

Curriculum for Wales – Terminology

Curriculum for Wales and the non-maintained settings curriculum may introduce you, as a practitioner to words and terms that you may never have come across previously. This factsheet aims to provide you with a simple definition or explanation of those words and terms. This factsheet aims to aid understanding and has been written to be a starting point for practitioner understanding.

Practitioner engagement with the professional learning opportunities given by the local authority or education consortia will support gaining a solid understanding of the new curriculum and requirements for implementation from September 2022.

Active play	Any activity that involves moderate to vigorous bursts of high energy.
Agency	Being able to make choices and decisions to influence events and to have an impact on one's own world.
Authentic and purposeful learning	Relevant and meaningful experiences that are rooted in real-life contexts.
Communication rich	A communication-rich environment is thoughtfully designed to develop children's speaking and listening skills, emotional well-being, physical engagement and general engagement.
Concept development	A process, linked to language development, that supports learners to gain an understanding of direction, location, position, number, quantity, sequence, attributes, dimension, size, and similarities and differences.
Conservation of number	The understanding that the count for a set group of objects stays the same no matter whether they are spread out, close together or rearranged.
Cross-curricular skills	The mandatory cross-curricular skills are literacy, numeracy and digital competence. They are essential to all learning and the ability to unlock knowledge.
Emergent thinking	The process through which children develop theories and ideas through exploration.

Emerging theories	The way in which children draw on and apply ideas and understanding accumulated from their personal and social experiences, in order to make sense of the world around them.
Five Developmental Pathways	The five developmental pathways are fundamental to the learning and development of all children within the early years. The pathways are child-centred and are interdependent, having equal value in supporting overall development and progress. They focus on what is important for the child and link closely to the key principles of child development. The five developmental pathways are Belonging, Communication, Exploration, Physical Development and Well-being.
Four purposes	The four purposes are the shared vision and aspiration for every child and young person in Wales. They are at the heart of the curriculum and all learning and development.
Integral skills	The key set of skills all children need to develop which underpin the four purposes of the curriculum.
Learner-centred	Placing the learner at the centre of learning, and allowing them to take responsibility for and make choices about what they will learn. The adult acts as the facilitator of learning.
Milestones	Developmental milestones are behaviours or physical skills seen in children as they grow and develop. Milestones are different for each age range. Developmental norms refer to the average age range in which a child may reach each milestone.
Motor function	The ability to control movements and postures.
Neural pathways	A series of connected neurons that send signals from one part of the brain to another. Children develop connections through everyday experiences and interactions.
Preferred learning environment	An area in the setting, where a child chooses to spend most of their time.

Principles of progression	The principles of progression provide national expectations for the ways in which learners are expected to progress throughout the continuum of learning. The principles describe what it means for learners to progress and the capacities and behaviours practitioners must seek to support, regardless of a learner's stage of development.
Progression	Progression in learning is a process of developing and improving skills and knowledge over time. A successful curriculum, supported by effective teaching and learning enables learners to make meaningful progress.
Proprioception	Perception or awareness of the position and movement of the body.
Self-reflect	Self-reflection is the process through which learners develop an understanding of who they are, what their values are, and why they think, feel and act the way they do.
Self-regulation	A foundational skill of early childhood. As children grow and are supported by adults, they learn how to manage emotions and behaviours.
Strategic competence	The growing ability of a child to apply strategies to formulate and solve mathematical problems.
Sustained shared thinking	Two or more individuals (adults and children) working together to solve a problem, clarify a concept or evaluate an activity. This usually takes the form of a conversation with the adult and child both contributing ideas to come to possible conclusions together.
Symbolic representation	The ability to depict ideas through the use of words, sounds, and objects during play.
Teachable moments	Unexpected or unplanned events or experiences that offer an opportunity for learning. They provide meaningful contexts for adults to introduce or expand on something of interest or curiosity to the learner.
The pedagogical principles	Curriculum for Wales is underpinned by 12 pedagogical principles, which state what good learning and teaching includes.

<p>Three Enablers</p>	<p>The three ‘enablers’ of early learning are described as Enabling Adults, Enabling Experiences and Enabling Environments. These enablers provide focus for holistic and meaningful learning for all learners during the early years.</p>
<p>Unconscious bias</p>	<p>Non-deliberate prejudice or unsupported judgments in favour of or against one thing, person, or group as compared to another, in a way that is usually considered unfair.</p>
<p>Wider requirements</p>	<p>There are a range of legislative requirements that settings and schools may need to consider or have regard to when managing their organisations. These include; the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.</p>

Further information and support

- Curriculum for Wales – Hwb - <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/>
- Curriculum for Wales – NDNA <https://bit.ly/3zReBpZ>

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