



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Additional national professional learning in service training (INSET) days 2022 to 2025

We want your views on allowing an additional national INSET day for professional learning for 3 academic years.

First published: 8 September 2022

Last updated: 8 September 2022

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Overview

This consultation seeks views on the introduction of additional in service training (INSET) days for the education profession to provide additional time for them to engage with professional learning to support the introduction of the new curriculum for Wales and other priorities which will have an impact in the classroom.

Introduction

The world's highest-performing education systems have vibrant, engaged teachers and support staff who are committed to continuous learning. This career-long commitment to professional learning is critical to the quality and impact of a country's teaching and learning. In Wales, we have developed developing a national approach to career-long professional learning for our school workforce, including teachers, teaching assistants, supply staff and leaders. We want to support practitioners in Wales to be lifelong professional learners who reflect on and enhance their own practice to motivate and inspire the children and young people in their schools.

The education system in Wales has faced significant challenges in the last 2 years due to the disruption caused to education as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, significant reforms relating to children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN) and a new Curriculum for Wales have been introduced. There is a need to reinforce a system-wide universal engagement with preparation and awareness of the implications of the new Curriculum for Wales, ALN reforms, and ensuring equity in education - and we recognise the need to provide time for all practitioners to be able to do this.

In service training (INSET) days were first introduced in the 1980's and are a

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series of 5 days on which learners do not attend school, but the staff are required to attend for training. The entitlement to 5 non-teaching/inset days (for a teacher employed full-time) forms part of the statutory 'School Teachers' Pay and Conditions (Wales) Document (STPC(W)D)', which sets out the total number of days on which a teacher must be available for work within a school year, including the number of those days which must be teaching and non-teaching INSET days. Powers over the STPC(W)D were devolved to Wales in 2018, and an annual independent process has been established to consider both teachers' and headteachers' pay and conditions moving forward via the Independent Welsh Pay Review Body (IWPRB).

Employment terms and conditions for teaching assistants are not the same as those for teachers and headteachers and are not governed by the work of the STPC(W)D. They are set by individual Local Authorities. The Welsh Government is clear, however, that teaching assistants should have opportunities to engage with professional learning. We have worked with education consortia to ensure that there is professional learning available for teaching assistants and our guidance clearly states that schools should be using the professional learning grant to support all practitioners' development, in line with the quality of provision that is available to qualified teachers.

A focus on professional learning in the context of our priorities to implement the new Curriculum for Wales, ALN reforms and equity in education will be critical if we are to ensure the success of our national mission to deliver a reformed and successful education system in Wales. It is intended that supporting practitioners to deliver our key priorities will lead to improved learner outcomes across the school sector. This reflects comments made in a recent OECD report on Teachers' Professional Learning^[1] which noted:

“ There sometimes appears to be a tendency to see supporting teachers to prepare the new Curriculum for Wales as an end in itself, rather than to see effective realisation of the curriculum as a means to enhancing pupil

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outcomes. ”

The traditional five INSET days each academic year have been used for a variety of professional learning and school development activities. In 2019 we introduced additional INSET days to support practitioners to prepare for the new curriculum. We recognise that these additional days were heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and often needed to focus on developing practitioners' skills to teach remotely or in a blended way. The skills developed during the pandemic will continue to support practitioners to deliver on our national priorities, particularly in the context of our proposed reform of the school day and the school year, the development of our National Blended Learning Strategy and our focus on increasing the number of community focussed schools.

We propose to continue to offer the additional INSET day for the next 3 academic years to ensure that practitioners have the time to prioritise and fully engage with their professional learning. It is proposed that the additional INSET day should be available to all practitioners engaged with supporting learners in the classroom.

The purpose of this consultation is to inform our proposals for revising the number of INSET days between 2022 and 2025 to support practitioners in developing their skills - predominantly in relation to the curriculum, ALN reform and equity in education. The consultation will be open for a period of approximately 6 weeks and will close as schools break for the autumn half term. This is to ensure that any changes to regulations can come into force early in 2023, allowing local authorities, schools and parents/carers to make the necessary changes needed for the first additional INSET day which would take place in the 2022 to 2023 academic year.

[1]Teachers' professional learning study: Diagnostic report for Wales | OECD Education Policy Perspectives | OECD iLibrary (oecd-ilibrary.org)

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What is the current position?

All teachers and headteachers are entitled to 5 INSET days per year as set out in the STPC(W)D. In 2019 we introduced an additional national professional learning INSET day to support practitioners to prepare for the new curriculum. This additional INSET day was available during the 2019 to 2020, 2020 to 2021 and 2021 to 2022 academic years.

As a direct result of the pandemic, many practitioners were unable to use the additional INSET day for the purposes that were originally specified. Instead, school leaders and teachers had to develop new ways to engage with learners and ensure that learners could continue to learn during the pandemic. Although practitioners developed new ways of supporting learning through a blended learning approach and developed new skills and experiences, they were unable to fully benefit from INSET that supported the implementation of educational changes in Wales as it had been originally intended. It is also recognised that opportunities for engaging professional learning should be provided beyond the date of the introduction of the new Curriculum for Wales to ensure that it can be effectively realised.

Why are we proposing a change?

To effectively realise our priorities of introducing the new purpose-led Curriculum for Wales, ALN reforms and equity in education, it is crucial that practitioners engage in professional learning that will enhance and develop their skills. Developing a highly effective education profession through the provision of career long, high quality professional learning is central to the realisation of our vision for education in Wales. The implementation of the **National Professional Learning Entitlement** will mark the beginning of a new phase in our professional learning journey in line with the roll-out of Curriculum for Wales.

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In order to support practitioners to engage with professional learning specifically to support our priorities, we propose to continue to offer one additional INSET day per year for the next three academic years. The profession needs time to reflect on and engage in professional learning that supports them to implement these changes to the education system in Wales. We believe a focus on professional learning is critical in providing the support that the profession needs at this time to ensure that they are able to develop their skills and support learners through the changes.

What are we proposing?

Additional INSET day

We are proposing to give practitioners extra time in the form of one national professional learning INSET day per academic year, for the next 3 years, for the purpose of supporting practitioners to implement the priorities of Curriculum for Wales implementation, ALN reform and ensuring equity in our education system. This will augment the pre-existing INSET time of five days allocated to schools per academic year, in the same way as for the past 3 academic years (2019 to 2020, 2020 to 2021 and 2021 to 2022).

To do this we will need to amend the Education (School Day and School Year) (Wales) Regulations 2003.

This change would require maintained schools to use one day (i.e. two school sessions) specifically for professional learning dedicated to these priorities. It would mean that schools would continue to hold six INSET days per year for the next 3 academic years, with the school being closed to learners on the additional INSET day.

We recognise that this additional INSET day may cause difficulty for some

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parents or carers, and that there may be concern around the impact of learners losing an additional day of learning. However, we consider that this approach is essential to enable all practitioners to continue to develop their skills in order to support the changes to the education system in Wales, and to make a difference to teaching and learning in the classroom in the longer-term.

Timing of INSET day

If there is support for the additional INSET day, the first additional INSET day would be in the Summer term of the 2022 to 2023 academic year. This would allow for reflection on the first two terms of the academic year and provide time to focus on and make preparations to inform the development of professional learning provision that will meet the needs of practitioners in the priority areas of Curriculum for Wales implementation, ALN reform and equity in education, ahead of the next academic year.

We recognise that there could be a need for some flexibility around the timing of the additional INSET days in 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025. We are therefore seeking views as part of the consultation on the timing of future dates for the additional INSET day proposed. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, we will consult informally with the education consortia and local authorities regarding future dates for the INSET days, and issue guidance upon the same at timely intervals.

Focus for the additional INSET day

We propose that the professional learning delivered during the INSET day should be focused solely on our three priorities of roll-out of Curriculum for Wales, ALN reform and ensuring equity in education. It should not be used for professional learning related to other school priorities or mandatory professional learning (such as Health and Safety training).

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The content of the professional learning in these priority areas will be determined on a local basis and will enable schools to use the time to provide the professional learning required to meet the needs of their staff Including, but not limited to, designing a curriculum, developing the Welsh language, teaching the history of Wales and other specific elements of our reforms such as supporting vulnerable learners.

What outcomes do we expect?

Professional learning is a change process to improve and develop professional knowledge, skills or understanding.

Additional INSET days over the next three academic years will ensure that all practitioners in Wales have more time to engage with professional learning that will support them to develop their practice and knowledge, and deliver our priorities for the Curriculum for Wales, ALN reform and ensuring equity in our education system. This will lead to better outcomes for children and young people in the longer-term, as their practitioners will be better supported through the provision of consistent and high-quality professional learning.

Consultation questions

Question 1

Do you agree that there should be an additional national professional learning INSET day during the 2022 to 2023, 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025 academic years, to enable the education profession to have more time to engage with professional learning while changes to the education system (including relating to the Curriculum for Wales and additional learning needs (ALN) reforms) are

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rolled out and embedded?

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree

Question 2

Do you agree that we should provide flexibility to schools on the timing of the additional INSET day to be taken during the 2022 to 2023, 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025 academic years? If not, please provide details in the supporting comments section.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree

Question 3

Do you agree that it should be mandated that any additional INSET day is used wholly or mainly to deliver professional learning to support our key priorities of implementing the Curriculum for Wales and ALN reforms, and ensuring equity in our education system? If not, please provide further details in the supporting comments section.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree

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Question 4

We would like to know your views on the effects that an additional national professional learning INSET day would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

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

Question 5

Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy could be formulated or changed so as to have 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, and 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.

UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

The Welsh Government will be data controller for any personal data you provide

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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

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- 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 UK GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer:

Welsh Government
Cathays Park
CARDIFF
CF10 3NQ

e-mail: DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales

The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are:

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
K9 5AF

Tel: 01625 545 745 or 0303 123 1113

Website: ico.org.uk

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Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.

[Curriculum for Wales blog](#)

[The national approach to professional learning \(NAPL\)](#)

The consultation documents can be accessed from the [Welsh Government's website](#).

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