

Changing the law on curriculum and assessment in Wales

We want your views on our ideas for the new law

Please tell us what you think by **25 March 2019**



This is an easy read version of Welsh Government's consultation document '**Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum—proposals for a new legislative framework.**'

February 2019



How to use this document

This is an easy read version. The words and their meaning are easy to read and understand.

You may need support to read and understand this document. Ask someone you know to help you.

Some words may be hard to understand. They are in **bold blue writing**. They have been explained in a box below the word.

If the hard word is used again it is in **normal blue writing**. You can check what they mean on page 26.



Llywodraeth Cymru
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This document was made into easy read by **Easy Read Wales** using **Photosymbols**.

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Introduction



We want to make education in Wales the best it can be. To do this we want to write a new **curriculum** and change the way we do **assessments**.



The **curriculum** is a list of things that children and young people learn at school.



Assessments are done to check how well children and young people are doing in school.



We need to make these changes because:

- We want children and young people to do even better in schools.
- Many people feel the **curriculum** now is too strict. And teachers are not able to change what or how they teach to suit learners.





- The **curriculum** is old. Some of it was written in 1988.



- **Assessments** should help learners to learn but they do not.



To make these changes we need a new law about **curriculum** and **assessments**.



We want your views on our ideas for the new law.



This document will explain what we want to change and why.



To have your say please fill out the response form and send it back to us by **25 March 2019**.

What we have done so far



We have done a lot of work on the new **curriculum** so far.



In 2015 Professor Graham Donaldson wrote a report called **Successful Futures**. It looked at what our **curriculum** and **assessments** were like. The report also gave ideas for making a new and better **curriculum**.



We have looked at a lot of reports and other information about what is taught in schools.



We have also thought about advice we have had from other countries and experts from around the world.



Lots of people had their say about what a new **curriculum** should be like. And some schools in Wales were asked to help write a new **curriculum** and test out new ideas. These schools are called **Pioneer Schools**.



In April 2019 everyone will be able to read the new [curriculum](#) and the plan for [assessments](#). We will give people time to have their say about this. The new [curriculum](#) will be ready from January 2020.



Schools will have time to get ready for the new [curriculum](#). They will need to start working from the new [curriculum](#) in September 2022.



They will slowly start teaching the new [curriculum](#) to different year groups. By 2026 all children will be taught using the new [curriculum](#).

What we want to change



We want the new **curriculum** to focus on the strengths of:

- children and young people
- teachers
- schools.



We want the new **curriculum** to:

- Have clear aims.



- Include all children and young people and give them the best education.



- Help all children to keep learning and doing well.



- Help children use what they learn across different subjects.



- Help teachers make changes to what and how they teach. And teach in ways they think are best for their learners.



- Be as easy to understand as possible.

How the new curriculum will be organised



4 main aims

We want the new **curriculum** to have 4 main aims. Everything in the **curriculum** will be about achieving these aims.

The 4 aims are to help children and young people be:



1. Ambitious and capable learners

This means they believe in themselves and what they can do. They want to learn and do better. They have the skills to learn.



2. Enterprising and creative

This means they can use their imagination to think of new ideas. They can solve problems. And use this in their work.



3. Ethical and informed citizens

This means they understand their rights and responsibilities. They take part in their community. They care about the world.



4. Healthy and confident

This means they have healthy minds and bodies. They feel good about themselves and what they believe in.



We want these aims to be in the law. This will make sure they are always thought about when planning, teaching and learning.



We want to help schools achieve these aims by giving them guidance.



This means schools will not have to follow the law about **how** they achieve the aims. They will be able to work towards the aims in the ways they think are best.



6 Areas of Learning and Experience

We want there to be **6 Areas of Learning and Experience**. We will call them **Areas** for short.

These **Areas** will make sure children and young people learn about lots of different subjects. They are:



1. Expressive arts

For example art, drama, music, dance and film.



2. Health and well-being

For example PE, sexuality and relationships, healthy eating and cooking.



3. Humanities

For example history, geography, business and religious education.



4. Languages, literacy and communication

For example listening and speaking skills, reading and writing, French, English and Welsh.



5. Mathematics and numeracy

This includes maths and using numbers to solve problems.



6. Science and technology

For example physics, chemistry, engineering and computers.



We want the **6 Areas** to be written in the law. This means schools will have to teach lots of different subjects from each **Area**. And children will get a good education about lots of different things.



Ideas for what schools could do in each **Area** will be written in guidance. This will mean schools can plan subjects and lessons in the ways they think are best.



It also means that schools can change what children learn when things in the world change. For example new technology.

3 responsibilities for the whole curriculum

We want all teachers in all subjects to help children learn:



- **Literacy skills** – reading and writing and speaking.



- **Numeracy skills** – understanding and using numbers.



- **Digital skills** – being able to learn and understand technology. And be able to use digital devices. For example computers, smart phones and tablets.



These skills are very important. So we want to write them in the law.



This means schools **must** teach these skills in all subjects. Teachers will need to help children learn these skills whatever subject they teach.

Progression through the curriculum



Progression means working through the **curriculum** and learning more and more.



We want the new **curriculum** to be like an ongoing journey through education. Children learn more and more as they go along their journey. They only move along the journey when they are ready.



This means children who are ready to learn more can move onto the next thing quicker.



Children who need more time can stay where they are until they are ready.



We want to use **progression steps** to help teachers understand where children should be on the journey.

Progression steps will give an idea where children should be in their learning journey when they are:

- 5 years old
- 8 years old
- 11 years old
- 14 years old
- and 16 years old.



We will write the **progression steps** in the law. Schools will have to support children to reach and go beyond the **progression steps**.



We want to explain each **progression step** in guidance. And we will write **achievement outcomes** in the guidance too.



The **achievement outcomes** will say what children at different ages:

- should know
- and should be able to do.



This means there will be more freedom about where children are in their learning. They will not be rushed through the **progression steps**.



Children will be supported to move through the **progression steps** at a pace that is right for them. And what they are able to do.



All these changes mean the new law will say less about what **must** be taught.



Schools will have more say in how they do the **curriculum**. They will be able to give support based on children's needs.

Careers and work related experiences



Careers and work related experiences helps learners understand more about themselves and the world of work. It also helps them develop skills to make good life choices.



Careers will be an important part of the health and well-being **Area of Learning and Experience**. But all **6 Areas** will say something about careers and work related experience.



The law says that 13 to 16 year olds have a right:



- to learn about careers and have work related experiences.



- to guidance from experts about what they could do after the age of 16.



Careers and work related experiences is part of all 6 **Areas of Learning and Experience**. So all children and young people from 3 to 16 will learn about careers.



This means that **all** teachers will help learners to understand the world of work. And make good choices about what work to do in future.



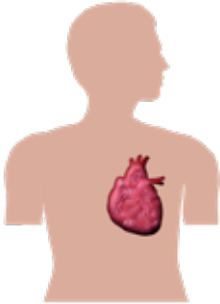
They will be supported to make their choices based on:

- what they are good at
- what they enjoy
- what jobs are available.

Relationships and sexuality education



A special group of experts looked at how we teach children about sex and relationships.



They said that schools mainly taught children and young people about:

- facts about the body
- diseases you can get from having sex.



They said not enough was taught about:

- feelings
- what healthy relationships are
- other important information about having healthy relationships and sex.



So they said:

- All children under 16 should be taught about healthy relationships and sex when they are the right age.



- Teachers should get more training on how to teach children about sex and relationships.



- It should be called **relationships and sexuality education** instead of sex education. It is called **RSE** for short. This covers more than just sex. It would include learning about things like rights and different types of relationships.



We want the law to say children aged 3 to 16 years old **must** be taught **RSE**.



We will write guidance about what should be taught in **RSE**. The guidance will have information about what should be taught based on:

- how old learners are
- what they already know
- what they need to know
- what their experiences are.



We want the law to say schools do **not** have to teach **RSE** to learners in sixth form. We want these learners to have the right to choose to do **RSE** or not.



We want to make sure the new **curriculum** helps achieve the 4 main aims.



1 of the aims is to make children **healthy and confident**. We think **RSE** is an important part of this.



At the moment parents can say they do **not** want their children to have sex education. But children do not get to choose.



We do not know yet what the law should say about parents choosing to stop their child having **RSE**.

Religious education



We want **religious education** to be part of the humanities **Area of Learning and Experience**.



Religious education is learning about different religions and the different things people believe. This includes non-religious beliefs similar to religious beliefs. It is called **RE** for short.



We want the law to say all children from 3 years old **must** have **RE**. Including children in nursery.



We want the law to say **RE** includes views that are similar to religions. For example **humanism** – which is about the importance of people instead of gods.



We will write guidance about what should be included in **RE**. Schools will have to think about what we say in the guidance when planning **RE** lessons. We will make it clear that both religious and non-religious views should be taught.



At the moment all learners in sixth form must have **RE**. We want the law to say learners in sixth form can choose to have **RE** or not.



At the moment the law says parents can say they do **not** want their children to have **RE**. But children do not get to choose.



We do not know yet what the law should say about parents choosing to stop their child having **RE**. We think it is an important part of the aim to help all children be healthy and confident. And it will now include lots of different views.



Welsh language

The Welsh Government wants to get 1 million people speaking Welsh by 2050. The new **curriculum** is important to help that happen.



The Welsh language is an important part of Wales. We want to focus on all learners being able to use Welsh.



We want there to be 1 **curriculum** for learning Welsh. This is instead of having a first and second language Welsh **curriculum**. We want to write this in the law.



All children in Wales will follow the same **curriculum** for learning Welsh. They will be supported to **progress** as much as they can.



This will be different based on each child and the type of school they go to. For example:



- Welsh language schools where they speak Welsh in all their lessons.



- English language schools where they speak Welsh in Welsh lessons.



- Schools where they have some lessons in Welsh and some in English.



The more you use Welsh the better you will be at using it. We want schools to use Welsh more.



We will need to think about this when we plan [assessments](#) for Welsh language. And what the Welsh [achievement outcomes](#) should be in different types of schools.



These changes will not make much difference to Welsh language schools. But English language schools will have to do more in Welsh.



We are spending money on training for teachers to be able to use Welsh more. And we will be helping schools to plan for these changes.

Assessment



We want **assessments** to help learners. **Assessments** should be used to see how best to support learners. And what learners need more help with.



Assessments should **not** be used as a way to decide how good schools and teachers are. To help stop this we do not send out information about **assessments** so often.



Assessments will be based on the **achievement outcomes** for the **progression steps**. **Achievement outcomes** will be written by head teachers.



The aim of **assessments** will be to find out:

- What learners can do.
- What learners need to work on.
- What learners need to do next.



Schools will have more control over when learners have **assessments**.

Hard words

Achievement outcomes

The achievement outcomes will say what children at different ages:

- should know
- and should be able to do.

Assessments

Assessments are done to check how well children and young people are doing in school.

Curriculum

The curriculum is a list of things that children and young people learn at school.

Progression

Progression means working through the curriculum and learning more and more.

Progression Steps

Progression steps will give an idea where children should be in their learning journey when they are:

- 5 years old
- 8 years old
- 11 years old
- 14 years old
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Religious education

Religious education is learning about different religions and the different things people believe. This includes non-religious beliefs similar to religious beliefs. It is called RE for short.