres were established in 2006 to lead on strategic planning, quality assurance and training, data collection and its return, and the funding and development of provision within their regions or sub-regions, in partnership with third party providers.

11.2 The Welsh Assembly Government provides the strategic steer and national co-ordination for the WfA programme, thus completing a tri-level system of strategic planning and delivery. It provides guidance to the centres on issues including strategic planning, funding, data and quality. It leads on the national marketing strategy, including organisation of national initiatives to increase demand. It is responsible for implementing a framework for the commissioning of WfA teaching and learning resources, and the development and management of national projects to support the infrastructure.

11.3 *One Wales* makes a commitment to 'explore the establishment of a Welsh for Adults unit with sufficient funding, giving priority to tutor education'. A decision was taken in May 2008 to continue with the tri-level system of strategic planning and delivery, outlined above. In the medium term, the aim is to support the structures established within the centres to enable the continued planning and delivery of

provision on the ground. The long-term vision for the WfA unit is to strengthen the close working relationship already established between Welsh Assembly Government and the six centres and to consider the WfA centres and their staff as part of the team of the WfA unit.

11.4 The main challenges for the future are to reconfigure provision in order to plan and deliver new courses at every level of the national framework across Wales, to raise the quality of provision, and to ensure the continuous professional development of teaching staff. Targets for performance improvement will be set and monitored by the Welsh Assembly Government for each centre. The long-term aim is for all centres to ensure that learners progress through the levels to reach fluency.

11.5 The centres will also play a vital role in taking Welsh to the community and providing the contact point for those wishing to develop their skills in the language. Steps will be taken to ensure that the WfA centres increase their presence within the six regions, to become 'shop windows' for learning Welsh, and places where learners can practise their Welsh outside the classroom.

11.6 WfA courses have been renamed to reflect the WfA examination levels which promote progress towards recognition of learning achievements. The implementation of a language continuum as a framework for identifying levels of attainment and competence could facilitate the process of placing adult learners on the appropriate starting level, and building on previous knowledge acquired through school or college.

11.7 WfA provision is divided into two types, namely intensive and non-intensive provision. Many learners enrol on non-intensive courses, as these involve attending for only one evening a week. However, as progress is slow and learners' expectations are often high, interest can wane, and this results in a high drop-out rate. Estyn concluded that intensive provision, with its higher number of guided contact hours, is the most effective method of creating fluent speakers. However, it is argued by providers that the National Planning and Funding System (NPFS) militates against this type of provision. Options will be considered for funding WfA provision in order to increase intensive provision in the medium term.

11.8 The centres also have an important role in developing specific provision for priority sectors. Current focus is on planning and developing provision to meet the growing needs of the workplace, and those of families who wish to learn Welsh with their children.

11.9 Welsh for the Family courses are now being delivered across Wales through the WfA centres and their partners. A new Welsh for the Family course book at Entry level, for families of children aged 3-7 will be commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government, and will reflect the content of the Foundation Phase curriculum. The course book will be specifically tailored to enable families to learn the vocabulary and sentence formations which their children are learning at school.

11.10 The Webb Report (*Promise and Performance*, 2007) found that some employers require skills training through the medium of Welsh; others require staff with different levels of fluency. This ranges from the need for vocationally skilled staff

who are able to speak conversational Welsh, such as meeting and greeting people in a reception role, to those who need to be fluent in technical terminology. Welsh-language skills must be recognised as skills that are important for the workplace in Wales. The centres will work closely with partners, including the Welsh Language Board, to identify specific workplaces in the public, private and voluntary sectors that have Welsh-language training requirements. The centres will also build strong relationships with the Sector Skills Councils to ensure that bespoke courses can be developed and delivered to meet the growing needs of the various sectors.

11.11 Welsh Language Board research indicates that employers feel unable to assess their employees' bilingual skills as there is no obvious tool to assist them. The Welsh for Adults five-level framework could provide the basis for a consistent national tool to assess and identify the Welsh-language skills of employees. Such a tool would enable employers to specify more strategically the nature and level of the Welsh-language skills they require, and would also enable employees to provide evidence of their skills when they move within the job market, and when they enter or re-enter employment. Progress on establishing a continuum of language skills and levels could also be relevant to work in this context.

11.12 New guidelines for planning Welsh-language training in the workplace will enable workplaces to plan successful training in partnership with the centres, and will further promote intensive training as the most effective way of developing the skills of staff.

11.13 The Welsh Assembly Government will continue to work with the centres on the development of Welsh for the Family and Welsh for the Workplace. Following the publication of the final evaluation report on the WfA programme in January 2010, the priorities for future development will be reviewed. Emerging priorities include e-learning, alternative teaching and learning methods, targeting of Welsh-language courses for students in higher education, and specialist provision for education practitioners. In looking to the future, there will be, among other things, a need to upgrade latent Welsh skills of learners who received Welsh-language lessons at school, amongst other key audiences.



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

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Ensuring an appropriate workforce for Welsh-medium education and training is fundamental to the success of this Strategy. Identifying the sector's developing requirements in terms of teachers, lecturers and other practitioners, and also in terms of the nature of the training, is a priority. The needs of the Welsh-medium sector should be seen as an integral part of providing an appropriate education workforce for Wales.

1.2 Concerns have been raised in the past that the development of Welsh-medium education and the introduction of Welsh in the National Curriculum took place without a parallel strategy to ensure that suitable practitioners were available. More recently, developments such as the Foundation Phase and the 14-19 Learning Pathways have added to demands in the recruitment and training sector, with needs for suitably qualified classroom assistants, learning support tutors and other support staff.

1.3 Developing the necessary workforce involves detailed analyses of demographic patterns and employment trends. The process also calls for a creative approach towards realising the maximum potential of the current workforce. The ability to meet the needs of the education and training sector for Welsh-medium and Welsh-language practitioners is limited by the size of the demographic pool. Meeting needs will not be achieved solely by recruiting new teachers. The potential of those already in the profession is a key element in increasing capacity, and planning is required to deliver opportunities for retraining or diversification.

1.4 Today, a significant proportion of those joining the labour market in Wales have received some degree of Welsh in their education since the age of five. It is important to consider, therefore, the extent to which the education system succeeds in developing the necessary skills in Welsh required by teachers and practitioners as they take up employment in education and training. In dealing with the training needs of the present workforce, it is important that we also look to future needs, and ensure that the skills gaps that are seen in the current workforce receive earlier attention in the education process.

1.5 Qualifications that are appropriate for Wales and the Welsh language must be made available in key areas of the education workforce, including childcare and classroom assistants. Where no suitable qualification exists to meet these needs, the commissioning of new qualifications taking account of the needs of the Welsh language must be considered.

1.6 The Welsh Assembly Government needs to consider how to prepare practitioners for a bilingual workforce during their initial teacher training in Wales. This applies to trainee teachers who intend to work in Wales at primary level, as Welsh second language teachers and practitioners, and in Welsh-medium settings. This training needs to cover Welsh-language skills and methodological skills. At the same time, it is important to ensure the transferability of skills to contexts outside Wales.

## **2. Workforce Planning for the Early Years and the Statutory Sector: Ascertaining Need**

2.1 The recruitment and training of all practitioners needs to be based on a better understanding of need, across all areas and phases of delivery. In order to plan more strategically for the future, we need a better picture of the medium- to long-term requirements of the Welsh-medium education sector. Filling gaps in this broader picture will allow a more strategic approach in relation to the targeting currently undertaken through specific projects, such as the in-service Welsh-language Sabbaticals Scheme, or the Welsh-language early years and childcare courses provided by Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and Trinity University College Carmarthen.

### **Early Years**

2.2 An analysis of the qualifications of staff working in the early years, together with the opportunities available for training and professional development, was carried out in 2004 on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government. This study points to a number of challenges, including the wide variety of roles and qualifications held by staff, and concludes that a more unified standard system for accreditation and training is required.

2.3 The final report of the Welsh Assembly Government Childcare Working Group, *A Flying Start: Childcare for Children, Parents and Communities* (2005), noted that the difficulty of recruiting Welsh-speaking staff '*was a significant barrier to sustaining Welsh-medium provision and developing effective bilingual provision*'. The final report of the Task and Finish Group for Welsh-medium and bilingual childcare provision (2006) draws attention to a number of issues highlighted by a scoping and mapping exercise undertaken by the Care Council for Wales. Welsh-medium settings are seen to experience particular difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff. These difficulties tend to be more acute in the non-maintained sector, where status, pay and work conditions tend to compare unfavourably with those in the maintained sector.

2.4 Responsibility for developing a Children and Young People workforce Development Network for Wales was given to the Care Council for Wales in 2005. As work on the Children and Young People Workforce Development Strategy continues, it is important that the needs of the Welsh-medium early years sector are identified and assessed in detail, as a basis for strategic growth.

## Primary and Secondary Sectors

2.5 In January 2006 Professor John Furlong's review of initial teacher training (ITT) provision in Wales drew attention to the fact that Wales was producing significantly more teachers than were needed. The Welsh Assembly Government published its ITT Change Plan in March 2006 setting out how it intended to take forward changes in ITT provision in the light of the review report. As well as a significant reduction in ITT intake targets (compared with the 2004-05 numbers, up to a 50% reduction in primary places, and a 25% reduction in secondary places), the ITT Change Plan also included provision for reviewing Welsh-medium ITT provision. The findings of this further review, undertaken by London Economics, were published in December 2007.

2.6 The review's terms of reference were to examine and make recommendations on *'the development of clearer figures on the current and future demand for teachers able to teach through the medium of Welsh'*, and *'the production of robust modelling methods to assist with better planning in setting intake targets for ITT courses to more effectively meet this demand'*.

2.7 The recommendations covered three main areas: teacher supply modelling (where it recommended that the Welsh Assembly Government should develop a workable Teacher Supply Model for Wales before pressing on with Welsh-medium modelling), defining Welsh-medium ITT (where it agreed that achieving a universal agreed definition would be difficult because of the complex nature of the issue; it suggested an alternative approach of defining a Welsh-medium course as any course that enabled the achievement of a relevant Welsh-medium qualification, and recommended seeking greater recognition and wider acceptance of the language competency certificates that are currently issued by individual Welsh-medium ITT providers following completion of courses), and intake target setting and ITT course issues (where it concluded that there is no realistic basis at present for making specific Welsh-medium intake targets on the same basis as intake targets generally, and suggested that 'indicative' targets, whose main purpose is for monitoring, could help to provide useful information in the meantime).

2.8 In the light of these recommendations, the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills decided on 28 November 2007 that on teacher supply modelling, as a first step the Assembly Government would look at how we can make best use of existing data, improve data sharing with the General Teaching Council for Wales and work with the Higher Education Statistics Agency to see if additional Welsh-medium data can be collected from the ITT section in the Destination of Leavers survey. In particular, it was agreed that a basic all-Wales, all-teacher Teacher Planning and Supply Model (TPSM) must be developed, assessed as being feasible and practicable, agreed to be financially viable and shown to be capable of producing results before modelling for more specific elements such as Welsh-medium numbers was undertaken. Work on developing the TPSM is in progress at present, and this and possible next steps on refining a TPSM for Wales to include Welsh-medium modelling will continue as part of the ITT Change Plan. For defining Welsh-medium ITT, the Welsh Assembly Government would discuss a possible common standard for language competency certificates with the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) and the ITT providers. This work will

continue as part of the ITT Change Plan during 2009-10. For intake target setting and ITT course issues, the Welsh Assembly Government would discuss with HEFCW on what basis indicative targets might operate following ITT reconfiguration work, from 2011/12.

2.9 Raising the status and appeal of the education profession is key to success in recruiting and training practitioners. The Training and Development Agency for Schools needs to continue to promote teaching as a career, taking appropriate account of issues relating to Wales, including Welsh-medium issues.

### **3. Initial Training for the Early Years and the Statutory Sector**

#### **Early Years**

3.1 Training opportunities in the early years need to address the specific needs of the Welsh-medium sector, whilst allowing the necessary flexibility for trainee practitioners to follow clear progression routes within their profession. Including the needs of the Welsh-medium sector from the outset should be a key principle in the development of accreditation routes for the future. This should also involve a specific focus on language immersion methodologies. The development of the Common Qualifications Framework for the Children and Young People Workforce is an essential component of this process.

3.2 Developing the workforce also requires a strategic partnership between early years providers and vocational training providers in the 14-19 sector. Collaboration such as the partnership developed since 2006 between Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and a cluster of Welsh-medium schools can offer valuable training and accreditation opportunities for students. Welsh-medium childcare courses have been prioritised for 14-19 funding for 2009-10, and will remain a priority.

#### **Primary and Secondary Sectors**

3.3 There are two main elements to the planning process: ensuring sufficient numbers to work in the profession, and ensuring that the content of the training given is appropriate for the work that practitioners are expected to undertake.

3.4 Teachers in Welsh-medium and bilingual settings today face a wide range of linguistic situations and needs in their classes. Within the same setting, it is quite usual to see children from homes where only Welsh is spoken, other children from homes where some Welsh is spoken, and others who have no contact with Welsh at home: according to 2008 figures, 36.1% of all primary school pupils were able to speak Welsh, but of these only 7.7% come from Welsh-speaking homes. Whilst teachers and other practitioners are carrying out excellent work in meeting the varied needs of their pupils, it is timely to ask if there is more that we can do to improve our understanding of language acquisition processes and language reinforcement techniques. Another challenge for teachers in some areas is to plan provision that offers a suitable balance between Welsh-medium education and English-medium education. Training needs to equip teachers with suitable methodologies to face these situations with confidence.

3.5 In order to move forward on this aspect of training, we need to consider options for ensuring that all trainee teachers who intend to work in Wales at primary level, as Welsh second language teachers and practitioners, and in Welsh-medium settings, receive tuition in Welsh-language and language awareness during their initial training. At the same time, however, careful consideration will have to be given to the extent of any additional training in the light of other pressures and requirements on ITT courses.

3.6 The all-important connection between research into immersion education methodologies and language acquisition processes on the one hand, and the content of training courses on the other, also needs to be nurtured. If the success of our immersion methods is recognised on the international stage, it is important to ensure that this pioneering work is properly reflected in our training courses and research activities.

3.7 This Strategy is also committed to raising the Welsh-language skill levels of teachers who will be teaching Welsh in non-Welsh-medium settings. The Welsh Colleges Scheme (*Cynllun Colegau Cymru*) gives an opportunity for students to learn new language skills, and methods of building on this provision will be considered. The aim in this respect should be to ensure that all trainee teachers who intend to work in Wales at primary level, as Welsh second language teachers and practitioners, and in Welsh-medium settings receive intensive support in Welsh during their initial teacher training. The consideration of options for including language awareness alongside teacher training provision will need to be included within this objective.

3.8 Such language awareness also needs to be strengthened as regards existing teachers and head teachers. Practitioners need to understand the linguistic context of their schools, and understand their role in fulfilling the linguistic aims of the school and local authority.

## **4. Continuing Early Professional Development (CPD) and In-Service Training (INSET)**

4.1 Recruiting trainee teachers and practitioners, and ensuring that they receive appropriate tuition in Welsh-language and language awareness during their initial training is one of the key steps in the process of building the capacity of the education workforce. However, the initial teacher training period is one element of a continuing process of teacher development. It cannot cover the areas of development we have discussed in their entirety, not least because including all the essential aspects of training within the available structure means that additional areas would present an unrealistic burden. Moreover, given the size of the existing workforce against the relatively small numbers of new entrants, in-service training and continuing professional development are vitally important.

### **CPD and INSET in the Early Years**

4.2 Training in this area is complex for several reasons. In the non-maintained sector in particular, it is difficult for many practitioners to take advantage of training opportunities because of financial constraints, especially when they work in childcare

or playgroup settings with small numbers of children. Practical considerations relating to the difficulty of attending courses during the working week can further hinder access to training. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is also a lack of awareness of the training opportunities available through other providers in the locality.

4.3 The allocation of funding through the *laith Pawb* programme in 2004 enabled Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, in partnership with Trinity University College, Carmarthen, to establish a training programme for practitioners wishing to improve their capacity to work through the medium of Welsh. *Cam wrth Gam*, a subsidiary of Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, offers a NVQ Level 3 programme, Certificate and Diploma Courses accredited by the Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE), and other CACHE-accredited childcare courses. Support is provided by professional assessors, verifiers and tutors, and a full range of online materials is available to students. To date, a total of 619 practitioners have obtained accreditation through the programme.

4.4 The Geiriau Bach project, also established through *laith Pawb* funding, is run by Trinity University College Carmarthen, in partnership with fourteen settings across eight counties. Its aim is to extend the use of Welsh in English-medium settings and in the 'Welsh Language Development' Area of Learning of the Foundation Phase. Students include playgroup leaders, teachers, childminders, classroom assistants, and day nursery staff. A total of 319 students have undergone training to date.

4.5 The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to long-term funding for a programme to meet the training needs of the early years. In the short term this will be through continuing to contract with Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin and Trinity University College, Carmarthen, up to 2010-11. Target numbers during this period will be 180 newly trained practitioners through *Cam wrth Gam*, and 150 through *Geiriau Bach* each year. During this period the Welsh Assembly Government will consider options for expanding and developing training opportunities.

4.6 A large number of non-maintained practitioners attend the Foundation Phase training courses using the Foundation Phase National Training Pack delivered by the local authorities. The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to working with the NDNA, the WPPA and the NCMA to establish a structure for training on the basis of clear criteria, in terms of the linguistic provision in their settings, the linguistic outcomes that can be expected in the settings, and the specific linguistic needs of the practitioners. Full consideration needs to be given also to the most appropriate models and times for the training, in accordance with the working patterns of different providers.

### **CPD and INSET in the Statutory Sector (including Induction Phase and Early Professional Development)**

4.7 The Welsh Assembly Government is looking to undertake a review of the opportunities for professional development in Wales from the completion of initial training through to leadership. It is currently intended that the review would include

consideration of the operation of the individually focused CPD programme administered by the GTCW, and the Induction and Early Professional Development and Leadership Programmes. The review will examine whether existing CPD opportunities are aligned to support the School Effectiveness Framework and whether they deliver effective training and development for practitioners that enhance outcomes for all learners. It will also consider the way that the current opportunities for CPD are structured and operate in practice, to see if they offer the most effective opportunities for teaching practitioners to develop their skills and translate these into effective professional practice.

4.8 Currently a variety of agencies and bodies offer in-service training opportunities to teachers (for example, local authorities, WJEC, CYDAG, and the national Welsh-medium Sabbaticals Scheme). There is always the potential for this to lead to duplication of effort, lost opportunities in terms of obtaining best value for money and benefiting from areas of expertise in other parts of Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government's initial priority will be to develop structured coordination, promote excellence and partnership working within Welsh-medium and Welsh-language in-service training and CPD. This will involve building on capacity to deliver more focused and structured training opportunities in Welsh-medium and Welsh-language skills on a national basis.

4.9 Consideration of developments in Welsh-medium and Welsh-language training (to include Welsh-language and methodological skills) will be included within the wider context of the overall CPD review. It is important that Welsh-language and Welsh-medium needs are not looked at in isolation, but are viewed holistically as part of CPD generally.

## **5. *Athrawon bro***

5.1 The teams of *athrawon bro* working across Wales are a key element of the present training structure. Since 1995-96 the Welsh Language Board has supported the work of the *athrawon bro* services by offering grant funding to promote Welsh in education. This funding is ring-fenced, and allocated on the condition that authorities contribute at least 25% of the total cost of activities.

5.2 *Athrawon bro* work in an advisory capacity to support Welsh and Welsh second language programmes of study. The nature and range of their roles vary between authorities, but encompass exemplar lessons, preparation of appropriate teaching materials, and advice on teaching methodologies. According to school and authority priorities, the *athrawon bro* also play a key role in areas such as Key Stage 2-3 transition programmes, and support for Welsh in the Foundation Phase. In some areas they are a core element of the provision for latecomers and pupils receiving intensive immersion provision, either in Centres or through intensive provision programmes. They also lead on specific trial projects to promote progress in skills, and organise opportunities for pupils to attend residential courses.

5.3 The *athrawon bro* services have made an extremely valuable contribution to the development of Welsh in schools in Wales, and to the quality of training offered to teachers and classroom assistants. This expertise needs to be developed further. At the same time it is important that the service contributes to creating a

Welsh-medium system that is sustainable. In order for this to be achieved the best ways of offering appropriate support to teachers and authorities whilst avoiding a situation of over-dependency on the *athrawon bro* need to be identified. In accordance with an objective already identified in the *Building the Foundation Phase Action Plan*, the work of the *athrawon bro* services will be reviewed. This evaluation will inform future decisions about the strategic direction of the *athrawon bro* structure within the wider training context.

## **6. Building on the Sabbaticals Scheme**

6.1 The most effective way of significantly improving Welsh-language skills is through intensive courses. The national Welsh Language Sabbaticals Scheme has shown the value of providing intensive, specialist courses tailored to the needs of teaching professionals – teachers, lecturers and training providers. This programme needs to provide training for more practitioners, but it is equally important that employers make effective use of the newly developed skills of the practitioners on their return to their institutions. A clear direction needs to be determined for career progression for practitioners after attending these courses.

6.2 It is also important that these intensive courses are given sufficient status and priority to enable practitioners to be released from their teaching responsibilities to follow the programmes. Schools and other relevant teaching institutions should be expected to release practitioners to undertake the necessary training. Priorities in terms of ensuring sufficient training in Welsh-language skills will be included in, and monitored through, the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans, individual schools' development plans and FE Welsh Language Schemes.

6.3 Opportunities to follow intensive Welsh-language courses, on a similar model to the Sabbaticals Scheme, need to be developed for practitioners with medium and lower-level skills in Welsh.

## **7. Further Education and Work-based Training Providers**

7.1 Although the structure and nature of training provided for Further Education practitioners is somewhat different from that for primary and secondary school teachers, the principles above will also be true for further development of FE practitioners. The need for training in Welsh-language skills and methodologies of teaching through the medium of Welsh and bilingually in FE and work-based training is considerable. These institutions throughout Wales, with a few exceptions, suffer from a shortage of expertise in language skills and in knowledge of Welsh-medium and bilingual teaching methodologies.

7.2 As with the primary and secondary sectors, we want to see how we can ensure that training can improve the understanding of language acquisition processes and language reinforcement techniques, and equip teachers with suitable methodologies to face these situations with confidence. In order to move forward on this aspect of training, we need to consider options for ensuring that all trainee FE teachers who intend to work in Wales as Welsh second language teachers and practitioners, and in Welsh-medium settings, receive tuition in Welsh language and language awareness during their initial training. At the same time, however, careful

consideration will have to be given to the extent of any additional training in the light of other pressures and requirements on FE ITT courses.

7.3 Further work is needed to determine the best methods of a more integrated approach to in-service training to cover FE and WBL practitioners as well as school teaching staff and other practitioners. Options for accreditation of such in-service training need to be considered.

## **8. Higher Education**

8.1 The Postgraduate Scholarships Scheme and the Welsh Medium Teaching Fellowships Scheme are important schemes which address the need for a significant increase in the number of academics able to teach through the medium of Welsh in the Higher Education (HE) sector. The Scholarships Scheme represents the starting-point for the creation of a new generation of lecturers who will be able to develop and extend opportunities for Welsh-medium study in the universities, and the Fellowships Scheme offers support for institutions to appoint new members of staff capable of teaching through the medium of Welsh. Given that the continuation and extension of Welsh-medium provision is dependent in the long term on the recruitment of new staff into HE with the necessary academic credentials and the ability to teach through the medium of Welsh, the schemes respond to the need to increase university departments' staffing capacity in a strategic way. All applications to the scheme are judged against specific criteria, and the applications' relevance to the national development plan for developing university Welsh-medium education is considered.

8.2 The schemes will continue to be used in the coming years to increase staffing capacity at sector level in a strategic way. In the short term, provision is increased as Welsh-medium teaching by scholarship and fellowship holders is an integral part of the Schemes. Over the mid to longer term, they will also ensure an increase in the number of lecturers teaching through the medium of Welsh as all awards are made on the basis of a commitment from the receiving institution to create a full-time and permanent lecturing post for which the recipient can apply and which includes teaching through the medium of Welsh as one of its principal duties. This is already bearing fruit with ten posts created and four in the pipeline.

8.3 Following a successful pilot scheme in 2007-08, the Centre for Welsh-medium Higher Education is coordinating a comprehensive staff development programme in 2008-09. This programme has been mapped against the Professional Standards Framework of the UK Higher Education Academy to ensure its comparability with English-medium staff development in Welsh universities. In addition, participation by HE lecturers in the National Sabbatical Scheme is currently being trialled. Over the longer term, it will be important for the HE sector to develop greater Welsh-medium staff development expertise within the sector, thus minimising the dependence on external practitioners, although this will be required for particular areas of specialism.

## **9. Welsh for Adults**

9.1 Historically, there has been considerable variation in the amount of initial and in-service training provided for Welsh for Adults (WfA) tutors. In fact, the lack of appropriate qualifications reflected the reality of employment among WfA tutors: it was generally perceived as a part-time and temporary vocation. Since the establishment of the six WfA Centres, this situation has improved, with the development of a career structure and the creation of more full-time posts within the centres. The requirement for centres to develop and implement annual training and development plans has also led to an increase in the provision of training. However, there is still an urgent need to ensure that all tutors are up-skilled and become qualified.

9.2 The delivery of the National Qualification for WfA tutors on a sustainable basis is key to the acquisition of skills by tutors. The qualification is being rolled out at all centres, and unqualified tutors are currently being targeted for participation. The aim is to ensure that all WfA tutors are qualified to the appropriate level by 2012. Centres will need to be supported to increase the amount of in-service training provided to ensure the continuous improvement of the quality of teaching.

9.3 The recruitment of new tutors is an essential consideration for the development of WfA provision. The majority of WfA tutors are in the over-50 age bracket, and there is a need to promote WfA as a career path. Estyn inspection findings indicate that standards of achievement amongst learners are highest where there is a high proportion of full-time staff. Although initial steps have been taken to increase the number of full-time staff, the Welsh Assembly Government will consider further development.

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

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Support mechanisms such as qualifications and skill frameworks, teaching and learning resources, new technologies and careers guidance are vital for the further development of Welsh-medium provision. Such support mechanisms for English-medium provision have developed over a considerable period of time in response to market forces in the education systems in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland as well as Wales. The Welsh-medium sector in Wales, however, has been limited by resources and the fact that the market is not large enough to make commercial development viable.

1.2 In developing Welsh-medium provision, education and training providers need to have access to a sufficient range of Welsh-medium qualifications, with assured assessment through the medium of Welsh. They also need teaching and learning resources suitable for the Welsh curriculum in Welsh, together with financial support to cover the extra costs of preparing or providing them. Although considerable development of Welsh-medium qualifications and resources has taken place, there are still subject areas which remain undeveloped. It is also vital that providers are able to show students the benefits of Welsh-language skills in their future careers; this calls for the cooperation of local authorities, FEIs and other providers, and the Careers Wales service.

### **2. The Skills Framework and the Welsh Language**

2.1 The requirements of the 1993 Welsh Language Act for public sector bodies to prepare and implement Welsh Language Schemes have meant an increase in the use of Welsh in the public sector. Welsh Language Schemes require public bodies to respond to the requirement that customer service is equally available in Welsh, and also to demonstrate how they propose to incorporate mainstreaming of Welsh-language issues into policy-making and service delivery.

2.2 The extent to which Welsh is important in the workplace in the private sector at present varies according to type and sector. The Future Skills Wales survey of private sector companies in 2005 shows a more mixed picture than in the public sector – 9% reported a need for Welsh-language skills, but demand may be higher, since 29% indicated the importance of Welsh-language skills for customer service. The need for Welsh speakers in the workforce is expected to increase as private companies also seek to enhance their customer service and look to recruit competent bilingual speakers.

2.3 It is important that employers, employees and training providers understand the varying needs encompassed within the broad aim of building a 'bilingual workforce'. Some workplaces require all employees to be fluent in both Welsh and English. Others will require some employees to have varying levels of competence in Welsh for different functions. In some cases, skills are needed for customer-facing services, and in others more advanced and specialist language skills will be required.

2.4 Access to Welsh-medium courses within the skills framework is vital to fulfilling the needs of Welsh-speaking learners who participate in work-based learning and apprenticeships. Our ambition is to expand provision of high-quality vocational training through the medium of Welsh which also ensures high-quality Welsh-language content. Wherever possible, individual learners should not have to choose between high-quality training on the one hand, and maintaining and using their Welsh-language skills on the other; both are important to the full development of the individual and the workforce.

2.5 In taking forward new provision from 2011 in work-based learning, including Modern Apprenticeships, Skillbuild and other learning in the workplace, Welsh-language needs must be taken into account, especially in the sectors which are key priorities, such as Childcare and Healthcare. As demand for Welsh-medium childcare increases, the need to increase capacity in the workforce becomes increasingly evident. Developing the skills of practitioners in this area is a key factor of success both in terms of responding to parental demand and also in terms of providing opportunities for career development and progression. In the case of health services, care and treatment in the patient's language of choice is seen to have a positive impact on the delivery of service. In some specific cases the need to communicate in Welsh with Welsh-speaking patients is seen as an integral and essential part of service delivery and clinical treatment. This applies to patients requiring speech and language therapies, those with mental health and additional learning needs, the elderly and young children.

2.6 Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) play a vital role in the development of skills for their sectors. They have the role of consulting with employers in their sectors in order to respond to identified need, and develop national occupational standards. They should work with Awarding Bodies to ensure that appropriate qualifications in NVQs, technical certificates and Key Skills are placed on the approved qualifications database for funding provision. They are also responsible for ensuring that frameworks for apprenticeships are appropriate and fit the blueprints. Sector Skills Councils are currently undergoing a re-licensing process at a UK level. This is taking place in five tranches during 2009 and may or may not lead to changes to the network should some SSCs be unsuccessful in obtaining their licences. They also have to prepare Welsh Language Schemes for approval by the Welsh Language Board, as public sector bodies which are operational in Wales.

2.7 A number of Sector Skills Councils and Standard Setting Bodies have taken steps to provide Welsh translations for particular suites of national occupational standards for their sector, for example, Skillset (TV and broadcast media), Skills for Care and Development, Skills for Justice, Skillsmart (retail), SkillsActive (sport), the Institute of Customer Service HABIA (hairdressing and beauty), and Public Services. These Standards are the basis of national vocational qualifications (NVQs) and they are also used for wider purposes by employers for performance appraisal and in-house training.

2.8 Welsh-language skills needs for their sectors should be identified by Sector Skills Councils, either as needs articulated by employers or as needs that are likely to arise as a result of national or local policy. These needs should then inform consideration when developing Modern Apprenticeship frameworks in Wales, and

also feature in the quality assurance role being carried out by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills. Further discussion of language issues will take place with Sector Skills Councils in Wales, and joint working on improving provision will be promoted.

2.9 The options for inclusion of Welsh-medium and bilingual options within the Skillbuild programme for pre-employment training will also be considered, in order to ensure that Welsh-speaking young persons not in employment, education or training are able to access suitable training.

2.10 With regard to the position of Welsh-language units delivered as part of apprenticeship frameworks, if Welsh-medium apprenticeships frameworks are not immediately available, it is important that options for including a Welsh-language unit in the framework are considered priorities for funding.

2.11 Equipping employees with the appropriate linguistic skills should be a key consideration in the case of those whose literacy level in Welsh falls below Level 1 (see also Strategic Aim 3). Workplace learning which targets sectors where customer service is of key importance (for example the care sector, and hospitality) is an important component of this aim, and should be included within the Employer Pledge programme. A limited number of courses aimed at improving Welsh-language basic skills have been delivered, but more needs to be done to develop this provision in a strategic manner.

2.12 The Wales Employment and Skills Board has a watching brief over skills in Wales, and, as part of its work, seeks to ensure that the standards and apprenticeship frameworks and the provision available are matched to the skills needs of employers. Part of this brief should be to ensure that language needs are sufficiently considered and understood by sectors, employers and providers. In order for this to be carried out effectively, considerable further work is required in order to obtain a detailed picture of the current Welsh-language skills of the workforce and of the nature and scale of the likely future demand for Welsh-language skills in the workforce. This work could be undertaken jointly with the Sector Skills Councils and the Welsh Language Board. It should focus on assessing and measuring levels of Welsh-language skills, both in terms of specialist sector needs and also in terms of more generic communication and literacy skills in Welsh. Such an audit would provide a firm basis for strategic targeting of training and recruitment for different sectors.

### **3. Qualifications**

3.1 The policy of the Assembly Government is to ensure equal opportunities for those learners who choose to access assessment through the medium of Welsh. This involves continuing to extend the range and number of qualifications available to students through the medium of Welsh. This will be progressed in response to learner needs and will make available sufficient Welsh-medium qualifications to ensure that centres and learners can increasingly meet the expectations arising from Welsh Assembly Government policies.

3.2 Subject examinations through the medium of Welsh were first provided by the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) in 1961 for Ysgol Glan Clwyd, the first Welsh-medium secondary school. The WJEC continued to provide Welsh-medium examinations without financial support from central government until the mid-1990s when the qualifications 'market' opened. The situation changed at that point, with all examination boards becoming 'commercial' with copyright ownership of their qualifications. The system of financial subsidy from central government to the WJEC and other examining bodies began in the mid-1990s.

3.3 Progress has been made in ensuring increased availability of Welsh-medium qualifications, but a number of areas require further development. At present, vocational and general needs are established through different mechanisms. We need a clearly understood approach for meeting the needs of schools and colleges for all types of qualification (general and vocational). We will also revisit the means for influencing awarding bodies in receipt of grant funding to fulfil their obligations in terms of Welsh-medium qualifications and assessment. Consistency and quality in the translation of assessment materials is a priority. We will also review ways of disseminating annual information and publicity about the qualifications available in Welsh, with a view to ensuring that examination centres are fully aware of what is available.

3.4 In 2009, the Welsh Assembly Government website lists 166 general qualifications which are currently provided through the medium of Welsh. In addition, there are over 120 Welsh-medium vocational qualifications being offered by at least 16 vocational awarding bodies. As there is no statutory requirement for awarding bodies to record the language of assessment in the data they provide to the Welsh Assembly Government, this may not be the complete picture. The total number of Welsh-medium qualifications compares with roughly 6,000 qualifications available in English, provided by approximately 140 awarding bodies in England; this reflects the operation of the commercial market in the English language. About 70% of the Welsh-medium qualifications are provided through the Welsh Joint Education Committee, with about 30% provided by awarding bodies in England. Some awarding bodies provide assessment opportunities through the medium of Welsh with no financial assistance from the Assembly Government.

3.5 Amongst its main findings the Estyn report *Welsh-medium and bilingual provision for 14-19 learners* (May 2008) noted the following points with regard to qualifications:

*'The vast majority of general qualifications are available in Welsh. Around 60 additional applied or vocational qualifications have become available in Welsh as a result of the Welsh Assembly Government initiative that offers support to awarding bodies to help them deliver this service. However, the number of vocational qualifications available in Welsh is a very small proportion of what is available in English. The shortage of examiners and verifiers who have the expertise to work through the medium of Welsh is a barrier to extending the number of Welsh-medium qualifications.'*

3.6 Rather than seeking to establish Welsh-medium qualifications for all those available in English – which is impractical and unrealistic – it is preferable to take a strategic approach to the provision of Welsh-medium qualifications, with the aim of maximising opportunities for those learners who choose to access assessment through the medium of Welsh. This means in practice that centres should be able to access more Welsh-medium qualifications where there is sufficient unmet or latent demand from learners.

3.7 The availability of appropriate qualifications in some particular areas is crucial to the success of this Strategy. Qualifications that are appropriate for Wales and the Welsh language must be made available in these key areas, particularly those relating to the education workforce, such as qualifications relating to childcare and classroom assistants.

3.8 Whilst there is currently Welsh-medium provision for accredited qualifications within the National Qualifications Framework, there is no support for qualifications outside the Framework. However, a number of such qualifications are widely used by schools and in non-formal learning, and closely linked to the development of important subject-specific skills, such as music (instrumental examinations) and physical education (examinations in dance, swimming).

3.9 It is likely that online assessment will become increasingly important in the future. Work has started on the issues surrounding preparation of online assessment through Welsh and English, but further work is needed, particularly into the most effective methods of considering Welsh-language and English-language needs simultaneously, and into delivering assessment in both languages. It is vital that the needs of Welsh-medium learners are met within the context of technological changes in assessment.

3.10 As noted in Estyn's May 2008 report, securing an adequate complement of qualified examiners, assessors and markers able to carry out this work through the medium of Welsh is a particular challenge. Since the pool of Welsh-medium and bilingual teachers and lecturers is already small, the options for securing these vital practitioners are more limited than for English-medium qualifications. This is especially true with regard to vocational qualifications, which historically have not been taught widely in Welsh-medium education. Further steps need to be taken to identify potential assessors and markers, as well as verifiers, with the necessary Welsh-language skills to tackle this shortage.

3.11 In the case of Welsh for Adults (WfA), the Welsh Assembly Government provides grant funding to the WJEC for the provision of five WfA examinations and the associated credit pathway. The Open College Network (OCN) also awards credits in this field of study. The introduction of the Qualifications and Credit Framework from 2010 will offer the opportunity for learners to build up achievements over time and at their own pace. It will allow for credit accumulation and transfer between all awarding organisations and across all learning providers. Although there are considerable merits to this new framework, it will be necessary to continue to support and promote WfA examinations to learners as they offer the only method of formally recognising achievement. Anecdotal evidence suggests that

learners who sit the examinations are more likely to progress through the levels successfully.

3.12 The needs of basic skills learners should also be taken into full account as qualifications are developed. This should include appropriate qualifications for basic skills at Entry level 1, 2 and 3. The same applies to vocational qualifications, but in addition there is a need to develop short intensive basic skills courses for those below Level 1 pre-entry into vocational qualification learning.

## 4. Teaching and Learning Resources

4.1 The availability of a wide range of teaching and learning materials is key to the successful delivery and development of Welsh-medium education. The aim in Wales is to ensure that pupils and students have access to Welsh-language resources that the commercial market does not provide.

Responsibility for commissioning materials rests with the Welsh Assembly Government; some materials are also developed by other organisations. Some sixty projects are commissioned annually, leading to the production and publication of between 250 and 300 new titles each year. In recent years the trend has been towards a reduced focus on translating materials into Welsh and an increase in the commissioning of original materials to address the needs of Wales' distinctive curriculum. Today nearly 40% of the materials are produced in digital format.

*Materials from projects commissioned between 2005 and 2008 (total of 200 projects)*

Nature of materials	% projects
Original	81%
Translated from English	19%
Welsh language publications	68%
Welsh and English language publications	32%
Digital content (DVD, CD ROM, on-line)	29%
Digital on-line content (on NGfL Cymru)	13%
Projects supported by WJEC	14%

4.2 Over the years, the expansion of Welsh-medium education has increased the demand for resources – more subjects, a wider age range and new media. The focus needs to be on matching the production of resources with the developments in the Welsh-medium sector. This involves providing support for recent Welsh Assembly Government initiatives such as the Foundation Phase, the 2008 Curriculum, and the 14-19 Learning Pathways. Other developments in the pre-14 sector, including mid and late immersion, have also highlighted new needs in terms of suitable learning materials.

4.3 Approximately one-third of the commissioned resources are currently published in English as well as Welsh, and these are becoming increasingly important to the successful delivery of Wales' distinctive curriculum. The Welsh Assembly Government will continue to support the publication of resources in English as well as Welsh when these are original materials needed to study the

curriculum in Wales, and where such materials are not provided by the commercial market. This provision is currently funded from the Welsh-language budget. Materials for Basic Skills are also published by the specialist Basic Skills team.

4.4 In view of the increasing demand on the budget from new curriculum needs and provision of materials in English, consideration will be given to increasing the investment in teaching and learning resources: the current level of funding remains unchanged from its level in 1994 (£2.6m).

4.5 Increasingly Welsh-medium provision is being moved into the digital age, since, as well as commissioning materials, the Welsh Assembly Government also supports a number of other initiatives that provide Welsh-language digital materials. This includes materials provided by the BBC. Of particular relevance is the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) Cymru, which develops and commissions bilingual (English/Welsh) digital resources for subjects across the curriculum for schools and colleges.

4.6 Materials meeting specific needs are also developed by other agencies and projects supported by the Welsh Assembly Government. *Athrawon bro* teams prepare local resources for learning Welsh, funded through the Welsh Language Board. The Welsh Books Council provides publishing grants to support the production of children's reading books, whilst development and training resources aimed at early years provision are provided through Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, along with reading books and other materials for parents and young children. Some project-specific resources have also been funded, for example, to support the Welsh-language Sabbaticals scheme and 14-19 partnerships.

4.7 The Welsh Assembly Government has an open but rigorous process for commissioning materials. It undertakes a wide-ranging annual consultation to identify and prioritise the materials to be commissioned, the essential focus being on meeting the real needs of practising teachers and lecturers. Wherever possible, publishers are then chosen by tender to undertake projects according to monitored contracts.

4.8 We aim to maintain and improve the current level of provision across the whole curriculum, from the Foundation Phase to qualifications at Level 3 across all subjects (academic and vocational), and for all ages. This includes the Foundation Phase, the 2008 curriculum, 14-19 Learning Pathways, the Welsh Baccalaureate, new GCSE and A level courses, vocational courses and Welsh for Adults. In this, consideration is given to the needs of pupils and students of all abilities, including those with additional learning needs. Priority has to be given to providing materials in curriculum areas where there is a significant lack of provision, and to meeting needs arising from new developments in the curriculum and also in assessment, examinations and qualifications. In addition, it will be necessary to meet needs arising from the development of new publishing technologies.

4.9 The aim will be carry out incremental improvement to some aspects of the current commissioning process, with a focus on priorities to meet the needs of the user, shortening the commissioning timetable, improving marketing, closer cooperation between the commissioning work and NGfL Cymru, providing resources

to accompany new qualifications, and improved planning and co-ordination between national and local resource providers.

4.10 There is a continuing debate about the linguistic demands of Welsh-language resources. During such discussions it has become apparent that there is a shortage of skilled Welsh-language editors, particularly in the younger age range and with expertise in educational publishing. One reason for this shortage is the lack of any recognised training and development structure in this area. We will look at whether an increase in the numbers and skill levels of Welsh-language education editors would result from setting up a system of professional training, development and qualification for them. Options for this development will be explored in greater detail.

## **5. Welsh-Language Technology and E-Learning**

5.1 It is important that all aspects of students' learning through the medium of Welsh incorporate the advances made in the application of information technology in education provision. This applies to the computer software used to support their learning-based activities, and also to the teaching and learning materials used to support their curricular work.

5.2 Local authorities and Welsh-medium and bilingual schools and other institutions delivering through the medium of Welsh will be issued with guidance about using Welsh-language versions of software, and will be actively encouraged to use them as the norm, in all cases where such software is readily available. Schools and institutions that do not deliver most of their provision through the medium of Welsh will also be encouraged to use Welsh-language software as a resource in developing the Welsh-language skills of their pupils and students.

5.3 The commissioning process for the production of Welsh-language electronic materials will be checked to ensure that it complies with the Welsh Language Board's Guidelines and Standards for Bilingual Software.

5.4 Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) are already in use through the medium of Welsh or bilingually, and wider use in schools and colleges is encouraged. To this end, updated translations of suitable software are needed for use throughout Wales. In addition, the up-skilling of teachers and practitioners on the use of new technologies is required.

5.5 Further commitment by providers to the sharing of teaching and learning resources is to be encouraged, to avoid isolated practitioners having to develop or translate all their own materials for new subject areas or curricula. The *Rhannu* database, now supported by NGfL Cymru, can be used by practitioners in 14-19 vocational subject areas to share new resources as a first stage in the development of more quality-controlled resources on NGfL Cymru. NGfL Cymru now houses a wide collection of digital resources which have been commissioned and edited, and the process of investment in more freely available Welsh-medium teaching and learning resources for all sectors will continue.

5.6 A total of 33 Welsh-medium and bilingual schools have already received state-of-the-art videoconferencing equipment to enable them to share teaching sessions with other providers, however geographically distant. The technology is supported by the Welsh Video Network Support Centre managed on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government by JANET (UK) Ltd Videoconferencing Service. Welsh-medium training for teachers in the methodological and practical use of videoconferencing for teaching requires further support to enable a wider range of teachers to make effective use of this technology.

5.7 In the case of Welsh for Adults, the aim is now to develop a national e-learning action plan which will inform the development of blended learning and e-learning courses to enable adults to learn Welsh at a time and location that suits their schedules. As with Welsh-medium provision, the action plan will set out steps to be taken to take advantage of all the latest technological advances in education, and to ensure that technical support for practitioners is provided through the WfA centres.

## **6. Careers Information and Guidance**

6.1 There appears to be a general lack of awareness among learners and their parents of the advantages of bilingual skills in seeking employment. Joint responsibility for increasing levels of awareness lies with schools and local authorities, FE institutions, and Careers Wales. Careers Wales' work complements and adds value to the Careers and World of Work curriculum framework delivered by learning providers for the age range 11-19.

6.2 Heightening awareness of Welsh-medium and bilingual opportunities in work experience is also a joint responsibility for providers, local authorities and Careers Wales. As many opportunities as possible should be made available to receive work experience through the medium of Welsh across a wide range of sectors.

6.3 The quality of the data available on the value placed on Welsh-language skills by employers is a key underpinning component to raising awareness. All providers and Careers Wales should be expected to use such evidence constructively when appropriate.

6.4 *Careers and the world of work: a framework for 11 to 19-year-olds in Wales* (2008) provides a revised framework for work-related education and careers education and guidance which forms part of the basic curriculum for all registered pupils aged 11 to 16 at maintained schools. It is also part of the requirements of the Learning Core of Learning Pathways 14-19. The framework is accompanied by non-statutory guidance to support how the requirements may be met in practice.

6.5 The framework stresses that learning providers should develop approaches that support the ethnic and cultural identities of all learners and reflect a range of perspectives, to engage learners and prepare them for life as global citizens. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig for 7-14-year-olds, and the Wales, Europe and the World elements for 14-19-year-olds should highlight '*linguistic, historical and environmental matters within the area and further afield*'. Communication in English or Welsh, as appropriate, about careers and the world of work forms an important element of the

framework. It is important that all education settings through this curriculum expand awareness of pupils and students with regard to Welsh-medium and Welsh-language opportunities in the workplace, voluntary activities and in the community. The role of the Learning Coach and Learning Support in the 14-19 framework will be important in pointing out the opportunities that maintaining and improving Welsh-language skills can provide.

6.6 In the post-16 sector, certain FEIs offer Welsh Language Awareness courses to students, and sometimes staff, on their arrival at college. Courses which concentrate specifically on the advantages of bilingual skills are available in some instances. In both these cases, there is as yet no information available to prove their effectiveness in persuading students to study through the medium of Welsh or to improve their Welsh-language skills in order to prepare for the workforce. The Bilingual Champions project in FEIs aims to improve perceptions of the language and its use, and is piloting a number of elements of good practice. In some key areas such as Childcare, the obvious connection between Welsh-medium qualifications, or ability in the language, and local job opportunities can mean that students are more willing to use their language skills in preparation for the workplace.

6.7 Careers Wales, through its six regional Companies and website, offers a range of advice, guidance and careers information throughout Wales. The six Companies contract with the Assembly Government annually to provide advice, guidance, placements and other services to individuals, educational organisations and employers. They also provide adult guidance services, Youth Gateway, and Education Business Link, including supporting organisations to provide work experience placements for young people in education.

6.8 All Careers Wales publications on learning and employment routes are bilingual. Careers Wales Online is now a fully bilingual online service that offers a comprehensive list of education, training and job opportunities for school and college leavers in Wales, as well as an 'e-portfolio' that allows clients to establish and maintain their own progress record online.

6.9 Within the national framework all six companies operate Welsh Language Schemes, but with some variations in targets with regards to bilingual provision for clients. All state that they undertake to provide services to clients in the language of their choice. They aim to provide Welsh-speaking advisers as part of their service-level agreement with Welsh-medium and bilingual schools. Practices, however, vary in the different companies and generally reflect the nature of the local population in their response to client need.

6.10 In terms of providing work experience in bilingual settings, for example, regional and local variation occurs, with such provision in the north and west being more readily available. As part of the strategy for visiting employers, Careers Wales staff gather specific information on opportunities that could be provided to young people through the medium of Welsh. This will be incorporated into the planned database of work experience opportunities to be accessed through Careers Wales Online.

6.11 Some of the companies are facing difficulties in recruiting and retaining fully bilingual careers advisers. In other companies, a fully bilingual guidance service is offered to all schools and colleges. At least one company has the necessary bilingual staff to provide services through the medium of Welsh to clients in Careers Centres, in line with the Welsh Language Scheme, but in other companies, such a service is not yet available because of a shortage of staff with the necessary skills.

6.12 The Webb Report noted the need for Careers Wales to inform young people of the range of opportunities available to them where competence in Welsh is required. It is not clear how far careers advisers provide information about the potential advantages of studying through the medium of Welsh or bilingually, and the opportunities that exist for careers using Welsh-language skills. A recent report on behalf of the Welsh Language Board suggested that the advice provided depends to a great extent on the individual providing it, and that the awareness of Welsh-speaking careers advisers of the importance of bilingualism in the labour market differs from the awareness of their non-Welsh-speaking colleagues. The six Careers Wales companies should continue to promote an institutional culture where there is emphasis on the provision of Welsh-language services and on the promotion of bilingual skills. Steps will be taken to include appropriate coverage of these issues in the forthcoming review of Careers Wales.



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

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The aim of this Strategy is to secure an education and training system that enables pupils and learners to achieve fluency in Welsh. The focus of all our objectives is on developing the infrastructure and capacity that will allow this to happen. However, we fully realise that education and training alone cannot guarantee that speakers become fluent in Welsh. A complex array of factors beyond the reach of education and training have a significant influence on linguistic attitudes and behaviour, and these also determine the extent to which speakers use Welsh with their families, in their communities and in the workplace. In presenting our vision for the education and training system of the future, we also need to consider the areas of activity which support and complement the process of developing Welsh-language skills through formal structures.

1.2 Within the Welsh Assembly Government the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills works closely with the Department for Heritage where promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh is a core principle. The Welsh Language Board also plays a key role in undertaking statutory and developmental work in this respect. Within the context of this Strategy, our main priority is to strengthen joint initiatives, identify new opportunities for collaboration, and situate Welsh-medium education and training in its broader social context. One example of this is the pilot scheme that has recently been initiated by the Welsh Assembly Government to revitalise the economy in Welsh-speaking communities in areas of strategic importance. These include the further development of residential facilities for Welsh learners at Nant Gwrtheyrn Welsh Language and Heritage Centre, and working with residents in the Blaenau Ffestiniog and Caernarfon areas to recognise the unique contribution of the Welsh language to economic development. This project aims to build confidence in local residents, encouraging them to make full use of the Welsh language in their day-to-day lives, and highlights the value of language skills when looking for work.

### **2. Promoting the Use of Welsh amongst Young People and Adults: Informal and Non-Formal Learning**

2.1 Informal and non-formal learning is a vital component of reinforcing Welsh-language skills learnt in formal classroom settings. Many of these opportunities are provided outside the school environment, and this helps to consolidate the status of Welsh as a living community language. At the same time, however, it is important to appreciate the role of informal and non-formal learning within learners' curricular experiences at school or college. The policy direction of the 14-19 Learning Pathways, and the Welsh Assembly Government guidance on the Learning Core, highlights the role of these opportunities in enriching students' learning experiences. Such learning can also contribute to the recognition of skills in the Community module of the Welsh Baccaulaureate qualification.

2.2 Urdd Gobaith Cymru and the *mentrau iaith* (local language initiatives) play a key role in informal and non-formal learning by providing a range of opportunities for young people through the medium of Welsh. An independent review of the Urdd for the Welsh Language Board (2004) concluded that its activities had considerable impact in spreading and improving the social use of Welsh. It was found that they created different and new opportunities to use the language, either by changing the pattern of language use to frequent use, or by providing the opportunity for participants to become more confident in using Welsh. Fluency and vocabulary were improved, and participation helped young people to see the value of using the language.

2.3 The *mentrau iaith* also carry out a range of activities at a community level, including youth work, sports and arts activities, and playgroups during school holidays. This support aligns with the Language Action Plan agenda, which is aimed at increasing the use of Welsh in areas of particular linguistic significance by co-ordinating activities for local people and institutions. The *mentrau iaith* and the Language Action Plans work in partnership and with the Welsh Language Board and other national organisations on various projects to promote the use of Welsh. These include work to help people moving into Welsh-speaking areas to learn about the linguistic nature of their new environment and to integrate into the community.

2.4 In addition, almost all of the activities of the Young Farmers' Clubs are held in Welsh or bilingually in north and west Wales. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme has given considerable attention to developing its provision bilingually, with the help of grant aid.

2.5 The Youth Service is central to the process of enabling children and young people in the 11-25 age-group to extend their use of Welsh in informal and community contexts. The underlying principles of Youth Work are non-formal learning, voluntary participation and provision, based on an agenda set by young people themselves. Historically there has been considerable variation in the nature of providers and the services offered by the Youth Service. They include provision supported by local authorities (clubs, information shops, residential provision, outreach work) as well as voluntary organisations working throughout Wales or locally, which include Welsh-medium provision such as that of Urdd Gobaith Cymru.

2.6 In the past the needs of Welsh speakers have not received consistent attention in this area. A survey in 1998 indicated that Welsh-language opportunities within the Youth Service were limited and *ad hoc*. Only 13% of youth clubs in the survey used Welsh as a sole or main medium of communication, while a further 13% described themselves as providing a bilingual environment. The vast majority (74%) were found to be English-only settings.

2.7 The Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales (1992, 2002 and 2007), reinforced by the National Youth Service Strategy for Wales (2007), recognises the bilingual nature of our communities and the significance of Welsh to our national identity. It describes the place of language in relation to ensuring expressive youth work opportunities which should be about: *'Encouraging and enabling young people to express their emotions and aspirations, through creative, sporting and challenging opportunities which raise awareness of cultural identity, bilingualism and the value of*

*one's own language, heritage, respect for diversity, citizenship and respect for others.*' This is reinforced by Estyn which also links youth provision to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig, seeing it as a complementary source of extra-curricular activities for young people.

2.8 The Welsh Assembly Government has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) as the basis of all its work for children and young people. The seven core aims in the UN Charter should form the basis for decisions on strategy and service provision in local authorities' Children and Young People's Plans. In addition, local planning should be in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993.

2.9 The Welsh Assembly Government will expect the Youth Services in each local authority to provide adequate opportunities for young Welsh speakers to have informal learning opportunities through the medium of Welsh. As part of this process, Children and Young People's Partnerships in each local authority should engage with voluntary sector organisations that work mainly or wholly through the medium of Welsh. These informal learning activities should include more opportunities for young Welsh speakers to socialise in contexts in which Welsh is considered the norm, that is, the only language used, rather than in bilingual or English-medium contexts. Each partnership should ensure that it has a specific responsibility for the Welsh language.

2.10 In Youth Service provision there is a significant gap in our information about current provision available in Welsh and the way in which young Welsh speakers are successfully encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities available. In principle, the participation of young people should embed Welsh-medium provision, but in practice this does not appear to be always guaranteed.

2.11 In a small survey of the views of children and young people in November 2008, it was reported that some pupils had very positive experiences of participating in Welsh-speaking clubs within and outside school, and stressed the benefits of a more informal approach, welcoming the opportunity to apply their language skills. Some felt that Welsh-speaking clubs outside school would be accepted more readily if they were orientated more towards sport-based and enjoyable activities, and that there should be more summer holiday activities through the medium of Welsh.

2.12 A fundamental challenge for local authorities and voluntary organisations is the shortage of qualified bilingual staff. The LLUK survey of Youth Service workers in 2007 found from a 50% response rate that 30% of all local authority personnel were able to speak Welsh at a level sufficient to deal with familiar work tasks, including 9.2% with more advanced Welsh-language skills. 66% had no Welsh-language skills.

2.13 Youth workers in many parts of Wales will work increasingly with groups of young people who are bilingual. Youth workers, whatever their skill levels in Welsh, can contribute constructively to bilingual practice. Bilingual youth workers need to be proactive in their use of language to ensure that language choices remain viable and open.

2.14 Few accredited courses in youth work are offered by post-16 providers through the medium of Welsh. Consideration should be given in the four HEIs in Wales currently offering Youth Work diplomas and degrees to providing more central support to share Welsh-medium development work and increase capacity. More recently, in-service Welsh-medium 'Training the Trainer' and related courses have been made available nationally with grant funding, but these have tended to concentrate on the voluntary sector.

2.15 Workforce planning for bilingual skills as well as vocational qualifications should be an integral part of planning in the Youth Service. The Children and Young People's Partnerships should conduct a thorough audit of Welsh-medium and bilingual Youth Service provision in every local authority, with specific attention given to the language skills of providers' staff and volunteers (while recognising that the CYPPs deal with a wider workforce than the Youth Service alone). This audit should then be acted upon by targeting training and recruitment of qualified Welsh speakers where appropriate.

2.16 All schools and FEIs are encouraged to provide Welsh-medium or Welsh-language extra-curricular activities in order to give an opportunity to participants to use Welsh in more social learning settings. The Learning Coach function and personal support for individual learners in the 14-19 agenda also have an important role in encouraging individual students to undertake informal and non-formal learning.

2.17 The Welsh Assembly Government will consider options for responding to the demand from students in the 14-19 age group in particular for the provision of some informal and non-formal learning opportunities in Welsh outside the classroom. These options may include piloting informal, more intensive Welsh learning through different settings or expanding non-formal learning opportunities through closer working with national and community organisations such as Urdd Gobaith Cymru, *mentrau iaith* and Youth Service providers delivering through the medium of Welsh.

2.18 This in turn fits with the Welsh Assembly Government's revised statutory guidance on preparing community strategies, '*Local Vision*', published in March 2008. Community strategies have the potential to ensure that linguistic regeneration becomes an integral part of community regeneration, and that issues of language preference and language need are adequately mainstreamed into local strategic planning.

2.19 The Welsh for Adults centres receive grant funding from the Welsh Language Board for the planning and delivery of informal learning opportunities for adult learners of Welsh. Informal learning is integral to the learning process as it provides learners with the opportunity to practise their oral skills and facilitates the path to fluency. The WfA centres arrange a variety of activities for learners, aimed at providing them with the opportunity to practise their oral skills in an informal setting and facilitating the path to fluency. Increased grant funding would be required to develop this aspect of the centres' work and to pave the way for adult learners of Welsh to integrate fully into Welsh-speaking communities.

2.20 The current focus on Welsh for the Family courses, together with developing Welsh-language skills for the workplace, is a key component in extending the use of Welsh beyond the classroom. In addition, it is important that the Language and Play and Family Literacy and Numeracy programmes funded through the Basic Skills Strategy are provided by local authorities through the medium of Welsh as well as English.

### **3. Raising Awareness of Welsh-medium Education and Training**

3.1 One of the recurrent features in the objectives outlined in this Strategy is the importance of providing clear information to parents and carers, pupils and learners about the opportunities available to them in terms of Welsh-medium provision. Several organisations are involved, and there should be some joint reflection on whether the messages are joined-up and effective.

3.2 Some aspects of this awareness raising are undertaken by local authorities, through the Families Information Services. Others, including the Welsh Language Board, Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, and more recently *Mantais* (in the HE sector) have developed successful marketing strategies, increasing awareness of the benefits of Welsh-medium education, and raising the profile of Welsh in the community and in the workplace. The Basic Skills Strategy also has an important role in raising the profile of Welsh and Welsh-medium education. Resources distributed to parents through Bookstart provide a valuable contact with parents in this respect. Through links with Twf, information about Welsh-medium education has already been incorporated in all book bags to families at 9 and 18 months.

3.3 It is important that further work in this area supports and reinforces the objectives of this Strategy. As more vocational opportunities through the medium of Welsh become available in the 14-19 area networks, and as the need for language skills in the workplace increases, we need to ensure that learners are fully aware of the Welsh-medium options on offer, and of the importance of continued development of their language skills.

3.4 The Welsh Assembly Government already funds a successful national Welsh for Adults marketing campaign to raise awareness of learning Welsh and to attract learners to classes. The national campaign, teamed with local direct marketing by the WfA centres, has proved successful, and the Welsh Assembly Government will continue to build on this partnership approach.

3.5 In 2007 the Welsh Assembly Government, in partnership with the Welsh Language Board, developed a language awareness training pack for the education and community and voluntary sectors. The training pack included specific sections on cultural and historical awareness of the Welsh context, and promoted the use of Welsh in everyday situations. This pack has been trialled in the education sector in two local authorities and has now been distributed to all education institutions and many voluntary bodies in Wales. More sector-specific packs are being considered for future development.



## Outcomes, Targets and Monitoring

### 1. Outcomes and Targets

This section describes the rationale for the selection of outcomes for the Welsh-medium Education Strategy (as outlined on page 20), and provides background data relevant to the target figures.

#### ***Outcome and Target 1***

Outcome	Target
<b>More 7-year-old children being taught through the medium of Welsh.</b>	<b>An increase in the percentage of Year 2 pupils assessed in Welsh first language, from 21% in 2008 to 25% (assessed in Welsh in the Foundation Phase <i>Language, Literacy and Communication Skills</i> Area of Learning) in 2015.</b>

This outcome and target are based primarily, but not exclusively, on Strategic Aim 1 and its associated objectives and actions. They are key to the success of the Strategy as they deal with the baseline cohort, that is, the pupils potentially able to continue with their Welsh-medium education to older age ranges. At primary school level, available data show that pupils who are assessed in Welsh are educated mainly through the medium of Welsh.

Over the decade 1998-2008, the percentage of Year 2 (age 7) pupils assessed in Welsh first language increased from 18.1% to 21.0%, with annual changes ranging between -0.1 to +0.9. Projecting the average annual rate of increase over this decade forward to 2015 produces a figure of approximately 23%. In this context, a 25% target represents a challenging but realistic target.

There is considerable variation in the percentage of Year 2 pupils assessed in Welsh across local authorities in Wales, as shown by the table below.

#### ***Percentages of Year 2 pupil assessed in Welsh first language according to local authority***

	Pupils in maintained schools:	
	Assessed in Welsh, KS1 2008	% Assessed in Welsh, KS1 2008
Newport	40	2.5
Monmouthshire	30	3.6
Blaenau Gwent	38	5.7
Flintshire	96	5.9
Torfaen	73	7.5
Wrexham	118	8.2
Bridgend	142	9.1

	<b>Pupils in maintained schools:</b>	
	<b>Assessed in Welsh, KS1 2008</b>	<b>% Assessed in Welsh, KS1 2008</b>
Swansea	263	11.0
Vale of Glamorgan	149	11.3
Merthyr Tydfil	68	11.6
Caerphilly	224	11.8
Cardiff	437	13.0
Powys	198	15.5
Neath Port Talbot	216	15.9
Denbighshire	209	20.6
Rhondda Cynon Taff	506	20.6
Pembrokeshire	267	21.8
Conwy	249	23.0
Carmarthenshire	991	55.1
Ceredigion	473	74.5
Isle of Anglesey	538	78.9
Gwynedd	1,193	97.9
<b>Wales</b>	<b>6,524*</b>	<b>21.0</b>

\* The Wales figure includes pupils new to the English or Welsh-based education system who are not included in local authority figures.

A target increase at national level of 4 percentage points by 2015 (21% to 25%) represents around a one-fifth increase. An increase of this magnitude for every Authority would clearly be impossible: for example, Gwynedd would reach beyond 100%. Appropriate targets for individual local authorities will be discussed and agreed with local authorities at a later stage for inclusion in their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

### ***Outcome and Target 2***

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Target</b>
<b>More pupils continuing to improve their language skills on transfer from primary to secondary school.</b>	<b>An increase in the percentage of Year 9 pupils assessed in Welsh first language, from 16% in 2008 to 19% in 2015.</b>

Ensuring linguistic progression features prominently in several of the Strategic Aims. The focus in this outcome is on the phase where this is most evident, that is, in the transition from primary to secondary schools. The indicator used is again the assessment data for Welsh first language, maintaining a link between KS1 and KS3.

The Year 9 pupils that will be assessed in Welsh first language in 2015 will be those who were assessed in Year 2 (age 7) in 2008. The Year 2 figure for 2008 was 21%, and this is therefore taken as a guideline percentage for the Year 9 (age 14) in 2015. In order to judge whether the target 19% national figure is realistic at local authority level, we have considered current progression rates between primary and secondary sectors across Wales. The following table is based on those pupils assessed in

Welsh first language at KS2 in 2005 whose records could be matched with KS3 assessments in Wales in 2008. Pupils are counted in the authority in which they were assessed in 2005.

**Assessments in Welsh first language at Key Stage 2 (2005) and 3 (2008):  
Continuity rates according to local authority**

	<b>Assessed in Welsh at KS2 in 2005</b>	<b>Assessed in Welsh at KS3 in 2008</b>	<b>Continuity KS2 – KS3</b>
Assessment Authority 2005	Number of pupils†	Number of pupils†	KS3/KS2 (%)
Neath Port Talbot	248	188	75.8%
Isle of Anglesey	704	534	75.9%
Carmarthenshire	920	698	75.9%
Conwy	254	194	76.4%
Pembrokeshire	216	166	76.9%
Ceredigion	579	454	78.4%
Monmouthshire	18	15	83.3%
Flintshire	98	83	84.7%
Bridgend	125	106	84.8%
Denbighshire	228	195	85.5%
Gwynedd	1256	1087	86.5%
Blaenau Gwent	33	30	90.9%
Powys	211	194	91.9%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	479	447	93.3%
Merthyr Tydfil	55	52	94.5%
Caerphilly	218	207	95.0%
Newport	40	38	95.0%
Wrexham	139	133	95.7%
Torfaen	57	55	96.5%
Vale of Glamorgan	147	143	97.3%
Cardiff	354	350	98.9%
Swansea	216	214	99.1%
<b>Wales</b>	<b>6595</b>	<b>5583</b>	<b>84.7%</b>

†: excluding pupils recorded as D (Disapplied under Sections 364–367 of the 1996 Education Act) or N (not awarded a level for reasons other than disapplication).

These figures indicate that currently around one in seven pupils across Wales does not progress from KS2 Welsh to KS3 Welsh. Our aim is to reduce this figure to one in ten by 2015, thereby increasing the progression rate to 90%.

The table also shows that there is considerable variation in continuity rates across local authorities, with half of the authorities already passing the 90% figure. As there is little room for further improvement in many of these authorities, the national target will only be met through improvements over time in those areas currently showing rates significantly below 90%. It is expected that the figures in this table should form a starting point for discussions leading to an agreement on a target figure, to be included in local authorities' Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

### ***Outcome and Target 3***

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Target</b>
<b>More pupils studying for qualifications through the medium of Welsh at Key Stage 4.</b>	<b>An increase in the percentage of Welsh-medium GCSE entries, from 10% in 2008 to 13% in 2015.</b>

Improving Welsh-medium provision for the 14-19 age range is a major theme in the Strategy, and our aim is to see significant progress across all subjects, including vocational areas. Linguistic continuity in Welsh-medium provision up to age 16 is the focus of this outcome and target. It is confined to GCSE qualifications because data for vocational qualifications come from different sources and do not at present provide a reliable basis for target-setting.

The percentage of Welsh-medium GCSE entries has remained virtually unchanged at 10% since 1998. This indicates that the increase in the numbers of Welsh-medium pupils seen at primary school level over recent decades has not led to a corresponding increase at GCSE level and beyond.

The Year 11 pupils who will be assessed in Welsh first language in 2015 will be those who were assessed in Year 2 in 2006. The Year 2 figure for 2006 was 20%, and this therefore represents the maximum figure for GCSE entries in 2015. As there is considerable room for improvement in this area across many local authorities, an increase from 10% to 13% is a realistic target. An appropriate target for this outcome will also be expected in local authorities' Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

## **2. Monitoring**

Although in our vision we recognise that some of the changes required will take some time to come to fruition, the Welsh Assembly Government will set targets in the Implementation Programme to include clear milestones that will be monitored and reviewed in regular cycles from 2010.

Monitoring will be led by the Welsh Language Development Unit within DCELLS. Progress will be reviewed annually by the CELLS Minister and discussed with representatives of key bodies. The Welsh Language Board will monitor the Welsh Assembly Government Welsh Language Scheme, of which the DCELLS Action Plan forms a part. In addition, the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts (COMEX) carries out regular reviews of progress made under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

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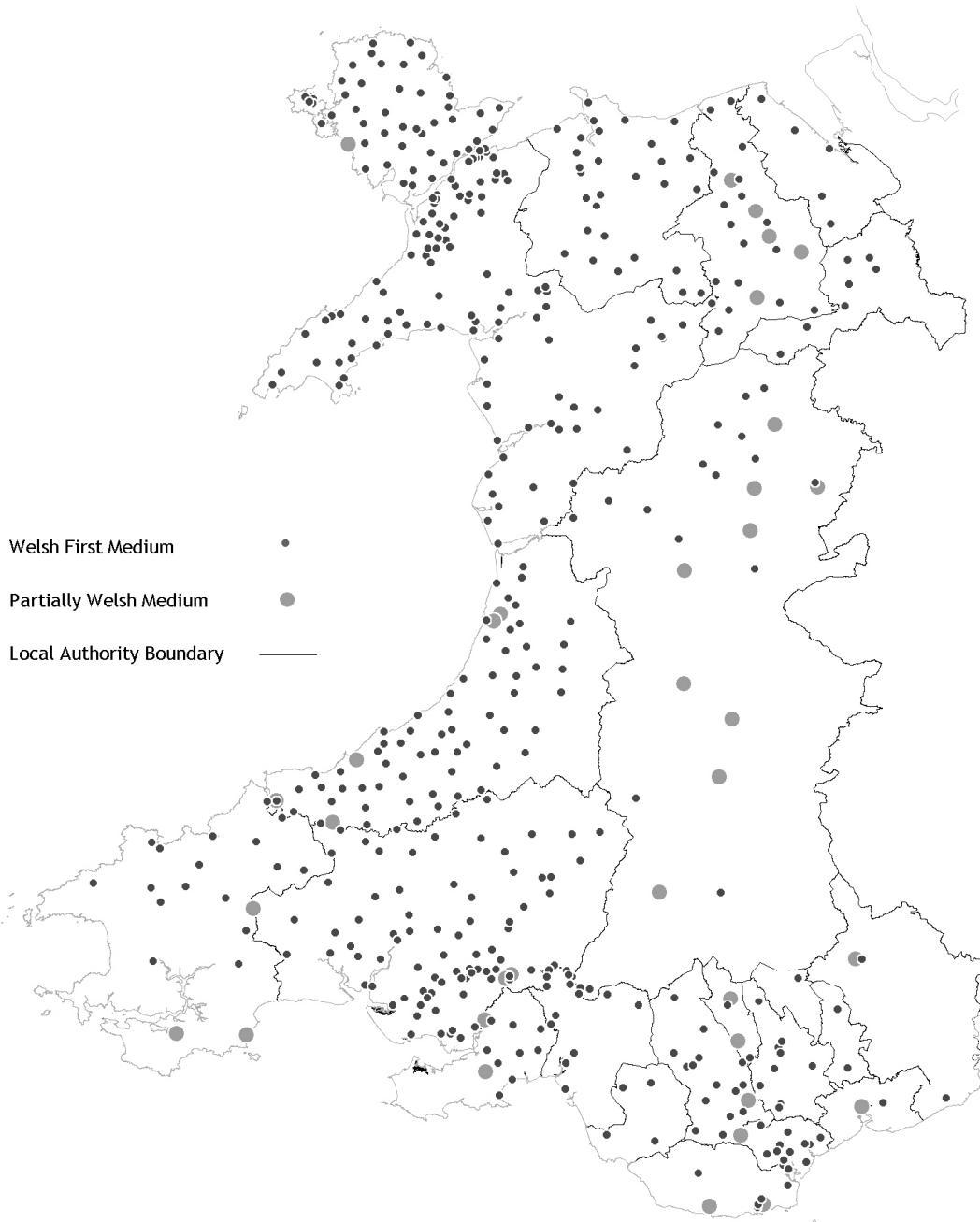
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## Welsh Primary Schools (Sept. 2008)



## Welsh Secondary Schools (Sept. 2008)

