



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

## Supplementary guidance: Welsh

### September 2013



**The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:**

- ▲ nursery schools and settings that are maintained by, or receive funding from, local authorities;
- ▲ primary schools;
- ▲ secondary schools;
- ▲ special schools;
- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community learning;
- ▲ youth and community work training;
- ▲ local authority education services for children and young people;
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies;
- ▲ offender learning.

Estyn also:

- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the Welsh Government and others; and
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

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**What is the purpose?**

To provide guidance to inspectors for evaluating Welsh language outcomes and provision when it is a line of enquiry.

**For whom is it intended?**

For inspectors of all maintained and independent primary and secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

**From when should the guidance be used?**

September 2010

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## 1. Introduction

Increasing the number of Welsh speakers and the number of people who use the Welsh language in their daily lives are government priorities.

The publication of the Welsh Assembly Government's Welsh-medium Education Strategy (April 2010) reaffirms its commitment to improving the quality of Welsh-medium and bilingual provision. The Strategy also sets a direction for improving how Welsh is taught, in particular Welsh second language. It sets an expectation that all maintained education providers, not just those delivering Welsh-medium or bilingual provision should move forward on the improvement agenda.

The advantages for learners of increasing their competence in Welsh and in being bilingual are well-documented. They include:

- extending language skills for the workplace;
- expanding their horizons and enriching their experiences of life;
- enhancing intellectual growth and mental agility<sup>1</sup>; and
- gaining an appreciation of diversity.

When evaluating Welsh language outcomes and provision, it is essential that you always consider what is reasonable when taking into account the linguistic background and context of the school.

In broad terms, schools can be classified according to their linguistic make-up<sup>2</sup> as follows:

- schools which teach mainly through the medium of Welsh;
- English-medium schools; and
- streamed schools, which offer both Welsh-medium and English-medium provision to varying degrees.

There are also schools in some parts of Wales that determine the medium of provision on the basis of a linguistic continuum that takes account of varying levels of competence in Welsh.

Inspectors should also take account the linguistic background of the area the school serves. For example, in the English-medium sector, inspectors should expect that the achievements of pupils in Welsh should be enhanced in schools serving an area where there is significant use of Welsh in the local community.

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<sup>1</sup> Research in Canada has revealed that bilingualism enhances attention and cognitive control in children and older adults, and in 2007, highlighted the impact of bilingualism on delaying the onset of dementia symptoms.

<sup>2</sup> The Welsh Assembly Government publication 'Defining Schools According to Welsh-Medium Provision' (Information document No: 023/2007, October 2007) sets out descriptions and categories of schools according to the amount of Welsh used in teaching and learning and in the day-to-day conduct of the school.

All maintained schools, including special schools and pupil referral units, have a legal obligation to teach Welsh to all pupils of statutory school age other than a very few pupils whose statement of special educational needs (SEN) disapplies them from learning Welsh. *Iaith Fyw, Iaith Byw* (the Welsh Assembly Government's action plan for a bilingual Wales) acknowledges the right of pupils with SEN to receive provision in the language of their choice as set out in the revised SEN Code of Practice for Wales.

There is no statutory requirement of independent schools to teach Welsh as a subject. When the school makes a positive decision not to provide for teaching of Welsh or to develop the Welsh dimension of the curriculum, the report should simply state: 'The school does not teach Welsh' or 'The school does not seek to develop the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig*'. In independent schools that teach Welsh or deliver Welsh-medium provision, inspectors should use the questions listed in the next section, as applicable. Inspectors should examine the school's policy for Welsh and evaluate how well the school is implementing it. They should also judge the extent to which the school contributes to the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales

The Common Inspection Framework requires inspectors to comment on standards in 1.1.5 Welsh language and provision in 2.1.3 Welsh language provision in maintained schools. It does not require inspectors to provide an overall judgment for these aspects. Inspectors should give careful consideration to the impact of any important areas for improvement relating to the questions overleaf on the judgment for the relevant quality indicator. When considering whether an area for development is important, inspectors should take into account the proportion of learners involved or affected by the shortcoming, in the light of the socio-linguistic nature of the provider and that of the area it serves.

## 2. Evaluating Welsh Language

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

#### 1.1 Standards

Inspectors should consider the following questions when inspecting and reporting on aspect 1.1.5 Welsh language:

- Does attainment in Welsh according to teacher assessment at key stages 1, 2 and 3, and in external examinations at key stage 4 and the sixth form, compare favourably with that in similar schools?
- Are pupils making good progress in Welsh lessons?
- Do pupils who join the school with little or no previous competence in Welsh achieve well?
- Where applicable, do pupils have a good grasp of subject terminology in Welsh in subjects across the curriculum?
- Where applicable, are pupils developing increasing competence in using dual literacy skills?<sup>3</sup>
- As appropriate, are pupils confident and competent in using Welsh in a range of situations beyond their Welsh lessons?
- In Welsh-medium provision, do all pupils complete written work and final assessments in Welsh in all subjects and courses?
- Where applicable, do all pupils gain a recognised qualification in Welsh at the end of key stage 4, apart from those pupils disapplied by their statements of SEN?
- Where applicable, does a significant proportion of pupils learning Welsh as a second language gain a qualification in the GCSE full course?

#### 1.2 Wellbeing

- Do pupils display positive attitudes and enjoyment in learning Welsh?
- What proportion of pupils is involved in extra-curricular or community events or activities where they are able to use their skills in Welsh?

### Key Question 2: How good is provision?

#### 2.1 Learning experiences

Inspectors should consider the following questions when inspecting and reporting on aspect 2.1.3 Welsh language provision and the Welsh dimension:

- Is the school meeting the statutory requirement to teach Welsh to all pupils up to school-leaving age, other than pupils whose statements of SEN disapples them?

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<sup>3</sup> In the Welsh-medium sector in particular, pupils often have to gather information from sources in one language and use it in the other, either orally or in writing. These 'dual literacy skills' are important in that they enable pupils to access a wider range of learning materials. They also reinforce their communication skills in both Welsh and English.

- Do curriculum organisation and the time allocation enable pupils to make and sustain good progress in Welsh?
- Is there continuity between and across key stages in terms of pupils' experiences in Welsh and, where applicable, the extent of Welsh-medium provision?
- Where applicable, is there continuity in developing pupils' skills in Welsh in the provision in pupil referral units?
- Where applicable, do pupils have access to a full range of Welsh-medium vocational options?
- Where applicable, are all pupils that are assessed in Welsh first language at the end of key stage 2 also assessed in Welsh first language at the end of key stages 3 and 4?
- Do pupils learning Welsh as a second language have increasing opportunities to develop their use of Welsh in a range of situations beyond Welsh lessons?
- Do learning experiences across the curriculum enhance the development of learners' knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales?

## **2.2 Teaching**

- Is there a sequence of learning activities that reinforces pupils' skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing Welsh and their inter-dependency?
- Is there sufficient consolidation of new vocabulary and sentence patterns to ensure pupils are able to use them with increasing independence?
- Are pupils given regular opportunities to apply and build on what they have learnt in previous lessons?
- Is there sufficient teacher intervention to improve quality and accuracy of pupils' oral competence in Welsh?
- Do Welsh second language teachers make increasing use of Welsh as a medium of communication, both in lessons and in other situations?
- Where applicable, do pupils have good opportunities and support to develop dual literacy skills?

## **2.3 Care, support and guidance**

- Is there good support for pupils who are latecomers and have limited or no previous competence in Welsh?
- Are pupils aware of the advantages of learning Welsh and becoming increasingly bilingual?
- Where applicable, do pupils have access to Welsh-speaking specialist teachers and educational psychologists, as well as provision for intensive specific needs such as speech and hearing therapists.

## **2.4 Learning environment**

- Does the school have an ethos that promotes the Welsh language and culture and positive attitudes towards them?
- Is there extensive use of Welsh in displays and signage around the school?
- Does the school encourage pupils and staff to make increasing use of Welsh, at the appropriate level, as a medium of informal communication?

### **Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?**

#### **3.1 Leadership**

- Does the school take good account of national priorities relating to Welsh as identified in *Iaith Fyw, Iaith Byw*<sup>4</sup> and the Welsh Assembly Government's Welsh-medium Education Strategy<sup>5</sup>?
- Does the school have regard for the local authority language policy and its Welsh Education Scheme objectives?

#### **3.2 Improving quality**

- Do managers at all levels have a realistic view of what needs to be done to improve outcomes and provision in Welsh?
- Do improvement plans identify clear proposals to address areas in need of development?
- Is there clear evidence of a commitment to moving forward on the improvement agenda in relation to the Welsh Assembly Government's Welsh-medium Education Strategy?

#### **3.3 Partnership working**

- Is the school working well in partnership with other providers to extend the availability of Welsh-medium provision on offer to pupils, especially to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure?
- Is there joint-working between primary schools and pre-school groups and between secondary and partner primary schools to ensure consistency and progression in pupils' learning experiences in Welsh at transition?
- To what extent does the school take advantage of the support offered by other bodies, such as the Urdd and Mentrau Iaith<sup>6</sup>?

#### **3.4 Resource management**

- Where applicable, does the school have enough staff who can teach effectively through the medium of Welsh to ensure progression and continuity in Welsh-medium provision?
- Are all teachers who teach Welsh first or second language qualified to do so?
- Where applicable, is there good quality support for non-specialist Welsh teachers and for other staff within the school, such as participation in the Sabbaticals Scheme<sup>7</sup>?
- Is the school taking every reasonable action in relation to the cost-effectiveness of delivering Welsh-medium provision?

<sup>4</sup> *Iaith Fyw, Iaith Byw*, (A Living Language: A Language for Living), Welsh Government, 2012

<sup>5</sup> Welsh Medium Education Strategy, Welsh Government, 2009

<sup>6</sup> The Mentrau Iaith (Local Language Initiatives) support efforts to sustain the language at a community level. The Mentrau Iaith work in partnership with local and national organisations and stakeholders on various projects to promote the use of Welsh.

<sup>7</sup> The 'sabbaticals scheme' is a programme funded by the Welsh Assembly Government to increase the number of qualified teachers and lecturers who teach through the medium of Welsh. The first course was held in spring 2006.