Strengthening the Curriculum for Wales means listening to learners at every age

Welsh Government's targeted review of the Curriculum for Wales panel's terms of reference say it will consider evidence from learners. The Welsh Young Co-operators' principle, "Nothing About Us Without Us," gives that commitment a practical test. The youngest children can show what helps them learn through play, pictures, gestures and conversation. Older learners can contribute directly to discussions about what they learn, how they are assessed and how they experience transitions. Participation should be accessible in Welsh and English and include disabled learners and those with additional learning needs. At every stage, children and young people should be told what changed because of their input.

The review of the Curriculum for Wales asks how national guidance can help teachers and early years practitioners understand what learners should know and how they should progress. The expert panel, which includes Dr Glenda Jones and Professor Dylan Wiliam, will look at knowledge, progression and assessment. Its remit retains the curriculum's four purposes and seeks clearer expectations and less unnecessary workload. Political education and Welsh history, including arts, culture and heritage, will help the panel test how clearer guidance might work in practice.

The review should explicitly consider every stage of the Curriculum for Wales, from age three to 16. That means hearing from practitioners in maintained and funded non-maintained nursery settings, as well as in primary and secondary schools. It also means looking closely at transitions. When a child moves from nursery into school, or from primary into secondary education, the next practitioner needs to know what the child has learned, what interests them and what support has helped them progress.

Our Co-operative Education Manifesto makes the case for learning about co-operation and having opportunities to practise it. In the early years, children can decide together how to use a play space, share materials fairly or build something that needs everyone's contribution. In primary school, they might plan a shared activity, agree a budget and explain their choices. In secondary school, they could investigate how people in Wales organised to meet local needs, use numeracy to compare borrowing costs, or set up a pupil-led enterprise and decide democratically how to use its surplus. These examples show how knowledge, skills and participation can develop together.

Clearer guidance should also make practitioners' work easier. Shared bilingual examples could show what progression looks like across the full age range, while allowing settings to draw on their own communities. Assessment should help learners see what they can do and what to try next. It should give families and the next practitioner useful information about what has helped, without creating unnecessary paperwork.

We ask the panel to work with early years practitioners, schools , post-16 providers and most importantly of all - young co-operators themselves- to develop practical examples that settings can adapt. The review should show how each stage builds on the one before it, and how learners' experiences, from their first years of education through to age 16, have shaped its recommendations.