

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE

THE WELSH LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION IN WALES

Purpose

1. This paper is intended to set out, in broad terms, the position on the Welsh language in education in Wales.

Background

2. The paper is submitted as part of the scene-setting for the Committee's review of the Welsh language in education, in parallel with the Culture Committee's wider review. It is in 3 sections: early years; schools; and post 16.

Early Years

3. The Welsh Affairs Committee Report on Childcare in Wales indicates that Early Years Education is crucial to the future of the Welsh Language. Organisations, such as Mudiad Ysgolion Methrin, have been extremely active in this area and the Welsh Assembly Government has agreed that their work should not be jeopardised by the proposed expansion of early year's provision to all 3 year olds. It also believes that parental choice to have children educated bilingually or through the medium of Welsh should be actively supported and provision integrated into the strategy at both national and local level. Training qualifications should be available to staff in both English and Welsh.

4. The audit recommended by the Assembly and which is now underway will include establishing current provision through the medium of Welsh. Once the outcome of this audit is known and the identification of future demand has been completed, the Assembly has recommended that the Minister should review the funding of Welsh medium early years provision.

Welsh-medium Schools : Primary

5. On most measures, the level of Welsh medium primary provision and take up has remained fairly constant or shown slight growth over the last five to ten years. Details of numbers of schools and pupils are in paragraphs 20 to 23 below. .

6. The number of pupils being taught in designated Category A Welsh medium schools has grown a little faster over the last ten years than the general increase in pupil numbers, so 17% of primary age children in Wales are now taught in Welsh medium schools, compared with 16% a decade ago.

7. The current combined capacity of the 440 existing Welsh medium primary schools is approximately 55,150 places (or 18% of the Wales total primary capacity). There is thus more overall provision than pupils, with 9,754 unfilled places. This represents a higher level of spare capacity than the average for

Wales (18% compared with 14%). However, most of the surplus capacity is in traditional Welsh-speaking rural areas where the pupil population is falling ; whereas in urban areas, where demand for places is growing, some schools are at or near capacity.

8. Looking at pupils in all categories of primary school, 18% of primary age children are taught in classes that use Welsh as the sole or main medium of instruction, although only 16% of primary school children are considered to be fluent in Welsh. Similarly, at the end of Key Stage 1, 19% of pupils were assessed in Welsh, although headteachers considered only 17% of that age group were fluent.

9. Altogether around 20% of primary age pupils are taught in classes where Welsh is used as the medium of teaching to some degree. This figure has fluctuated only slightly in recent years, with no overall trend of increase or decrease.

10. Average class sizes are lower in Welsh medium primary schools. Excluding nursery and special classes, the average Category A primary class has 23.1 pupils and the average in a Category B school is 23.5, whereas the average in English medium primary schools is 26.3.

Welsh-medium schools : Secondary

11. 23% of secondary schools offer Welsh as the medium of instruction for at least half their foundation subjects. The number of such “Welsh speaking” schools has grown from 44 to 53 in the last decade. 18% of secondary pupils now attend these schools, compared with 15% ten years ago, although not all the pupils in these schools learn through the medium of Welsh, since several have separate English and Welsh medium streams. These are all defined as Welsh speaking schools even when the pupils in the Welsh stream area minority. Information is not collected on the number of classes that are taught through the medium of Welsh. It is not therefore easy to assess the extent to which the total amount of Welsh medium teaching delivered in the secondary sector has increased. As an indicator, 14% of secondary pupils up to Year 11 study Welsh as a first language and this has increased from 12% a decade ago. In addition to teaching through the medium of Welsh, all maintained schools now teach Welsh either as a first or second language to pupils up to Year 11.

Planning of School Provision

12. Responsibility for supplying sufficient school places lies with the local authorities. They have a statutory duty to ensure that children are educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents, so far as that is compatible with the provision of efficient education and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure. The target for 2010 set out in “Better Wales” is that provision for Welsh medium education must be in balance with demand. This does not imply that LEAs should be actively seeking to drive up demand or make provision in advance of need, although it can be argued that supply may help shape demand.

13. The amount of Welsh medium provision made by the different LEAs varies considerably, reflecting mainly variations in the extent to which Welsh is in common usage throughout the country. All authorities now run at least one Welsh medium primary school and all make provision for secondary education through the medium of Welsh, although this may be in a neighbouring LEA area. By contrast, in Gwynedd, virtually all primary schools and all secondary schools teach mainly through the medium of Welsh.

14. Two new Welsh medium primary schools opened in September 2001 in Powys and Monmouth, and Cardiff are planning to build a two form entry school in Llanedeyrn to open in September 2002. Swansea also intends to expand provision. From the latest round of School Organisation Plans it is clear that several authorities in traditionally less Welsh speaking areas are reviewing their provision and considering expansion. On the other hand, some authorities with an existing high proportion of Welsh speaking schools are experiencing declining pupil populations and high levels of surplus capacity. Carmarthen and Pembrokeshire are both consulting on school closures and amalgamations : this may reduce the numbers of Category A schools but should not result in fewer pupils receiving Welsh-medium education in these areas.

15. There is a perception that where new Welsh medium provision is made it is in relatively poor quality buildings. In fact, a significant number of recently opened Welsh-medium schools occupy new or substantially renovated buildings, and new premises are under construction or planned for a number of Welsh-medium schools. The new primary school in Monmouthshire is in renovated buildings ; the new primary school in Cardiff will be in a new building from September 2002. New Welsh-medium secondary school premises are being provided in Caerphilly and Rhondda Cynon Taff under PFI arrangements.

16. Given that pupil numbers are generally falling and there are high levels of surplus capacity across Wales, the process of catering for any increase in demand for Welsh medium places has to be part of an LEAs overall strategy for rationalisation of provision and balancing supply and demand. Inevitably any such increase in demand must be accompanied by decreasing demand in existing schools. The key-planning document in this context is the School Organisation Plan (SOP). Since 1999, each authority has had to publish a SOP, updated every year and covering a five-year forward planning period, which summarises data on demand for and supply of school places. It must also set out the authority's policies on relevant issues such as the appropriate size of schools and their action plans for adding or removing school places, so as to ensure demand is met and resources used effectively. Authorities should show through their SOPs that they are planning their provision of Welsh medium education alongside their planning for all other types of schooling, so as to cater for the range of parental preferences and to utilise resources and existing accommodation to best effect.

17. The Welsh Language Board also charges authorities with producing Welsh Education Schemes for approval. These schemes must set out

policies and targets for Welsh medium education and show how demand is being met. In relation to supply of school places, trends in pupil numbers and plans for action, the schemes cover much the same ground as SOPs but are updated at different intervals.

Summary of the current policy position on schools provision

18. LEAs have a duty to provide Welsh medium education in response to parental demand (and in so far as that is compatible with efficient use of resources). It is for the authorities to assess that local demand and to cater for it in the context of their overall provision of school places and management of their education budget. Because levels of demand and of provision vary greatly across the different areas of Wales, local authorities are best placed to assess local needs, and this approach was endorsed by the Committee in their study on the Supply of School Places.

Numbers of Welsh Medium schools and Pupils in Welsh Medium education

Primary

19. As at January 2001 there were 440 primary schools in Wales (27% of all primary schools) which used Welsh as the sole or main medium of instruction (Category A) and a further 91 schools (5% of the total) used Welsh for teaching part of the curriculum(Category B). Although four new Category A Welsh medium primary schools have been opened in the last five years, the total number of such schools has actually fallen over that period (from 449) because some small schools have amalgamated or federated and Infant and Junior schools have merged.

Pupils in maintained primary schools (including nursery pupils)

	Jan 1992	Jan 1996	Jan 2001
In classes where Welsh is the sole or main medium of instruction	43,984 16.0% (of total pupils)	50,327 17.2%	51,087 17.9%
In classes where Welsh is used for part of the curriculum	10,552 3.8%	10,906 3.7%	6,860 2.4%
In classes where Welsh is taught as second language	165,019 60.2%	209,103 71.6%	223,328 78.1%
Being taught no Welsh	54,761 20%	21870 7.5%	4,511 1.6%
All pupils	274,286	292,206	285,786

20. The most marked trend in these figures is the decrease in numbers of pupils being taught no Welsh at all, matched by an increase in those being taught Welsh as a second language. It is likely that the majority of pupils who

are not being taught Welsh are in special classes or nursery and reception classes (where National Curriculum requirements do not apply).

Secondary

21. There are 53 Welsh-speaking secondary schools in Wales. As indicated in paragraph 11 “Information is not collected on the number of classes that are taught through the medium of Welsh. It is not therefore easy to assess the extent to which the total amount of Welsh medium teaching delivered in the secondary sector has increased”. However, the following table may be of interest :

Pupils taught Welsh in Years 7 to 11 in secondary schools

	Jan 1992	Jan 1996	Jan 2001
Taught Welsh as a first Language	19,416 11.7	21,845 12.4	26,135 14.0
Taught Welsh as a second language	87,545 52.6	111,647 63.2	157,300 84.5
Being taught no Welsh	59,429 35.7	43,132 24.4	2,646 1.4
All Pupils	166,390	176,624	186,081

23. From September 1999, statutory requirements for Welsh at key Stage 4 have been implemented in full. This has accounted for the drop in the numbers of pupils who are being taught no Welsh. In all probability, the 1.4% of pupils who are recorded as being in this category are either pupils exempted by virtue of a statement of SEN or are those who meet the criteria for the very limited exemptions available in the final year of key stage 3 or at key stage 4.

Schools : a second entry point into Welsh-medium education?

24. For the most part, choices about Welsh-medium education are exercised early. Parents choose Welsh-medium or English-medium education either when their children enter nursery/early years settings as early as age 3 or when children reach the statutory school age of 5 (or at any point in between). Once the choice of English-medium education is made, there is very limited scope to opt into Welsh-medium thereafter.

25. In September, I visited Newfoundland & Labrador, and New Brunswick, to examine a variety of immersion and intensive second language models

employed in schools in those Provinces to deliver French to pupils from Anglophone backgrounds. I viewed them in action in schools and I had several opportunities to discuss them in more details with Ministers and officials of the Provincial Governments, elected members and officials of School Boards, and with teachers and headteachers.

26. We saw much that similar to the Welsh situation, and much that was different. The model which appeared to offer the most scope for adaptation and implementation in Wales was the Intensive Core French model. In brief, its main characteristics are :

- an intensive period of study ;
- use of the target language as a means of communication ; and
- a focus on language learning rather than on the learning of subject matter in the second language.

27. The Intensive Core French programme appears to offer way of securing what does not exist (with very limited exception) in Wales which is a second entry point into Welsh-medium education for pupils whose parents opted for an English-medium school at the usual entry point – age 5 or earlier.

28. I have asked that the possibility of adapting the Intensive French model for this purpose should be examined further, with a view to establishing a pilot project to test its wider feasibility. Subject to the views of the group of experts which the Welsh Language Board have put together at my request (see below), the most appropriate point at which to implement a pilot would be with Welsh Second Language pupils in Year 6 – the final year of primary school – with a view to enabling those pupils to achieve a range of outcomes including :

- making the transition into a Welsh-medium secondary school ;
- studying more subjects through the medium of Welsh in a bilingual or predominantly English-medium secondary school setting than would otherwise have been the case; or
- achieving a sufficiently strong base of linguistic proficiency so as to be able to participate in a much wider range of Welsh language educational and social activities in, and outside, school

29. I have, therefore, set in motion the following actions :

- the report of the visit has been submitted for consideration by the group of experts already established under the chairmanship of the Welsh Language Board (the next meeting is on 14 December);
- it has also been submitted to ACCAC and Estyn (both of whom are to join the group of experts) ;

- the group is to draw up advice on the feasibility of adapting the Intensive model for a pilot in Wales – to include recommendations on the necessary preconditions for a pilot ; and
- the group is also to outline the steps required to identify primary schools (and partner secondary schools) to undertake the pilot project.

30. Copies of the Report of my visit to Canada have been provided separately to the Committee.

Schools : teacher provision

31. The recent General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW) survey of teacher recruitment in secondary schools identified:

- a lower number of applicants than average for posts teaching Welsh as a second language (4.5 applicants compared to the average of 6.5 for all subjects included in the survey);
- a lower number of applicants for posts where teaching is through the medium of Welsh (on average 3.6 applicants for all subjects included in the survey).

32. The survey produced a 76% response rate – but that may be substantially biased if, as might be likely, schools with particular recruitment problems responded more frequently than those who did not. The survey was only concerned with subject areas where there was anecdotal evidence of shortages – Chemistry, English, Maths, Modern Foreign Languages, Physics, RE, Welsh as a 2nd Language.

33. The numbers of teachers teaching through the medium of Welsh has increased slightly between 1998/99 and 2000/01 (2,762 to 2,812 – 1.8%) while the number of pupils in ‘Welsh speaking schools’ increased by 0.5%. The numbers teaching Welsh as a 2nd language increased from 7,907 to 8,277 (4.7%) in the same period. At the same time, the number of teachers in all primary and secondary schools in Wales increased by 4.6%.

34. The figures above do not suggest an increasing shortage of Welsh language teachers overall. The fact that it is difficult to recruit teachers in specific instances could be due to a number of factors. In particular, the supply of Welsh medium teachers could be affected by geographical immobility. The pool of teachers is small and dispersed and teachers may be unwilling to move long distances to take up new posts. Nor is there (generally) the possibility of recruiting from outside Wales.

Schools : examinations and qualifications

35. A wider range of qualifications is available in Welsh than ever before. Not all examinations are available in the Welsh medium. However, for the major examinations and subject to demand, the WJEC makes its Entry Level, GCSE and GCE A and AS level papers available in Welsh. The WJEC also has

arrangements with other awarding bodies to make papers available in Welsh, for subjects which are not provided by the WJEC. ACCAC has arrangements with awarding bodies to support the provision of Welsh medium examinations for vocational qualifications and the Assembly has provided substantial funding to support the provision of Welsh medium Key Skills tests.

Schools : Welsh as a subject

36. The teaching of Welsh as a subject – either as a first language or as a second language - is now firmly embedded into the National Curriculum. Successive administrations have taken the view that the recommendations which were made at the time that the position of Welsh in the National Curriculum was first considered in the late eighties still hold good - that all pupils in Wales are entitled to be taught Welsh and for that to be meaningful there should be continuity and progression throughout the whole period of statutory education. It is, therefore, a compulsory subject for all pupils from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 4 at maintained schools (with the exception of those pupils who meet the limited exemption provisions which apply in certain defined circumstances).

37. The most recent Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (for the school year 1999-2000) indicates that for Welsh as a first language the bulk of the work is satisfactory or better at key stage 1 (98%) and key stage 2 (96%) but that the amount of good work is lower than the previous year in both key stages. At key stages 3 and 4 standards have been rising over the last three years. However, standards are higher in key stage 3 than in key stage 4, and in Year 10 compared with Year 11. For Welsh as a second language, the equivalent figures for satisfactory or better work at key stage 1 and key stage 2 are 98% and 92% respectively. It is clear, however, that the final year of primary school presents the greatest challenge in terms of the amount of unsatisfactory work. Estyn attribute this mainly to a lack of progress across the key stage in pupils' ability to sustain extended conversation in the second language. In secondary schools, standards of Welsh as a second language show a slight improvement at key stage 3 but steady improvement at key stage 4 over the two previous years has not been sustained : there was an increase in the amount of unsatisfactory work.

Schools : The Curriculum Cymreig

38. It is a common requirement that 'pupils are given opportunities, where appropriate, in their study of [all National Curriculum subjects] to develop and apply knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales'. The common requirement applies to all schools, irrespective of the medium of instruction.

39. An Estyn report '*Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig – The Welsh dimension of the curriculum in Wales : good practice in teaching and learning*' published earlier this year indicated that the Cwricwlwm Cymreig can provide firm starting points and clear terms of reference for pupils. Not only can the increased

awareness of Welsh culture and identity, reflecting both its distinctiveness and diversity, make an important contribution to pupils' personal and social development, it can also help pupils gain a better understanding of other societies and cultures.

Schools : classroom materials

40. The availability of high quality Welsh language and bilingual materials to support the teaching of Welsh, other subjects through the medium of Welsh and the Cwricwlwm Cymreig is crucial. However, in many instances the commercial market fails to provide such materials.

41. ACCAC has a commissioning strategy in place which seeks to maintain and improve the general level of provision, particularly in respect of the distinctive features of the curriculum in Wales and in areas where significant underprovision is identified. The strategy is informed by a needs identification and prioritisation process through which ACCAC consults teachers etc on the most appropriate materials to be commissioned. In the past, most of the commissioned material was print but more recently ACCAC is seeking to ensure a better balance between print and non-print materials.

42. During its examination of ICT matters the ELL Committee heard a great deal about the dearth of curriculum-relevant, high quality content which is available electronically – content that is either Welsh-medium or Wales specific in Welsh or English to support the delivery of the National Curriculum in Wales, and particularly the distinctive Welsh aspects and the Cwricwlwm Cymreig. The Committee also heard that good work was being done locally on the production of materials but that opportunities for wider access and dissemination by electronic means was severely limited. The establishment of the ICT Advisory Panel, which is overseeing the appointment of the National Grid for Learning Cymru (NGfL Cymru) team to identify and develop locally-generated content for ICT application, will help address this issue.

Post 16

The National Council

38. So far as the National Council part of ELWa is concerned the remit letter issued by the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning sets out the requirements for Welsh language provision. In essence, it requires the Council to include in its operational plans proposals to meet the needs identified for post 16 Welsh Medium Education, Welsh for Adults, workplace Welsh, and skills training opportunities through the medium of Welsh. The Council's Welsh medium strategy is to include encouragement of more young people to follow training through the medium of Welsh and greater recognition of Welsh for Adults courses.

39. The strategic direction offered by the remit letter clearly anticipates the supply of post 16 Welsh medium provision being firmly linked to the National

Council's regional needs assessments At the same time, the National Council needs to encourage demand through the promotion of the concept of training through the medium of Welsh. Details of current levels of provision funded through the National Council – ELWa are set out in Annex B.

40. Responsibility for 6th form funding transfers from LEAs to the National Council in April 2002.. The Council will before then begin its review of all funding regimes in respect of post 16 learning provision, including 6th form provision. The Committee will recall discussion on the National Council's proposals for its funding review at its meeting on 14 November, and the National Council's supporting paper (ELL 17-01(p.5)) setting out safeguards. There is evidence that there is a lack of opportunity in many parts of Wales to continue education after 16 or 18 through the medium of Welsh and this too merits attention..

41. Further Education and Higher Education institutions in Wales fall within the definition of a "public body" for the purposes of the Welsh Language Act and therefore have to prepare Welsh language schemes. Provisional schemes have been drawn up by a number of institutions and all have to have schemes in place by 2002. One objective of these schemes is to clarify how institutions will develop and target Welsh medium and bilingual provision.

Summary of Post –16 (National Council – ELWa) Provision

42. The National Council – ELWa is preparing a joint Welsh Language Scheme with the Higher Education Council - ELWa, as required under the Welsh Language Act 1993. The target date for submission is May 2002.

A. National Council – Inherited Policies and Funding

43. The National Council - ELWa has inherited a mixture of support initiatives for Welsh language education and training in the post-16 sector as follows:

- **Welsh for Adults (WfA) provision** – is funded entirely by the National Council and involves a wide range of providers who work together in WfA consortia. As the name indicates, this provision is to teach adults Welsh and in the current academic year £3.1m is being spent.
- **National Officer for WfA and WfA examinations** - £100k is provided per year to pay for a National Officer to develop WfA and to fund examinations for learners.
- **Bilingualism Unit** – £55k will be provided this financial year to the new Sgiliaith Unit at Coleg Meirion Dwyfor. The Unit was conceived to serve further education institutions by developing learning resources and offering training and advice on bilingual teaching methodologies. It will now embrace post-16 in its wider meaning, by working with school sixth forms and other providers.
- **Bilingual post-16 provision** - £1.69m has been allocated for 2001/02 as premium funding for FE institutions providing courses through the medium of Welsh and/or bilingually. This is on top of the standard unit of funding. The total funding to FE colleges for Welsh medium and bilingual provision

is expected to be some £10 million. Money is allocated using the Recurrent Funding Methodology, which is under review, with a target date of Autumn 2003 for the implementation of major changes.

- **Bilingual Materials via the Internet Project** - £100k will be provided to Dysg to manage this project, which produces new internet based learning materials. Like the Unit, the project is broadening into the wider post-16 sector.

B. Sources of information

44. There are several sources of information which can help to inform future policy development:

The funding of bilingual and Welsh FE provision (Canolfan Bedwyr Research for FEFCW)

45. Commissioned by the Further Education Funding Council in 1999/2000 this considered how FE bilingual and Welsh provision is funded and concluded that the current methodology had not stimulated growth in Welsh medium/bilingual education. It suggested reasons:

- the current approach does not tackle the genuine lack of learning resource materials and making good the deficiency is slow and expensive;
- there are too few staff capable of teaching in Welsh;
- where Welsh medium education is not a core activity, it receives little awareness and recognition in institutions, and it is therefore a low priority; and
- the reluctance of some students to follow bilingual courses for varying reasons such as: peer pressure; eagerness to sever links with 'school traditions'; perceptions that Welsh courses are more work perhaps because of a lack of learning materials and the fact that too few awarding bodies offer tests or exams in Welsh; and students' lack confidence in their Welsh language ability.

46. The researchers considered the premium for Welsh language and bilingual courses in the recurrent funding methodology and explored alternative funding models. This concluded that it would be best to take into account wider sociological factors as well as numbers of students on courses, types of qualifications, numbers of courses, infrastructure costs etc. In addition, it suggested that payments should reflect teaching methods used (several models were analysed) to support best practice. The report was received by FEFCW in early 2000 and is available on the FEFCW web-site. Its recommendations will be taken into account in the development of the new national funding system, and also in the development of the National Council's strategy and policies.

Continuity in Welsh Language Education (Welsh Language Board)

47. This research in 1999 found that the future of Welsh is dependent upon the creation of speakers by the education system to maintain the current proportion of Welsh speakers in the population (18.7% according to the 1991 census) or increase it. It reported that, although 20.9% of primary school pupils attend schools where Welsh is the sole, main or part medium of teaching, the proportion drops to 12.9% in secondary schools. In FE institutions less than 2% of students were assessed in Welsh (statistics were not provided for sixth form students and so this is undoubtedly an under-recording of the true position post-16). These data mask regional variations, but overall the fact that only 12.9% of pupils complete education up to the age of 16 in Welsh means that too small a proportion do so to maintain the current proportion of speakers in the population of Wales.

A Study for the Need for Welsh/Bilingual Language Skills in North Wales SMEs and Indications for HR Development and Training with regard to Welsh (Cwmni Iaith for Celtec)

48. Commissioned by Celtec (in early 2001) the report concluded that support for Welsh medium training has not been as effective as it could have been. It identified a lack of initiatives to support training and provision, and a failure to ensure that Welsh language training is delivered according to demand or facilitated by providers (even though Celtec had expected its providers to have a Welsh language policy). The research found employer demand for Welsh language skills in business but training providers did not deliver the kind of Welsh language training provision required for the economy's needs. Looking to the future, the report recommended, amongst many things, that ELWa should:

- respond to local need by working with strategic and local partnerships;
- make providers aware of ELWa's requirements;
- make learners aware of the benefits of Welsh language skills, including the needs of employers;
- co-ordinate resource development and get providers to work together; and
- support development of a key skills course in bilingual communication - as compulsory or strongly recommended for all trainees.

Statistical Evidence

49. Data is provided at Table A about bilingual/Welsh medium provision and at Table B about Welsh for Adults.

50. From Table A it is clear that:

- the number of institutions offering such courses fluctuates but activity is heavily concentrated in six institutions in north and west Wales;
- the number of students enrolled on these courses who are assessed in Welsh has increased but total numbers are very small.

- as a proportion of all the students enrolled on these courses, the number assessed in Welsh/bilingually has declined; and
- the proportion of all students enrolled on courses funded by the former FEFCW assessed in Welsh/bilingually is very low.

51. From Table B it is clear that the numbers enrolled on Welsh for Adults courses:

- grew substantially for 1994/95 to 1999/00 but have fallen somewhat in 2000/01. It is too early to say why this has happened and whether it represents a longer term trend; and
- due to the method of data collection, it is not possible to analyse the progression of learners but there is strong evidence from other sources that only a small proportion of students become fluent.

Table A

Welsh medium/bilingual courses in further education institutions

Academic Year	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/01
Number of institutions providing courses	17	16	19	19	17	11	12	15
Number of enrolled students assessed in Welsh	2023	2288	2830	5550	4431	3503	4895	5483
Number of enrolled students on same courses not assessed in Welsh	1882	2346	3875	5498	4521	6821	6232	6022
Welsh assessments as a % of all enrolments on these courses	51.8%	49.4%	42.2%	50.2%	49.5%	33.9%	44.0%	47.7%
Total enrolments funded by FEFCW/National Council	136468	193735	255039	298873	304348	308381	353972	435106
Welsh assessments as % of total enrolments funded by FEFCW/National Council	1.5%	1.2%	1.1%	1.9%	1.5%	1.1%	1.4%	1.3%
<i>Data source: Midfess C</i>								

Table B

Funded enrolments on WfA courses between 1994/95 and 2000/01

Academic Year	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01
Number of funded enrolments	15894	18966	20762	21643	21500	23634	21011

*Source: RFM (fundable Form C - best of FEES/MIDFESS including predictions)
 1994/95 and 1995/96 are obtained by filtering by [subject of study]='Q520' and FE programme area=18A. No data on sponsored provision were available for 1995/96.
 1996/97 is based on enrolments where [programme area]=18A and [superclass code]=FK.357*

Higher Education

52. The number of Welsh medium enrolments in higher education has remained fairly static over the past 5 or 6 years, at around 1,000 full-time equivalent (fte) students. This represents around 1,500 actual students as many do not take the whole of their course through the medium of Welsh. In academic year 1999/2000, the latest for which data are available, nearly 1,050 fte Welsh medium enrolments were recorded, a slight rise on AY1998/99 which dipped to 970 fte from 1040 fte in AY1997/98.

53. The HEFCW will allocate a total Welsh medium premium of £1.1 million in AY2001/02 to ten institutions (three more than last year) to acknowledge the

extra costs associated with delivering provision through the medium of Welsh. A further sum of £284,000 will be released subject to the receipt of acceptable strategies for the maintenance, development and extension of Welsh medium provision. This is to encourage institutions to take a longer term approach to planning the development of their Welsh medium provision. The Council is also providing £50,000 towards the cost of the University of Wales Welsh Medium Teaching Unit, and £126,000 for the development of a bilingual open and distance learning Post-Graduate Certificate in Education by a consortium of four institutions.

54. The Welsh Language Board and the UoW Welsh Medium Teaching Development Officer contribute to the Council's feedback on institutions' strategies for Welsh medium provision. HEFCW officers also work closely with colleagues from the National Council so that, in addition to improving Welsh medium provision in their own particular sectors, the approaches taken by the two Councils cohere, facilitate progression and mutually benefit from good practice and developments in all areas of post-16 education and training, or elsewhere.

55. Expanding Welsh medium provision in the HE sector will involve a wide range of activities with potentially significant resource implications - market research, stimulating demand, promotion and recruitment, developing courses and related materials, providing linguistic support for students, taking advantage of ICT, and creating a cohort of suitably qualified staff. The Welsh medium strategies being developed by institutions together with their Welsh Language Schemes, and the role of the UoW Welsh Medium Teaching Unit, will be key elements in creating a strategic and collaborative approach to these issues.

56. The HEFCW gives extra funding to HE institutions for Welsh medium provision, and has set aside funding to underpin plans for taking forward Welsh medium provision on an institution-wide strategic basis. In academic year 1999-2000 just over 2900 students enrolled with HE institutions in Wales received any teaching through the medium of Welsh; about half of these students were enrolled on teacher training courses.

Other post-16 provision

57. Ufl **learndirect** is a growing source of distance learning which can be accessed at learning centres, in the workplace or at home. The Assembly has contributed to the cost of setting up the Welsh language **cyswllt dysgu learndirect** website. Learning materials are also being progressively made available in Welsh. The initial priorities for Ufl include IT skills, basic literacy and numeracy, skills for SMEs, and the skill needs of the multi-media, retail, automotive and environmental service industries. A complementary development is the Wales Digital College. This fully bilingual service, utilising digital TV, began broadcasting in November 2000. The Assembly, working with ELWa and ACCAC, funds a project to strengthen the delivery of national vocational qualifications through the medium of Welsh.

58. Young people also need to have an understanding of the Welsh dimension including the language and an opportunity to explore Welsh culture outside the formal education setting. The Youth Service is ideally placed to promote this work through its voluntary engagement with individuals and groups of young people. In some counties in Wales there are Welsh speaking and bilingual youth clubs where there is a recognition of Welsh culture and, of course, the language. The Youth Work Statement for Wales states that youth work opportunities amongst other things should be about

“encouraging and enabling young people to express their thoughts, emotions, aspirations and cultural identity through creative and challenging activities, particularly those which increase their understanding of bilingualism, heritage and cultures of Wales”

It is important that the language work in formal settings continues to be supported by the wide range of youth organisation in Wales.

Financial implications

59. There are no new financial implications to this paper

Compliance

60. This paper does not give rise to any new compliance issues.

**Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning
December 2001**