

## Welshness

### 1.2 The Welsh Language

#### Welsh

Wales has its own language called Welsh. It is one of the oldest languages in Europe. In some parts of Wales, Welsh is the first language. All primary school children learn Welsh.

There are 28 letters in the Welsh alphabet. There is no letter k, q, v, x or z. There are some extra letters – ch, dd, ff, ng, ll, ph, rh, th.

Some words are very long in Welsh.

One village in Wales has the longest place name in the world. It is called 'Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwll-llantysiliogogoch'. It means 'the church of St. Mary in the hollow of white hazel trees near the rapid whirlpool by St. Tysilio's of the red cave'.



#### How do you pronounce Welsh?

There are big differences between Welsh in North Wales and Welsh in South Wales.

**Sut da chi?**

(How are you?)

North Wales

**Shw mae?**

(How are you?)

South Wales

Welsh is a phonetic language. When you've learned how to pronounce each letter, you know how to say the words. A lot of people think the most difficult thing about learning Welsh is the 'mutation'. This is when the first letter of a word changes because of what was said before it. For example:

**bachgen**

(boy)

+

**bach**

(little)

=

**bachgen bach**

(little boy)

**merch**

(girl)

+

**bach**

(little)

=

**merch fach**

(little girl)