

Apologies for the delay in responding to the questions.

We were very pleased to submit comments to the committee on very important issues relating to the future of Welsh education, and look forward to the report in due course.

Regarding the specific questions that you have asked:

- Part of the process of developing provision in the English medium sector is to move schools along the language continuum (i.e. from English medium to bilingual, or from bilingual to Welsh medium). What evidence is there to show that local authorities have addressed this sufficiently in their Strategic Plans, and if not, what needs to change?

There is very little evidence as far as we can see in general. At least one authority has started the process specifically with primary schools (Carmarthenshire) but that is in specific linguistic contexts where a significant percentage of the parents (and the wider community) speak Welsh. Our position as a college is that it is necessary to consider the language skills of the workforce in English medium schools very specifically and to give every support to teachers in the English medium sector to develop their skills in Welsh. This is also true for those training to teach in English medium schools. Moving a school along the language continuum is much more practical if the staff are confident in both languages to begin with.

- A number of organisations have referred to the need to build the capacity of Welsh-medium Additional Learning Needs specialists, with the Children's Commissioner noting that lack of access to Welsh medium support is a systemic issue throughout Wales. Could you elaborate a little on the specific challenges in terms of increasing the number of Welsh medium staff with appropriate subject specialisms, including Additional Learning Needs.

There is a general challenge in terms of securing enough teaching staff that can speak Welsh, and that challenge is highlighted when dealing with specific specialties, e.g. ALN specialists or science teachers. Our opinion as a college is that there is a need to significantly expand the number of teachers that are trained through the medium of Welsh, and to develop additional specific initiatives to support the growth of the profession in areas where numbers are particularly limited.

On a wider issue, the process of re-accrediting Teacher Training Centres is about to start, and I would suggest that this is a very good opportunity to set a more robust framework in terms of Welsh medium training; and training for those that currently wish to work in the English medium sector where there is an urgent need to support and significantly improve their language skills.

Regards

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Registrar

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