

**Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc
ac Addysg**

**Children, Young People
and Education Committee**

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Jeremy Miles MS

Minister for Education and Welsh Language

21 December 2023

Post-compulsory education and the Welsh language: the learners' voice

Dear Jeremy,

We recently considered the Welsh Language Commissioner's new report on post compulsory education and the Welsh language: the learners' voice.

We note some of the statistics provided in the report. For example:

- The differences between the percentage of subjects taught in the Welsh medium between school learners (72%) and college learners (4%).
- The statistics from the Welsh Government that show that during 2021-22 15.2% of school sixth form activities were Welsh medium compared with 0.2% of further education institutions activities.
- The three common reasons for those who are fluent or can speak a fair amount of Welsh for not studying through the Welsh medium are the:
 - Perception that their English language skills are stronger, and that studying through the English medium is easier for them;
 - Subject / subjects not available in Welsh; and
 - Perception that further studies are likely to be in English or that there are better study prospects in English.

- The regional differences between those learners who felt there were sufficient opportunities to study through the Welsh medium in their area. While the overall figure was 60% who agreed or strongly agreed, the report shows clear regional differences. For example, in Mid Wales 78% of learners agreed or strongly agreed whereas, in South East Wales only 47% of learners agreed or strongly agreed. The report states that “there is a clear lack of post-16 provision in several areas”.

In the conclusions and findings of the report, it notes that the post-16 sector needs to address the lack of Welsh-medium provision, particularly in “more vocational areas”. The Commissioner also highlights a number of other areas where further work or consideration is needed including:

- Raising awareness of the opportunities to use Welsh as learners progress through their post-school education;
- Strengthening Welsh language provision across the post-16 sector;
- Increasing the number of students taking post-16 qualifications through Welsh medium;
- Increasing opportunities for people to use the Welsh language in the workplace; and
- Addressing barriers that prevent learners from studying in Welsh post-16.

We would welcome your thoughts on the issues covered in the Commissioner’s report; what steps the Welsh Government can take to address these issues; and what role the newly established Commission for Tertiary Education and Research will play in dealing with these issues. .

Due to their responsibilities for the Welsh language, I am copying this letter to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee. I am also copying this letter to the Welsh Language Commissioner.

We would appreciate a response by 1 February 2024.

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant MS
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.