

The Children, Young People and Education Committee

Implementation of education reforms

Use this proforma to record your views. Please make sure that you have answered all of the questions that are relevant to you. When you have completed the proforma, please email it to SeneddChildren@senedd.wales.

We are keen to hear from as many people as possible. If you would like to submit your views but do not want/are not able to complete this proforma, please call the Committee's clerks, who can arrange with you a different way for your voice to be heard.

0300 200 6565

SeneddChildren@senedd.wales

Information about you

1. Name:

Kathy Riddick

2. Email address:

kathy@humanists.uk

3. In what language(s) will you be completing this survey?

To submit a bilingual response please submit a Welsh and English version of the survey.

I am submitting in Welsh only.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am submitting in English only.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I am submitting in both Welsh and English.	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Would you like to be added to the Children, Young People and Education Committee's contacts list in order to receive updates about our work?

You can unsubscribe at any time by emailing SeneddChildren@senedd.wales

Yes



No

5. In what capacity you are responding to this consultation?

In a personal capacity (go to question 6)

In a professional capacity (go to question 9)

Personal capacity

If you are submitting a response in a personal capacity, we ask that you provide your name and postcode.

Before accepting material from those aged 13 or under, we require authorisation from the young person's parent or guardian, provided in the form of an email to SeneddChildren@senedd.wales from the young person's parent or guardian.

6. What is your full postcode?

7. Are you under 13 years old?

I am under 13 years old

I am 13 or over

8. Please choose one of the following options to confirm whether you would prefer that your name is published alongside your evidence.

We will not publish the names of people under the age of 18.

I am aged 18 or over and I am content for you to publish my name alongside my evidence

I am aged 18 or over and I would prefer that you did not publish my name alongside my evidence.

I am under the age of 18

Professional capacity



If you are submitting a response on behalf of an organisation please enter your details here.

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, we will publish the name of the organisation but will not publish your name or contact details.

If you are responding in another professional capacity, we will publish your job title/role, if relevant. We will also publish your name if you give us permission to do so. Your contact details will not be published.

9. Your role:

Coordinator, Wales Humanists

10. Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

Yes (go to question 11)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No (go to question 12)	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Organisation name:

Wales Humanists

12. Please choose one of the following options to confirm whether you would prefer that your name is published alongside your evidence.

I am content for you to publish my name alongside my evidence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I would prefer that you did not publish my name alongside my evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>



Your views

We will consider the views we receive at regular intervals over the course of the 6th Senedd.

13. Please record your views that relate to any of the following terms of reference (please keep your response to no more than 2,000 words in total):

- Implementation of the Curriculum for Wales in early years settings, primary schools and secondary schools.
- The level of consistency and equity of learning opportunities for pupils across Wales, given the flexibility for schools to develop their own curricula within a national framework.
- The associated reform of qualifications to align with the Curriculum for Wales.
- Implementation of the new Additional Learning Needs (ALN) system and the effective transfer of learners from the existing Special Educational Needs (SEN) system.
- The application of the definition of ALN, compared to presently for SEN, and whether there is any 'raising of the bar' on the ground for determining eligibility for provision.
- The professional learning and other support settings are receiving to ensure effective implementation of the Curriculum for Wales and the ALN system.
- Other factors potentially affecting implementation of the Curriculum for Wales and the ALN system, for example levels of funding and fall out from the pandemic.
- The particular challenges and opportunities facing different types of schools in varying circumstances (e.g. language medium, demographics and locality) in terms of implementing curriculum and ALN reform.

Embedding the curriculum

The curriculum is in the first of a five-year implementation plan. There is still much work to be done to embed the changes:

- make sure teachers have the right skills and support – there is still a need for professional learning to make sure teachers understand the importance of objective, critical, and pluralistic teaching to comply with the legislation and uphold the decision to remove the right to withdraw children from religion, values, and ethics (RVE).



- Locally agreed syllabi for RVE need to support the statutory RVE guidance and this is not true in all cases – Monmouthshire LA syllabus has redefined non-religious philosophical convictions to include ‘convictions held by those of faith and none’ which is clearly contradictory and diminishes the place of non-religious beliefs. This causes confusion for teaching staff and is not aligned to the Welsh Government RVE guidance.
- make sure parents know why the right to withdraw has been removed and what this means in faith schools – that they can demand non-denomination RVE if it is not being taught – a clear communication on this is required for all schools and parents.
- compliance with the new legislation – there is still confusion on how the new legislation will be monitored, and how Welsh Government will ensure compliance with the RSE code and the RVE guidance. Compliance is vital to support individual rights as the right to withdraw has been removed. Faith schools must not be permitted to overstep in denominational education and the independent inspection and reporting on this has not yet been determined. The guidance published for Catholic schools teaching RSE is not compliant with the RSE code and needs to be challenged by Welsh Government.

Collective worship

The continued requirement for Christian collective worship does not align with the pluralistic nature of the new curriculum or the commitment to the UNCRC, including freedom of religion or belief. It is out of step with the new curriculum, and the latest Census results which show Wales to be more non-religious than Christian. And yet we still allow for one faith to be presented as fact, contradicting the intent of the new RVE syllabus.

A petition to end collective worship was brought to the Senedd by two school children asking for the law to be changed in 2018. It was answered by the Education Minister in 2020 to the Children, Young People and Education Committee saying ‘Government must instead prioritise changes to the new curriculum’, but also acknowledging that statutory collective worship raises many human rights concerns, including children’s rights. The Minister stated that if they personally were ‘starting from a blank piece of paper,’ they would be unlikely to ‘enshrine the law in the way it currently is’.

It is disappointing that three years on from this, there is still no plan from the Welsh Government to remove this archaic law and replace it with inclusive assemblies.

About Wales Humanists

Wales Humanists is a part of Humanists UK. At Humanists UK, we want a tolerant world where rational thinking and kindness prevail. We work to support lasting change for a better society, championing ideas for the one life we have. [Our work helps people be happier and more fulfilled, and by bringing non-religious people



together we help them develop their own views and an understanding of the world around them. Since 1896, our work has been helping people be happier and more fulfilled. By bringing non-religious people together we help them develop their own views and an understanding of the world around them. Together with our partners Humanist Society Scotland, we speak for 100,000 members and supporters and over 100 members of the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group. Through our ceremonies, pastoral support, education services, and campaigning work, we advance free thinking and freedom of choice so everyone can live in a fair and equal society.

Information about third parties

14. Please choose one of the following options to confirm whether you have agreement from any third parties* referred to in your evidence that you can share information that may be used to identify them and that they understand that it may be published.

* Third parties means any person, other than you, who can be identified in the evidence that you share with us.

I confirm that any third party I have referred to in my evidence has agreed that I can share information that may be used to identify them, and that they understand that it may be published.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not have the agreement of one or more of the third parties I have referred to in my evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have not referred to any third parties in my evidence.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

