



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

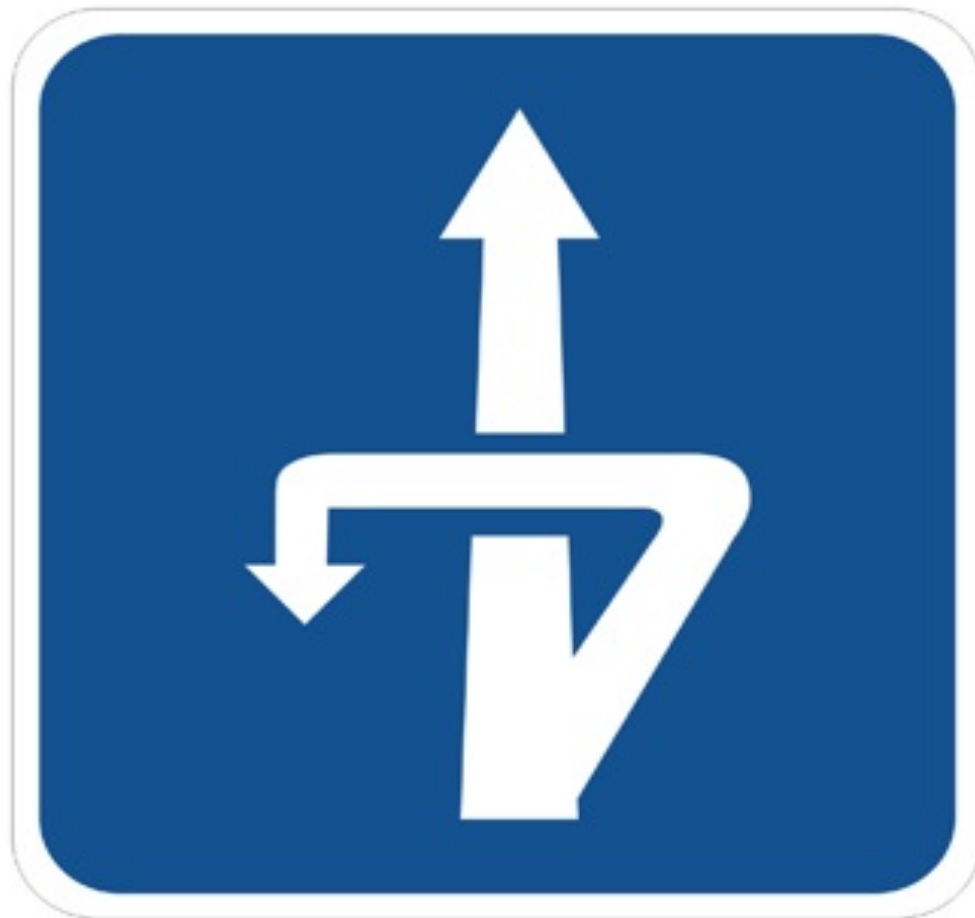
One language for all

Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4

September 2013

Professor Sioned Davies

Chair, Welsh Second Language Review group





Education Reform Act 1988



Welsh-medium Education Strategy 2010



Information

Information document No: 083/2010
Date of issue: April 2010

30th April 2012

- identifying opportunities for raising the status of Welsh second language as a subject and removing barriers at a local, regional and national level;
- reviewing Welsh second language qualifications at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5;
- considering the implications of discontinuing the GCSE Welsh second language short courses; and
- giving further consideration to the feasibility of introducing a Welsh language continuum.



Census

A Living Language: A Language for Living launched 2012



The Review Group's vision

- how to provide a positive learning experience for Welsh second language learners in English-medium schools;
- how to raise the status of Welsh second language as a subject and remove barriers at a local, regional and national level;
- whether qualifications (currently available and/or other possible forms of accreditation) are a lever or a barrier with regard to developing transferable Welsh language skills;
- how best to develop learners' Welsh language skills so that they are able to transfer their skills and use the language in the workplace, community and family; and
- how to address workforce planning issues to ensure that all secondary schools have the resources and capacity to provide quality Welsh second language provision.

Issues to be prioritised:

- ensure that pupils see a **point to learning the language** and that **pupils' confidence** to use the language is an important factor;
- **increase the opportunities for pupils to use the language** in the community, and make increased use of technology to promote the language;
- consider whether compelling pupils to learn the language is a barrier to some and whether the subject is too academic, highbrow and dry;
- look at the language continuum and consider how to improve successful transition from one key stage to another in order to ensure progression and to **avoid too much repetition of linguistic patterns**;
- ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities to succeed, as the provision in terms of time is inconsistent at present;

Issues to be prioritised (continued)

- **revise the syllabus to give teachers flexibility.** It was agreed that pupils' attainment, confidence and enjoyment would increase given an opportunity to explore more relevant topics;
- ensure a high quality workforce and the importance of training; and
- **raise the status of the subject** and ensure strong leadership within schools and local authorities.

Evidence taken from:

- pupils;
- teachers;
- parents;
- WJEC;
- Estyn;
- teacher training centres;
- Welsh for Adults centres;
- Mentrau Iaith;
- the Urdd; and
- individuals or organisations with an interest in the field.

The current position

- Welsh second language is a foundation subject within the National Curriculum for Wales.
- Welsh Language Development is a required Area of Learning in the Foundation Phase
- Welsh second language is a requirement at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4.
- Welsh second language is also taught at Key Stage 5 where, like all other subjects, it is optional.

- pupils do not continue to develop their Welsh skills well enough on transition to Key Stages 2 and 3;
- the time allocated to teaching the subject is not sufficient, and in some schools, the allocation is as little as one hour a fortnight;
- many teachers in primary schools lack confidence and ability to teach Welsh second language;
- too many pupils who follow the short course are entered for the foundation tier though they are capable of gaining A*-B grades which can not be achieved in the foundation tier;
- in most schools, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to hear and practise using the language beyond formal Welsh lessons;
- in too many secondary schools, the subject is taught by non-specialist teachers who lack a thorough understanding of second language teaching methodology; and
- pupils are not confident to use the language.

The proposed changes

- there is a need to ensure a steady flow of Welsh speakers coming through the education system and using the language in their everyday lives
- the Review Group recognises that in order to improve standards and attainment we can not consider Key Stages 3 and 4 in isolation
- the potential for future success in developing learners who have the skills to use the Welsh language outside the classroom was considered to be dependent upon raising the status of the subject

“It opens doors. No door is shut to you if you can speak Welsh”

“If you can speak Welsh, there are more job opportunities.”

- **Recommendation 1** - Welsh Government to ensure that Welsh second language continues to be a statutory subject within the National Curriculum and continues to be a compulsory subject for all pupils in Wales until the end of Key Stage 4
- **Recommendation 14** - Welsh Government to produce clear guidelines for schools on the time pupils need to learn and practise the language in order to make good progress in Welsh second language, to include examples of best practice
- **Recommendation 21** - Welsh Government to take steps to ensure that every primary and secondary school has sufficient numbers of teachers qualified and able to teach Welsh.

Conclusions

- Some recommendations can be implemented within a short timescale; others require planning and should be introduced over time
- Welsh Government's vision is to see the Welsh language thrive in Wales; the opportunity to be part of this vision has to be available to all. Ensuring that the teaching of the Welsh language is successful in our schools gives our children and young people this opportunity.



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Response to Welsh second language review group recommendations

May 2014

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