

# Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain

## Parents and Alumni 2025 Survey

During the summer of 2025, we ran a survey amongst our community – current parents, past parents, and alumni. In under a week, we had 112 responses, around a 90% completion rate - which is extraordinary. The strength of feeling was overwhelming.

What was clear is that this school is not just working, it's transforming lives, returning investment back to Wales, and growing the Welsh language exactly as Cymraeg 2050 intends.

Here are some of the highlights from the research...

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### This investment returns to Wales

- **90%** of families have *already moved back, plan to, or say the school has kept that option open.*
- **40%** have *already* returned and transitioned their children into Welsh-medium schools or universities.
- **A quarter like that it has kept that option open for them**
- Alumni are now:
  - Studying at **Cambridge, Aberystwyth, and the University of Pennsylvania (Ivy League).**
  - Working in Welsh-speaking sectors.
- Raising their own children in Welsh. - **80% of past pupils have already or intend to raise their families in Welsh**

*“Due to going to The London Welsh School, our boys were fluent in Welsh and were able to transition very easily to their new school after moving back to Wales.”*

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### Welsh language going beyond the classroom

- 100% of past pupils have continued with their Welsh
- 84% of past pupils have or intend to raise their families in Welsh
- Many parents (native speakers) described themselves as *“lapsed” or “disconnected”* before their children joined the school. The school reawakened their Welsh identity, and in many cases **completely transformed their day-to-day use of the language.**
- **There is a massive uplift in connection to Welsh:** Before joining the school, fewer than 4 in 10 parents (39%) felt ‘very connected’ to the Welsh language or culture, but after involvement with the school, this jumped to an overwhelming **96% feeling ‘very connected’**. The school is clearly not just educating children - it's **reconnecting entire families to Welsh identity, culture, and community.**

*“I hadn’t spoken Welsh for almost 25 years, and now I speak, message and write in Welsh EVERY day - it’s amazing how the language just came back to me.”*

*“Before my children attended the school I was a lapsed Welsh speaker... it reignited my love of the language.”*

*“The London Welsh School helped me to reconnect with my Welsh identity... I became more familiar with the richness of the Welsh culture and language.”*

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**Parents had trialled Welsh learning alternatives, but they were not effective**

When asked “ultimately, would you have been able to bring up your children as fluent Welsh speakers without the school”, 65% said “no”, 35% said “Possibly, but it would have been difficult”, NOBODY responded “Yes, easily”

Some parents had trialled other options, and dropped them. What we heard:

- Online tools, Saturday schools, Duolingo - none delivered fluency.
- Children resisted extra lessons or lost interest – it felt like a chore
- Parents couldn’t do it alone - especially in mixed-language homes.

But the most important difference? **Peers.**

- Children need to hear and use Welsh with other children, not just in lessons, but in the playground, at lunch, on trips, in jokes and games.
- That’s what **normalises the language** and makes it feel alive, not just academic.
- The school provides full **daily immersion**, which other options simply can’t.

*“Only in a school environment with children of the same age would she appreciate Welsh as a living language.”*

*“Children need to be with other children and the Welsh language needs to be a daily part of life.”*

*“It is important that children speak naturally to other children - otherwise they just think it’s something academic or that adults speak.”*

*“The immersion in the language for almost all the time is what made them long-term fluent Welsh speakers.”*

*“We tried everything... but our child was losing the language. Moving them to YGLI changed everything.”*

*“Saturday school or online lessons don’t come close. You can’t learn a language fluently for one hour a week.”*

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### **These families are living adverts and ambassadors for Welsh language and culture**

- We asked respondents “Have you ever told friends, colleagues, neighbours that your child(ren) speaks Welsh and attend/ed a Welsh-language school”, and **99%** say they’d told a lot of people. 87% say “I tell almost everyone / it comes up all the time” 12% “almost everyone/lots” of people.
- Between them, **just these 100 respondents have spread awareness to 30,000+ people.**
- The school sparks admiration and interest across London, from English families, other ethnic communities, and curious passers-by.

*“People are always curious... many didn’t realise Welsh was even a living language.”*

*“Travelling on the tube on St David’s Day... we had many, many conversations over the years.”*

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### **It creates community - and community creates Welsh speakers**

- **90%** of respondents say they’ve made lasting Welsh friendships through the school.
- It offers belonging, confidence, and identity - for children and parents alike.
- Without it, many say their children *wouldn’t be Welsh-speaking at all.*

*“This is my Welsh family in London.”*

*“It’s the glue that holds us together - it changed our lives completely.”*

*“We’ve gone from a purely English-speaking home to a truly bilingual one.”*

*“Making friends with other Welsh families in London was crucial to motivating my children to speak Welsh naturally.”*

*“Being part of the YGLI community has flipped things - now I feel more involved with my Welshness than I did even when I was back in Wales.”*

*“It gave me a solid connection with the London Welsh community which has continued for years to the present day.”*

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## We asked respondents to sum up what Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain meant to them in one sentence...

The responses paint a deeply emotional and consistent picture. Key themes include:

### Language & Identity

- The school is seen as *essential* to preserving and passing on the Welsh language, culture, and identity - not just to children but across entire families and generations.
- Many say their children simply would not speak Welsh without it.

### Family & Community

- Described repeatedly as "*a family*", "*lifeline*", "*extended family*", "*community*", and "*home from home*".
- The school offers a unique sense of belonging in a global city, helping Welsh families stay connected to their roots.

### Education & Opportunity

- The education is consistently described as excellent - blending high academic standards with strong cultural values.
- It has given children confidence, bilingual fluency, and access to opportunities both in and beyond Wales.

### A Cultural Beacon in London

- The school is widely viewed as the *beating heart* or *cultural hub* of the Welsh community in London - "a little piece of Wales in the capital."
- Its value reaches far beyond its small size - acting as a flag-bearer for Welsh language and identity in one of the most global cities in the world.

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## Diversity of Families

It's also important to say, these aren't all fluent Welsh-speaking families. Many don't speak Welsh at home. Some are mixed-language households, adoptive families, multicultural families. Parents from Cornwall, Spain, even Italy. And they all chose this school because they wanted to give their children the gift of Welsh - something they couldn't have done on their own.

This school proves that **Welsh isn't just for the Welsh of the Welsh** - it's for anyone who wants to be part of it.

In just a few days, over 100 individuals (past parent, current parent and past pupils) poured their hearts into telling us what this school means to them. The messages are consistent and clear:

- This school **creates new Welsh speakers**.
- It builds **fluency where nothing else works** - not even in homes that already speak Welsh.
- It gives families a reason to stay connected to Wales - and many return, ready to contribute.
- And it does all this while **normalising the Welsh language in London**, reaching tens of thousands of others as living ambassadors for Cymraeg.