



YSGOL  
DYFFRYN  
CONWY

# Polisi Iaith Language Policy



## **The School's Vision within the National Context**

The school's vision is to ensure that every pupil develops to be proficient bilingually, so as to be able to play a full part in the bilingual society of which they are a part. In the context of the Welsh language, great emphasis is on ensuring linguistic progression for all pupils from Primary to Secondary and that there are opportunities for latecomers to cultivate the basic skills of bilingualism.

To support this vision and in accordance with Conwy County Council's Welsh Language Education Strategy 2022-32; and the Welsh Government's, **Welsh Language in Education Scheme 2022-32** we as a school aim to promote the Welsh language and make it an integrated part of school life.

"Conwy County Borough Council has a vision to ensure that all pupils in the county have fluent and confident linguistic skills in Welsh and English. We want to ensure that the children and young people of the county have every opportunity to be full members of the bilingual / multilingual society of which they are a part so that they wish to use the language within the family, in the communities and in the workplace. We as an authority are committed to the aspirations of the Welsh Government to create one million Welsh speakers by 2050. We will contribute to this vision by increasing the numbers receiving Welsh medium education as well as inspiring and encouraging the pride of the county's children and young people in the Welsh language, its heritage and culture." (Strategic Plan for Welsh in Conwy education 2023).

The Government has recognized in the **Welsh Language in Education Scheme 2022-32** that there are significant challenges to be faced in the traditional Welsh communities, such as in Conwy and outlines their strategy to try to address this. It is therefore our responsibility to respond to these challenges as an educational institution, and to protect the Welsh language.

This Policy outlines the school's medium of learning and teaching, from the point of view of Welsh and English and it is the responsibility of all members of the teaching staff to implement this policy.

## **School Background**

Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy is from September 2023 designated as a Category 3 school which is a Welsh Medium School and offers a wide range of Learning and Experience Areas through the medium of Welsh. Learners who come to the School in Year 7 in 2023 will receive at least 70% of their school activities (curricular and extra-curricular) in Welsh. The area is naturally Welsh.

A diverse cross-section of pupils is admitted to the school each year.

- (a) Pupils from homes where Welsh is the language of the home.
- (b) Pupils from homes where English is the language of the home.
- (c) Pupils from homes where both languages are spoken in the household.
- (d) Pupils from homes where Welsh/English and other language(s) are spoken in the home.

By now most pupils transferring from primary have received Welsh primary education. Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy is fed by category 3 schools - Welsh medium, except for Ysgol Glan Conwy and Ysgol Talhaiarn. So, there is a

natural progression in Welsh when transitioning from KS2-KS3 in most cases. There are also very few latecomers who arrive during the transition period and during KS3 and KS4. There are immersion arrangements for them. The school's current position is therefore a strong one considering the linguistic patterns of the past and the local and national vision for the future.

## **General Statement**

Welsh is a core subject for everyone at the school and is taught up to GCSE and A level in the mother tongue. We aim to provide effective bilingual education, so that the experiences gained through the medium of Welsh and English, rather than through the medium of one language only, will broaden a children's horizons, so that they will be at advantage compared to a monolingual pupil. We therefore aim to ensure that every pupil across the subjects, regardless of their linguistic background or ability, develop into pupils who can express themselves bilingually, ready for the future workforce.

## **School Ethos**

We believe that it is our duty as a school to protect the Welsh ethos which is inherent to the area and to deliberately promote the Welsh dimension in the Curriculum. In order to promote Welsh culture and create a Welsh ethos, the Welsh language is given a prominent pride of place both visually and audibly around the school. A prominent place is given to the language:

1. In all the Curricular and social aspects of the school.
2. In the morning services and the tutorial periods.
3. Visually around the school such as official bilingual signs and bilingual signs on notice boards.
4. Using the Welsh language as a means of informal communication around the school. All correspondence to parents is sent bilingually.
5. Use of the Welsh language is ensured with the public and visitors to the school, on the telephone or at reception.
6. Welsh is used in formal evenings and in announcements and correspondence to parents where this is practically possible.
7. Awareness of Welsh heritage and culture is promoted by offering activities in the school and beyond such as activities and skills week in order to promote the use of the Welsh language socially, which marks the importance and status of the language.

## **Curricular Aspects**

### **Welsh and English as subjects**

All pupils are expected to study Welsh and English up to the end of year 11 and sit the appropriate examinations in both subjects at the end of the courses. Immersion pupils and late arrivals will also take a first language Welsh examination.

### **Language Medium – KS3**

A natural linguistic progression is ensured from Key Stage 2, as well as introducing elements in both languages to every child in every subject. The aim is for Welsh to be the main teaching medium in KS3, but the pupils' proficiency in both languages is protected and English is given an appropriate place in some work units and bilingual leaflets where this is relevant. The school also recognizes the importance of translanguaging and the pupils' ability to move from one language to another. Discussions during Key Stage 3 to teach Mathematics and/or Science will be bilingual (ensuring that this remains within the requirements of ensuring that at least 70% of the Teaching is through the medium of Welsh). Bilingual support can be provided to pupils and parents with homework.

### **Language Medium – KS4**

In years 10 and 11 all subjects are offered through the medium of Welsh with an option to study some optional subjects in both languages. The pupil is advised to continue in the medium he was taught in KS3. Access to copies of examination papers in both languages is possible by registering for examinations through the medium of Welsh.

### **Language Medium – Year 12/13**

The aim is to ensure a continuation of the previous linguistic balance, and the teaching medium will reflect the previous teaching if the resources allow it in the most suitable subjects and groups. The school collaborates in partnership with Ysgol y Creuddyn and LINC Conwy to expand pupils' choice and try to protect minority subjects in Welsh/Bilingual.

### **Provision for ALN pupils**

The school's ALN Co-Ordinator will be in contact with the departments and inspect the pupils' linguistic provision and offer the support of assistants in the lessons.

### **Primary Secondary Contact**

The school has a good partnership with the Welsh Language in Education Team of Officers who work for the authority.

### **Welsh Language Education Scheme, Conwy**

The school is represented on the sub-panels of the strategy. The school works together with the wider community through the Conwy Language Forum (Menter Iaith, Yr Urdd, Young Farmers). In addition, partnerships are held with other organizations/agencies e.g. Conwy Libraries

### **Primary Secondary**

The school works closely with the catchment area's primary schools in order to develop and promote the Welsh and English languages.

### **Staffing and Recruitment**

- The Welsh language will be identified as essential when advertising jobs within the school.

- If there is a lack or concern in terms of recruiting staff, consideration will be given to identifying the Welsh language as advantageous depending entirely on the job in question and the responsibilities.
- Every effort is made by the school to appoint confident bilingual staff.

### **Immersion Plan**

- There is an established scheme in place at Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy to prepare learners during Year 5 and 6 from English-medium primary schools to convert to receive their Secondary education through the medium of Welsh at Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy.
- If there is a class of immersion learners, they will receive linguistic immersion lessons weekly during year 5 and 6 (at the Primary School) and spend time during June and July of their 6th year at Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy.
- They are taught by Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy teachers including an immersion teacher.
- Before deciding to join the scheme, the parents of the "immersion learner" are invited to a meeting with the Headteacher and the Scheme Coordinator to discuss what is expected of them as well as of their children.
- The "learners" timetable will be specially adapted to develop their language and ability / understanding of the work.
- When transferring to the School in Year 7, if the learners need to continue with the linguistic support, they will be taught together and receive support from an immersion teacher / teacher.

### **Guidelines for teachers regarding the Welsh language**

#### **Main Aim**

The school's aim in establishing and implementing a language policy across the curriculum is to ensure that the linguistic experiences provided to pupils are consistent and also consistent within lessons, across subjects and key stages. In addition, this policy should reinforce the school's philosophy of developing pupils who can communicate naturally and confidently in Welsh and English and possess the linguistic skills that will enable them to gain access to the bilingual workplace and to fulfill their responsibilities and aspirations as adults.

Language is a means of organizing and categorizing experiences (as well as a means of communication) and we should be aware of the linguistic process that enables a pupil to access information and understanding. All teachers, regardless of their subject, are language teachers and are expected to be active in their role to develop the pupils' linguistic proficiency orally, when writing, and when reading. In addition, all teachers have a responsibility to use well spoken and written language patterns in Welsh and English and to pass these patterns on to pupils.

We aim to ensure that the learners in our care develop into confident bilingual learners and that they are able to:

- communicate clearly and with confidence orally, using a well spoken language, a rich vocabulary and avoiding slang;
  - communicate clearly and with confidence in writing for different situations and purposes;
  - read confidently and demonstrate an effective understanding of the variety of texts they read;
- develop a style of writing achieving an acceptable standard of spelling and punctuation.

## **The Role of Teachers**

It is the responsibility of every teacher to implement the above goals. Teachers should:

- ensure that, in their lessons, they act to develop and reinforce the pupils' linguistic skills as well as presenting specific subject information;
- emphasize how important it is to read widely for research, reading for pleasure etc. Full consideration should be given to reading skills e.g. skimming; scanning; smart reading.
- use appropriate patterns and levels of language and they should, through their own speech, consistently present an example of clear, precise and refined language.
- provide regular and structured opportunities for pupils to talk to each other for a special purpose. Teachers should ensure that pupils are aware of the importance of expressing themselves clearly, correctly and fluently as they develop their ideas, present information or express opinions. Teachers should accept dialect in Welsh, standard language in English but slang should not be accepted in either language.
- enriching the pupils' language by introducing the vocabulary and terminology of a specific subject using common terms across similar subjects. If it is suitable for the subject and the pupils, terms should be presented bilingually, whether the lesson is in Welsh or English, in order to reinforce learners' understanding of information and concepts and to promote their bilingual skills;
- ensure that the language children hear orally, when reading and in writing, from the teacher and fellow pupils, is correct, paying particular attention to notes, interactive whiteboard presentations, records of ideas on the whiteboard, class displays etc.
- draw pupils' attention to language errors orally, in their reading and in their writing and take sensitive steps to correct these. Pupils should not be under the impression that linguistic accuracy is only important in language lessons but also across the curriculum;
- ensure that the language used in notes or reading texts is suitable for the age and ability of the pupils;
- giving pupils frequent and consistent opportunities to develop their writing skills.