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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Welsh Government
Consultation Document

Draft relationships and sexuality education guidance 2018

To replace Circular 019/2010

Date of issue: 18th February 2019
Action required: Responses by 1st April 2019

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Overview This consultation is seeking views on the update to circular 019/2010. This non-statutory guidance will include the name change from Sex and Relationship Education to “Relationships and Sexuality Education” and will include a ‘whole school approach’ to this area of learning. A “whole school approach” is the effective linking of all elements of an education setting’s provision, policy, staff and community; encouraging the communication and reinforcement of a consistent positive ethos and providing holistic high quality support for learners. As well as considering how these elements work together within an educational setting, a “whole school approach” will include how they work in cooperation with external services to facilitate learners’ access to appropriate support and advice

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 form online, download and complete a hard copy of the form and post it to us at the address provided below.

Further information and related documents **Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.**

Sex and Relationship Education in Schools – Guidance. Circular 019/2010
<http://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/130425-sex-and-relationships-education-in-schools-en.pdf>

Informing the future of the Sex and Relationships Education Curriculum in Wales
https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/1030606/informing-the-future-of-the-sex-and-relationships-education-curriculum-in-wales-web.pdf

Equality Act 2010
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/pdfs/ukpga_20100015_en.pdf

The Human Rights Act 1998
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>

United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_PRESS200910web.pdf

Violence against Woman, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

<https://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/commsafety/161104-national-strategy-en.pdf>

Welsh Language Act 1993

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/38/contents>

Welsh Language standards

<https://gov.wales/about/welshlanguagestandards/?lang=en>

The consultation documents can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at gov.wales/consultations

**Contact
details**

For further information, please contact:

Arts, Humanities and Well-being Branch
Curriculum and Assessment Division
The Education Directorate
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ
e-mail: RSEGuidance@gov.wales



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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. The 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

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

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Introduction

This consultation has been devised to seek your views on the proposed update to the guidance document *Sex and Relationships Education in Schools* (circular 019/2010), which will now be entitled “*Relationships and Sexuality Education in schools*”.

High-quality Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) helps to create safe school communities where pupils can grow, learn and develop positive healthy relationships for life. RSE includes, but is not limited to, learning about:

- Different types of relationships, such as familial, non sexual and sexual relationships;
- The changing functions of the human body and how it influences behaviour and relationships;
- Social and cultural influences on representations of the body and relationships; and physical, mental and emotional health and well-being.

This update to guidance is intended to provide schools with additional support in respect of inclusivity, LGBTQ+ and Violence against Woman Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV). The guidance is also intended to be more comprehensive than before and includes case studies and examples of best practice to assist teachers in planning their RSE provision in the classroom and across the school. The draft version of the guidance has been attached to this consultation.

Background

Current curriculum legislation requires that:

- all secondary school age pupils attending maintained settings should receive sex education
- where Sex education is provided, it includes teaching regarding Sexually Transmitted Diseases and HIV/AIDS
- schools, both primary and secondary, must have a written and published policy on the sex education it provides.

Schools are supported in providing sex education through non statutory guidance; these are the *Personal and Social Education Framework for 7-19 year olds in Wales* (2008) and the *Sex and Relationships in Schools* guidance (2010).

New Curriculum

We are currently developing a new curriculum following the review into curriculum and assessment arrangements by Professor Graham Donaldson in his report ‘Successful Futures’. Professor Donaldson identified four purposes of education; that all young people leave schools as:

- Enterprising, Creative Contributors;
- Ambitious, Capable Learners;
- Healthy Confident Individuals; and
- Ethical, Informed Citizens

In addition his report sets out 6 Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) as being central to the structure of the new curriculum and these are:

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

It is proposed that RSE will be included as a statutory element of the new curriculum.

Government policies

The Welsh Government's *Prosperity for All* strategy and *Education in Wales: Our National Mission* acknowledges the key role of good physical, emotional and mental health and well-being in helping our young people to achieve academically and maximise their life chances.

Prosperity for All

Prosperity for All was published in September 2017 and outlines the Welsh Government's national strategy to deliver its key priorities for the rest of this Assembly term, and set the right foundations to tackle the big challenges faced by the nation. Improving mental health as one of its five priority areas that have the greatest potential to contribute to long-term prosperity and well-being. High quality RSE provision in schools contributes to this aim by supporting young people to develop the tools to cope with the rapidly changing world around them. It helps them to form a range of fulfilling relationships based on mutual trust and respect. It can also assist teachers to engage with often difficult social and emotional issues and identify those learners who may need further support.

Prosperity for All also emphasises the importance of supporting well-being from the earliest years; recognising the role that an individual's experiences in childhood can play in shaping their future, affecting their chances of going on to lead a healthy, prosperous and fulfilling life.

Education in Wales: Our National Mission

Education in Wales: Our National Mission was published in September 2017 and outlines how Welsh Government will improve the school system by 2021; including support for aspects of education that contribute to learner health and well-being. RSE contributes to supporting the health and well-being of learners.

Why are we revising this guidance?

On 1 March 2017, the Minister for Education established the Expert Panel, chaired by Professor Emma Renold from Cardiff University. The panel included representatives from a wide range of organisations that support schools to deliver Sex and Relationships Education. They published their report on 13 December. The terms of reference for the expert panel included that its members identify effective ways for children, young people and practitioners to inform the future Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) curriculum, as part of the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience.

The SRE expert panel found that the quality of SRE provision is inconsistent across schools in Wales. While some schools are providing high quality SRE for their learners; there are many whose SRE offers are narrow in their biological focus, lack inclusivity and do not always include learning regarding priority areas such as Violence against Women Domestic Abuse. The panel made 11 recommendations including that SRE should be made a statutory part of the new curriculum for all learners from the age of 3-16 and that it should be renamed Sexuality and Relationships Education.

On 22nd May 2018, the Minister for Education made a statement accepting the recommendations of the Sex and Relationships Expert Panel. As part of this announcement, the Cabinet Secretary committed to changing the name of this area of study to 'Relationships and Sexuality Education', with this being reflected in the updated guidance for the current curriculum.

By doing this we are moving it in line with the World Health Organisation definition of "sexuality", which emphasises the importance of developing a holistic understanding of the factors that can impact on the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of young people in Wales; such as cultural, historical, biological and social issues. In accepting this change in name, "relationships" has been placed first, to indicate the central importance of "healthy relationships" to this area of study.

This consultation stems from the Sex and Relationship Expert Panel's report entitled "Informing the future of the Sex and Relationships Curriculum in Wales"

<https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/research/explore/find-a-project/view/1026193-informing-the-future-of-the-sex-and-relationships-curriculum-in-wales>

This guidance is also intended to develop this area of study to better align with the ethos and structure of the new curriculum for Wales. The new curriculum will be statutory for primary schools and the first year of secondary school from 2022; it will then roll out for each year group until 2026. This guidance will therefore be relevant until the final year of the current curriculum being provided in schools (2026).

What has changed in the revised guidance?

The aim of the updated Relationships and Sexuality Education guidance is to provide teachers and school staff with practical support to build high quality provision of Relationships and Sexuality Education. This guidance is more succinct than its predecessor and includes helpful signposting links for teachers and school staff to use. These links can support planning of provision or help learners to seek additional information on topics/issues they maybe experiencing.

The current guidance was produced in 2010 and there have been many changes in legislation since then, most notably the introduction of Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 which came into effect in April 2015. The Act addresses domestic abuse and sexual violence perpetrated against all people in Wales, irrespective of gender or sexual orientation. The Act also addresses violence perpetrated against a woman or man arising directly or indirectly from values, beliefs or customs relating to gender or sexual orientation. There is also no age limit on the Act so children who witness or experience such violence or abuse and older people are included. The Act also

focuses on education and local authorities are required to report on how they are tackling these issues including in schools when they deliver healthy relationship education.

Within the updated guidance, we have included key principles to guide practitioners as they plan their RSE provision. This guidance has ease of use as its core design value. It looks to strike a balance between being informative, user friendly and flexible; enabling practitioners to design and plan lessons that are relevant and appropriate for their learners.

The guidance is also structured to support schools to implement a “whole school approach” to RSE, ensuring that schools are able to make meaningful links between their curriculum provision and wider school policies, ethos, behaviours and communications that impact on well-being. This includes:

- anti-bullying policy;
- safeguarding;
- prevention of violence against women and domestic abuse; and
- physical health.

The draft updated guidance includes information on topics such as safeguarding, bullying, VAWDASV and includes signposting links to organisations that provide specialist knowledge and advice on certain topics. The updated guidance also includes case studies provided by Estyn, third sector organisations and schools in Wales which exemplify best practice on the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education.

While the updated guidance encourages schools to think more broadly about the way they integrate this area of study into the curriculum, it does not change its statutory underpinnings. In legislation, the reference is to the inclusion of sex education in the school curriculum.

The draft updated Relationships and Sexuality Guidance is attached to this consultation and we welcome your feedback and views on it, including those of your learners.

