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QUALIFIED FOR LIFE

A curriculum for Wales –  
a curriculum for life

October 2015



# A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life

**Audience** The entire education workforce, government and national partners, including local authorities and their regional consortia, workforce unions, diocesan authorities, governing bodies and Estyn.

**Overview** This document sets out the plan for taking forward the recommendations within *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales*.

**Action required** None – for information only.

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**Additional copies** This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at [gov.wales/curriculumforwales](http://gov.wales/curriculumforwales)

**Related documents** *Qualified for life* (Welsh Government, 2014); *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* (Professor Graham Donaldson CB, 2015); *Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers* (Professor John Furlong, 2015)

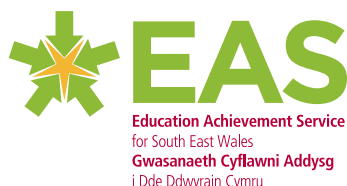
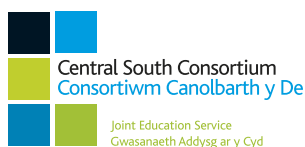
## Welsh Government working in partnership with



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales



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## Ministerial foreword



This is an exciting time for education in Wales. There is a new momentum in Welsh education, driven by our reforms, and focused on raising standards across the board.

We are moving towards our aim, set out in *Qualified for life* that:

Learners in Wales will enjoy teaching and learning that inspires them to succeed, in an education community that works cooperatively and aspires to be great, where the potential of every child and young person is actively developed.

Professor Donaldson's report, *Successful Futures*, provides us with the foundations for a twenty-first century curriculum shaped by the very latest national and international thinking. Our plan for the first ever 'made-in-Wales' curriculum sets out our principles and priorities and reflects our confidence and pride in Wales as a bilingual nation. Our new curriculum will embody better learning and higher standards for all.

I am committed to the profession playing a central part in the design and development of our new curriculum. I am confident they are both willing and able to take on this challenge.

Our new curriculum will be developed by the education professionals already working in Wales. A network of Pioneer Schools will be leading and shaping the detailed design and development of the new, inclusive, broad, balanced and challenging curriculum, working with experts to shape the future of learning in Wales.

We are a small nation and it is essential that we pool our resources and our expertise. As well as working with the profession, we will work closely with Estyn, the Education Workforce Council, higher education institutions, further education colleges, businesses, parents/carers, children and young people, and local authorities and their regional consortia all of whom have a vital role to play. Alongside this we will work with our other stakeholders and consult on changes as and when appropriate, including in advance of any legislative proposals being brought forward.

My ambition is for our new curriculum to be available by 2018. I believe this timeframe is realistic and achievable, and strikes the right balance between pace and ensuring that professional practice is developed to support the introduction of new approaches to learning and teaching.

*A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life* sets out, in broad terms, the steps that we will take to achieve *Successful Futures*. As we move forward our plans will be refined and revised. Taking the wider financial climate into account we may need to work and think differently to achieve our ambition without losing sight of the prize. I would welcome your feedback to ensure the future success and well-being of every child and young person in Wales who deserve nothing less than world-class learning and teaching.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Huw Lewis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Huw Lewis**  
**Minister for Education and Skills**

## Foreword – Professor Donaldson



Following the acceptance by the Minister for Education and Skills of the recommendations in my report, *Successful Futures*, Wales is about to embark on a radical reform of its curriculum and assessment arrangements.

Ultimate success will be strongly influenced not just by the translation of the ideas in my report into workable curriculum and assessment arrangements, but also by the way in which the developments as a whole are taken forward. I am therefore very pleased that the proposed approach to implementation draws on experience of educational reform nationally and internationally as well as on evidence from relevant research.

The inclusive and comprehensive approach outlined in this document will be taken forward at a measured but determined pace. The challenge is to be both creative and realistic in building the new curriculum and assessment framework while ensuring that the implications for professional development, leadership and accountability are fully understood and addressed. The Pioneer Network, which will be at the heart of design and development, will be important in ensuring the workability of the emerging framework and in supporting their colleagues as implementation gathers pace.

I am delighted to have been asked to maintain my involvement in the reforms as chair of the Independent Advisory Group (IAG). The creation of the IAG is a further example of the innovative nature of the Welsh Government's approach to implementation.

I am very much looking forward to working with colleagues across the country to help achieve our goals of better learning and higher standards for the young people of Wales.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Graham Donaldson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath.

**Professor Graham Donaldson CB**



## Our plan

Achieving the full benefits of *Successful Futures* for our children and young people, together with *Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers*<sup>1</sup>, and the New Deal for the Education Workforce will require us all to engage fully and work together. It will be a collaborative process that will involve the teaching profession, Estyn, local authorities, academics, parents/carers, businesses and a wide range of other stakeholders, experts and groups. To ensure we get it right, we will need to strike the right balance between proceeding at pace so that the new curriculum is available as soon as possible, with our desire to develop the new curriculum in partnership with schools and other partners to ensure we get it right. As we move forward together the development of the new curriculum will be:

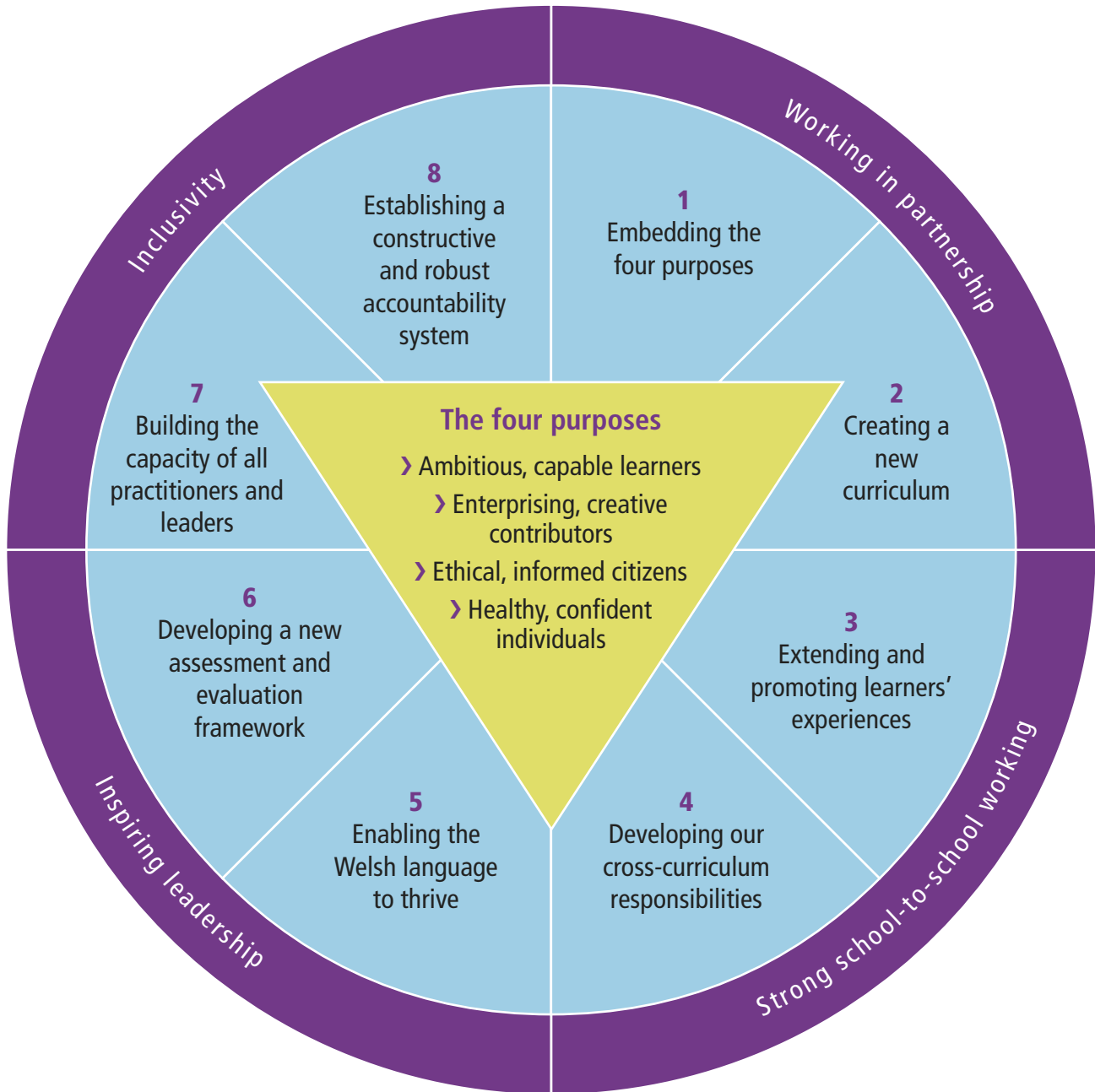
- › evidence-led
- › based on subsidiarity
- › ambitious and inclusive
- › manageable, with pace, passion and professionalism
- › unified.



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1 *Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers* (Professor John Furlong, 2015)  
[gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/wagreviews/teaching-tomorrows-teachers/?lang=en](http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/wagreviews/teaching-tomorrows-teachers/?lang=en)

## Building our national curriculum together – a curriculum for Wales, a curriculum for life



## Essential building blocks

In this plan we set out the steps we will take, working with the profession, to deliver on *Successful Futures*. It focuses on eight essential building blocks for our new curriculum for 3 to 16-year-olds.

These are as follows.

- › **Embedding the four purposes** of the curriculum fully in the learning and experience of all children and young people in Wales, whatever their school or educational setting.
- › **Creating a new curriculum** encompassing Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs), achievement outcomes and progression reference points.
- › **Extending and promoting learners' experiences** so that the curriculum is rich as well as being inclusive, broad and balanced.
- › **Developing our cross-curriculum responsibilities** by designing a digital competence framework while maintaining momentum in respect of literacy and numeracy.
- › **Enabling the Welsh language to thrive** to ensure that those who speak Welsh or acquire the language early can follow all aspects of the curriculum through the medium of Welsh, and those learning the language can progress towards using the language confidently in different contexts.
- › **Developing a new assessment and evaluation framework** that prioritises assessment for learning and aligns assessment arrangements with the four curriculum purposes and the achievement outcomes within each AoLE.
- › **Building the capacity of all practitioners and leaders**, including the ability to reflect on and evaluate their own practice, to design and create a relevant, challenging and stimulating curriculum, and to apply appropriate pedagogical principles and practice.
- › **Establishing a constructive and robust accountability system** that supports the four purposes.

## The four enablers

These building blocks will be supported by four 'enablers' that will underpin our new curriculum.

These are as follows.

- › **Working in partnership.** The vision and ambition set out in *Successful Futures* to build a new curriculum for Wales will only be realised through a strong partnership approach – an all-Wales partnership that will include schools, experts, Estyn, local authorities, and Welsh Government. The Pioneer Schools<sup>2</sup> network, focusing at first on the Digital Competence Framework, curriculum design and development and building the capacity of practitioners and leaders through the New Deal for the Education Workforce, will be at the forefront of this.

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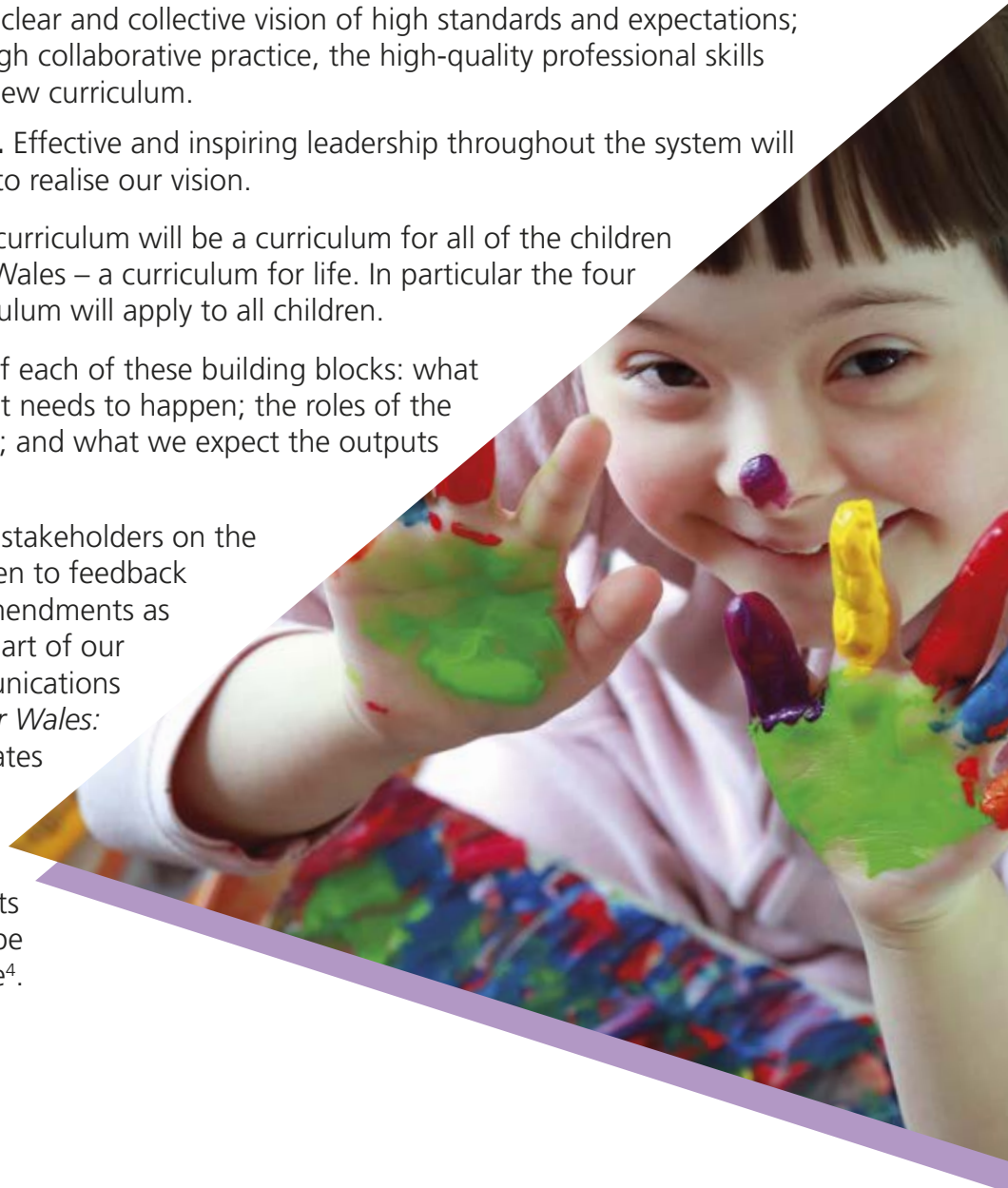
2 See [gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150630-pioneer-schools-en.pdf](http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150630-pioneer-schools-en.pdf)



- › **Strong school-to-school working<sup>3</sup>.** This is fundamental to our new curriculum: schools working across all ages and year groups to plan for progression; to establish a curriculum that sets a clear and collective vision of high standards and expectations; and to develop, through collaborative practice, the high-quality professional skills needed to teach the new curriculum.
- › **Inspiring leadership.** Effective and inspiring leadership throughout the system will be essential if we are to realise our vision.
- › **Inclusivity.** Our new curriculum will be a curriculum for all of the children and young people in Wales – a curriculum for life. In particular the four purposes of the curriculum will apply to all children.

Here we set out details of each of these building blocks: what needs to happen; when it needs to happen; the roles of the various partners involved; and what we expect the outputs or outcomes will be.

We will regularly update stakeholders on the progress of this plan, listen to feedback and make changes or amendments as required. This will form part of our engagement and communications strategy. *A curriculum for Wales: a curriculum for life* updates will be communicated via Dysg including information about key developments, documents and progress which will be published on our website<sup>4</sup>.



3 School-to-school working – this includes non-maintained settings, pupil referral units (PRUs), further education colleges as well as all schools.

4 Learning Wales website: [gov.wales/curriculumforwales](http://gov.wales/curriculumforwales)

# Building block 1 – embedding the four purposes

The four purposes will be at the heart of our new curriculum.

They are the starting point for all decisions on the content and experiences developed as part of the curriculum. More than that, they are designed to influence how practitioners plan, teach and assess.



It is vital that all settings and schools<sup>5</sup> adopt and embed the four purposes in their everyday practice. All schools should start to consider the extent to which they already support children and young people to develop the attributes and dispositions set out in the four purposes. They should consider what they can do within the context of the current national curriculum to strengthen their practice and pedagogy and its connection to the four purposes.

## What needs to happen and who is involved?

- › Settings/schools start thinking about how they could strengthen their practice and pedagogy in relation to the four purposes – from October 2015 onwards.
- › Local authorities with their regional consortia support schools and encourage debate, discussion and collaboration between them on how to strengthen practice and embed the four purposes – from October 2015 onwards.
- › Welsh Government share examples of schools in Wales and elsewhere with innovative and effective approaches to curriculum delivery and use Hwb to share effective practice as schools start to develop approaches to meeting the four purposes – from 2016 onwards.
- › Estyn will continue to identify and share good practice in curriculum delivery – October 2015 and ongoing.
- › Welsh Government will work with schools, regional consortia and Estyn to develop a range of media to support parents/carers, communities and employers to understand the four purposes and the wider curriculum changes – from 2016 onwards.

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5 Throughout this document the term 'school' or 'schools' will be used to include schools and, where appropriate, non-maintained pre-school settings eligible to deliver the Foundation Phase.

## Building block 2 – creating a new curriculum

Our new, inclusive, broad, balanced and challenging curriculum will give schools and practitioners more responsibility for determining what is taught. This responsibility will sit within a curriculum that comprises:

- › common Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) from ages 3 to 16
- › progression reference points at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16
- › achievement outcomes which describe expected achievements at each progression reference point
- › three cross-curriculum responsibilities – literacy, numeracy and digital competence (see Building block 4).

The new curriculum will set the parameters for each AoLE. These are:

- › Expressive arts
- › Health and well-being
- › Humanities
- › Languages, literacy and communication
- › Mathematics and numeracy
- › Science and technology.

Each AoLE should include, where appropriate, a Welsh dimension as well as an international and UK perspective<sup>6</sup>. Schools will be able to use the AoLEs to determine their own curriculum and how it should be organised.

Progression reference points and achievement outcomes will be defined nationally to ensure consistency and that assessment arrangements are fully aligned with the new curriculum, as set out in Building block 6. As recommended in *Successful Futures*, initial progression reference points will take account of guidance on *Routes for Learning*<sup>7</sup>.

The Pioneer Network will be at the forefront of designing the new curriculum and assessment arrangements with expert advice and support. The all-Wales partnership will include curriculum and assessment experts, and other key stakeholders, including Estyn.

Pioneer Schools will work with their wider school clusters and networks and beyond, including PRUs, non-maintained settings and further education colleges to ensure that as many learning providers as possible are part of the design and development process.

6 In line with the recommendations of the independent review of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig, history and the story of Wales: [learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/news/130424-cwricwlwm-cymreig-report-en.pdf](http://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/news/130424-cwricwlwm-cymreig-report-en.pdf)

7 [view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http%3A%2F%2Flearning.gov.wales%2Fdocs%2Flearningwales%2Fpublications%2F121115routeslearningbookleten.doc](http://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http%3A%2F%2Flearning.gov.wales%2Fdocs%2Flearningwales%2Fpublications%2F121115routeslearningbookleten.doc) (English only)

They will share thinking, test ideas and keep them up-to-date with latest developments as the curriculum and assessment framework develops. Robust quality assurance processes will be put in place to ensure we fulfil our ambition to develop a world-leading curriculum. We envisage four stages of development.

- › Stage 1 – October 2015 to January 2016 – selection, induction and preparation of the Pioneer Network. The Pioneer Network and the all-Wales partnership to agree their programme of work which will define the timelines for Stages 2 to 4.
- › Stage 2 – design of framework and principles for each AoLE, including progression reference points and achievement outcomes.
- › Stage 3 – developing the content of each AoLE; checking and reviewing with other schools and curriculum experts (taking national and international evidence and research into account) – supported by robust quality assurance processes.
- › Stage 4 – further checking and quality assurance, including international benchmarking.

Our intention is to bring forward legislation during the next Welsh Assembly term. In advance of any legislative proposals being brought forward, the Welsh Government will consult and provide all stakeholders with an opportunity to share their views.

### What needs to happen, when and who is involved?

- › Working with local authorities, their regional consortia and schools we will develop the Pioneer Network. This network will lead the development of the new curriculum and assessment arrangement (this work has already started).
- › The Pioneer Network will work closely with other practitioners from across Wales alongside other stakeholders and experts who will be part of the all-Wales partnership (from January 2016 onwards).
- › To support the work of the Pioneer Network, Welsh Government will facilitate links with curriculum and assessment experts and share good practice and evidence from other countries on an ongoing basis (starting in January 2016).
- › Estyn will provide expertise to support the curriculum design process and comment on its potential impact (from January 2016).
- › Welsh Government will bring together quality assurance partners, including higher education institutions (HEIs) and other experts, to review and provide feedback to the Pioneer Network at each stage of the curriculum design process (from January 2016 onwards).
- › Through a range of mechanisms, including stakeholder groups, we will facilitate stakeholder engagement in the curriculum design process to hear their views on the emerging curriculum framework (from 2016 onwards).
- › Qualifications Wales will be asked to review and develop new qualifications as the new curriculum is developed and implemented over time.

## When will the new curriculum become available?

Based on the four stages set out previously and our experience of the development of the Foundation Phase, this means that the new curriculum, for all year groups, could be available to schools as early as September 2018.

Schools will have some flexibility in determining how and when they begin first teaching of the new curriculum. We would expect some schools to be ready to start this transition very quickly after the new curriculum is made available, others will want to take a little longer. Working with practitioners we will reflect on what this means for learners who are part way through a course of study leading to a qualification. Our ambition is that by 2021 every school will be using the new curriculum to support learning and teaching. We have set this timeline because:

- › our curriculum will be designed using an open, transparent and consultative approach so we have built in time for debate among professionals and experts and robust quality assurance processes
- › we believe all schools will be fully prepared for first teaching by 2021 having the new curriculum available to them for up to three years, although those who can show they are ready before 2021 can commence with the new curriculum once it becomes available.





## Building block 3 – extending and promoting learners' experiences

*Successful Futures* emphasises the importance of rich experiences being integral to the curriculum and to deep learning. The first recommendation in the report defines the curriculum as all of the learning experiences and assessment activities that support the four purposes. Many schools will already have a rich and varied offer of experiences for their learners. Therefore, it will be important for schools and partner organisations to think about the range of experiences already available to learners in each school community; consider how they can be best applied, built upon and improved; and what new experiences can be offered to support the four purposes. Promoting learners' experiences is integral to learning but also an important aspect in raising aspirations.

Within the Schools Challenge Cymru<sup>8</sup> programme, we have been promoting and piloting approaches that enrich the educational and life experiences of learners through the delivery of a Pupil Offer. *Rewriting the future: Raising ambition and attainment in Welsh Schools*<sup>9</sup> also highlights the importance of raising aspirations and widening horizons in mitigating the impact of poverty on educational attainment.

We now want all our schools to build on the experiences already available in and through their school and design and deliver their own Pupil Offer to enrich the curriculum and raise aspirations.

### What is the Pupil Offer?

At its heart, the Pupil Offer is about finding successful ways of igniting interests, stimulating passions and increasing confidence in our children and young people. It is about finding more effective ways to deliver the curriculum, communicate high expectations, raising an individual's aspirations and ambitions to succeed in everything they choose to do. It is about schools and practitioners working with a wide range of partners to develop a breadth of opportunities and activities that expand horizons within and beyond the traditional learning environment of the classroom. It is not necessarily about doing more. It is about partnerships beyond the school, where partners multiply the impacts of each other's efforts.

Schools can already start to think about developing their own Pupil Offer and how they can support their learners' engagement and broaden their experiences in line with the four purposes.

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8 Schools Challenge Cymru:  
[gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/raisingstandards/schools-challenge-cymru/?lang=en](http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/raisingstandards/schools-challenge-cymru/?lang=en)

9 [gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/deprivation/rewriting-the-future-schools/?lang=en](http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/deprivation/rewriting-the-future-schools/?lang=en)

For example this could include the following<sup>10</sup>.

### Ambitious, capable learners

- › **Higher and further education** (ensuring that learners are aware of future routes for learning and how they contribute towards the achieving of career ambitions).
- › **Science and digital technology** (including in school and outreach activities which bring the curriculum to life for learners).
- › **Welsh language** (including opportunities within and outside schools for learners to use the language in a social and informal context).

### Enterprising, creative contributors

- › **Arts** (including expressive, creative, literature, media, visual, performing and culinary).
- › **Businesses and entrepreneurship** (to learn about the range of career options available to them).
- › **The third sector** (including volunteering opportunities or access to direct support from organisations).

### Ethical, informed citizens

- › **Local and national culture and heritage** (including museums, galleries, historical/faith sites, participation in local and national eisteddfodau, national parks, libraries and archives).
- › **Other cultures** (including learning languages, foreign exchange trips, visits to faith sites).
- › **Rights and responsibilities** (including participation in debates, learning about local authorities, National Assembly of Wales, Westminster, Brussels, Strasbourg and the United Nations).

### Healthy, confident individuals

- › **Clubs, associations and groups** (including working with the Urdd, cadet forces, scouts and guides, brigades, environmental groups, hobbies and areas of personal interest).
- › **Sports** (both within the school and more widely).

### What needs to happen, when and who is involved?

- › Schools to review the existing experiences they offer, consider new opportunities and develop a Pupil Offer that complements and supports the four purposes – start now and set out in their school development plan (SDP) for the next academic year.
- › Partners, which could include the Arts Council, Sport Wales, businesses, HEIs, voluntary sector, e.g. health and well-being organisations, to work with schools to develop their Pupil Offer – start now and support planning for the next academic year.

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<sup>10</sup> This list is not exhaustive and is for illustrative purposes – schools and their local communities will have many other ideas that cover and interlink the four purposes.

- › Local authorities with their regional consortia – to facilitate links between schools and other partners to develop their Pupil Offer and develop collaborative opportunities across schools – from now, as part of their planned and ongoing activity.
- › Welsh Government to work with local authorities to encourage schools to adopt the Welsh language charter to support and improve learners' use of the language in informal settings – from January 2016.
- › Welsh Government to share practice from Schools Challenge Cymru – evidence gathering during the autumn; publication in spring 2016.
- › Pioneer Network to use the emerging evidence to inform thinking about the 'experiences' during the design and development phase of each AoLE – from spring 2016.



## Building block 4 – developing our cross-curriculum responsibilities

As *Successful Futures* sets out, there are three key competencies and skills which are the foundations for almost all learning and are essential to being able to participate successfully and confidently in the modern world. These are literacy, numeracy and digital competence. These will be cross-curriculum responsibilities for all practitioners and people who work with children and young people.

We have already given priority to literacy and numeracy. The National Literacy and Numeracy Programmes were introduced in 2012 followed by the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) in 2013. Many schools

have made steady progress in implementing the LNF;

however more needs to be done to ensure that literacy and numeracy skills are

embedded in a meaningful

way in all schools. We will

therefore continue to focus on

literacy and numeracy as an essential pre-requisite for our new curriculum. We

will publish our updated National Literacy and

Numeracy Programme and will continue to ensure

that schools receive support in implementing the LNF from regional consortia and through producing additional online materials to share good practice.

While we continue to support literacy and numeracy, we are now moving at pace to develop digital competence as a cross-curriculum responsibility.

With the support of local authorities and their regional consortia we have already identified 13 lead Pioneer Schools that will focus initially on digital competence. They begin the design work in September 2015, and will work closely with our National Digital Learning Council (NDLC) and leading digital experts and employers over the next year. The aim is for the Digital Competence Framework to be available to settings and schools in September 2016<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> This will be on a non-statutory footing.

## What needs to happen, when and who is involved?

- › Local authority regional consortia to provide support to schools on the LNF based on regional priorities – October 2015 and ongoing.
- › Expert groups to continue to work with Welsh Government providing advice and support on literacy and numeracy developments – October 2015 and ongoing.
- › Welsh Government to publish a refreshed National Literacy and Numeracy Programme document – by November 2015.
- › Schools will be invited to share examples of approaches to implementing the LNF to be included in our online guidance and additional online support for the LNF – by March 2016.
- › Estyn to provide specific curriculum expertise to support the design process and continue to review the implementation of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum – October 2015 and ongoing.
- › Pioneer Network to begin designing the new Digital Competence Framework working with other schools and leading experts – from September 2015.
- › Welsh Government to support the work of the Pioneer Network by facilitating links with experts and sharing good practice from other countries – throughout the development process.
- › Quality assurance partners, including HEIs, to review and provide feedback to the Pioneer Network at each stage of the curriculum design process.
- › Stakeholders to engage in the design process and provide their views on the emerging Digital Competence Framework as it is developed.
- › The Pioneer Network will work with their clusters and networks to facilitate their engagement with the design process and to receive feedback on the emerging framework.
- › Local authorities to work with the Pioneer Network to deliver the Digital Competence Framework and associated professional learning support when it becomes available to schools, PRUs and non-maintained settings – by September 2016.

## Building block 5 – enabling the Welsh language to thrive

Building on the principles in *Qualified for life, Successful Futures* recognises the importance of the Welsh language to our identity as a country. The Welsh Government is committed to seeing the Welsh language thrive. That is why, as recommended in the report, the Welsh language will remain a compulsory element of the curriculum for all learners up to 16 years old. The new curriculum will provide a means to ensure that all learners can develop their Welsh language skills and use the language confidently in different contexts.

The value attached to the Welsh language should be enhanced by strengthening the focus on its commercial value for the jobs market, the suggested cognitive benefits of bilingualism and its importance in enabling children and young people to achieve a good understanding of the cultural life of Wales in the past and present. There will be a renewed focus on learning Welsh primarily as a means of communication, particularly oral communication and understanding. The use of technology to support language acquisition will be further developed.

Within the Languages, literacy and communications AoLE, clear and distinct progression reference points and achievement outcomes for developing Welsh language skills over time will be developed so that learners in all settings and schools can receive acknowledgement for skills gained.

Welsh language qualifications at 16 will be reviewed with a view to ensuring that a suite of qualifications is available which enables learners to progress to study Welsh at A level and university. It will also provide an option for learners to gain a qualification that is aligned with the proposed focus on speaking and listening and application in the workplace.

The specific needs of Welsh-medium teaching will be fully considered as the arrangements for the curriculum structure, including assessment arrangements, are developed. This will include sharing good practice in immersion education approaches and methods needed for teaching the curriculum through the medium of Welsh.

### What needs to happen, when and who is involved?

- › Local authority regional consortia to strengthen school-to-school support as part of their ongoing work and in partnership with other stakeholders with the requisite expertise.
- › Working with Estyn and the local authorities Welsh Government will identify and share good practice in the learning and teaching of Welsh second language.
- › Welsh Government will work with the Education Workforce Council to have a better understanding of the Welsh language skills of the current workforce to inform the provision of Welsh language training for the workforce.
- › Qualifications Wales will consider the current range of Welsh second language qualifications and advise on how these should change in light of recommendations made in *Successful Futures*. They will also advise on how, over the longer term, the expectations embodied in those qualifications can be raised.



## Building block 6 – developing a new assessment and evaluation framework

*Successful Futures* is clear that assessment is integral to successful learning. The most important purpose of assessment is to inform learning and teaching. Assessment is a crucial part of learning and teaching. When used well, assessment encompasses several forms and techniques to inform and enhance learning and to enable learners to take greater ownership of their own learning and development. It should be a powerful learning and teaching tool.

The review made a number of recommendations that offer us a very different vision for assessment and the way assessment is used in Wales. To achieve that vision, it will be essential to develop a new National Assessment and Evaluation Framework. The framework will be based on the four purposes and the key principles set out in *Successful Futures*. It will be designed with the profession and, from the outset, it will be developed to be fully inclusive to make sure the framework covers all learners and all abilities.

We will look to and learn from the latest international approaches and good practice from within Wales to inform the design, development and delivery of this framework. A new Quality Assurance Panel working with the Pioneer Network will be key to supporting and guiding the development of this framework.



## What needs to happen, when and who is involved?

- › Early design plans and principles of the National Assessment and Evaluation Framework will be informed by the practical experience of assessment and additional learning needs (ALN) specialists, supported by current research evidence.
- › A quality assurance panel, including HEIs, will be established by December 2015 to review and provide feedback to the Pioneer Network to ensure that the design and development of the framework is in line with the principles set out in *Successful Futures*.
- › Welsh Government will bring together quality assurance partners, including HEIs and other experts, to review and provide feedback to the Pioneer Network at each stage of the curriculum design process – from January 2016 onwards as set out in Building block 2.
- › Further design and development will be informed by the Pioneer Network, with learning from Pioneer Schools on assessment shared more widely in line with the stages of development of the curriculum set out in Building block 2.
- › Digital and online systems for assessment and reporting will be explored and developed closely with the Pioneer Network and digital learning leads. Hwb will be used as a platform to support schools to accurately assess learner outcomes.
- › Welsh Government will introduce online adaptive testing from May 2018.
- › Welsh Government will publish the National Assessment and Evaluation Framework by September 2018.

## Building block 7 – building the capacity of all practitioners and leaders

*Successful Futures* is clear that to embed the purposes and structure of the curriculum we need to explicitly address the fundamental interdependency between the curriculum and pedagogy. While the report sets out 12 pedagogical principles, it is clear that decisions about learning, teaching and curriculum design are context and purpose specific and so are best taken by practitioners themselves. This means that to embed the curriculum effectively we need to enable the workforce to collectively reflect upon and develop their pedagogical approaches to build the capacity across Wales to enable the new curriculum to have meaning in every classroom.

*Successful Futures* is also clear that committed leadership at all levels in the system will be an essential prerequisite for embedding the new arrangements. We need to ensure that all leaders understand the purpose and structure of the new curriculum and have the skills and support they require to influence, support and deliver the changes in their own context, particularly in supporting practitioners to develop their pedagogical skills, and as part of a wider 'self-improving' school system.

As set out in *Qualified for life* we will develop an excellent professional workforce with strong pedagogy based on an understanding of what works in Wales. We will build on what already works and support practitioners to develop their pedagogical skills. We will transform Initial Teacher Education and Training (ITET) as set out in *Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers* and support the professional development of practitioners and leaders through the New Deal for the Education Workforce. This will be shaped and delivered through a strong national workforce development partnership, between practitioners and the Pioneer Network, local authorities and their regional consortia, the workforce unions, the Education Workforce Council and Welsh Government.

### What needs to happen, when and who is involved?

- With practitioners and leaders working in Wales develop a clear vision to underpin the development of practice and embed the new purposes of the curriculum in learning and teaching – by spring 2016.
- The Workforce Development Partnership will develop and consult on new professional standards early in 2016 with a final version available from September 2016. The National Leadership Development Board (NLDB) will develop a new leadership strategy to ensure leaders at all levels in the system are skilled and prepared to lead and manage the changes up to and beyond curriculum implementation. The leadership strategy will be published in the spring 2016.

- › Through the New Deal for the Education Workforce, Welsh Government will create a new national framework of professional learning and development by spring 2016. The framework will be updated and further developed through implementation of the New Deal for the Education Workforce.
- › Working with local authorities with their regional consortia and schools, we will build the Pioneer Network to support the development of pedagogy and leadership across all settings so that new programmes are available to practitioners by September 2016<sup>12</sup>.
- › With the profession Welsh Government will develop practitioners' skills in order to better meet the differing needs of learners and to underpin the roll out of person-centred planning (or practice) (PCP) so that all learners with ALN are fully supported – by September 2016.
- › The Pioneer Network, working with local authorities and their regional consortia, will provide practical support and expertise to all schools across Wales as they prepare for and implement the curriculum in their own settings – from September 2018 onwards.
- › Welsh Government will consult on the further development of a self-governing profession through enhancing the functions of the Education Workforce Council in spring 2016. We will bring together ITET providers, schools and practitioners to embed the vision, standards and pedagogy into the practice of all trainee teachers so that they are well prepared and equipped to teach in the new system as soon as they enter the profession. Critically this includes the following actions.
  - ITET providers consider how their provision can help new teachers understand the four purposes – starting immediately.
  - New accreditation arrangements will be established for ITET to ensure that all programmes starting from 2018 will equip the trainees to deliver the new curriculum as they qualify – by September 2017.

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<sup>12</sup> Initial priorities for these programmes have been identified as leadership development, differentiation, metacognition and digital competence skills.

## Building block 8 – establishing a constructive and robust accountability system

*Successful Futures* makes a number of recommendations on how the accountability system will need to change to focus more on the four purposes of the curriculum and 'in an environment where key decisions are taken at the local level . . . strengthen and enhance accountability arrangements in ways that help to embed the new arrangements and drive improvement while avoiding the distorting effects that can arise from external performance and reporting requirements'.

In light of the above, we are working with key stakeholders to develop a revised accountability and support strategy. To support this we will establish a task and finish group which will hold its inaugural meeting during the autumn. Work will be completed by the summer of 2016 and shared with the wider profession during the autumn term of 2016. This work will include:

- › reviewing the balance between challenge and support in the current system to determine future roles and responsibilities at national, regional and local levels in the system
- › developing options for the new national sampling tests to report on system-wide progress
- › reviewing the arrangements for collecting and sharing national level data with regional consortia, local authorities and schools to ensure that data are used at the appropriate level to improve outcomes for learners in a manner that minimises the risk of the distorting effects identified in the review
- › further refinement of the national categorisation system
- › continuing to work with Estyn and other regulators to consider their role during the transition and once the curriculum has been implemented. Estyn have already commenced a review of their inspection arrangements and are currently consulting with the public and their stakeholders
- › developing models to assess the level of readiness of the system as a whole, along with individual and groups of schools to demonstrate their readiness after 2018.





## What needs to happen, when and who is involved?

- › Welsh Government will convene a task and finish group to develop a revised accountability and support strategy, including the design and development of a new national sampling survey to report on system-wide progress – by summer 2016.
- › Welsh Government will consult on a new accountability and support strategy – by autumn 2016.
- › Local authorities and regional consortia will be involved in the development of the new strategy and will review their own accountability arrangements once it has been agreed.
- › Welsh Government will take forward developments of the national categorisation system – during 2017.
- › Estyn will complete the review of their own inspection arrangements and set out proposals for future inspection arrangements beyond 2017.
- › Welsh Government will develop models to assess readiness for implementation by 2018.





## Enabling change

*Qualified for life* sets out four strategic objectives for creating a world-class education system in Wales<sup>13</sup> and together with *Successful Futures, Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers* and the New Deal for the Education Workforce explicitly addresses two of these objectives. We are improving education the Welsh way and have the foundations in place on which to build a world-class, self-improving system. Throughout the development of the new curriculum and the fulfilment of the eight building blocks set out previously we will continue to work with schools, local authorities and their regional consortia, Estyn and our other key stakeholders to ensure that all schools are ready to deliver our new curriculum by 2021. Our four enablers will provide crucial underpinning.

### Working in partnership

The all-Wales partnership will be central to our collaborative approach. The Pioneer Network will:

- › be at the forefront of this collaboration, informing both policy and practice throughout the development and implementation of the new curriculum
- › work closely with the profession, experts and stakeholders to design and develop our curriculum and assessment arrangements
- › as part of the New Deal for the Education Workforce, facilitate professional learning networks. These will be focused on both pedagogy and leadership that will enable practitioners to reflect upon and develop their practice ready for the new curriculum.

### Strong school-to-school working

The following will be fundamental to our new curriculum.

- › Schools working across all ages and year groups to plan progression (3 to 16).
- › Schools working together to plan a curriculum that sets high standards and expectations for their learners.
- › Schools working together to develop the high-quality professional skills needed to teach the new curriculum.
- › Schools working beyond local clusters and networks to include non-maintained settings, PRUs and FE colleges to ensure a continuum of learning from 3 to 16.

We cannot succeed in our ambitions for the future education of our children and young people without collaboration and mutual support and challenge. In each of the regions, consortia are developing a real and growing strength and depth in their approaches to school-to-school working and peer-to-peer support. Developing this further will be vital if it is to encompass the whole 3 to 16 age range and include collaborative working between schools and the non-maintained sector (settings) delivering early years education.

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<sup>13</sup> [www.qualifiedforlife.org.uk](http://www.qualifiedforlife.org.uk)

## Inspiring leadership

Embedding the curriculum successfully will require all practitioners to be leaders of learning in the classroom and to collaborate with others to lead their own professional learning. Those in formal leadership roles will need the commitment, understanding and skills to enable our reforms to succeed.

Our new curriculum will give schools far more freedom to determine what is taught. With this freedom comes a new responsibility and accountability – on practitioners and critically on school leaders. It brings with it a responsibility to plan a curriculum that embodies the four purposes, to promote excellence and high expectations for all learners and to build the confidence and competence of all practitioners to achieve better learning and higher standards for all their learners.

## Inclusivity

Our new curriculum is a curriculum for all and a curriculum for life. The new curriculum, with progression reference points and achievement outcomes, will be designed to support, stretch and recognise the achievements of all children and young people, challenging and championing every learner in Wales to reach their potential. An inclusive approach will require agencies and professions to work together and draw on the widest range of experience and expertise including that of parents/carers and communities.

## Governance arrangements

To help us to achieve our aims we have established robust governance arrangements (membership of the groups/boards set out can be found on our website<sup>14</sup>).

The **Independent Advisory Group (IAG)**, chaired by Professor Graham Donaldson, will ensure that implementation remains true to the vision set out in *Successful Futures* and the recommendations in *Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers*. It will also ensure that the New Deal for the Education Workforce complements and underpins that vision and supports the workforce to develop the capacity and capability to deliver. The group will also offer advice and assurance in terms of progress and readiness to deliver.

<sup>14</sup> Learning Wales website: [gov.wales/curriculumforwales](http://gov.wales/curriculumforwales)

The **Strategic Stakeholder Group** will ensure that key stakeholders are informed of and involved in the development of the approach to implementing the programme. It will act as a critical friend and provide external challenge, scrutiny and advice. It will also play a part in communicating key messages and progress with implementation to its key audiences, helping to develop consensus and in gathering and feeding back the views of those audiences to the Welsh Government.

The **Change Board** will be responsible for the successful delivery of the programme, providing strategic direction and ensuring coherence across the whole. The board will work closely with the Independent Advisory Group (IAG). It will oversee progress of component projects against an agreed programme plan, including progress against milestones; monitor programme level risks, issues and dependencies; and monitor progress and impact of the Communication and Engagement Strategy.

## Annex – *A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life:* timeline

Our ambition is to design, develop and realise our new curriculum within six years so that it can be available for first teaching in settings and schools by September 2021. Below we set out the high level key milestones to help us achieve our ambition together.

