

## REPORT FOR INFORMATION

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	All Members
<b>REPORT NO:</b>	COEEI/21/24
<b>DATE:</b>	December 2024
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Phil Wynn (Education)
<b>CONTACT OFFICERS:</b>	Rachael Southwell and Siwan Meirion
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Curriculum for Wales (CfW)
<b>WARD:</b>	All

### 1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To report on the current position of all schools across Wrexham in implementing the new Curriculum, with a focus on secondary schools. This report outlines the progress made, challenges faced and future actions required to ensure full alignment with Curriculum for Wales (CfW) standards.

### 2 INFORMATION

2.1 2024-2025 academic year marks another milestone as all schools across Wrexham have now implemented and are delivering the Curriculum for Wales (CfW) with learners up to year 9.

2.2 Curriculum for Wales has required a significant programme of reform, with effective teaching and learning and the four purposes, central to its success.

The four purposes were the starting point and aspiration for schools' curriculum design. Ultimately, the aim of a school's curriculum is to support its learners to become:

- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their life
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society

2.3 The local authority has ensured that the comprehensive professional learning offer to all schools, designed and delivered by the Regional Consortium aligned to the expectations and principles within the CfW, and that all schools were provided with the opportunity to engage in these sessions.

- 2.4 In line with the implementation of the CfW, all Wrexham schools and settings have been supported by the Local Authority to meet the statutory requirements within the expected timeline. Last academic year, support plans for secondary settings and the special school had a continued focus on preparing for the implementation of the curriculum into Year 9 from September 2024.
- 2.5 Wrexham schools engaged strongly with the relevant professional learning offer, to support their work to continue to improve pedagogy and curriculum delivery, for example, through engagement with the regional and local CfW networks, alliance working or the national CfW professional offer.
- 2.6 Schools are continuing to develop and strengthen opportunities that the CfW framework provides to create an engaging, purposeful curriculum for their learners. Schools appointed or delegated, responsibility for managing the transition to the new curriculum to ensure alignment with CfW principles to a senior leader or CfW coordinator within their school. There remains specific support in place for a few schools requiring additional guidance and leadership support.
- 2.7 Wrexham secondary schools have moved towards a model of assessment that aligns with the CfW's emphasis on progression. Schools are currently trialling new processes to develop robust assessment strategies to track learners' progression, with a focus on both academic outcomes and student well-being. Assessment must now be embedded as a part of curriculum design and development, with effective use of a range of assessments and a clear approach for understanding learner progress.
- 2.8 Supporting transition is a shared cluster theme across Wrexham. It is recognised that understanding curriculum design and progression across the 3 to 16 continuum is essential between secondary and primary schools, in order to effectively support learner transition. To facilitate this professional dialogue, GwE and the Local Authority, continues to support and provide opportunities for schools to work together in clusters, to develop and share effective practice around whole school curriculum design and assessment and progression.
- 2.9 Since the last report on CfW was submitted to the committee, seven primary schools in Wrexham have had full Estyn inspection reports published.
- 2.10 Primary Inspection reports identified:
- Learner-Centred Curriculum: Staff respond well to pupils' interests, integrating their input into lesson plans. Teachers personalise learning to individual needs and adapt planning effectively to support all pupils.
  - Wide Range of Enrichment Activities: Schools use visits, visitors, and authentic learning contexts to deepen pupils' understanding. Trips such as visits to museums, castles, RAF Cosford, and even local parks help pupils apply knowledge and broaden their worldview.
  - Global Citizenship and Well-Being Focus: Pupils engage in activities that nurture their sense of global citizenship, such as learning about environmental issues like palm oil deforestation. Schools also focus on

developing pupils' moral, spiritual, and social skills, including promoting awareness of rights and well-being.

- Use of Digital Skills: Many schools foster digital literacy, with pupils using technology in creative ways. Older students, in particular, use advanced tools like coding, 3D modelling, and animation to enhance learning across subjects.
- Independent Learning Opportunities: Some schools provide students with the chance to make choices in their learning, fostering a sense of ownership and engagement. Teachers often create dynamic learning environments where pupils work collaboratively and support each other in problem-solving tasks.
- Professional Development: Teachers have opportunities for collaborative professional learning. This includes sharing effective teaching practices with peers, developing resources to enhance literacy and numeracy, and reflecting on the curriculum's progression.
- Focus on Local Context and Community: Schools tailor their curriculum to reflect local values, history, and the cultural landscape. Activities like exploring careers within the community or studying local issues (e.g., the impact of climate change on local flood plains) strengthen pupils' connection to their environment and community.
- Curriculum Diversity: A broad, balanced curriculum is in place across many schools, underpinned by strong core values. Schools offer varied learning opportunities, from arts and sports to trips, which help pupils develop their skills across a range of disciplines.

#### 2.11 Areas for further development in some schools

- Curriculum Progression and Consistency: While the curriculum is engaging and inclusive, there is further development needed to strengthen whole-school planning in some schools to ensure that pupils build on prior learning in a systematic and progressive way across all subjects.
- Consistent Skill Development: Continued focus on developing and implementing a more integrated approach to the progression of key skills (literacy, numeracy, and Welsh language skills).
- A few schools are still in the early stages of developing a systematic approach to numeracy and Welsh language skills across all areas of learning. There is a need to focus on embedding these skills in all subject areas to ensure pupils have consistent opportunities to practice and improve them.

2.12 Since the last report on CfW was submitted to the committee, one secondary school in Wrexham has had full Estyn inspection, the inspection report is due to be published in January 2025.

2.13 The next steps this year for the secondary schools will be for the school leaders, teachers and Governors to reflect upon, evaluate and lead improvements in respect of learner progress in years 7 to 9. Evaluating learner progress will be informed by a wide range of information and evidence. This reflection and evaluation will complement the 'School improvement guidance: framework for evaluation, improvement and accountability' and the 'national resource: evaluation and improvement'. Ongoing robust evaluation will be

essential to ensuring that the CfW's vision of creating a more holistic, learner-centred education is embedded for all students in Wrexham and demonstrates measurable impact.

- 2.13.1 Schools are required by the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 to keep their curriculum under review and ensure it continues to comply with legal requirements set out in the Act. Schools should also look to respond to the changing needs of their learners and communities and seek to maintain or improve existing practice to help realise high expectations for all. Schools should reflect on the effectiveness of their curriculum and use that insight to improve.
- 2.14 Statutory guidance on 14 to 16 learning under the Curriculum for Wales (CfW) was published in September 2024, along with the finalised GCSE specifications for the first wave, which were shared with schools. This provided schools with the necessary information to begin preparing for the first teaching of Year 10 learners under the Curriculum for Wales, starting in September 2025.
- 2.15 Starting in September 2025, the curriculum for 14 to 16-year-olds should be structured around the four components of the 14 to 16 Learner Entitlement, alongside the qualifications offered during Years 10 and 11.
- 2.16 The WJEC has collaborated with the Welsh Government and Qualifications Wales to develop and deliver professional learning and guidance, ensuring that practitioners are well-prepared to teach the new qualifications with confidence. This includes a pan-Wales roadshow scheduled for spring 2025, supported by the coordination of INSET days across secondary school clusters. The professional learning INSET for the Wrexham and Flintshire areas, focusing on WAVE 1 qualifications, will take place on Friday, 21 February 2025.