

At the meeting on the 24 March, Professor EJ Renold agreed to provide a written response to the questions that were unasked.

Response received on 12 April:

Can you briefly explain what effective Relationships and Sexuality Education will look like if it is delivered as you believe it should?

There isn't a brief response to this, other than to re-state that a whole school approach to RSE is the single most important factor in building high quality RSE. The new guidance is very clear on what constitutes high quality RSE and their six underpinning principles, if implemented, have the potential to provide effective RSE provision. However, please also see written response regarding the need for robust and pan Wales professional learning opportunities and a dedicated RSE policy/practice/research network (SRE expert panel's recommendations in this area have yet to be implemented). Building capacity will take time, resources and a clear strategy for implementation. The following recommendations are yet to be acted upon (<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/the-future-of-the-sex-and-relationships-education-curriculum-in-wales.pdf>, page 23-24)

Key Area 3: Training and Standards

Recommendation 6: Welsh Government to establish a SRE professional development pathway, differentiated for stage of education, to be incorporated into ITE and professional learning courses.

This pathway would provide an opportunity to further progress their professional development and specialise in SRE, allowing scope for the workforce to achieve a Masters level SRE qualification.

Recommendation 7: All schools should have a specialist trained SRE lead with access to resources and guidance to co-ordinate a rights and gender-equity based curriculum. Hours for delivery across the key stages should be equitable with other curriculum subjects. This role should involve embedding SRE in a whole school approach.

Recommendation 9: For Estyn to build on recent changes to the inspection framework to consider the inspection of SRE as part of aligning new inspection arrangements to the new curriculum.

Recommendation 10: Welsh Government to consider establishing a SRE excellence mark to highlight exemplary whole school approaches to gender equality and equity and SRE.

Key Area 4: Research and Support

Recommendation 11: Welsh Government to establish a SRE Hwb Zone to support high quality SRE in school and to service a SRE research, practice and training network, aimed at facilitating provision of up to date research and training opportunities and creation of a Wales SRE community of practice.

How confident are you that this will happen?

Statutory RSE for primary schools begins in 2022. The current guidance is not sufficient to support schools to build and develop their RSE curriculum. We (with McGeeney and Coll) have been delivering Professional Learning (see CRUSH resource) for over 4 years. However, we don't know of any other sustained professional learning opportunities in Wales that specifically supports schools to prepare for the new statutory RSE (beyond topic focused training). We are also still waiting for Welsh Government to establish a pan Wales RSE network.

What potential barriers are there to the successful implementation of Relationships and Sexuality Education under the new Curriculum for Wales?

Key potential barriers include dedicated time for schools to plan, prepare and deliver the new RSE curriculum; enduring impact of COVID pandemic; pan-Wales professional learning opportunities for all RSE leads/working groups in schools; research-based resources that are aligned with the underpinning principles of the new curriculum for Wales (e.g. www.agendaonline.co.uk/crush), including bi-lingual resources); strategic leadership that ensures coherence of understanding and provision across local authorities and consortia.

Can you expand on your comment in your paper that this is a "curriculum panic zone"?

In our professional learning programme (www.agendaonline.co.uk/crush) we facilitate an activity called, 'comfort, stretch, panic' to explore teacher confidence levels in key areas of the curriculum. Sex, gender sexuality; violence, safety and support, and sexual health and well-being are often in the stretch and panic zones.