



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

A report on

Learn Welsh Ceredigion – Powys – Carmarthenshire

**Aberystwyth University
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by

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

This report is also available in Welsh.

About Learn Welsh Ceredigion – Powys – Carmarthenshire

The Welsh for Adults sector was reorganised in 2016 and the National Centre was established, along with a network of providers across Wales. Learn Welsh Ceredigion, Powys and Carmarthenshire (LWCPC) was established during this reorganisation and it is situated within Aberystwyth University's Welsh and External Relations Directorate.

LWCPC is the largest provider in the Welsh for Adults sector in terms of its geographical size, with over 1,600 individual learners a year, on average, across the counties of Ceredigion, Powys and Carmarthenshire. It receives a core grant of £1,178,616 during 2021-2022 from the National Centre for Learning Welsh.

A range of mainstream courses are provided, from Entry to Proficiency level, both in the community and the workplace, in addition to a programme of learner support activities across Ceredigion, Powys and Carmarthenshire that support learners to practise their Welsh in informal contexts.

In Carmarthenshire, LWCPC is responsible for intensive, advanced and supplementary courses only, while Learn Welsh Carmarthenshire provides less-intensive courses at Entry, Foundation and Intermediate level. In Ceredigion and Powys, LWCPC provides the full range of Welsh for Adults courses.

At the beginning of 2021-2022, 21 core staff were employed in addition to 53 fixed-term staff. The head of LWCPC is responsible for leading the provider strategically and operationally. There is a team of 6 programme coordinators who lead local and regional learning programmes and manage teams of local tutors. The team also includes a Training, Quality and Curriculum Coordinator, an Administrative Coordinator and four administrative staff.

Overview

Learn Welsh Ceredigion – Powys – Carmarthenshire (LWCPC) is a very supportive and caring learning community that has adapted and succeeded highly effectively on the online learning platform. Since March 2020, nearly all of the provider's courses have been held online.

The provider succeeds in creating an inclusive learning community that provides excellent care, support and guidance for its learners. This has a positive effect on learners and their learning outcomes. There is a close relationship between tutors and learners and, as a result, learners are highly motivated and make strong progress.

In lessons, nearly all learners listen attentively and most respond appropriately to oral, visual and aural feedback. Many learners develop their oracy soundly by talking spontaneously with the tutor and each other. They speak with increasing confidence and accuracy as they acquire the language, and a few develop oracy that is above the expected level.

One of the provider's strengths is that it is innovative in planning and delivering a programme that provides mainstream courses alongside courses for specific groups of learners. For example, tutors support the workforce at Hywel Dda Health Board through the *Codi Hyder* scheme to use the Welsh language practically at work, for example at the immunisation centres.

LWCPC provides support for learners to self-study in Welsh Government, in addition to providing courses for school staff and courses for parents, such as the Welsh at Home pilot scheme in five primary schools in Ceredigion, which provides wider access for them to hear and use the Welsh language. In a strategic partnership with the University of Wales Trinity St David to train the education workforce, it contributes purposefully towards planning and developing training for that workforce.

The provider works appropriately to plan provision with Learn Welsh Carmarthenshire in Carmarthenshire. However, current national data-sharing procedures do not allow providers to access the personal information of learners who transfer from one provider to another. As a result, the two providers that operate in Carmarthenshire do not hold qualitative discussions about the progress and standards of learners who transfer between them.

The provider's senior leaders set a clear strategic direction for the service. They have a definite vision and strategy that promote the aims and objectives of the National Centre for Learning Welsh successfully. The service operates as a key unit within Aberystwyth University's wider service and has a direct and positive influence on its linguistic development.

Recommendations

- R1 Work with the National Centre for Learning Welsh and Learn Welsh Carmarthenshire to use data effectively for the benefit of the standards and progress of learners who transfer between the two providers that operate in Carmarthenshire.
- R2 Ensure consistency in the use of good practice to support learners to improve their pronunciation.

What happens next

Estyn will invite the provider to prepare a case study to be disseminated on the Estyn website, describing its work in training the education workforce to increase the use of the Welsh language, in line with national priorities to increase the number of active Welsh-speakers.

Main findings

Learning: Good

Nearly all learners at Learn Welsh Ceredigion – Powys – Carmarthenshire (LWCPC) contribute enthusiastically to their lessons and interact well with Welsh-speaking visitors. They are able to convey clearly why they are learning the language. Most recall previous learning successfully during their lessons and apply that knowledge to different situations in line with their level. Many learners make strong progress, develop as independent learners and use the Welsh language beneficially outside their lessons, either socially, at work or by using additional resources, such as electronic resources, to reinforce and extend their learning.

In lessons, nearly all learners listen attentively and most respond appropriately to oral, visual and aural prompts. Many learners develop their oracy soundly by talking spontaneously to the tutor and each other. They speak with increasing confidence and accuracy as they acquire the language, and a few develop oracy that is above the expected level. A few learners have a tendency not to extend their answers and their pronunciation and intonation exhibit the influence of English pronunciation at times. Most learners at the higher levels develop to become increasingly confident and fluent speakers. By proficiency level, they understand dialectal features and different language registers and are able to discuss various themes in a very sophisticated manner, including contemporary topics such as the side effects of COVID-19, in addition to literary matters such as discussing the poem *Y Gododdin* by Aneurin.

Many learners develop their reading skills beneficially. In line with their level, they read aloud suitably and pronounce appropriately, on the whole.

Many learners at entry and foundation level make effective progress in their reading skills and develop from mastering sentences and basic questions about themselves to reading and understanding about other people. By the end of the foundation level, many show a good understanding of more extended pieces, which include a variety of constructions and verb tenses. Many intermediate level learners show sound progress in developing their reading skills further and learn how to combine reading and writing skills increasingly effectively. Most learners at higher levels are able to read a varied range of formal and informal texts effectively. In the best example, advanced and proficiency level learners combine their skills by reading articles and responding to them eloquently and fluently in writing.

Many learners across the different levels develop their writing skills effectively.

Most beginners develop successfully so that they are able to use positive and negative responses appropriately when responding to personal questions. They succeed in forming suitable sentences to create simple dialogues. Many write personalised pieces by using the present and imperfect tenses appropriately and use the future periphrastic forms correctly, on the whole, in various exercises. By foundation level, many use the conditional tense and regular and irregular comparative adjectives suitably. In the best example, learners succeed in using compound prepositions to fill gaps while using mutations correctly. A few entry and

foundation level learners experience difficulties with the mutation rules, but this does not usually affect the flow or meaning of their work.

Many intermediate level learners succeed in extending their writing skills well and come to better understand language structures, for example by understanding how and when to use the short form of the verb in the past tense or imperfect verbs to convey different meanings. The process of deepening learners' linguistic understanding continues as learners move on to more advanced courses. The best use masculine and feminine ordinals and the future continuous tense appropriately. They paraphrase sentences in different verb tenses and show linguistic agility and a very sound understanding of language structures. Most proficiency level learners combine their skills successfully and read, summarise and respond to articles about issues such as hunting and paying to see doctors. Learners at this level develop as purposeful users of the language who are able to use the Welsh language easily for professional purposes. For example, they use formal registers successfully to learn how to record meetings, write formal letters on behalf of organisations and act as a referee for someone who is applying for a job.

On average, around 1,600 learners enrol on the provider's courses each year. Numbers increased during the first year of the pandemic in 2019-2020 and a majority of learners completed their courses during that year; however, over a three-year period, many learners have completed their courses. Over the last three years, the number of learners who have progressed to subsequent courses has increased significantly from around half to many during 2020-2021 to 2021-2022. Many learners attend their courses regularly.

The WJEC did not hold a full series of Welsh for Adults examinations during 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. The number of eligible learners who have chosen to sit examinations has increased significantly from a few during 2018-2019 to a minority during 2020-2021, and most are successful.

Wellbeing and attitudes to learning: Excellent

LWCPC is a very supportive and inclusive learning community that has succeeded to adapt very effectively to the online learning platform. Nearly all learners enjoy the lively learning and show infectious enthusiasm towards their learning. Nearly all feel safe and learners are confident that the provider cares for their wellbeing and they know whom to approach should they need advice.

Learners feel like an important part of the class's close-knit and friendly community. Nearly all are very supportive of each other and show exceptional respect towards the views of other learners. Learners are extremely welcoming towards visitors and show a willingness to ask questions and the initiative to expand their knowledge and learn more about the Welsh language and Welshness. Nearly all feel extremely happy and homely in lessons and show enjoyment and humour while learning. Nearly all learners concentrate very well and show perseverance when learning and using new linguistic elements. In a few cases, there are examples of learners showing exceptional dedication to practising their Welsh in areas where the number of Welsh speakers is very low.

Many learners interact with each other naturally in Welsh. In line with their level and across the range of levels, learners are happy to interact in pairs or groups and, at times, discuss complex topics very confidently. Learners have the confidence to try without the fear of making mistakes due to the supportive ethos in the classes. Nearly all feel that they receive exceptional personal support from tutors during lessons and receive encouragement for activities outside the classroom. Many undertake and complete homework tasks successfully and persevere when they face difficulties. Through strong support from the tutor and the wide range of rich resources, for example language apps, they ensure further progress in learning Welsh. Many take advantage of one-to-one sessions that are available to those learners who miss lessons and this has a positive effect on their progress. Learners use social media frequently to engage with each other in groups to support each other outside the classroom and arrange to attend social events. A few make effective use of the Using my Welsh scheme, but many learners set personal targets for their learning with the support of their tutors. A few choose to attend supplementary courses to support their learning.

Learners benefit greatly from the valuable opportunities to express their views and nearly all learners are aware of the complaints and compliments procedure. Nearly all are confident that the provider listens to their voice consistently and adapts for their educational and personal benefit. For example, following a response from learners about the need for more detailed feedback on homework, a session was held for tutors to share ideas and best practice. In the best examples experienced learners also support and inspire new learners by visiting and contributing to their classes, which creates an ambitious culture and the desire for continuous improvement while learning Welsh.

Many learners are ambitious and show very strong motivation, for example to speak Welsh in the workplace, with their families and in their communities. They make an effort to watch Welsh television programmes and many read many kinds of materials in Welsh, in line with their level. Many learners at intermediate to advanced level show an obvious desire to assimilate with the Welsh speaking community by attending Welsh societies and various cultural activities, such as Cymdeithas Edward Llwyd and Merched y Wawr, to extend their contact with the language and culture successfully. Many learners take advantage of attending informal events outside formal lessons and enjoy them – both face-to-face and online. For example, by attending history walks, book clubs and ‘*Coffi a Chlonc*’ (Coffee and Chat). Learners enjoy attending clubs and these increase their confidence and boost their motivation. A few learners, independently of the provider, take the lead in creating valuable opportunities, such as discussion sessions, to encourage other learners to practise Welsh in the community.

Teaching and learning experiences: Excellent

LWCPC provides a wide and varied range of courses at all levels that provide effective routes and consistent progression for learners to make progress in their Welsh language skills. Courses are provided at different intensities that meet learners’ needs successfully. Leaders support tutors exceptionally well in providing a range of professional learning opportunities that support them to deliver digital learning activities. They tailor courses that support learners to fulfil their personal

goals, for example courses that support parents, school staff and workplaces, including Aberystwyth University and Hywel Dda Health Board.

One of the provider's strengths is that it is innovative in planning and delivering a programme that provides mainstream courses alongside courses for specific groups of learners. For example, tutors support the workforce at Hywel Dda Health Board through the *Codi Hyder* scheme to use the Welsh language practically at work. This enriches the service they provide to the public, for example at the immunisation centres. Courses are also provided for school staff and courses for parents which, in turn, enriches the linguistic experience of the school community. This provides them with wider access to hear and use the Welsh language. As a result, provision responds proactively to national priorities, such as increasing the use of the Welsh language in schools as pupils and teachers progress along the linguistic continuum. This contributes purposefully towards planning and developing training for the education workforce.

During the pandemic, leaders and tutors adapted provision quickly to be online, ensuring that learning continued almost uninterrupted. One highly effective feature of provision is that nearly all tutors forge a positive relationship with learners by creating a supportive learning environment. They have a sound awareness of learners' needs and interests, which leads to activities that engage and hold their interest to speak at length. There is a good balance in most lessons between pair and group exercises and whole class learning, which supports learners to talk and make progress in their skills. This is facilitated well by ensuring a suitable pace to lessons and lively presentations. In the best practice, tutors enrich learning experiences at all levels by presenting Welsh history and culture skilfully in lessons, for example the traditions of the Old New Year, national celebrations such as the Eisteddfod and the link between historical characters such as Twm Siôn Cati and John Dee in the learners' areas and communities.

Tutors have thorough knowledge of the language and use it enthusiastically in activities that focus on developing learners' oral skills. They are strong language models and introduce the vocabulary and accents of local communities successfully, for example '*Shwt wyt ti, bach?*'. However, a few tutors at lower levels do not provide regular enough opportunities for learners to improve their pronunciation.

Most tutors present activities that provide a challenge in line with learners' levels and provide regular opportunities for them to practise the language. In the best cases, tutors develop learners' reading and writing skills successfully, for example as learners discuss literary texts sophisticatedly. Nearly all tutors encourage learners to make consistent progress in their skills and support them diligently to make active use of the Welsh language. For example, providers offer an interesting range of learner support activities that provide valuable opportunities for them to practise their spoken language.

Most tutors support learners to know what they need to do to improve. They question and probe skilfully while encouraging learners to use the Welsh language in the classroom. For example, tutors are patient when giving learners an appropriate amount of time to think before responding and encourage them to correct themselves and support each other to recall previous learning. Tutors create an inclusive learning environment that supports learners to venture and participate fully in lessons. The

provider listens to learners' feedback consistently to improve provision. For example, tutors nurture learners' writing skills constructively and provide feedback effectively. As a result, learners respond positively to support which equips them to make progress in their skills.

Tutors support learners to understand the importance of speaking Welsh in various contexts and have a beneficial effect on their use of the language. This enriches learners' experiences and gives them the confidence to become speakers who are proud to speak Welsh at home, at work and in their communities.

Care, support and guidance: Excellent

The provider succeeds in creating an inclusive learning community that provides excellent care, support and guidance for its learners. This has a positive effect on learners and their learning outcomes. There is a close relationship between tutors and learners and, as a result, learners are highly motivated, and this has a consistent effect on their learning experiences and progress.

Most tutors provide individual support of the highest standard for the learners in their care. Tutors ensure a supportive, positive and stimulating environment where nearly all of their learners feel safe and contribute to lessons without the fear of making mistakes. They know their learners well and provide purposeful support and feedback aimed at individuals' needs and this leads to strong progress and attaining personal goals.

The provider's staff have a passionate commitment to retaining learners and ensuring that they continue with their lessons. Registers are completed by the tutors in a timely manner and checked effectively by managers. Tutors contact learners frequently by e-mail, telephone or through social media platforms to encourage them to attend lessons or return to the classroom when they have missed sessions. Catch-up sessions are also organised with a tutor to support learners to re-join the class. If learners are unable to re-join lessons, the provider strives to ensure that there is an opportunity for them to join the same course or another course at a later date. When learning moved online, a range of technical equipment was provided for tutors and advice and guidance was given to learners to facilitate their learning experience and ensure that they remained on the provider's courses.

There are very strong communication arrangements within the provision to support learners. The provider offers a wide range of information and opportunities for learners to choose the most suitable course for them. This includes relevant information from the tutor about progression to subsequent courses, an online prospectus, information leaflets etc. The provider refers learners to a learning programme that will meet their personal needs, whether that is an intensive course, a self-study course or a course at a pace that suits the learner. There is a clear explanation of what they can expect from the provider and also of the provider's expectations. This information means that learners are aware from the outset of how to make the most of their Welsh lessons.

Before starting the course, learners receive correspondence that draws their attention to the additional support that is available to them and any requests made by learners are cascaded to the coordinator and relevant tutor. Once courses have

begun, there is also a consistent arrangement in place whereby tutors cascade additional information back to managers and coordinators to receive further support effectively in line with individual learners' needs. Within the learner handbook, a summary of the relevant policies and procedures is provided, in addition to the contact details of core staff.

Tutors challenge learners to use the Welsh language outside the classroom regularly. As a result, many take advantage of opportunities to use their Welsh regularly with family, friends, in the workplace etc. An extensive programme of activities is organised for learners, including walks, film and history clubs, '*clybiau clonc*' and cooking clubs. Information is shared about Welsh language initiative events in the regions, in addition to Welsh organisations and bodies that provide suitable opportunities. These sessions are advertised effectively by tutors and officers to support learners to extend their use of the Welsh language in real-life contexts within their communities.

The provider ensures there are clear and effective arrangements to seek and act on learners' views. A continuous dialogue is held with learners through annual observations, discussions with tutors and coordinators and internal and national questionnaires. The annual national 'Have Your Say' questionnaire is promoted appropriately and is completed by around a third of learners. The provider also sends questionnaires at the end of specific courses and to those learners who leave their courses early as a means of acquiring useful information about their reasons for doing so. Information from these questionnaires has a robust effect through a timely reporting and operational procedure. Outcomes have a purposeful and positive effect on learners' experiences of learning Welsh across the provision. There is a suitable complaints and compliments process in place, which is implemented effectively, as appropriate.

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

Leadership and management: Excellent

The provider's senior leaders set a very clear direction for the service and have a very positive influence on its strategic direction. They have a clear vision and strategy that promote the aims and objectives of the National Centre for Learning Welsh successfully. The service operates as a key unit within Aberystwyth University's wider service and has a direct and positive influence on its linguistic development. For example, one of the service's leaders is part of the university's equality committee and contributes to developments in that area. The provider's head is passionate about the service and receives very effective support from a skilled leadership team. They work successfully with other teams within the service, such as the coordinators and the administrative team. They set clear and supportive guidance for tutors, promote their development and provide opportunities for them to make a very valuable contribution towards developing the service. For example, by discussing and developing plans to respond to the needs of specific groups of learners.

Leaders are proactive in taking advantage of project funding and work diligently to provide new and innovative elements. For example, in the case of the Welsh at

Home pilot scheme at five primary schools with Ceredigion County Council and by implementing 'Work Welsh' projects with Hywel Dda Healthy Board, where intensive courses and the *Codi Hyder* programme are held for staff. They also provide support to 148 self-study learners in Welsh Government and work in a strategic partnership with the University of Wales Trinity St David to train the education workforce, and similarly with local education authorities. As a result, the provider undertakes important work in terms of modelling successful language acquisition in the Welsh for Adults sector to trainee teachers and current practitioners in schools.

The provider is in an unusual situation in the Welsh for Adults sector as it operates in an area where there is more than one provider. In Carmarthenshire, LWCPC provides intensive and advanced courses and Learn Welsh Carmarthenshire (LWC) provides non-intensive courses at lower levels. They work appropriately to plan provision in the county. However, from the perspective of planning individual learners' progress, current national data-sharing procedures do not allow providers to access the personal information of learners who transfer from one provider to another. As a result, the two providers that operate in Carmarthenshire do not hold qualitative discussions about the progress and standards of learners who transfer between them.

The service has rigorous procedures to identify the comparative strengths and weaknesses of provision. It has a continuous self-evaluation process which has been embedded firmly over an extended period. Leaders undertake a useful range of activities that consider the views of the workforce and provide them with first-hand information about learners' progress and standards of teaching across the service. These procedures continued almost uninterrupted during the pandemic and remote provision was provided very quickly. The views of tutors and learners are given full consideration when making decisions about whether to continue virtually or resume face-to-face meetings.

Leaders gather evidence from different sources throughout the year. For example, observation arrangements and sharing expertise among tutors have a positive influence on developing teaching methods. Tutors state that they value the support they receive from the area coordinators and that they tailor support for individuals.

Leaders use the national quality framework effectively to identify and respond strategically to the identified priorities. Leaders prioritise effectively and evaluate progress thoroughly. For example, they have focused on how tutors provide learners with feedback by considering the views of tutors and learners. The workforce plays a full part in self-evaluation procedures by working closely with their line managers and through regular meetings of key committees, such as the training, quality and curriculum committee.

The provider has very robust staff performance management procedures, which means that all staff, including part-time teaching staff, are subject to annual reviews that lead to identifying training needs and opportunities. As part of the process, the provider has been supporting staff who are interested in specialising in specific areas, for example *Codi Hyder* programmes or additional learning needs, to develop expertise in those areas.

Following annual observation programmes and the input of coordinators into the findings, continuous professional development programmes are devised for each tutor and, as a result, nearly all tutors have received purposeful training, either from the provider's team or the National Centre.

The provider offers a wide range of professional learning opportunities for its staff and, in addition to training on areas of teaching and learning, a wider offer is provided in areas such as wellbeing and diversity. Most of the provider's staff take advantage of these opportunities and praise them.

Detailed attention is given to the development of new tutors and the Training, Quality and Curriculum Coordinator ensures a comprehensive training programme for them, which includes pursuing the sector's national qualification, *Dechrau Dysgu*. The coordinator contributes towards teaching this qualification at a national level.

As part of staff development, the provider ensures that there are regular opportunities for tutors to visit their fellow tutors' classes to observe good practice and develop their pedagogy. They state that this has a positive influence on their teaching. The provider aims for continuous improvement in the quality of its teaching and has identified pronunciation and the use of the target language as aspects that will be given detailed attention as part of the training programme in future.

The head of the provider and his leadership team ensure that decisions about expenditure align with the service's strategic priorities and support the objectives of the National Centre for Learning Welsh successfully.

The provider has appropriate levels of staffing for a wide range of courses and activities. Leaders manage the budget very effectively and manage staffing expenditure very carefully to make the most of their funding and to ensure that the activity is cost effective.

Levels of top-slicing the annual grant are appropriate and are no more than 15%. The university allocates top-sliced funding to fund support services, such as human resources, estates and technical infrastructure. This supports the provider's core activity very well.

During the recent period where there have been savings as a result of introducing remote learning, funding was targeted towards expanding the number of classes and supporting the needs of learners and tutors.

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)

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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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