



Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**
Social Care **Wales**

Using Welsh at work

Promoting the use of the Welsh language in the health and social care and early years and childcare sectors in Wales.

First published: 16 January 2019

Last updated: 8 February 2023

This document was downloaded from socialcare.wales and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://socialcare.wales/resources-guidance/social-care-workers/using-welsh-at-work> for the latest version.

Find out why it's important to use Welsh at work and what we're doing to promote the use of the Welsh language within the health and social care and early years and childcare sectors.

Why is using Welsh at work important?

Advantages

By improving the workforce's Welsh language skills, knowledge and understanding of bilingualism we can provide better care services for everyone.

The benefits of using Welsh at work include:

- removing the risk of isolating individuals by failing to provide services in their preferred or native language
- avoiding potential complaints to the Welsh Language Commissioner about poor or deficient Welsh language services
- achieving equality standards by providing Welsh language services
- assessing individual needs by communicating with users of service in their preferred or native language
- promoting the reputation of organisations by providing a bilingual service
- offering good quality care, by meeting the language needs of the individuals you work with, who will come from many different backgrounds.

Welsh language policy and legislation

Following legislation and developments in language policy, service providers need to take reasonable steps to make sure they have proportionate,

appropriate and adequate staffing arrangements in place to provide a bilingual care service.

Further legislation established new Language Standards for public bodies in Wales. These Language Standards also apply to third party bodies, agencies, companies and organisations that provide care services on behalf of public bodies such as local authorities.

Legislation and policy in Wales require that:

- Welsh language services in social care are of the same standard and are as easily and promptly available as English language services
- organisations shouldn't assume English as the default language when providing their services
- Welsh speakers shouldn't have to ask for a service in Welsh.

Here are some useful links about Welsh language standards, planning and awareness. There's also information about rights, Welsh language schemes, and guidance to support the provision of a bilingual service.

- [Welsh Government Welsh language](#)
- [Care Inspectorate for Wales \(CIW\)](#)
- [Welsh Language Commissioner](#)
- [Iaith.cymru](#).

What is 'More than just words'?

'More than just words' is the [Welsh Government's Strategic Framework for the Welsh Language in Health and Social Care](#).

Its aim is to:

- make sure the language needs of Welsh speakers are met
- provide Welsh language services for those who need it
- show that language plays an important part in the quality of care and isn't seen as an "add-on".

This is a proactive approach to language choice and need in Wales. It places the responsibility for ensuring Welsh language services on service providers, not on the individual who uses services.

Both Welsh speakers and non-Welsh speakers have a part to play in providing Welsh language services.

What is the 'active offer'?

The 'active offer' means providing a service in Welsh without having to ask for it. Welsh language services should be as available to users in the same way as English language services.

Actively offering Welsh language services makes sure that people's needs are understood and met and that those who access care services can rely on being treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

Not actively offering Welsh language services may result in people's dignity and respect being compromised.

How can I make the active offer?

[Delivering the 'active offer' information pack – Social services and social care](#)

PDF 944KB

[More than just words: active offer poster](#)

PDF 1MB

[More than just words: Little things in Welsh poster](#)

PDF 941KB

Let's hear from practitioners and individuals who use services

Keneuoe's story

Keneuoe talks about the importance of Welsh in her job.

[View transcript](#)

1

00:00:08 --> 00:00:13

I think that it's really important to provide a care service through

2

00:00:13--> 00:00:16

the medium of Welsh

if people choose it.

3

00:00:17 --> 00:00:21

Where we live and work in Gwynedd,

4

00:00:21 --> 00:00:25

it s a very Welsh place

where the majority of people

5

00:00:25 --> 00:00:28

we look after and care for

6

00:00:28 --> 00:00:35

have lived their lives through the medium of Welsh

for years.

7

00:00:35 --> 00:00:38

This is what is natural to them.

So, I think it's very important that

8

00:00:38 --> 00:00:48

we help them continue

with their lives as they've known them

9

00:00:48 --> 00:00:50

and they're used to.

10

00:00:51 --> 00:00:58

Keneuoe came to live in Bala back in 1997 and she didn't have a word of Welsh.

11

00:00:58 --> 00:01:02

In her current role

she's an inspiration

12

00:01:02 --> 00:01:07

and she has continued to develop

and continued using and promoting the language.

13

00:01:09--> 00:01:14

It's only been five years since Keneuoe
joined the care sector and in her words,

14

00:01:14 --> 00:01:17

she regrets that she
didn't come much sooner.

15

00:01:18 --> 00:01:23

They know I can speak Welsh,
they have settled down well,

16

00:01:23 --> 00:01:27

because I give them time,
I sit down and speak with them

17

00:01:27 --> 00:01:37

and that enables them to
express any concerns they have,

18

00:01:37 --> 00:01:45

or just share history and have a
more detailed conversation with
19

00:01:45--> 00:01:49

them in their language,
in the language of their choice.

20

00:01:49 --> 00:01:52

So that's important in my opinion,
and I'm proud that

21

00:01:52 --> 00:01:55

I am making a difference.

Morfydd and Will's stories

Morfydd and Will talk about how important it is for them to be able to speak Welsh in their care home.

[View transcript](#)

0:05

I've lived in Carmel for over 50 years, Cilgwyn is where I was raised

0:12

Well done, and you're in Plas Gwilym now.

0:15

Yes, I'm in Plas Gwilym now.

0:16

And I was at home in Cilgwyn and I'm at home here too remember.

0:21

Yes

0:22

Have you always spoken Welsh?

0:23

Yes, Welsh.

0:25

I'll tell you, my Mum was South Walian and dad from Penygroes, here

0:30

I went to school at the age of four and got a slap on my hand for speaking Welsh.

0:40

And speaking my mother's Welsh, I was

0:43

"tefe", "dan staer" for 'under the stairs' but I didn't know that I was wrong.

0:51

And I went home and said, and my dad said, "Where did you get the slap?"

0:57

"On my hand, here"

1:00

And then he got angry.

1:01

Then he turned to us, we were four children, and mum was there.

1:06

"There is no word of Welsh in this house from now on.

1:12

You all speak English"

1:15

To tell the truth, at the age of four, I didn't really know what he was thinking

1:19

I probably wasn't supposed to know.

1:22

And he says "Out with the children you will be allowed to speak Welsh as you can and as

1:28

you want, but Morfydd must learn correct Welsh

1:34

she's not getting a slap again"

1:37

And I played with the kids and I picked it up just fine.

1:41

And do you speak Welsh to everyone everyday here?

1:44

Yes, yes

1:46

But, if there's someone English there and wants me to reply, I do but

1:53

I prefer Welsh

1:56

I would speak English, I can, because Mum turned to English at that time of

2:04

language of the 'south'.

2:06

Then English is at the top of the list in the way I can, but Welsh beats it.

2:14

But I don't know, if I was here and everything was in English, I don't think I could

2:22

stay long.

2:24

No

2:25

it would be good for nothing for me.

2:28

You know when you're going to see Dr Britto now and you know

2:31

that you have to speak English with him.

2:33

How do you feel about that?

2:37

Well, I have freedom, don't I

2:42

I could say in English to him "I'm sorry, I can't speak English, only that."

2:50

And he would fetch one of the girls to talk to me and for her to tell him what I was

2:56

saying.

2:58

But I don't need that, I can speak English for myself.

3:04

But I don't know, it doesn't come naturally.

3:11

To us Welsh, it doesn't.

3:14

Do you feel more confident in Welsh?

3:17

Well, yes

3:19

The thing is, when you're Welsh you feel, especially in central Wales,

3:25

"Oh, I'm home.

3:28

"I've got the right to speak how I want".

3:31

You see, it brings back to me what that teacher did, give me a slap for

3:37

not speaking correctly.

3:40

In a way I've always been careful how I speak.

3:46

The words have to be right.

3:54

Do you speak Welsh everyday here, Will?

3:56

Every day, nothing else but Welsh.

3:59

How do you feel about Welsh, Will?

4:03

Well, that's the language I was born with.

4:05

My mum and dad and grandparents

4:11

I am Welsh through and through

4:15

I prefer to speak Welsh than English.

4:17

Do you think it makes a difference, Will, to the way you live and your care

4:23

if you can't speak Welsh every day to people?

4:27

Yes, no doubt.

4:30

I wouldn't feel happy.

4:34

I'm happy here, everyone here is Welsh.

4:37

Everyone, staff and residents.

4:42

It makes a lot of difference.

4:46

A lot.

4:47

In what way?

4:49

Well, it's my language - Welsh.

4:51

I go to another language when I speak English.

5:00

And I often don't know how to put things across from Welsh to English.

5:01

Right

5:02

Do you know what I mean?

5:04

Yes

5:06

If I want to say something in Welsh I can say it, but if I want to

5:08

say the same thing in English, I have to think.

5:12

Can you still speak English?

5:15

Yes.

5:16

Not good English, but I can communicate

5:23

You know when you chose to come to live in Plas Gwilym, was it important to

5:27

you that it's a Welsh home?

5:30

Yes, yes

Wyn's story

Wyn talks about the importance of understanding that some people find it easier to explain things in their native language.

- [Watch Wyn's video](#) on Welsh Government's YouTube channel

How to assess Welsh language skills

We're developing a tool that works out an individual's skills in speaking, writing and reading Welsh, from basic to fluent.

[Welsh language skills in your workforce - using them effectively \(Full Version\)](#)

PDF 1MB

[Welsh language skills in your workforce - using them effectively \(Quick Guide\)](#)

PDF 275KB

We've also created a version for the early years and childcare sector that's based on the principles of 'More than just words'.

[Welsh Language Skills in your workforce - using them effectively - early years childcare](#)

PDF 609KB

These packs help make effective use of language skills as you would with any other workplace skill, for the benefit and well-being of people who use your services.

Training resource to support bilingual working

Our 'train the trainer' resource supports language awareness training for people working in health and social care, early years and childcare and for people who are in further or higher education.

The resource aims to:

- help the trainer to teach language awareness while encouraging discussions on how best to work bilingually
- educate and empower learners and workers about how to offer a valuable service, making sure that language is always a consideration
- be used as part of in-service training or induction for people working in social care in Wales.

This resource is in PowerPoint format with trainer notes to support each slide.

[Contact us](#) if you can't download the presentation.

[Language, dignity and care - trainer presentation](#)

PPTX 162MB

[Language, dignity and care - introductory document](#)

DOCX 450KB

More resources to help you

Apps for training

[Work Welsh](#) is a free online course for beginners that's tailored to people working in care. It covers topics such as how to have an initial face-to-face conversation in Welsh with the people you care for.

[Camau | Learn Welsh](#) by The National Centre for Learning Welsh, is a fully funded online self-study course for beginners,

[Sgiliaith \(Grwp Llandrillo Menai\)](#) offers practical advice about good practice, staff training and resources to improve learners' bilingual skills and experiences.

[Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol](#) offers scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate students to study higher education courses through the medium of Welsh. It has resources to support learners who have little or no Welsh skills with the new CCPLD and HSC qualifications. It also offers 'Prentis-iaith' courses for apprentices who have little or no Welsh language skills, and apprentices can complete part of their HSC/CCPLD qualification in Welsh.

[Iaith Gwaith \(working Welsh\) scheme](#) and the orange speech bubble badge is used to show if a person can speak Welsh.

Clwb Cwtsh

Clwb Cwtsh is a resource that introduces parents and carers to Welsh vocabulary they can use with children.

- Watch [this video](#) on Mudiad Meithrin's YouTube channel to learn more.

Apps for learning

Here are some Welsh language apps for learning, available on both IOS and Android.

- [Beginners Welsh - created by Aberystwyth University](#)
- [Learn Cymraeg - Mynediad 1 \(Entry 1\)](#)
- [LearnCymraeg - Mynediad - Gogledd Cymru \(Entry North Wales\)](#)
- [Caring in Welsh App.](#)

Translation, proofreading and terminology

If you're looking for a translator or interpreter service, [visit the Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru's website](#) for a list and details of competent translators and interpreters.

Here are some Welsh online dictionaries to help you learn enhance your vocabulary:

- [Gweiadur](#)
- [Geiriadur yr Academi](#)
- [Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru](#)
- [Geiriadur - University of Wale, Trinity St David](#)
- [Y Termiadur Addysg.](#)

[Termau](#) is an English to Welsh and Welsh to English terminology portal.

[Cysgliad](#) is a software package with two programmes. Cysill identifies and corrects language errors in your Welsh language documents and Cysgeir is an electronic dictionary.

[Helo Blod](#) is a free translation and text checking service.

Ceredigion County Council has gathered many terms commonly used during the pandemic and produced a mini-dictionary of the most [commonly used coronavirus terms in Welsh](#).

Mentrau Iaith (Welsh initiatives)

[Mentrau Iaith Cymru \(MIC\)](#) is the national organisation that supports the work of 22 local Mentrau Iaith across Wales.

Its role is to raise awareness of the Welsh language and culture, by encouraging people to develop their knowledge and use of the language and be able to practice their language skills in a friendly and social environment in the community.

Welsh language - research, technology, learning, and support

[Canolfan Bedwyr](#) is Bangor University's centre for Welsh language services, research and technology.

[Developing Welsh language skills](#) helps students, staff and employers build confidence to use their Welsh language skills in the workplace.

[Place name](#) was created to help people find and check for the existence of Welsh names for English places, and vice versa.

This [speech language technologies](#) resource has the ability to produce and respond to human speech (text to speech and speech recognition).

Training

The [National Centre for Learning Welsh](#) was established to deliver Welsh language training, with a wealth of training available from online, short courses, apps and much more.

- [1000 Digital resources](#) (five levels)
- Learn Welsh in just five minutes a day for free with [Duolingo](#)
- [Say something in Welsh](#)
- [YouTube](#) videos
- [Work Welsh](#) is a funded, flexible programme designed to strengthen Welsh language skills in the workplace
- [Support for Employers](#) – how to audit skills, courses available, expected outcomes etc.

Other organisations

Mudiad Meithrin

Mudiad Meithrin offers play and learning opportunities for children from birth to school age.

- [Watch this video from Mudiad Meithrin learn more](#)

Mudiad Meithrin's [YouTube channel](#) has variety of useful videos.

Virtual bulletin for Welsh language resources

A [Welsh language virtual notice board on Padlet.com](#) has resources for training, learners, activities, apps, music, jobs and much more to support you to learn and develop your Welsh language skills.

Educational resources

[OpenLearn Wales: The home of bilingual, free learning in Wales](#) brings together a collection of free educational resources relevant to Wales and helps people learn about Welsh society and culture.

Contact us

If you have a question or if you can't find what you are looking for [get in touch with us](#).