

Curriculum for Wales  
Revised Areas of Learning (Language, Literacy and  
Communication Skills and Mathematical Development)  
and programmes of study (English, Welsh (first language)  
and mathematics) – Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4

**Consultation  
response form**

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Responses should be returned by **13 June 2014** to:

Curriculum Division  
Department for Education and Skills  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

or completed electronically and sent to:

e-mail: CurriculumforWales@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 following the amalgamation of Forestry Commission Wales (FCW), Countryside Council for Wales and the Environment Agency staff in Wales. It is the largest Welsh Government public sponsored body with just under 2000 staff, an operating budget of £17 million and manages 7% of the land in Wales.

Natural Resources Wales aims:

*"..... to play a central role in delivering sustainable development for Wales. This means bringing the management of our natural resources and environment together in a balanced and integrated way, to deliver benefits for the people, environment and economy"*

Natural Resources Wales welcomes the opportunity to comment on this consultation and looks forward to further involvement in the curriculum review.

**Our aim is to highlight the importance of natural resource management, the need to embed the environment and sustainable development in the widest sense within the curriculum and the importance of out of classroom learning for all key stages.**

## Questions applicable to all proposals

### Skills

**Question 1** – One way of presenting the additional expectation statements from the Areas of Learning (AoL) and programmes of study (PoS) is to incorporate them directly with the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) statements. This has been done for the Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development Areas of Learning and the mathematics programme of study.

Do you agree?

<b>Agree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>x</b>
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### Supporting comments

No comment

**Question 2** – An alternative way of presenting is to place the year-on-year skills for English and Welsh (first language) as a discrete section to follow the LNF section.

Do you agree?

<b>Agree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>x</b>
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### Supporting comments

No comment

### Range

**Question 3** – Stakeholders have indicated that if the Range section from the current national curriculum Orders was to be dissected into year-on-year

expectations, this could lead to a narrowing of the curriculum and to more prescription.

It is proposed that the current Range statements will be renamed 'Range of experiences' to describe the range of content and contexts that learners should experience. Do you agree?

<b>Agree</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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### Supporting comments

Natural Resources Wales would like to raise the importance of ensuring that these **experiences** include out of classroom learning at **all** key stages and contexts around the importance of natural resource management, the environment and sustainable development – all of which can support the development of numeracy and literacy skills. Evidence shows that children struggling in a traditional classroom setting perform better in an outdoor environment where the cross curricular skills of literacy and numeracy can be taught effectively through rich learning tasks and real life problems.

Many of the elements of the current Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESGDC) curriculum can also help develop literacy and numeracy skills using real life context and experiences.

Natural Resources Wales would be pleased to support this area of work, which also links to the Government's ideas expressed in the development of the Future Generations Bill and Environment Bill.

### Progression

**Question 4** – Do you agree there is clear progression between each year group and between each key stage for the AoL and PoS? If not, please suggest suitable alternatives.

<b>Agree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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### Supporting comments

**No Comment**

**Question 5** – Do you agree the expectations for year-on-year expectations are pitched correctly? If not, please explain why and suggest alternatives.

<b>Agree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>x</b>
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**Supporting comments**

**No comment**

**Question 6** – Do you agree the statements for 'Range of experiences' are pitched and worded correctly? If not, please explain why and suggest alternatives.

<b>Agree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>x</b>
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**Supporting comments**

Natural Resources Wales has no comment on the existing statements but would like to see out of classroom learning highlighted within the "Range of Experiences" for all key stages.

A review by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) and Kings College London found substantial evidence that fieldwork and out of classroom learning, providing it was properly conceived, adequately planned, well taught and effectively followed up, not only improves students' knowledge but also teaches skills that add value to their everyday experiences in the classroom.

**Question 7** – Do you agree the right skills are emphasised? Do you think any have been missed?

<b>Agree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>x</b>
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**Supporting comments**

Out of classroom and environmental based learning has a significant role in

supporting the development of literacy and numeracy skills which will become increasingly important as Wales develops its approach to natural resource management. Inclusion of these skills can help support the sustainable use of Wales' natural resources in the future and prepare young people for jobs in the emerging green economy

**Question 8** – Do you agree that the language used in the AoL/PoS is precise enough? If not, please give specific examples of changes needed.

<b>Agree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>x</b>
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### Supporting comments

**No comment**

**Question 9** – What additional support/training will practitioners in Welsh-medium and bilingual schools need to implement the new PoS and to develop strong bi-literacy skills? Please qualify and quantify this.

As mentioned in our response to the Phase 1 Consultation, Natural Resources Wales feels that training for education professionals, trainee teachers and ESTYN inspectors is a critical for any change to be successful. Natural Resources Wales (through the Forestry Commission Woodlands for Learning Team) was involved in the writing, roll out and training for Module 6 of the Foundation Phase National Training Pack – Outdoor Learning and would be pleased to support any future training in natural resource management and outdoor learning required at any key stage emphasising the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy skills in the outdoors. 20 plus bi-lingual training courses have been run over the last year with teachers and support staff valuing the opportunity to observe a class learning in the outdoors followed by time to discuss and work up new and innovative activity ideas linked to the LNF

We also feel it is important to ensure that any changes to the curriculum are reflected in initial teacher training courses. Again Natural Resources Wales would be pleased to work with WG and Higher Education in the necessary development of these programmes

Questions applicable to Foundation Phase

**Foundation Phase philosophy**

**Question 10** – It is proposed that there will be an overarching Foundation Phase pedagogy range of statements at the beginning of all AoL to highlight the importance of Foundation Phase philosophy. Do you agree with this proposal? If not, please explain why and suggest alternatives.

<b>Agree</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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### Supporting comments

Natural Resources Wales is pleased to see the statement “The Foundation Phase ethos is alive and well...” On page 11 of the consultation document. However anecdotal evidence is showing that the “free play” element so valued during the roll out of the Foundation Phase and often delivered outside is being removed from Foundation Phase departments as teachers struggle to deliver LNF elements. Natural Resource Wales would like to raise the importance of free play in a natural environment to facilitate a connection with nature at an early age which has proven benefits in adult life linked to increased physical activity, health and wellbeing and in developing an interest in the natural world and management of its natural resources. Natural Resources Wales would like to see an overarching statement emphasising the importance of free play and access to the natural environment.

### Nursery

**Question 11** – It is proposed that the skills for Nursery, but not related to the AoL, will become a non-statutory LNF for this age group. Do you agree with the proposal set out above?

<b>Agree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>x</b>
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### Implications for learners with additional learning needs (ALN)

**Question 12** – It is proposed that in order to ensure an appropriate progression is maintained for learners with ALN (after incorporating the skills for very young children – Nursery – into the LNF), minor modifications will be made to C steps and B steps statements in the Numeracy component of the LNF. Do you agree? If not, please suggest a suitable alternative.

<b>Agree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>x</b>
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				<b>disagree</b>	
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**Supporting comments**

**No comment**

**Question 13** – In the AoL we follow the LNF approach by using year-on-year expectation statements across the Foundation Phase. Is this the right approach? If not, please suggest a suitable alternative.

<b>Agree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Disagree</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>x</b>
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**Supporting comments**

**No comment**

**Question 14** – We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

Natural Resources Wales is keen to assist in the current curriculum review and particularly to help develop learning for sustainability and natural resource management aspects of the curriculum and embed the environment and learning outside the classroom throughout the curriculum in order to ensure the future sustainable use of our natural resources.

We are disappointed to see no mention of any of the above in the summary responses to the Phase 1 consultation despite a number of responses from the environmental sector highlighting similar points.

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: