

Curriculum for Wales – Draft Statements of What Matters Code

Consultation response form

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Responses should be returned by 16 July 2021 to:

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

or completed electronically and sent to:

e-mail: curriculumforwales@gov.wales



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Wales**

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is the largest public sector organisation in Wales. Its purpose is to ensure that the natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, enhanced, and used, now and in the future. This means looking after air, land, water, wildlife, plants and soil to improve Wales' well-being, and provide a better future for everyone.

The [Environment \(Wales\) Act](#) and the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act](#) together provide modern legislation for managing Wales' natural resources and improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales (it's sustainable development). In light of the recent climate change and environment emergency declaration by Welsh Government and other public bodies, an understanding and appreciation of the need for the [sustainable management of our natural resources](#) (SMNR) is essential now and in the future, as our environment comes under increasing pressure from a growing population. This will directly impact and be impacted by climate change and will drive the need for increased energy production adding pressure to our use of natural resources, their resilience and biodiversity. In line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act this will require work across the environment and education sectors to ensure an understanding and positive connection with the role that natural resources and the environment play in our lives socially, economically and culturally, is established from a young age and built on throughout our learning journeys.

Natural Resources Wales is pleased to work with the Curriculum Realisation Unit and support the on-going implementation of the Curriculum for Wales. NRW can provide advice and guidance to highlight the multiple health benefits of learning in, learning about and learning for the natural environment - increased physical activity, improved mental health & well-being and attainment, access to subject specialists, national and local support networks, outdoor learning advice and guidance, resources, data and training for teachers and education professionals.

For further clarification or information please contact:

education@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

www.naturalresources.wales/learning

Respondent type (please select one from the following)

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

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

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

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

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

Natural Resources Wales agree that the 27 statements meet the learning priorities for 3 to 16-year olds.

As principal advisor to Welsh Government on the natural environment and its sustainable management, we are very pleased to see that links to the climate emergency within Humanities and Science and Technology have been strengthened. We agree that this will further enable teaching and learning in this area and help facilitate wider understanding of

our reliance and impacts on nature. Ideally we would also like to see this expanded to also include the declared [nature emergency](#).

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

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

NRW agree that the amendments improve clarity, accessibility and understanding of the breadth of curriculum development.

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

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

No comment

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

Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales have declared a climate change and nature emergency. The current state of the natural environment will have impacts on children’s health, well-being and hopes for their future. The climate and nature emergencies are the most significant threat to life on Earth.

With the natural world currently under levels of stress unparalleled in human history, children are witnessing environmental degradation and destruction in real time, hearing about global threats like species loss and developing fears and worries about environmental risks and the future.

As principal advisor to Welsh Government on the natural environment and its sustainable management, we are very pleased to see that links to the climate emergency within Humanities and Science and Technology have been strengthened. However, we would recommend further strengthening to include understanding of the nature emergency as well, to develop understanding of the vital interdependency between human life and embedding pro-environmental behaviours.

We would like to see a whole school approach to normalising pro environmental behaviours and taking positive action through embedding sustainable school practice at an early an age as possible. A whole school approach needs to encompass the

vital role that the natural environment has in sustaining human health and well-being, through fostering a strong connection to nature to enable a better future for Wales.

NRW would like to see every setting with at least one appropriately trained and qualified member of staff who fully understands the sustainable management of natural resources and can facilitate environmental learning via outdoor learning pedagogy, implementing interventions in order to gain the multiple benefits to health, wellbeing and attainment for learners that the natural environment can realise. This is a cost-effective method of ensuring both pupil development and local environmental gains to support mitigation of the climate and nature emergencies, building understanding and a recognition of responsibility.

This is backed up by recently published WG research - [Research Study 6](#) part of [Research studies on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Welsh education system](#) recommends “greater support for outdoor learning”.

In Operational Guidance to Schools, Welsh Government has advocated the use of the [High Quality in Outdoor Learning in Wales](#) document to underpin pupil learning. This should continue to be a valuable resource to support this topic.

NRW would be happy to support the development of further resources as required and can facilitate co-production of any such resource via its facilitation of the Wales Council for Outdoor Learning.

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

No comment

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

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

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

Supporting comments

Natural Resources Wales is subject to Welsh Language Standards under Section 47 of the Measure and is happy that the Curriculum for Wales offers equal opportunity for both languages treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

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

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

Supporting comments

As all Curriculum for Wales guidance and documents are available in both languages it is difficult to see how this guidance could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects, increased positive effects or no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

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

No comment

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: