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Y Fro / The Vale

# Llawlyfr y Dysgwr 2023-2024

## Dysgu Cymraeg y Fro

## Learn Welsh the Vale

### Learner Handbook 2023-2024





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## Croeso- Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in a Welsh for adults course. This booklet contains information for you about the service we offer and how you can turn to us for support in order that you get the best possible experience as a Welsh learner.

## Language Learning Levels

### What Level?

Welsh courses are available at five levels:

**Entry:** Courses for beginners, where the emphasis is on conversational Welsh. Learn how to use the present, past and future on this level.

**Foundation:** Students are able to expand their speaking skills. The course will cover other tenses including conditional.

**Intermediate:** More writing, reading and listening is introduced - but the emphasis is still on speaking the language whilst revising work covered on Entry and Foundation.

**Advanced:** Courses help students strengthen their written skills and more complex grammar points but mainly concentrate on enhancing speaking skills.

**Proficiency:** For experienced learners as well as fluent speakers who want to improve their skills.

**How FAST?** - talk to us about how to speed up your learning

### Pa Lefel?

Mae cyrsiau Cymraeg ar gael ar bum lefel:

**Mynediad:** Cyrsiau ar gyfer dechreuwyr, ble mae'r pwyslais ar siarad yr iaith. Dysgwch sut i ddefnyddio'r presennol, gorffennol a'r dyfodol ar y lefel hon.

**Sylfaen:** Cyfle i fyfyrwyr gryfhau eu sgiliau siarad. Bydd cyfle i ddysgu amseroedd gwahanol gan gynnwys yr amodol.

**Canolradd:** Mae'r prif nod yn dal i fod ar siarad ond mae pwyslais hefyd ar ysgrifennu, darllen a gwrando wrth adolygu popeth wnaethpwyd ar lefel Mynediad a Sylfaen.

**Uwch:** Mae cyrsiau yn helpu myfyrwyr i gryfhau eu sgiliau ysgrifennu a dysgu am elfennau mwy cymhleth ei gramadeg ond gwella sgiliau siarad yw'r prif nod o hyd.

**Hyfreddd:** Ar gyfer dysgwyr profiadol yn ogystal â siaradwyr rhugl sydd eisiau cryfhau eu sgiliau.

**Pa mor GYFLYM?** - Siardwch â ni am sut i gyflymu'ch dysgu

## Courses

Learn Welsh the Vale is a provider for the National Centre for Learning Welsh and information about the courses is at [www.learnwelsh.cymru/thevale](http://www.learnwelsh.cymru/thevale)

Each course is assigned a tutor who, barring unforeseen circumstances, will teach the class for the duration of the course.



## Where are the classes this year?

In 2023-2024 we will offer many courses on Zoom but also some courses are taught face to face.

A few face-to-face classes will connect by Zoom to distance learners in the same lesson (this is referred to as Hybrid teaching).

## Blended Learning

There are also Blended Learning courses where in between lessons on-line with a tutor the learner to accesses interactive learning resources are available on the Learn Welsh website. for Self-study before every lesson enables faster progress, and on these courses, there is digital support with the tutor in addition to lessons online with a group and the tutor.

Blended learning is currently available at Entry, Foundation, and Intermediate levels but not at Higher levels.

A Blended learning student who completes individual study once a week and a weekly lesson with a tutor will complete one level in a year.

## Pace of Learning

In our programme of mainstream courses there is a choice of pace for the learner.

- One lesson a week- two hours with a tutor, in a classroom or on Zoom. The learner will complete half a level in a year (30 lessons).
- Two lessons per week - four hours with a tutor, in a classroom or on Zoom. The learner will complete a whole level in a year (60 lessons).
- Blended learning - 2.5 hours in an online lesson with a tutor, and 2 hours' interactive study weekly - the learner will complete a level in a year.



- Block Course - Very Fast Track- this is the most intensive course. One full week of learning Monday to Friday, once a month. The learner will complete a whole level in six weeks or two levels in one year of twelve block weeks. During 2023-2024 the block courses will be on Zoom only.

### Choosing more than one course

Learners are welcome to enrol on more than one course at a time. The learner can have the second course at half price. We particularly encourage learners on the Block course to attend a weekly course as well, to practise and continue to progress in between the blocks.

### Exams by Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC)

WJEC provides Welsh for Adults examinations called “*Using Welsh*”. The exams are available at Entry Level in January and in the summer term, and at Foundation, Intermediate and Higher Levels during the summer term. Learn Welsh the Vale usually hold the exams at Barry Library. A full programme of exams are expected to be available in 2024.

Learners can choose to sit an exam on completion of a level, or the following year. Each candidate will be offered information, advice and revision materials, and a free Revision Course to help them prepare for the exam.

Information about exams can be accessed on the WJEC website [here](#).

### Taster Courses

Taster courses offer people an introduction to the Welsh language and the experience of learning with a tutor in a class, whether in person or on-line. Taster courses are free and last from one to three lessons.



A free digital Taster course is available online at:  
[www.learnwelsh.cymru](http://www.learnwelsh.cymru)

### Reading Clubs

In a reading club a tutor and a group of learners will read a book together. Reading clubs are free, with the learner expected to purchase the book in advance of the first lesson. Reading clubs vary in length.

### Revision Courses

Revision courses are provided for Learn Welsh the Vale learners who choose to sit a Using Welsh examination with WJEC. Every candidate will be offered the opportunity to enrol on a free revision course. During the course the learner will practise all elements of the exam, including a one-to-one oral interview with a tutor, followed by personal feedback.

### Sadyrnau Siarad -Saturday Symposium & Friday Fun- Gwener Gweithgareddau

Around twice a term we offer a Saturday or Friday activity, which is an opportunity for learners to practise and revise their Welsh with different learners and tutors. Some will be on-line and others in our centres. 'Sadyrnau Siarad' run from 09.30-13.00. Gwener Gweithgareddau 13.00-15.00.

### **Enrolling**

The full programme of Learn Welsh the Vale courses is at  
[www.learnwelsh.cymru/yfro](http://www.learnwelsh.cymru/yfro)

When you have chosen your course, please follow the steps to enrol and pay online.

For advice or discussion about your options you are welcome to contact us on the above details.



## **Fees & Payment**

All courses of 60 hours or longer cost £90.00

Concessions are available for those in receipt of means-tested benefits and full-time students.

### Special Offers:

Pay for your first course and get a second course for half price.

Discount offers are sometimes available - if you haven't seen a discount advertised you can contact the office to ask if there is a current offer.

Vale of Glamorgan Council staff can register for a free place on a course with Learn Welsh the Vale to be taken during working hours. Enrol online without paying, and then contact our office to request a staff funding form.

Employees of other Organisations staff of other workplaces which have agreed to pay for the course can enrol online and then contact us to request that we invoice their employer for the fees.

Your organisation may be interested in using the Services of the Work Welsh section of the National Centre for Learning Welsh [here](#).

**Please pay online when you enrol.** We cannot accept card payments in the office or over the phone. If you wish to pay through the office you can write a cheque made payable to: "Vale of Glamorgan Council". If you are posting a cheque, please write the course code and name on the reverse and ensure you have enrolled online before posting.

To pay with cash please visit the office.



## Withdrawing from a Course & Refunds

A learner can withdraw from a course at any time by contacting the office, or by no longer attending lessons. After four weeks of absence the learner will be automatically withdrawn from the course. No refund will be agreed unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Learning Development Officer will consider any such request and decide based on the information provided by the learner.

A person who has enrolled on a course and paid in full but has never attended can contact the office to request a refund within a month of the start of the course. In this case a refund may be given, subject to a £10 administration fee which will be deducted from the refund except in exceptional circumstances.

## **Financial Support**

The Welsh Government supports students who need additional financial assistance by way of its Financial Contingency Fund. Some Learn Welsh students may be eligible to apply for money from this fund. Please note that the fund cannot be used to pay course fees. Other costs such as travel, books, and childcare may be reimbursed depending on your circumstances. Details of eligibility and how to apply are here: <https://learnwelsh.cymru/support/financial-support/>

## **Protecting your Data**

Please see the data protection statement here <https://learnwelsh.cymru/privacy-notice/> for information about how we process and use the information you share with us.

## **Complaints and Compliments**

Learn Welsh the Vale wishes to continually improve our service to learners. We welcome comments at any time of the year, we record and respond to them.





## Feedback

Every year during the spring term you will have the opportunity to complete a feedback survey called “Dweud eich Dweud”- “Have your Say”. The questionnaire will be sent to you by the National Centre for Learning Welsh, and you can complete it anonymously, and return it digitally and confidentially.

The National Centre will analyse and report on a national basis and individually for each provider. This means that we receive the feedback for our service and can compare our performance to the national trend. Learn Welsh the Vale will publish a document “You said - We did” which will be sent to all learners and detail how we have acted in response to the learners’ feedback.

## How to Complain

If you are unhappy about something on your course, please follow these steps:

- In the first place speak with your tutor. Sometimes an informal conversation about your feelings or complaint is enough to draw their attention and give the tutor an opportunity to solve the issue.
- The next step if you can’t discuss with the tutor, if the tutor’s response is unsatisfactory, or if discussion with the tutor would be inappropriate, is to contact the office with your comments or complaint. We will make a record of your call and respond in a timely and appropriate way. The Learning Development Officer Karl Davies will consider your complaint, respond and contact you.
- If you are not satisfied with the response of the Officer, please contact the Culture and Community Learning Manager, at The Vale of Glamorgan County Council.
- If you are not satisfied with the response of the team in the above process you can make a complaint through the Council’s complaints procedure by following this link



[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Complaints-and-Compliments.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Complaints-and-Compliments.aspx)

## How to Compliment

Please follow the steps in the link above to share your praise or positive feedback. Compliments will be noted and passed on to the relevant staff to ensure that they receive all positive feedback about their work.

## **Lessons**

Your tutor will prepare and deliver lessons according to the course you are following. Once a week course will cover half a unit per lesson. Twice a week courses will cover a unit every week. Blended learning classes will cover one unit per week.

Usually, the learners will have a short break during the lesson. In a face-to-face class you will be able to leave the classroom and use the facilities. We recommend that you bring a drink with you.

During a lesson on Zoom it's important for the tutor and learners to have a break, to get up and move rather than stay still in one place for the whole lesson.

Your tutor will provide contact details to the learners, for the purposes of communication about lessons, homework, and attendance.

You may discuss establishing a social media group with the tutor and other learners, on a medium such as Facebook or WhatsApp. There are benefits to being in contact as a group, such as mutual support and encouragement, and sharing messages and information if a learner misses a lesson. However, there is no obligation on any learner to join such a group. If you consent to join, giving your contact information to the other learners is seen as your agreement.



## Coursebooks

On most levels the learner will need to purchase or access the course book. An email with purchase information will be sent to you after you have enrolled online.

Your course book has a soft spine and punch holes ready for you to place it in a ring binder or arch file. If you would like a file there are many available to re-use in the office, please ask for one.

The courses are also available digitally on the website.

The coursebooks include oral, written, listening, watching, and reading tasks, as well as vocabulary lists and homework sections.

Please bring a pen or pencil and notebook to every lesson.

## Homework

Each unit in the coursebook is accompanied by homework for the learner to study and complete outside class time. Your tutor will mark your homework and return it to you within a reasonable time frame. The homework page is detachable from the course book and can then be returned to your file after marking. Homework is also available in different digital formats on request from your tutor.

## Additional Resources

There are many additional resources to support your progress on the national website at [www.learnwelsh.cymru](http://www.learnwelsh.cymru). You will find interactive tasks, revision materials, access to the listening and viewing tracks and much more. Please spend some time exploring the website to see what interests you or ask your tutor to help you if you are unsure how to navigate the site.

## Lessons in a classroom- Face to Face learning

Each centre or location will have been considered carefully and assessed in terms our Health and Safety Policy. Before the beginning of your course you will receive a copy of the guidance for your location/classroom by email. We will ask you to comply with



the guidance outlined, and to be aware that these may change in response to any public health situation. Learn Welsh the Vale operates within the Vale of Glamorgan Council's remit and policies, and delivers courses according to the latest Welsh Government advice to providers of Post-16 education (<https://gov.wales/guidance-safe-operation-post-16-learning>).

**Do not attend class or visit the centre if you have any sign or symptom of any infectious disease.**

### Classroom activities

Your tutor will plan the lesson according to the course. Some tasks in the unit may be allocated as homework. The tutor will ensure that the activities are varied within the lesson and may ask you to do activities in pairs or in groups.

### Lessons on Zoom

Although you are not able to interact in person, your tutor will organise the lesson to ensure that there is a variety of activities, and opportunities for the learners to practice language skills, with particular emphasis on speaking. Your tutor will be able to guide you in the use of the basic tools on Zoom, such as using *mute* and turning your camera off and on. He or she will use the breakout rooms feature to organise you in pairs or groups to do tasks together. When this happens, you will need to click to accept the invitation to the room. The tutor will visit the breakout rooms to support the learning. At the end of the task the tutor will recall you back into the main classroom, this will happen automatically, although you can react to a prompt to agree to leave the group and re-join sooner. While you're in your lesson and in a breakout room, you can use "Raise hand" feature to indicate that you would like the tutor's attention.



## Online Safety

You can join your class from any location which has a reliable Internet connection with your own digital equipment. Whilst this has many advantages for the learner, please take some time to consider how you can protect your own privacy and that of any people in the vicinity, including, potentially, your family members or children. Think about where to sit and what is visible when the camera is on. Your tutor will ask you to keep the camera on as much as possible, so try and establish a comfortable place to sit with a neutral background. If there are other people around when you are in your lesson, use the Mute button to ensure that background noise in your location doesn't interfere with the lesson. You can unmute to speak and mute again afterwards. Use your camera on & off button with discretion - for example, if you are at home and your children come in in their pyjamas to say goodnight, turn off the camera for a few minutes to protect their privacy.

Please see here for advice and guidance on distance learning and online classroom safety <https://hwb.gov.wales/zones/keeping-safe-online/>.

## Tutor Absence, Adverse Weather and Unforeseen Circumstances

If your tutor is unable to teach for any reason, we will do our best to provide cover by sending another tutor from our team. In the event that we cannot arrange cover, the lesson will be postponed, and an additional date will be arranged for a catch-up lesson. The tutor or office staff will contact all learners to inform them if the lesson is being postponed.

In the event of adverse weather, local emergencies, or other unforeseen circumstances, the tutor will offer lessons on Zoom.

Please ensure you update your online enrolment or inform the office if you change your contact details during the year.



## **Support with Digital Skills**

Your tutor will help you to navigate Zoom. However, if you would like to develop your skills and/or your confidence in using your computer or laptop/tablet, training and courses are available with the Get Back on Track programme which is also run from Palmerston Centre. Many of these courses are free to attend. Please contact the office at Learn Welsh the Vale or the main office at Palmerston Centre to enrol or enquire.

### Computers & Digital Devices

To get the best experience of your online lessons you will need to use a computer, laptop or tablet with the Zoom app downloaded on it already. Although it's possible to join a Zoom meeting on a Smartphone, all the features are not available so you may be unable to take a full part in the lesson.

Learn Welsh the Vale has several Samsung tablets available to loan to current students. If you would like to borrow one, please contact our office.

Members of the public can borrow an iPad from the Vale of Glamorgan Council Libraries service. More information at <https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/enjoying/Libraries/Vale-Tablet-Loan-Scheme.aspx>

## **Attendance and Absence**

Tutors register learners' attendance on digital registers which are safely stored on the Dysgu Cymraeg national website. If you are unable to come to your lesson please let your tutor know before the lesson.

After two consecutive absences your tutor will contact you unless they have heard from you in the meantime.



After four consecutive absences you will be withdrawn from the course. Should you wish to re-join the course you will need to contact the office and re-enrol.

### Catching up

All sorts of things can happen in daily life that could affect your ability to come to your Welsh class. Your tutor will make every effort to support you, and to help you to catch up if you have missed a lesson or two. If you have missed three or more lessons it may be more difficult to catch up by just returning to class, but don't worry - we can help. Have a word with your tutor or contact the office directly and we will organise support for you. It may be suitable to direct you to revision materials on-line, or we can arrange a catch-up lesson with one of the team at a time convenient to you.

### **Additional Learning Needs**

Learners can record any additional need or condition of which they wish the service to be aware during the on-line enrolment process. Following the receipt of this information, the office will contact the learner to ask their consent to pass on this information to their tutor. When the tutor has been made aware of the needs of a learner in this way, reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that the learner is included in all aspects of the course. We encourage learners to discuss their needs with the tutor, especially if there are adaptations that can be made once the tutor understands the needs of the learner. Any learner who chooses not to declare any additional needs on the enrolment form can approach the tutor to discuss their needs in confidence.

All Learn Welsh the Vale tutors attend training in which we learn about Specific Learning Difficulties and other learning needs. Your tutor will respond sensitively to your needs and may request support, advice, or further training from the Lead Tutor to learn how to help you in the most appropriate ways. You are welcome to



contact us in the office if you would like to discuss ways in which we can improve your learning experience.

## **Protection of Vulnerable Adults and Child Protection**

Learn Welsh the Vale operates within the Vale of Glamorgan Council policy on Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Child Protection. If you have a concern about someone in your class or in your home, you can report this to your tutor in the first instance. If this is not possible or not appropriate, please contact Karl Davies the Learning Development Officer- Learn Welsh the Vale on 01446-730402.

You can access the Vale of Glamorgan Council policy and information about safeguarding [children](#) and [adults](#) through these links.

## **Equality**

At Learn Welsh the Vale we welcome learners of all ages above 16, whatever their background or educational achievements, race, sexuality, gender, or ethnicity. Our classes are diverse and include people with a range of abilities.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Equality policy is [here](#).

### Who are our learners?

Whilst most of our learners live in the Vale of Glamorgan, some travel in from nearby areas to lessons, and since the advent of on-line distance learning, some attend class from countries across the world. Our lessons are conducted through the medium of English, and as the learners progress, the balance of English and Welsh spoken in the lessons changes. You can expect to receive directions and explanations in English when you attend an Entry level class, and as you understand more Welsh, the tutor will gradually reduce





the amount of English used in lessons. During Foundation and Intermediate levels, the tutor will increase the use of the target language - Welsh. In a Higher level class you can expect the lesson to be held in Welsh. Our Fluency level classes offer the opportunity for advanced learners - sometimes known as New Speakers - *Siaradwyr Newydd* to use their Welsh and continue to polish their skills whilst learning about a wider range of subjects.

### Educational background

Whilst some adult learners have had positive experiences in school, college, and university, we welcome people to our classes whose experience of education was less positive, or even simply a long time ago. Your tutor will do their best to be encouraging and help you to build confidence and learning skills.

### Welsh language background and true beginners

All the Entry level 1 courses will begin at the beginning, with an introduction to the pronunciation and letter sounds, greetings etc. If you know a little bit of Welsh already, please be patient while the class focuses on the very basics. Learners who have never heard the language previously may benefit from joining a Taster course before Entry One, to give you more time to explore the new sounds and structures, although this is not a requirement.

### It's all coming back to me now!

Have you joined a course and found you remember more than you thought you would? If you think you would benefit from moving up a level or two, have a chat with your tutor in the first instance. The staff in the office can help you to find a suitable alternative and transfer your enrolment once you are happy with the new class.



## It's so challenging!

Are you finding the learning hard going? Talk to your tutor! There are some things you can do to help your progress and confidence.

- Make time between lessons to go over what you learned
- Always do your homework- this helps you and your tutor to see how you are getting on
- Attend a Saturday Symposium- “Sadwrn Siarad”
- Explore language Apps which have Welsh resources e.g., Duolingo
- Come to our events and meet other learners
- Use your class WhatsApp or Facebook group to share ideas and encouragement
- Join a second course at the same level, and go over everything twice
- Listen and watch- other people speaking Welsh, or Welsh programmes on Radio Cymru and S4C.
- If you have children learning Welsh in school, read with them and try out your Welsh phrases at home
- At work, ask any Welsh-speaking colleagues to encourage you to try out your Welsh with them
- At Intermediate and Higher level, join the Siarad Scheme to get a Welsh-speaking buddy who will chat with you regularly
- Look out for our Caffi Cymraeg/Welsh Cafe In various locations around the Vale.
- Look out for people wearing an orange speech bubble badge/lanyard – try your Welsh in the community.



## **Celebrating and Speaking Welsh Together**

Learn Welsh the Vale staff organise several events every year to which learners and their families and friends are invited. We



celebrate traditional events including Christmas and the old New Year, as well as St David's Day.

Our Calendar of Events for 2022-2023 is published on the website.

The National Centre for Learning Welsh also organises events for learners, some of which are on-line and others in person.

Information about national events is at

<https://learnwelsh.cymru/news/>

Local organisations may be of interest to you as they provide activities for Welsh speakers and learners of all ages.

*Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin* – pre-school and nursery ages:

Information at <https://meithrin.cymru/?lang=en>

*Urdd* – Youth Organisation providing arts, sports and youth clubs, apprenticeships and the Urdd National Eisteddfod: Details at

<https://www.urdd.cymru/en>

*Menter Bro Morgannwg* – An organisation which arranges and promotes Welsh language social activities for all ages: Details

<https://menterbromorgannwg.org/en>

*Cymmrodorion y Barri* – a society which has brought Welsh speakers together for social and cultural activities for over a hundred years. Monthly meetings and some joint events with Learn Welsh the Vale. Learners at Canolradd level and above are invited to join. Information at:

<https://www.facebook.com/daviddaviesllandinam/>

*Merched y Wawr* - Welsh language women's society with branches in Penarth and Cowbridge. Contact:

<https://merchedywawr.cymru/>



## Contact Information

Learn Welsh the Vale is part of the Adult Community Learning Service of the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The address of our Office is:

Learn Welsh the Vale,  
Palmerston Community Learning Centre,  
Cadoc Crescent,  
Barry  
CF63 2NT

Email: [learnwelsh@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:learnwelsh@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01446 730402

We will respond to emails and telephone calls as soon as possible. We aim to reply to every message within two working days, in normal circumstances.

Office hours are Monday to Friday 0900-1700.

During school holidays opening times may vary, please phone before leaving to visit to ensure we are open.

Facebook: [@learncymraegBRO](https://www.facebook.com/learncymraegBRO)

Twitter: [@LearnWelshBro](https://twitter.com/LearnWelshBro)

## Learn Welsh the Vale Staff

The Learn Welsh the Vale Team are all employees of the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Learning Development Officer- Welsh for Adults: R Karl Davies  
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## **How Learn Welsh is Funded**

Learn Welsh the Vale is funded through a grant which is paid by the National Centre for Learning Welsh on behalf of Welsh Government. The Vale of Glamorgan Council is contracted to deliver a full programme of Learn Welsh courses on the terms of the National Centre and Learn Welsh the Vale is accountable to the Centre for the quality of the provision. The National Centre for Learning Welsh and all its providers are inspected by Estyn.

The Vale of Glamorgan's contract with the National Centre for Learning Welsh was renewed in 2022 for the Academic Year 2022-23 onwards.