Response to feedback phase

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Contents

Introduction

Sources of feedback

During the feedback phase, we considered feedback from a range of sources.

- Feedback received during the feedback phase.
- Internal reviews undertaken by Quality Improvement (QI) groups (QI practitioners who were previously Pioneers).
- Findings from innovation schools.
- Work commissioned on the early years element of the new curriculum guidance, which had previously been flagged as a key priority.

Welsh Government commissioned Wavehill, an independent research organisation, to conduct an analysis of this feedback to:

- understand and map the range of views and perspectives held by respondents towards the Curriculum for Wales 2022
- assess how prevalent particular views and perspectives are across different stakeholder groups and as a whole.

Feedback received

Wavehill analysed feedback from a range of sources. In addition to Wavehill's report, officials undertook a trawl of feedback, looking at a large number of specific responses in greater detail. These were selected on the following basis.

- Key public sector organisations.
- Key representative organisations.
- Key national or regional organisations with specific interest in education.
- Organisations and individuals with specific specialism or interest in a cross-cutting theme (e.g. Welsh dimension, relationships and sexuality education, inclusivity).
- A random sample of individuals and local authority school improvement teams.

We also arranged for the views of children and young people to be considered specifically.

Quality improvement review with practitioners

During the 2019 summer term, QI members were tasked with reviewing all the areas of learning and experience [Area/Areas]. This was conducted through specific lines of inquiry in mixed groups, drawn from across Areas. The lines of inquiry were developed from early feedback from expert groups, researchers from the Camau project (a collaboration between University of Wales Trinity St David and Glasgow University to consider learner progression), Welsh Government and regional consortia leads.

Innovation schools

To answer some of the key questions regarding manageability, accessibility and the curriculum framework to support school planning, 16 innovation schools were selected across the four regions and representing different types of schools. These schools were selected from the existing curriculum pioneer network. During the curriculum design process, individuals from pioneer schools have tested elements of the curriculum. However, Innovation schools are considering whole school involvement.

Innovation schools are being provided with funding to fully integrate the draft Curriculum for Wales as the key mechanism for curriculum delivery in identified phases/year groups. This will support evaluation of the full curriculum framework (overarching guidance, statements of what matters, principles of progression, descriptions of learning and the 'Designing your curriculum' sections) and develop models of school level assessment arrangements.

Schools were required to feedback their findings and work collaboratively to develop guidance materials for all schools.

Child development in the early years

Following an analysis of the curriculum guidance, we commissioned a child development group to review the developmental appropriateness of Progression steps 1 and 2. This group comprised Foundation Phase expertise and representation from schools, non-maintained settings, Estyn, local authorities and regional consortia. There was representation from within and outside pioneer schools, and included practitioners who participated in the Foundation Phase review of Areas in autumn 2018.

Summary of work done over the autumn

During the autumn term, QI practitioners worked to the milestones below, in order to complete the refined version of the Curriculum for Wales guidance.

These key milestones were centred on Quality Improvement workshops.

10–12 September	• Review key issues emerging from feedback phase and agree responses to issues. • Create a plan for refining issues over the autumn term.
1–3 October	• Drafting refinements (with practitioners' time split between Areas and cross-cutting work streams, including assessment).
15–17 October	• Drafting refinements (with practitioners' time split between Areas and cross cutting work streams, including assessment).
12–14 November	• Consider advice from Curriculum and Assessment Expert Group (CAG) and make further refinements if necessary. • Review guidance in Area groups and other work streams.

Within Welsh Government, we established a weekly operational group to organise and monitor refinements and a monthly project board.

Overarching changes

New layout: Navigation and ease of access

Key themes

There were concerns over the accessibility of the guidance, in particular the ease of access and the language used. Readers were presented with large amounts of information without being able to orientate themselves or fully understand the purpose of each element. It was clear that the structure of the guidance was confusing.

The presentation of achievement outcomes was also queried: it was difficult to compare progression steps to understand progression.

Information was often repeated in both overarching and Area-specific elements while the distinction between the 'Learning' and 'Planning for learning' sections was unclear.

There was also a concern that providing six distinct Area documents encouraged an Area-based approach and minimised cross-curricula design.

What we have changed

We have simplified the structure of the guidance by organisation into the following key elements.

For the overarching guidance:

- introduction
- proposals for legislation
- guidance on designing a curriculum.

For each Area:

- introduction to the Area
- the 'core' learning: statements of what matters, learning against each progression step, and principles of progression
- Area-specific considerations when designing a curriculum.

This is designed to make the guidance easier to follow and also to avoid duplication of information. We will also develop diagrams to help assist practitioners understanding of the different components of the guidance and how they are meant to be used.

In terms of presentation, the downloadable version of the guidance will not be separated into Areas. This is because the increased detail in the overarching guidance is critical reading for all practitioners. By separating these out, there was a risk that practitioners would miss the important overarching information. It is also to encourage learning and approaches across Areas.

Learning in each progression step will be presented horizontally: allowing practitioners to see the strands of progression across the continuum of learning.

What matters

Key themes

The majority of respondents agreed that the statements of what matters sum up the priorities for children and young people's learning. It was also clear that at times, children and young people struggled to engage fully with these.

The statements of what matters are intended to be the key organising structure of the guidance for each Area. They have been designed to sum up the 'big ideas' or key principles of each Area. As such, they provide the foundation for the learning described at each progression step.

What we have changed

Over the autumn, based on feedback, QI practitioners identified statements of what matters which required redrafting. QI practitioners sought expert feedback on these and developed and agreed alternative wording. Both headline and explanatory text, which comprise the full statement, have been changed as appropriate.

Where appropriate, the wording of statements of what matters headlines has been refined to make them more accessible. Given the feedback from children and young people, it was agreed that the statements should be broadly accessible to learners at Progression step 3. It was considered unrealistic to expect learners to understand the full suite of statements before this point, however it is still intended that learners engage with the essence of the statements. We have also published accessible versions specifically for children and young people to support learners to engage with them.

In response to concerns about equity and breadth of learners' experiences, it is now proposed that the statements of what matters will be mandatory. This means that a school's curriculum will be required to cover all of the statements of what matters from 3 to 16, providing engagement with their key concepts in a developmentally-appropriate way.

Descriptions of learning (in place of achievement outcomes)

Key themes

Review of the achievement outcomes confirmed a number of issues in their content, focus and how they were being perceived by practitioners. The review highlighted the following.

- The distinction between achievement outcomes and the 'Planning for learning' sections of the April 2019 draft was unclear: both aspects articulated learning at each progression step.
- Inconsistencies in the level of detail being expressed between achievement outcomes and the 'Planning for learning' sections.
- Many of the achievement outcomes were too narrow in scope to provide the basis for designing learning for a period of approximately two or three years.
- A number of achievement outcomes articulated narrow tasks and activities, rather than the learning to which the tasks and activities were meant to contribute. This meant that some could be covered in a small number of lessons and assessed narrowly in a short period of time.
- The name 'achievement outcomes' was unhelpful: suggesting an intention towards summative attainment targets, which translated into narrow outcomes that could be directly assessed.
- Some specific achievement outcomes were vague and unclear
- That the achievement outcomes didn't provide enough clarity on disciplinary specific learning.

Achievement outcomes were intended to provide guidance on how learners should progress within each statement of what matters as they journey through the continuum of learning. This learning was arranged in five progression steps which provide reference points for the pace of that progression. These expectations were expressed from the learner's perspective and were framed broadly so as to sustain learning over a series of years. They were not intended to be stand-alone tasks, activities or assessment criteria. Rather, it was intended that they would support schools to develop their own curriculum, supported by their own tasks and assessment activities.

What we have changed

To support practitioner understanding, we have renamed achievement outcomes as descriptions of learning: to make clear that they are reference points rather than summative outcomes.

We developed a methodology for the descriptions of learning setting out a specification which provided clear, conceptual underpinning to support QI practitioners refinement work.

This was that descriptions of learning should:

- describe the **essence of learning** or the key meaningful learning that should underpin topics, activities or tasks, rather than those things themselves which are a matter of professional judgment
- be broad in scope and not bound to specific contexts
- articulate the core concepts, ideas and inquiries within a discipline (or Area)
- point to the core of the statements of what matters in a subject (or Area)
- naturally recur, creating opportunities for transfer to other situations and subjects; and transcend individual, narrow topics
- provoke deep thinking, discussion, enquiry, new understanding and new questions
- spark meaningful connections with prior learning and personal experiences
- not specify specific tasks that can be directly assessed
- be clear how learning can be developed based on them – they should not be vague or imprecise in the learning articulated.

The concept of the 'essence of learning' has been an important guide during this stage of development. Descriptions of learning underwent a significant review and refinement over the autumn to ensure that they met this criteria. As part of the process, QI practitioners also reviewed learning set out in the 'Planning for learning' sections to consider whether elements should be included in the descriptions of learning.

Designing your curriculum

Key themes

Review of the April draft guidance as a whole highlighted a number of issues in the presentation of the Areas and the interrelationships between various sections, most notably the 'Planning for learning' section. The review highlighted the following.

- There was a strong call for clearer guidance on how schools should approach curriculum designing, and how they should use the curriculum guidance.
- There was insufficient clarity regarding the relative importance and purpose of the 'Learning' and 'Planning for learning' sections in each Area and their relationship with each other.
- Online navigation between the 'Learning' and 'Planning for learning' tabs was seen as cumbersome.
- The two sections often seemed indistinct, but when they were, 'Planning for learning' often articulated narrow tasks and activities or topical content at each progression step (which seemed to direct practitioners and limit agency).

- There was unhelpful repetition across progression steps in 'Planning for learning' accessibility was highlighted, as the draft presented significant considerations for practitioners in different places, with much of the information being repeated in different sections.

Fundamentally, the responses suggested a lack of clarity of purpose of the guidance: whether it was intended as the national curriculum or as guidance for each school to develop their own curriculum. Much of the draft implicitly suggested that it was supporting guidance, while the nature of many of the achievement outcomes and much of the 'Planning for learning' was characteristic of a national curriculum.

What we have changed

We have made the purpose of the guidance far more explicit: that it is to support schools and practitioners through provision of a framework to design their own curriculum, with assessment being intrinsic to this, rather than to provide them with a national curriculum. In doing this, we have condensed the guidance for schools and practitioners on designing a curriculum into more discrete sections.

A new section 'Designing your curriculum' has been introduced for all practitioners, which is supported by Area-specific information as necessary. We have avoided unnecessary repetition: where something is relevant for all Areas it is only included in the overarching section and not in the Area-specific section.

The 'Designing your curriculum' overarching and Area-specific sections are intended to support schools and practitioners to:

- develop a vision for their curriculum
- develop and design their curriculum by providing contexts and inputs for consideration
- think about implementing the curriculum using a variety of contexts and topics to ground and engage learners with the deeper essence of learning.

As part of refinement, QI practitioners considered the content of the April 2019 draft 'Planning for learning' sections and moved or redeveloped information as appropriate.

- Where learning mirrored or overlapped with descriptions of learning (indeed in some instances, it articulated the essence of learning better than draft achievement outcomes), this has been used in the descriptions of learning.
- Where learning articulated principles to support the selection of topical content, this has been used in 'Designing your curriculum'.

- Where learning articulated specific or narrow topical content, this was removed, and the principle behind this content included in 'Designing your curriculum'.

The Area-specific sections of 'Designing your curriculum' only include considerations unique to each Area. It is critical therefore that schools and practitioners consider the detail of the overarching guidance first, and in conjunction with any Area-specific development work. In developing the sections for areas of learning and experience, practitioners considered the following methodology.

- How do statements of what matters and descriptions of learning support practitioners to design a curriculum?
- What is the relationship between the statements of what matters?
- How to ensure breadth and depth in the Area?
- What are the key contexts and disciplinary concepts within the Area that should be used when considering the descriptions of learning?
- What local, national and international considerations are unique to the Area?
- What further considerations are unique to the Area?

Therefore, as a whole the 'Designing your curriculum' sections not only provide important new guidance for designing a curriculum, they support the whole system to understand what it means to be a curriculum designer and the professional learning requirements that arise from that.

Progression

Key themes

There was concern that while the achievement outcomes were grounded in an evidence based approach to progression and articulated how learners should make progress through the continuum of learning, they were too detailed to provide a broader sense overall of what the principles of progression were in each Area.

Given concerns about ensuring equity and a common expectation for learners across Wales, it was felt that this could be addressed by providing a statutory duty on schools to design a curriculum which ensures learners make progress. This duty could not be linked to descriptions of learning making them mandatory, as it would make them "high stakes" and influence their use negatively.

In addition, guidance on progression in the April 2019 draft was provided for Areas in part in their introductory narratives, and also alongside each statement of what matters. This made it more likely that these sections would be considered in isolation.

What we have changed

We have introduced principles of progression to respond to these issues. These principles will be mandatory to help ensure equity and common expectations across Wales.

These principles of progression are intended to:

- articulate the broader nature of progression within an Area: its essence and the nature of progression within an Area
- support professionals to build progression into their curriculum design, including their assessment arrangements
- support the profession to understand the nature of progression across the curriculum
- articulate any duty on schools to ensure learners make progress
- provide a common expectation of the nature of progression to avoid unintended levels of variation across schools and potential negative impacts on some learners' outcomes.

The guidance now sets out principles of progression for the curriculum as a whole and for each individual Area.

The overarching principles of progression:

- recognise the commonalities between certain models of progression across the Areas
- consider progression for all learners including learners with additional learning needs (ALN) across the curriculum as a whole.

The principles for each Area:

- set out and elaborate on the models and principles of progression previously articulated in each draft Area
- explain the nature of these in greater depth and signal essential learning experiences, more than the previous draft models
- provide professionals with an understanding of progression through a learning continuum rather than viewing it as atomised statements.

Given that this is a new element with proposed mandatory status, we will review these principles of progression and where appropriate make amends before statutory use of the curriculum commences.

Integral skills (previously 'Wider skills')

Key themes

There was some question over the term 'Wider skills', suggesting a risk that they might be considered peripheral. In fact, when QI practitioners rationalised these, it was clear that these skills were critical for learners' success in learning and later life and were integral to the four purposes.

What we have changed

They have been renamed integral skills. The guidance for these skills has also been refined and developed to provide additional support for what schools and practitioners should seek to embed throughout their curriculum.

Next steps

There are published frameworks available that could assist schools in embedding integral skills in their curriculum, for example:

> The European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework:
> https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1317&langId=en

OECD Transformative competencies for 2030:
http://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/teaching-and-learning/learning/transformative-competencies/in_brief_Transformative_Competencies.pdf

Relationships and sexuality education

Key themes

Much of the feedback on this theme referenced its legislative status, which was beyond the remit of the refinement of the guidance. However, feedback suggested there should be more detailed guidance as relationships and sexuality education (RSE) will be statutory, and given the sensitive and specialist nature of the subject area.

What we have changed

Over the autumn, a group of practitioners worked to refine and improve the:

- overarching guidance and definition of RSE
- descriptions of learning relevant to RSE – ensuring they reflect essential learning in RSE.

This now includes a more comprehensive explanation of RSE and the principles for embedding this in the curriculum.

It is clear however, that there are greater calls for additional detail in this area than in others and this would be out of step with detail in the rest of guidance. We will develop supplementary statutory guidance on RSE which will help schools to plan provision which is appropriate and accessible for their learners. For this reason, we have not included specific information in 'Designing your curriculum' sections for each Area, as this will be addressed in the subsequent guidance.

Careers and work-related education

Key themes

The main themes identified in the feedback were based around guidance content and practitioner delivery. In brief these were around:

- content visibility and clarity
- the ability for all practitioners to fully embed and deliver careers and work-related education (CWRE) across the curriculum
- post-16 opportunity awareness and engagement.

What we have changed

Visibility and clarity of content

As a cross-curricular theme CWRE is visible, both in the overarching and guidance for Areas for designing your curriculum. This content provides planners and practitioners with a clear understanding of CWRE, the benefits to learners and clarity regarding the need to embed it across the curriculum.

Ability for all practitioners to fully embed and deliver CWRE across the curriculum

The inclusion of CWRE across the curriculum raises its visibility and prominence, highlighting the need to include it throughout the continuum of learning, across the Areas. The 'Designing your curriculum' section now provides contexts for practitioners to consider when delivering CWRE in the curriculum.

Post-16 opportunity and engagement

The skills and knowledge gained through CWRE supports decision-making in a range of settings, but particularly in the context of transitions, career planning and management. As such, it is included in Health and Well-being Area descriptions of learning that reference decision-making.

Next steps

To further support planners and practitioners to embed CWRE in the curriculum and raise the importance of opportunity awareness and engagement supplementary statutory guidance is being developed.

Guidance will include areas highlighted in feedback, including an understanding of reason CWRE is cross-curricular, enterprise, opportunity awareness, careers guidance, stereotyping, career pathways, labour market information, work-related experiences and post-16 opportunities. Case studies will support professional learning, demonstrate potential delivery and signpost to potentially useful resources.

Human rights education and diversity

Key themes

Where referenced, there was strong support for the inclusion of human rights education. In discussion with stakeholder groups there was some concern about the place of understanding and valuing diversity: if a school simply drew on its local area in developing a curriculum, this may not support learners to understand the diverse nature of contemporary Wales.

What we have changed

The overarching guidance section on human rights has been strengthened while additional guidance has been developed in respect of understanding and valuing diversity. To support this further, the sections on designing your curriculum in each Area, refer to these, where appropriate.

Wales and local, national and international contexts (previously 'Welsh dimension and international perspectives')

Key themes

There was some question as to whether separating the Welsh dimension from international perspectives was helpful. It was suggested that local, Welsh and international perspectives influenced and linked to each other. Moreover, there was some concern that the terminology used did not make clear enough the importance of learners' immediate localities. There was also a concern about diversity and whether guidance should emphasise the importance of understanding the diverse nature of contemporary Wales rather than a more traditional and uniform view of Wales.

What we have changed

The revised guidance outlines the need for learners of all ages to learn about their locality, about Wales, and about the wider world in order to support their sense of identity and well-being and to make connections with people, places and histories in their locality, elsewhere in Wales and also across the world.

The guidance for local, national and international perspectives has also been refined to reflect feedback and provide more guidance for schools, including highlighting the importance of diversity and citizenship.

Assessment proposals

The feedback on the April 2019 initial assessment proposals has been invaluable in helping us further shape thinking on assessment. The Assessment Advisory Group has been key to this process, considering the comments received through the consultation process and advising on the changes required in order to refine the guidance on assessment. With membership including practitioners from both English and Welsh medium primary, secondary, and special schools and funded non-maintained settings, as well as academics and representatives from regional consortia, Estyn and Qualifications Wales, this group has enabled a broad range of partners to participate in the co-construction process.

The result of this work is updated guidance which reflects the culture change we intend to achieve with the Curriculum for Wales. This guidance supports schools and settings as they start to think about how they will plan, design and implement their new school curriculum – with assessment being a fundamental part of this.

Below is an overview of the key themes emerging from the feedback, alongside an explanation of how we have amended the guidance and why.

The purpose of assessment, including the terminology Formative and Summative assessment

Key themes

The feedback suggested we had not been clear enough in articulating the purpose of assessment and its different uses. We had referred to formative and summative assessment in the April 2019 draft, however, it appeared these terms were creating an unhelpful dichotomy and therefore were not conveying the ethos of the new curriculum to promote learner progression. Concerns were also expressed around whether there is common understanding and use of these terms across Wales.

What we have changed

In the revised guidance, we clearly describe the purpose of assessment as being to support the progression of each individual learner in relation to the 3 to16 continuum. With this purpose in mind, we also identify three main roles for assessment.

- Supporting individual learners on an ongoing, day to day basis.
- Identifying, capturing and reflecting on individual learner progress over time.
- Understanding group progress in order to reflect on practice.

In addition, the guidance sets out how assessment should not only consider the outcomes of learning, i.e. what a learner has learned, but should also consider the process of learning, in order understand how a learner has learned, enabling adjustments in daily practice to be made to take this into account.

We also received feedback in relation to future qualifications and the potential implications this may have on assessment in the context of Curriculum for Wales. Qualifications Wales is considering the development of future qualifications – these will be developed to reflect the Curriculum for Wales and help to realise its ambition. Within the amended guidance, we make it clear that assessment for the purpose of awarding external qualifications is outside the scope of the guidance.

The relationship between curriculum, progression and assessment

Key themes

The feedback demonstrated that the relationship between curriculum, progression and assessment had not been articulated clearly enough. This has been addressed in the amended guidance. Descriptions of learning and national principles of progression, both of which have been explained earlier in this document.

What we have changed

The revised guidance now clearly describes assessment as an ongoing process which is intrinsic to curriculum design and which is indistinguishable from learning and teaching. This is articulated in the overarching guidance, along with the principles and purpose of assessment, so that assessment is clearly viewed as a key aspect of curriculum design rather than a stand-alone process.

The assessment guidance then goes on to describe how a school's curriculum will need to be designed to reflect the national principles of progression, supported by the descriptions of learning, and that it is against a school's own curriculum that learner progression should be assessed.

Further guidance on the principles of progression and the descriptions of learning can be found in the wider Curriculum for Wales.

The level of detail included within the assessment proposals and the potential for inconsistency across schools

Key themes

While there was support from many respondents on the April 2019 draft about the greater flexibility that the assessment guidance provided schools and settings, there was also a call for a greater level of detail in terms of the assessment arrangements schools would be expected to put in place.

What we have changed

In the revised guidance, the message has been made clear that assessment arrangements are a matter for schools and that these should be developed as part of their curriculum design process. However, whilst being careful not to be overly prescriptive, explicit guidance is provided on the fundamental matters that schools should consider when designing their curriculum and assessment arrangements. The guidance is also now more specific on the key processes needed to support effective learner progression, including the need for collaboration within these processes.

- Ensuring a shared understanding of progression.
- Communicating and engaging with parents/carers.
- Transition along the 3 to 16 continuum.

Linked to this, concerns were raised that the greater flexibility provided for would lead to inconsistency across Wales, resulting in a range of issues from inequity of provision through to issues for learners moving between schools. This has been taken in to account primarily in the refinement of the process for developing a shared understanding of progression. The purpose of this process has now been more clearly articulated, along with the role that professional dialogue will play in this. Coupled with the distinct role of the descriptions of learning in conjunction with the principles of progression, this should encourage equity for learners across Wales and help ensure that schools design, adopt and implement a curriculum that enables appropriate progression for learners in all aspects of the curriculum.

How assessment will support the full range of learners, including those in early years and those with additional learning needs

Key themes

Feedback on the April 2019 draft suggested that greater clarity could be provided on how the guidance supported assessment for all learners.

What we have changed

Rather than including specific guidance for certain groups of users, the assessment guidance has been developed in such a way that it is appropriate for all learners, regardless of their age, their stage of development or whether they have any additional needs. Progression is described as being unique to each individual, and throughout the guidance references are made to both appropriate support and challenge, taking in to account any barriers to learning that an individual may have.

In line with the wider Curriculum for Wales guidance, we also set out how Welsh Ministers will publish a curriculum, including appropriate assessment arrangements, for providers of funded non-maintained nursery education in 2021, and how separate statutory guidance to support pupil referral units (PRUs) and those responsible for the provision of education other than at schools (EOTAS) will be published in 2021.

Greater clarity around the relationship between assessment and accountability

Key themes

Many respondents fed back that the relationship between assessment and external accountability and national monitoring needed to be clarified in order to deliver the desired cultural change. We have already taken steps to separate assessment for learning purposes from accountability at a national level by no longer publishing teacher assessment data and National Reading and Numeracy Test data at a school, local authority and regional consortia level. Under Curriculum for Wales there will be a clear separation between these two aspects.

What we have changed

Within the amended guidance we are explicit that the purpose of assessment is to support every learner to make progress and that information gathered through individual learner assessment will be for use within schools only. The guidance goes on to state that this information should not be collected or published by any external body/party, helping to end the current high stakes use of assessment information.

One area where the link between assessment and evaluation and improvement is made explicitly within the guidance is in relation to the self-evaluation process schools will undertake in order to review and improve their learning and teaching, ensuring they are effective in supporting learner progression. The assessment guidance now conveys how the learning gained from the assessment of learner progression and the process of 'Developing a shared understanding of progression' is expected to provide useful inputs in to this process.

The emphasis placed on the purpose and role of e-portfolios

Key themes

Among those respondents who did raise e-portfolios, there appeared to be broad support for the use of such a system in assessment. Having considered the feedback received in relation to e-portfolios, we felt it was essential to provide flexibility for schools to develop and make use of e-portfolios in a way that is appropriate to their own curricula and context.

What we have changed

As a result of feedback, we have removed references to e-portfolios within the amended guidance but will continue our work in developing e-portfolio templates for schools to use and adapt as they see fit.

We have, however, retained and strengthened the messages in the guidance around learners being active participants in the learning process, reflecting on their own learning in order to develop a full and rounded understanding of their own progress. The use of e-portfolios is one way in which this could be enabled.

Next steps

Now that the assessment guidance has been published, we will focus on developing further supporting guidance, exemplification materials and professional learning resources to support the effective implementation of assessment to support learner progression.

These will be aimed at addressing the main challenges associated with implementation of the new assessment guidance and will focus on how schools can be supported to design and develop their own assessment arrangements as part of their curricula.

Cross-curricular skills and supporting frameworks

Key themes

The feedback on the April 2019 draft raised questions about the continued role of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) and the Digital Competence Framework (DCF) and why they were being retained as separate documents given that given that cross curricular skills had been embedded across all areas of the new curriculum. The lack of reference to the teaching of digital skills within the curriculum guidance was raised as a constraint to the development of digital competence across the curriculum.

Regarding the structure of the LNF and DCF themselves, the feedback was supportive of the removal of year groups and the replacement of these with progression steps to align with the Areas. This structural change had been demonstrated in the versions of the LNF and DCF which were issued for feedback. Some questioned the suitability of the frameworks for early years learning/teaching. More specifically within the Literacy Framework there was a suggestion to replace the oracy strand with listening and speaking to align with the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area and the need for greater emphasis on developing phonological awareness in reading.

What we have changed

The curriculum guidance has been updated to better reflect the importance of developing literacy, numeracy and digital competence and the mandatory nature of these skills within the new curriculum. There is emphasis on designing a curriculum that embeds the development of these skills across all areas of learning, where appropriate.

The guidance includes links to the DCF and LNF as non-statutory guidance, providing a common approach to support schools and teachers to provide opportunities to apply and develop these skills.

The content of the Frameworks have been updated to align with the ethos and terminology of the new curriculum. Progression within the Frameworks aligns with progression in the Areas. Progression steps 1 and 2 have been developed with the support of the Foundation Steps working group therefore ensuring they are appropriate for the early years and learners with ALN.
To align with the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area the oracy strand of the LNF has been replaced with listening and speaking and there is greater emphasis on phonological awareness within the reading strand.

The Science and Technology Area provides a range of opportunities to develop a diverse set of digital competencies, recognising their cross-curricular nature and application. Within revisions to the descriptions of learning in this Area use of a range of digital technologies and software applications is implicit, which also complement similar opportunities to develop these skills in other Areas. The guidance is clearer, therefore, that when designing their curriculum, schools and settings should consider how and when these should be taught, building on prior learning.

Next steps

The precursor steps (developed from the routes for learning Roadmap) have not yet been reviewed and will require further consideration during 2020, mindful of the ongoing work to review of the Routes for Learning Routemap.

Interactive versions of the LNF and DCF, with exemplification (where possible), will be developed during 2020.

Guidance will also be required for the transition to and use of the refreshed cross-curricular skills frameworks.

Feedback from Foundation Phase practitioners

Key themes

A wide range of comments were provided by early years practitioners and groups regarding the April 2019 draft guidance.

The main issues raised were as follows.

- Many of the achievement outcomes at Progression step 1 across all Areas were inappropriate for learners aged 3 to 4 and did not address the complexity of child development in the period leading to Progression step 1.
- Learning in general between Progression steps 1 and 2 did not address child development principles and risked undermining the current, holistic approach of the Foundation Phase.
- The breadth of the draft guidance was difficult to navigate, especially for practitioners working in the non-maintained sector, and some language was too complex.
- The online presentation was overly complicated and it was difficult to draw out specific sections relevant to the early years.
- Concerns were expressed about the capacity of practitioners, particularly those in the non-maintained sector to become curriculum designers.
- There were potential issues around baseline and assessment for our youngest learners, risking 'knock-on issues' for transition periods.
- There was value in publishing the 'Culture of learning' document produced during the curriculum development process as part of the guidance to support practitioners in their understanding of the pedagogical principles which underpin the development of the new curriculum.

What we have changed

A Foundation Steps group, consisting of Foundation Phase experts from both the maintained and non-maintained sector and practitioners working with learners with additional learning needs (ALN), reviewed the developmental appropriateness of the achievement outcomes (now descriptions of learning) at Progression steps 1 and 2.

The group worked closely with members of each Area to simplify the language of the descriptions of learning and to ensure it aligned with child development principles to support appropriate learning at these progressions steps. Alongside this, the group also provided ongoing analysis to ensure coherence between Progression steps 1 and 2 and Progression step 3.

The group also drafted a section in the overarching curriculum development guidance on pedagogy, to ensure the core pedagogical principles which work well in the current Foundation Phase curriculum can be adapted to support practice across all progression steps in the new curriculum.

Next steps

'Enabling steps' guidance

As the work of the Foundation Steps Group progressed, it became clear that further work was needed to address the rapid developmental changes which occur in learners during the period of learning leading to Progression step 1. Addressing these concerns requires further guidance on learning and teaching to support practitioners working with children aged 3 to 4 in both maintained and non-maintained settings. This 'enabling steps' guidance will provide high level descriptions of learning which can support planning for learners prior to Progression step 1. These steps will also support ALN learners, many of whom may not progress beyond Progression step 1.

Curriculum for non-maintained settings

Throughout the feedback and refinement process, it has become clear that non-maintained settings are unlikely to have the capacity, expertise or resources to design and develop their own curriculum. We are, therefore, developing a curriculum for use by non-maintained settings to address this. The 'enabling steps' work will provide the starting point for this work.

Review of assessment and baseline arrangements

A professional adviser has been seconded to Welsh Government to work with external partners to review current early years assessment arrangements to ensure they are aligned to the new curriculum and assessment arrangements.

Expressive Arts

Key themes

In feedback on the April 2019 draft there was excitement that the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience has a prominent role in the curriculum. The following points were noted.

- The structure and content of the Area itself could lead to the arts receiving less focus.
- The draft 'planning for learning' section seemed overly technical, with complicated discipline-specific vocabulary.
- Design as part of the Expressive Arts needed to be developed further.
- There were challenges in delivering the breadth of the Area effectively, especially for those without expertise or experience within a specific medium or art (professional learning consideration).

What we have changed

Structure and content

The three statements of what matters statements in learning across this Area reflect the creative process and assist in structuring the learning across five disciplines in the Expressive Arts. The depth and breadth of this Area ensures that it is of equal importance to the other areas. There are now a number of approaches outlined in the overarching guidance that can assist with the realisation of this Area.

Design your curriculum for your Area

More specific principles related to the Expressive Arts are now detailed in the 'Designing your curriculum' section. This includes discipline-specific experience, knowledge and skills. This part of the guidance has been refined to take into account the comments regarding complicated language and discipline-specific vocabulary.

Design

The design process is covered in both the Science and Technology and the Expressive Arts Areas. In Expressive Arts, a strand of progression for design has been added to the statement of what matters for creating to reflect that design is part of all the disciplines in this Area.

Next steps

Further information on creative learning through the arts is available at
https://hwb.gov.wales/zones/creative-learning/

Health and well-being

Key themes

There was broad support for the Health and Well-being Area and broad agreement that the guidance supported a whole school approach. The following points were noted.

- There was a call for more detail on individual topics.
- The inclusion of mental health in the curriculum was welcomed but its priority was perceived to be diminished by insufficient reference.
- There were concerns raised over the use of the term 'self-regulate', and concerns that there was too much emphasis placed on learners to manage and deal with mental health concerns.
- Concerns were raised over the lack of prominence of physical activity and calls for greater specification of requirements.
- Concerns were raised about the need for professional learning support, with the area being new.
- Concerns were raised around safeguarding with a call for greater emphasis on learners being able to recognise safe and unsafe behaviour.
- There were calls for greater reference to human rights in the curriculum.

What we have changed

Clear methodology and guidance

The refined guidance with its new structure clarifies the new approach to the curriculum and clarifies how the documentation should be used. It clarifies how the Curriculum for Wales is a purpose-led curriculum which moves away from specifying lists of 'topics/content'. However the refined the Health and Well-being Area guidance has been drafted in such a way as to ensure descriptions of learning include sufficient depth and breadth to allow schools to teach various topics being sought for detailed inclusion, e.g. conditions, swimming, set number of hours for physical activity, etc.

Mental health

The new structure to the guidance clarifies how the statements of what matters should be used, and the 'Designing your curriculum' section for Health and Well-being clarifies the holistic nature of the statements, making it clear that these should be used as lenses through which different topics and issues can be explored. So while reference to mental health is only in one statement of what matters, this should be used to view curriculum design across other Areas.

The statement of what matters 'How we process and respond to our experiences affects our mental health and well-being', has also been significantly refined to bring clarity to the importance of the learning and experiences in this area and the wording has been amended to ensure the right, positive emphasis is given to mental health considerations.

The guidance has been refined to clarify what is meant by self-regulate, clearly referencing how support from others can contribute towards this. It clarifies that self-regulation is about supporting learners to be independent but providing them with the knowledge and skills to take control.

Safeguarding

The revised guidance strengthens learning in respect of safeguarding, with descriptions of learning under the statement of what matters relating to healthy relationships focusing on providing learnings with knowledge and an understanding of what constitutes safe and unsafe relationships and how to respond.

Human rights

The revised guidance strengthens learning and experiences in respect of human rights. The descriptions of learning for Health and Well-being have been drafted to strengthen a learner's ability to experience and learn about rights, their own and those of others, and learn how to exercise and respect rights.

As well as strengthening the learning and experience within the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience, human rights education and the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is now a cross-cutting element of the curriculum featuring clearly in the overarching guidance, ensuring that human rights and the UNCRC is considered holistically when designing a school curriculum.

Humanities

Key themes

There was broad support for the coverage of the Humanities statements of what matters. The following points were noted.

- Concerns were raised regarding a lack of clear methodology for selecting content.
- There were concerns regarding the visibility and distinct role of disciplines in contributing to the Humanities Area and supporting disciplinary progression.
- Emphasis on the 'local' ('cynefin') in the curriculum was welcomed, however, there was a call for clearer guidance on the national level including which key events and topics should be studied by all learners.
- Additional clarity was requested regarding the role of religious education and its supporting framework.

What we have changed

Clear methodology for selecting content

In response to feedback, the new Curriculum for Wales framework now provides guidance on:

- developing a vision for curriculum in a school
- developing a methodology to design and implement a curriculum
- specific guidance when incorporating learning in all Areas, including the Humanities.

The specific guidance for the Humanities Area emphasises the following key principles when selecting content.

- Local, national and the wider world perspectives.
- Coverage/range.
- Coherence.
- Rigour.
- Focus.
- Sensitivity.

Visibility and distinct role of disciplines

The revised guidance emphasises the key and unique contribution that history, geography, religion, values and ethics, business studies and social studies contributes to the Area. Following discussion with disciplinary experts, we have added a new section to outline the fundamental importance of a professional understanding of the purpose of different disciplines and their interrelationship within this Area.

Further guidance will be developed during 2020 to outline:

- how the concepts at the heart of the contributing disciplines support the Humanities Area

- the nature of progression for each contributory discipline (including any specific disciplinary strands) that contribute to the Area.

Wales and Welsh History

The Curriculum for Wales is a purpose-led curriculum which moves away from specifying lists of 'topics/content' to be taught. It provides a clear articulation of the conceptual understanding required to progress in learning.

The revised guidance for the Humanities Area emphasises that local, national and global contexts are integral to the Area and form part of the key principles relating to the choice of content. It outlines the need for consistent exposure to the story of learners' locality and the story of Wales, as well as to the story of the wider world, to enable learners to develop an understanding of the complex and diverse nature of societies, past and present.

The curriculum guidance is also clear about the importance of school curricula in general reflecting Wales, its cultural heritage and diversity, languages and the values, histories and traditions of its communities and its people. Learners should be grounded in an understanding of the identities, landscapes and histories that come together to form their 'cynefin'. This will not only allow them to develop a strong sense of their own identity and well-being, but to develop an understanding of others' identities and make connections with people, places and histories elsewhere in Wales and across the world.

We are considering what further support would be helpful to practitioners to enable them to realise this vision, including ensuring there are appropriate resources available to support teaching and learning of the histories of Wales and the world.

The role of religion, values and ethics (formally religious education) within the Humanities

Religion, values and ethics will be a statutory requirement in the new curriculum for all learners from age 3 to 16. We will publish for consultation in the spring term a supporting framework which provides further information on how religion, values and ethics can be taught within the Humanities Area. It has been written by practitioners and experts, in conjunction with Welsh Government. The ethos and philosophy of this framework corresponds to that of the Curriculum for Wales 2022.

Languages, Literacy and Communication

Key themes

There was broad support for the focus of the Languages, Literacy and Communication statements of what matters. There was a wide range of feedback provided on the April 2019 draft in this Area, which included:

- the need for more detail in early language development
- the need for ambitious but achievable expectations for Welsh in English-medium settings, schools and streams
- the need for more clarity around international languages at Progression step 2 and Progression step 3
- the need for clarity around literature
- the need to reference translanguaging and language mediation.

What we have changed

Early language development

The descriptions of learning at Progression steps 1 and 2 now reference the incremental steps in early language development. Further detail is available in the revised Literacy Framework. The 'Designing your curriculum' section for the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area contains further information on teaching reading.

Welsh in English-medium settings, schools and streams

Progression in Languages, Literacy and Communication is based on a continuum of learning. This starts with little or no language and develops towards proficiency.

To reflect the different pace and depth of learning in different language learning contexts, the curriculum includes some descriptions of learning which are differentiated for Welsh in Welsh-medium settings, schools and streams, for Welsh in English-medium settings, schools and streams and for international languages. In English-medium the focus is on developing interpersonal communication skills in Welsh. Learners in Welsh-medium will also progress in academic language proficiency in Welsh. Schools and practitioners will develop their curricula to ensure that all learners aged 3 to 16 make progress in Welsh along the language learning continuum.

In order to realise the ambition of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050, the descriptions of learning for Welsh in English-medium settings, schools and streams will be reviewed periodically with the intention in the long term of removing this scaffold and having all schools use the same descriptions of learning for Welsh.

International languages at Progression steps 2 and 3

The descriptions of learning for international languages reflect experiences in different languages from Progression step 2, with progression in an international language expressed from Progression step 3. This means that in addition to Welsh and English all learners should experience and learn at least one international language at primary school. The 'Designing your curriculum' section in the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area notes things to consider when deciding which language or languages to teach.

All descriptions of learning in the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area have been developed based on a language learning continuum with learners beginning with few or no language skills and progressing towards proficiency in the languages they learn. The skills and knowledge in international languages build on experiences and learning about languages through the 'Languages connect us' statement of what matters. They also build on the knowledge and skills gained through learning Welsh and English.

Literature

The **'**Literature fires the imagination and inspires creativity' statement of what matters refers to learners' experience and response to literature and to creating their own works. A definition of literature is provided in the guidance and is intentionally wider than that traditionally used by schools and settings.

The 'Designing your curriculum' section in the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area offers guidance on how to choose literature which is sufficiently rich and substantial to engage learners intellectually and emotionally, to encourage them to be inspired, moved and changed, and to extend their interest and enthusiasm for literature.

It notes that learners should have the opportunity to experience and to learn about literature and creators of literature which have made a significant contribution, be that in Wales (including literature in Welsh and in English) other nations in the UK and internationally (including literature in English and in learners' international and home languages). This contribution might be in terms of a genre of literature, in terms of the language, or in terms of culture and heritage.

Translanguaging and language mediation

All learners in Wales will learn Welsh, English and at least one international language. This Area brings these languages together. Through learning holistically about languages and across languages, the value and benefits of languages locally, nationally and internationally can be reflected. Progression in language mediation and in translanguaging is shown in the descriptions of learning for the 'Languages connect us' statement of what matters and these skills can be applied across all learning in this Area and beyond. Definitions of both 'mediation' and 'translanguaging' are included in the curriculum guidance, as follows.

Language mediation refers to an activity in which meaning from a source is communicated from one person to another person, sometimes within the same language (paraphrasing, summarising) sometimes from one language into another (translating, interpreting). The learner assists people to communicate with one another by relaying, explaining or translating information or ideas.

Translanguaging is a pedagogical practice that alternates the use of two languages for input and output in the same activity. The learner receives information in one language and works with that information in another language.

Next steps

Early language development

Further guidance is being developed to support non-maintained settings (see Foundation Phase section).

Welsh in English-medium settings, schools and streams

Settings and schools will have access to professional learning for staff to improve their Welsh language and language teaching methodology.

International languages at Progression steps 2 and 3

Schools will have access to professional learning and resources to support the teaching of international languages. Examples of how primary schools currently approach teaching a third or subsequent language will be available.

Further information

Further information on approaches to second language learning and teaching is available at (relevant also to subsequent languages):

https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-06/180228-overview-approaches-second-language-acquisition-instructional-practices-summary-en.pdf

https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2019-06/180607-effective-second-language-treaching-approaches-methods-summary-en.pdf

Further information on bilingual teaching methods is available at:

https://www.bangor.ac.uk/education-and-human-development/documents/English-pages.pdf

https://www.bangor.ac.uk/education-and-human-development/documents/Cymraeg-tudalen.pdf

Mathematics and Numeracy

Key themes

Mathematics and Numeracy received less feedback than other areas of learning and experience. This is due to Mathematics and Numeracy being recognisable to the subject taught in the current curriculum, as opposed to other areas that brought current subjects together, and it also enjoys broad agreement internationally as to what constitutes a mathematics curriculum.

The main issues arising were:

- the inaccessibility of the curriculum for early years practitioners and non-specialists and that some of the achievement outcomes were too advanced for this age group
- a perceived disconnect between the curriculum and the numeracy framework
- the specificity of some of the achievement outcomes, as they noted actual tasks rather than being of a more general and overarching nature
- a call for more advice on pedagogy and more examples of how progression would work in practice.

What we have changed

The Foundation Steps Group looked at Progression steps 1 and 2 generally but this work also addressed issues with mathematics and numeracy. In response to feedback, the number of Descriptions of learning at these progression steps has been reduced and they have been made more developmentally appropriate.

Revising the achievement outcomes to become descriptions of learning has taken these statements to a higher level. This has resulted in statements that cover approximately three years of learning and has removed the detailed prescription and individual tasks. In line with this the Numeracy element of the LNF has also been revised so that it is consistent with and reinforces the curriculum.

Some of the issues raised will be addressed by professional learning rather than any refinement of the curriculum. An example here would be the exemplification of progression.

Finally on pedagogy, there is no research that says one way of teaching mathematics is better than any other, but a resource paper on pedagogical guidance will be provided along with the curriculum guidance.

Science and Technology

Key themes

The April 2019 draft Area was generally well received, though there were tensions between those who sought greater levels of detail in this Area and those who thought it may be too prescriptive. The main issues arising were:

- some feedback suggested the breadth of learning across the Area could be difficult to manage
- a wide range of very precise feedback on wording and content suggested accuracy and consistency could be improved
- that evolution should be more explicit for learners of a primary age
- the need for greater clarity regarding the approach to the breadth of learning in the Area, and how that related to the statements of what matters, the development of subject knowledge and thematic curriculum approaches
- a call for more emphasis on climate change and clarity on the position of education for sustainable development and global citizenship (ESDGC)
- greater clarity on the essence of learning for computation
- how schools should approach the teaching of digital skills.

What we have changed

Levels of detail

The restructuring of the Curriculum for Wales Framework as a whole addresses a number of the specific issues raised regarding this Area; for example the level of detail and duplication in guidance for earlier progression steps. There is still some necessary duplication in the 'descriptions of learning' across some statements of what matters at Progression steps 1 and 2 to ensure clarity. In general, however, taking a more holistic approach to revisions to these foundational steps now better represents expected learning as well as reducing the volume of guidance.

Precise points of feedback, with suggested amendments where provided, have been considered by the QI group as part of the refinement process. These have also been supported through expert advisor review. In a number of instances suggestions for additions have not been adopted directly to maintain the principle of subsidiarity in the curriculum framework. However, amendments have been made in many instances to ensure the framework provides scope for schools to include more specific aspects of learning in their curricula.

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Evolution

The statement of what matters about 'living things' notes that living things are diverse, interacting with their environment and evolving over significant periods of time. So the importance and conceptual understanding of evolution is explicit within the what matters framework which applies throughout the 3 to 16 learning continuum, and which is proposed to be made statutory.

The revised guidance makes clear in primary settings we anticipate learning will start at recognising life and growth, moving on to consideration of how living things develop and have offspring, through to being able to describe how they have changed over periods of time. That then provides the basis of further learning in secondary settings on adaptation, mutation and natural selection.

Breadth of learning and relationships between statements of what matters

Revised guidance provided for this Area, and the curriculum as a whole, has made clearer the role of the statements of what matters in learning. The six statements for science and technology are based on groupings of essential learning, so there will be some variance to traditional subject areas. However, the guidance recognises the importance of these disciplines in terms of school curriculum design, teaching, and learner progression.

Climate change and ESDGC

ESDGC has been a key part of education in Wales for over a decade. However, the development of a new curriculum based on four purposes (which encompass and go beyond the seven ESDGC themes) provides the opportunity to integrate guidance in a more meaningful and manageable way for schools. Therefore, this Area, alongside Humanities and Health and Well-being, have been reviewed to ensure learning about climate change, consumption and waste, and the natural environment can be supported through the revised curriculum framework.

Computational concepts and digital learning

The statement of what matters in computation alongside the respective descriptions of learning have been revised to reflect feedback (including expert input in this new curriculum area) to more clearly reflect the key aspects of computation.

As noted in the earlier section regarding cross-curricula skills, Science and Technology also provides a range of opportunities to develop a diverse set of digital competencies, including the use of digital devices. However, it is not the only Area through which these skills might be taught. The guidance has been updated, therefore, to ask schools to specifically consider how and when learners' digital skills using a range of technology and software should be taught, building on prior learning.

Routes for Learning

Routes for Learning is a suite of materials to support practitioners in assessing learners with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). They were originally published in 2006 and are well-regarded both across the UK and internationally. As part of the wider curriculum and assessment reform, we are in the process of updating the Routes for Learning suite.

In April 2019 we published an updated version of the Routemap and 10 videos that exemplified some of the boxes and milestones included on it. Feedback was collected via an online form and an engagement event held in July. This process has been invaluable in helping us further shape our thinking on the Routes for Learning materials.

Working with members of the Routes for Learning Advisory Group, we have considered the comments received. The membership of the Advisory Group includes practitioners from both English and Welsh-medium special schools, as well as academics working in the field of PMLD. In response to the feedback, we have either updated the draft materials directly or we are seeking further views in order to finalise them by summer 2020.

Key themes

Below is an overview of some of the key themes from the feedback on the April 2019 drafts.

- On the Routemap, comments received suggested that respondents would be happy c*hanging the wording of route descriptor* 'Supported 1:1 turn-taking with adult' to 'Aided 1:1 turn-taking with adult', but were equally happy to keep the original wording.
- Agreement that the position of 'Responds to own name' on the original Routemap was not appropriate, however rather than being completely removed, some questioned whether it should be moved lower down on the map to reflect a later stage of development.
- The accessibility of the language used – especially for practitioners who are new to the profession; further clarification was also requested in relation to a number of route descriptors on the Routemap.
- There was strong feedback in favour of a glossary being developed to support the final version of the Routemap, in addition to the information provided in the exemplification videos.
- Respondents welcomed the opportunity to view the video clips and gave positive feedback, noting that the videos were a beneficial resource for practitioners and for supporting new staff.
- That information embedded in the video clips clearly showed what was being assessed while acknowledging the very different needs and responses of individual learners.

What we have changed

Changing the wording of route descriptor 'Supported 1:1 turn-taking with adult'

This matter has been considered as part of the wider review of the language used on the Routemap. We are currently seeking feedback on the recommendations made as a result of this review.

Removal of 'Responds to own name' on the Routemap

This was suggested because experience has shown that learners do not achieve this step independently at this early point. We are currently seeking feedback to ascertain whether 'Responds to own name' should be re-introduced on the Routemap between 'Contingency awareness' and 'Intentional exploration of the environment'.

Accessibility of language and request for further clarification

A small group of practitioners, academics and terminologists met in December 2019 to consider the language used on the English and Welsh Routemaps side by side. A range of recommendations have been made by the group and we are currently seeking wider views before finalising the changes to the updated Routemap.

Requests for additional information

Respondents also requested further clarification about the relationship between the Routemap and the updated cross-curricula skills frameworks for literacy, numeracy and digital competence. An explanation of the role of the Routemap is included in the Routes for Learning draft guidance which is currently available for feedback until 6 March and further reference to the frameworks will be made in the final version.

Format and content of video clips

Feedback included the recommendation that more examples for each box and having clips of learners across a range of ages was included. Many asked whether it would be possible to provide a platform and a quality assurance process that would allow practitioners to upload clips on an ongoing basis. We continue to seek additional video clips to exemplify the route descriptors on the map and will be considering future opportunities to gather clips following publication of the materials in the summer.

Information embedded in exemplification video clips

Respondents valued having more than one clip per box/milestone and felt this assisted in providing a depth of understanding of the route descriptor. Respondents also acknowledged that the updated draft guidance and the assessment booklet will help support practitioners using the Routemap.

The Routes for Learning draft guidance is currently available for feedback and the assessment booklet is being updated ready for summer 2020.

Next steps

Respondents identified a clear need for professional learning opportunities for practitioners to develop their understanding of the Routemap and assessing learners with PMLD. This includes school to school working and sharing good practice.

As we finalise the materials ready for summer 2020, we will be identifying professional learning opportunities that can be provided. The Routes for Learning guidance, assessment booklet and video clips when finalised can also be used to support staff professional learning.

Time, resources and support to successfully implement the new curriculum

Supporting delivery (case studies, materials, networks)

During the feedback phase, a diverse range of organisations offered their support both at a national level and to schools. A number of respondents also highlighted the importance of case studies and exemplars of learning and teaching to help teachers to visualise and understand the curriculum in practice.

Following January, we will be working with practitioners, regions and organisations and stakeholders to begin to develop materials that support realisation. We will be looking to pilot and prioritise key areas for this.

A key part of our national approach will need to be professional networks which support collaboration, the sharing of learning and expertise and the identification of professional implications of the reforms. These networks will need to be conduits to engage with the wider sector to ensure that all practitioners have support to further develop their skills and knowledge to realise the new curriculum.

Culture of learning

This document was shared informally with the intention of being a guide for schools and settings which sets out evidence-based aspects of curricular and pedagogical development for consideration when further shaping a culture of learning. It built upon Successful Futures' 12 pedagogical principles and embraces the ethos of that vision for the success of the Curriculum for Wales 2022.

In simplifying the guidance, these principles have been condensed and incorporated into the overarching 'Designing your curriculum'. The 'Culture of learning' document will be reviewed in light of this and we will consider whether the extended document should be released as a resource.

Critical importance of professional learning

Feedback has made clear that professional learning to support the new curriculum is critical.

The National Approach to Professional Learning[1] was officially launched in 2018. This "made in Wales" approach to professional learning marked a key point in the reform journey. It aligns with the new professional standards, the Schools as Learning Organisations approach and professional learning model, to create a vision fit for the evolving education system in Wales for all educational practitioners, not just teachers. We are committed to ensuring that all practitioners receive the support they need to deliver our new transformational curriculum.

The National Approach to Professional Learning is based on significant national and international research, and is designed to ensure that:

- schools, leaders and teachers are able to access best practice in defining and sharing professional learning at school level, especially through the use of critical enquiry and collaborative learning
- the providers of professional learning – the regional consortia, our universities and others – design professional learning experiences that are high-quality, accessible and fit for purpose, for example through designs that include collaborative enquiry and e-learning
- we as a government fund the right sorts of professional learning that evidence tells us will have an impact on practice in classrooms.

Integral to the National Approach is ensuring that professional learning for our practitioners is adequately resourced including both financial resources and time for teachers and leaders to engage with high quality development opportunities.

We are expecting a profound transformation in the way our practitioners and leaders think about their professional learning in light of the new curriculum and we need to provide support to schools to enable them to make this step-change.

It is our intention to give each school an extra INSET day each year for the next three years during the summer term specifically to give teachers more time for their professional learning. This additional INSET day is to be introduced by way of the Education (School Day and School Year) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 which are currently passing through the Assembly and are due to come into force on 1 September 2019. The first additional INSET day should take place during the summer term 2020.

We recognise that one additional INSET day in itself is not enough. This is why this Professional Learning inset day is part of a wider package of our National Approach to Professional Learning, supported by an additional £15m million investment in 2020-21.

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[1] https://gov.wales/national-approach-professional-learning-napl

Teaching assistants are an integral part of our education system, and it is the quality of our school workforce that will make the difference in transforming young people's lives. Over the past months a consultation on new professional standards for teaching assistants has been undertaken and new standards introduced. Joint work on developing both the Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) and the Teaching Assistants Learning Pathways (TALP) is continuing to ensure that the TALP and HLTA Status is aligned to the new professional standards and is in line with the National Approach to Professional Learning.

The current range of reforms to the education system in Wales heightens the need to ensure that school leaders are well prepared and supported to lead their organisations through these changes. *Our national mission* puts leadership at the centre of reforms and 'Inspiring leadership' is a key enabling objective.

To support this area of work the Welsh Government established The National Academy of Educational Leadership (NAEL).

An Academy Associates Programme has also been piloted that supports setting based system leadership. NAEL is committed to drawing on the expertise of current leaders and growing the current and next generation of leaders for Wales by improving the status, morale and pride in being a Welsh leader in the education system. Its approach to leadership development will aim to empower leaders to lead the system by building strengthening partnership working within and between all parts of the sector.

Wales also has an ambition that all schools develop as learning organisations in keeping with OECD principals. Schools that are learning organisations have the capacity to adapt more quickly and explore new approaches, with a means to improving learning and outcomes for all their learners.

We are determined to use the governance structure of the programme to monitor progress in our teachers' and leaders' access to professional learning, and to ensure that schools are ready to realise the new curriculum at the right time. To do this we are:

- receiving termly reports from the regions on access to their national programme of professional learning
- ensuring that schools' professional learning plans are signed off by their Challenge Advisers using demanding quality criteria
- ensuring that schools publish their professional learning plans so that they can be scrutinised by the communities they serve and experts in the field.

Accountability

What have we done?

The evaluation and improvement arrangements are being developed to support the implementation and realisation of the Curriculum for Wales, and we have been developing our approach in consultation with the profession. Draft proposals are accessible via the following link.

A number of changes have been made over the last few years, as a result of the feedback we have received. Ceasing the sub-national publication of data from teacher assessments, and their use in school continuous improvement arrangements, has ensured the integrity of their intended purpose. The set of interim Key Stage 4 indicators implemented this year will help to address, as early as possible, some of the most pressing unintended consequences of previous measures, while the longer-term arrangements that will foster a culture of continuous and sustainable improvement are considered. Amendments to Key Stage 4 target setting requirements have ensured alignment to these changes and signified a move away from a disproportionate emphasis on a small number of performance measures to a wider range of indicators which better capture the whole learning experience, learner progress and our ambitions for the new curriculum, while enabling all schools to be considered within their own context. This year, a short review of the All Wales Core Data Sets was also undertaken to align their contents with changes to the Key Stage 4 indicators and amended aspects of the content to better align with latest policy developments, with regards to the type of behaviours we want to promote.

Over the next three years we will be undertaking a series of activities to support the further development of the arrangements. These include: commissioning research into the future evidence needs to support self-evaluation and continuous improvement at all levels in the school system; piloting approaches to providing support to schools, and resources to support high-quality self-evaluation for improvement, and; continuing work across all tiers to encourage the appropriate and effective use of information and evidence in support of the curriculum reform. As we develop this work we will ensure that it supports the cultural change needed to support education reform.

Concerns around transition

There were concerns surrounding the transition from primary to secondary education, and then again from secondary to tertiary education. It was felt that with the draft guidance there would be a great deal of variance between schools and this would give rise to a fractured learning continuum. We have made it clear in the revised guidance that cluster working is paramount and schools need to work together to design curricula to promote smooth transition and ensure the learning continuum is secured for all learners.

The curriculum design and implementation for secondary schools should also take into account the various pathways that are available for learners at 14 to 16 and post-16, this is highlighted in the overarching guidance. Schools need to take into account when designing their curriculum the expertise and opportunities that further education institutions offer for learners.

The ongoing work with curriculum implementation would also provide the opportunity to produce case studies of cluster working and transition between non-maintained settings to primary, primary to secondary and secondary to tertiary.