

Introduce anti-racist teaching materials to children in schools in Wales to reduce hate crimes

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 12 Ionawr 2021
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Petition title: Introduce anti-racist teaching materials to children in schools in Wales to reduce hate crimes

Text of petition: Children need to be educated on how to be anti-racist. Although introducing POC and black history into the curriculum will be extremely beneficial, children need to have direct conversations about racism and how to be anti-racist. This will reduce bullying in schools and allow children to grow up in a multi-cultural environment, regardless of whether that have been surrounded by other cultures or not. This way, children will understand other cultures, and defeat stereotypes and discrimination



1. New curriculum

Subject to the Senedd passing legislation, the new age 3-16 Curriculum for Wales will be introduced in all maintained schools and publicly funded nursery settings from September 2022 on a phased basis. The [Curriculum and Assessment \(Wales\) Bill](#) was introduced to the Senedd on 6 July 2020. The Bill sets out the four purposes of the curriculum:

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

The Welsh Government has emphasised that the new Curriculum for Wales will be **purpose-driven rather than content-driven**. Specific learning content is not stipulated in the same way as under the current national curriculum.

The Bill sets out six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) for the new curriculum and the mandatory elements within them. The AoLEs are:

- Expressive Arts
- Health and Well-being
- Humanities
- Languages, Literacy and Communication
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Science and Technology.

The mandatory elements within the AoLEs will be English; Relationships and Sexuality Education; Religion, Values and Ethics and Welsh.

The Bill provides for a 'What Matters Code' to set out key concepts of learning and experience in each AoLE and that schools' curricula must encompass each of these concepts. The Welsh Government has published 'Statements of What Matters' in the [Curriculum for Wales documentation](#). This is intended to provide the 'national approach' which the [Minister for Education says](#) will ensure consistency for learners.

The Welsh Government's Guidance to help schools and settings develop their own curriculum (part of the statutory guidance) contains some specific guidance for teachers in designing history in their curriculum. This states that school curriculum design should (amongst other things):

- develop a rich context for exploring the concepts of governance, economy, power, leadership, diversity; culture, ethnicity, equality and inequality, justice, rights, conquest, social, political and economic ideologies, social organisation and structures, trade, agriculture and industry, power and protest, peace, conflict and cooperation, revolution, devolution and empire.

2. Welsh Government action

2.1. Communities, Contributions and Cynefin: BAME Experiences and the New Curriculum Working Group

On 21 July 2020, Kirsty Williams, the Minister for Education announced that Professor Charlotte Williams OBE, would chair a Communities, Contributions and Cynefin: BAME Experiences and the New Curriculum Working Group. The group will review existing resources available to teachers and good practice, and professional learning related to Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. The interim report was published on 19 November 2020. The final report is due to be published in early spring. The report said

without a full list of prescribed topics in the new Curriculum for Wales and the autonomy of schools in designing their own curricula within a national framework, there is a risk these themes continue to be ignored or marginalised. While learning about diversity, identity and belonging, justice and equality, rights and social action will be mandatory in schools' curricula, there is no statutory requirement to teach specific topics of central understanding to the histories of racism and diversity, for example, the histories of slavery or the Holocaust. This is of concern.

The report looks at how these themes can be achieved without the content-specific prescription that the Curriculum for Wales does not allow. The report included a recommendation for:

The development of a new suite of bilingual teaching and professional development resources that provide a detailed exploration of diversity in

Wales in the past and present. These background papers, servicing all AoLE, should include: [...]

- a narrative guide to the history of racism and anti-racism in Wales.

2.2. Bullying

In November 2019, the Welsh Government published a new suite of guidance on preventing and tackling bullying. It provides guidance and information on school's anti-bullying strategies and information of the various types of bullying, including that related to prejudice. There is separate guidance for local authorities, schools and children, young people and parents and carers. The guidance states:

One-off lessons or short 'blitz'-type activities are less likely to succeed than work embedded in the curriculum that progressively addresses relationships, positive behaviour and resilience.

It states that there will be opportunities across all six AoLEs in the new curriculum to embed positive behaviour and respect.

3. Show Racism the Red Card

In May 2020, Show Racism the Red Card published a report, Racism in Wales? that highlights key findings of racism within the Welsh education system. Findings included:

- Racism is widespread across Wales' school system and is likely being greatly underestimated by teachers and learning support staff.;
- Racism occurs across different age groups but is perceived to be more widespread at secondary school level;
- 62 per cent of respondents said that anti-racism education is taught at their school;
- 89 per cent of respondents believed that anti-racism education should be embedded in the curriculum. The percentage of respondents who say their school is teaching anti-racism has dipped slightly since 2016 when 66.6% of respondents said anti-racism education was taught in their school.

- Lack of time in the classroom was identified as the biggest challenge in educating pupils about racism. The second biggest challenge is teachers' confidence in the subject.

Show Racism the Red Card recommended that all educators must be made aware of where they can access anti-racism resources.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.