



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

How was school today?

**Parents' and carers'
guide to primary school
for children aged 7 to 11**



mae addysg
yn dechrau
yn y cartref
education
begins
at home

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Introduction

The Welsh Government believes that giving young learners a sound foundation for the future will benefit children and Wales as a whole in the long term.

Parents and carers have a vital role to play in helping their children to learn and, more importantly, to enjoy school and learning.

This guide will help explain what your child is learning in primary school.

It will give you some ideas about how to help your child and where to get more information, and will explain how their progress will be measured and reported to you.

Children's education in Wales is divided into four sections or stages.

Primary school

1

The Foundation Phase caters for children aged between 3 and 7.

2

Key Stage 2 is from 7 to 11 years.

Secondary school

3

Key Stage 3 is from 11 to 14 years.

4

Key Stage 4 takes learners to the age of 16.

This guide describes the curriculum as it applies to children in primary schools aged between 7 and 11 in Key Stage 2.

You can find information about the other phases of your child's learning at www.gov.wales/educationandskills

The curriculum

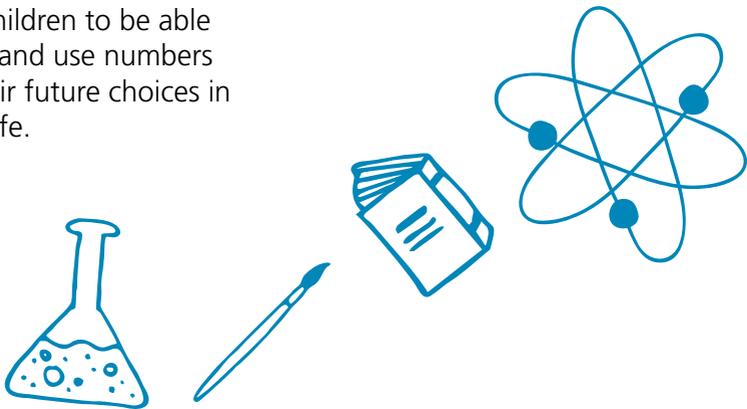
What is my child learning?

Children aged between 7 and 11 will follow programmes of study set out in the national curriculum for Key Stage 2. Their education will build on the experiences and learning gained in the Foundation Phase.

The curriculum in Key Stage 2 is designed around subjects and skills. It is designed to provide a firm foundation in language, mathematics and science, giving children the opportunity to achieve their best within a broad and balanced curriculum.

Supporting children to develop good literacy and numeracy skills is at the core of learning for children in primary schools.

We want all children to be able to read, write and use numbers to support their future choices in learning and life.



Your child will follow a rich and varied curriculum designed to give them opportunities to learn about:

- English
- Welsh or Welsh second language
- mathematics
- science
- design and technology
- information and communication technology (ICT)
- history
- geography
- music
- art and design
- physical education (PE).

Each school decides the detail of what children will learn and how the school day is organised, taking account of the requirements set out by the Welsh Government. They also organise their own timetable.

Teachers draw up lesson plans and decide which teaching resources and approaches to use. It is up to the school to make sure that its curriculum meets the legal requirements.

Your child's school will be able to provide more information about the way they structure the curriculum, the skills your child will develop and the content your child will cover.

You can find more information about education and the curriculum in Wales at **www.gov.wales/educationandskills**





English or Welsh

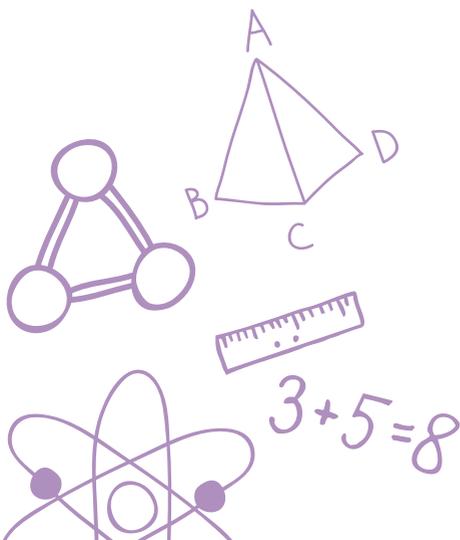
Children will develop their speaking and listening, reading and writing.

Children will become confident, clear and engaging speakers, working as individuals and as members of a group. They will have opportunities to take part in drama and role-play activities.

They will also develop as active and responsive listeners in a wide range of situations and will have the chance to experience a wide range of demanding texts, for enjoyment and information. The aim is to develop them into fluent and effective readers.

They will become competent writers, writing clearly in a range of forms and for a range of purposes. They will gain a growing understanding of the need to adapt their speech and writing to suit different purposes and audiences.

They will work with increasing accuracy and learn to reflect and evaluate their own and others' achievements.





Welsh second language

Children will gain confidence speaking in Welsh, working as individuals and as members of a group and using a range of vocabulary, phrases, sentences and questions.

They will have opportunities to take part in drama and role-play activities. Children will develop as active and responsive listeners, and experience a wide range of texts, including materials designed for learners and authentic materials, as they develop as independent and effective readers.

They will write in response to a range of situations with a growing understanding of the need to speak and write in a way that is appropriate to the purpose and audience.

Mathematics

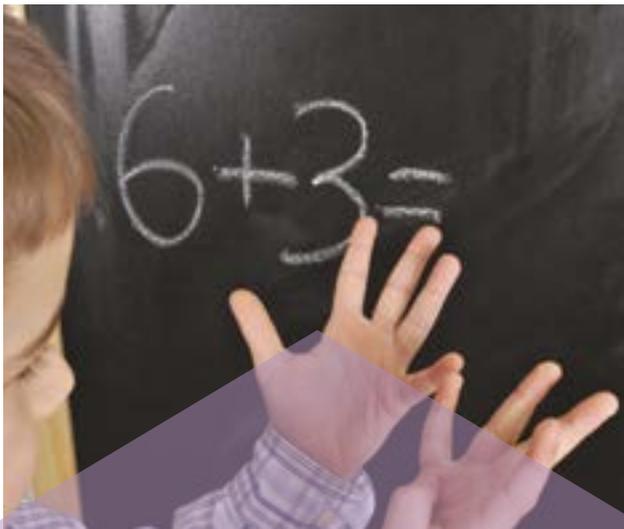
Children will develop positive attitudes towards mathematics and extend their mathematical thinking through mathematics in the curriculum.

Children will learn about solving mathematical problems, communicating and reasoning mathematically in many different situations and using a range of mathematical processes. They will extend their use of the number system, moving from counting reliably to calculating.

Schools will encourage children to try to tackle a problem using a mental method before using any other approach. They will use written methods of calculation appropriate

to their level of understanding. They will also develop ways to estimate and then use these ways to check their calculations, both written and when using a calculator.

Children will explore a wide variety of shapes and their properties, use a range of units and practical equipment to measure with increasing accuracy, and collect, represent and interpret data for a number of purposes. They will learn to choose, discuss, explain and present their methods and reasoning using an increasing range of mathematical language, diagrams and charts.



Science

Science in the curriculum will help children to learn to relate their scientific skills, knowledge and understanding in everyday life.

Children will learn to recognise that they can evaluate scientific ideas by using information gathered from observations and measurements. Science should encourage them to be curious and creative and it should be interesting, enjoyable, relevant and challenging. Children will be given opportunities to initiate, explore and share ideas, and extend, refine and use their skills, knowledge and understanding in new situations.

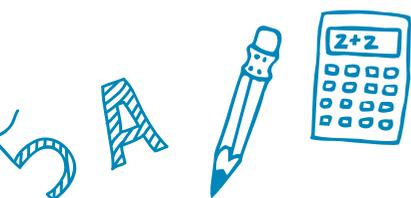


Design and technology

Schools will encourage children to be creative and think of new ideas when designing and making. Children will also learn how to combine these skills with knowledge and understanding to support their work in other subjects. Children will become aware of issues relating to sustainability and the environment in the twenty-first century, as well as human achievements that have shaped the world.

Information and communication technology (ICT)

Schools will encourage children to consider the sort of information they need to support their tasks and activities and how they might find that information. They will do this by using an increasing range of ICT tools and resources to find, process and communicate relevant information from a number of safe and suitable sources.



History

Children will learn by questioning the ways of life of different people in periods of history. They will draw on important developments, events and people in their area, Wales and Britain. Children will have experiences that make history enjoyable, interesting, relevant and significant.

Music

Children will learn by being actively involved in performing, composing and appraising, and developing their sensitivity to, and understanding of, music. They will develop musical skills relating to controlling and presenting sound.

These skills include singing, playing instruments and practising, as well as improvising, composing and arranging music.

Geography

Children will take part in practical activities and first-hand investigations in the classroom and outdoors. They will develop skills to gather and make sense of information, use maps, think creatively and share ideas through discussion.

Children will develop their interest in places and the world around them by studying their own Welsh neighbourhood, the world beyond, different environments and events in the news. They will also develop their understanding of what places are like and how and why they change.



Art and design

Art and design in the curriculum will stimulate creativity and imagination and challenge children to make informed judgements and practical decisions. This will allow them to communicate their ideas and feelings using their senses. They will achieve this by getting involved in the work of artists, craftworkers and designers, and through creative investigations and making their own work.

Art and design enriches our children as they explore, appreciate and enjoy art.



Physical education (PE)

Physical education (PE) plays an important role in promoting the health, fitness and well-being of children by helping to get them hooked on sport and by encouraging healthy lifestyles. The four areas of experience within PE (Health, fitness and well-being activities, Creative activities, Adventurous activities and Competitive activities) provide opportunities for children to develop a wide range of skills to help them to enjoy sport and physical activity throughout their lives.

Children will learn life skills, for example under Adventurous activities they will be taught how to swim unaided, develop water safety and personal survival skills, and how to read a map or follow trails. Competitive activities will include opportunities for children to learn games skills, observe fair play and equality, and be part of a team. Children will begin to understand that physical education is about learning how to feel healthy and stay fit while having fun.

Modern foreign languages (MFL)

The teaching of modern foreign languages (MFL) is non-statutory for children aged between 7 and 11 (in other words, the school does not have to teach them). Your child's school will decide if they want to teach a modern foreign language.



Schools that decide to teach a modern foreign language will use a wide range of creative activities to provide opportunities for children to develop their language skills and to increase their understanding of their own and other cultures.

What else will my child learn?

It is the responsibility of schools to plan and deliver a broad, balanced curriculum. Alongside the national curriculum, the subjects schools must also provide are religious education (RE) and personal and social education (PSE).

Primary schools do not have to provide sex education but they can provide a broader sex and relationships programme if the school governing body feel this is appropriate. However, they must have an up-to-date written sex education policy.

What is the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF)?

The National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) was developed to help achieve our aim that all learners develop excellent literacy and numeracy skills during their time at school. It provides continued development for 3 to 16-year-olds, clearly setting out expected yearly outcomes for literacy and numeracy.

In September 2015 we introduced revised programmes of study for English, Welsh and mathematics in order to integrate the skills identified in the LNF and to strengthen the learning and teaching of literacy and numeracy skills.

All children are supported to develop sound literacy and numeracy skills. These skills are not just about learning English, Welsh and mathematics; they are about being able to use skills in different situations and across a wide range of activities.

Literacy describes a set of skills, including speaking, listening, reading and writing, which allow us to make sense of the world around us.

Numeracy describes the use of number, measuring and data skills, and the ability to identify and use these skills to solve problems.

The LNF identifies literacy and numeracy expectations for each year group and will help children develop literacy and numeracy skills through all subjects in the national curriculum and by using a wide range of activities.





What are the National Reading and Numeracy Tests?

The best way to make sure that children make good progress is to make sure that they never fall behind. This can only be achieved by regularly monitoring and assessing a child's performance and that is why national tests have been introduced.

Having national tests developed especially for use in Wales means that teachers in all schools have the same information on the reading and numeracy skills of their learners. The tests can show where individual children might need more help to improve their skills or where children might need to be given more challenging tasks to stretch their skills, so there is no reason for children to practise for the tests.

The tests are developed in such a way that some children will be able to sit them in 'chunks'. This is especially important for younger children and those with additional learning needs. Depending on the needs of individual children, they can be delivered on a year group, class or small group basis.

Reading tests

The reading tests last up to an hour and are made up of short questions based on two or more texts. Some of the questions check how well the text has been understood while others aim to find out if children are able to make judgements about what they are reading.



Numeracy tests

There are two kinds of numeracy test, a procedural test and a reasoning test. Each of the numeracy tests takes up to half an hour. The procedural test measures number skills, measuring skills and data skills. The reasoning test measures how well children can use what they know to solve problems.

For a collection of resources to help parents and carers better understand the National Reading and Numeracy Tests, including an animated guide, search for 'National Reading and Numeracy Tests' at learning.gov.wales.

How can I support my child's learning?

Parental involvement is vitally important in helping children to learn. You can talk to the school about how to help your child's development and learning by getting actively involved, not just at home but in the garden, in the park and at the shops.

Schools can also work together with families to help them support their children's learning.



Ideas for learning together at home

- Spending time reading with your child, even just 10 minutes a day, can make a real difference. Choose reading material that they enjoy such as books, magazines, websites, packaging and leaflets – any text, anywhere.
- Look for opportunities in daily life to use numbers, whether it's at the shops, talking about the football scores, looking up the times of favourite TV programmes in the TV guide or using the bus or train timetable to plan a trip.
- Encourage your child to write and design things for a range of different purposes such as invitations, thank-you notes, e-mails, shopping or 'to do' lists.

Talk about the text, words and numbers that you see around you.

- Encourage your child to talk about mathematical concepts such as how much, how big and how many.
- Look for shapes and patterns in everyday objects and the world around you.
- Talk about and involve your child in everyday tasks that involve literacy and numeracy – cooking, playing or watching sports, paying for the shopping, planning a trip or playing a board game with the family or with friends.
- Visit museums and galleries, if you have the chance, and use your local library where you'll find a lot of information, support, computer access, and activities and events.

Well-being

It is very important that children are happy at school so they can learn and flourish. As part of the school community, you as parents and carers also have a role to play. Nurturing positive behaviour (in and out of school), encouraging your child to show kindness and respect to all members of the community, and making sure your child makes the most of their education by being in school are all ways of giving your child the best possible start in life.

Social and emotional learning

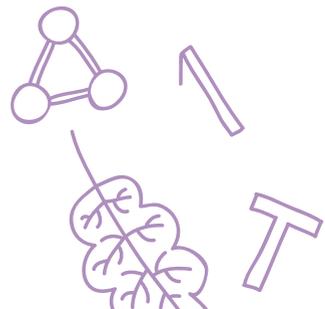
Many schools use specific programmes to promote learners' emotional well-being by developing their personal, emotional and social skills. Some programmes may be aimed at all learners, others may be for specific learners who, due to social, emotional or behavioural difficulties (or a combination of any of these), find school difficult and need extra support.

Counselling

Counselling services are available to support learners in Year 6. Within schools, counselling is used alongside the different approaches already in place to support the health, emotional and social needs of learners.

Bullying

If your child is being bullied or is bullying you should discuss the matter with the school as soon as possible. For more help and support visit **www.gov.wales** and search for 'Is your child being bullied?'.



Free school meals

If you receive certain benefits, your child may be eligible for free school meals as long as you meet certain eligibility conditions. If you feel you meet these conditions, you can collect a form from your child's school or apply to your local authority. If you claim free school meals for your child, the school can claim extra funding to provide further support to your child.

To find out if you are eligible, go to **www.gov.wales** and search for 'Free school meals'.

Healthy breakfasts

Children in primary schools can have a free healthy breakfast at school before the start of the school day. If your school does not run the free breakfast scheme, and there is demand for free breakfasts, the school governing body should write to the local authority to ask for free breakfasts to be provided. Free breakfast in primary schools is intended to help improve the health and concentration of children by providing them with a healthy start to the school day.

Do children with special educational needs follow the national curriculum?

Most children, including those with special educational needs, will be able to follow the national curriculum. However, at times, a headteacher may decide that all or part of the national curriculum should not apply, temporarily, to a child with special educational needs. In very exceptional cases for some children, such as those with Statements of Special Educational Needs issued by the local authority, it may be decided that the national curriculum should not apply on a permanent basis. This is known as 'disapplication'.

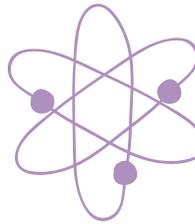
Find out more about what is provided for children with special educational needs by going to **learning.gov.wales** and searching for 'Information for carers of young people'.





Can I withdraw my child from the national curriculum?

There is no parental right to withdraw children from national curriculum subjects, or from the arrangements to assess children's progress in these subjects. However, you do have the right to withdraw your child from religious education and sex and relationship education which may be provided.





How is my child assessed?

For each national curriculum subject, the accompanying programmes of study set out what skills learners should be taught.

Your child's teacher will assess all aspects of school and home work and they will use a variety of assessment techniques as part of a combined approach to learning, teaching, planning and assessment. The teacher will assess what your child knows and can do and they will interpret the results of these assessments, applying these results to improve your child's learning.

At the end of Key Stage 2 the teacher will decide which level on the national curriculum scale best reflects your child's progress in each of the core subjects. In English, Welsh (either as a first or second language), mathematics and science, your child will be assessed on standards set out in the national curriculum programmes of study. These are set out as eight level descriptions, with one above Level 8 indicating Exceptional Performance (EP).

How will I know how my child is getting on?

You will receive a written report about your child's progress at least once a year. You will also have the opportunity to meet your child's teacher, but you can contact the school at any time to discuss your child's progress and how you can help your child to do even better.

Information from the national curriculum assessment will form part of the yearly report, along with information on how your child is progressing with literacy and numeracy across all subjects. The yearly report will also include feedback from your child's teacher about strengths and areas for improvement, attendance and achievements. The report will form the basis for a discussion about your child's learning needs and next steps.

At the end of primary school, your child's report will include a national curriculum level for each core subject. This will give you information about your child's progress and level of achievement against national curriculum standards.

The report will also include some information about how the results for the whole school compare with local and national standards.

For more information about school reports, see www.gov.wales/educationandskills



National curriculum levels

Outcomes 1, 2 and 3

Teachers may report on progress for children who are working towards the first step on the national curriculum by using the three 'outcome' steps that come before achievement at Level 1.

National Curriculum Levels 1, 2 and 3

For some children, performance below the expected level may be a huge achievement.

National Curriculum Level 4

This is the expected level for children at the end of primary school – most but not all children will achieve this level.

National Curriculum Levels 5, 6, 7 and 8

Achievement at Level 5 or beyond shows they are achieving above average.

Exceptional Performance (EP)

Some children might be expected to achieve significantly above the expected level.

N – Not awarded a level

Very rarely, there are circumstances that prevent a school from having enough knowledge and evidence on which to base a teacher assessment.

D – Disapplied

In some circumstances the headteacher may decide that all or part of the national curriculum does not apply to a child, for example because of their special educational needs.

National Reading and Numeracy Tests scoring and reporting

The tests can provide useful information to add to what your child's teacher knows about their reading and numeracy from their work every day in the classroom. Teachers can use the results to identify your child's strengths and also areas where more help may be needed.

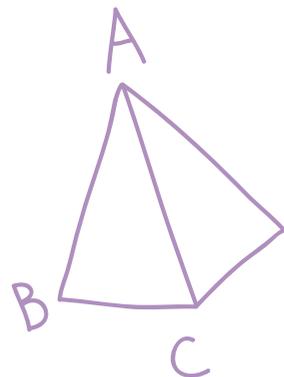
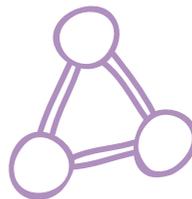
The tests provide two kinds of results – an age-standardised score and a progress measure. The age-standardised score tells you how well your child has done compared with other children of the same age (in years and months) taking the test at the same time. Looking at the progress measure from year to year will help you to track your child's achievement on the tests over time. You will receive these results in a report from your child's school.

The results act as a guide to how your child is performing in reading and numeracy. Your child's teacher will give a fuller picture of your child's performance in these areas in the end of term report.

You can find out more about scoring and reporting by visiting **learning.gov.wales** and searching for 'Information for parents and carers'.



$$3 + 5 = 8$$



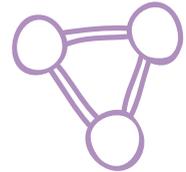
School reports

Who is entitled to receive reports and other information from the school?

You are entitled to receive a copy of your child's report from the school. You are also entitled to receive a copy of the governors' annual report.

Divorced or separated parents or carers and others who have parental responsibility for a child are equally entitled to this information unless there is a court order which would prevent this.

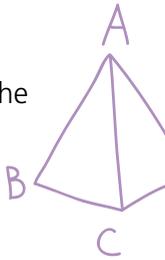
For more information about parents and carers and parental responsibility, visit www.gov.wales/educationandskills



Who can I talk to if I have concerns?

If you have concerns you should talk to your child's teacher first. If your child's school has a person chosen to be the first point of contact for concerns or complaints, you could also speak to this person.

If you are still concerned, you can raise your concern as a complaint. The school's policy on handling complaints will tell you how to do this.



Need more information?

You can get more information from the following sources.

- Your school – speak to your child’s teacher, the headteacher or a member of the governing body.
- Your local authority.
- By visiting our websites at:

www.gov.wales/educationandskills
www.gov.wales/schoolsinfo4parents

If your child has special educational needs and you need advice and information about matters relating to those needs, contact your local authority who will be able to direct you to their parent partnership service.



$$3 + 5 = 8$$

National school categorisation

A national school categorisation system was introduced by the Minister for Education and Skills in September 2014. This system gives us a clear and fair picture of how well your child’s school is performing compared with other schools across Wales, and helps us to identify the schools that need the most help, support and guidance to improve.

You can find the performance measures that schools are assessed against and the guide for parents and carers at **www.gov.wales** by searching for ‘National school categorisation’. Categorisation outcomes are published each year on the My Local School website at **mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk**

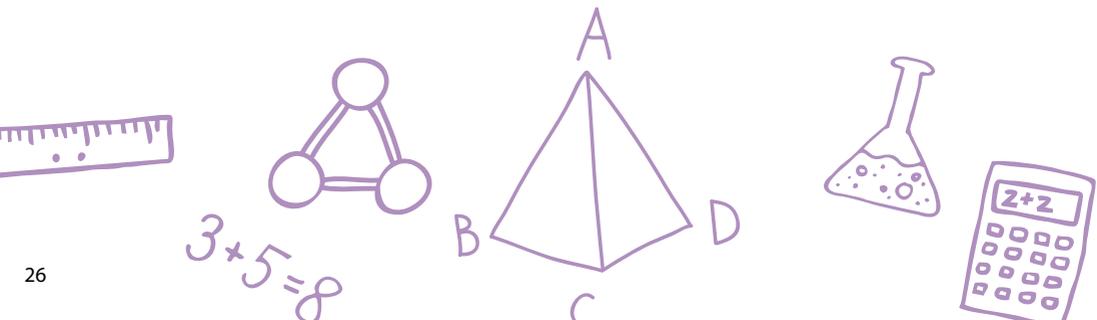
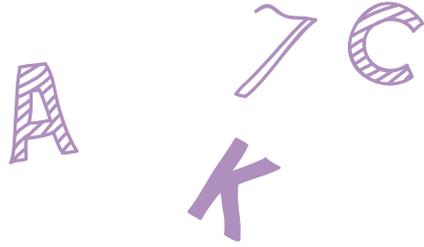
A smooth move into secondary school

Children generally move into secondary school in the September before they become 12.

When your child is in the final year of primary school, the local authority will send you information setting out how to apply for a secondary school place. This usually happens during the first term of children's last year in primary school.

Schools in Wales must have a transition plan in place which sets out how they work with local secondary schools to make the move to secondary school as smooth as possible.

Arrangements between your child's school and the local secondary schools might include visits to the secondary school for children to have a look around and meet the main members of staff, information sessions, and visits from secondary school teachers to the primary school.



Useful resources

This list of useful resources will help you as a parent/carer to gain more information to help you support the children in your life.

Bitesize

The BBC's free online resource to help children in the UK with their school work. (This website is only available in English.)

www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize

ChildLine

A 24-hour confidential service for children and young people in the UK dealing with any concerns from child abuse to drugs. (This website is only available in English.)

www.childline.org.uk

Lovereading4kids

Will help you to explore books that will excite children and help them to fall in love with reading. (This website is only available in English.)

www.lovereading4kids.co.uk

Welsh in Education Resources Branch, Welsh Government

The Welsh in Education Resources Branch commissions Welsh and bilingual educational resources to support all national curriculum subjects. You can get resources in a digital format through Hwb at

hwb.wales.gov.uk and those in a print format are available from www.gwales.com. For more information please contact

welshresources@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Education begins at home

Gives helpful tips on how to help children with learning.

www.facebook.com/beginsathome

Sumdog

A site that offers games to make mathematics fun. They are all free to play, with the option to subscribe for extra features. (This website is only available in English.)

www.sumdog.com



A curriculum for Wales

To find out more about the development of the new curriculum and assessment arrangements for Wales see *A curriculum for Wales: a curriculum for life*.

**[www.gov.wales/
curriculumforwales](http://www.gov.wales/curriculumforwales)**

How is your child's school doing?

A website that provides information on schools' performance across Wales.

mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk

Learning Wales

Learning Wales is a web-based resource, designed to meet the needs of educators and practitioners and improve the standards of learning providers across Wales.

learning.gov.wales

Hwb

The National Digital Learning Platform and content repository provides access to a range of high-quality digital learning tools and thousands of high-quality digital classroom resources to support digital transformation in the classroom.

hwb.wales.gov.uk

Hwb+

The individual school learning platform where learners, parents, carers and teachers can access a wide range of online tools and services that can support digital learning.

hwb.wales.gov.uk

Creative Learning Zone

A new zone on Hwb with information and inspiration to help make creative skills an established part of the curriculum.

hwb.wales.gov.uk/creativity

Meic

A confidential helpline service for children and young people in Wales. From finding out what's going on in your local area to helping deal with bullying.

www.meiccymru.org

Estyn

Find out more about how your child's school is performing.

www.estyn.gov.uk

Education Workforce Council (EWC)

EWC regulates education practitioners in Wales in the interests of learners, parents/carers, and the public. You can check online that teachers and support staff at your child's school are registered.

www.ewc.wales

Free school meals

To find out if you are eligible, search for 'Free school meals' online.

www.gov.wales

Change4life

Gives you ideas and recipes to help you and your family be healthier and happier.

www.change4lifewales.org.uk

Family and Community Engagement (FaCE) Toolkit

This is a collection of resources for schools that encourage and support parents and carers to become effective partners in their child's learning and attainment. Search for 'Family and Community Engagement Toolkit' online.

learning.gov.wales

The Fostering Network

Established in 1974, this is the UK's leading charity for everyone involved in fostering, bringing together all those who provide, plan and deliver foster care. (This website is only available in English.)

www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk

Children's Rights

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a list of rights for all children and young people, no matter who they are or where they live. These rights are the things that they need to be safe, healthy and happy.

www.childrensrights.wales

Children 4–11

(Cymraeg – Live, Learn, Enjoy)

Whatever language you speak at home, Welsh-medium education can give children extra skills and more opportunities for the future. So even if you don't speak Welsh yourself, why not consider Welsh-medium education for your child?

Search for 'Children 4–11' online.

cymraeg.gov.wales

Notes

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