



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

REPORT

Preparing for the Curriculum for Wales – case studies and cameos from secondary, all-age and special schools

Our response to Estyn's report and recommendations on Preparing for the Curriculum for Wales.

First published: 8 December 2020

Last updated: 8 December 2020

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This report responds to the Minister for Education's remit letter to Estyn for 2019-2020. It focuses on how maintained secondary, all-age and special schools are preparing for the Curriculum for Wales. The report is based on evidence from visits to a broadly representative sample of roughly equal numbers of pioneer, quality improvement or innovation schools and of partner (non-pioneer) schools

The report is the latest in a series from Estyn on the current period of change in education. It follows on from Curriculum innovation in primary schools (2018) that looked at how primary schools were preparing for the new curriculum. Previous reports in the series include: Improving teaching (2018), Preparing for the Digital Competence Framework (2018), Leadership development – case studies of professional learning for school leadership (2020) and Partnerships with employers in secondary and special schools (2020).

Welsh Government Response

Context

It is important to acknowledge the context in which schools are operating. Welsh

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schools are facing their biggest ever crisis in the form of COVID-19. This report was researched before the pandemic, and we recognise that the response to COVID-19 has had a significant impact on schools.

Curriculum for Wales – The journey to 2022 sets out the expectations of schools in the period from now until curriculum rollout - we want to ensure these expectations are realistic in light of the pandemic, and that they provide schools flexibility in their specific contexts. We recognise that schools will be in different places, and that the pace and focus of activity will vary.

Report findings and resources for schools

The Welsh Government welcomes Estyn's report into preparations for the new curriculum in secondary, all-age and special schools. The report's findings reflect an encouraging level of enthusiasm and support for the new curriculum in schools, and a widespread commitment to the philosophy of the reforms.

The case studies detailing different schools' journeys of curriculum reform are insightful examples of emerging practice, which we would encourage schools to read and consider as they begin to plan for and design their own curriculum and assessment arrangements.

It is clear that schools have made significant progress on their curriculum reform journeys, but we recognise that there is still more to do to address the barriers to implementation highlighted by this report.

Since this report was researched, a number of additional resources have been made available to schools to help inform their approach to curriculum reform. The *Curriculum for Wales guidance*, and in particular the section on *Designing your Curriculum*, provide the starting point. We encourage schools to engage with this guidance in detail as we move towards implementation of the Curriculum for Wales.

Curriculum for Wales – the journey to 2022 sets out the shared expectations for schools for designing their curriculum and preparing to implement it. It also aims to help schools in planning their approach and sequencing their activities

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by providing clear stages of activity between now and September 2022.

Education Wales' [YouTube channel](#) also contains a series of videos useful for curriculum design, including a [series on the different Areas of Learning and Experience](#). Practitioners can keep up to date with developments on the new curriculum and get involved in the conversation on the [Curriculum for Wales Blog](#).

Further support for schools

In addition to the resources currently available on [Hwb](#), the Welsh Government will continue to work with strategic partners to support schools with curriculum realisation and address the barriers highlighted by this report. This will include:

i. Curriculum Implementation Plan: This will set out:

- our expectations for realising Curriculum for Wales and how schools, strategic partners and the Welsh Government will all support this
- how we as a system will develop support for schools through co-construction with practitioners and stakeholders in the national network
- how we will ensure the system creates space and provides support to enable schools to realise Curriculum for Wales
- how we will use system-wide learning and feedback to understand how the reforms are working

ii. National network: The network will help drive implementation at a national level – bringing together perspectives from practitioners, experts and wider stakeholders from across Wales to understand progress, identify barriers, and inform support. It will serve as a forum to share understanding and expertise, co-construct solutions to implementation barriers and challenges at a national level, and deliver resources and materials to help address these barriers.

iii. Additional guidance: The Welsh Government will also be publishing additional resources in spring 2021 to help inform schools' approaches to curriculum development. This includes additional guidance on Careers and

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Work-related Experience; Religion, Values and Ethics; and Relationships and Sexuality Education.

iv. Further information: A full list of upcoming additional guidance and other milestones can be found in [Curriculum for Wales – The journey to 2022](#).

Publication details

The report will be published on or after 26 November 2020 and will be available on [Estyn's website](#).

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