

## CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** CAERPHILLY STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**DATE:** 23RD OCTOBER 2019

**SUBJECT:** CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

### **A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To update members on the development of the Curriculum for Wales 2022 in relation to RE.
2. To consider the Welsh Government consultation on the right to withdraw from RE and a proposed name change for Religious Education.

### **B BACKGROUND**

Welsh Government produced the draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 for consultation on 30th April 2019. Caerphilly SACRE worked collaboratively with other SACREs throughout the South East Wales region to provide feedback on the draft Curriculum for Wales 2022. This was response was agreed by the Chair and submitted to Welsh Government by the RE Adviser.

Curriculum pioneers are currently considering feedback from the public and are making amendments to the curriculum.

The work of the group writing the RE Framework is ongoing. Paula Webber (EAS Professional Learning Adviser RE and SACREs) and Libby Jones (RE Adviser Wrexham) continue to lead its development. The Framework will provide further detail about the relationship between Religious Education, the Agreed Syllabus, and the Areas of Learning and Experience. The writing group consists of religious education practitioners, curriculum pioneers, academics, and representatives from Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs) and the National Advisory Panel for Religious Education (NAPFRE).

The Framework will be published in draft for consultation in January 2020. This will coincide with the publication of the final version of the Curriculum for Wales 2022. The delay in publishing a final draft at the same time as the curriculum occurs because the RE Framework writing group need to consider changes made to the Curriculum following the redrafting process and because Welsh Government will consult with SACREs prior to its publication. The RE writing group and Curriculum pioneers will hold meetings together during the Autumn Term in order to consult together and to coordinate the process.

Welsh Government recently consulted on the white paper *Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum* set out the legislative proposals for the new curriculum. Caerphilly SACRE provided feedback following discussion in the Spring Term SACRE meeting held on 6th March 2019. In this paper Welsh Government asked questions about whether the right of parents to withdraw from RE and RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) should be retained. As a result of feedback received Welsh Government are

now consulting on proposals to ensure access to the full curriculum for all learners. In this proposal Welsh Government are seeking views on

- **the right to withdraw from RE** (and RSE)
- **a change of name for RE**

The Minister is 'minded' to remove the parental right to withdraw from RE and RSE and to change the name of RE to Religions and Worldviews.

SACRE will need to respond to this consultation by the closing date of 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

## **C RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. For SACRE to receive an update on the progress made in the writing of the Curriculum for Wales 2022 with a focus on Religious Education in the Humanities AoLE.
2. For SACRE to receive an update on the progress being made with regards to the RE supporting framework.
3. For SACRE to consider and respond to the Welsh Government consultation on proposals to ensure access to the full curriculum for all learners, removing the parental right to withdraw from RE (and RSE) and the proposed change of name of RE to Religions and Worldviews. The deadline for feedback is 28th November 2019.

## **D SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- Appendix 1 SACREs Collaborative response to the Welsh Government Consultation on the draft Curriculum for Wales 2022
- Appendix 2 WG Consultation on consultation on proposals to ensure access to the full curriculum for all learners - <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-10/consultation-document-ensuring-access-to-the-full-curriculum.pdf>
- Appendix 3 Welsh Government Integrated Impact Assessment Curriculum For Wales 2022 – Ensuring Access To The Full Curriculum - <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-10/integrated-impact-assessment-ensuring-access-to-the-full-curriculum.pdf>
- Appendix 4 Ensuring Access To The Full Curriculum For All Learners – Summary Of Proposals - <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-10/summary-of-proposals-ensuring-access-to-the-full-curriculum.pdf>

**Online response form:** <https://gov.wales/node/25971/respond-online>



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# Draft Curriculum for Wales 2022

## guidance: feedback

### Introduction

We welcome your feedback on the draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance.

The feedback period is open from 30 April and closes on 19 July 2019. We will review the feedback we have received and respond to the themes of the feedback following this time.

We will use this information to help us further refine draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance ahead of making it available in January 2020.

There are both general and more detailed questions which you can feedback upon.

If you work in or support the delivery of education, you may wish to respond to more detailed questions around the new curriculum and assessment arrangements, and professional learning. These questions start broad and become more specific the further you progress.

#### We recommend you read the following before you respond:

- [A guide to Curriculum for Wales 2022](#)
- [The area\(s\) of learning and experience you want to feedback upon](#)
- [Assessment proposals to inform the development of statutory guidance](#)

If you complete this survey online, you can save your feedback and return to complete it at any time. You will need to provide a name and email address for this purpose only. All published feedback will be kept anonymous. Keeping your personal information safe is important to us. Our website [privacy policy](#) explains how we use your information.

If you need assistance with this survey please e-mail  
[CurriculumForWales2022@gov.wales](mailto:CurriculumForWales2022@gov.wales)

## **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

The Welsh Government will be data controller for any personal data you provide as part of your response to the consultation. Welsh Ministers have statutory powers they will rely on to process this personal data which will enable them to make informed decisions about how they exercise their public functions. Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about or planning future consultations. Where the Welsh Government undertakes further analysis of consultation responses then this work may be commissioned to be carried out by an accredited third party (e.g. a research organisation or a consultancy company). Any such work will only be undertaken under contract. Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

In order to show that the consultation was carried out properly, the Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then redact them before publishing.

You should also be aware of our responsibilities under Freedom of Information legislation.

If your details are published as part of the consultation response then these published reports will be retained indefinitely. Any of your data held otherwise by Welsh Government will be kept for no more than three years.

## **Your rights**

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer: Welsh Government Cathays Park Cardiff CF10 3NQ  e-mail: Data.ProtectionOfficer@gov.wales	The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are: Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF Tel: 01625 545 745 or 0303 123 1113 Website: <a href="https://ico.org.uk/">https://ico.org.uk/</a>
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## Audience

The following questions help us to understand your relationship to the draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance.

### Do you work in or support the delivery of education?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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### If yes, what is your organisation? (if no continue below)

Welsh-medium school (Primary)	Higher education institution	
Welsh-medium school (Secondary)	Diocesan authorities	
Welsh-medium school (Special)	Regional consortia	x
English-medium school (Primary)	Local authority	
English-medium school (Secondary)	Private training provider	
English-medium school (Special)	Third sector	
Bilingual school (Primary)	Government	
Bilingual school (Secondary)	Adult community learning	
Welsh-medium middle school	Awarding organisation	
English-medium middle school	Teaching union	
Pupil referral unit (PRU)	Regulatory body (includes Inspectorate)	
Special school	Governing body	
Funded non-maintained setting	Other (please specify):	
Further education college		

### What is your primary role?

Headteacher	Chancellor/Vice-chancellor	
Teacher	Lecturer	
Practitioner	Pioneer	
Newly qualified teacher	Governor	
Teaching assistant	Challenge Advisor	
Senior leader	School improvement officer	
Supply teacher	Inspector	
Principal/Vice-principal	Other (please specify): <b>PL Adviser RE and SACREs for the South East Wales region (EAS)</b>	x

**If you do not work in or support the delivery of education, in what capacity would you like to provide feedback?**

Parent or carer		Employer	
Adult 18+ (not a parent or carer)		Apprentice	
Child or young person (under 18)		Other (please specify):	
Student/academic			

**Are you providing feedback on behalf of an organisation or group?**

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If 'yes' please specify

Please note that the feedback I provide has been collated on behalf of SACREs from the five local authorities within the South East Wales region (Blaenau Gwent; Caerphilly; Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen SACREs) during a collaborative workshop. SACREs have answered the questions that are of most relevance to Religious Education or to the Humanities AoLE.

## **Section A – General questions**

**A1. To what extent do you agree that the [draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance](#) will help children and young people to become:**

- **ambitious, capable learners**
- **healthy, confident individuals**
- **ethical, informed citizens**

<b>enterprising, creative contributors?</b> Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	<b>x</b>			
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>SACRE members are very positive and enthusiastic about the curriculum as it is written. Major concerns remain about the outside influences that will ensure the implementation of the curriculum is successful. There needs to be enough funding, PL and time for planning, suitable qualifications that reinforce the curriculum and new accountability measures that support the spirit of the curriculum.</p> <p>SACRE members can clearly see that the curriculum will lead to the holistic development of learners. The current curriculum is overly focused upon development of subject specific knowledge, whereas this curriculum provides a complete package that enables learners to work toward the four purposes. SACRE members were able to see the four purposes throughout the curriculum. However, for learners to become ‘enterprising’ the business studies in the Humanities might need to be strengthened. SACRE members were unable to see that this was strong enough. Members suggest that perhaps there could be greater emphasis upon the links between business and social action in WM5? Or within the planning for learning section? Or in links with other AoLE? Links to business and charity work that could be developed through an interdisciplinary approach with RE and other Humanities disciplines? This would strengthen the four purposes in the curriculum.</p> <p>All Four Purposes are relevant to Religious Education. If there is high quality Religious Education within the curriculum then this will enable schools to provide rich opportunities for the development of the four purposes. Schools would be missing out if they did not recognize this. Currently, due to funding cuts to schools, there has been a drain in RE provision and specialism within schools. For this curriculum to be successful in helping young people to develop the four purposes Welsh Government might consider providing funding for Professional Learning for RE linked to the Four Purposes, the implementation of the Humanities Curriculum and the RE Framework. LAs should receive funding for RE and its SACREs in order to ensure a collaborative approach to RE in the new curriculum. RE has often been described as a Cinderella subject in the current curriculum and this is to be avoided in the Curriculum for Wales 2022 where RE is an integral part. If this does not happen then learners will miss out on the rich opportunities in working toward the four purposes as RE contributes to both personal and societal well-being.</p>				

**A2. Looking at the *what matters statements*, to what extent do you agree that these sum up the priorities for children and young people’s learning?**

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	x			

**Comments:**

The WM statements in the AoLEs are rigorous and future centric. The WM do well to position the learners for the uncertainty of the future both in terms of the development of technology, the changing nature of the job market, and the challenges and opportunities that face the world in which we live. The pioneers have done very well with the WM statements. SACREs have commented specifically on the Humanities WM in Question C1. SACREs can clearly see that the four purposes are evident throughout the WM statements and rationale.

Further thought might be put into the order in which the WM statements are ordered as when they are listed, they may be seen in a hierarchical order. SACRE members feel that the WM that is listed last (WM5) in the Humanities AoLE, for example, seems to be much more valuable than those that precede it because it is the one that leads not just to the personal well-being but also to societal well-being via altruistic or social action.

**A3. Do you think the [draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance](#) could be improved?**

Yes	x	No	
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**If yes, how do you think it could be improved?**

**Achievement Outcomes** – Members ask why the Achievement Outcomes are couched in ‘I can’ and ‘I have’ language if they are not intended to become tick box criteria? Is there another way in which they could be written? SACRE members also suggest that the AOs should not be linked to ages that are too much like the current key stages, especially if there is to be continuous progression from 3-16.

SACRE members asked questions such as – how many AOs would a learner have to achieve if s/he is to be placed on a Progression Step? – SACREs, therefore, wonder whether the guidance explains clearly enough how the Progression Steps work and what they are intended to be. Additionally, there seem to be a vast number of AOs across all of the AoLEs. Will this become overburdensome for Learners and practitioners.

A SACRE member asked whether the AOs are demonstrable understanding of skills and abilities and if so, should they be renamed? Should they be called ‘Descriptions of Learning’? The term Achievement Outcomes encourages the idea that they are boxes to tick.

One of the teacher representatives, who has been implementing the curriculum, reported that her Foundation Stage children are exhibiting PS1 in some AOs and PS3 in some Health and Well-being AoLEs when it comes to participation in sports day. It is good to have the freedom for the learners to progress according to their own ability and by linking them to ages you might give the impression that everyone in nursery school should be on PS1. SACRE members suggest that the Progression Steps are reviewed as they are put into practice in order to ensure they provide rigor and challenge and are not letting learners bottom out at all PSs. SACRE members ask whether the progression from concrete thinking to abstract thinking has been taken into account as this is often age related? SACREs would like to enquire how LAs will evaluate the performance of their schools in all subjects, (not just RE) if there is no performance data to analyze? How will they know if their schools are being effective?



It is important that schools realise that the AOs are to be achieved over time and are not just achieved on sports day (as in the illustration above).

In order to embed this curriculum fully there needs to be a lot of engagement with parents who may currently feel that a school is only good if it can produce A\*-C results at GCSE. If the new curriculum is working toward the four purposes, then parents need to buy into this changing culture. Parents have also become accustomed to knowing how well their child is doing in comparison to other children, and how well the school is performing in relation to other schools. They understand the current data driven system. Welsh Government will need to do some work around this in order to support schools in their engagement with parents who need to buy into the vision of the four purposes of the new curriculum and how this approach will benefit their children as they progress toward adult life and the world of work.

**WM in Humanities** - SACREs felt that the message about the WM being interconnected and equitable is not clear in the guidance. There is a slide in the PowerPoint used for engagement that bullet points the relationship between the WM. This shows that the WM are non-linear. Could this be included in the guidance so that practitioners can clearly see the links between the WM? Practitioners ask whether a few concrete examples of how the WM interlink could be provided in the same way Nicky Hagendyk does this in the introductory video? As examples are shared with professionals it will become more obvious. SACRE members understand the need to avoid lots of examples but feel that a limited number may help to clarify how the curriculum is intended to work. This issue also highlights the need for good PL for all staff in all schools.

**A4. To what extent do the [assessment proposals](#) support settings and schools to identify a learner's strengths, achievements and areas for improvement so they can support a learner's progression by identifying next steps?**

Extremely supportive	Very supportive	Moderately supportive	Slightly supportive	Not at all supportive
Comments:				

**A5. In relation to reporting to parents and carers, please tell us your views on:**

- the role of the learner in contributing to the reporting process
- the role of the parent/carer in the reporting process
- the information you would want to include.

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## Section B – Detailed questions

B1. How helpful would you find the [draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance](#) in developing a curriculum for your learners?

Extremely helpful	Very helpful	Moderately helpful	Slightly helpful	Not helpful at all
<b>x</b>				

**Comments:**

Teacher representatives, who are implementing the curriculum, say that the guidance is 'enormously helpful otherwise practitioners would not know what they were doing at all.' They appreciate how the curriculum is now available Online and that it is very easy to navigate. SACREs are very aware that the Curriculum is married with the Professional Teaching Standards. Teachers are becoming collaborative and innovative. All of these will enhance the new curriculum. 'You can't just close your classroom door any longer and work within your own little box.'

Whilst the guidance is very helpful, teachers and schools need to be given time. Teachers are reporting that they will be spending their summer holidays planning for the next term so that they can begin to implement the curriculum. Many staff meetings are spent talking about and unpicking the curriculum and very little time has been found for the detailed planning that is needed. There should also be enough time given for collaboration between schools and in clusters or networks. There is a big difference between 'dipping your toe in the water' and deciding on a theme, and delivering the curriculum with coverage of all the What Matters, Progression Steps, Purposes, experiences, skills, etc. A significant amount of curriculum planning needs to take place to make sure that is delivered in a meaningful way. Practitioners are valuing the idea that there will be further guidance such as the RE Framework or the suite of resources being developed in Science and Technology.

The curriculum guidance is a great starting point, but please don't stop with there, further resources are needed to aid implementation. A lot of ongoing training will also be required. Teacher representatives suggest that this is a huge change and that many teachers, who were competent and confident under the old way of working, need help and support. This huge cultural change that may place practitioners outside of their comfort zones. Welsh Government should not underestimate the amount of support needed from Advisers. Are there enough professionals working within the regional consortia or LAs to provide this ongoing support? For instance, there are only 1.8 dedicated specialist RE Advisers in the whole of Wales to support the changes in Religious Education and to provide the essential specialist training for RE. Given the nature of the subject this could not be provided by non-specialists.

Teachers on SACRE suggest that it is important that Welsh Government, Consortia, LAs and SLT in schools keep telling them that what they are doing is OK because we currently have a profession who for decades have been told how to do things or that they need to attain targets. Therefore, for every practitioner is very excited about this new curriculum, there is another who is very fearful because of the culture that has been created within the current system. Welsh Government should be conscious of that and find ways of addressing this issue through Professional Learning. At the same time SACRE members are excited that that the new curriculum will provide practitioners with the freedom to explore the What Matters with their learners.

LAs are struggling with cuts to RSG and therefore, Education and Social Services are struggling. The reality is LAs will continue find it difficult to fund schools if budgets continue to be inadequate. This curriculum, especially if it is to be a curriculum rich in experiences, will need significant funding for implementation. In addition, the cost should not be transferred to parents who might not be able to fund visits or visitors for example. Ring fenced money for schools is needed to ensure the success of the curriculum. If it is not ringfenced for the new curriculum it will disappear into other areas.

**B2. How well do you think the [draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance](#) allows for all children and young people to gain a broad range of learning experiences?**

**You may want to consider learning across the different disciplines and subjects which form part of an area of learning and experience.**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
<b>x</b>				
<p>Comments:</p> <p>This is a real strength of this curriculum. If there is a problem in learners accessing a broad range of learning experiences, it will not be the fault of the curriculum as it is presented here. There should be no excuse for not giving learners a broad range if this guidance is applied. Schools are encouraged to link more with local communities, to invite visitors in and to take learners on visits that would provide learners with real authentic chances to experience.</p> <p>Training needs to be provided for practitioners organizing visits and visitors. This will be essential for RE as good relationships with communities of faith and belief can go a long way to building the community cohesion needed for societal well-being.</p> <p>Where will funding for these experiences come from? The burden should not be transferred to parents.</p>				

**B3. How well do you think [draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance](#) allows for all children and young people to specialise from age 14 in a particular discipline or subject?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
		<b>x</b>		
<p><b>Comments:</b></p> <p>Specialisation at this age will stand or fall on the quality of the qualifications offered. Qualifications need to be rigorous enough to stand against other international qualifications so that learners in Wales are not disadvantaged. SACREs are pleased that Qualifications Wales have been involved in the drafting process from the outset so that we will hopefully see some joined up thinking between curriculum and qualifications.</p> <p>Within the Humanities AoLE SACRE members are not able to identify the point at which learners move from a general approach to a more specialized approach in the Humanities AoLE. There is enough depth the suggest that the disciplines are visible, but until qualifications are in place then we do not know what that will look like. Welsh Government need to ensure that all learners receive their entitlement to statutory Religious Education according to the locally agreed syllabus and that schools are providing enough time for this to take place throughout each year group. A minority of schools are currently using methods such as drop-down days to deliver RE, this would be problematic in the new curriculum for several reasons. To isolate RE in this way would go against the interdisciplinary approach outlined in the curriculum unless links to all of the other disciplines are accounted for in the planning of the RE. Additionally, if a learner happens to be ill on that day they would miss a significant amount of their RE. RE should be treated equally to other Humanities disciplines in a way that it is generally not in the current curriculum.</p> <p>Will there be the opportunity for learners to explore areas that interest them and receive a qualification in that? e.g. if a learner has an interest in biodiversity could they have the freedom to explore that and receive a qualification in it? (Would this be a similar approach to the IB Theory of Knowledge paper?)</p>				

**B4. The [draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance](#) is intended to support practitioners and teachers to design a curriculum specific to children and young people. To what extent will practitioners and teachers have the flexibility and support to do this?**

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
		x		

**Comments:**

This would depend on the headteacher. SLT also need training in school-based curriculum design and how to implement that. Would schools need time and funding in order to take a collaborative approach to this? The collaborative approach has so many strengths, but it is very time consuming. If the process that has begun is to be completed in the same spirit, then this needs to be supported by Welsh Government. One extra training day would be insufficient. Welsh Government will obviously have concerns around teacher workload and retention and be considering this during the roll out phase.

Teachers are being innovative and producing lots of new ideas, but there is no money to buy equipment, resources, etc. There are financial implications t this new curriculum when practitioners are matching their teaching with what the learners want to learn. Teachers are saying that they may have to go to the charity shops to source equipment. On the other hand, with the Internet the availability of digital resources is incredible. This curriculum could not have been implemented 20 years ago. The Digital Competency is bringing the curriculum right up to date and ensuring it is as future facing too. Things of interest to learners can be found there instantly and often cost free. Collaboration and training would enable practitioners to plan for best use of the DCF in all AoLEs.

The feedback on this question is that “the curriculum is absolutely brilliant but how are you going to fund it when schools do not have enough money to buy basics like glue?”

**B5. How well do you think the [draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance](#) supports learners to develop skills in the cross-curricular responsibilities (literacy, numeracy and digital competence) and other cross-cutting themes (e.g. Welsh dimension and international perspective, wider skills, careers and work-related experiences, relationships and sexuality education)?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
	x			

**Comments:**

SACRE members note the additional guidance surrounding all these areas within the curriculum. They can see that all cross-curricular responsibilities are embedded within the AoLEs.

SACREs like the concept of cynefyn within the Humanities AoLE which will give a strong Welsh dimension to this curriculum. There are lots of key concepts within RE that would link to all cross-curricular responsibilities and it would be good to develop these within the RE Framework that is being drafted.

**B6. How could the *cross-curricular frameworks* ([National Literacy and Numeracy Framework](#) and the [Digital Competence Framework](#)) be refined to support the development of literacy, numeracy and digital competence across the new curriculum?**

The timing is good to implement this as schools have become used to implementing the LNF and the DCF and so will just carry on doing those things.

With the Internet, the availability of digital resources is incredible. This curriculum could not have been implemented 20 years ago. The Digital Competency is bringing the curriculum right up to date and ensuring it is as future facing too. Things of interest to learners can be found there instantly and often cost free. Collaboration and training would enable practitioners to plan for best use of the DCF in all AoLEs.

**B7. How well do you think the guidance for each [area of learning and experience](#) will support children during the Foundation Phase years?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
<b>x</b>				

**Comments:**

Superbly well! This is the view of our Foundation Phase expert.

The Humanities AoLE takes good account of the development of the youngest learners. Enquiring minds and the ability to ask 'big' questions are skills that many young children exhibit and this AoLE gives them the chance to understand the worth of these skills and develop them further. Ideas around 'curiosity' 'personal experience' 'special times' and 'rules' will be familiar to practitioners in the Early Years and give pupils the opportunity to share and celebrate their developing understanding of spiritual and religious practices that they encounter.

Professional learning will most definitely be needed for RE within the Foundation Phase because of the changes to legislation and 3-5 year olds now being entitled to receive Religious Education.

**B8. How well do you think the [draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance](#) supports and enables learners to progress at an appropriate pace for their development within the area of learning and experience from ages 3 to 16?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
	<b>x</b>			

**Comments:**

It is important that there is a focus on pedagogies such as spiral learning within ongoing Professional Learning and Engagement so that teachers and practitioners are able to implement the curriculum and desired outcomes are achieved. SACRE members note that the curriculum alone will not do this, and that it also must sit alongside the Professional Teaching Standards so that there is an onus on teachers to ensure progression takes place.

Some SACRE members suggest that there is a risk that, if a target led approach to teaching and learning is not taken, teachers might not stretch and challenge learners to achieve their potential. However, some practitioners sitting on SACRE are excited that there will no longer be a 'tick box approach' where learners can be coached to hit a target. They like the new holistic approach to learning and developing the individual learner that the new curriculum brings. This is particularly important in a subject like Religious Education where you might have a learner who isn't able to write but is able to show incredible amounts of empathy and kindness. Under this new curriculum practitioners will be able to comment on these very specific skills that the learners have. There does need to be a way of holding teachers to account, but it is the Professional Teaching Standards that need to do that now rather than the curriculum itself.

The Planning for Learning sections are useful in planning within the Progression Steps. SACRE members have looked at the Humanities AOLE Planning for Learning sections which are good. However, there are a very small number of inconsistencies that should be checked to ensure real progression.

SE Wales SACREs have made observations regarding Achievement Outcomes in another question (A3).

Some SACRE members asked whether there is a system of ensuring that any content delivered in schools is age appropriate? There is a concern that some parents are opting for home education because they believe that the content of the curriculum is not age appropriate. Some parents are concerned that young children will be exposed to concepts they may not be ready for. SACRE members suggest that parents need to be aware of the research in this area that has underpinned curriculum development. There is a need for intensive engagement with parents so that they understand this new curriculum. Parents need to be aware of the research that has been done into how this new curriculum will affect the development of the children so that they are not overly confused at too early an age.

**B9. How well do you think the [draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance](#) will provide a basis to help young people progress beyond the age of 16?**



Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
	<b>x</b>			
<p>Comments:</p> <p>It is good to see that skills for life are included in this Curriculum such as Financial Literacy, Careers, etc.</p> <p>It is important from the point of view of SACRE that learners are given the opportunities to engage in high quality RE which offers so many opportunities to build the life skills they require and develop the Four Purposes. Good quality RE will enable learners to explore concepts such as tolerance, diversity, attitudes toward prejudice and discrimination, interfaith dialogue, ethics, philosophy spirituality, relationships, purpose, identity, belonging, etc. This will lead to developing the personal well-being of the learner and therefore toward societal well-being.</p>				

**B10. Formative assessment should be given primacy in the new curriculum. How well do the [assessment proposals](#) promote this principle?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
<p>Comments:</p> <p>SACREs agrees with the priority given to formative assessment in the curriculum.</p>				

**B11. [The assessment proposals](#) propose a broader approach to moderation – *supporting professional dialogue regarding the nature of progression, the selection of appropriate learning and assessment activities, as well as ensuring a shared understanding of what achievement looks like in the context of the achievement outcomes.***

**How would you envisage your setting /school putting this approach into practice? What further support do you think would be needed?**

SE Wales SACREs would like to ensure that planned assessment activities consider learner entitlement to statutory Religious Education.
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SE Wales SACREs have made recommendations for the improvement of Achievement Outcomes in another answer (A3). If Achievement Outcomes are not defined more clearly and understood by practitioners, then a shared understanding may not be achieved.

**B12. What practical issues for settings and schools do we need to be mindful of if the [assessment proposals](#) are to be made a reality?**

There needs to be Professional Learning specifically for assessment methodology and pedagogies that are in line with the assessment proposals.  
Schools would need time to achieve a shared vision for assessment within the school.  
Schools should understand the RE Framework in order to ensure Progression in RE. This may require PL.

**B13. What implications do you see from the [draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance](#) for you and your colleagues' [professional development](#) needs in respect of the:**

- **impact on pedagogical practice**
- **implications of planning for a purpose-driven curriculum**
- **professional learning requirements linked to pedagogy**
- **developing in-school and cross-school collaboration**
- **specific areas of professional learning aligned to the areas of learning and experience**
- **opportunities for professional enquiry approaches support delivery of the new curriculum?**

**Please see references to the bullet points above throughout this response.**

The main recommendations SACREs would like to make are: -

### **Professional Learning needs for Religious Education in the New Curriculum**

Due to the changes in the position of RE within the Curriculum for Wales, and its unique position in being a local responsibility. The following Professional Learning needs are required for learners to receive their entitlement to high quality religious education which contributes towards the development of the Four Purposes.

PL Resources could be developed by the group writing the RE Framework and/or NAPfRE working alongside Humanities Pioneers and the QI Group. A degree of training the trainer might be needed prior to engagement.

WELSH MEDIUM provision = all the above should be available in both languages

### **The Impact on Learners**

It is important that high quality Professional Learning is delivered in order to establish a workforce confident to deliver high quality Religious Education. Religious education is objective, critical and pluralistic, and will develop and support learners to achieve the four purposes across all Areas of Learning and Experience.

High quality Religious Education enables learners to understand the changing nature of religion and belief locally, nationally and globally. Religious education focuses upon the need to have a sense of identity, belonging and purpose. At the heart of Religious Education is the quest for meaning and to understand the human condition which are essential in enabling learners to develop the Four Purposes. Religious Education focuses upon shared values, identity, personal worth and the development of curiosity and open-mindedness. Religious Education plays a significant role in enabling learners to develop the awareness, insight, knowledge, skills and experiences necessary for the social engagement and social action. These are necessary for learners to flourish as they navigate life both beyond the classroom and beyond the ordinary. Learners will, therefore, become able to imagine their futures in the world with which they are intrinsically interconnected. Religious Education also lends itself to providing opportunities for the spiritual development of learners and the experiences which can lead to self-awareness, confidence and aspiration.

Given that Religious Education is now placed within the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience and that it retains its statutory nature it is imperative that this change is understood fully. As Religious Education is locally determined it is important that the relationship between the Curriculum for Wales 2022, the RE Framework and the status and content of the Agreed Syllabus is understood. The RE framework has been written to be accessible to a wide audience. It is intended for use by teachers; head teachers; governing bodies of maintained schools in Wales; parents; local authorities and their SACREs; diocesan authorities; regional consortia; awarding bodies and Estyn. In addition, it will be useful to teacher unions, religious organisations and other bodies in Wales with an interest in religious education. It is, therefore, essential that all relevant bodies, including practitioners, understand their role in the provision of high-quality Religious Education and its impact on Learners.

Professional Learning will ensure learners are will be given opportunities to experience, develop skills and gain knowledge that will ensure consistent progression toward Achievement Outcomes.

A national approach to PL will ensure consistency, common standards across Wales. This will also include the shared pedagogical approaches to secure equity of access for all learners to receive their statutory entitlement to Religious Education.

There is a need to ensure enough funding available to ensure required resources are available including access for visits and visitors. This should not have a financial impact on practitioners or parents.

PL should be available for whole school curriculum design as well as well as for curriculum design for individual AoLEs and subjects/disciplines. This PL needs to include examples of opportunities for learners to develop the Four Purposes.

**B14. What are the professional learning challenges and opportunities to enact the principles in the [assessment proposals](#)?**

Many of the comments made by SACREs in B12 and B13 will also apply to the assessment proposals.

**Section C – Specific: Areas of learning and experience**

**C1. If you would like to provide specific feedback relating to one or more specific areas of learning and experience, please make a selection and add your comments below.**

Expressive Arts		Language, Literacy and Communication	
Health and Well-being		Mathematics and Numeracy	
Humanities	x	Science and Technology	

**Comments (if you choose more than one area of learning and experience please label each comment):**

**The Humanities AoLE**

SACRE members within the South East Wales region (EAS) are generally very positive and excited about the Humanities Curriculum.

SACREs appreciate that Professor Donaldson has included Religious Education within the Humanities AoLE and that it has an essential position in the new curriculum. Also, that RE will be statutory from the ages of 3-16.

To explore the human condition and human experience through interdisciplinary lenses including the RE lenses (as RE is multidisciplinary) contribution to the Humanities will enhance learner’s understanding of the human condition and human experience. It is, therefore, important that teachers are aware of the disciplines that make up RE. This could be outlined in the RE Framework.

Until now RE has not been statutory the foundation phase therefore there is a need for Professional Learning specifically for those delivering the curriculum to 3-5 year-olds in order to ensure the curriculum is being delivered successfully.

Some representatives on SACRE, suggest that in the past some schools have given teachers the responsibility for RE, not because they have a degree in RE, but because they have an enthusiastic faith of their own. This approach sometimes ran the risk of confessional RE and parents wanting to withdraw their children from RE. Whilst many non-specialists are very capable, understanding the objective, critical and pluralistic nature of RE, the recent Estyn Thematic Report for ks3 and ks3 RE picked up on the lack of confidence some non-specialist teachers have in teaching religions other than Christianity. The new Humanities curriculum provides an incredible opportunity for Professional Learning so that practitioners can be confident about the delivery of RE in line with the Humanities AoLE, the RE Framework and the Agreed Syllabus. With high quality PL there might be a lot of Humanities teachers who might be happy to step into some of those roles having built up more confidence. If PL does not take place it would run the risk of the Humanities AoLE failing during implementation.

SACREs are pleased that there is an emphasis upon Enquiry within the What Matters and particularly that “as well as being a process, enquiry is a quest to understand the human condition” which “enables self-reflection which adds meaning to their own lives and contributes to their sense of place in the world.” It is important that Welsh Government ensures, through PL, that practitioners are aware that this is more than simply carrying out an investigation or research project.

SACREs were pleased to see that the curriculum includes the exploration of the concept of cynefyn. This will create rich opportunities for RE as the concepts of identity and belonging are central to RE.

SACRE members are pleased to note the inclusion of social action in the Humanities Curriculum. This is not new to RE but gives permission to encourage learners to take social action as part of the curriculum. It is important that there is further consultation with agencies that might help learners to participate in social action. Many of these organisations may be charities and they would also need training in how to engage with learners considering changes to the curriculum. It also throws up the need for PL for practitioners delivering RE as the approach taken should in no way be confessional or involve proselytisation.

Some SACRE members thought that the Curriculum guidance should outline the what the essential learning should be. Some SACRE members are keen to see that knowledge within the curriculum is strengthened because - if you have an enquiring mind then there needs to be knowledge to enquire into. Some members agree that there needs to be a focus on the concept of religion itself, as well as a focus on concepts such as diversity and inclusion, for this to be RE.

SACRE members appreciate that RE can be studied from different perspectives e.g. through the lens of history and the other disciplines and how that will, if delivered well, strengthen the RE that is taking place.

Some SACRE members asked whether RE will be defined in this document? It is important that schools and practitioners understand the nature of RE. SACREs are pleased that there will be a RE Framework to support the Humanities Curriculum and would like to see that document defining the nature of RE.

Specific training is needed for Religious Education. The LA and regional advisory services need to be strengthened, especially in relation to Religious Education. RE is a Local Authority responsibility and SACRE members are very concerned that we have seen the destruction of the Advisory Service nationally in relation to RE. They understand that there are financial implications for LAs. But members suggest that if a new curriculum is to be rolled out, supported and monitored properly it is important to have the personnel to do it. This includes a robust Advisory Service, particularly in relation to Religious Education. LAs need sufficient funding in order to do this. If the RE falls down in the new curriculum because it is insufficiently

resourced, then that will have a detrimental effect upon the rest of the Humanities Curriculum and the links and interdependencies that can be made with RE and all AoLEs. There is a need to train specialists to deliver the Religious Education. There is, therefore, an economic consequence of introducing a new curriculum, not least in terms of the Advisory Service that must come with it. SACREs are aware that WASACRE has also been speaking to Welsh Government civil servants about the need for Professional Learning and Professional Support for Religious Education.

SACREs appreciate the focus on the local, national and global perspectives and issues found within the Curriculum.

SACREs suggest that there be enough training for school-based curriculum planning so that schools know how to implement this Humanities curriculum. SACREs are concerned that, due to the nature of the Curriculum and the freedom of schools to design their own curriculum that there will be inconsistency in quality across schools.

SACREs are concerned that all schools should be delivering RE that is diverse and pluralistic and that there is not a focus on one religion over others.

Some SACRE members were concerned that an interdisciplinary approach might undermine Religious Education in that there might be insufficient time to provide high quality RE. Will there be guidance surrounding parity between the disciplines in the curriculum to ensure that one subject receives more coverage whilst others are undermined?

SACREs in SE Wales feel that if the RE is to be properly delivered within the Humanities AoLE then there should be not opportunity for learners to be withdrawn from RE. This would make delivering this curriculum very impractical for schools to manage.

SACRE members would like to ensure that the RE that is being delivered includes a full spectrum of religious and non-religious beliefs and is not limited to one particular viewpoint. Therefore, it was good to see diversity and pluralism within the Curriculum.

SACREs are excited to see that the curriculum will be enriched through learning through the lenses of the different disciplines. This will be more holistic.

A teacher representative on SACRE is implementing the curriculum into the Foundation Phase and can already see that the children have an increasing understanding of religion and spirituality. SACRE members who are teachers have experienced some learners being withdrawn from RE because their families are non-religious. By providing a curriculum that is inclusive of both religious and non-religious viewpoints will go a long way toward less parents withdrawing their children from RE because they are non-religious. It is important that learners understand that religion and belief is interwoven into everything in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Wales, and that is important for them to know about religion and worldviews, whether they are from a religious background or not. The curriculum will allow for children who are from a religious background to tell their peers about their own background, beliefs heritage, etc. This will enable them to feel included and develop a sense of identity and belonging which clearly seems to be the aim of the Curriculum.

Teacher representatives on SACRE who are involved with the PL schools enthusiastically say that introducing the new humanities curriculum has also been an education for themselves too, suggesting that the curriculum is offering tremendous opportunities for all our learners.

There is a worry that many parents do not know that this curriculum is based on research. Some representatives of religion and belief report that that these anxieties are brought up and they have been fueled by reports in the media. There is a fear then that there will be an increase in home schooling that might be avoided by engaging with parents in a more robust way. The religious background of learners needs to be taken into account so that families do not become alienated and children confused. SACREs recommend continued engagement with communities as the curriculum is rolled out in order to listen to them and to address and alleviate fears that their religions and beliefs might be undermined.

Some members referred to issues that were encountered when the Scottish curriculum was rolled out in that teachers were worried about what they should actually be teaching, particularly in reference to benchmark statements that shows progression which is a good thing. However, they were concerned that there should also be reference to content in the Welsh Curriculum as there is in the Scottish Curriculum.

### **What Matters Statements in Humanities**

SACRE members feel that it is impressive that the Pioneers have managed to find the language and words to express what is relevant for learners from 3-16 with regards to the five disciplines. They are relevant to the whole age range because they are very broad statements.

SACRE appreciates the emphasis upon the concept of spiral learning which is described in the guidance.

**WM1** – SACRE members are enthusiastic about the emphasis upon enquiry in the Humanities AoLE. The whole idea of self-reflection being taught from the age of 3 is valuable. The ability to develop this skill must be specifically taught. Foundation Phase experts on the SACREs suggest that whilst the idea that something is ‘partial, inconclusive and open to different interpretations’ seems to be a big thing to consider in the Foundation Phase - it is a very exciting opportunity to be considering things like this. The Foundation Phase experts on SACRE, who are already engaging with this curriculum, were enthusiastic about the opportunities they have had to explore things like enquiry. They suggest that in the past children have come of FP with a set of knowledge that they spend the rest of their education unpicking it, when in fact learning should have been more open and broader in the first place as we see in this new curriculum. The FP experts admit to initially feeling a little daunted by the curriculum. However, their experience is that once they start talking to the children about the concepts it is very surprising how quickly the learners embrace those ideas. In terms of resources for FP - discussions and open-ended interpretations are already in the classroom, “they are just sitting there in all of those small brains. Introducing this curriculum is not as frightening as you first think from an early years perspective.” This kind of philosophical enquiry has always traditionally had a place in RE through the exploration of ultimate questions. SACRE members are, therefore pleased to see the place this has within the What Matters statements. The beauty of this curriculum is that this philosophical enquiry can take place in ever increasing depth from 3-16. Developing an enquiring mind is always very important.

Some members were keen to see the concept of altruism running throughout the statements. This could include the altruistic viewpoint this would enable learners to aim toward jobs in the care sector. Some SACRE members were concerned that investigation of worldviews might lead to people supporting hedonistic worldviews, etc.

SACRE members were very pleased to see that the experiences in the Planning for Learning section are those that are traditionally found in high quality RE. SACRE was pleased to see reference to ‘subject focused questions’ which means that RE will be delivered as one of the Humanities disciplines.

Some schools are putting the WM statements and Progression Steps on one piece of paper to ensure they are looked at as a whole rather than individually. Is this a useful approach? If so, could this be produced by WG?

SACRE members were pleased that RE is so visible within the Humanities WM statements, suggesting in fact that if you replaced the term Humanities with RE it would read as a RE curriculum.

**WM 2** – SACRE members support this WM statement where learners will be critically interpreting. They see it as a fundamentally important move for the better away from their own educational experiences, where they were taught that something was the way it was and there were no alternative viewpoints put forward. Members suggest that it is in seeing things through

a variety of lenses that the biggest breakthroughs in humanity come. People need to question what they already know. Members support the idea that children are taught from an early age not to believe everything they are told, and that they have their own self, is really important, especially in light of the media or social media in today's societies and the 'fake news' that is available to them. Schools need to enable our learners to see that what they see isn't necessarily correct. Some SACRE members referred to a speech made by a spokesperson for the Commissioner for Future Generations - that it is important to give our learners the ability to understand that not everything they see in the mass media is correct.

SACRE members suggest that the statement could give the impression that schools are going to teach children to challenge everything they have ever been told. Learners coming from a faith perspective might find this difficult. It could be interpreted that my child is going to be supported in developing the faith of the family. Schools are sitting in the middle of the mass media described above, which is pervasive, and with whatever they are being brought up with at home. Good quality RE within a Humanities curriculum is crucial in that it can help they learners analyse those things. Strange and new ideas (including those that may require the implementation of the Prevent agenda) are coming from the world around learners in a way that hasn't happened in previous generations and this WM and the RE within it will help learners navigate those things.

The slight concern that SACRE members have is: will there be sufficient checks and quality assurance built into this learning? When you are looking at things from a variety of perspectives it is important that this is considered. Teachers may have a conflict of interests for instance. This is sometimes seen in the case of RE where it is necessary to guard against it occasionally becoming confessional. This should always be avoided. This highlights the importance of specific training for teachers of Religious Education due to the sensitive issues discussed in relation to religion and belief. We need teachers who are confident to teach in a way that is respectful to the views of their learners. SACRE members raised the question of accountability and the future role of Estyn in checking that what is going on in out schools is good Humanities and good Religious Education. If you get RE wrong, it can have serious consequences for learners and for society.

Many of the skills required for future generations are those that have been taught in RE and are highlighted in this Humanities WM statement. The Future Generations Commissioner's office suggest that robots will be able to do most jobs in the future, but they will not be able to duplicate the skills learners will build through the Humanities WM including things like empathy, compassion and altruism. It is important that the Four Purposes are reflected within this WM statement as when the world is looked at in different ways there needs to be a focus on ethical and altruistic viewpoints. If this doesn't happen then you are creating learning that isn't going to lead to ethical individuals. SACRE members would like to highlight the links here to the Health and Well-being AoLE which lends itself to the kind of thinking that develops the Four Purposes. Members questioned whether some practices within Business Studies might lead to thinking about self only and promoting yourself above everyone else. It would, therefore, be helpful to have an ethical statement within each WM rationale.

SACRE members were pleased to see ultimate and philosophical questioning on the planning for learning section in this WM as well as the learners being encouraged to seek meaning. The skills in the WM statement would provide high quality Religious Education. SACRE members were pleased to see opportunities for learners to explore a range of symbolic stories, rituals, artefacts, art, dance, drama, music and food which would provide high quality RE.

SACREs liked the idea that the concepts of self and identity are explored in all of the WM statements but wonder whether practitioners will be fully aware of this if they are not RE specialists. Also, how will practitioners be aware of the links and interdependencies across Health and Well-being all the AoLEs in terms of these important concepts?

**WM3** - SACREs support the focus on spirituality within this WM statement and upon how people interact with the world and with animals. This is fundamentally important considering the need for sustainability of the environment. Members see this as a strong WM statement. Members suggest it might be wise to ensure that there is a statement on 'doing no harm'



toward the world in this statement. This WM is great for outdoor learning. Curiosity, appreciation of the natural world, awe and wonder, and the connection to the natural world are all concepts that are explored in RE and SACREs are very pleased to see that they are within this statement. Some SACRE members have asked why there is no reference to 'religion', beliefs and philosophies about the natural world in this statement? Other members are happy that the use of the term 'beliefs' here would encompass religious and non-religious beliefs. However, they question whether non-specialists would be able to see that.

**WM4** –SACRE members ask whether it would be possible to add the word 'altruistic' to the last sentence on "develop a tolerant and empathetic *and altruistic* understanding of..."

**WM5** - Members are pleased to see the curriculum taking this approach with a focus social action and becoming a global citizen from the age of 3 that would lead to learners who are less insular in their thinking. It is powerful that children from a young age will be able to understand that whatever they do will have an impact which is wider than their own home. Members agree that it is important not just to focus on self-development but to have the needs of other people at heart as well. This will give opportunities for spiritual development also. SACRE members think that it is important to explore thoughts and feelings alongside this. It is vital that the links and interdependencies with this WM and Health and Well-being are flagged up. There needs to be more help for schools planning their curriculum to be able to see the joined-up thinking. If schools plan well using the links and interdependencies, then this will allow for a more holistic development of learners.

It is good that learners are given permission to think about things to do with social justice, etc. and to influence adult's positions in those too. The idea of giving young people an authentic voice is an exciting opportunity that this new curriculum brings.

SACRE members are pleased to see compassion, empathy and social action on the curriculum. This would allow for exploration of religious beliefs around compassion and love in action which would be very relevant to RE.

SACREs note the importance of the concept of sustainability in this and like the idea that this is about more than the sustainability of the environment.

WM5 may help to redress the way in which society has become intolerant in recent years.

SACRE members appreciate that how learners will contribute to the world of work and the economy will take on an ethical focus.

### **General Comments**

SACRE members feel that, despite knowing that the WM are equitable, that the statement on social action should be listed first. Or should the statements be accessed through clicking a circular icon so that it can clearly be seen that they are not hierarchical? SACRE members are of the opinion that if we are creating global citizens then this WM is very important in the curriculum as a whole and to apply an interdisciplinary approach to this WM is revolutionary. Members are asking why this seems to be the WM statement that is the most his seems to be the most important WM and why then it is being listed last.

There is a need to ensure that there is clarity around the reasons why there is no overlap between the WM statements as some members would like to have seen social or altruistic action within all the WM Statements. There needs to be PL so that practitioners know how to use the WM in an interconnected way.

SACRE members note that if we can teach this whole curriculum properly it will contribute to societal and personal well-being. This will have a positive effect on mental and emotional well-being.

The **links and interdependencies** between the AoLEs could be strengthened, particularly that between Humanities and Health and Well-being. Religious Education could straddle both AoLEs with the emphasis on concepts of self, identity, belonging, diversity and spirituality.

**Planning for Learning** – there is plenty of support for teachers in knowing what to deliver in the classroom. But it is very important that Professional Learning is now in place so that teacher's subject knowledge is enhanced in order to do this. Subject specific training is needed from Advisors rather than just sharing resources. Where resources are shared there should be systems of quality assurance in place to ensure the delivery fits with the spirit and purposes of the curriculum. It is important to plug gaps in the knowledge of practitioners so that they do not remain in their comfort zone and only deliver what they know. Schools need to be given time, resources and money to plan for the successful implementation of this curriculum.

SACRE members suggest that interaction between schools and parents need to include sharing and discussing examples of how the curriculum can be implemented. SACREs would like to suggest that Welsh Government continue to engage with parents and with religious and non-religious communities and organisations as the curriculum roll out in order to ensure that Religious Education is effective and delivered in a way that is sensitive to the beliefs and values of families and communities.

### **Progression Steps**

SACRE members are concerned that, if there is only an integrated Humanities approach at 14-16, it would be too general, and the disciplines would be diluted. This would lead to learners having insufficient skills to lead to knowledge and understanding of individual disciplines. SACRE members ask whether the general Humanities approach would allow learners to focus in enough detail within the individual disciplines? There will be much reliance upon Qualifications Wales ensuring that the qualification that sit alongside this curriculum fully allow learners to progress Post 16. Welsh Government should ensure that Qualifications Wales engage with WASACRE/NAPfRE in designing the qualifications remembering that Religious Education is locally determined and that it is statutory for all schools to adhere to the content of the locally agreed syllabus for Religious Education. This did not happen during the last review of qualifications and this had a detrimental effect upon Religious Education in schools as it was more difficult for them to follow the Agreed Syllabus. The discontinued old RE short course had been designed specifically to cater for the needs of all learners who were entitled to core RE. In the new curriculum learners should be able to receive the equivalent to a short course level 2 qualification in RE as is currently the case. Members are supportive of an approach to learning that enables learners to explore the areas they are passionate about, especially through the enquiry process of WM1. The curriculum and qualifications should also take this into account as well as consider future generations - we do not know what jobs will look like in the next ten years. Learners should be enabled to follow a pathway to bespoke qualifications that develop their passion for the disciplinary areas that they are drawn toward. They also need the skills to build upon for careers and the world of work. All of this will have an effect on pedagogy, staffing and organization of schools. Again, schools should be adequately funded for this in order to make a success of the curriculum.

**Worldview(s)** should be one word and not two words throughout the document.

The definition of **worldviews** and of **spirituality** could be strengthened in the glossary. The definition of spirituality should include the connections between self, the world and for some people with the concept of the God/Ultimate Reality. There will need to be some consistency between the Humanities AoLE and the RE Framework in terms of definitions.

**C2. How well do the progression steps within the [Mathematics and Numeracy Area of Learning and Experience](#) articulate the proficiencies illustrated in the principles of progression?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
Comments:				

**C3. How well do the learning sections within the Languages, Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience provide for learners to develop translinguaging skills?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
Comments:				

**C4. How well does the guidance within the Languages Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience provide for the development of language acquisition and learning?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
Comments:				

**C5. How well does the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience guidance support a whole-school approach to supporting health and well-being?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
Comments:				

**Is there anything else you would like to add or feedback on?**

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**Return by 19 July 2019**

**Email:** [CurriculumForWales2022@gov.wales](mailto:CurriculumForWales2022@gov.wales)  
**Post:** Curriculum for Wales 2022 Feedback  
Curriculum and Assessment Division  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

Number: WG39139



Welsh Government  
Consultation Document

## Consultation on proposals to ensure access to the full curriculum for all learners

Date of issue: 3 October 2019

Action required: Responses by 28 November 2019

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

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**Overview** We want your views on the impact of proposals that the new curriculum for Wales which will be introduced in 2022 should not include a right to withdraw from Religious Education (RE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) and a change of name for RE.

**How to respond** This is a written, electronic consultation. Questions can be found at the end of this consultation document and you can complete the online form, download the form and complete manually and post to us at the address provided or send via email.

**Further information and related documents** Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum  
<https://gov.wales/our-national-mission-transformational-curriculum>

This consultation document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at [gov.wales/consultations](https://gov.wales/consultations). Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.

**Contact details** For further information, please contact:

Arts, Humanities and Well-being Branch  
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## General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Welsh Government will be data controller for any personal data you provide as part of your response to the consultation. Welsh Ministers have statutory powers they will rely on to process this personal data which will enable them to make informed decisions about how they exercise their public functions. Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about or planning future consultations. Where the Welsh Government undertakes further analysis of consultation responses then this work may be commissioned to be carried out by an accredited third party (e.g. a research organisation or a consultancy company). Any such work will only be undertaken under contract. Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

In order to show that the consultation was carried out properly, the Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then redact them before publishing.

You should also be aware of our responsibilities under Freedom of Information legislation.

If your details are published as part of the consultation response then these published reports will be retained indefinitely. Any of your data held otherwise by Welsh Government will be kept for no more than three years.

## Your rights

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data holds about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer:  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
CARDIFF  
CF10 3NQ

e-mail:  
[Data.ProtectionOfficer@gov.wales](mailto:Data.ProtectionOfficer@gov.wales)

The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are:  
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Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Tel: 01625 545 745 or  
0303 123 1113

Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

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## Ministerial foreword

Our vision for Wales is for a fully inclusive education system where all learners have the equity of access to education that meets their needs and enables them to participate in, benefit from and enjoy learning.

To help deliver this, we are in the midst of a transformative reform agenda, including the development of the Curriculum for Wales, based on learners making progress towards four purposes and, as part of this, providing the knowledge, skills and experiences to enable learners become healthy, ethical and informed citizens.

We are proposing that every child in a maintained school in Wales must have the right to access a broad and balanced curriculum; this includes access to Religious Education (RE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE).

RE and sex education are statutory requirements within the current curriculum. We propose that RE and RSE will be statutory within the new curriculum when it is introduced from 2022.

Through RE, learners explore the range of spiritual, philosophical, moral, social and cultural beliefs within their community, across Wales, and throughout the world. I am proposing to change the name of Religious Education to “Religions and Worldviews”, which appropriately reflects teaching practice within the new curriculum, and allows for the exploration of a range of religious and philosophical beliefs, as well as other beliefs and world-views, including non-religious world views.

Our responsibility as a government is to ensure that, through state education, all children and young people have access to learning that supports them to develop tolerance, empathy and understanding of different people, cultures and communities – and in understanding their rights and the rights of others. Children should be provided with access to information that keeps them safe from harm and allows them to navigate the world we live in, one which is very different to the world we or their parents grew up in.

All teaching and learning must be developmentally appropriate. It must be clear to parents what their children will learn about and to be able to engage in dialogue with schools about this part of the curriculum.

The teaching and learning in each school will be able to draw on a framework we will provide in guidance and should reflect the community the school serves.

I am minded to ensure all children and young people in maintained schools are required to study RE and RSE in the new curriculum, rather than continue the anomaly that parents can take the decision to prevent children from attending these specific and core lessons.

This consultation seeks views on the practical implications of such a change.

It provides an opportunity for parents, teachers, young people and stakeholders to help shape this important area.

I am very clear that we need to work with parents and carers, take account of their views and look at how we can balance the rights of parents to develop, care and

guide their children into adulthood and provide a broad and balanced education that serves the public good.

## What are the main issues?

1. This consultation asks for views on the practical implications on the proposal to ensure access to the new curriculum by not including the parental right to withdraw from RE and RSE<sup>1</sup>.

## Current curriculum

### RE

2. At present, RE is part of the basic curriculum and schools have a statutory duty to teach RE to all learners in maintained schools, including those in the sixth form and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) (covering ages 11 to 18), with an exemption for children in nursery classes.
3. The nature of the RE will vary according to whether the school is a faith or non-faith based school. The courts have established that RE must be taught in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner; in particular, the state is not permitted to pursue an aim of indoctrination (“the Pluralistic Requirement”). Nonetheless faith schools can teach RE in a way that accords with its faith basis but they must also provide neutral information on other religions and non-religious views as well.
4. In summary, the effect of the current legislation governing RE in schools is as follows:
  - the curriculum generally must be balanced and broadly-based and it must (a) promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and (b) prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life;
  - that the curriculum must include provision for RE for all pupils at the school;
  - Community schools, foundation schools and voluntary schools without a religious character follow the Agreed Syllabus<sup>2</sup>;
  - Foundation and voluntary controlled schools with a religious character must provide RE in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus unless a parent requests that their child be provided with RE in accordance with the trust deed for the school or, if there is no trust deed, in accordance with the tenets of the religion;

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<sup>1</sup> See section 71(1) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 for the parental right to withdraw from RE & section 405 of the Education Act 1996 for sex education

<sup>2</sup> See paragraph 2 of Schedule 19 to the *School Standards and Framework Act 1998*. The Agreed Syllabus is the syllabus for religious education adopted by the local authority on advice of its Agreed Syllabus Conference. It sets out the content of religious education for those schools without a faith basis and for those with a faith basis but which do not follow a separate denominational education (voluntary controlled schools).

- Voluntary aided schools with a religious character must provide RE in accordance with the trust deed for the school, or if there is no trust deed, in accordance with the tenets of the religion. However, if the parents so request, this must be provided in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus (paragraphs 3 and 4 of Schedule 19 to the 1998 Act);
- that RE in non-faith-based schools must comply with the Christian tradition<sup>3</sup> requirement;
- RE in non-faith schools may not be given by means of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of a particular religious denomination (although the study of such catechisms or formularies is permissible);
- the parent of a pupil has an absolute right to have the pupil excused from receiving RE, and no reason for the exercise of that right need be given;
- where a pupil has been so excused, he or she may (subject to certain conditions being met) be withdrawn from school to receive RE of a kind that his or her parent wishes him or her to receive; and
- if the school is a secondary school and pupils cannot be conveniently withdrawn from it, then (subject to certain conditions being met) facilities must be made available for the pupils to receive RE of a kind that their parents wish them to receive.

*What is a faith school?*

5. The schools that may have a faith basis are as follows:

- a) voluntary controlled schools: these may or may not have a religious character;
- b) voluntary aided schools: these may or may not have a religious character; and
- c) foundation and foundation special schools: foundation schools may have a religious character also.

6. In practice almost all faith schools in Wales will be voluntary aided (category (b) above).

7. As noted above, in non-faith schools there is provision in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 which states that no Agreed Syllabus may be distinctive of a particular religious denomination (“Catechism Provision”). This provision does not apply to faith-based schools. Whilst such schools must comply with the

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<sup>3</sup> Section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 provides that every agreed syllabus shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain.

Pluralistic Requirement (see paragraph 3), subject to that they may still teach according to their own catechism.

### *Parents' ability to prevent a child receiving RE*

8. Parents have been able to prevent a child from receiving RE since the Education Act 1944. Parents are not required to provide a reason for doing so and the right remains with the parent throughout schooling (including the sixth form).
9. This consultation proposes there will be no parental right to withdraw from RE (and RSE).

### **Sex education**

10. The current legislation requires that all secondary school age pupils attending maintained settings must receive sex education (set out in Section 101(c) and (d) of the *Education Act 2002*). Primary schools are able to deliver sex education but this is at the discretion of their governing bodies.
11. There is not a full definition of what sex education encompasses in the current curriculum but section 579(1) of the Education Act 1996 states that it does include information on sexually transmitted diseases. This is supplemented by statutory guidance. It has generally been interpreted more broadly to encompass aspects of relationships.
12. Both faith and non-faith based schools must teach sex education in a way that satisfies the Pluralistic Requirement and does not seek to indoctrinate in any particular religious view on issues relating to sex education. However, faith schools can teach it in a way that accords with its faith basis but must provide neutral information about other perspectives on the same issues.
13. Schools also have a statutory requirement to provide Personal and Social Education (PSE) for all compulsory school age pupils (generally ages 5-16). They are supported in planning their PSE provision by the non-statutory framework for PSE document, which contains a health and emotional well-being theme. However, as the PSE Framework is non-statutory, schools are free to decide on the content and approach for delivery as long as the subject is taught in a neutral way.
14. Relationships education is already present in the Foundation Phase, which covers 3-7 years old. The Foundation Phase contains a Personal and Social Development, Well-being and Cultural Diversity area of learning. Within this, children learn about themselves, their relationships with other children and adults both within and beyond the family.

### *Parents' ability to prevent a child receiving sex education*

15. Parents are currently able to prevent their children from receiving aspects of sex education in school (i.e. aspects not contained in the national curriculum). As

with RE, parents are not required to give a reason for withdrawal and this remains with the parent throughout schooling (including the sixth form). This consultation proposes there will be no parental right to withdraw from RSE (and RE).

## **New Curriculum**

16. We are developing a transformational curriculum and schools will be responsible for ensuring all their learners receive a broad and balanced curriculum, which is designed to meet the four purposes – that children and young people develop as:

- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives;
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world;
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

17. To ensure the curriculum enables learners to progress in relation to achieving the four purposes, the new curriculum will include (amongst other things):

- A requirement for RE for pupils 3 to 16 years of age;
- A requirement for RSE for pupils aged 3 to 16 years of age.

18. Further details of the proposals are contained in the White Paper. While there will be requirements and guidance to support schools in developing and implementing the new curriculum, a purpose-led curriculum will offer considerably more freedom and agency to practitioners to offer learning which equips learners for the challenges and opportunities they face growing up and then living and working in the 21st century.

19. Within this purpose-led approach, both RE and RSE have a central role to play in realising the four purposes to the extent that we have proposed they must be separate statutory requirements.

### RE in the new curriculum

20. In proposals for the new Curriculum, RE<sup>4</sup> will continue to be compulsory, forming a statutory part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience, whilst recognising the local responsibility of the Agreed Syllabus Conferences and local authorities and the place of the denominational syllabus in faith based schools (e.g. Voluntary Aided schools with a religious character).

21. A new supporting framework is being developed to provide further detail about the relationship between RE, the Agreed Syllabus, and the areas of learning and experience. This is being taken forward by a group of RE practitioners, teachers drawn from our Quality Improvement practitioners, academics, and

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<sup>4</sup> Please see paragraphs 45 – 47 below for our proposal to change the name of this subject area

representatives from Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs) and the National Advisory Panel for Religious Education (NAPFRE).

22. It is our intention also that RE reflects our historical and contemporary relationship in Wales to philosophy and religious views, including non-religious beliefs. Therefore we propose the current legislation will be amended to ensure the agreed syllabus for RE takes account of non-religious world views which are analogous to religions (for example, humanism).
23. In developing respect and understanding of different forms of religion and world view over time and in different societies, RE provides valuable experiences for children and young people that make a positive contribution to each of the four purposes.

### RSE in the new curriculum

24. Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) explores the interconnected ways in which a wide and diverse range of social, cultural, technological and biological influences affect the ability to form and maintain positive relationships. It supports young people to develop the knowledge and skills needed to effectively navigate these rapidly changing influences and establish respectful, fulfilling relationships throughout their lives. These may include family relationships, friendships, professional relationships and sexual relationships. Moving from sex education in the current legislation to RSE in future reflects the internationally recognised World Health Organisation (WHO) standards for sexuality education. This definition seeks to encourage schools to take a joined up approach to education around relationships and the broader range of topics included under sexuality.
25. RSE within the new curriculum will be mandatory in all funded non-maintained settings and maintained schools (and PRUs) for learners aged 3 to 16. The four purposes of the curriculum support learners to grow as healthy, confident individuals who are able to build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, and develop their mental and emotional well-being by developing their resilience and empathy. RSE is essential to supporting this and should provide learners with the experiences, knowledge and skills to form and maintain a range of positive relationships. To properly reflect the breadth of what will be covered, it will be formally renamed in line with the recommendation of the Sex and Relationships Education Expert Panel<sup>5</sup>.
26. RSE will allow learners to explore how their experiences, decisions, social and cultural interactions, and relationships, drawn from the interpersonal level, through local, national, United Kingdom and global contexts, can help them grow in empathy and recognise the dignity and respect due to others, and to the living world around them. It is about nurturing and developing learners' understanding of the influences that can affect them, both positively and negatively, as they

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<sup>5</sup> <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/180104-future-of-the-sex-and-relationships-education-curriculum-in-wales-en.pdf>

seek to develop and establish a range of respectful, healthy relationships. This includes learning at age appropriate stages about:

- relationships / friendship
- respecting values, rights, culture and sexuality
- understanding gender
- violence and staying safe
- relationships and sexuality, and health and well-being
- the human body and development
- sexuality and sexual behaviour

27. Developing RSE through different areas of learning and experience<sup>6</sup> within the new curriculum gives learners a rich and wide-ranging view of human relationships and sexuality from a variety of disciplines.

28. We propose that there will be a duty on the Welsh Ministers to issue statutory guidance on RSE in a way that is age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate for learners.

#### Role of RE and RSE in the new curriculum

29. Ensuring that RE and RSE forms part of the curriculum for all school learners would support learners to work towards the four purposes, and we believe there is a strong argument that these subject areas are necessary to produce ethical, informed citizens who are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world, and that schools have a role in providing neutral, comprehensive and accurate information to learners. Part of the rationale for including RE and RSE as mandatory elements in the new curriculum is the importance of their contribution to the four purposes; it is unlikely that some of the key characteristics could be secured by learners without access to these subjects.

30. There have been significant changes in society and the law since the introduction of the current curriculum. In this modern and increasingly complex world we now live in, religious and non-religious world views permeate through much of people's daily lives in one way or another. In order to equip a pupil for the modern world, schools must provide them with pluralistic, neutral and critical education on those religious and non-religious world views. Similarly in terms of RSE pupils have available to them a vast amount of information though the internet. That information can be accessed easily and in a number of different ways. We believe that the state has a moral obligation to ensure that children in schools receive neutral and accurate information in these issues which pervade throughout society.

31. Not including the right to withdraw would also support the interdisciplinary approach being adopted in the new curriculum. There is already anecdotal evidence that schools and parents find it difficult to identify those lessons from

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<sup>6</sup> It is proposed that the new curriculum will be organised around six 'areas of learning and experience': humanities; maths and numeracy; science and technology; expressive arts; literacy, languages and communication and health and wellbeing.



which their child should be withdrawn. This situation is likely to be exacerbated by the interdisciplinary nature of the new curriculum, and it would be difficult to ensure that any right to withdraw was capable of being meaningfully exercised.

## What we are proposing?

*Right to withdraw from RE and RSE:*

32. We are proposing to not include a right to withdraw from RE and RSE in the new curriculum for Wales. These lessons will be compulsory for all pupils.

33. In coming to this proposal we have carefully considered the views expressed in the responses to the White Paper and to the consultation on the RSE guidance. It is clear that these are issues on which there are strong views, and we recognise that people are concerned about:

- Developmental appropriateness, and that children should not be exposed to issues that they are not ready for;
- Role / primacy of family in providing guidance on these issues;
- The potential for there to be a lack of sensitivity to, or recognition of, different cultural or religious views;
- The capacity and capability to provide learning in a nuanced and sensitive way;
- Scope for unwanted conflict and disagreement.

34. At the same time, there has been strong support for our proposal that sex education would be replaced by RSE. The announcement was one of the most welcome and popular posts on our social media channels.

35. We also believe that, in a world where access to information – and disinformation – is universal and instantaneous, the curriculum has a key role to play in helping children and young people navigate all this safely and be able to judge what information they can trust and to recognise the very many negative perspectives they will be exposed to online.

36. Safeguarding all our young people and supporting them to navigate this complex world is vital. Parents, of course, have a central role to play in this but there is a crucial role for schools – and a role which is now more important than it has ever been.

37. On this basis we believe there is a strong principle-based case for all school learners to be guaranteed access to RE and RSE. For learners to fully benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum, they must be able to access all parts of the curriculum. Within the new purpose-led approach (outlined above), both subjects have a central role to play in our children and young people receiving a broad and balanced education and realising the four purposes.

38. There has been a clear message from practitioners that the way forward on these issues is for Government to decide at a national level and should not be passed to schools to manage.
39. In our increasingly complicated and rapidly changing world, the children and young people of Wales have a need and a right to receive consistent, factual and developmentally-appropriate learning about the issues covered in these subjects. This is important as part of the development of a more inclusive and tolerant society. High quality RSE and RE provision in schools supports children and young people to stay safe, to respect one another, and to build healthy relationships. These are important values we want all young people in Wales to develop to allow young people to be ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world and healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.
40. We carefully considered whether providing a mechanism for parents to withdraw their children from RE and RSE would be appropriate in the new curriculum. We recognised that the ability to withdraw was important to some parents and that some parents take the view these are primarily matters for parents and families to educate in relation to. We also considered the potential role of right to withdraw in circumstances where there were concerns that teaching and learning was not pluralistic. We concluded that a right to withdraw was not the appropriate mechanism to deal with this and the practice in the particular school should be being addressed. This has already been identified as an area where investment in professional learning and resources will be required to support practitioners. There is also a role for self-assessment to identify where practice can be improved and to consider how the Regional Consortia and Estyn can help identify and support action to improve practice in this area.
41. We concluded that the principle-based case for all children and young people to have access to learning on these issues was very strong and that there would be practical difficulties in operating withdrawals in this much more integrated curriculum. We also concluded that the focus on developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive teaching and learning; and the emphasis on engagement with communities and recognising and responding to the background of learners in discussing these subjects, would provide appropriate safeguards for parents.
42. On balance, not including the right to withdraw best meets our overall policy objectives, which are:
- For all learners to be able to access a curriculum which enables them to progress in relation to the four purposes
  - For the education system to play its part in creating a more inclusive and tolerant society and maximise its contribution to the well-being goals in the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
  - To recognise the role of parents and families in guiding these children in relation to these issues
  - To recognise, and respond to, the interests of all groups and promote equality
  - To not increase the burden on schools or the workload of teachers

43. Whilst we feel that schools have a crucial role to play in supporting learners to develop tolerance, empathy and understanding of different people and communities, and of both their rights and the rights of others, this does not mean that this proposal will replace parents' vital role in educating their children. The learning provided to our children and young people through RSE and RE in maintained schools will be provided sensitively and inclusively to complement it. The guidance on these subject areas will make it clear that the information covered must be conveyed in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner.
44. We will be carrying out meaningful and sustained engagement with communities about the content of RSE in the new curriculum and the way in which it will be taught. Also, we are establishing a working group to finalise the RSE guidance for the new curriculum and will seek to ensure that representatives from a variety of communities across Wales, including faith communities, are included and will be able to shape the final guidance.

#### *Change of name from RE*

45. Following the proposed change in name of Sex and Relationships Education (referred to as sex education in current legislation), to Relationships and Sexuality Education, which was done to reflect modern practice and approach to this subject area, we feel consideration should be given to the name Religious Education.
46. RE provides opportunities for learners to explore the range of spiritual, philosophical, moral, social and cultural beliefs within their community, across Wales, and throughout the world. We feel the subject name should reflect what learners will be taught through RE. As such, we are proposing to change the name of Religious Education, so that it appropriately reflects teaching practice within the new curriculum, and allows for the exploration of all religious and philosophical beliefs, as well as other beliefs and world-views, including non-religious world views. Our preferred name is Religions and Worldviews.

#### *Impact assessment*

47. Alongside this consultation paper, we are publishing our draft impact assessment. As no formal data is currently kept on the use of the right to withdraw, we have been dependent on anecdotal evidence from education practitioners. Whilst this has been very helpful, we want to understand more about the practical impact of this proposal before a final decision is made.

#### *Human Rights*

48. We consider that the proposals to not include the right to withdraw in the new curriculum for the new mandatory elements of RE (or Religions and Worldviews as we are proposing it is renamed) and RSE is compatible with the rights protected by the Human Rights Act 1998.

49. The parental rights in the second sentence of Article 2 Protocol 1 will be appropriately respected if the RE and RSE provided does not involve indoctrination and is provided in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner. The rights of the learner in Article 9 will be appropriately respected by ensuring they do not miss out on vital curriculum content – content which is important not just in terms of making progress in relation to the four purposes but also in safeguarding them. Their parents and wider community are free to provide education on RE (or Religions and Worldviews as we are proposing it is renamed) and RSE as they see fit outside of school.

# WELSH GOVERNMENT INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

## CURRICULUM FOR WALES 2022 – ENSURING ACCESS TO THE FULL CURRICULUM

September 2019 (v2)

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# SECTION 1. WHAT ACTION IS THE WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSIDERING AND WHY?

## 1.1 Background

### Ensuring access to Religious Education (RE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

As outlined in *Education in Wales: Our National Mission*, the Welsh Government is working to develop transformational curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales to enable young people to have higher standards of literacy and numeracy, become more digitally and bilingually competent, and evolve to enterprising, creative and critical thinkers. The new arrangements have equity and excellence at their core and help to develop confident, capable and caring citizens. This is at the core of the contribution of our compulsory education to the well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

*Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* (2015) sets out practical and fundamental issues with the existing curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales, including:

- levels of achievement not as high as they should be (as evidenced by PISA and Estyn);
- an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) review in 2014 which concluded the current assessment and evaluation arrangements are unsatisfactory in improving performance amongst a high proportion of Welsh young people;
- lack of continuity within education and during transition between stages;
- poor educational experience for young people at Key Stage 3; and
- a curriculum devised in 1988 does not reflect the world that young people are living in now and the implications of a changing world on what and how young people need to learn.

Consequently, there is a need to ensure that Wales has a broad and balanced curriculum which is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, outlining what knowledge learners should have and what skills they should acquire. One of the core recommendations of *Successful Futures* is to place the four purposes at the heart of our education system so that children and young people develop as:

- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives;
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world; and
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

While there will be other statutory requirements and statutory guidance to support schools in developing and realising the new curriculum, a purpose-led curriculum will offer considerably more freedom and agency to practitioners to offer learning which equips learners for the challenges and opportunities they face growing up and then living and working in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Within this purpose-led approach both Religious Education (RE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) have a central role to play in realising the four purposes and achieving a broad and balanced education to the extent that we have proposed they must be separate compulsory requirements. With this in mind, we have been reviewing the Right to Withdraw element of the current curriculum which allows parents to withdraw their child from RE and sex education, which will be encompassed within RSE in future.

We have carefully considered the views expressed in the responses to the White Paper consultation on this issue, which showed that people have concerns about:

- Developmental appropriateness, and that children should not be exposed to issues that they are not ready for
- Role / primacy of family in providing guidance on these issues,
- The potential for there to be a lack of sensitivity to, or recognition of, different cultural or religious views
- The capacity and capability to provide learning in a nuanced and sensitive way

However, in our increasingly complicated and rapidly changing world, the children and young people of Wales have a need and a right to expect state education<sup>1</sup> to offer critical, pluralistic and developmentally appropriate learning which does not seek to indoctrinate about the issues covered in these subjects. This is important as part of the development of a more inclusive and tolerant society. High quality RSE and RE provision in supports children and young people to stay safe, to respect one another, and to build healthy relationships. These are important values we want all young people in Wales to develop to allow young people to be ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world and healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

On this basis we believe there is a strong principle-based case for all learners to be guaranteed access to RE and RSE. For learners to fully benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum, they must be able to access all parts of the curriculum, and we are therefore, proposing that the new curriculum should not include a right to withdraw.

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<sup>1</sup> i.e. maintained schools and funded nursery settings



## Change of name for Religious Education

In line with our proposal to change the name of Sex and Relationships Education to Relationships and Sexuality Education<sup>2</sup> in the new curriculum in order to better reflect the current practice and approach to this subject area, we have been considering the name Religious Education.

RE provides opportunities for learners to explore a range of spiritual, philosophical, moral, social and cultural beliefs within their community, across Wales, and throughout the world. We feel the subject name should reflect the full extent of what learners will be taught through this subject area. As such, we are proposing to change the name so that it appropriately reflects teaching practice within the new curriculum, and demonstrates the breadth of the subject in allowing for the exploration of a range of religious and philosophical beliefs, as well as other beliefs and world-views, including non-religious world views. Our preferred name is Religions and Worldviews but we would welcome views and alternative suggestions.

### **1.2 Long term**

The new curriculum and assessment arrangements are being developed to ensure they are fit for a rapidly changing world.

The learning provided in RE and RSE is important in supporting learners so that they can navigate an increasingly complex society.

The proposal to not include the right to withdraw in the new curriculum is an example of accepting some short-term challenge and pressure in order to support the long term goal of a more inclusive society.

### **1.3 Prevention**

High quality RSE and RE provision from an early age supports children and young people to stay safe, to respect each other and to build healthy relationships. This will benefit their mental, physical and emotional well-being and therefore have important implications for their successful progression through adult life. The four purposes of the curriculum contribute to breaking multiple negative cycles by supporting children and young people to develop as: ambitious, capable learners; enterprising, creative contributors; ethical, informed citizens; and healthy confident individuals.

Mandatory RE and RSE and the proposal not to include the right to withdraw in the new curriculum directly contribute to prevention by ensuring learners receive learning about

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<sup>2</sup> The current name for this subject is “sex education” but guidance in 2010 used the title “Sex and Relationship Education in Schools”. We have consulted on draft guidance which uses the term “Relationships and Sexuality Education”.

their rights and the rights of others. Access to high quality information and strategies for understanding pressures they may face will equip them better in facing those pressures: from recognising healthy and unhealthy relationships to understanding the perspectives of people with different beliefs and values to them. This will support the prevention of the negative outcomes that would arise as a result of negative relationships and behaviours

It is questionable whether learners would be able to fully meet the four purposes of the curriculum especially being ethical, informed citizens; and healthy confident individuals if they do not receive RE and RSE.

#### 1.4 Integration

The new curriculum is based on a much greater level of integration across subjects and creating the opportunity for reinforcement through different approach. The intention is that RE and RSE should be integrated within the curriculum and not including the right to withdraw makes this aim easier to achieve.

Not including the right to withdraw from RE and RSE in the new curriculum will contribute to each of the seven well-being goals outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 shown below:

A prosperous Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners not being withdrawn from RE and RSE will better enable all young people leaving school to have a full understanding of the importance of respect for all faiths, religions and groups and enable a future workforce to be tolerant and integrated enabling young people to be ready to play a full part in work and life'.</li> </ul>
A resilient Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both RE and RSE contribute to social resilience, and RSE helps learners to recognise the dignity and respect due to the living world around them.</li> </ul>
A healthier Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that all learners receive high quality RE &amp; RSE will benefit their mental, physical and emotional well-being.</li> </ul>
A more Equal Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposals will ensure that learners will receive information about different beliefs and attitudes, and learn to respect and treat others with dignity.</li> </ul>
A Wales of cohesive communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of the four purposes of the new curriculum is to enable 'healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society' and both RE and RSE contribute to this purpose by enabling all learners to gain insight into a broad range of cultures and philosophical perspectives.</li> </ul>
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In developing respect and understanding, ensuring access to RE and RSE will have a positive cultural impact.</li> </ul>
A globally responsible Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of the four purposes of the new curriculum is to enable learners to become ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the World'; ensuring access to RE &amp; RSE will contribute to this purpose.</li> </ul>

## **1.5 Collaboration**

The policy to ensure access to RE and RSE will have an impact on parents, learners, practitioners (in different schools and settings), governing bodies, local authorities, regional education consortia and Estyn. More widely, they will also impact on third sector organisations, cultural institutions, further and higher education, and businesses.

Co-production has been key to the development of the curriculum with Pioneer Schools leading on developing the new curriculum which includes RE and RSE.

During development of these proposals we have:

- Discussed the potential implications of this proposal with a range of people with an interest.
- Undertaken a White Paper consultation which included questions about the Right to Withdraw around whether this should be retained and if so whether it should be retained in an amended form
- Consulted on draft RSE guidance

It is clear that RE and RSE give rise to particular sensitivities and, of the issues covered in the curriculum, they are the areas where the tension between the role of the state and the role of parents in educating and informing children and young people is most sensitive – and, arguably, most pressing.

In developing the proposed approach further it will be important to take opportunities for further collaboration in bringing in community representatives, experts and other groups to support schools in exploring the issues covered in more detail.

## **1.6 Involvement**

The whole curriculum has been built on a co-construction approach. There has been extensive engagement on these policy areas (RE and RSE) but this policy proposal on the right to withdraw is particularly challenging because it evokes strong opinion and not everyone will agree with it. However that makes ongoing involvement even more important.

As part of this consultation, we will be convening a series of focus groups to explore these issues with children and young people, parents and practitioners.

We will be carrying out meaningful and sustained engagement with communities, particularly about the content of RSE in the new curriculum and the way in which it will be taught. In addition, we will be establishing a working group to finalise the RSE guidance and will seek to ensure that representatives from a variety of communities across Wales, including faith communities, are involved and able to shape the final guidance.

## SECTION 2. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON SOCIAL WELL-BEING?

### 2.1 People and Communities

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal affect people and communities?**

#### Ensuring access to RE and RSE

Two of the four purposes of the new curriculum enable 'healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society' and 'ethical, informed citizens who are ready to be citizens of Wales and the world.'

The proposal to ensure access to the full curriculum will ensure that all learners in Wales develop understanding and appreciation of different world views, and establish a range of respectful, healthy relationships. It is envisaged, therefore, that overall this will have a positive impact on Welsh society. No formal data is currently kept on the use of the right to withdraw in the current curriculum, however, the anecdotal evidence we have received from education practitioners indicated that only a very small minority of learners are withdrawn. Therefore this proposal will only affect a very small number of people, although there are implications for individual groups and these are considered in the equality impact assessment at Annex B.

There is a possibility that, if the proposal is carried out, parents would prefer to withdraw their children entirely from maintained schooling to avoid them receiving education on the issues covered in RE and/or RSE. We do not have any concrete evidence on the likelihood of this happening but, if it does, this would have a negative impact on those children as they will not receive the benefits of mainstream schooling. If we decide to go ahead with the proposal, this will need to be monitored.

#### Change of name for Religious Education

We do not feel that there will be any impacts as a result of changing the name of this subject area, as any name change will merely reflect the existing breadth of the topics covered within it. We understand that people might have concerns that this will mean that learning about religions and religious tenets becoming a less important part of the subject area. However this is not the case.

### 2.2 Children's Rights

The development of the new curriculum has had regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

There are specific considerations in relation to the right to withdraw and a children's rights assessment is attached at Annex A.

### 2.3 Equality

An Equalities Impact Assessment is attached at Annex B.

## **2.4 Rural Proofing**

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate /minimal impact), will the proposal impact on rural individuals and communities?**

The curriculum is designed to apply to every learner in every classroom in Wales. There are no immediately obvious implications for rural communities or individuals living in rural communities.

## **2.5 Health**

**2.5a How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate /minimal impact), will the proposal impact health determinants?**

One of the four purposes of the curriculum is to support learners to become healthy and confident individuals. RSE supports learners to develop their mental and emotional well-being. Therefore the proposal should improve health determinants.

**2.5b. Could there be a differential health impact on particular groups?**

The proposals relate to learners of statutory school age. The policy proposal should reduce the likelihood of differential health impacts by ensuring that all learners have access to high quality learning on the topics covered in RSE in particular. There are potentially some differential impacts for some learners if they were withdrawn entirely from maintained schooling as a result of this policy proposal being carried out.

## **2.6 Privacy**

A privacy impact assessment is not required for these proposals as they do not relate to the collection or use of personal information.

## **SECTION 3. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON CULTURAL WELL-BEING AND THE WELSH LANGUAGE?**

### **3.1 Cultural Well-being**

**3.1a How can the proposal actively contribute to the goal to promote and protect culture and heritage and encourage people to participate in the arts sports and recreation? (for Welsh Language see section 3.2)**

The proposal has no direct impact on culture apart from improving tolerance and the embracing of diversity across society.

**3.1b Is it possible that the proposal might have a negative effect on the promotion and protection of culture and heritage, or the ability of people to participate in arts, sport and recreation? If so, what action can you take to avoid or reduce that effect (for example by providing alternative opportunities)?**

We have not identified a negative effect.

### **3.2 Welsh Language**

A Welsh Language Impact Assessment is attached at Annex C.

## **SECTION 4. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON ECONOMIC WELL-BEING?**

### **4.1 Business, the general public and individuals**

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal impact business and the public?**

The policy would have no direct impact on businesses.

The impact would be on parents who would no longer have a right to withdraw their children from RE or RSE and on learners who could no longer be withdrawn and on their wider communities.

### **4.2 Public Sector including local government and other public bodies**

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal impact the public sector?**

The proposals set out will have a minor impact on the public sector in Wales, primarily in schools.

### **4.3 Third Sector**

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal impact third sector organisations and what they do?**

Third sector organisations interested in education, those representing the communities which may have particular views on or interest in the content of RE and RSE will be impacted. Third sector organisations who work directly with schools will also be similarly impacted.

### **4.4 Justice Impact**

Based on legal advice it is unlikely there will be impacts on the Justice System. Therefore a Justice Impact Assessment has not been completed.

## SECTION 5. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING?

### 5.1 Natural Resources

#### 5.1a How will the proposal deliver one or more of the National Priorities in the Natural Resources Policy (NRP)?

The new arrangements will not have an impact on this area.

#### 5.1b Does the proposal help tackle the following national challenges and opportunities for the sustainable management of natural resources?

N/a

### 5.2 Biodiversity

N/a

### 5.3 Climate Change

#### 5.3a Decarbonisation

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal affect emissions in Wales?**

N/a

#### 5.3b Adaptation

**How (either positively or negatively), and to what extent (significant/moderate/minimal impact), will the proposal affect ability to adapt to the effects of climate change?**

N/a

### 5.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The proposals will not have an impact on any of the key areas listed as part of the regulations (agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water managements, tourism, town and country planning or land use). Consequently, an SEA is not required.

### 5.5 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The proposals will not affect any of the listed sites under the 'Natura 2000 European protected site network.' As a result, a HRA is not required.

### 5.6 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

The proposals will not have an impact on the listed areas. As a result, an EIA is not required.



## SECTION 6. RECORD OF FULL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS REQUIRED

<b>Impact Assessment</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>
Children's rights	Yes
Equality	Yes
Rural Proofing	No
Health	No – screening done
Privacy	No
Welsh Language	Yes
Economic / RIA	No
Justice	No
Biodiversity	No
Climate Change	No
Strategic Environmental Assessment	No
Habitat Regulations Assessment	No
Environmental Impact Assessment	No

## SECTION 7. CONCLUSION

### **7.1 How have people most likely to be affected by the proposal been involved in developing it?**

The curriculum design and development has been undertaken through a model of co-construction with representatives from the education system in Wales (Estyn, Regional Consortia, Qualifications Wales and practitioners). At the heart of this process is a national network of Pioneer Schools, who have engaged with their learners and their cluster and network schools to gather views throughout the process. In addition, an extensive programme of stakeholder engagement is underway.

The content of RE and RSE within the new curriculum is also being co-constructed. For RE, a new supporting framework is being developed by a group of practitioners, Pioneers, academics and representatives from Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education and the National Advisory Panel for Religious Education. The approach we are taking to RSE is based on recommendations from an Expert Panel, comprised of academic specialists in RSE, service providers and teachers with RSE responsibilities.

We have also formally consulted on the proposals for RE and RSE in the new curriculum as part of the White Paper consultation (the consultation also included questions on the right to withdraw) and on draft RSE guidance.

### **7.2 What are the most significant impacts, positive and negative?**

The most significant direct impacts would be on parents, because they would not be able to withdraw their children from RE or RSE.

It would also have a significant impact on learners who otherwise would be withdrawn. RSE and RE would become mandatory elements of the new curriculum. At present they do not have to attend such lessons if their parents withdraw them. That may be contrary to their wishes in some cases but it is reasonable to assume that in some cases the learner would be in agreement with their parent's decision. However, the proposal does mean that learners would fully benefit from a broad and balanced education by being able to access all parts of the curriculum.

### **7.3 In light of the impacts identified, how will the proposal:**

- **maximise contribution to our well-being objectives and the seven well-being goals; and/or,**
- **avoid, reduce or mitigate any negative impacts?**

The four purposes, as the starting point for all teaching and learning and supported by legislation, contribute to the Welsh Government's well-being objectives by developing children and young people as: ambitious capable learners; enterprising, creative contributors; ethical, informed citizens; and healthy, confident individuals. Compulsory RE and RSE have a significant part to play in allowing learners to achieve these purposes, and maximise the new curriculum's contribution to the well-being goals.

#### **7.4 How will the impact of the proposal be monitored and evaluated as it progresses and when it concludes?**

We are publishing this impact assessment as part of a consultation asking for views on the implications of the proposal. We will carefully review all feedback received before a final decision is made.

# FULL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

## A. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### 1. Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on children and young people.

#### Ensuring access to RE and RSE

Two of the four purposes of the proposed new curriculum are that children and young people develop as:

- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the World; and
- healthy, confident individuals ready to lead fulfilling lives as valid members of society.

It's important that children are educated in a way that contributes to developing ethical informed citizens who 'understand and exercise their human and democratic responsibilities and rights' and 'respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society'.

The curriculum is being designed as a continuum for all learners from 3-16 and the proposal will affect this age group.

In a world where young people are able to access 'information' instantly online, it is important that accurate and comprehensive information is shared with young people in an age appropriate way supported by discussions with a professional.

The right to withdraw in the current curriculum rests solely with parents and learners are not able to determine whether they learn about the topics covered in RE and RSE or whether they wish to withdraw. By not including a right to withdraw in the new curriculum, all children and young people across the maintained education system in Wales would, for the first time, be able to have access to the full curriculum including RE and RSE.

#### Evidence and Consultation

As there is currently no requirement for data to be kept, formal data on the current right to withdraw and how it is used is limited. However, we have obtained anecdotal evidence from education practitioners that only a very small percentage of learners are withdrawn from these subjects, although the pattern across schools can be very different.

A national call for evidence was undertaken as part of the Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment arrangements in Wales. This received over 700 responses, of which over 300 were from learners themselves. One of the areas that learners in particular, but not exclusively, wanted to see a greater focus on was general social competences (life skills and personal confidence, personal and social education (PSE)).

We carried out a White Paper consultation on our legislative proposals - *Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum* - which received nearly 2,000 responses and a consultation on *draft RSE guidance* which received 275 responses.

We have also explored the potential implications of this policy with practitioners.

## **2. Explain how the proposal is likely to impact on children's rights.**

Pursuant to section 1 of the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011, the Welsh Ministers must when exercising any of their functions have due regard to the requirements of Part I of the UNCRC. Accordingly, in developing this proposal consideration has been given to compatibility with the UNCRC.

RE and RSE within the new curriculum will encourage children and young people to respect their own rights and culture and those of others. They aim to equip children and young people with knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will empower them to realise their health, well-being and dignity; develop respectful social and sexual relationships; consider how their choices affect their own well-being and that of others; and understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives. Therefore ensuring access to high quality, comprehensive information on these subject areas will positively contribute to the following articles in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- Article 13 – Children have the right to get and share information as long as the information is not damaging to them or others
- Article 28 -Children have a right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Primary education should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this.
- Article 29 - Education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, and their own and other cultures.
- Article 33 – The Government should provide ways of protecting children from dangerous drugs

- Article 34 – The Government should protect children from sexual abuse
- Article 36 – Children should be protected from any activities that could harm their development

Providing for a right to withdraw in the new curriculum could have negative impacts on learners as – if their parents chose to exercise that right - they would miss out on core curriculum content, which is important for their development (and in the case of RSE for safeguarding them). Their parents and wider community will provide education on some of the same issues but the focus, message and comprehensiveness will potentially not be the same as provided in school (otherwise there would be no reason to withdraw them from school-based provision.)

The responses to the White Paper consultation and the consultation on the RSE guidance made it clear that some people have concerns that not including a right to withdraw in the new curriculum would have a negative impact on learners, particularly in relation to Article 13 (i.e. that children will be exposed to issues/concepts that they are not ready for and therefore will damage them) and Article 14 (“Children have the right to think and believe what they want and to practice their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.”)

We have considered these concerns carefully. However, this proposal is not intended to replace parents’ vital role in educating their children and our guidance will make it clear that the learning provided to children and young people through RE and RSE must be provided sensitively and inclusively to complement it. Professional learning and resources (as part of a £24 million package to support implementation of the new curriculum) will be provided to support this.

We also recognise that there is an argument for retaining a right to withdraw but transferring to the learner at an appropriate point in their maturity. However, we have provisionally concluded that not having a right to withdraw is a better option.

There is a possibility that if the proposal is carried out, parents would prefer to withdraw their children entirely from maintained schooling to avoid them receiving education on the issues covered in RE and/or RSE. We do not have any concrete evidence on the likelihood of this happening but, if it does, this would have a potentially negative impact on those children as they will not receive the benefits of mainstream schooling. If we decide to go ahead with the proposal, this will need to be monitored.

## B. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### 1. Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on people with protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010.

#### Ensuring access to RE and RSE

The new curriculum, including RE and RSE has been designed and developed to apply and be accessible to every learner in every classroom from ages 3 to 16.

In ensuring that learners receive RSE and RE, the proposal will enable them to explore how laws and policies contribute to equity and human rights regarding sex, gender, sexuality, relationships and beliefs. They will receive high quality, impartial teaching about different beliefs and respect for the rights of others.

There will be a need to work closely with all schools, in particular faith schools which are able to provide learning in line with the tenets of their religion (providing it is pluralistic), to ensure the learning offered in RSE and RE is pluralistic and non-discriminatory.

The proposals do not give rise to unlawful discrimination contrary to the Equality Act 2010.

#### **Record of Impacts by protected characteristic:**

##### **Age (including children up to the age of 16)**

The proposal that the new curriculum should not include a right to withdraw from RE and RSE would apply for learners in school or funded non-maintained settings from 3 to 16. These arrangements will equip learners with the skills and knowledge they need for later life, supporting them to develop in line with the four purposes and associated characteristics. Therefore, it is expected the arrangements will have a positive impact on learners. Due to the phased introduction from 2022, the new curriculum will be rolled out fully for learners currently in Year 4 and below.

We have been clear that the learning provided in RSE must be developmentally appropriate. This will require schools and individual teachers to make judgements about the matters that should be explored with learners of different ages. This will be explored in more detail in the RSE guidance and there will need to be associated professional learning and resources to support practitioners.

Learning, including progression, in RE is described in the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience and in an RE framework which will make the link between the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience and the Agreed (or denominational) Syllabus.

In both cases, this is about more than simply age but also an assessment of the development and maturity of the learner so that their engagement with these issues is done in a way that is appropriate for them. It will also need to recognise the cultural background of the child and acknowledge the different perspectives on issues in different communities. This is part of ensuring teaching is pluralistic.

As discussed in the CRIA (page 18 above) we consider that not having a right to withdraw is a better option than retaining it and transferring to the learner at an appropriate point.

#### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions

We will need to ensure that the RSE guidance is clear on the issue of developmentally appropriate RSE and that the RE framework is clear on the issue of progression.

#### **Disability**

The policy will require practitioners to adapt their provision of RE and RSE to support the needs and interests of their learners and communities, including disabled learners and those with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

#### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions:

We do not have specific evidence of use of the right to withdraw by parents of disabled learners. However, that does not mean that there is not an issue. We do have evidence from the Sex and Relationships Education Expert Panel that the teaching of the equivalent of RSE in the current curriculum was: *“inadequate for children and young people with disabilities. There is a lack of formal and informal SRE for children and young people with disabilities or opportunities to access information about when and how to seek advice and support.”*

This indicates that even if the right to withdraw itself is not a significant issue for disabled learners or their parents (which we do not have the evidence to determine yet), there is a need to ensure schools and teachers are better equipped to provide learning which recognises the specific needs of disabled learners – and opportunities for those learners to access further support and learning. This is an issue which needs to be picked up in the



Welsh Government's RSE guidance and for the professional learning and resources provided.

We will also need to engage with disabled learners, their families and representative organisations to ensure these issues are addressed.

We have not identified evidence of specific impacts in relation to RE but that does not mean that there are none. This will need to be explored further as proposals develop.

More generally in relation to the overall approach to the curriculum, the design principles for the new arrangements is that they are appropriate for every learner in every classroom which ensures that learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) have access to the curriculum. This criteria means the curriculum is developed to be inclusive, easily understood by all, encompassing an entitlement to high-quality education for every learner and taking account of their views in the context of the UNCRC, and those of parents, carers and wider society.

Special schools have been able to input the needs of their learners into the design through their representation on all AoLE groups, Curriculum and Assessment Group, Coherence Group, and Manageability Group.

The AoLEs have been designed with the input of Special Schools to ensure they are applicable to all learners. The ALN sub-group is developing guidance for ALN in mainstream schools to ensure inclusivity of the curriculum. In addition, a specific work stream has been set up to take account for 'Routes for Learning' during the curriculum the development process to ensure the curriculum is accessible for all. The ALN sub-group is supporting this by developing resources to support learners to progress from 'Routes for Learning' to Progression Step 1.

### **Gender Reassignment (the act of transitioning and Transgender people)**

Proposals to make RSE compulsory for all learners should have a positive impact on these learners as it raises awareness about respectful relationships, positive behaviour and acceptance of diversity. It also aims to encourage schools to consider how they provide support and learning to LGBTQI+. Furthermore, it aims to engage learners with issues such as gender and inequality and seek to foster a whole school approach to inclusion and tolerance.

We have not identified specific issues in relation to RE but this will require further consideration as the policy is developed.

### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions

The Sex and Relationships Expert Panel in their report to Welsh Government (2017) focused their recommendations to improve the provision of RSE in schools for all young people, no matter their gender or sexual orientation. RSE will form part of the curriculum for all learners up to 16, contributing to the four purposes, specifically: ethical, informed citizens who respect the needs and rights of others as a member of a diverse society; and healthy, confident individuals who form positive relationships based upon trust and mutual respect.

Research put forward in the Stonewall School Report Cymru (2017) shows LGBTQI+ identifying young people are still more likely to suffer poor mental health, self-harm and depression. The changes to RSE in the curriculum look to combat this by helping all learners feel emotionally and physically safe and secure so they are able to achieve their full potential.

The inclusion of 'age appropriate' provision of sex education in the curriculum acknowledges that, while age will still be a factor in making decisions around provision, schools will need to consider the physical and cognitive development of their learners, including taking into account the experiences of learners, when making decisions regarding planning RSE content. This supports the positive impacts on learners from this group, though there has been contention around these proposals and that could, if not handled carefully, have a negative impact on learners either in general or in the specific context of an individual school.

By not including a right to withdraw, all children and young people in mainstream education will have an inclusive Relationship and Sexuality Education across Wales.

### Pregnancy and maternity

RSE may have a positive impact on the prevention of teenage pregnancies and, separately, STDs by providing all learners with more information about relationships and safe sex. It should also provide learners with factual information about their rights, including their rights as someone who is pregnant.

### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions:

We have no specific evidence of impacts on learners who are pregnant.

**Race (include different ethnic minorities, Gypsies and Travellers and Migrants, Asylum seekers and Refugees)**

For RSE, a decision to not include a right to withdraw will have a negative impact on some parents, some learners and wider communities based on their race and religious identity or beliefs because parents would no longer be able to exercise the current choice they have about the extent to which the school educates their children about certain issues. There will be implications for different ethnic minorities as a consequence of their faith or belief. In addition, it will also have negative impacts for Gypsy and Travellers, where these matters are also very sensitive.

For both RE and RSE, if there is no right to withdraw, there are potential implications if a school fails to provide pluralistic education in these subject areas. While RE and RSE must be provided pluralistically there is some risk that they may in practice be delivered in a way which in some respects does not meet that requirement. That failure may be entirely inadvertent. If that happened, it could give rise to negative impacts for learners who would have to remain in class and attend the lessons. Work by Stonewall in relation to RSE provision, identified this as a particular issue in faith schools in the UK. However, we do not think that this concern is best addressed by having a right to withdraw, instead the issue should be addressed through guidance and the role of the consortia and Estyn.

A decision to include a right to withdraw in the new curriculum would have negative impacts for learners with these protected characteristics. This is because, if their parents chose to withdraw them from RSE and RE, they will miss out on core curriculum content – content which is important not just in terms of making progress in relation to the four purposes but also in safeguarding them (in the case of RSE). Their parents and wider community will provide education on some of the same issues but the focus, message and comprehensiveness will not be the same as provided in school (otherwise there would be no reason to withdraw them from school-based provision.)

There appear to be further potential negative impacts of including a right to withdraw for some groups with protected characteristics, in particular in relation to gender (and particular issues for girls and young women from some Black and Minority Ethnic communities or as a result of their faith or beliefs). Being withdrawn from RSE will mean that some girls and young women will miss out on learning about their rights and the opportunity to explore culturally sensitive issues such as forced marriage and female

genital mutilation. Similarly, if boys and young men are withdrawn they also miss the opportunity to learn about these issues in a way which fully reflects the law in the UK. This is a safeguarding concern.

#### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions:

The proposals set out to not include the right to withdraw in the curriculum is likely to have a negative impact on certain communities across Wales. However with the impact of the internet and information – and misinformation - being freely available it is important that these subjects are taught to all pupils in schools in a consistent and age appropriate manner.

We will engage affected communities very closely to understand the implication for them and, if we go ahead with the proposal, to inform the guidance, professional learning and resources necessary to enable practitioners to teach the subject in a sensitive and developmentally appropriate way.

As discussed above, we have concluded that a right to withdraw is not the appropriate safeguard to the risk of a failure to provide teaching and learning which is pluralistic. Instead the inappropriate practice should be addressed. We consider that the risk of that happening can be appropriately mitigated by the publication of clear statutory guidance on that point by the Welsh Ministers.

#### **Religion, belief and non-belief**

For RE, a decision to not to include a right to withdraw in the new curriculum will have a negative impact on some religious groups. Based on the evidence we have been able to gather, it will be a particular issue for Jehovah's Witnesses and humanists. We have not identified any other groups significantly affected by a decision to not include the right to withdraw for RE but we did receive some evidence that there could be issues where a school is failing to teach RE in a pluralistic way. This issue is discussed above.

For RSE, a decision to not include the right to withdraw will have a negative impact on some parents, some learners and wider communities based on their religious identity or beliefs because parents would no longer be able to exercise the current choice they have about the extent to which they, rather than school, educates their children about certain

issues. Based on the evidence we have been able to gather, it will be a particular issue for some Muslims and for some Christians.

The same issues in relation to a teacher failing to provide pluralistic learning noted above in relation to RE also apply to RSE.

However, a decision to include a right to withdraw in the new curriculum would have negative impacts for learners with these protected characteristics. This is because, if their parents chose to withdraw them from RSE and/or RE, they will miss out on core curriculum content – content which is important not just in terms of making progress in relation to the four purposes but also in safeguarding them (in the case of RSE). Their parents and wider community will provide education on some of the same issues but the focus, message and comprehensiveness will potentially not be the same as provided in school (otherwise there would be no reason to withdraw them from school-based provision.)

It is also important to note there are some differential impacts among religious groups in relation to both RE and RSE. In particular, some religious groups – those of Catholic faith (and also the Church in Wales) – may have the option to send their children to a maintained school which is also a faith school. These schools<sup>3</sup> are permitted to teach RSE (and RE) according to the tenets of their faith, although in doing so they must ensure their teaching is pluralistic. This means they can state that the Church – and the school – held a particular view on contraception or same sex marriage for example, but would need to highlight that others held different views. There is no current equivalent option for parents of other faiths to send their child to a school where RSE (or RE) will be taught in a way which reflects the tenets of their faith, while being pluralistic, within the maintained school system in Wales<sup>4</sup>.

There appears to be further potential negative impacts of the continuation of the right to withdraw for some groups with protected characteristics, in particular in relation to gender (and particular issues for girls and young women as a result of their faith or beliefs). Being withdrawn from RSE will mean that some girls and young women will miss out on learning

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<sup>3</sup> In practice almost all faith schools in Wales will be voluntary aided.

<sup>4</sup> Such schools could be established following a school organisation proposal

about their rights and the opportunity to explore culturally sensitive issues such as force marriage and female genital mutilation. Similarly, if boys and young men are withdrawn they also miss the opportunity to learn about these issues in a way which fully reflects the law in the UK. This is a safeguarding concern.

The right to withdraw has been described to officials as functioning as a safety valve in the system and not including it in the new curriculum could have a detrimental effect on schools' relationship with those communities, and cause community tensions. In addition, not including a right to withdraw in the new curriculum could lead some parents to remove their children from mainstream school and educate them at home or in other settings, many of which might be unregulated.

#### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions:

Based on the evidence we have, this is one of the areas where the decision on whether to retain the right to withdraw will have the most significant impacts. This emphasises the need to engage affected communities very closely to understand the implication for them and to inform the guidance, professional learning and resources necessary to enable practitioners to teach the subject in a sensitive and developmentally appropriate way. Unfortunately, to date, officials have been unable to discuss the position with the Jehovah's Witness community.

In circumstances where the issue is a failure to provide teaching and learning which is pluralistic or where an individual practitioner does not approach the issue pluralistically, we have concluded a right to withdraw is not the appropriate safeguard. Instead the inappropriate practice should be addressed. This is discussed above

#### **Sex / Gender**

RSE as a compulsory part of the curriculum will have positive impacts on gender by raising awareness and understanding amongst learners of respectful relationships, positive behaviour and diversity.

There appears to be potential negative impacts of including a right to withdraw for RSE in particular, for some groups with protected characteristics, in particular in relation to gender (and particular issues for girls and young women from some Black and Minority Ethnic communities or as a result of their faith or beliefs which are noted above). Being withdrawn from RSE will mean that some girls and young women will miss out on learning about their rights, appropriate, safe relationships and issues like violence and against

women. Similarly, if boys and young men are withdrawn they also miss the opportunity to learn about these issues in a way which fully reflects the law in the UK. This is a safeguarding concern.

There are potentially some differential impacts for some learners if they were withdrawn entirely from maintained schooling as a result of the right to withdraw being not included in the new curriculum. We do not have evidence about the likelihood, scale or the gender split but the engagement we have had with schools suggests it is possible in a minority of cases where the right to withdraw is exercised. This will need further exploration but clearly has the scope to exacerbate disadvantage based on gender.

### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions

Not including a right to withdraw in the new curriculum will ensure all learners have access to high quality RSE in schools across Wales.

Based on the evidence we have, this is one of the areas where there are impacts whether a right to withdraw is included or not included. This emphasises the need to engage affected communities, and women and girls in those communities, very closely to understand the implications for them and to inform the guidance, professional learning and resources necessary to enable practitioners to teach the subject in a sensitive and developmentally appropriate way.

### Sexual orientation (Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual)

The existence of a right to withdraw does not have a direct impact on LGBTQI+ learners. It is available to all and its existence does not prevent other learners from receiving either RE or RSE. However, there are indirect impacts of the continuation of the right to withdraw. It is apparent from the responses to the White Paper and conversations with the Muslim Council for Wales, for example, that certain topics are of particular concern. These topics generally relate to sexual orientation, gender identity and same sex relationships. A continuing position where learners are prevented from receiving consistent, factual and developmentally appropriate education in relation to these issues, has the potential to create an indirect negative impact on people with protected characteristics as a result of their gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. It has the potential to allow misinformation, bias or outright discrimination to persist in the wider school environment as a result of a lack of information (or inappropriate alternative learning being provided outside school.) It also has a negative impact on the development of a more inclusive and

tolerant wider society. It also, arguably, fails to recognise that the rights of LGBTQI+ people to be treated with equality are protected in law and there should be no issue with learning which reflects that.

RSE and the Health and Well-being AoLE, may reduce homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying and subsequently increase in well-being for LGBTQI+ learners. It will also help to challenge gender and sexual stereotypes and increase learners' understanding of safe, healthy and positive relationships.

For both RE and RSE, if there is no right to withdraw, there are potential implications if a school does not provide that education in a pluralistic way. This is discussed above

#### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions

The Sex and Relationships Expert Panel recommended the wider scope for Relationships and Sexuality in order to have the positive impact highlighted above. This is supported by the proposed statutory status RSE in the curriculum for all learners up to 16.

Not including a right to withdraw in the new curriculum would mean all young people in Wales will be able to be part of these important lessons.

In circumstances where the issue is a failure to provide teaching and learning which is pluralistic or where an individual practitioner does not approach the issue pluralistically, we have concluded a right to withdraw is not the appropriate safeguard. Instead the inappropriate practice should be addressed. This is discussed above

#### Marriage and civil partnership

RSE and the Health and Well-being AoLE will help challenge gender and sexual stereotypes and increase children and young peoples' understanding of safe, healthy and positive relationships.

#### Reasons for decision and mitigating actions

The four purposes, as the starting point for all teaching and learning, reflect the need for learners to respect a diverse society: *Ethical, informed citizens who respect the needs and rights of others, as a member of a diverse society.*

The statutory status of RSE in the curriculum and the parity across the six AoLEs (including Health and Well-being) will ensure the quality of the learning experience in this



area and raise the profile of the topics of marriage, civil partnership and healthy relationships.

There is currently statutory recognition of the right for schools of a religious character to provide RSE which is appropriate to the religious denomination of the school. There are no plans to change the ability for schools with a religious character to provide RSE that is consistent with their ethos. However, their provision of RSE must be pluralistic.

Not including a right to withdraw in the new curriculum would mean all young people in Wales will be able to be part of these important lessons.

**Low-income households**

N/a

**Human Rights and UN Conventions**

Human Rights	What are the positive or negative impacts of the proposal?	Reasons for your decision (including evidence)	How will you mitigate negative Impacts?
Article 2, Protocol 1 – The right to an education.  Article 9 – right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion  Article 14 – prohibition of discrimination	The proposals actively support a child or young person’s right to an education including high quality and comprehensive information about the issues covered in RSE and RE.	By not including a right to withdraw in the new curriculum, all learners will now be able to participate in this important part of the curriculum. The guidance on these subject areas will make it clear that the information covered must be conveyed in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner	There will be a need to work closely with all schools, in particular faith schools which are able to provide learning in line with the tenets of their religion (providing it is pluralistic), to ensure the learning offered in RSE and RE is pluralistic and non-discriminatory.

We have considered whether the proposals for RE and RSE are compatible with the rights protected by the Human Rights Act 1998 (“the Convention Rights”). The relevant Convention rights are Article 2 Protocol 1 (“A2P1”) (taking into account the UK reservation), Article 9 (“A9”) and Article 14 (“A14”).

A2P1:

In terms of A2P1 (Right to education) the second sentence of that Article provides “No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions”. The European Court of Human Rights (“the ECtHR”) has conventionally approached cases involving religion in schools by focusing on A2P1, holding that it, rather than A9, is the governing Article in the area of education and teaching.

Whilst that second sentence of A2P1 is phrased as an absolute right that is not how the courts have interpreted it. Instead the courts have found that the parental rights in the second sentence of A2P1 will be appropriately respected if the religious education and RSE provided does not involve indoctrination and complies with the Pluralistic requirement.

The ECtHR has held that the setting and planning of school curricula is a matter primarily for the state, and that A2P1 does not prevent the state from imparting through teaching knowledge of a directly religious or philosophical kind; in particular it does not enable parents to object to the inclusion of such teaching in the school curriculum. However, the ECtHR has also held that A2P1 is aimed at safeguarding pluralism in education and that the state must take care to ensure that information or knowledge included in the curriculum is conveyed in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner; in particular, the state is not permitted to pursue an aim of indoctrination that might be considered as not respecting parents’ religious beliefs and philosophical convictions.

The European Commission on Human Rights has held that A2P1 governs complaints about the organisation of instruction in religious knowledge and that, in the context of religious education at school, A9 affords protection against religious indoctrination.

There is clearly a tension between the rights of the child to receive an education as expressed in the first sentence of A2P1, and the rights of the parent as expressed in the second sentence of A2P1 to have their child educated in accordance with their religious and philosophical convictions. The Welsh Government considers that in providing mandatory RE and RSE this ensures that learners receive a comprehensive education that will fit them for a modern and complex society where these issues permeate all walks of life. The Welsh Government further considers that providing legislation and statutory

guidance that enables such education to be provided pluralistically appropriately respects the parental right in the second sentence of A2P1.

A9:

A9 protects the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion of individuals including children. The ECtHR has held that teaching which only provides information about religion, and which does not amount to indoctrination, does not constitute an interference with A9 rights. It follows that if the legislation is capable of being implemented in a way that ensures that religious education is delivered in a way that does not amount to indoctrination, then it is highly unlikely that the legislation would give rise to an interference with A9 rights, and therefore no breach of A9 could arise. The Welsh Government considers that the proposals are capable of being implemented in that way and as such there is no incompatibility with A9.

A14 (when read with another substantive Article):

The question of whether there is a breach of A14 when read together with another substantive article such as A9 is often approached by reference to four questions: (a) do the facts fall within the ambit of one or more of the substantive Convention rights, (b) is there a difference in treatment in respect of that right between the complainant and others put forward for comparison, (c) are those others in an analogous situation, and (d) is the difference in treatment objectively justifiable? The first question arises because A14 is not free-standing and, in order for there to be a breach of A14, the discrimination complained of must fall within the ambit of another substantive article of the Convention. The Welsh Government does not consider the proposals are incompatible with a substantive article and therefore does not consider that there is any incompatibility with A14.

Not including a Right to Withdraw and the pluralism requirement:

The Welsh Government considers the proposals for RE and RSE are compliant with the Convention Rights and meet the pluralism requirement. The Welsh Government considers that meeting the pluralism requirement in relation to RE or RSE is sufficient to be compatible with A2P1. The Welsh Government does not consider it necessary, for Convention compliance purposes, for there to be an opportunity for the learner to be exempted from RE or RSE.

In terms of RE the Welsh Government considers that the proposals will satisfy the pluralistic requirement because:

- There will be a requirement that curriculum will be broad and balanced and that it achieves the 4 purposes;

- The name of RE will be changed to Religions and World views. This makes clear that RE should encompass a range of religious and non-religious beliefs and world views.
- Whilst faith schools will still be able to teach according to their denomination they will still be required to teach a broad and balanced curriculum that achieves the 4 purposes and will be subject to the duty to teach RE in a pluralistic manner (in compliance with the ECtHR case law).

The same is true for RSE. Further the proposals are that the curriculum for RSE will not be prescriptive and the fine detail of what will be taught will be left to the discretion of the school having taken account of statutory guidance. The aim of such guidance would be to provide neutral and accurate information to enable schools and its pupils to navigate such issues and the huge amount of inaccurate information otherwise available.

In summary, in relation to Convention rights, the Welsh Government concludes that:

- a) whilst the second sentence of A2P1 is phrased as an absolute right that is not how the courts have interpreted it;
- b) the parental rights in the second sentence of A2P1 will be appropriately respected if the religious education and RSE provided does not involve indoctrination and complies with the pluralistic requirement;
- d) it is compatible with A2P1 and A9 to remove the right to withdraw from RE and RSE. Accordingly the Welsh Government is of the view the proposals are compatible with A2P1, A9 and A14 when read together A2P1 or A9;

## C. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. **Welsh Language Impact Assessment** **reference number** (completed by the Welsh Language Standards Team, email: [Safonau.Standards@gov.wales](mailto:Safonau.Standards@gov.wales)):

01/09/2019

2. **Does the proposal demonstrate a clear link with the Welsh Government's strategy for the Welsh language? – *Cymraeg 2050 A million Welsh speakers* and the related Work Programme for 2017-2021?**

The only link between the policy and the Welsh Government's strategy for the Welsh language is that it will apply equally to Welsh-medium and bilingual settings within the maintained education system as to English-medium ones.

3. **Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language, and explain how you will address these impacts in order to improve outcomes for the Welsh language:**

No impact on the Welsh language has been identified. There is a separate issue of ensuring there are appropriate resources and professional learning in relation to RE and RSE in the Welsh Language. However, this is being addressed through the wider development work on the new curriculum and will not be directly impacted by the policy and final decision on the right to withdraw.

## ENSURING ACCESS TO THE FULL CURRICULUM FOR ALL LEARNERS – SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- There is going to be a new curriculum in Wales. It is being designed by teachers in Wales.
- Each part of the new curriculum is important and all the parts are needed so that learners leave school with a broad and balanced education.
- In the current curriculum, parents can prevent their child from going to Religious Education (RE) and sex education lessons<sup>1</sup>.
- In the new curriculum, sex education will be replaced by Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE).
- RSE and RE will be compulsory for all children aged 3-16
- We think parents should not be able to prevent their children going to these lessons in future.
- This is because RE and RSE are very important in keeping children safe and helping them understand the world around them.
- We understand that people may have concerns.
- In these lessons information must be suitable for the child's age and development and their background.
- We are asking for views on what it would mean for parents, learners and schools if all learners had to go to RE and RSE lessons in the new curriculum
- We are also asking for views on whether the age range RE and RSE should be extended to 3-16.
- We are also asking for views on whether Religious Education is still the best name for this subject area.
- You can find out more about our proposals and send your views to the Government by completing [this form](#)

This is a summary of our proposals – for the full details, please see the [consultation document](#) on the Welsh Government's website

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<sup>1</sup> A fuller explanation of the current legislation in this area is set out in the [consultation document](#)