

The new curriculum, pupil enrichment and the third sector in Wales

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide informal feedback to Welsh Government on the pupil enrichment aspects of the new curriculum, prior to the formal consultation, which is expected in April 2019.
- 1.2 *Education in Wales: our national mission* sets the context for pupil enrichment in the new curriculum with a commitment to “*extend and promote learners’ wider experiences so that the curriculum is rich and varied as well as being inclusive, broad and balanced, where learners will benefit from the best possible learning opportunities both inside and outside of school*”.
- 1.3 Recommendation 34 from *Successful Futures* (2015) provides guidance for schools and head teachers about the enriching experiences for the new curriculum the role for partners outside of schools. *A curriculum for Wales - a curriculum for Life 2015- Building Block 3*, notes the importance for schools and partner organisations to consider the range of experiences available to learners in the community and how best to apply, build upon and improve new experiences that can be offered to support the four purposes.
- 1.4 Whilst noting that page 32 specifically describes the role of youth work and the youth work Wales charter, in *Education in Wales: Our national mission Action plan 2017-2021*, the role of partner organisations appears to have been diluted.
- 1.5 Third sector organisations have a long history of providing opportunities that enable children and young people to develop skills and capabilities that meet the four purposes of the new curriculum, through both highly structured volunteering opportunities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, to less formal social action within local communities; the long established Scout and Girl Guide movements and through to a rich diversity of cultural, sports, music and religious activities. These activities can be delivered as part of the curriculum, or outside of the school day.
- 1.6 Schools need to be aware of how best to engage with third sector organisations, how to select the best and most appropriate provision, consider safeguarding issues etc. Equally third sector organisations need to be armed with knowledge of the paradigm change with the new curriculum and ensure that their offer aligns to the four purposes and the AOLE.
- 1.7 This paper asks government to set out how a partnership approach can be taken to prepare and enable the third sector to be in a position to meet increased demand resulting from the changes to the curriculum.

2. Key points

- 2.1 Third sector networks welcome the emphasis on enrichment activities in the new curriculum and the significant opportunity for transformational change. The Tier 1-3 approach sets a transparent process for engaging stakeholders in the design of the new curriculum and it is clearly understood that the focus is to engage and prepare the formal education sector for the new curriculum. Third sector networks are represented in governance arrangements underpinning the new curriculum, for example the Strategic Stakeholder Group, AOLE work streams, sub group for children and young people etc and this involvement is welcome, but there remains a wider group of stakeholders who could benefit from awareness being raised of the changes ahead.
- 2.2 The Council for Wales Voluntary Youth Service (CWWYS) is pleased to sit on both the Education Reform Strategic Stakeholder Group (SSG) and its Children and Young People sub-group. The youth work sector engages readily with these strategic processes and provides examples of good practice and provision which enhance the proposed Curriculum. Youth work's contribution to preventative and early intervention is clear but it also enhances the educative offer i.e. expressive arts, emotional well being and mental health, personal and social development along with a culture of learning within young people-friendly and led environments. CWWYS believes that there are hugely positive steps being taken i.e. the CYPE Committee Inquiry into Youth Work; the forming of the Interim Youth Work Board; registration of youth workers and youth support workers; key working relationship with the Education Workforce Council; recognition of youth work's role in mental health and youth homelessness contexts; the establishing of a Welsh Youth Parliament; all provide for significant opportunities within which the new curriculum would benefit - and where young peoples' experience of that new curriculum would be enhanced tremendously.
- 2.3 However, outside of specific parts of the third sector such as youth work, it is felt that there is a gap in communication and engagement between government, schools and the wider third sector to prepare for a potential increase in demand from schools for enrichment activities post-April 2019.
- 2.4 The third sector would welcome the opportunity to engage with Regional Consortia in a much more coordinated and strategic manner. More informed engagement would pay dividends in enhanced good practice, contacts, knowledge base and reduction of duplicated effort.
- 2.5 Some third sector organisations are already making plans to offer resources and support to schools in their areas of expertise. For example, the Church in Wales and Christian Aid's Global Neighbours programme will be adapted for use in Wales as part of the new curriculum (see <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/schools/global-neighbours-accreditation-scheme> for details about the scheme currently available to primary schools in England). This scheme involves the use of local volunteers as well as online resources, and in Wales links with the well-being goals as well as with the aims of *Successful Futures*.

- 2.6 The organisations delivering the British Council Connecting Classrooms for Global Learning programme in Wales are adapting materials for the Welsh context including the new curriculum. Many programmes delivered by the Wales Alliance for Global Learning members are already well-aligned with the new curriculum and, in particular, cross-curricular approaches for developing ethical and informed citizens of Wales and the World. For example, ChangeMakers (WCIA and Oxfam Cymru) supports young people to develop global citizenship knowledge, skills and values, then create positive change in their schools and wider communities. These enrichment activities are valuable for young people getting involved in social action within the school but also in the wider community.
- 2.7 Sources of funding to support this kind of work are scarce. Consideration is needed of resource implications in order for supply by the sector to be able to match demand by schools. Engagement with third sector organisations, and young people themselves, in this crucial phase of curriculum implementation, will positively shape delivery and educational outcomes in years to come.

3 Recommendations

A programme of action to share information to prepare third sector organisations for the new curriculum

- 3.1 Third sector national and local networks and infrastructure organisations can be a useful mechanism for cascading information and connecting with the third sector. For example:
- Third Sector Partnership Council (TSPC) members represent 25 categories of third sector interest;
 - The 19 county voluntary councils (CVCs) connect with local organisations through communication, meetings and events;
 - WCVA has a broad reach to its members through a weekly newsletter, and via a website and active social media engagement.
- 3.2 To illustrate an example, Race Council Cymru sits on the Curriculum Stakeholders forum and has been working closely with the curriculum development team to organise a BAME sector wide engagement session to ensure that the needs of pupils from diverse ethnic backgrounds are considered and included in the curriculum. representations have been sent to the curriculum team to include black and diverse histories in its content. The team have plans to engage with all protected characteristics groups to ensure that views are sought and considered. The Faith Communities Forum is also a member of the Curriculum Stakeholders Forum and has regular engagement with the Humanities team. Early indications of likely curriculum structure and content have already been shared with our stakeholders, who know that in April 2019 they will have a full draft curriculum for which they can begin work on revising or writing materials.
- 3.3 There are many small and grassroots organisations that reach a wide variety of communities of interest in Wales, including many that operate primarily through social media such as Facebook, and could be reached via intermediary bodies such as EYST.

3.4 Officials are asked to work with WCVA and third sector networks to agree a joint programme of awareness raising and engagement on pupil enrichment activities, to lay the foundations for closer joint working between schools and third sector organisations.

Publish guidance for non-education professionals

3.5 Resources about the new curriculum and the scope of enrichment activities could be shared in a format accessible to non-educational professionals, to enable organisations to gear up for the change. A much clearer understanding is needed of what would be of most help to schools in terms of materials and engagement from the third sector. The draft curriculum places a high value on schools' engagement with local communities, so it is very important that local third sector organisations understand how they can best assist in this.

3.6 In terms of the development of the curriculum, there would be benefits in there being a structured link between lead officials and the Interim Youth Work Board.

Develop and share case studies from Pioneer Schools around diversity and pupil enrichment

3.7 Race Council Cymru (RCC) is happy to share the exemplary diversity agenda being progressed in Llanrhidian Primary School where RCC facilitated a series of workshops with people from diverse ethnic backgrounds. These events are cascaded throughout the school, promoting inclusion and cultural understanding between pupils from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

3.8 As well as showcasing case studies of best practice in creating "*diversity of representation in the curriculum*" it may also be useful to canvas all Pioneer Schools to gauge how many are presently attending to the concept and presenting with curricula that properly depict the contributions of BAME people and people with other protected characteristics, to UK and global society across the curriculum in order to understand to what degree the current framework and AOLEs are resulting in a curriculum that is truly transformative.

A government commitment to monitor schools in the promotion of diversity and inclusion

3.9 This should be embedded throughout the foundation of the new curriculum and support those teachings via enrichment activities that are accessible to all pupils. This will ensure that children with disabilities, including sensory loss, are provided with equality of opportunity, and that diversity in respect of the nine protected characteristics is celebrated.

3.10 In research conducted by EYST Wales in 2018, pupils of multiple ethnicities across Wales expressed the importance of seeing role models and achievements of all multiple ethnicities in all subjects and of presenting a more accurate and truthful portrayal of the British Empire and illuminated is the way in which a 'white-washed' curriculum distorts both the BAME pupils' sense of self-worth as well as their own and their white peers' understanding of their place and value in the world. A commitment to

correcting this imbalance would entail engagement with BAME parents and pupils of multiple heritages across Wales in a meaningful, rather than tokenistic fashion.

The Minister is asked to:

- 3.11 Make a statement about the role of the third sector in pupil enrichment and the new curriculum.
- 3.12 Ask officials to work with WCVA and third sector networks to agree a joint programme of awareness raising and engagement on pupil enrichment activities, to lay the foundations for closer joint working between schools and third sector organisations.
- 3.13 Create a small pot of funding for third sector organisations to develop bi-lingual resources suitable for the new curriculum. A current challenge faced by organisations in relation to posting content on Hwb is the scarcity of funding for translating materials.
- 3.14 Discuss the possibility of creating a dedicated section on Hwb for third sector organisations to communicate with teachers, share resources and pilot ideas for projects.