

CYMRAEG



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



# National policy on Welsh language transmission and use in families

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## Audience

All those interested in ensuring that the Welsh language is transmitted and used in families.

## Overview

This national policy on Welsh language transmission in families derives from the Welsh Government's strategy *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers* (2017). Its purpose is to plan developments in the intergenerational transmission of Welsh.

## Action required

None – for information only.

## Further information

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## Additional copies

This document is available on the Welsh Government website at [www.gov.wales/cymraeg](http://www.gov.wales/cymraeg)

## Related documents

*Parenting in Wales: Strategies for working with fathers* (2016); *Prosperity for All: the national strategy* (2017); *Education in Wales: Our national mission, Action plan 2017–21* (2017); *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers* (2017); *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers, Work programme 2017–21* (2017); *Welsh Language Transmission and Use in Families* (2017); *Parenting in Wales: Guidance on engagement and support* (2017); The Childcare Offer for Wales Campaign (2019); *Process Evaluation of Cymraeg for Kids* (2019)

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## Ministerial foreword

The language we use at home will affect how comfortable our children will feel using that language later in life. This Policy supports and encourages people with Welsh language skills, but who may not have used them for a while, to use more Welsh with their children i.e. to ‘transmit’ the language to the next generation.

When I launched the draft version of this Policy earlier this year, I wanted to hear from families themselves—the work we’ll do as a result of the Policy is for them after all. So I’m glad that we’ve been able to hear—and listen to—their voices. It’s always important to gain a wide range of views and perspectives on what we’re trying to achieve.

Every home is different, and in my case, I spoke Welsh with my mother and English with my father. I went further when it came to my own children, and made it a condition of marriage that my husband should learn Welsh and that he should speak it to our children. Within our family, the language we speak to our children was a very conscious decision but that’s not true for everyone; research shows that, like so many aspects of our lives, language transmission behaviour is to a large extent subconscious. This Policy focuses on how to influence this. Of course, the language we speak to our children, indeed all language behaviours, are the result of myriad factors. We’re already taking steps so more people have more opportunities to use Welsh. Those steps, and this Policy, contribute to one of Cymraeg 2050’s two main targets: doubling the daily use of Welsh.

We’re building on a solid foundation of work which we’ve done in Wales over many years. We now need to push boundaries and test new ways of working. And if those new ways don’t work, we’ll learn from that, and adapt what we do.

We won’t see all of the results of our work overnight, as what we’re aiming to achieve is by its very nature intergenerational. But the next phase of our work to ensure future generations of Welsh speakers in the family starts today.



**ELUNED MORGAN**

Minister for Mental Health, Wellbeing and Welsh Language



## Introduction

*Teulu*: ‘family’ in Welsh. Most of us learn and speak our first words by listening to and copying our families. Historically, the family was where most people learnt Welsh. Now, the education system generates the majority of new Welsh speakers, but not all these new Welsh speakers necessarily use Welsh with their own children later in life.

Our Welsh Language Use Survey clearly shows that use of Welsh at home as a child is a determiner of the frequency of use of Welsh in later life.<sup>1</sup> In speaking, or ‘transmitting’ Welsh to their children in the family, parents/carers can provide a beneficial basis for their children’s linguistic development.

This Policy updates our approach to transmission. It’s based on academic research, our experience of working in the field, our conversations with partner organisations, interested individuals, and a formal consultation process which included detailed conversations with parents. You can read both the research and report on the consultation on our website.

We said in *Cymraeg 2050*, that we wouldn’t wish to control how people behave in their homes, or force parents/carers to speak Welsh with their children. This Policy specifically aims to enable those families in which there is already capacity for use of Welsh—latent or otherwise—to use what Welsh they have with their children. In our wider work, we already are, and will continue taking steps to enable those families where parents don’t have Welsh language skills to develop their ability in Welsh—such as our work with the National Centre for Learning Welsh and other partners. However, this Policy doesn’t claim to address that area. What it does do is set out a scheme of work to assist those who have facility in Welsh to speak Welsh to their children, and help those who lack confidence or practice, understand that they too can speak Welsh to their children.

As more young people become Welsh speakers through the education system, there’ll be more adults who can speak Welsh. And so there’ll be more homes with at least one adult Welsh speaker. When these ‘new speakers’ have their own children, we want them to be comfortable in speaking Welsh with them at home. We fully realise that it would be unfair, unrealistic and unfeasible to place this expectation on the education system alone. So we’ll work across sectors, age groups, and test different methodologies and interventions as we do so.

We also need to bear in mind how potentially ‘messy’ the nature of intergenerational transmission can be and the challenges that can arise when attempting to alter established language use patterns. So it’s important that we think of the process in more than just binary terms. Because our research shows that intergenerational transmission of Welsh—or, of course the non-transmission—can be unplanned and unconscious behaviour we must bear in mind that transmission or non-transmission doesn’t necessarily result from rational and intentional parental decisions. We need to make it as easy and natural for those who may not have used their Welsh language skills for a while, or who don’t use Welsh for other reasons, to use them with their children.

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<sup>1</sup> Welsh Government & Welsh Language Commissioner, *Welsh Language Use in Wales, 2013-2015*, Cardiff, Welsh Government. Available on: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2018-12/160301-welsh-language-use-in-wales-2013-15-en.pdf>.

Our Policy provides a basis for a ten-year programme of initiatives and approaches to increase the rates of Welsh language transmission in families—but we'll feel the impact of the Policy over much longer than ten years. So we've developed it in line with the spirit and the letter of the Well-being of Future Generations Act to ensure a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.

Our Policy focuses on how we:

- i. Inspire today's generation of children and young people to speak Welsh to their children in the future.
- ii. Reignite the Welsh language skills of those who may not have used Welsh since their school days, or who aren't confident in their language skills, to speak Welsh with their own children.
- iii. Support and encourage use of Welsh within families where not everybody speaks Welsh.
- iv. Support Welsh-speaking families to speak Welsh with their children.

The success of our Policy depends on us all striking a successful balance between developing evidence-based interventions, fostering successful partnerships with other partners to implement those interventions, and testing what works, learning from what doesn't, and adapting what we do accordingly.

## Context

### Why is it important to speak Welsh in families?

We want more people who can speak Welsh to speak Welsh with their children—that's one of the main ways in which new Welsh speakers will be created. We know some Welsh speakers don't feel confident enough to do that at the moment, or don't speak Welsh at home with their children for other reasons. Many people say that their confidence in their Welsh language ability isn't as high as their equivalent confidence in English. This can sometimes be a barrier to Welsh language use in families and we address this factor throughout this Policy.

The picture in terms of Welsh language transmission in families varies across Wales. Blaenau Gwent, for example, has a transmission rate of 33 per cent to children aged three to four years old in households where both parents speak Welsh. However, there are only six such households in that local authority.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Gwynedd contains the largest number of three to four year old children living in households where both parents speak Welsh (1,223 children). The transmission rate amongst these households is 90 per cent.

We acknowledge the role that Welsh language transmission in families has to play in supporting the language in the areas with a higher percentage of Welsh speakers. Even in these areas, transmission rates merit detailed attention. There is also a difference across Wales in transmission rates when comparing three year old children with four year olds in the same area. For example, in couple households in Ynys Môn where only one adult is able to speak Welsh, only 38.1 per cent of three year old and 57.8 per cent of four year old children can speak Welsh. And even where both adults speak Welsh, the corresponding figure for three year olds is 76.7 per cent and for four year olds 84.2 per cent.

These figures come from the 2011 census. You'll find a full analysis of transmission in all counties in Wales in the research we commissioned and outline below.<sup>3</sup>

We've developed this Policy as part of our national Welsh Language Strategy, *Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers*, which we published in 2017.<sup>4</sup> As the title suggests, we want to see the number of those who can speak Welsh rise to 1 million by the year 2050. According to the 2011 census figures<sup>5</sup>, which are the most recent we have, the number recorded was 562,000.<sup>6</sup> *Cymraeg 2050* also sets out how we aim to double the percentage of the population that use Welsh daily from 10 to 20 per cent.

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<sup>2</sup> See Welsh Government, (2017). *Welsh language transmission and use in families*. Welsh Government, Cardiff. Available on: <https://gov.wales/welsh-language-transmission-and-use-families-0>.

<sup>3</sup> Welsh Government, (2017). *Welsh language transmission and use in families*. Welsh Government, Cardiff. Available on: <https://gov.wales/welsh-language-transmission-and-use-families-0>.

<sup>4</sup> Welsh Government (2017), *Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers*, Cardiff, Welsh Government, Available on <https://gov.wales/welsh-language-strategy-and-plans>. The Strategy's first *Work Programme* (2017-2021), action plans and annual reports are available on <https://gov.wales/Welsh-language-strategy-and-plans>.

<sup>5</sup> Welsh Government (2012), *2011 Census: First Results on the Welsh Language*, Statistics for Wales (SB 118/2012), Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available on <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-03/121211sb1182012en.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Detailed statistical information on the Welsh Language is available on <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Welsh-Language>.

*Cymraeg 2050* focuses on three aims:

- Increasing the number of Welsh speakers
- Increasing the use of Welsh
- Creating favourable conditions—infrastructure and context

*Cymraeg 2050*'s work programme for 2017-21 includes three specific actions in support of Welsh language transmission in families. These are as follows:

- Work with key stakeholders to develop a national Policy informed by recent research outlining how we intend to ensure that parents/carers are provided with the best possible support to introduce the Welsh language to their children.
- Review and refine the *Cymraeg for Kids* Programme to ensure that it continues to provide parents/carers with the information and support they need to make an informed choice about introducing the Welsh language to their child in the home.
- Continue to work with NHS Wales to ensure that midwives, health visitors and other partners share information about the benefits of language transmission as early as possible, and that new and prospective parents understand what support is available to them.

This Policy realises the first of these three actions and provides the basis for our work in this area for the next decade. The other two are already being implemented in our work. By fostering early bilingualism through the intergenerational transmission of Welsh, we want to open doors—to new cultural, educational and community experiences and perspectives. Our work through this Policy therefore needs to align with our other work across education, family support, tackling poverty and other relevant policy fields. Of course, Welsh language transmission helps a greater number of individuals to be able to speak Welsh, offering them an additional skill in a workplace which will increasingly place value on such skills. This all feeds into our ambition not only to increase the number of Welsh speakers but to double the daily use of Welsh by 2050.

*Cymraeg 2050* includes a statistical trajectory which shows how we think the Welsh language may change between now and 2050. Chart 2 below provides details of Welsh language transmission in families according to the language composition of the child's household. Although the 2021 census has yet to be held, this trajectory predicts that there'll be a gradual but conservative increase in the transmission rate between 2021 and 2031. This Policy deals with the work we'll need to do with families to ensure further gains in these transmission rates. You can read a more detailed analysis of the census data and the research we've published on our website.<sup>7</sup>

As is well-documented elsewhere, the decrease in numbers of Welsh speakers during the first half of the twentieth century may be due to parents choosing not to speak Welsh with their children. There were also significant changes in the economy, culture, society and industry in Wales in the second half of the twentieth century. These led to changes in population and in religion—chapels had previously been a community focus for the Welsh language. These all contributed to how often the language was transmitted and used more generally, and has led us to where we are today.

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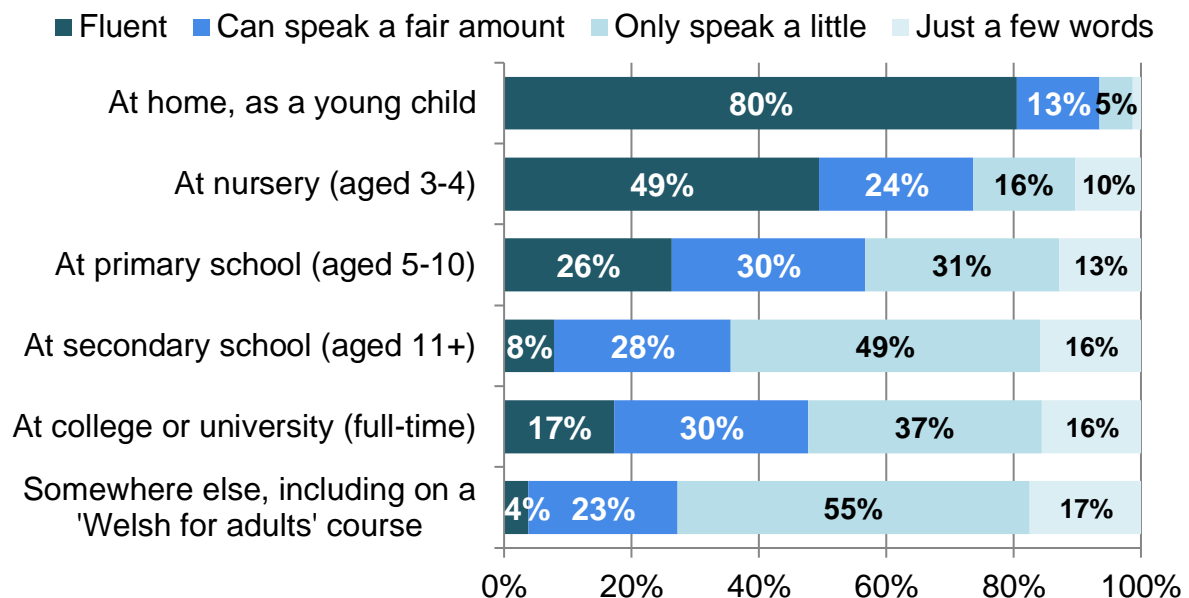
<sup>7</sup> Welsh Government, (2017). *Welsh language transmission and use in families*. Welsh Government, Cardiff. Available on: <https://gov.wales/welsh-language-transmission-and-use-families-0>.



Increasing Welsh language transmission in families is one way of addressing today's linguistic challenges.

Many studies emphasise that the use of a minority language (such as Welsh) in the home may have a crucial part to play in determining the use of that language in later life. As we have already said, our Welsh Language Use Survey clearly shows that use of Welsh at home as a child is a determiner of the frequency of use of Welsh in later life.<sup>8</sup> The survey asked respondents where they had learnt the language and asked how fluent they were. It found that 43 per cent of Welsh speakers had learnt to speak Welsh at home as a young child, 11 per cent at nursery, 25 per cent at primary school, 15 per cent at secondary school, 1 per cent at university and 5 per cent somewhere else. Chart 1 below shows how Welsh speakers described their fluency levels by where they had learnt to speak Welsh. It shows that 80 per cent of those who learnt to speak Welsh at home as a young child described themselves as fluent. This reduces to 49 per cent of those who had learnt to speak Welsh at nursery, and 26 per cent for those who had learnt at primary school.

**Chart 1: Fluency levels by where people had learnt to speak Welsh (Source: *Welsh Language Use in Wales, 2013-2015*)**



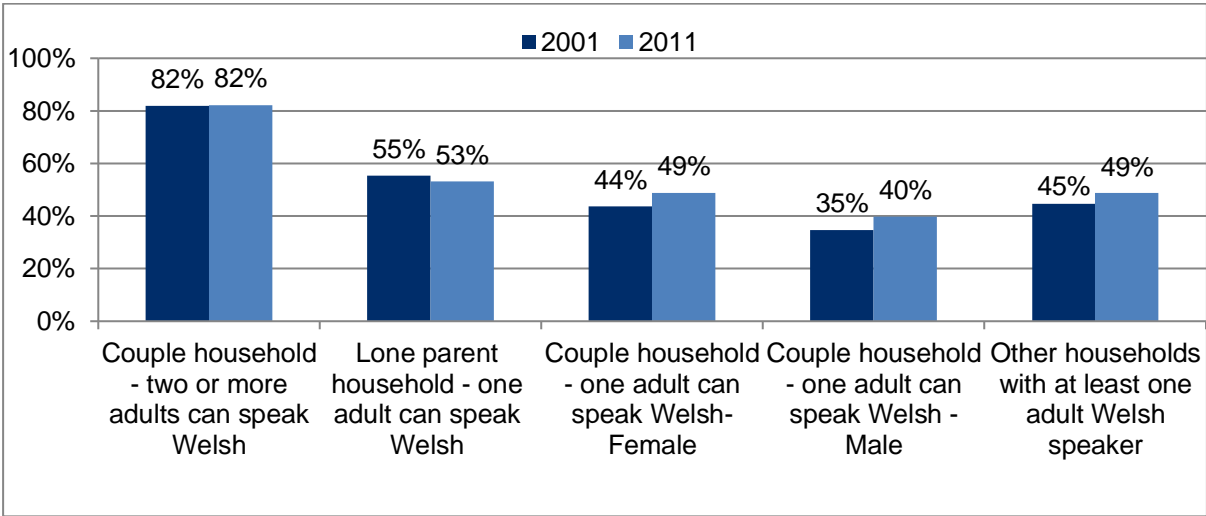
This is reflected in the work of one of the most quoted authors in the field of language planning, Joshua Fishman, who places the intergenerational transmission of a language as the vital building block of sustainable language planning activity.<sup>9</sup>

Chart 2 below shows that the percentage of children aged three to four able to speak Welsh, living in couple households where two or more adults could speak Welsh, had stayed the same between 2001 and 2011. The percentage of Welsh-speaking children aged three to four had increased between 2001 and 2011 for all other household compositions, except for lone parent households where one adult speaks Welsh.

<sup>8</sup> Welsh Government & Welsh Language Commissioner, *Welsh Language Use in Wales, 2013-2015*, Cardiff, Welsh Government. Available on: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2018-12/160301-welsh-language-use-in-wales-2013-15-en.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> See, amongst many others, Fishman, J.A., (1991). *Reversing language shift: Theoretical and empirical foundations of assistance to threatened languages*. Multilingual matters, Clevedon.

**Chart 2: Percentage of children aged three to four able to speak Welsh by household composition (Source: Census 2011 and Census 2001)**



**What’s already been done?**

A lot of work has been done to help families use more Welsh with their children. The *Twf* project ran from 2001 to 2016, and aimed to raise awareness among families of the advantages of raising children bilingually and to provide a positive influence on their use of Welsh.<sup>10</sup> *Twf* was funded by the Welsh Language Board until 2012, when responsibility for the project transferred to the Welsh Government.

*Cymraeg for Kids*<sup>11</sup> began in 2016, and is the successor to *Twf*. It aims to increase the number of children in Welsh-medium education as well as supporting parents/carers, prospective parents/carers and other family members in introducing and using Welsh at home and transmitting Welsh to their children.

Independent evaluations of *Twf*<sup>12</sup> and *Cymraeg for Kids*<sup>13</sup> have been published. We’ve fully considered their findings whilst drafting this Policy. The most recent evaluation of *Twf* noted how difficult it was to isolate its direct impact from other social factors affecting individuals’ language choices and behaviours. It also found that the project could have an impact on parents’ language-related decision-making. However, *Twf* generally reinforced the decision to transmit Welsh where those decisions had already been made, according to this evaluation.

As well as these programmes, the National Centre for Learning Welsh’s *Camau*<sup>14</sup> programme offers training for early years and childcare practitioners and is working on

<sup>10</sup> The *Twf* Website is archived on: <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/en/archive/20120328000759/http://www.twfcymru.com/English/Pages/home.aspx>.

<sup>11</sup> See the *Cymraeg for Kids* website on: <https://gov.wales/cymraeg-for-kids>.

<sup>12</sup> Chapter 2 of our report published in 2017, *Welsh Language Transmission and Use in Families*, reviews the reports carried out into *Twf*. Welsh Government, (2017). *Welsh language transmission and use in families*. Welsh Government, Cardiff. Available on: <https://gov.wales/welsh-language-transmission-and-use-families-0>.

<sup>13</sup> Welsh Government (2019). *Process evaluation of Cymraeg for Kids: final report*. Welsh Government, Cardiff. Available on: <https://gov.wales/process-evaluation-cymraeg-kids-final-report>.

<sup>14</sup> See <https://learnwelsh.cymru/work-welsh/camau-1/>

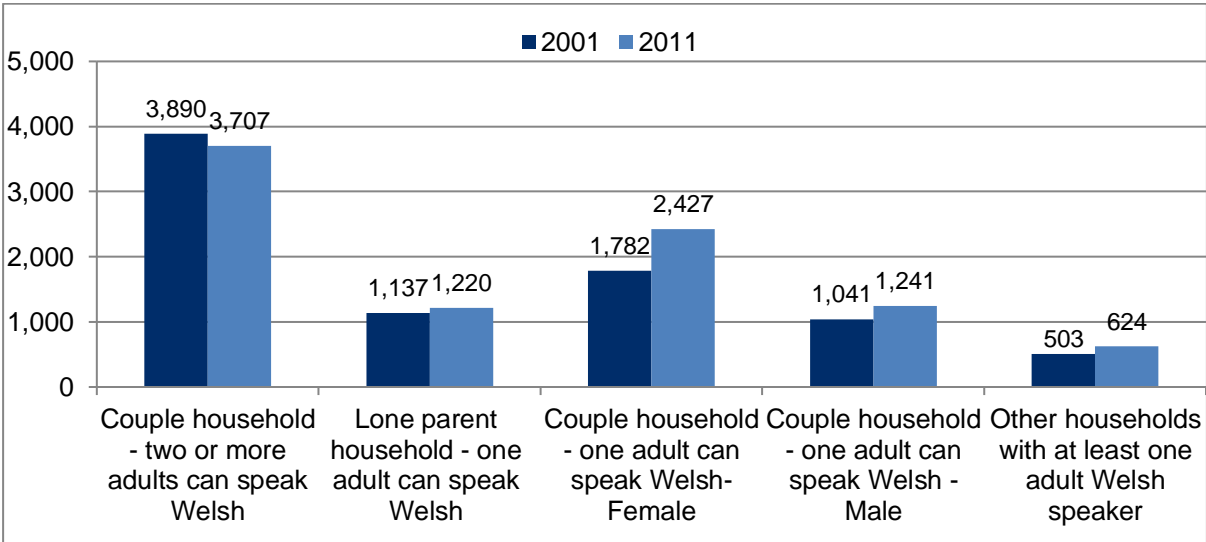
Welsh language development amongst these sectors. Although *Camau* doesn't focus on Welsh language transmission in families, it does contribute to the aims of this Policy through developing Welsh language awareness amongst these practitioners.

**Welsh in families: the current picture**

The census provides a method to measure Welsh language transmission in families. The statistical information in this Policy provides information gathered via the 2001 and 2011 census regarding the numbers of children aged three to four able to speak Welsh, by linguistic composition of the household. In choosing this age bracket we've assumed that most of these children won't have been substantially impacted by the education system. This broadly enables us to calculate language ability based solely on Welsh language transmission in the home.

The change in the **numbers** of children able to speak Welsh by household composition is shown in Chart 3.

**Chart 3: Number of children aged three to four able to speak Welsh by household composition (Source: Census 2011 and Census 2001)**

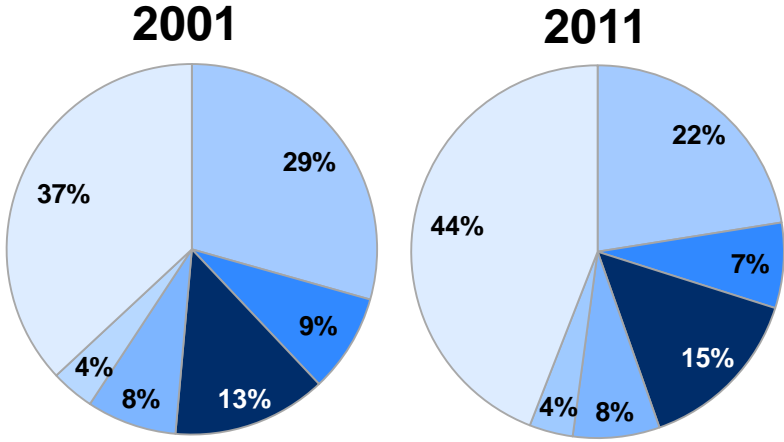


While Chart 2 shows us that the **percentage** of children from lone parent households where one adult could speak Welsh had decreased, Chart 3 shows us that the **number** had increased. This is due to an increase in the total number of lone parent households where one adult could speak Welsh and had a child aged three to four. Chart 3 also shows that between 2001 and 2011 there were fewer Welsh-speaking children aged three to four from couple households where two or more adults could speak Welsh, but a greater number of Welsh speakers from the other household compositions where there was an adult Welsh speaker in the household.

The charts below show us how the household composition of three to four year old Welsh speakers has changed between 2001 and 2011.

**Chart 4: Household composition of all children aged three or four who are able to speak Welsh in 2001 and 2011 (Source: Census 2001, Census 2011)**

- Couple household - two or more adults can speak Welsh
- Lone parent household - one adult can speak Welsh
- Couple household - one adult can speak Welsh- Female
- Couple household - one adult can speak Welsh - Male
- Other households with at least one adult Welsh speaker
- Households where no adult speaks Welsh



These charts demonstrate that in 2011 a smaller percentage of the children able to speak Welsh were in couple households where two or more adults speak Welsh (22%) when compared with 2001 (29%), and in lone parent households where an adult speaks Welsh (9% in 2001 and 7% in 2011).

This means that more children will be raised in households where not everyone is a Welsh speaker, so informal use of the language in the home may be less likely without initiatives in place to help families use more Welsh. We think that the number and proportion of households with at least one adult who can speak Welsh will increase as the actions set out in *Cymraeg 2050* take effect; this Policy aims to support these families to develop and expand their use of Welsh within families.

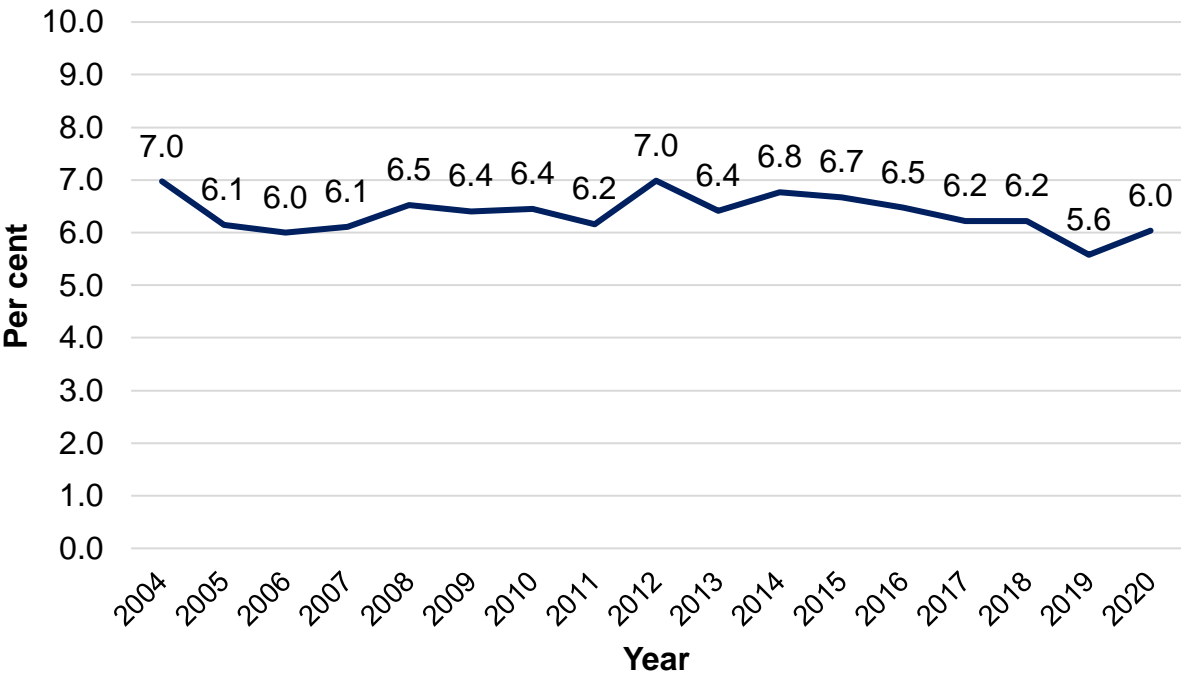
For the 2011 Census results, we can also distinguish between three and four year olds. The table below shows a substantial increase in the percentage of children who can speak Welsh in all household compositions between three and four year olds. This could be due to greater external influences (nursery, childcare etc.) where they could learn Welsh, but it could also be due to taking more time to pick up the Welsh language at home.

**Table 1: Percentage of children aged three or four able to speak Welsh by household composition (Source: Census 2011)**

	Percentage of children aged 3 years able to speak Welsh	Percentage of children aged 4 years able to speak Welsh	Percentage of children aged 3 to 4 years able to speak Welsh
Couple household—two or more adults can speak Welsh	78%	87%	82%
Lone parent household—one adult can speak Welsh	45%	61%	53%
Couple household—one adult can speak Welsh	38%	53%	45%
All households with at least one adult Welsh speaker	51%	65%	58%
Couple and lone parent households without an adult who can speak Welsh	9%	18%	14%

The Pupil-Level Annual School Census collects information about children’s ability to speak Welsh, and whether or not they speak the language at home. This information is available for children aged five at the start of the academic year, who typically would be in Reception class.

**Chart 5: Percentage of five-year-old children (at the start of the academic year) who speak Welsh fluently at home (Source: Pupil-Level Annual School Census)**



The chart shows that the percentage of five-year-old children who speak Welsh fluently at home fluctuates a little every year, but has changed very little since 2004, remaining at around 6-7%.

More recently, in the National Survey for Wales 2018-19, questions were included asking people whether they could speak Welsh, and where they had learnt the language, in order to provide more up to date information on Welsh language transmission in families. The survey found that:

- 43% of Welsh speakers had learnt to speak Welsh at home as a young child
- 75% of those who learnt to speak Welsh at home described themselves as fluent, compared with 6% who learnt Welsh at secondary school
- Where a parent had learnt to speak Welsh at home as a young child, 82% of their children also learnt to speak Welsh at home
- The Welsh-speaking parents found to be most likely to transmit the language to their children, were those who:
  - had learnt to speak Welsh at home
  - were fluent in Welsh
  - had more than one child
  - lived in north-west Wales
  - were female
  - had a high income.

We have extensive statistics which contribute to our understanding of Welsh language transmission in families. We need to couple these with a more complete qualitative picture of language use *in situ* in families and, more importantly, what we can do to increase this. We discuss research in the field of language transmission later in this Policy.

## What we know beyond the figures

We've already published research into Welsh language use and transmission in families. We commissioned it to gain a better understanding of what may influence how parents/carers use Welsh with their children. You can read the full report on our website.<sup>15</sup>

This research is based on original data from 60 parents/carers (all of whom had Welsh language ability of some level) of children aged 0-4. It also contains a detailed analysis of census data regarding Welsh language transmission in families. We've written this Policy in light of what the research found.

The research found that, for the respondents, the transmission of Welsh isn't a decision, but an unconscious behaviour. For many, Welsh was the main language they used with

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<sup>15</sup> Welsh Government, (2017). *Welsh language transmission and use in families*. Welsh Government, Cardiff. Available on: <https://gov.wales/welsh-language-transmission-and-use-families-0>. In drafting this Policy, we've also revisited research on the use of Welsh in Families published by the Welsh Language Board (*Language Transmission in Bilingual Families in Wales: An Independent Research Project Commissioned by the Welsh Language Board from Virginia C. Mueller Gathercole, Enlli Môn Thomas*. Cardiff, Welsh Language Board. Available on: <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20120328022157/http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/english/publications/pages/publicationitem.aspx?puburl=/English/publications/Publications/Adroddiad+Gathercole+Saesneg+9.2.07.pdf>).

their children at all times and they hadn't given much thought to their linguistic behaviour. These mostly came from Welsh-speaking families, had Welsh-speaking partners, and reported that they were confident in speaking Welsh. However, the majority of Welsh-speaking respondents from non-Welsh-speaking homes (most of whom were from south east Wales) hadn't considered speaking Welsh with their children. Most of these had themselves attended Welsh-medium schools and noted that looking back at their time in school, they didn't often use Welsh outside of the classroom. In some cases, they had negative attitudes towards Welsh.

Most did note that they had discussed Welsh-medium education with their partner (if they had one) as they were certain that they wanted their children to be able to speak Welsh. They often reported discussing Welsh-medium education prior to the birth of the child. In many cases they answered questions regarding transmission by referring to Welsh-medium *education* rather than the use of Welsh in the home. The report describes this as language *donation* rather than language *transmission*.

When their child started school, many respondents had reflected on their language use. Despite this, they didn't feel confident in using Welsh as they hadn't used it a lot since leaving school. To a lesser extent, they also perceived negative attitudes towards their 'type' of Welsh and noted a lack of opportunities to use the Welsh language.

## What happens in other countries

We also can't work in isolation. Other languages communities experience similar challenges with language transmission in families. The research we commissioned reviews this, but in our experience, there's more information available that analyses the *situation* of language transmission in families than on projects and practical steps taken to *increase* transmission (and the lessons learnt from this work). We'll ensure that our work feeds into concrete action and interventions which can assist parents/carers to transmit, rather than donate, languages to their children.

In all our work on this Policy, we'll work with the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD), and the indigenous, minority and lesser-used languages group of the British-Irish Council to bring an international dimension to interventions on the transmission of all our languages in families.

## Scope of this Policy

Sometimes people conflate Welsh language transmission in families and encouraging parents to choose Welsh-medium education. As we've already said, we know that education has a crucial role to play in increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers and we're taking steps to transform the education system to support the aims of *Cymraeg 2050*. We detail our plans for education in other documents we've published.<sup>16</sup>

But education is only part of the picture. It most certainly contributes to a child's linguistic development, but this Policy doesn't deal with that. Nor does it deal with marketing Welsh-medium education or increasing the numbers of Welsh speaking learners in schools. It deals with the active use of Welsh between parents/carers and their children. An increase in that use will be one of the key indicators of the success of this Policy.

## The principles on which this Policy is based

The following principles have guided how we've drafted this Policy. They form the basis for all work we'll undertake in Welsh language transmission in families.

- Children are individuals and have their own sense of agency. They aren't just passive recipients of a language from parents/carers. Children may express language preferences themselves regarding what language they use, and therefore attempt to influence which language their parents/carers use with them, as well as which language they use with their siblings and friends.
- We'll listen to the child's voice and consider their perspective in designing and implementing everything we do.
- Messaging is an important element of any intervention in any field, but it's not necessarily the intervention itself.
- Where we do use messaging, we'll make sure that we speak with one voice across all our work and that this is based on a common verbal strategy.
- Technology and the internet have revolutionised how we communicate. It's also had a significant impact on children's play. Our work in the field of Welsh language transmission in families will examine how technology could contribute to children's play in Welsh.
- Much of the work in family language Policy has taken place in two parent, heterosexual families. When we plan and implement our work, we'll take into account that family types are more diverse, e.g. many children reside in one parent families and/or in families where parents/carers belong to LGBTQI groups.
- We'll consider how to use the contribution of wider family networks beyond parents/carers in supporting Welsh language transmission in families.

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<sup>16</sup> See, for example, our *Welsh in education: action plan 2017 to 2021*, available at <https://gov.wales/welsh-education-action-plan-2017-2021>.



- We'll consider the balance between the influence of the home, the wider family, community and external social influences and life changes on language transmission. This could for example include times of transition in our lives such as childbirth, starting, changing or leaving school and so on. Some language planning literature calls these life changes linguistic 'mudes'.<sup>17</sup>
- We've based this Policy on research into the factors that may influence Welsh language transmission in families. We know that directly attributing changes in Welsh language transmission in families to any single intervention may be difficult, so we'll regularly evaluate everything we do. We'll plan in advance using theories of change to better understand how to get from where we are to where we want to be. This will help everyone know in advance what success looks like. And if what we do doesn't work, we'll change it or find a better way of helping families use more Welsh.
- All interventions developed through this Policy will be based upon behavioural science and other relevant methodologies. They'll take into account the realities of family life in terms of methods used and the timing and targeting of these interventions.
- We'll make sure that data and a sound research base is at the heart of our work.
- All interventions will use an iterative approach whereby we'll aim to quickly find out what's successful and what's not, where we expect things to fail, learn lessons from those failures and document how to strengthen future work.
- We'll focus on ensuring children gain positive Welsh language experiences with the aim of those experiences spilling over to their use of Welsh outside of school and their linguistic behaviour in later life.

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<sup>17</sup> See, amongst others, Pujolar, J. & Puigdevall, M. (2014)-"Linguistic *mudes*: how to become a new speaker in Catalonia"; *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 231; <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2014-0037>

## Our programme of work

This Policy offers a way forward to increase how much Welsh parents/carers use with their children. As we've noted, for many reasons not all Welsh speakers use the language with their children all the time. Our research has contributed to our understanding of the factors that influence this, and the following section turns this understanding into concrete actions.

Maintaining and increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers is important, but ensuring the language is used is vital. It's essential that all Welsh speakers, in whatever type of household they live, feel that they can transmit Welsh to their children. This means helping people change their behaviours, which in turn means rethinking some of our work. This Policy is based on the following:

- Research and evaluation we and others have done on Welsh language transmission and use in families;<sup>18</sup>
- Our conversations with people who work on Welsh language transmission and use in families;
- Our work with families and organisations who work with families.

We need to be up front that it may be difficult to isolate *precisely* what impact our actions might have. We need to acknowledge how long results may take to appear. But we'll use the latest methods to measure the progress of our work and to give us indications of whether we're on the right track or not. Different interventions may work differently in different places and with different target groups. We'll tailor our work accordingly. And if what we do doesn't work, we'll change it or find a better way of helping families use more Welsh.

This Policy has four overall aims. These are to:

- i. Inspire today's generation of children and young people to speak Welsh to their children in the future.
- ii. Reignite the Welsh language skills of those who may not have used Welsh since their school days, or who aren't confident in their language skills, to speak Welsh with their own children.
- iii. Support and encourage use of Welsh within families where not everybody speaks Welsh.
- iv. Support Welsh-speaking families to speak Welsh with their children.

Below we list the actions we'll take to achieve these aims. Some actions will contribute to more than one aim, as noted in the table. We also set out a timeline for implementing those actions.

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<sup>18</sup> See, for example, REVITALISE Network (2018), *Workshop Briefing Report 2 Workshop theme: Language revitalisation and the transformation of family life*. Available at: <http://revitalise.aber.ac.uk/en/media/non-au/revitalise/Revitalise---Workshop-Briefing-Report-2-FINAL.pdf>.

Actions	To contribute to Policy aim	Starting from
<p>1. To manage the work we'll do as part of this Policy, we'll establish a <b>programme board</b>, the members of which will have a range of perspectives of family support interventions. We'll include other stakeholders on this board to advise, assist, and provide challenge. We'll use this board not only to regularly review <i>what</i> we're doing, but to also what we're <i>achieving</i>. And if we aren't achieving, we'll make sure we learn from this and adapt what we do accordingly.</p>	<p>i, ii, iii, iv.</p>	<p>2021</p>
<p>2. Welsh Government programmes reach thousands of families of all types across many sectors. We'll analyse the opportunities these <b>touchpoints</b> offer to support the aims of this Policy.</p>	<p>i, ii, iii, iv.</p>	<p>2021</p>
<p>3. We'll analyse interventions in the field of language transmission and look at how lessons learnt <b>elsewhere in the world</b> can be applied to our situation in Wales. In doing this we'll work with the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD), the indigenous, minority and lesser-used languages group of the British-Irish Council and any other relevant networks.</p>	<p>i, ii, iii, iv.</p>	<p>2021</p>
<p>4. We'll look at work done with families in <b>other fields</b> and, if appropriate, adapt that work to help families to use more Welsh with their children.</p>	<p>i, ii, iii, iv.</p>	<p>2021</p>
<p>5. We'll <b>analyse how we communicate with families</b> and their extended members (beyond the immediate caregivers) about their use of Welsh with the aim of sustaining and increasing the intergenerational transmission of Welsh. This could involve looking at which channels we use, the way we use them as well as which individuals these channels target.</p>	<p>ii, iii, iv.</p>	<p>2021</p>

Actions	To contribute to Policy aim	Starting from
<p>6. We'll <b>provide practical advice and/or techniques to families where not everybody speaks Welsh</b> on how to increase their use of Welsh in all sorts of family situations.</p>	<p>iii.</p>	<p>2021</p>
<p>7. We'll <b>create new initiatives building on our existing work</b> to support Welsh language transmission and use in families. They'll use the latest techniques to change behaviours. Amongst others, they'll support people who may not have used their Welsh language skills since their school days to speak Welsh with their children. These may be built around the needs of specific geographical areas, target audiences and/or the social networks of parents/carers (whether face to face or virtual) and will take into account the demographics of these areas.</p>	<p>i, ii, iii, iv.</p>	<p>2023</p>
<p>8. We'll <b>make advice available to parents/carers</b> on what they could do when their children lack confidence in using Welsh or may be reticent to use it for other reasons. This could include targeted interventions via the health, childcare, education, or other sectors, and may be delivered at a particular times of transition or 'mudes' as we note above.</p>	<p>i, iii, iv.</p>	<p>2023</p>
<p>9. For those parents who haven't used their Welsh language skills in some time, we'll trial a <b>language use pledge programme</b>. This may build on the successes of a Basque language initiative called <i>Euskaraldia</i>. We'll start on a small scale with parents/carers of different family language backgrounds.</p>	<p>ii, iii, iv.</p>	<p>2023</p>

Actions	To contribute to Policy aim	Starting from
10. We'll explore opportunities for <b>peer-to-peer support</b> amongst parents/carers so they can help each other increase the amount of Welsh they use within their families.	i, ii, iii, iv.	2023
11. We'll <b>create projects to use parent/carer networks</b> around schools to help families use more Welsh with their children.	i, ii, iii, iv.	2023
12. We'll give professionals the skills and learning resources to help them <b>positively encourage</b> children to speak Welsh with one another. These will aim to help children become confident speakers of Welsh in later life, empowered to use their Welsh language skills, whatever their family language background.	i.	2023
13. We'll use all the possibilities <b>the workplace offers to increase individuals' use of Welsh</b> and explore what potential there is for this to 'spill over' into families. We'll consider how this work needs to be tailored to meet the needs of various demographic groups.	ii.	2023
14. We'll ensure that <b>Welsh for Adults courses reinforce the aims of this Policy</b> , and look at ways of developing the specific skill set needed for using the Welsh language with a child. This will be particularly relevant to parents who were educated through the medium of Welsh, but were themselves raised in non-Welsh-speaking homes.	i, ii, iii.	2023
15. We'll look at techniques used in other countries <b>to develop people's assertiveness and confidence in using languages</b> and, where we these have been proven to work, we'll implement them in our work with families.	i, ii, iii, iv.	2025

Actions	To contribute to Policy aim	Starting from
16. We'll <b>develop an online presence</b> to assist parents/carers who could, but for whatever reason, don't speak Welsh with their children. This may involve helping parents who have no personal experience of raising a child in a home where more than one language is spoken (e.g. helping them learn child-directed speech in Welsh).	ii, iii.	2025
17. We will explore the opportunities <b>gaming, other technologies and physical play</b> offer to help children use more Welsh and how that in turn can provide opportunities to help more use of Welsh in the household.	i.	2025
18. We'll put specific actions in place for <b>disabled people and those who have additional needs, impairments or health conditions</b> to help them use more Welsh with their family. We'll also make sure that these people and their families are at the centre of all our work.	i, ii, iii, iv.	Continuous
19. We'll <b>review our existing work and examine past interventions</b> on language transmission in families and make sure that we base what we do on evidence from behavioural science and on a sound theory of change. We'll feed what we learn from this review into pilot interventions. We'll learn from those pilots and if they don't work, then we'll change them or find a better way of helping families use more Welsh.	ii, iii, iv.	Continuous
20. When we commission research projects on the use of Welsh in families, we'll consider how they can explore the <b>influence of household linguistic composition</b> on that use.	i, ii, iii, iv.	Continuous

Actions	To contribute to Policy aim	Starting from
21. When we commission research projects on the use of Welsh in families, we'll consider how they can look at the role of parents/carers and their <b>wider family networks</b> on the use of Welsh, and <b>what part children themselves play</b> . This may include Welsh language transmission <b>from a child's perspective</b> .	i, ii, iii, iv.	<b>Continuous</b>
22. When we commission research projects on the use of Welsh in families, we'll consider how they can <b>study children's language development in the context of Welsh-English bilingualism in the home</b> . This will include how they acquire grammar, vocabulary and phonology.	iii, iv.	<b>Continuous</b>
23. When we commission research projects on the use of Welsh in families, we'll consider using both <b>observational and action research</b> (amongst other methods) to better our understanding of transmission of languages in families.	iii, iv.	<b>Continuous</b>
24. Where appropriate, we'll <b>include research questions</b> on Welsh language transmission and use in families in surveys we carry out.	i, ii, iii, iv.	<b>Continuous</b>