Late Immersion in Wales

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Structure

- Language Policy Context
- Welsh Medium Education in Wales
- Late Immersion Provision in Wales
- Skills Development – future research themes

Cymraeg 2050

Increase the number of speakers to 1,000,000

Double daily use from 10% to 20%

Cymraeg 2050

Theme 1:
Increasing the number of Welsh speakers

- Language transmission in the family
- The early years
- Statutory education
- Post-compulsory education
- The education workforce, resources and qualifications

Theme 2:
Increasing the use of Welsh

- The workplace
- Services
- Social use of Welsh

Theme 3:
Creating favourable conditions – infrastructure and context

- Community and economy
- Culture and media
- Wales and the wider world
- Digital technology
- Linguistic infrastructure
- Language planning
- Evaluation and research

Legend: Trajectory, Projection

Y-axis: Number of Welsh speakers aged three and over

X-axis: Year (2011 to 2049)
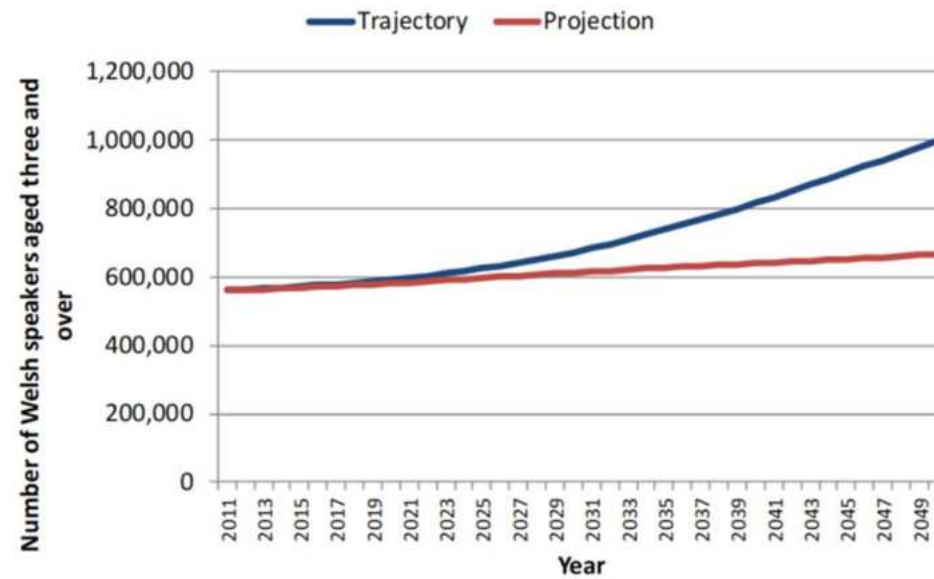
- Projection and trajectory of the number of Welsh speakers aged three and over, 2011 to 2050

Trajectory by 2050
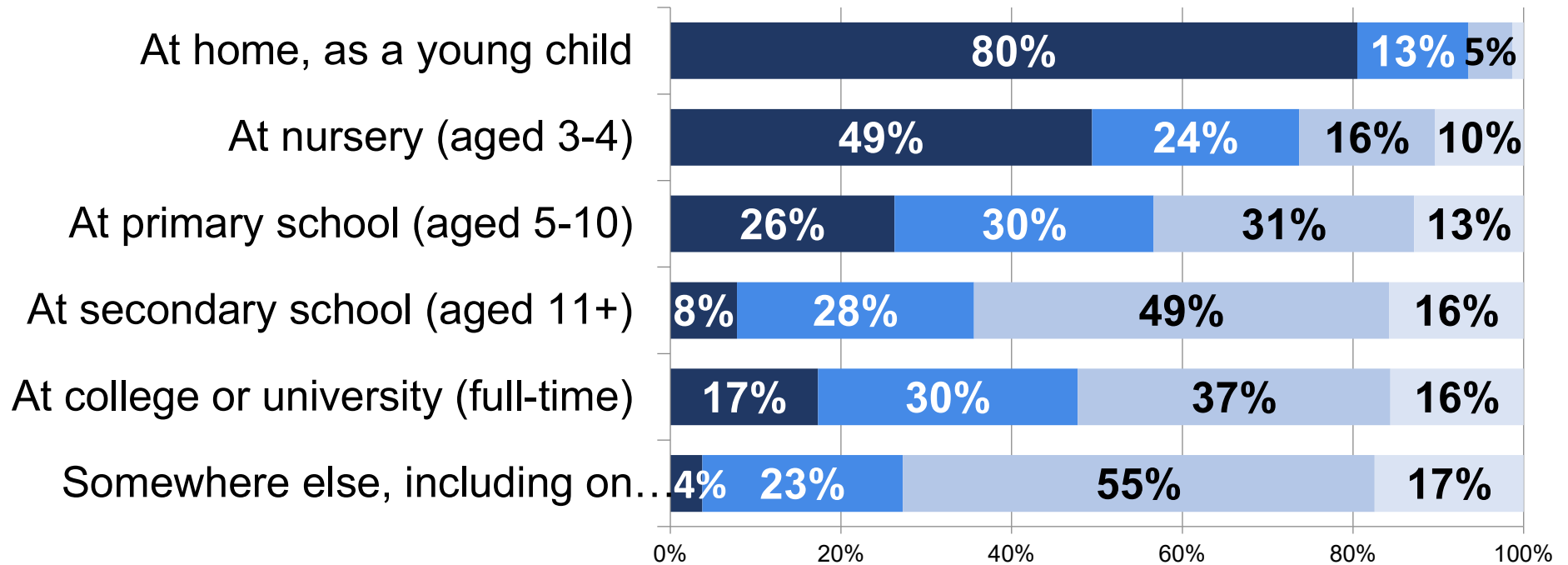
Language Surveys

1992

- **21%** (591,000) are Welsh speakers
- **13%** (370,000) are fluent in Welsh

2013-15

- **24%** (678,000) are Welsh speakers
- **11%** (319,000) are fluent in Welsh

Fluency levels

Legend: ■ Fluent ■ Can speak a fair amount ■ Only speak a little ■ Just a few words

	Fluent	Can speak a fair amount	Only speak a little	Just a few words
At home, as a young child	80%	13%	5%	
At nursery (aged 3-4)	49%	24%	16%	10%
At primary school (aged 5-10)	26%	30%	31%	13%
At secondary school (aged 11+)	8%	28%	49%	16%
At college or university (full-time)	17%	30%	37%	16%
Somewhere else, including on…	4%	23%	55%	17%

Percentage of five-year-old children (at the start of the academic year) who speak Welsh fluently at home
(Source: Pupil-Level Annual School Census)
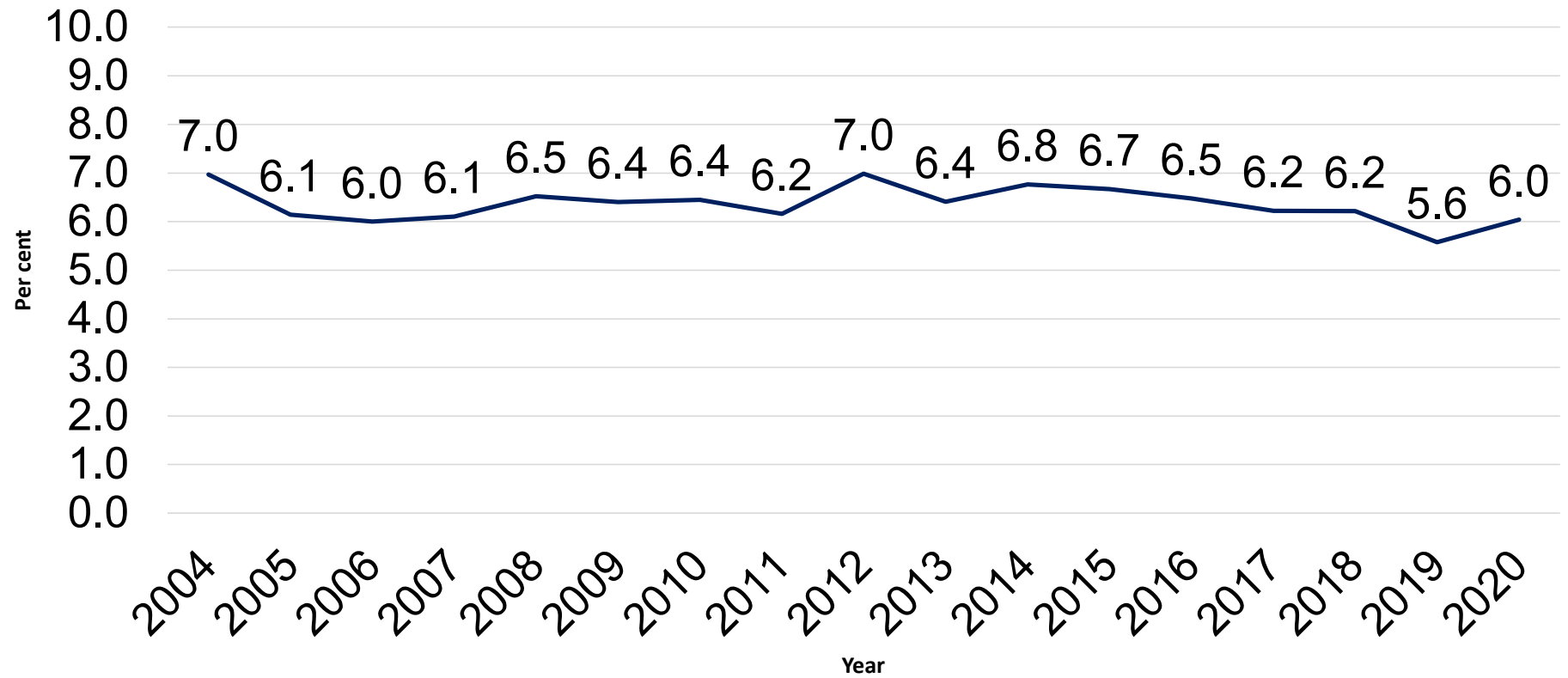
Welsh Medium Education

- Key challenge to attract new speakers
- Developing skills of speakers from households where no Welsh is spoken at home
- Immersion model from 3 years onwards where Welsh is the main (or only) language of instruction up to 7 years old
- After 7 years of age, Welsh continues to be main language of instruction but English also taught

Late Immersion Provision

- Provision targeted at pupils who do not speak Welsh and who join Welsh medium education 7 years old +

- Significant historical provision in areas where Welsh is spoken by majority and language of most (if not all schools)

- More recently immersion provision developed in counties where Welsh isn't a majority language but parents choose to send their children to Welsh medium schools

Late Immersion Research – Welsh Government

Katharine Young – mapping the provision

https://gov.wales/welsh-medium-education-through-late-immersion-mapping-provision-wales

Dr Mirain Rhys – late immersion education - review

https://gov.wales/late-immersion-and-intensive-language-provision-quick-scoping-review-summary-html

Late Immersion provision in Wales

Provision exists in all areas of Wales

Extent and nature of provision varies greatly

Demand for provision can be very variable

Take up of provision can be impacted significantly by the set up of the provision e.g. geography, length of programme, nature of support

Apparent lack of broader strategy and sharing of best practice

Late Immersion Findings

Shorter term Intensive provision more effective than longer term shorter periods of support

Focus on Communication

Practitioner skills and development key

Dedicated time allocated to provision

Support from schools and families

More research on successful methodologies

BREAKING NEWS … BREAKING NEWS …

- Welsh Government announced this week extra support for late immersion

- Investment in 8 local authorities / municipalities to create late immersion centres

- National investment to create network to share best practice and develop skills

Conclusions for Wales and beyond

Some evidence of the success of late immersion provision for learners with no previous Welsh language skills

Extent of support and linguistic context are key determinants

Broader issue in relation to support for skills development of all learners who require support (especially those from households where no Welsh is spoken / understood)

Impact of COVID – challenges and opportunities

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