

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i ymchwiliad y [Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg i weithredu diwygiadau addysg](#)

This response was submitted to the [Children, Young People and Education Committee inquiry into Implementation of education reforms](#)

IER 24

Ymateb gan: Dyneiddwyr Cymru

Response from: Wales Humanists

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**Nodwch eich barn mewn perthynas â chylch gorchwyl yr ymchwiliad. | Record your views against the inquiry's terms of reference.**

### **Embedding the curriculum**

The curriculum is in the first of a five-year implementation plan. There is still much work to be done to embed the changes:

- make sure teachers have the right skills and support – there is still a need for professional learning to make sure teachers understand the importance of objective, critical, and pluralistic teaching to comply with the legislation and uphold the decision to remove the right to withdraw children from religion, values, and ethics (RVE).
- Locally agreed syllabi for RVE need to support the statutory RVE guidance and this is not true in all cases – Monmouthshire LA syllabus has redefined non-religious philosophical convictions to include 'convictions held by those of faith and none' which is clearly contradictory and diminishes the place of non-religious beliefs. This causes confusion for teaching staff and is not aligned to the Welsh Government RVE guidance.
- make sure parents know why the right to withdraw has been removed and what this means in faith schools – that they can demand non-denomination RVE if it is not being taught – a clear communication on this is required for all schools and parents.
- compliance with the new legislation – there is still confusion on how the new legislation will be monitored, and how Welsh Government will ensure compliance with the RSE code and the RVE guidance. Compliance is vital to support individual rights as the right to withdraw has been removed. Faith schools must not be permitted to overstep in denominational Education and the independent

inspection and reporting on this has not yet been determined. The guidance published for Catholic schools teaching RSE is not compliant with the RSE code and needs to be challenged by Welsh Government.

### **Collective worship**

The continued requirement for Christian collective worship does not align with the pluralistic nature of the new curriculum or the commitment to the UNCRC, including freedom of religion or belief. It is out of step with the new curriculum, and the latest Census results which show Wales to be more non-religious than Christian. And yet we still allow for one faith to be presented as fact, contradicting the intent of the new RVE syllabus.

A petition to end collective worship was brought to the Senedd by two school children asking for the law to be changed in 2018. It was answered by the Education Minister in 2020 to the Children, Young People and Education Committee saying 'Government must instead prioritise changes to the new curriculum', but also acknowledging that statutory collective worship raises many human rights concerns, including children's rights. The Minister stated that if they personally were 'starting from a blank piece of paper,' they would be unlikely to 'enshrine the law in the way it currently is'.

It is disappointing that three years on from this, there is still no plan from the Welsh Government to remove this archaic law and replace it with inclusive assemblies.

### **About Wales Humanists**

Wales Humanists is a part of Humanists UK. At Humanists UK, we want a tolerant world where rational thinking and kindness prevail. We work to support lasting change for a better society, championing ideas for the one life we have. [Our work helps people be happier and more fulfilled, and by bringing non-religious people together we help them develop their own views and an understanding of the world around them. Since 1896, our work has been helping people be happier and more fulfilled. By bringing non-religious people together we help them develop their own views and an understanding of the world around them. Together with our partners Humanist Society Scotland, we speak for 100,000 members and supporters and over 100 members of the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group. Through our ceremonies, pastoral support, education services, and campaigning work, we advance free thinking and freedom of choice so everyone can live in a fair and equal society.