

# Religious Education and the new curriculum for Wales

Workshop with SACREs

# Questions to consider throughout the afternoon

- What are your views on the proposed relationship between the agreed syllabus and the Humanities AoLE?
- Would the supporting framework be a good way of supporting the Agreed Syllabus Conferences to fulfil their statutory role?
- Is there anything we should consider when developing the supporting framework?
- What are the implications of these proposals for you?

# How did curriculum reform begin?

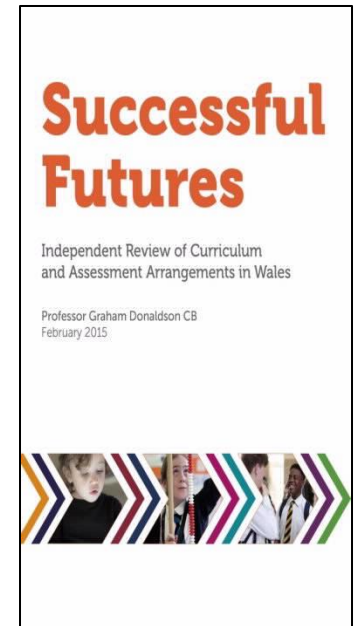
- Fundamental review of curriculum and assessment arrangements.
- Professor Donaldson's *Successful Futures* reported on the review's findings and recommendations - published February 2015
- The Great Debate on Welsh education began in March 2015
- All 68 recommendations accepted - June 2015

# How did Professor Donaldson reach his conclusions?

- Visiting schools and other settings.
- Widespread engagement.
- Call for Evidence.
- International experience.
- Research and good practice.

# What were the key recommendations?

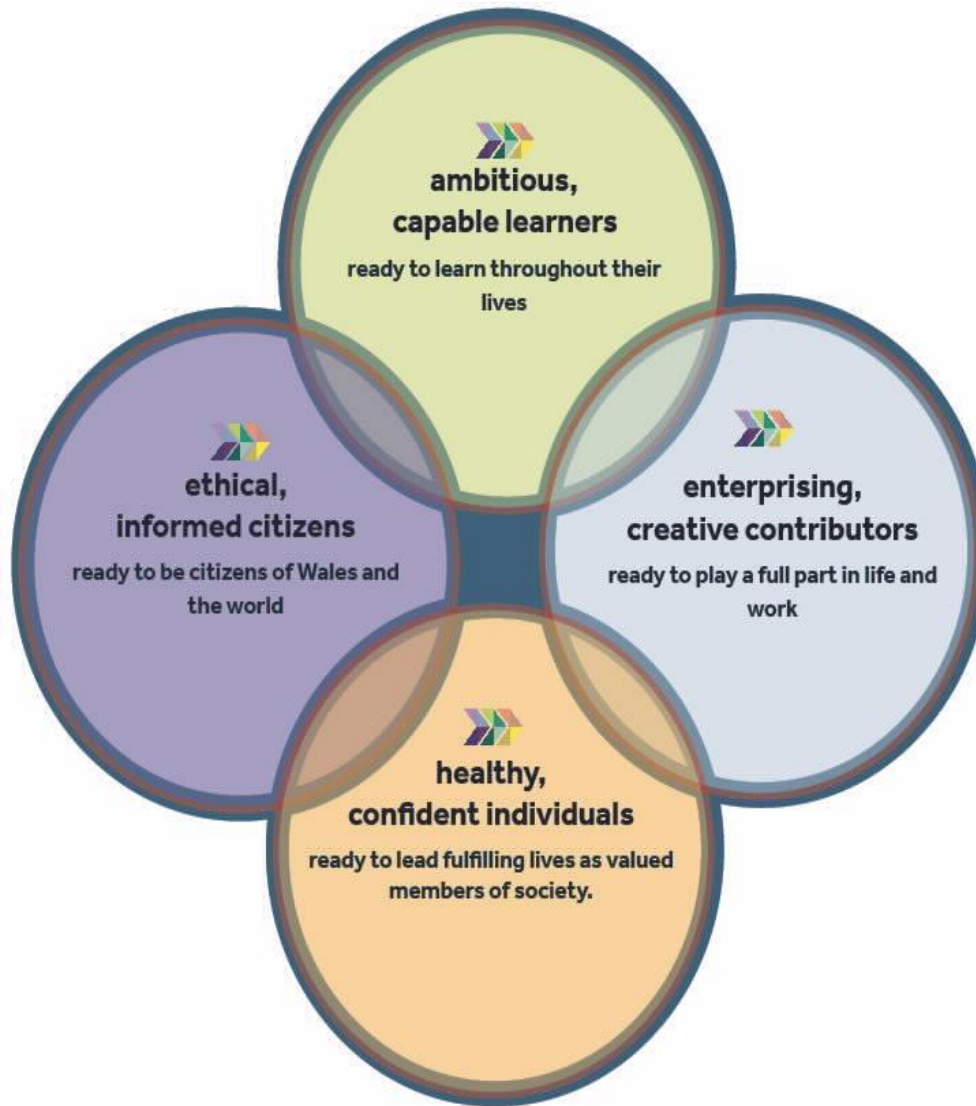
- Four purposes of education.
- Six Areas of Learning and Experience.
- Three cross-curriculum responsibilities.
- One continuum of learning
- Progression Steps - ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16
- Achievement Outcomes.
- A range of pedagogical approaches.
- Refocusing assessment on learning, including learners' self- and peer-assessment.
- The principle of subsidiarity



# Timeline

- **2015 - 2016:** Pioneer Network established
- **2015 - 2019:** Design and development phase of the new curriculum
- **September 2016:** Digital Competence Framework available  
**April 2019:** New curriculum and assessment arrangements available for feedback
- **January 2020:** Final curriculum and assessment arrangements available
- **September 2022:** All maintained schools and settings using the new curriculum and assessment arrangements. The first teaching of all year groups from primary school to Year 7 will begin in September 2022 and the new curriculum will roll out year-on-year from this point.

# The four purposes



# Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs)

Expressive Arts

Health and Well-  
being

Humanities

Languages,  
Literacy and  
Communication

Mathematics and  
Numeracy

Science and  
Technology



# What matters approach

- The pioneer groups have developed key concepts to organise the Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) by identifying 'what matters' in their fields i.e. the key elements that all learners should experience within their areas during their journey along the continuum.
- Each AoLE comprise of What Matters statements as a starting point for school level curriculum design. These high level concepts have been developed to avoid excessive variation from school to school while allowing for local flexibility.
- The What Matters key concepts across the AoLEs must support the development of the four purposes, but also reflect current ideas about important disciplinary knowledge, skills and experiences for each AoLE.

# What Matters in the Humanities

1. The process of enquiry allows people to make sense of and engage with the world.
2. People perceive, interpret and represent events and experiences in different ways.
3. Our natural world is diverse and dynamic, influenced by physical processes and human actions.
4. Society has been shaped and influenced by human behaviour and beliefs
5. Humanity faces many challenges and opportunities, that require informed and considered responses.
6. Citizens should be ethical and informed, and able to engage in life and work.

## AoLE Design Model

### A statement detailing how the AoLE supports the four purposes

A justification of how the AoLE contributes to the four purposes of the curriculum and why it is important. The statement also provides a 'way in' to the AoLE and the related What Matters statements

### What Matters statements and their accompanying rationales

Together, these statements outline the essential aspects of learning in the AoLE i.e. 'what matters', drawing on key disciplinary and instrumental knowledge and skills and making links with the four purposes

### Knowledge, Skills & Experiences identified as key to achieving each What Matters

To support the development of school level curriculum in relation to the relevant What Matters statement:

- Key principles relating to knowledge, skills and experiences from the relevant disciplines and domains deemed essential to achieving the What Matters statement. Outlined to help schools select appropriate topics and themes relevant to their contexts.
- If essential to achieving the What Matters statement, references will be made to the Cross-Curriculum Responsibilities, wider skills, Welsh dimension and international perspective, Careers and the World of Work.
- Where appropriate, referencing to sequencing
- Links to other What Matters within the AoLE as well as other AoLEs will also be made where appropriate

### Progression Steps/Achievement Outcomes

- Progression Steps will be described at five points in the learning continuum, relating broadly to expectations at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16.
- Progression Steps will take the form of a range of Achievement Outcomes, using terms like 'I have...' for experiences and 'I can...' for outcomes.
- Achievement Outcomes will include Knowledge, Skills & Experiences, Cross-Curriculum Responsibilities and wider skills, Welsh dimension & international perspective where appropriate.
- The Achievement Outcomes will contribute to achieving the What Matters and four purposes.

### Cross – Curriculum Elements

Cross-Curriculum Responsibilities (literacy, numeracy, digital competence); wider skills; Welsh dimension and international perspective; Careers and the World of Work embedded where appropriate.

### Guiding Principles to help turn What Matters into practice.

In the context of the AoLE, the principles may relate to: signature pedagogies; assessment; exemplification.

Further guidance on how Cross-Curriculum Elements could be addressed and references to where learners' Welsh language skills might be developed could be included here.

# Recommendation 9 of *Successful Futures*

*Religious education should form part of the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience, and should remain a statutory curriculum requirement from reception.*

# Professor Donaldson – Religious Education and the new curriculum

*Reflection time/  
opportunity to ask questions*

# Wider policy regarding Religious Education that we are mindful of

- The description of an agreed syllabus
- Religious Education in school sixth forms
- Religious Education in school nursery classes
- Withdrawal from Religious Education

# The locally agreed syllabus and the Humanities: A proposal

- An amendment to the current arrangements to ensure that the agreed syllabus supports the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience.
- Ensuring a place for Religious Education in the new curriculum, and parity with other subjects whilst also respecting the local responsibility for RE.
- In line with other statutory elements like Welsh and Relationships and Sexuality Education where further detail/guidance will be developed to support the relevant AoLE.



# Supporting framework

- Similar to the role of the National Exemplar Framework, a new supporting framework for Religious Education to be developed to support the new curriculum for Wales.
- It would provide further detail about how the What Matters statements included in the Humanities AoLE could be achieved in relation to Religious Education.
- We hope that the Agreed Syllabus Conferences will consider recommending to their Local Authority that this framework should be adopted/adapted to form their agreed syllabus.

# Supporting framework

A group to be established to develop the framework.  
Membership to include:

- Pioneer schools with expertise in Religious Education
- Additional practitioners to ensure coverage across Wales, English-medium/Welsh-medium, primary/secondary, special schools etc
- Representative(s) from WASACRE and NAPfRE
- Welsh Government policy leads
- Humanities AoLE leads
- Representative from Estyn
- Representative from Qualifications Wales

\*This group will draw on the research and input of wider stakeholders and experts.

# Potential Timeline

- September/October 2018 - establish group to develop supporting framework
- Autumn 2018 – Autumn 2019 - develop the supporting framework, building on the work completed by the Humanities AoLE group. Engage with SACREs and gather wider feedback throughout the process.
- January 2020 – publish supporting framework along with the rest of the curriculum documentation.
- January 2021- September 2022 – subject to progressing legislation - the Agreed Syllabus Conferences to take place.
- September 2022 – first teaching of the new curriculum, along with new agreed syllabi. Year on year roll out from Year 7.

# The place of Religious Education in the Humanities AoLE

The journey so far...

# Humanities proposals to date

- Questions: **Is RE easily identifiable** within the Humanities AoLE? (if YES please provide one example – If NO please identify any potential **gaps**)
- Can you share with us your views on the strengths and weaknesses of these proposals to date?
- Do you have any questions or suggestions to share with the Humanities AoLE Working Group?

# Humanities AoLE and RE

- Alongside papers from experts in all discipline areas, Welsh Government commissioned a discussion paper from a WASACRE/NAPfRE working group to support the early stages of the process of developing the Humanities AoLE
- Commissioned paper by Barbara Wintersgill on Big Ideas in RE
- WASACRE/NAPfRE members delivered the paper at Humanities workshops
- The commissioned paper has informed the drafting the Humanities AoLE statements and rationale...it continues to do so
- Welsh Government have met regularly with members of the WASACRE Executive Committee and NAPfRE in Humanities planning meetings
- Welsh Government have met and consulted with a wide variety of stakeholders including SACREs to seek feedback on the Humanities proposals.
- All feedback is considered carefully, informing decisions made in the writing process

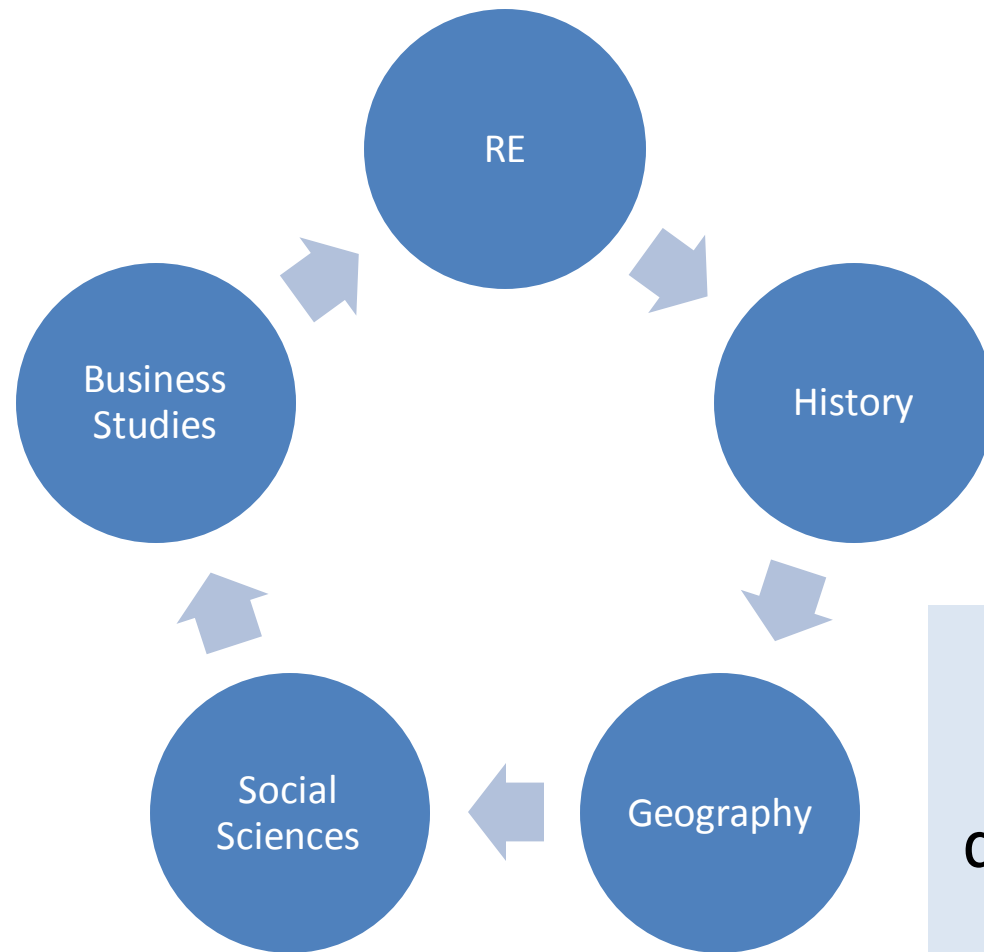
# Definition of Humanities

The following draft definition has been developed by the group.

- Humanities is the study of the human experience in the past and present. It allows us to consider possible futures for humanity/for the people of Wales and the wider world. Humanities provides a range of lenses through which we can understand and process the experiences of humanity. Humanities allows us to gain self-awareness and an understanding of our place in the world/Wales' place in the world. Humanities includes learning about the factors that influence society, environment, culture, human behaviour, the relationship between people and the natural and social environment in Wales and the wider world. The Humanities disciplines use a process of enquiry that is central to developing a critical mindset. Humanities provides perspectives through which we explore historical, geographical, religious, non-religious, political, economic and societal/sociological and classical concepts. Humanities aims to encourage learners to actively contribute to their communities/Welsh society through engaging (and critically engage) with local, national and global issues to become a responsible citizen of Wales and the wider world.

# Humanities AoLE

## An Interdisciplinary Approach



However,  
individual  
disciplines will  
not be lost



# How AoLE supports the Four Purposes

Humanities is the study of the human experience in the past and present in Wales, in the United Kingdom and in the wider world. It includes historical, geographical, **religious and non-religious**, political, economic and societal factors and concepts.

Through exploring 'what matters' about the humanities, learners will **study people, place, time and religious and non-religious beliefs/world views**. They will learn about Wales, Britain and the wider world, in the past and present, to build a solid base of knowledge and understanding of historical, geographical, political, economic, **religious, non-religious and societal concepts**. They will follow processes of enquiry, critically evaluate the evidence that they find, apply and communicate their knowledge effectively and thereby become ambitious, capable learners.

Learners will develop a range of skills and dispositions to become enterprising, creative contributors and responsible citizens. They will engage critically with local, national and global issues and use their knowledge to make links between challenges and opportunities in the past and present, and imagine possible futures, to contribute positively to improving the lives of people in their local community, in Wales, in the United Kingdom, and in the wider world.

**Learners will understand their own and others' rights, values, ethics, religious and non-religious beliefs/ world views and philosophy. Through understanding, respecting and challenging different religious and non-religious beliefs/ world views and how to exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities, learners will become ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the wider world.** They will consider, explore and make informed choices about sustainability and the impact of their own and others' actions in Wales, in the United Kingdom and in the wider world.

**By developing their personal stances on matters of religious and non-religious world views, ethical challenges and social inclusion, they will become healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society in Wales and the wider world. Exploring the natural world, locally, across Wales and in the wider world, will help them to develop their well-being and a sense of place.**

# The process of enquiry allows people to make sense of and engage with the world.

- Developing the skills of enquiry within the humanities disciplines enables pupils to make sense of ideas, information and ultimately, the world around them. This empowers learners to be responsible for their own learning and equips them with the tools to continue the pursuit of knowledge throughout their lives. Learners pose questions, develop ideas and hypothesise outcomes across the Humanities. By gathering, analysing and evaluating a range of evidence, learners can interpret and connect information to attain relevant knowledge to inform their understanding. Through thinking critically and reflectively about the evidence, they learn to make coherent, substantiated conclusions and judgements. Learners critically evaluate the effectiveness of the enquiry process and how well it has helped them to make sense of and engage with the world.

# People perceive, interpret and represent events and experiences in different ways

- Humanities allows learners to consider the different ways in which people view and represent events and experiences. Learners will develop their understanding of how narratives and representations are constructed, how and why interpretations of events and experience differ and how people, time, place and beliefs influence perceptions. Learners critically question and evaluate the validity of interpretations and representations in order to create their own informed and balanced understanding of events and experiences.

# Our natural world is diverse and dynamic, influenced by physical processes and human actions

- Studying humanities helps learners to identify, understand and analyse the diverse and dynamic interactions between people and place. Physical processes in Wales, and the wider world, have major impacts on places, environments, landscapes and the lives of people. Human actions have major impacts on the natural world. Appreciating these complex patterns and connections between the past, present and future is important for the understanding of the causes and consequences of change. Innovation, economic and technological developments have shaped and continue to shape Wales' environment and the wider natural world. Experiencing the natural world contributes to learners' understanding and development of spirituality, well-being and sense of place. Human responsibility for the environment and the actions humans take, can be influenced by diverse beliefs, practices, ethics and philosophies.

# Society has been shaped and influenced by human behaviour and beliefs

- Humanities enables learners to understand how societies in Wales, in Britain and in the wider world have been formed and influenced by individuals, communities, political, economic factors, cultural values and religious and non-religious beliefs and practices. Societies have experienced continuity and change that has affected, and continues to, affect people's lives, in Wales, in Britain and in the wider world. The causes and consequences of human actions in the past and present have shaped society and how it has developed in different times and places. Exploring human relationships have intrinsic value. Opportunities to see connections between today's society and the past, how diverse religious and non-religious views have evolved over time and how these have influenced the behaviour and beliefs of people in Wales and the wider world today, is essential.

# Humanity faces many challenges and opportunities, that require informed and considered responses

- Understanding current local, national and global challenges and opportunities is essential to becoming an ethical and informed citizen. Learners should develop informed views about challenges and opportunities that people in Wales, and in the wider world, face. By engaging with ultimate questions learners will understand that people's beliefs, experiences, perspectives and circumstances influence their responses to challenges and opportunities. Learners will understand and evaluate the success and appropriateness of various responses to challenges and opportunities. They will also form and justify their own opinions about challenges and opportunities based on their understanding of peoples' values, beliefs and viewpoints.

## Citizens should be ethical and informed, and able to engage in life and work

- Humanities encourages learners to think critically about ethical, economic, entrepreneurial, political or social engagement in their communities. Learners will understand their rights and responsibilities as ethical citizens, and the importance of ensuring that they respect the rights of others. Learners understand individuals' legal, moral, religious and non-religious responsibilities and the consequences of failing to act accordingly. Learners will develop an understanding of identity and Welsh identity. They will build a conscious understanding of their own role in society, the world of work and of the religious, non-religious, moral and ethical influences on people's lives.

# KSEs and AOs

- There will be Knowledge Skills and Experiences (KSE) outlined for each What Matters
- Progression will be linked to the What Matters and KSE through Achievement Outcomes



Knowledge- learners need to know:	Progression steps	Rationale
Significant people and events across a range of historical periods in Wales and in the wider world.	To be introduced at progression step 1 and revisited with increasing depth and complexity, at all progression steps.	A solid base of knowledge and understanding of how societies have been shaped by people and events is essential to developing an ethical, informed, ambitious learner who can place one's own life and experiences in context.
Political and economic ideologies, beliefs and practices that have influenced and shaped Welsh society and societies across the world.	To be introduced at progression step 3 and revisited with increasing depth and complexity, at all subsequent progression steps.	Political and economic ideologies and beliefs can influence the way in which humans choose to act i.e. Democracy, Communism
Range of different political systems, which have shaped society, at the local, Welsh, British and global levels.	To be introduced at progression step 3 and revisited with increasing depth and complexity, at all subsequent progression steps.	Systems of government, styles of governance and authority permit or restrict, support or prevent human behaviours and actions i.e. Democracy, Autocracy, Dictatorship.
Socio-economic and cultural differences which have shaped local, Welsh, British and global societies.	To be introduced at progression step 2 and revisited with increasing depth and complexity, at all subsequent progression steps.	Human beliefs and therefore their actions are influenced by socio-economic differences and cultural practices
Religious and non-religious beliefs/ world views, traditions and practices and how these form and influence societies, past and present, in Wales, in Britain and in the wider world.	To be introduced at progression step 1 and revisited with increasing depth and complexity, at all progression steps.	The significance of religious and non-religious beliefs/ world views, practices, lifestyles, rites, rituals and festivals and their symbolism, helps develop ethically informed citizens and allows pupils to understand different beliefs to their own.
Continuity and change, significance, cause and consequence and similarity and difference.	To be introduced at progression step 1 and revisited with increasing depth and complexity, at all progression steps.	Understanding the nature of change is vital to understanding the past and the future and therefore this is a key skill for this What Matters statement.

## Achievement Outcomes for the What Matters Statement

WM 2

Progression  
Step 1

I am aware that people have different viewpoints about familiar experiences.

Progression  
Step 2

I am aware of the difference between fact and opinion. I can identify that events and experiences are viewed and represented in different ways.

Progression  
Step 3

I can distinguish between fact, opinion, belief and world views and give reasons for the differences. I can describe the different perspectives and representations of events and experiences.

Progression  
Step 4

I can consider and provide some explanation for the reasons for different viewpoints and perspectives of events and experiences. I understand and analyse how and why events and experiences have been interpreted and represented in different ways, and I understand that different conclusions are possible.

Progression  
Step 5

I can consider different disciplinary lenses when exploring a range of viewpoints and perspectives of events and experiences. I take into account the changes in these viewpoints and perspectives, depending on time, places and beliefs. I can evaluate and synthesise different interpretations to come to an informed conclusion about events and experiences. I can evaluate the credibility and validity of viewpoints, interpretations and perspectives.

# Is the RE identifiable?

- Schools will have opportunity and freedom to plan the content of their own curriculum
- Identify opportunities for rich learning in RE within the existing framework.
- Are there opportunities you could suggest?
- RE remains locally determined (subsidiarity supports this)
- The supporting framework for RE will support schools in planning

# Recent developments

- Humanities AoLE working group being held every two weeks (latest held 12-13 September)
- In September there has been feedback from Curriculum and Assessment Group – an international panel of experts
- Redrafting following feedback from experts including WASACRE/NAPfRE

# Supporting Framework for RE

What will it look like?

# Possible structure:

- Introduction
- Religious Education: Learner Entitlement
- What is good RE?
- Cross curriculum elements
- Progression
- Religious Education and the Humanities
- The right to withdraw

# Introduction

- A section on Successful Futures
- The new curriculum for Wales and the What Matters approach
- An explanation of the role of the supporting framework

# Religious Education: Learner Entitlement

- Successful Futures, and the four purposes
- Professor Donaldson - Purpose of RE is:  
*‘developing respect and understanding of different forms of religion over time and in different societies.’ (page 46 of the report)*
- The CoRE report
- What would an entitlement for Wales look like?



# What is good RE?

- Build on the work produced to date by NAPfRE

# Cross – Curriculum Elements

- Welsh Government policy/definitions developed by the pioneers regarding the following (and how they relate to RE):
- Cross-Curriculum Responsibilities: literacy, numeracy and digital competence
- Welsh dimension/international perspective
- Wider skills
- Enrichment and experiences
- Welsh language across the curriculum

# Progression

- An outline of the approach to progression taken by the Humanities group (drawn on the work from the CAMAU project)

# Religious Education and the Humanities

- Statement that outlines how the Humanities AoLE supports the four purposes
- Each What Matters statement one by one, with the relevant key knowledge, skills and experiences and Achievement Outcomes developed by the Humanities group appearing beneath them
- Under each, further RE detail to be provided to support the AoLE (this includes further detail regarding the Achievement Outcomes)

# The right to withdraw

- Welsh Government to outline policy position
- Role of SACREs in supporting schools
- References to WASACRE Withdrawal from RE publication
- The content of the supporting framework will identify the explicit RE elements of the Humanities that learners can be withdrawn from

# Feedback questions

- What are your views on the proposed relationship between the agreed syllabus and the Humanities AoLE?
- Would the supporting framework be a good way of supporting the Agreed Syllabus Conferences to fulfil their statutory role?
- Is there anything we should consider when developing the supporting framework?
- What are the implications of these proposals for you?

# Next steps

To gather wider feedback from your SACREs, we would be grateful if you would:

- Share the proposals discussed today with your fellow SACRE members
- Seek their views on the key questions we have just considered
- Complete the form provided and send to [pauline.smith@gov.wales](mailto:pauline.smith@gov.wales) by 16 November.\*

\*Please let us know if your SACRE won't be meeting prior to this date.