

Bridgend County Borough Council
Welsh in Education Forum
Terms of reference – (September 2022 to 31 August 2024)

1. Introduction

1.1 Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) is committed to the promotion of Welsh language skills to support bilingualism, underpinned by the principles of inclusion and equal opportunity.

1.2 In 2017, Welsh Government launched Cymraeg 2050, outlining a commitment to achieve one million Welsh speakers across Wales by 2050. The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) plays a vital role in supporting the Welsh Government's long-term plan for the Welsh language. BCBC has been set a target by the Welsh Government to increase the number of Year 1 learners receiving Welsh-medium education from 7.6% (PLASC 2019-2020) to between 14% and 18% within the next 10 years. BCBC's new WESP is due to commence in September 2022.

1.3 To assist in reaching this target, BCBC will:

- promote and maintain strong links with pre-school Welsh-medium providers;
- promote the benefits of bilingualism to parents to support the dissemination of information to parents and carers across the county borough;
- facilitate effective transition through educational phases and stages;
- support those pupils in English-medium schools to be given the opportunity to sit an accredited examination in Welsh at the end of Key Stage 4;
- support children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN) to receive linguistic equality of opportunity in terms of Welsh-medium education;
- facilitate access to high-quality teacher training to support the development of the Welsh language;
- ensure that every post is subject to an assessment to determine Welsh-language requirements prior to recruitment; and
- provide opportunities to nurture Welsh language skills.

2. Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

2.1 The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 introduced a statutory obligation for local authorities to prepare and submit Welsh in

Education Strategic Plans (WESPs) to Welsh Government. The purpose of the WESP is to:

- make local authorities accountable to Welsh Government for planning Welsh-medium and Welsh-language education provision;
- illustrate the current situation, outline appropriate activities, and demonstrate improvement; and
- demonstrate clear progress over three years in each local authority and consortium area towards achieving the WESP targets.

2.2 The WESP is aligned to the targets set out in Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers. The local authority is required to report to the Welsh Government on progress made in meeting its WESP targets. This is in the form of an annual review report.

- Outcome 1: More Nursery children/three-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh
- Outcome 2: More Reception class children/five-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh
- Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another
- Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh
- Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school
- Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with ALN in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018
- Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh.

2.3 The WESP aligns with local and national priorities in the following ways:

- BCBC's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2021-2026 and the WESP outline how they will raise the profile of the Welsh Language and culture. The WESP is referred to within this strategy and the lead for the strategy within BCBC is a member of WEF.
- The Welsh Government's Welsh Language Act 1993 and the WESP share the principle, so far as is appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable that the Welsh and English languages should be

treated equally in the conduct of public business. The Head of Welsh in Welsh Government's Education Planning Branch is a member of Bridgend's WEF.

- Central South Consortium Welsh-medium education policy. Central South Consortium policy aligns with the WESP in the drive for learners to become increasingly bilingual and for the workforce to be upskilled with their Welsh language skills. The Strategic Lead for Welsh at Central South Consortium is a member of Bridgend's WEF.

2.4 The WESP is a Bridgend County Borough Council Corporate Priority and features within the Education and Family Support Business Plan. The Corporate Director Education and Family Support provides regular updates in respect of the WESP's progress to the Corporate Management Board.

3. Welsh in Education Forum (WEF)

3.1 Welsh Government also sets out a requirement for each local authority to work in partnership with its Welsh in Education Forum (WEF) in the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of its WESP.

3.2 The WEF provides a formal channel of communication between BCBC, its maintained schools and other partner organisations that have an interest in Welsh-medium education in Bridgend on matters relating to the WESP.

3.3 In particular, the WEF will:

- act as a consultative group for the development of the WESP;
- support the implementation of the WESP;
- advise on the provision of Welsh-medium education and act as a consultative group for further developments; and
- provide advice to the local authority in respect of the WESP.

3.4 The WEF's terms of reference will be reviewed on a biennial (that is, every two years) basis.

4. Collective responsibility

4.1 The WEF assumes that all those attending meetings agree by their presence that they will:

- listen to and respect the views and experiences of other people contributing, allowing others to have equal opportunity and time to share their opinions when contributions are asked for;
- challenge ideas not individuals or their opinions and respect all present as professionals in their field; and

- agree that any recommendation reached by most of the group, once made, is to be accepted as the recommendation of the forum, although a request to the chair can be made to record a different opinion.

5. Membership

5.1 Membership of the WEF shall be as follows:

BCBC officers

- Group Manager - Learner Support (Chair)
- Corporate Director - Education and Family Support
- Cabinet Member (Education)
- Finance Officer
- Principal Advisor Employee Relations
- Schools Programme Manager
- Group Manager - Business Support
- Group Manager - School Support
- Early Years and Childcare Manager
- Family Information Service and Childcare Development Officer
- Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager
- WESP Coordinator

BCBC schools

- Welsh-medium headteacher representatives x 2
- English-medium headteacher representatives x 2
- Welsh-medium chair of governors representative x 1
- English-medium chair of governors representative x 1
- Welsh-medium teacher representative x 1
- English-medium teacher representative x 1

Partners

- Welsh for Adults (Glamorgan) representative x 1
- Menter Bro Ogwr representative x 1
- Mudiad Meithrin Cymru representative x 1
- Central South Consortium representative x 1
- Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RhaG) representative x 1
- Urdd Gobaith Cymru representative x 1
- Further education representative x 1
- Higher education representative x 1
- Welsh Government representative x 1

6. Sub-groups

6.1 The WEF has agreed to establish several sub-groups to support the delivery of the WESP. The promotion of Welsh-medium education, and how demand

can be stimulated to achieve the targets outlined in the WESP, as well as the Council's Welsh Language Strategy 2021-2026 will be key considerations.

- 6.2 All sub-groups will be reviewed and agreed at the meeting of the WEF in autumn term 2022. Any sub-group established through the WEF will be supported by its own, individual terms of reference. Each sub-group will meet at least a fortnight before the WEF and all minutes will be circulated with the WEF agenda in advance of the WEF.
- 6.3 The chair of each sub-group will be agreed by the WEF and will be expected to provide regular updates at each WEF meeting.
- 6.4 The current sub-groups of the WEF are as follows:
- Welsh Language Steering Sub-Group
 - Welsh-medium Childcare Sub-Group
 - Training and Apprenticeships Sub-Group
 - Geographical Assessment Sub-Group
 - School Modernisation Capital Investment Sub-Group
 - Welsh-medium Secondary School Band C Provision Sub-Group
- 6.5 WEF members will contribute to the promotion of the Welsh language and Welsh-medium and English-medium education through the sub-group which will be established in autumn term 2022.

7. Term of office

- 7.1 Each member of the WEF shall be appointed on a biennial basis (that is, in the first instance, for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2024).
- 7.2 Members may be re-appointed at their term of office.

8. Removal of members

- 8.1 Membership shall end when a WEF member ceases to hold the office for which they initially became eligible for appointment.

9. Meetings

- 9.1 The WEF will meet three times a year, once each school term. Arrangement of sub-group meetings can more flexible. However, where possible, meetings should align with the termly WEF.
- 9.2 Additional meetings may be called, if necessary, at the discretion of the chairperson. At least five working days' notice of a meeting of the WEF will be given in writing to members, except in the case of an emergency.
- 9.3 Papers will be provided to WEF members five working days in advance of each meeting.
- 9.4 All meetings of the WEF, and its sub-groups, will be supported by appropriate translation facilities.
- 9.5 BCBC will provide the secretariat function for all meetings.

9.6 Meetings will be cancelled at the discretion of the chairperson if necessary.

10. Appointment of the chairperson

10.1 The chairperson of the WEF will be the Group Manager (Learner Support) who holds strategic responsibility for the WESP.

10.2 If the Group Manager (Learner Support) is not available, the meeting will be chaired by the Corporate Director (Education and Family Support).

11. Confidentiality

11.1 Information of a confidential nature may, on occasion, be given to members of the WEF to assist their understanding of the matter under discussion.

11.2 Members of the WEF must observe the confidentiality of such information.

12. Alternative members

12.1 In the event of being unable to attend, an appropriate substitute may be nominated to represent their respective sectors.

13. Other members

13.1 Officers of the local authority and expert advisors will be invited to attend meetings to provide support and advice as required. Others may be invited with observer status if agreed by the chairperson.

14. Quoracy

14.1 This is not applicable as the WEF is not a decision-making body.