



CONSULTATION REPORT

Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

Appendix A

List of Respondents to the Consultation Document

Carmarthenshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

Observation Received List

Number	Position/Category of Respondent
1.	Parent
2.	Parent
3.	County Councillor
4.	Parent
5.	Parent
6.	Parent
7.	County Councillor
8.	Welsh Language Organisation
9.	Unknown
10.	Parent
11.	Parent
12.	Parent
13a	Parents/ Members of Governing Body
13b	Parent/ Member of Governing Body
13c	Parent/ Members of Governing Body
13d	Parent/ Members of Governing Body

Appendix B

Observations/Themes and LA response

Observation/Theme	Local Authority Response
In opposition	
<p>1 Issue of parental choice/not compliant with legislation/ UNRC- the lack of choice is unacceptable</p>	<p>The Local Authority has a responsibility to provide all pupils with the best education possible and the Local Authority believes that providing a bilingual education is best for all pupils. The aim of Carmarthenshire’s Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2014-2017 is to ensure “that every pupil who receives education in Welsh/bilingual medium schools can speak, read and write Welsh fluently by the end of KS2.” The best way to create confident, bilingual individuals is through immersing pupils in the Welsh language.</p> <p>We do not agree with the response in respect to choice. We believe that we are compliant with the law and that the respondent has applied too broad an interpretation of “parental choice”, as the law does not give parents, the absolute right to have their children educated through whatever linguistic medium they choose. The Local Authority is of the view that the availability of education in one of the national languages is sufficient to fulfil the duty under Article 2 of the UNRC.</p>
<p>2 Issue of standards and learning through Welsh</p>	<p>There is no evidence that standards of education through the medium of Welsh are not equivalent to the standards of education through the medium of English. It is challenging to compare schools as they have different cohort sizes, learners from different backgrounds and different levels of challenge. In respect to the Level 2 Inclusive indicator it could be argued that Welsh Medium secondary schools achieve better results than the other schools.</p> <p><u>2015/16 Level 2i</u> Welsh Medium- 72.8%, Bilingual- 60.3%, English Medium- 57.4%</p>
<p>3 How can parents support with homework, get involved in their education</p>	<p>This is a fair point however there are examples of Welsh medium schools who work hard to successfully ensure that all parents understand their child’s work and are able to support their learning. e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open door policy where teachers translate the work for parents and provide an explanation of what is required at that time e.g. either before or after school • Homework is provided bilingually when needed. • Welsh lessons are provided to parents • A homework club is held after school to provide support for pupils who require help with their homework. • After school activities are held bilingually. • Older pupils have skills which enables them to explain the homework to their parents.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using online translation tools. • Asking a Welsh speaking friend/family member/neighbour for help. <p>ACTION- LA to work with schools to produce a ‘Good Practice/guidance document for engaging all parents’.</p>
4	Happy for children to be taught through Welsh in the primary level but not in secondary.	The LA is of the view that in order to develop to be fully and competently bilingual a learner needs to continue with a Welsh/bilingual education into Key Stage 3 studying at least 5 subjects through the medium of Welsh until the end of Year 9.
5	Lack of consultation initially and if interested parties have now been consulted.	<p>The LA was of the view that there was no requirement to consult on the revised Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. Officers considered <i>‘The Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and Assessing Demand for Welsh Medium Education (Wales) Regulations 2013’</i> which cited that <i>‘During the conduct of such a review the local authority must consult such persons as they consider appropriate’</i>. As there had been regular discussions in regard to the WESP with schools, the Council’s Welsh Language Advisory Panel and the Welsh in Education Forum we believed that was appropriate.</p> <p>However, Part 4 of the <i>School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013</i> states that- <i>In preparing a Welsh in education strategic plan or revised plan, a local authority must consult.</i></p> <p>Once officers were aware of this requirement a consultation was undertaken and an extended timescale, as advised by Welsh Government, was agreed.</p>
6	Issue of ALN and acquisition of two languages	<p>All pupils with additional learning needs have specific individual plans based on their needs and the agreed support is provided. In the majority of cases an additional learning need is not a barrier to learning two or more languages as there is much flexibility built into the delivery of the curriculum to enable pupils to succeed. It is our experience that the vast majority of pupils with a wide range of additional learning needs and abilities are successful in all of our schools irrespective of the language of instruction.</p> <p>We recognise the many benefits of bilingualism and are of the view that learning more than one language supports the development of cognitive skills e.g. cognitive control, phonological awareness, memory, comparison and non-verbal problem solving. Learning two languages also supports the gaining of understanding of differences in language structures, develops confidence in learning new languages and supports the gaining of learning skills early that are transferable across subject areas which support good</p>

		learning. We are of the view that in the majority of cases an additional learning need is not a barrier to learning two languages but recognise that the expectations for level of proficiency in each language need to be approached realistically. In exceptional cases only will there be a recommendation for monolingual provision.
7	<p>Many ALN assessment tools are only available in English and how will LA ensure that children with ‘protected characteristics’ are not discriminated against.</p> <p>Ability of learners with ALN being able to receive services in the language which they are most comfortable.</p>	<p>We are fortunate in Carmarthenshire in having a bilingual team of Additional Learning Needs Coordinators, Advisory Teachers and Education and Child Psychologists who can provide a bilingual service to learners and schools. We are confident that we can meet the needs of our learners and provide advice, guidance and assessments through the medium of Welsh and English.</p> <p>As part of the Welsh Government’s ALN Reform agenda the case to further develop Welsh medium resources and tools has been made.</p> <p>The LA has many experienced Inclusion officers who are able to offer expertise, advice and guidance in either Welsh or English. These officers contributed to the development of the WESP and the ALN section. Additional learning Needs Coordinators with the necessary skills are employed by schools to be able to support the learners.</p>
8	How has demand for English Medium school places assessed	<p>Comments are noted and the Local Authority is of the view that they have complied with this duty. There is no requirement for the Local Authority to assess the demand for English Medium school places however as part of the WESP guidance there is an expectation on some LAs to assess the demand for Welsh medium provision. As more than 50% of Carmarthenshire’s 7 year olds are in Welsh-medium education there is no requirement for us to undertake such an assessment.</p> <p><i>‘The powers in relation to Welsh-medium education assessments are set out in Regulation 3 and require any local authority to assess demand if there are fewer than 50% of seven year olds in Welsh-medium education and the local authority has not undertaken such a survey during the last three years provided that Welsh Ministers inform the local authority in writing that it must do so. Any such assessment must include the questions set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulations.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(WESP Guidance 2014)</p>
9	Will LA adhere to the ‘Schools Organisational Code’ in respect to this agenda- category, standards, progression,	<p>The Local Authority is obliged to ensure that any changes to a school will be in line with the <i>School Organisation Code</i> procedures.</p> <p>http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/130719-school-organisation-codes-en.pdf</p>

	travel time...	
10	Impact on English Medium schools in respect to funding, intake etc.	The WESP requires all schools to move along the language continuum and develop Welsh medium provision. We have some English medium secondary schools who have responded to this challenge and are providing some subject through the medium of Welsh at Key Stage 3. This has attracted learners and protected their roll and funding.
11	Ability to speak Welsh must not become the over-riding factor when recruiting staff.	Welsh as a 1 st or 2 nd language is a statutory element of the National Curriculum. All schools are required to provide a certain level of Welsh therefore Governing Bodies have a duty to employ staff who have the skills/ are able to deliver the Welsh requirements of the curriculum.
12	Need to make it clear that there is an expectation that learners who follow Welsh medium primary education are expected to continue with Welsh 1st language programme of study at secondary school.	<p>The WESP clearly states the Local Authority's expectations in respect to Welsh/bilingual provision.</p> <p>All schools have defined themselves according to the Welsh Government's '<i>Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision</i>' and review this annually in their submission to Welsh Government via the PLASC (Pupil Level Annual School Census).</p> <p>Schools, in their prospectuses/Information for Parents will note the school's language category and policy in respect to linguistic character and progression.</p>
In support		
1	Benefits of learning at least two languages and learners leaving school with fluency and confidence in Welsh	The respondents support is noted and we welcome the observations. There are many advantages to being bilingual as confirmed by national and international research. Bilingualism has positive effects on children's linguistic and educational development as well as having social advantages. Some new studies also suggest that bilingualism may offer some protection against the decline of cognitive abilities in old age, both in normal and pathological ageing.
2	Encouraged by increased update of Welsh 1st language at GCSE.	The respondents support is noted and we welcome the observations.
3	The MEP programme should be expedited to address the barriers to	Carmarthenshire County Council's Modernising Education Provision programme is addressing this issue and increasing the number of Welsh medium education places across the county e.g. establishing a dual stream school in Llanelli to replace two English medium schools (Copperworks and Lakefield),

	accessing Welsh medium education	<p>establishing a Category 1 school at Ysgol Bro Myrddin, supporting dual stream schools to become Welsh medium schools.</p> <p>The prioritisation of capital investment in the modernisation of school premises is founded upon consideration of a combination of criteria which includes-</p> <p>Welsh Language Development: <i>investment will be prioritised towards projects that promote the expansion of Welsh medium education or the development of bilingual education, in support of the objectives set out in the County Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.</i></p>
4	Happy to see increase in many indicators but concerned about reduction in transfer from primary to secondary sector.	The respondent's comments are noted. The LA is also disappointed in the 2015 transfer rate from Welsh medium primary education to Welsh medium secondary education. We are confident that initiatives such as our marketing campaign and the launching of the Language Charters will support this aim and increase the number of learners who choose Welsh medium secondary education. However, we must recognise that there is parental choice at this transition stage and a range of options for learners.
5	Would like to see a plan for every primary and secondary school to move along the Welsh language continuum.	<p>The LA agrees with this suggestion.</p> <p>ACTION- LA to draft a primary and secondary plan for discussion with school Governing Bodies.</p>
6	Support but the goals are not ambitious enough and there is a need to look at the broader context of supporting rural Welsh communities.	The respondent's support/comments are noted.
General comments		
1	Need to ensure Welsh medium early years provision in all areas and that school early years staff are bilingual.	The respondent's comments are noted. A review of early years provision has been undertaken and we are committed to work with schools and the non-maintained sector to ensure that all Carmarthenshire children can access quality Welsh-medium early years provision.

2	Schools need to better support/ acknowledge parents who are not Welsh/learning Welsh.	The respondent's comments are noted. There are examples of Welsh medium schools who successfully support who are not Welsh speakers. ACTION- LA to work with schools to produce a 'Good Practice/guidance document for engaging all parents'.
3	Language is ambiguous and sometimes aggressive	The respondent's comments are noted.
4	The document needs to be more celebratory in nature and note the progress being made in particular schools	The respondent's comments are noted. ACTION- develop and share case studies of effective practice and celebrate the progress being achieved by schools.
5	Need to develop further Welsh medium educational support materials, resources and initiatives	There has been substantial investment over the past few years in developing Welsh medium educational support materials and resources. Annually CBAC/WJEC invite practitioners to suggest ideas for new resources that are required to support curriculum delivery. http://resources.wjec.co.uk/Pages/SearchResources.aspx In addition the team of Welsh and Bilingual Support Teachers create many resources in response to requests from Carmarthenshire's schools.

