

Curriculum for Wales – Draft Statements of What Matters Code

Consultation response form

Your name: Hywel Iorwerth

Organisation (if applicable): Welsh Language
Commissioner

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Responses should be returned by 16 July 2021 to:

Curriculum Realisation Unit
Curriculum and Assessment Division
The Education Directorate
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

or completed electronically and sent to:

e-mail: curriculumforwales@gov.wales

Respondent type (please select one from the following)

Child or young person	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employer/business representative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent/carer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional body/interest group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools governor or member of school management committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Voluntary sector (community group, volunteer, self-help group, social or co-operative enterprise, religious, not for profit organisation)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mainstream school practitioner (head, teacher, teaching assistant, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regional consortium	<input type="checkbox"/>
EOTAS provider (PRU staff, independent school staff, other provider, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local authority	<input type="checkbox"/>
Higher education (including universities/academic institutions)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Further education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Politician (Senedd member, county councillors, MP, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other respondent group not listed above, please specify:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Lobbyist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of a school, setting or organisation?

<input type="checkbox"/>	As an individual
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On behalf of a school/setting/organisation

Question 1 – In response to feedback on the draft Curriculum for Wales guidance in 2019 the statements of what matters are being made mandatory through the development of this Code. Do the 27 statements as refined through this draft Code sum up the priorities for children and young people’s learning throughout the continuum for 3 to 16 year olds?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

Please see answer to question 4.

Question 2 – The statements of what matters will become the key organising curriculum structures for each area of learning and experience. Are the amended statements clear and accessible, providing understanding of the breadth for curriculum development?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

Question 3 – The statements of what matters have been refined following consideration of issues as part of the passage of associated legislation through the Senedd in 2020/21.

3a – Are the amendments to statements in respect of Welsh histories and diversity suitably clear?

3b – Are the amendments to statements in respect of the climate emergency suitably clear?

3c – Are the amendments to statements suitably clear to ensure relevance for the full range of languages that learners may encounter?

No. Please see answer to question 4.

Question 4 – We would like to know your views on the effects that the Statements of What Matters Code would have on the Welsh language, specifically on:

- i) opportunities for people to use Welsh
- ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Supporting comments

Whilst we understand the rationale for replacing references to 'Welsh, English and International Languages' within the statements of what matters with reference to 'plurilingual', we do not agree with the proposal. We fully support the principle and importance of multilingualism, and we agree that reference to this within the curriculum is essential. Nonetheless, it is unclear why this means references to Welsh and English need to be omitted from the statements of what matters.

This is a curriculum for Wales, and as such one would expect the statement of what matters to refer to the two languages of Wales (Welsh and English), albeit within the wider context of plurilingualism/multilingualism. The rest of the curriculum reflects the fact that the two languages of Wales are given particular attention, and it would therefore be clearer and more consistent if the statement of what matters refer to Welsh and English specifically. There is also the danger by not referring to the Welsh language, that an opportunity to emphasise the bilingual nature of Wales is missed and might lead to the conclusion that English is the 'default' language of education in Wales.

Unless the statements of what matters for languages, literacy and communication refers to Welsh and English, then it is not consistent with the requirements and expectations of the curriculum. We believe that it is appropriate for the statements of what matters to refer to the aspiration of an increasing bilingual Wales, and that they reflect the fact that expectations in terms of Welsh and English are different to other languages. It is this, of course, that distinguishes this as a Welsh curriculum, as opposed to the curriculum of any other nation. We emphasise once more that referring to Welsh and English in no way undermines the principle of plurilingualism, nor its prominent place in the new curriculum.

Question 5 – Please also explain how you believe the proposed Statements of What Matters Code could be formulated or changed so as to have:

- i) positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language
- ii) no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Supporting comments

Question 6 – We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: