

# A curriculum for all learners

Guidance to support  
teachers of learners with  
additional learning needs



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

Cymry Ifanc  
Young Wales

[www.cymru.gov.uk](http://www.cymru.gov.uk)



# A curriculum for all learners

## Guidance to support teachers of learners with additional learning needs

- Audience** All maintained primary, secondary and special schools in Wales; institutions for teacher education and training; local authorities; teacher unions and school representative bodies; church diocesan authorities; national bodies in Wales and others with an interest in education.
- Overview** These materials provide guidance for teachers of learners with a range of additional learning needs (see Appendix 1) in mainstream and special settings/schools in teaching and assessing against the school curriculum 2008. While the guidance is primarily focused on Key Stages 2 and 3, it will be useful to staff working in the Foundation Phase and with learners aged 14–19 in a variety of settings.
- Action required** This guidance may be used by individual practitioners, teachers and staff teams in schools, by those with curriculum and/or assessment responsibilities, SENCOs and senior managers and by local authorities (LAs) to support groups of schools in reviewing their curriculum and assessment practice.
- Further information** Enquiries about this document should be directed to:  
Curriculum and Assessment Division  
Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills  
Welsh Assembly Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ  
  
Tel: 0800 083 6003  
e-mail: C&A3-14.C&A3-14@wales.gsi.gov.uk
- Additional copies** Can be obtained from:  
Tel: 0845 603 1108 (English medium)  
0870 242 3206 (Welsh medium)  
Fax: 01767 375 920  
e-mail: dcells1@prolog.uk.com  
  
Or by visiting the Welsh Assembly Government's website  
[www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills)

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Section 1: Planning to include all learners</b>	<b>5</b>
Planning a relevant curriculum	6
From 'differentiation' to 'transforming learning capacity'	13
Meeting the needs of more able and talented learners	16
Using the skills framework	18
The personal and social education framework	18
Foundation Phase	19
Curriculum and assessment 8–14	20
14–19 Learning Pathways	20
Transition	23
Curriculum FAQs – your questions answered	24
Curriculum monitoring and evaluation	30
<b>Section 2: Assessing all learners</b>	<b>33</b>
The revised assessment framework	34
Using the national curriculum outcomes	35
The relationship between formative and summative assessment	37
Monitoring learners' progress	40
Expectations of learner progress	41
Foundation Phase Child Development Profile	44
Year 5 skills assessment	44
Wider measures of progress	45
Use of <i>Routes for Learning</i> for summative, end of key stage assessment for learners with complex needs	48
Support for teacher assessment	51

Assessment for Learning	53
Including all learners – final thoughts	55
<b>Section 3: Appendices</b>	<b>57</b>
Appendix 1: Defining additional learning needs	58
Appendix 2: Developing an inclusive curriculum – questions to support schools in meeting additional learning needs	61
Appendix 3: Inclusive teaching strategies	63
Appendix 4: Curriculum models for learners with complex needs	65
Appendix 5: Reviewing assessment practice	68
Appendix 6: Using assessment evidence	72
Appendix 7: References, further reading and useful websites	74
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>77</b>

## Introduction

The Welsh Assembly Government set out its vision for children and young people in *Children and Young People: Rights to Action* (2005). This vision is based on the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child and has seven core aims which seek to ensure that all children and young people:

- have a flying start in life
- have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities
- enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation
- have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities
- are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised
- have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional well-being
- are not disadvantaged by poverty.

Inclusion is everyone's responsibility. It is not only about where learners receive their education but about the provision of a meaningful education which will foster independence and inclusion in society as a whole.

To support this vision and ensure that all learners have an education which develops their potential to the full, the 'Including all learners' statement in the curriculum subject Orders (2008) and linked frameworks summarises the requirements on schools under the equal opportunities legislation. This includes the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Race Relations Act 1996, Human Rights Act 1998, Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the Equalities Act 2006. Further information on the Statutory Framework can be found in *Inclusion and Pupil Support* (NAfW Circular 47/2006). A definition of additional learning needs can be found in Appendix 1 (page 58).



*Section*

# 1

Planning to include all learners

## Planning a relevant curriculum

The 'Including all learners' statement should be used by settings/schools to look at their existing arrangements and identify good practice, while also drawing attention to any ways of working which might create environmental or social barriers to participation and engagement. Settings/schools must work to provide an inclusive curriculum which offers opportunities for all learners to achieve and contribute to today's multi-ethnic Wales.

To enable all learners to access relevant skills, knowledge and understanding at an appropriate level, schools may select content from the Foundation Phase or any key stage within the curriculum and use it flexibly, together with the *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008), in order to:

- provide a meaningful relevant and motivating curriculum for their learners
- meet the specific needs of their learners and further their all round development.

In addition to the national curriculum subject Orders, the linked frameworks for personal and social education (PSE) (2008) and for developing thinking, communication, number and information and communication technology (ICT) may be given greater emphasis across the curriculum to meet each learner's individual needs.

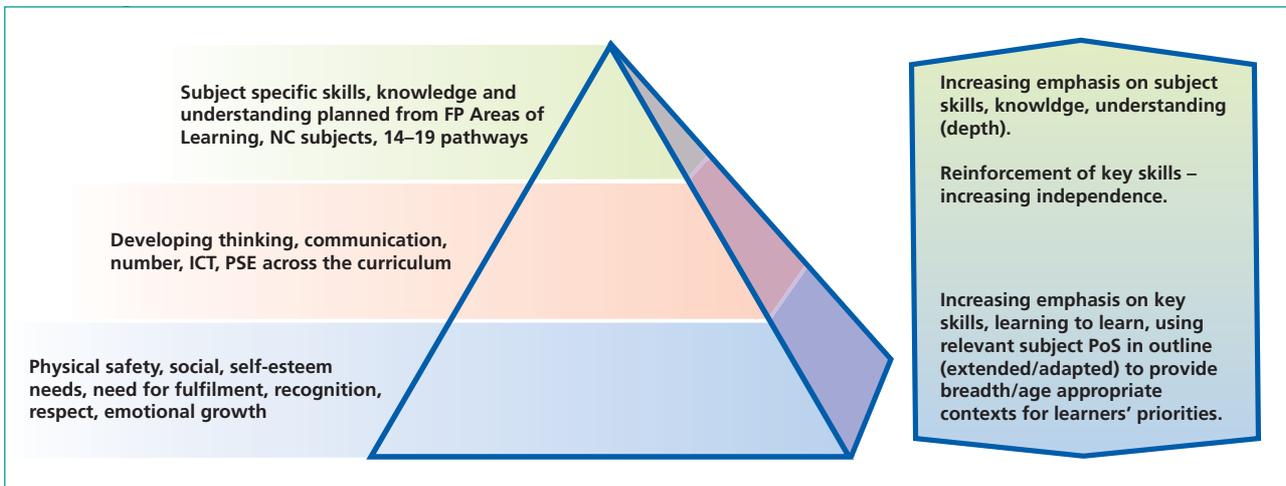
Figure 1 shows that, for effective learning to take place, the physical, safety, social and self-esteem needs outlined in the lower tier of the diagram must first be met. The second tier shows content which will form the basis of a relevant curriculum for all learners – developing thinking, communication, personal and social skills. This may also include physical, orientation and mobility skills, life skills and leisure and recreational skills. For learners with more complex needs, subject skills, knowledge and understanding may not be high priority but content can be selected from Areas of Learning/subject programmes of study which is relevant to learner needs and which will additionally provide interesting contexts for continuing work on individual priorities. For some learners, physiotherapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy and other additional areas may be an integral part of the curriculum.

Overall, the curriculum for every learner should aim to provide real understanding and relevant life skills not just 'coverage' of subject content.

An effective curriculum is not a series of 'one off' learning experiences. It must be planned with the needs of the learner in mind to ensure that individual priorities and key concepts are revisited in different contexts to ensure learning, transfer and embedding of relevant skills and understanding.

Schools must provide a broad, balanced curriculum which includes the national curriculum and religious education (RE) and they should provide a clear explanation for the decisions made regarding curricular emphases in the light of the learners' needs and the requirements of the equalities legislation. The resulting rationale should be documented in whole curriculum or subject policy statements. The questions in Appendix 2 may be used to support this process.

Fig. 1: Planning an inclusive curriculum



- **Long term plans:** should give an overview of the content selected from Areas of Learning or subject programmes of study together with skills from the developing thinking, communication, number and ICT frameworks.

The plans should use the age appropriate programmes of study as a starting point, drawing on relevant content and/or contexts for learning if some content is not accessible to all learners. In such cases, teachers should look at the earlier Areas of Learning/programmes of study as a basis for outlining the key concepts, essential questions and life skills which learners will need to become independent learners. Schools may identify these concepts within Areas of Learning/subjects to be taught in blocked units or continuing units and show links between subject areas and skills to ensure coherence.

Plans should also show progression and continuity across key stages in broad terms to clarify learners' entitlement to breadth and balance within the curriculum.

#### **Four year rolling programme – Key Stage 2 (resourced provision for learners with severe learning difficulties)**

The approach to planning shown in Figure 2 ensures progression, continuity and coverage without repetition for Key Stage 2 classes. Common themes have been used in some cases to group subjects together, avoid fragmentation and promote the generalisation of skills. The school emphasises the process of learning and avoids superficial content coverage. Themes usually span a term to allow for learners who find new situations/activities threatening to adjust to and become familiar with a new project so deriving maximum benefit. Medium term and short term plans will address differentiation to meet the wide range of needs in each class. All learners will have individual learning objectives (for communication/English and early concept development/mathematics) and in many cases the subjects shown above serve as a vehicle to address these priorities. ICT and Welsh (second language) are also covered across the curriculum as are many elements of PSE, considered to be a core subject at this school.

Fig. 2: Example of long term plan

<p>Y E A R 2</p>	<p>Electricity (SC)  ← Transport (GEO) →  Using Paint - Brushes (ART)  ← Showing Enjoyment New Instruments (MUSIC) → ← Turn taking /Active Play (DRAMA) →  ← Human Growth (PSE) → Christmas – Traditional Celebrations (RE)</p>	<p>Materials – Grouping (SC)  Comparisons (GEO)  Using Paint -Printers / Rollers (ART)  ← Showing Enjoyment Showing Preference (MUSIC) → ← Turn taking Party Games (DRAMA) →  ← Balance –Gym / Dance (PE) → ← Personal Safety (PSE) → Self Worth / Self Advocacy (RE) Easter Story In the Arts (RE)</p>	<p>Plants (SC)  Old and New (HIST) Using Fabric – Appliqué (ART)  ← Showing Enjoyment Small Group Appreciation (MUSIC) → ← Making Actions – Noises with Others Watching + Imitating (DRAMA) → ← Games – Ball Games/ Athletics (PE) → ← Caring for Self + Others (PSE) → ← Bullying (RE) →  Animals – Wild (SC) Teddy Bears Picnic (DT)  Papier Mache (ART)</p>
<p>Y E A R 3</p>	<p>Floating and Sinking (SC)  My House (HIST) Using Paint –Sponges /Splatter Nets (ART)  ← 5a Turn Taking Whole Group Composition (MUSIC) → ← 5a Making Actions – Noises with Others Interacting (DRAMA) → ← Travelling and Direction – Gym / Dance (PE) → Care of Property (RE) Healthy Living (PSE) → Christmas Messages (RE)</p>	<p>Materials – Grouping (SC)  Creating 3D Form (ART)  ← Buildings(GEO) →  ← Turn Taking Gestures - Cues (MUSIC) → ← Relationship Awareness Relaxation (DRAMA) →  ← My Community + Me (PSE) → Easter Foods (RE) Care of Animals (RE)</p>	<p>Humans (SC) Sticking and Materials (DT)  Using Pater – Cutting (ART)  ← Turn Taking - Recording ICT (MUSIC) → ← Relationship Awareness Body Awareness (DRAMA) → ← Games – Table Top Games / Athletics(PE) → ← My Family and Me (PSE) → ← Animal Environments (RE) →  Animals – Mimitbeasts (SC)  Weather (GEO)  Using Fabric – Texture Collage (ART)</p>

- **Medium term plans:** should be designed to extend/modify the selected content bearing in mind the broad profile of learners. They should focus on assessment opportunities (to ascertain what learners know, understand and can do through a range of activities) and show progression through skills/concepts (see Figure 3). Medium term plans may also include a range of learning activities (taking account of learners diverse needs and preferences), resources and teaching approaches to actively engage learners. Skills of developing thinking, communication, number and ICT should be included with planned revisiting and reinforcement.

Fig. 3: Example of medium term plan

Medium term plan for science				
LEARNING OUTCOMES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES	ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES	RESOURCES	KEY SKILLS AND PROCESSES
For pupils to be able to listen and show an interest in a variety of sounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- listening to and making a variety of sounds in the classroom of everyday sounds</li> <li>- explore and classify loud and quiet sounds</li> <li>- explore and classify sounds produced from different materials eg metal, wood, paper, plastic</li> <li>- sound lotto games with familiar sounds</li> <li>- tape musical instruments. Can we guess the sound to match the instrument</li> <li>- paired game. One child plays a hidden instrument / sound. The other child identifies the sound.</li> <li>- go on a sound walk / hunt around school / locality</li> <li>- computer programs involving sound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils' ability to make a sound on request</li> <li>Pupils' ability to respond to sound</li> <li>Pupils' ability to make choices about sound (preferences)</li> <li>Pupils' ability to identify a sound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tape recorder</li> <li>Sound lotto games</li> <li>Instruments</li> <li>Various materials for sound making</li> <li>CD-ROM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication skills</li> <li>Thinking skills</li> <li>ICT skills</li> </ul>
For pupils to learn that instruments / noise makers making sounds are vibrating / moving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- blow up a balloon, hold it to a child's ear and talk through it</li> <li>- twang a ruler on a desk</li> <li>- rice / confetti on a drum / cymbal</li> <li>- comb and paper kazoos to feel the vibration</li> <li>- feel and play various stringed instruments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils' ability to react to vibration</li> <li>Pupils' ability to notice movement</li> <li>Pupils' ability to maintain contact with instrument while it is being played</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication skills</li> </ul>

- **Short term plans:** will be differentiated to take account of learners' priority needs (as outlined in their individual education plan). For some curriculum areas where more open ended tasks are planned, it may be appropriate to outline a menu of learning intentions rather than a list to be followed in set order. More detail may be given about learner groupings, deployment of staff and teaching strategies.

Figure 4 below shows how one specialist resource plans for children in the Foundation Phase by setting out a 'menu' of continuing activities to cover key learning. The key learning is based on the Foundation Phase framework but adapted to suit the children's needs. A similar approach has been taken with the remaining Areas of Learning, with links drawn where relevant to avoid repetition. It is important to note that the key learning is not addressed as a checklist, but as a guide to help staff focus on possible outcomes across many Areas of Learning. The practitioners/teachers also plan learning outcomes (cross-curricular) which focus specifically on the children's individual priorities. Enhanced provision extends the continuous provision to support and extend learning. The children's learning is evaluated on an ongoing basis and flexibility is retained to enable staff to follow the children's preferences and interests and allow time for practice of skills.

Fig. 4: Example of Foundation Phase plan

Foundation Phase Continuous Provision - Language, Literacy and Communication - Mark Making		
What will the children do?	Permanent resources	Key Learning
Mark make/write Make patterns Draw Communicate Experiment/try out Problem solve Trace Read Draw around things Create pictures and messages to send to each other Use magnetic boards/letters Rub out Copy letters around them Role play	White Board Pens Pencils (thick and thin) Crayons Felts Gel pens Chalk/boards Lined paper Plain paper Coloured paper Shaped paper Tracing paper Letters/magnetic etc. Whiteboards/pens Books Envelopes Rubbers Sharpeners Enhancements	<b>Personal and Social Development</b> The children will begin to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a choice to play in the mark making area.</li> <li>• Accept a variety of textures to make marks in.</li> <li>• Explore and experiment with increased confidence.</li> <li>• Take turns and share.</li> <li>• Concentrate for lengthening periods.</li> <li>• Interact and form relationships with other children and adults.</li> <li>• Show care, respect and affection for other children and adults.</li> <li>• Select resources independently.</li> </ul> <b>Mathematical Development</b> The children will begin to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the sensory properties of mark making.</li> <li>• Enjoy working in an area that gives experience of shape.</li> </ul> <b>Language, Literacy and Communication</b> The children will begin to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make exploratory marks in a variety of sensory media.</li> <li>• Communicate using speech/sign/gestures.</li> <li>• Develop left to right orientation.</li> <li>• Overwrite in sensory media.</li> <li>• Scribble with intent.</li> <li>• Develop a more refined grasp of a mark making tool.</li> <li>• Make choices.</li> <li>• Listen.</li> <li>• Make exploratory marks on paper using a variety of instruments.</li> <li>• Develop their awareness that written symbols have a meaning.</li> <li>• Enjoy mark making using a variety of materials.</li> <li>• Colour in a bold shape with support.</li> <li>• Make marks between tramlines.</li> </ul>

The key learning demonstrated in Figure 4 takes place within termly themes and all learning experiences are planned to meet the children's needs in a holistic way, naturally covering many areas of development.

Teachers may consider the following points to support their planning:

- How will I activate the full range of learners' prior knowledge at the start of the lesson?
- How and when will I share learning outcomes and involve learners in developing success criteria?
- What teaching strategies will I use? (see Appendix 3, page 63)
- How can questions be used to encourage thinking and support learning? The levels of language used should be carefully considered with planned opportunities for learners to collaborate and become increasingly independent in their learning.
- What activities will help learners to develop and show their understanding? Plan a variety of meaningful activities to provide enjoyment and appropriate pace and challenge with opportunities for learners to act upon/use information with increasing autonomy.
- What materials will be needed?
- Is the overall design of the lesson(s) coherent and effective?
- How and how often will I give supportive feedback to help learners move on?
- How will learning be recorded? What evidence will be noted/kept?

## From 'differentiation' to 'transforming learning capacity'

Simpson and Ure (1994)<sup>1</sup> in their study of differentiation concluded that if teachers do not respond to learners' individual needs or don't know how to create the conditions which allow them to do so, no differentiation strategy will be very effective. They stress that all learners have shared needs associated with:

- **the curriculum:** the need to be given appropriate levels of work; to know about what is to be learned; to be set realistic short term targets; to have support in the acquisition of component or prerequisite skills
- **cognition:** the need to have explanations which are comprehensible; to have misunderstandings and misconceptions identified and rectified; to be given 'conceptual scaffolding' that will enable the organisation of detail or the elaborations of abstract concepts; to have available strategies such as concept mapping to assist in the development of understanding
- **the management of learning:** the need to have support in self pacing and management of work; to be assisted in understanding how to work profitably in groups; to be able to identify strategies for problem-solving/tackling exam questions/taking notes/ highlighting key points/revising, etc; to develop a strategy for asking for help with problems
- **motivational factors:** the need to be motivated to learn; to expect success and progression in learning; to be confident; to expect problems to be capable of resolution; to have high but attainable goals; to recognise purpose in the learning process; to value the skills and knowledge acquired in school and to have an expectancy that these are a springboard for future learning
- **personal factors:** the need to have idiosyncratic personal issues taken note of, e.g. at times of crisis/stress; to have personal circumstances taken into account, e.g. lack of facilities for homework, lack of parental support; to have assistance with improving personal and interpersonal skills; low self-esteem; to have help in dealing with peer group pressure.

Beyond this learners may differ in terms of their:

- prior experiences and attainment

<sup>1</sup> Simpson M, Ure J. *What's the difference? A study of differentiation in Scottish secondary schools* (Northern College Publications, 1994).

- cognitive development and pace of learning
- learning preferences, physical differences
- motivation, attitude, effort, personality
- interest, strengths, talents.

Many of the common factors will be addressed by settings/schools that have a positive ethos, which takes account of social and emotional factors in children's learning. The emphasis on well being in the Foundation Phase should continue throughout Key Stages 2 and 3 and 14–19 Pathways. The Welsh Assembly Government has provided further guidance in *Thinking positively – emotional health and well-being in schools and early years settings* and has adapted the social emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) materials from the Primary National Strategy in England.

*The ethic of everybody* (Hart et al 2004) focuses on meeting the diverse needs of all learners through a range of engaging experiences. Practitioners/teachers should focus on 'building learning capacity' and consider:

- teaching – styles matched to needs/groups, varied as appropriate to content, flexible levels of support/scaffolding, language levels
- learning environment – flexible groupings, ethos accepting of diversity, experiences which reflect learner interests, respect, opportunities for learner participation in decision-making, accessible physical environment.

Moving from planning for the majority and then 'differentiating' to meet additional needs, teachers may consider providing options in the following:

- content – coverage (pace of learning, sequence, need for revisiting), complexity of content, lesson structure
- process – development and application of thinking skills, integration, generalisation and transfer of learning opportunities for multi-sensory learning
- product/outcomes – using a variety of methods to communicate learning, learner participation in range of assessment activities to demonstrate learning
- materials/resources/equipment – including technological aids to support communication/access
- homework.

Practitioners/teachers should develop with learners a 'language for learning' so they become aware of their own strengths and ways to tackle any difficulties. Learners may be 'tracked' to monitor their experience and ensure that they have access to a varied curriculum with a balance of activities and teaching styles, 1:1 and group/class work.

Such tracking can check that the whole programme is coherent with any repetition being planned and links between Areas of Learning/ subjects identified. Learners should be given opportunities to learn then consolidate new skills and use them in a range of contexts to increase their independence in learning. This may be achieved by group rotation through a variety of tasks, where groups may focus on skill development, skill reinforcement or working more independently on 'safe' skills. To support learners with a wider range of needs, it may be possible to 'jigsaw' tasks, allocating different parts of the whole activity to different individuals, pairs or groups depending on their strengths and areas for development. This will give learners a more holistic experience than that gained when tasks are presented in small steps and they lose sight of the purpose/end result.



## Meeting the needs of more able and talented learners

In every school, there will be a group of learners who require extending, regardless of how they compare to more able and talented learners in other schools. The needs of more able and talented learners cannot be separated from the move to raise standards for all learners – to quote Renzulli (1998) 'A rising tide lifts all ships'.

Guidance on meeting the needs of more able and talented learners was provided in *A curriculum of opportunity: developing potential into performance* (ACCAC, 2003). This document provides guidance on the identification of more able learners, ways of organising and grouping learners and of extending and enriching their learning which is still relevant.

*Meeting the Challenge – Quality Standards for More Able and Talented Pupils* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008) provides a clear framework for the development of whole school quality provision covering the following areas of whole school strategy:

- identification, targets for improvement
- the use of a range of learning and teaching approaches and organisational strategies
- a flexible curriculum and provision to address pastoral needs
- reviews to identify underachievement and support individual learners including the exceptionally able
- a commitment to improving staff skills and developing appropriate resources
- listening to learners and parents/carers and working with a range of partners
- putting in place effective procedures for monitoring action plans and the effectiveness of school policy.

Provision which challenges more able learners must be an integral part of schools' curriculum design. The following factors contribute to improvements in attainment for all learners:

- the provision of a learning environment that will permit and encourage learners to develop their potential
- a climate that values and enhances intellectual ability, talent, creativity and decision-making
- opportunities to develop thinking, including analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

The best provision for more able and talented learners is made by extending that which is available to all learners. The teacher uses his/her professional skills and action research methodology – carefully monitored – to make adjustments based on evidence.

This approach sits well with the Welsh Assembly Government's current work on Developing Thinking and Assessment for Learning, which has potential to improve questioning and develop higher-level thinking skills, reflection and evaluation for all learners.

Further information and case studies can be found on the NACE Cymru website at:

[www.nace.co.uk/nace/cymru/nace\\_cymru\\_wales.htm](http://www.nace.co.uk/nace/cymru/nace_cymru_wales.htm)

Further guidance for Key Stages 3 and 4 is available in *Supporting learners higher-order literacy skills* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2009).

## Using the skills framework

Developing thinking, communication, ICT and number underpins all the subjects of the national curriculum, the Foundation Phase, PSE and RE frameworks. The *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008) will support settings/schools in developing a curriculum which:

- meets learners' needs
- is inclusive and provides equality of opportunity
- equips learners with transferable skills
- is relevant, challenging, interesting and enjoyable for all learners
- transforms learning to produce resourceful, resilient and reflective lifelong learners.

For learners with more complex needs the *Routes for Learning* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006) materials provide guidance on early communication and cognitive skills.

The Welsh Assembly Government intends to develop guidance on teaching and assessing skills for learners with learning difficulties.

## The personal and social education framework

Personal and social education (PSE) forms part of the basic curriculum for all learners at maintained schools who are of compulsory school age but is often a priority for learners with additional learning needs. The *Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008) reflects a continuum from Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity in the Foundation Phase through Key Stages 2 and 3 into the 14–19 Learning Pathways. The five key themes which include an increased emphasis on skill development are:

- Active Citizenship
- Health and emotional well-being
- Moral and spiritual development
- Preparing for lifelong learning
- Sustainable development and global citizenship.

While the framework provides the basis for a broad, balanced and holistic approach to PSE, many other learning experiences and opportunities which are features of the ethos and community life of the school make an important contribution.

For learners beyond the age of seven years, who are working at earlier levels of development, specific guidance on PSE (including PSE for learners with severe/profound and multiple learning difficulties) can be found on the Welsh Assembly Government PSE website at [www.wales.gov.uk/personalandsocialeducation](http://www.wales.gov.uk/personalandsocialeducation)

## Foundation Phase

The Foundation Phase for children aged 3–7 has its own framework, based around seven Areas of Learning. For more information see [www.wales.gov.uk/foundationphase](http://www.wales.gov.uk/foundationphase)

For learners with more complex needs, the less formal approaches of the Foundation Phase will complement the provision made. For this group, there is a need to consider all relevant perspectives, e.g. family views, to identify priorities and arrive at a 'best fit' programme of study. The curriculum must provide a holistic experience if it is to make sense to the learners and differentiation might include incorporation of various therapies and re-visiting of relevant Areas of Learning/themes. This will provide a more appropriate approach for those whose progression may be measured by an increase in awareness/response or the ability to demonstrate the same achievement on repeated occasions. The Foundation Phase National Training Pack modules on additional learning needs and early intervention stress the need to match the curriculum to the developmental level of individual children. The Foundation Phase is about developing childrens' aspirations, motivation, socialisation, self-esteem and mastery of learning.

## Curriculum and assessment 8–14

The Welsh Assembly Government is currently reviewing curriculum and assessment 8–14 to ensure continuity from Foundation Phase through to 14–19 Learning Pathways. The focus on learners 8–14 will improve consistency across Key Stages 2 and 3 transition and bring together work on developing thinking and assessment for learning, pedagogy, skills development and systems for securing the reliability of teacher assessment.

## 14–19 Learning Pathways

The key elements of the 14–19 Learning Pathways should more effectively meet the individual needs of each learner and promote continuity and progression between Key Stage 4 and post-16. The key features are:

- individually tailored learning pathways
- wider choice and flexibility of programmes and ways of learning, including experiences from all aspects of learner's lives
- a Learning Core which runs from 14 through to 19 wherever young people are learning
- Learning Coach support
- impartial careers advice and guidance.

For further information on 14–19 Learning Pathways see [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills)

The case study below shows how one special school is planning to meet the needs of learners 14–19.

## Case study 1

### Context

3–19 special school, South Wales.

### Background

The school use EQUALS Moving On – with accreditation from AQA units, adapted to their needs and EQUALS Schemes of Work for Key Stages 3 and 4 as a basis for planning. A five year rolling programme is used to avoid repetition, maintain breadth and balance and meet learners' subject entitlement which includes careers and the world of work.

All subjects provide contexts for key skills progression and evidence is gathered from national curriculum core subjects with further examples from non core subjects, generally from school/college situations and community settings such as work experience.

AQA units of accreditation (which are externally moderated) have been written covering characteristics of p scales 1–8 and Entry Level 1. Targets are set for learners achievement in a range of accreditation at the end of Key Stage 4 and in post-16. Individual learning pathways are planned according to need with some learners taking Entry level courses at a local college. These courses are carefully planned to ensure that they meet the needs of individual learners and are not content lead. Three vocational courses have recently been written with the local college.

Moving On evidence is kept as an on going Record of Achievement (RoA) and this is highly valued by students and their families. The RoA also contains a summative record, certificates, personal statement, etc.

Ongoing assessment for learning focuses on key skills. This has lead to more focused RoAs as learning outcomes are noted together with level of help/prompting given. To provide a framework for key skill outcomes, relevant indicators have been taken from B Squared numeracy, and the school's schemes of work for Scientific Enquiry and English.

Individual education plans (IEPs) focus on key skills and behaviour. Three targets are set per year according to individual need (not taken from a pre defined checklist). The IEP further informs differentiation, allowing the broader curriculum to be tailored to meet key skill targets and individual priorities.

Teachers write a termly plan which has moved from a focus on activity to a clearer focus on specific outcomes, within the following three levels:

- p 1–3
- p 4–6
- p 7 – national curriculum Level 1.

(Following the implementation of the 2008 curriculum these three groupings might translate to *Routes for Learning*, national curriculum outcome 1 and 2, national curriculum outcome 3/national curriculum Level 1).

The format of the plan includes four columns for developing thinking, communication, number and ICT skills and outcomes for learners in the three bands outlined above are written under appropriate key skill headings.

Outcomes are not contrived and are allocated to the key skill which is the main 'driver' for the task/activity leading to the desired outcome.

## Transition

Transition between all phases in education requires careful management. The curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales aim to form a single, coherent whole which will support greater continuity for learners of all abilities 3–19.

For each learner moving from the Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2, schools will need to ensure continuity between Areas of Learning and subjects of the national curriculum.

Transition plans are required to support learners moving from Year 6 to Year 7, and primary and secondary schools are required to work together to ensure coordination of:

- the curriculum (including shared schemes of work, bridging units, linguistic continuity)
- continuity and progression in learning
- continuity in assessment and teaching
- effective transfer of pastoral arrangements to meet learners personal/social needs
- transfer of information about achievement and behaviour
- details of the learning needs of all learners, in particular those with additional educational needs
- moderation of teacher assessment.

More information can be found in the Welsh Assembly Government Circular 30/2006 *Guidance on the preparation of Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 Transition Plans*.

# Curriculum FAQs – your questions answered

## Question 1 | **How much time must I plan to spend on core and foundation subjects?**

There are no nationally specified times for particular subjects and schools should decide the amount of time allocated to different curriculum elements over the course of each week, half term, term or year in the light of learner needs. Although the national curriculum is set out in subjects, there is no requirement to teach them separately.

Settings/schools may manage their time in a variety of ways for example:

- allocating time daily to areas such as communication deemed to be priorities for most learners
- teaching some subjects in blocks on alternating half term/terms, e.g. geography, history
- selecting and prioritising the most relevant content from subject programmes of study – teaching this in depth, while other content may be dealt with in outline or used as a context for developing thinking/key skills/personal and social skills, etc.
- grouping subjects together in topics/themes and identifying relevant/priority cross-curricular skills
- continuing learners personal, social programmes throughout lunchtime, etc. and fully exploring the potential of daily routines as learning opportunities
- having a more intensive focus on one/two subject areas over a period of a week, e.g. arts week.

Settings/schools should, over time, review and amend their documents in the light of the school curriculum (2008). This may include whole school curriculum statements, policy documents and subject plans/guidelines/schemes of work.

Similarly, in the Foundation Phase, there are no nationally specified times for Areas of Learning. The Foundation Phase should be delivered holistically, providing opportunities for children to initiate activities. Young children's learning cannot be compartmentalised and transferable skills should be developed across all Areas of Learning through interesting and engaging experiences.

---

**Question 2 | How can I plan effectively to meet the needs of mixed Foundation Phase and/or mixed key stage classes?**

The flexibility in the curriculum framework and the increased focus on the development of cross-curricular skills should support small schools in meeting the full range of learner needs. Strategies used by schools include:

- planning across different key stage programmes of study to provide a 'best fit' to meet learner needs
- selecting appropriate themes to use (perhaps on a rolling programme) as a context for a range of outcomes to meet learner needs
- selecting a range of resources for learners of different ages
- linking to other schools (specialist/mainstream) and the community to provide opportunities for differentiation and progression for older learners in the group.

---

**Question 3 | I teach learners with severe learning difficulties. How can I plan to make sure there are opportunities for progression beyond hierarchical increases in skills, knowledge and understanding?**

In addition to new skills and increased knowledge and understanding, progression through and across key stages may be shown through:

- increasing the breadth of curriculum content
- creating opportunities to consolidate, maintain and generalise skills/concepts
- providing greater opportunities for creativity/experiential learning and experience of a wider range of learning/teaching styles and methods
- increasing learner participation in the learning and assessment process by including opportunities for discussion and negotiation
- extending learning contexts to include more age appropriate situations, wider range of people and environments settings, school, community, work experience
- providing opportunities to practise skills and apply knowledge in relevant practical situations with increasing independence, in preparation for adulthood.

For learners with the most complex needs, the route towards independence must be seen as more than 'doing it by yourself'. Many learners with such needs will only ever be able to do only small parts of a whole activity due to their physical/sensory impairments. Here, shared or partial participation is important.

Learners must not be excluded from activities because they cannot do all of a task or develop independence in that area. Planning the curriculum for learners with complex needs must take into account that the ability to partially participate or cooperate with, for example, personal care routines, can make a real difference to quality of life for both the learners and their parents/carers.

Appendix 4 gives information on curriculum models and progression for learners with more complex needs and further information can be found in the *Routes for Learning* guidance.

---

**Question 4** | **I teach Key Stage 3 learners with autistic spectrum disorders in a mainstream school. They have particular difficulty with Welsh and French and some parents have asked for them to be disapplied. What should I advise?**

The curriculum framework provided by the Foundation Phase and national curriculum should serve as a basis for a relevant curriculum which meets the needs of all learners. Disapplication through a Statement of SEN (under Section 92 of the Education Act 2002) or on a temporary basis (under Section 93 of the Education Act 2002) should be necessary only in very exceptional circumstances. The 'Including all learners' statement stresses that sufficient flexibility exists within the curriculum framework to meet the needs of learners without the need for disapplication and that group or large-scale disapplications should not be used.

Before any form of disapplication is considered, schools should have evidence of the range of strategies/approaches used together with outcomes/results. All cases should be considered on an individual basis and the statutory requirement to provide a broad, balanced curriculum complied with. Disapplication should not be used to create time for additional basic skills support. Further information on disapplication, including information on general and special directions and parent/carer requests and appeals can be found at [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills)

With regards to the teaching of Welsh and modern foreign languages, the case study below may provide some useful ideas in using these languages as new and interesting contexts through which to teach a range of communication skills.

## Case study 2

The Communication Unit at a North Wales High School supports learners with a range of autistic spectrum disorders.

Languages here are regarded as an opportunity for a fresh start in developing communication skills and building self-esteem in a variety of age appropriate contexts. For this group of learners, the traditional method of teaching languages (e.g. in 2/3 lessons spread across each week) does not meet with a high level of success. The need to teach languages in context to increase motivation and interest forms the basis of the school's approach. One of the key features of language lessons is the emphasis on body language and non verbal communication to support learning. This aspect is particularly beneficial to learners with ASD who find, for example, reading facial expressions extremely difficult. Learners are encouraged to use their faces, hands or whole body when speaking the target language and to pay particular attention to these aspects to supplement information gained by listening.

Welsh (taught here as a second language) is seen as being closely aligned with Cwricwlwm Cymreig and cultural enrichment activities, such as the school Eisteddfod and other celebrations. A residential course is held annually at Glan Llyn (the Urdd Centre near Bala). Learners prepare for this trip by learning the language they will need to use in everyday situations – taught through role play, games, etc. For these learners, opportunities to develop personal and social skills can be a further important element.

French is taught in a similar way and a French Day has been run jointly with the local special school. This provided a range of practical, concrete activities (including petit dejeuner!) with structured opportunities to learn and practice everyday French and gain knowledge of some events in French history (Bastille Day).

### Question 5

**For many of our learners skills such as communication and developing thinking will be priorities. Will these areas be an appropriate focus for their individual education plans (IEPs)?**

IEPs which clearly identify learners' priorities for attention across the curriculum are key in supporting more effective learning and improved rates of progress.

The examples on the next page show how one special school already plan with a focus on key skills. Learners are involved in recording and improving their own performance and work to gain stars in each of the three areas (which vary according to learner age). The examples are for learners at Foundation Phase and Key Stages 2 and 3. For learners 14–19, the focus is on key skills and work/college experience and Asdan. Where sensory and/or physical development is a priority, this area is also added.

Termly progress towards each target is discussed with learners and recorded as follows: 1 star = experienced, 2 stars = making progress, 3 stars = cracked it!



## Curriculum monitoring and evaluation

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum should be set out in school policy documents. The full range of professionals, learners and parents/carers can play a part. To evaluate the effectiveness of the whole curriculum in the longer term, the following questions should be considered.

- Have our curriculum aims been met? Does follow up show that the school curriculum has produced motivated, independent learners with range of relevant skills they can transfer across situations and use in their daily lives?
- Does practice reflect policy? Are learners' needs met – including social, moral and spiritual needs?
- Do learners receive their entitlement to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum?
- Does the curriculum acknowledge and support the diversity of cultural and linguistic backgrounds within the school and the local community? Does the curriculum promote awareness of cultural diversity in Wales and beyond?
- Does the curriculum systematically build on the learning of individuals and ensure the development and application of key skills in a range of contexts across key stages?
- Is the curriculum coherent with a consistent approach to skills and links between Areas of Learning and subjects which make sense to learners?

In monitoring particular aspects of the curriculum/Areas of Learning/subjects, settings/schools may consider the following questions.

- Were intended learning outcomes met? Were there any additional/unplanned outcomes?
- Which learning/teaching approaches were most effective?
- Did responses differ between boys/girls, learners of different abilities, those using English/Welsh as an additional language? Were all given opportunities to show their skills, knowledge, understanding through a variety of ways?
- What did learners think of the content/learning opportunities provided?
- How were learners grouped? Was this effective in facilitating collaboration?

- Were support staff used effectively to support learning?
- What resources were used to help learners to be increasingly independent in their learning?
- How did the physical environment support learning?
- How did the ethos/climate support learning?
- How do we know that learners are achieving the planned/desired outcomes?





*Section*

# 2

Assessing all learners

## The revised assessment framework

The recent review of the national curriculum has resulted in the development of a more coherent assessment framework which now includes all learners.

Fig. 6: The assessment framework

Age 3	7	14	Qualifications
Routes for Learning			
Foundation Phase Outcome 1	National Curriculum Outcome 1	Pre Entry	
Foundation Phase Outcome 2	National Curriculum Outcome 2		
Foundation Phase Outcome 3	National Curriculum Outcome 3		
Foundation Phase Outcome 4	National Curriculum Level 1	Entry 1	
Foundation Phase Outcome 5	National Curriculum Level 2	Entry 2	
Foundation Phase Outcome 6	National Curriculum Level 3	Entry 3	
	National Curriculum Level 4	GCSE	
	National Curriculum Level 5		
	National Curriculum Level 6		
	National Curriculum Level 7		
	National Curriculum Level 8		
	Exceptional Performance		

Building on the *Routes for Learning* materials (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006) which have been written to assess learners with the most complex needs working at very early levels of development, the outcomes for the Foundation Phase Areas of Learning (3 to 7-year-olds) and the outcomes for early attainment in national curriculum subjects have been developed together, using common text where appropriate. They take a holistic approach and identify important concepts and cross-curricular skills which reflect priorities for learners working at levels where it may be hard to divide progress into discrete subjects. These outcomes will provide a common language and structure to record progress made by learners with a range of additional learning needs.

## Using the national curriculum outcomes

The national curriculum outcomes and level descriptions are designed for summative assessment of learning. They indicate the type and range of performance that learners working at a particular level characteristically demonstrate but are not a full description of all that a learner might achieve.

They are not designed for day to day use with learners. While practitioners/teachers should be able to relate learners' individual targets to characteristics within the outcomes and levels (i.e. have an idea of 'levelness') they should not constantly judge learners against them or allow them to lead planning and 'narrow' curriculum opportunities. Breaking down the outcomes/level descriptions or adding to them may change the basis on which 'best fit' judgements are made and reduce consistency between teachers and schools.

Single examples of a learner's work should not be assigned a level, but may form part of a body of evidence, gathered over time and across a range of activities/contexts, to support a rounded judgement of attainment. Selected individual examples of learners' work should provide teachers with evidence of the characteristics of one or more levels. Such examples will be helpful:

- for qualitative feedback to learners
- as a reference for school-based standardisation of teachers' understanding of national standards
- for moderating teacher judgements of learner performance.

It is not necessary for learners to demonstrate every characteristic – or a percentage of characteristics – to be awarded an outcome/level. Some learners may show a 'spiky' profile and show characteristics from a level above or below the one which, the practitioner/teacher feels best describes their performance overall.

It is not necessary to set up special assessment activities as many aspects of the curriculum are not best served by 'one hit' assessment. Although tests may seem to offer a more precise means of assessment, they should not be used in place of or just to confirm teachers' judgements. They may sample only a narrow range of skills, knowledge and understanding but will add different information to contribute to the overall summative judgement. Further information on using standardised tests is given in *Ensuring consistency in teacher assessment: Guidance for Key Stages 2 and 3* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008).

Some learners may show partial or inconsistent performance and/or require special equipment to allow them to demonstrate their attainment and it may be necessary to apply some characteristics flexibly or even disregard them if there are learners who are unable to perform them due to a particular difficulty or disability. In English, for example, learners may attain a level for writing by using a computer or reading may be from a screen rather than turning pages of a book. Requirements may also need adapting for learners with sensory impairments. Practitioners/teachers should be aware of physical or cognitive support given and should consider whether this changes the nature or level of the learner's response.

## The relationship between formative and summative assessment

Formative and summative are functions, not types of assessment. The key difference is in the use made of the evidence and information gathered. Both are forms of teacher assessment and should make a positive contribution to learning.

Formative assessment for learning	Summative assessment of learning
Practitioners/teachers focus on individual learners' ongoing achievements.	Practitioners/teachers use knowledge gained about learners from a range of activities over time, to make and record their judgements on overall attainment at the end of the phase/key stage.
A cycle of activity where evidence is gathered (e.g. through observation, questioning, review of written work, learner's self/peer assessment) and is interpreted in terms of progress towards short-term goals/individual priorities.	Information is interpreted in terms of achievement of certain skills, knowledge and understanding outlined in common criteria (Foundation Phase/national curriculum outcomes/levels), enabling information to be compared.
Information is used to help learners take the next steps in their learning.	Information may be used to report to learners, parents/carers and to make decisions about future options or for accreditation/qualifications. Information may be fed back into the learner's learning but this is not usually immediate.
Assessment is usually via internal measures such as skills, knowledge, understanding identified in schemes of work and IEP targets which cannot be aggregated and are used to evaluate the progress of individuals/success of strategies/interventions, etc.	Aggregated results may be used for evaluating the effectiveness of the school, local authority and for monitoring standards.

Schools will use their own more finely tuned criteria for ongoing assessment for learning and for identifying individual learning needs. These will inevitably assess some characteristics of the outcomes/level descriptions and teachers will use this information as outlined in the table on page 37. Further information on using evidence from learning activities for both formative and summative purposes can be found in Appendices 5 and 6 (pages 68 and 72) which provide further guidance to schools wishing to review the profile of their assessment practice and use of assessment information.

For children below the age of seven years, the Foundation Phase Outcomes should be used. For learners aged seven and older, the national curriculum outcomes should be used (with the possible exception of learners with profound learning disabilities who may be following a curriculum based on Areas of Learning beyond the age of seven). The two sets of outcomes are closely related and both retain a focus on important cross-curricular skills.

Following the introduction of national curriculum outcomes, settings/schools will want to review their collection and use of assessment information, to ensure that it is fit for purpose and each intended audience (which may include parents/carers, learners, local authorities, Estyn).

Most importantly, they should consider the impact on learning, ensuring that all forms of assessment not only establish that learning has occurred but ultimately move learning on. The collection and analysis of assessment information should not be given a higher priority than analysis of learning needs.

Whatever summative data are collected and used, key learning may also be summarised to give a context (see Figure 7).

Fig. 7: Example of pupil report

<b>Pupil Progress Report</b>						<i>Pupil Progress Report</i>			
			<i>Date of birth</i>				<i>Admission date</i>		
			<i>Current Yr Group</i>				<i>Current Class</i>		
<b>Routes for Learning data</b>				<b>Annual Review Progress data</b>					
			No. of Items Achieved	Highest item	Assessor	Date	Yr	Summary of progress	
01/01/2007	Y1	Class 1	14	23	SL	21/06/2005	N	Settled in well. Medication changed since christmas, eye contact improved, interacting with other pupils. Vocalising 'eee' when happy, occasionally saying 'yes'.	
01/07/2007	Y1	Class 1	26	26	SL	27/06/2006	R	Food & drink intake have caused concern. Motivation variable. Recently taking more fluids daily, now adequately hydrated.	
						13/05/2007	Y1	Epilepsy stabilised. Last recorded fit 09/06. Making more eye contact. Will reach to signal 'more'. Can hit a switch to operate toy. Moving now by bottom-shuffle and high-kneeling.	
<b>P Scale Summary Data</b>				<b>Attendance data</b>					
			Assessed Level (P1 - P3)	P Level subject average	Assessor:	School Year	% attendance		
14/10/2004			P2 (i)	P 2	PH	2004-2005	85%		
09/06/2005			P2 (i)	P 2	PH	2005-2006	86%		
01/05/2006			P1 (ii)	P1.5	SL	2006-2007	84%		

Although the above example from a special school in South Wales relates to learners with more complex needs, this model could be followed with the summary of progress highlighting gains in key cross-curricular skills. Note that references to p scales may be replaced in future by Foundation Phase/national curriculum outcomes and guidance on skills assessments.

The Estyn report *Evaluating outcomes for children and young people with additional learning needs* ([www.estyn.gov.uk/publications](http://www.estyn.gov.uk/publications)) suggests that local authorities should work in partnership with schools to monitor and evaluate the progress made by learners with special educational needs in achieving their individual learning targets, particularly those in communication, behaviour, literacy, numeracy, thinking skills, ICT and Welsh language development, where appropriate. It further suggests that schools should include information about learning outcomes in key personal and social skills, attendance, behaviour, progression and participation in wider activities when evaluating outcomes for learners with special educational needs.

Information from Foundation Phase or national curriculum summative assessment will be only one of a range of indicators which measure what we value and the Welsh Assembly Government is committed to finding ways to measure and value wider achievement (see case studies on pages 46 and 47). In addition, the Welsh Assembly Government has developed and piloted a School Effectiveness Framework which recognises that education outcomes do not just depend on schools but are influenced by a range of factors including poverty, family circumstances, housing and health. If schools are to deliver effectively for their learners they need to work with parents, the local community, statutory partners and voluntary organisations.

## Monitoring learners' progress

Many schools have in place locally agreed systems to track the progress of their learners. For learners aged 3–7 practitioners may use the Foundation Phase Child Development Profile to assess ongoing progress.

If they provide evidence of learning in relevant areas, for example, skills, they can support the use of national curriculum outcomes/levels when all information about the learners is considered in making a best fit judgement. IEP targets, learning outcomes in subject schemes of work and optional skills assessment materials will all provide additional opportunities to monitor and record learner progress.

Tracking of learners' progress should have both a quantitative and qualitative focus.

Quantitative tracking will primarily include the recording and analysis of summative information based on outcomes/levels. These data will provide an overview of trends in the setting/school, the performance of different classes/groups across subjects and may allow benchmarking with others locally or nationally.

Qualitative tracking will often be done as a narrative to record learning which is erratic and not linear. Here too, evidence of skills which occur in different contexts can be noted, showing the learner's depth of acquisition and range of application. Such records can also take account of the social dimensions of learning and provide insight into learners' construction of meaning, learning strategies and dispositions. This type of monitoring is therefore more holistic.

Both types of information are of value to policy and practice. Settings/schools should resist the temptation to reduce learning to checklists for the purposes of tracking as, although such practices may provide evidence of learner experiences, a 'tick' can provide little quality information to help the learner to move on in line with assessment for learning principles. The rigid application of hierarchical lists can often lead to assessment becoming a mechanical process which, in turn may encourage only superficial learning rather than in-depth understanding and wider application of skills.

The Welsh Assembly Government plans to publish further guidance on best use of assessment information in spring 2010.

## Expectations of learner progress

Learners' progress will not necessarily be regular or linear. They might regress in some aspects of their work, reach a plateau or progress significantly in certain areas. The national curriculum outcomes and level descriptions are deliberately broad to reflect these features of learners' development and the broad expectation is that an 'average' learner will progress one level over two years. For learners with special educational needs, particularly those who are working at the earlier levels of development outlined in the national curriculum outcomes, movement between levels may take longer and progress may be more variable. Learners should not, therefore, be expected to reach particular outcomes by a certain age and should not be 'labelled' using outcomes/levels.

Teachers need a sound knowledge of possible progression routes to enable them to move learners along over time towards the achievement of essential concepts and skills. The interim steps required for annual reporting and self-evaluation will be part of these progression routes. Over frequent levelling of a learner's work/performance using national curriculum levels/outcomes is counter productive and often meaningless and may be confusing or demoralising for learners, staff and parents/carers.

Holistic pupil tracking provides evidence to parents/carers, local authorities, etc. of the progress learners make in Areas of Learning and national curriculum subjects as well as wider learning. Wider definitions of progress for learners with more complex needs are discussed in the *Routes for Learning* guidance.

### Case study 3

Figure 8 shows how the Annual Performance Review is carried out at one all age special school (135 learners on roll). The school feels strongly that, in order to impact on learners, target setting must start from the learners themselves. Learners are assessed annually using Equals PACE or *Routes for Learning* and these results are analysed by subject (and attainment targets for English/Welsh), class achievement and individual pupil results to show value added for the year.

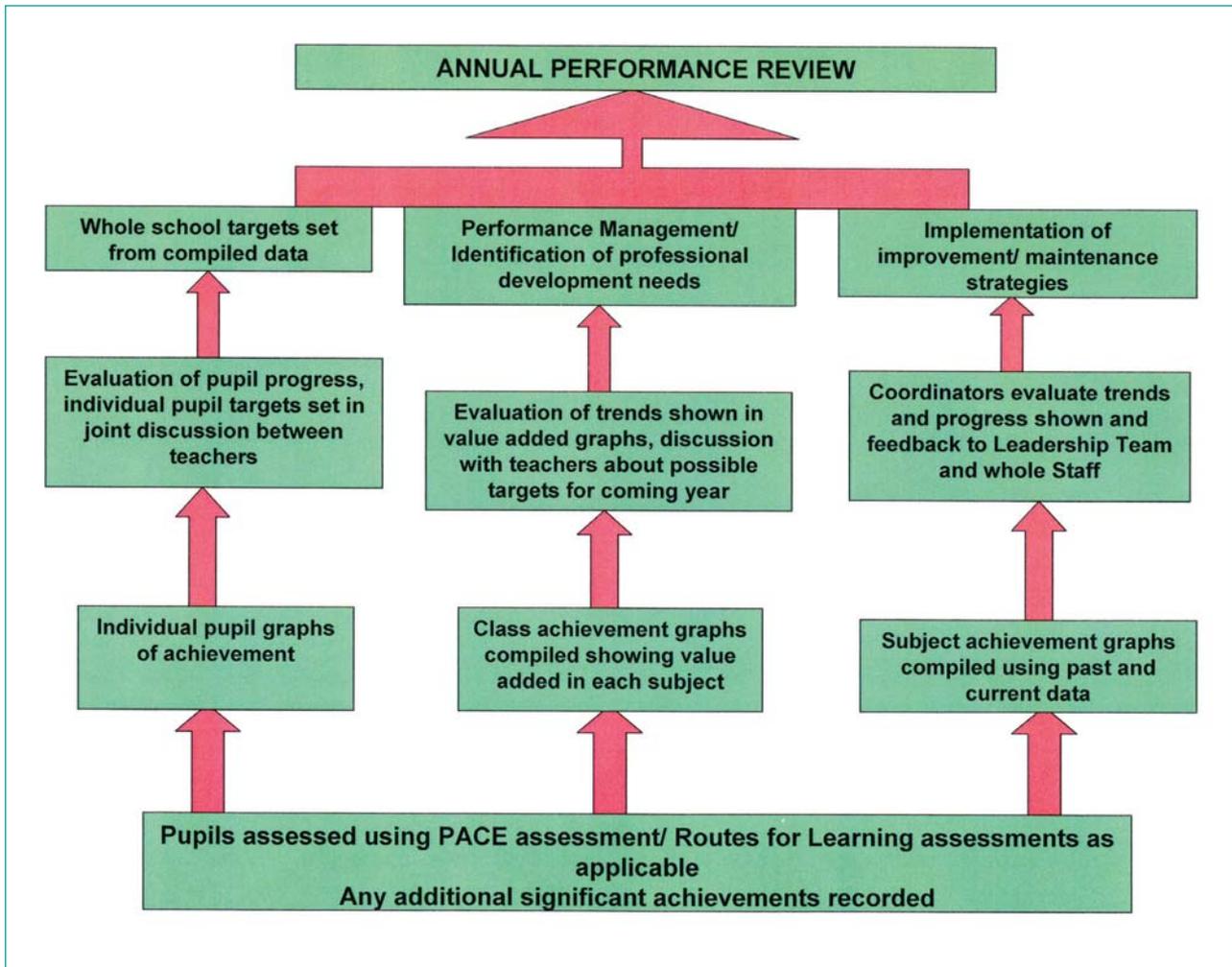
From this information, individual learner progress is evaluated and new targets set. Group/class trends are discussed by staff to inform new targets and subject coordinators analyse trends and progress to feed back to the leadership team.

Using this information, evidence-based decisions can be made regarding group/whole school targets (e.g. using *Routes for Learning*, Foundation Phase levels, national curriculum levels, Key Stage 4 accreditation), professional development needs and subject plans/improvement strategies.

The school stresses that all assessment information requires careful interrogation to raise relevant questions and either explain reasons for particular outcomes and/or take action upon them.

Any significant achievements by learners are also recorded and targets may also be set in areas such as communication skills (signing, use of Picture Exchange Communication System, electronic aids, etc.), personal skills (toilet training, mobility, eating) and participation in sports, festivals, youth fora, conferences, etc. A final check is also made on the percentage of IEP targets met throughout the year.

Fig. 8: Annual performance review



# Foundation Phase Child Development Profile

The Foundation Phase Child Development Profile has been designed for use throughout the Foundation Phase with children aged 3 to 7 years. This guidance supports practitioners in their observation of children throughout their formative years. Through careful observation and interaction with children, practitioners will be able to encourage them in their development along a learning continuum. When observing children practitioners should note their strengths, interests and needs to inform future planning across the curriculum. The Foundation Phase Child Development Profile focuses on:

- Personal development
- Social development
- Well-being/emotional development
- Cognitive development
- Language development and communication skills
- Physical development.

To make valid judgements/assessments practitioners should use the information in the Foundation Phase Child Development Profile in conjunction with the:

- Skills section of the seven Areas of Learning in *Foundation Phase: Framework for Children's Learning for 3 to 7-year-olds in Wales*
- the Foundation Phase guidance documents produced to support the curriculum
- the *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*.

## Year 5 skills assessment

The Welsh Assembly Government have developed a bank of Optional Skills Assessment Materials (OSAMs) to provide support for developing thinking, number and communication, initially aimed at supporting Year 5 learners. These materials will help teachers to identify and record progression in these skills.

This is consistent with the recommendation of the Estyn report on outcomes for learners with additional learning needs (see page 39) which states that all schools should provide annual information on the progress made by learners in communication, behaviour, literacy, numeracy, thinking, ICT and Welsh language development.

The Welsh Assembly Government are currently preparing further materials to support teachers in assessing the skills of learners with more complex needs.

## Wider measures of progress

National curriculum end of key stage outcomes and levels will be used as part of the target-setting process for whole school improvement by aggregating data for a class, phase and/or key stage. This can help school managers identify priorities for development. It is important to recognise the potential danger in the use of small samples of data which can be subject to wide variations. Such data may be insufficient for making comparative judgements about school or teacher performance.

Data derived from national curriculum outcomes may, however, be used to look at the performance of different groups and track their progress, allowing setting/school managers to investigate areas where rates of progress and levels of achievement give cause for concern. Assessment information might also be shared informally between similar settings/schools, to have a dialogue about school effectiveness and improvement.

However, information related to the national curriculum reflects only part of the learners' whole development and there will be other valuable areas which schools will wish to record and celebrate, such as levels of learner participation, social inclusion and partnership with parents/carers. The Welsh Assembly Government will be working with local authorities (LAs) and schools to explore the most appropriate measures of progress. The Welsh Assembly Government's School Effectiveness Framework puts improved learning and well being at the centre and requires collaboration between the Welsh Assembly Government, LAs and networks of schools to coordinate policy and focus at all levels on what happens for children and young people in the classroom.

Case studies 4 and 5 show how schools and LAs are using wider measures of progress to support learners and evaluate practice. A further case study on tracking the social and emotional well being of learners can be found at [www.wales.gov.uk/personalandsocialeducation](http://www.wales.gov.uk/personalandsocialeducation)

#### Case study 4

At a special school in South Wales, practice has been influenced by Ferre Laevers, of the Centre for Experiential Education. He proposed that two dimensions are critical in the assessment of quality in any educational setting – namely emotional well-being and involvement. While it is possible to explore the degree to which children feel at ease, act spontaneously, show self confidence and see that their basic needs, (security and belonging, social recognition and feelings of competence) are satisfied, involvement may be harder to measure. Laevers introduced a five point scale to measure both well being and involvement. Details, together with a self-evaluation document can be found at [www.cego.be/](http://www.cego.be/)

Although designed for early years, this approach may give useful feedback about the environment, ethos and approach in a range of settings.

At the case study school learning and teaching is monitored via these scales with a traffic light system being used to signal concerns about levels of well being and involvement in individual learners. This work is linked to the schools developing merit scheme and work on emotional literacy.

## Case study 5

In one LA, PASS (Pupil Attitudes to Self and School) has been introduced to support Year 6/7 transition and provide wider data. The questionnaire measures learner attitudes and feelings which are analysed according to nine traits. This data can be analysed in a number of ways to:

- highlight potentially vulnerable learners, at risk of bullying and/or with emotional/social needs
- provide early indicators of disaffection (attitudes to school attendance/behaviour, feelings about the curriculum).

Data can be looked at by year group and key stage and has promoted useful discussion among staff regarding rewards and sanctions, gender issues and the inclusion of learners from some minority ethnic groups. Results can also be fed into an interactive programme which suggests possible strategies for schools to use to further support vulnerable learners. The annual PASS survey facilitates the tracking of learner needs and the effectiveness of the selected interventions (at individual, group or whole school levels). This practice is supporting a move towards more strategic planning both within school and with external agencies as well as providing more tangible measures of a critical area of learners' development.

## Use of *Routes for Learning* for summative, end of key stage assessment for learners with complex needs

The Routemap was devised to support ongoing assessment, help teachers gain a better understanding of the development of early communication and cognitive development and enable them to plan effectively to meet the needs of learners with profound and multiple learning disabilities. Although the Routemap will certainly provide information for setting/school review, class/school transfer, and reports to parents/carers, use of the Routemap in practice has shown that learners' achievements may be spread across the entire map, making it difficult to place them within a single 'band' of attainment. A completed Routemap will in itself provide a summary of each learners' attainment.

The *Routes for Learning* materials show a variety of pathways to avoid the small steps/checklist approach so often used with this group of learners and the planning of appropriate routes for individuals is paramount. However, settings/schools are beginning to explore ways of summarising learners' achievement on the map by, for example, totalling the number of items achieved and noting the highest box number.

As learners achieve the outcomes at the top end of the Routemap, practitioners/teachers will need to look at the possibility of assessing them using the Foundation Phase or national curriculum outcomes (as appropriate for their age and the curriculum being taught). This will require a move from the *Routes for Learning* assessment model, to a 'best fit' model. The following descriptions have been written to:

- help practitioners/teachers recognise when learners are achieving securely at the top of the Routemap and need to move onto the relevant Foundation Phase/national curriculum assessment outcomes
- support a move to a 'best fit' assessment model. Practitioners/teachers can consider whether learners' performance over the phase/key stage is best described by the outcomes on the next page (linked to *Routes for Learning*) or whether Foundation Phase/national curriculum outcome 1 is more appropriate.

### **Communication skills (Language, Literacy and Communication/Welsh Language Development)**

Learners are beginning to develop more conventional communication and have a small repertoire of objects of reference, symbols, sign/gesture or words which they understand. They repeat or copy signs/words for familiar objects and use these spontaneously, sometimes linking two words/signs together for a range of purposes, e.g. to socialise, make a request, give information, describe, or direct. Learners repeat themselves or use an alternative strategy to get a response. They listen to and show enjoyment of songs/rhymes/stories and show interest in books/PC programmes using eye pointing/touch screens to interact. Learners (where appropriate) can grasp items and begin to use their fingers to make marks, e.g. in wet sand, foam, etc., progressing to scribbling on paper. They begin to explore other ways of communicating across distance/time, e.g. listening and responding by phone, using PC or communication aids.

### **Cognitive skills (Mathematical Development, Knowledge and Understanding of the World)**

Learners are able to focus attention, sometimes despite distractions and begin to attend for longer periods of time. They increasingly show that they can recall and use the experience from the (immediate) past. They show knowledge of simple daily routines and anticipate events. Learners are increasingly aware of the properties of objects and may begin to match those which are the same. Learners begin to develop a range of problem solving strategies, e.g. using a step/stick to reach a desired item or trying a different action/another body part/modifying movement needed to move a mobile/operate a toy or switch if first attempt fails. Learners are developing an awareness of one or many in a variety of activities and are able to explore the size and shape of objects which they may begin to group together.

### **Personal/Social Development (Personal and Social Development and Well-Being)**

Learners play alone or alongside peers and enjoy the attention of familiar adults. They begin to imitate/take part in simple role play but are usually possessive of their own belongings. They are beginning to develop an understanding of the need to defer immediate gratification and are increasingly aware of different reactions from others. Learners, where appropriate, are becoming increasingly independent in self help skills, attempting tasks and cooperating where help is needed. Learners can make straightforward decisions about what they want to do, food, drink, etc.

### **Creative Development**

Learners enjoy exploring the properties of a variety of materials with increasing purpose. They begin to investigate sound sources through banging, shaking, etc. They may show a preference for certain types of music and show some awareness of rhythm by joining in or moving. Learners make marks with a variety of materials and respond in different ways to others' creations and performances.

(Note: Physical development is not included as, due to the complexity of the physical disabilities of many learners, this area requires individual attention/assessment.)

## Support for teacher assessment

As the national curriculum levels and outcomes are used for reporting and national data collection, consistency within and across schools regarding expectations of learner performance and practitioner/teachers' best fit judgements is essential.

The Welsh Assembly Government has put in place arrangements to support schools to secure and strengthen their teacher assessment. By summer 2010, all Key Stage 3 subject departments will have benefitted from external moderation feedback on sample evidence of teachers' collective understanding and application of national curriculum level descriptions. From the school year 2008/9, primary and secondary schools have been required to have in place effective arrangements for cluster group moderation in order to support and strengthen teacher assessment and Key Stage 2/3 links. Further information can be obtained from the statutory assessment arrangements booklets for primary and Key Stage 3 which are produced annually and can be found on the Welsh Assembly Government website at [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills)

Systems and procedures for internal standardisation and moderation must allow teachers to confirm a shared understanding of national curriculum standards based on an agreed selection of learners' work. Supporting teacher commentary should show the links to the level descriptions/outcomes. Staff may find it helpful to agree a manageable format for annotating learner work/records which may include information on setting, staffing, task, evidence (what does the learner do/say?), support given, what the evidence shows (skill, knowledge, understanding, attitude), the characteristics of the outcomes/levels this shows and reasons why.

For Key Stage 2, these requirements apply to English, Welsh first language, Welsh second language, mathematics and science and for Key Stage 3 to all core and non-core subjects.

In order to comply with these requirements, headteachers must ensure that teachers within their schools:

- have in place arrangements by which they establish and maintain a shared understanding of national curriculum standards using samples of learners' work to generate a reference set of exemplars (standardisation procedures)

- have in place arrangements to moderate end of key stage assessments for selected individual learners (internal moderation) prior to finalising all learners' end of key stage attainment
- maintain concise documentary evidence of these systems and procedures and how they are applied for internal and external quality assurance
- review arrangements annually to ensure best practice and ownership by all staff involved.

Moderation may also help staff to consider continuity and progression across subjects/skills and age appropriate activities and resources.

Cluster group meetings for Key Stages 2 and 3 transition must include robust arrangements for moderation of samples of learners' work selected by the cluster group for English, Welsh first language, Welsh second language, mathematics and science. In these groups, staff might also think about how different activities and responses can be awarded the same level in different age groups and consider how curriculum contexts might differ between phases.

Key Stage 3 teacher assessment is supported by external moderation of sample evidence of teachers' understanding and application of the national curriculum level descriptions and verification of school-based systems and procedures. The Welsh Assembly Government is currently considering how future models for external moderation might extend this central support to Key Stage 2.

(Note: When considering setting/school results, particularly among groups of learners who have additional learning needs, note that year-on-year results may vary widely and small learner numbers and high levels of mobility will have an impact on assessment outcomes).

Further guidance is given in the booklet *Ensuring consistency in teacher assessment: Guidance for Key Stages 2 and 3* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008).

## Assessment for Learning

*Making the most of learning: Implementing the revised curriculum* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008) stresses that assessment for learning involves the learner gaining understanding of specific learning goals and associated success criteria so that, with support, they can move from their current position towards new targets and recognise when these have been reached. Individual targets should be linked to improving the quality of a learner's work, as highlighted through formative feedback and linked to success criteria for specific tasks. They cannot be linked directly with national curriculum outcomes or level descriptions as these describe attainment over a range of tasks at the end of a key stage. The relationship between ongoing assessment for learning and summative assessment of learning is discussed in more detail on page 37.

In its development programme for thinking and assessment for learning, the Welsh Assembly Government identified the following key principles.

- Questioning – with careful attention to language used and appropriate 'wait time'.
- Providing feedback to learners – including comment only marking. This will encourage a 'learning orientation' where effort is seen to lead to success, rather than a 'performance orientation' where ability is seen to lead to success within a competitive culture. Feedback should be given at key points during a task rather than end loaded and should provide opportunities to correct misconceptions or unhelpful lines of enquiry.
- Self and peer assessment – involving sharing and understanding learning intentions and success criteria for specific tasks, recognising good quality work and how to improve.

The following questions may help practitioners/teachers to focus on what learners will learn and how to recognise success.

What are the learning intentions for this unit/topic? (To know . . . To be able to . . . etc.)  
What evidence will be produced to show real understanding/gains in skills?

What tasks will staff/learners carry out to facilitate learning?

Against what success criteria will outcomes be evaluated? How will these be shared with learners to enable them to understand what success looks like?

How will I tell who has really understood and who just seems to have? \*\*

How can feedback be given to support future learning?

What misunderstandings are likely? How will I check for these?

\*\* e.g. by learners focused attention and ability to explain to others, shortcut procedures, make modifications or extend ideas and transfer learning.

Questions for reviewing use of assessment information can be found in Appendix 5 (see page 69).

Further information about the Developing Thinking and Assessment for Learning programme can be found in the 'Curriculum and assessment' area at [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills)

Further web-based guidance from the development programme involving learners with additional educational needs will be available in spring 2010.

## Including all learners – final thoughts

All children have a right to be included in every aspect of society. Clearly education from the Foundation Phase onwards has a key role to play and the school curriculum and assessment arrangements now provide a wealth of opportunities to actively engage all learners and enable them to progress. Inclusion is everyone's responsibility. It is not only about the placement of learners with special educational needs – or any additional learning needs – in mainstream schools. It is also about the provision of a meaningful education which, over a period of time, facilitates independence and inclusion in society as a whole. It requires all schools and local authorities to have a positive ethos and use the available flexibility to meet the needs of all children and young people. For those learners needing extra support or individually tailored programmes, this also means ensuring that they remain a part of their schools and communities wherever their education takes place.

The many examples of good practice from a range of special and mainstream settings throughout Wales, of which only a small sample could be included here, show what can be achieved – with outcomes which will make a real impact of the lives of all our children and young people in Wales.



*Section*

# 3

Appendices

## Appendix 1: Defining additional learning needs

### **The National Assembly for Wales (Legislative Competence) (Education and Training) Order 2008**

The National Assembly for Wales (Legislative Competence) (Education and Training) Order 2008 allows the National Assembly of Wales to make laws or Assembly Measures in relation to persons who have Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

A person has ALN for the purposes of the Order, if they receive education and training and:

- (a) have a greater difficulty in learning than the majority of persons of the same age as those persons;
- (b) have, or have had -
  - (i) a physical or mental impairment, or
  - (ii) a progressive health condition (such as cancer, multiple sclerosis or HIV infection) where it is at a stage involving no physical or mental impairment.

The Order covers persons of any age in receipt of Education or Training who have for 'whatever reason', a greater difficulty in learning than the majority of persons of the same age as those persons, or a disability.

### **What are Additional Learning Needs?**

The term ALN refers to a 'greater difficulty in learning' to encompass all learners in Wales whose learning needs are greater than their peers of the same age and which do not necessarily amount to SEN as defined in the Education Act 1996 (see below).

The term ALN is much wider in scope than the term 'special educational needs' in order to recognise the diverse and complex needs of learners and to reflect a more holistic approach to meeting the needs of individual learners.

ALN include persons who, for whatever reason, require additional learning support because they are struggling to learn in comparison with their peers. School pupils may therefore require additional learning support if they have difficulty in learning because, for example, they have:

- special educational needs
- a disability
- medical needs

- gaps in their knowledge or skills due to prolonged absences from the education system, e.g. school refusers, school phobics or young offenders
- experienced difficult family circumstances, e.g. due to bereavement
- accessed education inconsistently, e.g. gypsy and traveller pupils.

Some pupils may also require additional support if:

- their first language is not English or Welsh, e.g. asylum seekers/refugees/children of migrant workers
- they are looked after by the local authority, e.g. a child whose schooling was disrupted before being taken into care or has had frequent changes of school since taken into care
- they are underachieving due to care responsibilities, e.g. young carers
- they are pregnant or a young parent
- they are being bullied by their peers or other persons, due to their sexual orientation, e.g. lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils
- they are pupils who perform or who have employment.

Pupils defined as more able and talented are not considered to have ALN unless they have SEN or they have for whatever reason, greater difficulty learning a particular subject or skill in comparison with the majority of persons of the same age who are not able and talented (refer to above examples).

Estyn guidance to Registered Inspectors identifies some of the above groups of learners as potentially vulnerable (i.e. 'at risk' socially and educationally and needing attention to their social inclusion and well-being) as distinct from learners with additional support needs. The guidance makes it clear that not all learners within vulnerable groups are socially excluded or failing educationally, but that they are more at risk than other learners.

Some learners may belong to both groups, e.g. learners with special educational needs who are looked after by the local authority. There are associated statutory requirements for some, but not all of these groups. Further information is provided in Section 2 of the circular *Inclusion and Pupil Support* on the WAG website ([www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills) under the 'Schools' area of the 'Policies and Strategies' section).

## Special Educational Needs

The term 'Special Educational Needs' is a sub category of additional learning needs and continues to be used for those learners who have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Under the Education Act 1996 (section 312) and the SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002), a child has a learning difficulty if:

- (a) he has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age; or
- (b) he has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of his age in schools within the area of the local education authority; or
- (c) he is under compulsory school age and is, or would be if special educational provision were not made for him, likely to fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above.

## Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) defines a disabled person as 'a person who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

Physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments (such as those affecting sight and hearing) and communication impairments. The definition also covers certain progressive health conditions when the condition has been diagnosed and it has a long-term and substantial effect on a person's everyday life.

Further information is given in Appendix 1 of the Disability Rights Commission's Code of Practice for Schools which can be downloaded from [www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publicationsandresources/Disability/Pages/Education.asp](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publicationsandresources/Disability/Pages/Education.asp)

In recognition of the fact that people can be diagnosed with certain progressive health conditions without any adverse effects or symptoms and yet still face discrimination due to their condition, the National Assembly for Wales (Legislative Competence) (Education and Training) Order 2008, provides the National Assembly of Wales with the power to make an Assembly Measure in relation persons who have ALN and a progressive health condition even though the health condition has not yet reached the stage where a physical or mental impairment has been identified.

## Appendix 2: Developing an inclusive curriculum – questions to support schools in meeting additional learning needs

- What are our aims/principles/values?
- What makes up a relevant curriculum for our learners? What are their priority needs?
- What, in addition to statutory elements, do we need to include (e.g. therapies)?
- What theoretical models have influenced our thinking? What commercially produced materials have we drawn on? Have we developed a clear rationale for their adaptation and use?
- How does the whole curriculum, including the 'hidden' curriculum, promote the social, moral, cultural, spiritual development of learners?
- How do we maximise learner participation and capitalise on learners' interests?
- Is the curriculum providing a meaningful experience for our learners?
- How can we ensure breadth and balance?
- How are programmes of study used to ensure that learners receive their minimum entitlement? Is there a clear rationale for the selection of content to be covered in depth or that to be used as contexts for learning? Is provision made for planned revisiting/over-learning and application of skills/knowledge?
- What variations exist between key stages? Why?
- What use is made of the 'Including all learners' statement and the flexibility it provides to meet learner needs?
- How are the skills frameworks and personal and social education/ careers and the world of work frameworks used to ensure that priorities are addressed across the curriculum?
- Does the curriculum recognise the value of the process of learning as well as the product?
- How are learners grouped for different Areas of Learning/subjects? Why?
- Is there a balance between individual and group activities across the curriculum? Is there one between different teaching approaches, e.g. experiential or interactive?

- Is social interaction valued and is maximum benefit gained from time used for learners' personal routines, lunchtimes, etc.?
- What strategies are in place to support consistent teacher assessment and ensure this informs further planning (assessment for learning)?
- How is the progress of each learner recognised and reported to parents/carers?
- What data are collected to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and learning/teaching for learners with additional learning needs?
- What staff, other professional expertise is available? What professional development and training is needed to develop skills, attitudes and values?
- How does the location of the school impact on the curriculum? How can we draw on the expertise of parents/carers and members of the local community?

## Appendix 3: Inclusive teaching strategies<sup>2</sup>

### Whole class

- Consider seating/positioning particularly of learners with VI/HI – lighting, background noise, etc.
- Explain/display new, difficult vocabulary and check understanding of instructions, e.g. Explain in your own words.
- Develop strategies to support memory – sticky notes, visuals, etc.
- Plan questions – differentiate language/target as appropriate.
- Provide a choice of ways for pupils to respond, show what they know, understand and can do.
- Allow think time and provide support/scaffolding/writing frames, etc.
- Use collaborative work with opportunities for peer support.
- Make inputs multi-sensory – use visuals, symbols, ICT, music, drama.
- Involve learners in planning, decision-making, problem-solving, reviewing, evaluating.
- Make the abstract concrete as far as possible, e.g. exploring real objects, mindmaps with objects/photos, etc.

### Group work

- Plan transitions between whole class/group work.
- Model/clearly explain tasks, with reminders if necessary.
- Make materials accessible – appropriate reading levels, writing frames, ICT, etc.
- Allow some pupils to work in a distraction free area if necessary.
- Teach strategies for when pupils are stuck.
- Develop a bank of materials to support independence, e.g. displays/prompt cards, ICT resources, number lines.
- Plan more open/extended tasks for more able pupils.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from learning and teaching for children with special educational needs in the primary years, DFES Primary National Strategy.

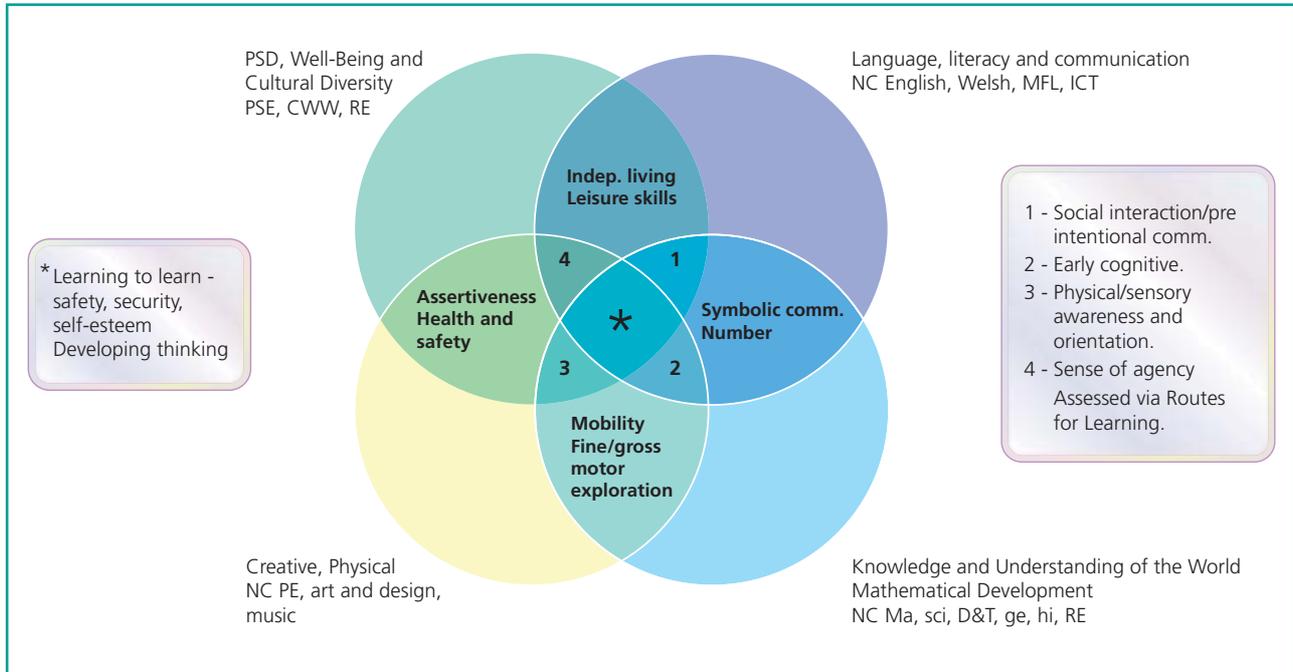
- Vary groupings and where appropriate allocate different parts of tasks to pupil strengths.
- Use ICT to support access – communication aids, sign supported software, voice activation, etc.
- Give positive but realistic feedback. Comments (e.g. a close the gap prompt) will give more support than grade only marking.
- Share possible outcomes and success criteria with pupils – explain what ‘good work’ will look like.
- Plan for flexible and effective deployment of teaching assistants.

## Appendix 4: Curriculum models for learners with complex needs

The Foundation Phase framework and the national curriculum contain sufficient flexibility to design an appropriate and accessible programme for all learners including those with severe and complex needs. The curriculum components may be modified to take account of development needs and individual priorities. The table below shows major components and their relationship to the wider curriculum framework. Developing thinking, communication, ICT and number as set out in the skills framework will underpin all areas 3 to 19.

Foundation Phase Areas of Learning	Subjects for Key Stages 2 and 3	Subjects/14–19 pathways
Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity	Personal and social education (including sex education), religious education, careers and the world of work.	Personal and social education and health, RE. Careers and the world of work. Wider key skills.
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	English/Welsh/MFL. May continue to focus on Communication, ICT – including speech therapy support.	English/Welsh. Communication, MFL, ICT.
Mathematical Development	Maths. May relate to early cognitive development.	Maths/application of number.
Welsh Language Development	Welsh/MFL/Cwricwlwm Cymreig. May provide context for further communication skills.	Wales, Europe and the World (WEW).
Knowledge and Understanding of World	History, geography, RE, design and technology, science. May relate to early cognitive development/sensory development in context of these subject areas.	WEW, history, geography, RE, science. Community/voluntary opportunities. Cultural experiences.
Physical Development	PE. May also include physio programmes, etc.	PE/sports enhancements. Leisure.
Creative Development	Art and design, music, design and technology, PE (drama, dance).	Aesthetic, creative enhancements.

Fig. 9: Example of a curriculum model for learners with complex needs



Since the introduction of the national curriculum, there has been a great deal of debate about the place of subject learning in the education of learners with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties (S/PMLD). Grove & Peacey (1999) following work with subject specialists and teachers from special schools concluded that learning within a subject involves:

- exposure to experiences critical to that subject/domain
- a grasp of the knowledge base particular to that subject/domain
- developing ways of understanding the world that are characteristic of that subject/domain.

It is difficult to define the boundaries between subject and cross-curricular learning at any level but possibly more difficult at the very early levels relevant to learners with S/PMLD. It is also important to emphasise that learning is not only hierarchical. It is not always helpful therefore, to try to distinguish between learning believed to be prior to domain specific attainment and learning seen as more distinctly subject-specific.

The *Skills framework for 3 to 19 year-olds in Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008) in particular, will support learners working on cross-curricular outcomes within/across the Foundation Phase Areas of Learning and national curriculum subjects. In this way, they will not be excluded from gaining subject specific skills/knowledge and understanding but the focus may well remain on cross-curricular skills depending on personal priorities. While settings/schools should have a clear rationale for their curriculum content, there should be no need for 're-labelling' relevant learning or tokenism regarding what is taught, if the learner's needs are the first consideration.

This cross-curricular approach is further supported by the introduction, for assessment purposes, of national curriculum outcomes which include these cross-curricular skills and maintain close links between subjects. For learners with profound and multiple learning disabilities, the *Routes for Learning* materials can similarly be used to assess cross-curricular learning across the full range of Areas of Learning/subjects and should in no way be taken to imply that such learners should not access the full breadth of the curriculum.

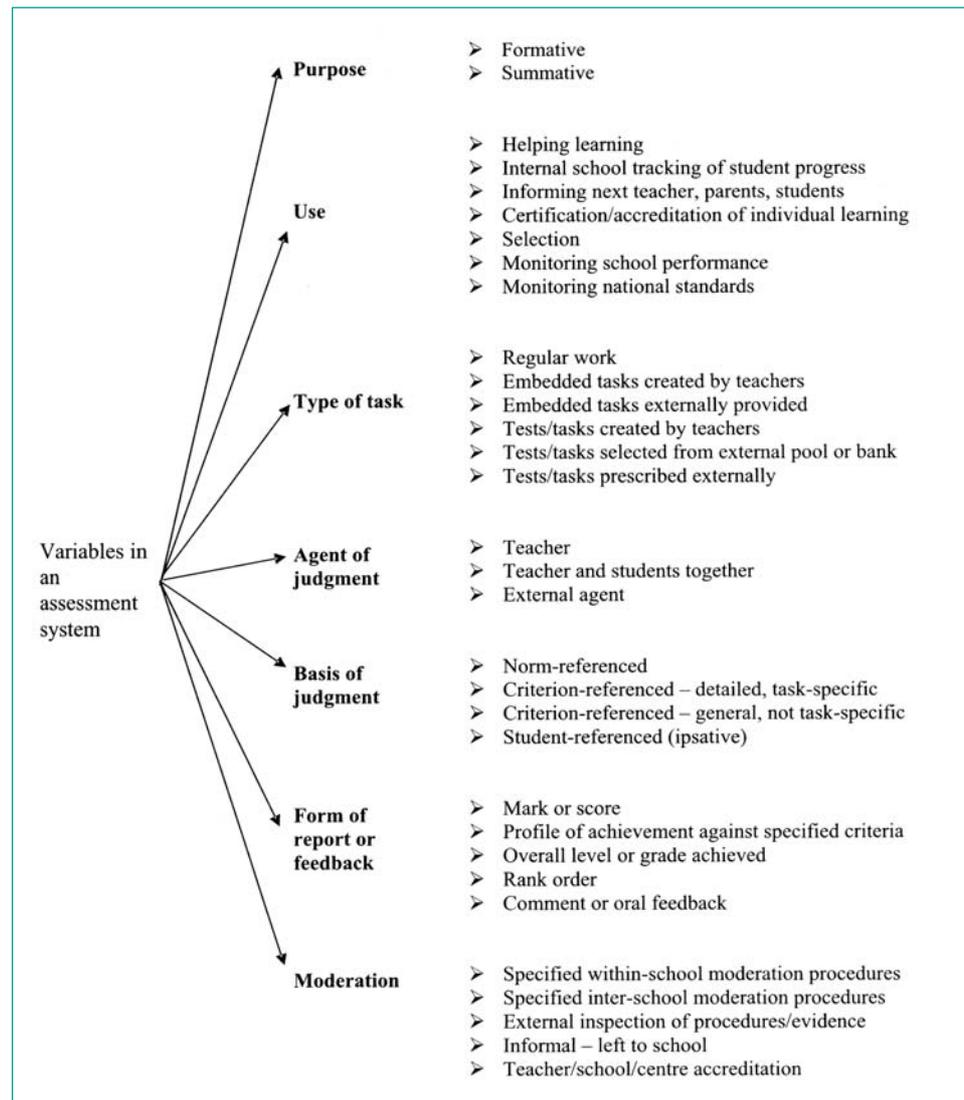
Byers (1999) states:

Learning is . . . multi-dimensional. Learning is also complex for students experiencing learning difficulties and staff need to develop the capacity to plan for, and record, a range of possible outcomes, including the domain specific and the cross curricular, within any learning opportunity.

## Appendix 5: Reviewing assessment practice

The table below (Harlen 2007) summarises the components and variables in any assessment system and may support schools in considering the profile of their own practice.

Fig. 10: Components and variables of an assessment system



## Using assessment information with learners

The following questions may support schools in reviewing their use of assessment information.

- How do we place emphasis on assessment for learning? Do we recognise that learners need to know where they are currently in their learning, where they need to go and how to get there?
- How do we share learning objectives/outcomes with learners before a lesson/series of lessons in ways they can understand?
- How are assessment criteria developed and/or shared with learners to facilitate self/peer assessment?
- How do we explain what 'good' looks like so learners are clear about expected standards?
- How do we use questions effectively to find out about learners' prior knowledge/understanding and to promote thinking and reflection?
- How does our feedback help learners to understand what they have achieved?
- Do we over emphasise grades/marks at the expense of telling learners what they need to do to improve?
- How do we give learners the time and the vocabulary to reflect on feedback and make comments on their learning?
- How do teachers use assessment information from learners to inform their future planning?
- How do we ensure that as well as identifying and supporting learners with additional learning needs and potential underachievers, we identify and support more able learners?
- Do we pay sufficient attention to assessment records of previous teachers? How can we improve our use of information/data?
- What evidence do we have that formative assessment has helped to improve learning, teaching, standards?

## Using assessment information at subject/department levels

- Do we analyse information in sufficient detail to provide a picture of strengths and weaknesses in learners' performance, our curriculum and teaching in different subject areas? How is this information used to plan for improvement?
- Are we aware of variations in the relative performance of:
  - boys and girls
  - different ethnic groups
  - pupils with additional learning needs/special educational needs/more able learners.

How do we use this information?

- How do we use our analysis of assessment information to ensure all learners are appropriately challenged?
- What does our information tell us about resources and professional development needs?

## Using assessment information at whole school level

- Are teacher assessments used in conjunction with other sources of assessment information to identify learner performance and possible underachievement?
- How do we use local/national averages and learner level data to set appropriate targets for improvement?
- How do we share assessment information with parents/carers in a way that is clear and will help them support their children?
- How can school portfolios be used to help parents/carers understand what is meant by progress?
- How do we ensure that analysis of assessment information leads to review/revision of plans and approaches?
- How does accumulated assessment data feed into updates of SIP, policies, curriculum plans?
- Does our governing body have sufficient information to set targets for improvement? Is it in an accessible format? How do they monitor progress?
- Does this analysis include the performance of different groups, e.g. boys/girls, English/Welsh as additional language, more able?

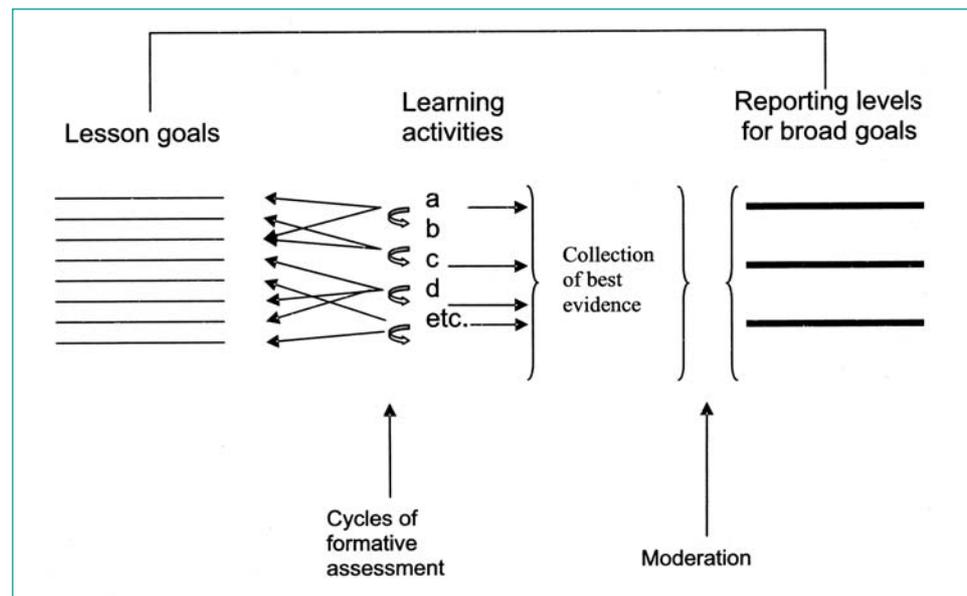
## Recording

- Is our recording system valid and manageable?
- Have we agreed the information that needs to be retained? Are we clear about purpose/use?
- Is practice consistent?
- How do records inform future plans and provide feedback on effectiveness of teaching?
- Are learners involved wherever possible?
- How do records feed into reports to parents/carers?
- Are they easy to interpret?
- How do we come to an agreed understanding of the curriculum requirements in order to make valid judgements?
- Are records passed between colleagues useful?
- Are records effective for learners of all abilities?
- Do records support effective transition between classes/key stages?
- Is there any duplication?
- Do our assessments record a sufficiently broad range of learner achievement?

## Appendix 6: Using assessment evidence

The diagram below shows how activities a, b, c, d, etc., generate evidence of learning, ultimately used for both formative and summative purposes. This evidence may include staff notes, witness statements, learners' written work, learner comments, artefacts/artwork, photos or video.

Fig. 11: Using evidence from learning activities for both formative and summative purposes



Figures 10 and 11 reproduced with permission from *Assessment of Learning* by W. Harlen (Sage, 2007).

Much of this ongoing information will, at first glance, be unclear, inconclusive or even contradictory and may well be very specific to the situation/setting in which it happened. The arrows show that the learning which takes place in lessons is not always hierarchical or sequential. These different pieces of evidence may make different contributions to the assessment process. At this stage, the primary focus will be to support learning and a judgement about a national curriculum outcome/level should not be made. The role of learners here is key and they will need some understanding of their targets and the quality criteria by which work will be judged.

Practitioners/teachers will need an understanding of the nature of progression to decide next steps with and for each learner.

Harlen (2006) suggests that progression can usefully be expressed in terms of indicators which focus attention on relevant aspects of learners' behaviour and help practitioners/teachers to see where they are in their development. Such indicators should be based on research and practice but will not be definitive as there is not an exact sequence which will apply to every learner. An example of this practice is the *Routes for Learning* materials which show the broad sequence of early communication and cognitive development without levels, in order to help identify possible next steps for learners.

Over a series of lessons, a picture will emerge of the learner's progress towards broader learning goals (which may be characteristics of the national curriculum outcomes/level descriptions but will also include developing communication skills, thinking skills, personal/social learning, etc.). In the interests of manageability, evidence need only be kept to show significant attainment/achievement. Over time, the best evidence can be collected, with older/less effective evidence replaced as appropriate. Harlen (2007) suggests: 'Whilst it is important to base the summative judgement on evidence from a range of activities and not judge from one task, there is no point in including work that no longer reflects what students are capable of producing'. Learners also have a role to play in selecting evidence and this process can build on their understanding of their short term targets to establish a link between these and longer term learning. Evidence selected to contribute to the summative judgement should reflect where the learner is at the time of reporting rather than progress or average performance over a period of time. At the end of a key stage the information derived from learners' work or about learners' performance (including ephemeral evidence) is brought together and reinterpreted in relation to outcomes or level descriptions, i.e. broad criteria which are the same for all learners.

Attainment is, therefore quantified in a single number. The summative assessment process is not an exact science and local authorities and schools should be aware of inflating the significance of data or placing too much emphasis on statistical analysis.

## Appendix 7: References, further reading and useful websites

### References

*A Rising Tide Lifts all Ships*, Renzulli J (1998). Paper for NEAG Centre for Gifted and Talented Development, University of Connecticut

*Assessment of Learning*, Harlen W (2007), (London, Sage)

*Assessment Systems for the Future Seminar Report 3* (2004) ([www.arg.educ.cam.ac.uk/ASF-report3.html](http://www.arg.educ.cam.ac.uk/ASF-report3.html))

*Experience and achievement: initiatives in curriculum development for pupils with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties*, Byers R (1999). *British Journal Special Education* 26, 4 184–188 Dec 1999

*Learning without Limits* (O.V.P.) Hart S, Dixon, A Drummond MJ, MacIntyre D (2004)

*On the relationship between assessment for formative and summative purposes*, Harlen W (2006) in John Gardner (Ed) *Assessment and Learning* (London, Sage)

*Teaching subjects to pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties*, Grove N and Peacey N (1999). *British Journal Special Education*, 26, 2, June 1999

*The Role of Teachers in Assessment of Learning*, Assessment Reform Group (2006) (see [www.assessment-reform-group.org](http://www.assessment-reform-group.org))

*What's the Difference? A study of differentiation in Scottish secondary schools*, Simpson M and Ure J (1994). Aberdeen: Northern College.

### Welsh Assembly Government Curriculum and Assessment publications

[www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills)

Guidance on the Foundation Phase can be found in the 'Curriculum and assessment' section of the DCELLS website at [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills)

Guidance on the Developing thinking and assessment for learning development programme can also be found in the 'Curriculum and assessment' section of the DCELLS website at [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills)

*A curriculum of opportunity: developing potential into performance* (2003)

*Ensuring consistency in teacher assessment: Guidance for Key Stages 2 and 3* (2008)

*Listening to learners: Special* (2007)

*Making the most of learning: Implementing the revised curriculum* (2008)

*Making effective use of assessment information series* (ACCAC)

*Routes for Learning: Assessment materials for learners with profound learning difficulties and additional disabilities* (2006)

*Statutory assessment arrangements for the school year 2008–2009* (produced annually)

*Supporting learners higher order literacy skills* (2009)

Tracking the social and emotional well-being of learners  
[www.wales.gov.uk/personalandsocialeducation](http://www.wales.gov.uk/personalandsocialeducation) (go to 'Primary school case studies' in the 'Resources' section)

## **Other Welsh Assembly Government publications**

Guidance on 14–19 Learning Pathways can be found in the 'Policies and Strategies' section of the DCELLS website at [www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills)

*Guidance on the preparation of Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 Transition Plans: Circular 30/2006*

[www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills) (see 'Circulars' in the 'Publications' section.)

Inclusion and Pupils Support

[www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills) (see 'Schools' in the 'Policies and Strategies' section)

*Meeting the Challenge – Quality Standards in Education for More Able and Talented Pupils*

[www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills](http://www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills) (see 'Guidance and Information' in the 'Publications' section)

*Promoting Disability Equality in Schools*

## **Estyn publications**

*Evaluating outcomes for children and young people with additional learning needs*

[www.estyn.gov.uk/publications](http://www.estyn.gov.uk/publications)

## **Useful websites**

Information and publications on assessment

[www.assessment-reform-group.org.uk](http://www.assessment-reform-group.org.uk)

Training, advice and publications on more able learners

[www.nace.co.uk](http://www.nace.co.uk)

Information on PASS survey

[www.pass-survey.com](http://www.pass-survey.com)

The website of the Association for Achievement and Improvement through Assessment

[www.aaia.org.uk](http://www.aaia.org.uk)

Information and publications from the Teaching and Learning Research Programme

[www.tlrp.org](http://www.tlrp.org)

[www.learntolearn.ac.uk](http://www.learntolearn.ac.uk)

## Acknowledgements

The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) would like to thank the many teachers, schools, local authorities and other organisations who have helped in the development of this guidance.

Special thanks are given to the guidance group: Janet Barnett, Kate Evan-Hughes, Rachael Gale, Mary Griffiths, Mary Hodgkinson, Lynne McCormack, Chris Lewis and Sue Wheelhouse who gave up valuable time to assist us in the development of this guidance.

DCELLS would also like to thank those teachers, schools and services who agreed to allow examples of work to be reproduced in this guidance.

In particular DCELLS is grateful to the following schools for providing help and materials:

Crownbridge School, Torfaen  
Darland High School, Wrexham  
Trinity Fields School, Caerphilly  
Woodlands High School, Cardiff  
Wrexham Educational Psychology Service  
Ysgol Crug Glas, Swansea  
Ysgol Heulfan, Wrexham  
Ysgol Tŷ Coch, Rhondda Cynon Taff.

DCELLS would also like to acknowledge the following for permission to reproduce copyright material in this book:

Figure 10 (page 68) and Figure 11 (page 72) reproduced with permission from *Assessment of Learning* by W. Harlen, published by Sage, 2007.