

## School development plans – proposals to introduce regulations

### Consultation response form

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Responses should be returned by **21 July 2014** to:

School Development Plans Consultation  
Practitioner Standards and Professional Development Division  
Department for Education and Skills  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

or completed electronically and sent to:

e-mail: [PracticeReviewandDevelopment@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:PracticeReviewandDevelopment@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

(Insert 'SDP consultation' in the e-mail subject box.)



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Wales**

**Natural Resources Wales (NRW) was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 following the amalgamation of Forestry Commission Wales (FCW), Countryside Council for Wales and the Environment Agency staff in Wales. It is the largest Welsh Government public sponsored body with just under 2000 staff, an operating budget of £17 million and manages 7% of the land in Wales.**

**Natural Resources Wales aims:**

***"..... to play a central role in delivering sustainable development for Wales. This means bringing the management of our natural resources and environment together in a balanced and integrated way, to deliver benefits for the people, environment and economy"***

**Natural Resources Wales welcomes the opportunity to comment on this consultation. Our aim is to highlight the importance of natural resource management, the need to embed the environment and sustainable development in the widest sense within the curriculum and the importance of out of classroom learning for all key stages.**

**Question 1 – Do you agree with the proposals to streamline the strategic planning and target-setting processes so that the SDP incorporates all other strategic planning documents? (Please see section 4.)**

<b>Agree</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>
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**Comments**

Natural Resources Wales believes it is sensible to streamline the strategic planning and target setting process in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and additional bureaucracy.

**Question 2** – Do you agree with the proposed minimum schedule of contents? (Please see section 5.)

<b>Agree</b>		<b>Disagree</b>		<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>x</b>
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**Comments**

The proposed minimum schedule appears sensible, although Natural Resources Wales has no specific comment to make on roles and responsibility of the governing body, use of school performance data to inform the SDP, timescale for implementation, publication of and access to the SDP or the duty to review

The minimum content of the SDP

Point IV states that schools will be required to show how they intend to use available resources and Natural Resources Wales would like to see the use and development of the school grounds as a source and location for learning included in this section. The effective use and development of school grounds can often depend on an enthusiastic staff member and in some cases if this staff member moves on wildlife areas or outdoor classrooms can become quickly neglected and underutilised.

Natural Resources Wales would like to see schools setting equal importance to both outdoor and indoor areas.

Outdoor classrooms, allotments, wildlife gardens, log circles and fire pits can provide many opportunities to enhance learning, allow children to reconnect with nature, to understand concepts within the ESDGC curriculum and have hands on experience of managing the schools natural resources.

Sympathetic planting of trees and shrubs can have many benefits including increased biodiversity, regulation of surface water run-off and the provision of shade.

**Question 3** – Do you agree that the SDP should set out, as a minimum, a detailed plan for the current academic year and an outline plan for the following two academic years? (Please see section 5.)

<b>Agree</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>Disagree</b>		<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	
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**Comments**

The effective development and maintenance of school grounds will benefit

from a longer term vision and the three years suggested should be a minimum.

**Question 4** – We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

**Comments**

This consultation clearly states the need for self-evaluation and improvement planning in order to support advances in professional learning and learner outcomes.

Natural Resources Wales is happy to support this process by providing CPD training in the use of school grounds and the natural environment and through its facilitation of Outdoor Learning Wales can offer teachers a local network where they can share good practice, participate in skill share events and access resources.

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