

Proposals for new teaching standards in Wales

The plans are part of the national mission to reform education to benefit pupils. The new standards aim to promote teaching excellence and support career-long professional development for all teachers.

The new standards will:

- Develop the leadership skills of all teachers.
- Provide opportunities for teachers to develop their skills throughout their career to meet the needs of the education system.
- Better support new entrants to the teaching profession by bringing together the requirements for the award of Qualified Teacher Status and the successful completion of induction.
- Enable teachers to work together more effectively to make sure all learners benefit from excellent teaching and learning.

It is proposed that the new standards will apply to all serving teachers from September 2018 and initial teacher training programmes from September 2019. This will provide time to build familiarity with the new standards before they become mandatory.

Kirsty Williams said:

“We are working closely with the profession to help teachers and practitioners be the best they can be, while raising the standard of teaching and, importantly, raising the standing of the profession as a whole.

“The current professional standards are no longer fit for purpose and do not match my vision for our school workforce. The old system set minimum expectations that we want to move beyond.

“These new standards are about making sure teachers develop the right skills throughout their career and all those teaching in our classrooms take on a leadership role as we all work together to raise standards. This is about moving to a system of career-long development. My vision is to strengthen leadership and make sure that there is greater consistency across our schools.

“I am grateful to all those teachers, leaders and other partners

who have been directly involved in developing these new standards – it is testament to what can be achieved through us working together.”

[New expert healthy relationships group to advise on curriculum](#)

The panel will provide advice and support on issues relating to the delivery of healthy relationships education within the curriculum. This includes a range of areas including improving understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, respect and consent, sexism and bullying.

Emma Renold, Professor of childhood studies at Cardiff University’s School of Social Sciences has agreed to chair the Group.

As well as teaching on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the field of childhood studies, Professor Renold has recently collaborated with Welsh Women’s Aid, NSPCC Cymru and the Children’s Commissioner to develop the online resource AGENDA: A Young People’s Guide to Making Positive Relationships Matter.

Kirsty Williams said:

“Providing good quality learning for children and young people on healthy relationships is essential to tackling a range of important issues and I want to have the best expert advice to help us achieve this.

“I am delighted such an experienced figure such as Professor Emma Renold has agreed to chair the group as she brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to this new role.

“She is internationally recognised for her work on gender and sexuality in childhood and youth across a wide range of areas including bullying, violence and sexualisation and I look forward to working with her.”

Professor Renold said:

“It is both a privilege and an honour to help support the effective delivery of sex and relationships education within the curriculum in Wales.

“Chairing this panel is an incredible opportunity to draw upon research evidence, and collaborate with experts, including young people, to identify the most effective resources and practices that will address and enhance children and young people’s gender and sexual well-being.”

The panel will be made up of individuals and organisations with relevant experience and expertise.

[Cabinet Secretary sees how project helps young people move in rather than move on](#)

Jointly funded by the Welsh Government’s Supporting People Programme Grant and Children’s Services in Newport, the project supports young people with complex needs who are leaving residential or secure units. Staff are trained to take a therapeutic approach and build on each individual’s strengths. The service has seen a huge increase in young people engaged in training or employment and securing longer term housing.

The Cabinet Secretary met some of the young people living at George Street and the staff who have been supporting them.

He said:

“I have been very impressed with the George Street Project and all the people I have met today, both staff and residents. I am committed to ensuring young people have the same life chances and are equipped for success as they move to adulthood.

“The young people who are being helped by the ‘Move In’ service have sadly already experienced several Adverse Childhood Experiences, which we know affect their chances later in life. They are lucky to have the support of Solas Cymru to overcome these experiences and it is heartening to hear of their plans to move into their own homes, undertake training and plan for their future careers. I wish them the very best for their futures.”

Economy Secretary, Ken Skates announces £3m for Yr Egin

Following consideration of a business case from the University of Wales Trinity St David, the Economy Secretary has agreed to allocate £3m of capital funding to support Yr Egin – a project that will see an innovative hub for the Creative Industries being established in Carmarthen.

Speaking about his decision, Ken Skates said:

“Having considered the overall potential economic, cultural and educational benefits of this project I am pleased to announce that the Welsh Government will be investing £3m in 2017/18 to support Yr Egin.

“The investment will help to deliver the infrastructure needed to support the University’s vision of a cluster of creative businesses in Carmarthen.

“This in turn will help to inject new life into the local economy, bring additional and high quality jobs to Carmarthen and enhance Wales’ growing reputation as an enabler of talent, imagination and productivity.

“It also supports our wider commitment to promoting Welsh as a living and vibrant language and will help cement links between academia and creative businesses.

“Our support for Yr Egin will help Carmarthen to capitalise and build on S4C’s decision to locate its headquarters there and will help provide space and networking opportunities for other businesses, the University, students and entrepreneurs.”

The Welsh Government’s £3m investment will support the construction of a new building to provide accommodation for companies, incubator space to develop new businesses in the creative and digital sectors as well as and event space, an open auditorium, and production and edit suites that can be used by both companies and the University.

People across Wales could benefit from

change to care home charging

The Welsh Government's five year plan, 'Taking Wales Forward', committed to more than doubling the capital limit used in charging for residential social care, from £24,000 to £50,000. If the regulations presented are passed by the Assembly, the limit will move to £30,000 from 10th April this year – increasing in phases up to £50,000 thereafter.

Minister for Social Services and Public Health, Rebecca Evans, is today encouraging individuals who may benefit from the change, or their families, to contact their local authority.

Rebecca Evans said:

“People who need residential care and who have capital over a certain amount are required to use this to pay for the full cost of their stay.

“This Government is committed to supporting older people, and those requiring care, which is why our five year plan 'Taking Wales Forward', pledged to significantly increase this capital limit. This frees up more of people's money for them to use as they wish.

“From 10th April people who require residential care and have capital up to the new amount of £30,000, will not have to use this to pay for their care. Instead their local authority will be responsible for funding their care, only charging a contribution based on a person's available income.

“As people who pay for the full cost of their residential care usually have private arrangements in place with their care home, local authorities will often be unaware of how much capital individuals have. I am therefore encouraging anybody who thinks they, or a family member, may benefit from the change to contact their local authority.

“People do not need to wait until the 10th April to do this. Individuals can contact their local authority now, to check whether they might benefit and prepare everything ready for the change in April.”