

Teach the Future Wales 'Asks 2023'

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How can climate education be effectively integrated into educational policy within the specific context of Welsh education?

I found myself reflecting continuously on this question during the *'Teens and Teachers'* conference and over the past few months in my role with [Teach the Future \(Wales\)](#)

Teach the Future [TTF] Wales is a student-led campaign, supported by [Students Organising for Sustainability \(SOS-UK\)](#), that is working to re-purpose the Welsh education system around the climate and nature emergency, and climate justice. Through consultations with students, public bodies, and representatives from educational, youth and environmental organisations across Wales, **we have developed a set of five new policy 'Asks' tailored to the Welsh educational policy context and the [new Curriculum for Wales](#).**

Coincidentally, we presented our new Asks to the Welsh Parliament one day before the *'Teens and Teachers'* conference took place. While that conference involved those most impacted by climate education policies (or the lack thereof) in collaboratively developing a climate education entitlement grounded in their concerns and perspectives, the TTF (Wales) Parliamentary Reception aimed to engage directly with policymakers and decision makers by advocating for specific policy changes.

Having attended both events, I appreciate how complementary they were, with the themes emerging from the climate education entitlement aligning with the policy proposals.

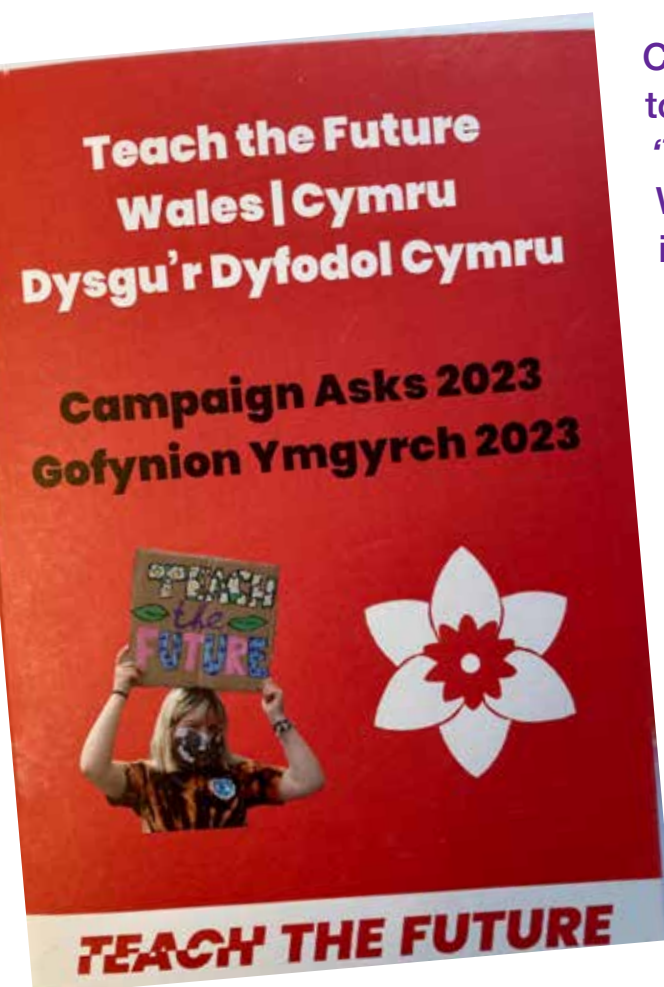
For instance, almost all students at the conference emphasised their right to receive support for—and accurate information to counter—climate anxiety. The TTF (Wales) 'Asks' have sought to advocate for this right by proposing additions to the [National Professional Learning Entitlement](#), such as the introduction of new professional learning resources and programmes that help educators identify and support pupils experiencing climate anxiety.

At the *'Teens and Teachers'* conference, I gained a wealth of insights on students' priorities regarding support with climate anxiety, which include helping students decipher mixed media messages on climate change and fostering safe spaces for students to share their fears and opinions.

Moving forward, I am committed to integrating these insights into our work in the hope that they are taken into consideration by policymakers if they plan – as they surely must – on developing the resources and programmes proposed.



Simon Gough Photographs
The Pier Head Parliamentary Reception



Click on cover for overview of 'Asks' in Welsh and English



Menna Christie and Yasmine Ghorayeb, introducing the 'Asks'

Resonating with the TTF (Wales) 'Asks', the students agreed emphatically about the need to mainstream climate education across all subjects, demonstrating recognition of the interdisciplinary nature of the task.

The Welsh Government's approach to curriculum reform has been described as reflecting Wales' [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#) [WFGA] This offers five ways of working, which include "integration" and "collaboration". Picture a scenario where the new curriculum's provision of climate education is also subject to these principles.

The outcome? -- A seamless integration of climate education across the new curriculum's [Areas of Learning and Experience](#) and **a curriculum that fosters collaboration between practitioners from different disciplines** in delivering climate education as a cross-cutting theme. These aspirations could be met if, as the 'Asks' suggest, the WFGA is leveraged as a guiding principle for periodically reviewing climate education within the new curriculum.

Echoing the Future Generations Commissioner's ['Skills for the Future Report'](#) and the [Outdoor Education \(Wales\) Bill](#), the students emphasised their rightful claim to acquire the necessary skills to pursue 'green' careers and to have increased access to outdoor learning opportunities.

The 'Asks' target these concerns simultaneously by proposing a statutory requirement for all educational settings in Wales to develop personalised Climate and Nature Action Plans and for the government to provide adequate funding and support for this.

As schools develop these in collaboration with their students, they provide ample opportunities for green skills development, such as biodiversity surveys in biology classes, swift box building in design and technology lessons, and involving students in maintaining school gardens and renewable energy installations.

Many of these activities require the use of outdoor classrooms, which would inevitably increase the amount of time students spend learning outdoors as they develop climate solutions within their immediate environments.

As I simultaneously reflect on the *'Teens and Teachers'* Conference and the TTF (Wales) Parliamentary Reception, **my conviction that students' demands can be implemented within the framework of Welsh educational policy is reaffirmed.**

All we need now is resolute action to make these essential reforms a reality.



Simon Gough Photographs
The Pier Head Parliamentary Reception

