



Education in Wales is changing

We want your
feedback on the
new curriculum

**How to run a focus
group to gather
feedback from children
and young people on
the new curriculum**



Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the feedback sessions on the new curriculum for Wales with your youth group/class.

Dynamix have put together a series of activities for you to gather opinions from children and young people on their education. This is an opportunity for us to check in on the 2015 consultation that was carried out following the publication of the 'Successful Futures' report.

Each activity provides clear instructions but if you are unsure of anything please do not hesitate to contact Dynamix on **01792 466231**.

Some things to remember:

- This is an opportunity for young people to give feedback. If you have anything you want to feedback on the curriculum please visit <https://hwb.gov.wales/draft-curriculum-for-wales-2022/have-your-say/>
- We have provided some prompts to help in moments when the groups are unsure of what is needed but please only use these in moments of silence – they should not be used to steer conversations.
- **HAVE SOME FUN**

Getting the feedback to us...

Please make sure you take note of as much as possible from the workshop and return it to us in one of the following ways:

- Email photos of all the bits of paper and post it (making sure you can see the writing clearly, we will be typing everything up) to **hub@dynamix.coop**
- Post – Keep everything together, mark it clearly and pop everything in an envelope and send to **Dynamix, Unit 4D, Cwm Road, Hafod, Swansea SA1 2AY**
- Tweet photos of the group sessions **@dynamixcoop**
#TalkCurriculum
#CurriculumforWales



Introducing the session to young people

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 plan 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
YOUR FEEDBACK
AS WE CHANGE.**

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**.

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

In January 2019 a legal document on the changes was shared for people to comment on. Welsh Government are now looking at these opinions and will make changes suggested.

On 30 April 2019 Welsh Government published guidance on how schools can create a new curriculum. The feedback period opened on **30 April** and closes on **19 July 2019**.



What's next?

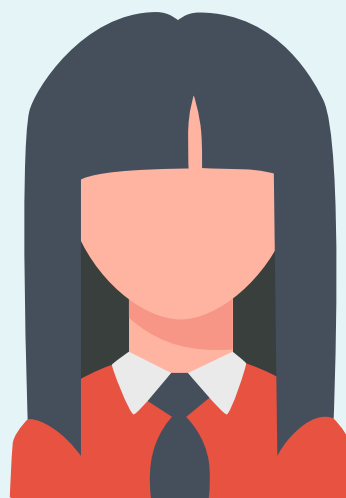
The feedback period is now open and will run until **19 July 2019**.

Welsh Government will use this information to help further refine the draft Curriculum for Wales ahead of making it available to see in **January 2020**.

To make sure we are still on the right track to improve education for children and young people there are a few things we want to hear from you about.

Your youth worker will run some activities with you so you can let us know what's important about your education.

For the new curriculum to work well, we need a really good base to build on, so we've come up with four purposes, which are our **starting point**.



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

Ambitious and capable, ready to learn throughout their lives.

Enterprising and creative contributors to life, 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 life to the full and be valued by those around them as valued members of society.

We think teachers need more freedom to help children and young people achieve the Four Purposes. To help teachers our idea is to split learning into six Areas of Learning and Experience (which is a bit of a mouthful, so we'll be referring to them as AoLEs).

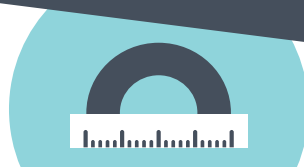
As a guide for teachers, we will list the **key aspects of learning** of each AoLE, and we'll call these **'what matters'**. They'll be a bit like an instruction booklet. Every school needs to make sure that they use the **'what matters'** when planning their lessons.

So, every AoLE has key aspects of learning, and teachers will be helped by the 'what matters' statements, which will help them to plan lessons to fit learners' needs so that they get the most from everything they learn.

If you want to give more detailed feedback on the **draft Curriculum for Wales 2022** or for additional information please go to <https://hwb.gov.wales/draft-curriculum-for-wales-2022/have-your-say/>

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

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



Question 1

What do you think are the three most important things (apart from qualifications) that you should gain from your education?



Activity 1
Sticky note
sorter!

What we want to find out?

- Young people's views on the most important things to gain from their time in school
- How these relate to the 'what's important' themes from 2015 consultation
 - **Knowledge**
 - **Social skills/Social behaviour**
For example: working with others, communication and becoming independent, teamwork.
 - **Friendship**
 - **Confidence**
 - **Skills for work**
 - **Health and fitness**
 - **Other**

Resources required

- Sticky notes
- Flip charts/wallpaper
- Marker pens

Time

Approx. 20 minutes



Part 1



Groups

Divide into small groups (maximum of 5 young people per group). This depends on group size, and confidence speaking in front of each other and will be the facilitators decision on how this is done. See Appendix 1 for a fun idea on how to mix up the room.

Part 2



Discussion

Give each group 5 minutes to discuss 'what are the important things that they should gain from school?'. Ask the groups to write one idea per sticky note and put their suggestions on a wall/flip chart stand at the front of the room.

The most important things gained from your education (not including qualifications)

Part 3 Categorise

As a group, categorise the 'what's important' sticky notes into the following headings, as shown below. This can be drawn out onto flip chart paper/wall paper.

Knowledge Total	Friendship Total	Skills for work Total	Other Total
Health and fitness Total	Social skills/ social behaviour Total	Confidence Total	

Question 2

What are the three best things about your education?

Activity 2

Positive Podium

What we want to find out?

- What young people feel are the 'Best things' about their education.
- Collecting the story/narrative behind the three best things about education.

Resources required

- Each of the following 'Best things' on individual sheets of A4/A3 on the walls around the room or spread out on the floor/table.
 - **School work**
For example: subjects, lessons, different ways of learning, group activities, etc.
 - **Friends**
 - **Staff**
For example: teachers, supply teachers, teaching assistants, etc.
 - **Fun**
 - **School trips**
 - **Facilities**
For example: sports, library, playground, outdoor space, the school building(s), etc.
 - **Atmosphere – the feeling that school gives you**
For example: safe, happy, comfortable, welcoming, friendly, etc.
 - **Cost (free schooling)**
 - **Break time**
 - **Other**
- Sticky dots/marker pens



Time

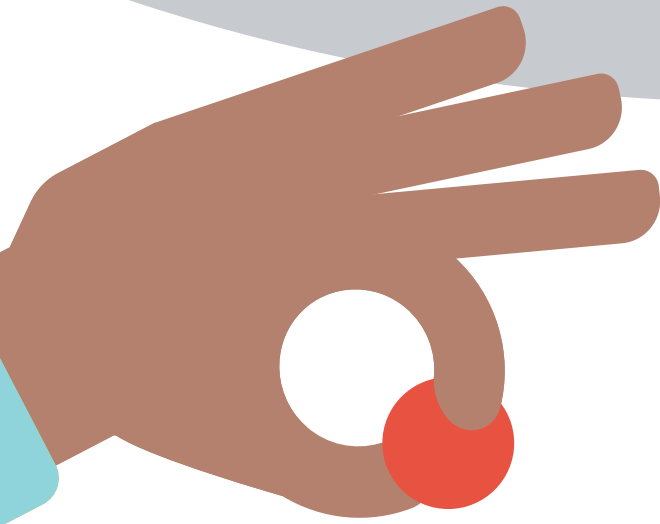
15–20 minutes



Part 1

Introduction

Introduce the ‘*Best things*’ categories that were established from consultation with young people in 2015. Give a quick explanation of each of them.



Give each participant 3 sticky dots and ask them to ‘dot vote’ on the options provided, they should vote on the three choices they feel are the most important.

If anyone thinks there is something missing from these categories, these extra options can be added to the ‘other’ category.

NOTE: if you don’t have sticky dots you can ask them to use markers but to make sure not to cast more than 3 votes.

Part 2 Dot voting



Part 3

Picking the **TOP THREE** for the winners' podium

Once the group have voted, votes are to be counted and the top three put on the podium. If two choices are given the same number of votes, they can go on the podium jointly.

Where possible, the remaining choices are to be ranked from 4th place downwards.

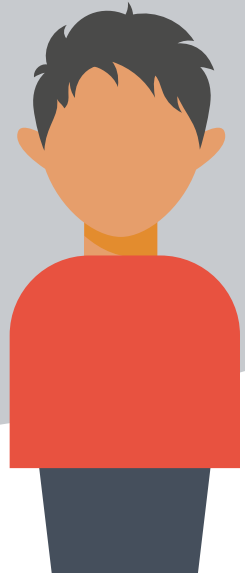
Use the space under the podium to capture the discussion on why these are the 'Best things' about education.



Why?



Why?



Why?

Question 3

What needs to change to improve how you learn and your experience of school?

Activity 3 School superhero



What we want to find out?

- Issues that young people may face in their schooling.
- Suggestions from young people on what they feel needs to be changed to improve their education.
- Top three to five things that what would make their education better.

Resources required

- Flip charts/wallpaper
- Marker pens
- List of possible changes

Time

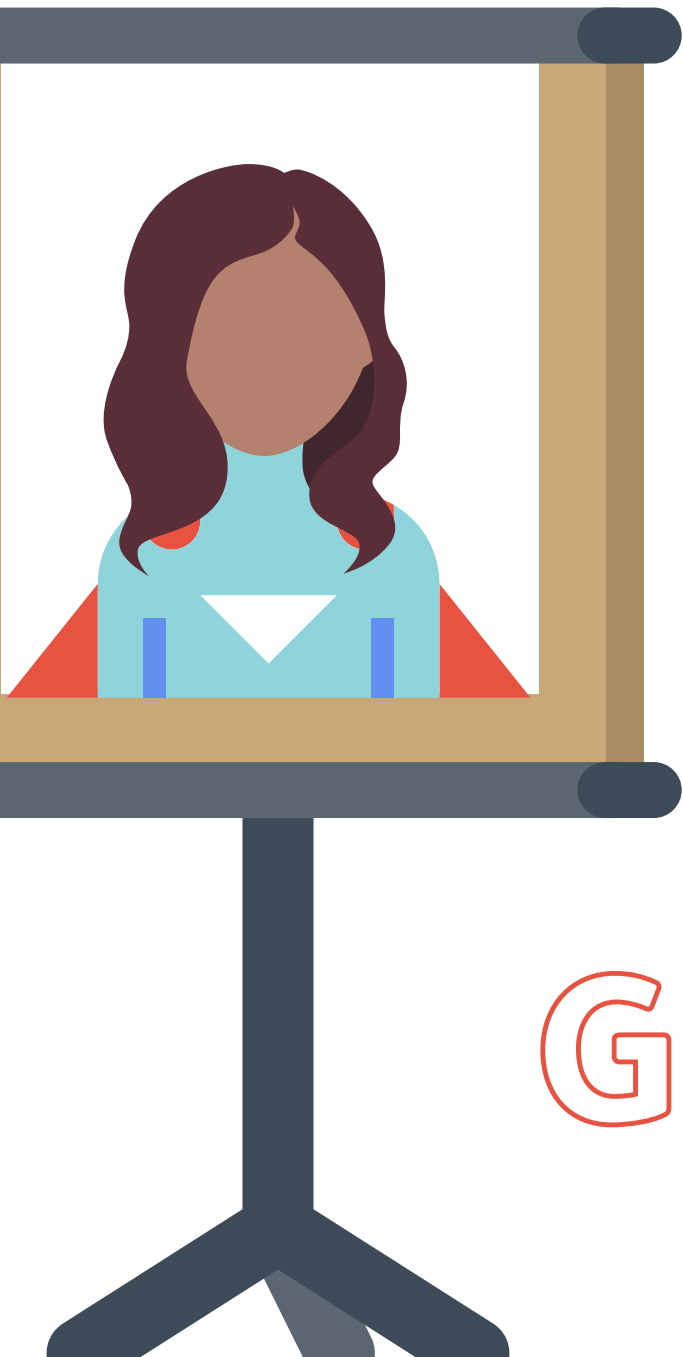
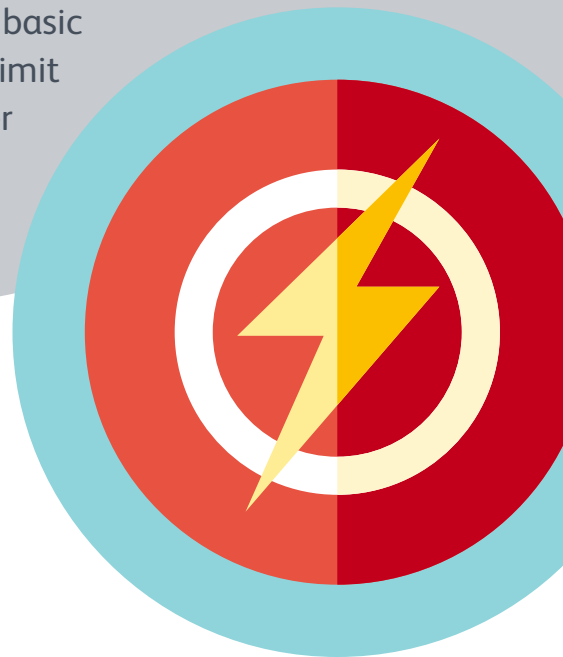
15–20 minutes



Part 1

Creating a School superhero

You can do this by rolling out a few sheets of wallpaper/flip chart onto the floor and drawing around one of the participants, alternatively use a smaller scale super hero drawn on a flip chart (see example overleaf). Ask the group to agree on a name for this person and some basic information about them such as age, gender. This is not to limit the young people's thinking or to prescribe an age or gender but just to get them to start discussing issues.



Part 2

Issues

Start a group discussion about what sorts of issues may be facing this young person at school. Record these issues and place them around the outside of the forcefield as shown below.

Prompts if needed: bullying, struggling with certain topics, not getting on with teachers, food, break times, rules.

GENDER

Age

NAME

Part 3

Forcefield

Ask the participants to think of ways to protect this student from these issues.

Write these around the outside of the body in the area of the force field.

Prompts if needed: better support for learners, smaller classes, more options to improve health, more physical education, less physical education, mixture of lessons.

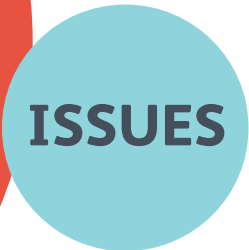


Part 4

Top 5 changes

Ask the group to decide on their top 5 changes from the forcefield that could improve education for their **School superhero**.

Clearly circle the 5 things that the group choose.



Appendix 1

Archipelago or islands

A game to get people moving and sitting next to different people.

How does it work?

Get everyone to stand in a circle and give them a sheet of newspaper.

Ask them to tear it in half and stand on one of the pieces.

Ask them to do origami with the other half and make a shark by screwing up the paper and throwing it into the middle of the circle.

You then tell them that they are no longer standing on a piece of paper in a room but are each on an individual island ... an archipelago. But this is no ordinary string of islands, it's an alphabetical archipelago – so they have to get themselves in alphabetical order of first names with all the Angelas and Andrews at one 'end', and all the Zoes and Zacs at the other. If they step in the water they will be eaten by the sharks so they must co-operatively move around the islands!

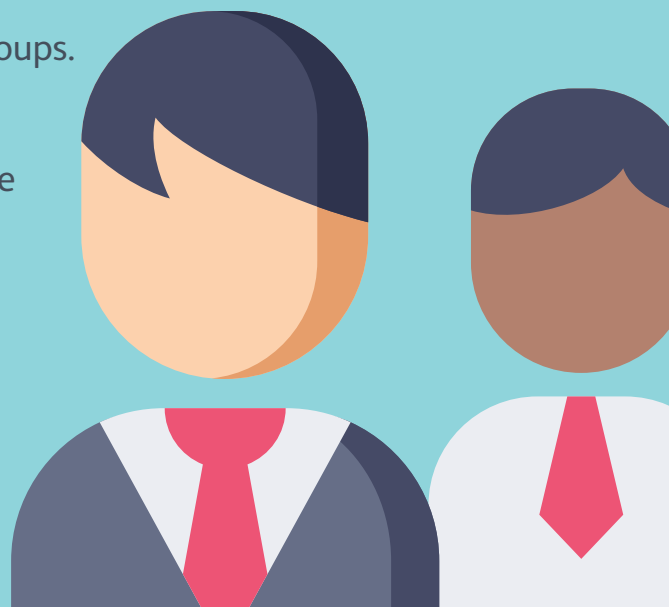
You can put on a time limit if you want, e.g. two minutes.

Check their success by sending a Mexican Wave round the circle as you call out the letters of the alphabet (they lift their arms as you say their letter).

You can now split into groups of 3, 4, 5 of those standing next to each other.

Why do we like it?

- It usually makes people laugh.
- It moves people from sitting in their friendship groups.
- The Mexican Wave is a good energiser.
- It allows people to move around and make a noise between quiet listening times like welcomes and introductions.



What will you need?

- A sheet of newspaper for each person and a loud voice!

Developments/adaptations

- You don't have to use newspaper, you can use chairs or just stand.
- You don't have to have sharks, you can make it okay to walk around.
- You can get into order of things other than alphabetical names, such as date of birth, distance travelled to get here, house number (be prepared to give random numbers to people with only a house name! And find out the highest number before you do the Mexican Wave ... you might need to count in hundreds!)
- You can send the Mexican Wave around a few times.
- You can make the wave very small – lift a finger – or very big – stand up with arms in the air.
- You don't have to have chairs, you can stand.
- You don't have to make a circle, you can make a line from one end of the room to the other.



Summary

There's a lot to take in, so here's a quick summary



We want to make sure that learning and experiences in school better prepare children and young people for life outside of school with things like career paths and the part they play in their community.



Our starting point is the four purposes of the curriculum – supporting learners to become ambitious and capable, enterprising and creative, ethical and informed, healthy and confident.



Our education system needs to work for young people and needs to be more fluid and flexible, so we're going to reorganise subjects into Areas of Learning and Experience so existing subjects can be taught in a way that links them together.



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' statements).



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



Relationship and sexuality education will become something everyone has to learn about up to 16 and will be much broader (with a focus on relationships).



Religious education will also be something everyone has to learn up to 16, and will look at different beliefs as well as non-religious views.



Welsh and English will be seen as equal and the aim will be that all children and young people in Wales will be able to use Welsh in everyday situations.

The key stages, will be changed to



The feedback
period closes on
19 July 2019

<https://hwb.gov.wales/draft-curriculum-for-wales-2022/have-your-say/>



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