



**Number: WG46474**

Welsh Government  
**Consultation – Summary of Responses**

## **INSET**

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

December 2022

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

## Overview

This document provides a summary of the responses to the consultation on Additional national professional learning in service training (INSET) days 2022 to 2025.

## Action required

This document is for information only.

## Further information and related documents

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

## Contact details

For more information:

Leadership Development Branch

Pedagogy, Leadership and Professional Learning

Education, Social Justice and Welsh Language Group

Welsh Government

Cathays Park

Cardiff

CF10 3NQ

email: [LeadershipDevelopmentDatblyguArweinyddiaeth@gov.wales](mailto:LeadershipDevelopmentDatblyguArweinyddiaeth@gov.wales)



@WG\_Education



Facebook/EducationWales

## Additional copies

This summary of response and copies of all the consultation documentation are published in electronic form only and can be accessed on the Welsh Government's website.

Link to the consultation documentation:

<https://gov.wales/additional-national-professional-learning-service-training-inset-days-2022-2025-html>

# Contents

Introduction	3
The Consultation	3
Who responded to the Consultation?	3
Summary of Responses	3
Welsh Government Response	7
Next Steps	7
Annex A - List of Respondents	8

## **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 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 the implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales and the ALN reforms, as well as ensuring equity in education (reducing the impact of poverty on the progression and attainment of pupils). We recognise the need to provide time for all practitioners to be able to do this.

The consultation "Additional National Professional Learning In-service Training (INSET) days 2022 to 2025" closed on Friday 28 October 2022. The consultation sought views on the following ('the policy proposal'):

- Providing an additional INSET day for the next 3 academic years (2022 to 2025)
- If agreed, the timing of the additional INSET days
- If agreed, the focus of the additional INSET days

## **The Consultation**

Views were invited as part of a 5.5-week consultation period which began on 20 September 2022 and closed on 28 October 2022. The consultation contained questions relating to the policy proposal, along with standard questions on the Welsh language, and was published on the consultation pages of the Welsh Government's website. Respondents were able to submit their views and comments on paper, by email or online, and in Welsh or English. The link to the consultation was emailed to a range of stakeholders, including representative bodies, professional bodies, sector organisations, and local authorities.

The consultation applied to Wales only.

## **Who responded to the Consultation?**

A total of 1623 responses were received. All the responses have been considered and analysed. The respondents represented a range of interest groups. 1480 completed responses were received with a further 162 partial responses and 1 letter.

A list of respondents other than those who requested anonymity is at Annex A.

## **Summary of Responses**

This document is a summary of the responses received. It does not aim to capture every point raised by respondents. The consultation document asked six questions and the

responses to each are summarised below. Not all respondents replied to every question. Some respondents gave a general response rather than answering specific questions. Where this is the case, the response has been included under the most appropriate question.

**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 rolled out and embedded?**

81.49% of respondents agreed that there should be an additional INSET day

17.34% disagreed

1.17% neither agreed or disagreed

We received 1459 responses to the question with 412 comments received:

- Many agreed that additional INSET days are needed for staff development and will be essential to support the introduction of the new curriculum for Wales and other priorities.
- The majority of respondents agreed the additional INSET day should also apply to wider teaching staff, including teaching assistants and those working in the regional education consortia and local authorities.
- A few raised concerns about the effectiveness of INSET days and whether they are leading to improved teaching and learning.
- Linked to this, a few comments were received on the need to evaluate the effectiveness of INSET days on the profession.
- Of those opposed to the additional INSET day many were concerned about the loss of learning as a result of the pandemic and commented on the length of the school holidays.
- Around half raised concerns related to the impact on parents/carers who either use limited annual leave entitlement or use childcare for INSET days. Those who use formal childcare noted the cost, which has been magnified by the cost of living of crisis.

**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.**

81.31% - Agreed that we should provide flexibility to schools on the timing of the additional INSET day

13.33% - Disagreed

5.36% - Neither Agreed or disagreed

We received 1455 responses to the question and 291 comments were received:

- Many suggested schools need flexibility to develop and Headteachers should be able to prioritise as each school is at a different stage of their developmental journey.
- A majority suggested that the day should support collaboration and cluster working so flexibility would be needed.
- Many respondents requested that schools give parents/carers sufficient notice of INSET days.

- Many comments received questioned whether INSET days could be held during school holidays.
- A minority suggested that if schools in the same local authority area or cluster held their INSET days on the same day this would help parents/carers who need to take annual leave or arrange childcare, especially those with learners in both secondary and primary settings.
- A few suggested that holding the INSET day either at the beginning or end of term was preferable, while others raised concerns that schools would see this as additional holiday and there would be limited engagement in professional learning.
- A few also commented on the need for evidence on the effectiveness of INSET days and a small number suggested that INSET days should be held on set days which are monitored.

**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.**

79.15% Agreed

10.46% disagreed

10.39% Neither Agreed or disagreed

We received 1453 responses and a total of 238 comments were received:

- Most respondents agreed that the focus of the additional INSET day should be mandated.
- A few felt it was necessary to be flexible and allow schools to set their own priorities, including for the development of displays and resources.
- Many of the respondents who did not support the additional INSET day felt that INSET days were not accountable and a few even expressed concern that INSET was being used as additional days off.
- Many of the respondents who did not support the additional INSET days suggested that any professional learning should take place in the school holidays or possibly on Saturdays.
- A few respondents suggested that confirmation should be given to parents on what was happening during INSET days.
- A few comments suggested that more than 3 additional INSET days were needed to ensure engagement with and implementation of educational reforms and priorities.

**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?**

A total of 728 comments were received:

- Many respondents who commented felt that the policy proposal would have little or no effect on the Welsh Language.

- A few respondents suggested that the additional INSET day could have a positive impact on the Welsh Language if it was used to encourage engagement with Welsh language professional learning.
- Very few comments included the need to ensure that Welsh language resources available to schools were increased.
- Very few comments were made on the possible negative effect of INSET days on the Welsh language and culture, especially for those learners who are from English speaking families as they would miss the opportunity to develop their language skills in their school setting.
- The majority of respondents suggested INSET days would have a positive impact on the Welsh language, especially where it provided an opportunity to work collaboratively, share good practice and focussed on developing the Welsh language skills of all teaching staff.

**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.**

520 responses were received:

- Many respondents did not think the policy would have any effect on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.
- Many respondents felt teachers could develop their Welsh language skills in the school holidays.
- A few respondents observed that the additional INSET day could have a positive effect as the Welsh language is part of the new curriculum and these days could be used to support the teaching and learning of Welsh within the new curriculum.
- A few respondents suggested there should be a dedicated INSET day for Welsh language skills, which could include better resources and more Welsh language immersion courses.
- Around half of respondents who provided comments suggested ways to improve and develop Welsh language skills, including those of teaching assistants. The suggestions included bite size learning, use of experts, specific time to develop skills, improving conversational Welsh and offering Welsh language skills courses as community learning for parents.
- Very few respondents made reference to living in areas of Wales that are largely English speaking and said they had no objection to their children learning Welsh in school, as long as it is not to the detriment of other subjects.
- However, many respondents were unsure about how this policy could be formulated or changed to have a positive effect on the use of the Welsh language.

**Q6 - 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.**

236 responses were received:

- Many respondents were concerned about the cost of childcare and the impact of the cost of living crisis, including for teachers and TAs themselves.

- Many suggested paying teachers to have INSET days in the school holidays. This was linked to concerns about the loss of learning as a result of the pandemic and declining school standards.
- A few respondents strongly felt that professional learning is needed to support the implementation of education reforms but many requested guidance on the use of INSET.
- Many respondents felt that support staff and supply teachers must be included on INSET days.
- Over half of respondents suggested that an evaluation of the impact of INSET over the next 3 academic years should be undertaken.

## **Welsh Government Response**

Your views are important in informing decisions about additional INSET days in Wales. The Welsh Government is grateful to everyone who has participated in this consultation, particularly people who submitted a response. As a summary document, not all the points made in the responses may have been reflected fully. Each response has been considered and the absence of issues or suggestions does not mean they have been disregarded. Many issues may remain relevant to our wider programme of work being undertaken to make best use of the additional INSET days.

The views support the policy proposal to make provision for maintained schools to use two sessions (one day), within the current and next two academic years, for the purpose of an additional INSET day devoted to professional learning relating to the implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales, ALN reforms and ensuring equity in our education system. We will take forward legislation to allow this to happen in early 2023.

## **Next Steps**

The Minister for Education and Welsh Language will bring forward relevant legislation. Welsh Government will issue guidance to the sector that will be published once the legislation has been laid.



## **Annex A - List of Respondents**

Children's Commissioner for Wales  
Education Workforce Council  
Estyn  
NASUWT – The Teachers' Union  
National Education Union (NEU)  
Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC)

100% of respondents to the online consultation requested that their responses be anonymous with a further 409 skipping the question.