# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY THE

# WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Welsh in Education Strategic Plans 2017-2020**  |
| **DATE**  | **19 September 2018** |
| **FROM**  | **Eluned Morgan, Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning**  |

As part of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, it is a statutory duty for all Local Authorities in Wales to submit a Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). Following receipt of the draft plans for 2017-20, the previous Minister for the Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning decided that further work was required as they lacked the ambition to achieve the Welsh Government’s Welsh Language strategy, Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers.

To facilitate this growth, I announced an additional capital grant for local authorities earlier this year. I am satisfied with the quality and the vision demonstrated in the bids put forward, and on that basis, I’m pleased to announce a total of £46m capital funds to boost Welsh medium education. This includes funding from the Childcare Offer Capital Grant Programme. By combining the funding from the Welsh Medium Capital and Childcare Offer Capital Grants, we have been able to ensure that the return on our investment from both Grants has been maximised to encourage growth and provision to two important areas. This combined funding commitment of £46m will deliver 41 projects across 16 local authorities and create an additional 2818 school and childcare places for Welsh medium learners. This is in addition to the £5 million for the Pantycelyn development announced by the Cabinet Secretary for Education earlier this year, making a total of £51 million to support Welsh education.

Several strategic plans were approved in March of this year. Welsh Ministers have given careful consideration to the remaining revised strategic plans and as a result have approved the following: -

* Neath Port Talbot
* Bridgend
* Merthyr Tydfil
* Monmouthshire
* Torfaen

The improvements made to the WESPs since their re-submission have provided a firmer footing to progress, and the local authorities who have had their plans approved have all demonstrated a commitment to support growth in Welsh-medium education in line with Cymraeg 2050. Although the approval process is not yet complete with Newport local authority, I am satisfied that that discussions are heading in the right direction. I would like to thank all local authorities for their cooperation.

The plans provide a platform to move forward to ensure the expansion of Welsh-medium provision so that Government strategic objectives are met. I am confident that the foundations developed here reinforce the Welsh-medium education sector which is essential in implementing the aims of Cymraeg 2050.