



Ms Catherine McCormack  
St. Richard Gwyn Catholic High School  
Albert Avenue  
Flint  
CH6 5JZ

Tuesday, 21 July 2020

Dear Catherine,

**RE: Response from the Welsh Government to headteachers' joint letter**

We are writing to share with you the response from the Welsh Government to the letter signed by all Catholic headteachers in Wales.

Firstly, we would like to express our disappointment that the response did not come from the First Minister nor was the response directed to the individual headteachers who took the time to sign the letter. This is, we feel, a huge snub to you as a headteacher, who have gone above and beyond the call of duty, particularly during the last few challenging months of COVID-19.

As you will see, the response from the Education Minister completely fails to understand the centrality of RE in Catholic schools and dismisses our community's concerns with inadequate arguments. We will of course be responding to the Minister to rebut her claims on the following areas:

*"Responses to the consultation clearly favoured a change in name."* The Welsh Government's own consultation analysis highlighted that opposition to their proposals came from across the whole sector and there was no clear unanimous view. 606 respondents explicitly stated they did not want to see a change in the name of RE compared to 377 respondents who favoured Religion, Values, and Ethics. We do not think this demonstrates clearly that responses *"clearly favoured a change in name"*. The consultation ranked every response equally regardless of whether it was from an organisation or school representing a large group of teachers, governors or education professionals. We are aware that many Catholic headteachers responded on behalf of their school communities. We believe this shows a disregard for the expertise and experience of those working in the school sector.

*"We in no way intend to diminish its importance of religion, rather to emphasise wider aspects."* The Catholic community and CES have been clear with the Government throughout the process to reform the Curriculum that RE is at the core of the core curriculum in Catholic schools and that it is an academic subject in its own right. The State's attempt to redefine RE to include other subjects, in an already full curriculum and school timetable, will diminish the religious education content of this subject and therefore the academic rigour and Catholic content.



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All best wishes,

**Paul Barber**  
Director  
Catholic Education Service

**Wendy White**  
Head of Education Service  
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Ein cyf/Our ref KW/03304/20

Angela Keller  
Catholic Education Service

[WalesAdviser@catholiceducation.org.uk](mailto:WalesAdviser@catholiceducation.org.uk)

7<sup>th</sup> July 2020

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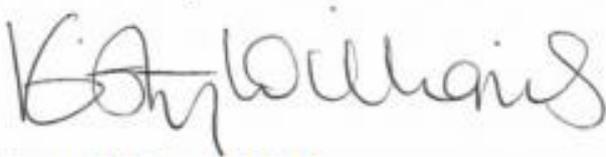
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Yours sincerely

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**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Miss Rachel Molyneux  
St Mary's Catholic School  
Ffordd Llewelyn  
Flint  
CH6 5JZ

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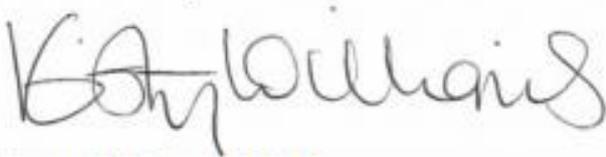
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**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Mrs Eirian Bradley-Roberts  
Sanates Helen RC School  
Twtl  
Caernarfon  
Gwynedd  
LL55 1PF

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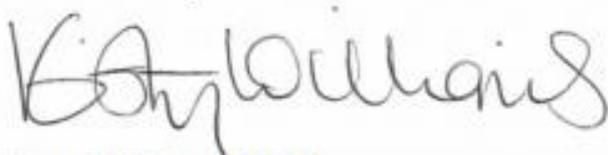
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Mr Richard Jones  
St Mary's Catholic Primary School  
Longford Road  
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LL65 1TR

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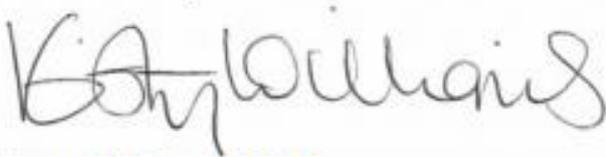
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Yours sincerely

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**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Miss Sian Jones-Evans  
St Winefrides Catholic School  
Whitford Street  
Holywell  
CH8 7NJ

Tuesday, 21 July 2020

Dear Sian,

**RE: Response from the Welsh Government to headteachers' joint letter**

We are writing to share with you the response from the Welsh Government to the letter signed by all Catholic headteachers in Wales.

Firstly, we would like to express our disappointment that the response did not come from the First Minister nor was the response directed to the individual headteachers who took the time to sign the letter. This is, we feel, a huge snub to you as a headteacher, who have gone above and beyond the call of duty, particularly during the last few challenging months of COVID-19.

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*"We in no way intend to diminish its importance of religion, rather to emphasise wider aspects."* The Catholic community and CES have been clear with the Government throughout the process to reform the Curriculum that RE is at the core of the core curriculum in Catholic schools and that it is an academic subject in its own right. The State's attempt to redefine RE to include other subjects, in an already full curriculum and school timetable, will diminish the religious education content of this subject and therefore the academic rigour and Catholic content.



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All best wishes,

**Paul Barber**  
Director  
Catholic Education Service

**Wendy White**  
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Ein cyf/Our ref KW/03304/20

Angela Keller  
Catholic Education Service

[WalesAdviser@catholiceducation.org.uk](mailto:WalesAdviser@catholiceducation.org.uk)

7<sup>th</sup> July 2020

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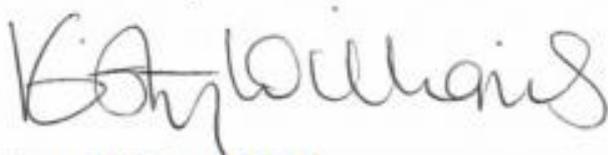
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**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Mrs Lucy Phillips  
Ysgol Bendigaidd William Davies  
Bodnant Crescent  
Llandudno  
LL30 1LL

Tuesday, 21 July 2020

Dear Lucy,

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Ein cyf/Our ref KW/03304/20

Angela Keller  
Catholic Education Service

[WalesAdviser@catholiceducation.org.uk](mailto:WalesAdviser@catholiceducation.org.uk)

7<sup>th</sup> July 2020

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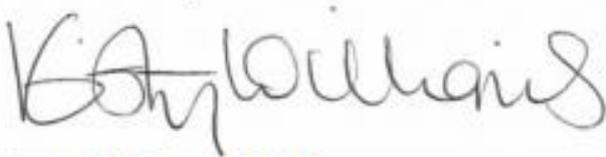
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**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Mr Simon Hughes  
St David's Catholic Primary School  
St David's Lane  
Mold  
CH7 1LH

Tuesday, 21 July 2020

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Ein cyf/Our ref KW/03304/20

Angela Keller  
Catholic Education Service

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7<sup>th</sup> July 2020

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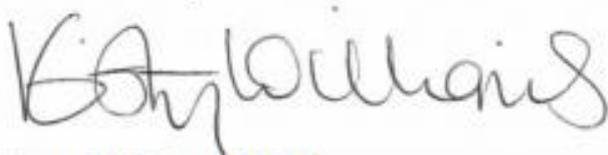
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Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Mrs Sarah Ruggeri  
St Mary's Catholic Primary School  
Milford Road  
Newtown  
SY16 2EH

Tuesday, 21 July 2020

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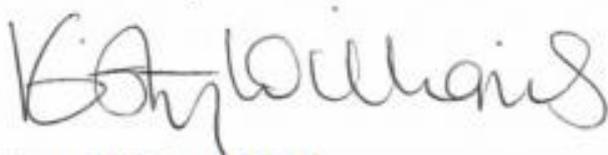
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Yours sincerely

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**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Ms Amanda Preston  
Christ The Word Catholic School  
Cefndy Road  
Rhyl  
LL18 2HG

Tuesday, 21 July 2020

Dear Amanda,

**RE: Response from the Welsh Government to headteachers' joint letter**

We are writing to share with you the response from the Welsh Government to the letter signed by all Catholic headteachers in Wales.

Firstly, we would like to express our disappointment that the response did not come from the First Minister nor was the response directed to the individual headteachers who took the time to sign the letter. This is, we feel, a huge snub to you as a headteacher, who have gone above and beyond the call of duty, particularly during the last few challenging months of COVID-19.

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All best wishes,

**Paul Barber**  
Director  
Catholic Education Service

**Wendy White**  
Head of Education Service  
Diocese of Wrexham



Ein cyf/Our ref KW/03304/20

Angela Keller  
Catholic Education Service

[WalesAdviser@catholiceducation.org.uk](mailto:WalesAdviser@catholiceducation.org.uk)

7<sup>th</sup> July 2020

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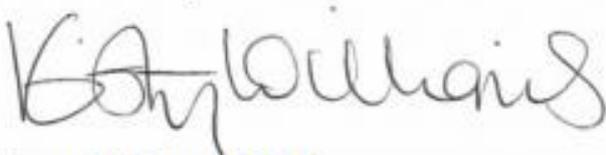
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**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Mrs Claire Priest-Jones  
St Anne's Catholic Primary School  
Prince Charles Road  
Wrexham  
LL13 8TH

Tuesday, 21 July 2020

Dear Claire,

**RE: Response from the Welsh Government to headteachers' joint letter**

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Ein cyf/Our ref KW/03304/20

Angela Keller  
Catholic Education Service

[WalesAdviser@catholiceducation.org.uk](mailto:WalesAdviser@catholiceducation.org.uk)

7<sup>th</sup> July 2020

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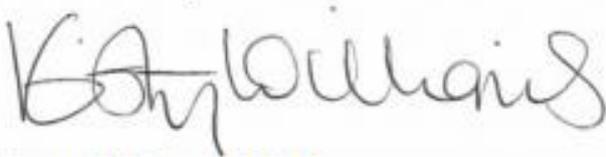
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**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Mrs Rachel Acton  
St Mary's RC Primary School  
Lea Road  
Wrexham  
LL13 7NA

Tuesday, 21 July 2020

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Ein cyf/Our ref KW/03304/20

Angela Keller  
Catholic Education Service

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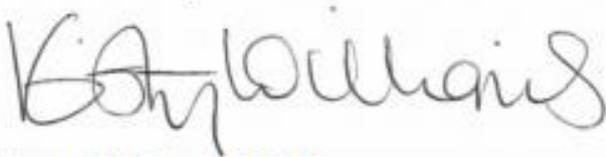
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Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



Mr Christopher Wilkinson  
St Joseph's Catholic And Anglican High  
Sontley Road  
Wrexham  
LL13 7EN

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Diocese of Wrexham



Ein cyf/Our ref KW/03304/20

Angela Keller  
Catholic Education Service

[WalesAdviser@catholiceducation.org.uk](mailto:WalesAdviser@catholiceducation.org.uk)

7<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Angela,

Thank you for your correspondence to the First Minister dated 19 June 2020, in which you raise the concerns from Headteachers of Catholic Schools in relation to proposed changes to Religion, Values and ethics in the Curriculum for Wales's framework. As Minister for Education I am responding.

Firstly, I would like to thank you and your colleagues for the positive involvement and engagement in the development of the new curriculum framework. I would also like to thank the headteachers and schools who have been directly involved in the co-construction of the Curriculum for Wales (CFW) framework.

On the point you make about changing the name from Religious Education to Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) in the Curriculum for Wales, the change of name was determined following the outcome of a formal consultation, which included specific community focus groups and engagement with learners and different community groups.

Responses to the consultation clearly favoured a change in name. The most popular choice from respondents was 'Religion, Values and Ethics'. I can therefore confirm that from 2022, RE will be renamed "Religion, Values and Ethics" in the new curriculum. This change in name more accurately reflects the subject's scope, the pluralistic requirement, and the subject's position within the Humanities area of learning and experience and the Curriculum for Wales. We in no way intend to diminish its importance of religion, rather to emphasise wider aspects. This is of course reflected in the RVE framework and we would expect to do the same in denominational guidance.

I would like to reassure you that in the new curriculum schools of a religious character will continue to be able to deliver denominational RVE in accordance with their trust deeds. I understand you have been in discuss with my officials around arrangements to co-construct that denominational RVE guidance. And I look forward to hearing how this will be progressed over the coming months.

Canolfan Cyswilt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

[Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

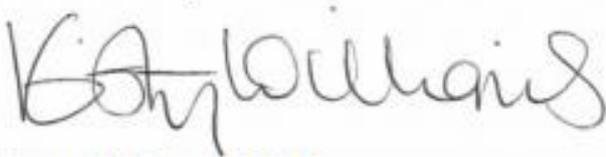
Finally, I can confirm that the Curriculum and Assessment Bill was introduced to the Senedd on 6 July.

The scrutiny timetable for the Bill has not yet been confirmed by the Senedd's Business Committee, but it is expected that Stage 1 of the scrutiny process will run for 12 weeks, excluding recess, so will be completed in the autumn.

A committee will commence consultation and engagement with stakeholders from early July as part of this process.

I hope this clarifies the position and I look forward to continuing working with you and your colleagues over the coming months to ensure we deliver a Curriculum for Wales that meets the needs of our learners in Wales.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', written in a cursive style.

**Kirsty Williams AS/MS**  
Y Gweinidog Addysg  
Minister for Education



**DIOCESE of WREXHAM**  
**ESGOBAETH WRECSAM**



**Catholic Education Service**  
**Gwasanaeth Addysg Gatholig**