

Agenda – Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 3 – Senedd

Meeting date: 11 December 2024

Meeting time: 09.30

For further information contact:

Lleu Williams

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

SeneddCulture@senedd.wales

Hybrid

Pre-meeting registration

(09.15 – 09.30)

Public

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(09.30)

2 Scrutiny of National Museum Wales: Evidence session with Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales

(09.30 – 10.30)

(Pages 1 – 17)

Kate Eden, Chair

Jane Richardson, Chief Executive

Attached Documents:

Research brief

3 Paper(s) to note

(10.30)



3.1 Forward work programme

(Pages 18 – 65)

Attached Documents:

Correspondence from the British Council: Introducing a research report on international language learning in Wales – 18 November 2024

Report: Language Trends 2024

3.2 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025–26

(Pages 66 – 72)

Attached Documents:

Copied correspondence from Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to the Chair of the Finance Committee: Responding to call for information on the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2025–26 – 27 November 2024

Correspondence from Community Leisure UK: Outlining concerns about the proposed increase in the employer's rate of National Insurance – 5 December 2024

3.3 Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union

(Pages 73 – 76)

Attached Documents:

Correspondence from the Equality and Human Rights Commission: Advising of a legal agreement with the Welsh Rugby Union – 29 November 2024

3.4 Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement

(Page 77)

Attached Documents:

Copied correspondence from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee: Notifying the sixth meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee – 2 December 2024

3.5 Visitor Accommodation (Register and Levy) Etc. (Wales) Bill

(Page 78)

Attached Documents:

Correspondence from Creu Cymru: Outlining concerns about the Welsh Government's proposed Visitor Accommodation (Register and Levy) Etc. (Wales) Bill – 3 December 2024

3.6 Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport

(Pages 79 – 88)

Attached Documents:

Correspondence from the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership: Providing additional information following the Committee's meeting on 13 November 2024, for the Committee's inquiry into the impact of funding reductions for culture and sport – 04 December 2024

Action points

3.7 Scrutiny of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales

(Pages 89 – 90)

Attached Documents:

Correspondence from the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership: Inviting views on the future relationship between Cadw and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales – 05 December 2024

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of this meeting

(10.30)

Private

5 Scrutiny of National Museum Wales: Consideration of evidence

(10.30 – 10.40)

6 Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport: Consideration of draft report

(10.40 – 11.40)

7 Welsh Government International Relations: International Relations Monitoring Report

(11.40 – 11.50)

(Pages 91 – 120)

Attached Documents:

International Relations Monitoring Report – December 2024 Issue 5

8 Forward work programme

(11.50 – 12.30)

8.1 Consideration of the forward work programme for spring 2025 (2)

(Pages 121 – 127)

Attached Documents:

Draft forward work programme

8.2 Cymraeg for all: Consideration of Terms of Reference

(Pages 128 – 133)

Attached Documents:

Draft Terms of Reference

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 3.1

From: Cocks, Ruth (UK Region) <Ruth.Cocks@britishcouncil.org>

Sent: 18 November 2024 16:10

To: Jewell, Delyth (Aelod o'r Senedd | Member of the Senedd)

<Delyth.Jewell@senedd.wales>

Subject: Language Trends Wales Research 2024 - Embargoed until November 19th at 16.00

Dear Delyth,

I am writing to you as Chair of the Committee for Culture and International Relations. Tomorrow, we launch our latest research on international language learning in Wales. The report is **under embargo** until **16.00 on November 19th (tomorrow) but I wanted to share with you the report in advance given your role to support an international outlook for Wales.** We are issuing a press release in the early hours of tomorrow with a headline on a 'Lost Generation of Language Learners in Wales.

Of note:

1. The trend is one of **decline of international language learning across Wales in secondary schools**– this is in line with trends we map in England and Northern Ireland too. Scotland are doing this research for the first time this year.
2. At primary level, thanks to the new Curriculum for Wales' **introduction of mandatory international language learning showed in last year's results, an upward trend.** We have left this a year (so not available in this year's report) to see if this upward trend continues. We won't be clear for a number of year if this then impacts uptake at secondary level in a positive way.
3. This is the **ten-year anniversary of the research** so we have ten years of data. Over the ten years, we can see that:
 - a. Entries in GCSE French and German have **more than halved in schools in Wales.**
 - b. **Spanish has reduced by 25%.**
 - c. In addition, the number of entries for GCSE German is now so low that **we risk having almost no German language courses at all** - a particular concern given Germany is our third largest trading partner.
 - d. We aren't seeing a trend whereby Mandarin or Arabic or other non-European languages are taking over. The picture is just one of decline overall.
4. The **Lost Generation** headline represents all of the above – a similar sentiment to the loss of EU programmes following the UK's exit from the UK, as well as the fact that there could be up to 200-300 pupils in Wales who do want to take languages but because the numbers in their school are so low, the school can't justify it. So those few **miss out completely.** This might be 2-3 per schools but the multiplier effect of that across Wales add up to 200 + pupils who might be denied taking a language. A useful action could be to **map provision across Wales.** Schools during Covid, pooled resources and this could be something to consider
5. There are **multiple reasons for the decline** (we don't report on pupil voice but there is other research that does and things like perceived difficulty of exams, and not seeing a career pathway come up) and therefore multiple potential actions.

Happy to talk through any time and it would be great if there are other members we should consider sending this to directly.

Also worth mentioning we are part of a session at the **Senedd on December 4th 12.00-13.30**, at the Senedd, comprising of 3 research presentations by the MFL Mentoring Project (who cover pupil voice), ourselves and authors of a recent PolicyWise briefing. It would be great if you and other Senedd Members could make it particularly those on the Culture Committee.

Best wishes,

Ruth

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Language Trends Wales 2024

Language teaching in primary
schools, secondary schools,
and post-16 colleges

By Jayne Duff, Aisling O'Boyle and Ian Collen
Queen's University Belfast

Pack Page 20

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Foreword from British Council Wales

At British Council Wales, we aim to create unique international opportunities for people across Wales – with the ultimate goal of contributing to peace and prosperity of our world. As Director of that mission and as a proud linguist our annual research into the *Language Trends of Wales* is as pertinent as ever. Wales does best when it's looking outwards. International Languages play a key role in creating that global outlook and in creating our global citizens of the future.

Learning languages from a young age changed my life for the better. They shaped my academic studies, my career pathway, my relationships and will continue to shape my future. Languages opened doors to travel, meet new people, experience new cultures, to adventure and to new business – both in cultural diplomacy and commercially. We cannot rest on our laurels in the English and Welsh speaking world and assume the world will speak our language so we don't need to speak the languages of the world. Let us not underestimate the platform, opportunities and windows on the world the joy of speaking an International Language offers. It's like having a super power. And you can use it when least expected...

British Council Wales is proud to support and advocate for International Language learning in schools and beyond. The younger our children learn a language, we hope their propensity for language learning grows. Welsh can play a role in the plurilingualism of our nation. And whilst Welsh and English are key to our identity, we believe that mastering additional International Languages is crucial for Wales to maintain its ambition as an outward-looking nation with strong global connections. In a world where cross-cultural dialogue and collaboration are increasingly important for trade, business, relationships, mobility and cultural understanding and peace, learning and speaking multiple languages empowers us to be the global citizens we aspire to be for Wales.

We hope that the findings in the *Language Trends Wales 2024* report will continue to inspire thoughtful conversations and action around language learning, ensuring Wales remains globally engaged and connected for years to come.

Ruth Cocks
Director, British Council Wales.

Introduction

Language Trends Wales is an annual survey of maintained schools and post-16 colleges, designed to gather information about the situation of International Language¹ teaching and learning. This research aims to i) track the trends of International Language learning over the years; ii) assess the impact of policy measures in relation to International Languages; and iii) reflect the current context of International Language teaching and learning, based both on quantitative data and on views expressed by teachers. This year, in lieu of a primary school questionnaire, Year 6 primary school pupils were invited to submit a poster entry on the broad theme of language learning, and we have included a new section in *Language Trends Wales* on pupil voices and opinions that showcases pupil creativity. The first *Language Trends Wales* survey was carried out in 2015, and it is part of a series of recurring research reports in the UK: there have been annual surveys in England since 2002, biennial surveys in Northern Ireland since 2019 and the first ever *Language Trends* report from Scotland will be released in early 2025. Previous reports can be found on the corresponding country's British Council website. *Language Trends* shows general shifts in the teaching and learning of languages and provides a springboard for teachers, school leaders, academics, inspectors, policy makers, school pupils, and the public to consider aspects of International Language learning more deeply.

British Council Wales contracted a team of researchers at Queen's University Belfast to conduct *Language Trends Wales 2024*. The team has previously worked on similar outputs for the British Council and includes members with experience of teaching languages in primary and secondary classrooms in the UK and other countries.

On behalf of British Council Wales and Queen's University Belfast, we would like to put on record our sincere thanks to the teachers who participated in our research and the Year 6 pupils who submitted wonderful poster entries. Without teacher and pupil participation, our research would not be possible. We thank you for your continued time and support.

Headline findings for 2024

- French is offered in 70 per cent of responding secondary schools in Year 7, a decrease of nearly 10 per cent to the figure reported in 2023. However, French retains its spot as the most popular International Language at both GCSE and A level;
- Nearly 70 per cent of responding secondary schools reported that none or less than 10 per cent of Year 10 students were taking an International Language for GCSE or other Level 2 qualification;
- Secondary school teachers report a lack of funding in International Languages and a need to revise harsh grading boundaries in public examinations;
- All responding post-16 colleges use AI technology in the teaching of International Languages.

¹ This refers to all languages other than Welsh and English which are learned at school and can include community languages, modern languages, classical languages and British Sign Language.

Policy context and background

British Council have long underlined the importance of International Language education for economic prosperity and global connections, identifying Spanish, Mandarin, French, Arabic, and German as the most important languages to learn for economic prosperity, with Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, Japanese, and Russian also seen as important (*Languages for the Future*, 2017). More recently, Ayres-Bennett (2023) has reinforced the importance of multilingualism to enrich ‘individuals, communities and nations’ (p. 3). Yet, there are declining numbers of language learners in higher and further education, prompting calls for ‘urgent, concerted and coordinated action to address the critical situation for languages in the UK’ (The British Academy et al., *Towards a National Languages Strategy*, 2020, p. 6).

Wales has undergone an era of educational policy change with the introduction of the New Curriculum for Wales in maintained schools since 2022. This framework provides statutory guidance for schools to better provide children and young people with the knowledge, skills and experiences to flourish. The New Curriculum for Wales outlays shared expectations regarding how schools should develop their curriculum, including the renaming of ‘Modern Foreign Languages’ to ‘International Languages’ (Welsh Government, 2021). International Languages include home and community languages, Modern Languages, classical languages and British Sign Language.

Further plurilingual government initiatives that promote a lifelong love for languages, including Welsh, English and Other International Languages, includes Global Futures², a government programme first initiated in 2015 following the dissolution of CILT Cymru, Wales’ National Centre for Languages, which had existed since 2002. Key to Global Futures is the MFL Mentoring Project that too has run since 2015, a scheme that provides high-quality direct support to secondary schools in relation to language learning and studying an International Language at GCSE level.³

Research outline

Ethical approval was secured from the Research Ethics Committee at the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work at Queen’s University Belfast prior to data collection. All participants, including children, gave their voluntary and informed consent to participate, and the research was conducted to the highest ethical standards.

The research is guided by the following question: ‘What is the current state of International Language teaching in primary schools, secondary schools and post-16 colleges in Wales?’. To answer this research question, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, building on the previous *Language Trends Wales* reports. The research methods comprised two surveys, one for secondary schools and one for post-16 colleges, available in Welsh and English. The surveys comprised closed question items to be analysed quantitatively and included some open question items for qualitative commentary. For the first time, we invited Year 6 primary school pupils to create a poster on their experiences of and feelings about International Language learning; young people are experts in their own lives and the resulting dataset not only gives them a voice in *Language Trends Wales 2024*, but is also a fascinating insight into their early understanding of the importance of having a global perspective.

Questions for the survey and lesson plans for the poster competition were developed by the research team in early 2024 and refined in consultation with a panel of Welsh education professionals, convened by British Council Wales. Invitations to participate in the poster competition were emailed to 1,210 primary schools and addressed to the Headteacher.⁴ The surveys were emailed to 176 secondary schools and 12 post-16 colleges in early May and addressed to the Head of International Languages. Links to participate in the surveys were also available on British Council Wales social media channels.

Schools were invited to submit one response only to the surveys; where multiple responses were received from the same institution, the first response to be received was included in the dataset. For the survey, closed item responses were analysed using descriptive statistics and comments to open response questions were analysed using thematic analysis. For the posters, we analysed what and how pupils expressed their ideas, feelings, and experiences of languages and language learning.

² For further information on Global Futures, see <https://www.gov.wales/global-futures-plan-improve-and-promote-international-languages-wales-2022-2025.html>.

³ To find out more about the scheme, see <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/modern-languages/about-us/engagement/foreign-language-student-mentoring>.

⁴ Due to the lack of a publicly available and up-to-date list of primary schools and contact details, not all primary schools in Wales were contacted. Some primary school addresses were no longer in use.

Survey response rates remain healthy at 30 per cent in maintained secondary schools and 42 per cent in post-16 colleges; comparatively, the response rate was 21 per cent for maintained secondary schools in *Language Trends England* in 2024. The response rate to the surveys has declined this year for both secondary schools and post-16 colleges; however, this was to be expected as our data collection had to be paused during the pre-election period from the announcement of a general election on 22 May 2024 and the formation of the newly elected government in early July 2024. The majority of our data was thus collected in the final two weeks of summer term 2024:

	Base	Achieved	% Response Rate
Secondary School Survey	176	53	30%
Post-16 College Survey	12	5	42%

Table 1: Response rates to the secondary and post-16 college surveys

Public examination figures

The approach to GCSE and A level grading returned to pre-pandemic arrangements this year. GCSE entries across all subjects in Wales were up by 4.8 per cent between 2023 and 2024, and when compared to 2019, the number of entries in 2024 increased by 5.5 per cent. The number of 16-year-olds in Wales increased by 4.2 per cent between 2023 and 2024, so an increase in GCSE entries is to be expected. It is pleasing that since last year French has grown by 5.5 per cent and German is up by 23 per cent in relation to GCSE entries, though raw numbers are still comparatively small. Spanish in Wales does not mirror trends in England or Northern Ireland, where there is a continual upward trajectory; Spanish is now the most popular International Language GCSE in Northern Ireland and is expected to be so too in England in the next two years. In Wales, French is holding its own.

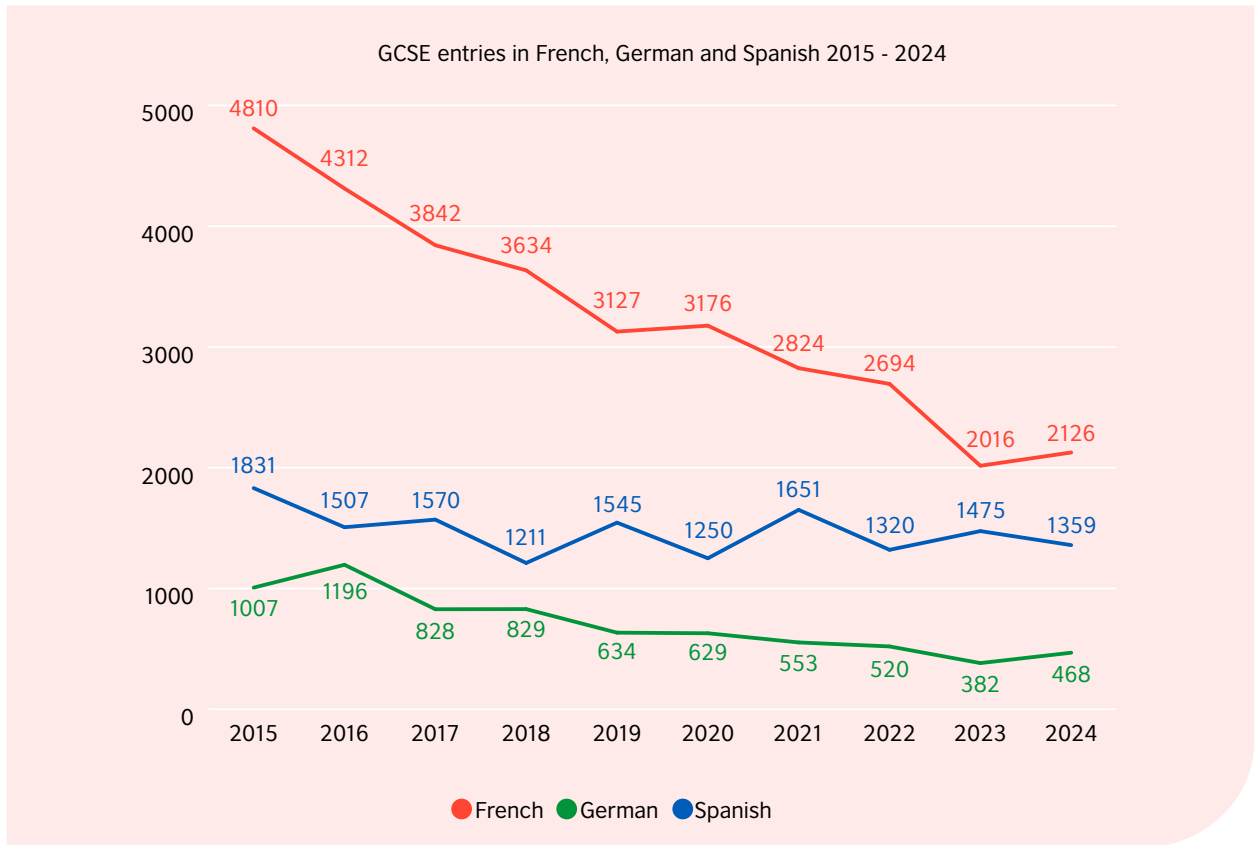


Figure 1: GCSE entries in French, German and Spanish 2015 – 2024 (source JCQ [Provisional exam data] 2015 - 2024)⁵

⁵ Please note that at the time of writing the previous Language Trends Wales report in 2023, the most up-to-date exam figures available were from Qualifications Wales; this year, all data from 2015 to 2024 in figures 1 - 4 is taken from JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) provisional examination data:

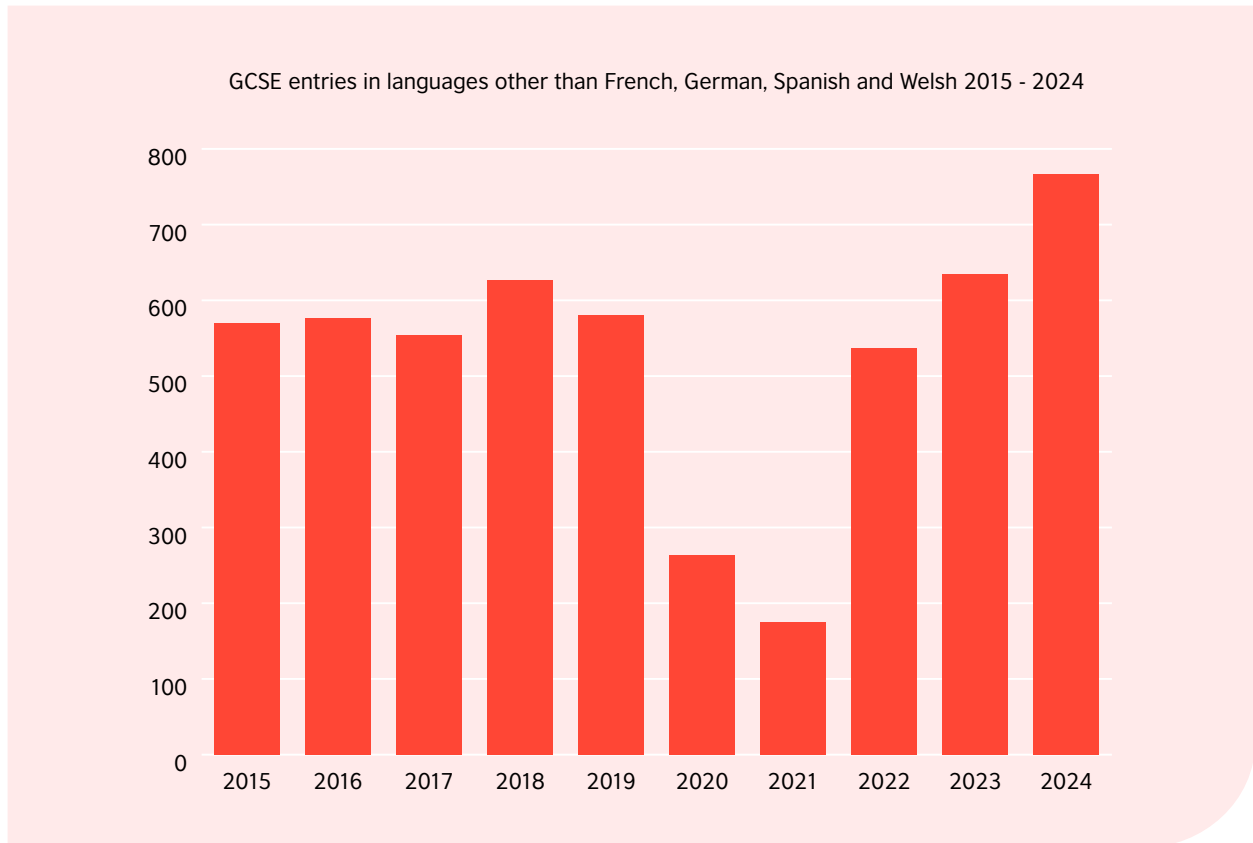


Figure 2: GCSE entries in languages other than French, German, Spanish and Welsh 2015 – 2024 (source JCQ [Provisional exam data] 2015 - 2024)

Figure 2 provides more good news as entries in Home, Heritage and Community Languages, are clearly increasing and have surpassed annual entries over the last ten years. Figure 3 shows a fairly stable picture at A level; as at GCSE, Spanish entries are somewhat erratic, and the steady growth noted in other parts of the UK is not reflected in Wales.

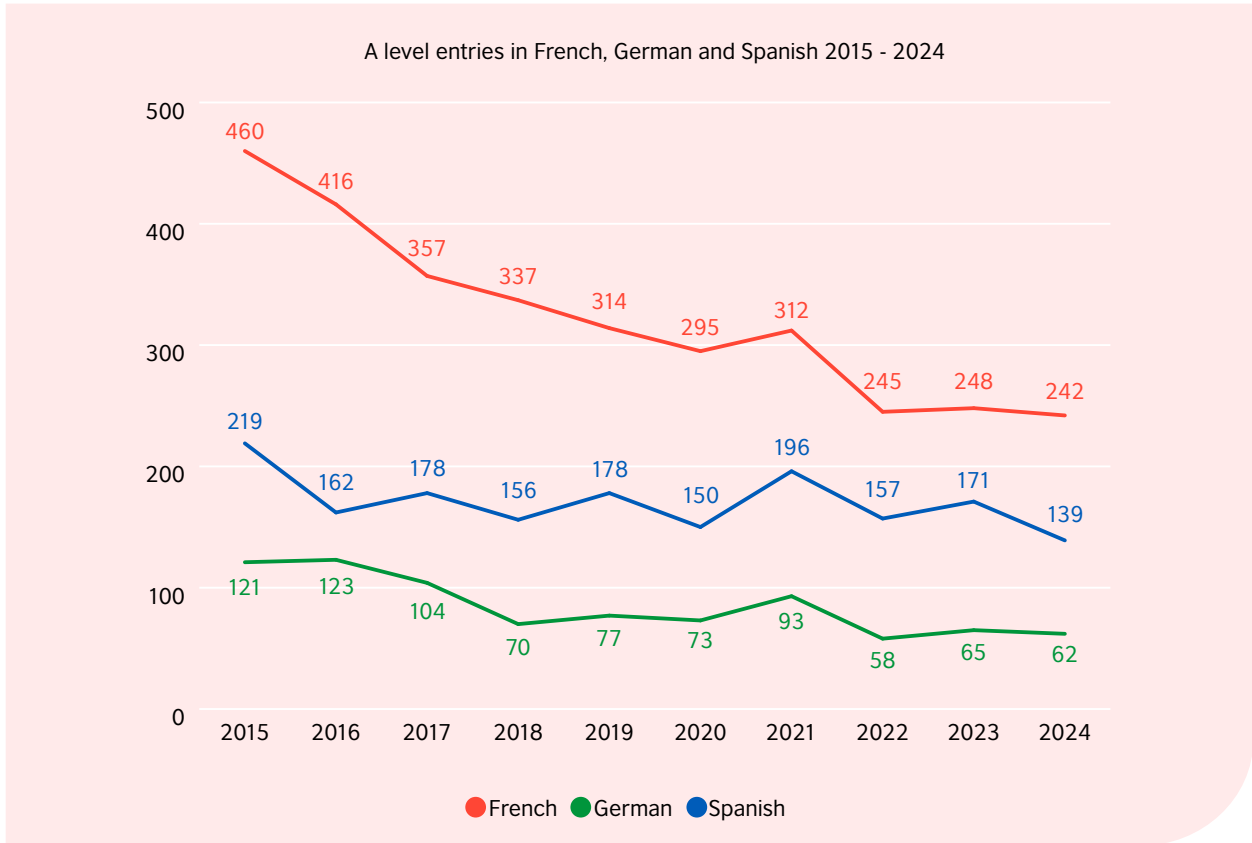


Figure 3: A level entries in French, German and Spanish 2015 – 2024 (source JCQ [Provisional exam data] 2015 - 2024)

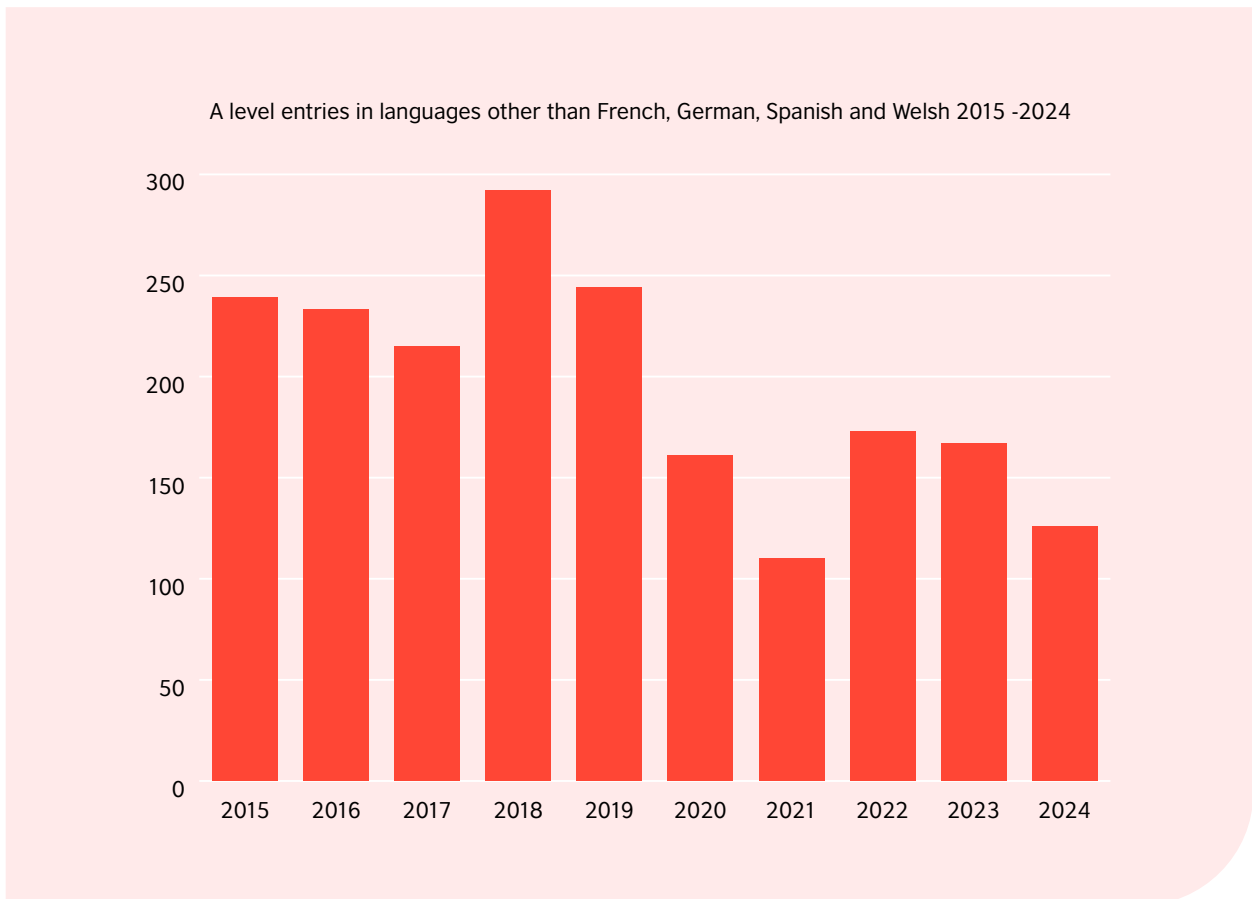


Figure 4: A level entries in languages other than French, German, Spanish and Welsh 2015 – 2024 (source JCQ [Provisional exam data] 2015 - 2024)

Findings from secondary schools

Profile of secondary schools

The 2024 schools' census recorded 176 secondary schools in Wales, of which 128 were English Medium, 8 were English Medium with significant Welsh, 18 were Welsh Medium and 22 were bilingual Welsh/ English. After data sets were cleaned and duplicates removed, the 53 usable responses from secondary schools resulted in a response rate of 30 per cent.

Eight schools responded to the survey in Welsh, and the remaining 45 schools responded in English. Table 2 shows the geographical distribution of responding schools, with around half located in North Wales.

Geographical location	Includes local authorities of	Base	Number of responding schools (n=53)
North Wales	Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wrexham	50	25
South West and Mid Wales	Powys, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot	48	11
Central South Wales	Bridgend, The Vale of Glamorgan, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil, Cardiff	48	11
South East Wales	Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Monmouthshire, Newport	30	6

Table 2: Number of responding schools by geographical location

Free School Meals

The percentage of students in each secondary school entitled to free school meals was calculated to determine any socio-economic differences in relation to language learning. Using data from the Wales School Census released in July 2024, the full cohort of 176 maintained secondary schools invited to respond to the survey were arranged into quintiles by the percentage of students (up to age 15) entitled to Free School Meals (FSM).

Quintiles		Base schools (total = 176)	Number of responding schools (n = 53)	Percentage
1	0.0-17.0%	35	11	20.8%
2	17.1-22.2%	36	13	24.5%
3	22.3-28.7%	35	9	17.0%
4	28.8-37.2%	35	9	17.0%
5	37.3% and above	35	11	20.8%

Table 3: FSME quintiles for state secondary schools in Wales

Table 3 shows that just over 45 per cent of responding schools are in quintiles 1 and 2, the least deprived areas in Wales according to the number of transitionally protected students entitled to free school meals. Although we have two more respondents in quintile 5 this year, the imbalance between respondents from all quintiles may result in a report that is more favourable than the current reality in schools.

Language learning at key stage 3

Teachers were asked what International Language(s) their students were learning at key stage 3 in the 2023/24 school year. In table 4, we see that French is offered in 70 per cent of secondary schools in Year 7, a decrease of nearly 10 per cent to the figure reported in 2023. There is a small, reported increase in the number of schools offering Spanish to all pupils at key stage 3, though the lack of statistical significance with the sample size is noted. In terms of other languages, two respondents noted the teaching of Mandarin.

	French	German	Spanish
Year 7	70%	6%	30%
Year 8	74%	4%	32%
Year 9	64%	8%	28%

Table 4: International Languages at key stage 3 for all learners

The survey asked respondents if learners in their school were learning more than one International Language in the 2023/24 school year, not including Welsh. From Year 7 to Year 10, the majority of schools reported that no learners were studying more than one language (table 5). From Year 7 to Year 9, all learners study an additional language in just under a fifth of responding schools; however, by Year 10, this figure is zero.

	All	More than half	Some (5% - 49%)	Less than 5%	None
Year 7	17%	4%	0%	2%	77%
Year 8	19%	4%	2%	2%	74%
Year 9	19%	4%	4%	6%	68%
Year 10	0%	0%	8%	19%	74%

Table 5: Proportion of learners studying more than one International Language (not including Welsh) in Year 7 to Year 10

Time for languages

Schools were asked to state the total amount of class time per week, on average, allocated to the learning of International Languages. Seventy-seven per cent of responding secondary schools allocate one to two hours of class time to languages in Year 7; by Year 9, this figure decreases to 62.3 per cent of schools. There is a small reported increase in the number of schools allocating less than 1 hour to International Languages in Year 8 (9.4 per cent in 2024, compared to 4 per cent in 2023), in Year 9 (11.3 per cent in 2024, compared to 1.5 per cent in 2023) and in Year 10 (5.7 per cent in 2024, compared to 0 per cent in 2023); however, it must be borne in mind that the smaller number of respondents in 2024 may skew the data. Just under two-thirds of responding schools allocate two to three hours of class time to languages in Year 10, comparable to data reported in *Language Trends Wales 2023*.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Less than 1 hour	6%	9%	11%	6%
1-2 hours	77%	70%	62%	15%
2-3 hours	15%	17%	23%	58%
3-4 hours	2%	4%	4%	8%
More than 4 hours	2%	2%	2%	17%

Table 6: Average class time allocated to International Language learning per week at key stage 3 and in Year 10

Language learning at key stage 4

In 2024, 36 out of 53 responding secondary schools (i.e. 67.9 per cent) reported that none or less than 10 per cent of their Year 10 students were taking an International Language for GCSE or other Level 2 qualification. Of the 53 responding schools, only one school (seven less schools than in 2023) reported that 30 per cent of the cohort were studying an International Language (table 7).

	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
2022	14	30	14	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023	20	25	12	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
2024	19	17	15	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 7: Proportion of students in Year 10 learning an International Language for GCSE or other Level 2 qualification (e.g., Level 2 Global Business Communication). Reported in raw numbers (2022 total n=64, 2023 total n=67, 2024 total n=53)

All responding schools told us that they use GCSE qualifications; in 6 per cent (n=3), schools also use Level 2 Global Business Communication accreditations for Level 2 International Languages.

As with previous iterations of *Language Trends Wales*, we asked respondents about school-level policies in relation to learning an International Language; multiple responses were permitted, and responding schools told us that:

Classes do not run if there are not enough learners	75%
Timetabling means that not all learners are able to take an International Language	51%
Lower than average attaining learners are discouraged from choosing an International Language	23%
Other (please specify)	15%
Some learners may be advised by SLT not to take an International Language	13%
The school strongly recommends that the most academically able take an International Language	9%
The school strongly recommends that all learners take an International Language	2%
All learners MUST take an International Language	0%

Table 8: School policies as perceived by responding teachers in relation to International Language learning at key stage 4 (multiple responses permitted)

In the majority of responding secondary schools, classes do not run if there are not enough learners. Indeed, 11 responding schools told us that at least ten pupils are required for a GCSE International Language class to run, and a further 11 schools noted the minimum number of pupils to be between 12 and 15. The percentage of schools reporting that timetabling may prohibit learners from taking an International Language remains consistent with last year's figure of 51 per cent. Fifteen per cent of respondents selected 'other' and specified alternative school policies at key stage 4, including i) allowing pupils to make their own choice without interference, and ii) positively encouraging pupils to take subjects that they enjoy/need.

Responding teachers were asked to think about the past three years and how the proportion of learners studying an International Language at key stage 4 had changed, if at all. In table 9, we can see that 13 per cent of respondents consider there to be more learners now studying an International Language at key stage 4 (compared to 7 per cent in 2023). Around two-fifths of schools responded that fewer learners now take an International Language, reflecting a positive finding when compared to the figure reported in 2023 (49 per cent); for 28 per cent of schools there is no clear trend, with learner numbers fluctuating yearly.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
International Languages are compulsory for all pupils at KS4	0%	0%	0%
More learners now take an International Language at KS4	10%	7%	13%
Fewer learners now take an International Language at KS4	55%	49%	38%
Similar numbers to before	16%	15%	21%
No clear trend: numbers fluctuate from year to year	17%	27%	28%
Other (please specify)	2%	2%	0%

Table 9: Teachers' perceptions of uptake at KS4 over the past three years

Uptake of GCSE International Languages

Responding teachers were asked what International Languages learners were studying at GCSE level in the 2023/24 school year (figure 5).

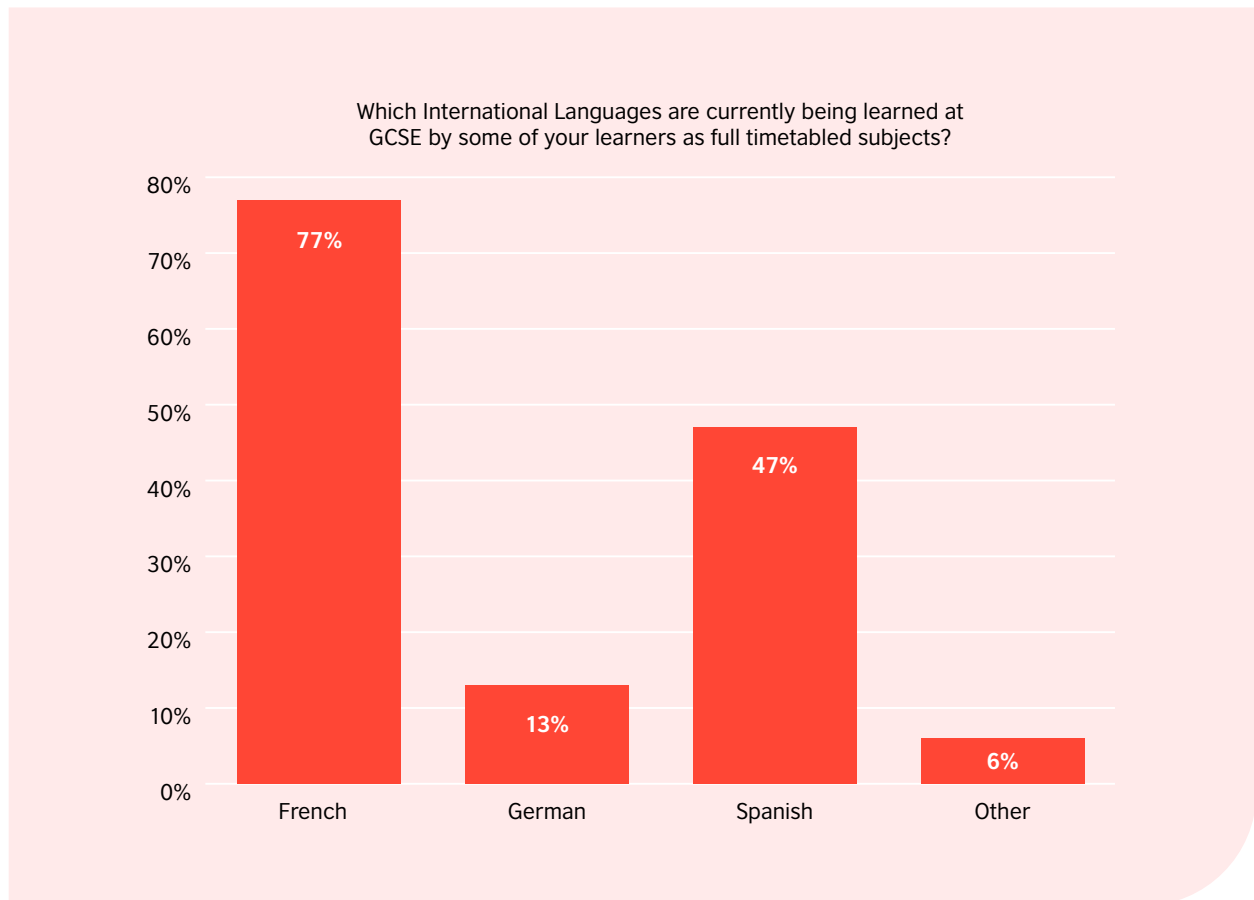


Figure 5: Percentage of International Languages learned at GCSE in responding schools

By far, French is the most taught language at GCSE level in 77 per cent of responding schools, while Spanish is being studied as a GCSE language in nearly half of schools, and German uptake remains low at 13 per cent. In the 'other' category, one teacher commented that no International Languages were being studied at GCSE level, and another noted that EAL pupils study their home or heritage language at GCSE level.

The survey asked teachers to reflect on what they feel are the most prominent barriers to encouraging young people to take an International Language for GCSE (options listed in table 10). A quarter of responding teachers perceived Global English and its perception as a world language to be the main challenge (25 per cent), followed closely by the nature and content of external exams (21 per cent). Another key challenge identified by teachers includes promoting languages at a whole-school level as a careers option (13 per cent).

Prominent barriers to uptake	Percentage of schools that consider this barrier to be the main challenge
Global English (i.e. the importance of English as a world language)	25%
The nature and content of external exams	21%
Languages not promoted at whole-school level as a careers option	13%
Insufficient curriculum time	11%
Timetabling of International Languages at key stage 4	8%
Languages a low priority for senior management	6%
Timetabling of International Languages at key stage 3	6%
The way external exams are marked and graded	4%
Lack of opportunities for learners to practise their language outside the classroom	4%
The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic	2%
The implications of the UK's decision to leave the EU (Brexit)	0%
Lack of access to Professional Learning (PL) for teaching staff	0%

Table 10: Percentage of schools that identify the abovementioned barriers as a main challenge to learners taking an International Language for GCSE

Responding teachers were asked to further comment on any other barriers to providing an effective learning and teaching environment in their school. A common thread that emerged amongst teacher comments centred on the lack of GCSE choices and learner reluctance to study an additional language. Other teacher comments included the following:

“Parents focus on Maths and English as a priority.”

“Despite being informed, pupils say that languages will not be useful for their futures, they find it too hard, or they don't enjoy it, some say there were clashes in their option choices or that they would choose it if there were 4 options rather than 3.”

“Very few opportunities for students to practise language outside of the classroom or believe that it is useful in the ‘real’ world.”

The New Curriculum for Wales stipulates that the learning and teaching of Welsh is a mandatory requirement until age 16; additionally, learners are encouraged to develop plurilingual language skills by studying an International Language (CfW, 2024). Some teachers have noted that language learning is perceived as difficult, and learning multiple languages may not appeal to a young person with a limited number of GCSE choices:

“Many pupils and parents do not see the value of speaking an International Language. Pupils have to study Welsh at GCSE and often do not want to use up one of their option choices with another language.”

Extra-curricular language learning

The survey asked teachers if their learners were learning any of the languages in table 11 as extra-curricular or enrichment subjects. In the majority of responding schools, there is no extra-curricular language learning throughout key stage 3, key stage 4 and post-16, commensurate with the findings of *Language Trends Wales 2023*. Nearly one fifth of schools reported the learning of Mandarin at key stage 3, which is perhaps due to school engagement with the Confucius Institute. In the 'other' category, there was some evidence of a broader range of International Languages on offer this year, including Italian, Korean, Japanese and Ukrainian.

	KS3	KS4	Post-16
Arabic	4%	6%	4%
French	2%	4%	2%
German	6%	4%	0%
Mandarin	19%	6%	4%
Polish	4%	13%	2%
Spanish	0%	6%	2%
None	68%	75%	87%
Other	8%	6%	2%

Table 11: Percentage of schools with the above International Languages studied in the 2023/24 school year as extra-curricular or enrichment subjects at key stage 3, key stage 4 and post-16 (multiple responses permitted)

Home, heritage and community languages

According to StatsWales, there were a total of 6,101 pupils in secondary education who are recorded to have English as an Additional Language (EAL).⁶ In the Welsh education system, EAL encompasses three categories of learners: a) New to English; b) Early acquisition; c) Developing competence. As a percentage, the most EAL pupils are recorded in Newport (13 per cent), followed by Cardiff (7 per cent).

Recent research has highlighted the importance of valuing home language skills to contribute to the economic, social and multicultural fabric of society, as well as developing and enriching the lives of individual learners by supporting their education journey (Humphries, Carruthers and Henderson, 2024). Within our dataset, we found that the majority (75 per cent) of responding secondary schools support learners to take exams in the languages spoken in their homes or communities or in addition to those taught at school. This highlights the plurilingual approach taken by schools in Wales which ensures opportunities for learners to undertake examinations and attain qualifications for all their language skills.

⁶ See StatsWales for further data: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and-Teachers/Schools-Census/Pupil-Level-Annual-School-Census/pupillevelannualschoolcensussummarydata-by-localauthority>.

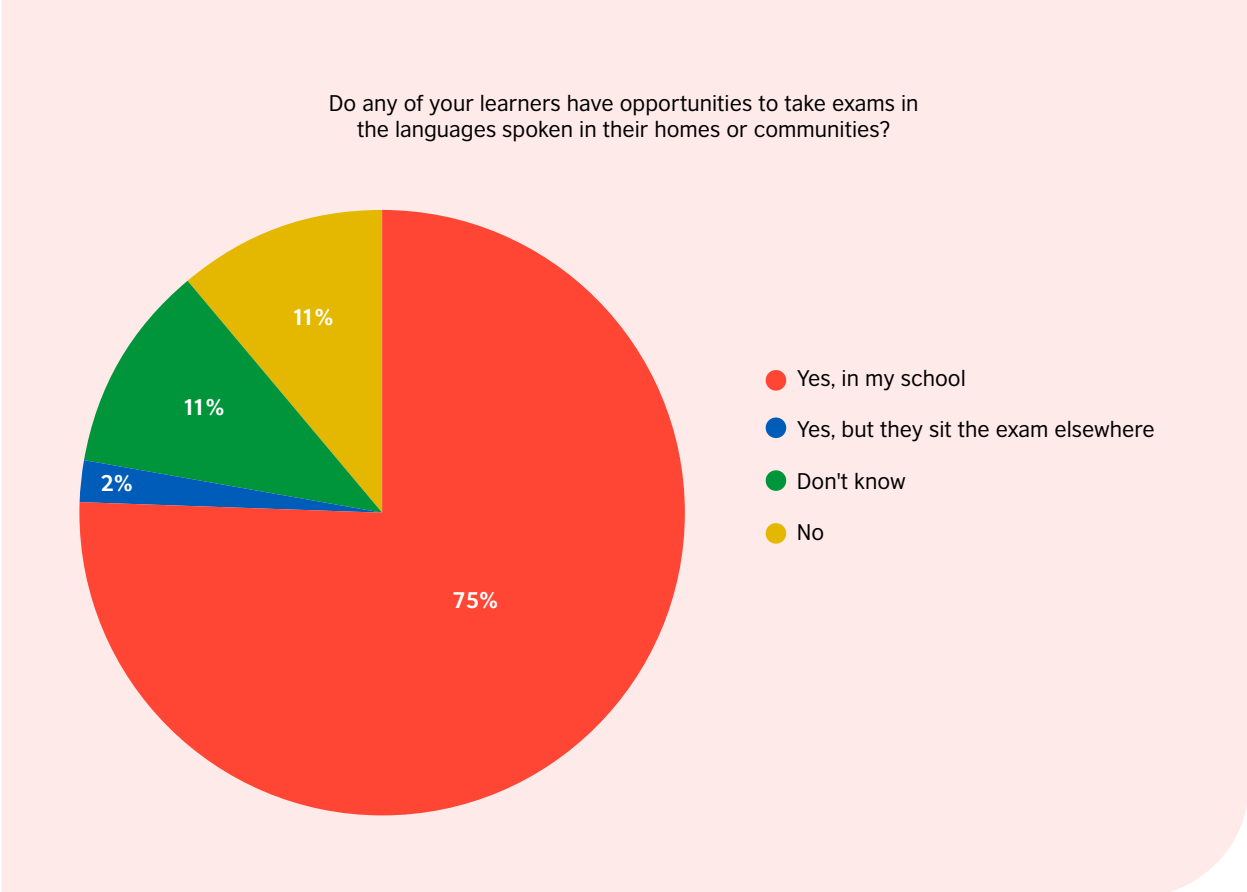


Figure 6: Percentage of schools that offer learners the opportunity to take exams in their home or community language (and not taught in their school)

International dimension

A variety of opportunities for international engagement with institutions and individuals exist in Wales that schools can avail of to support and enhance language learning, outlined in table 12. In particular, figures of engagement with MFL Student Mentoring remain high in secondary schools, with 72 per cent of responding schools continuing to engage with the successful mentoring scheme in the 2023/24 school year. MFL Student Mentoring encourages the learning of International Languages at GCSE level and beyond via a programme of in-classroom and online mentoring sessions and resources, all of which is available to young people in Wales for free.⁷ The data in table 12 also show a small increase in schools with one or more partner institutions abroad. In the 'other' category, some teachers commented that they take learners on international school trips.

There is, however, a decline in the number of schools who employ a Language Assistant (employed in four per cent of responding schools in 2024, compared to nine per cent in 2023). Consistent with previous *Language Trends Wales* reports, our data show that it is Mandarin speaking Language Assistants who are employed in the small number of schools with assistants. Although there is demonstrable evidence that a Language Assistant can provide a transformative and positive effect on language teaching, exam results and learning outcomes (British Council, 2023), a lack of funding often means that schools are unable to provide learners with real-life speakers of French, German, Italian, Mandarin or Spanish (*Language Trends Wales*, 2023). In the 2023/24 school year, there was also decreased engagement with British Council international opportunities, cultural institutes and Routes into Languages Cymru (see table 12). The reported decreases in international engagement in responding secondary schools highlights a need to make international opportunities more accessible yet high impact, with little preparation required by teachers.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
The institution has one or more partner institutions abroad	17%	18%	21%
British Council international opportunities	6%	15%	6%
We employ language assistants	8%	9%	4%
We engage with cultural institutes (e.g. Confucius Institute, Goethe-Institut, Institut Français, Consejería de Educación)	38%	31%	21%
We take part in MFL Student Mentoring Scheme	56%	72%	72%
We engage with Routes into Languages Cymru	78%	66%	58%
Other (please specify)	N/A	19%	19%

Table 12: International engagement in secondary schools (multiple responses allowed)

International Languages and the New Curriculum for Wales

With the introduction of the New Curriculum for Wales underway, schools are in a period of transition and have yet to see tangible outcomes on how the New Curriculum will improve the situation for International Languages.

Teachers were asked about what was currently working well in International Language learning, as well as what could be done to improve language learning. Some noted the following opinions on the New Curriculum for Wales in relation to languages education:

“It is hoped that a change of teaching methods, using the Conti ideas, and changes linked to the New Curriculum with more culture and some literature may reap some results but with only 3 hours a fortnight timetabled for International Languages, it is not enough for pupils to gain confidence in their learning.”

“[The] New Curriculum is allowing far more cultural knowledge to be shared.”

“The new GCSE content looks to be more relevant to pupils - travel and work for example.”

“[The] lack of clarity for new MFL [International Language] GCSEs in response to CfW is a problem - we can't tell pupils what to expect in terms of how they will be assessed; pupils who are anxious about this will not choose MFL without a clear understanding of what is required.”⁸

Teachers were asked about the extent of collaboration between their languages department and Area of Learning Experience in preparation for the New Curriculum. Just under 10 per cent of respondents and their International Languages department have not been involved in preparing for the New Curriculum in collaboration with their Area of Learning Experience (figure 7). Two-thirds of respondents have already made some changes in preparation for the New Curriculum (53 per cent) or have plans which will be put in place later (15 per cent).

⁸ Since data collection, the new WJEC specifications have been released for GCSE subjects: <https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/qualifications-in-development/made-for-wales-wjec-is-ready-to-deliver/qualification-outlines-and-consultation-summaries/>. Pack Page 38

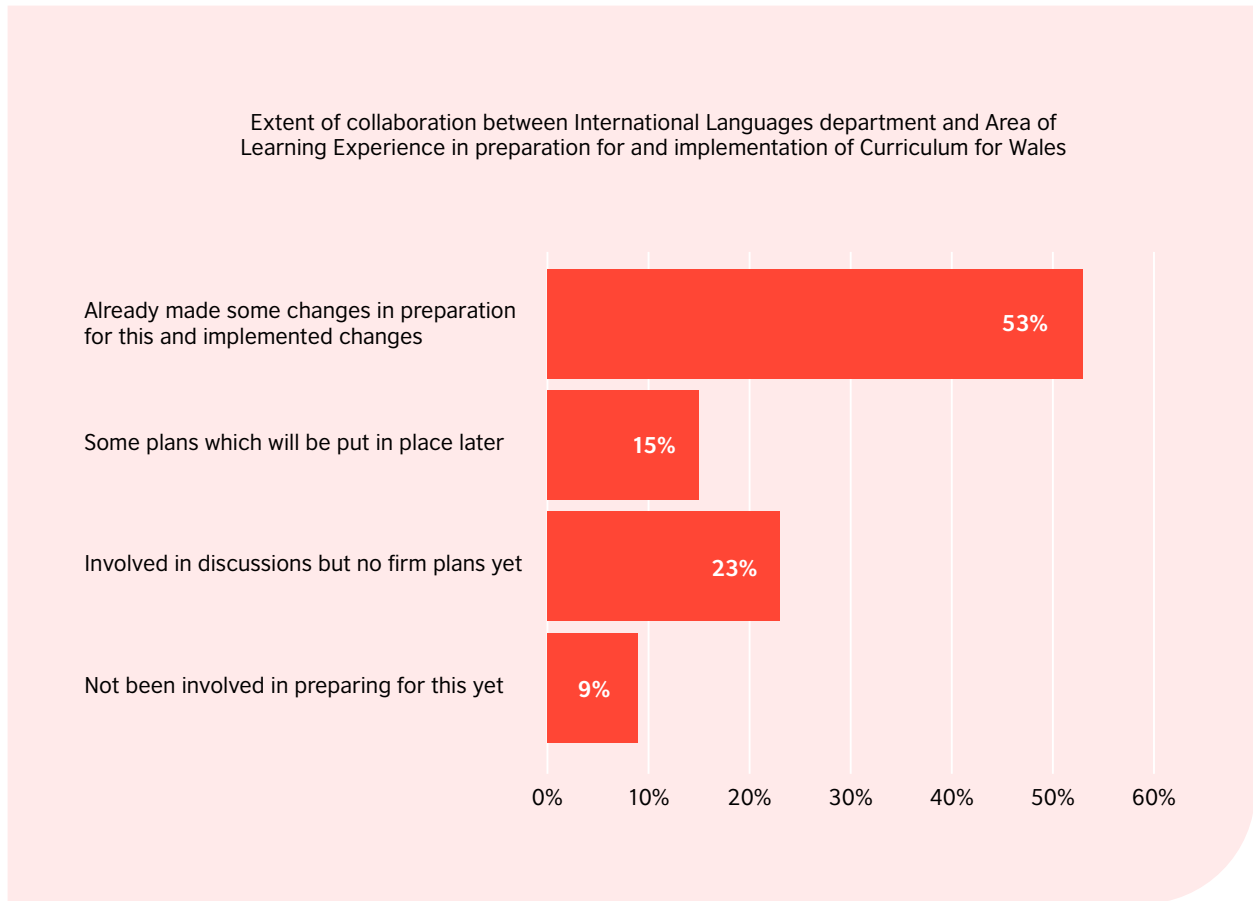


Figure 7: Teacher responses to 'To what extent has your International Languages department been collaborating within your Area of Learning Experience and across the whole school in preparation for and implementation of Curriculum for Wales?'

AI and technology in the languages classroom

In recent times, there has been an increased use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and AI-powered educational technology in and out of the languages classroom, including applications such as ChatGPT, Mizou, Gliglish, Diffet, Wisdolia and Magic Padlet. For the first time, *Language Trends Wales* asked teachers about their use of such technology in relation to language teaching. For the majority of responding teachers (75 per cent), AI technology is not used in language teaching and a quarter of respondents use it occasionally.

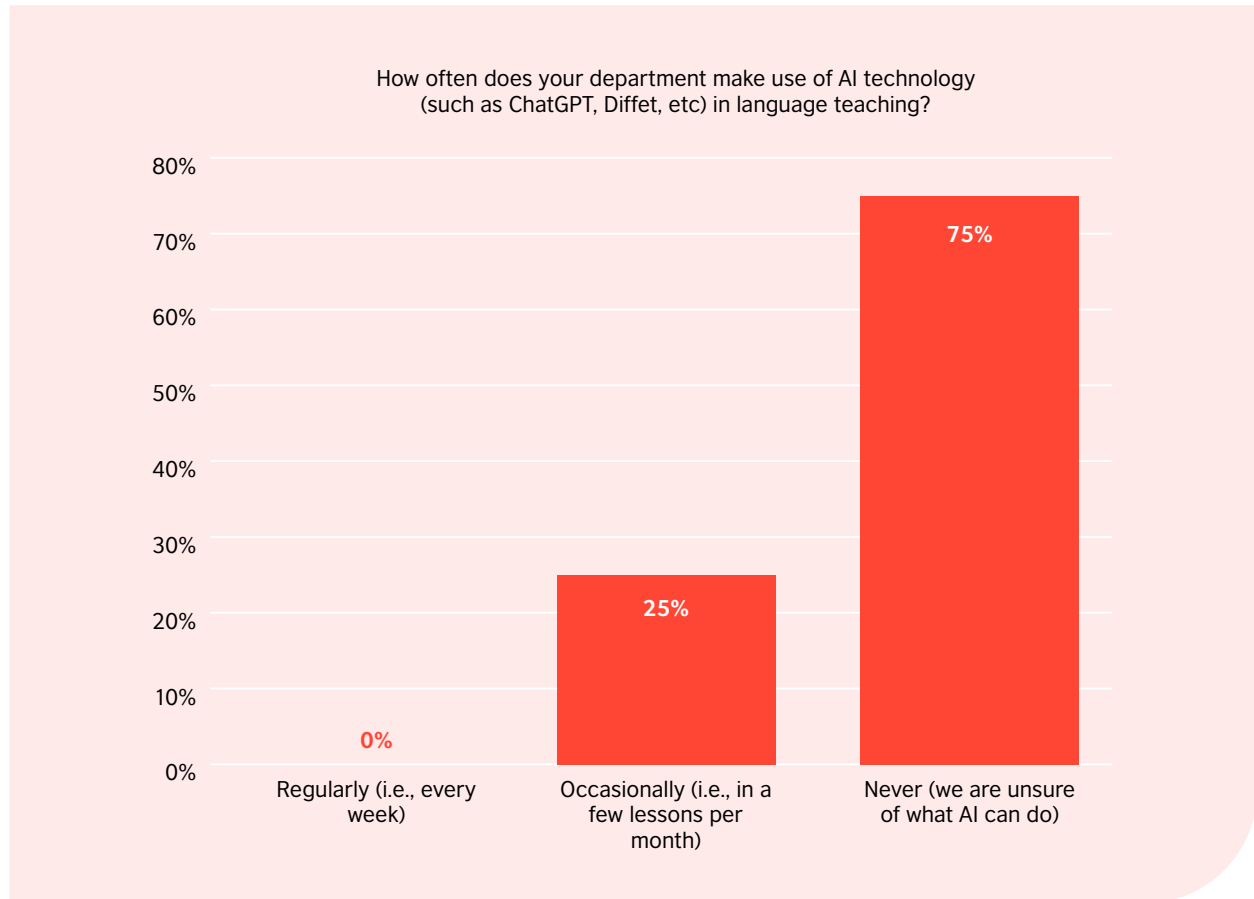


Figure 8: Secondary schools' engagement with AI technology in language learning

Teachers were also asked an open-ended question with room to expand upon their answer if learners are allowed to use AI technology to support their language learning. Many teachers commented that learners were not allowed to use AI, that learners could not access it on school devices, or, in several cases, that there are not enough IT devices to facilitate the use of AI with learners in school. Some comments included the following:

"No. I don't feel it would be beneficial for pupils as it would just give them a translation rather than an explanation or process which they could use in their future learning."

"We are not using AI technology yet. The reasons are lack of training (staff) and lack of equipment (access to devices)."

Other teachers commented that the use of AI would be explored in the future, while one teacher noted how their learners make use of technology:

“Yes, we encourage them to use ChatGPT to correct their work and suggest language specific apps such as Tutor Lily.”

International Languages and post-16 provision

Nearly half (n=25) of responding secondary schools do not have post-16 provision in International Languages. In those schools with post-16 provision in International Languages (n=28), around 60 per cent have five or fewer learners in Year 12 and in Year 13. As identified in previous editions of *Language Trends Wales*, low pupil numbers often mean that many classes do not run; this is indeed the case for nearly half of responding schools with post-16 provision in 2024 (see table 13). In ‘other’ comments, respondents noted the following alternative arrangements when only a few learners wish to study an International Language: i) they have attempted to collaborate with other schools in the past, but have been hindered by timetable constrictions; ii) classes take place after school; and, iii) it depends on the number and their future French class will run with four pupils.

AS and A2 classes are taught together	7%
Classes do not run	46%
Classes run at a reduced timetable	36%
Shared arrangements with another school	18%
Other (please give details)	18%

Table 13: Respondents’ answers to ‘What arrangements are in place, if any, when only a few learners wish to study an International Language post-16?’ (multiple answers permitted)

The survey asked teachers to reflect on the last three years and consider the changes, if any, in the take-up and provision of International Languages at post-16 level in their school. Twenty-six schools responded to this question and their responses are presented as raw figures in table 14. No schools have post-16 provision in an International Language other than French, German and Spanish.

	French	German	Spanish	Other I/L
Introduced as a new A-level	1	0	0	0
Take-up has increased	2	0	3	0
Take-up stable	6	2	5	0
Take-up has decreased	9	1	5	0
Subject discontinued	3	2	1	0
Not taught in my institution	5	15	11	18

Table 14: Teachers’ perceptions of what changes have there been, if any, in take-up and provision for International Languages post-16 in their school over the last three years

Teacher concerns on the future of post-16 languages

Recent research by the British Academy (2024) found that subject choices available to post-16 learners has narrowed, resulting in ‘fewer students studying humanities subjects like languages, English and history’, due to the range of subjects available and learner subject preferences. Responding teachers to our survey have expressed serious concerns on the future of languages in their schools due to fewer learners, difficult exams and harsh grading, parent and SLT perceptions of languages, and a lack of funding. The following are comments made by respondents on reasons for any changes in take-up or provision:

“We are very worried about the future of languages, now more than ever. We feel that no matter how much we try to promote the importance of languages and their relevance in the world of work, it does not change much. It would be useful to have regular support with outside speakers, showing what jobs they could do, etc. But it all costs money and budgets have been reduced.”

“GCSE numbers have decreased and level of challenge at GCSE is off-putting for those considering A level. I cannot understand why GCSE listening and reading papers are so difficult whilst grade boundaries are low - this is so de-motivating and is stopping a number of

learners from continuing into A level - surely we should be finding out what GCSE learners know rather than what they don't know. E.g. 2023 French higher tier listening: 13/45 for a grade C, 26/45 for A, 2019 GCSE German higher tier listening 12/45 C, 2023 French higher reading 16/60 C, German 17/60 C.”*

“There are fewer and fewer pupils opting for AS French in my school so the course is not running until we can recruit a bigger cohort. The Spanish AS will not run next year either as there is no candidate.”

Recruitment of language teachers

For the first time ever, *Language Trends Wales* asked all secondary survey respondents whether the recruitment of qualified language teachers is an issue for their department. For two-fifths of maintained secondary schools in Wales, recruitment of language teachers is not an issue; however, around a third of schools either find it to be a major (23 per cent) or minor issue (8 per cent). In ‘other’ comments, respondents noted that i) they do not need to recruit teachers because of low pupil numbers, ii) they reduced their teaching hours and language provision is carried out by one teacher, and iii) no language posts have been advertised for fifteen years, but specialist language cover can prove difficult.

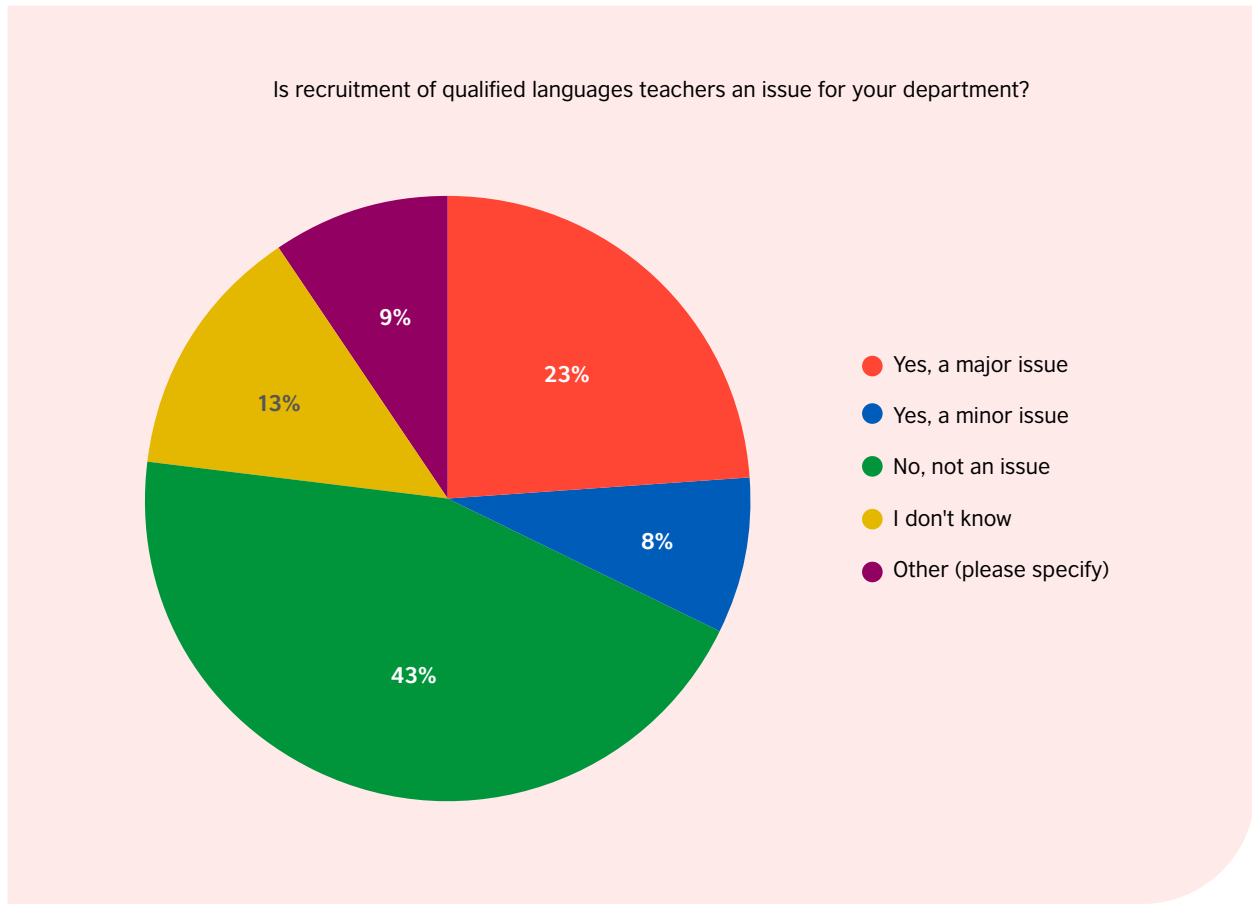


Figure 9: Respondents' answers to whether recruitment of qualified language teachers is an issue for their department

Time to listen: teacher recommendations on improving the situation for language learning in Wales

When asked what can be done either in their school and/or system-wide in Wales to improve the learning of International Languages, nearly all responding teachers took the time to comment their professional recommendations; the comments highlight the need to increase numbers of learner uptake, promote the value of languages school-wide, and, in particular, systemically review GCSE and A-level examinations:

"Information for Heads to try and raise the profile of languages. As long as languages are given so little curriculum time, it sends the idea that they are not important. The GCSE and A-Level exams are also too hard and rarely test what the pupils are taught. There has been too much content and pupils leave GCSEs deflated, often telling younger pupils not to bother with languages."

"Specialist language teaching at KS2, with a joined-up curriculum approach through transition to secondary. Classes to be allowed to run even with small numbers - there have rarely been large A level classes for languages generally in the UK and so by refusing to run

with under 10 for example as some schools do, the supply of future linguists, graduates and teachers is cut off."

"I can't do anymore that I am currently doing to promote languages as a very small department in a small school. In Wales the new GCSE has to be realistic - which includes its contents and themes. This needs to be taught starting in Year 10 on 4 hrs a fortnight. Also, the content of Year 12 is too much. You have to be a Francophile to be studying French A Level. There has been too much emphasis on Knowledge and Understanding of French society. The exam does not reflect the depth and variety of topics we have to teach in 8 months and grammar when we have no content list just a heading, for example - problems of French people. I realise it is about higher language skills but some of the content chosen for the Unit 2 exam in the last 2 years has been so specialised that you've had to know what it is about in order to answer the question correctly."

"The content of the GCSE syllabus needs to radically change, and the examinations are also so much more difficult compared with their other subjects, so pupils do not select languages. German is also still seen as an elitist subject within WJEC with more able pupils

selecting it, and in this school, German is taught to the entire year group. That is not reflected in the content or examinations.”

“Huge focus on STEM subjects is at the expense of creative subjects + MFL [International Languages]- and yet most engineering companies will agree that they need people with a competence in languages - Welsh government needs to do much more to raise the profile of International Languages - at the moment MFL teachers are fighting a losing battle.”

Given the comments above in relation to GCSE content for International Languages, the new WJEC specifications for French, German and Spanish for first teaching in 2025 are timely, and it is hoped that the new specifications will address the concerns expressed by responding teachers.

Several teachers also voiced the need for investment and funding in International Languages, like initiatives which appear to be working well for Welsh:

“To have funding to employ a Language Assistant where pupils can see language learning in action with someone from the place of study.”

“Funding to purchase subscriptions/resources to certain websites.”

“More funding for MFL.”

“Smaller classes, more funding for international trips, trained specialist teachers teaching the subject.”

“Better information on possible careers with languages. Funding to be able to have Language Assistants. Smaller class sizes.”

“Continued focus on promoting importance of languages. This must also be matched with funding to ensure that classes are not cut when numbers are low. Whilst messages about promoting languages as part of new curriculum are being communicated this is not being supported with actions and teachers are continually facing the challenges.”

Findings from post-16 colleges

International Language learning in post-16 colleges in focus

On our database, we have the contact information for 12 colleges who offer language courses. Five out of the twelve post-16 colleges that were contacted responded to the *Language Trends Wales* survey this year. Due to the small number, the figures in this section are reported as raw numbers.

The findings from post-16 colleges focus on French, German and Spanish A levels. The responding colleges do not offer vocational qualifications in languages; one college told us they offer the WJEC Language Pathways qualifications in spoken French, German, Spanish and Italian. Two respondents in 2024 offer GCSE or Level 2 qualifications in International Languages (one more than in *Language Trends Wales 2023*). One college also enables learners to re-sit GCSE or alternative Level 2 qualifications in International Languages.

For the first time, respondents were asked if the recruitment of qualified language teachers is an issue in their department; only one college reported this to be a minor issue.

All colleges reported that they had learners of International Languages in Year 12 and in Year 13, which is a positive uptake in figures when compared to *Language Trends Wales 2023*, in which three colleges reported having no learners of International Languages. Two colleges reported having more than 20 learners of Year 12 International Languages in 2023/24 (table 15).

	2023		2024	
	Year 12	Year 13	Year 12	Year 13
5 or fewer	1	3	1	0
6-10	1	1	1	2
11-15	2	0	0	1
15-20	0	0	1	2
More than 20	1	1	2	0
None	3	3	0	0

Table 15: Number of International Language learners in responding colleges

Only one college had a minimum number requirement for classes to run, stipulating that for the past few years there must be at least three learners. When only a few learners wish to study a language post-16, two colleges run classes at a reduced timetable; one college has composite AS and A2 classes, while classes will not run in one college. In 'other' comments, one college noted that classes run regardless of numbers.

Languages taught in post-16 colleges

Respondents were asked to reflect on the changes, if any, in the uptake and provision for International Languages post-16 in their institution. No college reported the teaching of an Other International Language in their institution. Two colleges reported introducing new International Language A levels (German in one college, and Spanish in another). French remains stable in two colleges, and Spanish in one. However, overall, four out of the five responding colleges noted decreases in French (n=3), German (n=2) and Spanish (n=2). All responding colleges reported the teaching of French, four teach Spanish and three teach German.

In comments on reasons for changes in take-up or provision, respondents noted some of the wider issues facing International Languages in secondary schools, including harsh grading and small numbers of language learners:

“Since last year, German is offered just as an AS qualification which is not interesting for students as it is not a full qualification. In several secondary schools German has been discontinued.”

“Only one of the local feeder schools offer Spanish at GCSE; this makes recruitment for Spanish a real challenge. I also think the nature and content of the GCSE is too challenging and demanding and 100% exam based. [...] The exam boards need to look at making the GCSE more accessible and relevant and this will help with pupils’ desire to continue. I also feel the AS and A level exams need to be looked at as once again compared to other subjects they are too hard and contain no coursework element.”

“Surrounding schools are dropping their delivery of GCSE Languages which impacts on our numbers coming to us for A Level. There is the wider impact of Welsh Language learning in schools, which originally had the dual purpose of not only enabling learners to become bilingual but also prepare them to be learners of further languages - this does not appear to have materialised.”

“Schools are more likely to offer only one language. They have small numbers. With the introduction of the Welsh Baccalaureate, the timetable has become too crowded.”

International dimension

Table 16 lists several opportunities for international engagement and colleges were asked to select the opportunities that their students and/or lecturers engage with. Consistent with the findings of *Language Trends Wales 2023*, all responding colleges reported at least one opportunity for staff and/or students to gain international experience in their institution. Four out of the five responding colleges engage with Routes into Languages Cymru, and three have one or more partner institutions abroad.

	2022/23	2023/24
We engage with Routes into Languages Cymru	3	4
The institution has one or more partner institutions abroad	2	3
Turing Scheme for outward mobility	3	2
Taith	6	2
We employ Language Assistants	2	1
We engage with cultural institutes (e.g. Confucius Institute, Goethe-Institut, Institut Français, Consejería de Educación)	3	1
British Council international opportunities	2	0
Erasmus+ projects	3	0
Other (please specify)	0	0

Table 16: Responses to ‘What opportunities are there for learners and/or lecturers in your institution to gain international experience? (tick all that apply)’ in 2022/23 and 2023/24

There is an overall decline in engagement with the international opportunities on offer in the 2023/24 academic year in responding colleges, particularly with the exchange programme Taith and Erasmus+ projects (see table 16). A Language Assistant was employed in one college in the 2023/24 academic year. The remaining colleges cited financial constraints and low learner numbers as the primary reasons for not employing a Language Assistant:

“Financial constraints and low numbers for both Spanish and French.”

“It’s too expensive and we can’t afford it with the budget we get for languages. We only have very few language learners so the cost would be even less justifiable.”

AI and technology in post-16 languages education

For the first time, we asked post-16 colleges to think about their use of AI technology in relation to language teaching. In figure 10, we can see that all colleges use educational AI technology in their department for language teaching (regularly in one college, occasionally in the remaining four).

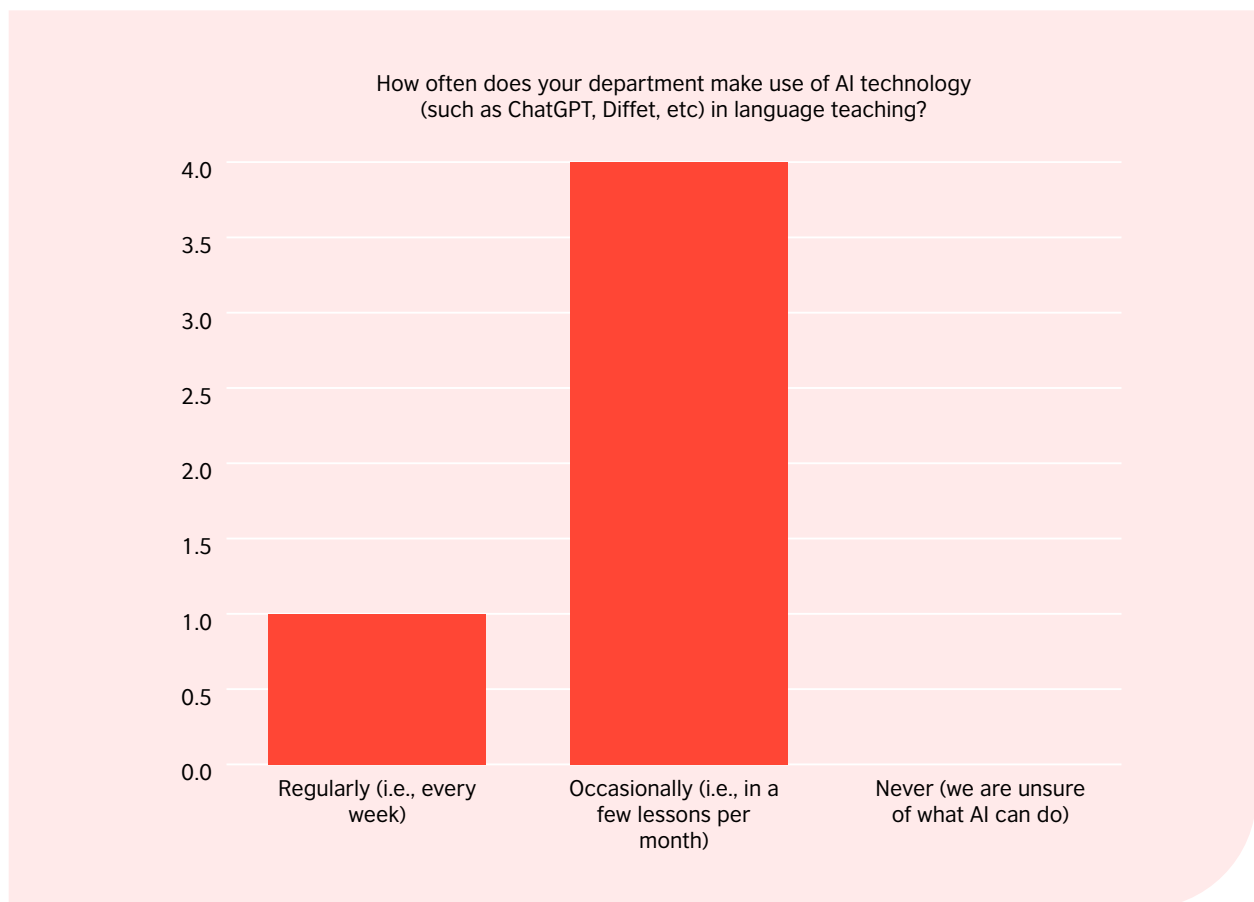


Figure 10: Number of colleges whose language departments make use of AI technology in language teaching

When asked if learners are allowed used to use AI technology to support their language learning, some responding colleges commented no, or that they discourage the use of AI:

“No, I have discouraged my learners from doing this as I am trying to teach them to be able to put their own sentence together without pre-preparing or learning.”

Other colleges are in the process of implementing guidance on how learners can use such technology:

“As a college we are currently completing our policy on AI technology which will help inform teachers and learners on what they may and may not do regarding AI. We are also going through a series of CPD in the coming months aimed at enhancing the use of AI in the classroom throughout all departments.”

“Although we are still waiting on a policy, students use AI, and I have encouraged them in some instances to use AI (such as Mizou where the chatbot takes the part of an oral examiner). I am now considering a system where AI could be used for some aspects (not all) of homework (e.g. evaluate a translation completed by AI, plan an essay, receive AI feedback on your writing).”

Improving language learning in post-16 colleges

In open-ended comments, college respondents elucidated the struggle that they face in improving recruitment for languages and teaching a substantial amount of content in a short period of time. When asked what could be done to improve the situation for language learners, colleges commented the following:

“Promoting International Languages, introducing two International Languages to curriculum for KS3 and 4 as in England and majority of European countries.”

“I think other areas of the college should offer either Agored units in language learning or the WJEC language pathways as option. I think evening classes for beginners and intermediate level are very much missed.”

“The connections between HE, FE, Secondary and Primary could be stronger in order to share resources and to promote language learning at grassroots in order to increase the learners we see picking up languages at Level 3 and above.”

“Exams need to change. Grading needs to change.”

Celebrating primary languages

This year's *Language Trends Wales* includes a new multimodal pupil dataset. Year 6 pupils across all primary schools in Wales were invited to express their ideas, feelings, and experiences of languages and language learning through the creation of a poster. From April to June 2024, the *Language Trends Wales 2024* Poster Competition ran in schools across Wales. It resulted in a total of 69 entries which evidence pupils' breadth and depth of knowledge about languages and experiences of primary language learning.

Acknowledging that annual or biennial surveys can lead to research respondent fatigue, the recruitment of participants and the collection of pupil data for this year's *Language Trends Wales* were designed to be creative opportunities for pupils and relevant classroom activities for teachers. To support school participation, teachers were provided with *Language Trends Wales 2024* Poster Competition materials. This included poster lesson plans, which included the aims and descriptions of learning for the *Language Trends Wales* poster lesson mapped to the Areas of Learning: Expressive Arts, Languages, Literacy and Communication in the National Curriculum; teacher notes and guidelines on how to deliver the lesson; and visual teaching aids for use in classrooms (see Annex).

Invitations to participate in the poster competition were sent to publicly available email addresses to all primary school Head teachers in Wales. Head teachers were also provided with parental opt-out forms if parents/guardians did not wish for their child/children to participate. Children were also asked for their informed consent to participate. Only posters which included these completed consent forms were included in the dataset.

In recognition of their participation in the research, schools were informed that posters will be on display at the *Language Trends Wales 2024* report launch and invitations were sent to winners of the competition to attend the launch, accompanied by a parent/guardian.

The analysis of the pupil poster dataset was driven by the research priority to evidence pupils' ideas, feelings, and experiences about languages and language learning. First, this entailed collating information on which languages were represented and how and the different types of visual features present in the data set. Second, the ideational representations of languages present in the poster dataset were identified and coded thematically. Third, the dataset was examined to identify

personal feelings and experiences pupils expressed about learning languages. It is important to note that in the guidelines teachers and pupils were reminded that they were free to choose what they want to put on the poster including positive and/or negative views of language and language learning. To analyse this pupil dataset in a replicable and robust manner, the analysis was undertaken by the research team using qualitative data management software. This was used to track the qualitative coding of the data and allow for inter-rater reliability measures ensuring rigorous and transparent analysis of the qualitative multimodal dataset.

One of the immediately striking features of the pupil poster dataset is the number of different languages mentioned by children in Year 6. Of the posters submitted there was a total of 70 different named languages referenced. The top ten most frequently occurring named languages are listed below:

Rank by frequency of occurrence	Named language
1	French
2	Spanish
3	Japanese
4	German
5	Portuguese
6	Mandarin
7	Arabic
8	Italian
9	Welsh
10	Russian

Table 17: The top ten most frequently occurring named languages in the Pupil Poster dataset

The names of different languages were written on the posters in several ways, including original or simplified versions (e.g. にほんご), anglicized and/or romanized versions. Some posters included images of signed languages, and some posters made specific reference to varieties of the same named language (e.g. American English, British English).



Figure 11: Poster extracts (039; 049; 063)

Accompanying the many references to different named languages, most of the posters (81 per cent) produced by primary pupils included multilingual phrases and greetings.



Figure 12: Poster extracts (055)

Most of the multilingual posters in the dataset included three or more languages (other than Welsh or English), evidencing the early multilingualism of the young people who took part in the research. Not only do these posters from Year 6 pupils in Wales display a wide knowledge about world languages, but they also illustrate how pupils are using the languages that they know.



Figure 13: Poster extracts (035)

With recent primary curriculum developments in Wales, this may be evidence, or potentially indicative, of learning in this area. What is clear is that the pupil dataset evidences pupils' multilingual repertoires in action, and it demonstrates how primary pupils already understand that many and different languages are part of their world around them. To what extent this early multilingualism nourished in primary contexts can be facilitated and sustained in the transition to post-primary contexts and materialized into post-primary uptake of languages is a matter for further attention.

In addition to the multilingual features, the posters in the primary poster dataset evidence a wide variety of visual features which signal pupils' global and cultural knowledge. Visual features include images of globes, flags, maps, geopolitical landmarks, and food. Most posters (over 80 per cent) incorporated images of flags and visual representations of the earth as a globe. Some posters include country maps and world maps from multiple perspectives. Examples of these visual features taken from the posters are shown in Fig.14:



Figure 14: Poster extracts (005; 012; 017; 018; 024; 026; 029; 039; 045)

These visual features present in the pupil poster dataset afford an insight into the associated meanings that multiple languages have for young people and how, for them, languages are part of their developing curiosity about cultures of the world. To further explore these ideational representations in the posters the research team examined the data and used inductive coding to identify several themes which categorised the meanings portrayed in the posters. Of the themes identified to capture the ideational representations in the dataset, two key themes emerged: 'languages as global' and 'languages as connections'.

Languages as global: Prominent throughout the poster dataset are images of the world as a globe. While the image of a globe, with its blue seas and green land, carries dominant geographical content, the images of globes in the dataset are often depicted as having human characteristics, such as eyes, mouth, hands, arms, and legs (see Fig. 15). These depictions of globes also convey socioemotional qualities such as being happy, smiling, welcoming, healthy, cool, and strong.

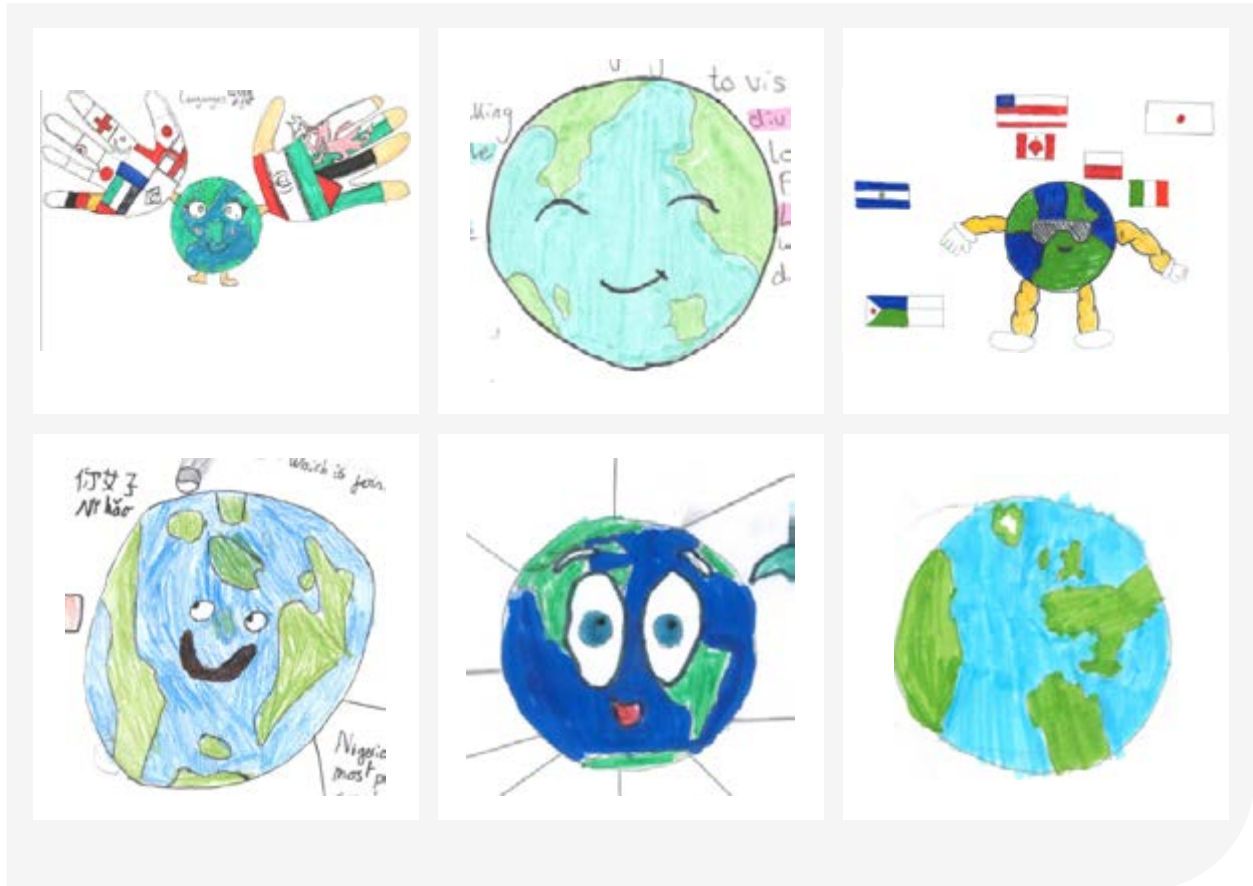


Figure 15: Poster extracts (027; 036; 055; 056; 057; 066)

In other posters which include images of the world as a globe, the earth is presented as talking directly from the poster to the viewer, telling the viewing audience how many languages 'it' speaks, why learning languages is important, and what you can do with languages. For example, in figure 16 these two posters present these ideas of the world speaking alongside the notion of power associated with languages (e.g. 'the strength of languages', 'feel the power all around the world', 'the power of language').



Figure 16: Poster extracts (068; 069)

These representations of languages and learning languages using images of globes, which occur consistently throughout the dataset, illustrate how young people's understandings of languages are tied to their understandings of the world. From these posters, it seems that primary school children who took part in the research perceive languages as global, belonging to the world, and aligned to notions of being communicative, geopolitically aware, strong, and healthy.

The second key theme in the dataset captures pupils' depictions of languages as important for social interactions, for travel, and for better communication. The theme of '**languages as connections**' occurs in one out of every four posters submitted. In one poster, the world is drawn with bridges extending outwards to connect representations of different countries and different languages.

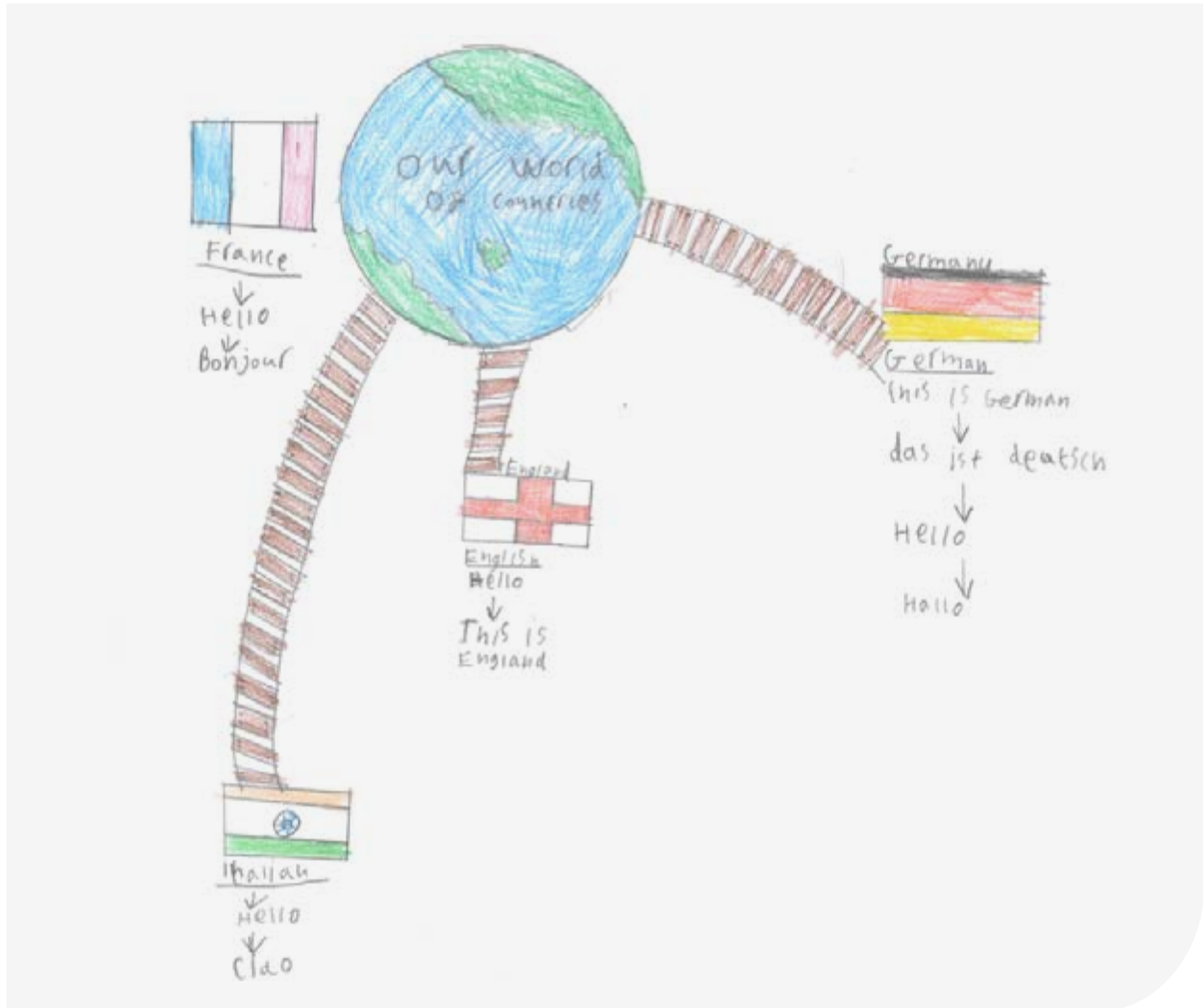


Figure 17: Poster extracts (050)

Languages are also represented in the pupils' posters as being necessary for very local and individual connections too. Pupils make explicit reference to how they use the different languages they know to speak to their friends and when they visit family who live in different places (see Fig. 18 below).

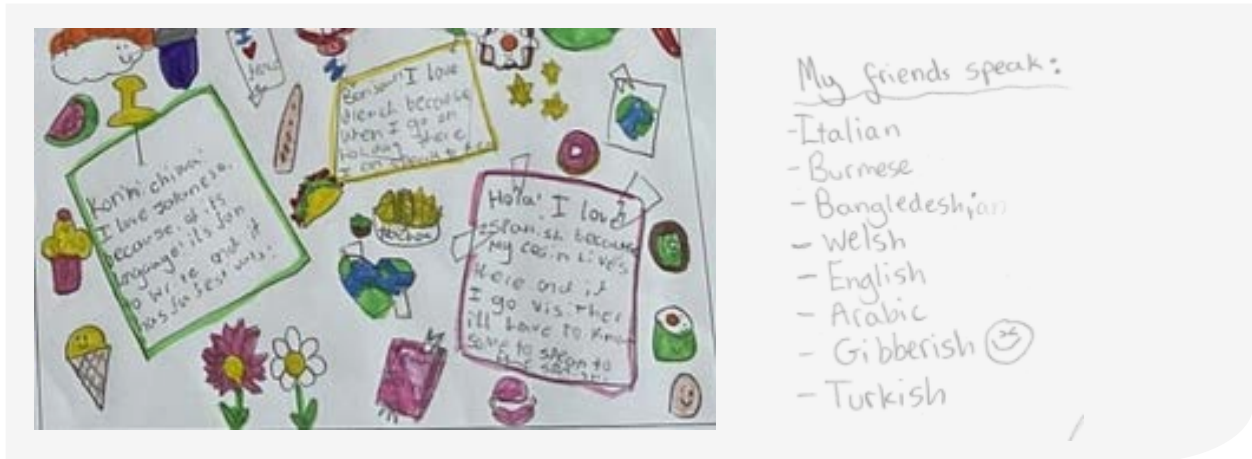


Figure 18: Poster extracts (014; 052)

Taken alongside the evidence of emerging multilingual repertoires and informed cultural awareness from the linguistic and visual analysis, these findings from the thematic analysis offer further insight into young people's knowledge and understanding about languages and the roles of languages in their lives, and in their world. It seems clear that the young people who contributed to this dataset have a breadth of knowledge about how the world works through different languages, how languages can be geographically and iconically situated, and the many relationships that languages have with health, social interaction, and cultural inclusion.

Finally, we present findings on pupils' feelings about languages and their experiences of learning languages at school, as depicted in their posters. It is important to note that in the poster competition guidelines teachers and pupils were reminded that they were free to choose what they wanted to include on the poster and that this could include positive and/or negative views of language and language learning. Notwithstanding this advice, no posters portrayed negative views of languages and/or language learning. Six out of ten posters presented positive perspectives on learning languages, which included imagery such as hearts, smiling faces, and phrases such as 'love learning languages' and personal statements such as: 'I enjoy learning languages because...'. The remaining four out of ten of all posters in the dataset presented neither positive or negative views about languages or language learning and were therefore considered neutral. Posters in this category presented facts regarding languages spoken in different countries, populations of different countries, and in some cases historical descriptions. Examples of posters identified as positive and neutral are presented below in Fig. 19:



Figure 19: Poster extracts (007; 011; 057; 067)

Positive messages about languages and language learning are also communicated by the Year 6 pupils through their posters: 'life is great' reports one poster and the imperative to 'learn one' is presented in another. Overall, the messages that young people have created through these posters is one which views multiple languages as positive. In addition to the general positive expressions and feelings portrayed by pupils through their posters, some Year 6 pupils included words and phrases to communicate specific reasons why languages and language learning are important to them, (i.e. 'it boosts my confidence'; 'acceptance'; 'the world is better with different languages and places to visit'; 'I enjoy learning languages because it is a chance to experience places around the world') alongside imagery of the natural world (e.g. flowers, leaves, trees, sun).



Figure 20: Poster extracts (053; 056; 064)

In relation to pupils' own experiences of language learning as presented in the posters, these too were portrayed as overwhelmingly positive. Their experiences of language learning were described on their posters as 'interesting' and 'just fun'. Although no negative learning experiences are evident in the dataset, it should not be assumed that negative experiences of language learning do not occur. Despite the reminder in the guidelines that pupils were free to include both positive and negative experiences, the genre of a poster competition and the promotion through languages advocates and institutions is likely to have had some influence on pupils and their teachers presenting only positive or neutral perspectives of language learning in their submissions. What is evident in the poster dataset are some pupils' attuned notions of language proficiency. For example, pupils present statements such as 'I can speak some Portuguese, but I'm not fluent'; 'languages I speak fluently, languages I kind of know'; 'I can speak a tiny bit of French'. Again, the findings from this poster dataset highlight that primary school pupils are already aware of and use their multilingual repertoires. They also clearly identify their needs and desires to learn and continue to learn languages.

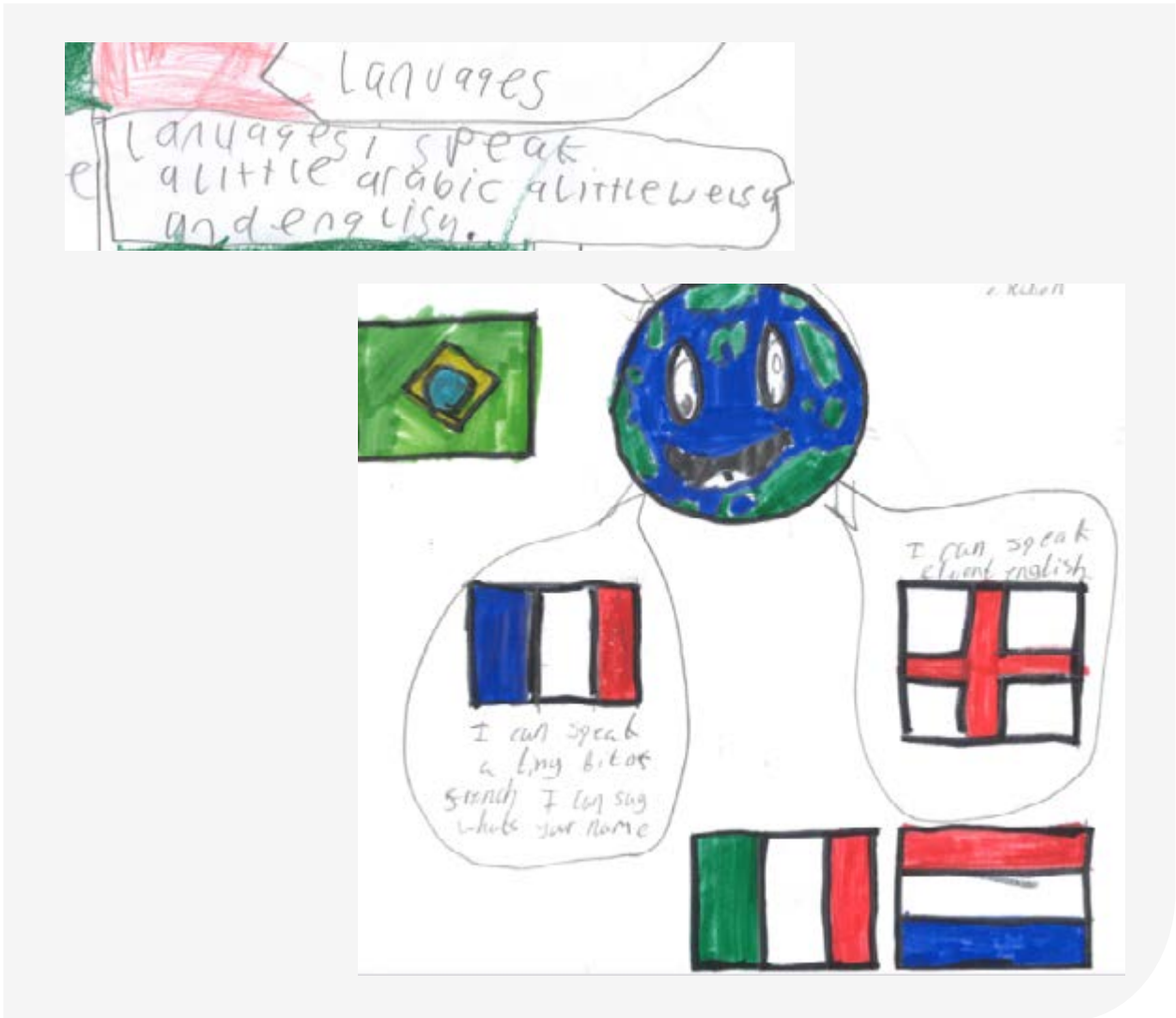


Figure 21: Poster extracts (030; 048)

Conclusion

The new multimodal pupil dataset for *Language Trends Wales* created as a result of Year 6 pupil's submission to the *Language Trends Wales 2024 Poster Competition* illustrates primary school children's understandings and experiences of learning and using multiple languages. Our analysis shows that those primary school pupils who took part in the competition are positive and highly informed about languages and cultures, and they are willing to use the different languages that they know. First, from an examination of the linguistic and visual features of the posters, there is evidence that young people have a wide and diverse knowledge of world languages alongside their use of growing multilingual repertoires. Second, our examination of ideational representations signals the depth of knowledge that young people express about how the world works through different languages; they understand that languages are good for health, languages are a means of cultural inclusion, and languages are geopolitically contextualised. Two prominent themes in the poster dataset were 'languages as global', and 'languages as connections'. In their expressions and understandings about languages and language learning, international and global perspectives are the 'norm', and languages are represented as key to making and keeping connections with people locally and globally.

Finally, in relation to the activity of language learning, the majority of Year 6 participants present their experiences as positive. From their perspectives there are many reasons for learning languages, and it is fun to do so. There is little indication that they wish to interact in the world with one or two languages alone and they already express nuanced notions of language proficiency as context dependent.

In contrast to the post-primary findings in this report on opportunities for learning languages, multilingual repertoires and areas of learning appear to be developing positively through the primary stages of schooling in Wales. However, the extent to which this confident and growing multilingualism can be nurtured and sustained in post-primary contexts may need considerable attention.

Conclusion

As always, the excellent work being undertaken in the languages classroom by teachers across Wales has shone through the data collected in this year's report, despite the many challenges affecting the future of International Languages education.

Several survey questions allowed teachers and lecturers to share their professional opinions and experiences on the situation for International Language learning in Wales; respondents have expressed deep concerns about the financial constraints, low pupil numbers, exam content and harsh grading that negatively affect the situation for language learning in secondary schools and post-16 colleges in Wales. Nearly 70 per cent of secondary schools have none or less than ten per cent of Year 10 pupils taking an International Language for GCSE in our dataset; concerns have been raised about the lack of GCSE choices and learner reluctance to study a subject that is perceived as difficult with severe grading as key barriers to young people studying an International Language in addition to Welsh. Although the numbers of teachers reporting that fewer learners take an International Language at key stage 4 has decreased from 49 per cent in 2023 to 38 per cent in 2024, there is a considerable way to go to encourage more learners to pursue a languages education and to sustain an enthusiasm for languages throughout their educational journey.

From this year's primary school poster competition, it is clear that primary practitioners are working hard to foster a plurilingual learning environment that encourages the development of creative and inquisitive young people, by opening up avenues to explore different languages, cultures and lands. From the wonderful posters created by Year 6 pupils, the research team identified 70 languages that primary learners have knowledge of. At this young age, learners have a developing global mindset; it is imperative that this is developed through secondary, further and higher education.

Reference bibliography

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Annex of Useful Resources

British Council England:

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/>

British Council Northern Ireland:

<https://nireland.britishcouncil.org/>

British Council Scotland:

<https://scotland.britishcouncil.org/>

British Council Wales:

<https://wales.britishcouncil.org/en>

CSC (Central South Consortium):

<https://www.cscjes.org.uk/>

Cerdd Iaith:

<https://listeningtolanguage.com>

EAS (Education Achievement Service):

<https://sewaleseas.org.uk/>

GIMAGINE by the Goethe-Institut:

<https://www.goethe.de/ins/gb/en/spr/drm.html>

GwE (North Wales Regional School Improvement

Service): <https://www.gwegogledd.cymru/?lang=en>

Languages Gateway:

<https://www.thelanguagesgateway.uk/>

Language Gym: <https://www.language-gym.com/>

MFL Mentoring: <https://mflmentoring.co.uk/>

MWP (Mid Wales Education Partners):

<https://www.pacc.cymru/?lang=en>

Neath Port Talbot:

<https://beta.npt.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/>

Partneriaeth: <https://www.partneriaeth.cymru/>

Routes into Languages Cymru:

<https://routesintolanguagescymru.co.uk/>

Think German: www.thinkgerman.org.uk

UK-German Connection:

<https://ukgermanconnection.org/>

Poster Competition Teaching Materials:

[Language Trends Wales Poster Competition 2024- Lesson](#)

[Language Trends Wales Poster Competition 2024- PPT](#)

[Tueddiadau Ieithoedd Cymru Cystadleuaeth Poster 2024 - Gwers](#)

[Tueddiadau Ieithoedd Cymru Cystadleuaeth Poster 2024- PPT](#)

Agenda Item 3.2

COLEG
CYMRAEG
CENEDLAETHOL

Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol
Y Llwyfan
College Road
Carmarthen
SA31 3EQ

Chair:
Dr Aled Eirug
Chief Executive:
Dr Ioan Matthews

Tel: 01267 610400
E-mail: gwybodaeth@colegcymraeg.ac.uk

E-mail address: SeneddFinance@Senedd.Wales

27 November 2024

Dear Committee,

Re: Call for information – Welsh Government Draft Budget proposals for 2025–26

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the Welsh Government's Draft Budget for 2025–26.

The Coleg Cymraeg creates and promotes training and study opportunities in the Welsh language by working with further education colleges, schools, universities, apprenticeship providers and employers. We inspire and encourage everyone to use their Welsh language skills, with the aim of creating a bilingual workforce, including the education workforce itself. Our response to the consultation will focus on those elements of the Budget that are relevant to the Coleg's remit.

Welsh-medium and bilingual further education and apprenticeships

In 2018, the Coleg was given the responsibility for further education and apprenticeships, and we are currently implementing ambitious plans to develop provision for *all* learners in these sectors, whatever their Welsh language skills.

As a result of the Co-operation Agreement, the Coleg received additional funding in 2022-23 and 2023-24 to invest in new Welsh-medium and bilingual provision and staff in the further education colleges and apprenticeship providers. Over 60 facilitators were appointed in the colleges in priority areas such as Health and Care and Childcare, and over 20 assessors were funded within the apprenticeship field.

As a result of the increased budget, there has been a clear increase in bilingual learning activities in the post-16 sector since the Coleg was given this responsibility, as seen in the table below:

Learning activities with at least an element in Welsh:

Year	Further education	Work-based learning
2017/18	7.3%	10.3%
2018/19	8.7%	11.9%
2019/20	8.8%	13.0%
2020/21	14.7%	20.8%
2021/22	18.2%	25.3%

Data source: [Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers – Annual report 2022/23 \(gov.wales p.24\)](#)

Due to the funding challenges faced by the Welsh Government in preparing the 2024-25 budget, the Coleg did not receive the promised increase of £840,000 for the third year of the Co-operation Agreement. Nevertheless, we welcomed the firm [commitment](#) from the Government and Plaid Cymru to re-profile the additional increase to the 2025-26 financial year. **It is critical that the Coleg receives this investment for 2025-26 in order to be able to continue investing, mainly within apprenticeships (work-based learning).**

An inquiry was carried out recently by the Senedd Culture Committee into the Development of post-16 Welsh language provision. Evidence was presented from a number of bodies in the sector stating that, in order to ensure that the provision continues to grow in a sustainable manner, it is vital that Welsh Government funding is maintained and increased over the coming years. We are awaiting the publication of the committee’s report and recommendations.

Funding Welsh-medium and bilingual further education and apprenticeships

The percentage of the Welsh Government's further education budget that is spent on Welsh-medium and bilingual further education and apprenticeships provision is 2%, while Welsh speakers represent 22% of learners. The Coleg Cymraeg and the Government's Welsh-medium and bilingual Further Education and Apprenticeship Action Plan targets *everyone* in the sector, regardless of their Welsh language skills.

Higher education

The Coleg was established in 2011. Since then, extensive Welsh-medium and bilingual provision has been developed across all the main subjects provided at Welsh universities. There are now over 8,660 students studying some of their degree course through the medium of Welsh, which is 27% of all Welsh speakers at universities in Wales.

The Coleg's latest Academic Plan outlines our plans for the next period, and one of the main objectives is to attract new audiences to Welsh-medium and bilingual higher education, including those who are less confident in using their Welsh. There are 19,786 Welsh speakers studying at a university in Wales, equating to 13% of the students at Welsh universities, and the Coleg is developing plans to attract more of them to study part of their course through the medium of Welsh. It is vital that the Coleg receives the anticipated funding to support this important work and to protect the provision that has already been established.

Funding Welsh-medium higher education

The percentage of the Welsh Government's higher education budget (not including the Student Support budget) that is spent on Welsh-medium and bilingual higher education provision is 3%, while Welsh speakers represent 13% of the students at universities in Wales.

Medr and funding Welsh-medium and bilingual tertiary education

In June 2023, the Coleg was designated by the Welsh Ministers to advise Medr (the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research), for the purpose of supporting it to fulfil its duties under section 9(1) of the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022, which relates to promoting tertiary education through the medium of Welsh.

We have presented initial overarching advice on policy, regulation and funding matters to Medr with the aim of informing its first Strategic Plan which will be presented to the Government in December. The advice, and Medr's response to that advice, will be published over the coming weeks.

In its consultation version of the Strategic Plan, Medr has indicated the intention, in accordance with the Strategic Priorities set for it by the Welsh Government and supported in the Coleg's initial advice, to develop a National Plan for the Welsh language in the tertiary education sector. The Coleg welcomes this and looks forward to providing Medr with further advice on the development of the plan.

In order to give effect to the Act's intention to encourage and meet the demand for Welsh-medium and bilingual provision in the tertiary sector, there will need to be a sufficient budget to invest in staff, provision and resources.

Welsh Language and Education Bill

Although the main focus of the Welsh Language and Education Bill is the statutory education system, it will lay foundations for progression to tertiary education and from there into the world of work. It will create the potential to ensure that many more children and young people in Wales are able to develop and use their Welsh language skills, and will ultimately help create the bilingual workforces that are so needed across various fields of employment. We need to start planning now to meet the needs of those who will be leaving the statutory sector and entering the tertiary sector as independent Welsh speakers.

In conclusion

The contribution of tertiary education to the achievement of the objectives of the Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy and the policy aims of the Welsh Language and Education Bill is clear, but financial investment is needed in order to meet those objectives.

We trust that the contents of this letter will be of benefit to the Senedd's committees as they proceed with the scrutiny of the Welsh Government's draft budget for 2025-26. For more information, please contact Gwenllian Griffiths, the Coleg's Director of Policy, Communications and Engagement, via g.griffiths@colegcymraeg.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Ioan Matthews
Chief Executive

cc. The Senedd Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee (SeneddCulture@Senedd.Wales) and the Children, Young People and Education Committee (SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales)



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Delyth Jewell MS
Chair, Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee
Senedd Cymru

Via email

5th December 2024

Dear Delyth Jewell MS,

Re: Impact of the increased National Insurance for employers on charities and social enterprises delivering public services

I am writing to urgently highlight the direct, deep and long-term impact on our members, who are all charities and social enterprises delivering public leisure and culture, of the proposed increase in the employer's rate of National Insurance to 15%, coupled with the lowering of the threshold from £9100 to £5000.

We are a members' association representing registered charities, societies or community interest companies (with a public benefit asset lock) delivering public leisure, sport and/or culture services for communities across the UKs. Our members in Wales work in partnership to deliver services on behalf of local authorities and operate assets and services as part of the public leisure and culture service provision in their communities.

The impact of the increase in National Insurance, which comes on top of a range of other financial challenges, will impact on our members' ability to retain their staffing levels and to improve and develop our services to the community, which will in turn ultimately impact on their physical and mental health, wellbeing and economic prospects.

The shift in the rate of Employers National Insurance contribution along with the significant change in threshold at which it is payable has an impact of an additional 2.3% on annual pay bills. Based on an indicative salary of £30,000, these changes represent an additional £866 cost to the employer per employee.

As charities and social enterprises all our members reinvest any financial surpluses generated back into their business and, ultimately, into their services. They operate on tight margins and have been hit hard in the past few years by the impact of Covid closures, the rise in energy prices, supply chain problems and inflation, and decreasing investment from local authorities. This is against a constraint of limited ability to increase pricing in order to ensure facilities and opportunities remain accessible.

The NIC policies announced in the Autumn Budget were unexpected, unbudgeted and is deeply damaging, particularly as it comes in addition to significant uplifts to the National Living Wage and Real Living Wage.

The cumulative impact on of all changes to staffing costs (both to salaries and national insurance rates and threshold) are equivalent to an 4.1% increase in costs for our members in Wales.

The rising employer costs, resulting from increasing NIC and National Minimum and Living Wage, pose a significant challenge for members who are seeing the erosion of differentials between job roles. While we welcome the intention behind the increases and absolutely support the National Living wage, the reality is that the rate of increases has exacerbated the pressure on maintaining distinctions between roles and levels of responsibilities.

These uplifts in wages represent an additional 1.8% salary costs for our members (excluding the changes to National Insurance Contributions). One of our members in Wales noted in our November survey that the impact of the additional costs will mean: "Reduction in workforce is inevitable with reducing management fees as well as these increasing costs together with inflation which is now greater from suppliers passing on the NI increases. Reduction in pay award is a consequence. Major problem will be further and widening health inequalities as prices are predicated to have to rise by around 10% as a result of these cost pressure"

According to our November members' survey, the direct impact of the increased salary costs (NIC and NMW/NLW) for our members in Wales are to increase prices, reduce staff pay awards, and restructure their workforce.

Prior to the announcement of the increase in National Insurance for employers, 69% of members cited affordability, economic climate, business performance, general market conditions as a key measure in setting pay awards.

We recognise the significant budgetary challenges facing both the UK and Welsh Governments and the reality of difficult decisions that need to be made. However, the risk of the cumulative effect of the financial pressures on our members is that, as businesses, they are at risk of significant service and/or workforce reductions to remain financially sustainable.

We call on the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee to recognise the unprecedented challenges facing our members and to meet as a matter of priority to discuss collaborative measures to safeguard these vital community assets and organisations.

Your sincerely,



Jennifer Huygen
Head of Policy and Strategic Partnerships, Community Leisure UK
jenniferhuygen@communityleisureuk.org



Delyth Jewell MS

Chair, Culture, Communications,
Welsh Language, Sport,
International Relations Committee
Senedd Cymru
Sent by email only

Our ref: 20241129 JewellD

Friday 29 November 2024

Dear Chair,

Our legal agreement with the Welsh Rugby Union

I am writing to inform you and the Committee that the Commission has signed a legal agreement with the Welsh Rugby Union after concerns over a workplace culture which did not adequately protect staff from discrimination and harassment.

The legally binding agreement sets out what the WRU must do over the next year to improve its workplace policies, practices and culture to protect its employees from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment.

Bydd y Comisiwn yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg.

The Commission welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English.

Ff/T: 029 2044 7710

E: correspondence@equalityhumanrights.com

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Companies House (1st Floor),
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equalityhumanrights.com

It comes after an independent review found that aspects of the workplace culture at the WRU were ‘toxic’, and that sexism, racism and homophobia were not adequately challenged. The review also found evidence of bullying and an over-reliance on non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) to prevent employees from sharing their experiences.

Under the terms of the agreement, the WRU has committed to:

- Introduce mandatory training on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) for all employees, board members, management and senior leadership
- Introduce mandatory training on harassment and dealing with complaints of sexual harassment for people managers
- Work with an external adviser to review and amend its corporate workplace policies, including a specific sexual harassment policy
- Introduce a standardised system to record and monitor discrimination and harassment complaints
- Implement all outstanding recommendations from the independent review
- Review the use of NDAs

Other key actions included as part of the agreement include an EDI delivery plan and five-year strategy, with senior executives having specific EDI-related objectives in their annual performance targets.

Bydd y Comisiwn yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg.

The Commission welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English.

Ff/T: 029 2044 7710

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The actions included in the agreement are designed to be achievable and effective ways to embed the prevention of discrimination and harassment at the WRU. We will monitor the completion of the actions in the agreement, with many of them already underway.

We will write to you at the conclusion of the agreement to provide an update on progress.

Yours sincerely,

John Kirkpatrick
Chief Executive

Bydd y Comisiwn yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg.

The Commission welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English.

Ff/T: 029 2044 7710

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Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros
Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate
Change and Rural Affairs

Our ref - DC/HIDCC/10589/24

Mike Hedges MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Senedd Cymru

2 December 2024

Dear Mike,

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement to notify you of the sixth meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee (IMSC), which will take place on 3 December 2024.

The Standing Committee will be chaired by UK Government's Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Rt Hon Pat McFadden MP. I will represent the Welsh Government at the meeting. This will be the first meeting of the IMSC since the general election held in July and will be held virtually. I anticipate the discussion will focus on the Covid-19 Inquiry Module 1 report, Common Frameworks, the UK Internal Market Act and the Sewel Convention.

I have copied this letter to the First Minister, the Rt Hon Eluned Morgan MS, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language, the Rt Hon Mark Drakeford MS, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning, Rebecca Evans MS, and to the Chairs of the Finance Committee, the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee and the Health and Social Care Committee.

I will provide an update after the meeting.

Yours sincerely,



Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd
a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

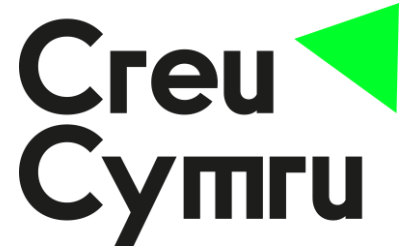
Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Huw.Irranca-Davies@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Huw.Irranca-Davies@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Agenda Item 3.5



*Yn Gosod y Llwyfan I'r Celfyddydau Perfformio yng Nghymru
Setting the Stage for the Performing Arts in Wales*

3 December / Rhagfyr 2024

Annwyl Ms Jewell

Rwy'n gobeithio eich bod chi'n iawn. I hope you are well.

I am writing with concerns regarding the Welsh Governments proposed Visitor Accommodation Levy Bill Policy and the effect on theatres, visiting theatrical companies and producing companies touring around Wales.

Many of our member theatres and producing companies pay directly for visiting artist or touring company accommodation. This additional accommodation levy will increase already stretched budgets.

Aberystwyth Arts Centre directly cover the costs of bookings of artists / bands / tours for approximately 1744 bed nights annual basis. This could mean additional £2180 to their annual budget.

At Venue Cymru their biggest shows have on average 50 people involved for 6 to 7 nights which would add just over £600 to a company paying for the accommodation.

We are also risking putting off visiting companies from outside Wales performing in our theatres, denying audiences around Wales the chance to see high quality productions.

Whilst we understand this Bill will generate valuable income for Local Authorities we are asking for an exemption for touring companies and artists as part of the Bill.

Edrychaf ymlaen at glywed gennych.
I look forward to hearing from you.

Cofion gorau,
Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Louise Miles-Payne'.

Louise Miles-Payne,
Cyfarwyddwr, Creu Cymru / Director, Creu Cymru

Jack Sargeant AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol
Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

Agenda Item 3.6

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Delyth Jewell MS
Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations
Committee

4 December 2024

Dear Delyth,

Further to my appearance before the Committee on 13 November, I am providing the additional information requested by the Committee. Please see the attached document.

Yours sincerely,



Jack Sargeant AS/MS
Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership
Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

CWLSIR Committee: 13.11.24,

Actions & Questions Not Reached

- **An update on the implementation of the recommendations from the 2015 Expert Review of Local Museum Provision**

The Expert Review is now almost 10 years old. The Welsh Government's support of the local museums sector reflects the current financial and social environment in which both Government and museums now work rather than solely seeking to implement the Review's recommendations. As we progress to the implementation phase of the new Priorities for Culture, there is an opportunity to consider the best options for ongoing support for local museums.

Viability of the *Creation of three Regional Bodies* recommendation depended on the support of Local Authority Members and Chief Executives across Wales and in 2015 was not deemed a priority for senior officials nor elected members. Estimations of funding required to set up and then run regional bodies indicate significant cost implications for the Welsh Government and Local Authorities. At the current time, recognising the immense financial pressures faced by the public sector, it has not been possible to progress this recommendation.

Other actions have, and continue to be, undertaken to address some of the ten recommendations of the Review. For example, the Museums Branch of Welsh Government works strategically with partners such as the Federation of Museums and Art Galleries of Wales, key sector support bodies such as Association of Independent Museums, Kids in Museums and Group for Education in Museums, as well as Amgueddfa Cymru, to provide leadership, focus resource effectively and co-ordinate activities across the local sector. In 2022-23, officials commissioned a review of our management of the Museum Accreditation Scheme in Wales and used its recommendations to ensure our support of the sector is focussed and appropriate. This has included new and additional support for our mentor scheme for museums without a professionally trained member of staff.

We have developed a new significance toolkit for museums to support organisations to identify and articulate the significance of their collections and how these contribute to the story of Wales - [Collections significance assessment: toolkit for Welsh museums | GOV.WALES](#). We have piloted the toolkit with museums, offered training in its use and have funded the Sporting Heritage subject specialist network to use the toolkit with museums this year. We are also working to explore the establishment of a Welsh scheme to recognise nationally significant items in local collections. This work will enable both Government and the sector to make informed decisions around rationalisation, development and the safeguarding of Wales' collections of significance.

The Welsh Government continues to deliver an annual high quality workforce development programme for local museums, libraries and archives. This includes access to specialist training, support and advice, toolkits and guides, and cross-sectoral networks. Following the Expert Review, the Community Learning Libraries

Capital fund was extended to include museums and archives. To date over £3m has been allocated to local museums to undertake capital improvements. In addition, this year we also allocated over £340,000 to local museums for improvements to their collections stores.

- **How much funding provided by the Welsh Government to its culture and sport arm's-length bodies in this and the previous financial year been used to fund redundancies? How many people are employed in culture and sport arm's-length bodies and local museums now, and how many were employed in 2010?**

Last autumn, we began conversations with the culture and sport Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) to encourage them to start scenario planning for a potentially challenging 2024-25 Budget. Following the draft Budget announcement on 19 December 2023, the ALBs had to make difficult decisions about how to deploy their workforces, to make sure they could operate within their revised budgets and continue to serve the people of Wales.

After exploring their options, and following discussions with their trade unions, some ALBs decided to launch redundancy consultations. We agreed to pay the full costs of these redundancies in the financial year 2023-24, to help mitigate against the reductions to revenue budgets in the following financial year (2024-25). Amgueddfa Cymru had forecast a budget deficit of £1.5m before the reduction to its revenue budget was announced, so its redundancy scheme was part of efforts to make sufficient savings to address both issues. The additional funding we provided to each ALB in the financial year 2023-24 was:

- Amgueddfa Cymru (£5,161,623)
- National Library of Wales (£1,143,500)
- Arts Council of Wales (£837,616)
- Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (£500,408.65).
- Sport Wales (£0)

No funding has been provided in the financial year 2024-25 to support redundancy costs.

The following table contains the number of people currently employed by the ALBs, compared with the end of 2010. For Amgueddfa Cymru and the Arts Council of Wales the figures provided are headcount. For the National Library of Wales and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales and Sports Wales the figures provided are Full-Time Equivalent (FTE). We have provided the figures for permanent staff with project and/or casual staff in brackets.

People employed by the ALBs

ALB	Current	2010
Amgueddfa Cymru	593 (& 206)	631 (&147) ¹
National Library	178 (& 25)	282.3 (& 7.3)
Arts Council of Wales	88	94
Royal Commission	22.2 (& 7)	32.5 (& 12)
Sport Wales	145.85	143.45

- **What consideration has the Welsh Government given to the proposal from Swim Wales to enable universal school swimming?**

Learning to swim is an important life skill and a foundation skill for a lifetime enjoyment of water-based activities. The two main opportunities for children in Wales to learn to swim are lessons provided in school or lessons in the community (local authorities, leisure trusts, independent swim schools) that are paid for. These opportunities are available to participants at a variable cost across Wales.

Over many years, Swim Wales has developed strong links with providers across Wales that deliver school swimming. However, the NGB does not currently have any direct relationships or influence with individual schools on a local basis.

I am aware there has been a decline in the number of young people who are able to swim by the time they leave primary school. Issues relating to the delivery of Curriculum for Wales are a matter for my colleague, the Cabinet Secretary for Education, but I am keen to explore opportunities across government to see if more can be done.

Through the Sport budget, the Welsh Government continues to provide funding, through Sport Wales, for local authorities to offer free swimming to children and young people aged 16 and under. The scheme provides a free splash session every weekend in every pool and two additional sessions in the summer holidays. Local authorities provide targeted support to encourage young people from areas of deprivation to participate in the scheme.

- **Details of the process the Welsh Government has required Amgueddfa Cymru to complete to access £1.3 million of capital funding that was announced in July 2024. How does this process compare to other awards of funding from the Welsh Government to arm's-length bodies? What barriers would there be to streamlining this process given the urgency of capital work on the Amgueddfa Cymru estate?**

The £1.3m announced in July 2024 represents the first-year emergency work of what is a proposed, longer-term capital investment in National Museum Cardiff. The total estimated investment required for this is £30m. As such, it represents a large-scale investment and, as a major project, requires development in line with the Five Case

¹ Figures are for 2013

Model methodology (aka Better Business Cases). This approach is mandated in the HM Treasury Green Book, which all public bodies are required to follow when spending public money on its projects and programmes. In this case, the first year of the project (the £1.3m identified) has been dealt with through the simplest and lowest level of business case, known as a Business Justification Case (BJC), due to the nature of the emergency work needed and timing of the funding to be released.

The Better Business Cases standard means spending proposals are scoped and planned to support evidence-based decision-making. In line with requirements of the Better Business Case model and aligned to the funding level being requested, we separated the first-year emergency work valued at £1.3m into a single stage BJC. This allows the urgent work to proceed in the financial year 2024 to 2025 and to make access to the funding easier and less bureaucratic in-year. However, this was on the condition that a Full Business Case is iteratively developed through its three stages to support decision making with regard to the remaining investment of £28.7m, sought over a 5-year period from 2026-27 onward. Guidance on the process for projects is available at [Better business cases: investment decision-making framework | GOV.WALES](#).

For specific capital investment, infrastructure projects and programmes, both the Welsh and the UK Governments follow the best practice Better Business Case model. Use of the methodology enables users to provide clarity in respect of the objectives of investment and appraisal of the available options that meet said objectives, to ensure that the preferred option is the one that optimises costs, benefits and risks, ensuring that we deliver the best possible outcomes against a backdrop of constrained public finances. That is why our infrastructure investments are subject to established business assurance practices, dictated by the level of investment being sought and the inherent level of risk.

In line with the process, Amgueddfa Cymru produced a Risk Potential Assessment (RPA) so the level and type of risk associated with the project could be assessed and an appropriate mechanism agreed for the first and future years of the project. Following the submission of the RPA the Welsh Government's Integrated Assurance Hub (IAH) agreed the approach to be taken for this project, based on the assessment of risk. This follows one of the three approaches described below:

1. Single Stage Business Justification Case - Low Value/Risk Project (£0 to £250k whole life costs).
2. Single Stage Business Justification Case - Medium Value/Risk Project (£250k to £2 million whole life costs)
3. Three Stage Business Case (SOC, OBC, FBC) – High Value/Risk Project (Over £2 million whole life costs)

As the first year was specifically for emergency work to protect the national collection at a value of £1.3m, and based on the assessment of the RPA, the Medium Value – Business Justification Case was used:

www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-10/business-justification-case-medium-value-1.odt.

This template was provided to Amgueddfa Cymru on 29 May for completion, ahead of the formal announcement of funding in July. Once completed to a satisfactory standard, an award letter would then be issued to enable the work to commence. In this case, two drafts have been submitted by Amgueddfa Cymru and we have been working with them to strengthen the content of the BJC.

The Five Case Model methodology (Better Business Cases) systematically addresses a number of key questions that lie at the heart of an investment decision. It is the recognised best practice approach for the preparation of spending proposals in the UK public sector, as directed by HM Treasury's Green Book and requires projects to be planned and to operate within an agreed framework to ensure their success and was developed in response to failures in the delivery of public sector projects.

The process being followed is no different to the requirements of other large scale cultural capital investment projects with funding being allocated to either local authorities or ALBs such as Celf, Theatr Clwyd and the Football Museum for Wales. Amgueddfa Cymru has been asked to follow this guidance to develop its project plans and access funding for both the redevelopment of the National Slate Museum and the work at National Museum Cardiff.

The Better Business Cases model was developed to strengthen project planning and delivery in view of the failings of previous public sector approaches. We, as co-owner of the standard along with HMT, have adopted this best practice approach to ensure that projects deliver the outputs, outcomes and benefits intended from the allocation of funding.

Information requested by the Committee on questions not reached:

- **What is the Welsh Government's current plan for ongoing revenue funding for the National Contemporary Art Gallery project? How reasonable is it for the Welsh Government to outsource the revenue funding of its own project rather than using its own resources?**

Discussions are continuing with the project partners on the funding required and potential sources, to support both the transition from completion of the capital investment to delivery, and the future operating/running costs of the operating model. These discussions reflect the need for the partners to take on delivery of a new initiative, having recently absorbed reductions to grant in aid baselines.

We believe it is reasonable expectation for the initiative to become self-sustaining over time, through a multifaceted funding model taken forward by the delivery partners. Funding for next year will be a discussed as part of the draft Budget for 2025-26, published on 10 December.

- **What ongoing costs will there be to partner organisations (the Arts Council, National Library and Amgueddfa Cymru) as part of the National Contemporary Art Gallery project? Will the Welsh Government cover these costs?**

My Officials have met and discussed expectations going forward with the three project partners. Updated papers setting out the case and estimating costs, commencing from April 2025, were received ahead of the Celf Project Board held during in November. These are by no means final at this at stage. Following the discussion at Project Board, officials have provided further feedback to aid the development of the model and cost structure. We have been clear that the future delivery model will seek to reduce reliance on funding from the Welsh Government over time. To do this, it will be important for the partners to access and secure external funding in addition to prioritising the funding available to the three partners. Further updates can be provided as discussions progress and options move towards being finalised and when budget allocations are clearer.

- **What assessment has the Welsh Government made of the state of culture and sport facilities in Wales? How has this changed in the last ten years?**

Leisure Services

The Welsh Government is working with the Chief Leisure Officers Wales (CLOW) group to determine the level and type of provision and condition of facilities in each local authority and have recently concluded a survey on this which is currently being reviewed and we will be in a position to report our findings shortly.

Sport Wales, as part of its capital programme, have set up two collaborative groups; one on pitches with football rugby and hockey, and one on courts, with tennis, netball and basketball; and they assess the need for investment in those facilities based on the existing provision and need across Wales.

Culture

Our Transformation Capital Grant programme provides funding for local museums, libraries and archives. In 2022 we commissioned and evaluation of the programme including some reflections on the future capital needs of our local sectors. Building on this we recently appointed contractors to provide independent analyses of the local museum sector's capital investment needs. This will provide independent evidence of the nature and scale of infrastructure issues faced by the local sector.

In 2023-24 the Welsh Government commissioned a review of collections management by local authority and independent museums in Wales and our national arm's length cultural organisations. This showed that for museums situated in historic buildings it can be extremely difficult and costly to maintain the environmental standards required to care for collections, some of which could be at risk. In response the Welsh Government launched a grant scheme to improve storage facilities. Eight awards have recently been made

The latest Museum Spotlight Survey (2022) asked museums to self-assess the performance and provision of their buildings. This also provided useful data which is informing our thinking on how our interventions can be targeted to be as effective as possible.

Arts

The Arts Council of Wales (ACW) commissioned a review into its 'Capital Funding 2010-2023' for internal purposes. The research, led by *Think Philanthropy*, identified challenges in the current state of arts facilities in Wales, including decreased capital funding impacting on arts infrastructure. The research identified a series of recommendations that ACW are now considering in its approach to distributing capital funding to best support arts facilities in Wales.

The Welsh Government's *Invest in Theatres* programme via ACW has provided vital investment to 26 theatres and venues across Wales over two years.

- **How much funding for culture and sport comes from other portfolios in the Welsh Government (e.g. education and health)? Does the Minister intend to increase this figure?**

Culture is mainstreamed into a number of Welsh Government policy areas. Therefore, it is not possible to provide an overall figure, but I acknowledge the importance of sectors within my portfolio receiving funding from other parts of Welsh Government and I am aware of some positive examples.

For example, the Creative Learning through the Arts programme is focused on supporting learners' creativity, as well as on developing their experiences in the arts. Welsh Government funding for the programme from the Education department, under the current grant award (2022 - 2025) is £3m, i.e. £1m per annum, and this is match-funded by the Arts Council of Wales through National Lottery funding.

Because of its cross-cutting benefits, the sector also receives funding from other Welsh Government departments. For example, during this financial year Sport Wales receive £600,000 from the Health Department to support Health Weight: Healthy Wales.

Third Sector Sports and Culture organisations can also receive support through the Volunteering Wales Grants, Strategic Volunteering Wales Grant and Community Asset Loan Fund all of which are managed by WCVA on our behalf.

The Welsh Language of course is an integral part of our culture and initiatives that promote culture within the Welsh language portfolio include:

- £2.4m for the Urdd (figure includes the £0.2m for their national youth theatre)
- £1m for the National Eisteddfod
- £0.72m for the promotion of Welsh music and Dydd Miwsig Cymru (*Welsh Language Music Day*)
- Funding to the *Mentrau Iaith* that promote Welsh culture, including organising local Welsh-medium festivals and events.

Local authorities are a major investor in the places and people that encourage and facilitate participation in culture and sport.

The Sustainable Communities for Learning and the Community Facilities programmes also support the drive to create modern and accessible facilities for culture and sport.

- **How have expectations asked of Welsh Government funded-organisations in their remit letters changed whilst their real-terms funding has decreased?**

Earlier this year, there was a discussion with ALBs on the impact of funding reductions in relation to respective remit letters. In these discussions, we acknowledged the challenges being faced by these organisations and, subsequently, that more realistic objectives need to be set in relation to how they deliver against their Remit Letters going forward.

Each organisation was asked to prepare or review its operational plan for 2024 to 2025, demonstrating how it will deliver against the areas outlined in the Remit Letter. In doing so, they were asked to consider the good progress already made during this term of government as well as their budget for 2024 to 2025.

I have approved the Arts Council of Wales' operational plan for 2024 to 2025. Amgueddfa Cymru, the National Library of Wales and the Royal Commission have all shared draft documentation with my officials which forms the basis for ongoing discussions between the Welsh Government and the organisations. Officials are also ensuring that the context in which the organisations are now working is taken into account during quarterly monitoring meetings.

- **What consideration has the Welsh Government given to funding national arts companies directly, rather than through the Arts Council?**

The Welsh Government has no plans to fund national arts companies directly. The Welsh Government considers that the Arts Council of Wales is best placed to distribute Welsh Government funding for the arts across Wales, working under the strategic framework we set.

- **What work had the Welsh Government done developing its proposal for a “Museum of North Wales” and what is the current status of this proposal after the previous Cabinet Secretary announced in July 2024 that “investing in [...] a Museum for North Wales will not be possible at this time”?**

Amgueddfa Cymru was originally charged with developing plans for the Museum of North Wales within its remit letter. Following the submission of the draft Strategic Outline Case (SOC) and subsequent detailed discussions between Amgueddfa Cymru and officials, in May 2023 the then Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething MS, agreed to pause and restart the project with the Welsh Government leading. This helped avoid confusion between the capital investment required for redeveloping the National Slate Museum in the short term and the investment

potentially required in the longer term specifically for a separate Museum of North Wales.

Informal consultation with the local museum sector had taken place, with a formal consultation workshop being planned for early 2024. However, a decision was made to pause any public workshops to discuss a new museum following the concerns regarding the intense financial pressures on all cultural institutions, at a national and local level.

It was within this context that the Welsh Government published its Written Statement on 10 July 2024, detailing the decision that the Museum of North Wales would no longer be actively progressed, in order to focus available funding on the immediate priorities of protecting and preserving existing cultural institutions and their collections.

It should be noted however that the Welsh Government is fully committed to bringing parts of the national collection that relate to North Wales back to the area. The redevelopment of the National Slate Museum aims to provide major improvements for access to and use of the national collections and to enable more people to learn, share skills and celebrate creativity through the creation of new spaces at the Llanberis site.

Delyth Jewell MS
Chair Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations
Committee
SeneddCulture@senedd.wales

5 December 2024

Dear Delyth,

The Committee will be aware of the ongoing work to review the relationship between Cadw and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW). This implements one of the recommendations in the [Cadw Governance Review](#), to which we responded earlier this year. The two organisations are jointly conducting the review, prioritising openness and collaboration throughout the process.

The review is considering all options to enhance the relationship between Cadw and the RCAHMW, ranging from closer alignment of work programmes to full amalgamation within the Welsh Government. Steffan Roberts, Deputy Director Arts and Sports, Welsh Government, chairs a working group to lead the review. It includes Cadw and the RCAHMW Chief Executives and Chairs and appropriate Union representatives. Carole Souter has also been invited to join the group as an independent heritage expert. She has a wealth of experience within the sector and is currently the Chair of Trustees of [The Heritage Alliance](#).

Carole is holding discussions and workshops with organisations and individuals within the heritage sector to gather perspectives on the options for the future relationship between Cadw and the RCAHMW. I would be delighted if the Committee would like to engage with Carole and share any views. This engagement could take place either in writing or in a private Committee session. Carole hopes to complete the stakeholder engagement in January 2025, since I am eager to identify the preferred option early next year.

Carole will contact the Committee clerk to discuss the most effective way for the Committee to feed into the process.

Yours sincerely,



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Jack Sargeant AS/MS

Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol

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Agenda Item 8.2

By virtue of paragraph(s) ix of Standing Order 17.42

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