

Wales China Schools Project (Welsh Confucius Institutes)

Global Futures: A plan to improve and promote international languages in Wales 2022 to 2025

Our vision

Our vision is that Wales becomes a truly multilingual nation. It is a Programme for Government commitment to 'expand the teaching of modern foreign languages in our schools'. We want to increase the number of learners studying languages, whatever their background or needs.

Wales is a confident, forward-looking nation, and we will support all our learners to be citizens of Wales and the world. We want all our learners to reach their full potential and experience the many benefits of learning international languages, including broadening their horizons by learning about other people and cultures and equipping them with the language skills to compete in the global economy.

Our strategy

The [Curriculum for Wales](#) will revolutionise our education system and provide exciting opportunities for language learning across all our schools and settings. Welsh Government, together with our Global Futures partners, will provide our time, knowledge and expertise to our schools and teachers to support all learners in their progress with language learning, as well as to realise the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales.

Our aims

Our strategic aims for the next 3 years are to:

- support the development and delivery of meaningful international language provision in Wales
- provide our practitioners with the skills, knowledge and experiences to plan and deliver international languages provision
- challenge the misconceptions around language learning

Each aim is supported by strategic actions, which will be delivered by ourselves and our Global Futures partners.

Context

'Global Futures: A plan to improve and promote international languages in Wales 2022 to 2025' will support both international languages in our Curriculum for Wales (international languages refers to languages other than English and Welsh and which can include community languages, modern languages, classical languages and British Sign Language) and our Programme for Government commitment to 'expand the teaching of modern foreign languages in our schools'.

Our strategic plan sets out how the Welsh Government and our Global Futures partners will continue to raise the profile of international languages, support our teachers to deliver their provision and our learners as they develop towards the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales.

As schools plan their own curricula, we want them to understand that providing meaningful linguistic and cultural experiences will broaden horizons and open up the world to learners whatever their background or needs. We want to support our learners to be able to actively engage with the global economy and flourish in their chosen path whether working for businesses, as entrepreneurs, or as performers and artists.

We want our schools and settings to know that support is available from our Global Futures partners, and we will encourage them to build stronger connections with our partners.

Our strategy will look to support and inform strategic planning and professional learning to allow schools to widen the choices available to learners as they become global citizens of Wales and the world.

This plan sets out a framework for our work over the next 3 years. We have deliberately avoided setting specific targets within the strategic plan. If the learning of international languages is to thrive, they must be part of a school's holistic planning and not marginalised. We will publish a more detailed version of this plan, clearly outlining the activities that we and our partners will undertake to meet these actions, later this year.

- **Strategic aim 1:** support the development and delivery of meaningful international language provision in Wales.

The curriculum for Wales will bring language learning together into the Languages, Literacy and Communication (LLC) Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE). We want to align with the ethos of the new curriculum, which focuses on a wider range of opportunities and experiences for learners.

As our learners will experience international languages from Progression step 2; and will learn at least one international language from Progression step 3 (onward it is crucial that we provide our settings, schools and initial teacher education (ITE)

providers with the necessary support and messages as they plan their international language provision.

The following strategic actions set out how we will meet this aim.

Strategic action 1

- Provide principles and raise awareness across all education settings of the importance of multilingualism and prioritising of languages and widening of learner choices.

The Wales China Schools Project commits to raising awareness in Welsh schools about the benefits of learning Mandarin and discovering Chinese culture, both as an independent choice of study and multiculturalism at large. We will promote it as a language that can widen learner choices whilst in education and for future career paths, paying particular attention to its position as the most widely spoken native language in the world.

These messages will be distributed across Wales via our media, marketing and promotional channels such as quarterly newsletters, websites and handbooks. Awareness will also be raised in Mandarin classes and Chinese-related activities in schools, both on a regular and one-off basis.

Strategic action 2

- Support schools and settings in planning their international language provision.

Ahead of the start of the new academic year, schools will receive information from the Wales China Schools Project to help them plan their international language provision for Chinese. For instance, in June 2023 we will provide schools with information on key Chinese festivals so they can plan accordingly, as well suggest activities and classes they might like to hold.

Strategic action 3

- Continue to build on activity at primary schools, to prepare for Curriculum for Wales.

The Wales China Schools Project will promote and offer options to primary schools unable to access an in-person Mandarin teacher due to reasons such as location. These include access to our resource bank, live streaming classes, open-access online resources, one-off special events related to festivals, and summer schools.

We will encourage secondary schools to introduce Chinese language/culture to their feeder schools through special events such as China Days and Visit Days for year 6 pupils.

We will incorporate ‘learning through play’ in our provision to primary schools.

Strategic action 4

- Continue to address the challenge regarding take-up of modern foreign languages in secondary schools with the help of our Global Futures partners.

The Wales China Schools Project commits to continue to raise awareness in Welsh secondary schools about the benefits of learning Mandarin and discovering Chinese culture. We will do this by promoting Mandarin as a language that can increase learners' horizons and opportunities, both whilst in education and later with their careers.

These messages will be delivered via our media, marketing and promotional channels such as quarterly newsletters, websites and handbooks. This will also be discussed and experienced during classes and at Chinese-related activities in schools, both on a regular and one-off basis.

Strategic aim 2: provide practitioners with the skills, knowledge and experiences to plan and deliver international languages provision

A critical part of raising aspirations and addressing different gaps in attainment is ensuring that all learners are given a wide range of opportunities through a broad and balanced curriculum. We want to provide our teachers with the confidence to deliver international languages in the Curriculum for Wales through training opportunities developed alongside our partners. Areas such as transition from primary to secondary school and whole school planning need to be carefully considered to ensure learners have the opportunity to make progress along the language learning continuum within the Curriculum for Wales. The introduction of international languages at primary schools within the languages, literacy and communication AoLE LLC, will need clear responsibilities, collaboration and resources for all those involved. We will continue to build capacity and to support the effective delivery of international languages in our primary schools. We will also engage with our ITE providers as we look to support our teachers of the future.

It is important that schools recognise that being able to speak one or more international language in conjunction with other skills assists learners in opening doors to exciting work possibilities as well as enriched personal lives.

The following strategic actions set out how we will support our schools and settings in these areas.

Strategic action 5

- Regional education consortia and partnerships to continue to provide support for primary and secondary schools across their regions to prepare for the Curriculum for Wales.

The Wales China Schools Project will provide a range of teacher training options, supporting educators in primary and secondary schools to prepare

for the Curriculum for Wales. Options will include not only courses in Mandarin for beginners, designed for teachers wishing to learn basic Chinese and support pupils with their learning, but also specialised ‘Learn to Teach’ programmes for key stage 2 and 3 teachers, aimed at those who wish to introduce some simple topic-based language learning in-line with the new curriculum.

Strategic action 6

- Increase the opportunities for learners to experience languages at primary school, and at secondary school in or alongside examination courses.

The Wales China Schools Project will provide schools with ideas of extracurricular activities, both in person and online, that they can either organise themselves or take part in. This will allow increased opportunities for learners to experience Mandarin Chinese and gain cultural knowledge and awareness about China.

As soon as international travels are fully restored, we aim to organise trips to China for those learning Mandarin Chinese in schools.

Strategic action 7

- Provide direct support to primary teachers via the Open University TEachers Learning to Teach languages (TELT) programme which upskills teachers in both primary languages pedagogy and the teaching either French, German, Spanish or Mandarin in the primary setting.

The Wales China Schools Project will promote the TELT programme funded by Global Futures to our partners and contacts from 2023.

As additional support, we also commit to offering pastoral care in the form of a mentor programme and networking opportunities with our tutors for anyone undertaking the Mandarin Chinese option. This allows educators to develop their skills with experienced Chinese teachers, and gives them the opportunity to seek advice and guidance.

Strategic action 8

- Provide direct support to secondary schools via the Cardiff University Modern Foreign Language Student Mentoring Project for 2022 to 2025.

The Wales China Schools Project will work in collaboration with MFL Mentoring on designing Chinese resources, building this into the workload of our tutors.

Strategic action 9

- Work with our language institute colleagues to highlight the wide range of support available to schools including qualifications, expertise and classroom support.

The Wales China Schools Project will create information specifically for teachers to include detailed information on qualifications, how to increase expertise and classroom support.

We will work with Cardiff University's BA Chinese Studies programme to provide teaching/classroom assistance from students undertaking the teaching module.

Strategic action 10

- Extend membership of the Global Futures steering group to increase the reach of the programme and to give greater prominence to messaging around international languages.

Strategic aim 3: challenge the misconceptions around language learning

There are a range of misconceptions around learning an international language. A lack of understanding of their value for work and personal life has contributed to a UK-wide decline in take-up. This decline does not reflect our aspirations for international languages in the Curriculum for Wales and our profile on the global stage.

The following strategic actions set out how we will challenge this issue.

Strategic action 11

- Expand our collaboration work with our Global Futures partners to ensure consistent messages are disseminated to raise the profile of international languages.

The Wales China Schools Project commits to providing the expertise, timely input and support in ensuring consistent messages are disseminated to raise the profile of international languages.

Strategic action 12

- Provide positive messages and communications that challenge the negative perceptions of language learning.

The Wales China Schools Project commits to providing the expertise, timely input and support in providing positive messages and communications that challenge the negative perceptions of language learning.