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# Curriculum for Wales: annual report 2024

Sets out progress and achievements to date, and our priorities from September 2024.

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# Foreword from the Cabinet Secretary for Education

This 2023 to 2024 academic year marks another milestone as all schools and other educational providers in Wales are now using the Curriculum for Wales with learners up to year 8.

Since becoming Cabinet Secretary for Education I have had the privilege of visiting a number of schools and have been able to see the Curriculum for Wales in action. More and more schools are seizing the opportunities that our framework affords them to create an engaging, purposeful curriculum for all their learners. I want to thank all of our schools, settings and teaching staff for their hard work and dedication to the children and young people they work with, many in challenging circumstances.

We are not simply updating, reforming or swapping one national curriculum for another. We are enacting a once in a generation opportunity for more engaging, more stretching, more inclusive and more purposeful learning. We have put the well-being of our children and young people at the forefront, through our whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being and the mandatory Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience, as well as by putting the needs of our learners at the heart of the curriculum design process.

The Curriculum for Wales asks us to meet our learners where they are, and to support them to make continuous progress in their learning throughout their education. This requires learning that is challenging and inspiring. It must be academically rigorous, and it must also allow for practical application in the real world. This is about making sure that all children and young people are motivated to learn and are able to succeed regardless of their starting point and the path they choose to follow in education, in work and in life more generally.

Overwhelmingly, headteachers tell me they are supportive of the aspirations of

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the Curriculum for Wales. They see these opportunities and want to get it right for their learners. However, alongside these opportunities there are undeniable challenges, and it is imperative we give schools, settings and practitioners the support they need so they in turn can support their learners.

This report sets out the current picture of reform, the steps we have taken as a government to support this over the last year as well as signposting towards the next steps of support that we will put in place in the coming years.

## Curriculum implementation: an overview

Building on the progress and focus outlined in the [2023 annual report](#), this section provides an overview of progress being made on the Curriculum for Wales by schools and other education providers including non-maintained funded nursery settings, and pupil referral units (PRUs). It also outlines areas of ongoing support.

This draws on information collated from a variety of sources across strategic partners (including regional consortia, Local Authority partnerships and Estyn), from practitioners, as well as early insights from evaluation and monitoring activities. Where information is published separately, links are included at the end of this report for further reference. However, some inputs remain less formal and unpublished. This annual report seeks to set out a summary of progress from across the breadth of inputs throughout the year. It has, for example, been sourced from:

- supporting improvement advisers, school improvement partners, curriculum team discussions and visits to schools by school improvement services
- local authority reviews of implementation in funded non-maintained nursery settings
- Estyn inspections, updates and annual report

- the Camau i'r Dyfodol project
- evaluations of professional learning and support
- survey and focus group outcomes
- regional and partnership meetings with headteachers and senior leaders
- regional and partnership attendance at cluster meetings
- informal and formal practitioner feedback through networking, including via the National Network and Policy Group
- qualitative (early insights) research with school senior leaders on the early implementation of the Curriculum for Wales: **Wave 2 report**
- evidence from the first phase of the Strategic Review of Education Partners

The developing picture is summarised below:

## **Funded non-maintained nursery childcare settings**

Very positive progress in implementing the Curriculum for Wales continues to be shown through independently analysed evidence gathered from local authorities and the childcare sector, through Cwllwm partners. Leaders and practitioners have shown commitment to embracing the changes required. Leaders are engaging well with practitioners, parents and carers, and advisory teachers to help identify strengths and areas for improvement which is leading to improvements in learners' progress, the quality of provision and practitioners' understanding of the curriculum.

The **curriculum for funded non-maintained nursery settings**, which emphasises the Curriculum for Wales' focus on the principles of child development to support the four purposes, has improved the capacity for more purposeful opportunities for learners to influence and lead their own learning and explore independently. Estyn's annual report found that practitioners demonstrated an effective understanding of when and how to intervene in children's play to support their progress. Following the publication of **assessment arrangements** to complement the curriculum in July 2023, most

settings are beginning to develop their assessment and observation processes appropriately.

We continue to work with settings and the broader sector to understand their ongoing development and implementation needs. We have held engagement events on the assessment arrangements, and published a [report on the National Network conversation held in December 2023](#) to support practitioner understanding.

Following feedback from the sector, we focussed on how we can support settings' engagement with parents and carers and published a [toolkit of resources](#). These include a poster, newsletter template and advice on how settings might fulfil the requirement to publish a summary of their adopted curriculum. We published a [revised guide for parents and carers](#) which includes advice on the benefits of nursery education. We have also made available a range of case studies and resources to explain curriculum changes, with specific resources to support practice, including on [child development, play and play based learning](#) and [authentic and purposeful learning](#).

## Maintained schools

Inputs from practitioners and across supporting partners are consistent in the view that the vast majority of schools continue to make good progress in enacting the Curriculum for Wales. There is common feedback and encouraging signs regarding progress schools are making on curriculum reform. There is also growing recognition across schools that this is an ongoing journey, with short term gains being made, but time is needed to fully realise the benefits of the Curriculum for Wales.

Many schools have worked well to develop broad, balanced, relevant and engaging curricula. In these schools the curriculum provides learners with an

appreciation of their local community, culture and cynefin which engages learners well. The curriculum is being developed to build systematically on learner progression in knowledge, skills and dispositions. However, there are schools that have not yet considered well enough how they will develop their own curriculum in line with Curriculum for Wales expectations. In such instances, there is often a process of trying to retrofit previous curriculum and assessment arrangements.

While retaining confidence that they have planned and implemented a curriculum that meets the needs of their learners, over the year most schools have also started the process of evaluating their initial curriculum designs. This is an encouraging step forward in the curriculum implementation process, demonstrating active cycles of review and refinement. In most instances schools continue to be supported by regional and local school improvement services through a process of self-evaluation, professional learning and bespoke guidance. In general, schools are focusing on refining specific aspects of their curricula, such as provision for the cross-curricular skills, cross-cutting themes or more detailed aspects of particular curriculum Areas.

The nature of dialogue between school improvement services and schools has also evolved over the last year, with a greater emphasis on curriculum design and pedagogy being reported. Overall, emphasis on self-reflection is being seen in most schools, with increasing recognition that collaboration with colleagues across schools, local communities and beyond is an effective approach to developing shared understandings and expectations. On the whole, schools are reported as demonstrating more effective prioritisation, with more robust dialogue taking place on why certain content should be taught and how that supports learner progression. The majority of schools are reported better able to articulate how their curriculum supports all their learners, this through clear approaches to learning and teaching. Leaders are supporting practitioners to develop a secure understanding of the purpose of what they are teaching.

With regard to the nature of support being requested by schools across Wales,

there is a perceived shift towards greater emphasis on improving learning and teaching linked to robust curriculum approaches. Within this, more schools are valuing bespoke support available from school improvement services on specific curriculum aspects, particularly where those needs go beyond what can realistically be met from more structured professional learning programmes. There is broad recognition of a need for curriculum priorities to be presented to schools more clearly, with this linked to ongoing specialised local support. For example, in parts of Wales bespoke support to schools for progression and assessment is reported as having the biggest impact in moving schools forward with their curriculum development.

All schools across Wales continue to receive funding to support their curriculum development, the associated professional learning, and collaboration within and between schools. Welsh Government funding to support school leaders and practitioners to collaborate builds capacity both within their school, and across their (primary and secondary) cluster and networks. School to school cluster collaborations continue to be a support priority for school improvement services, with the vast majority of schools engaging in some form of meaningful collaborative work. Challenges in allocating time and resources to curriculum realisation remains an issue for schools, as is fully engaging with and accessing the professional learning offer. In general, the focus of cluster working has also moved forward over the year, building on groundwork in developing trust and common agenda between secondaries and their feeder primaries.

The majority of clusters across Wales are now reported as demonstrating more focussed professional dialogue on specific curriculum aspects, such as developing a shared understanding of progression across the 3 to 16 continuum in specific curriculum Areas. Supporting transition is also a common cluster theme. A few clusters can still be perceived as using a 'top-down' model with priorities being driven by the secondary school. However, as cluster collaborations mature, more are recognising the value and contributions of practitioners across setting types. For example, an increase in instances of primary practitioners supporting secondary colleagues on aspects of reading



pedagogy as schools seek to address impacts of the pandemic on learner progress. In a very few cases more time is needed for schools to develop a culture of cluster collaboration, with school improvement service support being provided to move that forward. As confidence in understanding the Curriculum for Wales has grown with practitioners, more schools have been willing to share, with a range of positive knock-on effects.

Where schools are reported to have few or no challenges regarding their curriculum development and provision for progression and assessment arrangements, it can usually be noted that there is:

- strong and stable school leadership
- effective and focused cluster working
- design and development of progression in curriculum Areas using structured approaches which draw on thinking from various practitioners and experts
- engagement in formal professional learning as well as accessing local specialised bespoke support
- a strong focus on high-quality teaching
- assessment embedded as a part of curriculum design and development
- effective use of a range of assessment
- a clear approach for understanding learner progress

Where schools have challenges in their curriculum approach, it can usually be noted that there are:

- weaker and/or unstable leadership arrangements
- staffing absences or more significant changes to the school structure
- issues with staff capacity and/or expertise
- ineffective engagements for cluster working
- gaps in understanding or less focus on assessment

It is clear from a range of sources that schools on the whole would welcome more national direction about reform, in particular the practical planning of

progression and assessment.

In primary schools, those making the greatest progress are embedding their approach, including involving their learners meaningfully in curriculum design. The majority of primaries have adopted a more thematic or interdisciplinary approach in the development of their curricula. The mandatory statements of 'what matters' across the humanities, expressive arts and science and technology Areas are often developed through specific contexts, in an interdisciplinary fashion. In response to their curriculum self-evaluation a few schools have de-coupled science and technology learning from broader themes to provide a greater focus on conceptual understanding in key scientific concepts.

A minority of primary schools are reported as not yet having a sufficiently secure understanding of Curriculum for Wales principles. This has led to the focus of planning being solely on what learners are learning, rather than the purpose of that learning (and how best to secure it). As reported by Estyn, some primary schools do not yet incorporate important aspects such as the cross-curricular skills effectively. However, on the whole strong emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills, which are applied in context across Areas, is evident.

In secondary schools rolling out curriculum arrangements is more variable. The majority are taking a more disciplinary approach to organising their curriculum, with practitioners teaching within subject specialisms, though the overarching curriculum design above this does vary across different schools. In the best examples, schools have trialled approaches before undertaking evaluation and refinement. Schools that Estyn and school improvement services have identified as less successful often do not focus strongly enough on securing effective teaching, or curriculum change being hampered through misinterpretation of key curriculum principles. School self-evaluations are highlighting the need to embrace a more challenging curriculum.

On the whole engagement in the design process is taking more time in

secondary schools, with a few approaching this through the need to develop pedagogy. Secondary school leaders are reflecting on the need to raise expectations as a result of observing learning and progress. Through support, a deeper understanding of the Curriculum for Wales and the need to rise to the challenge of realising the four purposes is providing the solution. This requires all school leaders to engage intellectually with this process, and this is reportedly more the case over this year. Some schools continue to be concerned about developing their curriculum further without detail on external assessments (for example, the new GCSEs). New qualification specifications being published from September, alongside a new section of Curriculum for Wales statutory guidance on 14 to 16 learning, should support further work in this area.

In all-age schools, leaders are reported as establishing clear curriculum visions, focusing on developing skills and improving teaching. They encourage practitioners to trial approaches to teaching and, through systematic evaluation, adapt their provision based on their findings. Some of the weaknesses in both primary and secondary schools remain evident in this sector as well.

Special schools continue to focus on ensuring a curriculum that is suitably broad and balanced. Estyn note collaborative curriculum planning as a generally strong feature in these schools. This incorporated ideas from both learners and practitioners.

## PRUs

Estyn report variable progress in enacting the Curriculum for Wales in PRUs. In the most effective examples identified, the curriculum had suitable breadth and depth and supported learning, progress, emotional health and therapeutic needs. Support for curriculum development from school improvement services remains available through Welsh Government funding arrangements.

# Ensuring and embedding equity for all learners

The Curriculum for Wales has been developed to be inclusive and accessible to all learners and we continue to work with schools and settings to support learners to overcome barriers and develop in the ways described in the **four purposes**. Our ongoing work to tackle economic disadvantage, in particular the Pupil Development Grant and community focused schools, continues to support learners to engage with learning regardless of their background.

## Diversity

Diversity is a cross-cutting theme within the Curriculum for Wales and guidance includes information for developing a curriculum which promotes the understanding and valuing of diversity.

**DARPL** is having a growing impact across the whole of Wales. By the end of the spring term 27,500 education professionals engaged with DARPL through live events, consultations and asynchronous resources.

During 2023 to 2024, the DARPL project has progressed to phase 2 which includes the extension of the **DARPL virtual campus**, refinement of the longitudinal community of practice, bespoke work with education consortia and local authorities, and a key focus on wider dissemination, including international outreach. A second annual DARPL leadership conference in June provided further support to senior leaders on their journey towards sustained anti-racist leadership.

The National Network conversation highlighted representation as a key to ensuring equity and inclusion, learners need to see people like themselves and people from their communities in the curriculum, that includes representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, Gypsy Roma Traveller communities,

LGBTQ+ communities and Disabled people.

The continuation of the **Arts Council Cynefin**: culturally and ethnically diverse Wales project has provided further opportunities to explore the multicultural histories of Wales through creative learning.

It is a strand to Creative Learning Through the Arts focussing on Cynefin to help schools:

- explore the history and development of Wales as a multicultural society
- explore the diverse experiences and contributions of Black, Asian and Minority ethnic people in Wales past and present
- work alongside creative practitioners in a learning environment to enhance the quality of learning and teaching
- support schools in the enactment of the Curriculum for Wales

**Cymuned**, an interactive community map (launched in February) highlights Black, Asian and other diverse ethnic Welsh communities. The map has been designed specifically for the Curriculum in Wales, through close working with practitioners, educational experts and members of the map's communities. This supports schools in exploring local areas of significance and opportunities to learn of lived experience of racism. The map will be updated each year until 2029.

## Human rights

We continue to work with regional consortia and partnerships, with support from the Children's Commissioner for Wales, to develop professional learning resources to support practitioners in their understanding of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Following on from the published **modules 1 and 2**, module 3 is currently in development and aims to support practitioners to

understand ways to plan, design and review their school curriculum in relation to rights.

## **Additional learning needs (ALN)**

An inclusive education system is one where learners' needs are listened to, responded to and all learners are supported to participate fully in education with a whole school approach taken to meeting their needs. Together, the reforms to the Curriculum for Wales and the ALN system are acting as a catalyst for change towards achieving this.

**Estyn's thematic report**, published in September 2023, highlighted examples of effective practice and important areas for action by local authorities and schools. A second thematic review of the ALN system is underway to build on previous findings and consider implementation of the ALN system in schools and settings. It will report in December, providing a practical resource for schools and settings to share effective practice, enable them to self-evaluate and improve where necessary.

## **Equity and inclusion events**

During 2023 to 2024 a series of events were held across Wales on how the curriculum can support equity and inclusion and help all learners overcome barriers, progress in their learning and achieve their potential.

Some of schools and settings that contributed produced **case studies** which include approaches to additional learning provision, becoming a trauma informed school and overcoming economic disadvantage. A **directory of organisations** that attended the events and that can support schools and settings with equity and inclusion has also been published.

140 participants joined an online National Network conversation on equity and inclusion in April. Resources from and related to the conversation were published on [the National Network platform](#). Resources noted by participants can be seen by logging into Hwb and joining the [Equity and Inclusion Tegwch a Chynwysoldeb](#) network. Learning from the conversation has been disseminated across Welsh Government's Education Directorate.

## Curriculum and assessment design and refinement across and within Areas

### Understanding curriculum design

[Estyn found that many schools have developed a clear vision for the Curriculum for Wales](#). Where curriculum developments were most successful, providers prioritised improving the quality of teaching alongside planning their curriculum. In addition, these schools focused closely on supporting practitioners to develop understanding of curriculum design.

In January we published [Continuing the Journey](#) which sets out our ongoing expectations for curriculum and assessment design. This section of the statutory Curriculum for Wales guidance provides clear support around expectations for designing learning with purpose. Enhanced by a range of supporting materials and co-constructed with the profession, this guidance responds to the needs of the profession in being shorter and simpler to understand.

Building on the successful [curriculum design pilot](#) in 2023, we are making available nationally curriculum design professional learning. Co-constructed with practitioners and educational partners, this support will enable a research informed approach to effective curriculum and assessment design that is coherent with the Curriculum for Wales. Evaluation of the pilot demonstrated that

schools valued this funded thinking time to engage with curriculum and assessment design, with the resulting case studies on Hwb having high levels of engagement. Feedback from primary, secondary and special schools was overwhelmingly positive, with the pilot successfully supporting them to move curriculum design from being driven by tasks and activities to a focus on purposeful progression in learning. Pilot schools have continued to focus on the 'why' of their teaching, thinking carefully about the purpose of learning experiences. In addition, support for designing effective assessment that values a range of indicators of learner progression was well received.

As noted in the overview section above, whilst cluster working looks different across schools and settings, practitioners increasingly recognise the importance of collaboration to develop a shared understanding of progression, and the importance of strong relationships between schools to facilitate professional dialogue. Estyn and school improvement services are clear that developing understanding of progression and what effective learner progress looks like is the aspect of curriculum design (alongside assessment approaches) schools find most challenging. In January we published a range of **supporting materials and case studies** to exemplify expectations for school to school working.

Early insights research reports that senior leaders recognise they are engaged in a long-term reform process with roll out continuing until 2026 to 2027 when schools and settings will be using the Curriculum for Wales with all learners aged 3 to 16. Currently there remains some uncertainty but many practitioners are taking ownership of curriculum planning, embracing the autonomy and the opportunities presented. However, there is uncertainty among some about moving away from established practices, particularly in relation to assessment. We continue to work with the sector to develop a range of support to improve confidence and capacity with curriculum reform as the Curriculum for Wales continues to rollout.

The range of sources noted earlier in this report make clear that assessment, curriculum design and learner progression remain top priorities for



headteachers. The [National Network curriculum and pedagogy conversation](#) in January and February also reported similar feedback from the profession.

## Supporting Areas of learning and experience

### Expressive Arts

The expressive arts area is supported through two key Welsh Government funded programmes. The Creative Learning through the Arts programme is a joint initiative between the Welsh Government and the Arts Council of Wales and benefits from a match-funding arrangement. The overall focus is on supporting creativity within the curriculum and particularly, though not exclusively, within the Expressive Arts Area. The programme also links directly to creativity and innovation, [skills integral to the curriculum's four purposes](#). There are a series of programme strands, most notably, Lead Creative Schools which has engaged nearly 800 schools since the programme's inception. The [independent evaluation report on the programme's first phase](#) was published in February. It reports a positive impact assessment, highlighting numerous examples of good practice, particularly in relation to Lead Creative Schools and on school-to-school support.

The National Music Service established in 2022 with Welsh Government funding in line with the Programme for Government commitment. The [national plan for music education](#)'s wide-ranging work programme focuses on schools' provision linked directly with the curriculum. In 2023 to 2024 the programme engaged over 33,000 learners via the 'first experiences' initiative and a further 30,000 learners through other strands of schools-focused provision.

## Health and Well-being

The **early insights report** noted that health and well-being was generally more developed in terms of joint planning and integrated working than some other curriculum Areas. We have observed that some schools are doing this well, particularly in primary where they are accustomed to a more holistic approach. But we also have evidence of some innovative work in secondaries involving projects around healthy relationships and health screening. Nevertheless the pandemic has left its mark on learners: for example, the **2022 PISA report** reported that in Wales learners have a lower average level of life satisfaction (6.16) when compared to the OECD average (6.75).

As with the wider curriculum, National Network events this year and visits to networks of schools have shown that there is a degree of variability in the design and implementation of the Area. This ranges from complete understanding of **the statements of what matters** and the holistic approach in the curriculum, to schools that are currently looking at health and well-being in terms of provision for learners who have complex needs. Some secondaries also report difficulty in a cohesive approach across the school where different individuals lead on different aspects of health and well-being.

In collaboration with Public Health Wales, a toolkit to support practitioner confidence in their understanding of the Area and in designing and implementing their curriculum, alongside topic and theme content support to schools is being developed. It is designed to align with professional learning on curriculum design, assessment and progression and will be available in the autumn.

Officials have also been working with Public Health Wales to ensure that the Welsh Network of Health and well-being promoting schools aligns to the Area. In a new collaborative approach, network co-ordinators have been assisting practitioners to review resources on Hwb to ensure their alignment to the Curriculum for Wales. In addition, curriculum officials are collaborating with

health and social services colleagues to co-develop a range of resources to support schools in implementing the health and well-being Area.

As part of the formative evaluation of the curriculum, a deep dive into the health and well-being Area will take place this year. This involves in-depth qualitative research with a range of practitioners and senior leaders to ascertain successes, challenges, useful support mechanisms, and where further support is needed.

Relationships and sexuality education while closely aligned to the health and well-being Area, is a cross-cutting theme within the curriculum and is considered separately in the cross-curricula elements section below.

## Humanities

To support the learning and teaching of history within the Curriculum for Wales, we commissioned Peniarth (University of Wales Trinity Saint David) to produce an online poster with information on 25 Welsh history individuals and events. Five copies of this 'Brethyn Cymru' poster have been delivered to each primary and secondary school, giving practitioners and learners the opportunity to explore their multicultural history as a nation. The poster's QR code gives access to further information on Hwb, and both parts can be used to trigger discussion and to stimulate further work. The resource was developed in the light of Professor Charlotte Williams' report recommendation that cross-cutting resources and materials should be created to match the Curriculum for Wales, in order to learn and teach about diversity in Wales past and present.

Plans have been put in place to develop further supporting materials on Welsh history. This will involve working with experts, practitioners and colleagues in Adnodd to build on resources that are already available, to ensure all schools have access to flexible high-quality bilingual materials that provide a timeline for the histories of Wales.

Over the last year a range of other bilingual resources and supporting materials aligned to the humanities Area have been made available. These include:

- politics project resources developed to support learners to understand a range of governance systems and how people have been represented at local, national and international levels. The resources support learners in **primary**, **secondary** and for those with **additional learning needs**
- **media literacy resources** to support practitioners to facilitate learning around the different types of misinformation learners could encounter, from misinformation spread accidentally, to deliberate use of disinformation in news stories, between warring countries and on social media
- **global citizenship case studies** are aimed at supporting schools through demonstrating how schools have planned for effective and engaging teaching and learning of citizenship education within their curriculum design process
- following the conclusion of the **Robert Owen (co-operatives and social business) pilot, resources** were published on Hwb in May
- the **unions in the world of work** pilot completed and resources developed for publication on Hwb
- **Cymuned**, an interactive community map launched in February (see the Diversity section above for further details)

## Languages, Literacy and Communication

We continue to provide support for schools and settings through the oracy and reading toolkit, in **Welsh** and **English**. The toolkit was updated in 2023 to clarify the Welsh Government's commitment to systematic and consistent teaching of phonics during the initial teaching of reading (and writing).

The **Reading Mentoring Pilot Project** led by Cardiff University in partnership with Bangor University, worked with reluctant readers in twelve primary schools across Wales to help build their confidence, motivation and love of reading as

well as developing training materials and resources for mentors and mentees.

Through the **Ein Llais Ni** oracy project we are developing practitioner support and resources for the progression of Welsh speaking and listening skills across all Areas of the curriculum. The **Research on the Instruction of Literacy with Language** project is focusing on developing and trialling a bespoke Welsh-language programme which builds Welsh vocabulary and literacy skills to improve reading outcomes for 8 to 11 year olds.

We funded Books Trust Cymru to help generate a positive home learning environment and culture, encouraging early literacy through use of books and shared reading. From 2022 to 2023 £5 million additional funding provided every learner with a high-quality book of their own to promote a love of reading. The project gifted 438,245 books to learners in primary schools and 168,870 book tokens to secondary school learners. As part of this project every school also received 50 books to supplement their libraries.

Estyn is undertaking a thematic review on developing Welsh reading skills, which will report in September. Their report, alongside a similar review of English reading skills published last year, will inform our ongoing work supporting literacy teaching and learning in English and Welsh.

In the face of a number of challenges for international languages in our schools, the **Global Futures programme 2022 to 2025** asserts our ambition for increased language learning. The programme is a partnership with colleagues including Estyn, British Council and regional education consortia and local authority partnerships. We remain committed to working with our Global Futures partners to promote the language skills learners need to be able to compete in the global marketplace.

Global Futures funding has supported the Cardiff University's modern foreign languages student mentoring programme which worked with 127 secondary schools across over the last year. We continued to fund regional education

consortia and local authority partnerships as they supported primary schools to introduce international languages, this with the aim of capturing learners' enthusiasm to generate momentum into secondary. The funding also provides direct support to primary teachers via the Open University **TEachers Learning to Teach languages (TELT) programme** which upskills them in both pedagogy and the teaching of French, German, Spanish or Mandarin.

## **Mathematics and numeracy**

As an outcome of the **mathematics and numeracy plan**, published in November 2023, a research, evidence and advice group has been established comprising 8 scholars who support the development of the plan actions. Professional learning is being developed to support improving standards in mathematics and numeracy. This is co-constructed with practitioners, education improvement partners and academic specialists in mathematics and numeracy and its teaching. We have worked with the **Money and Pensions Service** and the **Financial Education Service Wales** to publish a range of supporting materials for financial education on Hwb for both primary and secondary aged learners. Aligned to the Curriculum for Wales, they support progressive development of financial literacy as one element of the cross-curricular skills.

Through collaboration with members of the Financial Education Forum Wales a **financial education toolkit** has been published to signpost practitioners to useful resources to support them in designing their financial literacy provision.

Funding has been provided to Swansea University to deliver the **maths support programme Wales** (formerly the further maths support programme). This provides professional learning opportunities for those teaching A-level and further mathematics, tuition for learners, and maths enrichment at pre and post 16. The programme also supports the mathematics and numeracy plan, with additional activity related to supporting parents to engaging with their children's learning in being delivered in this financial year.

## Science and Technology

We continue to support learning and teaching in science, technology engineering and mathematics (STEM) through a range of grants. This funding enables schools to access learner focused experiences across a variety of engaging, hands-on contexts, such as coding, physics and working with industry on STEM based challenges. They also support practitioners through providing in-person and online professional learning opportunities and supporting materials for the classroom.

**Technocamps** has been funded to support STEM activities for both learners and practitioners across Wales. This includes developing confidence, knowledge and skills in computing. The programme targets schools in deprived areas, and provides opportunities for learners to engage in coding, computational thinking and digital technology. It also provides practitioner professional learning on use of emerging technologies such as machine learning and AI, as well as engaging classroom approaches, such as the use of Minecraft.

The **physics mentoring programme** was delivered by Cardiff University supporting learners in years 9 to 11 to access physics pathways post-16. While this primarily focuses on A-level routes, the programme has expanded to include apprenticeships and other routes into physics and engineering. Approximately 7,300 hours of mentoring was delivered in 2023 to 2024 supporting learners to use their understanding of physics in engaging and hands-on experiences.

The Institute of Physics' stimulating physics network provided professional learning for both specialist and non-specialist practitioners through Welsh Government funding over the year. This provides practitioners with online and in-person support to deliver exciting and engaging physics lessons, as well as developing their understanding of physics qualifications and career pathways. The programme also supports schools to take a more inclusive approach to STEM learning.



The **Engineering Education Scheme Wales** delivered hands-on engineering experiences for learners across primary, secondary and post-16. Projects such as the Formula 1 in schools competition, the 6th form project and the Girls in STEM project, gave learners the opportunity to work with professionals to apply their knowledge of mathematics, physics and engineering in new and exciting contexts.

The **Techniquest** and **Xplore** science centres were funded over the year to provide experiences for schools to explore a range of STEM topics and learning. As well as having interactive exhibits, the centres provided workshops on topics such as the human body and magnetism, and laboratory areas where learners carried out experiments.

We continue to work with and draw on partners who form the Equity in STEM Ministerial board. This group provides strategic direction for governmental activities which support under-represented groups to engage with STEM learning and careers.

## Progression, assessment and communication to parents and carers

### Progression

#### Camau i'r Dyfodol

The Camau i'r Dyfodol project is part of our ongoing work to support the understanding and realisation of progression in the Curriculum for Wales. The project is working with practitioners, senior leaders and representatives from across the education system to build capacity in designing progression in curricula. Following the completion of **Phase 1 a report was published**, setting

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out the findings which focused on understanding the system's confidence with progression and building the evidence base for supporting this further.

Phase 2 brought together practitioners, educational partners and researchers to identify priority areas around progression in curriculum design, and to co-construct supporting materials. The **resulting resources** were published in September 2023. They have been developed to:

- be meaningful, manageable, and usable by practitioners
- support system-wide shared understanding of the Curriculum for Wales and how to develop progression in curriculum design
- enable practitioners to engage with the ways of thinking, design processes, and resources generated by the universities and by project participants
- reflect the thinking and learning of practitioners and the other partners and organisations involved

The resources are designed to be practical, while giving practitioners the tools and materials to develop their thinking. The **Phase 2 report** was published following the materials setting out the learning from the project and the next steps for supporting progression. Work has now begun on Phase 3 which involves Camau working with practitioners in their schools and settings on curriculum design and progression, to draw together detailed case studies on schools' development processes.

## Personalised Assessments

Some changes have been made to the way learner progress appears in the personalised assessment reports. These changes are outlined in **Key Changes for September 2023**. This is to help support a better understanding of progression under the Curriculum for Wales.

We published **Patterns in reading and numeracy attainment**, from 2018 to

2019 to 2022 to 2023 on 13 June. The anonymised data from personalised assessments presented within the report provides information on reading and numeracy skills at a national level. It shows changes in attainment over time and demographic differences, such as differences by sex, or by those eligible for free school meals and their peers. This follows the initial statistical release in November 2023 on [Patterns in reading and numeracy attainment: from 2018 to 2019 to 2022 to 2023](#).

## 14 to 16 learning and qualifications

Following Qualifications Wales's publication of the [new suite of made-for-Wales GCSEs](#) in June 2023, the WJEC has been finalising the first wave of GCSE specifications to share with schools in September. This will provide schools with the information they need to prepare for first teaching of year 10 learners under the Curriculum for Wales in September 2025.

The WJEC are also developing professional learning and guidance, working closely with the Welsh Government and Qualifications Wales, to ensure practitioners are positioned to confidently teach the new qualifications. This includes a pan-Wales roadshow planned for spring 2025, made possible by the co-ordination of INSET days across secondary school clusters. The Welsh Government is providing £250,000 in 2024 to 2025 and 2025 to 2026 to support this professional learning programme.

Qualifications Wales also published, in January, their [decision report](#) in respect of the full 14 to 16 qualifications offer. This confirmed they will:

- proceed with the development of a skills suite which includes:
  - project-based qualification, the personal project, assessing learners against the Curriculum for Wales' integral skills.
  - a broad range of units for skills for life and skills for work.
- proceed with development of a suite of qualifications in work-related subjects

to be called Vocational Certificates of Secondary Education (VCSE) at level 1 and level 2 and called Foundation at entry level - level 1.

- proceed with the development of a range of Foundation qualifications relating to the Curriculum for Wales Areas for learners who have not yet reached the level of a GCSE.

These qualifications will be available for first teaching from September 2027. Qualifications Wales are continuing to explore with stakeholders options for one or more Foundation qualifications in Cymraeg.

Together with reformed GCSEs, these qualifications will form our National 14 to 16 Qualifications, designed to support the Curriculum for Wales and meet the needs of learners and the Welsh economy. They will provide an inclusive, coherent and bilingual choice for schools to offer learners, helping to prepare young people for life, learning and work.

Recognising the important role of qualifications within the curriculum for schools and learners in years 10 and 11, we published a consultation in February on [14 to 16 learning in the Curriculum for Wales](#). The guidance sets out Welsh Government policy for learning and teaching in years 10 and 11 and aims to help schools to understand and deliver their legal obligations whilst helping to ensure learners continue to receive a broad and balanced curriculum as they work towards qualifications.

The draft guidance introduced the 14 to 16 Learner Entitlement, the learning that all those in year 10 and 11 will benefit from under the Curriculum for Wales. In addition to a broad offer of general and vocational qualifications, the entitlement also includes support for learners to understand their strengths and interests, and to plan their next steps once they leave compulsory education at 16. Through the guidance we set out our clear national expectations to help provide equity and consistency in the curriculum, with all schools valuing the same things that contribute to a learner's progression and successful onward transition.

We are currently reviewing consultation responses and plan to issue the final statutory guidance in September, so that schools can use it to plan their curriculum offer for years 10 and 11 alongside the new GCSE specifications.

## Communicating with parents and carers

**Estyn reports that while most schools already use a variety of ways to communicate with parents**, only a few consult parents on their preferences around communication. **The Supporting learner progression: assessment section** of the Curriculum for Wales guidance sets out statutory requirements for sharing information with parents and carers on a termly basis, and the requirement to provide a summary of individual learner information annually. Schools and practitioners continue to develop ways to communicate learners' progress effectively to parents and carers, and to indicate their next steps in learning.

**Early implementation wave 2 research**, in comparison to **findings of wave 1**, found that senior leaders described a greater range of approaches to engagement with parents and carers, and an increase in using electronic means in addition to traditional face-to-face approaches (for example, sharing examples of work and videos on classroom apps such as Dojo, Seesaw and Google Classroom). Encouragingly, the information shared with parents and carers was often focussed on progression rather than attainment.

Senior leaders reported challenges in engaging parents and carers in events or activities specifically related to the Curriculum for Wales. However, they increasingly reported how more innovative and informal approaches to engagement with parents and carers (for example, learner showcases or performances) resulted in improved engagement. In a further development from Wave 1, no senior leaders in Wave 2 reported concerns about informing parents of changes to their curriculum. Senior leaders appeared to be more confident to share information about their curriculum.

Senior leaders' main concern relating to parental engagement appeared to be how they would respond to changes in the information they shared on their child's progression in end of year reports. This concern was more commonly expressed by senior leaders in secondary schools than those in primary schools. We continue to develop video case studies with schools to showcase the ongoing development of the approaches they are taking to engage and share information with parents and carers, and to record their successes and helpful lessons learnt.

For parents and carers of younger learners the [revised guide](#) on the benefits of nursery education also includes resources explaining curriculum changes, as well as resources on [child development](#), [play and play based learning](#) and [authentic and purposeful learning](#).

## Cross-curricular elements

### Cross-curricular skills

Literacy, numeracy and digital competence are mandatory cross-curricular skills in the Curriculum for Wales and are part of the overarching values and dispositions of the professional standards for teaching and leadership. They are gateway skills without which learners cannot access a broad and balanced curriculum or develop in the ways described in the curriculum's four purposes.

### Digital Competence

Digital learning in primary and secondary schools was supported through Welsh Government funding to regional consortia and local authority partnerships throughout the year. This funding provided for a range of specific professional learning, alongside more hands-on bespoke support to schools on curriculum

design and development in developing digital skills across the curriculum. Digital competence was also supported through Welsh Government funding for the Technocamps programme, as referenced in the science and technology Area above.

In addition, we have worked with the BBC and Micro:bits Foundation to ensure primary schools throughout Wales have access to their new Micro:bits offer. 94 percent of eligible schools in Wales signed up to receive a classroom set of these programmable chips. Associated professional learning for using the Micro:bits effectively was produced in partnership with **Technocamps**.

## **Literacy**

Support for literacy is set out above in the section on support for the languages, literacy and communication Area.

## **Numeracy**

As set out in the section on support for the mathematics and Numeracy Area above, support for numeracy is being developed as part of the mathematics and numeracy plan.

## **Careers and work-related experiences (CWRE)**

Careers Wales continues to support **education and teaching professionals** with a wide range of information and resources to support planning, design and delivery of CWRE across all six curriculum Areas. They deliver a range consultancy and training sessions, including, the national academy for educational leadership (NAEL) endorsed certificates.

The **CWRE toolkit and toolbox resource** for all practitioners, senior leadership teams and those supporting young people has been updated. It supports the development, implementation, and evaluation of careers education, to realise and embed CWRE in schools and settings.

The Careers Wales quality award, which supports the implementation of CWRE, was launched October 2023. The new award offers a three-stage approach and quality criteria that can be applied in primary, secondary and special schools. The stages encompass criteria linked to the six dimensions of quality that underpin CWRE.

We continue to explore mechanisms to support schools to build links with local businesses, entrepreneurs and employers, following the conclusion of research into the relationships between schools and employers. The Robert Owen pilot also connected schools with local social businesses to explore their work in local communities, as well as the structure of the business.

## **Relationships and sexuality education (RSE)**

Senior leaders in secondary schools when preparing to implement the curriculum from September 2023 did not **report concerns being raised by parents about RSE**, despite the extensive high profile media coverage at that time. They also reported feeling confident to explain their approach to RSE to parents should any questions be raised.

Some schools have appointed designated RSE lead practitioners and mapped their current provision across curriculum Areas and were also providing advice and ideas to Area leads on how to embed RSE content within their curriculum. Senior leaders reported that RSE content was being implemented primarily in the health and well-being, science and technology and humanities Areas.

Some senior leaders felt they would like more specific guidance on what to

teach learners at different points of their curriculum journey, and the age-appropriateness of specific topics. A few senior leaders reported that staff had attended good professional learning through their regional consortium. Others noted that, while they would have liked more guidance, they felt confident in staff ability to develop their own approach to RSE.

The Welsh Government has been collaborating with RSE leads across school improvement services to discuss their professional learning provision and best practice to be shared nationally. With practitioners and healthy school coordinators, we continue to review RSE resources to ensure their alignment to the curriculum and to map gaps in resources. We are currently commissioning additional resources to support mandatory themes within the RSE Code.

## Supporting reforms

### Resources and supporting materials

We are committed to supporting schools in enacting the curriculum with resources aligned to its principles. A review of curriculum resources on Hwb is ongoing with practitioners, Welsh Government officials and resource developers involved in the process. As at the end of June, there were 471 resources and supporting materials available that directly support the Curriculum for Wales. Newly developed curriculum resources that are submitted to Hwb also go through the review.

This review is also serving as a mapping exercise and where significant gaps are identified the Welsh Government will work with Adnodd to support the co-development of new resources and supporting materials for schools.



## Adnodd

Adnodd is the new arm's-length body which will oversee the provision of bilingual educational resources in Wales to support learning and teaching under the Curriculum for Wales. It became operational last year with Emyr George appointed earlier this year as its first chief executive. Adnodd has started to recruit staff and work with stakeholders on identifying needs in order to begin commissioning and publishing resources later this year. Welsh Government officials are working closely with Adnodd on the transfer of existing grants and contracts relating to resource development, as it takes on more of its functions. Adnodd has been working closely with the WJEC to identify resources needed to support the new GCSEs which will be available when the new qualifications are introduced from September 2025.

In the interim, needs already identified for curriculum resources and supporting materials are being addressed through ongoing Welsh Government commissioning work. Our [resources and supporting materials guide](#), which was co-constructed with practitioners, is also being updated over the summer to reflect Adnodd's responsibilities.

## National Network for curriculum implementation

National Network conversations offer an open platform for all practitioners in Wales. The network explores key issues around implementing the curriculum through conversations held at a national and regional levels. The network continues to identify and address the challenges and opportunities of reform, providing space to come together to share learning, build capability, and set out the priorities for national support. That includes a focus on cross-cutting areas such as curriculum design and progression.

Over 500 practitioners have participated in National Network conversations this

academic year through conversations focused on:

- **curriculum and progression**
- assessment arrangements for funded non-maintained nursery settings
- Areas of learning and experience
- equity and inclusion
- pedagogy
- Artificial Intelligence

## Policy group

During the autumn we invited expressions of interest from practitioners to be part of the **Curriculum for Wales Policy group**. The group now has 38 members representing different types of schools and settings from across Wales that work together to co-develop policy and support curriculum implementation. An early example of the work of this practitioner group has been the development of the Continuing the Journey section of Curriculum for Wales guidance published in January.

## Professional learning

### High quality professional learning

To fully implement the entitlement and ensure practitioners can access a range of high-quality professional learning programmes and experiences, a new rigorous and robust **professional learning endorsement process** launched in March. The process is led by a National Endorsement Panel, comprising education professionals, senior leaders and practitioners, chaired by **Professor Ken Jones**. There are 3 levels of quality assurance:

- Accredited: the provision leads to national and/or internationally recognised qualifications. Accreditation is undertaken by the individual provider.
- Endorsed: the provision supports national priorities. For leadership provision, this is led by the **National Academy for Educational Leadership**. For other national provision, this is led by the Welsh Government.
- Recognised: smaller scale or localised provision is quality assured through a peer review process, based on the **national endorsement criteria**.

Initial calls for endorsement will focus on established national professional learning programmes.

## Access to professional learning

To provide a single point of access to high quality, easily navigable professional learning to meet the needs of all education professionals a **new professional learning area** launched on Hwb in 2023.

The professional learning area has been organised to help practitioners find the right resources to meet their professional learning needs. Within the area, practitioners can access a wide breadth of training, self-guided learning, case studies, guidance, and research on all aspects of professional learning.

The resources cover four broad areas:

- curriculum, pedagogy and assessment
- leadership and governance
- well-being, equity and inclusion
- developing as a professional

Work is ongoing to continue to enhance and refresh the professional learning area to ensure optimum user experience.

## **INSET and the professional learning grant**

To support the implementation of the curriculum and other national priorities, we have provided an additional INSET day during 2023 to 2024. This additional INSET day has been dedicated to Curriculum for Wales professional learning, with an emphasis on supporting learners with additional learning needs and embedding equity, well-being and the Welsh language across the whole-school community.

A further £12 million has been allocated directly to schools during 2023 to 2024 to build on the £67 million professional learning grant awarded over the last 6 years. This funding allows time and space for practitioners and leaders to work together across schools and networks to realise the curriculum. This funding is to enable all practitioners to develop skills and practice to deliver high-quality learning and teaching.

To ensure that INSET has a positive impact, we published [guidance to support schools get the best out of INSET](#) and professional learning.

## **Schools as learning organisations (SLOs)**

The [national SLO survey](#), the school improvement framework and the professional standards, continue to provide a firm foundation for schools and settings to identify professional learning priorities and develop a collaborative culture to support curriculum implementation and school improvement. To exemplify how the SLO model can be used as an improvement framework, case studies are being developed for publication on the professional learning area on Hwb.

## Curriculum for Wales development programme

Delivery of the national Curriculum for Wales development programme, via education consortia and local authority partnerships has been ongoing throughout the year. Sessions include a blend of theory and practical examples from schools and settings from around Wales. As noted in the overview section above, schools are increasingly accessing more bespoke support to implement the curriculum.

A [cross regional website](#) provides equitable access to information regarding professional learning provision for practitioners and open access to the Curriculum for Wales offer.

## Research and enquiry

Higher education institutions continue to play an integral role in supporting professional learning across schools, with the continued roll-out of the National Professional Enquiry Project (NPEP) to grow professional enquiry capacity across the system.

Since inception, NPEP has supported schools in their preparation for the Curriculum for Wales. Almost 300 schools have been involved in the 2023 to 2024 cohort as emerging, developing or established enquirers, based on their level of expertise. All NPEP enquiries over the year have an overall focus on curriculum implementation. Enquiry findings are shared with the wider system via the [professional learning area](#) on Hwb.

To support the transition to a sustainable approach to professional enquiry for all schools, work is underway to develop new professional enquiry modules, launching in 2025.

## School Information

We continue to draw on the **Social Finance Report: developing a new data and information ecosystem** which set out recommendations for approaches to using data and information in a way that allows the system to work together to support all our learners fulfil their potential, irrespective of their background. We are reforming the information ecosystem for our school system to better support delivery of sustainable school improvement, driving the behaviours and practices that are required by the Curriculum for Wales and its underlying principles.

Our **draft 14 to 16 learning guidance** articulates what the Welsh Government considers to be most important for 14 to 16 learning. Subject to analysis of consultation responses, this policy will inform the information requirements we bring forward as part of the reformed information ecosystem. We will develop and communicate proposals over the year ahead as we continue to work with practitioners and leaders to form and refine proposals, establishing the detail of our new arrangements by summer 2025 in readiness for the new GCSEs.

Our 14 to 16 learning guidance consultation indicates that the new information arrangements to support our 14 to 16 learning will replace the current set of interim key stage measures that are in place, including the capped 9 indicator. In the meantime, the existing arrangements will remain in place.

## Evaluation and monitoring programme

### Early Implementation Research

In the **2023 Annual Report**, we reported the findings of **Wave 1 of the Early Implementation Research**, which was designed to establish schools' and learners' views and experiences from the first years of curriculum

implementation. Since then we published **Wave 2**, and the findings, alongside other evidence, informs this Annual Report.

The fieldwork was primarily undertaken between May and July 2023 and involved in depth qualitative interviews with 74 senior leaders and nine focus groups with a total of 54 learners. The sample contained a good mix across sector, language medium and regions. The purpose of qualitative research is not to achieve full representation but to allow a broad range of issues to be identified, and deeper discussion to take place.

## Evaluation Plan

In July 2023, we published our **Curriculum for Wales evaluation plan** setting out our approach to a systematic evaluation. In line with our commitment to review the evaluation plan annually, we have considered the plan against priorities and resource availability and provide an update on progress against plans below.

The following projects are underway:

### Formative evaluation and deep dive case studies

The formative evaluation started in January. It is being undertaken by Arad Research, together with their partners for the work: University of Stirling, Cardiff Metropolitan University, the Open University in Wales, the University of Auckland, Bangor University and AlphaPlus.

The formative evaluation will provide us with the broad qualitative and quantitative picture of how the reforms are working, how practice is changing and how these changes are being experienced by practitioners, learners and their families. It is a large-scale piece of work examining the perspectives and

experiences of senior leaders, practitioners, learners and parents and carers. It includes surveys with a representative sample of these populations, as well as in-depth qualitative research to give a richer, more detailed understanding. The first surveys are planned for the autumn, with qualitative work to follow later in the coming academic year.

As planned, the formative evaluation also includes a number of qualitative 'deep dive' case studies on specific parts of the curriculum and system, most immediately these are focused on:

- approaches to equity and inclusion
- curriculum design
- pedagogical approaches
- the health and well-being Area
- curriculum design and implementation in PRUs and other types of EOTAS provision

The focus of future deep dives will be decided over the duration of the project to address priorities as we gain a better understanding from this evaluation and other evidence.

Reports from the different elements of the formative evaluation and deep dives will be published throughout the year ahead, as well as a synthesis report triangulating evidence from the across the research to identify and highlight key themes, trends and inter-dependencies. These reports will help us to understand what's working well, and why. It will also alert us when things are not progressing as we would expect, and why, so that we can work with system partners to focus support and guidance in the right places. As well as publishing detailed evaluation reports, we will also share the evidence in useful and accessible formats with the wider system to promote learner progress, school improvement and teacher confidence.



## **Programme for national sampling of progression and attainment**

Feasibility and scoping work has been undertaken to set out options for a national programme for sampling of progression and attainment. In the course of this work, there has been wide engagement with educational experts and the sector to help develop a programme that will provide valid, reliable information and be manageable for schools.

This is not about testing every learner. It is about understanding the national picture of learners' progress and attainment over time to support national system level support and improvement in education in a way that is consistent with the Curriculum for Wales and preserves school autonomy and agency in curriculum design. It will not be linked to school performance measures.

National sampling will form part of a broader approach to the information ecosystem which will draw on a range of qualitative and quantitative information about different aspects of the school system.

## **Legislation**

### **Welsh Language and Education Bill**

The Welsh Government's proposals for a Welsh Language and Education Bill were presented in the context of the significant challenge posed by the Cymraeg 2050 strategy, and the target of one million speakers. This calls for transformational changes to the way we think about the Welsh language and the role of education in this context. The White Paper which was the subject of consultation at the beginning of the reporting year therefore set out the steps we propose to enable all learners in Wales to become independent and confident Welsh speakers through the statutory education system.

The [report on the consultation published in February](#) showed broad support for the ambition and objectives outlined in the White Paper. Based on that support, Ministers confirmed intentions to press ahead and introduce a Bill that will address the policy objectives outlined in the White Paper.

## **Funding attributable to curriculum reform**

To provide ongoing support for effective Curriculum for Wales implementation, funding levels were maintained for the 2023 to 2024 financial year. For 2024 to 2025, curriculum reform funding has started to taper down as planned to reflect the implementation of the reform programme. However, we continue to prioritise funding to schools through the Local Authority Education Grant (LAEG): Reform arrangements.

We are publishing information on Welsh Government funding from the Education and Welsh Language main expenditure group (MEG) that is directly attributable to curriculum reform. In doing so, we recognise that a number of other budgets within the MEG also indirectly contribute to reforms (for example: initial teacher training, support for digital delivery, literacy and numeracy, National Music Service). As in previous years, funding directly attributable to curriculum reform from the Education and Welsh Language MEG is, therefore, defined as covering:

- direct funding for schools' curriculum and assessment reform
- support for non-maintained settings
- professional learning for curriculum reform
- Camau i'r Dyfodol progression support project
- Qualifications Wales new qualifications development
- resources and supporting materials
- school improvement services support for children and assessment reform
- evaluation and monitoring programme
- communications

- Welsh Government operational costs

## Table 1 builds on last year's annual report and sets out directly attributable spend in these areas over the last 3 financial years

Activity	2021 to 2022 (£)	2022 to 2023 (£)	2023 to 2024 (£)
<b>Curriculum reform</b>			
Practitioner costs for Curriculum for Wales guidance development	86,250	143,000	100,500
Regional and local authority support for curriculum and assessment reform	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
Schools' curriculum and assessment reform, including wellbeing and progression	9,203,000	6,346,000	6,346,000
Schools' network engagement	3,240,000	3,000,000	3,029,700
Resources and supporting materials	306,749	403,274	668,969
Non-maintained settings support	314,020	289,199	42,893
Progression support programme	499,546	1,314,454	600,000
Communications and stakeholder engagement	327,150	258,327	232,743

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<b>Activity</b>	<b>2021 to 2022 (£)</b>	<b>2022 to 2023 (£)</b>	<b>2023 to 2024 (£)</b>
Research evaluation and monitoring	235,701	276,775	813,347
Welsh Government operational costs, including guidance development and the National Network	240,664	405,535	445,014
Regional and local authority assessment for learning support for schools	400,000	400,000	400,000
<b>Teacher development and support</b>			
Professional Learning pioneer schools and cluster schools	680,000	0	0
Curriculum Professional Learning programme (regional consortia and schools)	5,900,000	6,400,000	5,700,000
Curriculum national Professional Learning resources	390,000	170,000	332,113
Professional Learning grant for schools	12,000,000	12,000,000	12,000,000
<b>Qualifications Wales</b>			
New qualifications development	1,142,000	1,327,000	1,411,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>37,965,080</b>	<b>35,733,564</b>	<b>35,122,779</b>

Of the £35.12 million spent on curriculum reform in the 2023 to 2024 financial

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year, over £22.03 million was passed to schools to support their implementation of the Curriculum for Wales, exceeding our planned sum of £21 million.

## **Table 2 below sets out current spend projections in these areas over the 2024 to 2025 financial year**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>2024 to 2025 (£)</b>
<b>Curriculum reform</b>	
Practitioner costs for Curriculum for Wales guidance development	329,108
Regional and local authority support for curriculum and assessment reform	2,600,000
Schools' curriculum and assessment reform, including wellbeing and progression	3,000,000
Schools' network engagement	3,000,000
Resources and supporting materials (including support for new qualifications in due course)	1,099,000
Non-maintained settings support	150,000
Progression support programme	5,000
Communications and stakeholder engagement	237,000
Research evaluation and monitoring	725,000

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<b>Activity</b>	<b>2024 to 2025 (£)</b>
Welsh Government operational costs, including guidance development	671,061
Regional and local authority assessment for learning support for schools	400,000
<b>Teacher development and support</b>	
Curriculum Professional Learning programme (regional consortia and schools)	5,700,000
Curriculum national Professional Learning resources	550,000
Professional Learning grant for schools	12,000,000
<b>Qualifications Wales</b>	
New qualifications development	1,520,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,986,169</b>

Future annual reports will again update on actual spend and forward projections, highlighting any anticipated pressures or savings.

## Forward look

It is critical that we build on the positive aspects of curriculum rollout to date, whilst also ensuring sufficient detail and support is in place. In our previous

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annual report, we set out 5 key aspects of our ongoing support for rollout. These are to:

- Monitor and consider additional support in aspects of the curriculum where the profession welcomes it
- Work with partners to ensure dependencies which are critical to the success of the curriculum reflect its ethos and are consistent with the approach of the Curriculum Framework
- Continue to develop policy on curriculum to ensure the national framework is clear and supports schools
- Enable coherence of expectations and support in foundational concepts and processes of the curriculum

Enacting these, the Cabinet Secretary has outlined a range of support, centred around three key aspects:

1. Simplified and clear detail and support for curriculum design, progression, and assessment:
  - nationally available collaborative support for curriculum design, progression and assessment building on the lessons from the curriculum design pilot programme and existing effective practice and support. This will include clear tools and templates to give schools a clear process for developing and enhancing their curriculum, regardless of their starting point. This will also help provide further detail on approaches to assessing learning, evaluating progress, and communicating this.
  - examples of what good can look like in curriculum design, by promoting and sharing effective practice.
  - Initial work will be shared throughout the academic year 2024 to 2025 and expand in the following year.
2. Additional focus and support on cross curricular skills:
  - nationally available collaborative support to help embed literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, raising standards. This will be piloted in 2025 and expanded throughout the 2025 to 2026 academic year.

- placing the literacy, numeracy, and digital competence frameworks on a statutory footing to support coherence across Wales. These will clarify and strengthen our national expectations for these skills. Consultation on revised and strengthened literacy and numeracy frameworks will take place in 2025. Revised frameworks will be published by 2026.
  - national principles about teaching and learning in literacy, numeracy, and digital competence, ensuring the building blocks for stronger learning are clear, and schools have access to high-quality resources that support this.
3. Specific support to plan progression in each curriculum Area of learning and experience. These materials will support professionals to select stretching content and plan the development of specific knowledge and skills. We will begin to trial these from the academic year 2025 to 2026.

We will develop the above working closely with practitioners, school leaders, delivery partners, and stakeholders to co-construct the detail of this support, to make sure it works for a wide range of schools and settings.

## Publications that have informed this Annual Report

- [14 to 16 learning under the Curriculum for Wales | GOV.WALES](#) - May 2024
- [Assessment arrangements for funded non-maintained nursery settings - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#) - October 2023
- [Assessment arrangements for funded non-maintained nursery settings: National Network Conversation 6th December 2023: findings report \(gov.wales\)](#) - January 2024
- [Careers and work-related experiences toolkit](#) - 2022
- [Community Focused Schools | GOV.WALES](#) - September 2023

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- [Consortia Addysg Gymraeg | Welsh Education Consortia \(google.com\)](#)
- [Creating time and space for professional learning - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#)
- [Curriculum for funded non-maintained nursery settings - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#) - November 2022
- [Curriculum for Wales: annual report 2023 | GOV.WALES](#) - July 2023
- [Curriculum for Wales: continuing the journey - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#) - January 2024
- [Curriculum for Wales evaluation plan | GOV.WALES](#) - July 2023
- [Curriculum for Wales Framework Guidance - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#)
- [DARPL - Diversity and Anti-Racism Professional Learning](#)
- [Developing a vision for curriculum design - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#)
- [Developing a new data and information ecosystem that supports the reformed school system in Wales: findings from a research study: Welsh Government response | GOV.WALES](#)
- [Engagement Toolkit for funded non-maintained nursery settings - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#)
- [Effective practice case studies: authentic and purposeful learning - 2023](#)
- [Effective practice case studies: child development - 2023](#)
- [Estyn - The Chief Inspector's Annual Report 2022 to 2023](#) - January 2024
- [Estyn - Thematic survey report - communication with parents \(gov.wales\)](#) - June 2018
- [Global Futures: a plan to improve and promote modern foreign languages | GOV.WALES](#) - November 2022
- [Guide to the Pupil Development Grant | GOV.WALES](#) - October 2023
- [Have Your Say | Qualifications Wales](#)
- [Limit Less: A whole-school approach to equity and inclusion | Institute of Physics \(iop.org\)](#)
- [Major challenges for education in Wales | Institute for Fiscal Studies \(ifs.org.uk\)](#) - March 2024
- [Mathematics and numeracy plan 2023 | GOV.WALES](#) - November 2023

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- **Maths Support Programme Wales**
- **National Leadership Wales (nael.cymru)** - endorsement
- **National Network Report Curriculum and Pedagogy In Person Conversation (gov.wales)** - 2024
- **National plan for music education | GOV.WALES** - May 2022
- **Nursery education for 3 and 4 year olds: A guide for parents and carers (gov.wales)**
- **Patterns of attainment in reading and numeracy | GOV.WALES** - June 2024
- **PISA 2022: National Report for Wales (gov.wales)** - December 2023
- **Professional learning - Hwb (gov.wales)**
- **Professional learning endorsement - Hwb (gov.wales) and Criteria - Hwb (gov.wales)**
- **Research on the Instruction of Literacy with Language**
- **Research with schools and learners on the early implementation of Curriculum for Wales: wave 1 | GOV.WALES** - April 2023
- **Research with schools and learners on the early implementation of Curriculum for Wales: Wave 2** - September 2023
- **Resource to support self-evaluation of Welsh - Hwb (gov.wales)** - April 2023
- **Review of roles and responsibilities of education partners in Wales and delivery of school improvement arrangements: letter to the minister [HTML] | GOV.WALES**
- **School improvement guidance: framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability - Hwb (gov.wales)** - August 2022
- **Seren Academy | GOV.WALES** and **Learner Journey - Hwb (gov.wales)**
- **Supporting learner progression assessment guidance - Hwb (gov.wales)**
- **"Take it seriously": children's experiences of racism within secondary schools - Children's Commissioner for Wales** - 2024
- **TEachers Learning to Teach languages | Open University in Scotland**
- **Technocamps**

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- [The Full 14 to 16 Offer | Qualifications Wales](#)
- [Understanding by Design™ Pilot: process and learning - 2023](#)
- [Understanding curriculum in practice: Camau i'r Dyfodol - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#)
- [Welsh Language Education: white paper | GOV.WALES](#) - June 2023

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