

Cyfieithiad I'r Saesneg gan Gomisiwn y Senedd English Translation by Senedd Commission

- **What challenges are posed by the decline in the number of Welsh speakers for local authority provision in terms of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans?**

Co-operation is needed to generate the demand for Welsh-medium education across Welsh communities. Recognising the importance of the early years in 'generating' new Welsh speakers, we feel that a national campaign is needed to promote these benefits for all new and prospective parents in Wales. Work will also be needed to ensure the development of early years care and education provision (as well as schools) locally for all communities, further building on the existing Set Up and Succeed scheme. The Census data highlights the need to invest further in the work of Mudiad Meithrin and to consider the relationship between Mudiad and policy makers within the local authorities.

- **What challenges lie ahead in designing and developing Welsh-medium education provision in light of Census data, and more specifically, the challenge of ensuring that pupils in the English-medium sector are fluent upon leaving school?**

Ensuring a sufficient supply of practitioners that have the necessary professional skills, along with Welsh language skills at the highest possible standard for the Childcare, Early Years and Playwork workforce, is central to adequate provision of Welsh-medium, pre-school locations and places across Wales, as well as the requisite school workforce. Planning must be ensured in order not to lose momentum at these crucial crossroads.

A Welsh language skills audit will need to be undertaken for all staff working and supporting schools and early years education and care settings, both in the English-medium sector and the Welsh-medium sector. This is what will provide an opportunity to identify where the ability to work in Welsh is, and where additional investment is needed from the Welsh Government and local authorities to enable all school and early years education and care settings staff to do this.

The Welsh Framework for English-medium settings should have a positive impact on Welsh language use in English medium settings and streams. Nevertheless, the framework must be delivered to teachers, early years practitioners and others in a way that encourages a vision of the positive effects, and minimises any negative feelings they may have about the delivery of Welsh horizontally across other curriculum experiences and not just as specified sessions/lessons. The professional learning opportunities of teachers and early years practitioners must enrich and reinforce this vision, considering how to promote a Welsh-medium career for staff today in the English sector. See ideas in Mudiad's document, '[Grym ein Gweithlu](#)'.

- **What funding considerations might be necessary in the future to fully support the development of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans, given the decline in the number of Welsh speakers?**

Teachers, early years practitioners and others will need to be offered bespoke professional learning opportunities to fully support the development of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans and as an effective way of supporting learners' Welsh language progress. This could include providing bespoke sessions for teachers, early years practitioners and others within different stages of progress and sectors to give them the opportunity to discuss and consider examples. Ideas such as giving extra remuneration to staff working in Welsh should be looked at. It will also be necessary to consider how it fits into planning to ensure that the development of learners' Welsh language skills is an integral part of the provision being planned and provided in a way that recognises current pressures on the sector i.e. the challenge of supplying "bank" staff to free up staff.

Additional investment in schemes to promote and promote the use of Welsh in the early years such as *Cymraeg i Blant*, *Clwb Cwtsh*, *Camau* and *Croesi'r Bont* (a scheme aimed at facilitating linguistic transition between early immersion settings (e.g. Cylchoedd Meithrin) and the local Welsh school) would have a clear role to play in the future, noting that Mudiad itself is now experiencing a challenge in appointing staff to such posts due to a lack of candidates.