

Education and Lifelong Learning Committee

Policy Review of the Welsh Language in Education Report

Recommendations (Not in any priority order but simply as they appear in the report)

1. The Committee recommends that the Assembly Minister should provide new guidance to improve the coherence between School Organisation Plans, Education Strategic Plans and Welsh Language Education Schemes. This guidance should focus on increasing the level of dialogue between schools, LEAs, the Welsh Language Board and the Welsh Assembly Government.
2. The Committee recommends that the proposed Strategic Unit, in co-operation with the proposed Language Forum, should play a crucial role in improving coherence in strategic planning. The Unit should take account of the strategies and plans of the organisations referred to above and work closely with the National Assembly's Department for Training and Education.
3. The Committee acknowledges the crucial role of Welsh language immersion teaching during Early Years, and recommends that this provision be expanded and the key role of the *Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin* recognised.
4. The Committee notes that the Assembly Minister has commissioned an audit of Welsh-medium Early Years provision, and recommends that the findings of this audit inform future policy development.
5. The Committee recommends that expansion of Early Years provision should also involve increasing bilingual provision, with some degree of immersion teaching, in accordance with parents' wishes.
6. The Committee recommends that the Assembly Minister should give priority to defining Welsh language provision in schools. The detailed work already undertaken by a group of experts, chaired by the Welsh Language Board, to clarify the manner in which language immersion and bilingual education is categorised will form the basis of this consideration.
7. The Committee recommends that the Assembly Minister should commission ACCAC, Estyn and the Welsh Language Board to establish an agreed set of criteria for assessing current levels of continuity. A thorough analysis of the reasons for the apparent lack of continuity should be undertaken, and appropriate measures should be adopted.
8. During the forthcoming review of school curriculum and assessment arrangements, ACCAC should include a thorough review of Welsh in education, both in relation to programmes of study and levels of achievement in Welsh as a first and second language, to establish whether current methods are appropriate in assisting young people to learn the language. LEAs and schools should consider ways of improving

standards in Welsh second-language, with clear guidance being provided by the Welsh Assembly Government.

9. Schools should comply with the statutory obligation to enter pupils for the most appropriate GCSE Welsh language examination.
10. There should be a commitment to reducing the number of pupils who enter no examination in Welsh as a second language at the end of Key Stage 4.
11. English-medium primary and secondary schools should develop policies for making more use of Welsh as a medium of instruction in appropriate subjects, taking account of appropriate guidance, the wishes of parents and the availability of suitably trained staff.
12. Dual literacy and other features of bilingual teaching methodologies should be developed and used more extensively at both primary and secondary levels. This should include relevant guidance and in-service training for teaching staff.
13. Thorough research should be undertaken into the feasibility of measuring pupils' competence in Welsh along a linguistic continuum.
14. The Assembly Minister should, in due course, critically review the appropriateness of maintaining Welsh as a compulsory subject at Key Stage 4.
15. Pilot projects aimed at delivering Welsh for intensive periods and increasing the number of entry points to Welsh-medium education should be established and funded. The detailed research into the feasibility of courses based on the Intensive Core French model, undertaken by a group of experts under the chairmanship of the Welsh Language Board, should provide useful guidance.
16. The Committee recommends that the Assembly Minister should commission the GTCW to undertake a comprehensive audit of the current numbers of Welsh language and Welsh-medium teachers and the nature of the training necessary for projected levels of demand to be met.
17. The Committee recommends that the Assembly Minister should consider, with the National Council – ELWa and HEFCW, the scope for introducing pilot language learning sabbaticals in the FE sector, similar to those proposed in the HE sector, to expand the pool of practitioners able to teach Welsh and through the medium of the language.
18. The Committee recommends that the General Teaching Council for Wales should incorporate Welsh-medium and bilingual CPD within its current development of a national CPD framework.
19. The Committee recommends that ACCAC should carry out a review of the process for identifying and responding to the need for Welsh-medium and bilingual teaching and learning materials, at a national level.
20. The Committee recommends that the ICT Advisory Panel, established by the Assembly Minister in response to the Committee's policy review of ICT in education, should play an important role in ensuring that ICT (including video-conferencing and e-learning) is used to extend the availability of academic and vocational subjects through the medium of Welsh.
21. The Committee recommends that the Future Skills Wales partnership should devise a clear and co-ordinated strategy for collating and disseminating information on careers where bilingual skills are required.

22. The Committee recommends that the National Council - ELWa should ensure that Welsh-medium and bilingual education and training is

developed within a strategic framework, which takes into account the importance of:

- Local partnerships in responding to local need;
- Making providers aware of the requirements of the National Council - ELWa and those of employers; and
- Heightening awareness of the benefits of bilingual skills amongst learners.

23. The Committee recommends that the National Council - ELWa should ensure that the work commissioned by FENTO to adapt FE teaching standards for the bilingual sector is given a high profile and adopted by institutions.

24. The Committee recommends that the National Council - ELWa should adopt a strategic approach, on the basis of reliable data, to the recruitment, training and re-training of staff to teach bilingually and through the medium of Welsh in the FE sector.

25. The Committee recommends that the National Council - ELWa should develop the potential provided by ICT to establish effective means of:

- Enabling learners to derive maximum benefit from the resources available;
- Disseminating models of good practice;
- Identifying the need for Welsh speakers in the workplace; and
- Marketing bilingual and Welsh-medium provision.

26. The Committee recommends that HEFCW give due consideration to the modified proposals of the Board, particularly with regard to increasing numbers of Fellowships and Doctorates, in order that a significant growth in Welsh-medium teaching be fully supported.

27. The review of the funding structure, currently being undertaken by the National Council – ELWa, should take account of the need to develop the professional skills of Welsh for Adults practitioners and promote a clear career structure.

28. The National Council-ELWa should seek to take a co-ordinated approach to Welsh for Adults.
29. A Virtual Centre should be established, subject to the availability of funds, with the aim of developing Welsh for Adults within the broader post-16 sector.
30. The Committee recommends that the Assembly Minister commission an audit of SEN provision currently available through the medium of Welsh.
31. The Committee recommends that LEAs should be encouraged to establish mechanisms for sharing resources and disseminating good practice at a regional level. The Welsh Assembly Government should pass the necessary secondary legislation to facilitate this co-operation.
32. The Committee recognises the value of situating Welsh-medium and bilingual education provision within the international context, and firmly believes that much can be gained from active collaboration. The Committee recommends that contacts already established by the Assembly Minister with partners in Canada and the Basque Autonomous Community be pursued and reinforced, and that further opportunities to share models of good practice with other communities be explored.