

OUR NATIONAL MISSION: A  
TRANSFORMATION CURRICULUM –  
PROPOSALS FOR A NEW LEGISLATIVE  
FRAMEWORK

WELSH GOVERNMENT INTEGRATED IMPACT  
ASSESSMENT

## CONTENTS

Section 1. What action is the Welsh Government considering and why? .....	3
Section 2. What will be the effect on social well-being? .....	8
Section 3. What will be the effect on cultural well-being and the Welsh language? .....	11
Section 4. What will be the effect on economic well-being? .....	12
Section 5. What will be the effect on environmental well-being? .....	13
Section 6. Record of Full Impact Assessments Required .....	15
Section 7. Conclusion .....	16
Full Impact Assessments.....	20
A. Children’s Rights Impact Assessment.....	20
B. Equality Impact Assessment.....	28
C. Welsh Language Impact Assessment .....	42
D. Biodiversity Impact Assessment .....	46
Questions.....	49

## SECTION 1. WHAT ACTION IS THE WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSIDERING AND WHY?

As outlined in *Education in Wales: Our National Mission*, the Welsh Government is working to develop transformational curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales to enable young people to have higher standards of literacy and numeracy, become more digitally and bilingually competent, and evolve to enterprising, creative and critical thinkers. The new arrangements have equity and excellence at their core and help to develop confident, capable and caring citizens.

*Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales (2015)* sets out practical and fundamental issues with the existing curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales, including:

- Levels of achievement not as high as they should be (as evidenced by PISA and Estyn);
- An Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) review in 2014 which concluded the current assessment and evaluation arrangements are unsatisfactory in improving performance amongst a high proportion of Welsh young people;
- Lack of continuity within education and during transition between stages;
- Poor educational experience for young people at Key Stage 3; and
- A curriculum devised in 1988 does not reflect the world that young people are living in now and the implications of a changing world on what and how young people need to learn.

These issues extend to the legislative control and accountability system that are seen to have: diminished the creative role of the school in curriculum delivery; and inhibited agility and responsiveness in dealing with emerging issues in the locality and world.

Consequently, there is a need to ensure that Wales has a broad and balanced curriculum which is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, outlining what knowledge learners should have and what skills they should acquire. One of the core recommendations of *Successful Futures* is to place the four purposes at the heart of our education system so that children and young people develop 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; and
- › healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

As outlined above, Education in Wales: Our National Mission sets out the aim of developing transformational curriculum and assessment arrangements to enable children and young people to have higher standards of literacy and numeracy, become more digitally and bilingually competent, and evolve into enterprising, creative and critical thinkers.

To support this, the Welsh Government proposes the introduction of primary legislation to facilitate the new curriculum and related learner assessment and school evaluation arrangements. The proposals contain provisions which act as enablers to changes in behaviour, culture and delivery in the system. The new arrangements must allow professionals the flexibility to deliver specific content and experiences which meets the needs of their learners and their specific contexts. It must also allow practitioners to use professional judgement and creativity to develop their curriculum in the classroom.

The introduction of new evaluation and improvement arrangements to replace the current, limited accountability measures will support the new curriculum and assessment arrangements. High-stakes accountability systems can lead to significant, negative unintended consequences. In addition, to the stress that these systems inevitable place on schools and their pupils, such cultures can divert attention from meeting the needs of young people as individuals. Based on the international evidence, the new evaluation system will prioritise improvement.

### **Long term**

The curriculum is being developed to ensure it is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and to ensure education delivers its priorities and addresses the needs of businesses and the economy in the future. A nation's prosperity, cohesion and well-being are built upon a successful education system.

The four purposes provide the starting point for all teaching and learning, providing expectations for learners to develop the skills, knowledge and approach to learning that will form the basis for what they need throughout their lives.

The recommendations in Successful Futures, which are followed through to these proposals, encourage less detail to be set out in primary legislation to enable more flexibility in the longer term to ensure that the curriculum is fit for purpose, can evolve and be evaluated.

### **Prevention**

Disadvantage, in many forms, has an effect on the educational achievement of children and young people. The curriculum forms the basis of statutory education and is being designed in ways that engages the interest of all children and young people to enable them to achieve. This has important implications for their progression through adult life. The four purposes of the curriculum contribute to breaking multiple negative cycles by supporting children and young people to be: ambitious, capable learners; enterprising, creative contributors; ethical, informed citizens; and healthy confident individuals when they leave statutory education.

Education in Wales: Our National Mission sets out the Welsh Government aim to create strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being to support the development and implementation of transformational curriculum and assessment arrangements. Another key action outlined in the strategy is to expand the Pupil Development Grant (PDG), formerly known as the Pupil Deprivation Grant, building on its success in narrowing the attainment gap and breaking barriers to learning.

The Health and Well-being AoLE will draw on subjects and themes from mental, physical and emotional well-being. All the AoLEs in the new arrangements will have parity, making mental health and supporting well-being key elements of the curriculum. While the new curriculum will be instrumental, developing positive health and well-being in learners is a wider issue, which is highly dependent on a whole-school approach – this is being considered by Pioneer Schools as part of the curriculum design process. This is supported by the proposals for statutory Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) which will seek to nurture and develop learners' understanding of the influences that can affect them, both positively and negatively, to support them to develop respectful, healthy relationships. This focuses the curriculum on supporting the prevention of negative outcomes as a result of negative relationships and behaviours.

### **Integration**

The new curriculum is designed so that it maximises its contribution to each of the seven well-being goals outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 shown below:

A prosperous Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the four purposes of the new curriculum which will be provided for in legislation is to enable ‘enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in work and life’ and each Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE) will contribute to this purpose.</li> <li>• The curriculum will embed careers education and work related experiences across all AoLEs to ensure learners gain insight into work and careers – and build employability skills.</li> <li>• Literacy, numeracy and digital competence will be specified as the three cross-curricular responsibilities ensuring the fundamentals are in place.</li> </ul>
A resilient Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The characteristics which underpin the four purposes can contribute to raising awareness of biodiversity and ecology: Under ethical, informed citizens: all children and young people show their commitment to, and recognise their dependence on, the sustainability of the planet; and understand and consider the impact of their actions when making choices and taking action.</li> <li>• The flexibility of the proposed legislation will allow for teaching to emphasise biodiversity and ecology in learners’ local environments (Science and Technology AoLE), whilst also facilitating a broader world view (Humanities AoLE).</li> </ul>
A healthier Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the four purposes of the new curriculum which will be provided for in legislation is to enable ‘healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society’ and each area of learning experience will contribute to this purpose.</li> <li>• The proposals will provide for compulsory Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) for pupils up to 16. This is intended to raise the profile and quality of the learning experience in this area and ensure it receives proper emphasis.</li> </ul>
A more Equal Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the four purposes of the new curriculum which will be provided for in legislation is to enable ‘ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn thorough out their lives’ and each AoLE will contribute to this purpose.</li> <li>• The proposals will define Areas of Learning Experience which will be studied up to the age of 14, ensuring a continuum of experience through compulsory education and ensuring breadth of topics studied is maintained.</li> <li>• The proposals will replace ‘key stages’ with ‘Progression Steps’</li> </ul>

	which provide reference points to test each young person's progress in their learning.
A Wales of cohesive communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the four purposes of the new curriculum which will be provided for in legislation is to enable 'healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society' and each area of learning experience will contribute to this purpose.</li> <li>• Religious Education (RE) will form part of the Humanities AoLE and be compulsory from 3 – 16, enabling learners to gain insight into a broad range of cultures and philosophical perspectives</li> </ul>
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposals will include a statutory requirement for Welsh (and English) for all pupils up to 16.</li> <li>• The curriculum will create a single pathway for Welsh to encourage a step change in provision by removing the concept of 'Welsh as a second language.'</li> </ul>
A globally responsible Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the four purposes of the new curriculum which will be provided for in legislation is to enable 'ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the World' and each area of learning experience will contribute to this purpose.</li> </ul>

The nation's economic prosperity, social cohesion and well-being are built on the foundations of a strong and successful education system. Whilst this work is designed to support directly the delivery of 'Ambitious and Learning' theme in Prosperity for All (2017), there is also a distinct link between all the key themes in the national strategy (Prosperous and Secure; Healthy and Active; Ambitious and Learning; and United and Connected) and the four purposes of the curriculum. Consequently, the proposals reinforce or contribute to multiple policy areas within Welsh Government and the current Government's vision for Wales.

Underpinning this work is a belief that someone's ability to benefit from education should not be determined by where they live or what their income is. This is a curriculum for all learners with a focus on a more personalised approach to learning and progression.

Education in Wales: Our National Mission (2017) contributes to Ambitious and Learning theme, and has a 'Transformational Curriculum' at the core of its enabling objectives.

## Collaboration

The proposals outlined in the White Paper have an impact beyond practitioners, on learners, schools and settings, governing bodies, local authorities, regional education consortia, Estyn and Qualifications Wales.

Successful Futures (2015) set out that full curriculum and assessment arrangements should be redesigned with schools and expert stakeholders. Co-production has been key to the development of these arrangements, for example:

- Pioneer Schools working with its cluster schools and its supporting partners has brought together practitioners, Welsh Government, regional consortia, Estyn and Qualifications Wales
- The governance of the Curriculum Reform Programme includes key educational partners on the main decision groups.
- Wider stakeholders and experts have been involved the development of the AoLEs as well as the curriculum structure as a whole where they have particular interests or specialist knowledge.

## Involvement

The co-production of the new arrangements has ensured that those who will be implementing the change have been involved from the earliest stages of design. This emphasis on collaboration across the education system in support of the four purposes (which broadly support to the seven national well-being goals) supports the approach outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. Further consideration of the views of those impacted by the proposals will be considered in April 2019 when the curriculum and assessment arrangements are made available for feedback.

Further information will be added following the White Paper consultation on the views of stakeholders and the public on these proposals.

## SECTION 2. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON SOCIAL WELL-BEING?

### 2.1 People and Communities

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal affect people and communities?**

Two of the four purposes of the new curriculum, which will be provided for in legislation, is to enable 'healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society' and 'ethical, informed citizens who are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world.' Each AoLE will contribute to these purposes.

The development of the curriculum has involved a model of co-production with a national network of Pioneer schools (representing rural, urban, Special and schools of different language mediums), key educational partners (including Regional Consortia, Estyn and Qualifications Wales) and a variety of stakeholders and experts.

## **2.2 Children’s Rights**

Ministers are required to have due regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child when exercising any of their functions. A Children’s Rights Impact Assessment is attached at Annex A.

## **2.3 Equality**

An Equalities Impact Assessment is attached at Annex B.

## **2.4 Rural Proofing**

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal impact on rural individuals and communities?**

The curriculum is designed to apply to every learner in every classroom in Wales. The Pioneer Schools network includes schools of different sizes in locations across Wales, including rural areas, in collaboration with Welsh Government, the Middle Tier, stakeholders and experts.

Further understanding of the potential impact of the new curriculum and assessment arrangements on rural settings will be gathered when the curriculum is made available for feedback in April 2019.

At present we don’t foresee a need for a full Rural Proofing Impact assessment based on the proposals as there are no structural changes to the education system and the flexibility in the new arrangements will suit different schools and settings. This will be kept under review as the curriculum is made available for feedback in April 2019.

## **2.5 Health**

**2.5a How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal impact health determinants?**

Successful Futures identified four purposes of education in Wales, which are provided for in legislation – one of which is to support children and young people to become healthy, confident individuals. The four purposes are at the heart of the new curriculum and are the starting point for all decisions on the development of the new curriculum and assessment arrangements. In addition, Health and Well-being is one of six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE). The AoLEs

are listed alphabetically in Successful Futures to emphasise that they are of equal importance in a broad and balanced curriculum.

The Health and Well-being AoLE will draw on subjects and themes from mental, physical and emotional well-being. In addition, the development of the new curriculum involves Pioneer Schools considering how the school environment supports children and young people's social, emotional, spiritual and physical health and well-being. While the new curriculum will be instrumental, developing positive health and well-being in learners is a wider issue, which is highly dependent on a whole-school approach.

In health and well-being, the What Matters statements as organisers of the AoLE focus on supporting learners:

- To develop of a healthy and active body
- In their mental and emotional health through their experiences and how they respond to them
- to make healthy and positive decisions
- To interact positively with their environments
- To form and maintain positive relationships.

The proposals will provide for compulsory Relationships and Sexuality Education for pupils up to 16. This is intended to raise the profile and the quality of the learning experience in this area.

### **2.5b. Could there be a differential health impact on particular groups?**

The proposals relate to children and young people of statutory school age.

Subsidiarity is key to the new curriculum. High level principles will be set out in the curriculum developed at national level to provide a starting point for school-level curriculum planning. This allows practitioners to select content appropriate to the needs of their learners.

At present, we do not foresee the need for a full Health Impact Assessment as there are not differential impacts on particular groups of children and young people. This will be kept under review as the curriculum is made available for feedback in April 2019.

### **2.6 Privacy**

A privacy impact assessment is not required for these proposals as they do not relate to the collection or use of personal information.

## **SECTION 3. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON CULTURAL WELL-BEING AND THE WELSH LANGUAGE?**

### **3.1 Cultural Well-being**

#### **3.1a How can the proposal actively contribute to the goal to promote and protect culture and heritage and encourage people to participate in the arts sports and recreation? (for Welsh Language see section 3.2)**

The new curriculum removes the current distinction between core and foundation subjects and gives all AoLEs parity. This includes the Expressive Arts, Health and Well-being and Humanities AoLE. It will be statutory for learners to continue to study elements of each Area of Learning and Experiences to the age of 16.

Successful Futures states that each AoLE should include, where appropriate, both a Welsh dimension and an international perspective. A draft rationale and principles for embedding these aspects across the curriculum have been developed and refer to providing learners with the opportunity to develop their identity through exploring questions of culture, language and belonging in their locality and in Wales. It provides them with an understanding of the diverse histories, cultures, values and heritage of modern Wales and the contribution they can make to their communities.

#### **3.1b Is it possible that the proposal might have a negative effect on the promotion and protection of culture and heritage, or the ability of people to participate in arts, sport and recreation? If so, what action can you take to avoid or reduce that effect (for example by providing alternative opportunities)?**

We have not identified a negative effect during the curriculum design process. Feedback on the implementation implications will be gathered once the draft curriculum is made available in April 2019.

### **3.2 Welsh Language**

A Welsh Language Impact Assessment can be found at Annex C.

## SECTION 4. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON ECONOMIC WELL-BEING?

### 4.1 Business, the general public and individuals

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal impact business and the public?**

One of the four purposes of the new curriculum, which will be provided for in legislation, is to enable 'enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in work and life' and each AoLE will contribute to this purpose. Careers education and work related experiences will be embedded across all AoLEs to ensure learners gain insight into work and careers and build employability skills, with specific elements of this learning being part of the Health and Well-being AoLE.

Literacy, numeracy and digital competence will be specified as the three cross-curricular responsibilities ensuring fundamentals are in place. The wider skills of critical thinking and problem solving, planning and organising, creativity and innovation and personal effectiveness will also be embedded across all AoLEs.

### 4.2 Public Sector including local government and other public bodies

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal impact the public sector?**

The proposals set out requirements which will have impacts on the public sector in Wales. These range from direct impacts of new legislative requirements on local authorities, schools, head teachers and governing bodies to in consequential impacts on Regional Consortia, Estyn, and Qualifications Wales. The costs, savings and benefits on these bodies are considered in the draft Regulatory Impact Assessment.

### 4.3 Third Sector

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal impact third sector organisations and what they do?**

As part of the co-construction approach to developing the new curriculum, individual AoLEs have engaged with third sector representatives appropriate to their areas. When the new curriculum is made available in April 2019, there will be opportunity for third sector organisation to provide feedback.

### 4.4 Justice Impact

Based on the current understanding of the proposals it is unlikely there will be impacts on the Justice System. This will be kept under review as provisions develop following this consultation exercise.

## **SECTION 5. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING?**

The following assessments have been undertaken as required: Natural Resources; Biodiversity; and Climate Change.

### **5.1 Natural Resources**

#### **5.1a How will the proposal deliver one or more of the National Priorities in the Natural Resources Policy (NRP)?**

The flexibility of the proposed legislative arrangements will allow for teaching to emphasise biodiversity and ecology in learners' local environments (Science and Technology AoLE), whilst also facilitating a broader world view of natural resources (Humanities AoLE).

#### **5.1b Does the proposal help tackle the following national challenges and opportunities for the sustainable management of natural resources?**

The characteristics which underpin the four purposes can contribute to raising awareness of biodiversity and ecology e.g. by developing children and young people to become ethical, informed citizens who show commitment to , and recognise their dependence on, the sustainability of the planet; and understand and consider the impact of their actions when making choices and taking action.

### **5.2 Biodiversity**

A biodiversity impact assessment has been developed at Annex D in compliance with Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

### **5.3 Climate Change**

#### **5.3a Decarbonisation**

#### **How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal affect emissions in Wales?**

As highlighted above the four purposes of education, which are the foundation for all teaching and learning, contribute to raising awareness of the sustainability of the planet, including encouraging learners to understand their dependence on and show their commitment to the planet and consideration of the impacts of their actions.

A full assessment of the effect on emissions has not be undertaken as the impacts are about raising awareness and understanding, rather than activity which directly contributes to lowering levels of emissions.

### **5.3 b Adaptation**

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal affect ability to adapt to the effects of climate change?**

As highlighted above under decarbonisation.

### **5.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

The proposals are not likely to have an impact on any of the key areas listed as part of the regulations (agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water managements, tourism, town and country planning or land use). Consequently, an SEA is not required.

### **5.5 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)**

The proposals will not affect any of the listed sites under the 'Natura 2000 European protected site network.' As a result, a HRA is not required.

### **5.6 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**

The proposals will not have an impact on the listed areas. As a result, an EIA is not required.

## SECTION 6. RECORD OF FULL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS REQUIRED

Impact Assessment	Yes/No
Children's rights	Yes
Equality	Yes*
Rural Proofing	No – to be kept under review
Health	No – to be kept under review
Privacy	No
Welsh Language	Yes*
Economic / RIA	Yes
Justice	No – to be kept under review
Biodiversity	Yes*
Climate Change	No
Strategic Environmental Assessment	No
Habitat Regulations Assessment	No
Environmental Impact Assessment	No

\* Mandatory for all proposals in order to meet statutory obligations.

## SECTION 7. CONCLUSION

### **7.1 How have people most likely to be affected by the proposal been involved in developing it?**

The curriculum design and development has been undertaken through a model of co-construction with representatives from the education system in Wales (Estyn, Regional Consortia, Qualifications Wales and practitioners). At the heart of this process is a national network of Pioneer Schools—they include representation from the different types of schools in Wales (rural, urban, large, small, English-medium, Welsh-medium, Bilingual, schools with a religious character, Primary, Secondary and Special). As part of their role as Pioneers, these practitioners have engaged with their learners and well as their cluster and network schools to gather views throughout the process.

Further feedback from interested parties will be collected when the draft curriculum is made available in April 2019, including governors and parents.

### **7.2 What are the most significant impacts, positive and negative?**

The proposals look to combat the negative aspects of the current education system in Wales, set out in Successful futures, whilst building on the existing strengths, including the commitment to equity.

Children's rights are a key design principle of the new arrangements, integral to the four purposes and built into the Health and Well-being AoLE, and Humanities AoLE. The proposals have a positive impact on children's rights and reference a strong learner focused approach.

The proposals promote a knowledge and understanding of biodiversity issues through the four purposes, as the starting point for all teaching and learning, and the Science and Technology AoLE.

The proposals focus on the development of curriculum that is for every learner in every classroom; the flexibility provided through the legislative proposals supports this. Further understanding of the impacts on protect groups will be explored through the consultation and when the curriculum is available for feedback in April 2019.

The proposals contribute to the promotion of the Welsh language by maintaining its statutory status as part of the curriculum in Wales. The removal of the distinction between first and second Welsh language supports the transformational approach to learning, teaching and assessment of

the Welsh language with the aim of ensuring all learners will be able to use the Welsh language when they leave school. This principle is at the heart of curriculum reform.

### **7.3 In light of the impacts identified, how will the proposal:**

- **maximise contribution to our well-being objectives and the seven well-being goals; and/or,**
- **avoid, reduce or mitigate any negative impacts?**

The four purposes, as the starting point for all teaching and learning and supported by legislation, contribute to the seven well-being objectives by developing children and young people as: ambitious capable learners; enterprising, creative contributors; ethical, informed citizens; and healthy, confident individuals. The four purposes also ensure that the curriculum arrangements contribute to the Welsh Government's four key themes in Prosperity for All: the National Strategy. The new arrangements give flexibility to practitioners to use their creativity and professional judgement to deliver a curriculum which supports their learners and their specific contexts.

The design principles of the new arrangements support positive impacts by ensuring the curriculum is inclusive, responsive to the needs of learners in later life, engaging for every learner, and based on subsidiarity to encourage ownership and decision making of practitioners to deliver a curriculum that is right for their classrooms.

The proposals will maximise the contribution to the well-being goals by:

- ensuring the curriculum is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs of learners and has flexibility to adapt over time;
- Developing 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; and healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.
- Look to support and prepare children and young people for later life and break negative cycles associated with attainment.

### **7.4 How will the impact of the proposal be monitored and evaluated as it progresses and when it concludes?**

Successful Futures recommended that *'separate and independent evaluation arrangements should be established to monitor the effectiveness of the change structure and the new curriculum arrangements in relation to improvements in the quality of learning and performance'* (Recommendation 55).

Officials are currently developing an approach to evaluate the new arrangements and wider reforms outlined in Education in Wales: Our National Mission and the proposals introduced in the White Paper will form part of that planning.



## FULL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

### A. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

#### 1. Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on children and young people.

##### Curriculum

The school curriculum in Wales is defined as including all of the learning experiences and assessment activities planned in pursuit of agreed purposes of education. The proposals put the four purposes at the heart of the curriculum and assessment arrangements. These are the starting point for all teaching and learning. The four purposes of the curriculum are that children and young people develop as:

- Ambitious, capable learners, ready throughout their lives;
- Enterprising, creative contributors ready to play a full part in life and work;
- Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the World; and
- Healthy, confident individuals ready to lead fulfilling lives as valid members of society.

The four purposes are elaborated through key characteristics, to provide a practical guide for the planning of the curriculum and teaching and learning. We propose that schools will have to give regard to these key characteristics which include developing ethical informed citizens who 'understand and exercise their human and democratic responsibilities and rights' and 'respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society'.

The curriculum is being designed as a continuum for all learners from 3-16. The design and development is ensuring that the curriculum:

- reflects directly and promotes the curriculum purposes
- embodies the entitlement of all children and young people, including those with severe, profound or multiple learning difficulties, to a high-quality, broad and appropriately balanced education throughout the period of statutory education

The new curriculum and assessment framework will be for all children and young people in Wales regardless of any additional learning needs they may have, and which encompasses all six Areas of Learning and Experience. They are:

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

Subjects and disciplines will remain important but they will be grouped within the AoLEs in a more integrated manner. Indeed the AoLEs themselves shouldn't be seen as watertight compartments. Practitioners should draw on the different AoLEs in their planning and work collaboratively and creatively across subject boundaries in the context of the four purposes. This should lead to a more holistic experience for the learner with links being made across the curriculum.

We propose that there should be one continuum of learning for all children and young people<sup>3</sup> to 16. The removal of phases and key stages in order to improve progression and therefore increase potential for higher attainment by minimising transitions and shifts in purposes and approach at intervals in school careers in line with Successful Futures and seeks to ensure that learners are not limited in their aspirations.

The structure will be inclusive, with all children and young people making progress along the same continuum, regardless of any additional learning needs they may have, although they may move between Progression Steps more slowly or quickly than others. A more personalised approach to learning will support every child and young person to progress at a suitable pace, and be challenged appropriately. The Achievement Outcomes articulated for each Progression Steps will signal an emphasis on achievement in a broad sense, rather than only narrower measures of attainment, these outcomes broaden the scope of what we value in children and young people's learning. The diverse needs of learners are being considered as the curriculum development process develops.

*Successful Futures* identified that the current system has become centred on making general, best-fit judgements about performance. The consequences of this are that insufficient attention is being focused on progression with 'best-fit' judgements masking wide variations in progress in different aspects of learning. We propose that the current system of 'Levels' will be removed. Schools will develop assessments based upon the Achievement Outcomes described at each Progression Step. Progression Steps will be defined in legislation and have been deliberately set two or three yearly intervals so as to allow teachers to plan and assess learning without constant reference to externally determined criteria. Progression Steps will be described at five points in the learning continuum, relating broadly to expectations at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16. Progression Steps are reference points, providing a 'road map' for each individual child and young person's progress in their learning and not universal expectations of the performance of all children and young people at fixed points. To support this, we also propose that there will be a duty on schools to provide a curriculum that focuses on how learners can move forward along the continuum and enables most children and young people to reach, or go beyond, each Progression Step within the relevant three-year window.

The new curriculum will be broad, balanced, inclusive and challenging. One of these purposes is that all our children and young people will be ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives. This includes setting themselves high standards and seeking and enjoying challenge to support the needs of More Able and Talented learners (MAT).

In addition, our Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and curriculum reform policies have been co-constructed with stakeholders and are key components of our National Mission to raise standards and reduce the attainment gap. Officials are currently working together across the Education Directorate to help ensure alignment between the new ALN system, curriculum reform and the broader professional learning programme.

From the age of 14 onwards, young people will begin to specialise and make choices. However, they will continue to have experiences across all six of the AoLEs to maintain curriculum breadth. There are certain aspects of the curriculum that learners will continue to study regardless of choice. These include Welsh, Religious Education, Relationships and Sexuality Education, the Cross-Curriculum Responsibilities as well as aspects that support national priorities such as science

and health. The aim is to ensure a balance of breadth and specialisation with a focus on the four purposes of education. Qualifications will be developed to articulate with Progression Steps 4 and 5.

### Assessment

There will be a continuum of learning from 3-16 years. We would seek to put in place a provision requiring head teachers to make arrangements for learners to be assessed throughout the year on the 3-16 continuum of learning.

We are already making changes to our national tests, and have introduced personalised assessments. The purpose of the assessments is to help learners progress, through understanding what they can do, the things they need to work on, and their next steps. In personalised or 'adaptive' assessments, the questions are selected based on the learner's response to the previous question. This provides an individual assessment experience and tailors the level of challenge for every learner. Schools have far more control over these assessments and decide when a learner, or groups of learners, would benefit most from the assessment, unlike the current national tests where there is a test window,

In terms of learner assessment arrangements; we are looking for a power for Welsh Ministers to issue statutory guidance for the assessment arrangements under the Assessment and Evaluation Framework'.

The assessment proposals have a strong focus on development and improvement of children and young people, rather than on accountability, with learners at the centre. The emphasis is on formative, low-stakes assessment of students (with external qualifications being developed to articulate with Progression Steps 4 and 5) (with external examinations at 16); opportunities

Formative assessment will have primacy, this recognises that formative assessment practices provide feedback about *what* a learner needs to do to improve, or asking a question to help a learner think in a different way to support their improvement has a greater impact on learner improvement than providing them with a more summative assessment e.g. a level or grade.

Successful Futures sets out that schools, teachers, parents and carers need reference points for determining whether children and young people are making appropriate progress in their learning. Progression Steps provide these reference points. The new assessment arrangements must redress the current emphasis on summative assessment and ensure formative assessment has priority as an essential and natural part of the teaching process. We must also ensure assessment is proportionate and supports progression in learning to have a positive impact on children and young people.

### Evidence and Consultation

Based on the evidence gathered during the Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment arrangements in Wales (the Review), *Successful Futures* put forward principles of curriculum design which outlined that any proposed structure should satisfy a number of criteria, including having children's rights at the heart.

The Review undertook a national call for evidence, encouraging stakeholders from across Wales to submit their views and help shape the outcome of the Review. In order to generate debate and discussion, the questions included in the call for evidence were deliberately very broad and open-ended and included questions such as 'What are the three best things about education in Wales?' This received over 700 responses to the call, of which over 300 were from children and young people themselves. Due to the diverse nature of the responses, WISERD (Welsh Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods) were appointed to analyse the responses.

A recurring concern of the children and young people who spoke to the Review Team was their perception that the current school curriculum was out of date in relation to digital technology. They talked about laboured teaching of software packages that they saw as being either simple to use intuitively or already out of date. Representatives of business were similarly extremely concerned that schools were out of touch with the emerging digital workplace. They saw the ability to use technology creatively for researching and problem solving as key competences that they wanted to see in prospective employees. *Successful Futures* recommended that digital competence is given equal status to literacy and numeracy as a cross-curriculum responsibility in the new curriculum. The development of the Digital Competence Framework (DCF) was fast

tracked and made available in September 2016 support digital competence in schools before the new curriculum arrangements were made available.

In addition children and young people in particular, but not exclusively, would like to see a greater focus on general social competences (life skills and personal confidence, personal and social education (PSE)), basic skills (i.e. literacy and numeracy), and more vocational education and careers guidance. The WISERD report suggests that these views were also reflected in responses to the call for evidence. As their analysis states, stakeholders felt that ‘...schools should be doing more than simply imparting knowledge. While successful learning was a highly valued outcome of education by all stakeholders (including children and young people), so too were a range of other outcomes. General social competences, life skills and personal confidence were seen by all as important things to be gained from school’. These views have been reflected in the proposals for statutory cross- curriculum responsibilities (Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Competence); and the embedding of wider skills into the AoLEs. The inclusion of an AoLE dedicated to Health and Well-being and equal in status to the other AoLEs also reflects the emphasis children and young people placed on personal and social education.

Children and young people wanted lessons to be more relevant and engaging, with more practical lessons, more fun, more interactivity, and more out-of-classroom activities. There is a sense that a more general enthusiasm for learning has been sacrificed in the race for qualifications.

Through the design process, there has been full consultation with a range of schools and settings. We have engaged with different settings to ensure that the new curriculum arrangements are accessible for all learners, including Foundation Phase settings and groups with an ALN focus. For instance, the Pioneer School Network has representation from different language medium schools, special schools and Foundation Phase practitioners. This model of development has prompted practitioner engagement with the learner on the emerging proposals for the curriculum and has fed this back into the design process. In addition, the Camau Project (led by University of Wales Trinity St David and Glasgow University) to support the development of progression in the curriculum is developing a toolkit for practitioners to use to support them including learner voice in their curriculum design.

The new Curriculum and Assessment reform work will involve a wide-ranging White Paper consultation exercise beginning in January 2019 including with Children and Youth Groups

This consultation provides an opportunity to engage further discussion with a wider range of stakeholders on the impact of the proposals. This activity will be supported by further engagement as the draft curriculum is made available for feedback in April 2019. This information will feed into future drafts of this impact assessment.

In the longer term, Successful Futures recommends “separate and independent evaluation arrangements should be established to monitor the effectiveness of the change structure and the new curriculum arrangements in relation to improvements in the quality of learning.” Officials are working with stakeholders to develop an evaluation plan for the curriculum, and the impact on children and children’s rights will be considered as part of this framework.

## **2. Explain how the proposal is likely to impact on children’s rights.**

The proposed curriculum and assessment arrangements contribute to the following articles in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- Article 28 -Children have a right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children’s human dignity. Primary education should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this.
- Article 29 - Education should develop each child’s personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, and their own and other cultures.

Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that the needs of our children and young people are at the heart of the new curriculum. The design of the new curriculum in Successful Futures was based upon a set of ten principles, one of which was that the curriculum should be inclusive and take into account the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: *‘taking account of their [children and young people] views in the context of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and those of parents, carers and wider society.’*

The four purposes will be at the heart of the learning and experience of all children and young people in Wales, whatever their school or maintained educational setting. Specifically, the four

purposes recognise the role of children's rights – All children and young people will be ethical, informed citizens: who respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society; and who understand and exercise their human and democratic responsibilities and rights.

Children's rights are also part of the Health & Well-being AoLE and the Humanities AoLE. The draft What Matters statement in the Health and Well-being AoLE reflect children's rights - *Healthy relationships are fundamental to our sense of belonging and well-being* which includes the following planning support principle *Learners need to know respect, equity and recognising each other's rights is an important part of developing positive, healthy and safe relationships*. This is also reflected in the expectations at Progression Steps which reflect the need for children and young people to know and understand their rights.

The What Matters Statement in the Humanities AoLE also reflects children's rights – *People face many challenges and opportunities, individually and collectively, that require informed and considered responses*, which includes the following planning support principle *Learners will understand their rights and responsibilities and make ethical informed choices*.

## B. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### 1. Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on people with protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010.

The curriculum and assessment arrangements are being designed and developed to apply and be accessible to every learner in every classroom from ages 3 to 16. This is supported by the enabling activity taking place as highlighted in Education in Wales: Our national mission to create '*Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being*'.

The legislative proposals represent flexibility in the new curriculum arrangements to enable the school to take account of and respond to the unique challenges that present themselves to individuals or groups of learners. The arrangements will allow schools and practitioners to integrate their local contexts into teaching, learning and experiences to ensure equity amongst all groups of learners.

The design criteria of the new arrangements promote equity amongst learners by focussing on:

- The four purposes to develop children and young people, as the starting point for all teaching and learning;
- The characteristics of the four purposes draw out specific features which support equality, e.g. ethical, informed citizens who respect the needs and rights of others as a member of diverse society.
- Statutory AoLEs which give the Health and Well-being AoLE parity with other AoLEs in the curriculum.
- Pioneer Schools, through the development of the curriculum, have considered how the school environment supports children and young people's social, emotional, spiritual and physical health and well-being, i.e. a whole-school approach.
- Statutory provision of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) up to 16.
- Learners will be able to explore how laws and policies contribute to equity and human rights regarding sex, gender, sexuality and relationships through RSE in the Health and Well-being AoLE.

- The principles for the design of the curriculum include ‘inclusive- understood by all, encompassing an entitlement to high-quality education for every child and young person, and taking account of their views in the context of the UNCRC.’

The curriculum is supported to promote equity through the assessment and evaluation arrangements. The ultimate objective of assessment and evaluation is to enhance outcomes for all learners. This is achieved through the improvement of practices at the different levels of the school system, including teaching methods, school leadership processes, ways to organise learning, and direction of education policy. There will be a greater focus on formative assessment in the new system and a personalised approach to progression for all learners to enable them to develop into ambitious, capable learners.

### **Record of Impacts by protected characteristic:**

#### **Age (including children up to the age of 16)**

The new curriculum and assessment arrangements will apply to all learners from 3 to 16. The aim of the new curriculum and assessment arrangements is to develop and support all learners to develop their potential and improve outcomes for these learners. The arrangements will equip learners with the skills and knowledge they need for later life, supporting children and young people to develop in line with all of the four purposes and associated characteristics. Therefore, it is proposed that the arrangements will have a positive impact on learners.

Specific proposals to reduce the upper age limit for compulsory Religious Education and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) will have specific impacts on learners in sixth forms in maintained schools. It is proposed that there are positive impacts on post-16 learners as a result of this change as they have choice over the subjects they study.

#### **Reasons for decision and mitigating actions**

Currently, schools must deliver Religious Education and Sex Education to all registered pupils; this includes sixth form learners at secondary schools. These are the only curriculum subjects that school sixth formers must study. As compulsory schooling finishes at 16, we are proposing to remove the statutory duty for schools to provide RE and RSE at sixth form.

Like the current arrangements in FE colleges, should a learner wish to receive RE lessons schools will have to provide them. This allows a consistent approach to be taken in relation to 16, 17 and 18 year olds' right to make decisions regarding participation in RE lessons, RSE lessons and Collective Worship, no matter the setting.

This policy decision also forms the basis of the mitigating action to change to ensure a positive impact.

### **Disability**

In 2017, the attainment (at the Core Subjects Indicator/ Foundation Phase Indicator) of pupils on the Special Educational Needs Register was lower at the Foundation Phase and Key Stages 2 and 3 compared to the all pupils<sup>1</sup>.

Table 1: Percentage of pupils on SEN register achieving the expected outcome or level at Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 in 2017.

	<b>Pupils on the SEN register</b>	<b>All pupils</b>
Percentage of pupils at KS3 achieving at least the expected level (L5) in teacher assessment for the Core Subjects Indicator (CSI)	62.4%	87.7%
Pupils at KS2 achieving at least the expected level (L4) in teacher assessment for the Core Subjects Indicator (CSI)	65.3%	89.7%
Percentage of pupils achieving at least the expected outcome (outcome 5) in teacher assessments for the Foundation Phase Indicator (FPI).	57.8%	87.4%

Source: <https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/academic-achievement-pupil-characteristics/?lang=en>

<sup>1</sup> <https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/academic-achievement-pupil-characteristics/?lang=en>

The curriculum must allow professionals the flexibility to deliver the specific content and experiences which meet the needs of their learners in their specific context; and to have a positive impact on learners with disabilities. The legislative proposals seek to reaffirm these principles by placing the content of AoLEs in statutory guidance. This allows practitioners to adapt the curriculum in their school to best support the needs and interests of their learners and communities, including disabled learners and those with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

Reasons for decision and mitigating actions:

The design principles for the new arrangements is that they are appropriate for every learner in every classroom which ensures that children and young people with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) have access to the curriculum. This criteria means the curriculum is developed to be inclusive, easily understood by all, encompassing an entitlement to high-quality education for every child and young person and taking account of their views in the context of the UNCRC, and those of parents, carers and wider society.

Special schools have been able to input the needs of their pupils into the design through their representation on all AoLE groups, Curriculum and Assessment Group, Coherence Group, and Manageability Group.

The four purposes are the starting point for all teaching and learning and are applicable to every learner in every classroom for example, healthy, confident individuals who have the skills and knowledge to manage everyday life as independently as they can. Schools should use the needs of the learner as a starting point and adapt the AoLEs accordingly. Sufficient flexibility exists within the curriculum to meet the needs of learners without the need for disapplication. In exceptional cases, individual learners may be disapplied, usually on a temporary basis, but group or large-scale disapplication should not be used.

Where it is not possible to cover the content of all of the AoLEs, the statutory requirement to provide a broad, balanced curriculum in line with the four purposes can be met by selecting appropriate topics/themes from the curriculum as contexts for learning.

The AoLEs have been designed with the input of Special Schools to ensure they are applicable to all learners. The ALN sub-group is developing guidance for ALN in mainstream schools to ensure

inclusivity of the curriculum. In addition, a specific work stream has been set up to take account for 'Routes for Learning' during the curriculum the development process to ensure the curriculum is accessible for all. The ALN sub-group is supporting this by developing resources to support learners to progress from 'Routes for Learning' to Progression Step 1.

### **Gender Reassignment (the act of transitioning and Transgender people)**

Proposals to make Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) may have a positive impact on these learners as it raises awareness about respectful relationships, positive behaviour and acceptance of diversity. It will also aim to encourage schools to consider how they provide support and learning to LGBTQI+. It also aims to engage children and young people with issues such as gender and inequality and seek to foster a whole school approach to inclusion and tolerance.

#### **Reasons for decision and mitigating actions**

The Sex and Relationships Expert Panel in their report to Welsh Government (2017) focused their recommendations to improve the provision of RSE in schools for all young people, no matter their gender or sexual orientation. As a result of the recommendations, it is proposed that Relationships and Sexuality be a statutory part of the curriculum for all children and young people up to 16, contributing to the four purposes, specifically: ethical, informed citizens who respect the needs and rights of others as a member of a diverse society; and healthy, confident individuals who form positive relationships based upon trust and mutual respect.

Research put forward in the Stonewall School Report Cymru (2017) shows LGBTQI+ identifying young people are still more likely to suffer poor mental health, self harm and depression. The changes to RSE in the curriculum look to combat this by helping all learners feel emotionally and physically safe and secure so they are able to achieve their full potential.

The proposals outline the need for statutory guidance on 'age appropriate' provision of sex education. This acknowledges that, while age will still be a factor in making decisions around provision, schools will need to consider the physical and cognitive development of their learners, including taking into account the experiences of learners, when making decisions regarding planning RSE content. This supports the positive impacts on learners from this group.

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

The proposals will positively affect learners who are pregnant or who have recently given birth by providing practitioners with flexibility to adapt the curriculum delivered in the classroom to reflect the needs of their learners and to reflect their local community. In addition, RSE may have a positive impact on the prevention of teen pregnancies and STDs.

#### **Reasons for decision and mitigating actions:**

The curriculum is being designed to for every learner in every classroom across Wales, and there is flexibility, through the legislative proposals, for practitioners to develop their curriculum to support their groups of learners. The proposals suggest maintaining provision for disapplication to allow learners to be excused from some aspects of the curriculum and assessment arrangements if needed. This provides learners and schools with the flexibility to develop towards the four purposes depending on their circumstances.

### **Race (include different ethnic minorities, Gypsies and Travellers and Migrants, Asylum seekers and Refugees)**

Evidence shows that in the current system, the attainment of pupils in Wales differs by ethnic background (Welsh Government, 2018). For example, Welsh Government Core Subject Indicators (CSI) at Key Stage 2 and 3, and the Foundation Phase Indicator, show that pupils from Traveller, Gypsy and Gypsy Roma backgrounds have lower levels of attainment compared to the average for all pupils in Wales<sup>2</sup>. However, pupils from Chinese or Chinese British backgrounds outperform the Wales average against the Foundation Phase Indicator and the Core Subjects Indicator at Key Stages 2 and 3<sup>3</sup>.

#### **Table 2: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected outcome or level at Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 by ethnic group (2015-2017 aggregated).**

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<sup>2</sup> <https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/academic-achievement-pupil-characteristics/?lang=en>

<sup>3</sup> <https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/academic-achievement-pupil-characteristics/?lang=en>

<i>Ethnic Background</i>	Foundation Phase Indicator (percentage achieving at least the expected outcome across Areas of Learning)	Core Subject Indicator at KS2 (percentage achieving at least the expected level across the core subjects)	Core Subject Indicator at KS3 (percentage achieving at least the expected level across the core subjects)
<i>All Pupils</i>	87.2%	88.8%	86.0%
<i>White- British</i>	87.7%	89.1%	86.0%
<i>Traveller</i>	59.5%	53.6%	39.2%
<i>Gypsy/ Gypsy Roma</i>	54.2%	65.7%	34.9%
<i>Mixed</i>	88.8%	90.6%	86.0%
<i>Asian or Asian British</i>	89.6%	90.8%	89.7%
<i>Black or Black British</i>	83.1%	84.9%	82.8%
<i>Chinese or Chinese British</i>	89.4%	92.9%	94.9%
<i>Any other ethnic group</i>	78.3%	82.9%	82.3%

Source: <https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/academic-achievement-pupil-characteristics/?lang=en>

In 2017/18, there were 27, 836 learners aged 5 and over with a first language other than English or Welsh.<sup>4</sup> Evidence from the current system shows that learners who were new to English (where it was an additional language (EAL)) had lower attainment than those who were fluent<sup>5</sup>.

The curriculum and assessment arrangements are being designed for all learners. Underpinning the development work is a belief that someone's ability to benefit from education should not be determined by what their background is or where they live. This is a curriculum for all learners with a focus on a more personalised approach to learning and progression to support the objective of closing the attainment gap. As a result it is proposed that there are positive impacts on children and young people from different races.

The curriculum aims to provide learners with an understanding of the diverse histories, cultures, values and heritage of modern Wales and the contribution they can make to their communities. It will also offer opportunities for learners to reflect on their roles and responsibilities as global citizens living in a culturally and linguistically diverse society. In addition, the Languages, Literacy and Communication AoLE includes international language as a key component. Critically engaging with the curriculum will help learners explore positive relationships based on mutual respect, tolerance and dignity in a diverse society. These draft key principles form part of a wider rationale relating to a Welsh dimension and international perspective which will be embedded across the curriculum.

#### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions:

The new curriculum arrangements have been designed so they are applicable to every learner in every classroom. Successful Futures has challenged us to re-think our approach to the curriculum, it makes it clear that a high degree of prescription and detail at a national level inhibits "*the flow*

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<sup>4</sup> <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and-Teachers/Schools-Census/Pupil-Level-Annual-School-Census/Ethnicity-National-Identity-and-Language/pupilsaged5andoverfirstlanguageotherthanenglishwelsh-by-localauthorityregion-year>

<sup>5</sup> <https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/academic-achievement-pupil-characteristics/?lang=en>

*and progression in children and young people's learning and progression"*. The proposals set out flexibility within a broad national framework requiring schools to deliver a curriculum in line with the four purposes, the six AoLEs and cross-curriculum responsibilities with the content of the curriculum set out in statutory guidance. The concept of subsidiarity provides practitioners with flexibility to ensure that the curriculum delivered in the classroom is meaningful to all of their learners and reflects their local community.

The four purposes are the starting point for all curriculum design decisions as well as learning and teaching. This includes developing learners as ethical informed, citizens who respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society.

In support of learners with a first language other than English or Welsh, the Languages, Literacy and Communication AoLE will include International Languages. This allows schools to acknowledge the language of the home when considering a learner's journey along the continuum and in measuring attainment.

### **Religion, belief and non-belief**

Each Local Authority has an agreed syllabus for Religious Education that schools (other than schools of a religious character which follow a denominational syllabi) must deliver. The description of an agreed syllabus outlined in the 1996 Education Act currently reads as follows:

*Every agreed syllabus shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.*

It is proposed that this description is updated to include non-religious beliefs and reflect a Welsh context. We consider that non-religious beliefs must be analogous to religious beliefs i.e. they must attain the necessary level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance to attract protection under the European Convention of Human Rights.

A Local Authority can adopt an agreed syllabus based on a recommendation made by their Agreed Syllabus Conference. Committee A of an Agreed Syllabus Conference is a group that 'represents Christian denominations and other religions and denominations as in the opinion of the authority appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area.' The proposals will acknowledge

representatives of non-religious belief groups (analogous with religious beliefs) in relation to Committee A. This also applies to membership of Committee A of the Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education at Local Authority level. This proposal is a point of clarification and reflects the advice sent to Local Authorities from the Cabinet Secretary for Education in May 2018.

These proposed changes will allow learners to consider and develop an understanding of a wide range of beliefs which may reflect their own personal religious or non-religious beliefs or those of the wider community.

Parents can continue to send their children to maintained Catholic or Church in Wales schools that may reflect their own personal religious beliefs. Voluntary aided schools with a religious character will continue to deliver their denomination syllabi and parents 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.

The current legislation provides for a parent to withdraw their child from Religious Education and Sex Education. This approach is being considered as part of the White Paper consultation. The impacts of the approach will be considered as policy options are developed.

#### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions:

The proposals relating to the agreed syllabus and membership of Committee A were taken to acknowledge non-religious beliefs (analogous with religious beliefs). A variety of stakeholders during the curriculum design process have also indicated the importance of acknowledging non-religious beliefs.

We have also worked closely with colleagues from the Church in Wales and Catholic Education Service to ensure that links are made between their denominational syllabi and the wider Humanities AoLE, and the new curriculum as a whole.

There is currently statutory recognition of the right for schools of a religious character to provide sex and relationships education which is appropriate to ethos of the school. There are no plans to change the ability for schools with a religious character to provide RSE that is consistent with their ethos.

## **Sex / Gender**

The curriculum itself is designed for every learner in every classroom. However, there is evidence of differences in attainment of learners based on gender, for example, in the 2018 National Reading Tests girls outperformed boys in all year groups. In the 2018, National Numeracy Tests, boys outperformed girls in most national curriculum year groups (with the exceptions of the Year 8 procedural numeracy tests, and the Years 3 and 7 numerical reasoning tests)<sup>6</sup>.

The statutory inclusion of RSE will have positive impacts on gender by raising awareness and understanding amongst children and young people of respectful relationships, positive behaviour and diversity.

### **Reasons for decision and mitigating actions**

As highlighted above, evidence from the National Reading and Numeracy tests highlights different results based on gender. In addition, Official Statistics show a difference in Key Stage 4 examinations results based on gender.<sup>7</sup> The new assessment arrangements are more learner focused and remove the relationship between teacher assessment and accountability. The new approach to national tests which supports a more personalised approach to learner assessment and their progression will help learners to develop as ambitious, capable learners.

### **Sexual orientation (Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual)**

There is expected to be positive impacts from the proposals on sexual orientation. Specifically, RSE and the Health and Well-being AoLE, may reduce homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying and subsequently increase in well-being for LGBTQI+ learners. It will also help to challenge gender and sexual stereotypes and increase children and young peoples' understanding of safe, healthy and positive relationships.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://gov.wales/docs/statistics/2018/180822-national-reading-numeracy-test-results-2018-en.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and-Teachers/Examinations-and-Assessments/Key-Stage-4/examinationachievementsofpupilsaged15-by-gender>

### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions

The Sex and Relationships Expert Panel recommended the wider scope for Relationships and Sexuality in order to have the positive impact highlighted above. This is supported by the proposed statutory status of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in the curriculum for all learners up to 16. In addition, funding has been provided to regional consortia in 2018/19 to support schools in delivering quality learning experiences in RSE to support the impacts indicated above.

### **Marriage and civil partnership**

The proposals will seek to have a positive impact on learners understanding of marriage and civil partnerships. Specifically, RSE and the Health and Well-being AoLE will help challenge gender and sexual stereotypes and increase children and young peoples' understanding of safe, healthy and positive relationships.

### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions

The four purposes, as the starting point for all teaching and learning, reflect the need for children and young people to respect a diverse society: *Ethical, informed citizens who respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society.*

The statutory status of RSE in the curriculum and the parity across the six AoLEs (including Health and Well-being) will ensure the quality of the learning experience in this area and raise the profile of the topics of marriage, civil partnership and healthy relationships.

There is currently statutory recognition of the right for schools of a religious character to provide sex and relationships education which is appropriate to ethos of the school. There are no plans to change the ability for schools with a religious character to provide RSE that is consistent with their ethos.

### **Low-income households**

The proposals seek to support every learner in every classroom and are designed to apply to all learners up to 16. Enabling Objective three in Our National Mission highlights the commitment to ensuring learners from low-income households are supported to achieve their potential. The

curriculum is supported by other policy activity set out in Education in Wales: Our National Mission, which looks to narrow the attainment gap and reduce the barriers for learners. Therefore, it is suggested that the proposed curriculum and assessment arrangements will have a positive impact on these learners.

Reasons for decision and mitigating actions:

Our National Mission commits the Welsh Government to activity to enable the delivery of a transformational curriculum including learners from different backgrounds.

The evidence gathered as part of the Successful Futures: Independent Review into Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales identified the commitment to equity and inclusion as key strengths of the Welsh education system.

The four purposes are the starting point for all teaching and learning, and apply to all learners in all classrooms regardless of their background. In addition, the removal of phases and key stages in order to improve progression and therefore increase potential for higher attainment by minimising transitions and shifts in purposes and approach at intervals in school careers in line with Successful Futures and seeks to ensure that learners are not limited in their aspirations. This is also supported by the proposal that there will be a duty on schools to provide a curriculum that focuses on how learners can move forward along the continuum and enables most children and young people to reach, or go beyond, each Progression Step within the relevant three-year window.

**Human Rights and UN Conventions**

<b>Human Rights</b>	<b>What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?</b>	<b>Reasons for your decision (including evidence)</b>	<b>How will you mitigate negative Impacts?</b>
Protocol 1, Article 2 – The right to an education.	The proposals actively support a child or young person’s right to an education.	The enabling objectives set out in Our National Mission support the curriculum arrangements through ensuring the	N/A

		workforce, leadership and evaluation framework supports all learners to achieve high standards.	
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## C. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### 1. Welsh Language Impact Assessment reference number:

01/12/2018

### 2. Does the proposal demonstrate a clear link with the Welsh Government's strategy for the Welsh language? – *Cymraeg 2050 A million Welsh speakers* and the related Work Programme for 2017-2021?

This proposal fully supports the Welsh Government's strategy for the Welsh language. The aim is to enable all learners in Wales to be able to use the Welsh language when they leave school. The aim is to transform how we teach Welsh in order that by 2050 at least 70% of learners can speak Welsh by the time they leave school.

For this to happen, the teaching and learning of Welsh needs to be recognised and valued as an integral component of the curriculum for Wales. *Successful Futures* acknowledges that the teaching and learning of Welsh is a priority for Welsh Government, and recommends that Welsh language learning remains compulsory to the age of 16. There will be a renewed focus on learning Welsh primarily as a means of communication, particularly oral communication and understanding. This includes the development of a language continuum for Welsh for the purposes of curriculum planning, delivery, and for recording attainment.

*One language for all: review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4 (2013)*

recommended that one continuum of learning for Welsh should be developed with clear expectations for pupils learning Welsh in English-medium, bilingual and Welsh-medium. Developing such a continuum would mean that all pupils in Wales would follow the same curriculum and be assessed against one framework, thus removing the term Welsh second language and the programme of study. This review was considered by Professor Donaldson as part of the evidence for *Successful Futures* and the recommendation of one Welsh language continuum reflected in the Languages, Literacy and Communication AoLE.

Clear expectations along one continuum of learning for Welsh will be set out in the form of different Achievement Outcomes for pupils learning Welsh in English-medium and Welsh-medium schools. The Achievement Outcomes will set out the differentiated outcomes that different

linguistic categories of schools will be expected to reach, and they will be updated as schools improve over a period of time.

**3. Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language, and explain how you will address these impacts in order to improve outcomes for the Welsh language:**

The following proposals support the promotion of the Welsh language:

- a) One of the key characteristics of the four purposes of the new curriculum is to develop children and young people to be ambitious, capable learners who can communicate effectively in different forms and settings, using both Welsh and English. The four purposes are integral to the development and delivery of the curriculum in schools and their key characteristics will be outlined in statutory guidance to which schools must give regard.
- b) Welsh will be statutory for all learners up to the age 16 and will form part of the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience. Like the current arrangements, the new curriculum will be delivered in all maintained schools in Wales. This includes Welsh medium, English medium and bilingual schools.
- c) The proposals set out will give English and Welsh equal statutory status in the curriculum in Wales.
- d) In order for learners to use the Welsh language confidently, they need authentic opportunities to use Welsh within and beyond the classroom. Our expectations for those learning Welsh in English medium schools will gradually be increased as the first cohorts learn through the new curriculum and as the workforce is developed, in order to realise the ambition of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050. Schools and settings will therefore be encouraged, where possible, to support the development of learners' Welsh language skills across the curriculum and through extra-curricular experiences and activities as part of a whole-school approach.
- e) The Achievement Outcomes at each Progression Step in the Languages, Literacy and Communication AoLE have been developed to encapsulate the most important aspects of learning; take account of the ways in which children progress based upon research undertaken specifically to inform this work together with practitioners' understanding from their experience in the classroom; and recognise what they need to know and be able

to do in order to move to the next stage securely. This should improve the learning of the Welsh Language which forms part of the AoLE.

- f) Legislation is needed to remove the distinction between two programmes of study – Welsh and Welsh second language. This will allow for one continuum of learning Welsh to be taught in all schools. The changes to assessment in schools are in keeping with allowing learners to learn in a supportive environment.

### Mitigating actions

There are actions being undertaken to ensure the curriculum is designed and developed to ensure the promotion of the Welsh language, these are set out below.

The curriculum has been developed through a model of co-construction with a network of Pioneer Schools across Wales. Through this network there is representation from English-medium, Bilingual and Welsh-medium schools.

The draft curriculum framework has been developed in a bilingual manner - with Welsh medium pioneer practitioners working side by side with English medium pioneers. We have also drawn on the expertise of bilingual editors to ensure that the new curriculum is meaningful in both Welsh and in English.

Interim expectations for Welsh in English medium have been developed based on a common progression framework which or continuum which starts with beginning learners and moves gradually towards fluency. The Achievement Outcomes for Welsh in English medium schools will be reviewed every 3-5 years as the first cohorts are taught through the new curriculum and as workforce development progresses. Expectations will be increased as we move towards the 2050 ambition of 1 million Welsh speakers.



## D. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### Embedding biodiversity

#### 1. How will your proposal integrate biodiversity into decision making?

Biodiversity has been included in the development of the curriculum and is included in the What Matters statements for the Science and Technology AoLE, which will be included in statutory guidance.

#### 2. Has your proposal ensured biodiversity is accounted for in business decisions?

N/A

#### 3. How does your proposal improve understanding and raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity, encouraging others to act?

The new curriculum and assessment arrangements encourage practitioners to become curriculum designers adapting the statutory requirements to take into account their learners and local contexts.

The draft What Matters Statement three in the Science and Technology is 'Life is diverse. Organisms interact with each other and their environment, evolving over generations'. The rationale for this statement is: *"it is important to understand how humans as organisms, that made up of cells, tissues and organs, form part of the living world. Our decisions and actions can have a significant impact on living things and their environment, affecting ecosystems. This may limit biodiversity and result in changes to the natural world.*

*As a result of evolution there are, and have been, many different kinds of organisms, and interactions between them can be beneficial or detrimental. All living things require conditions and resources to successfully grow, develop and reproduce, and may have to compete with other organisms to do so. The study of life helps learners understand environmental and health issues both in Wales and internationally, and how they may be addressed."*

The flexibility of the proposed legislation will allow for teaching to emphasise biodiversity and ecology in learners' local environments (Science and Technology AoLE), whilst also facilitating a broader world view (Humanities AoLE).

There are opportunities to raise/ include biodiversity issues in the experiences elements of the new curriculum, especially if they are pertinent to the locality.

The four purposes form the basis of the curriculum and provide the foundations for teaching and learning. The characteristics which underpin the four purposes can contribute to raising awareness of biodiversity and ecology: Under ethical, informed citizens: all children and young people show their commitment to, and recognise their dependence on, the sustainability of the planet; and understand and consider the impact of their actions when making choices and taking action.

### **Improving our evidence, understanding and monitoring**

#### **4. Have you used the best available evidence of biodiversity to inform your proposal and this assessment?**

None of the species or habitats of principle importance published under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 will be adversely affected by the proposals..

#### **5. Have you used up to date knowledge of the key impacts on biodiversity to make evidence-based decisions?**

The development of the curriculum has used a model of co-construction with experts, practitioners, and the Middle Tier in Wales. In developing the Science and Technology AoLE the knowledge of a range experts, including the Royal Society of Biology, have been utilised to ensure the AoLE reflects the latest knowledge and thinking.

#### **6. Can your proposal contribute to our body of knowledge for biodiversity?**

The proposals support the sharing of knowledge and the development of understanding amongst children and young people through the Science and Technology AoLE, and the four purposes, which will be supported by legislation.

### **Governance and support for delivery of biodiversity action**

#### **7. Can your proposal support biodiversity action in any way?**

The new arrangements allow professionals the flexibility to choose the specific content which meets the needs of their learners in their specific context. Likewise, this flexibility should allow professionals the autonomy to consider issues which will meet the needs of their learners, which may include biodiversity action.

#### **8. Can your proposal help to build capacity for biodiversity action?**

The proposals outlined support the development of knowledge and understanding of biodiversity issues as part of the four purposes of the curriculum and more specifically as part of the Science and Technology AoLE. The new arrangement give practitioners and schools the flexibility to include high quality learning experiences related to biodiversity if they wish.

**9. Have you recorded decisions and actions to maintain and enhance biodiversity?**

The actions highlighted above are recorded as part of the curriculum documentation. This will be published and used by practitioners to support the development of the curriculum in their schools.

## QUESTIONS

### Equalities Questions

**Question 1 :** To help inform our assessment of the possible impact of these proposals, can you foresee any particular impact on those with protected characteristics (within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010) and how they might be particularly affected by these proposals that have not been included in the draft impact assessment?

**Question 2:** What effects do you think there would be? How positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

### Children's Rights Questions

**Question 3:** To help inform our assessment of the possible impact of these proposals, can you foresee any particular impact on children's rights that have not been included in the draft impact assessment?

**Question 4:** What effects do you think there would be? How positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

### Welsh Language Questions

**Question 5 –** We would like to know your views on the effects that proposed legislative proposals would have on the Welsh language, specifically on:

- i) opportunities for people to use Welsh
- ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

What effects do you think there would be? How positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

### Supporting comments

**Question 6 –** Please also explain how you believe the proposed legislative proposals could be formulated or changed so as to have:

- i) positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language
- ii) no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

**Supporting comments**

**Question 7** – We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.