



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**Learn Welsh North East  
Coleg Cambria  
Grove Park Road  
Wrexham  
LL12 7AB**

**Date of inspection: March 2020**

**by**

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education  
and Training in Wales**

## About Learn Welsh North East

The Welsh for Adults sector was reorganised during 2016, and a national centre and network of providers were established. Learn Welsh North East, which is a partnership between Coleg Cambria and Popeth Cymraeg, was established during this reorganisation.

Learn Welsh North East receives a core grant of £1,066,320 during 2019/2020 from the National Centre for Learning Welsh to teach Welsh for Adults in the Wrexham, Flintshire and Denbighshire areas. It provides a range of different courses from Entry to Proficiency levels, including mainstream Welsh for Adults, Welsh in the Workplace and Working Welsh courses. It also provides a programme of informal learning opportunities for learners to practise and extend their Welsh skills outside the classroom. During 2018/19, 1,513 adults enrolled on the provider's courses.

Learn Welsh North East employs 55 staff, around half of whom are part-time tutors. The Head of Corporate Communications, the Welsh Language and International at Coleg Cambria is responsible for leading the provider, both operationally and strategically.

## Summary

Leaders at Learn Welsh North East have a clear and purposeful vision to mainstream Welsh for Adults across Coleg Cambria. It supports the college strategically and operationally to work towards Welsh Government's aims in its policy, Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers.

The provider has succeeded in creating high levels of care and support for learners. Nearly all tutors foster highly productive and supportive working relationships with learners. Tutors foster positive learning environments and reinforce inclusive and supportive learning communities. By adopting an energetic and enthusiastic teaching style, they enable and elicit constructive responses from learners. They ignite learners' enthusiasm, and many develop learners' skills successfully in a creative range of activities.

The commitment, care and inclusive attitudes of the provider's staff are reflected in learners' highly positive attitudes towards learning Welsh. Nearly all learners are completely clear about why they are learning the language, and their passion and conviction are inspiring. As a result, learners enjoy the experience of learning greatly, and most feel strongly that the courses help them to achieve their personal aims. Learners across the levels are increasingly confident and ambitious in terms of achieving fluency in Welsh. Most speak Welsh spontaneously with the tutor and with each other, in line with their level. Many use the Welsh language proactively outside the classroom. In the best examples, they take responsibility, independently of the provider, to organise valuable opportunities for other learners to practise the Welsh language in the community.

<b>Inspection area</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Wellbeing and attitudes to learning</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Teaching and learning experiences</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Care, support and guidance</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

## **Recommendations**

- R1 Ensure that all learners develop their oracy skills to the best of their ability
- R2 Disseminate best practice in teaching across the provider in order to ensure consistency in teaching and learning in all aspects of the learner experience

## **What happens next**

Estyn will invite the provider to prepare a case study on its work in relation to its contribution, at a strategic and corporate level, within Coleg Cambria towards achieving the aims of Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers, to be disseminated on Estyn's website.

## Main findings

### Standards: Good

Nearly all learners at Learn Welsh North East are able to express clearly, and with conviction, why they are learning the Welsh language. They are extremely enthusiastic and contribute positively in their lessons. As a result, many make strong progress towards achieving their personal aims.

In lessons, nearly all learners listen attentively and understand their tutors' language well and respond appropriately to oral prompts. Most learners recall previous learning successfully and build on it beneficially by applying their knowledge to different situations effectively.

In line with their linguistic level, most learners speak Welsh spontaneously with the tutor and with each other. On the whole, learners across the levels are increasingly confident and ambitious in terms of achieving fluency in Welsh. Most develop as independent learners and use electronic resources, dictionaries and social media to extend their linguistic skills beneficially. A majority of learners take advantage of informal and supplementary learning opportunities to reinforce their ability to communicate usefully.

On the whole, learners pronounce appropriately. Many develop as confident speakers who are able to express an opinion purposefully, in line with their linguistic ability. They use an increasing variety of syntax and verb tenses beneficially. However, a few learners, across the levels, have a tendency to provide short answers rather than extending their responses.

Many learners at entry and foundation level make sound progress in acquiring elementary patterns to communicate suitably orally. Most learners from intermediate courses onwards make valuable progress and deepen their understanding of Welsh structures and grammar. Learners at proficiency level develop as competent speakers who are able to contribute meaningfully to interesting discussions on abstract topics, such as the morphology and orthography of the Welsh language.

Many learners at all levels develop their reading skills valuably. At entry and foundation level, they succeed in reading short sentences and are able to read aloud appropriately. By intermediate and advanced levels, they read with increasing confidence and are able to earmark and find patterns, errors and grammatical elements within familiar texts, such as letters. Many learners at advanced levels have a sound understanding of an increasing range of factual and imaginary texts. They read texts for learners, in addition to challenging novels for fluent Welsh speakers. Most learners at proficiency level show a very high level of understanding when discussing various books. They combine reading and oracy skills effectively to discuss challenging themes, for example dementia and sexuality.

Across the different levels, many learners develop their writing skills effectively. Entry level learners fill in the gaps and write elementary sentences accurately, on the whole. By foundation level, most learners are beginning to become increasingly familiar with the language, and are able to change verbs from the singular second

person to the second person plural correctly. They also use the imperative form purposefully to write instructions on how to prepare food. Many intermediate and advanced learners are able to begin to write effectively for different purposes and audiences, such as poems, dialogues and book reviews. They become increasingly familiar with using a wide range of verb tenses meaningfully, including the past conjugated, imperfect, future periphrastic, future conjugated and impersonal. By the time they reach proficiency level, many learners are able to produce mature and sophisticated pieces that show linguistic agility and eloquence. They express an opinion effectively and use rich vocabulary purposefully. In the best examples, these learners combine skills creatively and create electronic presentations that are based on personal research, such as their family history.

Many learners, across the levels, complete their courses and move on to subsequent courses. During 2018-19, most learners at intermediate, advanced and proficiency levels completed their courses. A minority of eligible learners sit examinations. Most of these learners succeed in the examinations, and around half attain distinction.

### **Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent**

Learn Welsh North East is a supportive and inclusive community, where nearly all learners genuinely enjoy and show obvious enthusiasm towards all elements of learning. Nearly all feel safe and know whom to approach if they need support or advice. Nearly all learners feel that they receive good support from tutors during lessons and in activities outside the classroom. They appreciate tutors' response and positive action in relation to their educational and personal needs. Learners benefit greatly from valuable opportunities to discuss their progress against their personal targets in 'Using my Welsh' in termly one-to-one meetings with their tutors.

Most learners are aware of the complaints and compliments procedure, and nearly all feel strongly that the provider listens to their opinions regularly for their personal and educational benefit. For example, following feedback from learners, appropriate lighting was ensured at night at one venue. In the best examples, learners also influence the content of activities and contribute beneficially towards deciding what they will learn.

Many learners express that their life skills are enriched and broadened by learning Welsh. This has a very positive effect on the wellbeing of these learners. For example, learners gain great satisfaction from composing poetry in Welsh and reading contemporary novels. They feel like an exceptionally important part of the class community and, as a result, nearly all learners are very supportive of each other and treat each other, and each other's views, with particular respect. They are extremely welcoming when engaging with visitors to the class, and demonstrate polished questioning skills. They also show a keen curiosity in expanding their knowledge. Nearly all learners feel happy and at home in lessons, and show obvious enjoyment without the fear of making mistakes, due to the supportive and nurturing ethos within the classrooms.

Most learners speak Welsh with each other spontaneously, in line with their level and, across the range of levels, learners are happy to interact in pairs or groups, and complete homework regularly. Most learners work effectively individually. Most learners are ambitious and show very strong motivation, for example to speak Welsh

in the workplace, with friends and with their families. They concentrate during lessons and show perseverance when learning and using new linguistic elements. In a few cases, learners show exceptional dedication, with examples of learners travelling for hours each week to attend class.

Learners use social media regularly to contact each other in groups in order to support each other outside the classroom, and make arrangements to attend social events. Many either attend supplementary courses or use online activities and apps regularly to support their learning.

Many learners use the Welsh language outside lessons. Many learners at the higher levels show a great desire to assimilate with the Welsh community by attending Welsh societies and various cultural activities, such as a 'cynganeddu' poetry class and local choirs, in order to extend their contact with the language and culture very beneficially. A majority of learners take advantage of attending learner support events, and benefit from them. For example, a significant number of learners in the area attended a pre-show talk on a theatrical production of the novel, Llyfr Glas Nebo. A few learners, independently of the provider, take responsibility for organising valuable opportunities, such as conversation sessions, for other learners to practise the Welsh language in the community. These learners develop as independent and proactive learners. For example, a notable example is of learners working with Welsh language initiatives to apply for a grant to develop bilingual communities. Based on this grant, they have opened a bank account in order to organise exciting trips and events for learners in their area.

### **Teaching and learning experiences: Good**

Tutors foster a constructive and inclusive relationship, and create a community of enthusiastic learners who take pride in their ability to use the Welsh language. This contributes effectively towards ensuring learners' interest and adherence to the provider's vision and mission. As a result, this sets learners on a clear path towards becoming confident and active speakers in their communities.

Tutors foster positive learning environments and reinforce inclusive and supportive learning communities. Nearly all tutors adopt an energetic and enthusiastic learning style, which enables them to elicit constructive responses from learners. They ignite their enthusiasm and develop learners' skills very successfully in a creative range of activities. Most tutors have sound subject knowledge, and model effective language and syntactical patterns that are suitable for the level of all learners. Purposeful and consistent use of the target language is made in the classes, which contributes to learners' skilful achievement. Most tutors have high expectations of learners which, in turn, raises learners' ambitions. The provider plans suitable opportunities for tutors to work together, which enables them to observe and emulate good practice. In the best practice, many tutors adopt high quality practice, model language effectively and ensure that learners' pronounce correctly.

Tutors are clear about the provider's mission of producing speakers who are increasingly confident in speaking Welsh. They motivate learners through a variety of activities and techniques, which build learners' ability to communicate confidently. A good example of this is the ability of learners at higher levels to question an invited guest about his work as a football commentator by using specialist and rich vocabulary about communication.

Most tutors provide opportunities for learners to develop and extend their reading skills by encouraging them to read a range of current materials and publications. As a result, learners are more confident when reading Welsh novels of a high standard. They respond by writing reviews that lead to stimulating discussion with their fellow learners. Regular opportunities are provided to encourage pupils to record their personal experiences, which leads to learners having the confidence to produce original written work. In the best examples, tutors enable learners to submit creative work to local competitions and publications. As a result, learners' writing skills develop effectively and contribute productively to local cultural contexts. A majority of tutors make effective use of technology to enrich learning in the classroom. In the best examples, they encourage their learners to interact with each other both inside and outside of lessons. As a result, this reinforces the sense of an active learning community.

Many tutors support learners effectively through skilful and proactive questioning, which challenges and stretches learners to develop their knowledge and awareness of purposeful vocabulary and syntactical patterns. A very few tutors do not challenge learners enough to extend their skills to the best of their ability. Through activities in pairs and small groups, the practice of working together in the classroom leads to creating a supportive and nurturing learning environment. By establishing this environment, many tutors succeed in responding to learners' different needs, both orally and in writing, effectively. This nurtures their skills developmentally and leads to positive progress. However, feedback on learners' work is not always clear enough in terms of showing learners how to improve in order to ensure that they benefit and make the best possible progress.

The provider offers a varied and purposeful selection of courses within its programme, for example Welsh for the Family and workplace courses, including Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and North Wales Police. It also provides a programme of purposeful supporting events, which introduce learners to Welsh contexts and culture effectively. These events are promoted effectively by the provider through various media. This provides opportunities to enrich learners' experiences and development successfully. It also reinforces the provider's core aims, and ignites learners' obvious enthusiasm and appreciation. A notable example of this enthusiasm and appreciation is the Learners' Eisteddfod, which is held annually in different locations across the area. Within the fun and supportive environment of the Eisteddfod, learners are given various opportunities to compete in areas that are of interest to them, which include creative writing tasks, art work and competitions on stage. Motivating learners to compete adds to their wider linguistic development and their appreciation of Welsh culture.

### **Care, support and guidance: Excellent**

The provider has succeeded in creating a close-knit and inclusive community that provides its learners with exceptional care and support. This has a very positive effect on the progress that they make, their wellbeing and their positive attitudes to learning.

Most tutors know their learners very well. They get to know their learners' ability and progress accurately. On this basis, they have a very good awareness of the individual needs of each learner in the groups that they teach. As a result, learners are very highly motivated, and this has a positive effect on the number that continue on subsequent courses.

The provision has tight tracking systems to monitor attendance centrally. It works tirelessly to ensure that learners attend lessons and continue with their learning. Tutors contact learners who miss sessions regularly in order to arrange additional work for them, to ensure that learners continue with their learning outside the classroom. The provision also organises valuable intervention sessions that provide valuable support for learners who have missed longer periods, or who are at risk of dropping out of their courses, in order to support them to return to class. To help learners enrol on courses, special discounts are provided for those who have attended supplementary courses, in addition to an 'Early Bird' discount to encourage commitment to courses.

The provider offers effective and impartial advice on selecting the course that is most relevant to learners. This includes telephone advice before enrolling, a prospectus, details on social media and a video explaining the content of the provision's alternative courses. A strong feature is the flexibility to move between courses if the course is unsuitable or if circumstances change.

There are clear communication processes within the provision to identify learners who need personal and specialist support. During the induction period, a constructive and supportive relationship is forged in order to ensure that all learners receive suitable and inclusive support. This ensures that learners that are on the courses, and that sit examinations, are given every support to overcome obstacles. Maintaining high levels of wellbeing for learners and staff are core to the provider. Nearly all tutors have received training on student and staff wellbeing. Based on this training, tutors have strategies to support them and to refer learners to specialist services within the college. As a result of the provider's supportive and encouraging ethos, learners have adopted a caring learning community that support each other both inside and outside lessons.

Tutors ensure that nearly all learners make effective use of 'Using My Welsh', which is provided by the National Centre. They set targets jointly to challenge learners to use the Welsh language outside the classroom regularly, and review them every term through constructive one-to-one meetings. Tutors are passionate about maintaining learners' interest and supporting them, by ensuring that they are given rich opportunities while learning Welsh in real-life contexts within their communities. This includes regular quizzes, stewarding at the National Eisteddfod, a joint party to celebrate St Dwynwen's Day and the Scottish poet, Rabbin Burns, and a successful family carnival. The provider works very closely with a number of partners, such as the local Welsh language initiatives, Saith Seren Welsh language centre and Merched y Wawr, in order to create opportunities for learners to use their Welsh naturally in their local communities.

The provider works closely with the college's English for speakers of other languages department and the Refugee Hub. As a result, it provides courses for the Portuguese community and for refugees that have attended taster courses in a local cafe. Some have children in local schools, and this helps them to settle in their community.

The provider has established a clear plan to seek learners' views by inviting all classes to elect a representative at the beginning of the course. A questionnaire is sent to the representative twice a year in order to seek learners' responses on

various issues. As a result of the class representative's responses, the provider acts successfully to improve provision in terms of pastoral care and educational provision. A notable example of this is developing more conversation sessions in all lessons, and highly beneficial one-to-one meetings between the tutor and learner.

The provider's arrangements to safeguard learners meet requirements and are not a cause for concern.

### **Leadership and management: Excellent**

Leaders at Learn Welsh North East have a clear and highly robust vision, which focuses very effectively on their learners' progress and wellbeing. Leaders lead provision proactively and have a sound grasp of all of the organisation's priorities and procedures. They provide their colleagues with masterful guidance in order to ensure that the provider's work is of a high standard. Their priorities comply successfully with those of the National Centre for Learning Welsh.

There is an excellent working relationship between the college's chief executive and the head of provision. The provider's priorities for improvement are recognised in the college's development plans, which ensure that the provider's work is a core part of the organisation's wider work. A notable example of this is the role of Coleg Cambria's Link Governor for the Welsh language, which ensures that the governing body has valuable and up-to-date knowledge of the latest developments in the provider's work. The provider benefits from this, as it uses the college's resources and contacts beneficially to evolve provision, in addition to supporting the college to achieve its aims of increasing the numbers that speak and use the Welsh language.

The provider has developed comprehensive self-evaluation procedures that are based purposefully on first-hand evidence. For example, leaders and tutors scrutinise learners' attendance rates and take appropriate action to ensure improvement.

Leaders use data on enrolments, completion, attendance, progression and examinations in order to plan effectively for the provision's development needs. A notable example of this is the provider's very firm grasp of its pastoral system, which ensures high progression rates on higher level courses.

Leaders have suitable and thorough self-evaluation and planning systems, and they identify strengths and areas for development well. These aspects are included in purposeful action plans, which outline specific steps to introduce them, which identify clearly leadership responsibilities, measures to denote success, and training needs. Leaders ensure regular valuable opportunities for the provider's staff to contribute to this strategic planning work through termly conferences and through meetings for staff in each county.

The provider has effective procedures to evaluate standards of teaching and identify staff's professional development needs. Leaders observe lessons in order to identify strengths in individuals' work, and aspects for development that may be common among a number of tutors. Leaders work very effectively when gathering various streams of information in order to ensure that they have a comprehensive picture of the quality of teaching and planning. As a result, leaders provide a valuable training

plan that targets general areas for development among staff. In individual cases, the provider has a beneficial mentoring plan that includes opportunities for tutors to teach jointly in order to share good practice.

In order to ensure whole-team participation, leaders provide training at times that are convenient for staff, including weekends, and provide recordings of training sessions on e-platforms. Managers have a sound grasp of the way in which staff participate in training, and take purposeful steps to ensure that all members of staff have access to the training that is available and understand their responsibilities. Formal performance management procedures reinforce these systems successfully and address underperformance suitably. Leaders provide good support for new tutors.

The provider has an appropriate level of staffing, which meets the provision's needs successfully. The staffing structure is effective and there are opportunities for them to develop leadership skills, for example by providing mentoring support for colleagues. The provider manages, allocates and uses funding appropriately across the partnership, and monitors expenditure successfully in line with the sector's national objectives. There is an additional benefit for the provider as a result of access to the home organisation's wider resources. For example, the provider receives support from funding officers, human resources and information and communication technology services at Coleg Cambria. Due to the wider responsibilities of the head of provision within the college, the provider makes the best of opportunities to promote all aspects of provision. As a result, she ensures that Welsh for Adults fulfils a key and core function in the college's strategic plans to promote the Welsh language, in line with Welsh Government's policies.

## Evidence base of the report

Before the inspection, inspectors:

- analysed the outcomes from the learner questionnaire and considered the views of tutors and staff through their questionnaire responses

During the inspection, inspectors:

- met the head of the provider, a representative of the managing body/governing body, senior and middle managers (where appropriate) and tutors to evaluate the impact of the provider's work
- engaged with learners to discuss their work and hear their views about various aspects of their provider
- met with groups of learners, such as representatives of learner voice groups
- visited a broad sample of classes and conducted learning walks to observe learners in lessons and informal learning activities
- looked closely at the provider's self-evaluation processes
- considered the provider's improvement plans and looked at evidence to show how well the provider had moved forward with planned improvements
- scrutinised a range of the provider's documents, including information on learner progress, records of meetings of staff and the managing/governing body, information on learners' wellbeing, including the safeguarding of learners, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- reviewed the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

## Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the provider and from the Estyn website ([www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales))

Estyn evaluates a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

<b>Excellent</b>	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
<b>Good</b>	Strong features, although minor aspects may require improvement
<b>Adequate and needs improvement</b>	Strengths outweigh weaknesses, but important aspects require improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement</b>	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 77 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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