

BEING BILINGUAL



Vale of Glamorgan Council
Civic Offices,
Holton Road,
Barry. CF63 4RU

The benefits of being bilingual

Being bilingual means having the ability to live your everyday life using two languages. There are many advantages to this and in Wales one of the most common routes to bilingualism is being educated through the medium of Welsh.

The aim of this booklet is to explain the advantages of being bilingual, answer a few common questions and tell parents where they can find more information about Welsh medium education in the Vale of Glamorgan.



An Educational Edge ...

- Bilingual children tend to achieve higher within the curriculum and to perform better in exams.
- Learning a second language at a young age helps children develop an ear for languages and gives them a head start at learning a third or fourth language as they get older.

- Children who speak two languages tend to become better at analysing data, multi-tasking, tend to do better in IQ tests and have higher cognitive skills.
- Because they learn in a way that teaches more than one word for an object or concept people who speak two languages become more flexible, sensitive and creative.



Advantages in later life...

- Speaking two languages offers more employment opportunities. In Wales speaking Welsh is a workplace skill, especially within the public and service sectors, and due to recent changes to the law more and more employers will need a bilingual workforce.
- Bilingual people earn on average 11% more.
- People who speak two or more languages tend to do better working under pressure.
- Speaking more than one language opens up a wider range of social activities and expands horizons.
- Learning through another language helps children develop a greater sensitivity to other cultures and backgrounds.
- Speaking more than one language helps to reduce the risk of dementia in later life.



Welsh Heritage & Culture ...

* The Welsh language is a key part of our Welsh heritage. Speaking Welsh gives people a closer relationship with the history, heritage and traditions of Wales. It also lets people learn the Welsh sayings, music, poetry and literature which are celebrated and respected worldwide.

* These cultural benefits make for a strong personal identity which increases a young person's sense of belonging and self-worth.

Did you know?

At least half of the world's population is bilingual or multilingual i.e. they speak 2 or more languages.

and did you know ...

Welsh is one of the oldest living languages in Europe.

Put simply, a bilingual education enhances opportunities – it doesn't limit them.

“ I see the benefits but I don't speak Welsh and I'm concerned that ... ”

“ ... I won't know what's going on in a Welsh speaking environment. ”



The vast majority of parents who send their children to Welsh medium schools in the Vale don't speak Welsh themselves. This is why Welsh medium schools in the Vale of Glamorgan always communicate with parents in both Welsh and English.

The classroom environment is Welsh (apart from English lessons of course!) but whenever parents, carers, relatives and friends visit the school, bilingualism is the norm. This means that teachers and pupils will speak Welsh or English depending on who is in the conversation.

“ ... I won't be able to help my child with homework. ”

This is a very common concern that teachers in Welsh medium schools are fully aware of and always take into account when setting homework. In almost all cases homework will have an English explanation provided with it so all parents can help their children with the work.

“ ... I don't want their English language skills to suffer ”

Bilingual people are more sensitive when communicating and so are more aware of the needs of listeners, especially when switching from one language to another. This often makes them better communicators in both languages.

There is also a large amount of support available on child-friendly websites – homework after all is set for children and not parents! But, if in doubt, simply ask.



What do parents say ?

“ I was initially concerned that I would be the only parent that didn't speak Welsh and that my son's pace of learning would be behind his English speaking peers. This has not been the case and at the age of 6 he reads well in both languages. ”

Sam Willis, Llantwit Major

“ As a non-Welsh speaker, I had worried that I could not support my children in their education. I can now say that I am involved with every aspect of their education and feel thankful to the school for this. I love listening to my children speaking Welsh and have picked up a few words myself. ”

Juliet Evans, Barry

“ I am hugely proud of being Welsh, of our culture and heritage and the language is a big part of that. Being able to give the gift of language to my son is a joy. Welsh can be a huge help in the workplace and a real asset to a career in Wales. Research shows being bilingual can help you learn other languages too.

So it's all good! ”
Lucy Owen,
TV News Reader & Presenter,

And the pupils ?

“ Choosing Welsh medium education for me was one of my parents' best decisions. It's brilliant being able to say I'm bilingual! ”

Lloyd Evans,
former pupil of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg
studying medicine, Cardiff University

“ The ability to switch between languages as I study medicine has increased my confidence as I learn new things. I can think of things quickly in different ways. ”

Gareth Davies,
former pupil of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Morgannwg
Oxford University student

“ I am so proud to be Welsh and being able to speak the language is awesome. ”

Seren Russell, age 11, Penarth

Welsh medium schools in the Vale

The Vale of Glamorgan has six Welsh medium primary schools and one Welsh medium 3-18 school.

You can check your catchment area online at www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk – just enter your postcode into the “in your neighbourhood” box on the homepage. Alternatively email admissions@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk or call 01446 700111.

Ysgol Gymraeg Gwaun Y Nant
(age 3 -11)
Amroth Court, Caldy Close,
Barry, CF62 9DU
01446 421723

email: ygawunynant@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
www.ysgolgwaunynant.co.uk

Ysgol Gymraeg Sant Curig
(age 3-11)
College Road, Barry, CF62 8HQ
01446 744222

email: ysantcurig@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
www.ysgolgymraegsantcurig.com


Ysgol Gymraeg Sant Baruc
(age 3-11)
St Paul's Avenue, Barry,
CF62 8HT
01446 749009

email: ysantbaruc@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
www.ysgolsantbaruc.co.uk

Ysgol Gymraeg Bro
Morgannwg (age 3-18)
Colcot Road, Barry,
CF62 8YU
01446 450280


www.bromorgannwg.org.uk






Ysgol Gymraeg Pen-Y-Garth
(age 3-11)
Redlands Road, Penarth,
CF64 2QN
029 2070 0262

www.ysgolpenygarth.ik.org
email: ygpenygarth@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk



Ysgol Gymraeg Dewi Sant
(age 3 -11)
Ham Lane East,
Llantwit Major, CF61 1TQ
01446 709595

www.ysgolgymraegdewisant.co.uk
email: ydewisant@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk



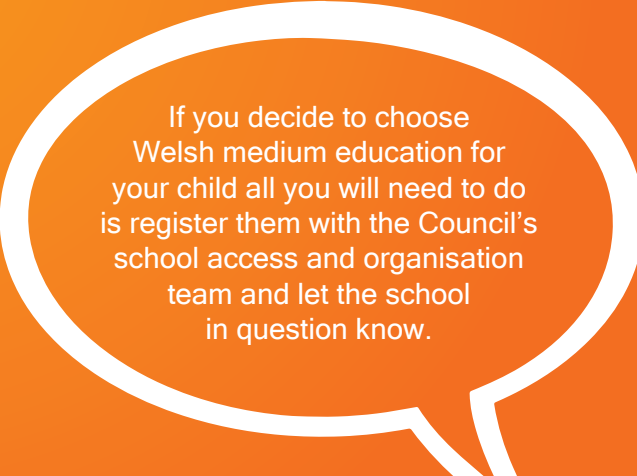
Ysgol Iolo Morganwg (age 3-11)
Broadway, Cowbridge,
CF71 7ER
01446 772358

email: yiolomorganwg@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
www.ysgoliolomorganwg.co.uk

There are also a number of Welsh medium pre-school playgroups in the Vale run by an organisation called Mudiad Meithrin. There are more details on this in the directory at the end of this booklet.

If you want to know more about your options for your child's education why not...

- call your local school to arrange a visit and to have a chat with the headteacher.
- go along to some local Welsh language pre-school playgroup activities for new parents such as Cylch Meithrin or Cylch Ti a Fi .
- speak to other parents and friends who have had experience of Welsh medium education. You could even have a chat with parents outside the school gates!
- search 'bilingual parenting' online.



If you decide to choose Welsh medium education for your child all you will need to do is register them with the Council's school access and organisation team and let the school in question know.

Directory

Outside of the Vale's schools there are lots of organisations and societies working in the area that arrange activities and events for both children and adults through the medium of Welsh. Here are details of a few. If you'd like to try one or just learn more then get in touch.



Welsh courses for Adults at every level, across the Vale of Glamorgan.

A choice of short or long courses, daytime and evenings, and a variety of activities to enable you to practice your Welsh. Wherever you are on your journey to fluency, let us help you on your way.

 www.learnwelsh.cymru

 learnwelsh@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

 01446 733762



Parents for Welsh Medium Education' exists to support and promote education through the medium of Welsh throughout Wales. It ensures equal opportunities for those who wish their children to be taught through the medium of Welsh.

Ceri Owen, Development Officer
Ty Cymru, Greenwood Close, Parc Busnes
Porth, Caerdydd CF23 8RD

 www.rhag.net

 ceri@rhag.net

 029 2073 9207 / 07912 175403



Cymraeg for kids is a project managed by Mudiad Meithrin that focuses on increasing the number of nursery age children that are able to speak Welsh.

It shares information, advice and support to parents on the benefits of being bilingual, the importance of introducing Welsh to children as early as possible and the advantages of opting for Welsh medium childcare and education.

A range of support groups are run locally such as baby massage, baby yoga, Welsh Storytime sessions and family events to make them aware of the bilingual journey available for them and their child.

 www.llyw.cymru/cymraeg

 @CymraegforKids

 Cymraeg i Blant y Fro

 Sioned.stephens@meithrin.cymru

 01970 639639 / 07931 652092



Mudiad Meithrin is the main provider of Welsh medium early years care and education in the voluntary sector. The aim is to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years' care and education experiences through the medium of Welsh. Cylchoedd Ti a Fi (parent and toddler) and day nurseries offer activities for children from birth whilst Cylchoedd Meithrin playgroups welcome children from 2 years of age to school age.

 www.meithrin.cymru
 [@mudiadmeithin](https://twitter.com/mudiadmeithin)
 Mudiad Meithrin
 01970 639639



The website offers information on the range of Welsh language opportunities available, from introducing Welsh into the family and finding activities in Welsh for children and teenagers, to the benefits of using the language in the workplace.

It includes the all-Wales Welsh Language Events finder, a Welsh App of the week feature, and a course finder that lists all Welsh for Adult courses. The website also acts as a portal linking to other sites offering Welsh language services as well as digital resources in Welsh.

 www.llyw.cymru/cymraeg



The Urdd is one of the largest youth movements in Europe offering opportunities and activities for children and young people to live their lives fully in Welsh. The Urdd is an exciting, dynamic movement with over 50,000 members between 8 and 25 years. The Urdd sports department offers a wide range of opportunities, for example, clubs and activities, weekly and holiday sport, as well as family sessions.

 www.urdd.cymru
 [@UrddCaerdyddFro](https://twitter.com/UrddCaerdyddFro)
 Urdd
 029 2063 5684



Menter Bro Morgannwg is the Vale's Welsh language initiative, and our main aim is to provide opportunities for children, young people and adults to use the Welsh language socially outside school and work hours. Our activities include Gŵyl Fach y Fro festival, school holiday childcare provision, weekly clubs for primary and nursery aged children, family activities, recreational courses for adults, informal conversational groups for Welsh learners and regular musical evenings titled Gigs Bach y Fro.

 www.menterbromorgannwg.cymru  @MIBroMorgannwg  Menter Bro Morgannwg  ffion@menterbromorgannwg.cymru  02920 689888



Vale of Glamorgan Council,
Civic Offices,
Holton Road, Barry
CF63 4RU.
c1v@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

01446 700111