

Additional Information from the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) 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?

- ASCL Cymru agrees with the intent of the Bill but not with the ability of our system to address it at this time.
- Accountability without a workforce, the basic resource to deliver the outcomes required, is not appropriate
- One of the enabling objectives of CfW is the establishment of a new and clearly defined data and information ecosystem to support the establishment of a collaborative school improvement system. Additional "add on" accountability could distract from this
- Findings from a Welsh Government commissioned research report (<https://www.gov.wales/research-exploring-new-information-system-schools>) states that' Prior to the introduction of the CfW, there was also a disproportionate focus on learner attainment ..in the school system, which created unintended consequences including fostering a culture in which the use of quantitative data was skewed towards scrutiny and accountability.'
- ASCL believes that setting a broad numerical target linked to acquisition of the Welsh language and prioritising educational strategies and resources in this area may have an unintended consequence of distracting from urgent priority areas and impede the essential progress required. It is essential that current priority lies within the main policy drivers in Wales, namely, closing the attainment gap by tackling poverty and poor standards in literacy and numeracy, increasing curriculum engagement to improve attendance and behaviour and support for ALN.
- Welsh Government is currently moving towards a self-improving system based upon collaboration between schools, local authorities and Welsh government following the middle tier review led by Professor Dylan Jones (Review of roles and responsibilities of education partners in Wales and delivery of school improvement arrangements: letter to the minister [HTML] | GOV.WALES). It has been proposed that this is focused upon a culture of collaborative improvement and collective responsibility in raising standards driven by professional agency and effective collaboration. ASCL believes that the Welsh Government intent to establish 'a clear line of accountability' conflicts with these professional principles and will have the unintended consequence of

placing pressure on schools to prioritise Welsh language acquisition above it's other critical national drivers.

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?

Not aware of involvement of school leaders. Aware that this has existed for some time but not aware of any collaborative input from school leaders consistently across LA's.