

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales
Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and
Education Committee
Ymchwiliad i Gynlluniau Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg | Inquiry into
Welsh in Education Strategic Plans
WESP 13
Ymateb gan : Cyngor Gofal Cymru
Response from : Care Council for Wales

Question 1 – What are your views on whether Welsh in Education Strategic Plans are contributing to the outcomes and targets set out in the Welsh Government’s overarching Welsh Medium Education Strategic Plan?

The Care Council for Wales (Care Council) strongly supports the Welsh Government’s Welsh Education Strategic Plan and the role of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) in delivering it. There is a growing demand for social care services to be delivered in Welsh. This cannot be realised without strong Welsh-medium vocational and academic education and training in place.

The establishment of the WESPs is a very positive step forward. Local authorities in all parts of Wales have produced thorough plans to meet the demand for Welsh-medium education and training. These plans are in their second full year of delivery. We wish them well and welcome the time and effort that has been taken in developing them.

With the plans in their second full year of delivery we are pleased to offer our view as the organisation responsible for promoting training in the care and early years workforce. In our view, there are opportunities to strengthen provision, which we detail below.

If you believe that WESPs are not contributing sufficiently, how do you think this could be resolved?

See below.

Question 2 – What are your views on whether WESPs are (or have the potential) to deliver the required change at a local authority level (for example delivering provision to meet any increased demand for Welsh

medium education)?

See below.

If you believe that WESPs are not, or don't have the potential, to deliver change, how do you think this could be resolved?

See below.

Question 3 – What are your views on the arrangements for target setting; monitoring; reviewing; reporting; approving; and ensuring compliance with delivering the requirements for WESPs (and the role of the local authority and the Welsh Government in this regard)?

This is an important function and we support the steps that local authorities and the Welsh Government are taking. The key is coherence so that there is a clear line of sight from pre-school to post 16 learning and through to work-based learning and training so that the value of the Welsh Language as a living language is consistent. This needs to be supported with clear expectations on providers of education and training.

If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

Leadership with a strong clear message is vital. There is still the potential for the Welsh Language to be viewed and described as additional/problematic. That has been the experience of the group which are supporting the implementation of More than Just Words, the strategy to improve the use of Welsh in health and social care.

Question 4 – What are your views on whether WESPs evidence the effective interaction between the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium education strategy and other relevant policies and legislation*?

(*for example school transport policy; 21st Century Schools programme; A living language: a language for living – Moving forward policy statement; Flying Start; planning policy)

It is good to see the WESPs evidence effective interaction with other relevant Welsh Government policies. For example, a number of the WESPs have made clear links with Flying Start and the wider early years policy and take concrete steps to meet the demand for Welsh-medium places.

The Chief executive of the Care Council chairs the *More than Just Words*

implementation group for the provision of Welsh language services in health and care. The experience has been that at a national policy level, there continues to be the risk of silo working with no real link between those in government who lead on Welsh Language and on Welsh Language Education with the other streams of work relating to Welsh language provision, such as workforce strategies.

If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

It is vital that there is co-operation between officials responsible for the Welsh language across different departments in the Welsh Government with a clear line of sight from early years right through to post 16 and work-based learning so that the coherence of the vision and the joint strategic planning at national and regional levels so that the value of Welsh language education and training is reinforced.

'Raising Our Sights' the review of Welsh for adults published in December 2013 cited the importance of leadership from the Welsh Government to encourage co-operation and joint working. There is a real opportunity for the Welsh Government to make the connections between the role of adult learning, work-based learning, community learning and formal education and training. This is particularly important in areas such as health, care and support, where there is a clear need for improvement in the Welsh Language offer to the citizens of Wales. Around 80,000 employed in social work, social care and early years and a similar number employed by the health services. There is a growing demand for Welsh language services in these areas, so there is every reason for it to be considered a priority sector for Welsh medium education and training in the future and ripe for collaboration at national regional and local levels.

Question 5 – What are your views on whether the outcomes of WESPs deliver equal outcomes for all pupils, including for example, primary/secondary pupils or children from low income households.

For many years, the lack of opportunities for Welsh Language learning post 16 has not been helpful in demonstrating the value of Welsh medium learning and reinforcing the link to Welsh Language in the workplace. It is good to see that the 2014–17 WESPs take steps to tackle this deficit. It will be important for the 2017–2020 plans to build on these.

Drawing on the Care Council's extensive experience of working with education and training providers for social care, particularly workbased learning, and provision in FE, there is a need for leadership in the development of learning resources and assessors.

If you believe that the outcome of WESPs do not deliver equal outcomes, how do you think this could be resolved?

The Care Council has regulatory powers in relation to social work qualifying training and we have used those powers to stipulate the Welsh Language opportunities on all social work training and a requirement to offer language awareness module. Whilst we currently do not have the same powers in relation to social care training, there is a proposal in the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Bill for us to have similar powers to the ones we have for social work. If that is realised then we will be able to stipulate similar requirements for social care courses.

Local authorities are taking positive steps to realise the aims of the Welsh Education Strategy. It is important that it does not end with the remit of Schools but extends to the learning offer for people beyond 16. It is important that the Welsh government ensures that other partners, including bodies like the Care Council which regulate training and education programmes play their part too.

Whilst More than Just Words sets out some targets for organisations such as the Care Council and equivalent bodies for health, it is important that the requirement is not seen as additional but rather as part of the national education and training for all from school through to FE, HE, professional training, adult learning and work-based learning. Without that joined up approach the value of Welsh in work and in life may not be realised.

Question 6 – If you had to make one recommendation to the Welsh Government from all the points you have made, what would that recommendation be?

See above.

Question 7 – Do you have any other comments or issues you wish to raise that have not been covered by the specific questions?

Whilst we recognise that some of these points extend beyond the focus of the consultation document, we believe that they are important in order for

the investment in Welsh Language Education to be realised and lead to an increase in the use of Welsh in business, services and communities.