



Newport City Council Survey of School Preference 2010

Research Findings

Final Report June 2010



Newport City Council Survey of School Preference 2019 Research Findings

Study Overview

1. Opinion Research Services (ORS) was commissioned by Newport City Council to assess the future demand for Welsh language education from the parents and guardians of children across the County.
2. The study focused on two cohorts of children: those born between September 2007 and August 2010 and those born between September 2010 and August 2012 who will be entering full-time education in September 2012 (referred to as cohort 1 within the report) and September 2013 (cohort 2).
3. To inform the research a self-completion questionnaire was distributed by post to the parents/guardians of all pupils across the two cohorts. The survey focused upon factors influencing their decisions when selecting a primary school for their children, in particular issues surrounding potential demand for Welsh language education. An introductory letter from Newport City Council was enclosed with the questionnaire which explained the purpose of the study.

The Survey

4. The survey was undertaken in April and May 2010 with questionnaires distributed to the parents of all children across the two cohorts. Contact details were supplied for children based on the details which was recorded at birth. The contact data included a total of 3,434 different addresses and questionnaires were sent to each address.
5. A detailed breakdown of the sample responses to the survey is provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Summary of Survey Responses

Organisation Type	By Cohort		TOTAL
	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	
TOTAL POPULATION			
Number of Children	1,766	1,876	3,642
Number of Parents	1,602	1,832	3,434
SURVEY RESPONSES (based on weighted number of parents)			
First survey phase (initial questionnaire)	142.5	179.5	322
Second survey phase (reminder questionnaire)	445	425	87
Total Completed Questionnaires	187	222	409
ACHIEVED SAMPLE (based on weighted number of children)			
First survey phase (initial questionnaire)	152	195	347
Second survey phase (reminder questionnaire)	48	48	96
Total Completed Questionnaires	200	243	443
Overall Response Rate	11.3%	13.0%	12.2%

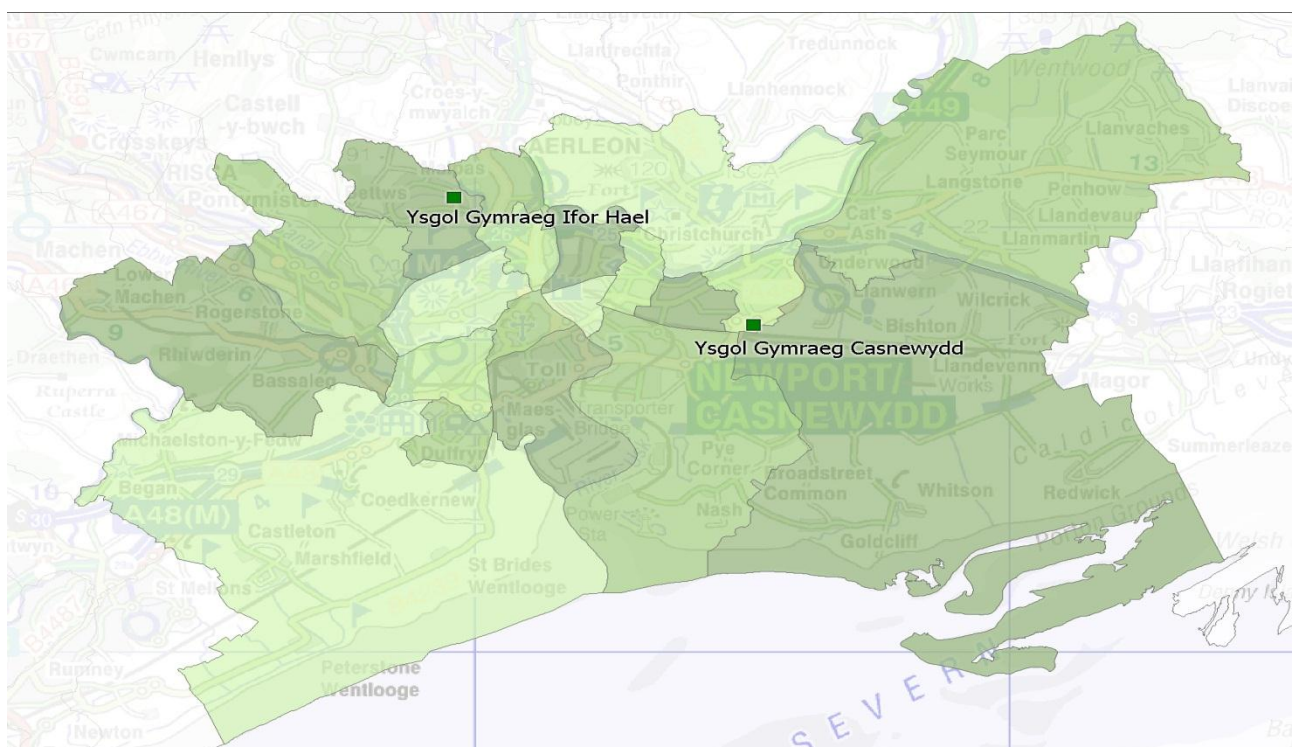
- 6. Completed questionnaires were returned by 40% of parents, who collectively had 443 children born between September 2007 and August 2009. 20% of questionnaires were returned as undeliverable by the Royal Mail
- 7. The overall survey response rate was 22%. The response rate from the older cohort (11%) was compared to a response rate of 16% from the younger cohort. Parents that had more than one child in the study cohorts have their responses statistically weighted to ensure that the study results are accurate and count all children they had a child in cohort one and a child in cohort 2
- 8. It should be noted that the sample was achieved from local health board birth data. The sample

Consequently, parents living in areas within Newport that do not receive the survey. This would especially be the case for those in the South West region (e.g. Marshfield and Coedkernew areas). Accordingly, absolute levels of demand to those reported here may actually be higher, especially in the South West of Newport.

Overview of Existing Welsh Medium Primary School Provision

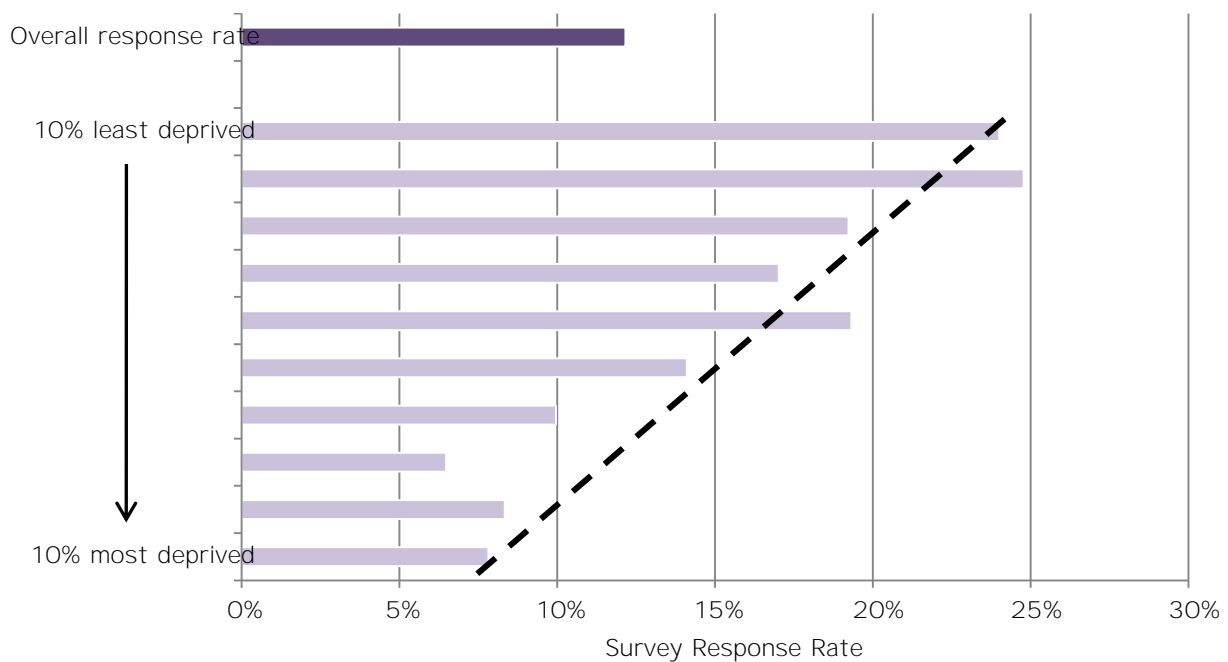
- 9. There are currently two Welsh medium primary schools in the county. The location of the schools and all Newport ward boundaries are shown in Figure 2

Figure 2
Locations and Ward Areas of Existing Welsh Medium Primary Schools



- 10. When we consider the overall response rate together with the measure of relative deprivation it is apparent that there is a clear correlation. Figure 3 shows the response rates for the 10% least deprived areas through to the 10% deprived areas of the county. It is apparent that response rates are approaching 25% in the least deprived areas whereas the most deprived areas have response rates below 0%.

Figure 3
Response Rates by Area based on Relative Deprivation



11. Therefore it seems likely that the differential response rates across Newport are fundamentally influenced by the characteristics of the areas and their populations.

Expressed Demand for Welsh Language Education

12. Firstly, parents were asked if they would like their children to be able to speak Welsh and whether they believed their children would benefit from a Welsh medium education. Two thirds (66%) stated that they would like their children to be able to speak Welsh (55%) believed that their child would benefit from a Welsh medium education.
13. Parents were then provided with the following information about existing Welsh primary school provision:

Welsh Language Primary Education is provided by Newport City Council, Monmouthshire Council, Torfaen County Borough Council and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Councils. Currently a free bus service is provided for Infant and Junior children who live more than 2 miles away from their closest school in Torfaen and in Monmouthshire this is reduced for Infants and Junior aged children. In Blaenau Gwent this is reduced to 1.5 miles for Infants on

Parents were presented with a list of the Welsh medium primary schools from across these counties Ysgol Gymraeg Sŵn Newydd (Newport East); Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael (Newport West); Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni (Monmouthshire Abergavenny); Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin (Monmouthshire Caldicot); Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbran (Torfaen Cwmbran); Ysgol Gymraeg Panteg (Torfaen Griffithstown); Ysgol Gymraeg Bryn Onnen (Torfaen Panteg Pontypool); and Ysgol Gymraeg Brynmawr (Blaenau Gwent Brynmawr)

14. They were then asked the two following questions
- § How likely or unlikely is it that you would choose to send your child(ren) to one of the Welsh medium schools?
 - § If there was a Welsh medium primary school ~~2 miles~~ of your home, how likely or unlikely is it that you would choose to send your child(ren) to this school?
15. Analyses focus on just the two Newport schools. If ~~parents~~ ~~indicated a preference for both or either school~~ (i.e., very likely or fairly likely to choose to send their child) they assigned a mark demonstrating a preference for Welsh medium primary ~~education~~ ~~to~~ ~~both~~ ~~questions~~. The responses are summarised in Figure 4 and Figure 5.

Figure 4
Likelihood of selecting Welsh medium education based on current primary school provision

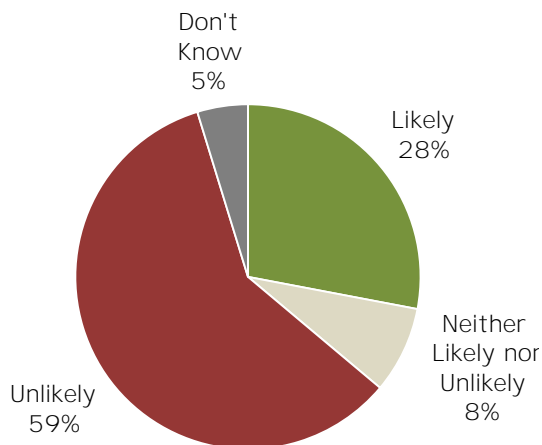
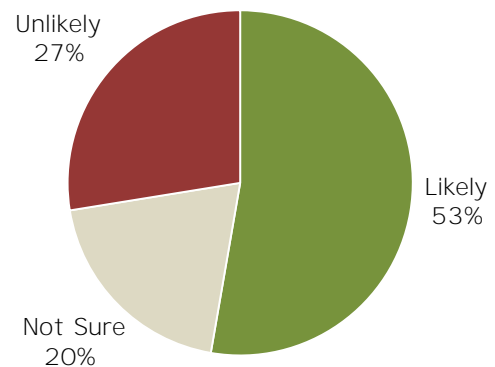


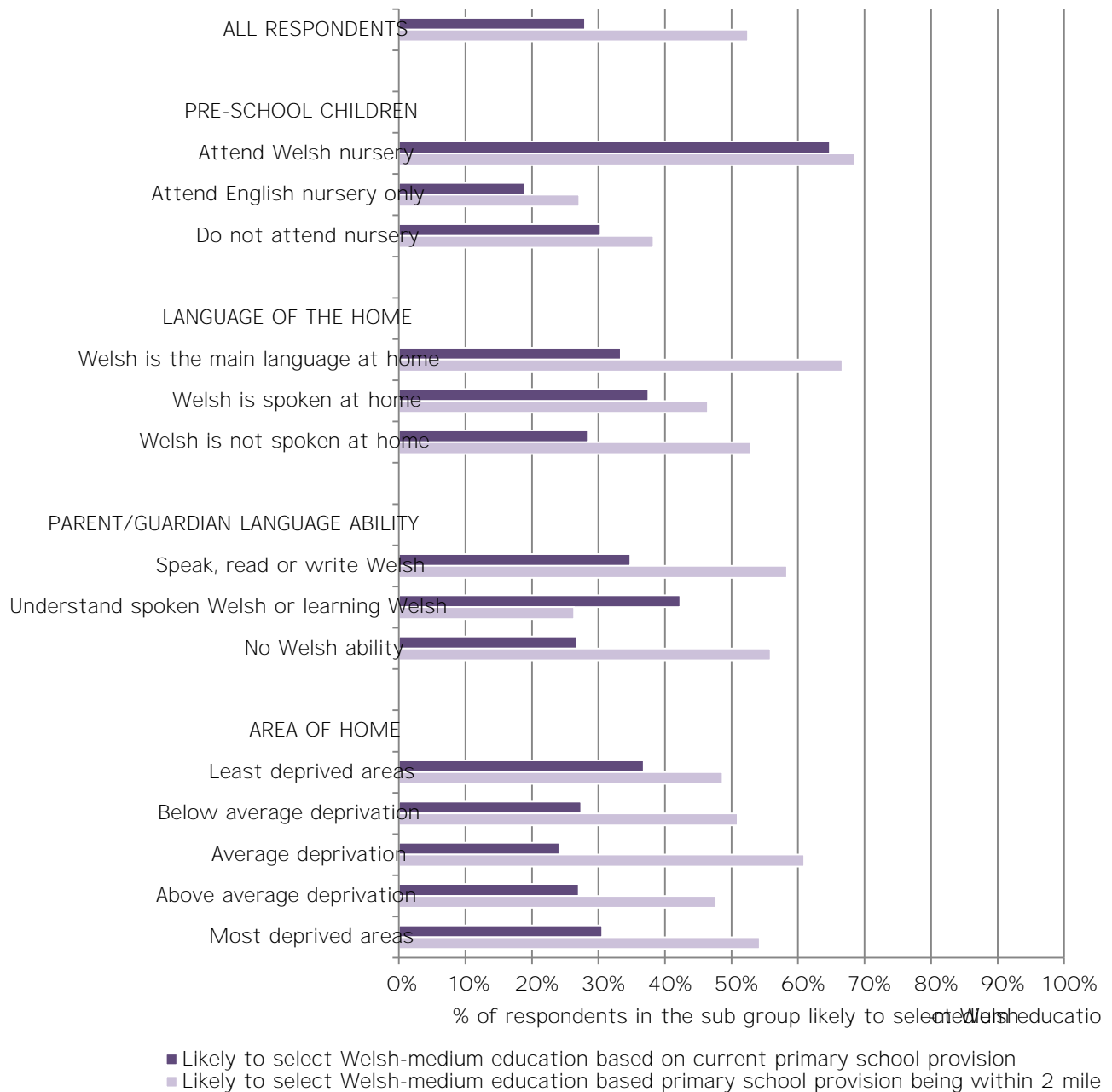
Figure 5
Likelihood of selecting Welsh medium education based on primary school provision being within 2 miles



16. Based on current primary school provision
- § 28% of parents replied that they are likely to choose Welsh medium education for their children
 - § A further 8% of parents are currently undecided
 - § 59% of parents are unlikely to choose a Welsh medium primary school
17. The responses were different if a Welsh language primary school was available within 2 miles
- § The proportion of parents likely to choose Welsh medium education for their children would increase to 53%.
 - § A further 20% were undecided about language choice.
 - § The remaining 27% of parents were unlikely to choose a Welsh medium primary school.

18. The different results between the two scenarios suggests that there is latent demand for Welsh primary schooling in the county, which is only likely to come forward if additional schools are provided.
19. Figure 6 illustrates the likely change in the level of demand for Welsh medium education of different subgroups of the population in the two scenarios. Note that the term Likelihood includes those who were very likely or fairly likely to select Welsh education.

Figure 6
Likelihood of selecting Welsh medium education: Subgroup Variations



20. The key differences between the sub groups based upon existing provision in figure 6 can be summarised as follows.

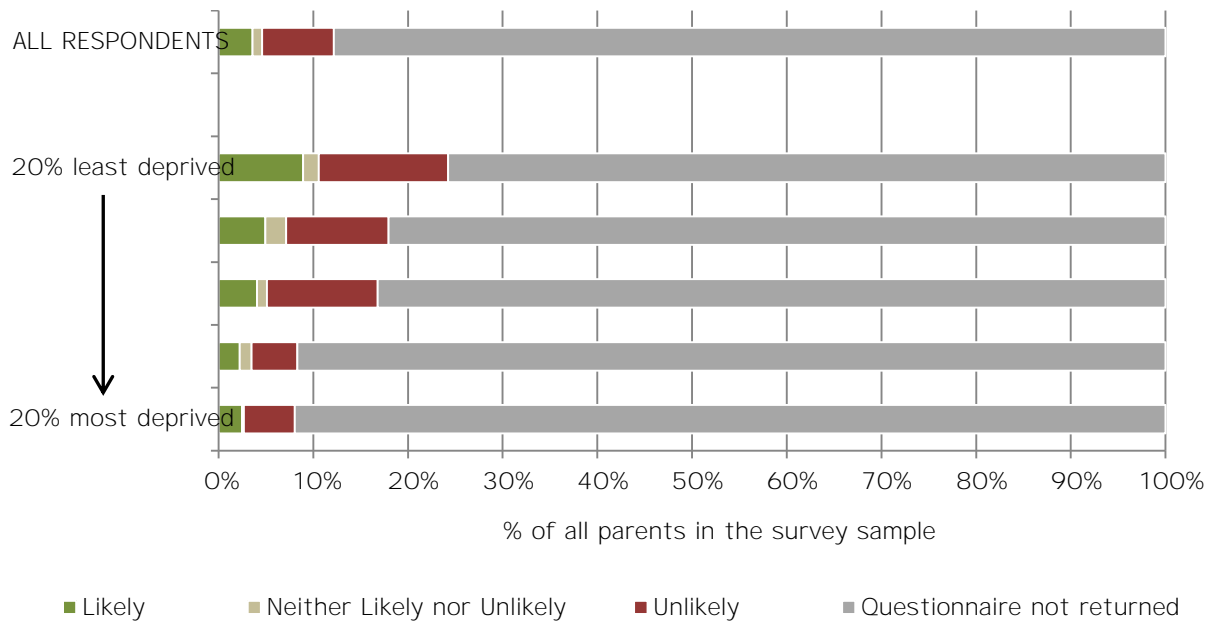
§ Those most likely to select Welsh medium education were those attending a Welsh language nursery (65) - but this does indicate that over a third of respondents where their children were currently in Welsh nurseries are unlikely to continue to a Welsh language primary school.

§ Otherwise, those most likely to select Welsh medium education were those households where Welsh is spoken at home (3%). Likelihood was also high amongst respondents from households where Welsh is the main language (3%); (respondents who could speak, read or write Welsh (3%); and respondents who understand spoken Welsh or who are currently learning Welsh (4%).

§ A curvilinear relationship exists between the area of home and the proportion of respondents likely to select a Welsh medium education. A high proportion of respondents from the most deprived areas (31%) and a high proportion of respondents from the least deprived areas (37%) were likely to select Welsh medium education. This result is somewhat misleading, and is explored further below.

21. As previously noted, the survey response rate was much lower in more deprived areas. We know the relative deprivation of all addresses in the sample, so it is possible to further investigate the conclusion that parents from more deprived areas were more likely to select Welsh education. Key to this further analysis is to explore the impact of those parents who did not return their questionnaire on the survey results.

Figure 7
Likelihood of Selecting Welsh Medium Education based on current primary school provision based on Relative Deprivation



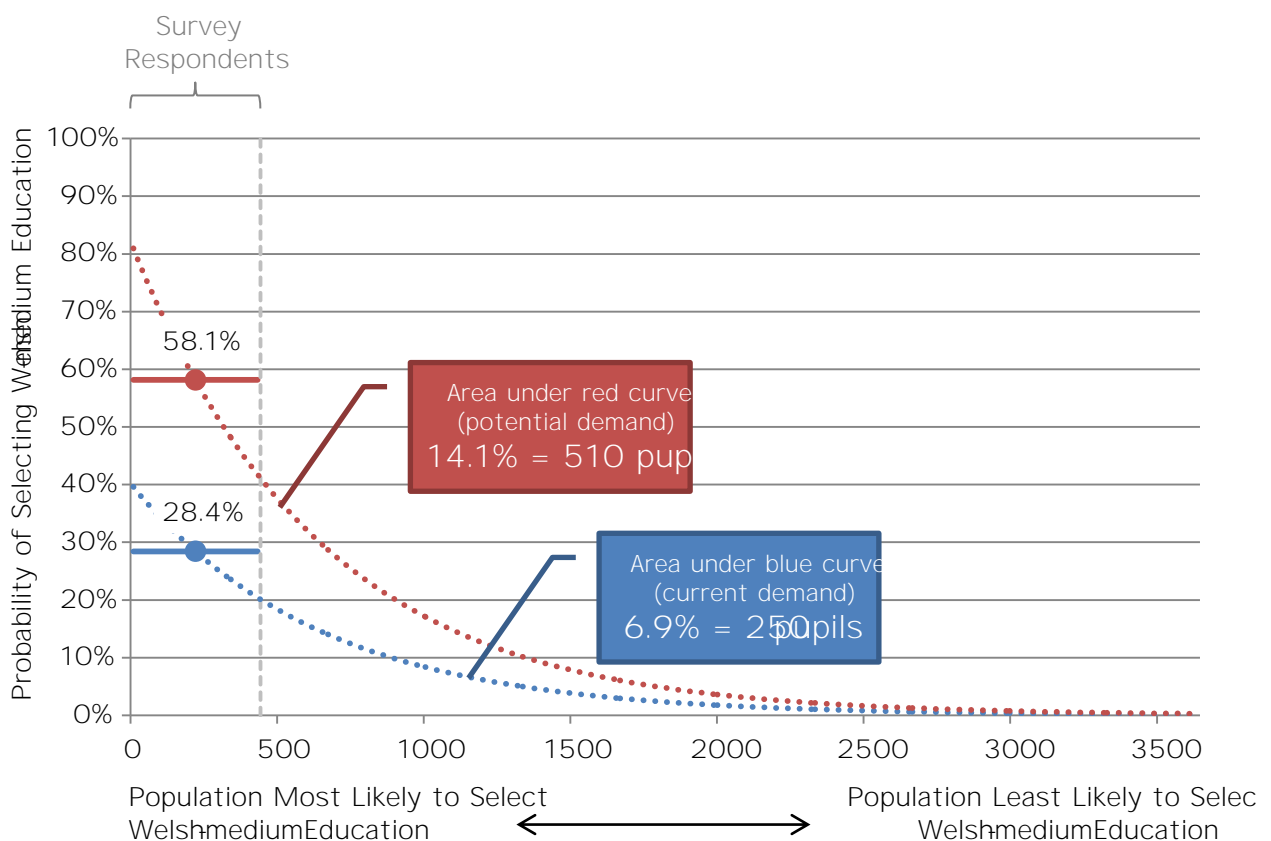
22. The difference between the conclusions relating to Figure 6 and Figure 7 can be simply explained. Figure 6 focuses on the proportion of parents who responded, Figure 7 focuses on results as a proportion of the total number of parents in each area.

23. Figure 7 clearly shows that the proportion of all parents in the area likely to select Welsh medium education is actually highest in the least deprived areas, with a tapering off of the proportion as areas become more deprived (i.e., 9% of all parents choose Welsh medium education in the least deprived areas compared to 3% in the most deprived areas).

Assessing the Overall Demand for Welsh Language Education

- 24. When undertaking sample surveys it is important to ensure that the achieved sample is an accurate representation of the whole population. Nevertheless, in a survey such as possible that it is interested parties (i.e. parents interested in Welsh education) will be more likely to respond.
- 25. Therefore it cannot be assumed that the percentage results from the survey can be simply applied to the overall population to establish the overall requirement. Equally it cannot be assumed that all non-respondents have no interest in Welsh medium education either.
- 26. Simply, we cannot know what respondents would actually prefer. Therefore, it is necessary to generate a feasible model to represent the likelihood by which Welsh medium primary education will be selected. One may reasonably speculate that there will be a diminishing level of interest (preference) with accumulating population responses. **Error! Reference source not found.** This model of demand is illustrated in the blue curve illustrates actual demand and the red curve illustrates potential demand. As previously reported 28% of respondents overall stated that they were likely to select Welsh medium education for their children on the basis of current primary school provision.

Figure 8
 Estimating Demand for Welsh Medium Education over the Whole Population (Blue curve = current demand; Red curve = potential demand)



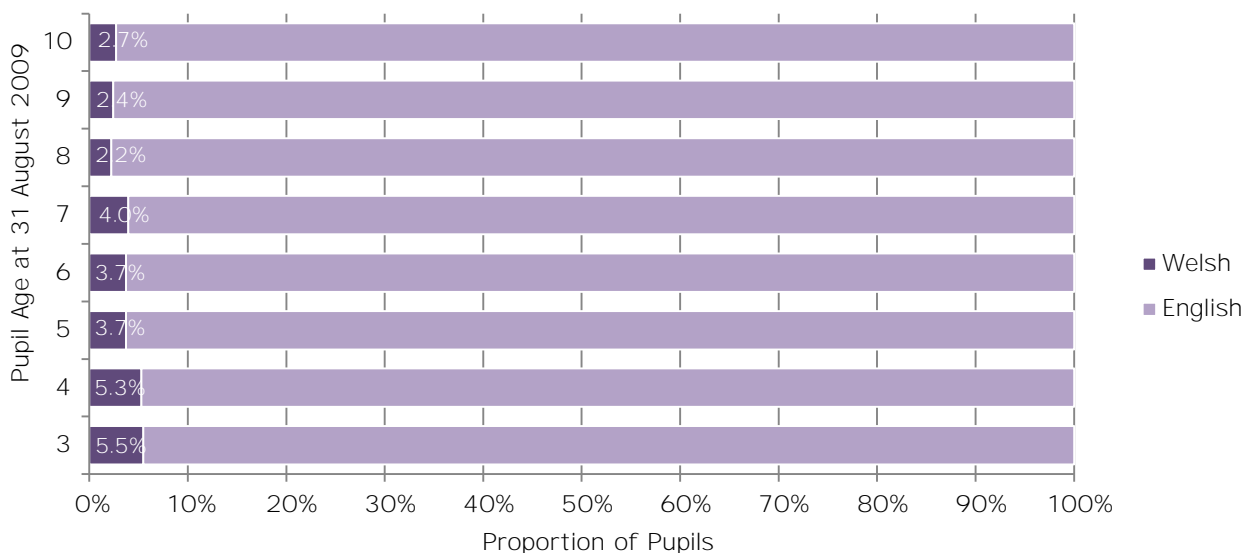
- 27. Applying this model to the current sample suggests that the overall percentage of parents selecting Welsh medium education for their schooling would be around 6.9%. This is equivalent to around 250 pupils over the two pupil cohorts.

- 28. To extend the analysis to include potential demand we consider jointly respondents that are likely to select Welsh medium education on current provision and those likely to select medium Welsh education on the basis of a primary school provision being within 2 miles.
- 29. The results for the survey suggest potential demand (this is 4.1% of the total population) is equated to around 510 pupils over the two pupil cohorts
- 30. These levels of potential demand have already been exceeded in other local authorities in Wales (Vale of Glamorgan). However, these numbers are unlikely to be realised in Newport immediately likely to be a more progressive change.
- 31. Considering the two study cohorts independently, the survey would suggest that in 6.0% of the older cohort and 7.7% of the younger cohort. These percentages equate to 105 pupils in year 2012 and just 10 pupils in year 2013.
- 32. Given that currently there will be only 77 places available per year across the medium Welsh primary schools in Newport, it is clear that demand will exceed supply.

Setting the Results in Context

- 33. A Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) is conducted by all Local Education Authorities, which collates a range of data about the pupils attending each school. On the basis of the PLASC data for Newport City Council submitted in January 2010 it is possible to profile how the demand for Welsh medium education has changed over recent years (Figure 9).

Figure 9
 Proportion of Pupils Welsh Medium Education by Age (Source Newport City Council Pupil Level Annual School Census January 2010)



- 34. Whilst the overall proportion of primary school pupils in medium Welsh primary schools is 3.7%, there is an indication that the proportion has increased over the year.

35. The proportion of pupils in Welsh medium education has increased from 2.7% of 10 year olds to 5.5% of 3-year olds, which equates to an average annual increase of 0.4 points although growth has been more rapid in recent years. There has been an average annual increase in 0.9% over the last two years. Given this trend, the findings that 6.0% of cohort are likely to require Welsh medium education also seems reasonable.

Understanding the Distribution of Latent Demand Across County

36. As previously noted, a number of children are not likely to receive Welsh education on the basis of current primary school provision, but their parents would be likely to select a Welsh primary school if it was within 2 miles of their home. This latent demand may become effective demand if additional Welsh medium primary schools were opened in the county. In other words, opening additional Welsh primary schools could stimulate demand for Welsh education and increase the number of pupils beyond the levels estimated above.
37. Figure 10 shows the expressed current demand for Welsh medium education and the latent demand. Together these values indicate expressed potential demand.

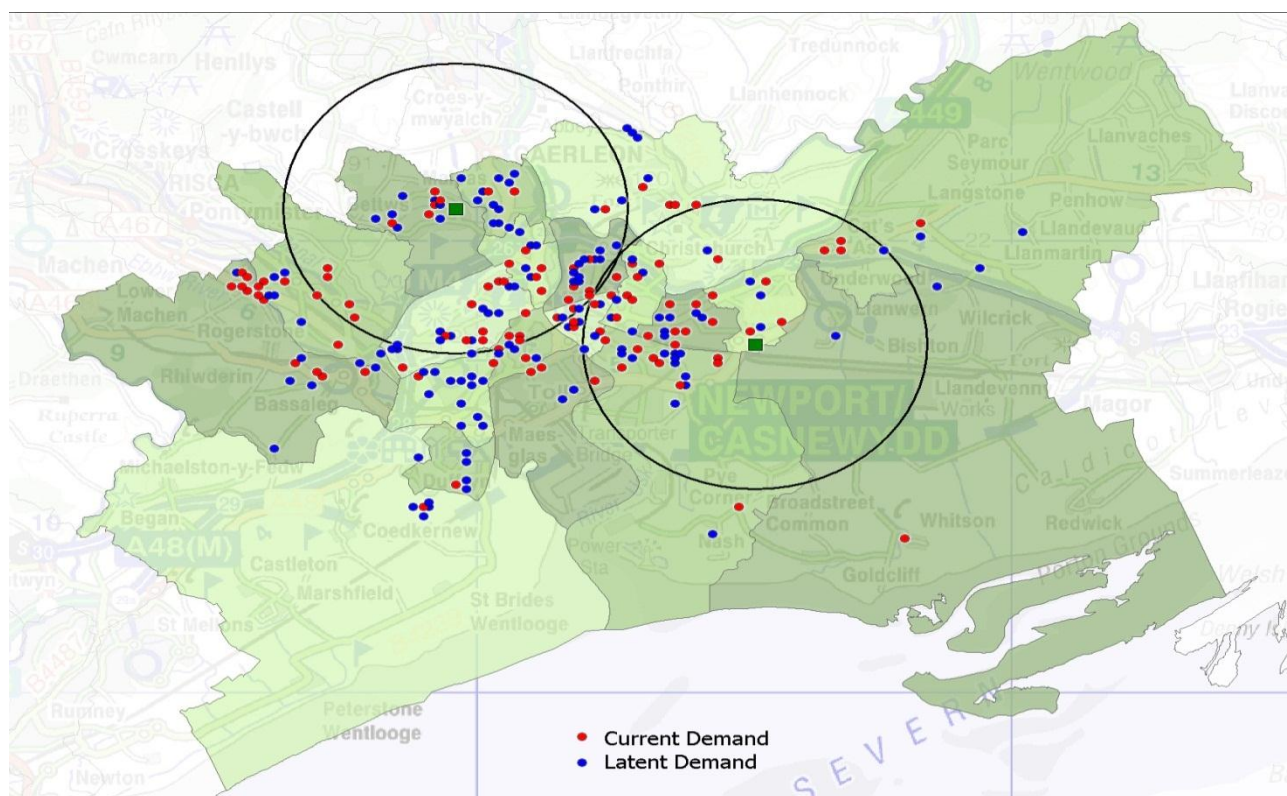
Figure 10
Summary of Current, Latent and Potential Demand (Note: Figures shown are based on annual averages)

Demand Type	Overall	Cohort 1	Cohort 2
Current Demand	251	107	144
Latent Demand	262	141	121
Expressed Potential Demand	513	248	263

38. Whilst there is current demand from around 250 pupils in the cohorts, the analysis suggests that potential demand for Welsh medium education could be as high as this if Welsh medium primary schools were available within 2 miles of children's homes in Newport (i.e., circa 500).
39. Figure 11 illustrates the distribution of demand for Welsh medium education identified by the survey. Parents who are likely to select Welsh medium education on the basis of current primary schools are represented by a red dot (current demand) and parents who are unlikely to select Welsh medium education on the basis of current primary school provision but would be likely to select a Welsh medium primary school if it was within 2 miles of their home are represented by a blue dot (latent demand). The Green squares represent the two Welsh medium primary schools and the circles around these demarcate a two mile radius.
40. There is evidence of a wide dispersion of latent demand across Newport. There is a particular concentration of latent demand to the South West of Newport. It would seem that this area could provide a sensible location for a new school which would translate latent demand into current demand.
41. As mentioned earlier, parents from the South West region (e.g., in the Marshfield and Coedkernew areas) are unlikely to be represented in the current sample. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that this region also contains unmeasured potential demand (both current and latent). Identification of additional demand in this area further supports the suggestion that opening a new Welsh medium primary school here would be appropriate.

42. It is also worth noting that there are a number of blue dots in close proximity to the existing primary schools. Insofar as the respondents that these dots represent stated that they would be likely to choose Welsh medium education if there was a school within 2 miles of their home, yet they are unlikely to choose Welsh medium education based on current primary school provision, it seems apparent that they are not aware that they already have existing schools nearby. Given this evidence it may be appropriate to review the information that is provided to parents about their local medium school although information may already be circulated near the children that children are expected to start their education.

Figure 1
Distribution of Current and Latent Demand for Welsh Language Education



43. The two mile radius around Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Haf is dissected by the M4. This may provide a real barrier to parents south of this barrier considering using this primary school. Accordingly it may be why we are seeing a fair proportion of parents representing latent demand within the two mile radius of Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Haf. These parents may be serviced in conjunction with those we have mentioned already a new Welsh medium primary school being opened to the south west of the M4 (that is within two miles of their home)

Other Factors Influencing the Choice of Primary School

44. The survey also considered general factors that influence their choice of primary school. Respondents were asked to rank factors in order of importance from most important to least important.

45. The factors provided for respondents to consider were:

- § Ease of access/transport to school

- § Another child already at the school
- § Distance from your home
- § Main language used in school

46. Respondents were most likely to identify distance from home as the most important influence on their choice of primary school with 32% of parents identifying this as their first priority (65% overall including it amongst their top priorities).
47. Figure 12 presents the average ranking score associated with each factor. Given that 1 represented the most important factor and 4 represented the least important factor, the lowest score represents the highest importance in terms of influence.

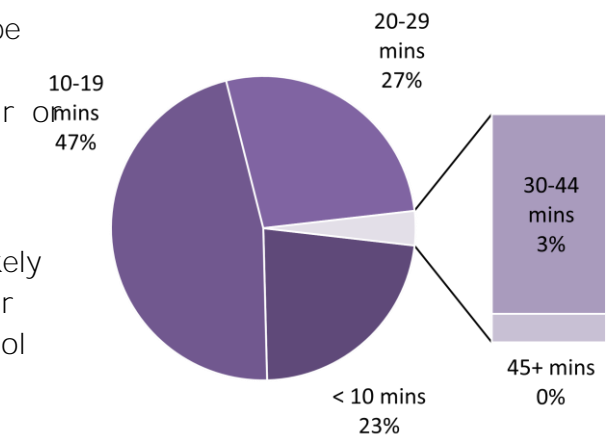
Figure 12 Rank analysis for the most important factors influencing parents' choice of primary school: All respondents

Rank	Factor	Average Score
Most	1 Distance from your home	2.14
↓	2 Another child already at the school	2.55
↓	3 Ease of access/transport to school	2.63
Least	4 Main language used in school	2.67

48. The rank analysis confirms the importance respondents attribute to distance from home. Another child already at the school is viewed as the second most important issue when rank analysis is employed although the average scores for this are similar to the ease of access/transport to school and the main teaching language.

49. Whilst ease of access and transport to school is less important (3 out of 4) on the basis of its average score, respondents were also asked what they considered to be the longest acceptable journey time for their children to and from school.

50. Figure 13 shows that the longest acceptable journey time for almost three quarters of respondents (73%) was less than 20 minutes each way, with 23% expecting journeys to be less than 10 minutes. Only 3% of respondents considered a journey time of half an hour or more to be acceptable.



51. Figure 14 repeats the rank analysis, but considers only the views of those parents likely to select Welsh medium education for their children on the basis of current primary school provision.

Figure 14 Rank analysis for the most important factors influencing parents' choice of primary school: Respondents likely to select Welsh medium education on the basis of current primary school provision

Rank	Factor	Average Score
Most	1 Main language used in school	2.25
↓	2 Distance from your home	2.28

Least	3	Ease of access/transport to school	2.61
	4	Another child already at school	2.86

52. Main language used in school becomes the most important factor for these parents. However, this is only slightly more important than distance from school. Having another child at the school becomes the least important factor.



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