

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-636
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/01538/15

William Powell AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
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20 August 2015

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 5 August on behalf of the Petitions Committee seeking my views on sex and relationship education in schools following your meeting on 16 June.

In response to the petitioners' comments on current arrangements for sex and relationship education, I should clarify that schools presently have the flexibility to decide how this element of the curriculum is implemented to suit their own local needs. The delivery of the curriculum is therefore delegated to schools and decisions on the precise content, materials and resources lie with head teachers and their governing bodies to ensure that it meets the needs of the children and local community. This gives schools flexibility to decide where the emphasis should be placed and to focus on issues that are particularly relevant to their learners. Where appropriate, it is for schools to plan and work with specialist providers to ensure they deliver relevant learning experiences.

Turning to the petitioners' points in relation to the review of the curriculum. On 30 June, I announced my support for the development of a new curriculum by accepting, in full, the recommendations contained within the Successful Futures report by Professor Graham Donaldson. I published the findings of the 'Great Debate' alongside my formal response to Professor Donaldson's report and a link to that document is enclosed below:

<http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150630-wavehill-e.pdf>

We will now set about the task of building a curriculum that supports our children and young people to become -

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

In line with the recommendations in Professor Donaldson's report, I am determined that our schools and practitioners, as well as other key stakeholders, will be at the forefront of the design and development of our new curriculum. This is why I have invited regional education consortia to work with their schools – primary, secondary, special– to apply to become Pioneer Schools. These schools will work with experts and other key stakeholders as part of an all-Wales partnership to lead on design and development of the new curriculum.

Meaningful engagement with all relevant stakeholders will be essential to achieving the vision set out in Professor Donaldson's report – a vision that I share. We are currently developing a plan which will set-out how Professor's Donaldson's recommendations will be taken forward. This will be published in the autumn.

Further information on how stakeholders can be involved will be communicated in due course and I will ensure that the petitioners' details are added to our stakeholder list so that my officials may keep them up to date with developments.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to assure you that changes to our curriculum going forward will be subject to full public debate and consultation.

Yours sincerely



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