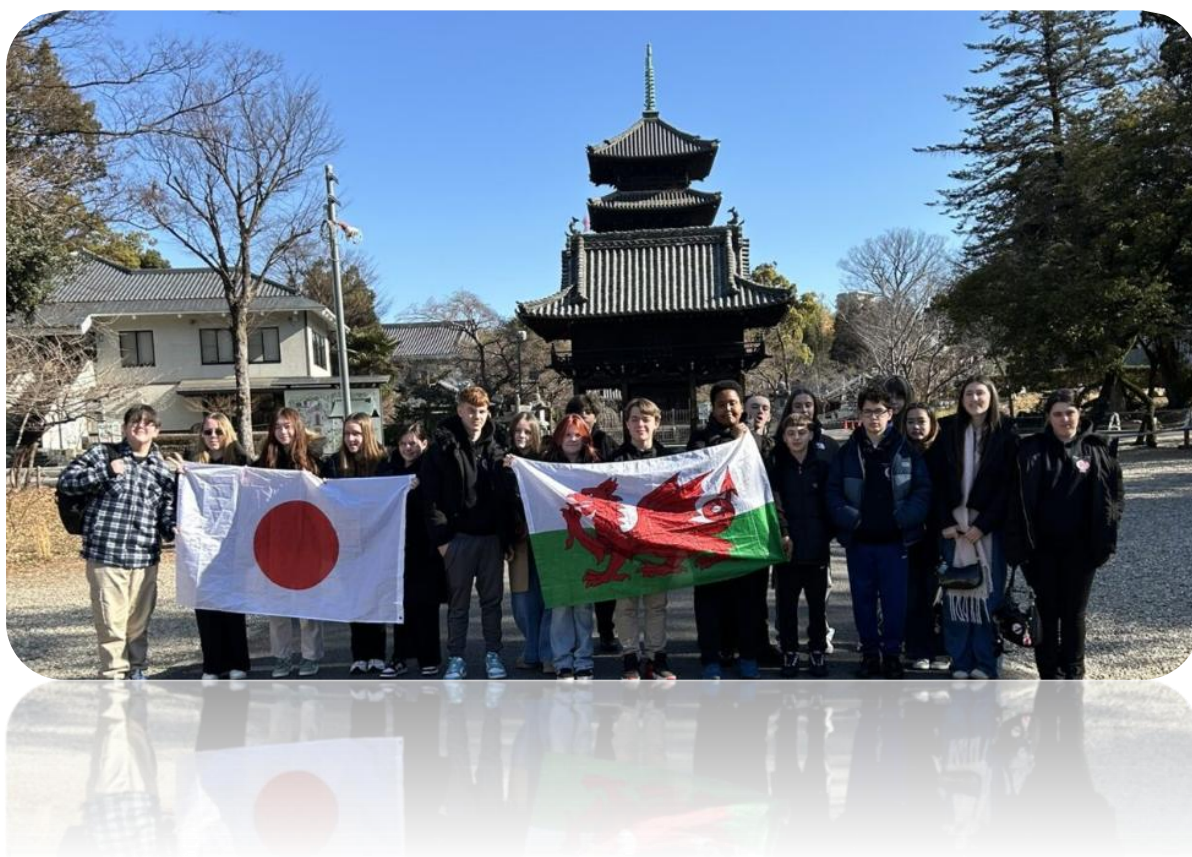


# Taith Annual Report 2025-2026



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## 1. Executive Director's Statement

I am delighted to present Taith's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2026. This report outlines our progress in delivering Wales's international learning exchange programme and reflects on the impact of our work during a successful year of continued development and consolidation.

Over the past year, Taith has further strengthened its role in enabling and supporting learners, staff, and organisations across Wales to engage internationally. Our focus has remained on ensuring that opportunities funded through Taith are accessible, inclusive, and aligned with our strategic objectives, particularly in widening access and supporting learners who may otherwise face barriers to international exchange opportunities. As the programme has continued to mature, we have maintained our strong commitment to continuous improvement at both strategic and operational levels, prioritising our supportive and flexible model of engagement with the sectors. In this context, we have further refined our delivery model, informed by stakeholder engagement, feedback, and learning from operational experience.

This year has also been marked by an evolving and uncertain external environment. Despite these pressures, we have maintained our focus on collaborative working, effective governance, and robust as well as responsible management of public funds. We have worked closely with the Welsh Government, Grant Recipients and our wider stakeholders to ensure that Taith operates with transparency, accountability, and a strong emphasis on value for money, delivering positive outcomes for learners and organisations across Wales.

Looking ahead, our priority is to continue to build on this foundation by maximising the programme's long-term impact and by safeguarding its legacy. We will continue to strengthen partnerships, refine and improve our processes, and ensure that the benefits of Taith reach learners and communities in all parts of Wales. We remain committed to contributing to a more globally connected, inclusive, and confident Wales.

I would like to thank the fantastic Taith team for their professionalism, passion and dedication, as well as the Directors of the ILEP Ltd Board, Advisory Board members, Grant Recipients, and wider stakeholders for their ongoing collaboration and support. We are also grateful to colleagues in the Welsh Government for funding the programme and for their continued guidance. Together, we are helping to ensure that international learning opportunities deliver life-changing impact for learners and for Wales.

**Susana Galván Hernández**  
Executive Director, April 2026

## 2. Programme Overview

Taith is the Welsh Government funded international learning exchange programme for Wales. It is for people in every part of Wales, in every education sector – schools, youth, adult education, further education, vocational education and training, and higher education, and every education type – formal, informal and non-formal.

At Taith, we are deeply committed to fostering a culture of equality, diversity, and inclusion. These principles are at the heart of our core values, driving our success as an inclusive international exchange programme, and are demonstrated by the large number of participants from underrepresented groups who have benefitted from the programme to date.

Taith mobilities and projects seek to inspire learners and raise aspirations. This is why we also fund educators and staff projects which create immediate and lasting benefits for generations of learners. Taith creates opportunities to broaden horizons, experience new ways of life, and bring back lessons to share with people at home.



### 3. Impact of the Taith Programme

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*“I didn’t know what to expect but I came home with memories, friendships and an idea of who I could become”*

*“Japan taught me that every step outside of your comfort zone is a step towards who you’re meant to be”*

*“Travelling to Japan didn’t just change my life – it opened it”*

Pupils from Newport High School

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#### 3.1 Independent Programme Evaluation

The independent evaluation of Taith is a requirement of the Welsh Government Grant Agreement Letter with ILEP Ltd. To date, *Wavehill Consulting* have been commissioned to deliver the inception and interim phase evaluations of Taith, as well as the inception and final evaluations of the Global Wales III scheme.

##### ***Inception Evaluation of Taith***

This was completed in March 2024. This evaluation was commissioned to establish the theory of change for the programme, develop an evaluation framework for subsequent stages, conduct a review of the programme’s monitoring system alongside support to develop new tools and implement improvements, and provide an initial assessment of delivery performance.

##### ***Interim Evaluation of Taith***

This was completed in June 2025. This evaluation drew on feedback from Grant Recipients, mobility participants, and stakeholders. The evaluation concluded that Taith is strongly aligned with Welsh Government priorities and is delivering clear benefits for learners, staff, and organisations through international learning exchanges, particularly by widening access for underrepresented groups.

The evaluation also highlighted that the programme has been delivered effectively with high levels of satisfaction reported by each stakeholder group. It has managed to cater to the needs of all eligible sectors, developing strong, supportive relationships and good engagement.

Taith has succeeded in engaging a high number of organisations, demonstrated by the fact that it has been oversubscribed and received applications from a substantially larger pool of organisations relative to Erasmus+ over a comparable period. The programme has also funded more organisations than Erasmus+ funded in Wales over a comparable period and has been particularly successful in engaging Youth and Adult Education organisations. It is particularly notable that the programme has successfully engaged ‘new’ organisations, and the number of organisations applying for the first time has increased year on year, demonstrating strong demand for the support.

The report also concludes that the programme’s principal achievement to date has arguably been its engagement with underrepresented groups which is at the heart of Taith’s core values. The programme has continued to deliver high-quality, inclusive activity across all education sectors via Pathways 1 and 2, supporting educational innovation through international collaboration. Despite significant external pressures, including rising costs and budget reductions, Taith has shown resilience and a strong commitment to continuous improvement.

Another significant conclusion was that the programme has achieved ‘good’ to ‘excellent’ value for money across most of the indicators established. Indicators of Equity were particularly strong, with 6 out of 8 rated as excellent, including proportions of underrepresented and disadvantaged individuals engaged in Taith.

### ***Inception (March 2024) and Final (November 2025) Evaluations of Global Wales III***

Global Wales III is a scheme delivered by Universities Wales and funded by Taith until July 2025. Its aim is to enhance the visibility, reach, and impact of Wales’ Higher and Further education sectors in key international markets.

**Executive summaries** of these evaluations are published in the [Impact](#) section of the Taith website.

### ***Final Evaluation of Taith***

This is scheduled to take place between April and December 2027.

## 3.2 Projects, Stories and Qualitative Impact

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*“Being part of a Taith project is life itself. It involves learning, sharing, negotiating, communicating, being open and generous, facing challenges and fears, and bringing ideas and people together, whichever they are, wherever they are, whatever they do. Like a community. Like life”*

Sara Novo Loureiro, Project Coordinator – Overseas Programme,  
Coleg Gwent

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### **Projects Information and Data**

A dedicated section of the Taith website has been developed to include data and information about Taith-funded **‘Planned Projects’** and **‘Completed Projects’**.

The **‘Planned Projects’** area includes information about all the projects which have received Taith funding to date, which can be filtered by funding year, funding pathway, sector and local authority, with a short summary of the planned for every successful applying organisation. The data provided, including agreed allocated budget and participant numbers, is taken from what was provided at application stage.

The **‘Completed Projects’** area includes information about all the completed Taith-funded projects. These can be filtered using the same parameters as those in the ‘Planned projects’ area as well as through an interactive map tool. The pages provide individual summary profiles of each of the completed projects, which include both quantitative and qualitative data, as well as images and quotes from participants. These profiles reflect the narrative provided by the Grant Recipients in their final reports.

In addition, two core data collection tools have been developed to better understand the impact of the Taith programme: a **participant survey** for Pathway 1 projects, capturing learner-level experiences and outcomes; and a **Grant Recipient survey** for Pathway 2 projects, focusing on outputs, outcomes, and organisational impact.

Together with the Grant Recipients reports, these tools provide robust qualitative and quantitative evidence-gathering on the transformative benefits of Taith activity and its contribution to sector priorities across Wales.

### **Taith Stories**

Taith has continued to build a comprehensive repository of [impact stories](#), with the aim to illustrate and communicate the impact of the programme through social media engagement across several platforms.

These stories showcase the incredible life-changing and impactful mobilities funded by Taith to date. Some examples include:

- A visit to the United Nations by a group of young people from [NYAS Cymru](#), an organisation which champions the rights and voices of young people and children in the care system. Together with the young people they support, they co-designed powerful international experiences to explore how advocacy for care-experienced young people is delivered around the world.
- The Taith-funded exchange to New Zealand which led to the launch of [Our Voice Our Journey](#), a new youth-led organisation tackling gender-based violence and inequality in Wales.
- The learning exchange to Paris of a group of pupils from [Canolfan Amanwy](#). Canolfan Amanwy is a Local Authority facility for learners with severe learning difficulties, profound multiple learning difficulties and additional diagnoses from Year 7 to Year 14.

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*"The Welsh Government's Taith Programme is a vital initiative for young people across Wales. It provides life-changing opportunities to travel abroad, experience new cultures, and broaden their horizons. For many, this is their first chance to step beyond their communities and develop essential skills like independence and resilience. At Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales, we see firsthand how these experiences inspire young people to dream bigger, build confidence, and embrace a global perspective. Taith is an investment in the future, empowering the next generation to reach their full potential and contribute positively to Wales and the wider world"*

Grant Poiner, CEO, Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales

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### ***Taith Celebration at the Senedd***

In October 2025, Taith hosted a celebration event at the Senedd to mark three years of the programme and the incredible impact it has had on people, organisations, schools, and communities across Wales. This event featured a [special video to celebrate three years of Taith](#).

The event was sponsored by Heledd Fychan MS. Mark Drakeford MS attended as one of the speakers, together with fifteen other inspiring speakers from several participating organisations. In addition, the event showcased the work and Taith-funded projects of around forty contributors in a dedicated marketplace. A surprise performance by Avant Cymru dancers added a wonderful highlight to the day. We were truly overwhelmed by the turnout, the engagement, and the many messages of thanks and appreciation received afterwards. A clear reflection of how meaningful the Taith programme is for so many organisations and people across Wales.

One of our Grant Recipients, [Cardiff Youth Service](#), filmed the event and produced a fantastic video that powerfully showcases the programme:



### 3.3 Wider Impact

Taith is a small and young programme when compared with established international mobility schemes such as Erasmus+. However, despite its scale and early stage of development, Taith has demonstrated significant impact and has attracted increasing attention beyond Wales, including across the UK and internationally, as illustrated by the examples below.

#### ***Research on International Mobility***

Johanna Waters, Professor of Human Geography at UCL, has highlighted the success of Taith as part of her research on the impact of international student mobility on individuals, families and communities. Professor Waters was particularly impressed about Taith's success in facilitating the international mobilities of under-represented young people from Wales and in how the programme *'has allowed individuals (and, importantly, groups) to consider a period abroad when previously this would have been inconceivable'*.

Professor Waters wrote to the Chair of the Senedd's Children, Young People and Education Committee on 7 January 2026 to highlight the success and significance of the programme and to ask for its continuation.

#### ***UK's Reassociation with Erasmus+***

In the context of the UK's reassociation with Erasmus+, it has been widely acknowledged by the UK Government and other stakeholders that there are lessons to be drawn from the success of Taith, particularly around sector engagement and mobilisation, and a need to embed these in the delivery of Erasmus+ in the UK. Nick Thomas-Symonds, whom the Taith team met in November 2025, formally recognised the commitment to learn from the Taith programme in the UK Parliament.

The EU Delegation in the UK have been following the development of the Taith programme and engaging with the Taith team since the programme was launched in 2022. The team at the Delegation have fully acknowledged the success of Taith – they were interviewed as part of the interim evaluation – and recognise the need to learn from our model of work to improve engagement from all the UK learning sectors in the Erasmus+ programme.

#### ***Bloomberg Associates***

Bloomberg Associates is a US-based philanthropic consultancy that advises cities around the world and is part of Bloomberg Philanthropies. They are an example of a large and prestigious international organisation taking a keen interest in the Taith

programme. This interest stemmed from a piece of research commissioned by the Greater London Authority on global best practices in international exchange. New York-based Bloomberg representatives Rose Gill and Rachel Pollan visited Wales in October 2025, ahead of their meetings with the Mayor of London, to specifically meet with the Taith team and several Taith-funded organisations and participants. As part of their research, the Bloomberg team identified Taith not just as an example of best practice, but as ‘the’ model of youth mobility to be replicated. In another piece of work they have done for the city of Detroit, their Mayor simply expressed that he wanted the Taith programme for his own city.

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*“It’s been amazing to pull back the curtain and see everybody behind this incredible production. I think everybody can look in the mirror and say to themselves, ‘We’re really helping people.’ We’ve met some of the individuals who are the beneficiaries of the work that this organisation [Taith] does, and it’s real, and it’s amazing. You’re making the world a better place”*

Rose Gill, Principal, Bloomberg Associates

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### ***Taith in the Media***

The Taith programme has attracted media attention during the year, particularly in the context of the UK’s confirmed re-association with Erasmus+ and the current position that Taith is due to conclude in 2027, with no commitment to continuation ahead of the forthcoming Senedd elections.

This coverage has included an article in Times Higher Education titled [“Wales urged to continue ‘life-changing’ Taith student exchange scheme”](#) (17/02/2026); an article in The Guardian titled [“‘Life-changing’ international learning scheme in Wales at risk of closure”](#) (19/03/2026); and a mention about Taith’s impact and the case for its continuation in a Wales-focused episode of the UK political podcast [The Quiet Riot](#) (22/03/2026, minute 37:53).

## 4. Programme Delivery: Key Headlines

### 4.1 Funding Pathways

The Taith programme is structured around two funding pathways:

**Pathway 1** funding supports international exchange of learning through the outward (participants going from Wales) and inward (participants coming to Wales) mobility of either groups or individual participants. Funding is available for learners, young people, and staff to undertake international exchanges, both short and long term which provide opportunities to share learning, experience different cultures and develop new skills. The sectors eligible for funding are Schools, Youth, Adult Education, Further Education and Vocational Education and Training, and Higher Education (covering Education and Research).

**Pathway 2** funding supports educational innovation through Welsh-led international collaborative partnerships which address a specific issue or sector priority in Wales. International exchange enables the sharing of knowledge, expertise and collaborative learning between Welsh and international organisations, to develop theory and practice in education within Wales and internationally. Pathway 2 funding is intended to support projects which would not be possible without the input and expertise from international partner organisations. The sectors eligible for funding are Schools, Youth, Adult Education, Further Education and Vocational Education and Training.



## 4.2 Applications and Participation to Date

**Table 1** presents headline application data for Pathway 1 and Pathway 2 funding calls delivered to date. These include:

- total number of applications received
- total number of applications funded
- trends in new applicants compared to previous funding years

**Table 1**

Sector	2022		2023			2024			2025		
	Received <sup>1</sup>	Funded <sup>2</sup>	Received	New <sup>3</sup>	Funded	Received	New <sup>4</sup>	Funded	Received	New <sup>5</sup>	Funded
Schools	34	22	47	34	36	46	26	34	80	39	38
Youth	26	17	25	13	17	35	16	25	58	26	43
AE	16	9	10	4	5	11	4	9	19	8	13
FE/VET	16	12	20	4	14	17	3	13	24	5	16
HE	14	14	14	0	14	6	0	6	10	0	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>118</b>

**Notes:**

1. Number of applications received.
2. Number of applications funded.
3. Number of new organisations applying for Taith funding, compared to 2022.
4. Number of new organisations applying for Taith funding, compared to 2022 and 2023.
5. Number of new organisations applying for Taith funding, compared to 2022, 2023 and 2024.

The data demonstrates continued demand for international opportunities across sectors, alongside a steady broadening of participation from organisations new to the programme.

## 4.3 Funding Awarded to Date

### *Pathway 1*

**Table 2** presents the funding awarded to date under Pathway 1 funding, by year and by sector.

**Table 2**

Sector	2022	2023	2024	2025
Schools	£2,139,513	£1,758,991	£1,222,661	£1,346,127
Youth	£1,035,912	£1,004,407	£846,040	£1,241,245
AE	£184,297	£231,441	£298,673	£305,211
FE/VET	£1,564,250	£1,190,191	£847,211	£855,100
HE	£5,551,017	£2,997,088	£1,548,479	£1,264,963
<b>Total</b>	<b>£10,474,989</b>	<b>£7,182,118</b>	<b>£4,763,064</b>	<b>£5,012,646</b>

The distribution of funding reflects Taith’s strategic commitment to supporting diverse learner groups and sectors across Wales, while responding to variations in demand and programme maturity over time.

### Pathway 2

**Table 3** presents the funding awarded to date under Pathway 2 funding, by year and by sector.

**Table 3**

Sector	2022	2023	2024	2025
Schools	£430,945	£441,653	£321,273	£93,564
Youth	£174,556	£151,525	£309,218	£173,885
AE	£194,499	-	£165,788	£75,589
FE/VET	£270,390	£302,915	£123,688	£147,883
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,070,390</b>	<b>£896,093</b>	<b>£919,967</b>	<b>£490,921</b>

## 4.4 Delivery Status and Reach to Date

As of 31 March 2026, the Taith programme **has achieved 81% of its 15,500 mobilities target**. Here are some of the delivery numbers to date:



### ***Accessibility and Inclusion<sup>1</sup>***

Taith is committed to being as inclusive and accessible as possible. Since the programme launched in 2022, **47% of outward learners** have been from underrepresented groups (from disadvantaged backgrounds, Disabled, those with ALN and those from ethnic minority backgrounds).

In 2024 we implemented a policy requiring all projects to have a minimum of 25% of learners from underrepresented backgrounds. Alongside this policy amendment, we have focused our communications on raising awareness of the importance of opening opportunities to those with the greatest barriers and on supporting Grant Recipients to enable more underrepresented individuals to participate. This has had a significant impact - **for projects funded since 2024, 62% of outward learners have been from underrepresented groups.**

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*“The trip to Paris, France has and will be the most amazing opportunity our pupils will have the opportunity to experience. The opportunity to travel by a ‘PLANE’ and go abroad is something most of our learners could never have dreamed of! To go up the Eiffel Tower and get the traffic around the Arc De Triomphe stopped so our wheelchair user could go over and see it first hand was a memory for all of us and most of Paris to remember. The whole process was well supported by the Taith support team and the experience our pupils have had is nothing short or outstanding. A truly once in a lifetime opportunity that brought tears of joy to all involved especially the staff seeing the pupils’ expressions as we moved around Paris seeing things they had only seen in books or on TV”*

Adam Goodman, Manager, Canolfan Amanwy

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<sup>1</sup> Data as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026

## 5. Governance, Risk and Assurance

### 5.1 Risk Management

The **Taith Risk Register** forms an integral part of the programme's risk management framework and is reviewed on a quarterly basis, at a minimum.

The most significant risks currently affecting the programme relate to the uncertainty surrounding future funding, and the unpredictability of impact that global events may have on international travel and delivery capacity.

Mitigation actions are monitored and reviewed regularly by the Senior Leadership team, the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC) and the ILEP Ltd Board.

### 5.2 Annual Assurance Statement

Taith has produced an **Annual Assurance Statement**. The statement confirms compliance with regulatory requirements and standards. It also discloses incidents reported through compliance processes between March 2025 and February 2026.

The statement was approved by the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC) in March 2026 and was presented to the Finance & Infrastructure Committee of Cardiff University in April 2026. The statement provides assurance to Cardiff University that Taith is meeting its legal obligations and has clear corporate policies and processes in place to manage and mitigate risk.

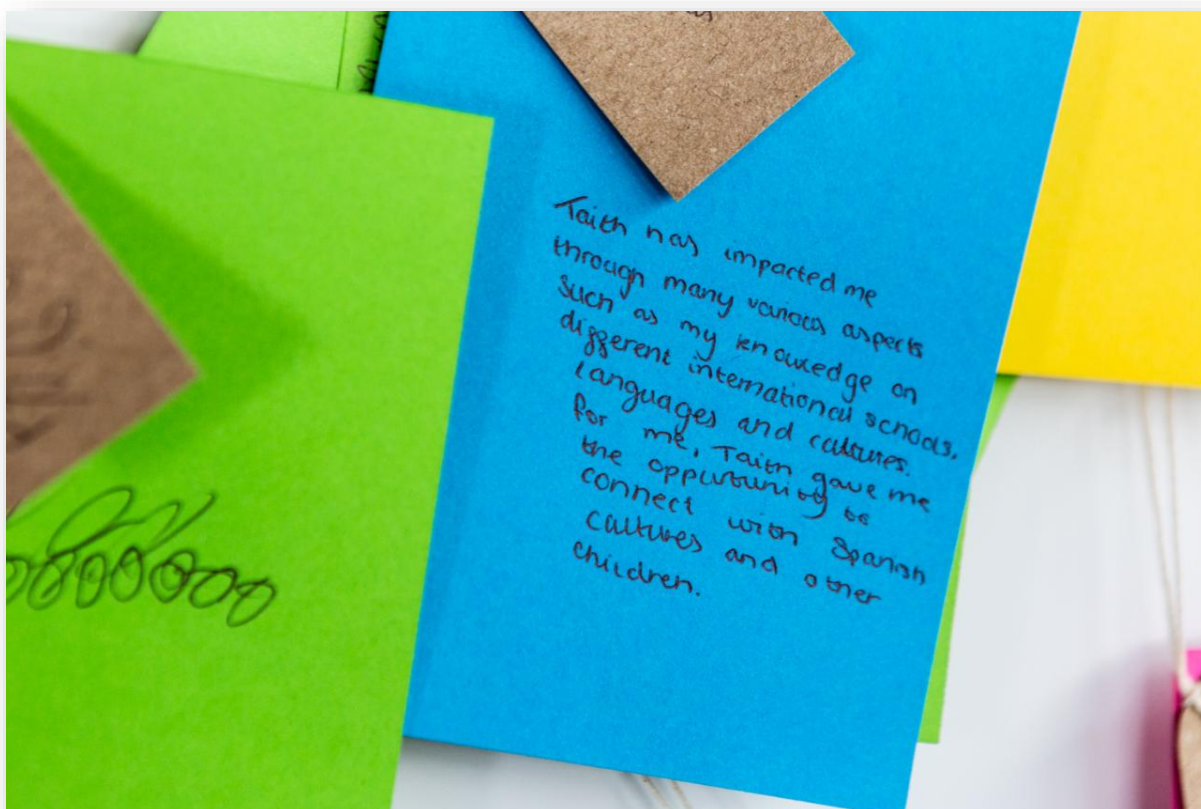
### 5.3 Governance

In her role as Chair, Kirsty Williams wrote a letter to the Welsh Government on 15 September 2025 recommending the dissolution of the Taith Advisory Board once the terms of the members ended in February 2026. This recommendation was made in recognition of the programme's transition from a development phase to full delivery, and in consideration of the current position that there is no confirmed continuation of Taith beyond the end of August 2027.

A response to Kirsty Williams' letter was sent on 9 December 2025 from the Welsh Government advising that the Minister for Further and Higher Education and the

Cabinet Secretary for Education agreed to this recommendation, followed by a Grant Variation Letter issued on 26 March 2026.

The last meeting of the Taith Advisory Board took place on 8 January 2026. This was followed by the appointment of Kirsty Williams as an ILEP Ltd Board Director.



## 6. Financial Statements

The ILEP Ltd Financial Statements were prepared for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025. They were signed by management on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026 and independently audited and countersigned by KPMG on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026.

The statements were then presented to the ILEP Ltd Board on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026 for review and formal approval, ensuring appropriate governance and oversight before finalisation.

The accounts can be accessed on the [Companies House website](#).



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*"The Taith programme has been transformative for our pupils and staff. Without Taith, the majority of our pupils would never have had the opportunity to travel to America. This programme has opened doors to life-changing experiences, allowing them to develop essential life skills, immerse themselves in new cultures, and broaden their horizons in ways we never thought possible. Taith has truly made dreams come true for our school community."*

Vanessa Palmer, Assistant Headteacher, Ysgol Calon Lân

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Taith.cymru

Taith.wales