

This document provides a translation of correspondence received from Cymdeithas yr Iaith

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 06b

Ymateb gan: Cymdeithas yr Iaith

Response from: Cymdeithas yr Iaith

11 October 2024

Supplementary evidence for the Senedd's Children, Young People and Education Committee on the Welsh Government's Welsh Language and Education Bill

The views of the people of Wales

1,151 adults over the age of 16 were asked the following question in a YouGov survey commissioned by Cymdeithas yr Iaith between 24 and 29 July 2024:

'In principle, do you believe that schools in Wales should or should not aim to teach every pupil to become a confident Welsh speaker?'

59 per cent answered that they should, 29 per cent were of the opinion that they should not and 12 per cent said that they did not know.

Excluding those who answered 'do not know', 67 per cent agreed with the principle that schools should teach every pupil to become a confident Welsh speaker. Support was particularly strong among the 16-24 age group, at 74 per cent, and those aged 25-49, at 63 per cent, increasing to 80 per cent and 71 per cent respectively when those who answered 'do not know' are excluded. As can be seen, the percentage of individuals who agree that every pupil should become a confident Welsh speaker is broadly consistent with the number of pupils who are deprived of Welsh-medium education, namely 80 per cent.

Our concern, as noted in our previous written evidence, is that this will not be addressed by the Bill in its current form, as we know, since the publication of Professor Sioned Williams's report, *One Language for All*, in 2013, that learning Welsh as second language does not lead to fluency and that providing 10 per cent of education through the medium of Welsh is nowhere near enough to lead to fluency.¹

There is strong public support for the principle of moving every school in Wales towards teaching through the medium of Welsh by 2050, and this is now a mainstream concept. The following question was posed in the aforementioned survey:

To what extent would you support or oppose the principle that every school in Wales should move towards teaching through the medium of Welsh by 2050?

¹ Welsh Government, *One language for all: review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4* (Cardiff: Welsh Government, 2013) <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-07/review-of-welsh-second-language-at-key-stages-3-and-4.pdf>, p1.

39 per cent of respondents said that they supported the idea, 47 per cent said that they opposed it and 14 per cent answered 'do not know'.

Excluding those who answered 'do not know', 45 per cent agreed with the principle. Again, support was strongest among the 16-24 age group, at 55 per cent, and those aged 25-49, at 43 per cent, increasing to 60 per cent and 50 per cent respectively when those who answered 'do not know' are excluded.

These figures demonstrate that there is scope for the Welsh Government to be much more radical with the Welsh Language and Education Bill than it is at present.

All figures, unless stated otherwise, are from YouGov Plc. The total sample size was 1,151 adults. The survey was undertaken between 24 and 29 July 2024. The survey was conducted online. The figures have been weighted and represent all adults in Wales (aged 16+). The full figures are attached.

The Athrofa

A national body that functions as an independent entity is needed specifically to plan, lead and implement a strategy to train the workforce and to set targets for training colleges regarding Welsh language provision. Unfortunately, local authorities have proved ineffective on the issue of Welsh language training for teachers as it is not a priority for them. As the education consortia are coming to an end, there will also be fewer opportunities to collaborate on training. Such a body should be an independent entity at arm's length of Government but accountable to it. To enable the body to focus on training the workforce, it should not be a wing or part of another body, such as Medr or the Coleg Cymraeg.

We foresee that the Athrofa would be a natural evolution of the National Centre for Learning Welsh with the objective of training the education workforce, if given the necessary resources. Over the past two years, the National Centre for Learning Welsh has launched training courses to upskill teachers in post, tailoring relevant courses to the range of skills that already exists among the education workforce in Wales. As the majority of the education workforce that will be teaching in 2050 is already in post, training to upskill teachers in the Welsh language is vital; this echoes the point made by ASCL in its evidence to the Children, Young People and Education Committee.

Additional, appropriate resources need to be provided to the national body that will be responsible for training the workforce to facilitate the development of the workforce's Welsh language skills, and this should not be at the expense of the National Centre for Learning Welsh's other current functions, if the new body is to replace it. We have recommended an annual investment of £20 million in our strategy for developing the education workforce's skills.² A workforce that is proficient in Welsh will be crucial to the Bill's successful implementation.

Further information

The YouGov figures are attached in both languages.

² Cymdeithas yr Iaith, *Strategaeth datblygu gallu'r gweithlu addysg* (Aberystwyth: Cymdeithas yr Iaith, 2017), https://cymdeithas.cymru/datblygu_gweithlu?page=7

For any further information, or to discuss the matters raised in this response, please contact cyfathrebu@cymdeithas.cymru.

The Education Group

Cymdeithas yr Iaith

October 2024