Ymateb i Ymgynghoriad / Consultation Response

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Pwnc / Subject:	**Draft framework for Welsh in English medium education**

Background information about Estyn

Estyn is the Office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. As a Crown body, Estyn is independent of the Welsh Government.

Estyn's principal aim is to raise the standards and quality education and training in Wales. This is primarily set out in the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and the Education Act 2005. In exercising its functions, Estyn must give regard to the:

- Quality of education and training in Wales;
- Extent to which education and training meets the needs of learners;
- Educational standards achieved by education and training providers in Wales;
- Quality of leadership and management of those education and training providers;
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners; and,
- Contribution made to the well-being of learners.

Estyn's remit includes (but is not exclusive to) nurseries and non-maintained settings, primary schools, secondary schools, independent schools, pupil referrals units, further education, adult community learning, local government education services, work-based learning, and teacher education and training.

Estyn may give advice to the Welsh Parliament on any matter connected to education and training in Wales. To achieve excellence for learners, Estyn has set three strategic objectives:

- Provide accountability to service users on the quality and standards of education and training in Wales;
- Inform the development of national policy by the Welsh Government;
- Build capacity for improvement of the education and training system in Wales.

This response is not confidential.

Response

Introduction

We welcome the fact that this is a concise and accessible document. We feel that the information provided in the framework is beneficial as a higher-level document for Welsh specialists within regions or Local Education Authorities and experienced practitioners. However, on the whole, it does not include specific enough details about language and patterns that practitioners would need to plan the next steps in learning.

We feel that there is an opportunity to refer to recent documents and priorities in the document, for example the overall context in terms of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy, school categorisation (including the expectation for English-medium schools to teach through the medium of Welsh for 15% of curriculum time).

We believe that the workforce will need support to interpret the content of the framework in order to identify and plan suitable activities for the next steps in pupils' learning. One of the recommendations from our recent thematic report, 'Welsh Immersion Education – Strategies and approaches to support 3 to 11-year old learners, is that Welsh Government should establish a national forum to promote Welsh immersion approaches, including local hubs to support practitioners to introduce vocabulary and syntactical patterns with suitable progression. Although there is a difference between Welsh language immersion and learning Welsh in English-medium schools, these principles that relate to vocabulary, syntactical patterns and approaches remain relevant.

Consultation questions

(i) Do you work in or support the delivery of education?

Yes	✔	No	☐

(ii) If yes, for what type of organisation? (If no, continue to iv below)

Welsh-medium school (Primary)	☐	Higher education institution	☐
Welsh-medium school (Secondary)	☐	Diocesan authority	☐
English-medium school (Primary)	☐	Regional consortium	☐
English-medium school (Secondary)	☐	Local authority	☐
Bilingual school (Primary)	☐	Private training provider	☐
Bilingual school (Secondary)	☐	Third sector	☐
Special school	☐	Government	☐
Welsh-medium all-through school	☐	Adult community learning	☐
English-medium all-through school	☐	Awarding organisation	✔

Pupil referral unit (PRU)	☐	Teaching union	☐
Provider of local authority commissioned education other than at school (EOTAS)	☐	Regulatory body (includes inspectorate)	☐
Further education college	☐	Governor	☐
Funded non-maintained setting	☐	Other (please specify):	☐
PRU management committee member	☐		

(iii)   What is your primary role?

Headteacher	☐	Chancellor/vice-chancellor	☐
Teacher	☐	Lecturer	☐
Other education practitioner	☐	Governor	☐
Newly qualified teacher	☐	Challenge adviser	☐
Teaching assistant	☐	School improvement officer	☐
Senior leader	☐	Inspector	✓
Supply teacher	☐	Other (please specify):	☐
Teacher in charge	☐		
Principal/vice principal	☐		

(iv)   If you do not work in or support the delivery of education, in what capacity would you like to provide feedback?

Parent/carer	☐	Employer	☐
Adult 18+ (not a parent or carer)	☐	Apprentice	☐
Child or young person (under 18)	☐	Other (please specify):	☐
Student:	☐		

(v)   Are you providing feedback on behalf of an organisation or group?

Yes	✓	No	☐

(vi)   If 'yes', please specify

Estyn

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?

| **Yes** | ☐ | **No** | ☐ | **Unsure** | ✔ |

Please explain your answer.

We feel that the information provided in the framework is beneficial as a higher-level document for Welsh experts within regions or local authorities and experienced practitioners.

On the whole, it does not include specific enough details of the language and patterns that practitioners would need to plan the next steps in learning. The steps that are included are generic. For those who are not confident teaching Welsh, there is not enough detail to support them. In our recent thematic report, 'Welsh language acquisition', we noted 'In a minority of schools, planning for learning is underdeveloped. For example, in English-medium settings or schools it is not informed well enough by evidence and research.' Therefore, as a result, without a specific enough structure and details, areas for development such as the above will remain.

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

| **Yes** | ✔ | **No** | ☐ | **Unsure** | ☐ |

Please note here where you think the gaps are and what should be added.

To enable learners to develop a full range of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, it would be beneficial to provide suggestions of meaningful and interesting contexts and activities that may facilitate the above. For example, to reinforce 'learning for reading', including examples of good practice in using a variety of reading strategies that teachers, particular those who are less confidently, could use, along with a list of a variety of reading texts.

We believe it is important to provide support to teachers from all linguistic backgrounds to feel confident in introducing and learning the language in English settings.

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

| **Yes** | ☐ | **No** | ☐ | **Unsure** | ✔ |

Please explain your answer.

Some teachers, particularly those providers who are not as confident in teaching Welsh, are likely to see this level of knowledge as too ambitious and vague for planning purposes. The information above is useful to those who want to deliver local or regional plans and to those experienced practitioners. A large number of Welsh teachers in English-medium schools will rely on guidance from their regions in terms of planning purposes and introducing new vocabulary and syntactical patterns skilfully in rich, well-planned activities.

Our thematic report, 'Welsh language acquisition' states that 'a few practitioners' own communication skills are not secure enough to support learners to use the Welsh language correctly'. Therefore, as a result, we feel it is important to provide more guidance and support to teachers when planning. Our thematic report, 'Welsh Immersion Education – strategies and approaches to support 3 to 11-year-old learners', includes a number of principles that provide guidance and support to teachers while planning. Although there is a difference between Welsh immersion education and learning Welsh in English-medium settings, these principles remain relevant and beneficial when planning for learners' progression in the Welsh language.

Question 4 – The draft framework sets out the descriptions of learning strand by strand. 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? (An example taken from the framework is provided below, with the suggested additional sentence: 'This strand describes progression in vocabulary development'.)

	This strand describes progression in vocabulary development				
	Progression Step 1	**Progression Step 2**	**Progression Step 3**	**Progression Step 4**	**Progression Step 5**
Descriptions of learning for writing	I can use familiar words and phrases and experiment with newly learned vocabulary.	I can use increasingly imaginative and varied vocabulary.	I can use familiar idiomatic language and appropriate register in my communication.	I can choose idiomatic language and appropriate register in my communication to enrich my expression.	I can use idiomatic language and appropriate register to enhance my expression in a range of contexts.

Yes	☐	**No**	☐	**Unsure**	✓

Please explain your answer.

The format is concise, clear and useful and includes the simple sentence above that shows the focus clearly.

> However, it is likely that practitioners will need additional information from support partners to understand how the steps are relevant to their classroom practices.

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?

> To enable learners to develop the full range of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, it would be beneficial to provide suggestions of meaningful and interesting contexts and activities that may facilitate the above. Providing examples or case studies of good practice in planning a wide range of opportunities to intensify and support learners from all linguistic backgrounds would also be beneficial.
>
> Our thematic report 'Welsh Immersion Education – strategies and approaches to support 3 to 11-year-old learners' includes a number of principles that relate to vocabulary, syntactical patterns and approaches. Although there is a difference between Welsh immersion education and learning Welsh in English-medium settings, these principles remain relevant and beneficial when planning for learners' progression in the Welsh language. The report refers to specific examples of provision that would be beneficial for teachers to use to support learners' progress. For example, it identifies approaches such as valuable listening activities, feeding purposeful language, visual resources and the use of different areas.

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?

> Professional development is a crucial element in this case. Where practitioners in schools receive regular training and support, they are more confident in teaching Welsh.
>
> It is likely that there will be a need to invest in the Welsh language skills of the practitioners themselves. Perhaps it would be worth considering how we measure the effect of such training on classroom practices.
>
> Our thematic report 'Welsh Language Development in the Foundation Phase' states 'there is a wide variation in the amount of training available to practitioners in different authorities. In the best cases, practitioners receive regular update training and support'. However, the report identifies the 'difficulties in releasing staff to attend training'. In addition to this, our most recent report 'The Curriculum for Wales – How are regional consortia and local authorities supporting schools?' states that 'overall, the support to improve the quality of teaching is too variable. In addition, the support for subject and phase specific approaches to teaching has decreased over time'. The recommendations in the report state that there is a need to 'improve the support across all subject disciplines'. Where subject support is at its strongest, the report states that regional partnership schools have 'benefited from the support for Welsh' and that 'professional learning for middle leaders has helped them to understand how to support teachers in their departments to develop their approaches to curriculum and teaching, and to consider the best ways to help their pupils to make progress in learning'.
>
> We believe strongly that teachers will need support to interpret the progression steps for their pupils and what this means for the next steps in their learning. For example, they may need

> support to identify suitable vocabulary and sentence patterns that provide appropriate progression, in addition to approaches, tasks and activities to support them.
>
> We believe that co-operation between the Welsh for Adults sector and Welsh in English-medium settings would be a very valuable forum for sharing good practice, methodology and common implementation methods.

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?

Comments

> The framework certainly raises the profile of the Welsh language as an equal language that is not less favourable that English. This new proposal supports the Welsh Government agenda of reaching the target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. It will be important to maintain the current focus on speaking and listening skills in any new specification to meet the aims of the 2050 strategy. It is also beneficial to enable practitioners to plan purposefully to ensure continuity and progression for learners in acquiring Welsh language skills.

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 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.

Comments

> We believe that the framework could influence the leadership of these settings so that they establish a clear vision and strategic approach to developing learners' Welsh language and literacy skills in an inclusive learning environment. The framework is a means of raising leaders' expectations of the Welsh language and compelling them to plan a wide range of opportunities to intensify and support learners from all linguistic backgrounds to take pride in the Welsh language and use it naturally and spontaneously as part of their education and everyday lives.
>
> However, the leaders of settings will need to invest in practitioners' skills and expertise through high quality professional learning that develops their understanding of the best way to develop learners' language and literacy skills.

Question 9 – We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues

which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

We feel that the submission misses opportunities to refer to recent documents and other priorities, such as the overall context in terms of Cymraeg 2050, school categorisation (including the expectation for English-medium schools to teach through the medium of Welsh for 15% of curricular time).

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: