

EDUCATION & YOUTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Thursday 17 th November, 2016
Report Subject	Welsh Advisory Service
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Education
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the work of the Welsh Advisory Service which provides support services to primary schools to raise standards in Welsh and Welsh as a second language.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That members receive the report on the work undertaken by the Welsh Advisory Service.
2	That members endorse the work of the Welsh Advisory Service in supporting schools to raise standards of Welsh in Flintshire schools.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE STRUCTURE AND PROVISION
1.01	<p>The Welsh Advisory team consists of full time equivalent 3.3 staff. 2.8 FTE work in English medium primary schools and 0.5 staff predominantly work in Welsh-Medium primary schools. This includes the service manager/team leader. This has reduced from 5.0 FTE since 2014 due to reductions in the Welsh Education Grant and council efficiencies. There are 59 English medium primary schools and 5 Welsh-Medium primary schools in the authority. According to Welsh Government's Welsh-Medium classification, all 59 English medium schools are defined as Category 5 schools. All 5 Welsh schools are defined as Category 1, Welsh-Medium primary schools. (See Glossary for further explanation).</p>
1.02	<p>The team's main objectives are to improve standards in Welsh (first and second language); to provide one coherent service to monitor, support, intervene and challenge Flintshire primary schools to raise standards in Welsh and contribute to Flintshire's Welsh in Education Strategy.</p>
1.03	<p>Under the National Model for Regional Working, the Welsh Advisory Team currently remains a local authority resource but works very closely alongside GwE Challenge Advisers to ensure a coherent approach to supporting and challenging schools in relation to Welsh. The manager of the team is the authority's representative on the GwE network group with the responsibility for Welsh to ensure effective working at a regional level.</p>
1.04	<p>The Welsh Advisory team provides targeted support following analysis of individual school needs which is used to create a school profile. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• analysis of data; advice and guidance on school effectiveness in relation to the teaching of Welsh;• guidance on curriculum changes, implementation and delivery;• comprehensive and flexible in-service training programme by a subject specialist, which will include specific support for schools;• support for teachers and headteachers before and following an inspection;• advice and support in developing the school's self-evaluation processes in relation to Welsh;• classroom advice and support for teachers who deliver first and second language Welsh;• literacy development strategies;• support for moderation and KS2/KS3 transition;• opportunities for more able and talented pupils to extend their Welsh language skills;• support for latecomers in Welsh-Medium schools at Key Stage 2.
1.05	<p>The funding to support the team and its work is reliant upon the Education Improvement Grant and Flintshire's contribution, which is subject to variation year on year.</p>
1.06	<p>Welsh taught in Welsh-Medium primary schools is assessed as a core subject at the end of Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2. Welsh second</p>

	<p>language taught in English medium schools is assessed as a non-core subject at the end of Key Stage 2. The number of pupils assessed at the end of Foundation Phase in Flintshire's Welsh-Medium schools in 2016 was 118 and the number of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 2 was 102. This is much lower than that of other authorities across the North Wales region and contributes greatly to the fluctuation of data at the end of Key Stage assessments. In 2016 there was dip of 3.1% to 88.1% in Welsh first language in Foundation Phase after a three year upward trend. In Key Stage 2 the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Welsh has been dropping since 2014 to its current level of 84.3% and is a priority focus of the team and the Challenge Adviser linked to the Welsh medium schools.</p>
1.07	<p>There has been a strong upward trend in Welsh second language results at the end of Key Stage 2 over the last 5 years. In 2016 the figure increased to 79.4% of pupils attaining Level 4+. That position is 1.5% above Wales at Level 4+.</p>
1.08	<p>Training staff has been high on the team's agenda for several years and continues to be a vital element of its work. It is of paramount importance that the workforce within Flintshire's boundaries possesses the necessary language skills and appropriate methodology to deliver age appropriate and sufficiently challenging schemes of work to pupils. This will continue to be a priority to ensure that Flintshire can meet the challenges of the Welsh' Government's new Welsh Language Strategy with its highly ambitious target of creating a million Welsh speakers by 2050.</p>
1.09	<p>The team offers a number of courses for both Welsh-Medium and English-medium primary school staff. These training programmes have been very well received and have impacted greatly on the continuing improvement of standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in Welsh as a second language. In order to effectively use the team's limited resources, a model of working with the neighbouring authorities of Denbighshire and Conwy for some of the training has been delivered successfully for a number of years. Local training for just Flintshire schools is also delivered.</p>
1.10	<p>The type of training and support required for a school is assessed on an individual basis. Teachers who have undertaken Intensive Language and Methodology Courses are prioritised with post-course support from members of the team. This may be in the form of discussions with the class teacher, team teaching or demonstration sessions provided by the Welsh Advisory teacher to model best practice. Feedback from staff and Head Teachers has identified this model to be extremely effective, as it not only guides the teacher throughout the year, but also moves them gently out of their 'comfort zone' and challenges individuals carefully to further develop their teaching methodology. Some teachers were reticent initially, but as time progressed, have valued and recognised the significance of this crucial element in their training/support and acknowledged the personal progress they have made. Approximately 170 school staff received training from Welsh-Medium and English medium primary schools in 2015-2016.</p>

1.11	Training and guidance is provided to Welsh-Medium schools when 'latecomers' transfer from English medium settings at Key Stage 2. The objective is to upskill school staff to deliver a language-focused programme over 14 weeks to these pupils, with a member of the Welsh Advisory team monitoring its delivery and impact. This intensive programme of support for the pupil rapidly increases their Welsh language skills which enables them to better access the whole curriculum and integrate more effectively.
1.12	Members of the Welsh Advisory Team are invited to join national working parties and groups relating to the development of Welsh e.g. national project on developing reading materials and the development of national exemplification material for assessment. The Team has been actively involved with the planning and implementation of a number of projects e.g.
1.13	Welsh Language Sabbatical training course for classroom assistants working in Welsh-Medium schools. This was in collaboration with Canolfan Bedwyr, Bangor University, Welsh Government and Wrexham local authority. Given the success of this pilot training programme, Welsh Government have agreed to fund the continuation of this course in 2016-2017 across the North Wales region. Involvement of the team with projects and initiatives such as these ensure that the Service can provide high quality advice and guidance to all Flintshire primary schools in relation to Welsh.
1.14	The work of the Welsh Advisory Team makes a significant contribution to the authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), particularly in relation to the targets for standards of Welsh achieved by learners and those related to the development of the workforce. The manager of the Welsh Advisory Team is one of the co-authors of the WESP, alongside the Senior Manager for School Improvement and other members of the Welsh Strategic Forum who make valuable contributions to the production of this annual plan.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Officer time.
2.02	Resources within the Education & Youth Portfolio.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	None required.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Funding – The reliance on grant funding and the reduction of the grant poses a risk to the provision and effectiveness of the Service. The Service has reviewed and amended its working practices in light of recent reductions to provide as efficient model of delivery as possible, but further reductions to funding could jeopardise the impact and effectiveness of the Service.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None. Contact Officer: Rhian Roberts, Manager Welsh Advisory Team Telephone: 01352 704059 E-mail: rhian.roberts@flintshire.gov.uk

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	FTE – Full time equivalent
7.02	GwE – Regional School Improvement Service for North Wales
7.03	Defining schools according to Welsh-Medium provision - Information document No: 023/2007 – Welsh Assembly Government 1. Welsh-Medium Primary School Curriculum - all Pupils in the Foundation Phase experience the areas of learning through the medium of Welsh. Welsh is the main teaching medium at KS2 with at least 70% of the teaching through the medium of Welsh. English is introduced formally as a subject at Key Stage 2 and is taught through the medium of English, and English may occasionally be used for some aspects of some subjects. Language of the School - Welsh is the language of the day to day business of the school. Welsh is used as the language of communication with the pupils and for the school's administration. The school communicates with parents in both languages. Outcomes - The normal expectation is that pupils, regardless of home language, will be able to transfer easily to Welsh-Medium secondary provision and by the end of Key Stage 2 will have reached a standard in English equivalent to that reached by pupils in predominantly English medium schools. 5. Predominantly English medium primary school Curriculum - all

pupils in the Foundation Phase experience the areas of learning mainly through the medium of English. English is the main teaching medium at KS2. Welsh is taught as a second language in KS2, and some aspects of some subjects may be taught in Welsh. Less than 20% of the teaching is through the medium of Welsh.

Language of the School - English is the language of the day to day business of the school, but some Welsh is also used as a language of communication with the pupils with the aim of improving their capacity to use everyday Welsh. The school communicates with parents either in English or in both languages.

Outcomes - The normal expectation is that pupils will transfer to English medium secondary provision and continue to learn predominantly through the medium of English, learning Welsh as a second language.