



GWYNEDD SECONDARY SCHOOLS LANGUAGE STRATEGY

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2. INTRODUCTION

Since the launch of the Welsh Language Charter in Gwynedd, innovative work has been done in our primary schools to impact children's social use of Welsh. So as to ensure a robust progression to the Charter, we are proud to present a Secondary Language Strategy that provides our secondary schools with clear guidance on language practices altering techniques and the various ways of influencing pupils social language within and outside school.

This strategy has been drawn up under the guidance of Carys Lake, Gwynedd Secondary Schools Language Centre Leader and with the collaboration of a working Group of secondary school headteachers and deputies and Gwynedd Council officers. The working Group represented a range of secondary schools that vary in geographical location, size, background and language context.

The Strategy has received valuable and enthusiastic input from secondary school learners from various language backgrounds including those for whom Welsh is their first language, fluent learners and more elementary learners. These visits to groups of pupils has provided an opportunity to cascade all kinds of ideas. These pupils infectious enthusiasm hugely impressed.

The effective planning and implementation of this Strategy will ensure Standard consistent implementation to promote informal verbal Welsh by learners in our secondary schools. It recognizes and addresses these challenges in the field, including the impact and influence of factors such as social media and a global commercial impact. It sets out an agreed clear vision and contains clear paths for action that includes accountability to realise that vision.

To implement this Strategy, it is essential that all stakeholders, including schools, teaching and administrative staff, Elected Members of Gwynedd Council, parents and pupils not only subscribe to it but also embrace it as a tool that ensures that Gwynedd remains at the Vanguard when contributing towards achieving the Welsh Government's vision of having a million Welsh speakers.

Gwynedd Council is committed to supporting the Welsh Government's strategy to achieve the objective of a million Welsh speakers by 2050, ensuring that at every stage in his/her life, an individual has an opportunity to learn Welsh and learn through the medium of Welsh. As part of the effort to achieve this objective, Gwynedd Council have been specifically requested to work with the Welsh Government to disseminate Primary School Language Charter practices throughout Wales. It is therefore exciting to announce that Gwynedd Council have developed a Secondary School Language Strategy as an effective planning tool, building on the Primary Schools Language Charter's success, for giving a lead towards further progress in pupils social and curricular use of Welsh.

Arwyn Thomas – Head of Education Gwynedd

3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1. Gwynedd Primary Schools Language Charter has now been established and is implemented in the county's primary schools. It was decided to build on the success of this charter so as to ensure appropriate follow-up in the secondary sector. Through establishing the primary charter, several methods were identified to evaluate the progress made in use of Welsh socially amongst young people. Using these methods will be considered, as well as others, to measure progression in the secondary sector.
- 3.2. When developing Gwynedd Secondary Schools Language Strategy, it was taken into account that Gwynedd Council serves a county in Wales with one of the largest number of Welsh speakers. It contains a broad range of language contexts that extend from areas that include a high percentage of Welsh people for whom Welsh is their first language to more Anglicized areas.
- 3.3. It is important to use the firm foundations within Gwynedd to ensure that the Council takes an innovative role in implementing the Welsh Government's role in this regard, specifically the vision to ensure a million Welsh speakers.
- 3.4. Gwynedd Council Language Strategy also provides firm foundations for planning Gwynedd Secondary Schools Language Strategy.
- 3.5. Secondary school pupils have made a significant contribution to the vision. There is a strong desire for implementation of the Language Strategy. The following quotes sum up some of the messages:

"Schools need to promote the fact that the ability to speak one of Europe's oldest languages is an important career qualification."

"We are so proud that an emphasis is placed on Welsh and that Welsh receives equal treatment."

"Thanks for providing us with an opportunity to voice our opinion."

- 3.6. The context and direction are based on several key policy documents namely:
 - Welsh in Education Strategy Plan.
 - Welsh Education Scrutiny Enquiry Report - Gwynedd Council Services Scrutiny Committee.
 - Study Report by Alun Charles, External Adviser.
 - Secondary Schools Language Practices Support Project (PCAI) – Welsh Government.
 - Gwynedd Language Strategy 2014-2017 – Strategic Field Number 2. Children and Young People.
 - Gwynedd Language Strategy action plan – addressing National targets at LEA level.

- Gwynedd Council Trail Report (October 2014) – Increase use of Welsh socially by children and Young people of Gwynedd secondary schools.
- Welsh Government draft strategy: a million Welsh speakers by 2050.
- Framework for increasing use of Welsh by children and young people.
- Donaldson Review ‘A successful future’:
 - Recommendations nos 21-30. The Welsh Language.
 - Recommendation no 62. Local and National ownership.

4. THE VISION

- 4.1. Gwynedd Council is totally committed to an excellent innovative secondary schools system that promotes Welsh in all aspects of their work.
- 4.2. The objective of the Secondary School Language Strategy is to promote use of Welsh within a social context by children and young people and develop it as an effective medium for all aspects of school life and work.
- 4.3. The Strategy will be an effective planning tool, building on the success of the Primary Language Charter, for leading towards further progress in pupils social and curricular use of Welsh.
- 4.4. It supports the vision of Gwynedd Language Strategy to ensure that the Welsh language prospers. Through placing an emphasis on Welsh, it is ensured that children in Gwynedd are bilingually proficient and confident and take pride in the additional value they obtain from being bilingual, that they can confidently use both languages socially and professionally after leaving school and that they ultimately transfer both languages to the next generation in Gwynedd.
- 4.5. The language also contributes to implementing a bilingual strategy through promoting Welsh, ensuring that it has equal status and opportunities.
- 4.6. Every school will implement the Secondary School Language Strategy and ensure that all the school’s stakeholders are involved in this scheme.

5. OBJECTIVES.

5.1. Objective 1: Leadership and Expectations

- Ensure that Gwynedd Council and Gwynedd Schools Service are firmly committed to supporting and challenging schools to implement the Secondary Language Strategy.
- Ensure that school leadership, governors and senior managers have high expectations regarding Language Strategy implementation.

- Ensure that the workforce, as a consequence of the guidance provided, also have firm expectations and a sense of pride in the school's success in implementing the Language Strategy. Consequently, ensure that all the school's stakeholders firmly promote the Language Strategy and take pride in it.
- Ensure that the school's staffing structure notes responsibilities and clear accountability for implementation of various aspects of school life involving the Welsh language.
- Ensure that every school has a three year Language Strategy action plan that is incorporated within the school development plan. The Language Strategy's objectives will be robustly facilitated through this plan.

5.2. Objective 2: Ethos.

- Ensure that all aspects of the school's daily life and its community promotes the Welsh ethos.
- Nurture an awareness of Wales cultural and identity and heritage amongst the school community.
- Ensure that all aspects of the school's extra-curricular programme cherishes and promotes Welsh.

5.3. Objective 3: Young People.

- Establish a Language Council to ensure that young people have a prominent say in the plans to promote use of Welsh in a social context.
- Ensure that the Language Council develops leaders and language ambassadors role at the school with specific expectations.
- The Language Council supports and promotes Welsh cultural events at the school.
- The Language Council raises awareness of Welsh events both in the community and in Wales.
- Language Council promotes the history of Wales that will ensure that Young people nurture a sense of Welsh identity and of pride.
- The Language Council plan together to popularize Welsh as a medium on the social media.
- Hunaniaith provides additional support.

- Collaboration is promoted between PCAI and the Welsh Government Framework.

5.4. Objective 4: Training.

In compliance with Alun Charles report recommendations, prepare and implement a formal professional development plan that will support staff to:

- become more fluent in Welsh and nurture their confidence to use Welsh in the classroom.
- increasingly and more effectively present subjects through the medium of Welsh.
- make effective provision for pupils who are Welsh learners or who are in the process of crossing the language bridge.
- Effectively respond to pupils so as to ensure a liking and enthusiasm for the language and ensure verbal responses in Welsh within lessons.
- gain considerable awareness and sense of ownership and pride in the school's Welsh provision.

5.5. Objective 5: Role of Language Departments.

Ensure that core language departments have equal status, expectations and curricular links.

- Celebrate the value of Welsh as first Language as an important qualification in Gwynedd.
- Implement expectations for pupils to follow Welsh as First Language programme at KS3 that is an effective follow-up to that achieved at KS2.
- Implement expectations for pupils to follow Welsh as First Language programme at KS4 that provides an effective progression to achievement at KS3.
- Ensure that every pupil respects every language and understanding of language.

5.6. Objective 6: Curricular Experiences.

- Ensure that every pupil gains curricular reading, writing, verbal and listening experiences through the medium of Welsh at KS3 that builds upon, represents

progression and shows progress in the language skills and experiences provided at KS2.

- Ensure that at KS4, all pupils gain curricular reading, writing, verbal and listening experiences through the medium of Welsh that builds upon, provides progression and shows progress in the language skills and experiences provided at KS3.
- Ensure an increase in number of candidates who mainly or partially follow KS5 courses through the medium of Welsh through developing candidates, teachers and leaders confidence.

5.7. Objective 7: Bridging Learners.

- Ensure that pupils who follow Welsh as first language trail, when transferring from KS2 to KS3, continue to make further progress on that trail.
- Ensure that every secondary school uses the excellent work done with learners in the primary sector as foundations for further robust progress.
- Ensure that learners and bridging learners cross the bridge, continue to make effective progress to master Welsh with the objective of studying Welsh as First Language at GCSE.
- Ensure that learners and bridging learners increasingly do their work through the medium of Welsh.
- Provide effective support for parents of learners, ensuring that they support learners progress.
- Celebrate learners achievements

5.8. Objective 8: The School and the Community.

- Ensure that the school pro-actively promotes the Welsh language for parents and the wider community.
- Ensure that the school promotes the role of Welsh as an important career qualification and promotes opportunities for pupils to gain experiences in Welsh when involved with a broad range of employers and outside agencies.
- Ensure that the school promotes the educational benefits of bilingualism.
- Promote use of the Welsh language in extra-curricular activities provided by school staff.

- Ensure that activities and outside agencies such as Careers Wales, youth Service, the Leisure service and the Urdd provide experiences that reinforce pupils experiences in the Welsh language.

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6. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS.

6.1. The following procedure is used to monitor the plan:

- Gwynedd Secondary Schools Language Strategy Co-ordinator:
 - Supports every school to prepare an agreed language review.
 - Supports and challenges every school to prepare a standardized language action plan.
 - Supports every school to effectively implement the action plan.
 - Provides encouragement, support and training for schools as and when required.
- Gwynedd Secondary Schools Language Co-ordinators.
- The Steering Group will maintain a scrutiny and monitoring role.
- Gwynedd Council's relevant scrutiny Group.
- The termly and annual meeting to review progress that every school has completed within the action plan will form a core element of monitoring arrangements.

6.2. The following will be used to monitor, identify actions taken, that which requires further focus for future action and any change of direction and emphasis:

- Quality of school action plans and level of challenge.
- Extent of success when completing action plans of every individual year.
- Opinion of pupil groups at every school.
- Opinion of the steering Group and other stakeholders including headteachers, teachers.
- A combination of process success criteria and performance success criteria are used (outcomes). The main emphasis is on evaluating outcomes.

7. ANNEXES (To follow)

- Annexe 1 – Gwynedd Secondary School Language Strategy Action Plan.
- Annexe 2 - Template 1: Secondary School current Evaluation.
- Annexe 3 - Template 2: 3 year outline Action Plan.
- Annexe 4 – Gwynedd Secondary Schools Centre after care Strategy.
- Annexe 5 – Gwynedd Secondary Schools Language Centre after care Strategy Check list

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Carys Lake

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