

CYMRAEG



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Siarter Iaith: National Framework

A framework for implementing the Siarter Iaith (Welsh Language Charter)



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1. Outcomes and Objectives – the Whole Programme

Further resources to follow

- Welsh Language Charter Programme Guidelines - Primary
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- Cymraeg Campus Programme Guidelines
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- Guide for validators
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1. Introduction

The Welsh Government recognises the importance of the Welsh Language Charter programme as a key resource for increasing children and young people's use of Welsh. Since the Welsh Language Charter programme was expanded from being active in Gwynedd only, to becoming a national programme in 2016, the world around us has changed; the growth of technology and the digital field continues to affect the linguistic habits of our children and young people and how they socialise. In addition, the data from the [2021 Census on the Welsh language](#) is now known, and significant developments in language planning are underway with the development of the Welsh Language Education Bill. We believe that all this, including the introduction of the Curriculum for Wales, requires the updating of the Welsh Language Charter.

We are therefore introducing a new revised framework for the Welsh Language Charter. We hope that, by following this framework, the Welsh Language Charter programme will continue to be an important tool to increase children and young people's social use of Welsh in Wales, no matter what their linguistic background.

2. A framework for whom?

This document is targeted at everyone involved in the implementation of the Welsh Language Charter Programme. The purpose of the document is to update the Charter's strategic documents, setting a national direction and vision for the programme. The framework is suitable for National Leaders and Coordinators, Primary and Secondary Headteachers and teachers and other key partners. It therefore contains all the initial information needed to implement the Welsh Language Charter. *Please note that supplementary resources containing the programme guidelines will follow.* The learner's voice is extremely important to the implementation of the Framework, and so, specific promotional and awareness-raising material for children and young people will follow. We emphasise that each school journey is unique, with each school developing at their own pace.

3. Background

In July 2017, the Welsh Government published its national strategy for our language, *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers*. As the title of the strategy suggests, we want to see the number of those able to speak Welsh rise to a million by the year 2050. The strategy also sets out a desire to see the percentage of the population who speak Welsh every day, and who are able to speak more than just a few words of Welsh, increase from 10 per cent (in 2013-15) to 20 per cent by 2050.

Cymraeg 2050 is a national strategy, for everyone in Wales, whether they speak Welsh or not. Although it was published by the Welsh Government, we note that the Welsh language belongs to us all in Wales, and so does the responsibility for its future.

The Welsh Language Charter programme contributes to *Cymraeg 2050* by aiming to inspire children and young people to use and enjoy Welsh in all aspects of their lives. The Welsh Language Charter is part of a series of Welsh Government programmes which aim to increase children and young people's use of Welsh in informal situations. The Welsh Language Charter programme is for everyone; every member of a school community has a role to play – the school council, learners, parents, governors, the whole school workforce as well as the wider community, such as local businesses and residents. Together, we can increase the social use of Welsh by children and young people.

4. Policy developments

Curriculum for Wales

The Welsh Language Charter programme supports the [Curriculum for Wales](#), with the principles of the programme supporting the following four purposes to create:

1. ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives
2. enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
3. ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
4. healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

However, schools should not rely on the Welsh Language Charter programme as the only tool to *introduce* Welsh to learners. The Welsh Language Charter programme should be used to augment educational experiences and bridge between curriculum elements, extra-curricular experiences and informal play times. We emphasise that the Welsh Language Charter is not an addition, but rather an integral part of the Curriculum for Wales.

Welsh in Education Strategic Plans

Section 84 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 requires a local authority to create and implement a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP).

It states that the Plan should include local authority proposals on how it will carry out its education functions to:

- Improve the planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh in its area; and
- Improve the standards of Welsh-medium education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area.

The WESP commenced on 1 September 2022 and ends on 31 March 2032. Each local authority's WESP has been compiled around seven outcomes that reflect a learner's education journey and align with the Cymraeg 2050 and education policy areas more widely, including Curriculum for Wales. One of those outcomes is "More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school."

This outcome states the expectation for the local authority to include information on how they will improve the Welsh language skills of those receiving Welsh-medium education in any school it maintains in order to improve the standards of Welsh-medium education.

Welsh Language Education Bill

In March 2023, the Welsh Government published a White Paper on proposals that will form the basis of a Welsh Language Education Bill, in collaboration with Plaid Cymru through the Cooperation Agreement. The Bill will provide for steps to be taken to enable all pupils in Wales to become confident Welsh speakers through the statutory education system. Key proposals include:

- Reflecting the target of a million Welsh speakers in law
- Creating a single Welsh language skills continuum to describe skill levels so that learners, teachers, parents and employers have a common understanding of the journey towards learning Welsh
- Establishing a statutory system of categorising maintained schools according to language medium
- Over time, enhancing Welsh language provision in maintained schools that are not already designated Welsh-medium schools
- A requirement for the Welsh Ministers to create a statutory National Plan for the acquisition and learning of Welsh, and to review it in each Senedd term
- Reforming how local authorities plan Welsh language provision in schools in order to meet targets set by the Welsh Ministers
- Requirements on local authorities to proactively promote Welsh-medium education, including late immersion provision; and
- Providing specialist support for schools with Welsh language learning.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work in a better way with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

Included in the Act are Seven Wellbeing Goals, the purpose of which is to ensure that everyone is working towards achieving the same aims. One of those aims is to work towards a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.

5. Welsh Language Charter Umbrella

The Welsh Language Charter programme focuses on promoting and increasing learners' use of Welsh within their educational institutions (for 3 – 18 year olds) and in social contexts. We use the terms 'Welsh Language Charter programmes', or 'the Charter' when referring to the national framework and any associated activity. To encourage progress, schools work towards incremental awards – bronze, silver and gold. See chapter 7 for further guidance on awarding in the context of the new framework.

Within the structure of the Welsh Language Charter, there are two pathways:

Welsh Language Charter	
<p>Welsh Language Charter</p> <p>Primary, Secondary and Lifelong Educational Institutions</p> <p>Category Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C2 – dual language school, • T3 – a school transitioning to C3, • C3 – Welsh-medium school, • 3P – designated Welsh-medium school. 	<p>Cymraeg Campus (primary) and Cymraeg Bob Dydd (secondary) Welsh Language Charter</p> <p>Primary, Secondary and Lifelong Educational Institutions</p> <p>Category Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C1 – English-medium school, • T2 – a school transitioning to C2, • C2 – dual language school.
<p><i>Individual educational institutions on a journey of changing categories are expected to consider which route within the Charter is best suited for them to follow in accordance with the school's linguistic position.</i></p> <p><i>Similarly, Additional Learning Needs (ALN) schools and educational centres are encouraged to assess which route within the Charter is best suited for them to follow, depending on the school's linguistic position and the needs of the learners.</i></p> <p><i>Further information and guidance on the categorisation of schools by Welsh-medium provision is provided on the Welsh Government website.</i></p>	

The structure is roughly the same across the entire programme. Learners will complete a questionnaire about their use of Welsh and will use the information to identify areas for improvement; set their objectives and formulate an action plan

for the whole school community. At the end of the implementation period, learners will repeat the questionnaire to see if they have made progress.

The questionnaire is not a measure of performance in relation to awards or a way to compare educational institutions or regions.

Each school should decide its own priorities, objectives and targets, based on the circumstances and needs of the school, and the different linguistic backgrounds of the learners. This framework therefore provides a high-level guide to the implementation of the Charter programme.

6. Vision

The programme will contribute to creating bilingual citizens for the future, who will:

- be independent Welsh speakers,
- use the Welsh language of their own volition and enjoy it,
- speak Welsh to each other, whether they come from Welsh speaking homes or not,
- have a positive attitude towards the language and be confident to use their Welsh.

The programme will work to ensure:

- that school leaders, teachers and other stakeholders have a clear development plan, the knowledge and skills to encourage the use of Welsh at school, at home and socially within the community
- that parents and guardians make an active contribution to their children's use of Welsh, regardless of their language ability.

7. Values and implementation

To achieve the vision, we ask schools to follow these values:

Values of the Welsh Language Charter:

- We want everyone to **enjoy speaking Welsh**,
- We want everyone to **be proud** of the Welsh language and the Welsh Language Charter, and **own** all the elements of the programme and their school plans,
- We want everyone to **work together** to promote the Welsh language while implementing the Welsh Language Charter,
- We want everyone to **celebrate** success, no matter how small; at individual, class, school or community level.

Key elements of the Welsh Language Charter:



- **Leadership:** From planning to delivery, leadership is vital for increasing children and young people's use of Welsh and also for the success of the Welsh Language Charter. The Charter works at its best when owned by governors, the school council, the senior team, and school and county / regional coordinator.
- **Learner's voice:** Since 2005, all schools in Wales have been required by law to have a school council.¹ Forums such as the school council should be used to discuss the school's position in terms of the Welsh language and the journey in relation to implementing the Charter, and when analysing the results of their online questionnaires. We encourage schools to create specific discussion forums for discussing the Welsh language and their journey with the Charter; several schools have already established 'Criwiau Cymraeg'.
- **Whole school accountability:** Increasing children and young people's use of Welsh and their pride in our language, the culture of our country and their Welsh identity is the responsibility of the whole school, whether they be

¹[The School Councils \(Wales\) Regulations 2005 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

office workers, staff on the yard or teachers and pupils. The pressure of increasing the use of Welsh should not fall on the shoulders of one individual or one particular department e.g. the Welsh department in secondary schools. Everyone has a role to play in encouraging and empowering learners to use the language, from the governors to the school ancillary workforce and parents. We also recognise the school's unofficial role in influencing the wider community.

- **Evaluation:** Evaluating, measuring and celebrating success is something that should be considered at each stage of a school's journey with the Charter programme. The questionnaires are part of this process, and a useful tool for developing action plans that address the findings within schools. Evaluation should be carried out on an ongoing basis.
- **Success:** Success will look different in every organisation. It would be difficult to create a programme that defines one single way to succeed with the Welsh Language Charter. We recognise that the linguistic landscape of Wales varies widely from area to area, school to school, and among different social circles. So, acknowledge and celebrate your success – at all levels.

8. Implementing the Welsh Language Charter, step by step:

a) Online questionnaire

The Welsh Language Charter questionnaire, a series of questions for learners about their language use in different situations, and their attitudes towards the language, is currently an important part of the work in a number of schools. The questionnaire findings are used as one basis for schools' individual action plans. The online questionnaire is available on Hwb for all schools in Wales to use as one of the tools to measure progress in this work. There is user guidance on Hwb on how to use the questionnaires and how to create a report of the results.

b) Action Plan

Creating an Action Plan for the Welsh Language Charter programme is an essential part of implementing the Charter. Schools and partners who already use the Welsh Language Charter make use of Action Plans as a way of planning to increase children and young people's use of Welsh. **We stress that publishing this framework does not mean creating plans from scratch if a school already has a plan.**

Schools are encouraged to develop challenging, but achievable, action plans with support from their local coordinators. We encourage schools to embed the Charter action plans as part of the school's overall development plans, as well as supporting schools to increase Welsh within their specific language category. Each school will follow its own path in order to achieve the outcomes and meet the objectives, in line with the school's current situation. We will put a monitoring structure in place to validate and support schools to develop, share good practice and build on progress constantly.

The overall aim of the programme, which is to contribute to doubling the number who use Welsh every day, will not be attainable overnight. The programme is part of the bigger picture of behaviour change over a long period of time, and each school's journey is different and unique.

Each school will draw up their work development plans in implementing the Charter which will involve the whole school community – learners, the whole school workforce, parents/carers, governors and the wider community / partners.

Schools are expected to work alongside other schools within their cluster, as well as relevant secondary schools to ensure continuity and a seamless path of support for learners.

c) Validation

The principles of the validation process are:

- Ensuring national consistency
- Celebrating and recognising the achievements of all schools
- Encouraging an increase in the use of Welsh
- Ensuring the level of award is appropriate and suitable for all schools

The validation process is expected to reach a consensus as to whether or not a school has fulfilled the requirements for the Charter awards. When a school needs further support, the validator will provide guidance, share good practice and make recommendations to the school.

As a result of the validation process, the validator is expected to produce a report detailing the implementation of the Welsh Language Charter in accordance with the school's self-appraisal, the impact of implementing the Charter on learners' social use of Welsh, oracy, good practice, as well as recommendations for areas for development.

Further resources and guidance will be shared shortly after the National Framework announcement. These will include further information regarding the Welsh Language Charter programme awards; post-gold and the validation process. Nevertheless, the high-level process that should be followed in this context is set out below. Schools and coordinators in all schools across the country are expected to adhere to this regime to ensure consistency in the process and that everyone acts in the same way on a national level.

Validation Process:

- **Step 1:** School self-appraisal
- **Step 2:** Local coordinator to assess school self-appraisal
- **Step 3:** If approved, the local coordinator will contact Welsh Government officers to process the award and to send a certificate on behalf of the Minister to the school.

Post-gold process

If a school has received the gold award, the status will be valid for a period of three years until a second appraisal is made. The following process is expected to be followed in the context of post-gold:

1. Annual school self-appraisal
2. Within three years of receiving the gold award, the local coordinator will arrange a validation visit to ensure the school is still worthy of the

gold. If the school remains a gold school, the status will be current for another three years and the validation will be reappraised at that time. Should a school not maintain its gold status, targets will be set by the local coordinator with a note to revisit the school in a year's time. Should a school not maintain its gold status after this period, then it will become a silver school.

3. For all schools that have maintained the gold status for the three-year period, a virtual award ceremony is organised by Welsh Government officers to celebrate the schools' achievements.

9. Who does what?

We all have an important contribution to make, whatever role we play in a learner's Welsh language journey. While teachers, with the help of local coordinators, are responsible for introducing the Charter to learners and inspiring them to want to speak Welsh, we want our young people to enjoy using their Welsh in all aspects of their lives – when socialising, shopping, or when taking part in sport or other activities.

We want parents, babysitters, community organisations, local businesses and neighbours to join in by giving children opportunities to use their Welsh. This could be at home by reading Welsh books and magazines, using Welsh apps, chatting to friends while playing online games, watching Welsh TV or listening to Welsh radio or music.

In developing plans for the national framework, schools are given the flexibility to tailor the implementation of the Welsh Language Charter programme in a way that suits their individual needs and situations.

Contributors	Key Responsibilities
<p style="text-align: center;">Welsh Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the overall vision for the Welsh Language Charter programme and provide leadership at a national level. • Provide funding for the programme. • Ensure that any programme developments are based on up-to-date research and evidence. • General brand management and raise the status of the Welsh Language Charter programme. • Develop age-appropriate learner resources and templates available on Hwb. • Ensure national consistency, including standardisation and authorisation of related resources. • Provide guidance for the Charter programme. • Work with organisations to provide opportunities for children and young people to use Welsh outside school. • Provide support to schools and coordinators with the Hwb questionnaires.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that a social psychology approach has an increasingly important role in increasing the use of Welsh. • Arrange to send bronze/silver/gold certificates to schools following confirmation from the local coordinators. • Organise an annual virtual award ceremony for post-gold schools who have continued to hold the award for a period of three years.
<p>Delivery Partners:</p> <p>Local coordinators of the Welsh Language Charter in Consortia and/or Local Authorities, Organisations working with young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure everyone has a positive experience of Welsh. • Raise awareness and ensure a high profile for the Welsh Language Charter programme within schools and local authorities. • Support schools to implement principles and monitor the impact of the Welsh Language Charter programme. • Support visits to each school once each term or on demand. • Encourage links between schools locally and regionally to promote effective and strategic collaboration. • Provide training and/or share information on the content of the Welsh Language Charter for the whole school workforce, parents and governors as needed. • Facilitate the sharing of good practice between schools within the region and nationally. • Attend the national programme steering group sessions to report on developments and share good practice with other areas. • Report progress to the Welsh Government twice a year. • Organise the school validation/accreditation process within the region. • Collect case studies from the region and submit them to Welsh Government as part of progress monitoring forms. • When possible - partners to create play opportunities such as summer schemes. • Partners to create or promote informal opportunities for bridge-building between community and school. • Local coordinators to inform the Welsh Government annually which schools have received awards.

<p>Whole School Community</p> <p>Criw Cymraeg, School Council, Learners, Workforce, Parents, Governors, Wider community e.g. local businesses and local Welsh speakers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure everyone has a positive experience of Welsh. • Complete Welsh Language Charter questionnaires annually to find evidence of their learners' language use in order to formulate a school programme of action. • School forums, such as y Criw Cymraeg, to develop the objectives and action plan of the school led by the coordinator or one of the school's teachers. • Ensure that the Welsh Language Charter programme is a central part of the school development plan. • The whole school community to encourage, own and support each other to take responsibility for and implement the action plan. • Collect and present evidence of progress for validation. • Increase communication with parents and the wider community. • Collaboration at cluster and secondary cluster levels • Collaboration with the Delivery Partners / local/regional coordinators • Attend county/regional/national networks.
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10. Good practice

What do effective Welsh Language Charter schools look like?

- Everyone has a positive experience of Welsh.
- The programme is a key part of the educational institution's development plan.
- The entire school community understands the goals of the Welsh Language Charter programme, takes responsibility for implementing the action plan, and supports each other in learning and using the language.
- Strong leadership is in place to implement the programme.
- The whole school community has the opportunity to discuss the language and its relevance to everyday life.
- The use of Welsh outside the classroom and school is encouraged through extra-curricular activities and experiences. Community groups and other organisations working with young people could be involved such as the Urdd, Young Farmers Clubs, youth workers, the Selar and the Eisteddfodau, to name just a few.
- The school workforce develops their Welsh language skills and uses Welsh with each other and with the learners.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to make an active contribution to their children's Welsh language use, regardless of the language ability of those parents.
- Convene a group of learners to lead and take ownership of the Welsh Language Charter e.g. Criw Cymraeg, Dreigiau.
- The Welsh Language Charter provides a clear pathway for a learner's educational journey, including progression from primary to secondary, encouraging learners to continue to implement the scheme. It is also used across lifelong schools.

11. Additional support

Local coordinators and/or local authority officers will be responsible for providing regular advice and support to schools as they implement the framework. Regional consortia and/or local authority officers will also be responsible for promoting and monitoring school progress as part of the support process.

Officers and leaders of the Welsh Language Charter are welcome to contact the Cymraeg 2050 Division at Welsh Government for any further advice:

Cymraeg2050@gov.wales

Appendices

Outcomes and objectives – The Whole Programme

The main outcome of the whole programme: Everyone has a positive experience of the Welsh language. This runs through all aspects and elements of the Welsh Language Charter.

1. **Strategic leadership** shown at a whole school level.
 - Guidance given to learners about opportunities to use the language beyond school.
 - Senior leadership team demonstrates a clear commitment to the development of the Welsh language and identity at a whole school level.
 - Governors ensure that the Welsh Language Charter is a central part of the school's plans and support implementation.

2. **Learners** take ownership of the Welsh language and understand its relevance to everyday life.
 - All learners at the school understand the purpose and importance of the Welsh Language Charter and their role in supporting implementation.
 - Learners encourage and support each other to take responsibility for the language.
 - Instruction is given to the school council or group leading the Welsh Language Charter programme on how to discuss the language and provide guidance to their classmates.
 - School learners and forums such as Criw Cymraeg/ Welsh language ambassadors support their classmates to use more Welsh outside the classroom in a positive way.
 - Encouragement and support for learners to use Welsh through technology and social media.
 - Learners have the opportunity to discuss the language and its relevance to everyday life.
 - Celebrate Welsh identity and nurture pride among the learners.

3. **Schools** encourage learners' use of the language outside the classroom and offer Welsh language experiences and relating to Welsh identity across the **curriculum**.
 - Learners use Welsh in various situations in school.
 - The workforce ensures the use of Welsh across the curriculum (bilingual and English-medium schools).

- Enrichment activities and experiences offered in order to develop learners' use and enjoyment of Welsh.
 - The school development plan includes a clear commitment to developing the Welsh language skills of the workforce.
4. **The school workforce** develop their Welsh language skills and use Welsh with each other and with the learners.
- Whole school workforce understands the aim and objectives of the Welsh Language Charter and their role in supporting implementation.
 - The school workforce is able to discuss the language with learners.
 - The school workforce takes advantage of opportunities to develop their Welsh language skills, in line with professional standards.
 - Learners support the wider school workforce in developing and using their Welsh language skills.
 - The school workforce encourages the use of Welsh outside the classroom.
5. Work in partnership with the **wider school community** to support learners' use of Welsh outside school.
- Parents/carers and the wider community of the school understand the purpose and importance of the Welsh Language Charter and their role in supporting implementation.
 - Guidance for parents/carers to encourage them to support their children's language use outside school.
 - The whole school community and community partners plan and work together to offer activities and opportunities for children and young people to use the Welsh language outside school.

