

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales
Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and
Education Committee

Blaenoriaethau ar gyfer y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg |
Priorities for the Children, Young People and Education Committee

CYPE 20

Ymateb gan : Mike Perkins

Response from : Mike Perkins

May I offer a general observation about Primary Education.

Every school in Wales has been issued with standards to achieve with every child set out in year groups. They then have to devise their own curriculum, with guidance, to fulfil each child's needs.

Wales used to have a tradition of well-constructed and thought through text books, but am not advocating a return to the dry monotonous education of my youth. However all aspects were covered and remain with me today. As well as the company of some very inspirational teachers.

I have witnessed, and actively participated in the waste of many thousands of trees in the paper used throughout my 39 year teaching career. A core curriculum in maths and language is common to every school in Wales and could be set out in a book for each year. This would not stop the brilliant innovation that I have also seen and been part of, but it would take the pressure off missing things and allow more time and effort to be spent on individual needs, and the skills required for the future.

When I retired as head in 2014 I had witnessed at least four different cycles of how the curriculum should be organised. Each one detracted from giving the children a brilliant experience in school. No one could tell me or explain what the new curriculum would look like, and so teachers and parents were left in the air. A list of things your child should know by the end of the year, evidenced by work in books still done from a worksheet is not cost effective.

A core of activities set out in a text book common to all, would bring clarity.

The millions being spent on supporting schools could be diverted into world class text books which if good enough could be sold across the world as they once were.

As the schools go back next week, it is clarity about the way forward that everyone needs, and not the doubt about yet another initiative that will run for a few years to be replaced by another.

Many thanks for your attention.