

# Information for Parents about Welsh Medium Secondary Education



CYMRAG



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



# Purpose

The aim of this booklet is to offer useful information to parents about the Welsh language.

Is includes information about:

- The background of Mentrau Iaith Cymru and the Menter Iaith in Neath Port Talbot
- The benefits of Welsh medium education
- Support available to parents
- Answers to some frequently asked questions.

If you'd like more information about anything included in this booklet, please get in touch.



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# Mentrau Iaith Cymru



Mentrau iaith Cymru (MIC) is a National Organisation which supports the work of **22 local Mentrau iaith** across Wales. The work of each Menter iaith is managed by voluntary management committees and each Menter works with a variety of other partnership organisations locally.

**Mentrau iaith's aim is to promote and encourage the Welsh Language in every part of Wales.**



# What's a Menter iaith?



There are 22 Welsh language enterprises working in Wales



supporting over 160,000 people of all ages



to increase and strengthen the use of Welsh in our communities.



Organising festivals, childcare, language sessions and more -



Menter iaith is a one-stop-shop for the language.



helping us live, learn and enjoy in Welsh



Mentrau iaith is for everyone.



To find out more go to  
[mentrauliaith.cymru](http://mentrauliaith.cymru)

CYMRU



MICNPT was established in April 2002. Since then MICNPT has developed a large number of activities and projects to promote the Welsh language in Neath-Port Talbot.

MICNPT work with families, children and young people, communities, and with a variety of different organisations.

Our aim is to encourage and promote the use of Welsh within the county and to give opportunities to the residents to use, learn, hear and enjoy through the medium of Welsh.

For more information about our work, go to our [website](#), or contact us.



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# Welsh Medium Education

**Whatever language you speak at home, Welsh-medium education can give children additional skills and more opportunities for the future.**

Extensive research shows that being able to speak more than one language gives children a boost in many ways.

Attending a Welsh language primary school gives children an extra skill - the ability to speak Welsh. It is important to continue to develop this skill by attending a Welsh medium comprehensive.

# Why Welsh Secondary Education?

Bilingualism means being able to live your everyday life using two languages.

Welsh medium education has a very simple aim, to enable children to become fully fluent in both English and Welsh while teaching all other subjects across the curriculum.

Welsh Comprehensive schools give children the opportunity to develop their Welsh language skills through broad and interesting subjects and experiences. Children feel more confident using the Welsh language everyday and feel prepared to use this extra skill when moving onto further education and the workplace.

The Welsh Government has also committed to developing a bilingual Wales through its Welsh-language strategy 'Cymraeg 2050' with a vision for reaching a million Welsh speakers by 2050. There is more demand than ever before for bilingual skills in a variety of fields such as health, education, leisure, childcare, retail and public services.

Here are some of the advantages of bilingualism:

- Speaking two languages increases opportunities for your child to socialise.
- Two languages opens the door to two cultures.
- Speaking two languages helps you learn other languages.
- There is an increased demand for the Welsh language in the workplace, and it could lead to more pay.
- Research shows that people who speak two languages can think flexibly and with more creativity.
- The Welsh language is an additional skill.
- Children tend to perform better in school.
- Bilingual children tend to be very good at analysing data and multitasking.

In addition to these benefits, there are many that relate to culture and heritage, which is connected to our identity.

## Culture and Heritage

- The Welsh language is an essential part of our heritage. Speaking Welsh can bring people closer to their history, culture and the traditions of Wales. Language also makes it possible to learn sayings, music, poetry and literature that is celebrated and respected across the world.
- These cultural benefits can mean a strong personal identity which increases a feeling of belonging and self-worth.

“...I wanted her to have the choices I didn’t”

Steven,  
Father to Mia

“I think a common concern is that we, as parents, will be unable to help our children with their homework, but with the support of the school, Mudiad Meithrin and lots of different websites this has not been a problem”

Louise,  
Mother from Blaenau Gwent.

# Concerns?

Although the benefits are obvious, there are still many concerns raised by parents regarding Welsh medium education. Here are some of those concerns along with some supporting comments.

“I can see the benefits, but I worry because I can’t speak Welsh”

“I won’t understand what’s going on in a Welsh medium environment”

The majority of parents who send their children to Welsh medium schools don’t speak Welsh. That’s why schools communicate using Welsh and English.

The classroom environment will be Welsh (with the exception of English lessons of course!) but when parents, guardians and friends visit the school, bilingualism is the norm. This means that teachers and children will speak Welsh or English depending on who is involved in the conversation.

“I won’t be able to help my child with their homework”

This is one of the most common concerns and teachers are completely aware of this. In the majority of cases, an English explanation will accompany any homework tasks to enable parents to help their children.

In addition, there is a lot of support available on child friendly websites, after all the homework is for the children and not for parents. If you have any concerns regarding homework, just ask.

## “I don’t want my child’s English skills to suffer”

Children leaving Welsh medium primary schools are expected to reach the same standard of English as those in English medium primary schools

Bilingual children are more sensitive when communicating and are therefore fully aware of the needs of their listener, especially when switching from one language to another. This often means they are better at communicating in both languages.

## “We’re not Welsh – would it be strange for us to choose Welsh medium education?”

Not at all. You don’t have to be Welsh to speak Welsh. Parents of children in Welsh-medium schools in Cardiff have come from all over the world. While some might consider themselves to be Welsh, others might not – the key point is that learning Welsh is open to all.

## “What about education after they leave school?”

As pupils from Welsh-medium schools are fully bilingual, they can choose to follow college and university courses in either language (or both!). Recently, the work of Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (the national Welsh-medium college) has ensured that more and more university degrees are available (partially or completely) through the medium of Welsh.

There are also a growing number of Welsh medium courses available in Further Education.

## “What opportunities are there to use Welsh outside the classroom?”

There are a number of organisations which provide opportunities for children and young people to use Welsh outside the classroom. The Welsh language is a living, vibrant language which is being used across the country, in a variety of different situations. For more information, turn to the pages on organisations which can help, or contact Menter Iaith CNPT.

# Why continue education through the medium of Welsh?

- Linguistic progression makes the change from primary to secondary much easier for the learner
- Research shows that the valuable skills learned at primary school are quickly lost if the medium of instruction is changed
- Children's bilingual skills develop best if used daily, and Welsh medium or bilingual education gives a child a daily opportunity to develop his/her language skills, becoming increasingly fluent and confident.

For more information go to [GOV.WALES](http://GOV.WALES).



# Welsh Education in NPT

Here is a list of Welsh medium secondary schools in our county.

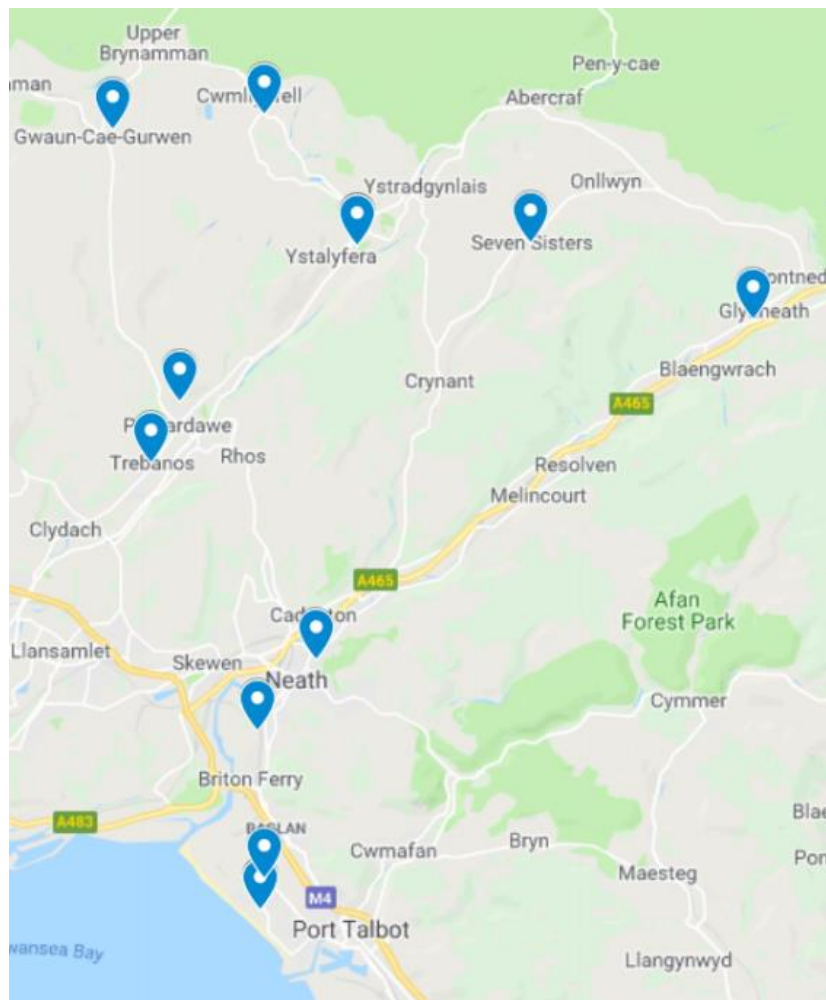
## Welsh Medium Secondary Schools

Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Dur

- 01639 502895

Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera (Uwchradd)

- 01639 842129



# Welsh Organisations

There are many organisations across Wales that give people, including children the opportunities to learn, socialise and to better their Welsh language skills.

- Welsh Government
- Mentrau Iaith
- Urdd
- Cymraeg for Kids
- Mudiad Meithrin
- Flying Start
- Local Council
- Local Schools
- Cymraeg for Adults

You can find more information and keep up to date with all Welsh language events from the above organisations on their websites and social media pages. Further on will be a useful contacts page with information for officers from the above organisations that work in Neath Port Talbot.

# Useful Contact Details

## **Mentrau Iaith Cymru**

**Heledd Ap Gwynfor**

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MENTRAU IAITH

## **Urdd Gorllewin Morgannwg**

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## **Urdd Brycheiniog a Maesyfed (De Powys)**

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**urdd.org**

Urdd Gobaith Cymru

## **Chwaraeon yr Urdd**

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## **Family Information Service**

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## **Learn Welsh**

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