

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales
Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and
Education Committee
Ymchwiliad i Gynlluniau Strategol Cymraeg mewn Addysg | Inquiry into
Welsh in Education Strategic Plans

WESP 15

Ymateb gan : Bro Morgannwg

Response from : Vale of Glamorgan

Question 1 – What are your views on whether Welsh in Education Strategic Plans are contributing to the outcomes and targets set out in the Welsh Government’s overarching Welsh Medium Education Strategic Plan?

- The WESP contains local targets and planned actions which are determined by local factors and intelligence, targets set can fall short of the ambitious targets set in the Welsh Government’s (WG) Welsh Medium Education Plan (WMEP) of 2010.
- The WESP contribute positively to a few of the overarching targets set in the WG’s WMEP of 2010, however the target of 25% for 2015 in Outcome 1 is ambitious in relation to the local forecast of 16.16% for 2015/16.
- The Strategic Objectives (SOs) in the Welsh Government’s Welsh Medium Education Plan of 2010 are not fully integrated into the WESP requirements.
- The terminology used in the WG’s WMEP of 2010 is inconsistent with some current practice i.e School Effectiveness Framework and in some Councils the Children and Young People’s Partnerships are no longer in existence.

If you believe that WESPs are not contributing sufficiently, how do you think this could be resolved?

- Possibility of the strategic aims in the WMEP being fully synchronised with the requirements of the WESP.
- A more realistic approach to national target setting, perhaps regionalising targets, so that the strategic direction of the WG are reflected in the Target setting outcomes of the local WESP.
- Reference made to the consideration of the wide range of current provision and this is welcomed.

Question 2 – What are your views on whether WESPs are (or have the potential) to deliver the required change at a local authority level (for example delivering provision to meet any increased demand for Welsh medium education)?

- The strategic plans of the Council in relation to education, feed into the overall WESP, dependent on local and national funding, pupil numbers and the number of surplus places.
- Forecasting demand for Welsh Medium provision is based on a number of factors including a parental questionnaire, to determine the strategic planning for provision.

If you believe that WESPs are not, or don't have the potential, to deliver change, how do you think this could be resolved?

- Too early to evaluate the potential to deliver change as the strategic nature of the plan came into force a year ago with one update in November 2014.

Question 3 – What are your views on the arrangements for target setting; monitoring; reviewing; reporting; approving; and ensuring compliance with delivering the requirements for WESPs (and the role of the local authority and the Welsh Government in this regard)?

- Coordination of the WESP in conjunction with the appropriate partners and the wide range of service areas is a significant piece of work in light of the significant reduction in capacity locally.
- Update timescales are extremely tight.

If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

- An appreciation that the accountability for improving standards remains within the local authority, but the reviewing, monitoring and reporting of standards in relation to education performance could be completed on a regional basis, as aspects of school improvement are commissioned regionally.
Other partners contribute centrally, such as FE, URDD, school organisation etc. Therefore, the WESP template could reflect the two distinct areas, with responsibility attributed accordingly.

Question 4 – What are your views on whether WESPs evidence the effective

interaction between the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium education strategy and other relevant policies and legislation*?

(*for example school transport policy; 21st Century Schools programme; A living language: a language for living – Moving forward policy statement; Flying Start; planning policy)

- Including officers and partners from the list above in the WESP Forum is critical to ensure all policies and local legislations are reflected in the outcomes of the WESP, and are modified and updated.
- Attendance at all meetings (twice a year) is good. Participants challenge officers and planned actions are updated and modified.

If you believe there are problems in this area, how do you think they could be resolved?

- Timescales are tight given that the time waiting for feedback on the plans can be a lengthy period. *Time between submission and feedback needs to be shortened.*
- Issues around translation of the plan and updates. *Capacity locally is low, cost is high to commission out to external translators*
- Responses to the initial consultation were poor. *Wider communication to wider stakeholders.*

Question 5 – What are your views on whether the outcomes of WESPs deliver equal outcomes for all pupils, including for example, primary/secondary pupils or children from low income households.

- The plan does not discriminate between groups of children
- The WESP in conjunction with other plans within the Council will monitor the outcomes of all groups of pupils. The Consortium and Council are currently embedding processes with schools through the challenge advisers to monitor effectively the PDG, SEG and WEG plans, which identify opportunities for all pupils to reach their potential.

If you believe that the outcome of WESPs do not deliver equal outcomes, how do you think this could be resolved?

- Currently the WESP does not report on the outcomes of groups of pupils, quality of leadership or the quality of teaching neither 1st or 2nd language, maybe it should. How would this be monitored? Monitoring of standards and provision could be scrutinised and reported on a regional basis; the information is available from the

challenge advisers' reports on individual schools in all phases.

Question 6 – If you had to make one recommendation to the Welsh Government from all the points you have made, what would that recommendation be?

- Appreciation that there is a wide range yet complementary reporting requirements of the WESP across the Council and regional services therefore a recommendation to split the WESP into two templates, one which could be reported on locally and one, namely standards and training which could be reported on regionally.

Question 7 – Do you have any other comments or issues you wish to raise that have not been covered by the specific questions?

Aesthetic note

The WESP format is difficult to manage when updating. Either the template needs to be altered to ensure the updates reflect the planned actions and current practice, to make it a more accessible to the wider audience or permission granted for it to be adapted locally