



# **EDUCATION LANGUAGE PREFERENCE SURVEY 2018/19**

**Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg / This document is available in Welsh.**

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## **Methodology**

### **Purpose of the Survey**

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council is committed to delivering the best educational service that it can. In order to ensure it serves the needs and preferences of parents/guardians within the county borough, regular surveys are carried out. This survey focused on the language preferences, together with other aspects of school provision that parents considered important when choosing a school.

### **Methods and Data Sources**

The sample data used was the birth data across RCT for the period 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018. These data being obtained from Registrars and the Cwm Taf NHS Trust. Given that both cover areas outside RCT, the postcodes were checked to ensure that only those within the County Borough were included. These addresses were then utilised to provide 7296 unique addresses that became the survey sample. These children will form the cohort for entry into reception for the three academic years 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. Although there has been some concern about the validity of the addresses, due to the time between the birth and the survey, it was recognised that this source would provide the most accurate data about the relevant population. Where questionnaires had been returned without births during the period any information relevant to the survey was included.

A postal questionnaire was distributed during October 2018. An introductory letter from RCT was enclosed with the questionnaire, which explained the purpose of the survey. Respondents were given the option of returning the questionnaire in a freepost envelope or completing the questionnaire online. The return date being the end of November. Non-respondents were followed up with a reminder letter in January to prompt the return of the survey. All surveys received until the beginning of March 2019 were included in the analysis.

Some of the comments within this report involve the aggregation of categories e.g. those who responded very likely or likely, to give a composite group, who are 'likely' to make a particular choice.

Where small numbers are involved these are included as well as percentages. In some cases totals may not equal 100% due to rounding or choosing multiple options. The percentage values quoted throughout the report are those for the respondents who answered that specific question.

All GIS data are for respondents who supplied their postcodes and could be matched to those within RCT.

### **Limitations**

Care is needed when using the survey data as the geographic response rate is uneven and it would be expected that those with a greater interest in Welsh language education would have been more likely to respond, as they are making an informed choice of school for their child, rather than choosing the 'default' English medium catchment school. The proportion of respondents who indicated at least one adult in their household spoke Welsh (34%) was significantly higher than the 9% reported for those 16+ in the 2011 census. Therefore care is needed when extrapolating results for the whole population. The results obtained represent the views of those who responded to the survey and should not be used to represent all views.

## Findings

### Response Rates

In total 1142 valid responses were received 333 as a result of the follow up letter.

246 being completed online and 896 paper based.

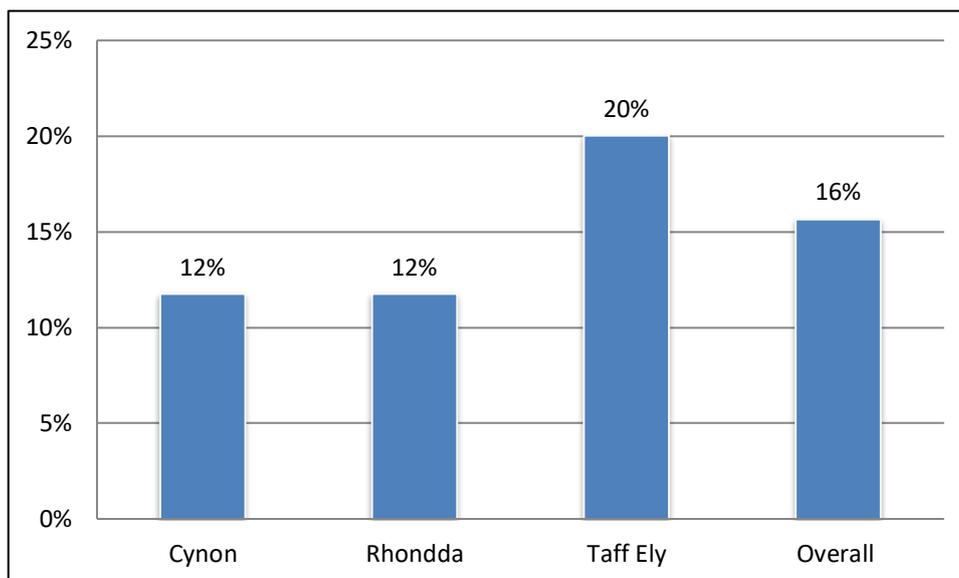
Yielding an overall response rate of 16%.

**Table 1 – Response rate by area**

Area	Number Distributed	Number of Responses	Response Rate
Rhondda	2120	257	12%
Cynon	1996	249	12%
Taff Ely	3150	637	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7296</b>	<b>1142</b>	<b>16%</b>

As can be seen from Chart 1 the there was a much higher response rate from Taff Ely (20%) compared to Cynon and Rhondda.

**Chart 1 – Response rate by area**



**Distribution – 7296    Responses = 1142**

The highest response rates for those requesting WM School Age Education being from the catchment areas of YGG Garth Olwg (14%) and YGG Aberdar (11%).

The highest response rate for those requesting EM was from the catchment area of Pontyclun Primary (6%)

## Children Under 4

Respondents were asked about the number of children they had currently living with them under the age of 4 years. The majority of the respondents had one child, 78% with a further 22% having two.

The total number of children identified by respondents in this question was 1373 under 4 with 749 of these being aged 2 or younger.

## Existing Provision

At the time of the survey there were 125 Schools in RCT:

- 102 Primary/Junior/Infants – (80 English medium; 13 Welsh medium; 3 dual stream; 6 faith schools)
- 16 Secondary –(11 English; 3 Welsh; 2 Faith schools)
- 1 Middle - (i.e. Age 3-18)
- 4 Special
- 2 PRU

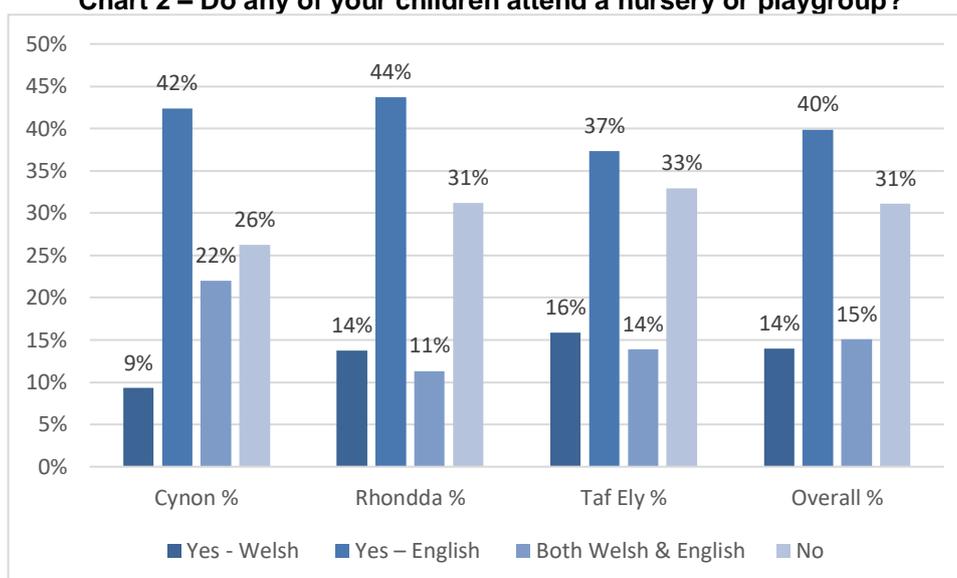
## Playgroup/Nursery

The children of 69% of respondents attended a nursery or playgroup.

- 14% Welsh Medium
- 40% English Medium
- 15% Both

As can be seen from Chart 2 attendance at Welsh medium nursery or playgroup is lower in Cynon than Taf Ely and Rhondda.

**Chart 2 – Do any of your children attend a nursery or playgroup?**



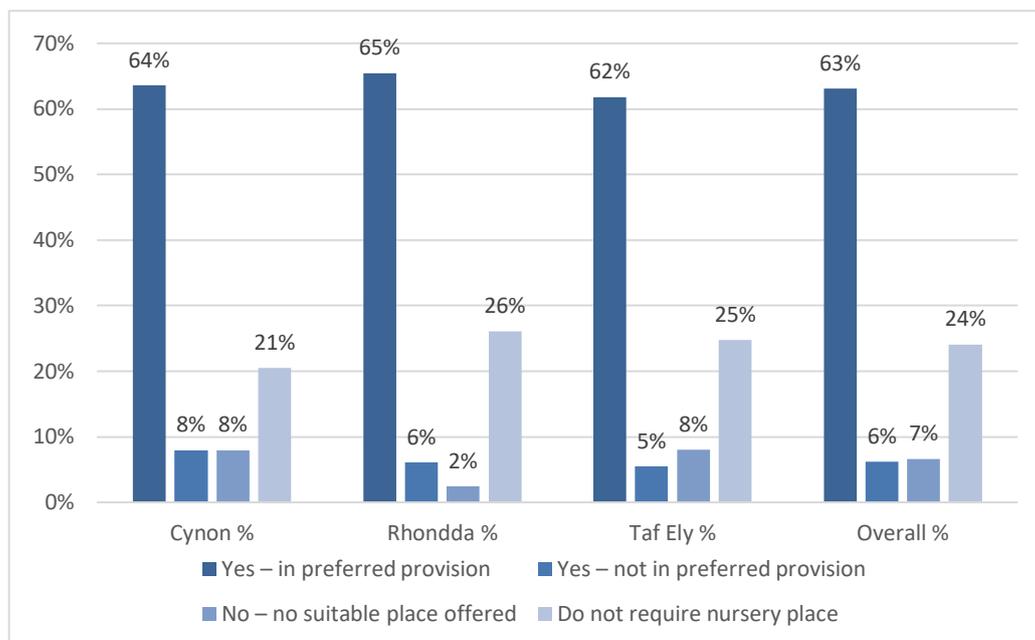
Responses - 1096

## Nursery Provision

93% of respondents were able to obtain a place or did not require a place in nursery education following their child’s third birthday.

The percentage of respondents not requiring a nursery place was lower in Cynon than Taff Ely and Rhondda.

**Chart 3 – If you have a child over the age of 3 years, were you able to obtain at least a part time place in nursery education for the term following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday?**



Responses – 664

Seven percent (44) indicated no suitable place was offered.

Of these, 19 stated the reason they were unable to get a place was that the preferred medium was full; 12 EM, 7 WM.

Where full postcodes were given, the data was analysed to establish the catchment school. Consultation with the admissions section indicated that there had only been refusals to Nursery in 4 of the 15 schools, indicated by the survey, during the academic years 2017/18 and 2018/19.

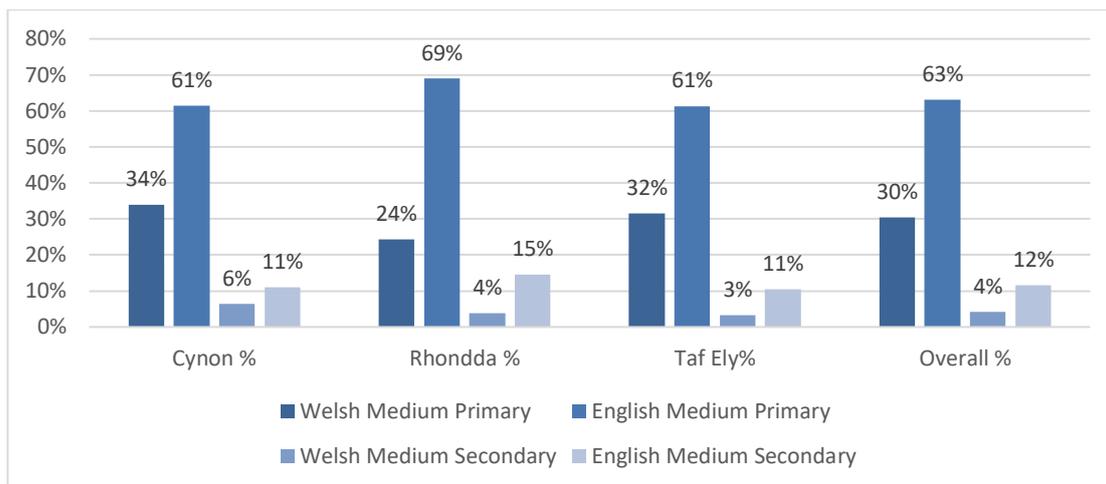
## Children Aged 4 and over

Of those with children aged 4 and over, already attending school, 30% have children attending a Welsh Medium Primary and 4% attending a Welsh Medium Secondary.

As can be seen in Chart 4 Rhondda has a lower percentage of children attending Welsh Medium Primary school than both Cynon and Taf Ely.

Cynon has a higher percentage (6%) of children attending Secondary Welsh Medium than Rhondda and Taf Ely.

**Chart 4 – If you have any children living at this address aged 4 and over, which type of school do they attend?**



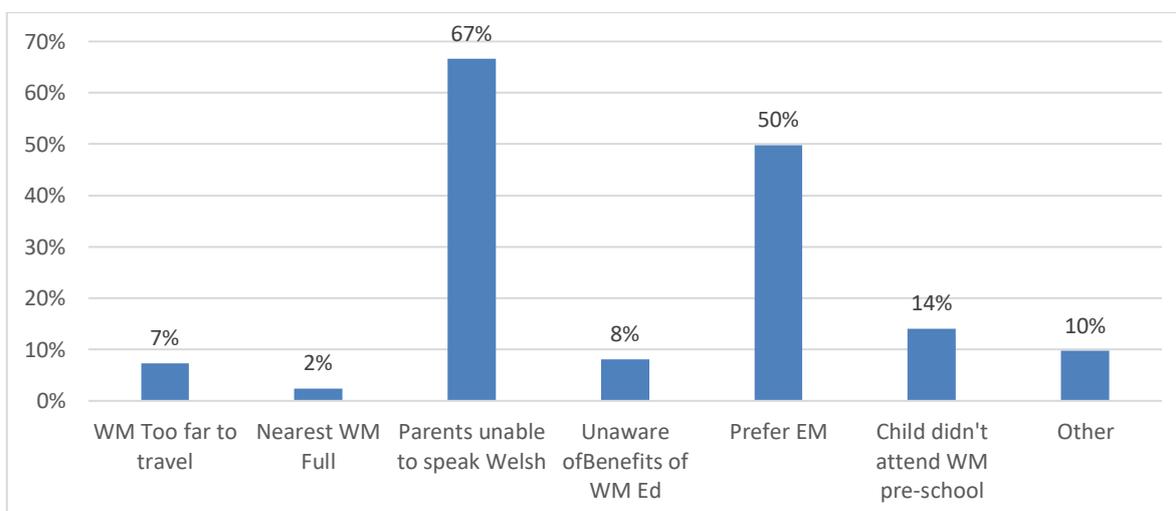
Responses – 450

As can be seen in chart 5, Parents' inability to speak Welsh was the highest reason for school aged children not attending a Welsh medium school 67%.

Preference for English medium education was the second highest, 50%.

The 'Other' reasons given included the quality of education was better at the English school, poor English skills, managing transition to further education and preferring a faith school.

**Chart 5 – If you have school aged children who do not attend a Welsh medium school please indicate the reasons**



Responses – 369

## Expressed Demand

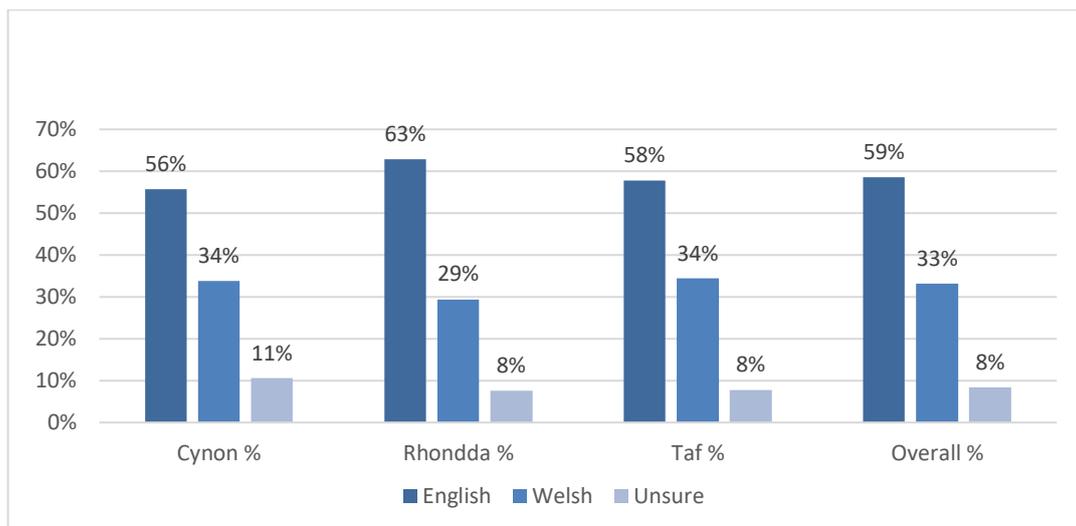
### Pre School

When asked their preferred language for **pre-school** provision 59% indicated English Medium and 33% Welsh medium.

Eight percent were unsure.

As can be seen in Chart 6 the lowest demand for Welsh medium was Rhondda, 29% with Cynon and Taf Ely being 34%.

**Chart 6 – What would be your preferred language of PRE-SCHOOL provision for your child?**



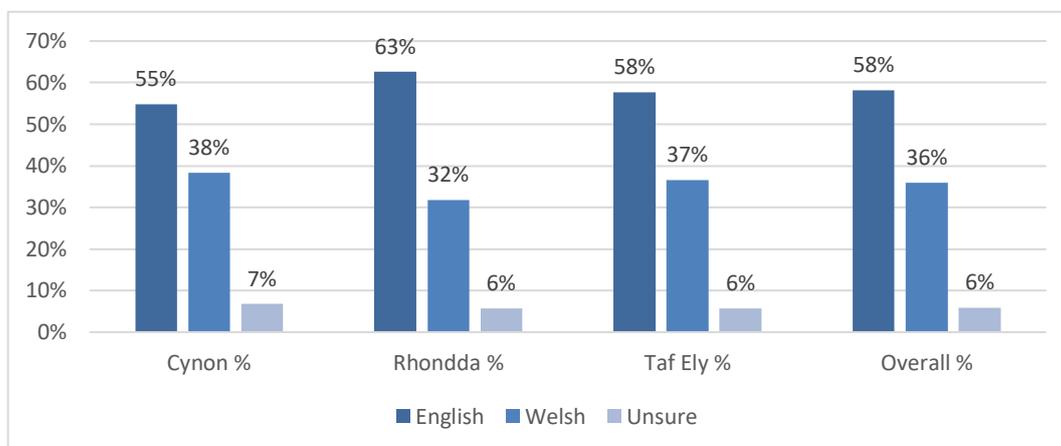
Responses – 1098

### School Age

In response to the question 'What would be your preferred language of **school aged** education for your child', 58% indicated a preference for English and 36% Welsh, 6% were unsure.

At area level there was less demand for Welsh medium in Rhondda than Taf Ely and Cynon.

**Chart 7 – What would be your preferred language of SCHOOL AGED provision for your child?**



Responses – 1101

## Expressed Demand

### 2015/16 Survey: Actual Reception numbers for 2017/18 – 2018/19

The children from the 2015/16 survey formed the cohort for entry into reception for the academic years 2017/18 and 2018/19.

When comparing the expressed demand from the responses to this survey and the actual numbers admitted to Reception there is a difference equating to 368 less pupils than the survey would suggest over the two years. This needs to be taken into account if extrapolating data.

There is a large variation in the numbers when comparing the data by catchment area Four having a difference of 50 or more pupils:

YGG Aberdare      YGG Llwynceilyn      YGG Tonyrefail      YGG Bodringallt

Further detail can be seen in table 2.

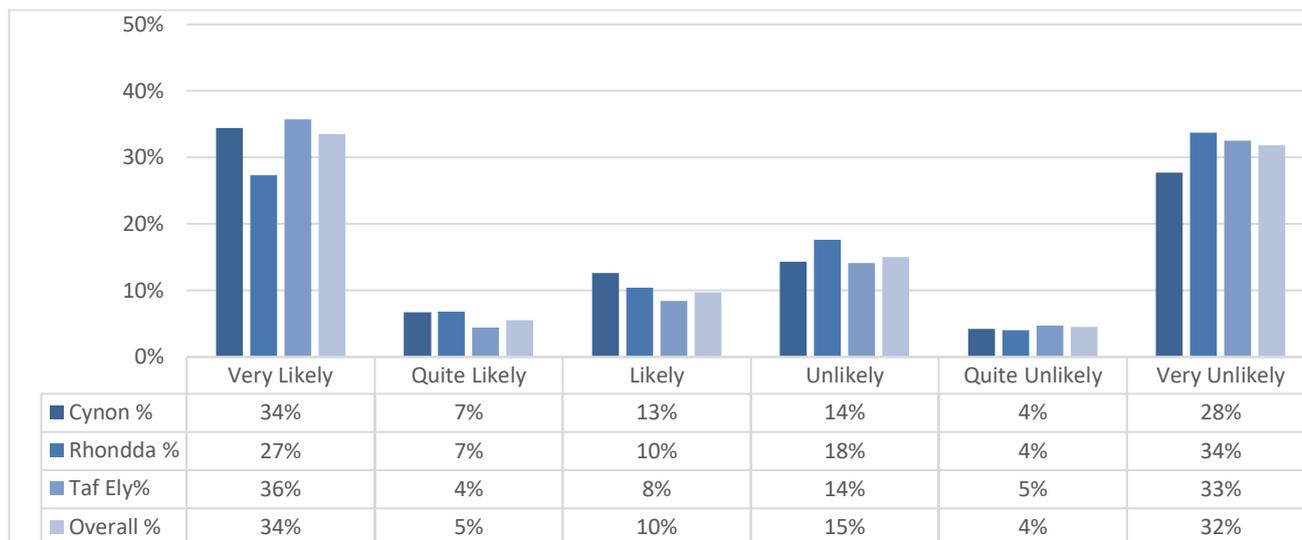
**Table 2 – Comparison ELP Survey 2015/16: Actual Reception Pupils**

Area	School Name	Est Num Pupils From Survey			Actual Reception 2017/18 - 2018/19			Diff Actual Pupils: Survey Estimate		
		2012/13	2013/14	Total	Actual R 2017/18	Actual R 2018/19	Total	Ac Yr 2012/13	Ac Yr 2014/15	Total
T	Dolau Primary (Welsh)	26	27	54	26	19	45	0	-8	-9
T	Heol Y Celyn (Welsh)	34	29	63	20	11	31	-14	-18	-32
C	Penderyn Primary (Welsh)	21	19	40	22	17	39	1	-2	-1
C	YGG Abercynon	47	50	97	46	30	76	-1	-20	-21
C	YGG Aberdar	81	90	171	51	56	107	-30	-34	-64
R	YGG Bodringallt	40	39	79	12	17	29	-28	-22	-50
R	YGG Bronllwyn	50	42	93	30	35	65	-20	-7	-28
T	YGG Castellau	34	32	66	37	30	67	3	-2	1
T	YGG Evan James	44	35	79	36	36	72	-8	1	-7
T	YGG Garth Olwg	56	52	108	50	47	97	-6	-5	-11
T	YGG Llantrisant	31	42	72	31	41	72	0	-1	0
R	YGG Llwynceilyn	72	75	147	43	43	86	-29	-32	-61
R	YGG Llyn Y Forwyn	25	19	44	27	17	44	2	-2	0
T	YGG Pont Sion Norton	45	48	94	42	31	73	-3	-17	-21
T	YGG Tonyrefail	59	58	117	27	30	57	-32	-28	-60
R	YGG Ynyswen	29	35	64	25	33	58	-4	-2	-6
T	Ysgol Llanhari	25	27	52	29	25	54	4	-2	2
	<b>RCT</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>1440</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>1072</b>	<b>-166</b>	<b>-202</b>	<b>-368</b>
	Rhondda Tot	216	211	427	137	145	282	-79	-66	-145
	Cynon Tot	149	159	309	119	103	222	-30	-56	-87
	Taff Tot	354	350	704	298	270	568	-56	-80	-136

## Journey - Distance

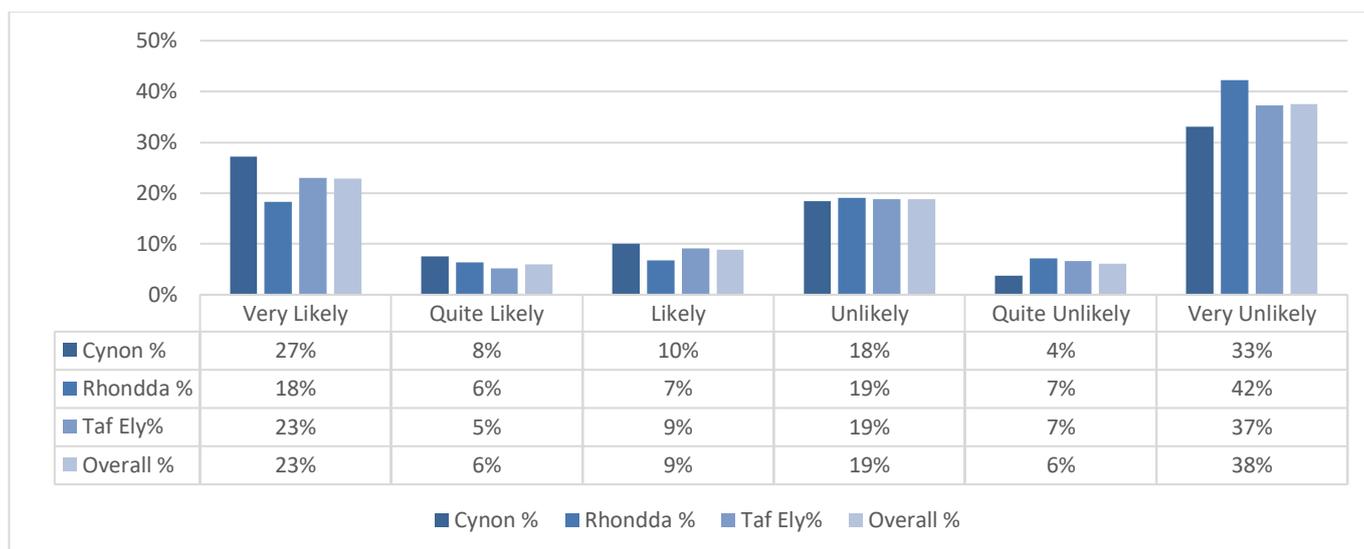
When asked how likely they would be to send their children to a Welsh medium primary school situated within 2 miles of their home, 34% stated this was very likely. This percentage decreased to 23% if the school was in excess of 2 miles. Further detail by area and likelihood can be seen in the charts below.

**Chart 8: Which one of the following statements best describes the likelihood of sending your child to a Welsh medium primary school WITHIN 2 MILES of home**



Responses – 1095

**Chart 9: Which one of the following statements best describes the likelihood of sending your child to a Welsh medium primary school IN EXCESS OF 2 MILES of home**



Responses – 1112

## Journey – Time

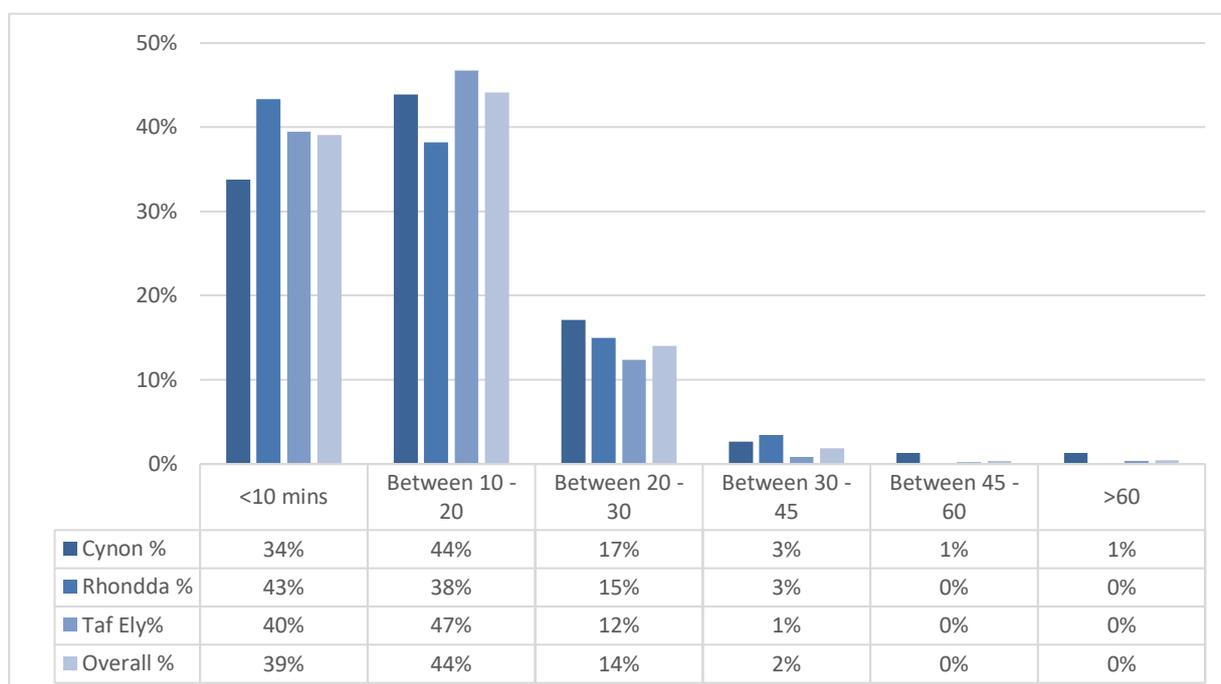
### Primary

The most acceptable travelling time for children between home and a Welsh medium primary school on a free bus service was between 10 and 20 mins 44%; with 39% stating less than 10 mins was acceptable.

Analysis by area and time can be seen in Chart 10.

**Chart 10 – Which one of the following best describes what you consider to be an acceptable journey time between home and a Welsh Medium school on a free bus service?**

#### PRIMARY



**Responses – 1028**

When asked how likely they would be to send their children to a Welsh medium school situated within their acceptable journey time 33% stated this was very likely, with an additional 17% stating it was quite likely or likely.

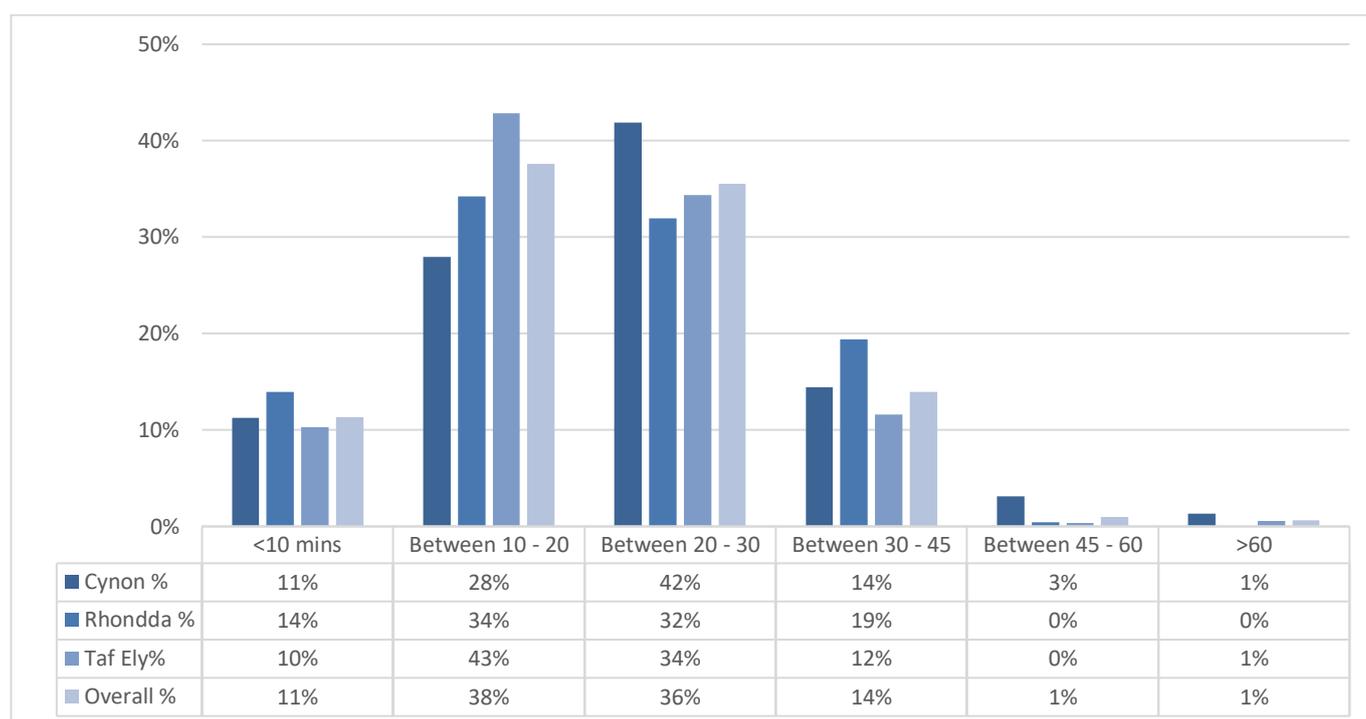
## Secondary

The most acceptable travelling time for children between home and a Welsh medium secondary school on a free bus service was between 10 and 20 mins 38%; with 36% stating between 20 and 30 mins was acceptable.

Analysis by area and time can be seen in Chart 11.

**Chart 11 – Which one of the following best describes what you consider to be an acceptable journey time between home and a Welsh Medium school on a free bus service?**

### SECONDARY



Responses – 997

## Features of School Provision

With 1 being the most important and 11 being the least important respondents were asked to rank different features when choosing a primary school for their children.

Using the mean response rate, the overall ranking showed the top three were language of school, followed by attainment/exam results then school close to home.

Ease of transport was the least important.

Whilst the order remains similar for most features, comparison of those requiring English to Welsh medium shows:

- Language of school was the most important feature for those whose preference was Welsh but ranked 4<sup>th</sup> for English.
- School close to home was ranked as the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest priority for those requiring English and 3<sup>rd</sup> for those requiring Welsh Medium.

Table 3 below shows the rankings comparison by language preference.

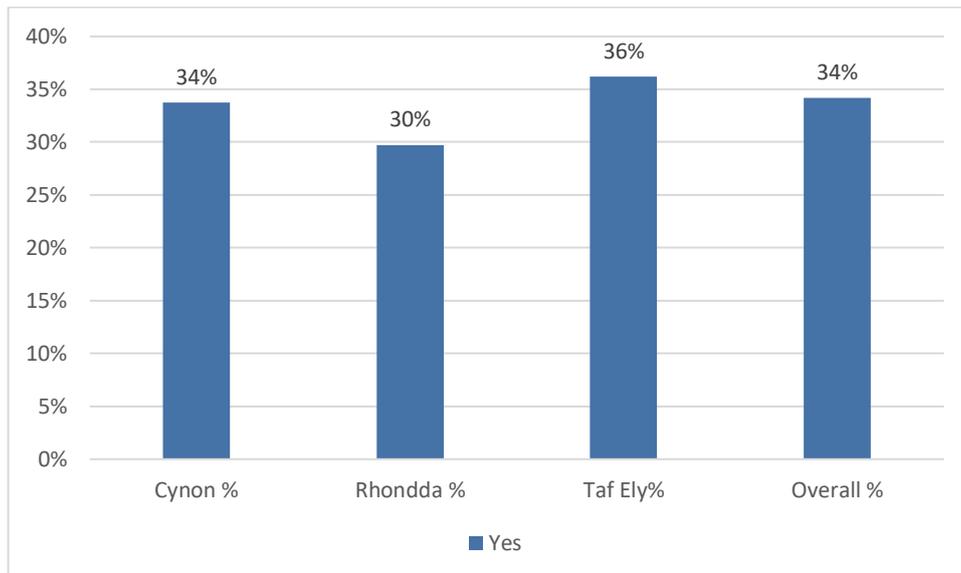
**Table 3 – Rank analysis importance of features influencing choice of primary school**

Option	Overall	Overall	WM	WM	EM	EM
	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean
Language of school	1	4.04	1	2.44	4	4.80
Pupil Attainment/Exam Results	2	4.36	2	4.78	1	4.13
School close to home	3	4.59	3	5.11	2	4.28
Facilities at school	4	4.86	4	5.12	3	4.71
Class sizes	5	5.26	5	5.54	5	5.15
Sibling at school	6	6.07	6	6.01	6	5.95
Availability of pre-school	7	6.51	7	6.62	7	6.48
Healthy Meals	8	6.84	8	7.04	8	6.79
Quality of school buildings	9	7.02	9	7.23	9	6.92
Availability of after school care or activities	10	7.88	11	8.15	10	7.78
Ease of transporting your child to the school	11	8.58	10	7.95	11	9.00

## Welsh Language Ability

Responses to the question 'Do any adults in your household speak Welsh' indicated 34% had at least one adult who could speak Welsh (this ranged from 30% in Rhondda to 36% in Taf Ely). This compares with 9% of persons 16 and over recorded in the 2011 Census.

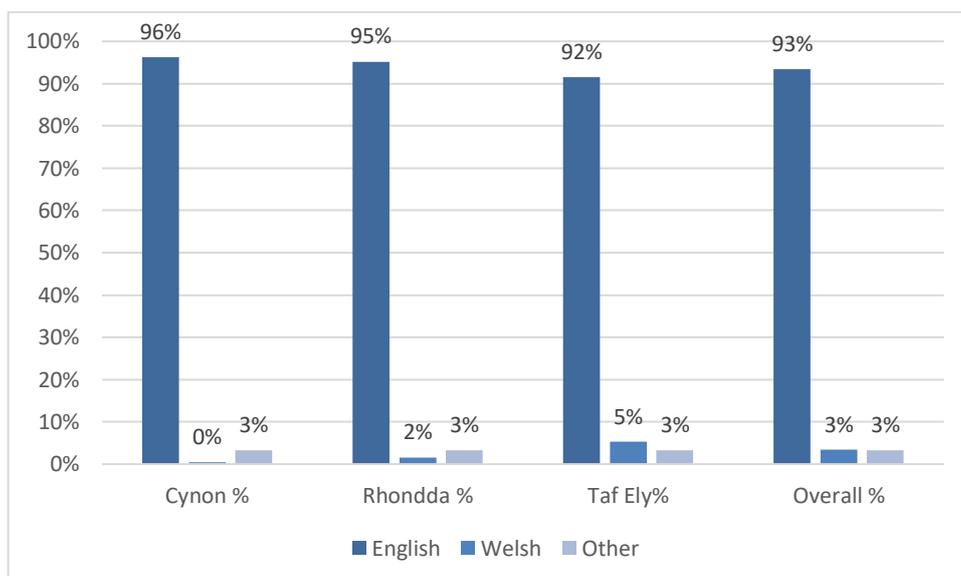
**Chart 12 – Do any adults in your household speak Welsh?**



**Responses - 1113**

Three percent (38: Taf Ely 33, Cynon 1, Rhondda 4) stated that Welsh was the main language spoken in the home. Three percent (36: Taf Ely 20, Cynon & Rhondda 8) stated that a different language was used.

**Chart 13 – What is the MAIN language spoken in your home?**

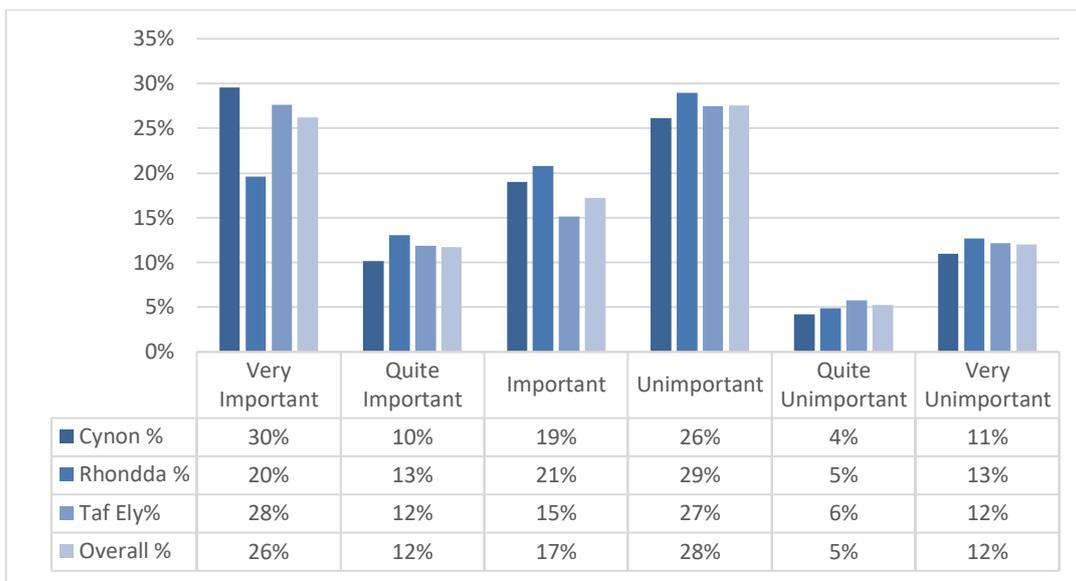


**Responses - 1114**

Replies to the question regarding how important it was that their child spoke Welsh fluently showed that 55% thought it was ‘important’.

Further detail by area can be seen in chart 14

**Chart 14 –In light of the benefits of Welsh medium or Welsh language education, how important is it that your child speaks Welsh fluently?**



**Responses - 1090**

For those households who had at least one adult able to speak Welsh, the percentage who thought it important their child spoke Welsh was significantly higher at 84%; 58% of which thought it was very important.

## **Comparison with 2015/16 Survey Results**

### **General**

- decrease of 2% in the response rate from 18% to 16%.
- decrease of 7% in the number of children currently attending a nursery or playgroup.
- main reasons for children not attending a Welsh medium school still the same, i.e. parents' inability to speak Welsh and preference for English.

### **Pre school Provision**

- increase in the preferred language for Welsh medium of 13% \*
- increase in the preferred language for English medium of 5% \*
- decrease in the preferred language of 2% for the unsure option \*

\*Due to the removal of the 'mixed' option this year, no reliable conclusions can be made from comparing these results.

### **School Age Provision**

- decrease in the preferred language for English medium of 8%
- increase in the preferred language for Welsh of 9%
- no change in the preferred language for the unsure option

### **Journey**

- increase of 11% in the number of respondents that considered a journey time of more than 10 mins acceptable.
- decrease of 3% in those 'likely' to send their child to a Welsh medium school, if situated within 2 miles of home.

### **Welsh Language Ability**

- increase of 4% in the amount of adults able to speak Welsh
- increase of 1% in the number stating Welsh being the main language spoken in the home\*
- increase of 7% in the number stating English being the main language spoken in the home\*
- increase of 12% in the 'importance' of children speaking Welsh fluently.

\*Due to the removal of the 'both' option no reliable conclusions can be made from comparing the results of the main language spoken in the home.

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