

Education (Curriculum) (CPR and AED) Bill: Call for Views

Response from the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) Awarding Organisation

Clause 1

Clause 1 of this bill amends the existing legal list of topics that must be in the NI curriculum, to include training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automatic external defibrillator (AED) awareness.

These are lifesaving measures you can take if someone's heart stops.

[CPR is a set of physical exercises you can carry out to keep blood and oxygen circulating to the brain and other vital organs until medical help arrives.

You kneel down beside the person, put one hand over another and push down rhythmically on the bone down the centre of the person's chest. For a while, you will act as that person's heart muscle! In some cases you may also need to help someone breathe.

AED is a machine you can use as well as CPR. AED sends an electric pulse into the person's heart muscle. It restarts the natural beating signal of the heart. It is completely safe and will harm neither you nor your patient.

To act quickly with CPR and AED can not only save someone's life, but can help them to recover fully afterwards.]

Curriculum, minimum content: CPR and AED

1. After Article 7 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 (minimum content) insert—

“Minimum content: CPR and AED

7A. The Department must exercise its powers under Article 7(2), to ensure that, in relation to the area of learning called Learning for life and work, in relation to key stage 3, the minimum content includes—

(a) training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and

(b) automatic external defibrillator (AED) awareness.”.

Do you agree that pupils at key stage 3 should learn these lifesaving skills at school?

Yes

No

Other X

Please explain your answer

CCEA agrees that learning these lifesaving skills is important for all pupils in Northern Ireland. However, this does not necessitate changes to the 'minimum content' of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

The NI Curriculum is designed to be flexible and, as such, is composed of concepts and ideas rather than prescribed instructions.

A 'minimum content' requirement for training in CPR and AED awareness would be very specific, making it different to the rest of the Curriculum.

Emergency response and CPR training for pupils is already included in a variety of areas (e.g., Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, Learning for Life and Work, Physical Education, GCSE Motor Vehicle and Road User Studies), at different stages, within the NI Curriculum. Resources for use at pre-school through to Key Stages 3 and 4 are available from CCEA (see <https://ccea.org.uk/learning-resources/cardiopulmonary-resuscitation-cpr>).

The availability of these CPR training resources means a curriculum change is not needed. CPR can be effectively taught and trained within the existing bounds of the NI Curriculum thanks to the Curriculum's flexibility.

Do you want to make any changes to this clause? If so, what change would you suggest?

Yes

No

Other X

Please explain your answer

In Personal Development as part of LLW at KS3 the concept of Personal Health includes a statutory requirement to:

- Develop preventative strategies in relation to accidents in the home, school and on the road.

To retain flexibility in the NI Curriculum whilst also including CPR and AED, this requirement could be reworded and expanded to state something like:

- Develop preventative strategies and first aid procedures in relation to incidents in the home, school, on the road and in the community, including CPR and the use of AED to increase the chance of survival of someone who is in cardiac arrest.

Clause 2

Clause 2 is a "commencement" clause. It says that if the Bill becomes an Act, there will be three months after that to allow schools and trainers to get ready to provide this training to pupils in Northern Ireland.

Commencement

2. This Act comes into operation after the end of the period of three months beginning with the date on which it receives Royal Assent.

Do you agree that there should be three months to allow everyone to prepare for this new law?

Yes

No

Other X

Please explain your answer

Given the current pandemic, this may not be manageable for teachers. They will be better placed to comment on this timeframe.

Do you want to make any changes to this clause? If so, what change would you suggest?

Yes

No X

If so, what change would you suggest and why?

Clause 3

The long title says what the new law will be called when it becomes an Act.

Short title

3. This Act may be cited as the Education (Curriculum) (CPR and AED) Act (Northern Ireland) 2021.

Do you agree that when it becomes an Act, this should be called the “Education (Curriculum) (CPR and AED) Act (Northern Ireland) 2021”?

Yes

No

If No, please comment:

Entitling the Bill as specifically as this may narrow the scope for learning. A broader term such as *First Aid Procedures* might encompass more than cardiac arrest (e.g., bleeding, fractures, burns, choking, poisoning, concussion), but the specific CPR/AED could be referenced in the statutory curriculum.

Final thoughts

Finally:

Is there anything we've forgotten?

Do you think there need to be any more clauses in this Bill?

Learning for Life and Work is a major focus of the curriculum. The discrete Area of Learning is dedicated to those aspects which cannot be successfully delivered through traditional subjects. The training in the use of CPR and AED sits appropriately in Personal Development but wider consideration of aspects that can be delivered in other subjects would be worthwhile providing guidance on. For example, in science, pupils *explore physical, chemical and biological effects on personal health (Personal Health)* which would highlight the intended connections between LLW and learning in traditional subjects, and, at the same time, reduce the risk of duplicating content in Personal Development.

By making this statutory it becomes an entitlement for every learner at KS3 – has consideration been given to the impact on SEN and Inclusion matters? If this Bill comes into effect, specific guidance/requirements for SEN should be included.