

Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) Tool

Stage 1 – Information Gathering	
NOTE: As you complete this tool you will be asked for evidence to support your views . Please see Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance for more information on data sources.	
Proposal Name:	Home-to-School/College Transport Policy
Department	Education, Young People and Early Years
Service Director	Lindsay Harvey (Corporate Director - Education, Young People and Early Years)
Officer Completing the WLIA	Robin Davies (Group Manager - Strategy, Performance and Support)
Email	Robin.davies@bridgend.gov.uk
Phone	01656 754881
Brief Description	The proposal changes to the current Home-to-School/College Transport Policy.
Date	01/03/2024
Please outline who this proposal affects? (Service Users, Employees, Wider Community)	Service users
What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?	To implement a revised Home-to-School/College Transport Policy. The revised policy provides protection for pupils attending Welsh-medium schools to ensure the local authority is meeting its statutory duty under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032
Who will benefit / Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? If so, list them here.	The policy proposals do not change the current eligibility of pupils attending Welsh-medium schools in the borough. Rather, the proposed changes to the proposed eligibility for English-medium

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	<p>pupils could make the option of a Welsh-medium education more attractive for parents/carers, for their child. The local authority's statutory duty to support and promote the Welsh language is contained in the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and is also enshrined in the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008.</p>
<p>Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s) concerned</p>	<p>The 2021 Census figures regarding the Welsh language show a decrease in the percentage of Welsh speakers across Wales to 17.8%.</p> <p>In Bridgend – the percentage of the population who can speak Welsh decreased from 9.7% to 9.2%. N</p> <p>Numerically, this was a reduction from 13,103 members of the public being able to speak Welsh at the 2011 census to 13,043 in 2021.</p>
<p>Other relevant data or research</p>	<p>To support Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers' strategy, Welsh Government has set Bridgend County Borough Council a target to increase the percentage of learners taught through the medium of Welsh from c.8% to between 14% - 18% by 2032 (based on Pupil Level Annual School Census data of Year 1 pupils 2019-2020). This is in accordance with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019.</p> <p>Currently, in Welsh-medium schools in Bridgend, there are 162 pupil places available for Reception pupils. The local authority has set a target of 300 Reception places being available for Welsh-medium pupils by the end of the plan period, which is an additional 138 additional pupil places. The 300 Reception places equate to ten forms of entry, and the aim is to ensure those places are filled.</p>

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This Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 sets out the local authority's vision for the next ten years to increase and improve the planning of Welsh-medium education. It will build on progress made during our previous WESP (2017-2022) and set out the actions we will take to achieve our targets. These include:

- increasing Welsh-medium sessional childcare places (creating potential for 176 additional sessional sessions) by establishing four new Welsh-medium childcare hubs through the childcare offer capital grant;
- increasing the number of Welsh-medium Nursery school places, through the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme by expanding two of our Welsh-medium schools during the first five years of the plan;
- taking forward commitments made in Cabinet to establish a one-form-entry Welsh-medium provision in Porthcawl and a one-form-entry provision in Bridgend South-East which would be subject to Cabinet approval;
- scoping/exploring options to relocate and expand Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd to a 3-19 school;
- developing a clear and robust programme for delivering Welsh-medium latecomer provision, so that learners entering the Welsh-medium sector at a later stage (Key Stage 2 or Key Stage 3) are able to follow a course of intensive immersion learning before continuing on their education journey in a Welsh-medium school; and
- continuing to work collaboratively with our Welsh Education Forum and relevant sub-groups to continually review and improve how we provide our parents and guardians with

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	information about Welsh-medium education and the opportunities it brings to becoming bilingual.
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Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

In this section you need to consider the impact, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement. This is to ensure that the opportunities for people who choose to live their lives and access services through the medium of Welsh are not inferior to what is afforded to those choosing to do so in English, in accordance with the requirement of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note there is a separate impact assessment for Equality and Socio-Economic duty that must also be completed for policy proposals. Remember that effects that are positive for some groups could be detrimental to others - even among Welsh language groups. Consider the effects on different groups. For example, a proposal may be beneficial to Welsh learners, but not to Welsh speakers.

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</p> <p>e.g. staff, residents and visitors The rights of Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh when dealing with the council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	Neutral but potentially positive	<p>All correspondence issued in relation to the operation of the Council's Home to School/College Transport Policy will continue to be published in Welsh with the Welsh appearing first.</p> <p>The consultation on the policy proposals was provided bilingually and face-to-face meetings</p>	<p>At present (June 2024) 26% of primary school pupils eligible for big bus transport (as the main transport mechanism offered by the local authority) are transported to Welsh-medium schools and 61% are transported to Welsh-medium secondary schools.</p> <p>Following the implementation of this policy if accepted by Cabinet, this is estimated to increase to 31% for primary school pupils and to be</p>	<p>Ensure all correspondence and information on the local authority's home-to-home-to-school transport contracts is available bilingually.</p> <p>Encourage school transport operators to appoint Welsh-speaking staff where possible on school transport services, especially to</p>

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		<p>were held with the public and offered bilingually.</p> <p>All bus passes provided to pupils are provided bilingually.</p> <p>The policy proposals seek to maintain the status quo regarding the home-to-school transport offer for pupils attending Nursery education, statutory education and Post-16 education, in that pupils attending their nearest suitable Welsh-medium school are able to benefit from free home-to-school transport where they live over the policy distances of 1.5 miles for Nursery pupils, 2 miles for primary school pupils and 3 miles for secondary school pupils.</p> <p>For pupils attending English-medium schools the policy proposal does</p>	<p>maintained at 61% for secondary school pupils.</p>	<p>those serving our Welsh-medium schools</p>
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		<p>not support Nursery or Post-16 pupils with home-to-school transport. Therefore, there is greater potential for parents/carers to consider a Welsh-medium education for their child given the stronger home-to-school transport policy offer.</p> <p>With pupils continuing to travel together on school transport buses to their nearest Welsh-medium schools, this will continue to allow the communal use of the Welsh language on the journey to and from school amongst pupils.</p>		
Stage 2 – Impact Assessment				
Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?				
	Does the proposal have any positive,	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or

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	negative or neutral impacts?	neutral impact on the Welsh language.		better contribute to positive impacts?												
<p>Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers</p> <p>e.g Welsh-Medium Education / Study Opportunities. Links with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy / BCBC Five Year Welsh</p>	<p>Neutral but potentially positive</p>	<p>The local authority has four Welsh-medium primary schools and one Welsh-medium secondary school.</p> <p>The policy proposals seek to maintain the status quo regarding the home-to-school transport offer for pupils attending Nursery education, statutory education and Post-16 education, in that pupils attending their nearest suitable Welsh-medium school are able to benefit from free home-to-school transport where they live over the policy distances of 1.5 miles for Nursery pupils, 2 miles for primary school pupils and 3 miles for secondary school pupils.</p> <p>For pupils attending English-medium schools</p>	<p>The numbers of full-time Nursery places currently applying being applied for in Welsh-medium schools in Bridgend is higher than at Reception. This is potentially to do with the closer proximity of English-medium primary schools of which there are 40 in the borough against the 4 Welsh-medium primary schools (see table below for September 2024 intake)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>School</th> <th>First choice Full-time Nursery applications</th> <th>First choice Reception applications</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Ysgol Cynwyd Sant</td> <td>42</td> <td>21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr</td> <td>56</td> <td>41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ysgol Gyradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd</td> <td>21</td> <td>18</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	School	First choice Full-time Nursery applications	First choice Reception applications	Ysgol Cynwyd Sant	42	21	Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr	56	41	Ysgol Gyradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd	21	18	<p>As the local authority has a generous policy offer for Nursery transport of eligibility over 1.5 miles against that of Reception of 2 miles, this may influence choice of Welsh-medium education at Nursery but may greater influence the choice of English-medium education at Reception.</p> <p>The proposed policy aims to address this risk by providing the offer of transport for Nursery pupils to Welsh-medium schools over 1.5 miles from home, to school, but not to English-medium schools. This may ensure early commitment by parents/carers of their child accessing a Welsh-medium Nursery place with greater likelihood of</p>
School	First choice Full-time Nursery applications	First choice Reception applications														
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		<p>the policy proposal does not support Nursery or Post-16 pupils with home-to-school transport. Therefore, there is greater potential for parents/carers to consider a Welsh-medium education for their child given the stronger home-to-school transport policy offer.</p> <p>Therefore, this policy proposal encourages education through the medium of Welsh and may therefore increase the overall numbers of pupils in our Welsh-medium schools. This will support the targets set by Welsh Government and contained within the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032</p>	<p>Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sgêr</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>that child remaining in Welsh-medium education.</p> <p>in terms of adherence to the Welsh Language Measure, the Council must treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.</p> <p>The new policy proposes a positive treatment of the Welsh language by supporting pupils at both Nursery and Post-16 where no support for English-medium pupils would be available.</p>
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	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</p> <p>e.g. status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work and in the community</p> <p>Actively encourage and promote the use of our services in Welsh to see an increase in demand over time.</p>	<p>Neutral or potentially positive</p>	<p>The local authority believes that the policy proposals create the right conditions for new pupils of all ages to embrace the Welsh language from Nursery through to Post-16 education.</p> <p>The more generous offer for home-to-school transport provision offered by the policy is not expected to discourage parents from applying for Welsh-medium school places.</p> <p>Rather, the policy proposals seek to provide a strong Welsh-medium school transport offer to ensure the take up and continuum of Welsh-medium education.</p>	<p>The local authority has monitored over many years the loss of Welsh-medium pupils to English-medium schools due to the proximity of those schools and the equivalent policy offer for home-to-school transport. While numbers are relatively small, there is broad agreement among Bridgend's Welsh Education Forum members that if a Welsh-medium Nursery pupil is lost to an English-medium school, the likelihood of that pupil re-entering Welsh-medium education in the future is significantly reduced. Therefore, the improved home-to-school transport policy offer for Nursery pupils in particular, supports the continuum of Welsh-medium education through Nursery, into statutory education and then into Post-16 where there would also be a strong policy offer favouring Welsh-medium education but not those pupils wishing to pursue an English-medium education.</p>	<p>The local authority works with WEF partners to support the delivery of its communication strategy promoting the Welsh language and the benefits of a Welsh language education. Significant progress has been made since the inception of the WEF. The local authority will continue to look to support and communicate the importance of Welsh language and Welsh-medium education with WEF partners under the auspices of local authority's WESP 2022-2032.</p> <p>The local authority will monitor any future amendments to the</p>

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		<p>This helps ensure that the local authority is able to meet its duty under the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 to promote Welsh-medium education.</p> <p>In addition, the introduction of the proposal may result in potential growth in demand for Welsh-medium school places as the critical home-to-school transport support for non-statutory Nursery pupils living over 1.5 miles ensures that the risk of these pupils drifting into English-medium schools due to a comparable is mitigated against.</p> <p>If these benefits are realised through the implementation of this policy offer, this would potentially positively</p>		<p>Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 by Welsh Government following its review of its learner travel policy and arrangements. However, it is unclear what, if any, recommendations made will directly impact the Welsh language.</p> <p>However Welsh Government has stated that in making the recommendations, they have been developed to align with current legislative commitments and financial constraints.</p> <p>The actions set out by Welsh Government will be overseen by a cross-departmental working group to ensure full engagement with the range of policy colleagues with an interest in this cross portfolio issue including</p>
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		<p>impact on the local authority's WESP targets and its desire to increase the number of Welsh language speakers in Bridgend and to grow Welsh-medium education and Welsh language opportunities throughout the borough.</p>	<p>transport, education, Welsh language, health and rural affairs.</p> <p>Local authority officers did consider further supporting Welsh-medium pupils accessing their nearest school through a further reduction in the policy distance for Nursery, pupils of statutory school age and for Post-16 pupils when considering a range of policy options. However, as the rationale for the policy change has been to progress required Medium-term financial efficiencies and reduce overall home-to-home-to-school transport spend, it was not possible to propose a policy offer that would likely significantly increase the cost to the local authority of the</p>
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				provision of free home-to-school transport.
Stage 2 – Impact Assessment Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?				
	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Compliance with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards e.g increasing or reducing the Council's ability to deliver services through the Medium of Welsh.	Positive	The consultation exercise and this Welsh Language Impact Assessment have been completed to achieve and assist with compliance with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards and responsibilities.	The policy proposal would not apply equally to Welsh-medium and English-medium pupils. Pupils in Nursery and Post-16 Welsh schools would maintain eligibility for free home-to-home-to-school transport but those in English-medium schools would not retain any eligibility.	Greater promotion of Welsh-medium schools across the Borough. Promotion of the home-to-school transport policy offer available for those wishing to consider a Welsh-medium education for their child.

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<p>Consider the rights of Welsh speakers to use Welsh when dealing with the Council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>		<p>With particular reference to Standard 90 (as applicable to the Council), this states: When you (the Council) formulate a new policy, or review or revise an existing policy, the council must consider how the policy could be formulated (or how an existing policy could be changed) so that the policy decision would not have adverse effects, or so that it would have decreased adverse effects, on - (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.</p>		
<p>Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language</p>	<p>Neutral or potentially positive</p>	<p>The new policy proposes a positive treatment of the Welsh language by supporting pupils at both Nursery and Post-16 where no support for</p>	<p>At present (June 2024) 26% of primary school pupils eligible for big bus transport (as the main transport mechanism offered by the local authority) are transported to Welsh-medium schools and 61% are</p>	<p>Greater promotion of Welsh-medium schools across the Borough. Promotion of the home-to-school transport policy</p>

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		<p>English-medium pupils would be available.</p>	<p>transported to Welsh-medium secondary schools.</p> <p>Following the implementation of this policy if accepted by Cabinet, this is estimated to increase to 31% for primary school pupils and to be maintained at 61% for secondary school pupils.</p> <p>Only Post-16 pupils attending Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd would be eligible for free school transport in future and those attending the only faith secondary school in Bridgend, that is Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School.</p>	<p>offer available for those wishing to consider a Welsh-medium education for their child</p>
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Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal

Having listed actions in section 2 which may mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts – please record below which ones you will imbed into the policy proposal and who will be responsible for them.

Also consider is the proposal necessary? Would it be possible to meet demand without any new developments? Could other existing provision be used? Where should the development be?

What are you going to do?	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible?
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The Council will continue to adhere to The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, and work towards achieving the goals of Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 vision by promoting the Welsh language.	Ongoing	Corporate Director - Education, Early Years and Young People
Continue to promote Welsh-medium education with WEF partners	Ongoing	WESP Co-ordinator
If the policy is approved by Cabinet we will promote the home-to-school transport policy offer for those wishing to consider the benefits of a Welsh-medium education for their child.	From October 2024 to August 2025	School Transport Team Schools WEF partners
If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible to implement, please explain why. Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning.		
What was identified?	Why is it not possible?	
n/a	n/a	

Stage 4 – Review

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For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not, you are required to forward this assessment to Welsh Language services – WLS@bridgend.gov.uk and the Consultation and Engagement team – consultation@bridgend.gov.uk in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable Welsh language considerations wherever possible. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below in collaboration with the relevant departments.

Welsh Language Services Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback
Consultation Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consultation

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Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

How and who will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?

If the policy proposals are accepted following the public consultation and approval by Cabinet, the local authority will monitor the impact of the revised policy on the take-up of Welsh-medium places at each statutory admission round, through the monitoring of in-year transfer admissions to Welsh-medium schools compared to English-medium schools and to the number of pupils on local authority provided home-to-school transport.

The local authority will continue to monitor and evaluate the effect of its Home-to-School Transport Policy in relation to both its duty to promote Welsh-medium education under the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 and its impact and effect on the Bridgend WESP 2022-2032 with WEF partners.

This will be conducted through the collection and analysis of relevant data, engagement with key stakeholders and reporting through the Council's democratic processes such as our Scrutiny committees. The progression of our WESP target in particular the increase in the number of Year 1 pupils taught through the medium of Welsh in Bridgend, will in particular, be an important metric in any future evaluation.

Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment, to include some of the main positive and negative impacts along with an overview of actions taken since the impact assessment to better contribute to more positive impacts.

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The proposal seeks to introduce revision to the current Home-to-School Transport Policy namely maintain eligibility for Welsh-medium pupils at Nursery and at Post-16 for free local authority provided home-to-school transport while removing this eligibility for those pupils attending English-medium schools.

The eligibility distance for Nursery is maintained at 1.5 miles from home, to school. For pupils of statutory school age, the distances are the same as the statutory distances laid down in the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008.



The local authority will continue to accept parental choice providing mainstream English, Welsh and faith school places.

Any policy change can only be implemented from September 2025 at the earliest.

The assessment has identified that there is a possibility that as the policy proposals maintain the current policy offer for Welsh-medium pupils it will therefore have at least a neutral impact on parents/carers considering a Welsh-medium education for their child. However, it is hoped that the policy offer will go further and promote the Welsh-language, increasing the take-up of the Welsh-medium education as the offer of free home-to-school transport for English-medium pupils at Nursery and at Post-16 is removed.

Stage 7 – Sign off			
Name of Officer completing WLIA	Robin Davies	Service Director name:	Lindsay Harvey (Corporate Director Education, Early Years and Young People)
Position	Group Manager (Strategy Performance and Support)	I recommend that the proposal: (Highlight decision)	Is implemented with no amendments
			Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined

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			Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language
Signature		Service Director Signature	
Date	01/03/2024	Date	01/03/2024