Welsh Government

# Consultation – Welsh in English Medium Schools and Settings

Final Version, September 2022
Analysis of Feedback / Consultation Responses on the
Framework Welsh in English Medium Schools and Settings

Dr Nick Morgan, Tom Bajjada, Carly Wise / Miller Research (UK) Ltd.
Heledd Bebb / Old Bell 3

For further information please contact:

Tom Bajjada

tom@miller-research.co.uk

Pen-y-Wyrlod, Llanvetherine, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, NP7 8RG, UK

www.miller-research.co.uk | 01873 851880 | Twitter: @miller_research

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**Glossary**

| Acronym | Definition |
|---------|------------|
| ASCL | Association of School and College Leaders |
| CfW | Curriculum for Wales |
| CPD | Continuing Professional Development |
| CYP | Children and Young People |
| EM | English Medium |
| LA | Local Authority |
| NEU | National Education Union |
| PLN | Professional Learning Network |
| PS | Progression Step |
| SE | South East |
| WEM | Welsh in English Medium |

# 1.  Introduction

*Background*

1.1    Following some initial mapping work by a group of teachers in October 2021, a wider group was convened in December 2021 to make recommendations for a draft framework for Welsh in English medium schools and settings.

1.2    The framework aims to improve pupils' experiences and attainment in learning Welsh in English-medium schools and settings, contributing to the Cymraeg 2050 policy and the four purposes (specifically, ambitious, capable learners that can communicate effectively in Welsh and English in different forms and settings, alongside ethical, informed citizens how are knowledgeable about their culture). Furthermore, it seeks to provide support to non-specialist teachers teaching Welsh.

*Consultation*

1.3    The consultation on the draft framework for WEM was issued in the Spring of 2022 seeking views from the education sector and closed on the 13th of May. The consultation phase forms part of the co-construction process and provides a vital opportunity for all practitioners and other stakeholder to provide input supporting the development of the framework.

1.4    Miller Research, in conjunction with Old Bell 3, was commissioned to undertake an independent consultation analysis, consisting of workshop consultations with stakeholders, and the dissemination of written responses to the additional guidance.

1.5    During the consultation period, alongside engagement with children and young people (see Section 2), a series of five workshops were held, which were open to a wide range of practitioners from primary and secondary education, as well as wider stakeholders such as regional consortia. These took place between the 30th of March and 11th May. The workshops were themed, with specific workshops

offered to different stakeholder groups, such as primary and secondary school practitioners in the medium of Welsh and English. Two catch-all sessions were also held, open to everyone to attend.

1.6    Responses to the consultation and the input to these workshops were independently analysed and summarised to form the basis of this report. This report is divided into two sections. The first provides the analysis of the written responses to the consultation. The second provides an analysis of the consultation workshops.

1.7    Following the end of the consultation period the framework will be further refined to reflect consultation feedback. Welsh Government are aiming to publish the framework within the guidance for the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area of the Curriculum for Wales on Hwb in autumn 2022.

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## 2. Feedback from Children and Young People

2.1    As part of the consultation, we engaged with children and young people (CYP) to gather their thoughts on their experiences of learning Welsh in English medium education.

2.2    Although this activity was not aimed at gathering direct feedback on the draft framework, it was deemed important as part of a wider drive to understand the current experiences of learning Welsh in English medium education from a learners' perspective.

2.3    Fieldwork involved attending the Urdd Eisteddfod in June, surveying children and young people who were currently learning Welsh in EM schools and settings. The age range of respondents was 10-18 years old. The findings of the research is set out below.

*The importance and purpose of learning Welsh*

As might be expected of CYP attending the eisteddfod, when asked how important Welsh was to them, all respondents said it was, stating how they enjoyed learning the language. The chance to further deepen their knowledge and keep the culture alive was frequently mentioned, as was the ability to socialise with Welsh speaking friends. Several respondents claimed that the ability to speak Welsh formed part of their identity and viewed the language as "community-based". One participant stated, "it [the Welsh language] belongs to the people, it is a missed opportunity if it is not taught, there is a risk that we will lose our heritage and culture".

Furthermore, of the CYP surveyed, the majority considered the ability to speak Welsh as having a positive effect on their career opportunities post-school. They perceived the language to be 'on the up' with it having "grown and grown". They referred to a number of various bilingual jobs available for them to explore post-education, with teaching in both English and Welsh speaking schools the most commonly mentioned opportunity.

*Using the language*

2.4    As mentioned, CYP most commonly spoke Welsh in the company of friends whilst one pupil stated how they used it in their local college. Many expressed difficulty using Welsh frequently outside of the classroom given that they come from English speaking families, and as such, when at home, had to learn Welsh by themselves.

*Welsh Lessons*

2.5    CYP were positive about their Welsh lessons and teachers, welcoming how they "push" them to use the language. They cited their ability to answer teacher's questions in Welsh, alongside having basic conversational skills such as talking about themselves, how they feel and the weather. In terms of the more challenging aspects of their Welsh lessons, learning new vocabulary and grammar was repeatedly mentioned.

2.6    They did feel more could be taught at both the primary and secondary school level to further their ability to hold conversational Welsh in a real world setting. One learner claimed, "second language Welsh GCSE does not help you in everyday life", saying they learned far more in Year 12. They also suggested introducing 'tiered Welsh exams' given that there was a wide variation in pupils ability to speak Welsh, largely determined by their background, i.e. if they came from an English or Welsh speaking home.

2.7    In summary, of the CYP surveyed, there was a significant amount of enthusiasm and pride stemming from their ability to speak Welsh. At a national level, this highlights the need to continue to support and develop learners' progression of their linguistic skills as much as possible. The refinement of a draft framework for WEM schools and settings has the potential to offer practitioners the necessary guidance to achieve this.

## 3.  Overview of Responses

3.1     The consultation on the framework for Welsh in English Medium
        Schools and Settings received a total of 46 substantive responses.

3.2     The questionnaire's design employed a combination of both open and
        closed questions, allowing space for respondents to provide detailed
        feedback, and raise any questions or relevant concerns.

3.3     Of the 46 total responses, 39 were submitted in English and seven
        were submitted in Welsh. In addition to the survey, further written
        responses were submitted by numerous organisations and groups
        including but not limited to, Estyn, ASCL Cymru, NEU Cymru, Mudiad
        Meithrin a 'Professional Learning Network' and multiple Local
        Authorities.

3.4     The majority of survey respondents had an occupational role within
        primary and secondary English-medium school. Remaining
        respondents represented a range of groups including third sector,
        Welsh and bilingual schools, Local Authorities, further education
        institutions, regional consortia and teaching unions.

3.5     A common theme from the responses was that the framework had
        potential to be helpful for practitioners, with the overarching view that
        it was a 'stepping stone' to addressing some of the challenges faced
        in the sector. Positive comments were made about the repeated
        reference to culture within the framework. The proposed inclusion of
        an additional sentence for the descriptions of learning was also
        largely viewed as a positive addition.

3.6     The principal concerns raised were related to the length of the
        framework, with several respondents deeming it too lengthy.
        Furthermore, it was frequently considered too vague in some areas
        whilst too detailed in others. The need to include a language
        continuum setting out vocabulary, grammar and language patterns
        was repeatedly referenced. Finally, stakeholders reinforced the
        message that the framework is only as effective as the practitioners

implementing it; that there was a need for more emphasis, time and
resources to be placed on ensuring Welsh teachers had sufficient
linguistic and pedagogical skills to teach Welsh at a level that
supports learner progression, that is also in alignment with the
principles of the new Curriculum for Wales.

## 4.    Welsh in English Medium Schools and Settings: Consultation Questions 1-12

4.1    This section provides a chronological breakdown of responses across each question of the survey. Responses have been analysed to gain a sense of overall sentiment, key themes, and areas of concern and contestation.

**Question 1:** *Does the information provided in this framework about experiences, knowledge and skills offer teachers guidance to help plan for learners' progression in Welsh?*

4.2    In total, 23 respondents agreed that the information in the framework offered guidance to teachers to help plan learners' progress. A small number of these respondents who elaborated on their answer explained that the framework provides suitable scaffolding for progression, and that the "skills and experiences in progression steps helps to see how children should develop skills." Another positive response noted how the framework allows for flexibility for pupils and teachers to achieve results "in a variety of ways." Finally, a respondent noted how having a "prescriptive" language format will guide and give staff confidence in teaching Welsh as a second language.

4.3    There were however 4 responses which answered "yes" but offered caveats. These included:

- There is too much in it, and the expectation for teachers is too high considering their level of Welsh
- It is suitable so long as staff have a sufficient understanding of Welsh
- Still not enough structure for teachers with limited language skills

- That teachers lack the time to properly study this framework alongside other guidance documents and resource they receive.

4.4     Ten respondents answered "No" to this question, with another 11 answering "unsure." The most common reason given for this response was a lack of sufficient guidance or detail for practitioners to teach Welsh. For example, it was referred to by one respondent as "too vague and woolly," adding that it "cannot be translated into lesson plans." Other respondents similarly stated that it "will not automatically enable to teachers to plan for learners' progression," or that the framework is not detailed enough for practitioners not proficient in teaching languages.

4.5     Several respondents have noted the need for a more structured framework of "scaffolding" for how to teach Welsh, with one referring to the current framework as an "assessment tool," and not the strategy or method needed for teaching a language.

4.6     A related issue raised by three respondents was the issue of inconsistency, with both feeling that the framework was too open to variation. One noted that this could result in pupils from different schools being at "very different places" when leaving primary school. They attribute this potential inconsistency to there being "little guidance regarding language patterns to cover."

4.7     Another theme emerging from respondents answering "No" or "Unsure" is that there is to much detail in the framework. These responses focus on there being too much expected from teachers, taking issue with the amount of time it will require to "take the document on board." One respondent noted that this was one document among several that has been developed since the introduction of the new curriculum, and that these guidance documents will all require "time …to sit down, understand them, prepare for them, get training, implement it, make mistakes, and adapt, before they are fully understood.

**Question 2:** *Is there something missing that should be included in the experiences, knowledge and skills?*

4.8     This question received a mixed response, with 17 respondents answering "Yes," 16 answering "Unsure," and 9 answering "No."

4.9     Of the "yes" responses, the most common theme underpinning comments related to the need for more structured guidance, worded in responses as "a core curriculum," "learning pathway," or "language patterns." These comments, as in the question above, felt that additional material and structure is needed to enable practitioners to implement the guidance. One response within this theme notes that this is needed as otherwise there will be "inconsistencies created by teachers' language skills."

4.10    Further "Yes" responses note the following themes:

- Case studies are needed on how the guidance should be implemented in real terms.
- More high-quality resources are needed to support learners and practitioners.
- There is too much to read, and a lack of appreciation for how much time it will take for teachers to deliver the guidance.
- Additional time is needed for staff to implement the guidance, both in terms of ensuring a minimum amount of face-to-face time with learners and providing time for practitioners to study the language.

4.11    Those who answered "No" or "Unsure" left few comments, with one "Unsure" respondent stating their concern that the guidance lacks enough focus on how to teach the language, which may result in inconsistency in the language levels of leaners in different schools.

**Question 3:** *Will the information about language competencies provided in this framework support teachers to plan for learners' progression in Welsh?*

4.12    In all, 20 respondents answered "Yes" to this question, 9 answered "Unsure," while another 14 respondents answered "No."

4.13    Few of those that answered "Yes" explained their answers, but of those that did, respondents added that a framework will help to offer a better understanding of "linguistic levels" or in understanding where "children are [on] their learning journey," and "support the professional in the identification of the next steps for individual children."

4.14    One respondent that answered "yes" provided a caveat: that what hinders them is "not knowing how [learners] will be assessed at age 16."

4.15    There was a range of additional comments given by those answering "Unsure" or "No" to this question. As with above questions, a lack of suitable information was noted by several respondents, with one noting that "the information included won't give practical support to teachers to design for learner progress in Welsh."

4.16    One respondent felt that teachers will rely on consortia to continue to direct them due to there being "no actual suggestion of what should be taught in this framework." This respondent stated that they understood why there was unwillingness to prescribe language patterns, but "with a vulnerable area like this, it should really be considered."

4.17    Some "Unsure" or "No" respondents raised the need for more support to implement the curriculum in terms of the provision of training. The Welsh language skills of the workforce was raised as an issue by two respondents.

4.18    A small number of other respondents once again noted the vagueness and "technical" nature of the guidance, with the guidance being described by one respondent as "too complicated [with] too many steps."

4.19    One "No" respondent felt that there was "not a lot of difference between each Progression Step."

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**Question 4:** *Do you think including an additional sentence above descriptions of learning to summarise the focus of each strand of progression would be helpful to teachers?*

4.20    There were 29 "Yes" responses to this question, 5 "Unsure," and 9 "No" responses.

4.21    For many of those that answered "Yes" and who left responses, the addition of more information was welcome: "the more clarity the better." Responses noted that this would add "clarity," would make it "easier to track coverage of [the] curriculum," make it "easy to find [things] at a glance," and would help to "summarise." One response added that "the more complete and clear the document can be made … [the more it] would support all practitioners and teachers as they might not all be linguistic or language specialists."

4.22    There was however one "Yes" respondent that warned against becoming dependent on teaching certain language structures at certain times, noting that consolidating any language into boxes is extremely difficult and instead "columns must cross over continuously." One respondent that answered with "Unsure" similarly commented that the framework "does not make much practical sense" as receptive language "listening, reading" comes before expressing language, however within a lesson pupils need the chance to move from "hearing to low-risk responding … to practice producing to producing with confidence."

4.23    For the other respondent that answered "Unsure," the comment provided argues that the additional sentence, while it would solidify the focus of the descriptions of learning, would not "assist practitioners to develop a language curriculum."

4.24    For respondents that answered "No," their reasons given centre on the sense that an additional sentence will do little to address underlying concerns, mostly around a lack of focus on addressing pedagogy and the language skills of practitioners. One "No"

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respondent also stated that they "still do not understand the expectations per each Progression Step"

**Question 5:** *What additional supporting materials do you think teachers will need in order to use the Curriculum for Wales and this framework effectively to support learners' progression in Welsh?*

4.25    Thirty-six respondents provided an answer to this question. The answers provided can be grouped into the following themes:

*Additional resources for learners*

4.26    Resources discussed under this theme included reading books for learners that are interesting for children, books for learners and parents, stories written specifically for second language learners, materials to help with "pronunciation and language patterns," and digital resources for learners for listening and watching, which could take the form of apps.

*Additional resources for practitioners*

4.27    These materials include lesson plans and materials for every stage of the framework, created by "advisory teachers" and "language specialists."

4.28    Respondents also specified having access to case studies, examples, and best practice, which includes resources created by other schools and settings. One respondent suggested that practitioners could record videos of what is delivered within schools to be shared on Hwb in order to demonstrate best practice. Another noted the need for an "interactive knowledge bank for staff and pupils to find vocabulary needed."

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*More training opportunities and options for CPD*

4.29    Seven respondents discussed the need for training support and opportunities for CPD. This included "a focus on upskilling all teachers in English medium schools to develop their language skills." One respondent noted the need to train practitioners to "speak the language fluently enough to teach it to the levels expected," also noting that while the sabbatical scheme is good, it is limited in scope. Training was noted as being particularly important at Progression Step 3, which requires higher levels of Welsh.

4.30    One respondent noted the value of the Language Co-ordinator resource funded through Camau and Cwlwm to the non-maintained sector as these staff can help practitioners on their language journey and identify resources and ideas for practice. The respondent notes the impact this has on the confidence of staff to use the language.

4.31    One respondent also noted the need for more time to plan and amend existing resources.

*More specific or comprehensive framework or structures to guide how to teach Welsh as a second language.*

4.32    In addition to respondents stating the need for more teaching materials, 4 respondents emphasised the need for more structured or comprehensive guidance, including step-by-step guidance, or a "core-curriculum/language continuum. One respondent noted that while a curriculum should not restrict a school's ability to develop their own teaching approach, a core curriculum for language would "ensure that teachers and schools are able to reach the demands of the new curriculum and use the language effectively across the curriculum." They feel that this would also ensure bridging between primary and secondary settings.

*Other comments*

4.33    One respondent noted the need for more support for teachers and headteachers to understand how developing the curriculum can lead to a significant increase in the number of learners that can develop fluency in Welsh. To this end, schools should be supported to concentrate on the use of Welsh across the curriculum.

**Question 6:** *What additional professional learning opportunities do you think teachers will need in order to use the Curriculum for Wales and this framework effectively to support learners' progression in Welsh?*

4.34    A wide range of responses were received, with 37 respondents having left comments.

4.35    Many responses noted the need for training courses. Language courses for staff were raised by many respondents, including one respondent suggesting "weekly courses accessible to all." A respondent suggested that this be delivered by Regional Consortia. One respondent had been on the sabbatical year and stated that "without this great experience I would not have the confidence to deliver this framework."

4.36    Training on how to use the resources available was noted by a small number of respondents, particularly for teachers who feel that they need more support. Another respondent suggested digital lessons for teachers before each unit of teaching to help those with poorer Welsh language skills.

4.37    Several respondents described the need to improve the confidence of staff in their Welsh language ability or their ability to teach Welsh. One such respondent described the need for courses that concentrate on increasing confidence levels.

4.38    A small number of respondents noted the need to train teachers in language pedagogy, with one noting that "the framework is unlikely to succeed without teachers that possess solid language skills and

language pedagogy to successfully deliver the framework. The respondent notes the need to design the professional training strategically and ensure that there is at least one teacher in each school developing these specialist skills.

4.39 Other respondents suggested the following:

- A greater focus on upskilling staff in Welsh language within English medium schools.
- Weekly support from Welsh language specialists.
- Professional learning workshops
- Professional learning about language and language etymology.
- Opportunities to share good practice
- Ensuring sufficient time for Welsh lessons in the timetable
- Exchange or secondment programmes with Welsh medium schools
- Opportunities to work as a cluster to develop resources for the curriculum.

**Question 7:** *We would like to know your views on the effects that the framework for Welsh in English-medium schools, settings and streams would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English. What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?[1]*

4.40 Thirty-seven responses were received to this question.

4.41 Some respondents felt that the framework was a positive step, with one stating that it works toward the aim to have one million Welsh speakers by 2050, and another stating that it "will raise the profile of Welsh and ensure that it is treated equally like a 'core' subject." One respondent felt that the framework "should facilitate greater

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[1] This is a mandatory question included in all Welsh Government consultations.

awareness of the need to undertake Welsh opportunities on a daily basis, while another similarly noted that it will increase the enthusiasm for using Welsh."

4.42    One respondent saw the framework as having the potential to ensure that children and adults come to realise that Welsh belongs to all. They note that if learners have a positive experience when learning Welsh then there will be hope for them to continue to develop skills in secondary education.

4.43    Some commenters, although not directly answering the question, noted the importance of encouraging Welsh in English medium schools in abstract. One, for example, noted that English medium schools will "have the greatest impact on numbers [of Welsh speakers] moving forward." Another felt that and opportunity to explore Welsh culture and the language is to be encouraged.

4.44    The majority of responses however felt that the impact of the framework on the Welsh language would be hampered by practical challenges. Many of these responses highlighted the inadequacy of the framework to make an impact, while others noted wider practical issues that would limit a positive impact on the Welsh language.

4.45    The following responses noted practical issues that would limit the impact of the framework.

4.46    One respondent had concerns that without a "small army of peripatetic Welsh first language support teachers" or more sabbatical learning, the framework will not have the desired effect. They warned about the "ramping up of expectations on professionals who are already stretched," arguing that "unrealistic Welsh targets for EM primary schools is damaging morale within the profession." Another response similarly argues that "forcing this on schools at the current time with so few Welsh speaking staff … is causing undue stress and worry." Another respondent felt that with the tightly packed curriculum, non-specialist teachers will see Welsh as a "difficult and time-consuming subject."

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4.47    The Welsh language skills of practitioners in English medium schools was noted by one respondent as a reason for why the framework, in its current structure, is unlikely to have an effect. This response notes that in its current form, the framework requires staff to have high level skills and specialism in order to be able to turn the framework into a suitable curriculum. The respondent adds that more support is needed to accompany the framework.

4.48    The following responses were from those noting that the framework was unlikely to have an impact. Taking issue with the effectiveness of the framework, one respondent felt that while it provides some guidance, to "ensure further impact, [it] requires refining to include further detail along with associated professional learning and support." Another respondent stated that the framework will have a "limited impact" as it will "not be of much use to non-specialist teachers as [it] really doesn't respond to their current needs."

One respondent felt that as it was not statutory, it would not have a solid foundation. They were concerned that without statutory status, the situation would remain as it has been, with inconsistent attitudes.

4.49    One respondent felt that the framework by itself will not lead to any changes, and that a continuum of language is needed in order to encourage learners to use Welsh in the real world. The respondent felt that the framework has not provided non-specialists with a "good understanding" of how this can be achieved.

4.50    Other comments received include:

- There is a barrier to motivation to learn Welsh for learners and their families
- An obsession with STEM is "running the show" with the new curriculum
- There are difficulties in recruiting staff that speak Welsh to a sufficient standard outside of heavily Welsh-speaking areas
- Learners and staff should be immersed in the language

- Possible negative perception of Welsh in non-Welsh communities, with messaging needing to communicate that Welsh is not a threat to non-Welsh speakers.

**Question 8:** *Please also explain how you believe the proposed framework for Welsh in English-medium schools, settings and streams could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language[2]*

4.51    Twenty-nine responses were received for this question, excluding answers which stated, "see previous answer."

4.52    As with the question above, the answers given to this question were wide ranging, often making broader points beyond the specificities of the question itself.

4.53    Some comments related specifically to the framework. One respondent stated that more examples are needed, providing examples of the kind of milestones they would like to see (e.g., "PS1 – Pupils can recognise common vocabulary, e.g., numbers and colours, and match what they have heard to a picture").

4.54    Answers also included some criticisms of the framework including one statement from a respondent that felt that "the draft framework should be more specific and detailed in order to provide clarity regarding progression."

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[2] As with Question 7, this is a mandatory question included in all Welsh Government consultations.

4.55    Two respondents noted that the framework will have a positive impact on the Welsh language, with one stating that it will "give staff more confidence to teach … knowing at which levels pupils should be at roughly." However, the respondent adds that a whole school approach is needed to embed the language with continuous incidental use, alongside a "wealth of positivity from all stakeholders." The other respondent notes that the framework aims towards a positive effect on the language, but that it will take years to change mentalities in some schools. This respondent added that the framework needs to stay in place for a few years once finalised to give teachers, departments, and schools a chance to understand it.

4.56    Some broader points were made about how best to encourage Welsh in schools. These include the following themes:

- For older pupils, exploring Welsh in the workplace was raised as beneficial
- Peripatetic conversational Welsh cultural teaching within primary clusters would make the language embraced more
- Staff training is key, as staff who cannot speak Welsh are unable to hold it to as high a standard as English
- "Splash" needed on social media about how cool it is to be able to speak more than one language
- More emphasis is needed on using the language practically, with less emphasis on exams. There is currently too much of a focus on teaching learners to pass exams in Welsh as opposed to for practical use or enjoyment
- More leadership, direction and support are needed for English medium schools
- More resources and training are needed, with training for all staff following the Sabbatical Course model
- Welsh should be statutory in all schools and settings in Wales, and each school should conform with standards with Welsh provision that are relevant for them

- The status of the subject needs to be raised and ensure that schools give enough time to the subject.

## Additional comments

4.57 Twenty-nine respondents provided additional comments. Additional comments included:

- A request to be mindful of priorities in poorer parts of Wales where Welsh is not widely spoken, as learners already face barriers to "lead productive lives as wonderful citizens"[3]
- The Curriculum for Wales is a missed opportunity for the teaching of Welsh, as it advocates no additional curriculum time for Welsh. English medium "development will continue to be stalled for 30 or more years"
- The framework is "excellent," and will be "very helpful to supporting teachers to teach Welsh"
- More "up to date" and "engaging" resources are needed, specifically tailored to the sentence patterns and structures expected at each Progression Step. Welsh resources can at present "be lacking as they often look outdated"
- Implement a language mentor programme with learners from Welsh medium schools, and more opportunities for Welsh medium and English medium teachers to cooperate and interact
- Welsh should be given the same amount of time as English in English medium schools
- There needs to be a closer focus on practical issues, such as a lack of primary staff who are proficient in Welsh, and a lack of learners choosing languages more generally for GCSEs and higher levels
- The curriculum and this framework need to be simplified

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[3] The respondent was here paraphrasing one of the four purposes: "lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society."

- Resources on language etymology need to be made available
- More focus on Welsh will place a bigger burden on professionals already stretched to meet the curriculum. More incidental use of Welsh across the curriculum would be a more realistic approach.

## 5.    Additional Responses

5.1    In addition to the completed, individual survey responses, the consultation also received 19 responses on behalf of organisations which work with English-medium schools and settings. Responses were submitted by the following groups: Estyn, WEM Education, a 'Professional Learning Network', Dyfodol i'r Iaith, Cymdeithas yr Iaith, Mudiad Meithrin, Conwy CBC, Wrexham CBC, Swansea Council, Denbighshire County Council, ASCL Cymru, NEU Cymru, the National Centre for Learning Welsh and the Education Service, Denbighshire County Council. A series of anonymous group responses were also submitted.

5.2    These responses are covered in further detail below. Given the range of organisations involved, and the changes taking place in the teaching of Welsh in education  all feedback was invited. It should be noted however, that some of the issues raised through the additional responses fall outside of the remit of the WEM consultation process. Though the sentiment of their concerns is acknowledged it is important to recognise that comments in this context, can only be addressed in relation to the framework, as well as professional learning opportunities and materials and what this hopes to achieve.

**Professional Learning Network**

5.3    A response was received from the Welsh in English-medium Education Professional Learning Network (PLN), a group of practitioners predominantly from South-east Wales. The response was signed by 52 practitioners working in primary and secondary schools, and further and higher education institutions. The response

from the PLN recognises that the framework for Welsh in English medium schools and settings is a 'first step' and potentially a useful support tool for the development of language progression. Overall though, the PLN view the framework as not specific or coherent enough, and too large and varied to prove useful for EM primary teachers. In short, they feel it does not offer practitioners the necessary guidance needed to effectively plan learners' progression.

5.4  In response to what should be included in the framework, the need to detail what language has been taught previously (including patterns of vocabulary and grammar) and the language pupils will learn once they move on to the next class is mentioned as a key necessary addition. This needs to be mapped out and accessible for teachers in order to ensure coherence and progression across year groups, including the transition from primary to secondary schools.

5.5  In particular, the PLN states how the framework does not sufficiently offer guidance to non-specialist teachers, as they do not have proficiency of the Welsh language to translate the statements in the framework into actual language content taught in class.

5.6  The competencies cited in the framework are viewed as a useful way to classify the different purposes they want learners to be able to use the language for. However, they are not seen to provide sufficient support to plan for sequential, coherent and logical progression for learners. The concept of including additional sentences for the descriptions of learning is met with scepticism by the PLN as they feel that the strands should be self-evident with no further explanation required. Furthermore, they feel the additional sentences fail to address what they deemed a lack of hierarchical and sequential coherence in some strands.

5.7  In terms of supporting materials required by teachers, the PLN refers to the aforementioned core language progression that includes patterns, vocabulary and grammar that is organised in a hierarchically coherent way. This would be followed by the design of a core

curriculum which would enable successful, consistent implementation by all English medium schools and teachers. The designing of effective, sequenced core resources including second language teaching resources is also referenced.

5.8     In coherence with supporting materials, the PLN states that professional learning opportunities need to be based on language progression and on a core curriculum to be developed, along with core resources. The Welsh Government funded Welsh in a Year sabbatical programme is seen as an exemplar resource to be utilised. However, it is recognised that the majority of teachers could not attend this, and as such, emphasis should be placed firstly on Welsh language training, synchronising the language teachers learn to what they teach pupils, and secondly on teaching the pedagogical principles to practitioners.

**Anonymous response from a Local Authority**

5.9     At a high-level, the Local Authority deems the framework as providing useful guidance for schools but feel more detail is needed for practitioners to plan learners' progression in Welsh and provide an impact on the Welsh language as a whole.

5.10    In its current form, respondents interpret the framework's lack of detail resulting in an inaccessible document for non-specialists. Specifically, more detail regarding language patterns, vocabulary and grammar across progression steps is deemed as a necessary supporting material to ensure coherence and progression.

5.11    High quality professional learning for practitioners and resources linked to the methodology of teaching a language are also seen as key resources.

5.12    The Local Authority views the additional sentences above the descriptions of learning as clarifying the focus of the strand.

5.13 In summary, the draft framework is seen to outline an initial way forward for the teaching of WEM education. However, they feel there needs to be a focus on addressing the varying linguistic skills and confidence of practitioners when using Welsh.

**Anonymous response from a Local Authority and Regional Consortia**

5.14 This group considered the framework to be helpful in identifying the experiences, knowledge and skills but felt it provided insufficient support to plan for learners' progression when accounting for the lack of linguistic skills amongst practitioners in EM education. Once again, the need to map vocabulary, grammar and language patterns in the form of a 'language continuum' at a national level was highlighted as essential in linking to the descriptions of learning and associated knowledge, skills and experiences outlined in the framework.

5.15 The need to support non-specialist teachers via further detail around skill-based methodologies and ongoing training was also mentioned. It was felt the language competencies do not provide further guidance and support to plan continuity and progression in learner journeys.

5.16 In contrast, the strands in the framework were viewed as helpful in focusing on the key areas of language development for practitioners to consider.

5.17 Alongside a core linguistic 'continuum', supporting materials identified include texts and resources that reflect the progression pathway for WEM schools, as well as exemplification of learning and teaching linked to progression, potentially from lead schools or Sabbatical Champions. Welsh Government's Siarter Iaith was referenced as a supportive framework to drive the language though authentic learning experiences. Furthermore, the Welsh in a Year scheme was viewed as a key professional learning opportunity to be able to use the framework effectively.

5.18    The need for learning to be underpinned by research and evidence
        was cited throughout the response, especially in reference to
        language teaching methodology and pedagogical approaches. The
        importance of learning how to weave language patterns that reinforce
        continuity and progression was stated. Increased investment in the
        training and recruitment of suitably qualified specialists were also
        cited as a key resource. Finally, the need for professional learning for
        leaders at all levels and school improvement partners was viewed as
        essential.

5.19    The leadership and ethos / culture of the school, alongside the level of
        support and resource dedicated to developing practitioners linguistic
        skills nationally were seen to be the key factors determining the effect
        the framework will have on the Welsh language.

**Anonymous response from a Teaching Union**

5.20    The Teaching Union feels there is consistency in how the framework
        is presented that is coherent with other curriculum documents,
        specifically the opportunity for schools to be flexible in terms of
        delivery. Furthermore, the focus on speaking and listening at
        Progression Step one and two are welcomed as a positive inclusion.

5.21    However, the level of detail added to the framework is raised as a
        concern given the amount of content that schools have to cover
        already. As such, there is a fear they will not be able to deliver to
        expectation.

5.22    The usefulness of the information surrounding language
        competencies are seen by the Union as dependent on the linguistic
        skills of teachers and the wider approach to Welsh within the school.

5.23    The provision of exemplar materials at each progression step are
        viewed as a key resource. Similarly, the teaching union highlights the
        need for any professional development opportunities to focus on the
        content of the framework and expectations of the model, providing

exemplars that schools can adapt for their own contexts. The need to increase access for teachers to develop language skills both outside of school and within school training are raised.

**National Education Union (NEU) Cymru**

5.24    NEU Cymru raise concerns that the framework does not help teachers plan or have a sense of progression, viewing the document as 'unfinished'. For instance, they feel Progression Step one is fairly advanced, missing out the stages of learning basic skills and as such, extra steps are needed before learners can reach PS1. Members interpret the framework as less of a model for EM schools, but more one where there is an expected amount known already. Overall, there is a consensus that there needs to be more of a focus on the different starting points for pupils learning Welsh, so to better identifying progress at an early stage.

5.25    The need to ensure the framework has second language learners in-mind is mentioned, with the suggestion of a sliding scale, breaking down understanding into detailed steps so learners feel they are progressing, regardless of where they start. The potential for EM pupils to spend time in areas where Welsh is widely spoke is suggested as a potential learning opportunity.

5.26    The additional sentence above the descriptions of learning are seen by members as helpful and making the framework clearer.

5.27    In terms of additional supporting materials, NEU Cymru believes qualifications will help assist the education workforce, with GCSE specifications helping plan learner progression. Additional audio / visual materials are also seen as an important tool for pupils learning Welsh, with blended learning resources also mentioned. Training and materials for staff across the education sector is seen as important in ensuring Welsh is a cross-cutting theme.

5.28    Funding staff training for Welsh language practitioners away from the classroom (especially non-specialist, primary teachers) is seen as crucial in supporting them to both upskill their language skills and assist them in using the framework.

5.29    Overall, NEU Cymru members have concerns that the framework risks making Welsh unpopular, with a need for more emphasis on ensuring learning Welsh is a positive experience, with a clear progression pathway to motivate learners.

**Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) Cymru**

5.30    The ASCL Cymru view the framework as being too long and inconsistent in terms of the level of detail and ambition across the document. The transition between progression steps are not always seen as logical and sequential, with some statements considered to be vague whilst others are clear. In certain instances, the lack of reference to knowledge or skills building from the previous progression steps are cited.

5.31    The response does state that the information about language competencies in the framework is clear and the additional sentence above the descriptions of learning were useful 'in theory'.

5.32    In response to professional learning opportunities required, the ASCL Cymru cites the need for evidence-based and peer-to-peer learning, and team teaching.

5.33    They hope that the framework will improve learners' opportunities to use Welsh in an authentic, engaging way but feel this will not be evident until it is implemented, developed and refined.

**Swansea Council**

5.34    The response from Swansea Council is that while the framework offers teachers guidance, more detail is needed to support staff further, such as written examples and video clips.

5.35    They feel there is a need for further explanation of the main points, especially with ideas of when, where and how to bring the Welsh language alive.

5.36    A detailed language continuum alongside the descriptions of learning is seen as a necessary addition, with Swansea producing their own continuum for vocabulary and language progression, which has been shared by the Welsh service in Swansea. As such, they have summarised the focus of each strand in a more detailed interpretation.

5.37    Similarly, a regional or national language continuum document is highlighted as a resource to support learner progression. Contemporary audio-visual and reading materials aimed at less confident practitioners is also referenced as a necessary supporting tool.

5.38    The theme of collaboration and sharing best practice is raised, specifically opportunities for cluster / partner schools to develop a shared understanding of progression and use of themes. With support from LA's and the region, professional learning networks are viewed as important in developing resources.

5.39    Finally, Swansea Council states the need for the framework to signpost practical examples of authentic opportunities where schools have designed curriculum content suited to their specific context.

**Education Service, Denbighshire County Council**

5.40    The response from the education service in Denbighshire argues that the framework does not consider the following:

- Methodological approaches [to teaching Welsh]
- Regional dialects

- The availability of support staff to support the language journey to ensure success in developing Welsh within English medium schools.

5.41    While they welcome the principle of the framework, the lack of a statutory status will mean that schools will not adopt and implement it. A statutory framework is needed, as at present, it will not be able to secure any improvement in schools that are not in Language Category 3.

5.42    The response calls for more leadership within the document, and that it is insufficient at present to develop progress in Welsh without specialist teachers in Welsh. They feel that many of their staff will have difficulties in delivering the framework, particularly interpreting the descriptions provided within the framework. The statements are too open, which can cause issues for non-Welsh speaking staff. Simple examples are needed in a consistent progression. Specific resources for each Progression Step would also help to create a clear and consistent pathway when developing the language skills of learners.

5.43    The respondent for Denbighshire's education service notes that the framework does not consider the Welsh Advisory Teachers (for the county), whose role needs to be accounted for within the framework. This will ensure support, training, and leadership within the local catchment area. The respondent argues that without such a team in place, the great majority of practitioners will not be confident in implementing the framework.

5.44    When discussing additional resources, the response notes the need for any national "language continuum" to be carefully designed by experts. Denbighshire have developed a "network" to prepare and organise a regional continuum framework for English medium schools in the north-east. A bank of resources is needed that are relevant to the north, mid, and south of Wales. The resources need to build

progressively and need to emphasise the importance of resources encouraging speaking as a skill as a priority.

5.45    With regard to the question of professional learning opportunities for practitioners, the respondent notes the value of sabbatical courses for the individuals who attend, but notes that there is no obvious evidence that this develops Welsh within the school. Teachers who attend sabbatical courses therefore need support to ensure that they can continue to share their expertise. The response notes that the language pedagogy skills have deteriorated in recent years, and that there needs to be an investment in Welsh Advisory Teachers to strengthen the structure underpinning Welsh. The response also points out resources that used to be available, such as the Welsh in Education Grant, and training courses that were available through the WJEC for staff in English medium schools in Wales.

**Anonymous Response from School Improvement Officer, Local Authority**

5.46    The respondent feels that the link between the guidance and the wording of the Areas of Learnings and Experience is to be commended. However, the respondent argues that the framework does not refer in enough detail to specific elements of language and grammar. The examples are insufficient to ensure progress for learners.

5.47    The response states that a firmer understanding of how to teach a language is needed, as without specialist language skills among practitioners, the document is not detailed enough to be useful to teachers without an understanding of Welsh or of language. It argues for a language continuum; specific syntactic patterns, vocabulary, and grammar to achieve the aim of reaching a million Welsh speakers. The response also calls for more contemporary resources in Welsh, and links within the framework which gives examples and support to those who do not have experience of how to teach a language.

5.48    With reference to the competencies within the Progression Steps, the respondent feels that while interesting, practitioners are not familiar with language competencies, and that they are not powerful enough to enable practitioners to plan for the development of learners.

**Estyn**

5.49    Estyn welcomes the fact that the document is concise and accessible and feel that the information within the framework will be of benefit to Welsh language specialists. They argue that it raises the status of Welsh as a language  treated no less favourable than English, supports the agenda for a million Welsh speakers by 2050, and raises the expectation for leaders to design opportunities for learners from all linguistic backgrounds to appreciate the language and use it as part of their lives and education.

5.50    However, they feel that the framework does not include enough specific details about language and patterns that practitioners need to design the next step for teaching. Those that are not confident in teaching Welsh will require greater detail. This assertion is backed up by reference to a recent Estyn report that found that a minority of schools had not sufficiently developed their planning for teaching Welsh. This will continue without greater structure and detail made available to practitioners.

5.51    Support can take the form of resources or suggesting interesting activities. Encouraging best practice through examples would be beneficial, for instance, offering teachers, especially those who are less confident, example activities to encourage learners to read in Welsh.

5.52    Estyn believes that the workforce will need support from Regional Consortia to interpret the framework in order to deliver activities suitable for the next steps in the teaching of learners. Teachers not confident in language pedagogy will likely see this framework as too ambitious and vague. They believe that training will be a very

important element, as their experience is that teachers are more confident in teaching Welsh where there is regular support and training. It is likely that there will need to be an investment in the Welsh language skills of practitioners themselves, and it would be beneficial to consider how to measure the impact of this training on classroom practices. Estyn notes that there is a great deal of variety in the training available to staff in different local authorities. In the best instances, practitioners have regular support and training, however there are still difficulties faced in releasing staff to attend training. The response also notes the value of forging links with the Welsh for Adults sector as a forum to share best practice.

The response points to a recommendation from a recent Estyn report on Immersion Education - that the Welsh Government establish a national forum to encourage methods for immersion, including local hubs to encourage practitioners to deliver vocabulary and syntax patterns with a suitable follow-up. While it is recognised that immersion and teaching Welsh in English medium are different, the fundamentals around vocabulary, language patterns and methods are related.

Finally, Estyn believes that there is a missed opportunity in the introduction to refer to recent publications and priorities, such as Cymraeg 2050, and the expectation that English medium schools teach through Welsh for at least 15 per cent of the curriculum timetable.

### Mudiad Meithrin

5.53    The response from Mudiad Meithrin states that the framework provides clear information to teachers, specialist practitioners, and those without ability in the Welsh language to design for the development of learners in Welsh. It notes that the framework refers to linguistic competencies in a clear and understandable way, noting clearly which competencies are being developed, and which

experiences need to be offered to develop the competency, knowledge, and skills. The response states that providing case studies or examples to practitioners would be effective to support preparing for the development of learners in Welsh. It does argue that providing examples of the meaning from the 'What Matters Statements' relating to language would be of help to practitioners in preparing effectively for teaching.

5.54    The response notes that it would be useful to have a more prominent reference in the introduction to the framework to its connection with the Descriptions of Learning that are part of the Languages, Literacy and Communication Areas, and draw specific attention at the need to follow Progression Steps that are relevant to the linguistic context of the school.

5.55    The response suggests that additional professional learning opportunities will be needed, including specific sessions available to practitioners to support with particular Progression Steps, and sessions for specific sectors in order to discuss examples. The response also suggests that there needs to be a consideration of how the framework accompanies the whole school approach to planning to ensure that the Welsh skills of learners are a key part of the design and delivery of the curriculum.

5.56    The response from Mudiad Methirin sets out their belief that the framework will have a positive effect on the use of Welsh in English medium schools, but states the need to roll out the framework in a way which encourages its positive effects and minimises any negative feelings practitioners may have about introducing the Welsh language across the curriculum. Professional learning opportunities for teachers and practitioners must enrich and reinforce this vision.

**Response from Welsh Advisory Teacher Team for Conwy County Borough Council**

The respondent welcomes the fact that there is recognition of the challenges that practitioners face in teaching Welsh but argues that the framework in its current form does not offer enough guidance. More clarity and examples are needed within the document so that teachers can deliver Welsh. While the response states that the competencies are useful for recognising and using language for different purposes, it also notes that the document needs to include language patterns and specific activities to ensure development among learners. Examples need to be provided for how language develops through the Progression Steps, especially within the Descriptions of Learning for speaking.

The response raises the need for national training for practitioners on how to use the framework, especially as the majority of teachers are not specialists in language.

Finally, the response notes the need for more resources or Welsh language learners, such as websites, magazines for learners, and contemporary reading materials.

**Response from a Welsh Advisory Teacher Team for Wrexham County Borough Council**

5.57    The response from the Welsh Advisory Team at Wrexham Council notes that the information within the framework does enable teachers to plan for the progression of learners in Welsh, and that it will help to raise their awareness and understanding of language competencies that are presented within each Progression Step.

5.58    However, the response adds that there is no explanation for what the purpose of the document is. They raise the issue of the lack of examples given on how to deliver Welsh, stressing that examples of language patterns and activities that could be delivered would be of benefit. The need to ensure that the language patterns provided are relevant of the local area is also key. The response notes the framework's lack of a statutory status, claiming that a statutory status

is necessary to ensure that progression is made in the standards and usage of Welsh. This, it argues, would also ensure accountability for schools.

5.59    On the question of additional resources needed, the response notes the need for examples on how language develops through moving from step to step. The following example is suggested in the response, focusing on examples of how progression is made:

>   Cam Cynnydd 1 – 'I am beginning to express my feelings' – Dw i'n hoffi...
>
>   Cam Cynnydd 2 – ' I can share ideas,and express opinions and feelings using                                 relevant vocabulary' – Dw i'n hoffi ... ond dw i ddim yn hoffi...
>           achos ...
>
>   Cam Cynnydd 3 -     'I can inertact with others, talking about my thoughts, feelings                               and opinions showing empathy and respect.'- Dw i'n cytuno
>           efo... Dw i'n hoffi ... hefyd ond mae'n well gen i ... achos
>   ...

5.60    The response describes additional training activities that could be delivered, including presentations to practitioners on a national level to explain how to use the framework effectively. The response also notes the role that Welsh Advisory Teachers can play in delivering the training needed to effectively ensure delivery of the framework in schools and settings.

### Dyfodol yr Iaith

Dyfodol yr Iaith welcomes the framework and the competencies that it offers. They feel that it is detailed and thorough and recognised the relationship between language and identity. They do however offer the following suggestions for improvement.

The introduction to the guidance that relate to language skills is
without context. They suggest that the guidance is rooted in Welsh
history, geography, and culture.

The response suggests that the guidance needs to make clear that it
is from activities beyond the language class that learners gain
necessary experiences, for example, from experiences delivered
though sports and PE, music, and through learning other subjects
through the medium of Welsh. The response also notes that while it is
good to see mention of using the language in "different social
contexts," it would be good to include some details for available social
contexts relevant to the age of the learner, e.g., Urdd activities or
Fentrau Iaith.

The response notes the importance of learning the Welsh geographic
names for places and the land, and to understand the connection
between the names and history.

**Senior Officer for Welsh Language in Education, Unspecified
Local Authority**

5.61    The respondent feels that the framework does not provide sufficient
information to practitioners to help deliver progression for learners.
They state the need to map language progression across the
Progression Steps with a language continuum, with examples of what
language should be used at what point, and to what standard.
Language patterns, vocabulary, and grammar are essential to enable
teachers to design for the progression of learners. They state that the
majority of teachers in the Local Authority do not have the necessary
skills and ability in Welsh to deliver the framework. Additional
resources required therefore includes:

- A language continuum and language patters, with grammatical
  elements, aligned to the Progression Steps
- Links to example videos and examples of written work.

5.62    The respondent argues that comprehensive training will be needed to deliver the framework, including courses to improve the confidence of teachers. They note that sabbatical courses are valuable but are not sufficient as it offers spaces for very few teachers. They state that the lack of specific training courses available makes it impossible for schools to plan strategically to improve the Welsh language skills of their workforce.

5.63    They also state that the progression from one Progression Step to another is not always clear.[4]

### Response from Welsh Advisory Teacher Team for Unspecified Local Authority

5.64    The respondent welcomes the framework as is provides a degree of guidance, and notes that the competencies are useful to show what skills are being developed. However, the respondent feels that the framework lacks guidance on how to use it. They state that it needs to be noted more clearly what the purpose of the framework is – that it is not a document to be ticked off by teachers – but is instead a document to be used when designing teaching. They feel that it is hard to understand for teachers without language specialism, and there is a need for examples, including language patterns to support the teachers.

5.65    The respondent states that a language continuum resource is needed to ensure consistency between schools, Local Authorities, and regions across Wales. This should be agreed nationally, with clear differences acknowledged between regional variations in language, and this should be carried out by a group of language experts from all parts.

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[4] For example, in the learning description for speaking, in Progression Step 2 says, 'I am starting to use appropriate language to talk about past and future events', but this is not included for Progression Step 3, and it does not explain which language should be used, i.e. are the learners expected to use irregular verbs/vary the person of the verb/negate/use the imperfect tense when talking about the past, etc.

5.66    The response notes the need for training for practitioners which can support them to understand language patterns and language pedagogy. They note that while sabbatical courses are excellent, they have a limited number of places. Finally, they add that teacher training should include learning about language pedagogy and methodology.

5.67    They are concerned that practitioners will avoid the framework as it is not statutory, and that its lack of a statutory status may limit how much focus is placed on language pedagogy for teacher training courses.

**National Centre for Learning Welsh**

5.68    The response from the National Centre for Learning Welsh states the need for more tangible examples in the framework, especially relating to the patterns expected from skills. The response asserts that in order for this to be a meaningful document for the education workforce, information about a language curriculum needs to be included. They feel that it is too complicated and bulky a document as it is. While they recognise that information on language patterns may be released separately, it would be useful to include them within the same document. They state that guidance is needed for practitioners to avoid there being too much variation in the interpretation of the framework.

5.69    The response welcomes the competencies, describing that they will nurture understanding of them, but also states the need for more guidance on how to incorporate the competencies.

5.70    In response to the question about additional resources, the respondent notes the benefits that have derived from creating coursebooks for the adult learning sector, which include:

- They provide more of a focus on appropriate training and how to bring the course books to life. This has not limited teachers' creativity

- They provide supplementary resources for teachers, and while units of work are interpreted differently, they present the same patterns and the same vocabulary

- Because everybody uses the same course books, it has enabled the development of and investment in high quality digital resources that are in line with the course

- Partners are very keen to work together, e.g., the Welsh Books Council have invested in a series of graded books, with sales of these books far beyond the average sales of Welsh books

- Six course books were published in 2020, with one being refined each year in consultation with Welsh tutors. This has encouraged an element of ownership over the materials.

5.71    A final point from the response is disappointment at not seeing reference to Welsh used "spontaneously" within the framework, which should be the aim of the framework, regardless of the Progression Step.

**Anonymous Response from a Respondent from a Regional Consortia**

5.72    The respondent supports the aim of the framework and its ambition, but expresses concern that the framework is not clear to practitioners.

5.73    The response states their uncertainty that the framework provides sufficient information to teachers to help the progression of learners in Welsh, arguing that there will need to be supporting materials designed specifically to support teachers across sectors. The competencies in the framework are also felt to be too general, with too little information on how they are to be developed. They feel that without these resources and case studies targeting specific aspects of the framework there is a danger that teachers will not be able to appreciate the objectives of the framework. They add that there is a danger that without more "meat on the bone," that there is a risk the framework will sit on a shelf. It notes that a deep understanding of

language pedagogy is needed to appreciate how learners make progress in a language, hence the need for a "core curriculum" to accompany the framework.

5.74    The response notes the need for training and sharing of expertise, with teachers contributing to resources to accompany the document. They state that co-producing resources with practitioners from across sectors would encourage ownership over the framework. Additional resources should also reflect the importance of "language psychology," and raising awareness of the importance of presenting Welsh as a living language across the curriculum. The supporting materials should incorporate the principles of the Siarter Iaith and promote the use of informal Welsh to work towards the aim of reaching a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

5.75    The response details options for training, including professional development courses that focus on language pedagogy, and in particular, on how speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills interweave and support one another. Teacher training courses should also include training on the framework. The sabbatical courses should also be built upon, making the most of the individual expertise of teachers who were part of the training.

5.76    Finally, the response notes that the framework should be a basis to have wider discussions about the place of Welsh within the curriculum throughout the school.

**Cymdeithas yr Iaith**

5.77    The response from Cymdeithas yr Iaith criticises the development of a separate framework for English medium schools and settings as it goes against the principle of one single continuum for teaching and assessing Welsh and is little more than a re-branding of Welsh as a second language. The response states that keeping these learning pathways separate cuts across the philosophy underpinning the Curriculum for Wales and perpetuates the artificial ceiling that limits

the achievements of learners in terms of language skills. They believe that the framework will continue to create differences between learners in terms of language and will continue to deprive learners from the ability to learn and enjoy Welsh.

5.78    The response notes evidence of failures and inconsistencies with teaching Welsh in English medium education, providing an example of a pupil who was able to pass an exam with an A grade, but who is unable to speak the language.

5.79    Cymdeithas yr Iaith notes the need for a framework which has clear expectation, but that ensures that these expectations are part of the same continuum, and that sets high expectations for all learners.

5.80    The response argues the need for significant investment in training for the education workforce to save money in the long-term. A strategy is also needed for how to train the workforce. Cymdeithas yr Iaith has drawn up a strategy that recommends steps such as releasing staff for training, ensuring that teacher training courses are supportive of the Welsh language, and putting in place targets for the proportion of the workforce that are able to teach Welsh as a subject and that can teach through the medium of Welsh.

5.81    Cymdeithas yr Iaith states that there needs to be more development of Welsh across the curriculum, noting that it is not only the responsibility of Welsh teachers, but the responsibility of staff across the school as a whole.

# 6. Consultation Workshops

**Introduction**

6.1 This chapter sets out the findings of five workshops held between the 30th of March and the 11th of May 2021. The workshops were attended by 36 contributors representing a variety of key target groups. The target groups and workshop details are outlined in the table below:

|  | Date | Target group | Attendance |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 30 March 2022 | Primary school practitioners (English and Welsh) | 10 |
| 2 | 4 May 2022 | Secondary school practitioners (English) | 1 |
| 3 | 5 May 2022 | Secondary school practitioners (Welsh) | 3 |
| 4 | 10 May 2022 | Catch-all opportunity (English) | 10 |
| 5 | 11 May 2022 | Catch-all opportunity (Welsh) | 12 |

6.2 The insights gathered in these workshops are organised into five dominant themes which were identified during the analysis phase. The responses from each target group will be discussed within these themes, which form the outline of this section.

*Theme 1: First impressions of the framework*

6.3 The majority of contributors from the primary school practitioners workshop commented on the importance of having a framework that can be picked up by someone who is not a specialist. The general concern amongst contributors was that the framework can only be used effectively if a teacher has a strong command of the Welsh language. This sentiment was echoed by the secondary school practitioners and the English language catch-all group, who felt that

the framework would not be easily understood by teachers who were not sufficiently trained in the Welsh language or had limited proficiency.

6.4     Participants across all workshops felt that while the framework contained a lot of information, it lacked the correct detail for non-specialist teachers. Participants from the Welsh-speaking 'catch-all' group, including teachers from English medium schools, highlighted their concerns around how to translate the framework into a curriculum that can be used in the classroom. This relates to the need for specialist language pedagogy skills in order to make sense of the framework.

6.5     There was a general sense amongst participants from the English-speaking catch-all group that if the framework was mandatory, people would be more encouraged to take note and use it. Overall, contributors across the target groups agree that, while there is room for improvement, the framework is a good starting point and a move in the right direction. It rightfully focuses on developing the Welsh language.


        *Layout*

6.6     In terms of the layout of the framework, and what practitioners will see when they engage with the document, contributors expressed the need for the framework to be simplified, streamlined, and compacted. Similarly, the Welsh-speaking secondary school practitioners group agreed that a simpler framework is better, with a more focused scope and less open to interpretation.

6.7     Participants from the English-speaking catch-all group agreed that the framework could be refined, as it is quite a long document with a lot of information in its current form. This group as well as the Welsh-speaking catch-all group mentioned that many sections of the framework would benefit from examples, so that teachers with differing levels of expertise could comfortably use the document.

6.8 In all workshops, it was communicated that a "detailed core language continuum" is needed in the framework. Similar to the point above, this would show examples, and provide clarity and purpose throughout the document.

6.9 A common view amongst contributors was that, at first glance, there is significant potential in the framework, provided there are applicable and creative examples. Furthermore, collaboration among professionals would be beneficial. One contributor commented that "*we need everyone working in the same direction; professionals investing in curriculum design, with teachers interpreting it, and adding their creativity in the classroom*".

*Alignment with the Curriculum for Wales*

6.10 During the workshops the contributors were asked to describe if and how the framework was aligned with the wider Curriculum for Wales. Primary school practitioners communicated that there is scope for further clarity and examples on how the framework can support the progressive teaching and learning of Welsh, as it is expressed in the new curriculum. Participants stated that the curriculum is built on coherent progression, which is an essential aspect of the framework. this sentiment was echoed by Welsh-speaking secondary school practitioners.

6.11 It was pointed out that activity and assessment examples are strongly recommended for the framework. However, a divergent discourse that emerged from observers here was that providing lesson plans seldom works, and that practitioners should be wary of falling into the trap of minutely planned-out lessons.

6.12 Participants from the Welsh-speaking catch-all group stated that they felt the Curriculum for Wales does not support language acquisition. Off the back of this, they felt that the framework would benefit from a much more assertive strategy for language learning. Participants also

acknowledged that the framework cannot be too specific, and that continued alignment with the Curriculum for Wales is important.

6.13    Overall, participants across most consultation workshops acknowledged that the framework needs to adopt a similar ethos to that of the Curriculum for Wales as it relates to learning Welsh. There were discussions about the need for the framework to be a "backbone" to teaching the Welsh language, ensuring that it is standardised and consistent.

*Theme 2: Accessibility of the framework*

6.14    During workshops, contributors were asked to offer insights related to the applicability and accessibility of the framework, and to consider the extent to which it caters to a wide-range of school settings, progression levels, and individual learners.

6.15    A general observation made by the contributors from the primary school practitioner workshop was that interpretation and successful implementation of the framework is largely dependent on the teacher. One respondent stated that "*[it is] how a teacher teaches that makes a massive impact; pedagogy is often reliant on the attitude [of the teacher]*". This was followed by a comment on how the framework was created the same for every learner, despite their individual aptitude for Welsh, and therefore, the responsibility is on the teacher for intuitive application in the classroom.

6.16    Many contributors from the secondary school practitioners' workshops agreed that the framework caters "*as well as it can*", given the variety of teachers and learners that will be engaging with it. Some contributors said that the framework is suitable for all levels, including learners with additional learning needs (ALN). This was echoed by the Welsh-speaking catch-all group. However, the emphasised challenge was the differing levels of Welsh language skills among students; it was acknowledged that a "one size fits all" approach is difficult to achieve.

6.17    The Welsh-speaking catch-all group observed how learners' language
        progression can be built through the framework, but this will be
        dependent on more detailed examples of processes, tasks, and
        outputs. A common view amongst contributors in this group was that
        the framework provides enough flexibility at all levels to be adaptable
        for learners with varying needs and abilities.

*Catering for different settings*

6.18    The primary school practitioner group felt that while the framework
        caters as best as possible to different school settings, the larger issue
        is that many settings do not have Welsh language specialists to
        implement the framework as best it can. This point was reiterated by
        secondary school practitioners who stated that there are time
        constraints of Welsh-language teaching. It was reported that two
        hours every fortnight is insufficient.

6.19    The Welsh-speaking secondary school practitioner group commented
        that there is a greater challenge of implementing the framework in a
        secondary school context. This was underpinned by the fact that all
        pupils have to sit the same exams eventually, which leads to gaps in
        understanding of how to assess progression steps in individual
        students fairly and consistently.

6.20    The English-speaking catch-all group commented that the framework
        caters well to all settings. However, an important consideration is that
        each school needs basic educational resources and examples to
        ensure that all areas of the framework have consistent standards of
        Welsh learning. In this way, all teachers across school settings will
        have a clearer idea of whether or not they are working towards similar
        goals to others.

6.21    The Welsh-speaking catch-all group echoed the need for more
        examples on tasks and outputs. Contributors from this group did,
        however, see how progression builds throughout the framework. A
        strongly agreed recommendation from this group was that a

discussion across the cluster should be enabled, in order to consider how best to encourage smooth progression from primary to secondary settings, which is discussed further below.

*Theme 3: Progression in the framework*

6.22    There was a sense amongst primary school practitioners that having to revisit Welsh from scratch at the start of Year 7 is a big issue, implying that currently, students' progression in Welsh language between primary and secondary is not supported as well  as it could be.

6.23    The Welsh-speaking secondary school practitioners felt that it would be appropriate for consortia to step into this space and provide examples of learning and teaching in both primary and secondary contexts. This would provide guidance for progression and facilitate the primary-secondary transition. The contributors in this group suggested that this enabled collaboration between settings would be beneficial for all. It would provide an opportunity for settings to work together, to experiment with what works in the classroom, and jointly agree on what progression looks like in their contexts.

6.24    This point was strongly reiterated by the Welsh-speaking catch-all group who believed that conversations within clusters should be encouraged. These discussions should aim to eliminate any vagueness around progression during the transition from primary to secondary education. It was suggested that primary schools need a clear structure in place, so that there is more consistency. This circled back to importance of a language continuum, which contributors believed should be reflected in the framework.

*Theme 4: Support and opportunities for practitioners*

6.25    When asked what additional supporting materials are needed to use the framework effectively, the importance of digital applications and

platforms was highlighted by primary school practitioners. It was suggested this could be an addendum to the framework itself, offering guidance on what is available.

6.26 The use of materials applied to both teachers and learners with suggestions of a national resource bank to draw from that aligns with the proposed language continuum. Primary practitioners stated it was imperative that professional learning is delivered hand-in-hand with these resources, as they felt resources alone are not to sufficient to drive language competency amongst teachers.

6.27 Secondary practitioners also emphasised the importance of linguistic progression, as opposed to a thematic approach, when determining which resources are most appropriate. Exemplar materials were deemed to be beneficial, providing teachers with inspiration on how they can design the curriculum to suit their individual school context. In addition, the 'Siarter Iaith' was referenced as a useful resource.

6.28 Within both the English and Welsh medium catch-all workshops, provision of suitable training and resources for less confident staff was also raised. Additionally, case studies and textbooks were viewed as key resources for teachers to utilise. One stakeholder highlighted that there were 'amazing' resources already available and that there was a need to increase awareness of this.

6.29 In terms of professional learning opportunities to aid practitioners in the use of the framework, the Welsh in a Year Sabbatical scheme was mentioned repeatedly across the workshops. Stakeholders were highly complimentary about the programme and its ability to provide teachers with confidence. However, similar to the online consultation responses, the scheme's limitations. was raised as an issue.

*Theme 5: General improvements to the framework*

6.30 Across the five workshops, there were multiple suggestions on how the framework could be improved. As discussed, the inclusion of a

language continuum was viewed as necessary. Stakeholders also felt there needed to be more attention in the framework to the transition between primary and secondary education. Participants in the catch-all workshop cited the need for the framework to be understood by all, as well as including more obvious milestones that are understood by both teachers and learners.

6.31    Some practitioners also felt the framework needed to place a higher emphasis on the cultural element of the Welsh language. It is important to note though, that several practitioner cited the framework's reference to culture as a strength.

6.32    Overall, the primary role of the framework was seen as preparing practitioners and ensuring they know what is expected of them in a simple, concise document. The addition or signposting of guidance and resources was viewed as necessary to enable the framework to become functionable and implementable.

*Helpful aspects of the framework*

6.33    Alongside suggestions for improvement, there was also several aspects of the framework which practitioners considered helpful. Stakeholders fully endorsed the principles of the framework, and whilst recognising there was still "work to be done", saw the document as "a good starting point".

6.34    The focus on culture and skills throughout the progression strands was particularly welcomed, as was reference to themes such as empathy and belonging. Elements of innovation in teaching Welsh were also viewed positively. Some practitioners liked the applicability and transferability of the framework when it comes to learning any language.

*Additional comments*

6.35    At the conclusion of each workshop, we offered the opportunity for participants to make any final, additional comments in relation to the teaching of Welsh in English medium schools and settings.

6.36    The difficulties the education sector faces in relation to the recruitment of Welsh teachers was raised, as was the opinion that more staff and more hours needs to be dedicated to Welsh. A few participants also felt the framework needs to have statutory obligations to provide it with "status"

6.37    Achieving buy-in from LA's, senior leaders, parents and the community was considered essential as part of the wider effort to meet the target set out in Cymraeg 2050. Additionally, incorporating Welsh into the ethos of the school beyond the language department was also referenced.

6.38    As aforementioned, training for teachers and head teachers was also seen as essential with the suggestion of introducing Welsh specialists into the classroom. Enabling accountability and support for the framework is key for it to be successful in helping teachers plan learners' progression in Welsh. From the learner perspective, it was suggested that older students should work with younger ones to help progress their language skills.

6.39    To conclude, there was widespread appreciation at the opportunity to comment and contribute to refinement of the framework through this consultation process.