



ADDYSG CYMRU
EDUCATION WALES

cenhadaeth ein cenedl | our national mission



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Education in Wales is changing.

We want your help
as we change.

**A Consultation for
Young People
and Communities**



Introduction

Have you heard that education in Wales is changing?

You might have experienced some of that change already, but it's going to have an even bigger impact on the children and young people who follow in your footsteps through school.

It's all part of the Welsh Government's **vision** to improve learning: something that your teachers, future employers and politicians are all agreed needs to happen.

We hope you're on board, too, and we'd like you to tell us whether we're on the right track.

In Wales there are over 26,000 teachers, teaching millions of facts and figures, across masses of subjects, to almost half a million children and young people across over 1,500 maintained schools. Teachers also support learners in developing life skills and help them prepare for their futures outside school.

WE WANT THE BEST POSSIBLE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN WALES



For change to happen successfully, there is a sequence of events to follow. We need to:

- Know why something needs changing
- Understand where we want to get to (what the outcome should be)
- Agree what changes will get us there
- Decide how best to make those changes happen

All of this requires lots of thinkers, writers and talkers, to come together to agree on the best way forward.

And you are part of this process.

The process

WHAT LEARNERS ARE TAUGHT

The Curriculum and assessment arrangements are being reformed.

UNDERSTANDING HOW PUPILS ARE PROGRESSING IN THEIR LEARNING

This requires the Welsh Government to **change the law.**

Before that happens, something called a **White Paper** is published explaining why and how decisions have been made and what should be included in new laws.

This is where you come in.

We want your views on the proposals being put forward. That way, we can include what you tell us when we draft those new laws, which then get put before politicians to make the final decision.

The White Paper runs to 60 pages and over 21,000 words, so we thought we'd also publish something a bit shorter.

Here it is:

We'd love to know what you think.

**Our National Mission:
A Transformational Curriculum – proposals for a new legislative framework**

For those of you who are super-interested, this is a quick look at what's happened so far (quite a lot, in fact).

Since 2015 the Welsh Government has worked alongside schools and experts to design the **new curriculum for Wales**.

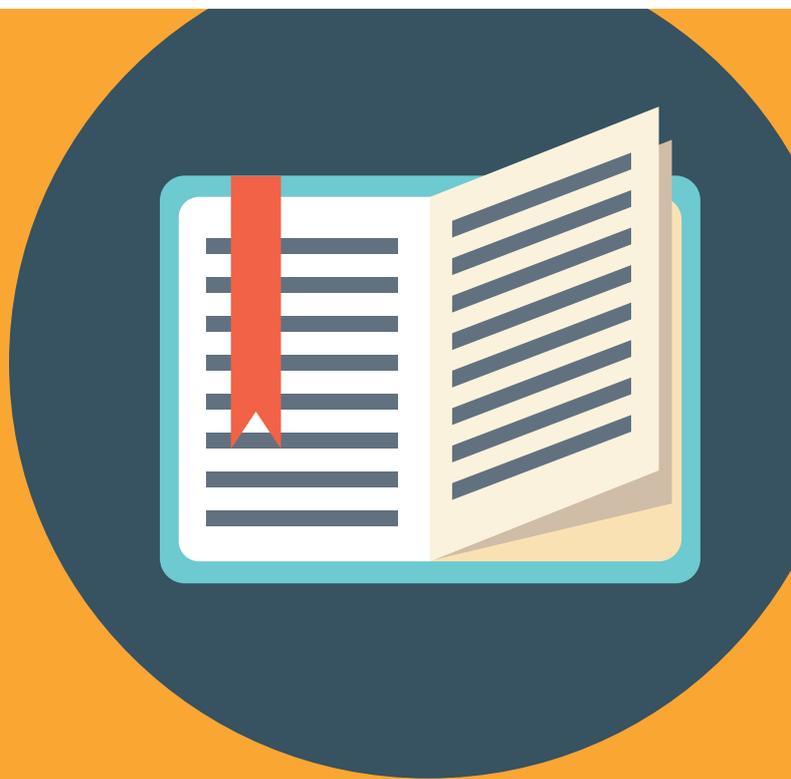
The story so far...

In 2015, Professor Donaldson wrote an important report called *Successful Futures* with the aim of shaping a **successful and exciting future** for the children and young people of Wales.

Everyone had a chance to throw in views and ideas in the **Great Debate**, which resulted in:

A more fine-tuned report called *A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life* (2015). This outlined the steps to get us to where we want to be.

Schools from across Wales were asked to help develop the new curriculum and test out the changes to see if they worked. These are our **Pioneer Schools**.



The OECD* provided advice from world experts in its report – *Rapid Assessment of Education in Wales*.

Publication of the Welsh Government's action plan – *Education in Wales – Our national mission* (2017).

*The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

All of which has led us to this point

- Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum
- proposals for a new legislative framework



The 'to do' list includes:

- Publish the **Curriculum for Wales for feedback** (April 2019)
- Establish new laws (which this White Paper paves the way for, and where we are seeking input from you)
- Roll out the changes **from September 2022** (schools can start preparing for the changes now. Many are already teaching with the principles of the new curriculum in mind).



By 2026 everyone from 3 – 16 will be taught the new curriculum

One of the main reasons we are doing this is because the world around us is changing so quickly.

Your teachers (well, the older ones, at least) remember life before mobile phones, digital downloads, and social media.

During this period, facts and knowledge mostly came from books, newspapers, and documentaries on BBC2.

Today: learning takes place in a much wider setting, and at a much faster pace.

In the past, people generally had a rigid career path and often worked for just one employer for their whole lives, before retiring to spend more time in their garden.

Today: we don't even know what the jobs of the future will look like!

That's why the new curriculum is designed to support learners to **'adapt to a changing world'**



In fact, what we actually said was, we wanted to:

“shape the detailed design of a new curriculum which better reflects wider national and societal needs, including those of learners, communities and the economy”.

Which basically means:

“Making sure that the things learners get taught in the different subjects properly prepare them for their future life and job(s), which is better for learners, better for all of us, and better for the economy”.



Ready to embrace
opportunities

NEW SKILLS

Understanding a changing world

Entrepreneurial

Playing a part in the community

Able to take **KNOWING**
good decisions **RISKS**

Teachers have more freedom to
decide what to teach

Informed

Learn how
to thrive in a
digital world

Broad
and
balanced

Four Purposes

QUICK RECAP:

We want to make sure that what is learnt and experienced in school better prepares learners for life ahead.

That's the reason for the changes.

We need a really solid foundation in order to build those changes, so we've come up with four clear purposes, which are our **starting point**.

The **Four Purposes** will support learners to be:

- **Ambitious and capable**, ready to learn throughout their lives
- **Enterprising and creative contributors**, ready to play a full part in life and work
- **Ethical and informed** citizens of Wales and the world
- **Healthy and confident**, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society

Areas of Learning and Experience

Schools in Wales teach a variety of subjects to suit all talents.

In order that teachers can better plan lessons to help learners achieve the **Four Purposes**, we think they need greater flexibility. That's why we are proposing six **Areas of Learning and Experience** (which is a bit of a mouthful, so we'll be referring to them as AoLEs).

Children and young people will still be taught the subjects they're familiar with already, it's just that they'll be clustered under these broad headings:

- Expressive arts
- Health and well-being
- Humanities
- Languages, literacy and communication
- Mathematics and numeracy
- Science and technology

As a guide for teachers, we will list the **key aspects of learning** of each AoLE, and we'll call these '**what matters**'. They'll be a bit like a manual, or instruction booklet. Every school needs to make sure that they use the '**what matters**' when planning their lessons.

So, every AoLE has key aspects of learning, and teachers will be supported by the what matters guides, which will help them to plan lessons to fit learners' needs so that they benefit from the full curriculum.

It's important that we get the structure right, so that's why these six AoLEs are going to be listed in the new legislation.



Cross-curricular responsibilities

There are three important skills that help learners do well in their studies, whatever subjects they're doing:

literacy, numeracy and digital competency.

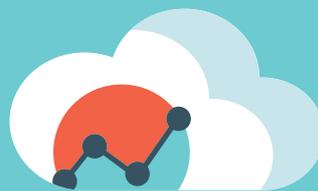
We believe learners should be supported as much as possible in developing these skills so that they do well in school, and to ensure they're well prepared for future life, in work, and playing a part in their local community.



They're so important that we're going to list them in the new legislation. We're calling them cross-curricular responsibilities* because they are the things learners need whatever they're studying or whatever they do in life. It's our responsibility to make sure they have these skills.

*That's another mouthful, so you're more likely to hear them referred to as CCRs.

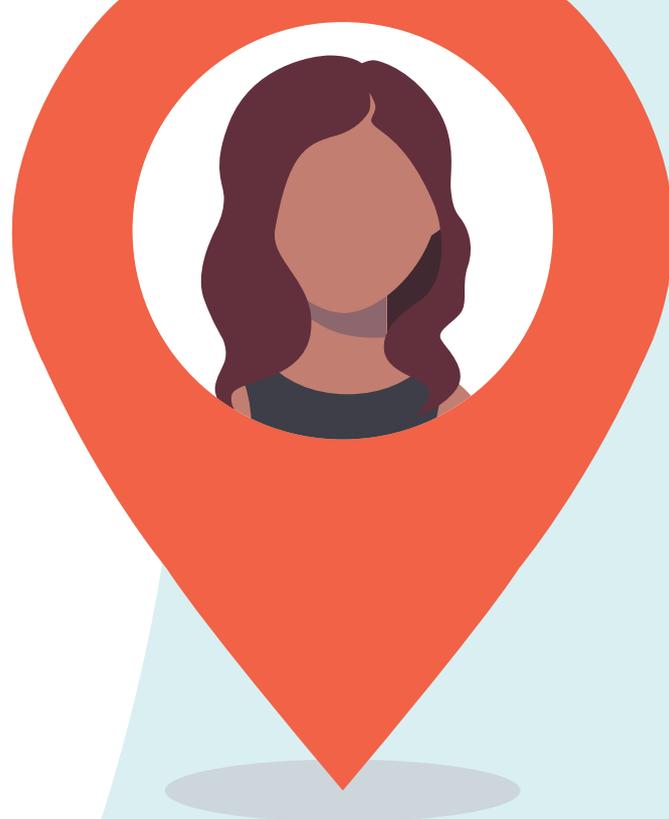
We are also keen to arm learners with wider skills, which we'll embed in the AoLEs. These are: critical thinking and problem solving; planning and organisation; creativity and innovation; and personal effectiveness.



Flexibility for teachers

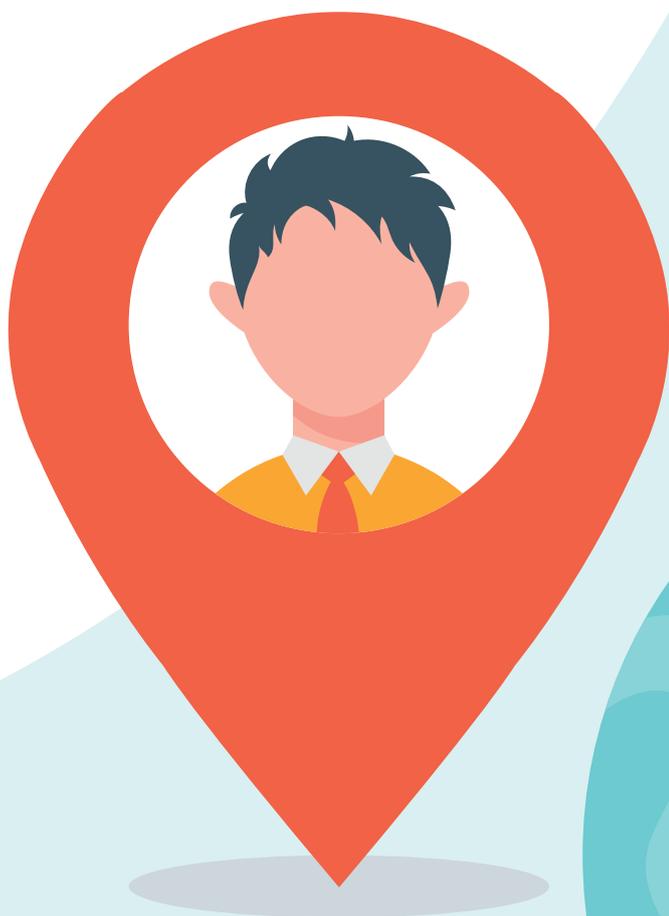
The lessons that are taught in classrooms now are quite rigid, and that means that Mrs Jones in Caernarfon is giving pretty much exactly the same lesson as Mr Williams in Lampeter, or Ms McKenzie in Swansea.

Remember, our aim is the **Four Purposes**, and we think that allowing schools greater freedom to decide on the content of lessons and the style of teaching is a better way of doing it.



This means that the Mrs Joneses, the Mr Williamses and the Ms McKenzies, will be able to make lessons more relevant to the places children and young people live in, enabling learners to use local news and events in their learning, with lessons being shaped to best suit the class.

Teachers will have more freedom to teach in ways they feel will have the best outcomes for their learners.



Consultation Question:

The new Curriculum for Wales is designed to give teachers **flexibility** over how and what they teach, with the aim of helping learners to learn. What are your views on this?

Progression and Reference points



School life is currently organised into chunks, according to age. They're called Key Stages, ranging from Foundation to Key Stage 4. We are going to change that so that the new curriculum is organised as a **continuum of learning** from 3 to 16.

In other words, learners will be on a seamless journey throughout their school life, without any bumps in the road, and without a rigid emphasis on the end of one stage where we look backwards, but **rather an emphasis on looking forward.**

Our new system reflects the fact that everyone develops and progresses at different rates, whilst some take a different path to reach the next stage on their learning journey.

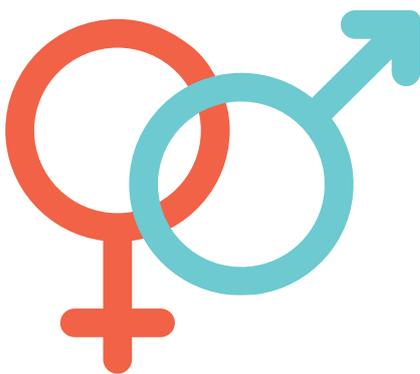
We still need to know how learners are doing along the way. Teachers will continue to monitor how well things are going at all times, but at certain ages, they'll be taking a deeper look at progress, and seeing what milestones have been reached. These are going to be called Progression Steps, and we need to set these out in the new laws.

Relationship and Sexuality Education – RSE

We asked a group of experts to offer ideas on how the new curriculum should support the teaching of sex education. They agreed the most important thing to focus on is **relationships**.

Sex education will be renamed **Relationships and Sexuality Education** (or RSE) and it's going to be made **statutory** for learners from the age of 3 to 16, meaning that it will *have* to be taught to everyone (the **new laws** will be needed to make this possible).

The subject will be broader and should equip children and young people with the confidence to discuss and understand things like domestic abuse, how childhood experiences can affect future mental health, as well as LGBT* issues. These topics can't be boxed up neatly: they crop up in other subjects, too, so learners may find discussions on relationships and sexuality coming up in literature, history, or geography.



*Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender

Two really important things to note here:

- 1) RSE will always be developmentally appropriate, meaning that it will be taught in a way that suits the learner's physical and mental development at that point (so no-one will be told things that they're not mature enough to understand).
- 2) We think that teachers would appreciate some help here, too, which is why they'll be supported to provide learners with this education.

Finally, those young people who stay on in sixth form can also choose to continue with RSE, but it will no longer be compulsory, as it is at the moment.

positive relationships

where to go to get support and advice

emotional well-being

lived experiences

healthy and confident

respect

mutual trust

the developing human body

behaviour

physical well-being

social and cultural influences

Religious Education

We're also proposing to make **Religious Education** statutory for learners from the age of 3 to 16, but not compulsory for those staying on in sixth form (although sixth formers can still **choose** to have RE). We're doing this so that the **Areas of Learning and Experience** work across all subjects and the whole age range from 3 to 16.

Our plan is to make RE broader, looking at religious beliefs as well as non-religious beliefs comparable to religious beliefs, so that learners get a balanced understanding and a more rounded education.

Like RSE, extending the reach to those aged 3 and making it optional for those aged 16 and beyond will need to be included in the **new laws**.



Consultation Question:

What are your views on our new approach to RSE and RE, and how do you feel about making both optional for sixth formers?



Develop respect and understanding of different forms of religion over time and in different societies.

Right to withdraw

For a very long time, parents or guardians have had the right to ask that the children or young people they're responsible for can be excused from sex education or religious education. We feel that if we're to successfully achieve the **Four Purposes** and give learners a balanced education and rounded experiences, both RSE and RE are an important part of the **new Curriculum for Wales**. The Right to Withdraw may be inconsistent with this aspiration.

It's a tricky one. We feel we need to modernise these arrangements, but we're not sure how.

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Consultation Question:

We'd love you to have a discussion with your class, or group of friends, about this, and tell us if there's a better approach, and whether we should remove the Right to Withdraw, change it or keep it as it is.



Welsh and English

We are proud of the fact that Wales is a bilingual nation and one of our big national goals is for there to be **one million Welsh speakers by 2050**.

Welsh and English will continue to be compulsory up to the age of 16. We are going to stop using the term 'Welsh second language' so that everyone can benefit from following the same journey whatever school they're in – Welsh, bilingual or English schools.

CYMRAG

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Consultation Question:

Do you think our approach will help learners speak Welsh by the time they are 16?

On that Welsh language pathway throughout schooling, learners will be reaching different points at a different pace, but the emphasis for **everyone** will be on **speaking** and **understanding** Welsh, with the aim that by 16, **all children and young people in Wales will be able to use Welsh in everyday situations**.

This is a big change in direction for all of us and schools and learners will be given time and support to adapt, especially those in English schools.

Welsh and English will appear on an equal footing in the **new laws** to reflect Wales has two official languages.



Assessment and evaluation

We're sure that you're all-too familiar with assessments.

The real purpose of assessment is to provide information for the teacher on how best to support pupils' learning progress.

As we change the curriculum so that it is based on the **Four Purposes**, and introduce new **Progression Steps**, we think it's also time to change the way we carry out **Assessment and Evaluation**.

The current system of 'Levels' is being changed, so that learners' achievements can be assessed in a way that better suits our rapidly changing world.



Consultation Question:

What do you think of changing the assessment arrangements so that they are more about the learner?



Instead, assessment will be based on **Achievement Outcomes** at each of the Progression Steps, and schools will be expected to keep on nudging learners forward, shaping what they learn so that they can go above and beyond.

The system we've agreed is more focussed on **the learner**, helping **them** to understand:

- **what they can do,**
- the things they need to **work on,**
- and their **next steps.**

Teachers will have control over the assessments so that they can set what pupils **learn next**, based on where they **are now**.

Summary

Thanks for sticking with us!

It's a lot to take in,
so here's a summary:



We want to make sure that what children and young people learn and experience in school better prepares them for their life ahead – for their career and the part they play in their local community.



Our starting point is the Four Purposes – supporting learners to become ambitious and capable, enterprising and creative, ethical and informed, healthy and confident.



Our education system needs to be more fluid and flexible, so we're going to reorganise subjects into Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs).



We also want to give teachers more freedom in the classroom over how and what they teach (although, they will be supported by the 'what matters' guides).



Literacy, numeracy and digital competency are so important, that they'll be central to learning, and we're going to call them Cross Curricular Responsibilities (CCRs).



A continuum of learning will replace key stages.



Relationship and Sexuality Education will become statutory up to 16 and will be much broader (with a focus on relationships).



Religious Education will also be compulsory up to 16, and will look at different beliefs as well as non-religious views



We're pondering whether the Right to Withdraw from Relationship and Sexuality Education and Religious Education should stay or go.



Everyone will follow the same Welsh language journey, so that all children and young people in Wales will have conversational Welsh. The term 'Welsh second language' will no longer apply.

We hope that you now have a better understanding of what the Curriculum and Assessment Reform White Paper is all about and we're really keen to hear your views on.

Please get involved.

Send us your individual thoughts or get together in a group with classmates and friends to have a discussion.

Although many of the reforms are being undertaken in one form or another already in many schools, not all of the reforms will affect you because you may have left school before the end of implementation, but by sharing your views with us, you'll be shaping the future of those following in your footsteps.

We hope we've given you enough information here but if you need more detail, you can read the whole White Paper by going to <https://beta.gov.wales/our-national-mission-transformation-al-curriculum>



Responses to this consultation should be e-mailed/posted to the address below to arrive by 25 March 2019 at the latest.

E-mail:

CurriculumReformLegislation@gov.Wales

Post:

**Curriculum Reform Legislation Team
Curriculum and Assessment Division
Education Directorate
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ**

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What are your views on this?

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? Consultation Question:

Do you think our approach will help learners speak Welsh by the time they are 16?

Consultation Question:

What do you think of changing the assessment arrangements so that they are more about the learner?

We do not need you to share with us any information that will identify you in your response. We will not keep any information about you that you accidentally share through responding (for example, your email address). However, it would be very helpful if you could indicate your age group by ticking one of the following boxes:

- 10 years or under
- 11-13 years
- 14-16 years
- 17-19 years
- 20+ years

See next page for information on how responses will be used

How responses will be used

The Welsh Government will be in control of any information you give us while getting involved with the consultation. Welsh Ministers will use their powers to decide how they take your information and use it to do their job.

Welsh Government staff will see how you respond to any of the questions in the consultation. If the Welsh Government looks at the consultation deeper it may ask other organisations to use the information, but if Welsh Government does this, we will make sure that these organisations keep the information safe.

To show that the consultation was run properly, the Welsh Government will write a report showing some of what people said.

You should also know that people can ask for information from us (Freedom of Information legislation).

Your rights

Under the data protection law, you have the right:

- to be told about any personal data we hold about you and to access it
- to make correct any wrong information in that data
- to (in certain situations) say you don't want us to use all or some of your personal data
- for (in certain situations) your data to be deleted
- to (in certain situations) have data moved
- to make a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer:

Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

e-mail: Data.ProtectionOfficer@gov.wales