



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## **Response to the Estyn thematic report on curriculum innovation in primary schools**

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.  
This document is also available in Welsh.



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**Report title:**

Curriculum innovation in primary schools

**Report details:**

The survey report was commissioned by the Welsh Government in the Cabinet Secretary's annual remit letter to Estyn for 2016-17. The report is aimed at the Welsh Government, Local authorities and regional consortia. The report findings and the associated case studies will also be of interest to headteachers and staff in primary schools, as well as secondary schools when they reflect on their current curriculum provision and plan for curriculum change.

The report draws on evidence from a sample of primary schools and provides an overview of how primary schools currently plan, deliver, monitor and refine their curriculum and teaching approaches.

**Summary of main findings:**

The report highlights what is working well and what the barriers to change are. It also provides a curriculum development self-evaluation model

Schools focus sharply on designing learning experiences that harness the curiosity and creativity of pupils, and support risk-taking and pupils' independent learning.

Schools focus on change and innovation, whilst providing opportunities for teachers to improve their skills through effective pedagogy. Many of the schools have strong self-evaluation practices and know what aspects of teaching and learning need to change.

The report highlights that a successful ethos in schools can be attributed to a number of key areas, including;

- i. developing a common understanding and an agreed language of learning that all staff use to inform discussion of key concepts and activities in the school
- ii. encouraging open and direct dialogue about teaching and practice with a strong focus on its impact on learners
- iii. building collaborative and supportive professional relationships within and between schools
- iv. engaging with research evidence and carrying out research
- v. recognising a collective responsibility for improvement
- vi. adopting a genuine open-door culture in classrooms that contributes towards creating trust, transparency and honesty among staff.

A few schools have only made tentative steps in developing the curriculum, instead waiting for definitive guidance and direction from Welsh Government.

Barriers to change include Insufficient curriculum planning, Inconsistent skills development, wider collaboration across schools, and pioneer schools, and not

involving parents and the community in the initial preparations for curriculum change.

**Recommendations:**

N/A

This report does not contain any recommendations. It is for information and reference only.

**Publication details:**

The report was published on Estyn's website on 17 May 2018 and can be found on Estyn's website: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports>