

# P-06-1501 : Put rugby in the curriculum for Wales from primary schools through to secondary schools

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 12 Mai 2025  
Petitions Committee | 12 May 2025

Petition Number: [P-06-1501](#)

**Petition title:** Put rugby in the curriculum for Wales from primary schools through to secondary schools

**Petition text:** As a Coach of a under 10s rugby team. I have first hand experienced and witnessed the positive impact Rugby has on children in there sporting development, social skills, mental wellbeing and life skills.

\*I have noticed during my time as a coach that very few primary schools in Wales offer rugby.

\*Schools unfortunately do not prioritise rugby and is often an after thought.

\*Children are not given the opportunity to fall in love with the sport from a young age.

## 1. The Curriculum for Wales

### 1.1. Overview

The Welsh Government and the education sector are rolling out a new age 3-16 curriculum, the 'Curriculum for Wales (CfW)'. The CfW began its roll out in September 2022 when it was introduced to primary schools. In September 2023, it became statutory for Year 7 and 8 in secondary schools before extending further as those cohorts progress through secondary school. The 2023/24 Year 8 cohort



became the first Year 9 cohort to study the CfW in 2024/25 and will be the first Year 10 and Year 11 cohorts to do so in 2025/26 and 2026/27 respectively. By September 2026, all compulsory school age year groups will be studying the CfW.

The CfW is intended to better equip young people with the knowledge, skills and experience they need for modern adult life, than the current/previous national curriculum established in 1988. It follows Professor Graham Donaldson's Successful Futures review in 2015, which adopted a starting point of what 16 year olds completing their compulsory education should look like and what attributes they should have, before deciding what the curriculum should provide.

## 1.2. Layers of requirements

The new curriculum is intended to be purpose-led rather than content-based, with a greater emphasis on skills and teaching what matters. Schools have the flexibility to design their own curriculum, within a broad national framework provided by the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and associated codes and guidance. There are therefore several layers of curriculum requirements of the CfW, which make up this national framework.

The 2021 Act itself specifies:

- four purposes, one of which, as highlighted in the Cabinet Secretary's letter, is "to enable pupils and children to develop as healthy, confident individuals";
- six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs), one of which is "Health and Well-being";
- four mandatory elements (Welsh, English, Relationships and sexuality education (RSE), and Religion, values and ethics) and three mandatory cross-curricular skills (digital competence, literacy and numeracy); and
- general requirements that the curriculum must be broad and balanced, provide for appropriate progression, and be suitable for pupils, or children, of differing ages, abilities and aptitudes.

Beneath the purposes, AoLEs, mandatory elements and cross-curricular skills, the detail of the CfW is provided in a statutory 'What Matters' Code, which sets out the key foundations of each AoLE through 27 'statements of what matters', and statutory guidance published on the Welsh Government website 'Hwb'.

The Welsh Ministers must keep the What Matters Code under review and may revise it ([section 6](#) of the Act). Before issuing a revised What Matters Code, the [Welsh Ministers must consult](#) the persons they think appropriate (if any) and lay a draft before the Senedd under the Negative procedure ([section 76](#) of the Act). The Welsh Ministers may also amend the statutory guidance it has issued, or issue new statutory guidance, on the detail of the CfW ([section 71](#) of the Act).

### 1.3. Relevant aspects of the CfW framework and guidance

The Welsh Government developed the statements of what matters and statutory guidance – essentially the detail of the curriculum framework – with the education sector and other stakeholders, [publishing it initially in May 2019](#) and [finalising it in January 2020](#).

One of the statements of what matters within the [Health and Well-being AoLE](#) is “Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits”. The detail of the statement includes the following:

This [AoLE] can help learners to understand the factors that affect physical health and well-being. This includes health-promoting behaviours such as physical activity, including but not limited to **sport**; balanced diet; personal care and hygiene; sleep; and protection from infection. It also includes an understanding of health-harming behaviours. [bold is my emphasis]

The detail of what is taught within each statement of what matters is set out in ‘[Descriptions of learning](#)’, which make up part of the statutory guidance on the CfW. These are in the form of expectations of what pupils should have been given the opportunity under their school’s curriculum to attain at five ‘progression steps’, broadly corresponding to ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16.

“Rugby” is not specified within the Descriptions of learning, nor is any other individual sport. Sport and physical activity more generally are referenced as follows:

- Progression step 3: I can motivate myself to engage confidently in regular physical activity and sport, and am aware of my own progress.
- Progression step 4: I can engage in regular physical activity and sport with confidence, motivation and commitment.

- Progression step 5: I can value the benefits of participation in regular physical activity and sport, seeking opportunities to develop my expertise.

## 2. Senedd scrutiny

The Children, Young People and Education Committee is scrutinising the implementation of the CfW, along with the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) system, as part of its scrutiny of the implementation of education reforms. However, this is not particularly looking at curriculum content.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.