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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government
Consultation – summary of responses

The Education (Amendments Relating to the Intervals for Inspection of
Education and Training) (Wales) Regulations 2020

Date of issue: 19 December 2019

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

The Education (Amendments Relating to the Intervals for Inspection of Education and Training) (Wales) Regulations 2020

Audience	This document is aimed at all schools, local authorities, diocesan authorities, teaching unions, further education institutions, Estyn and other interested parties.
Overview	This document provides a summary of the responses received to the consultation regarding The Education (Amendments Relating to the Intervals for Inspection of Education and Training (Wales) Regulations 2020
Action required	None.
Further information	Enquiries about this document should be directed to: Finance and Inspection Branch Education Business Planning and Governance Division The Education Directorate Welsh Government Cathays Park Cardiff CF10 3NQ e-mail: Education-BusinessPlanning&Governance@gov.wales
Additional copies	This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at www.gov.wales/consultations Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.
Related documents	: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/document/responses-consultation-estyn%E2%80%99s-proposed-transition-year-2020%E2%80%932021-academic-year

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Introduction

The Welsh Government undertook a public consultation on the making of The Education (Amendments Relating to the Intervals for Inspection of Education and Training) (Wales) Regulations 2020. These Regulations extend the current inspection period for nursery education, maintained schools, including Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and religious education provided at maintained schools, careers and related services and further education settings from 7 to 8 years for one cycle only (2016-2024).

The purpose for extending the current inspection cycle is to assist the partial suspension of school inspections to take place during 2020-21.

This document provides a summary of the responses received to the specific questions asked and outlines the proposed way forward.

Summary of responses

Eighteen respondents replied to the consultation. A list of the respondents can be found in Annex 1.

Question 1

Do you agree to the making of The Education (Amendments Relating to the Intervals for Inspection of Education and Training) (Wales) Regulations 2020 which will come into force on 1 September 2020 to allow the partial suspension of school inspections to take place in 2020-2021?

Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree
15	0	3
83%	0%	17%

Summary analysis

The majority of respondents supported this proposal.

Two of the three respondents that neither agreed nor disagreed did not provide any comments or rationale for their disagreement. The other respondent that neither agreed nor disagreed commented that it supported the proposal to partially suspend inspections but felt it was unclear how a programme of engagement visits would support schools and that it would be a distraction and workload burden for schools. The respondent considered that the proposal should be rescinded. The same respondent raised concerns that there wasn't a strategic implementation plan for curriculum reform.

There is an overwhelming support to the partial suspension of inspection allowing time for schools to focus on and embed the changes in line with the new curriculum, also allowing Estyn inspectors to support schools and develop an understanding of the reform process and adapt their practices to ensure that future inspection arrangements are fit for purpose. Respondents commented that Estyn as a 'listening' inspectorate is welcome; that this proposal would provide an opportunity for Estyn to work collaboratively with schools and allow preparatory and pilot work to be undertaken.

One respondent queried the 'flexibility' for Estyn to suspend inspections at other locations prescribed in the current inspection regulations; although they welcomed the flexibility to partially suspend, they asked for clarity as soon as possible to those sectors, providing assurance to all relevant stakeholders.

Another respondent commented that whilst they noted the consultation response document regarding the role of Estyn during this period of time, they e looked forward to providing school leaders with absolute clarity as to what they can expect from the inspectorate during this period.

One commented that some interim inspections must take place at least for those schools requiring greater support and one respondent felt that the partial suspension should be longer and also include the role of challenge advisers.

The Welsh Government response

As a result of the high support for the proposal, the Education (Amendments Relating to the Intervals for Inspection of Education and Training) (Wales) Regulations 2020 will come into force for September 2020 to allow the partial suspension of inspection to take place during the 2020-2021 academic year. During this period there will continue to be a sufficient amount of inspection activity and monitoring of schools causing concern.

The comments regarding the engagement visits and the role of the Inspectorate are noted and have been passed to Estyn for consideration. In response to the comments about the Regulations providing flexibility to suspend inspections in other settings if required, it is anticipated that Estyn will only be partially suspending inspections for maintained nursery schools, maintained schools and PRUs during 2020-2021, however, if Estyn decided to extend the proposal to other sectors included in the Regulations, those sectors would be notified immediately.

In response to the comment around a strategic implementation plan for curriculum reform, we will consider further in light of the longer time-scale.

Question 2

We would like to know your views on the effects that the making of The Education (Amendments Relating to the Intervals for Inspection of Education and Training) (Wales) Regulations 2020 would have on the Welsh language, specifically on: i) opportunities for people to use the Welsh language ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language. What effects do you think there would be? How positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Summary analysis

Nine respondents provided comments.

One respondent considered that there needed to be equal weighting for English and Welsh medium schools, another believes that the new curriculum gives more emphasis to the Welsh language and therefore the proposed pause of Estyn inspections would give professionals a greater chance to plan for the new Curriculum – thus improving access to language. However the respondent also believes that the WG target of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050 will not be reached if we do not invest in support and training for our existing workforce.

Another respondent considered that the implementation of the new curriculum would enable schools to strengthen the development of pupils in Welsh language skills through the delivery of the Languages, Literacy and Communications Area of Learning and Experience.

A number of respondents anticipate there would be no significant positive or negative implications.

The Welsh Government response

Welsh language issues were considered during the proposed amendments. The responses to the consultation did not raise any issues that require the amendments to be changed with respect to the Welsh language.

Question 3

Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy to make the Education (Amendments Relating to the Intervals for Inspection of Education and Training) (Wales) Regulations 2020 could be formulated or changed so as to have i) positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language ii) no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Summary analysis

Nine respondents provided comments.

Five of the respondents believed that there would be no positive or negative impacts with the implementation of the Welsh Government proposals.

One of the respondents noted the need to ensure that there are suitable, adequate and local opportunities for education practitioners from early years onwards to attend information sessions and training on the new inspection system through the medium of Welsh.

Another respondent considered that there is a scope for the changes to have a positive impact on the Welsh language, as it would give education professional a greater chance to plan for the curriculum thus improving access to the language. Whilst others commented that there should be equal weighting for English and Welsh medium schools and a shorter timescale between visits and professional dialogues would have a positive effect on improving the opportunities to use and further develop Welsh and need to ensure consistency of approach by all Estyn inspectors in line with school linguistic categorisation and geographical location.

The Welsh Government response

The responses suggest that there will be no positive or negative impact, therefore the Regulations will be made.

Question 4

We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

Summary analysis

Respondents asked that as the Welsh Government preparations for implementing the new curriculum in non-maintained settings has taken place on a timescale that is slower than the school curriculum timetable, will there be a period of suspension of reviews for this sector in order to ensure fairness. Respondents also asked if Estyn intends on undertaking a training programme on how they will inspect the areas of learning and experience for Wales 2022.

The Welsh Government Response

Comments have been noted and will be considered.

Annex: List of respondents

- Voice the Union
 - NASUWT
 - Estyn
 - WLGA & ADEW
 - UCAC
 - EWC
 - National Education Union Cymru
 - ASCL
 - Cydag Uwchradd
 - Sea view Primary
 - Conwy CBC
 - Mudiad Meithrin
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- 6 Respondents chose to remain anonymous