

MERTHYR TYDFIL SACRE

REPORT TO: STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

DATE: FEBRUARY 11th 2014

SUBJECT: National Curriculum review and assessment

Background

In October 1st 2012 the Minister for Education and Skills, announced a review of assessment and the National Curriculum in Wales. This review includes two phases.

Phase 1 - will focus on strengthening the teaching of literacy, numeracy and wider skills, ensuring continuity and progression from Foundation Phase to key stage 4.

Phase 2 - will focus on curriculum design at each phase/stage of education to ensure that we have a broad and balanced curriculum which is fit for the twenty-first century. It will consider:

- the suggestion that Key Stage 2 is overcrowded
- redefining the purpose of Key Stage 3, including looking at the possibility of giving learners time to develop their own particular areas of interest around a particular theme or topic, possibly in conjunction with and supported by organisations beyond the school 3
- developing the concept of 'graduation' at the end of Key Stage 3 to mark the transition to Key Stage 4
- ensuring that the curriculum reflects the needs of business, including the critical role of science
- the place of languages in the curriculum
- specific subject and cross-curricular content
- the Basic Curriculum.

Phase 1 consultation

Main proposals in Phase 1:

- a) **revise existing Areas of Learning programmes of study** for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development (at Foundation Phase) and English, Welsh and mathematics (post-Foundation Phase). These revised documents will set out year-on-year expectations to complement the approach taken in the Literacy and Numeracy Framework.
- b) **introduce a statutory wider skills framework** from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. These are skills considered to be essential for learning, for work and for life, and include:
 - critical thinking and problem solving
 - planning and organising

- creativity and innovation
 - personal effectiveness
 - digital literacy.
- c) **refocus assessment arrangements** to include literacy and numeracy. The proposal is to include a summative assessment of literacy and numeracy report to the Welsh Government at the end of each phase/ stage.
- d) **introduction of cross curricular 'rich learning tasks'** at the end of key stage 2 to strengthen teacher assessment data.
- e) report on end of key stage 3 summative assessment in English, Welsh and mathematics (including literacy and numeracy), science and Welsh second language and remove the statutory requirement to report progress in the remaining statutory subjects to Welsh Government at the end of this key.

Consultation on the proposals will run from 22 October 2013 until 17 January 2014.

Recommendation

Members of the SACRE are requested to discuss the proposals and consider any future implication for the Merthyr Tydfil agreed syllabus.