

Jeremy Miles MS
Minister for Education and Welsh Language
Welsh Government

Dyddiad | Date: 07 December 2022

Pwnc | Subject: Post-ministerial scrutiny follow up

Dear Jeremy

I am writing to you following your ministerial evidence session on our inquiry into the legislative framework that supports Welsh-medium education provision on 17 November 2022. The Committee was grateful to you for taking the time to come and discuss these issues. As part of the session, I said the Committee would follow up on certain matters, which are outlined below.

Training for Welsh-medium teachers

The Welsh in Education Workforce plan states:

we must develop a high-quality education workforce to ensure that all learners benefit from a world-class curriculum and that they enjoy learning and teaching that inspires them to succeed in a strategically planned, effectively led, collaborative and innovative education community

The plan also recognises that “*we do not have enough people choosing to become teachers in the Welsh-medium sector.*” The plan outlines a number of barriers related to recruitment. During our scrutiny session, I mentioned courses developed by Mudiad Meithrin in response to overcoming the challenge of recruiting staff to work in nursery settings. This idea involves targeting school pupils earlier in the education cycle before they begin pursuing a career path – and by so doing, it helps ensure that those who might consider a career in childcare are given the opportunity to plan for this early on. The Mudiad Meithrin have developed two accredited courses to cover the increasing demand for qualified staff in the nursery setting, which start early and in time for GCSEs, to encourage pupils to take an interest in job opportunities in the care setting.

I would be grateful if you could please tell us what consideration you have given to pursuing similar ideas in order to overcome the challenges posed by recruiting staff to work in Welsh-medium

nursery settings. Likewise, I would be grateful to understand more about what consideration has been given to encouraging pupils at an earlier stage to follow a Welsh-medium teaching career path. Unfortunately, as things stand, when graduates choose to pursue a career in teaching, it will be more challenging for them to do this through the medium of Welsh if they haven't undergone their studies through the language. I'm sure that you will agree that any courses that can be developed earlier in children's development will help to overcome this stubborn hurdle.

PLASC data on Covid-19 impacts on entry

During the meeting, Heledd Fychan MS asked about the impact of Covid-19 on Welsh-medium education. Heledd asked about what data is available covering pupils accessing Welsh-medium education and the losses that may have occurred due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Your officials told us in the meeting that from the latest PLASC data, that numbers *"have started to stabilise again"*, and that we are *"back to where we should have been"*.

As part of this discussion, I asked if you would you be able to share the PLASC data with the Committee. I would be grateful if you could share the data for this year, and for the past three years.

Also, I would be grateful if you could confirm whether or not the PLASC data that is publicly available through Stats Wales is also available as a percentage of the number of pupils entering Welsh-medium education at three and seven years old (foundation stage and key stage 1), as well at secondary school (key stage 3 entry). If this is not available, we would be grateful if you could make it publicly available.

Thank you again for taking the time to attend the Committee meeting on 17 November 2022. I look forward to receiving your response to our questions in due course.

Yours sincerely



Delyth Jewell MS

Chair of the Culture, Communication, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.