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An overview of Curriculum for Wales 2022

This guidance contains information on the structure and components of Curriculum for Wales 2022, the approach to progression, and how the curriculum must be inclusive for all learners.

It also includes information on elements of learning that span the whole curriculum. All practitioners should consider and authentically embed these elements in all learning.

The story so far

Our national mission is to raise standards, reduce the attainment gap, and deliver an education system that is a source of national pride and public confidence. Curriculum for Wales 2022, made in Wales but shaped by the best from around the world, is fundamental to achieving that mission.

The next few years are crucial in achieving ambitions which are shared – and demanded – across Wales. We need to ensure that our children and young people are able to lead fulfilling personal, civic and professional lives in our modern democracy.

Both at a national level and at a setting and school level, the curriculum needs to prepare children and young people to thrive in a future where digital skills, adaptability and creativity are crucial, where there is a blend of experiences, knowledge and skills, and that is rooted in Welsh values and culture.

Curriculum for Wales 2022 seeks to allow for a broadening of learning, supporting settings and schools to be more flexible in their approaches, and provides education leaders and practitioners with greater agency, enabling them to be innovative and creative.

At the heart of this are the four purposes of the curriculum, setting out the aspirations for all children and young people by the age of 16, enabling them to be successful learners, who play an active part in their community and wider society, and who are prepared to thrive in an increasingly complex world.

Proposals for legislation

The White Paper consultation *Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum* set out the legislative proposals for the new curriculum.

The proposal is that funded non-maintained settings and schools will be under a duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which comprises the six areas of learning and experience. Welsh, English, religious education, relationships and sexuality education, and the three cross-curricular responsibilities of literacy, numeracy and digital competence must be embedded in the areas of learning and experience as appropriate.

Funded non-maintained settings and schools will have a discretion as to how they design their curriculum to meet their curriculum duties. However, they must have regard to the *Curriculum for Wales 2022 statutory guidance* issued by the Welsh Ministers. In practice that means they should follow the guidance unless they have good reason not to.

The draft *Curriculum for Wales 2022 statutory guidance* consists of:

- this guide to Curriculum for Wales 2022
- the guidance for each of the areas of learning and experience
- assessment guidance¹.

The Welsh Government will consider the outcomes of the White Paper consultation *Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum* to inform decisions on finalising proposals for legislation on the curriculum.

Process of reform

The draft *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* has been developed by practitioners through a pioneer network which represents all types of schools in Wales. That network is in partnership with regional consortia, local authorities, Estyn, the further and higher education sectors, and other key experts and key stakeholders. They have researched best practice and curriculum models, considered expert advice, in order to take forward the findings and recommendations from *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* (2015).

This guidance and the areas of learning and experience guidance are intended to provide a national framework that settings and schools can build on to develop their own curricula. They are not intended to be comprehensive or exhaustive syllabi or a guide for organising timetables. The *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* sets out:

- what settings and schools should take into account in designing their curriculum
- the broad expectations for learners for each area of learning and experience at each progression point.

¹ We are publishing *Assessment proposals to inform the development of statutory guidance* which sets out our initial thinking to inform final assessment guidance.

The next phase of co-construction is to seek the views of the whole education profession, children and young people, and parents/carers, as well as all other interested stakeholders and partners. This affords the opportunity for everyone to engage with *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance*, give feedback on what has been developed and provide suggestions for refinement. The feedback phase will conclude on 19 July 2019 and the feedback will be considered by education professionals involved in its development. *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* will then be refined before it is made available in January 2020 for rollout in September 2022 for all year groups in primary school and Year 7 in secondary schools. The curriculum will roll out to Year 8 in September 2023 and year on year until it is introduced to Year 11 in 2026.

What is the scope of Curriculum for Wales 2022?

Curriculum for Wales 2022 has been designed for all learners aged 3 to 16. Current proposals for legislation are that the new curriculum will be provided for:

- 3 to 5-year-olds who attend nursery classes in maintained schools and those attending funded non-maintained settings
- 5 to 16-year-olds who attend maintained schools in Wales.

Current proposals are that pupil referral units will be required to teach a broad and balanced curriculum but will not be required to teach the whole of the curriculum. This is in line with current requirements for pupil referral units. The Welsh Government will consider whether to expand the requirements for pupil referral units further following the White Paper consultation *Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum*.

The four purposes of the curriculum

The four purposes of the curriculum, as set out in *Successful Futures*, have guided the whole design and development of Curriculum for Wales 2022. They are the starting point for all decisions in respect of Curriculum for Wales 2022 and school-level curricula should be designed and guided by these same four purposes. 'Curriculum' includes all the learning experiences and assessment activities planned in pursuit of the four purposes of the curriculum, which are to develop children and young people as:

- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

Curriculum for Wales 2022 is designed to help all learners realise these four purposes. Each purpose is more than a headline; it is also described in terms of key characteristics. In their entirety they should underpin all teaching and learning in Wales.

The *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* has been designed to assist teacher agency and support education professionals and practitioners to enjoy the autonomy to make school-level decisions within a common framework, and to design and develop curricula relevant to the context and specific needs of learners. This also applies to funded non-maintained settings.

Curriculum for Wales 2022 has also been developed to reflect the strengths that the Foundation Phase has brought to education in Wales. The Foundation Phase ethos, principles and pedagogy will continue to be central to the delivery of early years education and have been incorporated across Curriculum for Wales 2022 to ensure it is appropriate and accessible for all practitioners and learners.

Areas of learning and experience

Curriculum for Wales 2022 organises learning around six areas of learning and experience which are:

- **Expressive Arts**
- **Health and Well-being**
- **Humanities**
- **Languages, Literacy and Communication**
- **Mathematics and Numeracy**
- **Science and Technology.**

Each of the areas of learning and experience has been designed to support learners to realise the four purposes of the curriculum, and provides the starting point and aspiration when developing a school-level curriculum. They encompass existing subjects and disciplines, and are intended to promote collaboration and cross-disciplinary school-level curriculum development and design.

The guidance for each area of learning and experience includes:

- a statement explaining how the area of learning and experience supports the four purposes of the curriculum
- statements of what matters in learning
- principles of progression, including achievement outcomes developed around progression in the area of learning and experience
- planning for learning support.

The areas of learning and experience are designed to operate together as part of a holistic curriculum. They are not intended to be watertight compartments but instead allow learning to be drawn from across the areas of learning and experience. Decisions as to how these should translate into day-to-day activities should take place in settings and schools. Learning should be coherent and planned across the different areas of learning and experience, building on inherent links, dependencies and interdependencies. These links should be drawn upon during school-level curriculum design and development, with practitioners working creatively and collaboratively to support learners' realisation of the four purposes of the curriculum.

The area of learning and experience guidance provide guidance on how mandatory subject areas can be embedded in the area of learning and experience, as well as Welsh and English, religious education, and relationships and sexuality education. Practitioners should embed learning to meet these duties within and, where appropriate, across the areas of learning and experience, and the cross-curricular responsibilities of literacy, numeracy and digital competence should be embedded across all areas of learning and experience as appropriate.

What matters in Curriculum for Wales 2022

The *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* organises learning within each area of learning and experience by what matters statements. Each what matters statement articulates fundamental key concepts that express what matters most in that area of learning and experience, including a headline and a supporting narrative or rationale. The headline is designed to capture the essence of the fundamental learning concepts, with the supporting narrative providing further exploration of the learning area, and a rationale as to why it is considered important.

They outline the key learning within an area of learning and experience building towards the four purposes of the curriculum, and provide supporting guidance about what it means to be an educated learner by the age of 16 in Wales. They also draw on the component disciplines where they are relevant to the area of learning and experience, and provide context for the associated experiences, knowledge and skills.

What matters statements can also help make sense of different aspects of learning which otherwise could appear unconnected. Across the continuum for learners aged 3 to 16, understanding what matters can help them recognise why particular aspects of their learning are important: making connections over time and between different experiences, knowledge and skills.

Importantly, the areas of learning and experience guidance also use the what matters statements as the basis of organising learning progression and progress. This can enable learners to revisit these concepts throughout their learning journey, developing increasingly sophisticated understanding and the ability to apply that learning in wider contexts across what matters statements and areas of learning and experience.

Progression

The intention is that learners will progress along the same continuum of learning for each area of learning and experience from ages 3 to 16. Progression is signalled through progression steps at five points on the continuum of learning, relating broadly to expectations at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16. The pace at which they progress along the continuum may differ – allowing for a variety of diversion, repetition and reflection as a learner’s thinking develops over time to new levels of sophistication.

In the area of learning and experience guidance, progression steps are articulated through a series of achievement outcomes for each what matters statement. They are reference points to plan learning and teaching, including assessment, and can also be used on an ongoing basis to monitor how learners are progressing, to provide clarity in relation to the pace of progression and to identify where interventions are needed. As the document *Assessment proposals to inform the development of statutory guidance* explains, it is not intended for progression steps to be used for summative purposes at a set age or point in time.

Achievement outcomes

Within the *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance*, achievement outcomes are statements made from the learner’s perspective and expressed in terms such as ‘I have ...’ and ‘I can ...’ and provide descriptions of learning as broad expectations over two to three years. In developing *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance*, pioneer groups used the concepts of deep or secure learning which means learning that brings together a breadth of knowledge and skills which the learners can use and apply in new and challenging contexts. Deep learning can support learning descriptions in the achievement outcomes to be met securely.

Within *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance*, achievement outcomes articulated for each progression step are not designed to be used as a ‘best-fit’ model, which means they should not be used as individual criterion to judge overall achievement. Instead achievement outcomes should be used as the basis for building an accurate picture of how learners are progressing in relation to the various knowledge, skills and competencies across the areas of learning and experience, as well as the four purposes of the curriculum. This would provide insight for practitioners and learners on how they are progressing, where they need support and what they should do next.

Current proposals for legislation are that there will be a duty on headteachers to set achievement outcomes for each progression step. Headteachers will have discretion in setting achievement outcomes but will need to have regard to the guidance. It is also proposed that a duty is placed on schools to provide a curriculum that enables most learners to reach, or go beyond, the achievement outcomes set by the school and progress along the continuum for the progression steps according to the learner’s educational development.

Planning for learning

The *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* for each area of learning and experience includes additional information considered essential to design and development of curricula in settings and schools.

Links within and with other areas of learning and experience

There are natural relationships that exist within and across areas of learning and experience. Those provided in the *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* are intended as examples only, and are an indication of wider collaborative considerations during the design and development of school-level curricula.

Experiences, knowledge and skills

In the guidance for each area of learning and experience, this section highlights what is considered key to achieving what matters in learning, consequently supporting the four purposes of the curriculum. These aspects of learning may apply across the continuum of learning, or be sequenced against specific progression steps, depending on the area of learning and experience.

The statements of experiences, knowledge and skills are not exhaustive but are provided in support of the what matters statements, as a common starting point for curriculum design and development in settings and schools, and in support of the learning expressed through the achievement outcomes. This approach is intended to give a clear sense of what should be considered while also providing the flexibility to develop school-level curricula in response to the specific needs of learners.

Other proposed statutory requirements

In order to develop a rich curriculum consistent with the aims of *Successful Futures*, a range of further elements must be appropriately embedded within the areas of learning and experience. Current proposals for legislation are that there should be duties to teach Welsh; English; literacy; numeracy and digital competence; relationships and sexuality education; and religious education.

To assist schools to enact the new curriculum, the areas of learning and experience provide guidance on learning and planning support which contribute to these elements. They also include supporting material which explains how the area of learning and experience supports learning in these elements.

The cross-curricular responsibilities of literacy, numeracy and digital competence

The cross-curricular responsibilities of literacy, numeracy and digital competence support almost all learning and are essential for learners to be able to participate successfully and confidently in the modern world.

Literacy, numeracy and digital competence need to be considered as part of school-level curriculum design across all areas of learning and experience. They are embedded within *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance*, where they support the learning set out within the areas of learning and experience guidance. It will be the responsibility of all settings and schools to plan progression across the full range of literacy, numeracy and digital skills in a flexible manner, appropriate to the needs of individual learners.

To ensure that learners develop high levels of competence in these skills and have frequent opportunities to develop, extend and apply them across the curriculum, the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) and the Digital Competence Framework (DCF) will continue to be available. Revision of the content of the frameworks will take place this year to ensure that they are consistent with the progression set out in *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance*.

Relationships and sexuality education

Current proposals for legislation are that relationships and sexuality education will be mandatory in all funded non-maintained settings and maintained schools for learners aged 3 to 16. The four purposes of the curriculum support learners to grow as healthy, confident individuals who are able to build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, and develop their mental and emotional well-being by developing their resilience and empathy. Relationships and sexuality education is essential to supporting this and should provide learners with the experiences, knowledge and skills to form and maintain a range of positive relationships.

As part of the White Paper consultation *Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum*, the Welsh Government invited views on what role if any parents'/carers' current right to withdraw their child from relationships and sexuality education should play in the context of Curriculum for Wales 2022 and will clarify proposals following the consultation.

Relationships and sexuality education offers opportunities for learners to explore how their experiences, decisions, social and cultural interactions, and relationships, drawn from the interpersonal level, through local, national, United Kingdom and global contexts, can help them grow in empathy and recognise the dignity and respect due to others, and to the living world around them. It is about nurturing and developing learners' understanding of the influences that can affect them, both positively and negatively, as they seek to develop and establish a range of respectful, healthy relationships. This includes learning about:

- relationships
- values, rights, culture and sexuality
- understanding gender
- violence and staying safe
- relationships and sexuality, and health and well-being
- the human body and development
- sexuality and sexual behaviour.

The core principles of relationships and sexuality education are that it should be:

- inclusive
- holistic
- relevant, engaging and co-produced
- creatively designed
- empowering and transformative
- protective and preventative.

Developing relationships and sexuality education through different areas of learning and experience gives learners a rich and wide-ranging view of human relationships and sexuality from a variety of disciplines.

Current proposals for legislation include that the existing duty to issue statutory guidance on sex education will be retained (and extended to include relationships and sexuality education) but reformed so that the requirement should be for Welsh Ministers to issue guidance to secure that relationships and sexuality education is provided in a way that is age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate for learners.

Religious education

In proposals for Curriculum for Wales 2022, religious education will continue to be compulsory. We do not propose that funded non-maintained settings will be required to teach the agreed syllabus but they will have to have regard to guidance as to how best this could be taught.

We do not intend to make any change to the requirement for schools to deliver the agreed syllabus. Voluntary aided schools with a religious character will continue to be able to deliver their denomination syllabi and parents/carers of learners attending voluntary controlled schools can continue to request that their child studies the denominational syllabus rather than the locally agreed syllabus if they wish.

A new supporting framework is being developed to provide further detail about the relationship between religious education, the agreed syllabus, and the areas of learning and experience. This is being taken forward by a group of religious education practitioners, curriculum pioneers, academics, and representatives from Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs) and the National Advisory Panel for Religious Education (NAPFRE).

It is our intention also that religious education reflects our historical and contemporary relationship in Wales to philosophy and religious views, including non-religious beliefs. Therefore the current legislation will be amended to ensure the agreed syllabus for religious education takes account of non-religious world views which are analogous to religions (e.g. humanism).

The Welsh and English languages

One of the key characteristics of the four purposes of the curriculum is to develop ambitious, capable learners who can communicate effectively in different forms and settings, using both Welsh and English. All learners should have appropriate pathways for learning Welsh and English to enable them to develop the confidence to use both languages in everyday life.

Current proposals for legislation are that there will be a duty on all funded non-maintained settings and schools to teach Welsh for learners aged 3 to 16.

Opportunities to use Welsh within and beyond the classroom (including on digital platforms) support learners to use Welsh confidently and appreciate its usefulness to communication in a bilingual Wales. Facilitating the use of Welsh, through planned linguistic progression in every phase of education from ages 3 to 16, and as part of a whole-school approach, offers opportunities for all learners to develop bilingually.

Expectations for those learning Welsh in English-medium settings/schools/streams will be reviewed and gradually increased as cohorts learn through Curriculum for Wales 2022, and as the Welsh language methodology skills and experience of practitioners increase. This will contribute to realising the ambition of having one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

The Languages, Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience brings together English, Welsh and international languages. Settings and schools should support the development of learners' Welsh-language skills across the whole curriculum. Our proposal is the new curriculum will still allow settings, such as Cylch Meithrin, and schools to fully immerse children in the Welsh language.

The *Siarter Iaith* (Welsh Language Charter) is a national framework for all settings and schools to provide a holistic basis for planning experiences across the curriculum in order to increase learners' use of Welsh and develop their confidence in the language. It supports increased opportunities for learners to speak Welsh in a variety of contexts and embed their use of Welsh language patterns from an early age. The principles set out in the *Siarter Iaith* are in keeping with the *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance*.

Other cross-cutting elements and considerations

In order to develop a rich curriculum consistent with the aims of *Successful Futures*, a range of further elements have been signalled within *Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* which should be embedded in school-level curriculum design and development. It is proposed that these components will not be subject to separate statutory provision.

Where appropriate, the guidance for each area of learning and experience explains how the area of learning and experience supports learning in these elements.

Welsh dimension and international perspective

The need for learners to be rooted in their own cultures and to have a strong sense of identity within their locality, Wales, and the wider world is a key theme within the four purposes of the curriculum.

Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance recognises that learners should have the opportunity to develop their identity through exploring questions of culture, language and belonging in their locality and in Wales. It should provide them with an understanding of the diverse histories, cultures, values and heritage of modern Wales, and the contribution they can make to their communities. The new curriculum should provide learners with the means by which to imagine both Wales' future and their own roles in its unfolding story.

An international perspective offers opportunities for learners to reflect on their roles and responsibilities as global citizens living in a culturally and linguistically diverse society, and to respond to the challenges of working towards a sustainable and equitable future.

Learners should experience contexts that help them explore and make connections between their locality, Wales, the United Kingdom, Europe and wider global issues. This will help them explore positive relationships based on mutual respect, tolerance and dignity in a diverse society.

We are creating a curriculum for Wales and, as such, Wales and an international perspective should be evident across Curriculum for Wales 2022 and be included in the learning journeys of all learners in all areas of learning and experience.

Learners should fully understand, appreciate and analyse:

- their locality and Wales' place and contribution to the United Kingdom and the wider world
- the current and historic impact of the wider world, including the other nations of the United Kingdom, on Wales and the locality of their setting or school
- the impact of the interplay between these various relationships.

When designing and developing a school-level curriculum these aspects of learning should be approached in a manner that is appropriate and meaningful to each area of learning and experience. For some areas of learning and experience this forms a key aspect of the content or focus of learning itself; in others it provides context to make sense of processes, theories or principles, e.g. through examples, application in real-world scenarios, or case studies.

For many areas of learning and experience this approach may mean starting learning journeys from their locality and Wales, acknowledging their cultural and linguistic diversity, and then also developing their understanding of wider contexts. Where appropriate, learners should also be encouraged to draw comparisons and/or give consideration to the manner in which the locality, Wales, the United Kingdom and the wider world are constantly influencing each other.

Wider skills

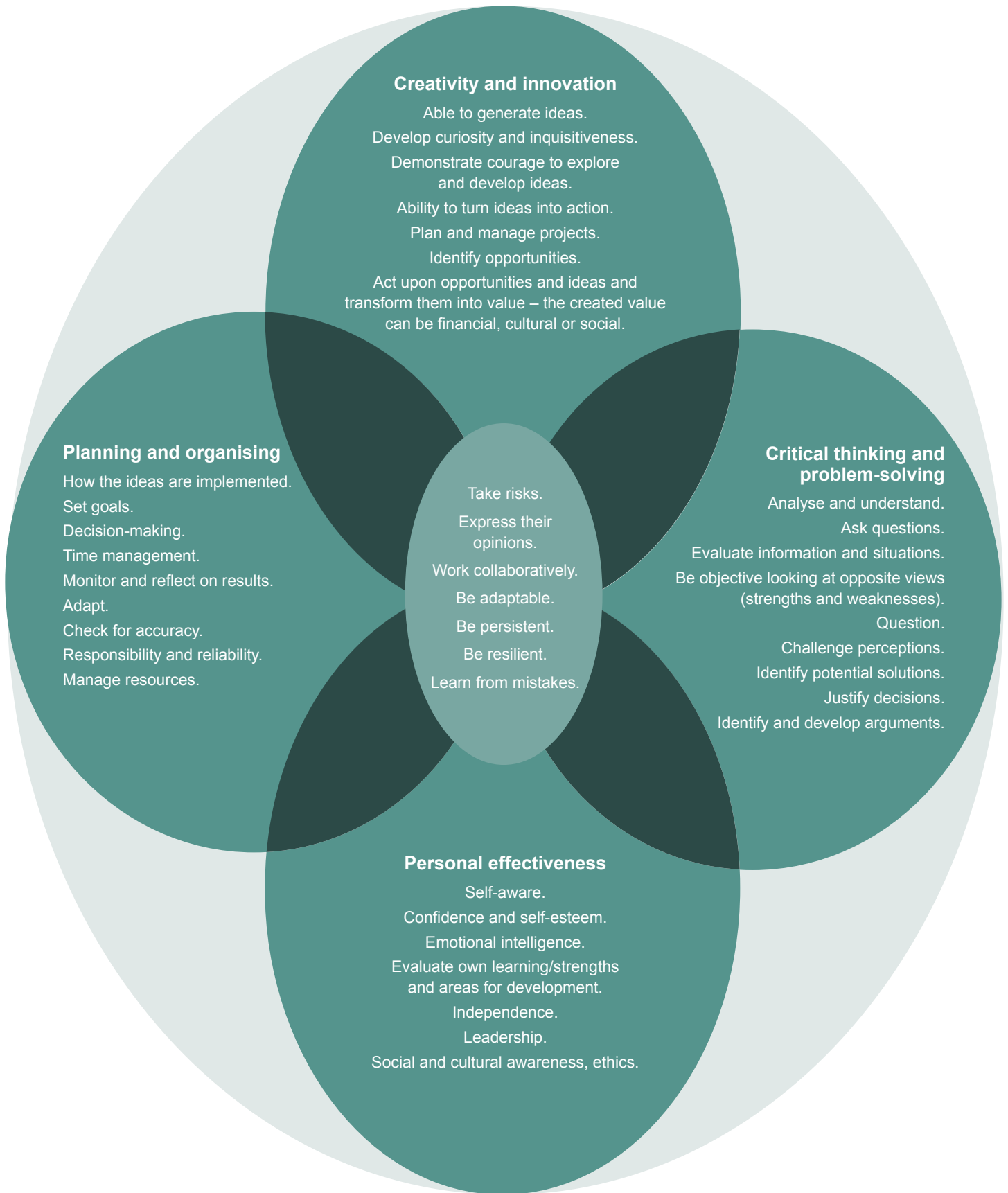
Our guidance is that the following wider skills are integral to the curriculum and the design of the areas of learning and experience. They are an essential school-level curriculum design and development consideration.

- Critical thinking and problem-solving – marshalling critical and logical processes to analyse and understand situations and develop responses and solutions.
- Planning and organisation – implementing solutions, executing ideas, and monitoring and reflecting on results.
- Creativity and innovation – generating ideas, openness and courage to explore ideas and express opinions.
- Personal effectiveness – reflecting on and understanding oneself and others, behaving in effective and appropriate ways; being an effective learner.

It is vitally important learners develop a range of wider skills necessary to prepare for modern life and the workplace. These wider skills are essential in order for learners to become more resilient and be better able to respond to the challenges that they face, both now and in future.

The diagram on the next page has been developed to support integration of these wider skills across the six areas of learning and experience as part of curriculum design and development in settings and schools.

Characteristics, attributes and values of wider skills



Careers and work-related experiences

Careers and work-related experiences include careers education, information, advice and guidance. It will help all learners develop the awareness and aspiration of a range of career choices, creating a more diverse, economically engaged workforce in Wales.

Career management and planning skills of motivation, self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decision-making, application and resilience support learners to realise the four purposes of the curriculum. This is supported by each area of learning and experience. Careers and work-related experiences should enable learners to develop:

- understanding of the factors that guide, shape and influence career prospects and development, and the skills needed to progress their career plans and development
- awareness of individual skills, attributes and interests, and how they impact on career choices, raising learner aspiration and understanding of consequences
- employment and enterprise knowledge, which can be applied when seeking, applying for and sustaining employment, or self-employment
- the skills to manage everyday life as independently as they can.

An understanding of the world of work should begin at an early age. Primary-aged learners should benefit from a greater awareness of job roles, the benefits of work and the negative consequences of stereotypes. This forms the basis of continued learning, enabling learners in secondary school to make informed and appropriate careers decisions.

There is currently an existing duty for learners aged 13 to 16 to be provided with a programme of careers education, and the Welsh Government is considering the future legislative provisions required following the White Paper consultation *Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum*.

Learner choice at Progression steps 4 and 5

All learners will have an entitlement to education across all of the areas of learning and experience. Breadth of learning across the areas of learning and experience should be achieved through continued learning up to the age of 16 to provide learners with a sound educational basis for future life, study and work.

As learners progress they will begin to specialise and make choices. Each of the areas of learning and experience guidance has been designed to support learners to specialise as they progress as well as to have broad experiences, thus allowing for learner choice.

The four purposes of the curriculum should be central to discussions with learners regarding their progress and choices, as well as consideration of future careers and supporting courses and qualifications. Flexibility to build a tailored profile for each learner would also support those who are able to go beyond the achievement outcomes articulated at Progression step 5 by continuing to deepen their learning.

Qualifications Wales has been closely involved in the curriculum reform process. Building on the collaborative approach to curriculum development, they will engage extensively with stakeholders, including professionals directly involved in curriculum development, to consider how qualifications for 14 to 16-year-olds should align to the new curriculum.

By the time the first learners who embark on the new curriculum in 2022 reach the stage when they will be sitting GCSEs, Qualifications Wales' work on this will be complete and any new arrangements will be in place.

Human rights education and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Human rights are the freedoms and protections to which all people are entitled. Learners have specific human rights guaranteed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Curriculum for Wales 2022 can play an important role in understanding and promoting respect for human rights and the rights of the child. Our guidance is that this could be achieved by schools promoting:

- learning about human rights: the acquisition of knowledge and skills about human rights, and the sources of those rights including the UNCRC
- learning through human rights: the development of values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect human rights values
- learning for human rights: the motivation of social action and empowerment of active citizenship to advance respect for the rights of all.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales has guidance to support children's rights approaches in education. This includes mapping how articles of the UNCRC underpin each area of learning and experience and each of the four purposes of the curriculum. Guidance can be accessed online on the website of the Children's Commissioner for Wales at www.childcomwales.org.uk.

