

Supplementary guidance: Welsh

Autumn 2017

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
- ▲ all-age schools
- ▲ special schools
- ▲ pupil referral units
- ▲ independent schools
- ▲ further education
- ▲ independent specialist colleges
- ▲ adult community learning
- ▲ local authority education services for children and young people
- ▲ teacher education and training
- ▲ Welsh for adults
- ▲ work-based learning
- ▲ learning in the justice sector

Estyn also:

- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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What is the purpose?

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

For whom is it intended?

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

From when should the guidance be used?

September 2017

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Supplementary guidance

The key Estyn documents that guide inspection activity are the inspection guidance handbooks for each sector. However, we also produce supplementary guidance to help inspectors to consider specific aspects of education and training further.

The supplementary guidance documents set out some key principles, considerations and resources for inspectors. They relate to all sectors that Estyn inspects, unless they state that they are for a specific sector. They expand on certain aspects of education/training (e.g. the inspection of literacy) or on ways of conducting inspections (e.g. the use of learning walks) or specific inspection arrangements (e.g. guidance on inspecting church schools).

The supplementary guidance documents do not aim to be comprehensive. Inspectors are not required to work through them exhaustively when covering any specific aspect on an inspection. However, inspectors may find them useful when responding to specific emerging questions that arise during inspections or when they wish to reflect or investigate further.

The supplementary guidance documents may also help providers to gain an understanding of Estyn's inspection arrangements. They may also be helpful to providers in evaluating specific aspects of their own provision.

Our inspection work is based on the following principles:

- Inspectors will approach inspection with a positive mindset to ensure it is the best possible professional learning experience for the staff in each provider
- Inspectors will take a learner-focused approach to inspection
- Inspectors will always focus strongly on the quality of teaching and learning
- Inspectors will seek out well-considered innovative practice
- Inspectors will tailor the inspection activities according to the circumstances in each provider as far as possible
- Inspectors will be agile and responsive to emerging findings and will use the increased range of inspection tools and approaches available
- Inspectors will consider everything in the inspection framework, but will only report on the key strengths and weaknesses within each provider

Introduction

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

The publication of the Welsh-medium Education Strategy (April 2010), in addition to *A living language: a language for living – Welsh language strategy 2012-17* (2012), reaffirms the government's commitment to improving the quality of Welsh provision. Based on the principles of *Qualified for Life* (2014), *Successful Futures* recognises the importance of the Welsh language in the development of Wales 'as a bilingual nation with the strength and assurance to nurture both languages'.

Welsh continues to be a mandatory element of the curriculum for all learners until they are 16 years old, and *A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life* (October 2015) identifies that it is a priority to 'ensure that all learners can develop their Welsh language skills and use the language confidently in different contexts'.

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

- commercial value in the employment market and extending language skills for the workplace
- expanding their horizons and enriching their experiences of life in Wales and beyond
- the cognitive advantages of bilingualism¹
- appreciation of diversity

When evaluating Welsh language outcomes and provision, it is essential that we always consider the school's linguistic context and what it does in order to ensure continuity and progression in its pupils' linguistic skills.

In broad terms, schools can be classified according to their linguistic make-up² as follows:

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

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) disappplies them from learning Welsh. *A living language: a language for living* 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.

¹ 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 the symptoms of dementia.

² 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 life of the school.

There is no statutory requirement for independent schools to teach Welsh as a subject. When the school makes a positive decision not to provide for the teaching of Welsh or 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 on the Welsh language and evaluate how well the school is implementing that policy. 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 (revised) Common Inspection Framework sets a requirement for inspectors to comment on the Welsh language in **1.3** (Standards and progress in skills), in **3.3** (Provision for skills) and in **5.1** (Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers, including the governing body).

It does not require inspectors to provide an overall judgement on these aspects. Inspectors should give careful consideration to the effect of any important areas for improvement relating to the questions overleaf on the judgement 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.

Evaluating the Welsh language

1.3 Standards and progress in Welsh

General guidance

Inspectors should report clearly on pupils' standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing skills in Welsh in all key stages. Inspectors should consider pupils' progress in relation to the national literacy framework. Further guidance on inspecting literacy skills (Welsh) can be found on Estyn's website (www.estyn.gov.wales).

Inspectors should judge standards in Welsh language skills on the basis of first-hand evidence, for example when observing pupils' progress in lessons, learning walks, scrutinising pupils' work and discussions with pupils. Observing pupils carefully in lessons and speaking with pupils will provide evidence of their speaking and listening skills and their ability to think. Scrutinising work will provide evidence of how well pupils are able to write clearly and understand what they read.

Inspectors should consider pupils' standards in Welsh in comparison with similar schools and pupils' previous attainment. Where applicable, inspectors should consider pupils' progress from the Foundation Phase to key stage 2 and key stage 3. They should consider pupils' attainment in Welsh, Welsh literature or Welsh as a second language in comparison with their previous progress and attainment in similar schools.

Inspectors should consider the progress that pupils make in terms of developing their Welsh language skills across the curriculum and around the school. They should consider how well pupils know about the advantages of learning Welsh and becoming bilingual.

In key stage 4, where applicable, inspectors should consider the proportion of pupils who gain a recognised key stage 4 qualification in Welsh second language. In Welsh-medium and bilingual schools, they should consider the proportion of pupils who complete their coursework and their final assessment in Welsh in key stage 4 and in the sixth form in all of the courses that they follow across the curriculum.

Questions

Inspectors should consider the following questions when inspecting and reporting on 1.3 Standards and progress in Welsh:

- Are pupils making good progress in Welsh lessons/through the medium of Welsh across the curriculum?
- Do pupils develop their grasp of Welsh language skills in an integrated manner?
 - speaking and listening skills in order to communicate and interact confidently in different contexts
 - reading skills in order to understand and respond to different written forms
 - writing skills in order to write effectively, correctly and at length
- Where applicable, are pupils confident and competent in using the Welsh language in a range of situations outside their Welsh lessons?
- Where applicable, are pupils able to use the relevant linguistic register when discussing or communicating with different audiences?
- When appropriate, do pupils have a good understanding of subject terminology in Welsh in subjects across the curriculum?
- Where applicable, are pupils developing increasing competence in using dual literacy skills?³
- Do pupils who join the school with little or no previous competence in the Welsh language achieve well?
- Does attainment in Welsh according to teachers' assessments at the end of the Foundation Phase, key stages 2 and 3, and in external examinations in key stage 4 and the sixth form (Welsh, Welsh Literature or Welsh second language), compare favourably with that in similar schools?
- Do pupils continue to develop their Welsh language skills at secondary school in a way that ensures progression from the end of key stage 2?
- Where applicable, do all pupils gain a recognised qualification in Welsh at the end of key stage 4, apart from those pupils who are disapplied by their statements of SEN?
- Where applicable, how many pupils who learn Welsh as a second language (in English-medium schools) gain a recognised qualification in Welsh, including GCSE Welsh second language (full course) at the end of key stage 4?

³ 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.

- In Welsh-medium and bilingual schools, how many pupils complete their coursework and their final assessments in Welsh (in all courses that they follow across the curriculum) in key stage 4 and the sixth form?
- Do pupils display positive attitudes and enjoyment in learning Welsh?
- Are pupils aware of the advantages of learning Welsh and becoming increasingly bilingual?
- What proportion of pupils take part in extra-curricular or community events or activities where they are able to use their Welsh language skills?

3.3 Provision for the Welsh language

General guidance

Inspectors should evaluate to what extent curriculum arrangements ensure that pupils develop the necessary Welsh language skills to support their work across the curriculum. Inspectors should consider how well the school has paid attention to the national literacy framework when planning learning experiences for pupils. The breadth of pupils' experiences across the curriculum should provide increasing and purposeful opportunities for pupils to practice and develop their Welsh language skills. Inspectors should look at the evidence in pupils' books and in classes to consider to what extent planning helps to provide purposeful opportunities for pupils to use the Welsh language as a medium of learning across the curriculum.

Inspectors should evaluate to what extent the school's formal and informal provision develops Welsh language skills and evaluate the quality of provision. Inspectors should comment on the arrangements and the appropriateness of the time that is allocated to ensure that pupils achieve appropriate standards in Welsh. Pupils should be aware of the advantages of learning Welsh and being bilingual. It is a statutory requirement for all pupils to learn Welsh up to school-leaving age.

Questions

Inspectors should consider the following questions when inspecting and reporting on aspect 3.3 Provision for the Welsh language:

- Does the school meet the statutory requirement to teach Welsh to all pupils up to school-leaving age, other than pupils whose statements of SEN disapply them?
- 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, are all pupils who 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?
- Where applicable, is there continuity in developing pupils' Welsh language skills in provision in pupil referral units?
- Where applicable, are pupils able to access the full range of Welsh-medium vocational options?
- Are pupils given increasing opportunities to develop their use of the Welsh language in situations outside Welsh lessons?

- Do the school's learning and teaching practices (pedagogy) ensure that pupils' Welsh language skills develop/improve soundly and quickly?
- Do the school's learning activities reinforce pupils' language skills and ensure interdependence between speaking and listening, reading and writing skills?
- Does the school plan purposefully to develop its pupils' language skills?
- Is there sufficient teacher intervention to improve the quality and accuracy of pupils' oral competence in Welsh?
- Do the school's teachers make effective use of the Welsh language as a medium of communication, both in lessons and in other situations?
- Where applicable, are pupils given good opportunities and support to develop dual literacy skills?

- Does the school prepare pupils to use the Welsh language in further studies, in the workplace and in their communities?
- Does the school nurture curiosity about the Welsh language and enjoyment of it, in order to enable pupils to be aware of the advantages of using the Welsh language?

- Is there good support for pupils who are latecomers to the school, or pupils who have limited or no previous competence in the Welsh language?
- Where applicable, do pupils have access to Welsh-speaking specialist teachers and educational psychologists, in addition to provision for profound specific needs, such as speech and hearing therapists?

- Does the school have an ethos that promotes the Welsh language (and culture) and positive attitudes towards them?
- Is the school implementing plans, including the Sïarter Iaith (Language Charter) for example, to promote the Welsh language in the school's everyday life (language normalisation)?
- Does the Welsh language play a prominent part in the everyday life of the school? Can the language be heard and seen around the school? For example, do pupils and staff speak Welsh to each other and is the language used on signage and in displays around the school?

5.1 Quality and effectiveness of leaders and managers (including the governing body) in improving pupils' Welsh language skills

General guidance

Inspectors should consider to what extent leaders have established a clear and strategic rationale for the curriculum, in terms of its advantages for pupils when preparing them for lifelong learning and playing a full part in society. Inspectors should evaluate how successful leaders and managers are in achieving national priorities, in particular in improving pupils' Welsh language skills. Inspectors should evaluate to what extent leaders and managers plan purposefully to provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their Welsh language skills in formal and informal situations.

Questions

- To what extent do school leaders plan purposefully to develop its pupils' Welsh language skills across the curriculum?
- Do managers at all levels have an accurate picture of what needs to be done to improve outcomes and provision in Welsh?
- Do improvement plans identify clear proposals to address areas that are in need of development?

- Does the school work well in partnership with other providers to extend the availability of Welsh-medium provision that is offered to pupils?
- Is there joint working between primary schools and pre-school groups, and between secondary schools and partner primary schools, to ensure consistency, continuity and progression in pupils' learning experiences in Welsh during the transition period?
- To what extent does the school take advantage of the opportunities that are offered by other bodies, such as the Urdd and Mentrau Iaith (Welsh Language Initiatives)⁴?

- Where applicable, does the school have enough staff who are able to teach effectively through the medium of Welsh in order to ensure continuity and progression in Welsh-medium provision?
- Are all teachers who teach Welsh qualified to do so?
- Where applicable, is there good quality support/professional development for non-specialist Welsh teachers and other staff at the school, such as participation in the Sabbatical Scheme⁵?
- Does the school take every reasonable action in relation to the cost-effectiveness of delivering Welsh-medium provision?

⁴ Mentrau Iaith (Welsh Language Initiatives) support efforts to sustain the language at a community level. Mentrau Iaith work in partnership with local and national organisations and stakeholders on various projects to promote the use of the Welsh language.

⁵ The 'sabbatical scheme' is a programme funded by the Welsh 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.