

Curriculum for Wales guidance: British Sign Language NEU Cymru response

NEU Cymru welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation. We have chosen to respond in this format as the questions didn't address our points.

NEU Cymru welcomes that Welsh Government are considering the British Sign Language (BSL) curriculum. However, we have a series of concerns which will need to be considered to ensure that D/deaf learners have full access to the curriculum.

Clarity – 3rd language or 1st language?

This guidance lacks clarity about what it expects from BSL learners, in terms of whether BSL is to be treated as a 1st or 3rd language. For D/deaf learners, for whom BSL is their first language, this guidance does not set out whether there is an expectation young people will also complete English and Welsh language requirements, for example in writing, or whether recording of BSL will count towards those areas of the curriculum.

More clarity should be given. Including how D/deaf learners access the curriculum in the widest sense. More distinct information is needed.

Training

For young people who are expecting to learn the curriculum through BSL, sign language professional with sufficient understanding will be needed. This will require significant support in terms of funding. Some D/deaf learners may do best in a support environment specifically for D/deaf learners, and should be supported through the local authority to attend the provision which best helps them to fulfil their potential.

More training will be needed for teaching and support staff to allow D/deaf learners to access the whole curriculum through BSL.

Assessment

Careful consideration will need to be given to assessment to ensure that learners who use BSL will have assessment criteria which is accessible to them. Again, it is unclear what this guidance is specifically relating to in terms of embedding BSL across the curriculum.

For more information please contact:

Mary.vandenheuvel@neu.org.uk