

Additional Information from the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) Cymru following the evidence session on 02 October 2024

•The Welsh Government wants to establish a “clear line of accountability” at a national, local and school level for the planning of Welsh language education. Do you agree with what the Welsh Government wants to achieve and to what extent do you believe the Bill does this?

NAHT's view is that a “clear line of accountability” for Welsh language education is crucial for ensuring the successful implementation of the bill. Accountability at national, local, and school levels enables a coordinated and transparent approach to planning and delivering Welsh-medium education. It ensures that each layer of governance is responsible for its part in expanding the language’s use, growth, and sustainability. At the national level, clear accountability can drive effective policy and resourcing, ensuring that Welsh education is prioritized in budgetary decisions. However, For school leaders there would be a concern that an accountability framework, introduces unnecessary workload and results in unintended consequences

It would appear that the Welsh Language Bill supports this intention by setting out statutory responsibilities for different levels of government and institutions. It strengthens the legal framework surrounding the promotion and use of Welsh, with mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress. However, while the Bill establishes these responsibilities, the challenge lies in its practical enforcement and the provision of adequate resources, ensuring that accountability translates into real, measurable outcomes for Welsh language education.

•How effective do you believe the system of Welsh in Education Strategic Plans has been to date? What, if any, involvement do school leaders have in local authorities’ planning and improvement of the provision of Welsh language education?

NAHT has seen some good examples of this. For example, in Caerphilly there has been some real successful because the WESP has been driven from early years up. Strong links with sustainable community and childcare/non maintained setting have also been key. The LA has hit its targets in reception and now is looking to build on these successes. The WESP is regularly reviewed via the LA's SMT and headteachers attend on a rolling programme. Headteachers also engage through the WESP forum which includes a range of stakeholders. There are very ambitious targets and strong political support.