

This document provides a translation of correspondence received from Education and Children's Services, Carmarthenshire County Council

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i'r [Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg](#) ar [Bil y Gymraeg ac Addysg \(Cymru\)](#)

This response was submitted to the [Children, Young People and Education Committee](#) on the [Welsh Language and Education \(Wales\) Bill](#)

WLE 19

Ymateb gan: Addysg Plant y Lluoedd Arfog, Cyngor Sir Caerfyrddin

Response from: Education and Children's Services, Carmarthenshire County Council

General principles of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill and the need for legislation to achieve the stated policy intent. In coming to a view on this you may wish to consider addressing the individual Parts of the Bill:

a. Part 1: Promotion and facilitation of use of the Welsh Language

We welcome a focus that is broader than education – education has a key role to play in reaching the goal, but other aspects, such as the workplace, homes, and communities, need to contribute towards reaching the target. There must be consistency in data collection – the experience of the census makes clear that many underestimate their ability in the Welsh language.

b. Part 2: Describing Welsh language ability

- i. Consistency in describing ability in Welsh is welcome. Consistency across Local Authorities would be helpful in terms of the system used to assess Welsh language ability.
- ii. With regard to developing the skills of Carmarthenshire Council's workforce, discussions are under way to combine our current ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe) system with CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) to clarify and exemplify expectations at all levels in terms of the Council's workforce.
- iii. This will then lead to a Training Framework which will be a vehicle for Welsh learners to develop their skills and develop into independent/proficient users of Welsh.

c. Part 3: Welsh medium education

- i. We welcome the new categorisation system and clarity in terms of the minimum amount of Welsh education to be provided and the aims of learning Welsh.

- ii. We welcome that every school will need to draw up a Welsh education delivery plan that sets out how it intends to achieve its Welsh learning goal – this should be part of the School Development/Improvement Plan, rather than a separate plan, as it is central to the school's work.
- iii. In terms of the Welsh Language Education Delivery Plan, it would be useful to have consistency in the template and criteria to be used across Wales. In this regard, it is important to include a section requiring the school to refer to how they contribute to achieving the Local Authority's Welsh Language Strategic Plan. Would it be appropriate for similar schools to collaborate on a plan where there are shared issues and then adapt it to reflect a school's particular needs?
- iv. It is important to have a baseline, namely a clear record of where each school currently stands - this will prove useful in tracking and measuring progress.
- v. There will be a challenge in terms of the Local Authority's capacity to approve the plans: with 111 schools/learning locations in Carmarthenshire, doing the work effectively will place greater time requirements on experienced and qualified officials.
- vi. We support the principle noted in paragraph 17 in terms of ensuring that there is no reduction in Welsh language provision.
- vii. We support the proposal regarding Special Schools where there is a focus on a Welsh language ethos and the everyday use of Welsh.
- viii. With regard to the Local Authority Register, it would be useful to have framework to ensure consistency across Wales.
- ix. Immersion Education - the Local Authority's Information Handbook for Parents can be used to meet the request, to inform parents of what immersion education is available. It can also be shared on the county's website. Schools can also include information on their websites or in their handbooks.

d. Part 4: Planning Welsh Language Education and Learning

As a county that already has a high percentage of Welsh-medium provision, the targets do not worry us, but others may find it challenging to meet the targets. A specific resource will have to be secured to enable a Local Authority to deal with, and increase, the provision. Each Local Authority will need a clear and accurate baseline for the percentage of learners in each school year following the Welsh education pathway. We welcome the detail regarding the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

and the more realistic five-year period in terms of ensuring development and progress.

e. Part 5: National Institute for Learning Welsh

We welcome the strengthened focus on the education workforce and developing teachers and assistants who can work through the medium of Welsh. In terms of additional duties, the Institute can lead on promoting the benefits of bilingualism/multilingualism in Wales, based on current and relevant research, and develop materials that schools/Local Authorities can use to encourage parents to choose a Welsh-medium education pathway.

f. Part 6: General

Any potential barriers to the implementation of the Bill's provisions and whether the Bill takes account of them (including commencement and the United Kingdom Internal Market Act)

- i. It will be important that concise and clear documents/guidelines are created for the various partners regarding the requirements of the Bill, e.g. governors, headteachers, local authority, parents, learners.
- ii. The Welsh Government will need to consider Local Authorities' capacity to deliver what is set out in the Bill during what is a time of significant cuts to local government funding. If the Bill is to succeed, a sound analysis of the funding needs is needed.
- iii. An awareness raising/training scheme will be required to ensure that key stakeholders understand the requirements and their contribution to meeting them.

Whether there are any unintended consequences arising from the Bill

The Bill might stir up certain elements in our society who oppose Welsh medium education – much like the group opposed to the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and any reorganisation of schools that proposes an increase in Welsh language provision.