Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity

chwarae • dysgu • tyfu
play • learn • grow
cyfnod sylfaen 3–7 foundation phase

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Welsh Assembly Government

Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity

Audience   Headteachers, teachers, practitioners, governing bodies of maintained schools and practitioners and management committees in the non-maintained sector in Wales; local education authorities; teacher unions and school representative bodies; church diocesan authorities; national bodies in Wales with an interest in education.

Overview   This document provides guidance on the skills and knowledge that children acquire during the Foundation Phase, along with case studies on its implementation in settings and schools. The document and the Area of Learning should not be viewed in isolation, but should be planned for across the curriculum.

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Background

The proposals in the Welsh Assembly Government's document *The Learning Country: Foundation Phase 3–7 years* included developing a curriculum that linked and strengthened the principles and practice in ACCAC's document *Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning before Compulsory School Age* (2000) with the programmes of study and focus statements in the Key Stage 1 national curriculum, to create a rich curriculum under seven Areas of Learning for children in the Foundation Phase. The Foundation Phase curriculum advocates that positive links between the home and the providers of care and education are fostered and promoted.

The Welsh Assembly Government's approach to education and lifelong learning is set in the broader context of our vision for children and young people overall.

We have seven core aims for children and young people developed from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. These will underpin all of the activities of the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS).

We aim to ensure that all children and young people:

- have a flying start in life and the best possible basis for their future growth and development
- have access to a comprehensive range of education, training and learning opportunities, including acquisition of essential personal and social skills
- enjoy the best possible physical and mental, social and emotional health, including freedom from abuse, victimisation and exploitation
- have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities
- are listened to, treated with respect, and are able to have their race and cultural identity recognised
- have a safe home and a community that supports physical and emotional wellbeing
- are not disadvantaged by any type of poverty.

This guidance supports the Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity Area of Learning in the *Foundation Phase Framework for Children's Learning for 3 to 7-year-olds in Wales*. The document provides guidance on the skills and knowledge that children acquire, along with case studies on its implementation in settings and schools. The guidance and Area of Learning should not be viewed or delivered in isolation; it should be planned for across the curriculum.

Please note that details of the statutory requirements for religious education are on page 13 of the *Foundation Phase Framework for Children's Learning for 3 to 7-year-olds in Wales*. In essence, the content of religious education will continue to be set out in the locally agreed syllabus with advice provided by the local Standing Advisory Council for religious education (SACRE), or under such arrangements as are made by a school of religious character.

Introduction

This Area of Learning is at the heart of the Foundation Phase Curriculum 3–7 and should be developed across the curriculum.

At the heart of Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity is the process of experiential learning that is central to good practice in education for young children. The model:

- starts with the children's past or present experience

- provides an opportunity for children to talk about their experiences, including sharing familiar and new cultural experiences

- relates learning to the real world

- allows for new learning and practice of skills

- reviews the whole process and leads to progression in learning.

In Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity children learn about themselves, their relationships with other children and adults both within and beyond the family, the distinctive Welsh culture and other cultures that are part of the diverse society in Wales. Concepts of fairness and justice are introduced and children are encouraged to think about and respect the feelings of others. The importance of motivation, perseverance, self-esteem and a positive disposition to learning all have a significant role to play in children's learning and development within the Foundation Phase.

Well-being is an integral part of learning and is associated not only with children's basic needs for safety and security, food and shelter, warmth and affection, but also with how at ease children are with themselves and their surroundings. It is now recognised that well-being is essential to becoming an effective learner.

Personal development

As individuals, children should be given opportunities to learn:

- how to take care of themselves, their personal hygiene and safety
- the skills of dressing and undressing
- independence when eating
- how to respect their environment and use resources constructively and with care.

This can be achieved through:

- individual encouragement and support from a practitioner
- spontaneous and structured learning opportunities
- mealtimes and snack times
- (physical) activities in the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

In structured play activities and through experiences related to their daily lives, their families, homes, friends and neighbourhood, children will:

- learn to interact with others who are similar and different from themselves
- gain awareness that all individuals are of equal value and learn to acknowledge, respect and value individual and cultural similarities and differences
- learn to value the right of individuals to their own lifestyle and beliefs.

Frequent opportunities for children to express and communicate their views, feelings and emotions, as well as to listen to others, for example in circle time, will (whether the setting/school is characterised by ethnic diversity or mono-ethnicity, and regardless of whether the children are from the dominant or minority culture) lay the foundations for and enable children to develop:

- confidence and assertiveness
- sensitivity and empathy to the needs of others
- the ability to challenge stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination related to culture, gender or disability

• an understanding that through recognising and challenging negative views and attitudes racist attitudes can be changed.

Opportunities to care for pets and plants will help children to:

• understand that all living things have similar needs

• show care and respect for living things.

Children develop knowledge, concepts and skills that build on their personal experiences, and equip them for a role in society through a learning environment that reflects each culture appropriately and provides activities that are suitably planned and resourced.

Caring for the class goldfish, frogspawn and tadpoles

In addition to providing opportunities for Jack to develop confidence and assertiveness and to show concern for living things, he also increased his vocabulary and became more confident in interacting and talking with other children and practitioners.

Jack's speech was immature and difficult to understand. He was reluctant to converse with practitioners in the setting and only interacted with small groups of children. He often spent time alone watching the class goldfish.

When frog spawn and tadpoles were brought to school Jack was fascinated by them. His curiosity led to him asking questions. Within a few days, Jack was providing daily accounts of their progress to both practitioners and children. He was given the important role of informing the teacher of when he thought each frog was ready to be returned to its pond.

This new responsibility, and his natural interest in nature, resulted in Jack becoming more confident in interacting and talking with other children and practitioners, and there was a noticeable improvement in his speech and vocabulary.

Social development

- Initially children's social development and learning occur within the home as they form relationships with members of their family group.

- Learning experiences in the home will be extended when children start to attend settings/schools but they will continue to spend some of their time in solitary activities, acquiring new skills.

- When engaged in small group activities, children should have the opportunity to interact with and be supported by a practitioner and should be encouraged to seek help if they need it.

- As children progress more challenging topics can be introduced in response to the children's interests and growing understanding; for example, 'Folk tales and fables', 'Being good friends', 'Patterns and colours'.

- The transition from home to a setting/school will be eased by opportunities for role play in the home corner or other familiar surroundings, such as a book corner, that are suitably furnished with adult- as well as child-sized furniture.

- Gradually children build up their vocabulary and develop confidence in talking with other children and practitioners about themselves and what they are doing, as well as becoming aware of and respecting the needs of others.

- In group settings children may play alone or alongside others, gradually interacting more with their peer group as their language and communication skills and their friendships develop.

- When children play happily together in small groups and have acquired relevant communication skills, activities can be planned that require them to solve problems or play games together.

- Children also need to develop awareness of the consequences of their actions, for example that it is wrong to hit others because they will be hurt.

- Opportunities should be made to involve children in devising a set of simple rules for behaviour in their group.

- Children also need to develop respect for rules and property.

- The support of a practitioner will still be required until children develop skills in taking turns and observing the rules of a game.

- Children should be encouraged to consider the needs of others and to participate in caring and sharing activities.

- Practitioners also need to be sensitive to children's needs for support in developing attention skills. Some children will require a range of stimuli and routines to gain and maintain their attention, such as gestures, sounds or visual aids.

- As children progress they will be able to contribute to a variety of groups for different purposes and will be able to undertake roles within those groups, for example re-enacting the parts of characters in a story, or carrying out a mathematical investigation.

- Children should have opportunities for undertaking collaborative work on large-scale projects that involve considerable interpersonal skills such as cooperative learning, decision making, and undertaking different roles and responsibilities.

- As children progress they will be able to recognise issues that are of common concern to themselves and to others, such as what is fair and unfair.

- Children can provide mutual support for each other. They learn to establish and maintain friendships and how to participate in a variety of groups in the wider community.

- Children will benefit from opportunities to develop their understanding of different members of the community by learning about their roles, the different workplaces in the locality.

- Children should become aware of how they can help to care for their environment.

- The concept of cultural diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is different and unique. By providing a safe, positive and nurturing environment children will have opportunities to share and explore these differences.

- The Curriculum Cymreig should enable all children who live in Wales to gain a sense of belonging to Wales, and provide them with an understanding of the Welsh heritage, literature, arts and religious background, as well as the language.

- Children will become aware of their own cultural identity and that of others through a range of planned, and incidental, practical educational experiences.

- Children will learn to appreciate cultural diversity by sharing and celebrating familiar and new cultural experiences, including some of the festivals and traditions contained in local and denominational agreed syllabuses.

- Differences should be acknowledged, discussed, respected and valued. There will also be similarities, for example most cultures have rituals (such as family mealtimes and birthdays) with which children are able to identify, although they may celebrate them differently.

- Topics such as 'Families', 'Homes', 'Foods', 'Toys and games' and 'Celebrations' all enable cultural diversity to be developed as they relate to every child's experiences in some way. However, focusing solely on spectacular or colourful events such as this may lead to stereotyping .

- Knowledge of different aspects of culture can be developed including dress, language, diet and food, ways of eating, discipline, courtesy, traditions and customs, music, art, dance and literature.

- Over time children will learn about different backgrounds and lifestyles, to respect them equally and appreciate the varied contributions that different cultures make to communities in Wales.

- Celebrating some of the festivals of major religions provides positive opportunities for learning about different beliefs and customs. There may be aspects of culture associated with religions, for example writings, art, music, symbols and architecture.

- In order to be able to empathise with others children will need to explore their own personal and cultural identities and feelings, and express their views through play and talk, drawing, painting and other forms of representation.

- Issues of fairness, justice, rights and responsibilities can be introduced when children are able to appreciate the feelings of others.

- In predominantly mono-ethnic settings/schools children's understanding of different cultures can be extended by communicating (e.g. via e-mail) with children in other settings with different cultural contexts.

I use Snuggly Squirrel (a toy squirrel) as a 'magic' comforter when a child is upset – perhaps when leaving Mum, after a fall or an argument with a friend, when a child is not very well, etc.

Snuggly Squirrel

This is very effective and seems to help children recognise, express and deal with their feelings more easily. They may come up and ask for a cuddle with Snuggly Squirrel for a variety of reasons and then recognise that they can comfort and calm themselves with some independence. Also, this toy squirrel seems to encourage recognition of feelings and empathy in the other children; I often have requests for Snuggly Squirrel from children on behalf of another child in the class "to make him/her feel better". It is clearly important that Snuggly Squirrel is only used for this purpose and so retains his magic powers.

Christmas in a country far away

One January morning, during circle time, Aled excitedly told the other children about the Christmas holiday he had recently spent visiting some of his family who lived in Australia. It had been a very different experience from Christmas in Wales. The weather had been hot and Aled had spent Christmas day playing on the beach, and had enjoyed a picnic as his Christmas lunch. In Wales it had been very cold and we had all enjoyed a roast dinner.

The children were fascinated by Aled's holiday but were also curious to know if his cousins had a Christmas tree, and if they gave presents and cards to their family and friends. Some children wanted to know how far it was to Australia and so they went to look in our book of maps. As the children were so interested in the discussion I decided to join them.

I started to highlight the similarities between Wales and Australia as much as possible and made a list of statements for the children to sort into 'same' or 'different' categories, for example 'Children enjoy playing with their friends' would be put in the 'same' category; 'Australia is a large country' would be an example of 'different'.

Next I invited the children to come up with statements of their own. After some practice, two large pieces of sugar paper were put up in the classroom to which the children added their statements. Which list would be longer? At the outset, the children thought that the 'different' category list might turn out to be longer, but it was demonstrated that there were, in fact, more similarities than differences.

Other discussion points could include that in Australia:

- boys and girls enjoy playing games

- children must bring their own pens to school

- little girls enjoy wearing pretty dresses

- children help around the house

- friends help each other

- people love to have fun

- children love animals.

Moral and spiritual development

- Children discover some of the boundaries for behaviour (what they are/are not allowed to do) and what is acceptable by observing positive behaviour and attitudes of others.

- Sometimes expectations in a setting/school may not be consistent with those at home but children need to learn the reasons for particular conduct.

- Ultimately, the aim is that children will be able to communicate about what is good and bad, right and wrong, fair and unfair, caring and inconsiderate themselves and exercise self-control.

  It is important when praising or reprimanding behaviour that the approval or disapproval is clearly directed at the act and not the child.

- Learning to empathise with others firstly necessitates the ability to recognise their own feelings and reflect on them.

- The practitioner provides an important role model for the kind of behaviour expected in different situations.

- Spiritual development is less easily defined than moral development, as the innermost thoughts are involved.

- Children can be provided with opportunities to experience and respond to quiet and still times. They should be encouraged to observe and reflect on natural phenomena (such as autumn colours, or shadows), close their eyes and listen to sounds around them (such as birdsong or classical music), or just be very quiet and think of something they think is beautiful. All responses should be respected and valued.

- Values can be developed by giving children opportunities to share their ideas about things that are important to them or something they are pleased about in a piece of work they have done.

- Circle time is an ideal way of enabling children to take turns at speaking in a group situation and to listen to each other's ideas. Collective worship is another opportunity for sharing beliefs and ideas.

- Special times such as birthdays and religious occasions can be celebrated by creating a special atmosphere to make the event memorable, for example by using candles and music.

Well-Being

Self-identity/self-esteem

- In order to feel happy about who they are and how they fit into groups, children need to develop self-awareness as individuals and as part of wider society. This will include self-esteem, self-knowledge, confidence, feeling valued and accepted by others, an ability to express their views and feelings and make sense of them, and an ability to relate to others and work with them.

- Circle time is a familiar way of introducing into discussion matters related to feelings and reactions, beliefs and personal views. Children can be encouraged to respond to photographs, puppets, dolls and story characters. They should have opportunities to explore aspects of their own and others' personal and cultural identity and begin to question stereotyping.

- Young children need to acquire positive attitudes and so it is important to convey positive messages that show that every child is valued and respected.

- Children will begin to develop a sense of identity if they can see themselves in mirrors and photographs in a variety of activities.

- Children will begin to develop a sense of belonging as they interact with others in their family, their friends and members of the local community. This includes developing awareness of the cultural heritage of Wales and beginning to speak Welsh.

- Topics such as 'All about me' or 'Myself' enable children to explore identity, similarities and differences, as well as to discuss likes and dislikes, favourite foods, customs, etc. They can learn about different names, observe visual differences by producing and comparing self-portraits, paying attention to detail, individuality, what is special about each of them.

- If children feel safe and secure, without fear of failure or criticism, they will be able to benefit from the learning experiences provided for them by venturing into new activities, making decisions, taking necessary risks and developing increasing control over their own lives.

- Children should know about the importance of food and water to their bodies, how to make healthy food choices and the importance of exercise.

Painting of Maisha

This painting by a child, based on a character from a book, reflects the positive attitudes and acceptance of others that she has acquired.

Children were painting characters from their favourite stories. The characters were multiracial and children were asked to choose one. A child told me she wanted to paint Maisha, an African girl, because she looked pretty.

Physical well-being

Physical well-being focuses on children's increasing awareness of their own bodies and their personal health development, including nutrition and personal safety.

Children will need to learn how to keep themselves physically safe and healthy. Their learning programme should include information about:

- what to do or to whom they should go if they feel unsafe or need assistance
- the importance of food and water to their bodies
- the importance of healthy eating and how to make healthy food choices that include the foods that should feature in a balanced diet
- the importance of exercise
- road safety, water safety and hazards in the home
- the different parts of the male and female body and the distinction between appropriate and inappropriate touching
- medicines that are taken to make them feel better, and the dangers of drugs, smoking, alcohol and other dangerous substances.

Snack time

Parents/carers were concerned that their children were not eating lunch, as they were ravenous when they arrived home after school. I assured parents/carers that their children did eat lunch but that from 12 noon until 3.30 p.m. was a long and busy afternoon. I proposed snack time to the parents/carers and then the children; all seemed very positive and enthusiastic about it.

Children pay £1 per week and have the choice of cereal, crackers, cheese, fruit/vegetables each day.

The children take part in preparing some of the fruits, handing out cups and plates, and then choosing what they want to eat. They also take responsibility for clearing away their own dishes by washing and drying them.

Afternoon snack time takes 20 minutes and is taken before afternoon play. It seems to maintain the children's energy levels and keeps them alert through the rest of the day. They have tried different sorts of food including fruits/vegetables that were previously untried or disliked.

Learning to learn/dispositions to learning

- Children are naturally motivated to learn by curiosity and a desire to explore and discover more about their environment, initially in a physical way and, as their language develops, through asking questions and talking about their experiences.

- Children readily acquire skills in using information and communication technology (ICT) and should be provided with a programme of taught skills and opportunities to use ICT independently.

- The skills of enquiry, questioning and information seeking should be nurtured and developed as tools for lifelong learning.

- If activities are suitably challenging, but not too difficult, they will engage children's interest, as will be evident in children's concentration and perseverance to achieve new skills and explore new opportunities.

- Learning how to learn, and both adapting learning to and tackling new situations and experiences in a non-threatening environment will establish long-lasting skills that will enable children to progress and adapt to the continually changing demands of society.

- When activities are suited to their needs and interests children will be relaxed, enjoy learning, and be motivated and involved in what they are doing.

- Positive dispositions to learning, which are influenced by children's feelings, rely on children wanting to learn because they find their learning experiences intrinsically rewarding. This has implications for the teaching approaches used and the practitioner's sensitivity to children's interests, their developing knowledge, understanding and skills.

- Observation of children's well-being and their involvement in the process of learning will indicate how well learning activities are matched to children's developmental level.

- Professor Laevers of the Leuven Centre for Experiential Education, Belgium introduced the term 'involvement' to describe children's deep level of concentration when learning activities meet their needs.

Making a scarecrow

The activity began with a story about a scarecrow. The children were so enthusiastic about the story that several of them immediately asked if we could make our own scarecrow. We found a shirt that had been used as a painting apron and some old trousers from lost property. We discussed what material we could use to stuff him with, took another look at the book, and decided to use autumn leaves collected from outside. We took guesses about how many bucketfuls of leaves we would need. This was an opportunity for the children to make a sensible estimate of capacity. The leaves were collected and stuffed into the clothes. There were leaves everywhere.

We then stuffed a plastic bag with leaves to form the scarecrow's head and covered this with some fabric. Eyes and a nose were stuck on and the children asked if I could sew a mouth to make a smile. We found a pole to keep the scarecrow upright and decided that a bucket of sand would serve to hold him up. Within an hour or so from finishing the story, the children had made their very own scarecrow.

As a class teacher I have found that if at all possible, it pays to try and accommodate the children's ideas. The enthusiasm which they generate from thinking through their own idea and from pursuing it is tangible within the classroom sometimes. I had planned some follow-up work on the scarecrow story, but not this. I could see the potential for going with the children's idea, rather than preventing it and putting my planning into operation.

Independence

- Independence will be promoted through the provision of a well-organised, stimulating learning environment, where resources are easily accessible to children.

- Children who are involved in choosing resources, being responsible for looking after them and returning them after use, will develop initiative and a sense of responsibility.

- As part of a varied and interesting curriculum, allowing children to initiate some of their own activities in negotiation with a practitioner, helps to promote a high level of involvement and positive dispositions to learning, both immediately and in the longer term.

- This enables children to pursue an interest in depth; they may wish to return to an activity on successive occasions, and provision should be made for this.

- Encouraging children to be active partners in planning their learning activities, in their capacity to undertake responsibilities and develop the skills required for independent learning, shows respect for children's rights as identified in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

- When children have completed their activities they should be encouraged to share their learning with others and evaluate what they have enjoyed, are pleased with or what they might improve in the future. This introduces an element of self-evaluation and personal target setting from an early age. Children are also encouraged to listen to others and learn that there are different ways of doing things.

The sad train

The children pursue an interest in depth and have returned to it on successive occasions.

A small group of children were playing in the construction area with the large train, trying to build a train track with a set of wooden blocks, but the train was too big to go through the only tunnel they could find in the nursery. How could the children help the train?

"We could build a tunnel. Let's use the blocks."
The children worked as a team to collect the blocks they thought they would need, which included large and round blocks.

One little girl appeared to be detached from the group. She did not get as actively involved as the others, but took full part in the discussions and decision making, often taking on the role as the leader when they began to talk and explain what they were doing.

"We need to build the rail first."

Now the train has a tunnel to go through: "Look at the train, he's happy now." Two of the children remained in the construction area and built another tunnel for the train to use. They worked cooperatively but without much discussion.

Planning

The following is a sample of how one school plans for aspects of Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity in a holistic way across the Areas of Learning.

Links with other Areas of Learning (to ensure a holistic delivery)	Activities and resources	Assessment
Creative Development Language, Literacy and Communication Skills Physical Development Welsh Language Development	Song – 'What's your name?' 'Pwy wyt ti?' Post names in boxes Make names in sand Resources: Children, puppets, names, post boxes, sand, glue, card	Practitioner to note: • who answers appropriately and individually • who recognises name • dexterity.
Mathematical Development Creative Development Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	Singing of numbers 1–10 Number recognition 1–3 Resources: Number line	Note number recognition

The following example of two activities undertaken at different times in the term illustrates the progress that children will make in Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity.

Activity 1

Children begin to gradually interact more with their peers, develop friendships and respect for rules and property.

Activities and resources	Practitioner involvement	Assessment
The children will be trained/shown how to put on badges to play in/with the farm, house, shop, sand, book corner, puppets, computer, musical instruments. Resources: Badges	Practitioners will play in these activities with groups of children in order to ensure fairness.	Is it fair? Note response(s) of a limited number of children involved in an activity.

Activity 2

Children begin to develop their involvement in choosing resources, taking responsibility for looking after them and returning them after use, and developing initiative.

Activities and resources	Practitioner involvement	Assessment
The children take ownership of the kitchen to keep it tidy and take on a family role. Resources: Kitchen	A practitioner will play with the children and intervene where appropriate (use play book to suggest conversations).	Note conversational skills of the children (especially their use of sentences). Note who can take on a role.

Progress in learning

Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity is at the heart of the Foundation Phase. It should be planned for across all other Areas of Learning and through practical and structured activities that will help develop children's specific skills. Children will progress through the various elements when they are developmentally ready.

Personal development

Children's involvement in a wide range of activities throughout the Foundation Phase should encourage them to feel confident to explore and experiment with new learning opportunities and acquire the appropriate attitude to/disposition for learning. The development of children's self-confidence, self-esteem and their ability to respect the needs of others and to take responsibility for personal hygiene should be sensitively promoted. As they move through the Foundation Phase children should be given opportunities to:

- become independent in meeting their personal hygiene needs and be more aware of personal safety

- express and communicate different feelings and emotions (for example, happiness, excitement, affection, sadness and anger) – their own and those of others

- show curiosity and develop positive attitudes to new experiences and learning, take risks and become confident explorers of their environment (indoors and outdoors), and experiment with new learning opportunities (including ICT)

- become independent thinkers and learners, develop an awareness of what they are good at and understand how they can improve their learning and use feedback to improve their work

- concentrate for lengthening periods and value the learning, success and achievements of themselves and other people.

Social development

Children's involvement in a wide range of activities throughout the Foundation Phase should encourage them to develop the appropriate skills to communicate and develop positive relationships with others to become independent learners and members of their communities. The development of children's skills should be an integral part of the curriculum. As they move through the Foundation Phase children should be given opportunities to make progress in their ability to:

- be aware of and respect the needs of others, to take responsibility for their own actions, as well as to consider the consequences of words and actions for themselves and others

- develop an understanding of the behavioural expectations of the setting/school and understand that rules are essential in an ordered community

- develop an understanding of what is fair and unfair (and understand what they believe is right and wrong), and be willing to compromise

- form relationships and feel confident to play and work cooperatively, to value friends and families, and to show care and consideration

- develop a positive self-image and a sense of belonging

- develop positive attitudes and understanding of who they are within their family and within different communities, as well as an understanding of their own Welsh identity

- experience and begin to develop an understanding of the different routines, customs and events that are important aspects of the cultures within Wales

- develop an awareness of different cultures and the differing needs, views and beliefs of other people in their own and in other cultures

- treat (all) people from all cultural backgrounds in a respectful and tolerant manner, to develop an understanding of the diversity of roles that people play in different groups and communities, and to begin to question stereotyping.

Moral and spiritual development

Experiences throughout the Foundation Phase should encourage children to communicate their ideas, values and beliefs about themselves, others and the world. They should understand that people have different preferences, views and beliefs, and know that each person is different but understand that all are equal in value. Children should have opportunities to consider and evaluate their own behaviour and that of others. They should be encouraged to ask and respond to difficult questions about life, and recognise the value of life. As they move through the Foundation Phase children should be given opportunities to:

• respond to ideas and questions enthusiastically, sensitively, creatively and intuitively while beginning to challenge stereotyping and racist comments and behaviour

• talk/communicate about what is good and bad, right and wrong, fair and unfair, caring and inconsiderate

• talk about/communicate and reflect on the decisions made in stories and situations, or to personally suggest alternative responses

• respond personally to simple imaginary moral situations, giving reasons for decisions made

• use stories or situations to raise questions about why some things are special; experience exciting, wonderful, inspirational, creative and/or quiet times

• express ideas and feelings creatively, explaining why they are significant

• talk about the choices available to individuals and discuss whether the choices available make a decision easier or more complex/as well as ask questions about how and why special things should be treated with respect and respond personally; they should also experience exciting, wonderful, inspirational, creative and/or quiet times and express ideas and feelings about these times creatively

• evaluate the decisions made by characters, suggesting alternative responses, and to respond personally to simple imaginary moral situations giving reasons for decisions made; ask questions about what is important in life from a personal perspective and from the perspective of others; talk about exciting, wonderful, inspirational, creative and/or quiet times experienced, explaining why they were significant.

Well-being

Children's involvement in a wide range of activities throughout the Foundation Phase should encourage them to adopt an open and interested attitude towards their environment and learning, and to develop their confidence and self-esteem. They should feel safe and secure, and feel that they are valued. In addition they should feel that their contribution is equally respected. Children need to understand that they can contribute to their own safety, and that they have a right to say 'no' if they feel threatened/frightened/ uncomfortable with a person/situation. They should also understand that in certain circumstances it is acceptable to break the rules where their own personal safety is threatened. Children should develop an understanding of their own bodies and of how to keep them healthy and safe. As they move through the Foundation Phase children should be given opportunities to:

- value and contribute to their own well-being and to the well-being of others, and to be aware of their own feelings and develop the ability to express them in an appropriate way

- understand the relationship between feelings and actions and that other people have feelings

- demonstrate care, respect and affection for other children, adults and their environment

- develop a growing interest in the world around them and understand what their environment has to offer when playing alone and with others

- understand and recognise the changes that happen to their bodies as they exercise, and describe the changes to their breathing, heart rate, appearance and feelings

- develop an understanding that exercise and hygiene as well as the right types of food and drink are important for healthy bodies, and that to keep their bodies safe they will need to prepare for and recover from activity appropriately

- develop an understanding about the dangers in the home and outside environment, and to understand that medicines are taken to make them feel better, and that some drugs are dangerous.

Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity across the curriculum

Effective provision for personal and social development and well-being needs careful planning across all Areas of Learning to ensure that children have opportunities to develop their skills as active thinkers, learners and decision makers and to interact with others – learning to help, share, cooperate, identify and solve problems. Children should also have opportunities to develop, apply and extend their knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum Cymreig, and of the different cultures, traditions and celebrations that exist in Wales today. There are many opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and understanding within the other Areas of Learning and within the different teaching areas in the setting/school, for example:

Language, Literacy and Communication Skills

• communicating needs, expressing feelings and opinions through role play/dramatic activities
• through handling books from different cultures to develop children's knowledge of the different languages that exist in Wales – how they sound and look

Mathematical Development

• through counting in daily routines – how many children have dinners through to addition/subtraction/multiplication when buying and selling fruit and vegetables from an imaginary greengrocer/supermarket
• through exploring the importance of various numbers in the different cultures and traditions

Welsh Language Development

• through starting to express/communicate feelings and emotions in Welsh through to reading and writing simple texts relating to moral issues
• experiencing through role play/small world activities/cooking the different images and tastes that are integral to the cultures within Wales

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- developing an enquiring mind through structured 'exploration' activities in the outdoor learning environment, such as developing routes/plans
- exploring their local environment and wider country, and identifying culturally diverse links through experiential learning activities and using ICT

Physical Development

- through the children sharing and working with others and playing traditional games from other cultures to improve their fine manipulative skills
- through moving large equipment children should become aware of safety issues to themselves and others

Creative Development

- through exploring a range of sound sources indoors and outdoors children can discuss preferences and share 'emotions' from music with others
- using a variety of media and textures children can create and copy patterns used in different cultures.

The legal and ethical context

The Race Relations Act 1976 made it unlawful to discriminate on racial grounds, either directly, indirectly or by segregation or victimisation.

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 extends the Race Relations Act 1976 and places a duty on public bodies to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups.

The Education Reform Act (1988) introduced the national curriculum 5–16, the obligation to provide religious education that is broadly Christian, and promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of children. Commitment to equal opportunities for all and preparation for life in a multicultural society are major cross-curricular dimensions of the school curriculum.

The Children Act 1989 is a major piece of legislation relating to children. One of its key principles is that child care provision must take into account the religious, racial, cultural and linguistic needs of the child.

The Care Standards Act 2000 extends the Children Act and introduces standards for full day care, sessional day care, crèches, childminders, out-of-school care and open-access play. One Standard requires the registered person and staff to actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
This has no legal standing but is an internationally recognised code of ethics that has been ratified by countries throughout the world. It contains 54 articles, many of which relate to anti-discriminatory practice.

Useful information and contacts

A Process-Oriented Child Monitoring System (research started 1976) by F Laevers (*Experiential Education* series, Centre for Experiential Education, Belgium). This is a programme for observing and assessing children's well-being and their involvement. The English learning tools section of it, and other related materials, can be accessed by visiting www.cego.be

Anti-discriminatory Practice by R Millam (Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd) ISBN: 9780826454768

A sure start for an uncertain future by G Claxton. Invited keynote address to the British Association for Early Childhood Education Conference, June 1999.

Contemporary Issues in the Early Years edited by G Pugh and B Duffy (Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd, 2006) ISBN: 9781412921077

Developing the Curriculum Cymreig (ACCAC, 2003)
ISBN: 1861125240

Effective Early Learning – Case Studies in Improvement by
C Pascal and T Bertram (Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd, 1997)
ISBN: 9780761972938

Equal opportunities and diversity in the school curriculum in Wales (ACCAC, 2001) ISBN: 1861123949

Experiencing Reggio Emilia edited by L Abbott and C Nutbrown (Open University Press, 2007) ISBN: 9780335207039

Global Citizenship Handbook (OXFAM, 2002)

National Assembly for Wales *Race Equality Scheme* 2005–2008

Personal and Social Education Framework: Key Stages 1 to 4 in Wales (ACCAC, 2000) ISBN: 1861122225

Personal and Social Education: Supplementary Guidance (ACCAC, 2000) ISBN: 186112242X

Personal, Social and Emotional Development of Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by H Mortimer
(A QEd Publication) ISBN: 1898873178

Start Right: The Importance of Early Learning by C Ball (Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, 1994) ISBN: 9780901469151

Supporting Early Learning by V Hurst and J Joseph (Open University Press, 1998) ISBN: 9780335199501

Supporting Identity, Diversity and Language in the Early Years by I Siraj-Blatchford and P Clarke (Open University Press, 2000) ISBN: 9780335204342

The Early Years: Laying the Foundations for Racial Equality by I Siraj-Blatchford (Trentham Books Ltd, 1993) ISBN: 9780948080647

Unlearning Discrimination in the Early Years by B Brown (Trentham Books, 1998) ISBN: 9781858561226

Young Children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development by M Dowling (SAGE Publications, 2005) ISBN: 9781412906913

It is crucial that prior to using any website with children that the practitioner visit the website in advance. This should be done to check that the information/material intended for use:

- supports the learning of the children
- is relevant to the work being explored
- is appropriate for the children.

Commission for Racial Equality:
CRE Wales, Floor 3, Capital Tower, Greyfriars Road, Cardiff CF10 3AG
Tel: 029 20 66 3710
www.cre.gov.uk

Multifaith, multicultural and citizenship resources are available from The Festival Shop Ltd, 56 Poplar Road, Kingsheath, Birmingham B14 7AG
Tel: 0121 444 0444
www.festivalshop.co.uk

UNICEF
www.unicef.org.uk

Welsh Centre for International Affairs:
Temple of Peace, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3AP
Tel: 029 2022 8549
www.wcia.org.uk

Early Childhood Research & Practice (ECRP) is an electronic journal covering topics related to the development, care, and education of children from birth to age 8.
www.ecrp.uiuc.edu

The Incredible Years are research-based, proven effective programs for tackling behaviour problems and increasing social competence at home and at school.
www.incredibleyears.com

Learning through Landscapes helps settings/schools and early years settings make the most of their outdoor spaces for play and learning.
www.ltl.org.uk

Persona Dolls are a resource that provide an effective and enjoyable way to raise equality issues and counter stereotypical and discriminatory thinking with students, early years practitioners and young children.
www.persona-doll-training.org

Foundation Phase glossary

Active learning
This term relates to children being active and involved in their learning. Children learn best through first-hand experiences. It is crucial that children have active experiences indoors and outdoors that build up the skills, knowledge and understanding that will support their future learning.

The purpose of play/active learning is that it motivates, stimulates and supports children in their development of skills, concepts, language acquisition/communication skills and concentration. It also provides opportunities for children to develop positive attitudes and to demonstrate awareness/use of recent learning, skills and competencies, and to consolidate learning.

Assessment profile
The assessment profile provides guidance on key child developmental stages and skills that children develop and acquire from approximately 18 months through to 84 months.

Child initiated/centred
The Foundation Phase curriculum should focus more on children's interests, development and learning rather than the curriculum and pre-determined outcomes. It is important to note that the planned curriculum has to have structure and clear learning objectives but enough flexibility to enable the children to follow their interests and their needs.

Careful observations of the planned curriculum and how children respond to it should provide evidence of whether the children are focused on their learning and not playing aimlessly. An understanding of child development is crucial to ensure that the children are extended in their learning.

Cognitive development
Cognitive development is the development of the mind. It focuses on children's thinking and understanding, imagination and creativity (including problem solving/reasoning/concentration and memory).

Communication/language development

Language is made up of different forms and skills which include speaking and listening, reading, writing, thinking and observation. The tone of a voice is a powerful form of communicating meaning. Some children may use alternate systems to the voice such as signing.

Non-verbal communication also takes on different forms such as facial expressions (smiling), gestures/body movements (shoulders slouching and eye contact).

Cooperative/group play

Children start to play together, they share their play. Children become more sociable, take on roles in the play and take account of the roles of other children. They begin to be aware of the needs and wishes of their peers, so that gradually the play becomes more complex. Rules are sometime devised and some cooperative play will be revisited over several days.

Cultural diversity

The Foundation Phase supports the cultural identity of all children, celebrates different cultures and helps children recognise and gain positive awareness of their own and other cultures. Positive attitudes should be developed to enable children to become increasingly aware of and appreciative of the value of the diversity of cultures and languages that exist in Wales.

Curriculum

Seven Areas of Learning have been identified to describe an appropriate curriculum for 3 to 7-year-olds that supports the development of children and their skills. They complement each other and work together to provide a curriculum that is holistic. Each Area of Learning includes the statutory education content (skills and range) that needs to be followed.

Curriculum Cymreig

The Foundation Phase contributes to the Curriculum Cymreig by developing children's understanding of the cultural identity unique to Wales across all Areas of Learning through an integrated approach. Children should appreciate the different languages, images, objects, sounds and tastes that are integral to Wales today, and gain a sense of belonging to Wales, and understand the Welsh heritage, literature and arts as well as the language.

Differentiation
The curriculum should be flexible to match children's abilities, skills and developmental needs.

Emotional well-being
Emotional development focuses on the development of children's self-esteem, their feelings and their awareness of the feelings of others.

Fine manipulative skills
The development of children's fine manipulation/motor skills begins within the centre of their bodies and moves out. Through appropriate development, children will eventually be able to undertake fine and intricate movements. Fine manipulation skills include using finger movements and hand–eye coordination.

Gross motor skills
The development of gross motor skills starts with the young baby controlling head movements and then, moving down the body, controlling other parts of the body. Gross motor development includes using whole body movements, coordination and balance.

Holistic curriculum
The holistic curriculum is one where Areas of Learning are interlinked and learning and teaching support many aspects of the children's development rather than focusing on one specific stage or need. The curriculum is viewed and delivered as a whole.

Imagination
Imagination is having the skills and ability to form images, ideas and concepts that either exist but are not present, or that do not exist at all.

Independence
Independence refers to having the ability and skill to be less dependent on others. Skills of managing and coping should be progressively developed throughout the Foundation Phase.

Learning styles
There are different learning styles or preferred ways of interacting. The learning styles are: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. When learning styles are taken into account learning can be enhanced.

Some children learn best if they have a visual stimulus, others an auditory one or a kinaesthetic (practical) task. Research into brain development has shown that individual learning styles are affected by the environment, the type of learning activity and whether the child is working independently or in a group.

Memory
The memory is the part of the brain where information is collected, saved and later retrieved. Initially information has to be taken in and understood; it is then saved and recalled when needed. All of these processes are needed for learning to take place.

Outcomes
The Foundation Phase Outcomes incorporate baseline assessment scales and descriptions and the national curriculum level descriptions. They have been developed to support the end of phase statutory teacher assessment. There are six Outcomes per Area of Learning and for information purposes Outcomes 4–6 broadly cross-reference to the current descriptions for Levels 1–3.

Outdoor learning
There is a strong emphasis on outdoor learning in the Foundation Phase. The outdoor learning environment should be an extension of the indoor learning environment. Structured experiential activities should be planned for throughout the day, and children should as far as possible (taking account of health and safety issues) be able to move freely between the indoors and outdoors.

Parallel play
Children may appear to be playing together, but closer observation reveals the children are actually playing alone and not interacting with each other. Children can be using the same equipment, or sitting or standing next to each other, but both are working independently of each other, with no interaction (either positive or negative) between them in their play.

Partnership/associative play
Children operating in the partnership/associative stage of play will begin to become aware of other children. They start to communicate with each other and are more aware of the play/games that other children are involved in. They begin to explain to each other what they are doing. Gradually one child will become involved in the other child's play.

Pedagogy
Pedagogy refers to the relationships between learning and teaching. It embraces the concept of the practitioner as a facilitator of learning, responding to the needs of individuals, willing to learn alongside the children, using appropriate methods to manage the process of learning and continually reflecting on and improving practice.

Personal development
Personal development focuses on the children's awareness of themselves and the development of their self-help skills.

Physical development
Physical development focuses on increasing the skills and performance of the body. Physical and cognitive development are closely linked, especially during the early years. Physical development can be divided into gross motor skills and fine manipulative skills.

Practitioners
This generic term refers to the adults that work with children in the Foundation Phase. It includes teachers and classroom assistants in the maintained sector, and staff that work in the funded education settings in the non-maintained sector.

Practitioner/adult guided
Practitioners need to plan an appropriate curriculum that engages children in their learning. They need to encourage, motivate and develop attitudes. Practitioners need to be aware of when it is appropriate to intervene sensitively to extend children's learning, when to challenge their problem-solving and thinking skills, and when to allow the children to come to satisfactory conclusions on their own. Practitioners should support/'scaffold' children's learning, observing, monitoring and assessing children's progress to ensure that they are moving on to the next stages of their development and that their skills are being extended.

Problem solving
Problem solving focuses on developing the ability to assess a problem/situation then gathering information to find a solution/answer. As children's skills increase they will be able to draw on previous experiences when attempting new activities and solving problems.

Self-esteem
This refers to the way children feel about themselves. Positive feelings indicate a high self-esteem, while negative feelings about themselves are an indication of low self-esteem.

Skills framework
The non-statutory *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* outlines progression in developing thinking, communication, number and information and communication technology (ICT).

Social development
Social development focuses on children's social interactions and relationships with their peers, practitioners and adults.

Solitary play
Children play contentedly alone. They are involved in their own play and will move from activity to activity regardless of any other children. Often in this stage of play children enjoy imitating everyday activities.

Spectator play
Children observe other children but do not join in. They like to watch other children playing. Often they can be observed standing/sitting on the fringes of where other children are playing. Although they can appear to be alone or lacking in confidence, they can often be concentrating while observing the play in order to develop an understanding of what to do.

Statutory assessment
Within the Foundation Phase there are two statutory assessments that have to be implemented: the baseline assessment and the end of phase statutory teacher assessment.

Structured educational play
Structured play experiences have specific planned outcomes to extend children's learning, skills and development. Structured play should be planned with flexibility so as to allow children opportunities to choose and extend an activity according to their interests and knowledge.

Acknowledgements