

Building the evidence base for the Review

Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales

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Introduction

In March 2014, the Minister for Education and Skills asked Professor Graham Donaldson to conduct a fundamental Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. In undertaking this Review, the commitment from the outset was to involve as many people in the process as possible. In addition, the Review utilised Welsh, United Kingdom (UK) and international research.

This document outlines the broad range of views and research that contributed to the evidence base for the Review.

Visits to education settings

Listening was at the heart of the Review. The Review visited English and Welsh-medium nursery, primary and secondary schools, special schools, pupil referral units, a young offenders' institution and work-based learning settings. This included the following.

Aberaeron Primary School	Ysgol Aberconwy	Abertysswg Primary School
ACT Training	Adamsdown Primary School	Bishop Gore School
Blaenavon Heritage VC School	Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg	Ysgol Bro Pedr
Ysgol Bro Sion Cwilt	Caldicot Comprehensive School	Castell Alun High School
Ceredigion Pupil Referral Unit	Clydach Primary School	Coedcae Comprehensive School
Coedffranc Primary School	Croesty Primary School	Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni
Ysgol David Hughes	Denbigh High School	Ysgol Derwenfa
Dolau Primary School	Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen	Ebbw Fawr Learning Community
Eirias High School	Ysgol Esgob Morgan	Fairwater High School
Glan Gele Infant School	Ysgol Glancegin	Goetre Primary School
Gurnos Nursery School	High Street Primary School (Barry)	Ysgol Iolo Morganwg
Ysgol Gynradd Llanbedrgoch	Llanelwedd Church in Wales Primary	Llangatwg Community School
Maes yr Haul Primary School	Maesglas Primary School	Mount Street Nursery and Infant School
Mount Street Junior Community School	Mount Stuart Primary School	Newtown High School
HM Prison & Young Offenders' Institution Parc	Ysgol Pen Barras	Pen-Y-Dre High School
Ysgol Penrhyn New Broughton Primary School	Penyrenghlyn Community Primary School	Rhyl High School
Richmond Park School	Rose Heyworth Millennium Primary School	St Christopher's School (Wrexham)
St Joseph's RC High School	St Joseph's Catholic and Anglican High School	Tai Education Centre
Tavernspite Community Primary School	The Dell Primary School	Treorchy Comprehensive School
Tŷ Gwyn School	Willows High School	Ynystawe Primary School

In addition to visits, the Review held three seminars with practitioners from across Wales to develop and then later test emerging thinking. Attendees represented a range of different educational settings.

The call for evidence

The Review undertook a national call for evidence, encouraging stakeholders to submit their views and help shape the future of curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales. Over 700 responses were received, of which, over 300 were from children and young people themselves. In order to do justice to the diverse nature of the responses, Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD) were appointed to analyse the responses.

A table showing the breakdown of respondents to the call for evidence

Respondent type	Frequency of response
Children and young people	349
Parent/carer	30
Teacher/support staff	137
School governor	17
Other individuals	33
Group discussion	11
Organisation	79
Information not provided	55

'Organisation' includes: 33 third sector, 17 public sector, 3 private sector and 3 other – 23 organisations did not provide information with regards to sector¹.

The full analysis of the call for evidence, including further information on respondent type, is available at www.wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/150225-questionnaire-responses-en.pdf.

¹ Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD) (2015) *Successful Futures: Analysis of questionnaire responses – Final Report* Welsh Government

Stakeholder discussions

The Review engaged on an individual level with a wide range of representative organisations, groups and individuals from across Wales and beyond. This included the following.

Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW)
ADEW Improvement Coordination Group
Airbus
Arts Council Wales
Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL)
British Council
CfBT
Children's Commissioner for Wales
Central South Consortium Joint Education Service
CollegesWales
Society of Schools for Welsh Medium Education (CYDAG)
Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg
Diocesan Directors of Education
Dr Carmel Gallagher (General Teaching Council Northern Ireland)
Education Through Regional Working (ERW)
Estyn
Estyn Non-maintained Stakeholder Forum
Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)
Funky Dragon (including attending their AGM)
Governors Wales
General Teaching Council Wales (GTCW)
North Wales Consortium (GwE)
Harold Hislop, Chief Inspector, The Inspectorate, Department of Education and Skills Republic of Ireland
Higher Education Wales
National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)
National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)
National Training Federation for Wales
Natural Resources Wales
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)
National Union of Teachers (NUT)
National Council of Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) Republic of Ireland
Noelle Buick, Chief Inspector of the Education and Training Inspectorate, Northern Ireland
Parents for Welsh Medium Education (RhAG)
Representatives from Entrepreneurship Panel for Wales

Professor Carol McGuinness, School of Education, Queen's University Belfast
Professor David Egan, Professor of Welsh Education Policy, Director of the Wales Centre for Equity in Education, University of Wales Trinity St David
Professor David Reynolds, University of Southampton
Professor Elizabeth Treasure, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Cardiff University
Professor Iram Siraj-Blatchford, Professor of Education, Institute of Education, University College London
Professor (Emeritus) John Furlong, Department of Education, University of Oxford
Professor Louise Hayward (Curriculum, Assessment and Pedagogy), University of Glasgow
Professor Mark Priestley, School of Education, University of Stirling
Professor Mel Ainscow CBE, Centre for Equity in Education, University of Manchester
Professor Richard Daugherty, Centre for Educational Assessment, University of Oxford
Roger-François Gauthier, Member of the French Conseil Supérieur des Programmes (High Curriculum Authority)
Sir Alasdair MacDonald, Raising Attainment Advocate for Wales
Education Achievement Service for South East Wales (EAS)
Sport Wales
Sustainable Development Commissioner for Wales
The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Sector Panel
The National Centre for Languages in Wales (CILT Cymru)
Jayne Edwards, Director of Continuing Professional Learning and Development, University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC)
UNISON
University and College Union (UCU)
Vale of Glamorgan Youth Forum
Wales Co-operative Centre
Wales Association of SACREs (WASACRE)
Welsh Language Commissioner
WJEC
Welsh Independent Schools Council (WISC)
Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)

In addition to visits, the Review held seminars looking specifically at languages and ICT. A seminar was also held with representatives from the business community.

Professor Donaldson had access to policy officials across Welsh Government as required and attended a variety of working groups and reference groups, meeting practitioners, wider representatives and officials.

Independent reviews

As well as undertaking its own research, the Review also had recourse to a wealth of other evidence within Wales, including research papers, policy documents, as well as the important reports of a number of independent reviews commissioned by the Welsh Government, including:

- the ICT Steering Group's report to the Welsh Government
- the Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4
- the final report of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig, history and the story of Wales review group
- the report of the Schools and Physical Activity Task and Finish Group
- the report on Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales
- the Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales.

Professor Donaldson personally engaged with the chairs of each of the aforementioned reviews.

UK and international research

The Review also drew on a range of wider UK and international evidence in the form of discussions, visits, research papers and policy documents. Research by the European Union (EU), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was drawn upon. Curriculum models in a number of countries were reviewed including:

- Canada (specifically Alberta)
- Australia
- England
- France
- Republic of Ireland
- Netherlands
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Sweden
- New Zealand.

The Review Team

As well as wide-ranging engagement activity, Professor Donaldson has been assisted by the following.

Advisors seconded to the Review from Estyn

Sarah Morgan (Primary Adviser to the Review) – Sarah Morgan has worked for Estyn as an HMI since 2009, inspecting in the primary, non-maintained nursery, independent and initial teacher training sectors in English and Welsh. Prior to that, she worked as a class teacher, deputy headteacher and headteacher for twenty-two years in Rhondda Cynon Taff and the Vale of Glamorgan. During that time, she also worked closely with local authorities and an initial teacher training institute in a variety of leadership and training roles. Her subject specialisms are music and Welsh as a second language. Sarah is a Welsh speaker.

Nigel Vaughan (Secondary Adviser to the Review) – Nigel Vaughan taught in secondary schools in Powys and Shropshire. Following this he took on a role as a local authority senior adviser with a specific focus on humanities (history, geography, RE and anti-racism) and secondary education. Nigel became a HMI in 1991 and has inspected in early years, primary, secondary, further education, local authorities and initial teacher training. Nigel was the secondary lead inspector for a period until his retirement in 2012. From this time he has been employed by Estyn on a part-time basis.

External advisors

Claire Armitstead – Headteacher, Rhyl High School, English-medium secondary school.

Owain ap Dafydd – Headteacher, Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni, Welsh-medium secondary school.

Kevin Tansley – Headteacher, Tŷ Gwyn School, special school.

Dr Gill Robinson – Scottish Government.

Professor (Emeritus) Pamela Munn – University of Edinburgh.

Civil service team

Kerry Davies – Diary Secretary to Professor Donaldson.

Denize Morris – Curriculum Adviser to the Review.

Megan Powell – Project Manager.

This team was led by **Jo Trott**.