



Curriculum for Wales 2022

B Squared Assessment Overview

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Overview.....	4
4 Purposes.....	5
Assessment and Progress.....	5
B Squared Assessment Frameworks.....	7
Size of Levels.....	7
Subject Areas.....	8
Shortening Areas of Learning.....	8
Pupils Working Below Progression Step 1.....	9
Routes to Progression.....	10
Progression Steps Core.....	10
Progression Steps Plus.....	10
Overview of Framework Structure.....	11
Connecting Steps and the Curriculum for Wales.....	13
Evisense and the Curriculum for Wales.....	14
Transitioning from Other B Squared Frameworks.....	15
Curriculum for Wales Assessment Trial.....	15
Older Students.....	15
Curriculum for Wales – Descriptions of Learning.....	15
Other Areas for Development.....	16
Religious Education.....	16
Sex and Relationships.....	16
Progression Step 4.....	16
Progression Step 5.....	16
Translating Assessment Content and Software into Welsh.....	16
Feedback and Questions.....	16

Introduction



This document is to give schools in Wales an overview of how we have designed our assessment frameworks for the Curriculum for Wales 2022.

We welcomed the arrival of the new Curriculum for Wales in 2020, and have been working hard to find an assessment solution to show progress for pupils with SEN.

B Squared released a framework called Progression Steps for England in 2018, after the removal of P Levels. B Squared will always refer to their assessment frameworks for Wales as the Welsh Progression Steps (WPS).

B Squared have a large number of schools in Wales, the majority of these are using our assessment frameworks based on the English P Levels and National Curriculum levels. Some schools are using our frameworks we developed for the Welsh Foundation phase and our Welsh Key stage 2 framework. A few schools are making use of our Engagement Steps to show progress for pupils with Complex Needs.

All schools should transfer to our new frameworks for Wales, as they become available.

If you are not using Evisense alongside Connecting Steps, please contact us to find out more. Evisense is a great way to build your E-Portfolios to evidence your pupils' achievements and show how you are supporting your pupils to develop within the context of the **Four Purposes**.

If you have any feedback or questions around our assessment content or products for the new Curriculum for Wales, please send an email to dale@bsquared.co.uk.

Not sure which of our assessment products is right for you?

Contact B Squared

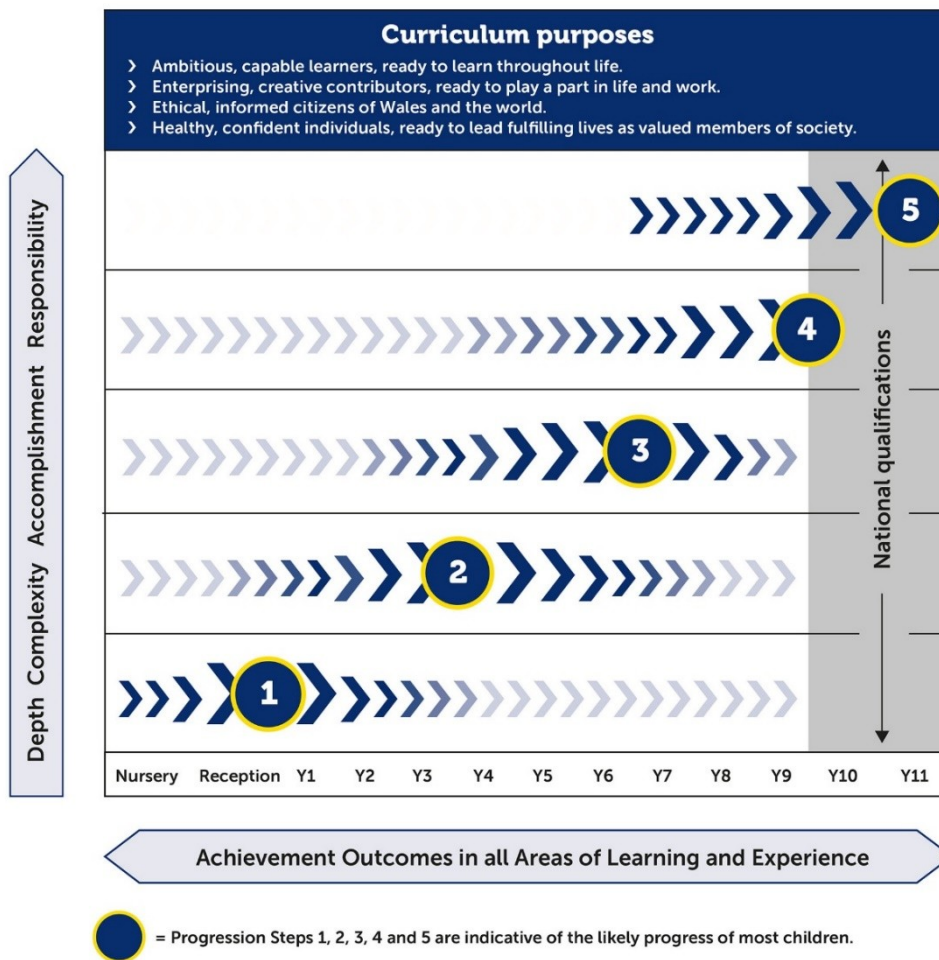
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Overview

In the Curriculum for Wales there are six **areas of learning and experience**:

- Expressive arts
- Health and well-being
- Humanities
- Languages, literacy & communication
- Mathematics & numeracy
- Science & technology

These are further divided into more specific areas. Within each of these areas are **Statement of What Matters** and **Descriptions of Learning**. There are also a number of cross curricular skills.



The new curriculum for Wales has removed levels, replacing them with Progression Steps. There are 5 Progression Steps covering typical development from 3 years to 16 years. The Curriculum for Wales identifies success criteria to help learners achieve the descriptions for learning for each of the five Progression Steps.

There are lots of concepts in the Curriculum for Wales, with minimal guidance on implementation, especially for pupils with ALN.

4 Purposes

One of the concepts that the Curriculum for Wales had introduced is the **Four Purposes**. These should be the starting point and aspiration for schools' curriculum design. Ultimately, the aim of a school's curriculum is to support its learners to become:

- ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

It is important that schools plan their curriculum and learning opportunities to support pupils with these **Four Purposes**. It is important that they take time to assess and reflect on how effective these opportunities have been and how they can be improved.

Assessment and Progress

In the Curriculum for Wales guidance, under Progression it says...

“Learners with additional learning needs (ALN) will progress at a rate individual to the learner and this may not correlate with the broad two-to-three-year progression step. Pace of progression should be evaluated by the professionals working with learners with ALN.”

Developing a Vision For Curriculum Design, Progression

The Government has acknowledged the pupils with ALN will progress at individual rates and that professionals should use their own professional judgement around the pace of progression. There is a lot of work involved in breaking down the Progression Steps and the **descriptions of learning** into the small steps that pupil with ALN make.

“The purpose of the descriptions of learning is to provide guidance on the pace of progression in order to support practitioners and inform curriculum design and learning and teaching. They are not a series of criteria to be directly assessed against, nor can they be met with single assessment tasks.”

Supporting Learner Progression: Assessment Guidance

This is really important. Progression Step 1 covers 2 years of development. Pupils making typical levels of progress will not achieve the **descriptions of learning** till towards the end of that second year. Pupils will not be achieving them throughout the 2 years. They will not be working through them in order. They will be making progress towards all the **descriptions of learning** at the same time. It will take a typically developing

child 2 years to meet these **descriptions of learning**. Although the child will not be achieving the **descriptions of learning** for 2 years, they will be showing progress in terms of engagement and understanding.

Teachers should not be planning towards individual **descriptions of learning**. This will not be effective or engaging. The **descriptions of learning** will not directly drive planning. A lesson or topic will touch on multiple **descriptions of learning**. It is spiral learning; pupils will be developing the skills over multiple topics to fully embed them.

“Assessment should focus on identifying each individual learner’s strengths, achievements, areas for improvement and, if relevant, any barriers to learning. This understanding should be used by the practitioner, in discussion with the learner, to ascertain the next steps required to move learning forward, including any additional challenge and support required.

This should be achieved by embedding assessment into day-to-day practice in a way that engages the learner and makes it indistinguishable from learning. This allows the practitioner to respond to the individual needs of the full range of learners within their classroom on an ongoing basis.”

Supporting Learner Progression: Assessment Guidance

The new Curriculum for Wales promotes individualised learning, being able to identify next steps and barriers to progress and how to support the pupil to make progress towards these.

Embedding assessment means not doing lots of tests but assessing pupil progress through marking and observation in day-to-day learning opportunities designed to engage the pupils.

“The foundation for this engagement and partnership is establishing:

- *where learners are in their learning*
- *where they need to go in their learning*
- *what needs to be done for them to get there, taking account of any barriers to their learning.”*

Supporting Learner Progression: Assessment Guidance

It is important that professionals are able to identify where pupils are, their next steps and how to support the pupils to achieve those next steps. To do this effectively, a school needs to use a shared structure, language and understanding of assessment, next steps and how to support pupils.

B Squared Assessment Frameworks

To meet the requirements of the new Curriculum for Wales, B Squared have created a number of assessment packages:

- Routes to Progression
- Welsh Progression Steps Core
- Welsh Progression Steps Plus

When creating our new frameworks, we have had to make a number of decisions to support pupils with ALN. We felt it was important to adapt the Curriculum for Wales to suit pupils who make smaller steps of progress. We wanted to support schools by providing a framework that helps them identify the small steps and identify barriers to progress.

Relevant assessment points are linked between subjects and areas of learning and experience to give a more holistic view and to reduce teacher workload.

Size of Levels

Our first area of concern was the size of the Progression Steps and the developmental stages they cover. Progression Step 1 covers the development a typical child will make between 3 and 5 years old. A typically developed 3-year-old has a vocabulary of 200 words or more and can string together three or four word sentences. A 5-year-old will have a vocabulary of between 1,000 and 2,000 words, they can make up stories, retell stories and talk about things they do. They are also recognising that letters and numbers have meaning. There are lots of concepts to understand at this stage as their language develops.

When we develop our content, we have a limit of around 50 assessment points per level. 50 assessment points fill a single sheet of paper, working across multiple pages increases complexity. If a typically developing pupil is taking 2 years to progress through Progression Step 1, then a pupil with ALN could take 4 years or more. For Progression Step 2 where the pupil is learning to read, we would need to squeeze 3 years of progress for a typically developing pupil into 50 assessment points. For a pupil with ALN, this could be 6 years or more.

We split the Progression Steps into sub-levels. Each sub-level is the equivalent to a year of typical development. We call these levels our Welsh Progression Steps (WPS). Progression Step 1 is split into 1.1 and 1.2, Progression Step 2 is split into 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 and so on. You will find the same **descriptions of learning** on each level within the Progression Step, with the assessment points on each level showing small steps of achievement around and towards achieving the **descriptions of learning**. The description of learning is included on the highest level within the Progression Step so that professionals can mark the **description of learning** as being met. You will find this version of the **description of learning** has the 'I can' removed.

We do not plan to create assessment content for Progression Step 5 as this will be covered by National Qualifications.

Subject Areas

Some of the subject areas within the Curriculum for Wales cover a wide range of skills. This also causes issues when trying to capture the small steps of progress pupils with ALN make.

Languages, Literacy & Communication has 4 areas: Literacy, Language, Expressive and Receptive. Expressive contains the skills pupils use to express themselves, through their speech or their writing. Receptive contains the skills pupils use to receive information, through listening or reading.

Language and Literacy are linked, but it is important you can distinguish when a pupil is having a difficulty with their language or their literacy. A pupil's writing may be limited due to their literacy skills, but also their language skills. Schools need the ability to identify the pupil's strengths and weaknesses in each area.

By combining these 4 areas into Receptive and Expressive, we were limited on the number of small steps we could use. We took the decision to split Receptive into separate areas for Reading and Listening and Expressive into separate areas for Writing and Speaking.

We took the same approach for Number in Maths. We split Number into Number, Arithmetic, Money and Fractions, Decimals & Percentages.

Health & Wellbeing contains Physical Health & Wellbeing, this contained several large areas combined into a single area. We split Physical Health & Wellbeing into Physical Skills, Physical & Emotional Changes, Diet and Nutrition and Physical Health & Wellbeing.

These decisions along with the decision around the size of the levels allows us to show the small steps of progress pupils with ALN make. It will also support schools to plan next steps and identify possible barriers to progress.

In England, English, Maths and Science are considered the core areas. When it comes to assessment in England, the main areas until GCSEs are Reading, Writing and Maths. The Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland has a similar organisation to the Curriculum for Wales. In Scotland we have found the 3 main areas schools focus on are Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing. Based on this information our Core pack contains Literacy (including Welsh as a second language), Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing. Our Plus pack contains Expressive Arts, Humanities, Science and Technology and International Languages.

Shortening Areas of Learning

Some of the areas within the Areas of Learning have extremely long names that are unusable within Connecting Steps and Evisense. We have shortened these to make them more usable. For example:

How we engage with social influences shapes who we are and affects our health and well-being

We have shortened this to...

Engaging with Social Influences

Pupils Working Below Progression Step 1

Progression Step 1 starts at the typical development level of a 3-year-old. At which point they already have a vocabulary of around 200 words. A lot of development has already been achieved.

Beneath Progression Step 1 is the Routes for Learning. This covers the development range from birth to around 18 months. Above Routes for Learning are the ABC Steps from the Routes to Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Competence. The Routes for Learning have been reviewed and will continue to be used, there is uncertainty about what will happen between the Routes for Learning and Progression Step 1.

Over the last few years, we have developed frameworks covering similar developmental ranges for England and Scotland. They used different approaches. England are very data centric, so we created something with lots of small steps over a wide range of areas. Scotland are less focussed on data, they use their assessments to plan next steps, not to build lots of graphs.

In both England and Scotland, the lowest levels are not looking at progress in English or Maths, they are looking at skills around communication, attention, cognition, emotions and physical movement. In England, these non-subject specific levels overlap with the lowest subject specific and this provides schools with a path to transition the pupils on to subject based learning. In Scotland they added additional levels below the main curriculum to support transition from the 'Foundation Areas' to subject based learning.

There are 6 levels below Progression Step 1, split into 2 groups:

- Non-subject specific - same develop range as Routes for Learning (Pre-Progression Steps 1 to 3)
- Subject specific learning - same development range as the A B C steps (Pre-Progression Steps 4 to 6)

We felt that the split between subject and non-subject specific learning works well and lines up with the transition between the Routes for Learning and the ABC steps.

Pre-Progression Steps 1 to 3 are included in our Routes to Progression. Pre-Progression Steps 4 - 6 are included in the Welsh Progression Steps Core package.

Routes to Progression

We have used the statements from the Routes of Learning within our Routes to Progression framework. We have split the Routes for Learning statements over 3 steps and over 4 areas:

- Attention Skills – Responding to events and stimulus.
- Preference and Choice – Shows pleasure/displeasure, accepts, or rejects items, people or activities or makes a choice.
- Interaction – Awareness and responding to events and people.
- Cognitive – Explores toys and objects, demonstrates awareness of routines.

Splitting the statements into multiple areas and levels has allowed us to create assessments to support progress towards and around the Routes for Learning Statements.

The Routes for Learning focuses on the areas of cognition and communication. Our Routes to Progression framework looks at a wider range of skills to give a more holistic view of the child so that schools can plan next steps and identify barriers. Alongside our areas working with the Routes for Learning we have also included:

- Emotional Awareness – Shows basic emotional responses to people and activities and recognises facial expressions.
- Emotional Regulation – Attempts to self soothe, responds to adults when distressed and begins to regulate emotional response.
- Functional Movement – Gross motor skills, fine motor skills and coordination.

Progression Steps Core

Welsh Progression Steps Core covers Pre-Progression Step 4 to Welsh Progression Step 3. This gives a developmental range equivalent of P4 to National Curriculum Level 4. It includes Languages, Literacy & Communication (apart from International Languages), Mathematics & Numeracy and Health and Well-being.

The content of this package has been developed using the **descriptions of learning, statements of what matters**, cross curricular skills and the literacy and numeracy frameworks.

Progression Steps Plus

Welsh Progression Steps Plus covers Welsh Progression Step 1 to Welsh Progression Step 3. This gives a developmental range equivalent of P7 to National Curriculum Level 4. It includes Expressive Arts, Humanities, Languages, Literacy & Communication (International Languages ONLY) and Science & Technology.

The content of this package has been developed using the **descriptions of learning, statements of what matters**, cross curricular skills and the digital competence frameworks.

Overview of Framework Structure

On the next page you will see our framework comparison chart. This chart helps professionals to understand how our Welsh Progression Steps framework compares to the Curriculum for Wales Progression Steps, the old P Levels and National Curriculum levels, typical development based on school years, the Foundation Phase, the Routes for Learning and the ABC Steps.

The document helps professionals transition from their current assessment system to the new Welsh Progression Steps and identify where their pupils will be working.

Curriculum for Wales 2022

P Levels and NC Levels	School Years	Welsh Progression Steps	B Squared Welsh Progression Steps	ALN (Wales)	Foundation Phase (Wales)																	
NC 7	Year 11	Welsh Progression Step 5	Welsh Progression Step 5																			
	Year 10																					
NC 6	Year 9	Welsh Progression Step 4	Welsh Progression Step 4.3																			
	Year 8		Welsh Progression Step 4.2																			
NC 5	Year 7		Welsh Progression Step 4.1																			
NC 4	Year 6	Welsh Progression Step 3	Welsh Progression Step 3.3																			
	Year 5		Welsh Progression Step 3.2																			
NC 3	Year 4		Welsh Progression Step 3.1																			
NC 2	Year 3	Welsh Progression Step 2	Welsh Progression Step 2.3			Outcome 6																
						NC 2a	Year 2	Welsh Progression Step 2.2	Outcome 5													
						NC 2b																
NC 1	Year 1	Welsh Progression Step 2.1	Welsh Progression Step 2.1	Outcome 4																		
NC 1a				Foundation 2	Welsh Progression Step 1	Welsh Progression Step 1.2	Outcome 3															
NC 1b																						
P8	Foundation 1	Welsh Progression Step 1	Welsh Progression Step 1.1	Outcome 2																		
P7			Pre-Progression 6 (subject based)	C Steps	Outcome 1																	
P6					Pre-Progression 5 (subject based)	B Steps																
P5							Pre-Progression 4 (subject based)	A Steps	Gold													
P4									Pre-Progression 3 (not subject based)	Routes for Learning	Silver											
P3(ii)											Pre-Progression 2 (not subject based)		Bronze									
P3(i)													Pre-Progression 1 (not subject based)									
P2(ii)																						
P2(i)																						
P1(ii)																						
P1(i)																						



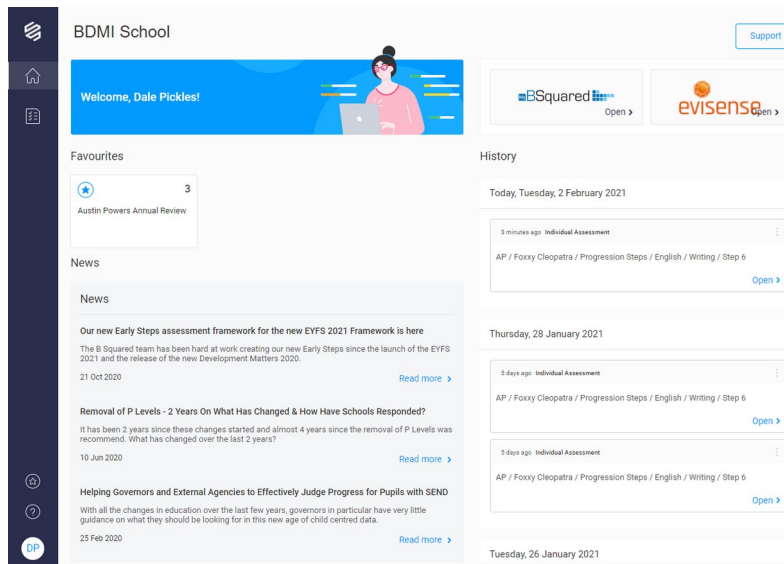
Connecting Steps and the Curriculum for Wales

Connecting Steps is B Squared’s assessment software. It has been used by schools for over 20 years to show the small steps of progress pupils with ALN make.

Pupils with ALN will often have a spikey profile, making progress in some areas, while struggling in others. Connecting Steps allow schools to assess pupils over multiple levels and has a number of reports to show the progress pupils are making across multiple levels.

Connecting Steps is unique as not only can it show progress as skills are achieved, it can also show progress as pupils work to achieve skills. For some pupils with ALN it may take a number of learning opportunities before a skill is embedded, it is important professionals are able to show this progress so they can plan further learning opportunities. As professionals record pupils’ achievements the system will highlight skills that haven’t been achieved and help professionals to plan next steps and identify barriers to progress.

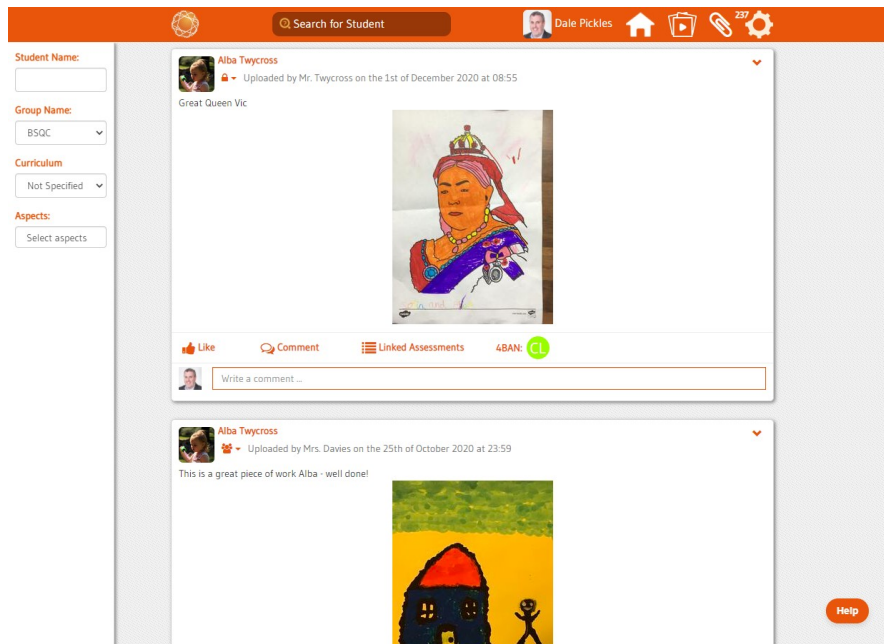
In early 2021 we are launching Connecting Steps V5, making assessment quicker, easier and more powerful



Book a FREE online meeting through our website to find out more about Connecting Steps

Evisense and the Curriculum for Wales

Evisense is B Squared’s evidence software. An easy to use system to capture and share evidence securely. The new Curriculum for Wales wants all children to have an e-portfolio as a way of demonstrating the progress pupils have made as well as all the experiences they have had. Evisense is an ideal candidate as not only does it links directly to our new assessment frameworks for the new Curriculum for Wales, it also links to the new **Four Purposes**. E-Portfolios are a great way to share with parents what is going on in school and allow schools to see what is being achieved at home.



Book a FREE online meeting through our website to find out more about Evisense

Transitioning from Other B Squared Frameworks

If you are already using B Squared with one of our other frameworks, you can transition to using the Welsh Progression Steps. Any skill that is in your existing framework that is in the new Welsh Progression Steps will be linked. This means any achievements, comments or evidence will automatically appear in the Welsh Progression Steps.

We cannot transfer any completed levels, pupils will need to be re-baselined in the new framework. This is due to the changes around the content of the levels. Although a pupil cognitively may be working at a level, they may not have demonstrated the skills required of the new curriculum and it is important teachers use their professional judgements to make decisions around baselines.

Curriculum for Wales Assessment Trial

Between March and June, schools in Wales who already use our Connecting Steps assessment software (hosted customers only) can trial our Progression Steps Core content.

Older Students

For older students, we already have a framework called Steps4Life covering functional academic skills, employability skills and life/independence skills. For more information visit the B Squared website –

www.bsquared.co.uk/solutions/send/preparing-for-adulthood

Curriculum for Wales – Descriptions of Learning

Alongside our Welsh Progression Steps packages, we have created another framework called Curriculum for Wales – **Descriptions of Learning**. This contains the **descriptions of learning** from the Curriculum for Wales, without any additional assessment points showing development towards or around the **descriptions of learning**.

The **descriptions of learning** are linked to the **descriptions of learning** within the Welsh Progression Steps. When these are marked as achieved in the Welsh Progression Steps, they will be marked as achieved within this framework.

With so many unanswered questions around the new Curriculum for Wales, we were unsure if schools would find this overview of just the **descriptions of Learning** useful.

Other Areas for Development

We are currently completing our development of our assessment content up to Welsh Progression Step 3. There are several areas we have not currently developed or have immediate plans to develop. These areas are listed below.

Religious Education

We currently do not have plans to develop content around Religious Education as this is directed at local level. We are happy to talk to schools about this if they have suggestions on how we can develop assessment content.

Sex and Relationships

Currently, we have not developed content for sex and relationships. There is some content within Health and Wellbeing and Science around healthy, happy relationships and changes in puberty, but these are only at a basic level. We are waiting for further guidance around sex and relationship education.

Progression Step 4

We have developed our content up to Progression Step 3, which is around level 4 of the National Curriculum. In our experience this will cover most of our customer's needs. Pupils who will be working at this level are likely to be older pupils with ALN and may find the Steps4Life framework more suitable. We are open to conversation with schools around developing content for Progression Step 4.

Progression Step 5

We do not plan to create assessment content for Progression Step 5 as this will be covered by National Qualifications.

Translating Assessment Content and Software into Welsh

This is something we intend to do in the future. We will wait for feedback on the content we have developed and finalise all the development. It won't be as simple as translating the content, as various aspects will change.

Feedback and Questions

If you have any feedback or questions around our assessment content or products for the new Curriculum for Wales, please send an email to dale@bsquared.co.uk.