

Association of Teachers and Lecturers – Wales
Cymdeithas Athrawon a Darlithwyr - Cymru

9 Columbus Walk, Brigantine Place, Cardiff CF104BY
9 Rhodfa Columbus, Maes Brigantin, Caerdydd CF10 4BY
Tel/Ffon:029 2046 5000 Email/Ebost:cymru@atl.org.uk www.atl.org.uk



Early Years Team
Department for Education and Skills
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

13th January 2015

Dear Early Years Team,

Early Years Outcomes Framework Consultation Response

About ATL Cymru

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers represents over 160,000 education professionals across the four constituent parts of the United Kingdom. It draws its membership from teachers and lecturers, leaders and support staff in maintained and independent schools, and Further Education Colleges. As well as campaigning vigorously to protect and enhance members' pay and conditions ATL also believes that the education profession has a key role in developing education strategy and policy. ATL Cymru represents over 6,500 education professionals in colleges and schools across the whole of Wales.

Key points

ATL Cymru welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation.

We note that Welsh Government has included a range of references to other strategies relevant to the Framework within this document, which is welcome. Joint working is clearly very important to the success of this Framework.

However, we do have some concerns about the Framework, as proposed. Our main concerns are about the **detail**, **measures** and the **data** used.

Our response

Overall, it seems there is a lack of **specific fixed aims** relating to the aims stated – instead aims are about ‘increasing’, ‘improving’ or ‘narrowing’. Whilst these are aspirations, it is impossible to know what ‘good’ looks like for most of the measures, only that services for the early years need to improve.

Therefore, we would welcome the opportunity to respond to the Framework containing specific detailed aims.

It is disappointing too that not all the **data** has been developed at this time. It would again be a more full consultation if the data was being consulted on here.

In terms of whether children will ‘**learn and develop**’, we would largely agree with the aims. However, again it is critically important that there is a more complex picture of what a ‘good’ outcome looks like, with specific detail around these aims.

Although the consultation states we will be able to use **measures** to see which areas are better than others, it would be helpful to see, independently of that, what Welsh Government expects from these measurements – and indeed what is expected from those expected to deliver this Framework, including schools.

Indeed, it is hard to tell if the measures used are the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework¹ Tests, as they don’t appear to be explicitly mentioned within the document.

In a survey we completed with ATL Cymru members at the end of last term, a range of concerns about the LNF tests were expressed. For example, just over half of teachers who responded said that not all their pupils could access the tests. There was confusion about which children could be exempted. One teacher stated: ‘We sought advice for children and were informed for them to attempt the tests, which they did. Other schools were told to dis-apply certain children. I think there needs to be a much clearer process for dis-application, and a consistent message across Wales’.

With that in mind, we would like to see a fuller explanation of the

¹ <http://learning.wales.gov.uk/resources/browse-all/nlnf/?lang=en>

aims, measures and associated data which will be used within the Framework, in order that we are able to comment on it more fully.

Please do come back to us if you have any further questions.

Yours faithfully,

Mary van den Heuvel
Policy Officer
ATL Cymru – the education union