

Agenda – Children, Young People and Education Committee

Meeting Venue:

Video Conference via Zoom

Meeting date: 21 October 2020

Meeting time: 09.30

For further information contact:

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Committee Clerk

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In accordance with Standing Order 34.19, the Chair has determined that the public are excluded from the Committee's meeting in order to protect public health. This meeting will be broadcast live on www.senedd.tv.

Private pre-meeting

(09.00 – 09.30)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(09.30)

2 Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Bill – evidence session 12 with Welsh Government representatives

(09.30 – 11.30)

(Pages 1 – 57)

Kirsty Williams MS, Minister for Education – Welsh Government

Georgina Haarhoff, Deputy Director – Curriculum and Assessment – Welsh Government

Kate Johnson, Senior Lawyer – Welsh Government

Attached Documents:

Research Brief

Legal Briefing note

CYPE(5)-25-20 – Note of video evidence

CYPE(5)-25-20 – Note of roundtable discussions

CYPE(5)-25-20 – Children and young people's survey analysis by Wavehill



There will be a 10 minute break during the evidence session

(10.30)

3 Papers to note

(11.30)

3.1 Letter from Qualifications Wales to the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee following the Committee meeting on 18 August

(Pages 58 – 59)

Attached Documents:

CYPE95)-25-20 – Paper to note 1

3.2 Letter from Bangor University to Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee regarding the arrangements to support students in light of COVID-19

(Pages 60 – 62)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-25-20 – Paper to note 2

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting

(11.30)

5 Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Bill: consideration of the evidence

(11.30 – 12.00)

6 Consideration of the Committee's forward work programme

(12.00 – 12.30)

(Pages 63 – 70)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-25-20 – Private Paper

Document is Restricted

Document is Restricted

Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Bill

Video evidence

In light of the public health situation and the high level of interest in giving evidence on the Curriculum and Assessment Wales Bill, video evidence has been gathered during Stage 1 scrutiny from a range of stakeholders.

This evidence has been gathered to supplement the oral evidence, written evidence, themes arising from roundtable discussions and evidence from children and young people.

Invitations to participate in these videos were issued to a range of organisations, and invited views on the following themes as they relate to the Bill. These themes were selected on the basis of the Committee's previous and ongoing consideration of curriculum reform:

- Children's rights
- Human rights
- Mental Health
- Physical activity
- Life-saving skills
- Financial education and life skills
- Welsh history and history from a Welsh perspective
- Race equality
- The Welsh language



A [summary video](#) has been published, reflecting the views of those who responded to this invitation.

The [full videos submitted by each organisation](#) that responded to the invitation are also available:

- [British Heart Foundation Cymru](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#)
- [Cymdeithas yr Iaith](#)
- [Dyfodol i'r Iaith](#)
- [Ethnic Minorities & Youth Support Team \(EYST\) Wales](#)
- [MIND Cymru](#)
- [Parents for Welsh Medium Education \(RhaG\)](#)
- [Welsh Youth Parliament – Life Skills in the Curriculum Committee](#)
- [Welsh Youth Parliament – Emotional and Mental Health Committee](#)

This video evidence will be considered by the Committee along with all other forms of evidence, and will inform its report and recommendations.

Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Bill

Note of virtual roundtable discussions held by the CYPE Committee on 1 October 2020

As part of Stage 1 scrutiny of the Curriculum and Assessment Wales Bill Members wanted to explore **how the legislation would impact on specific groups of people**.

In light of the public health situation, the Committee undertook this work in four one-hour long **virtual roundtable discussions**. These discussions took place on 1 October 2020 on Microsoft Teams.

The roundtables were facilitated by Members. Eight to ten representatives of the following groups participated in each roundtable discussion: **children and young people; parents and carers; higher education, further education, and adult learning; and employers / employability**.

This note has been prepared with the permission of all those who participated. It summarises the **key themes arising in each discussion**. Its purpose is to inform the Committee's consideration of evidence on the Bill, and its final report and recommendations. In order to maintain the privacy of those with whom Members spoke, **comments have not been attributed to individuals**.

The Committee would like to **thank** all the children, young people, parents, carers, HE, FE, lifelong learning and employer representatives who enabled these roundtables to take place and gave their time to help Members with this work. A list of organisations who supported the Committee to arrange participants to speak from each of these perspectives is attached as an Annex to this note.



1. Discussion with children and young people

Members in attendance: Siân Gwenllian MS and Laura Anne Jones MS

How well the curriculum prepares young people for adult life

- Children and young people are **not taught what they need**. We are taught for exams rather than skills for life.
- The current curriculum is too academically oriented. Children and young people are all different and schools need to nurture those individual needs. There **needs to be more emphasis on vocational interest and trade skills**.
- There are **some really good elements of the current curriculum** but there are also some large gaps. The curriculum needs to give young people the skills and knowledge to apply to all sorts of areas.
- There are **major gaps in the current curriculum around life skills**. We learn some aspects of running a business through the Welsh Baccalaureate but would like to learn about managing taxes etc.
- Young people **need to leave school ready for adult life** and the workplace.
- Schools often do not know how to deal with pupils' **mental health**.
- We learn about the promotion of good health but we **do not learn enough about mental health problems and specific conditions**, such as ADHD. This increases stigma of such conditions and a lack of awareness which can lead to bullying etc.
- The current curriculum does not facilitate the involvement of specialists – not just in mental health but other subjects such as business. It should not be all down to the teachers – **outside expertise should be used and a collaborative approach adopted**. The third sector should be involved to teach about a much wider range of topics and skills.

What children and young people want to learn about in school

- The purposes of the new curriculum look great but we **need the opportunity to acquire life skills** such as financial literacy and political citizenship.

- Relationships and Sexuality Education (**RSE**) and Religion, Values and Ethics (**RVE**) are the **best features** of the new curriculum – schools are currently lacking in this. However, given parents will have no right to withdraw their children from lessons, there could be tensions within families and between families and schools. It will depend on the religious character of the school. There **needs to be a compromise** regarding RSE and RVE – it is **important that we do not alienate people**.
- It is important that children and young people know about their human rights, for example the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (**UNCRC**).
- The curriculum **needs to promote business as an option**. It is an excellent way of making a success out of yourself but not much time is spent on it in school.
- There **needs to be more emphasis on mental health** and how to deal with hormones and issues such as panic attacks. Children have lots of complex issues to deal with, which has been **made worse by COVID-19**. Schools need to teach them how to deal with this.
- Young people need to be taught about how to build up resilience and support each other. They also **need to be able to distinguish between normal emotional swings and genuine mental health problems**. This needs to be embedded into the whole school ethos.
- **Mental health should be covered at an earlier age**, in primary schools. There is no age limit on problems such as anxiety, which children can experience at any age.
- Children and young people are **exposed to issues regarding relationships and sexuality at a relatively early age**, therefore it is right that it is taught as early as possible. It also needs to be more than just a few times a year, as currently, and also needs to be more specialised.
- It is **best to learn languages early** – not just Welsh but other Modern Foreign Languages as well.
- There are some negative attitudes about Welsh amongst some young people but it opens up career and job opportunities. **Learning Welsh is important in embracing your culture and communities**. It is not just a qualification but adds to your identity.

- There was **no clear view about whether Welsh should be compulsory**, for example at GCSE level. There were also mixed views about whether it should be treated differently to English.

The merits of giving schools greater freedom in relation to what they teach pupils

- If curriculum design is done on a school by school basis, how do we ensure that all young people learn diverse history? **Leaving it up to schools could still result in gaps. This could be a particular issue where children move schools** – they could be transferring to a quite different curriculum, which could result in gaps in their knowledge and skills. (This was raised specifically in relation to **Looked After Children** who are more likely to move schools.)
- It is a good idea to allow schools flexibility in how and what is taught but this could exclude some key topics from being covered. It **could lead to regional and local variations, as well as greater inequality** as schools with fewer challenges will find it easier and vice-versa.
- **Schools' unconscious bias** may affect the curriculum they put in place for their pupils. They will need training so they can cover everything fairly for all pupils.
- Teachers will **need a lot of training and support** to deliver the new curriculum.
- Participants were in favour of the principles behind the new curriculum, which has the **potential to revolutionise education**.
- The power head teachers will have to **disapply Year 10 and 11 pupils' choices** will need to have adequate checks so that it is not abused or used excessively.
- Children and young people, parents and school staff **all need to be involved** in the development of the new curriculum so everyone is content with what is taught.
- The Humanities What Matters content currently has a narrow view of what is meant by history. There **needs to be more attention given to Black History**.

2. Discussion with parents and carers

Members in attendance: Suzy Davies MS and Hefin David MS

How well the curriculum prepares young people for adult life

- A broader curriculum should help schools to ensure that learning can **meet the individual needs** of learners. The curriculum needs to be relevant for learners. This is an opportunity to make learning interesting and engaging.
- It is good that **digital competency** is on a par with literacy and numeracy.
- It is important to **expand the curriculum to bring it up to date**.
- **Mental health and well-being** aspects are really important especially given the growth of social media and its impact on children and young people's mental health. Well-being is especially important for looked after or formerly looked after children. Some schools may not understand the impact of trauma on learner behaviour (although ACE training helps with this). The new curriculum will help give equality of opportunity for looked after and formerly looked after children.
- It is welcome that consideration is being given to Black Asian and Minority Ethnic issues are being considered in the Bill and that the **curriculum will be able to adapt for potential changes in society**.
- A survey by Parentkind found that parents' concerns were about mental health, life skills, being a good adult and critical thinking. The new curriculum could be a **good framework** to address these concerns.
- There is a need to consider **how parents are being informed and 'brought along' with the reforms**. Consideration needs to be given as to how parents will be consulted about their local school curriculum. Parents should be able to engage in dialogue at the beginning of the process. Parents being involved in the education process helps them support learning at home. Communication between school and home is currently not there. There is a need for a **parental engagement framework**.

Advantages/disadvantages of local curriculum

- There needs to be **underpinning similarities in the curriculum** as children may change schools. The needs of children vary considerably, for example

some areas have greater deprivation, so teachers can respond to needs of children within the basic structure.

- There were some **reservations over the potential for inconsistency in local curricula** and formerly looked after children may need consistency.
- **Assessment of the quality of curriculum** will need to be carefully considered and there will need to be some monitoring (not inspection).
- There may be concerns that **parents may not be confident with very different curricula**.
- Teachers **may only teach what they are comfortable with teaching**, but professional development may help this.

Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS)

- All pupils should have **equal access to the curriculum**. There were concerns that EOTAS pupils may not have the necessary **breadth of education**. All learners need the same opportunities and same preparation for adult life.
- The new curriculum may be beneficial for Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) as they may be able to provide **more bespoke education** for individual learners.
- Currently, schools may not meet the needs of children who are therefore receiving EOTAS. The new curriculum may meet their needs better.
- Those who are providing **home tuition** (in relation to EOTAS) need to be involved in any training.

Mandatory elements within the Bill

Welsh and English

- It is welcome that children have the opportunity to **become bilingual from an early age**. There should be consistency between how much Welsh and English being taught.
- There may be issues for learners whose **first language is neither English or Welsh**, who are learning these as a second language. The introduction of a third language may cause confusion.

- The **language profile of the community is important** and there is a need for parental engagement.

Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE)

- There is agreement that RSE should be taught, but it **should be age appropriate and appropriate for the level of understanding** of the learner.
- Parents need to be engaged and informed of what is going to be taught so they can be prepared for questions. In the Parentkind survey, **views of parents were very polarised** perhaps because they do not understand what will be taught.
- Concerns were expressed about RSE being taught where **children may have had adverse experiences and this trigger negative reactions** for some children. Teachers may not be aware of the experiences of learners.

Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE)

- It is important for children to have **a broad understanding of all religions or belief systems** as this supports inclusivity. Children may present the values and ethics of parent.
- While there was **support for the removal of the right to withdraw**, learners of some faiths may believe that undertaking some faith based practices or learning may be harmful for them and this needs to be considered.
- There is a potential that the removal of the right to withdraw **may lead to more elective home education** as the mandatory elements are being taught throughout the whole curriculum, so a pupil cannot just not be present for a particular RVE lesson.

3. Discussion with higher education, further education and adult learning

Member present: Suzy Davies MS

- The new curriculum does a lot to **address independent learning** and takes away spoon-feeding. Learners may have all had different experiences so this may lead to difficulties in further education, but diversity is welcome and colleges and universities are used to teaching students from all areas of the country.
- It was queried whether, in creating their curriculum, **headteachers and governors would have training in working with FE Colleges and employers in meeting the demands of the local economy.**
- It was felt that it was not clear **where vocational training fits in with the new curriculum.**
- While teachers have co-constructed the curriculum, they will **need training in curriculum development.**
- Schools may be **collaborating at a local and regional level at the moment but this is at the will of individual heads.** There is no framework to support it. This needs to be better communicated and facilitated. Currently, collaboration works well if schools, local authorities and FE work together to offer programmes that schools do not for example. Hopefully that will continue.
- It was suggested that a **fourth mandatory element of civic skills** could be added to include learning about political structures.
- The **'building blocks' for more technical study may not be included in the new curriculum** for STEM subjects, like engineering. This may affect learner resilience when they move into further education.
- There is a **need for change in post-16 education**, given the dramatic changes in pre-16 education. FE will need to work in partnership with schools once curriculum content is settled.
- **Qualifications dictate what happens in the curriculum.** Learning for GCSEs and A levels begins in Key Stage 3. There is a need to look at qualification routes as it seems that only one type of qualification is valued. There is

unlikely to be parity of esteem between vocational and academic qualifications when GCSE and A level are seen as gold standard.

- Whatever form of **assessment there is should be equitable** and different assessment methods suit different subjects. Examinations may not reflect the totality of a student's learning. Traditional exams do not fit many learners needs. However, employers will demand qualifications and specific grades.
- In **setting their own curricula, universities go through very rigorous moderation and validation**. There are many checks and balances.

4. Discussion with employers and employability representatives

Members in attendance: Siân Gwenllian MS and Laura Anne Jones MS

How well the curriculum prepares young people for adult life

- Employers report that **young people do not have the necessary skills**, including ‘soft skills’, communication skills and work experience.
- Levels of literacy and numeracy amongst young people are a big problem. School leavers have **insufficient literacy and numeracy skills** and a lot of time is spent in the post-16 sector bringing their levels of literacy and numeracy up to the required standard. The focus on literacy and numeracy must not be lost in this major curriculum reform.
- **Computing skills are severely lacking** in young people leaving school. Often, they cannot use PCs as they are so used to hand held devices. Businesses are having to spend considerable time and resources upskilling employees and apprentices on digital skills.
- **Careers and work related education needs to be taught earlier**, as early as in primary schools.
- Parents are big influencers in exposing children to certain career paths. Young people **need to be exposed to a full range** of careers and options.
- COVID has meant **businesses have had to rethink their strategies**, which could create opportunities for young people, for example those with skills in digital marketing. Young people can bring a fresh, different approach.
- **Careers and work related education should be specified on the face of the Bill**, as it is in the existing primary curriculum legislation. It needs to be embedded across all Areas of Learning and Experience as there is a real need for good careers education.

How the new curriculum relates to qualifications and future career pathways

- The Bill needs to be seen as part of the wider context of **schools opening their doors to employers and other stakeholders** who are better placed to deliver some of the work-related education to young people.

- Careers advice and guidance is generally given by teachers who can usually only advise on academic routes. There is **a need to bring others in from the outside** to make consideration of careers and work related education, and the influence this has on the school's curriculum, **as all-encompassing as possible**. The curriculum is delivered in schools but needs to embrace other organisations.
- There needs to be a focus on other participants in education beyond learners, including parents and teachers. A lot of teachers go into education direct from education, and therefore may have limited knowledge and experiences of business and employment. Perhaps **teachers themselves should undertake work experience placements** in order to better understand business and the world of work.
- A key challenge is how to **apply learning in schools to the workplace context** and explain its relevance to careers and the world of work.
- At what point do skills, rather than qualifications, become relevant in the curriculum? **Is teaching and learning geared towards skills outcomes or qualifications outcomes?** This is an important question as it influences how early learners might be encouraged along a vocational pathway rather than academic pathway.
- In a rapidly changing world, the challenge for education and the economy is **skilling people up for jobs that don't exist yet**. This requires young people to be flexible and open to many different career paths.
- Getting the connection between the curriculum and qualifications is vital. Whilst teaching and learning should not necessarily be completely about achieving qualifications, **qualifications definitely have their place and provide a really useful benchmark** of ability and achievement.
- Qualifications are a **certificate of achievement and show that an individual meets a standard**. They are evidence that a candidate can do the job and fulfil the functions required.
- Qualifications Wales' initial consultation on qualification reform alongside the new curriculum saw significant **support for keeping the GCSE brand**. Employers concur with this and urge for the brand to be retained, even if the content changes.
- There will **always be the need for a skilled workforce**. From an employers' perspective, the competition for talent is fierce.

The merits of greater freedom for schools to put in place a curriculum to meet the needs of their pupils

- There is a **risk in moving away from a prescriptive curriculum** to one of considerable flexibility. Accountability for schools is still needed.
- Introducing more autonomy for schools to design curricula **could lead to more variation**. Where is the evidence that supports giving head teachers this level of autonomy in deciding what their pupils are taught?
- Greater school autonomy **could lead to greater competition between schools**, related to the type of curriculum on offer. It could become an important consideration in parents' applications for school places.
- Careers Wales should have input into the curriculum the head teacher designs for their school. For example, **local and regional labour market information** should be available to schools in their curriculum planning.
- The approach being taken lends itself to localism, however, there **needs to be a national framework, which the curriculum feeds into**. Such a framework should extend beyond education and needs to be **closely aligned with economic strategies**. Otherwise, there could be a lack of strategic approach to the new curriculum, especially if schools are all doing their own thing and the curriculum they are providing to their pupils is not sufficiently linked to regional and national economic and workforce/skills priorities.
- Who will sign off a school's local curriculum plan? The Bill requires it to comply with certain requirements but other than that, the head teacher designs the curriculum and the governing body must adopt it. School governance will be crucial but **will there be necessary oversight of the individual curricula which schools develop?**
- **Implementation is the potential pitfall** to this area of work. The opportunities provided by the Bill are potentially game-changing but everyone needs to have a role in realising the purposes behind the new curriculum.

ANNEX – Supporting organisations

Children and young people roundtable

- Children’s Commissioner for Wales
- Welsh Youth Parliament
- Voices from Care
- Ethnic Minorities & Youth Support Team (EYST) Wales
- Children in Wales

Parents and carers roundtable

- Parentkind
- Adoption UK
- The Fostering Network

HE, FE and adult learning roundtable

- Colegau Cymru
- Coleg y Cymoedd
- Grwp Llandrillo Menai
- Cardiff and Vale College
- CaBan
- Universities Wales
- Yr Athrofa: Institute of Education
- UCU
- NUS Wales
- Adult Learning Partnership Wales

Employers and employability roundtable

- South West and Mid Wales Regional Skills Partnership
- North Wales and West Chester Chamber of Commerce
- North Wales Regional Skills Partnership
- South East Wales Regional Skills Partnership
- Learning and Work Institute
- National Training Federation Wales
- Groundwork Wales
- Careers Wales
- BT

Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Bill

Children and Young People's Survey Analysis

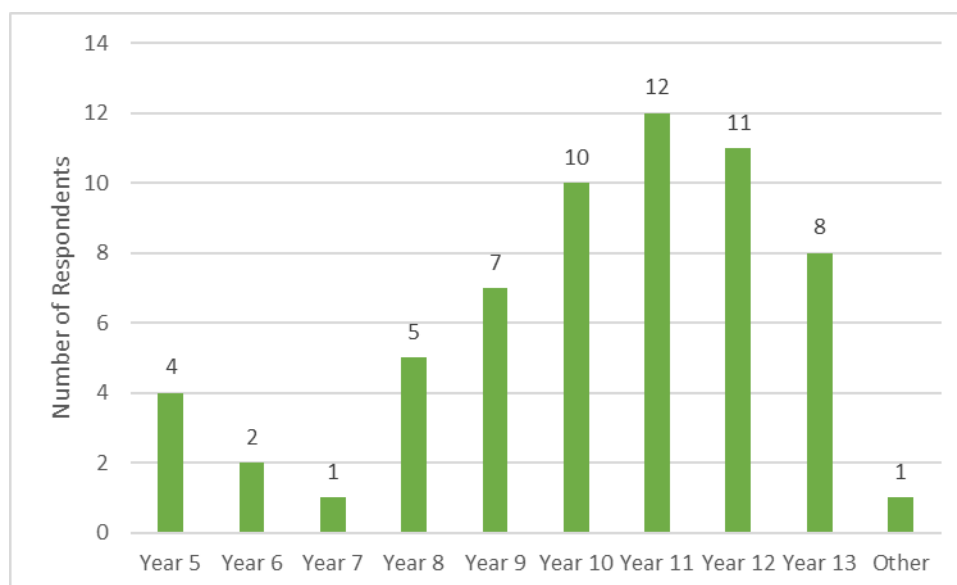
October 2020

This briefing paper summarises children and young people's responses to the survey.

Background

In order to include their voices in discussions surrounding the Bill, children and young people were invited to complete a survey. It asked a series of questions designed to explore their views across a range of issues relating to their education. This included participating children and young people's perceptions of the current curriculum, as well as towards aspects of the Bill. For details on how the information provided to participating children and young people, and the questions they were asked, please see the Annex at the end of the document.

A total of 61 children and young people kindly shared their thoughts and reflections.¹ They represented a range of communities across Wales and age groups, including children and young people from Year 5 to Year 13:



¹ In accordance with the survey's privacy notice, authorisation is needed from a parent or guardian for under 13s' information to be used. Permission was not explicitly granted in the case of all under 13s who responded. In those cases, the information submitted could not be used or analysed.

In order to understand the views of respondents, we completed a number of analyses designed to understand trends and strength of feeling amongst those that responded. The analysis should be interpreted as providing an indication of the views and perceptions held by those that responded to the consultation, rather than providing a definitive account of the views of children and young people across Wales.

1 Main Messages

On the whole, the children and young people that kindly responded to the consultation were broadly supportive of some of the key principles underscoring the Bill. There was broad consensus amongst respondents, for example, of the proposals surrounding Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) and Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE), including the removal of the parental right to withdraw. There was also broad support for the emphasis on learning both Welsh and English in the Bill.

In terms of the current curriculum, 95.1 percent of respondents wanted to learn more in school that would help them make the transition into adulthood and into employment. What was less clear was precisely the skills and expertise they felt would help them to make that transition. Respondents offered a diverse range of academic and applied subjects and skills that they felt would be valuable, from astronomy through to car mechanics. This issue was reflected in the finding that 49.2 percent of respondents felt they would like to see greater choice around what they study.

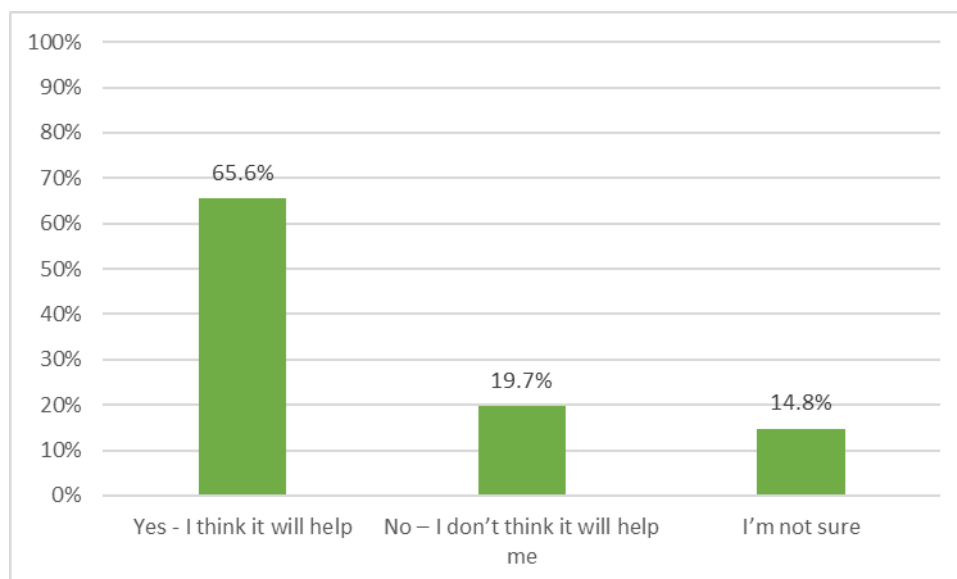
As with RSE and RVE, more broadly across the curriculum almost two thirds of respondents suggested that it was important for all children and young to receive the same learning opportunities at school. Whilst not as pronounced as the support for universal RSE and RVE provision, this may suggest that respondents feel that there are benefits to children and young people receiving a common curriculum. Additionally, 80.3 percent of respondents felt that those educated in other settings, including at home, should also receive the same opportunities as those in school.

In terms of feedback that respondents currently receive from teachers surrounding their learning, over two thirds felt that it could be improved either somewhat or substantially. Whilst this should be interpreted with caution, this finding suggests that feedback may be an area that could be improved in support of learning and progression.

In conclusion, respondents were asked what they thought about how children and young people should be taught in the future. Of the 26 respondents that offered suggestions, a key issue raised was the importance of including the voices of children and young people at all levels of the decision making, including within and across schools.

2 Perceptions Around the Value of Learning

Respondents were first asked if they felt that what they were currently taught in school would help them when they get older. The question itself explores the connections between what a respondent is being taught currently in the classroom, with what they feel it will be important to know in future. Overall, 65.5 percent of respondents felt that what they were currently learning in schools was valuable and would be helpful to them as they grow older:

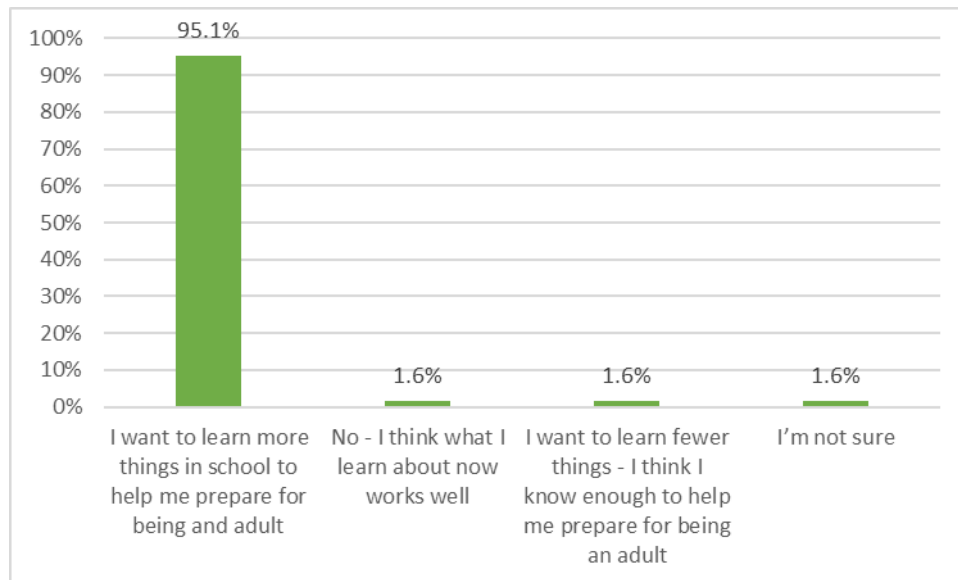


Almost 20 percent of respondents felt that what they were learning in school would not help them in future. This suggests that amongst these respondents there may be a disconnect between what they understand they need to know in future, and what they are currently learning. Whilst the significance and scale of this finding should be interpreted with caution, it does highlight a potential barrier for some children and young people to engagement in learning implicit within the current curriculum. There is broader evidence, for example, to suggest that perceptions around the value of education and teaching content can influence engagement in learning and ultimately levels of attainment.²

Within responses to this question there were no discernible and statistically significant trends across different year groups.

² See Wang and Eccles (2013) for an interesting discussion on factors influencing engagement (paywall): <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0959475213000327>

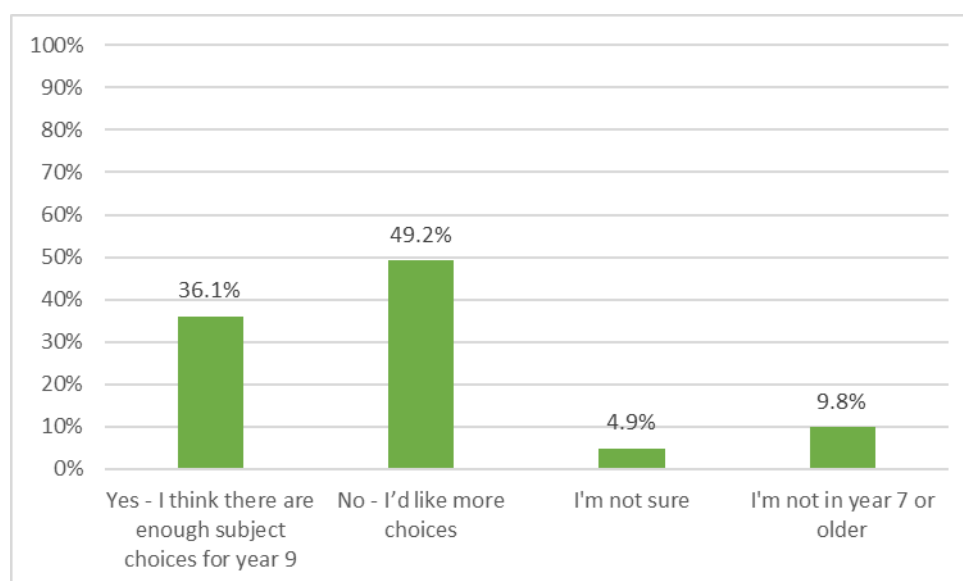
In order to explore the views towards the value and utility of learning further, respondents were then asked a more focused question around employment and becoming an adult. 95.1 percent of respondents felt that they would like to learn more in school about getting ready for being an adult and getting ready for a job:



This finding could suggest that, for the vast majority of respondents, the curriculum could do more to help children and young people prepare for life after school. Implicitly within responses is the perception that the current curriculum does not offer respondents the things that they think will be important to them in finding work and transitioning to adulthood. Broader qualitative reflections offered by respondents later in the survey may support this observation. For some children and young people, for example, the curriculum could be strengthened by providing a greater range of practical subjects such as financial literacy or life skills.

3 Learning and Choice

Respondents were then asked whether they felt that they had enough choices about what they study in year 9 and older. This sought to explore the extent of subjects available to children and young people, and whether this provided a sufficient range of learning opportunities within the current curriculum arrangements. Overall, 49.2 percent of respondents felt that they would like greater choice, and a further 36.1 percent suggested that current choice was sufficient:



Respondents were asked a follow up question exploring which subjects they would like to have the opportunity to study. 30 respondents offered thoughts and ideas (49.1 percent), often suggesting a range of subjects that they would be interested in studying:

More language options and life skills.

Pupil, Year 12

I think that politics and economics should be subjects that if not mandatory then at least optional. Also I think that we should be taught more [about] climate change and the ecological crisis, maybe this even needs its own subjects as it's such a broad topic that affects many aspects of life.

Pupil, Year 11

The types of subjects respondents raised were hugely diverse in nature. This included subjects ranging from the humanities, arts and the social sciences through to subjects often more associated with further or tertiary education, such as medicine, law and astronomy.

Alongside the diverse range of subjects, the number of responses was low which limits our ability to highlight any meaningful trends. Those subjects that did receive significant attention from four or more children and young people included:

- Modern Foreign Languages
- Government and Politics
- Psychology
- Journalism and Media Studies
- Life Skills e.g. car and house maintenance, financial literacy.

Another issue highlighted by eight, predominantly older children was the role of compulsory subjects. Some felt that they felt served to limit the choices available to them, for example, whilst others did not want to study them altogether:

Geography, History, triple science & a language. This is impossible when Welsh, R.E, and the Welsh bacc are all compulsory

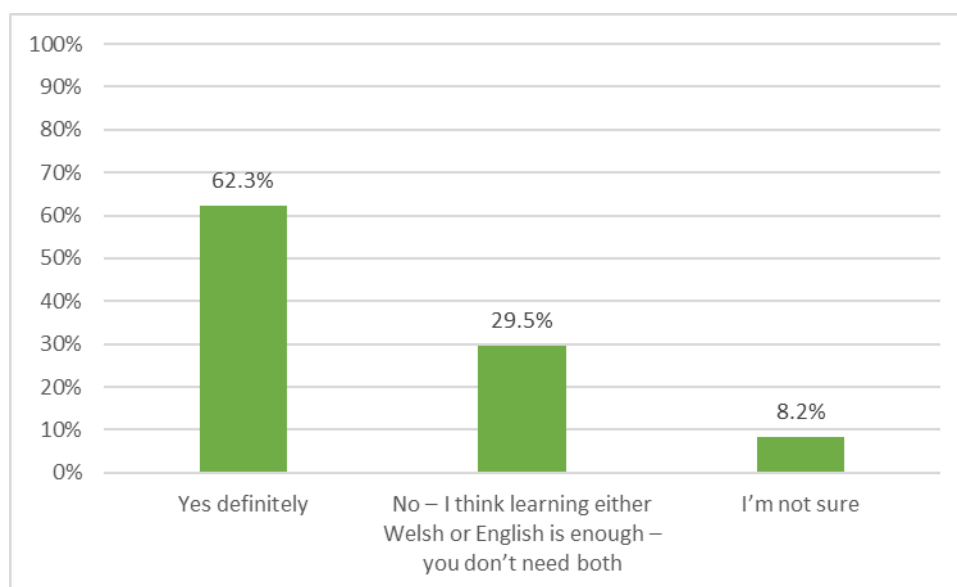
Pupil, Year 12

I would like the choice not to study Welsh to GCSE level.

Pupil, Year 10

4 Welsh and English Medium Provision

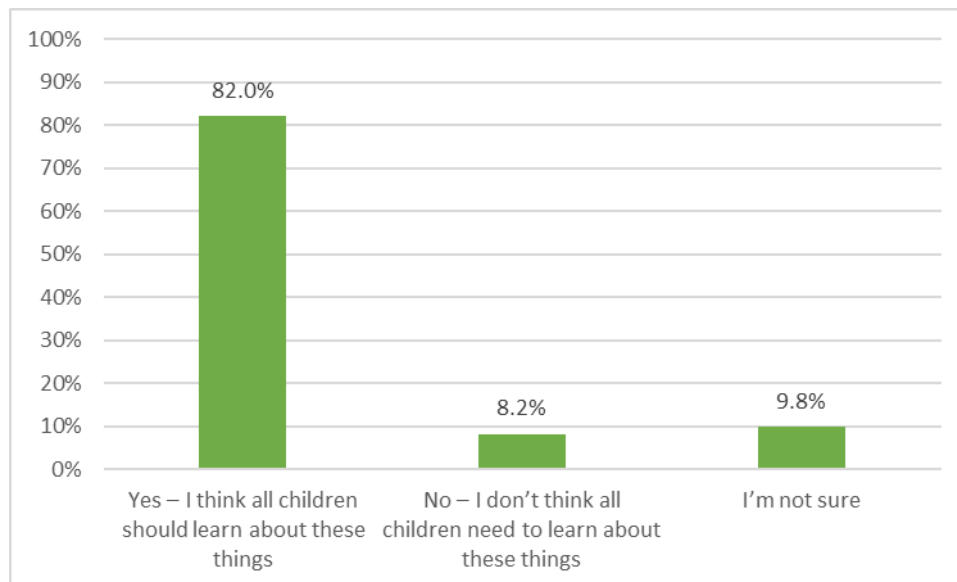
Respondents were then asked if it is important for all children and young people to learn both the English and Welsh language in school. Almost two thirds of respondents suggested that it was important to learn both in schools, which suggests broad support for the proposals contained within the Bill:



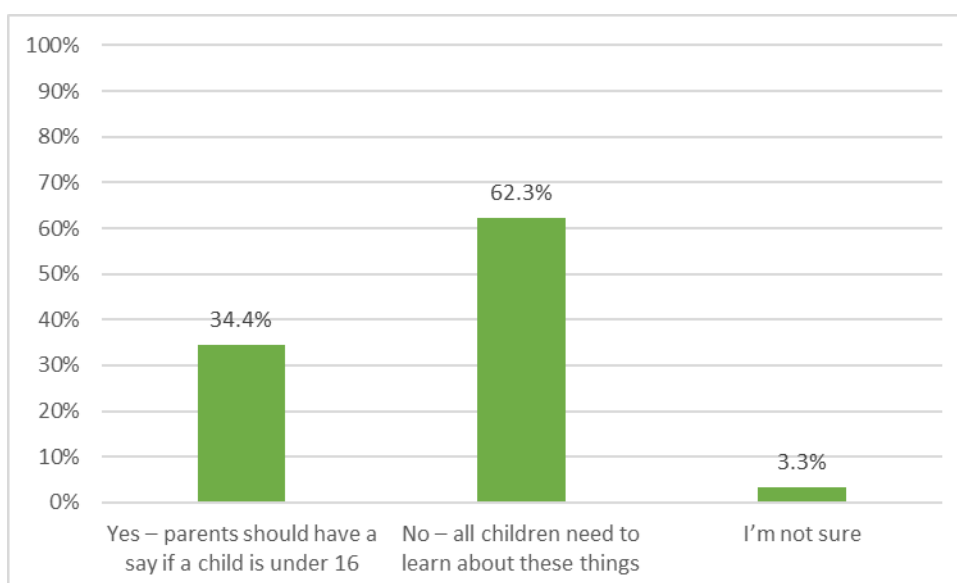
A further 29.5 percent of respondents, however, suggested that they felt it was not important to learn both languages, and that learning either Welsh or English was sufficient. This observation is supported by responses to other qualitative answers, including from those that felt they wanted to opt-out of certain provision, such as Welsh GCSE.

5 Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

There was significant support for the proposals surrounding RSE. 82 percent of respondents agreed with the proposals for all children and young people to learn about how to have healthy friendships and relationships:

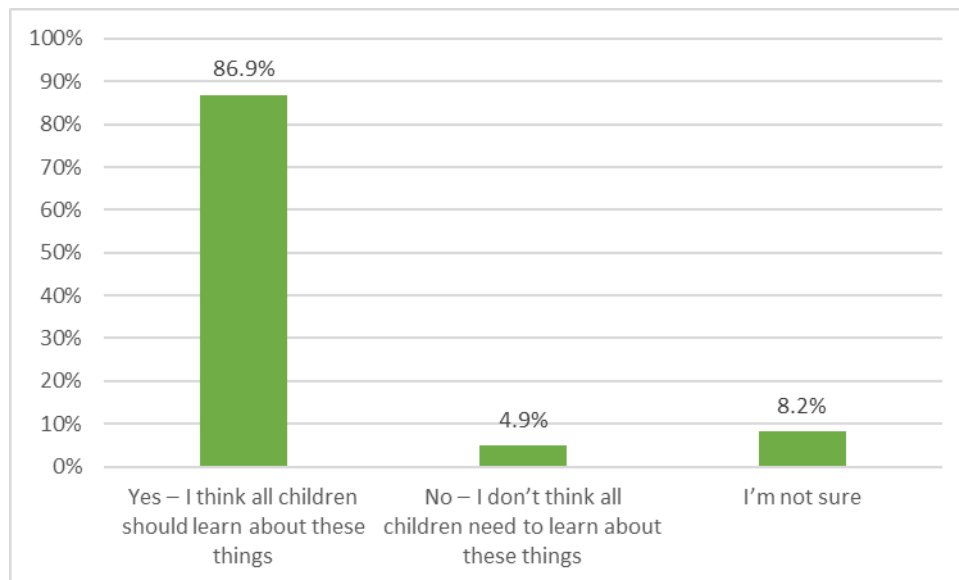


Exploring perceptions further, 62.3 percent of respondents felt that parents and carers should not have the right to withdraw children and young people from RSE provision, thereby agreeing with the position set out in the Bill:

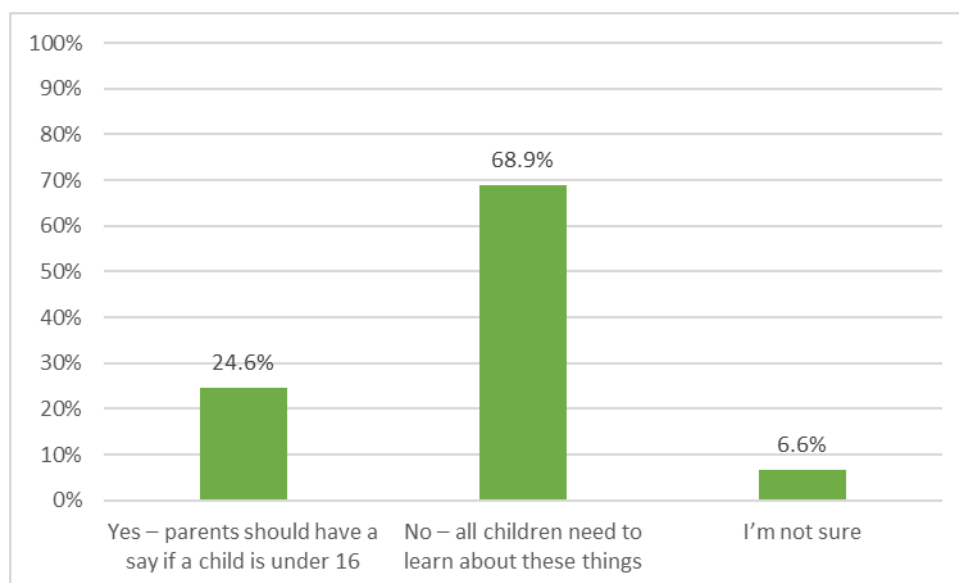


6 Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE)

Similarly, there was significant support from respondents surrounding the proposed reforms to RVE. 86.9 percent of respondents supported the proposals, including for all children and young people to learn about religions, beliefs, and different views about how we should treat each other:

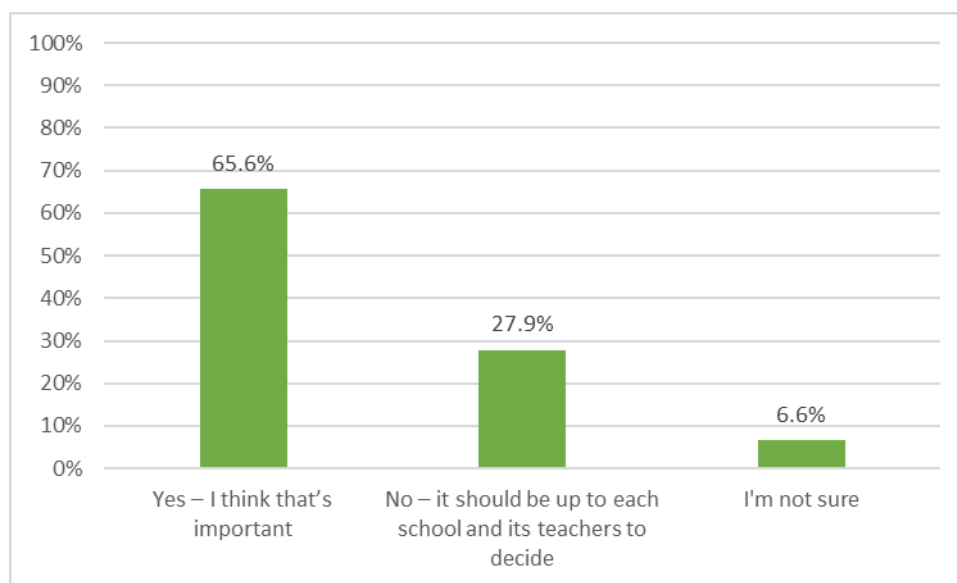


Again, there was significant support behind the withdrawal of parental opt-out of RVE provision. 68.9 percent of respondents felt that parents and carers should not have the right to withdraw children and young people from RVE provision:

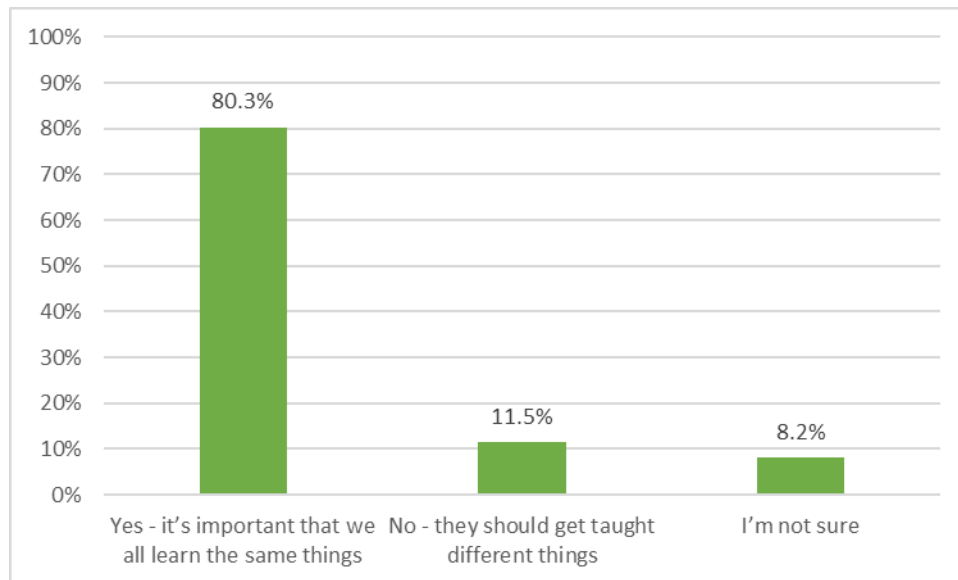


7 Uniformity of Learning Opportunities

In order to explore the views of respondents towards other aspects of the curriculum, respondents were asked if all children and young people in Wales should learn about the same type of things. Almost two thirds of respondents suggested that it was important for all schools across Wales to teach children and young people the same types of things. Whilst not as pronounced as the support for universal RSE and RVE provision, this may suggest that respondents feel that there are benefits to children and young people receiving a common curriculum.

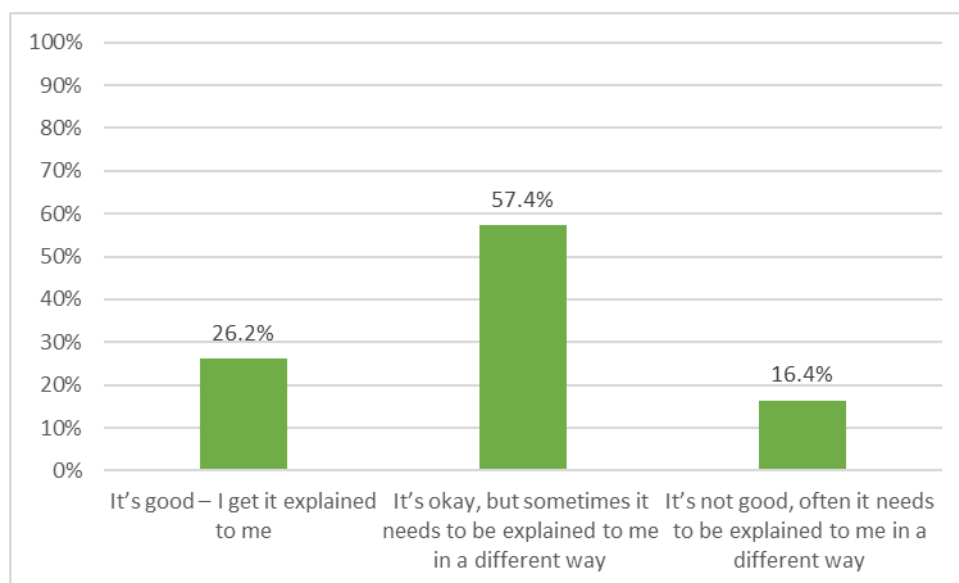


To explore this issue further, respondents were also asked whether children and young people who receive their education outside of school settings, including in the home, should learn the same things as other children. 80.3 percent of children agreed that it is important that all children learn the same things:



8 Perspectives on Feedback

In order to explore respondents' views towards feedback on their learning, they were asked if they thought about the way teachers communicate how they are doing and the things that they could do better. Feedback is an important part of learning. There is a significant body of research suggesting that effective feedback can have very high effects on learning and attainment.³ Overall, 57.4 percent of respondents gave conditional support for the feedback they received. From this perspective they felt that the feedback they receive from teachers was okay, but sometimes needed to be explained in different ways. A further 26.2 percent of respondents felt satisfied with the feedback they received, whilst 16.4 percent felt that it could be improved:



The significance of these findings should be interpreted with caution. There are many factors that shape effective feedback, and these may not accurately express the thoughts and perceptions of children and young people beyond those that responded. However, it does suggest that improving feedback could be an effective approach to supporting more positive outcomes, including pupil's perceptions of teaching but also learning and attainment. The data is not statistically significant, however in terms of raw numbers older young people are more likely to report that they feel feedback could be improved than younger year groups.

³ See for example, the Education Endowment Foundation (2018) for a summary of the evidence supporting effective feedback:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/toolkit/?id=131&t=Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Toolkit&e=131&s=>

9 Turning to the Future

In conclusion, respondents were asked what they thought about how children and young people should be taught in the future. Of the 26 respondents that offered suggestions, a key issue raised was the importance of including the voices of children and young people at all levels of the decision making, including within and across schools:

I think that children need to be taught in a less oppressive and free environment, the current education system doesn't leave much room for personal preferences or for children and young people to develop independence and their own opinion. Also schools should focus more on things that you actually need to know about in life, for example mortgages or how to get a job or how the government works etc.

Pupil, Year 11

Mae angen i ni gael ein trin fel oedolion ifanc a bod athrawon yn gwranddo ar ein barn.

We need to be treated as young adults and teachers need to listen on our opinions more.

Pupil, Year 10, translated from the Welsh

Llorenc O'Prey and Tony Jones
October 2020
Llorenc.oprey@wavehill.com

Annex

The survey was promoted via the Senedd's social media channels and drawn to the attention of the Committee's stakeholders to encourage the participation of children and young people.

The survey read as follows:

What children and young people are taught in school is going to change.

There are going to be new rules that schools must stick to – these rules are called a 'curriculum'.

We want to hear from you!

This survey has been designed for children and young people aged school year 5 and above. Answering these questions will help us to decide if the plans for learning in the future could be better or not, for you and other children in Wales. You don't have to write lots, and you can tell us in Welsh or English, it's up to you.

If you are an adult, or would like to provide more information than is possible on this survey, you can respond to the Committee's [call for views](#).

Who are we?

We are the Children, Young People and Education Committee. The Committee is a group of politicians who make important decisions. It's our job to listen to you, and by doing that we can try to make life better for children in Wales.

We ask that you read this [document](#) so that you can understand how we will use the information you provide.

Please note that if you are under 13, you need to ask the adult who's looking after you if you can write to us. This authorisation can be provided by email from your parent or guardian to SeneddCYPE@senedd.wales

Along with asking participants to provide their school year and the rough area that they live in, the survey posed the following questions and asked participants to select the answer that best matched their views:

Will what you get taught in school at the moment help you when you are older?

- Yes - I think it will help
- No – I don't think it will help me
- I'm not sure

Would you like to learn more or less in school about getting ready for being an adult and getting ready for a job?

- I want to learn more things in school to help me prepare for being an adult
- I want to learn fewer things - I think I know enough to help me prepare for being an adult
- No - I think what I learn about now works well
- I'm not sure

Do you think all children and young people in Wales should learn about the same type of things?

- Yes – I think that's important
- No – it should be up to each school and its teachers to decide
- I'm not sure

(Only answer this question if you are in year 7 or older)

Do pupils have enough choices about what they study in year 9 and older?

- Yes - I think there are enough subject choices for year 9
- No - I'd like more choices
- I'm not sure
- I'm not in year 7 or older

Tell us what sorts of subjects would you like to have the choice to study

[Free text answer invited]

Is it important for all children to learn both the English and Welsh language in school?

- Yes definitely
- No – I think learning either Welsh or English is enough – you don't need both
- I'm not sure

What do you think about plans for all children and young people to learn about how to have healthy friendships and relationships?

- Yes – I think all children should learn about these things
- No – I don't think all children need to learn about these things
- I'm not sure

Should parents and carers have a say about whether a child aged under 16 learns about healthy friendships and relationships?

- Yes – parents should have a say if a child is under 16
- No – all children need to learn about these things
- I'm not sure

What do you think about plans for all children and young people to learn about religions, beliefs, and different views about how we should treat each other?

- Yes – I think all children should learn about these things
- No – I don't think all children need to learn about these things
- I'm not sure

Should parents and carers have a say about whether a child aged under 16 learns about religions, beliefs, and different views about how we should treat each other?

- Yes – parents should have a say if a child is under 16
- No – all children need to learn about these things
- I'm not sure

Should children and young people who get taught outside schools learn the same things as those in a school?

- Yes - it's important that we all learn the same things
- No - they should get taught different things
- I'm not sure

What do you think about the way teachers tell you how you are doing in school and about things you could do better?

- It's good – I get it explained to me
- It's okay, but sometimes it needs to be explained to me in a different way
- It's not good, often it needs to be explained to me in a different way
- I'm not sure

Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about the way you think children and young people should be taught in Wales in the future?

[Free text answer invited]

Agenda Item 3.1



CYPE(5)-25-20 - Paper to note 1

By email

To Lynne Neagle MS, Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

12 October 2020

Dear Lynne

Following our attendance at the Children, Young People and Education Committee on 18 August, the Committee requested further information about the impact on specific groups of pupils of the proposed standardised grades and the awarded Centre Assessment Grades (CAGs). In response to this request, we have today published a breakdown of the final results that were awarded in summer 2020 for GCSEs, AS and A level qualifications in Wales.

The report provides an analysis of changes at centre, local authority and regional consortia level in 2020 compared to changes seen in recent years. Results in 2020 are compared to the CAGs and the standardised grades that were originally awarded. The report has been published on our [website](#), along with our position [statement](#).

We have shared this report with our 2021 stakeholder group for reference and provided the information as further evidence for the Independent Review commissioned by the Minister for Education.

We will be publishing a further report at the end of October, providing further analysis of the final results that were awarded in Summer 2020 by protected characteristic in a more detailed equalities impact assessment, building on the initial analysis provided in our results overview, which was [published](#) on 4 September.

The Minister has written to us requesting advice on options for 2021. We will provide, and publish, advice to the Minister shortly. Our advice, the recommendations from the independent review, and views from stakeholders will help the Minister to decide on the general approach to the assessment arrangements for 2021 at the end of this month. Following the Minister's decision, we will work closely with schools and colleges, teachers, awarding bodies and others to make sure the agreed approach is put into practice as quickly and smoothly as possible.

If you have any questions about the statistical release or other activity, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Qualifications Wales

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Cymwysterau Cymru

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Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Philip Blaker', enclosed in a light blue rectangular border.

Philip Blaker
Chief Executive

Agenda Item 3.2

CYPE(5)-25-20 - Paper to note 2

Response from Bangor University

Re: Letter from Senedd CYPE Committee

Firstly may I apologise that this response from Bangor University is so late you will be aware that the Bangor area has been placed into a Health Exclusion Zone and therefore last week and the start of this week have been particularly busy. I have answered the questions below, but if you require further information please don't hesitate to come back to me.

The COVID-19 measures you have taken in relation to your own accommodation, and how you have worked with Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSAs) and private landlords (NB please refer to arrangements for both term and vacation periods);

Only en-suite accommodation is in use this year at Bangor University, all shared bathroom facility halls have been closed. Hand sanitizer points are available in all Halls, and appropriate social distancing signage has been installed. Cleaning of communal areas (corridors, stairwells, lifts, etc.) occurs 7 days a week and includes multiple cleans of touch points per day. The residential estate has three electrostatic disinfecting machines which are utilised in the communal areas. In addition, students have been provided with additional cleaning material in kitchens and are asked to keep communal areas clean at all times. In relation to university staff visiting flats for planned and reactive maintenance protocols have been put in place including PPE for staff, and the use of an advance questionnaire regarding Covid-free declarations. The Halls Offices/Receptions/Security lodges have all been reconfigured including physical screening to ensure the health and safety of both staff and students. The University is in communication with local private student halls and those private landlords that are registered with us to provide them with additional information in relation to Covid-secure practices.

How you intend to support – or have been supporting – all students (on and off-campus) who have needed to self-isolate, including how you would support large numbers self-isolating at the same time in a dignified manner (i.e. the provision of food and drink that meets dietary requirements, medicine, mental health support and other essentials);

All students who are self-isolating are provided with information on sources of support both from our Student Services department (including financial hardship and counselling support) and also external sources (such as online support platforms specifically for Covid-19 issues). We have a number of mechanisms in place for those who are isolating in halls, such as providing students with extra cleaning products and bin bags, systems for students to order food deliveries and also contacts for student support, including halls wardens, security staff and student support services. Urgent postal deliveries such as medicinal items and study supplies are being delivered where possible by the Halls and post room teams. Students who are self-isolating in the community are supported by the Students' Union to obtaining provisions and essential supplies. Our Coronavirus and Mental Health page aims to provide information and guidance to help maintain mental and physical health. To make sure students can access support wherever they are, all of Student Services will be available online to support students. In addition, students on campus will be able to book face-to-face appointments with Disability Advisers, Mental Health Advisers, Counsellors and a range of other Student Support staff.

The provision you have in place for identifying and addressing student hardship;

Please see answer to the question above, and in addition a means tested Digital Hardship Fund is available for new and returning students. This fund can provide means tested support for unexpected costs that students are unable to cover.

Your approach to working with students on COVID-19 measures and actions, including self-isolation;

We continue to update our student 'frequently asked questions' webpage with new information as it becomes available.

We have worked in partnership with Undeb Bangor (Students' Union) to develop a Covid Community Commitments for students. The Commitment outlines the expectations and responsibilities and the of the University, students and the Student's Union.

To keep students informed about any changes and developments that are taking place in the University, our Student Services team are sending regular bulletins to the student community. These bulletins will highlight important and useful information on Covid-19 and support available to students (booking a test, reporting a positive result, keeping safe, Student Support services etc). We have also provided students with further guidance on self-isolating for students living in Halls.

The University is working closely with local authorities, Public Health Wales and the local health board to monitor reported positive tests for Covid-19 within the student community. We have robust plans in place to respond to any concerning rise in cases including a bespoke Portal which assists us in managing our confirmed Covid positive cases. The local Contact Tracing team is working closely with the university to identify and notify students who have undertaken testing. A dedicated mailbox is monitored 7 days a week for correspondence and queries from students.

Students can also engage fully in the online elements of our social programmes such as Campus life and Students' Union events. We are also providing resources, so students are able to continue with their studies. We plan to make online content available for the whole year so if students are unable to be on campus due to Covid-19 they will still be able to continue their studies.

Students living in Halls signed up to a Covid Code of Conduct when they signed their contract and this is displayed on all Hall front doors. It's a reminder to abide by the regulations and to be a responsible part of the student community.

We are taking breaches of the regulations very seriously and will use our student disciplinary procedures where there is a need to do so both for students living in halls and in the community.

How you are working and integrating with the public health and civil contingencies machinery within your local authorities and local resilience fora (to include confirmation of whether you have on-campus testing facilities for students);

The University is represented on both the Gwynedd and Anglesey Incident Management Teams which currently meet frequently. The University has an onsite testing facility at Ysbyty Enfys for students.

How you have engaged – and are engaging – with the local population, in particular where you have campuses in rural local authorities;

In addition to representation on the Gwynedd and Anglesey IMT and partnership working on communications we are posting updates on our social media platforms of the measures which the University is taking in relation to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of our University community and the local community. We are also meeting this week with both local and county councillors to brief them on the steps we are taking.

Once again please accept my sincere apologies for the lateness of this response.

Kind regards,

Document is Restricted