

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS/HIGHLIGHTS

You should highlight no more than 5 of your main achievements/highlights in this section.

1. Blaenau Gwent has successfully gained 21st Century Schools WG funding approval for the Band B remodelling works at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. Education are taking a report via the Council's political processes which seeks to progress statutory consultation processes in line with the proposal to create a 210 place WM primary school in Tredegar/Sirhowy valley.
2. Numbers of pupils on roll, along with those applying for a place at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg continues to increase, with a positive trend noted over the last 3 years in relation to both nursery and reception. In addition, transition rates between primary and secondary for 2019/20 were 100%.
3. Blaenau Gwent Council has developed a strong marketing and communication plan, targeting and promoting the benefits of being bilingual, whilst also establishing appropriate methods of engagement and consultation with stakeholders, in order to inform key strategic priorities.
4. Representation, attendance and frequency continue to be strong in BG WEF meetings, with partners firmly committed to and recognising the effectiveness of the Blaenau Gwent Forum. Partners have hailed the work of BG WEF as an example of good practice. Also the WESP POSP subgroup continues to meet regularly to support proposals for growth and development on a regional basis and again, to inform strategic planning.
5. Sabatical Welsh in a year figures are increasing year on year, in 2019/20 there were 8 signed up and in 2020/21 there are 13. The EAS have 14 places available to each region annually (Welsh in a Year) and they received more expressions of interest. School, governors and individual involved need to be committed to the course prior to interview and acceptance. There is a distance and blended approach to the delivery of training this year.

OVERALL PLAN SUMMARY

Green/Amber/Red. You should note your current target, your achievement this year and a self -assessment of red, amber or green.

Blaenau Gwent 2019/20 self-assessment = **Amber**, with the rate of completion against the 2019/20 action plan at 84% (or 49 actions) with 7% (4) actions in progress and 9% (5) not started. This is lower this year due to the restrictions of Covid 19, which was out of our control.

KEY ANNUAL DATA

Sept 2020, 28 Year 2 pupils (cohort 785) representing 3.56% of the cohort.
Sept 2020, 27 Year 3 pupils (cohort 743) 3.63% of the cohort. There were 44 enrolled for Nursery in September 2020 and 37 Reception with another 11 due to start in January 2021. Early Years -Gwdihw Brynithel transfer rate to WM primary 1 out of 25 (4.76%) and Helyg Bychan transfer rate to WM primary 13 out of 20 (68.9%).

ALIGNMENT WITH KEY POLICY AREAS

E.g.; Childcare Sufficiency Assessments, 21st Century Schools and Colleges programme. Childcare Sufficiency Assessment data and subsequent updates are used to inform the WESP and associated actions on both a strategic and operational level. The Blaenau Gwent 21st Century Schools Programme seeks to enhance and develop Welsh-medium education provision locally, with the first proposed Band B project in development, being a remodelling project to enhance the teaching and learning environment at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg. The Child Care Offer and Childcare Grant within BG are also closely aligned to the WESP and aim to enhance and develop Welsh-medium early years and childcare provision, options and opportunities.

You should outline specific LA level risks which are or could in future effect your objective achievement.

1. There is a risk in relation to implementation of the BG Welsh Medium Grant proposal, which will be subject to the statutory consultation process.
2. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there is a risk associated with transition between early years and foundation phase, meaning that numbers could decline.
3. There is a risk that the LA fails to engage partners within the development of the 10 year plan, due to COVID-19.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

You should outline your mechanisms and internal processes for monitoring progress, as well as the monitoring work through the Welsh Education Forum.

The WEF meets on a termly basis with outcome leads for each area identified. The outcome leads support the Education Transformation team to track, monitor and collate data relating to their respective outcome areas and monitor progression against the associated targets.

The Council has an action planning process in place, in order to monitor and collate progression data and information relating to achievements against the WESP each year. Termly updates are sought, with the autumn-term updates and WEF meeting then focusing in on annual progression against the associated outcomes and targets.

A reported is collated in the autumn-term each year and taken via the Council's political processes and is both the Scrutiny and Executive Committee forward work programmes as part of the annual cycle, to inform learning and plans for the preceding year.

A Task and Finish group has been established for the new 10-year plan, they are due to meet in December 2020 to formalise a co-ordinated approach.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

1. Education are scheduled to take a report via the Council's political processes to initiate statutory consultation in December 2020.
2. Alternative engagement methods and plans are in place between the school and providers. The BG WEF and associated Communications Sub-group are closely monitoring this.
3. A detailed plan and timeline are in development and partners have committed to the first planning workshop in December 2020.

FORWARD LOOK MILESTONES

You should highlight any significant developments/milestones planned for the next year.

- Delivery of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg Remodelling Project under the Council's 21st Century Schools Band B Programme.
- Education aim to initiate the statutory consultation process in line with the proposal to develop a 210 place WM primary school in Tredegar/Sirhowy valley.
- The Council aims to undertake consultation/market testing in early 2021, to inform the development of the Councils marketing and promotion strategy including: web-based developments and resources.
- The Council aims to develop a plan via the SEWC POSP and Demand Sub-group, to secure a regional solution to Welsh Medium secondary provision by 2027.
- A new Cylch Meithrin at Tredegar is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales. Staff recruit processes are underway for opening in 2021.
- A pilot is being established through Mudiad Meithrin's SAS (Setup and Succeed) with Buds to Blossom in Beaufort, to provide cylch meithrin sessions for children in their care.
- Cylch Meithrin Gwdihw (Brynithel) are extending their services to provide full-day sessions 9am -3pm becoming an Education provider, this has the potential to increase the uptake in Bro Helyg from (Brynithel) upon entry to reception.
- The Council aims to develop and consult upon the draft 10 year WESP Plan.

You should include a short summary of your progress under each objective.

Outcome 1: Good progress has been made against this outcome; however, due to the restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, progress associated with face to face engagement has been stunted. The benefits of being bi-lingual booklets and the use of social media outlets to promote WM childcare and Education, along with virtual engagement, have been reviewed and further developed throughout this period. The team continues to monitor the delivery of this outcome and explore alternative engagement and promotion methods. Demand, marketing and promotion are being driven by the local WEF Communications Sub-group, along with key developments undertaken by the Regional WEF POSP and Demand Group. Further web-based and marketing plans are in development for implementation throughout 2021. Promotion has been carried out virtually, with individuals signposted to the being bilingual booklet online. Pupil numbers within the primary school continue to increase.

Outcome 2: Good progress has been made overall; however, transition and promotional engagement has been restricted on a face to face basis, with alternative communication and engagement methods being established. Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg continue to have positive working relations with childcare, early years and secondary sectors. Uptake of Welsh-medium nursery and reception places continues to increase (in line with live birth data). Secondary transition continues to be strong with 100% of primary pupils from Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg transferring to Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw. Discussions are taking place regionally with regards to securing long-term secondary provision for Blaenau Gwent learners, along with those in neighbouring authorities, in line with Torfaen CBC proposal to extend the age range of Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw. In addition, one of the key aims of the Band B Remodelling Project will be to enhance and develop the teaching and learning environment at Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg to strengthen and enhance provision and transition – both at early years and secondary. Cylch Meithrin Gwdihw (Brynithel) are in the process of extending their services to full-day sessions 9am -3pm, and going through the process to become an Education provider, this has the potential to increase the uptake in Bro Helyg from (Brynithel) upon entry to reception.

Outcome 3 and 4: Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, youth club and other associated wider engagement opportunities and provision have been put on hold, with detached/online engagement being established as an alternative. The situation has also been exacerbated by staff from both services being placed on furlough. The Youth Service and the Urdd are exploring the development of an online welsh-medium provision for young people. Progress against the 2019/20 the target to increase use Welsh in/out of the classroom by 15% (as in the previous 2 years) has been stunted; however, opportunities have been made available remotely since September 2020. There will be an increased focus in this area in 2021.

Outcome 5: Good progress has been made, however, the pandemic has had a negative impact upon progress, due to the need to establish new and alternative resources and tools to promote Welsh language skill development. Distance and blended learning resources have been created in support of the teaching of Welsh and Welsh Second Language.

Outcome 6: Good progress has been made both locally and regionally informing both policy and practice. Welsh-medium resource development is underway and has strengthened over the last year. Work in this area is ongoing in line with emergent policy and legislative developments.

Outcome 7: Excellent progress has been made in this outcome area, with a number BG schools actively engaging in Welsh-medium CPD initiatives and development opportunities. During the 2019/20 academic session 8 staff signed up to the Welsh in a year sabbatical, with a further 13 signed up during the 2020/21 academic session.