

WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

Name of Local Authority

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Period of this Plan

Sept 2022 – August 2032

This Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is made under Section 84 of *The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013* and the content complies with the *Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019*¹⁻². We have given due regard to the statutory guidance issued by Welsh Ministers when setting our targets.

Signed: **Date:**

(This Plan needs to be signed by the Chief Education officer within your local authority)

¹ [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans \(Wales\) Regulations 2019](#)

² [The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans \(Wales\) \(Amendment\) \(Coronavirus\) Regulations 2020](#)

Notes to help you

You will need to outline your local authority's Welsh-medium education vision of the next ten years and the main strategic objectives for this period. Demonstrate how you will achieve Outcomes 1 to 7 with reference to the Guidelines.

Before completing this template, please refer specifically to Part 2 of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans Guidance.

<https://gov.wales/welsh-education-strategic-plans>

This part sets out the statutory requirements for what must be included in your Plan (as outlined in the Schedule of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019). In addition to your overarching 10 year target, some statements in the Schedule require you to set other targets, and if so, please refer to those here.

Our ten year vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh-medium education in our area

The vision of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council aligns with Cymraeg 2050.

Merthyr Tydfil - #Shwmaeronment – a place where the Welsh language is celebrated.

‘To continue to grow opportunities for Welsh medium education across the County Borough, supporting families and professionals to develop their skills in the use of Welsh so that they are more confident to use the language wherever they are.’

To support this our target is to increase the percentage of learners taught through the medium of Welsh from approximately 14% (100 learners) – based on PLASC data of Year 1 learners 2019/20 to between 22% & 26% (155 – 185 learners) by 2032

There are currently 2 Welsh Medium Primary Schools with – capacity of 743 learners (13% primary learners), with a third seedling school opening with 9 nursery pupils in April 2022. The number of children receiving Welsh medium education between 2015-2020 ranged from 711 to 781, 12.3% to 13.3% of the primary school population.

The number of pupils who have transferred from Welsh medium primary to secondary education between 2015-2020 ranged from 94.2% to 97.6%. From 2019 there has been an increasing transfer back to English medium secondary school (2019/20 – 5; 2020/21 – 9; 21/22 (up to April) – 9). This is an area that needs further exploration during the lifetime of this plan as it will impact GCSE outcomes.

The local authority also has 2 registered education providers who have a capacity of 19 learners to support nursery provision in schools, particularly in the summer term.

The local authority block purchases 22 Welsh medium Flying Start places plus spot purchases in other venues. Increasing the capacity of Welsh medium Flying start provision is a key target as Flying Start provision is rolled out across the County Borough

Between 2015 - 2020 the number of cylchoedd meithrin ranged from 5 to 10 settings with the number of children attending a meithrin ranging from 106 to 209. The transition rates of children from these settings to Welsh Medium Education ranged from 57.1% to 79.3%. This is an area that must be improved if the Council is to meet the target set.

The number of children in each Ti a Fi group ranged from 3 to 18.

We are committed to: -

- Further developing provision for Welsh medium education
- Facilitation of better transition from Welsh medium early years setting into mainstream education
- Facilitating the wider use of the Welsh language both within schools and the wider community and championing the identity of Wales.
- Working with partners to promote and increase the use of the Welsh Language in schools and across the County Borough.
- Celebrating progress and commitment to developing the Welsh Language in all settings.
- Developing support for learners with additional learning through the medium of Welsh thus ensuring they receive an equal linguistic opportunity.

This WESP sets out Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's Plans over the next 10 years to increase and improve the planning of Welsh Medium education. It is aspirational as the Council recognises work in this area has not always been a priority previously.

Throughout the lifetime of this plan and beyond we aim to make Merthyr Tydfil a place where:

- Progression from pre-school Welsh medium provision to Welsh medium maintained provision is fully supported and available for all.
- All learners have the opportunity to develop and increase their use of Welsh in everything they do.
- The school workforce has the opportunity to develop their competency and confidence to teach through the medium of Welsh. The benefits of bilingualism, cognitively, economically, socially and educationally is promoted throughout the community.
- Linguistic progression across curricular areas when transitioning from pre-school to primary education, from primary to secondary education and from secondary to further education or employment is supported and developed.
- Latecomers to Welsh medium education are supported to develop their skills so that they are able to continue their education through their language of choice
- All partners play their part in improving opportunities for and the use of Welsh within and beyond the learning environment.
- Parents and the wider family are given every opportunity to develop their Welsh language skills so that can support their children's language development.

The opening of the third Welsh medium school will include provision for an Immersion class to support latecomers to Welsh. The Council will work with Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) to consider whether this immersion provision will support learners from across Merthyr Tydfil and the Cynon Valley.

The current plans for a learning resource class at Ysgol Rhyd y Grug will just support learners from Merthyr Tydfil but again there are opportunities to develop this provision alongside RCT and the Welsh medium schools in the Cynon Valley.

LINK WITH WELSH GOVERNMENT POLICIES

CURRICULUM FOR WALES

The new WESP will start as schools begin to implement the new Curriculum for Wales in which the role of the Welsh language is a key aspect. Within Merthyr Tydfil, we are committed to promoting the Welsh Language as a subject, as a medium of instruction, and as a language for informal communication

WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

We aim to create, across the County Borough, which is a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage, and the Welsh language, and encourages people to participate in the arts, sports, and recreation.

CYMRAEG 2050: A MILLION WELSH SPEAKERS (2017)

Following the themes of the Cymraeg 2050 work programme published in 2021 we will consider our work under each theme –by seeking to increase the number of Welsh speakers, increasing the use of Welsh and creating the infrastructure and context for these to happen. This will be considered alongside the ambitions of the Council’s Welsh Language Strategy. Over the lifetime of the plan, we aim to achieve a significant increase in the number of children and young people who access Welsh-medium education and have skills in Welsh, only by enabling more people to learn Welsh will it be possible to realise a million Welsh speakers across Wales. We will focus on the early years and families because the earlier a child has contact with the language, the more opportunity the child has to become fluent.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FOR LEARNING

Merthyr Tydfil’s investment programme will consider the WESP and will support the development of learning environments to allow the successful implementation of strategies for improvement and better educational outcomes.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND EDUCATION TRIBUNAL (WALES) ACT 2018

One of the core aims of the Act is to create a bilingual system of support for Additional Learning Needs. Services will be required to consider whether a child or young person needs Additional Learning Plan (ALP) in Welsh; this duty will be an ongoing one, rather than a one-off decision. If they do, this must be documented in the Individual Development Plan (IDP) and ‘all reasonable steps must be taken to secure the provision in Welsh. A mechanism is included in the Act to remove by regulations the ‘all reasonable steps’ test so that the duties to provide ALP through the medium of Welsh become absolute over time. A series of strategic duties are also aimed at driving progress towards a bilingual ALN system. When reviewing their arrangements for ALN, and the extent to which those arrangements are sufficient to meet the needs of children and young people, local authorities will be required to consider the sufficiency of ALP made in Welsh. If a local authority considers that the arrangements are not sufficient, including the availability of ALP in Welsh, it must take all reasonable steps to remedy the matter. In doing so, local authorities should link their review of ALP with wider strategic duties including those under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, which

requires them to draft, consult on and publish Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) demonstrating how they will aim to achieve the outcomes and targets for Welsh-medium provision in their area, including for learners with ALN.

LINK WITH OTHER COUNCIL PLANS

RAISING ASPIRATIONS RAISING STANDARDS STRATEGY

The key driver for education improvement across the County Borough, the ambition of this plan needs to be considered alongside those of the WESP. This strategy has as an overarching theme partnership and collaboration and states All partners have a key role to play in enabling our young people to take greater responsibility for their own learning beyond statutory education when they move into adulthood as informed citizens. The creation of this partnership as an integral theme to the overall strategy will ensure better cohesion and collective ownership of outcomes. This aspiration will also be key to the success of the WESP (& the WL strategy)

ECONOMIC

Growing the economy within Merthyr Tydfil is a key priority for the council and its wider partners. We will engage with partners to ensure there are opportunities for young people to access work experience and apprenticeships through the Welsh language and through the ambitions of our Welsh Language Strategy to ensure that the use of Welsh is promoted across the economy in the County Borough.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Any expansion of education settings must be considered alongside the Councils' Local Development Plan (LDP). The current LDP runs until 2031 and seeks to secure 2,250 additional dwellings across the County Borough. Work is ongoing to secure additional educational facilities including Welsh medium facilities as new housing developments are built.

WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY

The ambitions of the WESP are a fundamental component of the Council's Welsh Language Strategy. The two documents are coterminous and the action plans that sit behind them have a dual purpose of supporting the council to deliver on both the Welsh Language Strategy and the WESP

The growth in Welsh medium education in Merthyr Tydfil means more of our children and young people have the opportunity to become confident bilingual adults. Every child regardless of whether they attend Welsh or English medium education should leave school with Welsh skills. The actions plan for both the Welsh Language Strategy and the Welsh in Education Strategic plan will run alongside each other and sub-group activity will work alongside both plans

The Welsh Language Strategy and the WESP are strategies for Merthyr Tydfil as a whole, not for any one organisation. The current financial situation faced by all local authorities means that delivering the outcomes of this strategy will be challenging, but it also presents great opportunities and firm foundations upon which to forge

new and stronger partnerships, which help the Welsh language to prosper across the County Borough.

Through the Welsh Language Strategy, there is a clear expectation for all staff to increase their levels of Welsh across the lifetime of the plan.

WELSH IN EDUCATION FORUM

BACKGROUND

The Welsh in Education Forum has been established to provide a forum to monitor the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) of the authority which details how Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (MTCBC) will aim to achieve the Welsh Government's outcomes and targets outlined in the Welsh Medium Education Strategy (WMES). It feeds into the MTCBC Welsh Language Strategy and also the #Shwmaeronment Implementation Plan

POLICY CONTEXT

The WMES sets out the Welsh Government's vision for an education and training system that responds in a planned way to the growing demand for Welsh-medium education. This is reflected in the MTCBC Welsh Language Strategy. The aim is to facilitate an increase in the number of people of all ages able to use the Welsh language with their families, in their communities, and in the workplace. The WEF is a key vehicle for creating an improved planning system for Welsh-medium education outlined in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).

The WESP provides the means for the Welsh Government to monitor the way in which local authorities respond and contribute to the implementation of the WMES objectives by:

- Ensuring that every step of the local authority education process includes full consideration of Welsh-medium education.
- Extending provision where a need is identified based on improved planning.
- Ensuring the delivery of Welsh-language support and Welsh-medium support services on a consortia basis.
- Improving standards and extending the use of Welsh by children and young people,
- Identifying ways of extending the use of Welsh across the community,
- Demonstrating progress against the specific targets in the WMES.
- Contributing towards achieving national targets enshrined in the WMES

OBJECTIVES OF THE WEF

The objectives of the WEF are to ensure that MTCBC, within the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan:

- Contributes toward the development of the Authority's WESP
- Reflects the aims of the WMES,
- Demonstrates clear progress towards achieving the WMES targets;
- Illustrates accountability for planning Welsh-medium and Welsh-language education provision.
- Recognises and supports the sharing of good practice

LANGUAGE DATA

Census 2011 the number of Welsh speakers was 5,532 or 8.9%, (will be updated before this is published)

Annual Population Survey December 31 2020

the number of people who could speak Welsh in the County Borough was 12,600 or 21.7%

19.8% of the population could read Welsh,

18.2% could write Welsh, and

23.9% could understand spoken Welsh.

the frequency of the number of people speaking Welsh in Merthyr on a daily basis was 8.1%

The following pages outlines actions against each objective further information can be found in the joint action plan in Appendix 1.

Outcome 1:

More nursery children/ three year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Where are we now?

In 2021/22 - 88 (12.9%) nursery children are receiving their education through the medium of Welsh.

As can be seen from the below table, the number of *cylchoedd meithrin* and children attending have decreased, however transition from *Cylch Meithrin* into Welsh medium education have remained stable. Anecdotal evidence from parents suggests this is due to lack of immediate nursery provision in Welsh medium schools, lack of transition links with schools, and the proximity of *cylchoedd* to schools themselves.

The overall data rates for the past 5 years are :-

School year / School year	Number of <i>cylchoedd meithrin</i>	Number attended the <i>cylchoedd meithrin</i>	Number transferred from the <i>cylch</i> to a school	Ysgol Gymraeg	%
2016-17	11	175	65	40	61.54%
2017-18	5	163	83	56	67.47%
2018-19	6	151	87	69	79.31%
2019-2020*	5	106	56	32	57.14%
2020-2021	5	132	83	68	81.93%

Work has started on developing closer links with primary schools and an additional Welsh medium Registered Education provider in the South of the County Borough has been secured to help the capacity issue particularly in the Summer Term. The opening of the third Welsh medium primary school for rising 3's in April 2022 will also go some way toward addressing this issue in the North and centre of the County Borough.

Since 2018 Cymraeg i Blant have held sessions for parents. Over the past two years these have moved online and have been delivered across Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent for 2020/21 only joint figures for both areas is available
 2018-2019 – Merthyr - 54 groups held - 329 parents attended the groups
 2019-2020 – Merthyr – 74 groups held 403 parents attended the groups
 2020-2021 – Merthyr & Blaenau Gwent – 195 online groups - 283 parents attended online
 2021-2022 – Merthyr – 75 groups held - 473 parents attended the groups

There were 5 Ti a Fi groups across the County Borough in 2020/21, these had an average attendance ranging from 3 to 18 with the group in Trago being the best attended. One of the groups in Gurnos ran at full capacity (10) for most of their sessions.

There are currently 22 funded Welsh medium Flying Start places across the County Borough and the authority recognises this must increase substantially to meet the targets of this plan.

The Council's being Bilingual Booklet has been refreshed and the accompanying animation has started to be used to further promote Welsh language educational opportunities.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

We will:

- We will actively work to create the demand for Welsh-medium education across the County Borough
- Increase the number of Welsh medium early years places across the County Borough to give parents every opportunity to engage with Welsh medium education
 - The planned roll out of Flying Start provision will see a planned increase of Welsh medium provision by at least another 22 places over the first 2 years of this plan(100% increase)
 - By the end of the first 5 years this will increase to at least 90 places
- Increase the current provision of 3.5 form entry to 6 form entry over the lifetime of this plan
 - By 2027 there will be 2-form entry provision in three schools for nursery age children
 - Sept 2022 – open Dosbarth Meithrin in former Gurnos Nursery School
 - Sept 2024 – new school open – nursery, reception, Yr 1
 - Sept 2024 – extra capacity open in Ysgol Rhyd y Grug
- Work with pre-school and child-care providers to increase the number of families who choose Welsh medium education by promoting the benefits of being bilingual
- Run a marketing campaign with all partners over the lifetime of the WESP using the Being Bilingual booklet and other promotional material
- Use data from Mudiad Meithrin to ensure that children receiving Welsh medium early years provision have every opportunity to transfer to a Welsh medium school setting
 - Create explicit links with schools and clych meithrin
 - Each school to be linked to at least three by the end of this plan
 - Support each Welsh medium primary school to develop transition plans with link cylchoedd
 - Working with Mudiad Meithrin to develop transition material for parents, cylchoedd and schools to use with their children

- Working with Mudiad Meithrin - increase the number of Cylch Meithrin by at least three
 - Sept 2023 – open Cylch Meithrin in the centre of the County Borough
 - Sept 2024 - open further Cylch Meithrin in the centre of the County Borough
 - Sept 2025 – working with Mudiad Meithrin to identify an appropriate place for a new Cylch so as to ensure the County Borough has more equal coverage
- Working with Mudiad Meithrin increase the number of Ti a Fi groups to at least eight
 - Sept 2022 – develop a plan to increase Ti a Fi groups
 - April 2023 – open additional Ti a Fi Group
 - April 2024 – open further Ti a Fi Group
 - April 2025 – open further Ti a Fi Group
- Increase the number of Welsh medium Registered Education Providers (REP) so there is provision within the catchment areas of the three Welsh medium primary schools
 - Sept 2026 – additional Welsh medium REP approved
- Ensure all nursery places are full-time thus ensuring transport is available for all
- Consider which schools could move along the categorisation model finally determined by Welsh Government
- With CSC and Mudiad Meithrin develop a Campus Cymraeg/Siarter Iaith model for all Early Years settings
 - Summer 2022 – pilot
 - September 2022 – rollout to all settings

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

By the end of this plan, there will be sufficient Flying Start provision for all learners entering Welsh medium education – 180 places

3 x 2-form entry Welsh medium schools will be established with a capacity for 180 learners in each year group

Across the County Borough, there will be capacity for all these learners to attend high-quality early years provision to support their language development

All Early Years settings will have achieved the Gold standard for ‘Campus Cymraeg/Siarter Iaith’

The aim is for 2 schools to move along the categorisation model, however with only 20 primary schools this is an ambitious target

Key Data

Numbers and % of 3 year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
98	13.8%	108	15.2%	118	16.6%	128	18.1%	138	19.5%

2027 - 2028		2027 - 2028		2027 - 2028		2027 - 2028		2027 - 2028	
148	20.9%	155	21.9%	165	23.3%	175	24.7%	185	26.1%

Outcome 2

More reception class children/ five year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Where are we now?

In 2021/22, 85 (11.63%) reception pupils are receiving their education through the medium of Welsh

Currently, within our Welsh medium schools, there are 100 places available for reception learners. Over the last 5 years, there has been pressure on Ysgol Rhyd-y-Grug which has led to the need to increase the capacity of that school by another 20 places within the first 5 years of this plan.

Over the past 5 years numbers have been relatively stable within the schools with varying surplus capacity.

	NOR (inc nurs)	Capacity (inc nurs)	Empty spaces
Ysgol Santes Tydfil	470	456	-14
Ysgol Rhyd y Grug	265	309	44
2017 FT totals	735		
Ysgol Santes Tydfil	480	485	5
Ysgol Rhyd y Grug	282	309	27
2018 FT totals	762		
Ysgol Santes Tydfil	488	485	-3
Ysgol Rhyd y Grug	295	309	14
2019 FT totals	783		
Ysgol Santes Tydfil	479	486	7
Ysgol Rhyd y Grug	302	334	32
2020 FT totals	781		
Ysgol Santes Tydfil	471	478	7
Ysgol Rhyd y Grug	294	334	40
2021 All pupil totals	765		
Ysgol Santes Tydfil	451	478	27
Ysgol Rhyd y Grug	303	334	31
2022 All pupil totals	754		

Prior to the pandemic the local authority supported a very few children who transferred into Welsh medium education late through a small amount of additional funding.

In 2021/22 the local authority secured 84k Welsh Government Funding to support immersion and this has proved beneficial to both schools as children return from predominantly English speaking households to Welsh medium education.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

Within the first three years of this plan continue to develop immersion opportunities to be taken up for latecomers to Welsh medium education, linking in with the resources available from the local education consortium

- January 2022 – pilot immersion activities across Ysgol Santes Tydfil and Ysgol Rhyd y Grug (funded by Welsh Government)
- April 2022 – develop immersion activities further with both schools
- April 2022 – continue to work with CSC to develop the capacity of staff to provide immersion activities
- 2023/24 – develop an overarching late comer’s policy document which will aid schools, parents and carers
- September 2024 – immersion class opens in third Welsh medium school
- 2024/25 – consider opening the immersion class to learners from Cynon Valley, RCT

Developing immersion activities is key if the LA is to reach the Upper target set by WG

- Sept 2025 – Rhyd y Grug 2-form entry nursery will ensure by Sept 2027 there will be capacity for 120 learners in Yr1
- Sept 2024 – third Welsh medium school will have its first Yr 1 children
 - to reach lower end of target by end of plan this needs to be a full form entry
 - to reach upper end of target by end of this plan this needs to develop into a two-form entry provision

Support for non-Welsh speaking parents will be developed with the schools, Family Learning and Ysgol Rhydywaun to ensure parents are confident in supporting their children to remain within the Welsh medium sector

We will continue to promote bilingualism through the Being Bilingual booklet and accompanying animation.

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

- Across the County Borough there will be six reception classes of up to 30 children each which will mean the LA will be at the upper end of the target set by WG
- The third Welsh medium school will be complete and at capacity
- All Welsh medium schools are recognised as excellent schools providing high quality learning for all pupils to attract parents into the Welsh medium sector.

Key Data

Numbers and % of 5 year olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
88	12.9%	98	13.6%	108	15.0%	118	16.4%	128	17.8%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
138	19.2%	148	20.6%	155	21.6%	165	23.0%	175	24.3%

Outcome 3

More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

Where are we now?

80/82 pupils (97.6%) transferred from WM primary education to WM secondary education in 2020/21. This provision is outside the County Borough.

The transfer from Welsh medium primary provision to Welsh medium secondary provision has remained high for the past five years with only a very few learners choosing not to continue through the medium of Welsh

However, we are seeing an increase in numbers transferring back to English medium secondary education over the past 3 years. It is too soon to see if this is a result of the pandemic. This will be closely monitored and we will work with Ysgol Rhydywaun to ensure these numbers are minimal.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

As the capacity of Welsh medium primary provision increases within the County Borough there is a need to ensure that there is sufficient secondary provision for learners to continue their education in Welsh.

Within the first five years of this plan, we will

- undertake a feasibility study on the setting up of a Welsh medium secondary provision within Merthyr Tydfil.
- Jan 2022 - Engage with RCT as to the capacity of Rhydywaun to take additional learners
- Sept 2022 – consider elected member approval to undertake feasibility of Welsh Medium secondary provision within County Borough
- April 2023 – consider possible site for Welsh Medium Secondary School of required by members

We will ensure that rates of transition to Ysgol Rhydywaun remains at least as high as it is currently.

We will work with Ysgol Rhydywaun to develop opportunities for Merthyr Tydfil learners to undertake work experience in Merthyr Tydfil schools

Within the first three years of this plan, we will

- work with Merthyr College to support their delivery of their Further Education and Apprenticeship Welsh medium Action Plan
- Work with the Economic Growth Partnership expand the opportunities for Welsh medium apprenticeships within the County Borough

- Support the development of a wide range of Post-16 opportunities for courses through the medium of Welsh
- Ensure the Welsh medium primary schools in the County Borough support the placement of social care students
- Develop bespoke pathways for social care students in Merthyr College to work in Welsh medium primary schools

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten-year Plan?

By 2032 learners from the third Welsh medium school will be transferring to secondary provision. The expectation is for all learners to transfer to secondary provision either in a new school within the County Borough or to an increased capacity Ysgol Rhydywaun.

A wide range of Post-16 opportunities for qualifications through the medium of Welsh is available at Merthyr College and there are also opportunities for apprenticeships through the medium of Welsh. (see also Outcome 4)

Key Data

Numbers and % of learners continuing to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
84	98.8%	99	99%	93	100%	105	100%	92	100%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 - 2032	
85	100%	88	100%	98	100%	108	100%	118	100%

Outcome 4

More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

Where are we now?

Merthyr Tydfil does not have any schools with sixth forms nor does it have a Welsh medium secondary school, so this outcome focuses on the expansion of learners taking Welsh as a Second Language for GCSE.

The number of learners undertaking Welsh at GCSE level in Merthyr Tydfil has increased over the past 5 years and the regional consortium will work with schools to ensure that all learners are given every opportunity to study for a qualification in Welsh.

Of the Merthyr Tydfil learners that attend Ysgol Rhydywaun, all subjects are studied through the medium of Welsh. Attainment at the end of KS4 for these pupils is broadly in line with those educated in schools within Merthyr Tydfil.

496 (82.26%) of pupils studied Welsh Second Language GCSE in 20/21 with 97.6% of these attaining A*- G (70.9% A*-C)

Over the past 3 years, there has been an increase in the number of learners transferring back to English medium secondary provision (19/20 – 5; 20/21 – 9; 21/22 up to April – 9) – this will impact our target for all learners to achieve an assessed qualification in Welsh as there is not the capacity in our secondary schools to offer a 1st Language Welsh qualification

The College Merthyr Tydfil is committed to enhancing and promoting opportunities for post-16 learners to maintain and develop their Welsh language Skills, knowledge and experience.

The College currently offers the following provision to learners progressing to post-16 education:

Welsh A-level 2nd language qualification. Numbers studying this qualification have been relatively low over the last three years as shown below. However, work is now being undertaken with local schools to examine how to attract and encourage further learners to study in this subject area.

Course	2019 Enrolled	2020 Enrolled	2021 Enrolled
AS Level Cymraeg Ail Iaith	10	9	5

Discussions have also been held with ESGOL and also Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun in regards to offering a Welsh A-level 1st language qualification that would offer a progression route for learners coming from nearby Welsh medium secondary schools.

The college offers learners the opportunity to complete their Welsh Bacallaureate through the medium of Welsh.

Welsh language curriculum provision in key regional skill sector priority areas, including Public Services, Childcare and Health and Social Care

The college has worked in partnership with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to appoint full-time Bilingual Support Assistants to work within the Public Services and Health and Care divisions. The Bilingual Support Assistants have been able to support course tutors in raising awareness of Welsh language skills in these key sector priority areas and support learners to study and complete their work and assignments bilingually and through the medium of Welsh. Key modules that learners have studied to date, include:

	10 hour Work Welsh on-line taster	Agored Leading Towards a Bilingual Society	Prentis-laith (Coleg Cenedlaethol Module)
	No. of learners	No. of learners	No. of learners
Public Services		14	14
Healthcare	53	15	15
Childcare	16	16	

The college provides a range of opportunities for learners from across the college to maintain, develop and enhance their Welsh language skills through offering Welsh reception skills. Essential language skills, phrases and confidence are a big part of the brand-new Level 1 Welsh Reception Skills unit that meets the Welsh Government's recently announced directive for their own staff recruitment programme. Scenarios and role play are central to the learning process, and one Level 1 group of Hair & Beauty students has already commenced working towards this qualification, with another class of Level 3 learners set to start in Spring 2022. Moving forwards, the college plans to roll this out to other divisional areas, including Business and Computing.

The college offers learners the opportunity to receive curriculum or learning resources and support through the medium of Welsh. For example, learners studying GCSE Maths or English re-sits can receive course materials and resources, including terminology guides through the medium of Welsh and also receive a copy of the Welsh exam paper to go alongside their English copy.

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

We will:

- Work with schools to increase the numbers taking GCSE Welsh second Language and maintain the high levels for the lifetime of the plan
- Ensure professional learning opportunities are available for staff in secondary schools to develop their skills in teaching of Welsh
- In September 2022 develop a professional learning network for Welsh language teachers across the County Borough
- Consider how to support learners who leave Ysgol Rhydywaun during Key Stage 3 to achieve a Welsh Language qualification
- Develop a pathway to ensure all schools identify early those learners who wish to continue Welsh as a subject into sixth form with the aim to:
 - Increase the number of learners undertaking Welsh Language A level at Merthyr College year on year
 - Provide opportunities for these learners to use their Welsh outside the classroom
- Work with Merthyr College to identify opportunities to increase pathways through the medium of Welsh
- Work with Merthyr College to engage with e-ysgol to expand their offer of qualifications through the medium of Welsh
- Ensure that for Post 16 learning, Central South Consortium, Merthyr College, Careers Wales and Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol are fully engaged in securing and enhancing career progression through the medium of Welsh
- Following the steer from Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, Merthyr College will continue to focus on embedding full bilingual units into the main qualifications in priority bilingual curriculum areas.
 - In the first 5 years the focus will be on childcare, health and social care and public services. Merthyr College will employ new staff (or upskill existing staff) to deliver bilingual units in these three curriculum areas.

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

All learners will gain a qualification in Welsh with increasing numbers continuing to study through Welsh Post-16

Merthyr College will have a Bilingual Support Assistant for every curriculum area. The college will also offer a first language Welsh GCSE re-sit option alongside a range of post-16 qualifications in Welsh

Key Data

Numbers and % of learners studying for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

2022 - 2023		2023 - 2024		2024 - 2025		2025 - 2026		2026 - 2027	
564	90%	672	95%	661	100%	594	100%	731	100%
2027 - 2028		2028 - 2029		2029 - 2030		2030 - 2031		2031 – 2032	
749	100%	724	100%	731	100%	775	100%	701	100%

Outcome 5

More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

Where are we now?

April 2022 – Siarter Iaith/Cymraeg Campus Awards

Siarter Iaith	2/2 Silver Awards
Cymraeg Campus	6/22 Bronze Awards – Primary Schools
	1/4 Gold Awards – Secondary Schools

All schools bar one secondary school are involved in the above process

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

We will:

- By April 2022 - Develop a specific social media presence for Welsh Language Education and social events to promote the use of the language
- Promote Cymraeg Campus in all English medium (EM) schools and will use Welsh medium (WM) schools to support Welsh Language development in English medium schools
 - By July 2023 all EM schools will have achieved at least Bronze Award
 - By July 2027 all WM primary schools will have achieved Siarter Iaith Gold Award
- Develop a Cymraeg Campus style Award for Early years settings
- Develop a Cymraeg Campus style Awards for Youth Services
- Develop After School and Holiday provision in all Welsh medium schools
 - During Summer 2022 – at least 2 weeks holiday provision in one WM school
- Link with Fforwm Sirol to promote activities within the community with schools and parents
- Develop a social media partnership presence to promote Welsh Language Activities across the County Borough
 - **During 2022/23** in conjunction with Wellbeing Merthyr and the Urdd establish sporting activities through the medium of Welsh across the County Borough
- Ensure current partnership between Youth Services and Menter Iaith is developed further
 - **September 2022** – establish a Youth Forum (9-16) to include young people from Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun, Ysgol Santes Tudful and Ysgol Rhyd y Grug to support the further

development of Welsh only and bilingual activities for young people.

- Develop an annual plan of activities for young people to be promoted on social media
- Building on the success of the PenyDre Cluster and in partnership with schools, develop cluster-based eisteddfodau
 - **March 2022** – Cyfarthfa Cluster
 - **March 2023** – Faith Cluster
 - **March 2024** – Afon Taf Cluster
 - **March 2025** – County Borough Eisteddfod including WM schools
- Establish wider links with Yr Urdd
 - **Sept 2023** - In partnership with Wellbeing Merthyr secure funding for Urdd Apprentice to support Sports development
- Building on the success of the Diwrnod Shwmae event in 2021 - plan and deliver at least two community wide partnership events each year promoting the use of Welsh

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

All schools to have achieved the Siarter Iaith/Campus Cymraeg Gold Awards
All early years settings & youth provisions to have achieved silver status of the equivalent award.

Community events across the County Borough established to celebrate the Welsh language, engagement from all schools

Outcome 6

An increase in the provision of Welsh medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) (in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

Where are we now?

The ALNET Act places a duty on local authorities to provide support for learners who require additional learning plans (ALP) through the medium of Welsh. There is currently no provision within Welsh medium provision to provide for learners with additional learning needs and anecdotally over the past 5 years, several learners have moved from Welsh medium provision into English medium provision due to lack of support for additional need. We have also seen a very few parents chose English medium provision after attending Cylch Meithrin due the additional needs of their children, To support this, we will seek to secure funding from Council to open a learning resource base at Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug. This resource base will provide for up to 15 learners from across the three Welsh medium schools who have a range of complex needs. The ALN team within the local authority will increase its own confidence in the use of Welsh through ongoing training and where recruitment opportunities arise these will be identified as Welsh essential

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

- Sept 2023 open a Learning Resource Base (LRB) at Ysgol Rhyd Y Grug for up to 15 children with complex needs
- liaise with the peripatetic Welsh Language support team in RCT to ensure that learners accessing the LRB can successfully transition to Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun for their secondary education
- Ensure that any learners with Social Emotional and Behavioural difficulties transfer successfully to provision in Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun
- From September 2023 provide parents with information on support provided through the medium of Welsh
- Within the first five years of this plan increase capacity within Special School & PRU for Welsh speaking learners
- Develop the opportunity for Welsh speaking staff within the primary phase of the PRU to undertake outreach work in WM primary schools when needed
- Work with RCT to consider the need for a specialist class for children with behavioural difficulties who struggle to access mainstream provision
- Provide a structured training programme to upskill Welsh Language skills of centrally based staff

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

By 2032, there will be equity of access to specialist services and provision for children and young people with ALN across the County Borough

Work will have been undertaken with RCT to ensure that those young people within Welsh medium primary schools in Merthyr Tydfil can successfully transfer to secondary provision with the appropriate support

EOTAS provision through the medium of Welsh will be available and young people can access support through their language of choice

Outcome 7

Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

Where are we now?

Data based on 20/21 Schools Annual Census

Workforce	No Skills	Entry	Foundation	Intermediate	Advanced	Proficient
WM pri teachers						35
EM pri teachers		70	75	40	10	15
EM sec teachers	80	45	15	10	5	15
WM pri support	5					40
EM pri support	165	115	25	10	5	
EM sec support	80	15				

Where do we aim to be within the first 5 years of this Plan and how we propose to get there?

- **Within the first two years of this plan** work with CSC and Learn Morgannwg to develop a programme of support for school staff who wish to improve their level of Welsh
- **From September 2022** increase the number of staff able to teach through the medium of Welsh to enable the third Welsh medium school to flourish
 - Work with Initial Teaching Education establishments and Merthyr College/Ysgol Rhydywaun to secure high-quality staff – expected increase – 2 teachers and at least 2 support staff for first five years of plan, following years at least 2 teachers will be needed.
 - Depending on outcome of feasibility study for Welsh medium secondary provision they may be a need to secure secondary staff, the plan will be revised accordingly once outcome is known.
- **By 2025** work with partners to ensure all support staff in EM primary and secondary schools have at least an entry level understanding of Welsh
- **By 2025** work with CSC to ensure all teaching staff in secondary school have at least an entry level understanding of Welsh
- **By 2027** nearly all school staff in EM to improve their level of Welsh by at least one level
- With CSC develop opportunities for post-sabbatical staff to engage in professional networks to retain skills learnt

- Ensure all staff within Welsh medium schools access the appropriate professional learning to increase their skills including leadership skills
 - Develop a relationship with ITE establishments to secure Merthyr Tydfil Schools as employment of choice
 - Encourage at least one WM primary school to become a partner school for ITT to further develop those relationships by Sept 2023
- **Within the first five years of this plan** develop a school-based Learning Support Welsh language training provision for
 - Staff in Welsh medium schools
 - Staff in English medium schools

Where do we expect to be at the end of our ten year Plan?

We will have worked with CSC to encourage at least one member of staff from each school to undertake the Welsh Language Sabbatical

- all English medium primary schools will have at least two teachers and one support staff member confident in delivering through the medium of Welsh
- all secondary schools will have at least four teachers outside the Welsh department and at least two support members of staff confident in delivering through the medium of Welsh
- all Welsh medium schools will be fully staffed

How we will work with others to achieve our vision

The Welsh in Education Forum will assess progress against the targets within the WESP:

The WEF is expected to play a crucial role in agreeing and implementing the authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

APPROACH

The main Group will meet each term with sub-groups also meeting once a term and feeding into the main group. The members of the main Group are:

- Councillor (Welsh Language)
- Director of Education (CHAIR)
- Head of ALN & Inclusion
- Head of Achievement & Wellbeing
- Early Years and Family Support Manager
- Head of Adult Learning
- Representative headteacher of Welsh medium primary schools
- Headteacher of Welsh medium feeder secondary school
- Representative headteacher of English medium primary school
- Governing body representatives from Welsh-medium primary schools
- Representatives from
 - Menter Iaith
 - Urdd Gobaith Cymru
 - Rhag
 - Mudiad Meithrin
 - Merthyr Tydfil college
 - Cymraeg i Blant / Welsh for Kids
 - Cymraeg i Oedolion / Welsh for Adults
 - Regional Consortium
 - Health

There is a standing invitation for a Welsh Government representative to attend meetings of the Group in an observer/advisory capacity (but not as a full member). Chairs of sub-groups if not on the main group may also attend

Substitutions may attend.

The sub-groups are:-

- Early Years
- Additional Learning Needs
- Curriculum
- Infrastructure
- Community

Each sub-group is made up of officers, headteachers and wider partners and will consider how their work meets the ambitions of this plan. An joint action plan for the Welsh language Strategy and WESP and the termly WEF will consider

progress against this plan as well as receiving written highlight reports from partners and officers on their work towards the ambitions of the plan.

Whilst not being represented in the main group there will be an additional Youth group established to consider and report back on activities to support Welsh Language activities for young people in the community.

A bi-annual conference will take place jointly with members of WEF, Welsh Language Strategic Forum and Forwm Sirol to consider progress and identify further ways forward to meet targets.

The newly established #Shwmaeronment social media platform is increasingly being used to promote Welsh language education materials.