



# Complete Agenda

Democratic Services  
Swyddfa'r Cyngor  
CAERNARFON  
Gwynedd  
LL55 1SH

Meeting

**EDUCATION AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date and Time

**10.30 am, THURSDAY, 10TH JUNE, 2021**

***NOTE: A BRIEFING SESSION WILL BE HELD FOR MEMBERS AT 10.15AM***

Location

**Virtual Meeting - Zoom**

**\* NOTE**

**This meeting will be webcast**

**[https://gwynedd.public-i.tv/core//en\\_GB/portal/home](https://gwynedd.public-i.tv/core//en_GB/portal/home)**

Contact Point

**Eirian Roberts**

**01286 679018**

**[eirianroberts3@gwynedd.llyw.cymru](mailto:eirianroberts3@gwynedd.llyw.cymru)**

(DISTRIBUTED 03/06/21)

# **EDUCATION AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **MEMBERSHIP (18)**

### **Plaid Cymru (10)**

Councillors

Aled Ll. Evans  
E. Selwyn Griffiths  
Gareth Tudor Morris Jones  
Olaf Cai Larsen  
Mair Rowlands

Steve Collings  
Judith Mary Humphreys  
Huw Gruffydd Wyn Jones  
Rheinallt Puw  
Paul John Rowlinson

### **Independent (5)**

Councillors

Elwyn Jones  
Dewi Wyn Roberts  
[Vacant Seat – Independent]

Beth Lawton  
Elfed Powell Roberts

### **Llais Gwynedd (1)**

Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd

### **Gwynedd United Independents (1)**

Councillor Dewi Owen

### **Welsh National Party (1)**

[vacant seat]

### **Ex-officio Members**

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

## **CO-OPTED MEMBERS:**

### **With a vote on education matters only**

Anest Gray Frazer	Church in Wales
Colette Owen	The Catholic Church
Ruth Roe	Meirionnydd Parent/Governors Representative
Karen Vaughan Jones	Dwyfor Parent/Governors' Representative
Manon Williams	Arfon Parent/Governors' Representative

### **Without a Vote**

Dilwyn Ellis Hughes	UCAC
Dylan Huw Jones	NASUWT

# **A G E N D A**

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

To elect a Chair for 2021/22.

**2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

To elect a Vice-chair for 2021/22.

**3. APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of personal interest.

**5. URGENT BUSINESS**

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chair for consideration.

**6. MINUTES**

5 - 11

The Chair shall propose that the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee held on 15th April, 2021 be signed as a true record.

**7. EDUCATION AND THE WELSH LANGUAGE: A NEW VISION FOR THE IMMERSION EDUCATION SYSTEM TOWARDS 2032 AND BEYOND**

12 - 41

**Cabinet Member – Councillor Cemlyn Williams**

To consider a report on the above.

**8. COVID EDUCATION GRANTS TO SUPPORT PUPILS**

42 - 48

**Cabinet Member – Councillor Cemlyn Williams**

To consider a report on the above.

**9. SCRUTINY DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22**

49

To submit the scrutiny draft work programme 2021/22 for adoption.

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## EDUCATION AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 15/04/21

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**Present:** Councillor Paul Rowlinson (Chair)  
Councillor Elwyn Jones (Vice-chair)

**Councillors:** Steve Collings, Aled Evans, Alwyn Gruffydd, Selwyn Griffiths, Judith Humphreys, Gareth Tudor Morris Jones, Huw Wyn Jones, Cai Larsen, Beth Lawton, Rheinallt Puw, Dewi Roberts, Elfed Powell Roberts and Mair Rowlands.

**Co-opted Members:** Colette Owen (The Catholic Church) and Manon Williams (Arfon Parent/Governor Representative).

**Officers present:** Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Services Manager), Bethan Adams (Scrutiny Adviser) and Eirian Roberts (Democracy Services Officer).

**Present for item 5:**

*(Education Department)*

Councillor Cemlyn Williams (Cabinet Member for Education)

Garem Jackson (Head of Education)

Ffion Edwards Ellis (Assistant Head of ALN and Inclusion)

Ellen Rowlands (TRAC Manager)

*(Children and Supporting Families Department)*

Councillor Dilwyn Morgan (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)

Catrin Thomas (Assistant Head of Supporting Families)

Bethan Eluned Jones (16-24 Support Team Leader)

**Present for item 6:**

Councillor Gareth Thomas (Cabinet Member – Economy and Community)

Nia Gruffydd (Libraries Service Manager)

Roland Evans (Assistant Head of Culture)

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Freya Bentham, Ruth Roe (Meirionnydd Parent/Governor Representative), Karen Vaughan Jones (Dwyfor Parent/Governor Representative), Dilwyn Ellis Hughes (UCAC) and Dylan Huw Jones (NASUWT).

### 2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Selwyn Griffiths declared a personal interest in item 5 on the agenda - Delivering the Youth Engagement and Development Framework in Gwynedd - as his daughter-in-law was responsible for submitting the report and as he had a family connection with the Wavehill company who had drawn-up the TRAC and ADTRAC evaluation report.

The member was not of the opinion that they were prejudicial interests, and he did not withdraw from the meeting during the discussion on the item.

### 3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

### 4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous committee meeting held on 4 February 2021 as a true record.

## **5. DELIVERING THE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK IN GWYNEDD**

The Cabinet Member for Education and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, along with officials from the Education Department and the Children and Supporting Families Department were welcomed to the meeting.

Presented - the report of the Cabinet Member for Education inviting the scrutiny committee to consider whether the Council's arrangements and provisions are sufficient to support young people who are at risk of disengaging from education or who have disengaged from education, training or employment.

The two Cabinet Members set out the context noting that:

- The Youth Engagement and Development Framework, introduced by the Welsh Government in 2013, was a cross-departmental responsibility.
- The views of the scrutinisers be sought on the arrangements for meeting the requirements of the Framework following the cessation of European Social Fund (ESF) funding for TRAC and ADTRAC projects.
- Everyone needed to constantly remind themselves during the discussion that this was a framework report, i.e. the framework for how the Council supports children and young people not in employment, education or training (NEET).

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and make observations. During the discussion, the following observations were noted:

- Going forward, it was important to understand the successes and failures of the current provision.
- It was felt that the committee was scrutinising this issue too soon, or too late. The Framework itself was eight years old. Although the framework arrangements had been in place since then, some of the provisions attached to it had changed. Some of the provisions were under review. To date, the Wavehill review of TRAC and ADTRAC had identified the need for this type of support for young people, and their success was evident in the review up to a certain point, but things had changed since then, especially as a result of the pandemic context. There was also a desire to continue with these provisions, but their funding was ceasing. ADTRAC funding ended next month, and TRAC funding ended in a year. Discussions on sources of funding beyond the current European Funds were being led by the Westminster Government, but how could it proceed, unless there was a very significant change of mind on the part of the powers who fund these things?
- Collaboration was particularly important in the current difficult situation as a result of the loss of ESF funding, and multi-agency collaboration in Dyffryn Nantlle was cited as a good example of thinking outside the box.
- One of the biggest influences on young people is their peers, and it was assumed that there were young people, who were once difficult and vulnerable, but who had now turned a corner and moved on to further education, training or employment, and who were willing to talk openly to disaffected young people.
- It should be asked whether there is evidence that the decision to charge for transport to Coleg Meirion Dwyfor had been a barrier to young people attending further education.

In response to the observations and questions from members:

- Details were provided of the collaboration between the CAMHS mental health service within ADTRAC, and between the TRAC project and the ALN and Inclusion Service and the School Counselling Service.
- In terms of measuring how many young people were in employment by the age of 25, it was explained that the Service measured the outputs, or the journey of young people who engage with the programmes and provisions. In terms of ADTRAC, an infographic was provided outlining how many young people were receiving support, and had moved into education, training or employment. Of the number of young people receiving the support, 77% progressed to a successful outcome. The Service also captured the soft, more positive outcomes that the young people received.
- With regard to the lessons learnt in terms of which interventions were successful or not, it was explained that the final evaluation of ADTRAC and TRAC would outline the most successful interventions, so that they could be incorporated into core services in the future, once European funds had ceased.
- It was explained that Covid had not affected the tracking systems for young people, as the multi-agency collaboration had been brought closer together as a result of Covid. However, it had impacted on the ability to successfully engage with young people who were NEET, because face-to-face work had to end during the lockdown periods.
- In terms of establishing a mechanism for scrutinising the success of past provision, it was noted that the Engagement Framework Management Group, driving the local agenda under the Framework, would receive and discuss the outcomes of the evaluations.
- It was explained that engagement with a third of referrals to ADTRAC had not been successful, and that the reasons for this were complex, including the reluctance of some young people to engage with the provision, a lack of time within project boundaries to nurture the relationship and the engagement, and the developmental age of some of the young people. However, it was often seen that young people who left school at the age of 16, without progressing into education, training or employment, were ready to engage in employment provision within a year or eighteen months.
- It was noted that TRAC and ADTRAC coordinated transition meetings on an annual basis, thereby identifying individuals who were at risk of not progressing to training or employment, and keeping track of them to some extent. As with ADTRAC, referrals to TRAC were complex cases, with some of those children reluctant to engage with the support. On a monthly basis, up to 1000 pupils could become eligible for TRAC support. Obviously, not all of them could receive a service. TRAC undertook mapping work to identify those most in need. Tracking pupils at College was undertaken by the College and Careers Wales.
- In terms of numbers, it was explained that over the last three years, 160 out of the 470 referrals to ADTRAC had not proceeded to register with the project. Data was available for comparison with other authorities, and this could be reported in writing to the scrutinisers.
- With regard to preventing Year 11 pupils from leaving school without transitioning into further education, training or employment, it was explained that Careers Wales was a full partner with Education, and that employers, etc., could be approached so that the young people could experience and see the options available to them.

- In terms of ensuring the future continuity of the service in the absence of European funding, it was noted that an evaluation of TRAC was being undertaken regionally, together with an evaluation of the impact of Covid. It was also intended to start a local evaluation so that any gaps left by TRAC could be identified. Work was also underway to map TRAC's legacy, but it would not be possible for any new model to be the same as the current model. TRAC drew in £3m of European funding over the six years (2016-2022). Models were looked at so that the Education Department adopted elements of TRAC within existing services, utilising services such as early intervention, communication and interaction, which mainly worked in the primary sector. The inclusion services could also inherit some TRAC principles. For it to work properly, the model would have to differ to what was already provided, and be creative and flexible with regard to the needs of these individuals. It was acknowledged that there was work to be done, and this would guide the TRAC Manager's work programme over the next 18 months, so that a model could be submitted to the Education Department, whether the Council received funding for that or not. With regard to ADTRAC, the Children Department had already remodelled its provision in the Youth Service to ensure follow-up arrangements to address some aspects of that project beyond the European funding period.
- In terms of continuity of support, it was noted that the evaluation looked at how TRAC blended in with the provision of some of the Council's other services, such as the schools, the Youth Service and the ALN and Inclusion Service, taking into account where the gaps were, where they could be filled, and where the gaps would obviously remain.
- It was noted that TRAC/ADTRAC worked with other Council departments to offer opportunities for individuals on schemes such as Kickstart to gain work experience with the Council.
- It was explained, as noted in Appendix 6 to the report, that the Framework was dependent on TRAC and ADTRAC in terms of the ability to identify young people who were likely to drop out of education, or who had dropped out of education, training or employment. The uncertainty as to when was the best time to review the Framework was a cause for concern. The Council was driven by ESF funding to review the provision and arrangements, but the whole Framework was dependent on funding that ended at different times. Parts of the post-16 provision had been reviewed, with the 11-16 element still to be reviewed. The scrutinisers were asked if they were comfortable that by being forced to review in the way we currently do, we were going to address the needs of the Framework as a whole, or whether they thought something was being missed by operating in this way, while accepting, at the same time, that it was impossible to do all the reviewing in one step. Although TRAC and ADTRAC were two comparatively key projects for the Framework, these were not the only resources to help the Council achieve its goal, and it was not clear at this stage whether all the provision was now understood. There was also a need to understand the relationship of the Framework to other economic and employability programmes, such as Communities for Work and Gwaith Gwynedd. The purpose of the Framework was to ensure that all young people were engaged in education, training, or employment, but Covid, and experience of TRAC and ADTRAC as projects, had shown that work or education interventions, in the sense of the education or learning curriculum, were not what some young people needed. There were challenges around the personal development and social circumstances of young people, and there may be room to question whether the Framework itself was now fit for purpose, as it sought to produce economic outputs and outcomes for all young people, although mental health, well-being and personal development



were seen to have been more of a barrier to young people getting back into education, training or employment over the last 12 months.

- In terms of targeting disaffected young people, drawing them into the Framework and supporting them, it was explained that TRAC worked with young people mainly through the schools. As the service sat within the Education Department, but was not a statutory service, it would be possible to be creative and flexible in what could be offered to these individuals. As well as working on the employability element, TRAC also worked on these young people's self-image and self-confidence, working with individuals who had behavioural problems too. Obviously, it was not possible to work with every individual, and they had to be on the TRAC radar, but the service worked with the most vulnerable young people.

A member noted that the funding question was far too complex for the scrutinisers to answer at present, and it was suggested that the committee should scrutinise the field further, and discuss the timetable for this at this committee's Annual Workshop in May. In response, it was noted that the officers would be very happy to attend the workshop, and the following were mentioned as matters requiring further attention:

- The impact of further evaluation on TRAC, and input into planning succession to TRAC.
- How would whatever happened after TRAC or ADTRAC fit into the wider provision if no funding was available.
- How to respond to changes in provision that occurred at different times, while continuing with transition and tracking arrangements, and also understanding the real impact of the changes on the young people, and their needs.
- The impact of Covid on the outcomes and experiences of pupils leaving the school system in July, not only academically, but also in terms of wider support.

It was noted that officers had been open and transparent in answering the scrutinisers' questions, and they were thanked for their work with a very vulnerable group of young people, who had significant challenges.

**RESOLVED to accept the report, noting the observations made - particularly in respect of the suitability of the Framework's arrangements, the need to offer full support for young people who are at risk of disengaging/are disengaged from the field of education, training or employment, ensuring that these elements are addressed when reviewing our provisions in the future. Consideration should be given to scrutinising this field further, discussing the timetable for that at this committee's Annual Workshop in May.**

## 6. REVIEW OF THE MOBILE LIBRARIES SERVICE

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Community and officers from the Economy and Community Department were welcomed to the meeting.

Submitted - the report of the Cabinet Member for Economy and Community seeking the guidance of the scrutiny committee on the Mobile Service for Homes following a review of the current and historical provision within the Library Service. Members were invited to consider several options, based on the Service's findings of current demand and usage of the service, and savings that could be made from reviewing the pattern of provision.

The Cabinet Member set the context, noting that a number of benefits were seen to arise from the new system of Service delivery, which had started during the Covid crisis, and that the arrangement was increasingly appreciated as time went by.

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions and make observations. During the discussion, the following observations were noted:

- Although it was accepted that people welcomed the home service, there may be a need to urge and encourage people to venture out and socialise following the pandemic.
- Carers, etc., who called at people's homes, could pick up books and take them to the individual during their work time.
- The mobile vehicle could visit village halls, for example, when groups or 'paned' clubs met there.
- The use of electric/hybrid vans to provide the service, instead of the large lorries, was welcomed.
- It was understood that the new way of delivering the Service was not an opportunity to save money, and if the service saw the need to maintain the status quo, there was money available for that.
- The decision to introduce the change during the pandemic was questioned and it was asked whether it would be better to wait for things to settle first.
- Not visiting mobile stops would mean a 17% reduction in the number of households in Gwynedd who were within reach of a fixed or mobile library, and since the majority of the county's population lived in the towns anyway, that meant 17% of rural residents.
- People who were housebound, for whatever reason, very much welcomed the service to the home, and the scheme needed to be further developed, as well as given more publicity, e.g. by including an item in Newyddion Gwynedd. It was also suggested that it would be an idea to e-mail all councillors to inform them of the Service, asking them to disseminate the information via the main social media platforms to the residents of their wards. The Library Service Manager agreed to follow this up.
- The choice of books on a van is quite limited, and the service to the home expanded the choice of books, and reached everyone in the county.
- It was questioned whether people would want to congregate in a confined space like a van in the wake of Covid anyway.

In response to the observations and questions from members:

- It was noted that concerns had been raised prior to the pandemic regarding the year-on-year reduction in the numbers using the mobile stops, and that the length of stay at those stops had also declined over the years.
- It was explained that the service's previous experience and figures suggested that the reduction in the use of the mobile stops would continue in the future, as the pattern of life and people's needs had changed. Also, the stop was not ideal in bad weather, and the facility of having the service delivered to the home was more attractive.
- It was agreed that it was possible to develop the idea of improving the level of support given to Service users by, e.g. providing ICT equipment and internet access in mobile libraries, and using the service to enable residents in rural areas to access other Council services. Reference was made to two specific examples of how the new approach to the provision of a home delivery service had been successfully utilised, namely the use of a tackling poverty grant to provide period products to the home, and the 'Library of Things' project, which offered equipment on loan to the home, as part of the circular economy. It was noted that the service was working with a number of agencies and services in promoting these proposals.

- In terms of visits to groups, etc., it was noted that the service was able to respond to many enquiries of this type, targeting and tailoring the service to meet a host of different needs.
- It was noted that it was believed that there was enough slack in the system at present for one driver to be able to deliver the service across Arfon and Dwyfor, but that there was a need to tread carefully. This would have to be piloted first, but could be a further option when planning the service for the future.
- It was explained that the Welsh Public Library Standards Quality Indicator target had been set by the Welsh Government and measured proximity to a library, static service point, or mobile service point. However, by delivering to the home, it could be argued that the service reached 100% of the population.
- In terms of the timing, it was noted that the Covid period had allowed the Service to experiment, and as a consequence, it was seen that there was a different solution, which could reach more people and provide a better service.
- It was noted that people welcomed the reading packs prepared for them by members of staff, and that this was a good way to introduce readers to new authors.

The Library Service was thanked for the excellent service provided during the lockdown periods, and appreciation was also expressed for the audio books service.

**RESOLVED to accept the report, noting the observations made during the meeting, and to recommend to the Cabinet to adopt Option 1 in the report as the best provision and implementation model for the Mobile Libraries Service in the future, namely:**

**Step 1**

**A (monthly) Home and Delivery Service provided by 3 smaller vehicles (electric/hybrid vans), each with a driver for:**

- 1. Arfon**
- 2. Dwyfor**
- 3. Meirionnydd**

**Step 2**

**Following the retirement of a driver in the next 1-2 years, a (monthly) Home and Delivery Service provided by 2 smaller vehicles (electric/hybrid vans), each with a driver for:**

- 1. Arfon / Dwyfor**
- 2. Meirionnydd**

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.25 pm

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**CHAIRMAN**

# Agenda Item 7

<b>Committee</b>	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
<b>Title of Report</b>	Education and the Welsh language: A new vision for the Immersion Education System towards 2032 and beyond
<b>Date of meeting</b>	10 June, 2021
<b>Author</b>	Debbie Anne Williams Jones
<b>Head of Education Department</b>	Garem Jackson, Head of Education Department
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Cemlyn Rees Williams

## 1. BACKGROUND

**1.1** The School Standards and Organisation Act (2013) became law in Wales on 4 March 2013.

The Act places a statutory duty on Local Authorities to prepare and submit a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) to Welsh Government. These initial plans came into effect on 1 April 2014 for a period of three years up to March 2017. These plans outline the way Local Authorities intend to achieve aims and targets set by Welsh Government and which are outlined in the Welsh Medium Education Strategy.

**1.2** During 2017-18, a consultation period was held on the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019 together with the draft Guidelines. This means that the new WESP will come into force in September 2022, and that they are 10-year planning documents.

**1.3** Over the past few months, the Education Department has been working on the content of this new WESP, with the intention of holding an informal consultation on it, before moving on to a public consultation in the autumn.

**1.4** Immersion education is pivotal to the Gwynedd education language policy and the new WESP and, consequently, the new vision presented for the immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond, is pivotal to the delivery and success of the WESP and the associated outcomes over the next ten years.

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

**2.1** In this report along with the associated appendices, the following are presented to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee:

- A proposed new immersion education system and vision for Gwynedd
- A copy of the Summary Report: Gwynedd Language Centres' Pilot Scheme for reference.

**2.2** As a result of this report, the Cabinet Member for Education is eager to receive the observations of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee on his vision for the immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond:

*"My vision is to have a Welsh-medium and bilingual education system that puts the needs of all our learners at the heart of our provision.*

*I would like to see a flexible immersion education system, which provides first class education and training, supporting new learners to successfully acquire the Welsh Language, as well as ensuring high quality provision, experiences and support through the medium of Welsh that responds to the needs of the learners and their families, and will enable them to develop as independent and confident bilingual learners and to succeed and thrive."*



**Cemlyn Rees Williams**  
**Cabinet Member for**  
**Education**

### **3. THE CASE FOR CHANGE**

**3.1** The main case for change and the need for a new vision for the Gwynedd immersion education system can be summarised to the following fields, and further details about these can be found below:

- Place the learner's needs at the centre
- Modernise the provision and make it contemporary
- Working in partnership
- An opportunity to create a first-class learning environment
- New opportunities as a result of COVID-19
- Lessons learnt as a result of the Pilot Scheme implemented at the request of the Cabinet.

#### **3.2 Place the learner's needs at the centre**

- The need for the system to promote the achievement and welfare of Gwynedd newcomers to acquire the Welsh language while keeping in contact with their local school and peers at the same time.
- The need for the system to be able to assist parents and carers to understand the value of Welsh-medium education to support their children.

#### **3.3 Modernise the provision and make it contemporary**

- The need for the system to respond to the needs of the learners and the curriculum.
- The need to invest in the infrastructure for the system including digital resources.

#### **3.4 Working in partnership**

- The need for the Education Department and schools to work in partnership and take joint ownership of the immersion education system.
- The need for the immersion education system to provide guidance, support and resources to schools to enable them to support learners to make further progress in terms of their Welsh language confidence/skills.

#### **3.5 An opportunity to create a first-class learning environment**

- An opportunity to invest £1.1million of Welsh Government Welsh-medium education capital grant into the immersion education system, improving the learning environment and infrastructure.

### **3.6 New opportunities as a result of COVID-19**

- Blended learning provision i.e. the Language Centres provided blended learning as a result of the numerous lockdowns, namely face-to-face teaching at school, live learning sessions via Teams, together with work on Google Classrooms. This was recognised as excellent practice by Estyn.
- The schools are asking for immersion education expertise and resources to support the Welsh language to be disseminated across the system.

### **3.7 Lessons learnt as a result of the Pilot Scheme**

- The pilot highlighted the need to consider the welfare of learners, and keep in contact with their peers; many are finding it difficult to blend in back at their local school after their time at the Centre.
- The need to strengthen the relationship with schools to enable further progress in terms of support for language development.

### **3.8** Therefore, based on the case for change, our vision for learners who are new learners of the Welsh language is that they have:

*"Access to an excellent immersion education system that provides flexible and sustainable learning experiences of a high standard that equips them as independent learners who have the information and Welsh language skills to enable them to move forward.*

*To provide an effective transition from immersion education to the local school, ensuring a high standard of experiences and support through the medium of Welsh, that responds to the needs of learners and their families to enable them to succeed and thrive."*

### **3.9** Our vision is to have an immersion education system that places the needs of learners at the centre of our provision. We would like to see a flexible system, which provides first class immersion education for the learners, nurturing their Welsh language skills to enable them to succeed and thrive in our schools, becoming confident bilingual speakers.

### **3.10** Details about the objectives that form the basis of the vision are provided in Appendix 1, namely:

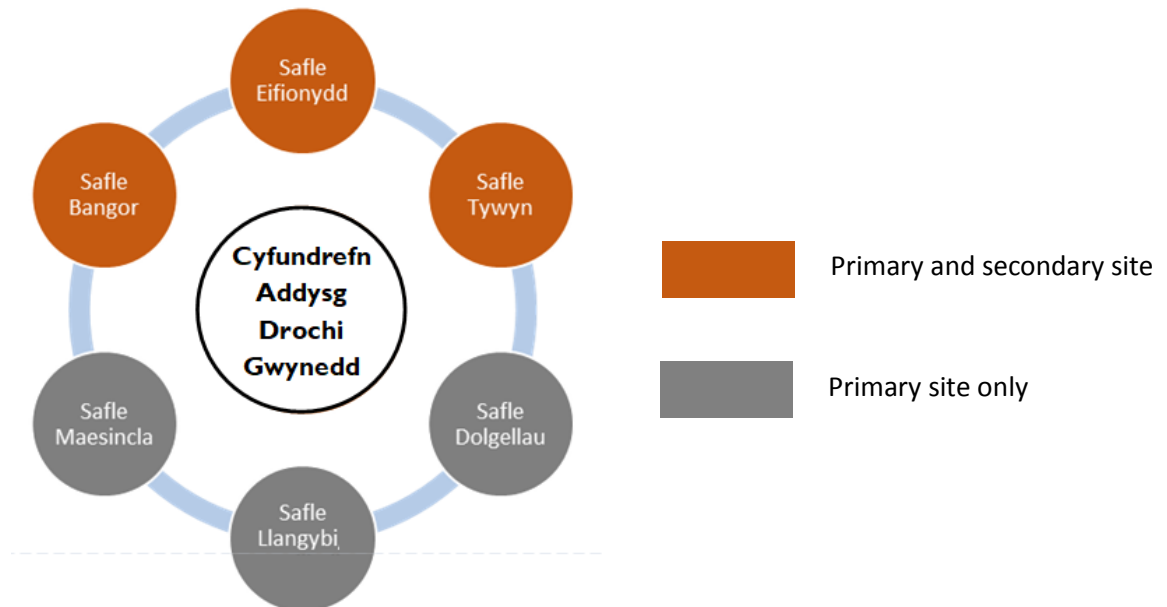
- Teaching and Learning
- Learning Environment
- Curriculum
- Support for Learners
- Financial Resources

### **3.11** In order to deliver the vision, purpose, aim and objectives, we hope to invest £1.1m of Welsh Government Welsh-medium education capital grant into our immersion education system in Gwynedd to ensure a state-of-the-art learning environment, with modern facilities for 21st century learners and educators.

### **3.12** This capital investment will facilitate the establishment of two completely new immersion education sites in Gwynedd, located in strategic areas of the county and areas of linguistic significance, namely Tywyn and Bangor. It is also intended to improve the facilities in the Eifionydd immersion education site which again is strategically located in the centre of the county. These three immersion education sites will offer primary and secondary provision jointly, bridging years 5-9.

**3.13** It is also intended to relocate the Dolgellau Language Centre to a larger site in order to offer the provision to more children, and the Dolgellau site, together with Llangybi and Maesincla, will provide immersion education to years 2-4 of primary schools.

**3.14** As a result of the investment, six sites will offer provision to primary age learners and three sites will offer provision for secondary learners, with flexibility between the sites as needed.



#### **4. THE VISION FOR THE IMMERSION PROVISION**

**4.1** In the new system, the on-site primary and secondary immersion education provision will be a 4 day-a-week provision, for a period of 8-10 weeks. This would be a means of ensuring that the immersion provision can be maintained in full for the three school terms.

**4.2** Learners will attend their local school for one day every week, which would be a way for the learners to continue contact with their local schools, ensuring continuation of their immersion education in Welsh there, as well as having full access to the curriculum.

**4.3** For one day a week, when the learners attend their local school, the staff of the immersion education system would be available to support the learners in the schools, assist in the other immersion education sites, provide support for the learners from a distance, give guidance to the schools to support the learners, as well as create and provide resources in response to the need of the Welsh-medium education field and immersion education more generally.

**4.4** For the remaining period in every term where the learners will return to their local schools, the immersion education system staff will implement a full programme of blended learning, namely face-to-face teaching at school, live learning sessions via Teams, as well as distance learning via Google Classrooms to ensure additional support for the learners to assist them to make further progress to acquire the Welsh language at school.

## **5. FUNDING THE VISION TOWARDS 2032 AND BEYOND**

**5.1** It is intended for the Immersion Education System towards 2032 and beyond to be funded from three different sources, namely:

- EIG Grant
- Schools (central)
- Education Department

### **5.2 EIG Grant**

This is the core grant to fund the Immersion Education System, however, as is known, as a result of inflation and an increase in costs, this grant alone is not sufficient to fund the provision in full.

### **5.3 Schools**

The immersion education system is a specialist service and pivotal to the implementation of the Gwynedd education language policy. Consequently, it is intended to ask for a financial contribution from the schools which will be a means of ensuring joint-ownership and a fit-for-purpose immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond.

### **5.4 Education Department**

The Education Department already contributes to the costs of the service, and this contribution will continue, through:

- Match funding for the EIG grant
- Contributing towards the transport costs to the immersion provision.

## **6. SUMMARY**

**6.1** Above all else, the Immersion Education System towards 2032 and beyond is seen as pivotal in preventing the decline in the number of Welsh-speakers in Gwynedd by:

- providing pioneering and outstanding immersion education to new-comers to the County which will enable them to thrive with their peers in our bilingual education system and consequently they will be able to blend into the Welsh and Welsh-speaking society of their local school without feeling that they are 'different' or excluded from the usual experiences of their peers;
- providing support for families to embrace the Welsh language, support the education of their children, and benefit from cultural and community experiences through the medium of Welsh;
- supporting and equipping our schools to nurture our learners' skills and confidence in the Welsh language;
- supporting and equipping our schools to nurture positive attitudes towards the Welsh language.

**6.2** For reference, a copy of the Summary Report: Gwynedd Language Centres' Pilot Scheme is provided in Appendix 2.

## **7. NEXT STEPS**



**7.1** During June, it is intended to hold an informal consultation on the vision for the immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond with key stakeholders.

**7.2** The Cabinet Member for Education will consider the observations received as part of the informal consultation, together with the observations of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee, prior to presenting the vision to the Cabinet.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**8.1** Members are asked to:

- give observations on the proposed vision for the immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond.



# Immersion Education System

towards 2032 and beyond



# Foreword

## Cemlyn Rees Williams

Cabinet Member for Education



*"My vision is to have a Welsh-medium and bilingual education system that puts the needs of all our learners at the heart of our provision."*

*I would like to see a flexible immersion education system, which provides first class education and training, supporting new learners to successfully acquire the Welsh Language, as well as ensuring high quality provision, experiences and support through the medium of Welsh that responds to the needs of the learners and their families, and will enable them to develop as independent and confident bilingual learners and to succeed and thrive."*

## CYMRAEG 2050

*"Welsh medium immersion education is our main method of ensuring that children are able to develop their Welsh language skills, and of creating new Welsh-speakers."*

*Welsh Government's aim is... to create a statutory education system which increases the number of confident Welsh-speakers.*

## Welsh Government: Cymraeg 2050



# The purpose of the **immersion education system** towards 2032 and beyond is to:

- Promote the achievement and welfare of Gwynedd newcomers to acquire the Welsh language.
- **Support learners who need an additional boost to increase their Welsh language confidence/skills at school.**
- Empower and support Gwynedd's schools workforce to implement immersion education principles in the Foundation Phase.
- **Provide guidance, support and resources to the Gwynedd schools workforce to enable them to support learners to make further progress in terms of their Welsh language confidence/skills.**
- Assist parents and carers to understand the value of Welsh-medium education and assist them to support their children.





**The vision for learners who are new learners of the Welsh language is:**

Access to an excellent immersion education system that provides flexible and sustainable learning experiences of a high standard that equips them as independent learners who have the information and Welsh language skills to enable them to move forward.

To provide an effective transition from immersion education to the local school, ensuring a high standard of experiences and support through the medium of Welsh, that responds to the needs of learners and their families to enable them to succeed and thrive.

# The Vision

Our vision is to have an immersion education system that places the needs of learners at the centre of our provision.

We would like to see a flexible system, which provides first class immersion education for the learners, nurturing their Welsh language skills to enable them to succeed and thrive in our schools, becoming confident bilingual speakers.



# Our Aim





# 5

## Aims

**These are the aims which will provide the foundation for the immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond:**

### **1. TEACHING AND LEARNING**

1. An innovative immersion education system, based on expertise and enriching the teaching and learning experience as well as encouraging excellence in the field.
2. The outcomes for all learners lay a solid foundation in Welsh, developing a lifelong interest in the languages of Wales and languages of the World, thus making them ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn in Gwynedd's bilingual education system and throughout their lives.
3. A modern immersion education system that celebrates identity, language awareness and heritage, developing learners who are principled, knowledgeable citizens ready to be citizens of Wales and the world.

### **2. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

1. A state-of-the-art learning environment, with modern facilities for 21st century learners and educators.
2. An inclusive learning environment that responds to diverse needs including vulnerable learners and learners with Additional Learning Needs.
3. A learning environment that takes advantage of the latest technology and provides learners with a variety of experiences and skills in language acquisition.

### **3. CURRICULUM:**

1. A robust and durable immersion education system that can adapt to any relevant changes in education.
2. A fit for purpose contemporary immersion education provision for 2032 and beyond that reflects the requirements of the learners and the curriculum.
3. An immersion education system that works in partnership with schools to support and deliver the curriculum.





#### 4. SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS

1. An immersion education system that offers excellent pastoral provision putting the needs of the learner at the centre.
2. An immersion education system that ensures access to high quality help and support designed around the learner.
3. An immersion education system that works in partnership with the schools to ensure appropriate help and support for the learner, parents and guardians in the context of the Welsh language.

#### 5. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

1. An immersion education system that makes efficient use of financial resources, ensuring equality of opportunity for all learners.
2. A viable immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond based on resilient learning groups, a budget and a robust business plan.
3. A system that has taken the opportunity to attract an investment of £1.1m to improve immersion education provision through the Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant.



## Achieving the Aim, Vision and Objectives

We will invest £1.1m of Welsh Government Welsh-medium education capital grant into our immersion education system in Gwynedd to ensure a state-of-the-art learning environment, with modern facilities for 21st century learners and educators.

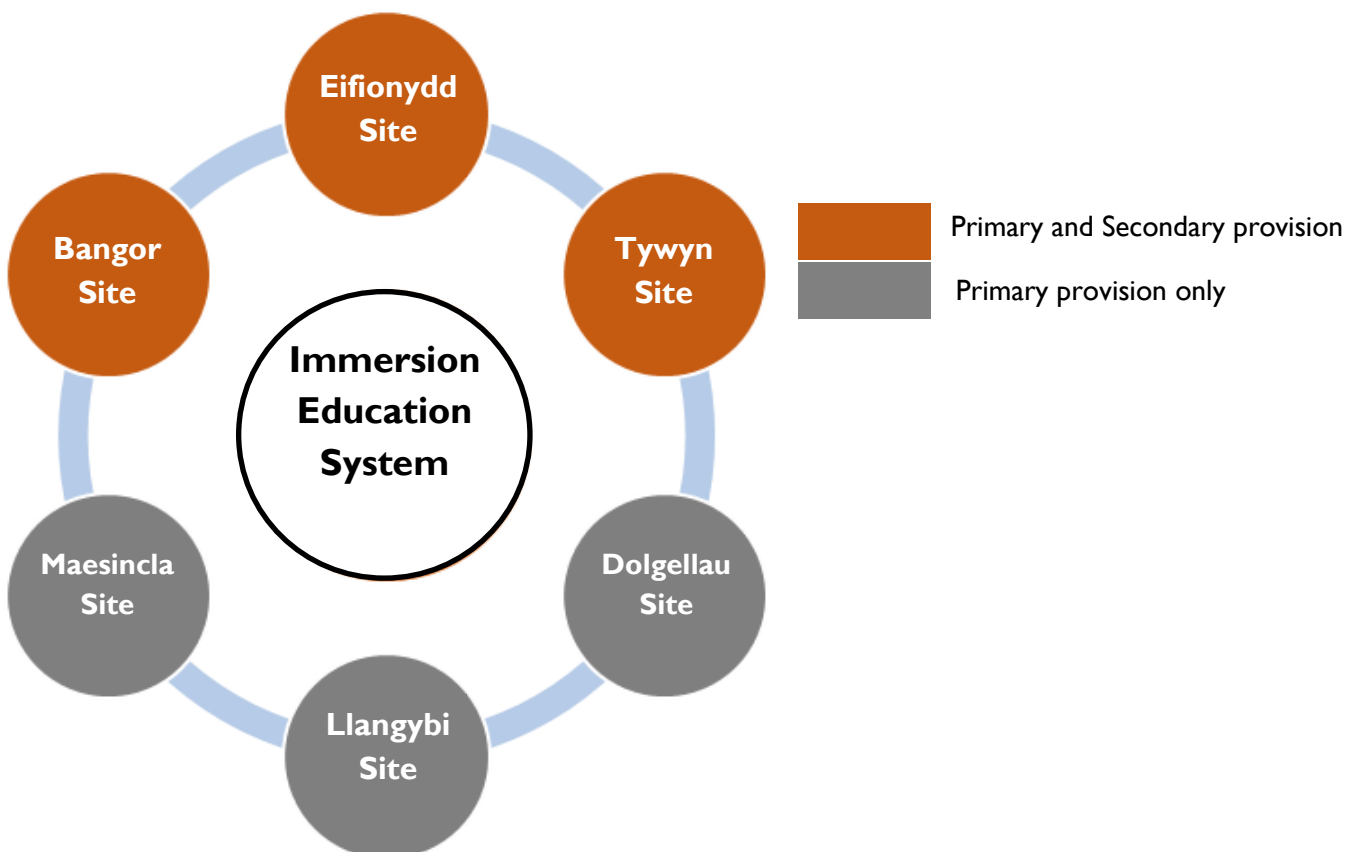
This capital investment will facilitate the establishment of two completely new immersion education sites in Gwynedd, located in strategic areas of the county and areas of linguistic significance, namely Tywyn and Bangor. It is also intended to improve the facilities in the Eifonydd immersion education site which again is strategically located in the centre of the county. These three immersion education sites will offer primary and secondary provision jointly, bridging years 5-9.

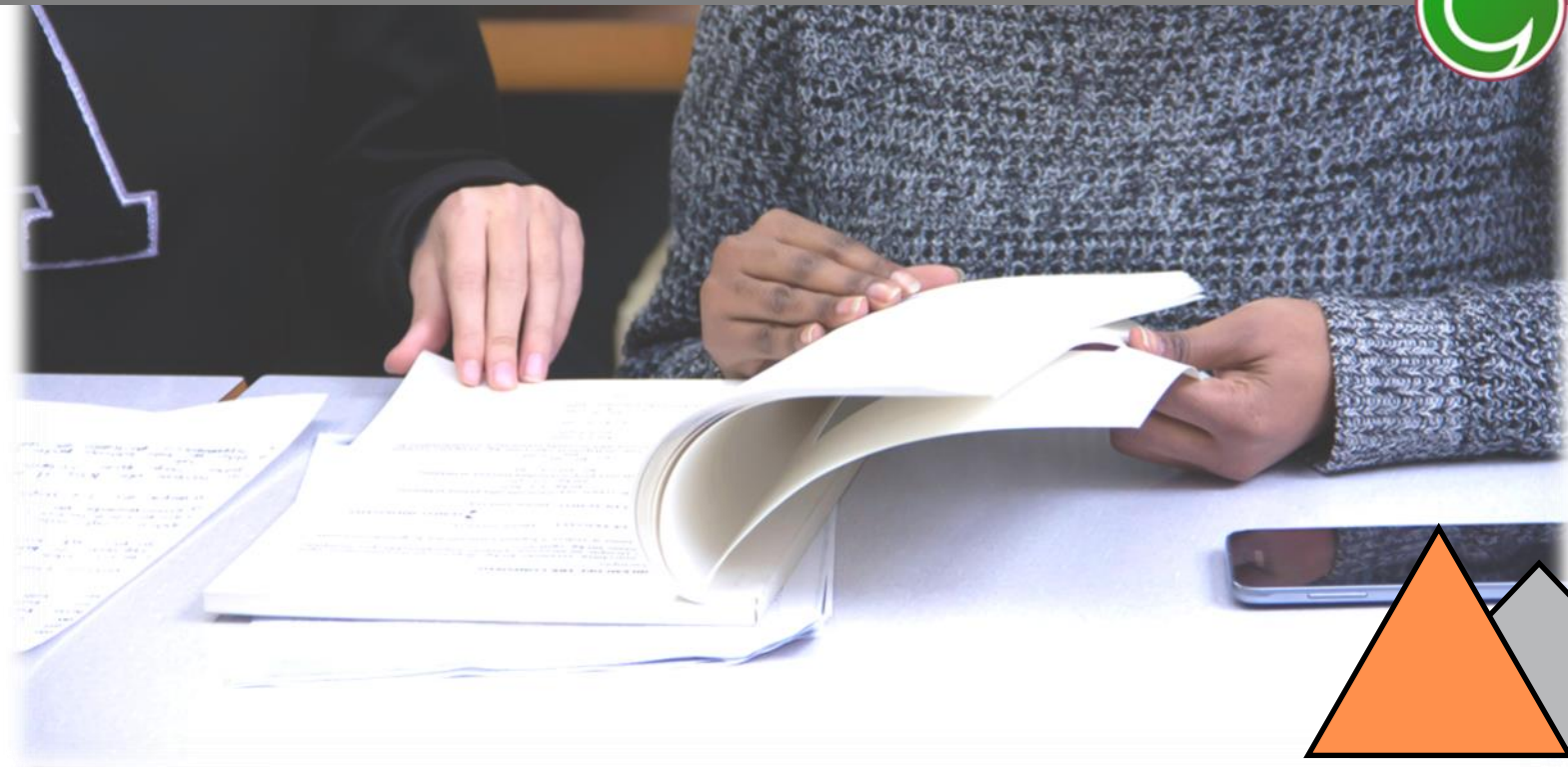
It is also intended to relocate the Dolgellau Language Centre to a larger site in order to offer the provision to more children, and the Dolgellau site, together with Llangybi and Maesincla, will provide immersion education to years 2-4 of primary schools.

As a result of the capital investment, six sites will offer provision to primary age learners and three sites will offer provision for secondary learners, with flexibility between the sites as needed.

Consequently, in the new system, it will be possible to offer the provision to more learners.

**As a result of the above, the new immersion education system in Gwynedd will have six sites, as follows:**





## Catchments served

The following table notes which catchment areas the Gwynedd Immersion Education System sites will serve generally.

There will be flexibility between all the sites in terms of accepting learners from different catchment areas depending on numbers, particularly those catchment areas which border several sites e.g. Arduwly and Dyffryn Nantlle.

Catchments areas	Bangor BI 5-9	Eifionydd BI 5-9	Tywyn BI 5-9	Maesincla BI 2-4	Llangybi BI 2-4	Dolgellau BI 2-4
Dyffryn Ogwen	Orange			Grey		
Bangor	Orange			Grey		
Brynrefail	Orange			Grey		
Syr Hugh Owen	Orange			Grey		
Dyffryn Nantlle	Orange			Grey	Grey	
Botwnnog		Orange			Grey	
Glan y Môr		Orange			Grey	
Eifionydd		Orange				
Y Moelwyn		Orange				Grey
Arduwly		Orange	Orange			Grey
Bro Idris			Orange			Grey
Y Berwyn			Orange			Grey
Tywyn			Orange			Grey

## The Provision

The primary and secondary immersion education provision will be a 4 day-a-week provision, for a period of 8-10 weeks. This will be a means of ensuring that the immersion provision can be maintained in full for the three school terms.

Learners will attend their local school for one day every week, which will be a way for the learners to continue contact with their local schools, ensuring continuation of their immersion education in Welsh there, as well as having full access to the curriculum.

For one day a week, when the learners attend their local school, the staff of the immersion education system will be available to support the learners in the schools, assist in the other immersion education sites, provide support for the learners from a distance, give guidance to the schools to support the learners, as well as create and provide resources in response to the need of the Welsh-medium education field and immersion education more generally.

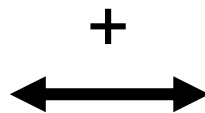
For the remaining period in every term where the learners will return to their local schools, the immersion education system staff will implement a full programme of blended learning, namely face-to-face teaching at school, live learning sessions via Teams, as well as distance learning via Google Classrooms to ensure additional support for the learners to assist them to make further progress to acquire the Welsh language at school.

It will be possible to provide blended learning at any time to learners who still need additional support as they return to their local school after spending 8-10 weeks in the immersion education provision.

### Modelling the provision



Learners attend the nearby Immersion Education provision for 4 days a week for a period of 8-10 weeks.

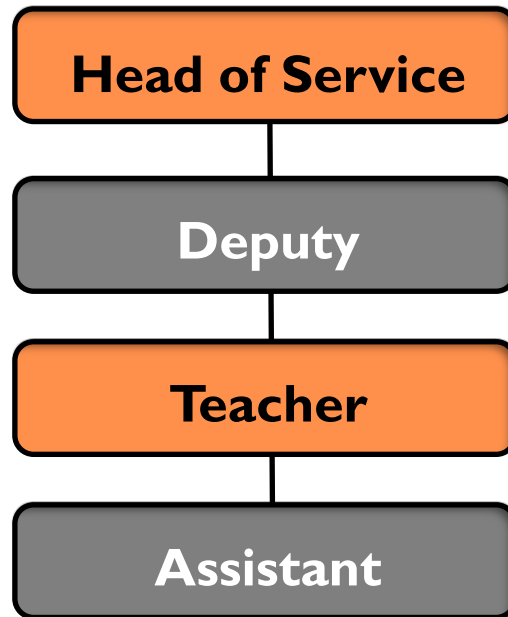


Learners attend their local school for 1 day a week for a period of 8-10 weeks before returning to their local school full time.





## Staffing Structure



# Funding

The Immersion Education System towards 2032 and beyond will be funded from three different sources, namely:

- **EIG Grant**  
This is the core grant to fund the Immersion Education System, however, as a result of inflation and an increase in costs, this grant alone is not sufficient to fund the provision in full.
- **Schools**  
The immersion education system is a specialist service and pivotal to the implementation of the Gwynedd education language policy.  
Consequently, it is intended to ask for a financial contribution from the schools which will be a means of ensuring a fit-for-purpose immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond.
- **Education Department**  
The Education Department is already contributing towards the costs of the provision, and this contribution will continue, by:
  - provide match funding to the EIG grant
  - Contribute towards the transport costs for the immersion provision.



## Measure of Success:

We will measure the immersion education system's success specifically by means of the following measure: **Number / % of new learners reaching Level 2 (speech) at the end of their intense immersion period.**

We will also measure the success of the immersion education system from the contribution of the system to the following outcomes in the Authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan:

- More reception class / 5 year old children educated through the medium of Welsh. (WESP: Outcome 2)
- More pupils continuing to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another. (WESP: Outcome 3)
- More learners studying for Welsh (as a subject) qualifications and subjects through the medium of Welsh. (WESP: Outcome 4)
- More opportunities for learners to use the Welsh language in different contexts in the school. (WESP: Outcome 5)
- Increase in the Welsh-medium education provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) (WESP: Outcome 6)



## Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP):

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is a statutory document under section 84 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the content complies with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019.

These WESP outlines the way in which Local Authorities intend to achieve the Welsh Government aims and targets in the context of Welsh-medium education.

In Gwynedd, the WESP is interpreted in the context of the County's Education Language Policy. The aim of the Language Policy is to ensure that all of the County's pupils have well-balanced, age-related bilingual skills to enable them to be full members of the bilingual society of which they are part. Age-relevant bilingualism means that pupils have the appropriate language skills in both Welsh and English.

The purpose of the Immersion Education System is to promote the achievement of new learners to acquire the Welsh language through intense immersion provision, together with providing support for learners who need an additional boost to increase their Welsh language confidence or skills at school. This Immersion Education System provision is central to assisting primary and secondary schools to implement the current Language Policy, and also contributes to the success of our learners in the Welsh-medium and bilingual education system found in Gwynedd.



*"I am pleased to publish the **Gwynedd Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for 2022-2032.***

*The Plan reflects my vision of having a Welsh-medium and bilingual education system that puts the needs of all our learners at the heart of our provision.*

*The Plan sets a clear commitment and direction for ensuring that learners in Gwynedd attain the highest standards in order to maintain the language, culture and economy locally.*

*The Council's Departments, schools and wider partners are committed to accomplishing all the aims and objectives of the **Welsh in Education Strategic Plan** and consequently to supporting Welsh Government's strategy to reach the goal of a million Welsh-speakers by 2050, ensuring that there are opportunities at every stage of an individual's life to learn Welsh and to learn through the medium of Welsh.*

*It is a very exciting time for the Welsh language, and I would like to ensure high quality provision, experiences and support through the medium of Welsh that responds to the needs of the learners and their families, and will enable them to develop as independent and confident bilingual learners and to succeed and thrive.*

*Similarly, I would like to ensure that the entire workforce of our schools are confident bilingual speakers, who receive support to nurture their confidence and skills in the Welsh language, and able to transfer those skills effectively to teach and learn through the medium of Welsh and bilingually in the classroom."*

Councillor Cemlyn Rees Williams,

Cabinet Member for Education.







**SUMMARY REPORT:**

***Gwynedd Language Centres' Pilot Scheme.***



## Background

On 2 April 2019, Gwynedd Council's Cabinet resolved to implement a pilot scheme at one Language Centre of a teacher and assistant staffing structure, in order to identify whether it affected the quality of the education and the children's attainment.

## The brief of the research

A brief for the research was compiled and was presented to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee on 10 October 2019 for comment.

The brief denoted the following requirements, with every Language Centre a part of the research that would form the basis to measuring the impact of the pilot scheme at Maesincla Language Centre.

### 1.1. a) The Daily Structure of the Language Centres

The research team will be required to consider the day-to-day arrangements for teaching and learning at every Language Centre, namely at which times during the working day does every Centre hold:

- one learning group with two teachers (maximum ratio of 2:16)
- one learning group with a teacher and assistant (maximum 2:16)
- one learning group with one teacher (maximum ratio of 1:16)
- one learning group with an assistant (maximum ratio of 1:16)
- two learning groups (maximum ratio of 1:8)
- other

1.2 The numbers of pupils attending Language Centres can vary up to a maximum of 16 pupils. This means that the numbers of pupils in the learning groups at every Centre can vary, based on the total number of children, and the research team is asked to give due consideration to this as part of the research.

### 1.3 b) Background Information

As well as the general information gathered about every pupil, the research team will also consider additional background information about the children and their families who have moved to Gwynedd, along with their connection or previous or current experiences with the Welsh language before attending the Language Centre. This information will include:

- When did they move to Gwynedd?
- Have they lived in Gwynedd previously?
- Main reasons for moving to Gwynedd?
- Can any members of the family or the extended family speak Welsh?
- Do they attend Welsh-medium community activities?
- Do they believe that it is advantageous for them to learn Welsh?
- Does the child have experience of the Welsh language before moving to Gwynedd?





- Does the child have a connection with anyone outside school who is able to speak Welsh?
- What does the child hope to achieve from learning the Welsh language?

1.4 This information will be a way of establishing a baseline of the children's backgrounds, ages, school year, their attitudes as well as their previous connection with the Welsh language, which will provide a basis for the research across the Language Centres.

### 1.5 c) Visits to the Language Centres

The research team will attend the Language Centres in order to consider, see and measure the linguistic progress made by the children during their period at a Centre. The Research team will attend the Language Centres at three specific periods during the course in order to measure the children's linguistic progress.

This will be approximately:

- Primary: Weeks 4, 8 and 12
- Secondary: Weeks 3, 6, 8

1.6 The Language Centres will draw up criteria based on the course's content regarding the progress and language patterns that the children should have mastered by those agreed key stages during the course.

1.7 The research team will be required to reach a judgement as to whether or not the children have achieved the expected progress, in discussion with teachers and assistants at the Language Centres, in order to ensure a full context to the judgement.

1.8 In accordance with the Language Centres' Business Plan, the research team will measure to what extent the Language Centres achieve their purpose by means of the following measure:

### **Number / % of children reaching Level 2 at the end of their period at a Language Centre and for this to be considered in parallel with:**

- ·The daily structure of the Language Centres
- ·Background information and children's profile
- ·Visits to the Language Centres

## 2. The Research Team

2.1. The members of the research team were appointed based on their experience and expertise in immersion and second language education. The members of the research team were: Dr Diane Jones, Education Officer, Sian Eirug, Secondary Sector Language Strategy Coordinator, and Nia Williams, former Headteacher at Ysgol Morfa Nefyn. ~ Professional and informal input was also provided by Dr Enlli Thomas, School of Education, Bangor University.

### **Dr Diane Jones**

Education Officer

Diane has been an Education Officer with Gwynedd Authority for five years. As a member of the Education Department's Management Team, she contributes to, and leads on education improvement plans, school estate capital plans and education developments, jointly leads on interventions and development plans, and offers guidance and support to school leaders in a variety of fields. Her background is in the field of community and cultural development, and teaching Welsh to learners of varying proficiency in the Secondary and Higher Education Sectors. She gained a doctorate in Welsh Language and Literature for her research into drama in Wales.

### **Sian Eirug**

Secondary Sector Language Strategy Coordinator

Prior to taking up her current role as Secondary Sector Language Strategy Co-ordinator within the Authority, Sian Eirug was Head of the Welsh Department at a Secondary School in Ceredigion, and then Director of the PGCE Course at Aberystwyth University for over ten years with responsibility for Welsh as a subject. She taught Welsh as a second language to trainee teachers, and contributed regularly to the provision of the Welsh Medium Improvement Plan, specialising in bilingual teaching.

She has also contributed on a Masters in Educational Practice course at Cardiff University, and was a Peer Inspector with Estyn. She has extensive experience of working as a moderator for WJEC.





## Nia Williams

Former Headteacher at Ysgol Morfa Nefyn

Nia was Headteacher at Ysgol Morfa Nefyn for 10 years, before retiring in 2018. Under her leadership, the school was awarded the Excellence standard by Estyn on two occasions. To conclude a successful career in education, Nia received a 'Finalist' award at the 2017 Professional Teaching Awards Cymru for her contribution to developing Welsh to a High Standard.

As part of her role as Headteacher, she diligently created teaching resources, led and ran courses on raising standards in Welsh, especially in oral work, across Wales for various organisations such as schools, WJEC and numerous conferences.

Nia has recently been a Foundation Phase Oracy Coach as part of the Welsh Government's 'Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers' project.

### 3. The Research

- 3.1. The research into the Language Centres was conducted between October 2019 and March 2020. However, the unprecedented conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic affected the time-scale originally planned for the completion of the work.
- 3.2. Below is a summary by the research team of their findings, based on their visits to each Language Centre during the Autumn Term 2019 and part of the Spring Term 2020.

### 4. The Findings of the Research

#### 4.1. Good practices:

It was a pleasant experience for the Research Team to witness the fact that the pupils present at the Centres during our visits enjoyed being there. The collaboration between members of staff at individual Centres to ensure positive experiences for the pupils attending is to be commended, and it was pleasing to testify to the appreciation of the Headteachers of the schools for the work being undertaken there to equip the pupils with Welsh language skills. It is clear that the pupils attending are making progress in their ability to speak and use the Welsh language - there is no doubt about that. However, the variation that exists within that progress is something that needs further consideration.

## **4.2. Service Structure:**

There are four Primary Language Centres and one Secondary Centre. Although there has been evidence of some recent collaboration across the Centres, they operate as individual centres. As a result, it is felt that there is inconsistency in the provision provided to the county's pupils, and there were examples of the duplication of functions, which could be more tightly controlled. It is believed that this would have a positive influence on the effectiveness and efficiency of the provision.

It was felt that the Centre's staff were not adequately supported on teaching and learning issues, e.g. access to the support of Education Officers, teachers in Professional Learning Communities and GwE Officers.

## **4.3. Admission Procedure:**

The length of time spent in the Centres by the pupils attending them varied. Pupils attended the Primary Centres for twelve weeks, and the Secondary Centre for eight weeks. The procedure for admitting pupils to the Primary Centres was unclear, and it was seen that the procedure reported at the individual Centres varied greatly. Some were there because they were pure latecomers, others were there to get a little boost with their reading and writing skills, but were completely fluent in their spoken language. Others at another Centre had already attended the Centre during the previous academic year, but had returned to school at that time and had received the opportunity to come back. One Centre noted that some children went there as they were "generally weak" academically. There was no specific procedure for setting a baseline for individual learners against which progress could be measured. There was no consistent process across the Primary Centres of checking schools' applications for learners to attend. It was felt when speaking to the staff of the schools sending pupils to the Centres that there was an obvious lack of understanding of the referral procedure and in deciding who was eligible to attend or not. Due to the lack of clarity in the procedure for admitting pupils to the Centre, it is difficult to reach a firm judgement when measuring pupils' progress.

Due to the variation in the conditions of pupil admission to the Centres, this highlights the need for a more differentiated provision, which appropriately challenges the linguistic and educational ability of the attendees.





#### 4.4. Staffing Structure:

There was no clear logic or consistency to the staffing structure of the Language Centres. There is no other example within the County's schools of classes being led by two teachers, but rather, a teacher and an assistant. In two of the Primary Centres, there was a leader and a teacher. At another Centre, one teacher and an assistant (i.e. the pilot scheme), and in the other, a leader and an assistant. In the Secondary Centre, there was a leader and a teacher. Very good practices of effective collaboration were observed in all centres, and no pupil was felt to be at a disadvantage as a result of the varied staffing structure of the Language Centres. Some excellent examples of collaboration between teacher and assistant were witnessed at one primary centre. There were no significant differences observed in the use of assistants and/or teachers across the Centres, with some examples of teachers and assistants taking learning groups at times, or supporting the learning led by another teacher or leader. The teachers' method of grouping and teaching pupils during the day was unclear. There were numerous examples in two teacher Centres or in leader and teacher Centres, of one member of staff taking all the groups for extended periods during the day. It was felt that opportunities were being missed to differentiate on the basis of linguistic ability in order to offer further support or challenge as appropriate.



#### **4.5. Structure of teaching and quality of learning:**

Although Cynllun y Llan was a structured scheme for the Primary Centres, there was significant variation in the way it was used and presented from one site to another. There was variation in what was presented orally - some examples of mutations being delivered naturally and an example of them not being presented at all in another centre. The general feeling, from talking to the Centres' staff, and from observing the learning, was that the Scheme had become dated, and it was felt that basing the entire teaching programme on an imaginary village as in the Scheme, was irrelevant to the experience cycle of those pupils who attended the Language Centres. Certainly, effective immersion techniques were practised at times, but it is felt that there is undoubtedly a real need to update the context in which the language is presented.

A similar scheme, namely the Cefyn Cŵl scheme, exists in the Secondary Centre, but some subject provision is also tailored there, to give learners who attend elements of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig, where themes such as the Welsh Not, the history of the Celtic nations, the history of the language, etc. are addressed. It was felt that this was good practice that should be emulated at the Primary Centres. However, with the Secondary pupils in particular, does their development in their core subjects suffer perhaps as a result of missing out on an extended period of mainstream education input in their schools?

The aim of the Language Centres is to ensure that the pupils who attend them reach Level 2 (Oracy) at the end of their time there in order to cope with the bilingual provision provided back in their schools. Good practice was witnessed within the context of the Pilot Scheme, but as there is no consistent system used as evidence to set a baseline and measure progress, it is difficult to judge whether this is being achieved with each pupil. In addition, as the provision does not sufficiently differentiate between the needs of individual pupils, it is not possible to know for sure how many of those pupils who were pure latecomers achieved Level 2 (Oracy) descriptors in Welsh. The reliability of this data is therefore questioned. However, it can be noted with certainty that all learners make progress and succeed in acquiring some Welsh, but that there is a noticeable variation in that progress for individual pupils in each Centre.

#### **4.6. After-care:**

It was not felt that there was an entirely clear picture of after-care provision as it was not possible to visit during the third term due to the pandemic. A small number of learners that had attended the Centre during the Autumn Term was observed, and it could be seen that following the educational provision in the class proved challenging for some, as did the ability to mix naturally with their peers. Talking to the Centre's staff revealed a vague picture of the procedure for offering after-care following the





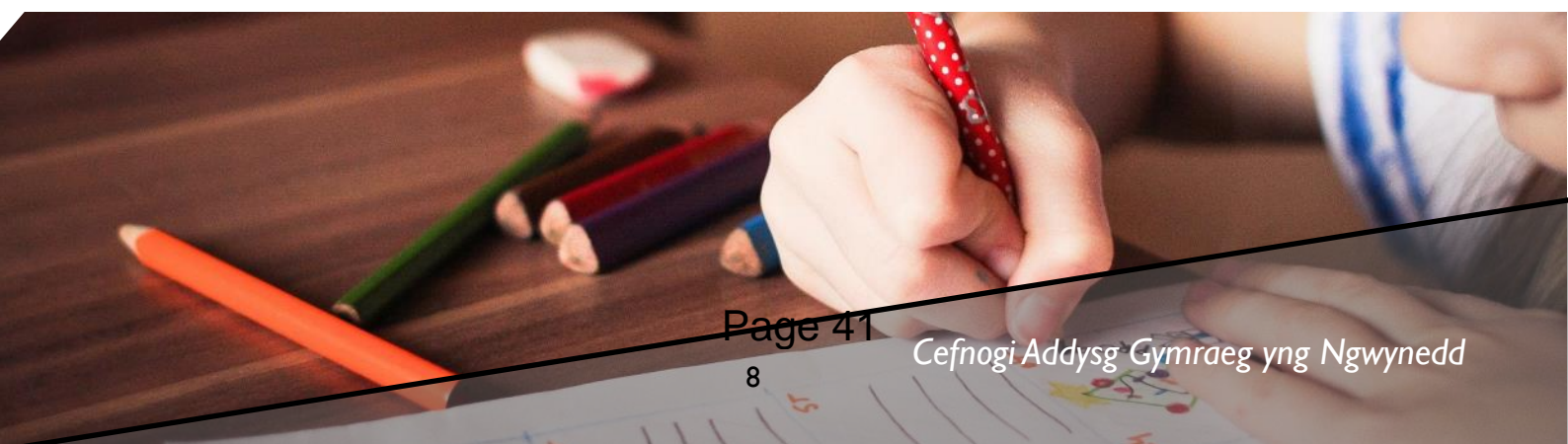


pupils' return to the schools. The Primary Language Centres (as a result of the Cabinet decision of 2 April 2019) had not yet implemented the new procedure of providing after-care for learners in the third term directly themselves, however, up to 20 March 2020, there was no clear plan in place to respond to this new requirement. It is felt that the primary schools could benefit further from the expertise of Language Centre staff by sharing good practice and supporting wider groups of children who may benefit from the additional boost to their oral skills. This would further strengthen partnership working with the primary and secondary schools, and strengthen the sense of ownership in the journey of introducing the language to the pupils. Developing the current after-care to offer support and form potential Intervention Groups in primary schools would have a positive impact on pupils' achievements, and allow them to realise the relevance of the language to their wider educational development, instead of confining it to within the boundaries of the imaginary village of Llanfairgogoch (Cynllun y Llan).

## 5. Fields that need further attention:

It is recommended that the following be carefully considered in order to strengthen existing provision:

1. A clear admission policy and procedure to be established and carefully monitored.
2. The current structure of provision: are there alternative ways to offer the provision that will enable pupils to settle in their schools alongside attending the Language Centres?
3. Reconcile the daily administration of the Centres, e.g. the INSET days of the schools in which the Centres are located, the arrangements and times of the taxis transporting the pupils.
4. Reconcile the procedure for reporting on learners' progress.
5. Share good practice across Centres and schools.
6. Strengthen the relationship with the primary schools to enable further progress in terms of support for language development.
7. Adopt a method of work planning that identifies clear and timely outcomes to facilitate the monitoring of progress.
8. A clear after-care plan.
9. Strengthen Quality Assurance approaches in aiming for excellence.
10. Further consider the current termly scheduling structure to ensure comprehensive provision, which meets the needs of learners and provides value for money.



# Agenda Item 8

Committee	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Title of Report	COVID education grants to support pupils
Date of Meeting	10 June 2020 <sup>1</sup>
Author of Report	Owen Owens, Senior Manager Education Resources Service
Relevant Officer	Garem Jackson, Head of Education
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Cemlyn Rees Williams

## 1. Background

- 1.1 As a result of the COVID pandemic, an **Accelerating Learning Program Grant** has been received by schools to assist pupils.
- 1.2 Although a range of other grants have been available to support schools due to COVID requirements, only the **Accelerating Learning Program Grant** is directly for supporting pupils. Other grants have been for different purposes, for example, supply cover for staff who were off due to COVID requirements, recouping the costs of school adaptations due to COVID requirements, loss of income of secondary school catering service, etc.

## 2. Conditions of Grant

Below is a summary of the grant conditions from the Welsh Government:

### Accelerating Learning Program

- 2.1 *The funding is expected to help schools meet the requirements **of Recruitment, Recovery and Raising Standards: Accelerating Learning Program** announced by the Education Minister on 9 July 2020.*
- 2.2 *During the crisis, it became apparent that many learners have not progressed as far as might be expected in their progress in learning, and some learners are more severely affected than others. This funding enables investment in schools to allow them to recruit and deploy more people to help learners address their needs following the initial COVID-19 crisis and school closures.*

- 2.3 *The primary purpose of the funding is therefore to enable investment in schools to allow them to recruit and deploy more people to help learners address their needs following the initial COVID-19 crisis and the closure of schools.*
- 2.4 *All pupils are eligible for additional support when they return to school in September, although the scope of the support required will vary considerably depending on individual circumstances. As resources are limited, we will prioritize planning the allocation of resources as follows:*

***Priority Groups for Assistance:***

- 2.5 *The funding is targeted at specific areas identified as most vulnerable, as follows:*
1. *Pupils preparing for examinations in the next academic year (namely pupils in years 11, 12 and 13).*
  2. *Vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils, as defined by various approaches.*
  3. *Year 7, due to the disruption in transition from primary to secondary school.*
- 2.6 *These specific cohorts are an indication of what headteachers will consider when distributing support. Although the funding formula is based on specific cohorts of learners, it is expected that the funding will be used to ensure that any learners who need support have the opportunity to receive that support wherever possible. It is therefore not reserved solely for the use of the three priority groups listed in points 1-3, and should be used to allow access to support where needed for children who have suffered the impact of various aspects of the pandemic.*
- 2.7 *As individuals who are not listed in the 3 priority groups will also need support, it is an important principle to allow Headteachers to have autonomy in deciding which groups or individuals they want to help as part of their individual school plans.*

***Support to Provide***

- 2.8 *Curriculum reform remains our top priority for education in Wales. Accordingly, this Program will focus on support for:*
- *Literacy, numeracy and digital competence within a broad and balanced curriculum - for examination years this will include advanced reading and writing skills, higher level maths skills where applicable, and digital competence at an appropriate level and as appropriate ' relevant to learners progressing with their qualifications.*

- *Develop independent learning skills, to enable and motivate learners in all groups to progress more quickly by working more effectively on their own and out of school.*
- *Support and engagement through coaching - in recognition that the most disengaged learners will need training and emotional support as well as help with exam preparation and skills.*

**What the funding should be used to provide:**

2.9 *This grant provides specific financial resources to create new capacity in the education system.*

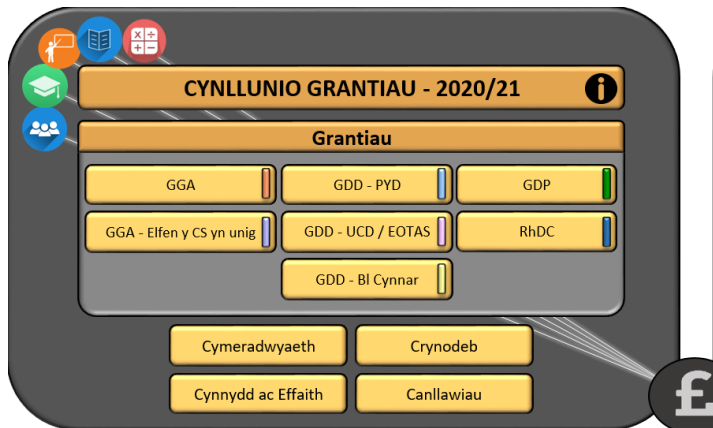
- *Schools may appoint Qualified Teachers including Newly Qualified Teachers, Teaching Assistants and other school support roles (for example roles designed to provide coaching support), in line with the school's understanding of learners' needs.*
- *The new capacity may be full or part time, or an increase in hours for an existing contract where those skills are needed.*
- *New colleagues may work across more than one school where clusters of schools work in a collaborative partnership.*
- *Headteachers may appoint new teachers to the school to release existing teachers who know their pupils best to work with them to accelerate their progress (filling their normal temporary posts).*
- *The skills of new colleagues will need to reflect the needs of groups and learners.*
- *The delivery model within which new colleagues will work will be specific to the needs of the school and its learners.*

**3. How much money have Gwynedd schools received?**

3.1 The Accelerating Learning Program Grant allocation has reached schools in two tranches, September 2020 and March 2021, with the national total allocated being £29 million and £33 million. The total amount of money allocated to Gwynedd schools is approximately £2,220,440. The allocations by school sector are shown in **Appendix 1**

**4. Grant Planning and evaluating impact**

4.1 It is expected that every school will have a spending plan for the grants. To support schools in planning effectively for grant expenditure, GwE has produced a Regional Grant Planning Dashboard.



- 4.2 This is a system that helps schools plan the use of grants including the Accelerating Learning Grant. The Dashboard provides totals of grants awarded to schools in the financial year and links to relevant guidance documents and terms and conditions of grants. There is an evaluation section on the Dashboard for the Headteacher, Governing Body Representative and Improvement Support Advisor to approve the plans. The information in the Dashboard can also be summarized so that it can be shared with governors and the wider school community.
- 4.3 For 2020/21 the use of the Dashboard was optional for schools. Almost all in the primary have started using it, with most secondary schools using the Dashboard and the rest planning using their own templates.
- 4.4 Here is one example of how planning on the Dashboard looks for an individual school:

Enw'r Ysgol	RHAGLEN DYSGU CARLAM (RhDC)					2020/21			Cyfanswm Grant (£) ⚠
	Nifer Disgyblion wedi'u cynnwys	Meysydd Cymorth	Braslun o ddatrasiad cwricwlwm a gynigr	Datrasiadau staffio a gynigr	Math cynhwysedd	Amserlen		Math o wariant	
Carfanau Blaenoriaeth						O	Hyd a+		

The columns and choices are in accordance with the grant guidelines allowing a school to choose from and offer their own narrative about the specific expenditure.

- 4.5 Improvement Support Advisers work with schools to evaluate the impact of the grants. **Once schools have had the opportunity to fully utilize the grant they will be in a more mature position to measure its impact.**

## **5. School Plans**

### **Primary School Accelerating Learning Plans**

- 5.1 All schools have plans for recruiting staff to undertake intervention programs to restore and raise standards.
- 5.2 In practice the schools have used the funding for one, or a mixture of these temporary approaches:
  - Increase the hours of part-time assistants already on the staff of the school
  - Increase the hours of part-time teachers already at the school
  - Recruiting new assistants on a full or part-time basis
  - Recruitment of teachers (supply) full or part time
- 5.3 Yet, it was generally difficult for a few schools to find new assistants and the understandable reluctance and limitations of bubbles made it difficult for a few schools to attract new employees to a school. The main expenditure of the money has therefore been on increasing the hours of internal school staff.
- 5.4 These additional staff or hours were used for the assistants or teachers to either work with specific groups of pupils or to release other members of staff to do this.
- 5.5 In order to identify pupils to be receiving intervention through this program each school identifies their vulnerable pupils and those with needs through normal processes. Nearly all schools also assessed their pupils in early September 2020 and identified pupils where their language and maths skills had slipped. Intervention groups have been set up in almost all schools to provide recovery support for these pupils.
- 5.6 The plans identify a number of different interventions. Many schools have made very good use of GwE Accelerating Learning resources and research into the most effective interventions.

### **Secondary School Accelerating Learning Plans**

- 5.7 In general, the schools have prioritized the funding for specific cohorts of pupils such as pupils preparing for examinations (Yr.11, 12, 13), vulnerable and disadvantaged children, year 7 and any specific groups or individuals who need extra help. Targeted support areas include literacy, numeracy and digital competence, developing independent learning skills and engaging through training.
- 5.8 Schools have been creative in terms of the solutions that have been adopted with one secondary school for example having:

- supported and encouraged identified year 11 pupils to receive additional support during the lock-out period by appointing digital learning coaches to ensure continuity of learning;
- appointed an additional teacher to run literacy and numeracy sessions for specific groups of pupils who needed extra support during the lock-up period;
- appointed a lead for a cross-school Accelerating Learning Program to plan further pupil support and support the SMT with whole-school provision.

5.9 There are other examples where either time has been increased or new assistants / mentors appointed for mentoring and catch-up sessions. The main focus here was to ensure appropriate support and assistance for disaffected pupils during the lock-out period so that they could catch up with peers.

5.10 The use of the grant for targeting post-16 pupils has been similar to the above with the focus on supporting pupils with their learning, with a proportion of the money also being used for standardization and moderation centre assessment grades. Some schools have targeted specific intervention for year 12 and 13 pupils who have been identified for receiving additional support by appointing learning coaches and assistants to support them.

5.11 There is another example of responding to the concern of losing teaching time by adding lessons on the year 12 and 13 timetables when they returned to the school site. This was done by appointing additional staff to teach at KS3 so that the normal KS5 staff could be released and deployed to deliver more AS / A level lessons.

Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee  
 COVID education grants to support pupils  
 10 June 2021

COVID education grants to support pupils

	National amount	Grant	Total Gwynedd Primary Schools	Total Gwynedd All-through Schools	Total Gwynedd Secondary Schools	Total Gwynedd Special Schools	Total Central Services (EOTAS and Nursery)	Total Gwynedd	Notes
1	£29 million	Accelerating Learning Program (September 2020)	£547,178	£68,642	£380,672	£11,138	£2,014	<b>£1,009,644</b>	Money slipping to summer term 2021
2	£33 million	Accelerating Learning Program (March 2021)	£731,852	£76,558	£391,259	£13,141	£134,195	<b>£1,347,005</b>	
3		6 <sup>th</sup> form – extra catch up money		£9,102	£124,734			<b>£133,836</b>	
4	£4.177 million	Accelerating Learning Program for examination years		£12,686	£138,628			<b>£151,314</b>	
5	£4.069 million	Year 11, 12 and 13 Transition Grant		£131,188				<b>£131,188</b>	Summer 2021 Grant



## Scrutiny Draft work programme 2021/22

### EDUCATION AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>10/06/2021</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Welsh Language within Education, including the Language Centres</li><li>• Educational grants to assist pupils</li><li>• School Meals</li></ul>
<b>21/10/2021</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Well-being gap, including<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➢ The effect of covid on <u>the education</u> of all pupils</li><li>➢ Which steps do schools have in place to ensure the well-being of all pupils</li></ul></li><li>• Regeneration Framework</li></ul>
<b>09/12/2021</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unemployment levels and support for people to return to work</li><li>• Education Annual Report</li></ul>
<b>08/02/2022</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support for businesses</li><li>• New Curriculum for Wales, along with outdoor education</li></ul>
<b>31/03/2022</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• North Wales Economic Ambition Board</li><li>• Sustainable Tourism</li></ul>