

Curriculum for Wales

British Sign Language guidance

Information Session for Teachers of the Deaf

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Session aims

- Understand the principles of the Curriculum for Wales
- Understand what's in the Curriculum for Wales BSL guidance
- Get an insight into work involving ToDs in Swansea and other ongoing work to support the BSL in the Curriculum for Wales

overview

- The Curriculum for Wales
- The process of developing Curriculum for Wales BSL guidance
- The Curriculum for Wales BSL guidance
- Ongoing work in Swansea

What is the Curriculum for Wales?

- The [Curriculum for Wales framework guidance](#) aims to help each school develop its own curriculum, enabling their learners to develop towards the [four purposes](#) of the curriculum

The aim of a school's curriculum is to support its learners 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
- **healthy, confident individuals**, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

Areas of Learning and Experience

Expressive Arts

Health and Well-Being

Humanities

Languages,
Literacy and
Communication

Mathematics
and Numeracy

Science and
Technology

Progression

- The [progression code](#) sets out the ways in which a curriculum must make provision for all learners.
- Principles of progression
- Descriptions of learning
- Practitioners will consider the smaller steps learners will make to progress in the way described in the descriptions of learning

Languages, Literacy and Communication

Statements of what matters

- **Languages connect us.**
- **Understanding languages is key to understanding the world around us.**
- **Expressing ourselves through languages is key to communication.**
- **Literature fires imagination and inspires creativity.**

BSL guidance Development Group

The group was led by:

- Eleri Goldsmith, Head of Curriculum Development for Welsh Government

The group included:

- Deaf community representatives – Dafydd Eveleigh and Sarah Lawrence (and others on an ad hoc basis)
- Teachers of the Deaf
- A representative from Estyn (Education inspectorate in Wales)

The group was supported by expert input from:

- Dr Kate Rowley, Wolverhampton University
- Dr Robert Adam, Heriot-Watt University
- Prof. Bencie Woll, DCAL

Consultation

During the course of development, there was a public consultation to get feedback on draft curriculum guidance for BSL. This included:

- Online public consultation
- Focus groups
- Session for young deaf BSL users

The feedback received was used to refine the draft guidance and to inform ongoing work around supporting materials and resources.

BSL in the Curriculum for Wales

The guidance development group was responsible for producing:

- Guidance for [designing a curriculum which includes BSL](#)
- [Descriptions of learning](#) which express progression in BSL along a continuum
- [Links with other Areas](#) of the Curriculum for Wales

BSL curriculum guidance - who is it for?

- Curriculum for Wales is for children and young people aged 3-16 educated in schools and settings in Wales
- The BSL guidance is both for deaf BSL users and others learning BSL as a second, third or subsequent language
- The BSL guidance does not in itself change the role of ToDs – our support is still for deaf learners
- Consortia and schools are responsible for BSL for other learners – guidance highlights the need to ensure the requisite expertise and experience

Curriculum development

- The Curriculum for Wales does not offer an off-the-shelf curriculum – it is national framework guidance
- Each school will design its own curriculum based on the needs of the learners

Curriculum Guidance: using evidence and expertise

BSL learning and teaching should be informed by sound [evidence and expertise](#) including:

- the *Deaf community* as well as BSL tutors and Teachers of the Deaf
- understanding from high-quality educational research and evidence
- relevant information about learners and their communities
- learning from professional inquiry
- evidence and expertise shared through local, cluster, regional and national networks
- partnership with further and higher education
- professional learning

[Curriculum co-construction](#) will involve working with:

- learners
- the Deaf community
- Teachers of the Deaf and other practitioners
- parents, carers and stakeholders
- other organisations, services and agencies
- schools, settings and further and higher education institutions

Consortia contacts

region	name
CSC	C Billington-Richards
EAS	Elen Roberts Kath Bevan
GwE	TBC
Mid Wales Partnership	Heidi Lorenz
NPT	Ceri Long
Partneriaeth	Anna Vivian Jones

Curriculum Guidance Document

- To help guide practitioners in designing their curriculum
- Gives background/context of BSL
- A positive focus, and a focus on language

Expectations

- Teachers of deaf children starting learning through the new curriculum in nursery from September 2022 will need to consider Progression Step 1 (PS1) the descriptions of learning for BSL as a starting point. The aspiration is that these learners will progress to PS5 by age 16
- Children who've had BSL from birth may progress faster than those who have not
- Others learning BSL also start at PS1. How long they continue learning BSL and how much contact they have with the language will affect how far they progress along the continuum.

Descriptions of Learning

Expressing ourselves through language is key to communication

Progression Step 1 (Approx age 3-5)	Progression Step 2 (Approx age 6-8)	Progression Step 3 (Approx age 9-11)	Progression Step 4 (Approx age 12-14)	Progression Step 5 (Approx age 13-16)
<p>I can use a range of handling classifiers.</p> <p>I am beginning to use size and shape specifiers.</p> <p>I can use classifier repetition or numbers to show plurals.</p>	<p>I can use size and shape specifiers, handling classifiers and whole entity classifiers.</p>	<p>I can use body part classifiers.</p>	<p>I can use classifiers as spatial verbs.</p>	<p>I can use complex spatial verbs and classifiers appropriately.</p>

What about qualifications?

- Qualifications Wales has established a BSL Subject Level working group alongside Subject level working groups for other subjects
- The focus includes options for BSL GCSE and/or smaller qualifications for BSL

What about training?

- [Professional standards for all school practitioners](#) in Wales are intended to:
- set clear expectations about effective practice during a practitioner's career including, where applicable, entry to the profession
- enable practitioners to reflect on their practice, individually and collectively, against nationally agreed standards of effective practice and affirm and celebrate their successes
- support practitioners to identify areas for further professional development
- form a backdrop to the performance management process.

What about supporting materials and resources

- Links to BSL resources suitable for children learning through the Curriculum for Wales and that are freely available are presented in a playlist on Hwb.
- Welsh Government has commissioned BSL awareness resources; BSL story resources; and BSL for Progression Step 1 – these will be available for Welsh and English medium schools for free via Hwb.
- In Swansea we have also commissioned BSL resources using grant funding.
- Log into Hwb and join the Teachers of the [Deaf/Athrawon Plant Byddar](#) network

Swansea Council BSL Curriculum Project

- Last year we wrote a proposal to plan how we could support Swansea schools in implementing the BSL Curriculum Guidance.
- This has been adopted as part of the ALN transformation plan for our LA.
- We have used grant funding to commission resources and develop training for Swansea schools - the resources will be available online.
- The BSL Curriculum Guidance is not in itself a prescriptive curriculum, so we will be working on developing training and resources to support schools in developing their curriculum.
- The priority is to enable **deaf** children to follow the BSL curriculum, and then training/resources will also be available for those schools who have chosen to teach BSL as their third or subsequent language.

Swansea Council BSL Curriculum Project

- Some common difficulties we identified with provision for deaf learners:
 - Limited funding/support for parents to learn BSL
 - Lack of school staff with proficiency and qualifications in BSL
 - Limited awareness of the language needs and culture of deaf learners
 - Not enough qualified BSL Communicators to meet the needs of deaf pupils

Swansea Council BSL Curriculum Project

Family Support

- We are funding an in-person BSL class through Swansea Deaf Centre for parents/carers.
- As an online resource, we also commissioned a series of Early Years BSL Vocabulary videos for parents/carers and Early Years staff.

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLpOVWdRoBzVDu2ugL_H1J-CpGPLVatKq

Swansea Council BSL Curriculum Project

We are also awaiting completion of further video resources:

- Deaf awareness and supporting communication
- BSL stories
- Videos on supporting deaf children's language development and literacy
- We filmed interviews with several of our local parents of deaf children in Swansea, sharing their experiences and insights for raising a deaf child

Swansea Council BSL Curriculum Project

- We have funded BSL courses (levels 1-6) for school staff across Swansea, as well as several creche/Flying Start centres - to upskill our current BSL Communicators, as well as enhance provision and increase capacity across schools with deaf learners.
- We have commissioned video resources for schools, which are being created by Sarah Lawrence (Deaf BSL Tutor), Kate Rowley (Deaf Researcher) and Taking Flight Deaf Theatre.
 - Deaf awareness and culture
 - BSL grammar and higher level vocabulary
 - Deaf role models
 - Language development and literacy for deaf children
 - BSL literature

Swansea Council BSL Curriculum Project

- We are nearing completion on our own training & resources to support schools with the BSL Curriculum:
 - We are working collaboratively with staff in Grange Primary, supporting planning of their BSL curriculum.
 - We held an information-gathering meeting with several schools in Swansea (those with deaf children who use BSL), to find out what questions they may have and particular areas where support may be needed in planning a BSL curriculum. This has helped to guide our work moving forward.
 - We are developing training videos for Swansea schools to support them in developing/planning their BSL curriculum.

To close...

- Changing the culture of education in Wales
- Opportunities for support and co-construction
- Capacity for BSL at all levels of the system will need to be grown over time to allow the vision of Curriculum for Wales to be realised

For more information...

<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales>

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