# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Support for Literacy** |
| **DATE**  | **04 October 2024** |
| **BY** | **Lynne Neagle MS, Cabinet Secretary for Education** |

Further to my [Oral Statement](https://www.gov.wales/oral-statement-progress-rollout-curriculum-reform-and-next-steps) on 2 July, I want to update members on action I am taking to support literacy under the Curriculum for Wales. I have been clear that literacy is a key part of delivering on the Welsh Government’s priority to improve standards in education. As I have stated repeatedly, there is no room for complacency when it comes to our children and young people’s education, and that includes reading.

Given the technical nature of this area of learning, it is clear that we must work with partners to clarify our guidance and support to ensure that our expectations are clear for schools. This includes where the importance of phonics needs to be more explicit and where wording needs to be clarified around the use of picture cues.

We are already reviewing our Literacy and Numeracy Framework to support the whole of our teaching profession to develop literacy skills across the curriculum. Alongside this review, we are developing clear, evidence-based, national principles for effective literacy teaching. The Framework and national principles will ensure that our expectations for literacy are stretching and reflect the evidence of how we learn to read. As I stated in the Senedd in July we will also place the Framework on a statutory footing to support greater consistency across schools.

We are also working with partners including local authorities to ensure all schools and practitioners have access to the same high-quality training and support to teach literacy. This will include a trial for an assessment toolkit to help professionals screen learners’ reading and wider literacy skills at key transition points into primary and secondary schools.

The steps we are taking to support the wider development of progression, assessment, and curriculum design in our schools are also crucial to literacy. The first cohort of practitioners and leaders have already started on our national support programme for curriculum and assessment design, ensuring that professionals are supported to be confident about what good looks like. We will be providing the additional detail on what progression in key skills and dispositions looks like in practice across the curriculum, as well as tools and templates to support school planning.

However, the need for improvement cannot wait until after this work has been completed. I will ensure that existing, high-quality resources on phonics and literacy are made easily accessible to all schools through Hwb, our national digital learning platform. I will also ensure that further examples of the effective use of phonics are shared widely across the system to support delivery as soon as possible, by expanding the range of [case studies](https://hwb.gov.wales/playlists/view/493337ce-edf1-4e5f-af18-f0320d228b79/en/9) of practice available on Hwb. I will be writing to schools to highlight these resources.

There is brilliant work already happening in so many of our schools under the Curriculum for Wales, including on literacy. That includes whole-school approaches to reading, using our national Personalised Assessments as a tool to improve reading skills, and embedding reading skills across the curriculum. Sharing and learning from what works is vital to improving reading across Wales.

Finally, I am already planning to convene an expert panel this term to review and inform the development of our steps to improve literacy in Wales. This will bring together a range of expertise to ensure all of our support is firmly based in the clear evidence on how learners develop reading and their wider literacy skills.

I will continue to keep members updated on progress.