

NUT Wales - Speaking Notes

Education Committee of the Assembly - 13th February 2002

Thank you for the opportunity to give my views. The general response of the NUT is included in the previous written response. Therefore I would like to give a teacher's perspective, one who worked in the Welsh-medium sector by looking at my experiences of having worked over 25 years in a Welsh medium comprehensive in one of the South Wales Valleys.

I do not wish to go back over the history of the development of Welsh medium education but one must note the massive growth in Welsh medium education. In 1974, when the old Mid Glamorgan Authority started, there was only one Welsh medium secondary school in the whole of Mid Glamorgan and Gwent. Now there are 9 schools in this area. Naturally, to feed all these schools, there is also a similar development in the Welsh medium primary schools.

During this whole period, the same pattern had developed without exception. If there was a vacant building available, whatever its state, it was good enough for Welsh medium education. A good example was the English medium primary school in Llantrisant which was condemned as being unsuitable for education in 1971. Two new schools took its place, but the old school was re-opened as a Welsh medium school, and that school is still there today. Another example was Tonyrefail. Here there was a Welsh medium school which was in a terrible state and a new school was built. Children moved from the English school into the new building and the Welsh medium school was given the old English school.

Everybody in the Welsh medium sector had to expect that their conditions were second-rate and that they had to be thankful to get anything as if they were some steel or coal workers from the past, grateful for any crumbs that came off the master's table. Unfortunately, this pattern continues. A new English medium school is opening in Maesteg and a Welsh medium secondary school will get the old building. Of course, proper reasons are given for the size and location but again there is an acceptance that second-hand buildings for Welsh-medium education are acceptable.

I do accept that new buildings are now beginning to become available because of the unacceptable state and the cost of the old buildings which have been used for Welsh medium schools throughout Wales.

Local Government Re-organisation brought about problems in its wake, certainly in the Valleys of South Wales, as regards the secondary sector - Rhondda Cynon Taff has inherited four Welsh medium schools while Merthyr and Bridgend have been left without one. The new development in Bridgend is a cause of concern, in the short term, as to its effect on Llanharri school, because 60% of Llanharri's pupils come from Bridgend.

Because education is provided through Local Authorities, it is something of civic pride to provide their own schools, but it is boundary nonsense that has caused the present situation. The Assembly and the Local Councils should plan and organise on a regional basis rather than on a County basis, to ensure that they live up to the vision and to provide the best value to pupils and to tax-payers.

As regards the teaching resources, things have improved substantially - the pupils no longer have to receive everything in purple script which has been prepared by a teacher on the old Sprit Banda, and every teacher does not have their fingers coloured by the carbon. However problems continue - not the word processor and the photocopier controls. Despite more resources reaching our schools, often the problem is they reach the Welsh medium schools too late. Naturally, costs are high to produce any Welsh textbook, and no private publisher is prepared to produce Welsh medium books because the profit margin is not as great as those educational publishers in England are able to achieve.

English materials usually are up-to-date, colourful and attractive. Usually in the Welsh medium sector, the teachers have to buy one copy of an English book and then they have to prepare their own work-books themselves, having based their work and ideas on the English text book. This production does not reach the professional standard of the English books. After much time later, some panel selects a book that they think is worth translating. More time is taken to simplify the complications about the copyright before the book can be released as a Welsh language version. Naturally there is a great welcome for this translation but the teachers who teach through the medium of Welsh have had to give long hours to prepare the material for whole courses before the proper translation has appeared. This happens in almost every Welsh medium school and therefore this is replicated throughout the sector.

I have a request to have a body that is able to be available up front and can prepare materials before a course commences, not in time for the second course to start. I also have a concern for the recent development where handbooks for examination courses are prepared and printed in English - translated and put on the network in Welsh - and photocopied again, which is second rate and compared to what is available in English.

Can I at this point pay tribute to ACCAC and the Welsh Joint Education Committee for their work with Welsh resources. There is a need for much more work and a faster response to ever-changing situations. The aim must be to fund and invest adequately.

The WJEC is a leader in the field of examinations boards and as an examination officer myself, I only have praise for their work and relationships with schools. It is a shame that not more schools are supportive of the WJEC. Here again the costs are very high and obviously having to translate the vast majority of papers there are costs the boards in England do not usually have to face despite being much larger organisations. I remember a phone call from a subject officer in the WJEC asking me to confirm that a candidate

would be attending an examination as she was the only candidate sitting the paper through the medium of Welsh. The cost of translation is the same, regardless of the number of candidates.

The WJEC does not cater for every subject any more especially in the case of A-Level and vocational examinations. We therefore have to go to boards in England for our courses and examinations. Even though they are more than happy to help and distribute papers through the medium of Welsh, I am concerned at their method of marking. In some examinations, candidates' scripts are translated into English and then the translation is marked.

There must be a better way than this to provide education and examinations through the medium of Welsh. I can understand the economic pressures on the WJEC but there must be a way of co-operating with boards in England to buy syllabus and the question papers with the rest of the process being undertaken by the WJEC.

Even though there has been significant improvements since I first started working in the Welsh-medium sector, rapid developments in the field of education mean that we have not caught up. Rapid developments in the field of technology are a help but in the classroom, books and the written work on paper still rules and will continue to rule for years to come. The Welsh medium sector needs support, not in order to gain advantage over the English medium sector, but in order to catch up with them. The market for English medium materials is large enough to be of interest to private companies but without significant support this is not possible in the Welsh medium sector.

I am aware that I have only highlighted a few matters and these have come from Welsh medium sector in secondary sector. There are a number of other matters that are only now becoming obvious, such as the lack of subject teachers in some subjects, but I do not have time to follow this topic further. Of course, Welsh as a second language is in itself an area of its own.

If the Assembly is serious about the future of the language it is therefore imperative to support the schools and the teachers. It is time that the Welsh medium sector is given an equal opportunity. Can I finish by attempting to translate an historical quote:

“Give us the tools, and we will do the work”.

TABLE 23 Recruitment to initial teacher training courses (a), 1997/98 - 2001/02

ENGLAND AND WALES						
	1997/ 98	1998/ 99	1999/ 00	2000/ 01	2001/02(b)	Percentage change 2000/01 - 2001/02
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	%
Overall						
Undergraduate	10,455	9,643	9,335	8,952	8,664	-3
Postgraduate	19,471	18,781	18,876	21,188	22,708	7
Total	29,926	28,424	28,211	30,410	31,372	4
Primary						
Undergraduate	7,801	7,444	7,374	7,323	7,106	-3
Postgraduate	5,214	5,639	6,001	7,117	7,172	1
Total	13,015	13,083	13,375	14,440	14,278	-1
Secondary						
Undergraduate	2,654	2,199	1,961	1,629	1,558	-4
Postgraduate	14,257	13,142	12,875	14,071	15,536	10
Total	16,911	15,341	14,836	15,700	17,094	9
Mathematics	1,538	1,190	1,390	1,390	1,627	17
English and Drama	2,255	2,249	2,154	2,172	2,385	10
Science	2,941	2,416	2,512	2,581	2,757	7
Modern Foreign Languages	1,887	1,740	1,567	1,746	1,812	4
Welsh	49	46	44	64	43	-33
Technology(c)	2,086	1,841	1,824	2,031	2,341	15
History	1,043	983	884	989	995	1
Geography	904	791	916	957	1,082	13
Physical Education	1,725	1,580	1,287	1,303	1,420	9
Art	962	954	853	919	913	-1
Music	546	533	552	605	687	14
Religious	675	659	566	621	620	0

Education						
Other (d)	300	359	287	322	412	28

Source: DfES, TTA, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales

- a) These figures do not include those people recruited onto employment based routes into teaching.
- b) 2001/02 recruitment numbers are the latest provisional figures for the whole academic year.
- c) Technology includes design & technology, information & communications technology & business studies.
- d) Other includes citizenship, classics, economics, other social sciences and other subjects.

APPENDIX 2

GTC Wales - Teacher Recruitment Survey: Secondary Schools December 2001

Recruitment to Secondary Posts, January - August 2001

The survey asked respondents to consider all posts in the seven subject areas in the survey advertised in the period 1 January to 31 August 2001. This question applied to posts for teaching Key Stages 3,4 and above. Respondents were asked about the number of applicants for advertised posts, whether it was possible to make an appointment from the field and whether there was a requirement to teach through the medium of Welsh. The purpose of the question was to elicit whether there were problems in attracting teachers to apply for posts in the reportedly "difficult to recruit" subject areas. Respondents were guided to include posts involving combinations of any of the seven subjects with another subject not listed.

Respondents were asked the following question:

"In relation to any posts advertised between the period of 1 January to 31 August 2001, please complete the boxes provided to indicate the number of applications received for advertised posts and whether an appointment was made. List only those subjects in the guidance note given".

All posts

The table below (table 1) provides details of the number of posts advertised and the number of applicants received for each subject. It can be seen that the average number of applicants per post for the subjects included in the survey is generally fairly low, averaging 6.5 applicants per post. In certain subjects such as Physics and Welsh 2nd Language, the average number of applicants is as low as 3.8 and 4.5 respectively. In the case of 19 of the posts advertised, there were no applicants at all.

TABLE 1

Subject	Number of posts advertised	Number of applicants received	Average number of applicants received	Number of posts where no applications received
Chemistry	24	197	8.2	0
English	90	713	7.9	0
Mathematics	105	641	6.1	5
Modern Foreign Languages	48	403	8.4	1
Physics	44	169	3.8	4
Religious Education	32	184	6.1	2
Welsh 2 nd Language	63	283	4.5	5

Science	37	276	7.5	2
Total	443	2866	6.5	19

Although appointments followed advertisement in 80 to 95% of cases, for the posts advertised, there is some variation in the percentage of those posts where an appointment was made. For example, only 78.1% of Religious Education posts were filled as opposed to 95.8% of Chemistry posts.

TABLE 2

Subject	Number of posts advertised	Number of posts where appointment made	Number of posts where appointment not made	Number of posts where not stated whether an appointment made	% of posts where an appointment made
Chemistry	24	23	1	0	95.8%
English	90	77	13	0	85.6%
Mathematics	105	96	9	0	91.4%
Modern Foreign Languages	48	42	6	0	87.5%
Physics	44	35	9	0	80.0%
Religious Education	32	25	6	1	78.1%
Welsh 2 nd Language	63	53	10	0	84.1%
Science	37	34	3	0	91.9%
Total	443	385	57	1	86.9%

Posts where the applicant was required to teach through the medium of Welsh

In respect of posts where there was a requirement to teach through the medium of Welsh, the situation is of further concern, with a number of subjects showing very low number of applicants for the posts advertised (see table 3).

Although the number of posts is smaller than for the English and Welsh speaking sector combined and caution needs to be applied in interpreting the figures, it is nevertheless, a source of considerable concern that the number of candidates for Welsh medium posts is so limited.

TABLE 3

Subject	Number of posts	Number of applications	Average number of
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	advertised	received	applications received
Chemistry	2	7	3.5
English	8	23	2.9
Mathematics	18	45	2.5
Modern Foreign Languages	10	28	2.8
Physics	8	10	1.3
Religious Education	4	23	5.8
Welsh 2 nd Language	30	151	5.0
Science	6	25	4.2
Total	86	312	3.6

Note: The difference between the figures in the previous tables for Welsh 2nd Language may be explained by bilingual schools' requirements to provide Welsh 2nd Language teaching to those from English speaking backgrounds.

For the posts advertised, there is also variation in the percentage of those posts where an appointment was made (see table 4). For example, only 75.0% of Religious Education and Physics posts were filled as opposed to all Chemistry and English posts. However, in interpreting the percentage results in table 3, it should be noted again that generally one is considering a small number of posts.

TABLE 4

Subject	Number of posts advertised	Number of posts where appointment made	Number of posts where appointment not made	% of posts where an appointment made
Chemistry	2	2	0	100%
English	8	8	0	100%
Mathematics	18	16	2	88.9%
Modern Foreign Languages	10	10	0	100%
Physics	8	6	2	75.0%
Religious Education	4	3	1	75.0%
Welsh 2 nd Language	30	26	4	86.7%
Science	6	5	1	83.3%
Total	86	76	10	88.4%

Recriwtio i Swyddi Uwchradd, Ionawr – Awst 2001

Gofynnodd yr arolwg i ymatebwyr ystyried pob swydd yn y saith maes pwnc yn yr arolwg a hysbysebwyd yn y cyfnod 1 Ionawr i 31 Awst 2001. Roedd y cwestiwn hwn yn berthnasol i swyddi dysgu Cyfnod Allweddol 3, 4 ac uwch. Gofynnwyd i ymatebwyr ynglyn â nifer yr ymgeiswyr ar gyfer y swyddi a hysbysebwyd, a oedd yn bosibl penodi o'u mysg ac a oedd angen dysgu trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Pwrpas y cwestiwn oedd datgelu a oedd problemau ynglyn â denu athrawon i ymgeisio am swyddi yn y meysydd pwnc a nodwyd oedd yn "annodd recriwtio" ar eu cyfer. Rhoddwyd cyfarwyddid i ymatebwyr gynnwys pynciau oedd yn cynnwys cyfuniad o unrhyw rai o'r saith pwnc gyda phwnc arall nad oedd wedi'i restru.

Gofynnwyd y cwestiwn canlynol i ymatebwyr:

"Mewn perthynas ag unrhyw swyddi a hysbysebwyd rhwng y cyfnod 1 Ionawr i 31 Awst 2001, llenwch y bocsys a ddarparwyd i nodi nifer y ceisiadau a dderbyniwyd ar gyfer swyddi a hysbysebwyd ac y penodwyd iddynt. Rhestrwch y pynciau hynny yn y cyfarwyddyd a roddwyd".

Pob swydd

Mae'r tabl isod (tabl 1) yn rhoi manylion am nifer y swyddi a hysbysebwyd a nifer y ceisiadau a dderbyniwyd ym mhob pwnc. Gellir gweld fod nifer yr ymgeiswyr fesul swydd ar gyfer y pynciau a gynhwyswyd yn yr arolwg yn lled isel ar y cyfan, gyda chyfartaledd o 6.5 o ymgeiswyr fesul swydd. Mewn pynciau arbennig megis Ffiseg a Chymraeg 2il Iaith, mae cyfartaledd yr ymgeiswyr mor isel â 3.8 a 4.5 yn ôl eu trefn. Yn achos 19 o swyddi, ni chafwyd yr un ymgeisydd.

Tabl 1

Pwnc	Nifer y swyddi a hysbysebwyd	Nifer y ceisiadau a dderbyniwyd	Nifer y ceisiadau a dderbyniwyd ar gyfartaledd	Nifer y swyddi lle na dderbyniwyd ceisiadau
Cemeg	24	197	8.2	0
Saesneg	90	713	7.9	0
Mathemateg	105	641	6.1	5
Ieithoedd Tramor				
Modern	48	403	8.4	1
Ffiseg	44	169	3.8	1
Addysg	32	184	6.1	4
Grefyddol				
Cymraeg 2il Iaith	63	283	4.5	5
Gwyddoniaeth	37	276	7.5	2
Cyfanswm	443	2866	6.5	19

Er y penodwyd ar ôl hysbysebu mewn 80 i 95% o achosion, ar gyfer y swyddi a hysbysebwyd, mae rhywfaint o amrywiaeth yng nghanran y swyddi hyn lle gwnaed penodiad (tabl 2). Er enghraifft, dim ond 78.1% o swyddi Addysg Grefyddol a lenwyd o'u cymharu â 95.8% o swyddi Cemeg.

Tabl 2

Pwnc	Nifer y swyddi hysbysebwyd	Nifer y swyddi lle gwnaed penodiad	Nifer y swyddi lle na wnaed penodiad	Nifer y swyddi lle na nodwyd a wnaed penodiad	% y swyddi lle gwnaed penodiad
Cemeg	24	23	1	0	95.8%
Saesneg	90	77	13	0	85.6%
Mathemateg	105	96	9	0	91.4%
leithoedd Tramor					
Modern	48	42	6	0	87.5%
Ffiseg	44	35	9	0	80.0%
Addysg	32	25	6	1	78.1%
Grefyddol					
Cymraeg 2il Iaith	63	53	10	0	84.1%
Gwyddoniaeth	37	34	3	0	91.9%
Cyfanswm	443	385	57	1	86.9%

Swyddi lle'r oedd gofyn i ymgeiswyr ddysgu trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg

O ran swyddi lle roedd angen dysgu trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg, mae'r sefyllfa yn achosi mwy o bryder, gyda nifer o bynciau'n dangos nifer isel iawn o ymgeiswyr ar gyfer y swyddi a hysbysebwyd (tabl 3).

Er bod nifer y swyddi yn llai nag ar gyfer y sector Cymraeg a Saesneg gyda'i gilydd a bod angen pwylllo wrth ddehongli ffigyrau, serch hynny, mae'n achosi cryn bryder bod cyn lleied o ymgeiswyr ar gyfer swyddi trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.

Tabl 3

Pwnc	Nifer y swyddi a hysbysebwyd	Nifer y ceisiadau a dderbyniwyd	Nifer y ceisiadau ar gyfartaledd a dderbyniwyd
Cemeg	2	7	3.5
Saesneg	8	23	2.9
Mathemateg	18	45	2.5
Ieithoedd Tramor Modern	10	28	2.8
Ffiseg	8	10	1.3
Addysg Grefyddol	4	23	5.8
Cymraeg 2il Iaith	30	151	5.0
Gwyddoniaeth	6	25	4.2
Cyfanswm	86	312	3.6

Sylwch: Gellir egluro'r gwahaniaeth yn nablau 3 a 5 ar gyfer Cymraeg 2il Iaith gan y gofynion ar ysgolion dwyieithog i ddarparu addysgu Cymraeg 2il Iaith i'r rheiny o gefndir Saesneg.

Ar gyfer y swyddi a hysbysebwyd, ceir amrywiaeth hefyd yng nghanran y swyddi hyn lle gwnaed penodiad (tabl 4). Er enghraifft, dim ond 75.0% o swyddi Addysg Grefyddol a Ffiseg a lenwyd o'u cynharu â phob swydd Cemeg a Saesneg. Fodd bynnag, wrth ddehongli'r canlyniadau canran yn nhabl 4, dylid sylwi eto, yn gyffredinol, mai nifer fach o swyddi sy'n cael eu hystyried.

Tabl 4

Pwnc	Nifer y swyddi hysbysebwyd	Nifer y swyddi lle gwnaed penodiad	Nifer y swyddi lle na wnaed penodiad	% y swyddi lle gwnaed penodiad
Cemeg	2	2	0	100%
Saesneg	8	8	0	100%
Mathemateg	18	16	2	88.9%
Ieithoedd Tramor Modern	10	10	0	100%
Ffiseg	8	6	2	75.0%
Addysg Grefyddol	4	3	1	75.0%
Cymraeg 2il Iaith	30	26	4	86.7%
Gwyddoniaeth	6	5	1	83.3%
Cyfanswm	86	76	10	88.4%