

# Agenda – Children, Young People and Education Committee

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Meeting Venue:	For further information contact:
Hybrid – Committee room 4 Tŷ Hywel and video conference via Zoom	Naomi Stocks Committee Clerk
Meeting date: 21 September 2022	0300 200 6565
Meeting time: 09.15	<a href="mailto:SeneddChildren@senedd.wales">SeneddChildren@senedd.wales</a>

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## Private pre-meeting

(09.00 – 09.15)

At its meeting on 14 July, the Committee agreed a motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to exclude the public from today's meeting. However since agreeing the motion an additional item has been included on the agenda so items 2, 3 and 4 will now be held in public session.

## 1 Pupil absence – consideration of the draft report

(09.15 – 10.15)

(Pages 1 – 96)

Attached Documents:

Pupil absence – draft report – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Private paper 1

Pupil absence summary of consultation responses – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Private paper 2

## Break

(10.15 – 10.25)

## 2 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(10.25)



**Senedd Cymru**  
**Welsh Parliament**

### **3 Summer exam session 2022 – evidence session**

(10.25 – 11.55)

(Pages 97 – 129)

Ian Morgan, Chief Executive, WJEC

Elaine Carlile, Director of Qualifications, Assessment and Responsible Officer,  
WJEC

David Jones, Chair, Qualifications Wales

Philip Blaker, Chief Executive, Qualifications Wales

Jo Richards, Executive Director, Regulation, Qualifications Wales

Attached Documents:

Research brief

WJEC response – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper 1

Qualifications Wales response – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper 2

### **4 Papers to note**

(11.55)

#### **4.1 Forward work programme**

(Pages 130 – 133)

Attached Documents:

Joint letter from the Chairs of the Children, Young People and Education  
Committee and the Health and Social Care Committee to the Deputy Minister  
Mental Health and Wellbeing – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 1

#### **4.2 Peer on peer sexual harassment among learners**

(Pages 134 – 139)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing – CYPE(6)–  
17–22 – Paper to note 2

### **4.3 General scrutiny of Ministers with responsibility health and social care**

(Page 140)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee to the Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 3

### **4.4 Mental health inequalities**

(Pages 141 – 142)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 4

### **4.5 Legislative Consent: Schools Bill**

(Pages 143 – 144)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Minister for Education and Welsh Language to the Llywydd – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 5

### **4.6 Summer exam series 2022**

(Pages 145 – 146)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chief Executive of Qualifications Wales – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 6

### **4.7 Implementation of education reforms**

(Pages 147 – 150)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee to the Minister for Education and Welsh Language – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 7

#### **4.8 Peer on peer sexual harassment among learners**

(Pages 151 – 152)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education  
Committee to the Managing Directors of Regional Education Consortia –  
CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 8

#### **4.9 Peer on peer sexual harassment among learners**

(Pages 153 – 154)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education  
Committee to the Interim Chief Executive of CollegesWales – CYPE(6)–17–22  
– Paper to note 9

#### **4.10 Peer on peer sexual harassment among learners**

(Pages 155 – 156)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education  
Committee to Ffion Williams, Members of the Welsh Youth Parliament –  
CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 10

#### **4.11 Peer on peer sexual harassment among learners**

(Pages 157 – 159)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education  
Committee to Members of the Welsh Youth Parliament – CYPE(6)–17–22 –  
Paper to note 11

#### **4.12 Pupil absence**

(Pages 160 – 162)

Attached Documents:

Additional information from Estyn – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 12

#### **4.13 Forward work programme**

(Pages 163 – 164)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Minister for Education and Welsh Language from the Chief Executive of Natspec – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 13

#### **4.14 Forward work Programme**

(Page 165)

Attached Documents:

Letter from Lord Kinnoull, Chair of the European Affairs Committee – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 14

#### **4.15 Metal health inequalities**

(Pages 166 – 198)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing to the Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 15

#### **4.16 Forward work programme**

(Pages 199 – 200)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Minister for Education and Welsh Language – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Paper to note 16

#### **4.17 Pupil absence**

(Pages 201 – 203)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Minister for Education and Welsh Language – CYPE(6)–17–22  
– Paper to note 17

#### **5 Summer exam session 2022 – consideration of the evidence**

(11.55– 12.00)

#### **6 Legislative Consent: Schools Bill**

(12.00 – 12.10)

(Pages 204 – 209)

Attached Documents:

Legal advice note on the Schools Bill – CYPE(6)–17–22 – Private paper 3

#### **7 Looked after children and care leavers – further consideration of the scope and approach**

(12.10– 12.20)

(Pages 210 – 227)

Attached Documents:

Care experienced children Suggested Inquiry Terms of Reference – CYPE(6)–  
17–22 – Private paper 4

#### **8 Pupil absence – further consideration of the draft report (if needed)**

(12.20 – 12.30)

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Dear Jayne

7 September 2022

Thank you for your letter outlining concerns about this summer's exams.

We understand the challenges faced by all in returning to formal exams and assessments this summer following the policy decision to cancel such exams and assessments in 2020 and in 2021.

WJEC implemented a range of measures to ensure that students taking exams and assessments were supported during the 2021-2022 academic year.

Following Qualifications Wales' policy decision to introduce adapted qualifications for students taking their exams and assessments in the summer 2022 series, WJEC published qualification adaptations for each specification in July 2021. Following a period of consultation these adaptations were published at the end of the previous academic year to aid teachers in planning for the 2021-2022 academic year. These adaptations were aligned to Qualifications Wales' [requirements](#) and, depending on the design of the qualification and/or assessments, included;

- streamlining assessment content
- reducing NEA (Non-Exam Assessment) requirements
- having optional questions or units.

We provided advance information in September 2021 for some qualifications where it was not possible to put suitable adaptations in place. Additionally, we provided advance information in February 2022 for a range of qualifications which already had adaptations in place.

We believe that the range of measures we took provided support to students, aiding them in planning their revision and in focusing on key aspects of the specifications that were subject to assessment this summer.

In addition to providing detailed information for teachers and for students and parents on the adaptations made to specifications for the summer 2022 assessments, we also provided a range of resources to support students in preparing for their exams and assessments. These included:

- blended learning resources
- knowledge organisers
- exam and NEA walk-throughs
- bridging resources (to support the transition from Year 9 to Year 10 GCSE cohort)

We also provided generic resources to support students' revision and well-being, which included a range of revision tips and templates, mental health and nutritional advice and guidance.

This information was made freely available to all students via our dedicated [student support webpages](#). We also provided student friendly support on [Instagram](#) to ensure we reached as wide a group of students as possible.

We provided a range of resources to support teachers, including additional sample materials and additional non-examination assessment guidance for qualifications where the design of assessments was more significantly altered this summer.

In designing the summer 2022 assessments, we followed our standard process to create assessments that effectively differentiate between students' performance, whilst being of a similar level of demand to those set in previous years. However, as we assess different aspects of specification content each year to ensure appropriate coverage of content over time, it is possible

for an assessment to be more or less challenging than in previous years. If the questions we set this year were considered to be more challenging, or not as clear as anticipated, and may have been open to differing interpretations, we reviewed the mark scheme and considered how marks could be assigned to as wide a range of responses as possible to ensure students were appropriately credited for showing what they know, understand, and can do.

We also took account of the level of demand of assessments in setting grade boundaries during the awarding process. We did this to ensure outcomes were as fair as possible for all students. As announced by Qualifications Wales last autumn, qualifications this summer were graded more generously than they were in 2019, but not as generously as they were in 2021. We worked with our assessment and subject experts to ensure we set appropriate standards this summer to meet this policy objective.

As in any exam series, we implement the [JCQ special consideration process](#), which is our standard practice. Special consideration was given to students who had temporarily experienced illness, injury, or some other event outside of their control at the time of the assessment. It was applied when the issue had a material effect on a student's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their normal level of attainment in an assessment. Special consideration was usually given by applying an allowance of additional marks to each unit affected within a specification. The size of the allowance depended on the timing, nature, and extent of the adverse effect.

We are confident that the range of measures we took this year, across the full range of qualifications, resulted in students being awarded fair outcomes for their qualifications.

### **GCE Mathematics**

We were aware that some students found a range of our GCE Mathematics assessment materials challenging this summer. There was very specific feedback provided on the content of the Unit 1 AS Mathematics question paper.

It is worth noting that A level Mathematics and Further Mathematics were part of the last group of qualifications to be reformed, with students following a one-year programme of study being assessed in the new specification for the first time in 2018, and those following a standard two-year programme of study being assessed in 2019, the last year exams were sat prior to the pandemic.

As stated previously, we wish to assure you that we set out to design assessments that were of broadly similar demand to those set in 2018 and 2019. However, we have observed that some of the questions that we considered to be straightforward challenged many students this year, whilst in other more demanding questions students performed better than when similar questions were set in 2019. We understand that the inclusion in the Unit 1 AS Mathematics paper of the topic 'know and use the function  $a^x$  and its graph, where  $a$  is positive', under 2.1.6 of the specification content, and with links to depreciation methods, confounded many students. In marking this question, as well as other challenging questions in the paper, we ensured that mark schemes were adapted to appropriately reward students wherever possible to do so. When setting grade boundaries for the Unit 1 paper, as well as ensuring we were implementing this summer's generous grading policy, we also accounted for the level of difficulty of questions.

91.85 % of 17 year-old students entered for AS Mathematics this summer achieved an E grade or above compared to 84.56% achieving the same grade in summer 2019. 49.71 % of 17 year-old students entered for AS Mathematics this summer achieved an A grade compared to 36.46% achieving the same grade in summer 2019.

### **A level English Language and Literature**

In printing over 1,730,000 examination papers across a range of qualifications in Wales this summer, we implemented our standard quality assurance process at each stage of the development process. Our thorough process checks identify errors as the materials are developed, which are

addressed and rectified prior to the materials being despatched to schools and colleges. Regrettably, our quality assurance processes did not identify the collation issue that impacted some optional questions on one of our A level English Language and Literature exam papers. We issued an apology to the 153 students from the 22 schools and colleges in Wales impacted by the collation error.

We implemented a range of measures to minimise the impact of the error and to ensure that students were not adversely affected. These included:

- identifying each student taking the optional questions impacted by the collation error
- considering any adjustments needed to the mark scheme as some students answered Section B before seeing the questions set for Section A
- senior WJEC staff contacting staff at each of the affected schools/colleges to discuss how the error specifically impacted their students
- considering the impact of the error during the awarding process
- applying a special consideration tariff to all impacted students
- reviewing the marks achieved by each impacted student in both Section A and in Section B
- reviewing the marks achieved by each impacted student in unit 3 compared to units 4 and 5
- following our reviews, making any additional adjustments to final unit 3 marks.

We believe these measures resulted in students being awarded fair outcomes for the impacted unit and for the A level English Language and Literature qualification as a whole.

We informed all impacted schools/colleges of the measures we took, the day before results were issued to students, and provided them with contact details if they wished to discuss the situation further.

At the end of each summer series we undertake a lessons learnt review, to learn from our experiences and to make any identified improvements for future series. We have already identified and implemented actions to improve our final quality assurance processes

Although there were some reports of students experiencing challenges with this summer's examinations, we are also aware that many did not find the period as daunting as they had feared and welcomed the return to exams. As outlined in this letter, with an acute focus on students, we took a range of measures to ensure the summer 2022 exam series went as smoothly as possible.

Where issues were reported, we took measures to ensure that students were not adversely impacted and were issued with fair qualification results so they could progress to the next steps of their education or into the world of work.

We look forward to meeting with the Committee in due course where we will be happy to further discuss these themes or any other themes you may wish to explore.

Your sincerely



**Ian Morgan**  
**Chief Executive**



## CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper 2

By email

Jayne Bryant MS  
Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

7 September 2022

Dear Jayne

In our letter of 1 August 2022 we provided interim information in response to your letter of 6 July 2022 about the summer exams. Now that the awarding process, undertaken by WJEC, is complete, we are providing a further response to inform you of how concerns have been addressed.

WJEC has now awarded all GCSEs, AS, A levels and Skills Challenge Certificates to learners and results were issued on the planned results days. As indicated in our earlier letter, we observed a sample of awarding committee meetings, including all those for any subjects where concerns or issues had been identified.

We are satisfied that WJEC were compliant with our regulations and policy requirements when making awarding decisions, and carefully considered the issues and concerns identified when exams were being taken.

As required, awarding committees considered a range of statistical evidence and looked at learner performance in the context of this summer series. They also considered the level of demand presented by the papers when identifying where grade boundaries should be set.

### **Difficulty of question papers this summer (including A Level Chemistry)**

In general, there was no evidence from the awarding process that question papers were significantly more demanding this year than any other, though learners may have found them more challenging given the exceptional context for this year's exams.

It was never the policy intent that exam papers should be more lenient or demanding than previous years, indeed the papers used this year would have been developed pre-pandemic and modified to accommodate the adaptations made to assessment requirements for this year. This said, however well designed, there are always some small differences in question paper demand from year to year - as questions change and different parts of the specification are assessed. This is normal and accommodated through the way that grade boundaries are set by awarding committees each year – lower grade boundaries reflect a slightly harder question paper and higher grade boundaries reflect a slightly easier question paper.

#### **Qualifications Wales**

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Imperial Park,  
Casnewydd  
NP10 8AR  
☎ 01633 373 222



Pack Page 127

[www.cymwysteraucymru.org](http://www.cymwysteraucymru.org)

#### **Cymwysterau Cymru**

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In cases where performance was poor this summer, awarding committees recommended grade boundaries that were lower than in previous years. This was to account for the context of the series, the demand of the question papers and to align with the policy that was set for results to be broadly midway between those seen in 2019 and 2021.

In a few cases, before the results of each subject were signed off, WJEC made further amendments to the grade boundaries, to ensure that sufficient account was taken of this summer's context and the challenges experienced by learners, and to meet the policy position in relation to results.

### **AS Level Mathematics (Unit 1)**

During our monitoring, we paid particular attention to the award of AS Mathematics, especially the Unit 1 paper (where most concerns were raised about the difficulty of the question paper and the fairness of some specific sub-questions). We raised specific concerns with WJEC over one particular part of a question (question 8c – a three-mark question).

We were concerned that while the question was within the scope of the overall requirements of the specification, the specific requirements of the question could be interpreted as having been removed by the adaptations. This presented an ambiguous position that could not be resolved until there had been consideration of information about how learners had performed in this question.

There are a variety of potential responses to this issue including two principal options a) removing the question from the award or b) setting slightly lower grade boundaries for the unit overall. After extensive consideration, WJEC decided to implement the second option. This decision was made because learners had attempted the question and some had achieved the marks available. A decision to remove the question from the award would have disadvantaged these learners. It was clear that many learners found this question paper difficult, and performance was poor in several questions. WJEC took this into account when setting the grade boundaries.

WJEC wrote to the centres affected to explain their response to the concerns raised and no further concerns have been raised with us.

### **A Level English Language and Literature (Unit 4)**

There was a known error in the question paper collation for this unit where four missing pages in the printed question paper omitted parts of the optional Shakespeare texts. This will have affected learners differently depending on which optional Shakespeare text they were responding to and on how their exam centre dealt with the issue. We know from WJEC that where necessary, all exam centres accessed the on-line question paper, which did not have the missing pages, and their learners were able to complete the question paper, albeit with some unfortunate disruption.

WJEC took an individualised approach to this issue and checked with each exam centre how they had addressed the administration of the exam. They also looked at how learners performed in the affected questions and how this compared to how those learners had performed in other questions. In addition, their performance was considered relative to other learners not affected by the issue.

Performance in the affected question and unit paper was generally good and it was felt that in general terms the error had not significantly disadvantaged learners. WJEC followed up with each individual centre to consider the specific circumstances for each learner. Special consideration (a small uplift in marks) was applied to all learners who were impacted by the error and additional special consideration was also given to some learners who following discussion with exam centres were considered to have been impacted more negatively.

WJEC wrote to the centres affected to explain their actions and no further concerns have been raised with us.

As part of our follow up activities, we will be seeking to understand from WJEC what actions they intend to put in place to avoid any similar error in the future. We will review and monitor any proposed action plan to be assured that the actions have been completed appropriately.

We know that learners will have been very anxious about the return of exams and that this anxiety will have been heightened during the exam period and the build up to results being issued.

I hope this assures the committee that all concerns and issues were considered appropriately, and action taken where necessary. I have copied both WJEC and the Minister for Education and the Welsh Language into this response.

Yours sincerely



Philip Blaker  
Chief Executive

# Agenda Item 4.1

CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 1

**Y Pwyllgor Iechyd a  
Gofal Cymdeithasol**

—

**Health and Social Care  
Committee**

**Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc  
ac Addysg**

—

**Children, Young People  
and Education Committee**

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Lynne Neagle MS

Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Welsh Government

11 July 2022

Dear Lynne

**Mental health and wellbeing: Committee recommendations**

During the Fifth Senedd, the Health, Social Care and Sport, and Children, Young People and Education Committees did significant and substantial work on the mental health and wellbeing of people in Wales. We plan, through the work of our Sixth Senedd committees, to build on our predecessors' work on these important matters.

As the remits of our Committees overlap in respect of the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, we are writing jointly to seek an update on our predecessors' recommendations.

We would be grateful if you could respond to the issues raised in the annex by **1 September 2022**.

Yours sincerely



Russell George MS  
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee



Jayne Bryant MS  
Chair, Children, Young People and Education  
Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.





## Annex: Request for information

To inform our Committees' work on mental health and wellbeing, for each of the reports listed below, we would welcome:

1. An indication of which recommendations the Welsh Government considers still to be outstanding and where further action is needed, whether there are any barriers to implementing these, and if so, what those barriers are.
2. How the Welsh Government's work to implement the recommendations is contributing to tackling mental health inequalities.

We would be grateful to receive your response by **1 September 2022**.

### Health, Social Care and Sport Committee reports

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The Fifth Senedd's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee maintained a determined focus on mental health. In addition to exploring issues relating to mental health throughout its scrutiny of Welsh Government budgets, general scrutiny of health and social care Ministers, and its other inquiry work, the Committee undertook inquiries on:

- Loneliness and isolation (December 2017)  
The report made six recommendations, including: the timescales for developing a loneliness and isolation strategy; a cross-departmental approach (especially in relation to dementia and carers); assessing the impact of loneliness and isolation on mental health and the subsequent impact on public services; working with the voluntary sector to secure funding stability; evaluating the impact of intergenerational contact; and an awareness-raising campaign to change attitudes and address stigma. In its February 2018 response, the Welsh Government accepted four recommendations, and partially accepted two.
- Use of antipsychotic medication in care homes (May 2018)  
The report made eleven recommendations, including: improving data collection and publication; compliance with NICE guidelines; person-centred care assessments for people with dementia; issues relating to medication reviews; access to allied health professionals; dementia care training; and a review of the levels and appropriateness of the use of antipsychotic medication for people with dementia in secondary care. In its July 2018 response, the Welsh Government accepted, or accepted in principle, ten of the recommendations, and rejected one. The Cabinet Secretary provided further information later the same month.
- Suicide prevention "Everybody's Business" (December 2018)  
The report made 31 recommendations, including: suicide prevention training and promotion of existing resources; evaluation and rollout of suicide prevention initiatives and

referral pathways; parity of mental and physical health; an all-Wales triage model locating community psychiatric nurses in police control rooms; follow up care after discharge; waiting times for psychological therapies; a postvention suicide strategy and pathway; engagement with people with personal experience of suicide ideation, survivors of suicide attempts and people bereaved by suicide; targeted actions for at risk groups, including men, farmers, students and prisoners; considerations for planning authorities; media reporting; online safety; governance; and funding. The report also supported recommendations made by the CYPE Committee in its Mind Over Matter inquiry. In its January 2019 [response](#), the Welsh Government accepted 21 recommendations in full, and accepted eight more in principle. Of the remaining two recommendations, some elements were accepted in full, and others in principle.

- [Mental health in policing and police custody](#) (October 2019)

The report made eleven recommendations, including: detentions under the Mental Health Act; partnership working between police and health services; early intervention, mental health crisis and out of hours care; data collection and publication; care and treatment planning; conveyance; and the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat Assurance Group. In its December 2019 [response](#), the Welsh Government accepted seven recommendations in full, three in principle, and rejected one.

- [Impact of the COVID-19 outbreak, and its management, on health and social care in Wales: impact on mental health and wellbeing](#) (December 2020)

The report made 15 recommendations, including: planning for the short and long term mental health impact on the population and the health and social care workforce; monitoring the impact on self-harm and suicide; disconnects between health boards' assurances and patients' experiences; the mental health core dataset; a bereavement care framework; and urgently evaluating remote digital mental health service provision. The report also reiterated recommendations made in Everybody's Business and the CYPE Committee's Mind Over Matter reports on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. In its February 2021 [response](#), the Welsh Government accepted twelve recommendations in full, and three in principle. The then Minister for Mental Health, Wellbeing and the Welsh Language [wrote](#) to the Fifth Senedd HSCS Committee in March 2021 to provide a detailed update on progress against the recommendations made in the Everybody's Business report.

Children, Young People and Education Committee reports

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In a [Plenary statement](#) in January 2017, the chair of the Fifth Senedd's Children, Young People and Education Committee, Lynne Neagle MS, stated that members of the Committee were "incredibly passionate about the quality and provision of mental health services for young people". The



Committee carried out work relating to the mental health of children and young people and their families throughout the Fifth Senedd, including as part of the following inquiries:

- Perinatal mental health in Wales (October 2017) and Perinatal mental health – Follow up  
The report made 27 recommendations, including that the Welsh Government: establishes a clinician-led managed clinical network; ensures that robust data is collected and monitored to understand the ongoing level of need for perinatal mental health support; creates a Mother and Baby Unit in south Wales; and explores with NHS England options for the creation of a centre in north east Wales. In its response, the Welsh Government rejected four recommendations, accepted four “in principle”, and accepted 19. The Committee carried out follow-up work to monitor the Welsh Government’s implementation of those recommendations between November 2018 and March 2021.
- Mind over matter (October 2018) and Mind over matter: Two years on (October 2020)  
The Committee’s influential Mind over matter report made 28 recommendations. Its “key recommendation” was that the Welsh Government make the emotional and mental well-being and resilience of children and young people a stated national priority. Other recommendations considered issues such as support for mental health in schools, primary mental health support services, CAMHS services, suicide prevention, inpatient care, advocacy services and expenditure on emotional and mental health services. In its response, the Welsh Government rejected four recommendations, and partially or wholly accepted the others. The Welsh Government’s progress against those recommendations two years on from the original report’s publication is addressed in the Committee’s follow-up report Mind over matter: Two years on.

# Agenda Item 4.2

CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 2

Lynne Neagle AS/MS  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd Meddwl a Llesiant  
Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Jayne Bryant MS,  
Welsh Parliament,  
Cardiff,  
CF99 1SN  
E-mail:

12 July 2022

Dear Jayne,

During the Children, Young People & Education Committee's session on 'Peer-on-Peer Sexual Harassment Among Young Learners' held on the 4<sup>th</sup> May, the Minister for Social Justice agreed that information would be provided to the Committee about the Police led review of the Wales Police Schools Programme (WPSP). This has been passed to me for reply as the WPSP falls within my portfolio.

Attached to this letter is a summary report of the review which was conducted in 2019. Officials are currently working closely with the Police on implementing the recommendations. There is an Operational Board in place on the programme which also considers the progress being made against the recommendations. This is chaired by the Police and includes a range of stakeholders, including relevant policy representatives from Welsh Government departments. There is also a strategic board in place, chaired by Welsh Government, where updates and key issues are escalated from the Operational Board, both on the operation of the programme and updates on the implementation of the recommendations.

Yours sincerely

**Lynne Neagle AS/MS**  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd Meddwl a Llesiant  
Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
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[Correspondence.Lynne.Neagle@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Lynne.Neagle@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.



# RHAGLEN YSGOLION

Heddlu Cymru

Wales Police

# SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

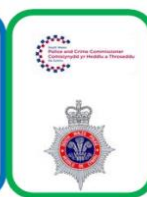
## Wales Police Schools Programme Future Vision and Proposals

### Summary of findings and recommendations from 2019 review

The Wales Police Schools programme has been developed in recognition of the role that schools and education can play in tackling antisocial behaviour, substance misuse and problems associated with personal safety. The programme is mainly preventative generalised and broad-based one that is focussed on formal lessons delivered by uniformed police in the classroom, together with supportive policing activities. Aims of the programme are:-

- work towards achieving a reduction in crime and disorder in the young of our communities,
- through the medium of education and promote the principles of positive citizenship in schools and their wider communities.

A joint review was carried out and commissioned by Police & Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables of Wales following discussions with Welsh Government and an exercise to discover the views of key partners, including head teachers and pupils.



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## Conclusions, Recommendations and The Fresh Vision for the Wales Police Schools Programme

The conclusions contained within the report were based on an Operational Review undertaken within each of the four Welsh Forces to assess current arrangements and discover the views of all those involved in the programme. This was set out in three distinct sections, firstly the desktop literature review, the second comprised of interviews and focus groups and the third section, electronic surveys were sent to children and teachers in both primary and secondary schools.

Evidence captured from the review is that the Police Schools Programme is highly valued, having police officers within schools was a high and positive impact and there is considerable evidence and benefits in maintaining the presence of Police Officers within schools across Wales. The programme aligns itself to early intervention and prevention approach that is at the heart of policing. The review highlights the need to keep pace with legislative and curriculum developments led by Welsh Government and the way in which Policing in Wales has entered into new partnerships and tackled big issues in ways that respect the different communities and variable challenges across Wales but benefit from collaboration and shared learning. Another theme identified within the review is that the programme has provided an opportunity to divert children away from criminality and entering the Criminal Justice System.

It is recognised that in order for the programme to maintain its standing it needs to evolve and keep pace with changes in policing which has become more complex and education which also faces challenges of a complex society. Although positives are highlighted the report set out advice and a series of recommendations for Policing in Wales and Welsh Government endorsement.

The areas identified through the review process are grouped into 6 thematic areas, these are:-

- Governance
- Curriculum
- Interactions with Children and Schools
- Operational Policing
- Recruitment, Training and Supervision of School Police Officers
- Monitoring of the programme/schoolbeat website/technology

Within each of these thematic areas there are further detailed recommendations listed that address the priorities, in total 25.

These 25 recommendations have been included in the Wales Police Schools Programme delivery plan which is a live document and continues to be reviewed by the Implementation Board of the delivery against these recommendations.

#### **GOVERNANCE:**

- 1 There is a need for a clear governance structure of the programme at national, regional and local level, tied into local and the all-Wales arrangements agreed between Policing and Welsh Government and the local ownership recommended earlier in this report.
- 2 There needs to be closer alignment of the programme to the priorities of Policing in Wales and priorities of Welsh Government. Local arrangements should link to neighbourhood policing, Early Action Together and officers serving in Youth Offending Teams etc.
- 3 The Policing Partnership Board for Wales should establish an Implementation Board to drive the development of this Programme, involving senior representatives of relevant Ministers as well as Commissioners and Chief Constables and other partners. The aim should be to implement the proposals by September 2020.
- 4 There also needs to be consistent line management of the programme in each of the four Welsh forces, to provide clarity about vision and outcomes and to allow the sharing of experience and reports on implementation and practical arrangements.

#### **CURRICULUM**

- 5 The Implementation Board will make way for a Curriculum & Oversight Board to develop the programme/curriculum and propose changes and amendments as needed. This should be a simple action-orientated Board reporting to the All-Wales Policing Partnership Board.
- 6 The Curriculum and Oversight Board will be required to take an analytical approach to supplement stakeholder input to ensure that an intelligence-led evidence-based approach is adopted in future lesson design and delivery. It should have a process to allow feedback on individual lesson content.
- 7 The purpose and nature of the Programme should be communicated in clear simple language with a simple title – Wales Police Schools Programme – rather than initials.

#### **INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS**

- 8 The Programme should adopt a more targeted approach to children who are more likely to be at risk of entering the criminal justice system. This would include those who are disengaged or excluded and those who have been subject to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). It would involve increased engagement with Pupil Referral Units. A joint review of the service currently provided to Pupil Referral Units should be undertaken to identify potential benefits to education, policing and other agencies of an enhanced and targeted service to these units along with considering other ways of working with children who are difficult to manage in the school environment, with consideration to the resource requirements of that potential contribution.

- 9 The Programme should consolidate the change in focus from a predominantly lesson-based approach to a balanced and more pastoral all-school approach which has clear links to local neighbourhood teams and other appropriate partners.
- 10 A more compact core framework should focus on identified areas of threat, risk and harm. Currently, for example, we would expect a focus on serious violence, knife crime and county lines but this may change over time and there may be variations in the priorities in different areas.
- 11 Consideration should be given to best practice from the engagement of Police Officers in schools providing restorative interventions or conducting reparation meeting in the school environment.
- 12 The Implementation Board must work closely with our partners in education and collaborate with other partner agencies who deliver messages within the school environment to avoid duplication and ensure relevance to the new education curriculum that is currently being rolled out.
- 13 The inception of a more formalised delivery of key messages to a younger audience must be aligned to evidence demonstrating emerging threat and risk (subject to external expert guidance on age relevancy via the Implementation/Curriculum Board). This should involve local Community Support Officers as part of a wider team approach.
- 14 There needs to be the development of a framework for important messages delivered by the Schools Police Officers to be reinforced by the wider police family.

#### **OPERATIONAL POLICING**

- 15 There should be consistently improved collaboration between Police Officers in the Programme and operational police officers at all levels across the four forces, supported by supervisors.
- 16 Schools Police Officers should work more closely alongside Neighbourhood Policing Teams and other local partners to develop opportunities around early intervention, prevention and information sharing.
- 17 Schools Police Officers need to be used more often and more systematically as an operational problem-solving resource for issues involving children and young people in addition to partner agencies such as Youth Offending Service, Local Authority and Early Action Together.
- 18 Consideration should be given to continuity of support and engagement with young people during school holidays.

#### **RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND SUPERVISION OF SCHOOL POLICE OFFICERS**

- 19 There should be a consistent training plan for Police Officers moving into the role which should be seen as part of their continued professional development and must include appropriate and timely operational content
- 20 There should be development of a work based assessment/accreditation process for Schools Police Officers.



- 21 It is important for Police Officers seconded into the Schools role to maintain operational credibility and knowledge, and to be encouraged to see the secondment as relevant to their ambition for progression and promotion within the Police Service. With that in mind it is suggested that tenure in the role should normally be 2 years – with an extension of up to a further 12 months on one or at most two occasions and only for valid operational reasons. These are decisions for each Force whose reasoning needs to be explicit and explained well to head teachers and other partners
- 22 Induction, initial training and support for officers moving into the role needs to be highly developed, with a period of introduction and handover protected explicitly within the new arrangements.

#### **MONITORING OF THE PROGRAMME/SCHOOLBEAT WEBSITE/TECHNOLOGY**

- 23 There should be a change in the performance framework for the Programme from an output-focused system to one which has outcomes as its basis. This should be agreed by the Implementation Board and monitored by a Chief Officer and Commissioner's representative in each Force. An annual report should be produced for the Board, outlining achievements and challenges in the year
- 24 A task and finish group should be formed to review the SchoolBeat website and explore opportunities for a more sustainable technology-based approach.
- 25 There should be a consistent approach to incident recording against agreed criteria on the SchoolBeat website.

# Agenda Item 4.3

**CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 3**

**Y Pwyllgor Iechyd a**

**Gofal Cymdeithasol**

—

**Health and Social Care  
Committee**

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Lynne Neagle MS  
Deputy Minister for Mental Health and  
Wellbeing  
Welsh Government  
12 July 2022

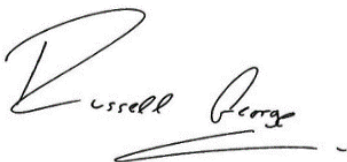
Dear Lynne

Consultations on healthy food environments and ending the sale of energy drinks to children and young people under 16

Thank you for your letter of 9 June 2022, in which you provided details of the above consultations, and sought our views on the matters they raise.

While we have not undertaken any work in these areas to date, our Committee strategy for the Sixth Senedd identifies the promotion of healthy lifestyles and prevention as potential priority areas for consideration later in this Senedd. We will therefore watch the outcomes of your consultations with interest.

Yours sincerely



Russell George MS

Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

# Agenda Item 4.4

## CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 4

### Y Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol

#### Health and Social Care Committee

Jayne Bryant MS

Chair, Children, Young People and Education Committee

Jenny Rathbone MS

Chair, Equality and Social Justice Committee

John Griffiths MS

Chair, Local Government and Housing Committee

15 July 2022

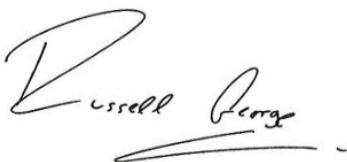
Dear Jayne, Jenny and John

#### Health and Social Care Committee inquiry into mental health inequalities

Further to my [letter of 6 June 2022](#), I am writing to provide a further update on the Health and Social Care Committee's [inquiry into mental health inequalities](#).

I enclose for your information summaries of the issues emerging from our [discussions](#) with people with lived experience of neurodiversity, and our [visits](#) to EYST Cymru and Barnardo's Cymru's Beyond the Blue project. These notes have been published on the inquiry webpage. I also enclose in confidence for your information a copy of the Senedd Research briefing prepared for our recent oral evidence session on 6 July.

Yours sincerely



Russell George MS

Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

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#### Welsh Parliament

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## Health and Social Care Committee inquiry into mental health inequalities: update

### Background

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The Health and Social Care Committee launched an inquiry into mental health inequalities in January 2022. The terms of reference were very broad, seeking to identify which groups were most likely to experience mental health inequalities, what barriers they face, whether Welsh Government policy does enough to recognise and address these groups' needs, and what more needs to be done.

Drawing on the evidence we received in writing, through focus groups and during initial oral evidence sessions, in March 2022 we decided to focus on four emerging themes: mental health and society; community solutions; the impact of mental health inequalities on people with neurodiverse conditions; and the role of the healthcare and wider workforce.

During the summer term we have taken oral evidence from stakeholders (4 May, 19 May, 8 June and 6 July), held a private informal stakeholder event on the experience of mental health inequalities of people with neurodiverse conditions and their families or carers, and visited projects and services working in their communities to support people from ethnic minority communities, and children, young people and their families.

### Next steps

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During the summer recess, the Citizen Engagement team will hold **focus groups with frontline health staff** to discuss: how they meet the mental health needs of diverse communities; whether staff feel equipped to recognise and meet diverse needs; what barriers may inhibit more effective working; the role of prevention and the promotion of good mental health; and the mental health and wellbeing needs of the workforce itself. A summary of the findings will be published in the autumn.

We have established an **online advisory group**, comprising people with a range of different lived experiences. The group will be asked to provide its views on emerging issues at key milestones in the inquiry. We will also be asking members of the **Welsh Youth Parliament** to share their views on emerging issues.

All of the evidence we gather throughout the inquiry, including the written update we have sought jointly with the CYPE Committee on progress made on key recommendations made by Fifth Senedd committees in respect of mental health, will inform an **oral evidence session with the Welsh Government** to be held in the autumn term.



**CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 5**

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**  
**Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg**  
**Minister for Education and Welsh Language**



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA/JMEWL/2166/22

Elin Jones MS  
Llywydd  
Senedd Cymru  
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Llywydd@senedd.wales

19 July 2022

Dear Llywydd

The Schools Bill (“the Bill”) was introduced in the UK Parliament (House of Lords) on 11 May 2022.

The Bill includes a range of measures on issues such as school funding, regulating independent educational institutions, teacher misconduct, school attendance, implementing a register and support for children not in school and the structure and regulation of academy trusts.

My officials have been in regular contact with Department for Education (DfE) officials since last September to discuss our respective plans for elective home education (EHE), possible cross-jurisdictional issues and the various shared challenges in this policy space. My officials explored the potential for co-operation on school attendance orders (SAOs) and the sharing of EHE data between local authorities in England and Wales.

We did not agree to inclusion of provision in relation to Wales on any aspects of the Bill, so its effect on introduction was stated to be only in relation to England. For that reason, the UK Government were of the view that no Legislative Consent Motion (LCM) was required in respect of the Bill as laid.

However, on 30 May, an amendment “amendment 96” was tabled by Baroness Barran for consideration during House of Lords Committee Stage, which commenced on 8 June and concluded on 27 June. The amendment is to section 494 of the Education Act 1996 and will serve to extend the inter-authority recoupment provisions for excluded pupils set out in section 494 of the Education Act 1996, to encompass academies. The amendment was agreed on 20 June and has been incorporated within the Bill as amended at Lords Committee Stage in Schedule 3, paragraph 1. The amendment makes provision falling within the legislative competence of the Senedd.

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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.

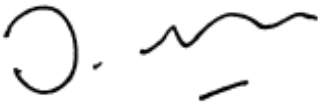
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I therefore laid a Legislative Consent Memorandum on the Bill on 7 July 2022. I apologise that it was laid outside of the normal two-week Standing Order 29 deadline. This is in part due to a failure of the UK Government to notify Welsh Government that the amendment had been tabled.

We are continuing our consideration of the devolution implications of the Bill as it progresses, to ensure there is nothing further that triggers the LCM process. Once the legislative competence analysis in relation to the remainder of the Bill is completed, I will write again should I intend to lay a further Legislative Consent Memorandum.

I am copying this letter to the Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution, Mick Antoniw MS, the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths MS, the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee, Huw Irranca-Davies MS and the Chair of the Children and Young People Committee, Jayne Bryant MS.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a wavy line and a short horizontal stroke.

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**

Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg  
Minister for Education and Welsh Language

# Agenda Item 4.6



## CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 6

By email

Jayne Bryant MS  
Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

1 August 2022

Dear Jayne

Thank you for your letter of 6 July 2022 about the summer exams. Although you asked for a response by 7 September, I thought it would be useful to provide you with an interim update on the issues that you have outlined. We will provide a full response for the 7 September deadline, after all of the issues raised have been considered by WJEC in their awarding meetings, which we will observe. We note that you have also sent a similar letter to WJEC and will therefore clearly set out our respective roles regarding these issues.

To support learners and recognise the ongoing impact of the pandemic on their education, we have required WJEC to make adaptations to their qualifications and to take a different approach to grading in summer 2022. The adaptations were put in place in July 2021 to focus learner preparation for the summer 2022 assessments (exams and non-exam assessments). The expectation was that schools and colleges would endeavour to teach the full course content but were aware of where the exams and other assessments would be focussed. Due to the substantial increases in results in 2020 and 2021 when alternative assessment arrangements were in place, consideration was given to making a fair move back to the pre pandemic results. The grading approach provides a transition back to the established standards in future years, whereby this year, results at a national subject level will be broadly midway between the 2019 and 2021 results.

As you noted in your letter to us, we have spoken to you about some of the exam paper issues that have arisen this summer. WJEC as the 'owner' of the qualifications will take the lead in investigating such issues and setting out the actions to be taken in relation to ensuring that learners are not disadvantaged by the issues. They report the issue to us and outline the actions that they will be undertaking which we then monitor. WJEC also undertake root cause analysis investigations where errors are identified and provide us with an overview of the cause and what will be put in place to prevent a similar incident reoccurring. Again, we monitor these action plans.

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Pack Page 145

[www.cymwysteraucymru.org](http://www.cymwysteraucymru.org)

### Cymwysterau Cymru

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This year there have been complaints to WJEC, us and more widely reported in the media about some adaptations and views expressed that particular questions or part questions that appeared on exam papers had been from topics which had been removed from the assessment requirements. We have also seen from our Have Your Say questionnaire views from some learners, parents and teachers where similar concerns have been raised alongside general comments about the demands of some of the papers. We have published an interim report on the responses we have seen and actions taken to date: <https://qualificationswales.org/media/8561/have-your-say-on-summer-2022-exams-questionnaire-summary.pdf>

WJEC will consider these issues through the awarding process and as part of our monitoring programme we will be observing awarding meetings where concerns have been raised and WJEC will report to us the actions they will be taking. Where concerns have been raised in relation to difficulty of the exam papers, for example in A level Chemistry, WJEC will take account of the demand of the paper when setting the grade boundaries. In the case of A level English Language and Literature where a known error in question paper collation has occurred, WJEC will consider the impact on learners and take action to ensure that as far as possible they are not disadvantaged.

The AS Maths first exam paper (Unit 1) has come under particular scrutiny. We have already asked WJEC to review the questions where concerns have been raised and provide us with a report. Additionally, we have engaged two independent subject experts to review the paper and feedback to us on the claims that some of the questions should not have appeared as they had been removed from the assessment requirements. We have shared them with WJEC and are considering what action needs to be taken, such as the removal of these questions from the paper.

I hope this provides some reassurance to the committee that these issues are being considered and we will provide further detail to you by 7 September as requested. I have copied both WJEC and the Minister for Education and the Welsh Language into the interim response.

Yours sincerely



Philip Blaker  
Chief Executive



**CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 7**

**Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc  
ac Addysg**

—  
**Children, Young People  
and Education Committee**

Jeremy Miles MS

Minister for Education and Welsh Language

8 August 2022

## **Key education reforms: summer 2022 check-in**

Dear Jeremy,

Thank you for appearing before Committee on 14 July to discuss the new curriculum and the ALN reforms as part of the first check-in of our Senedd-long inquiry into these key education reforms.

From this check-in, we are concerned that some of the pupils previously on schools' SEN registers are not being provided with a statutory Individual Development Plan under the new ALN system. We seek your views on the reasons for this, clarification of whether it is in line with the Welsh Government's expectations, and regular updates on the numbers of learners registered with SEN/ALN. More detail is set out below.

### Background

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Under the [Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal \(Wales\) Act 2018](#) ("the 2018 Act"), the definition of Additional Learning Needs (ALN) is essentially the same as the definition of SEN under the old system.

Your predecessor, Kirsty Williams, [said in the Senedd](#) in March 2021 that "the test to decide who has ALN has not changed" (paragraph 397). The [Welsh Government's implementation guide for parents](#) also states that "Having ALN is the same as having SEN. This means that if a child or young person has SEN they are also likely to have ALN".

The 2018 Act also states that any learner who has ALN is entitled to a statutory 'Individual Development Plan'.

However, our predecessor Committee [raised concerns](#) in 2019 about whether schools had the capacity to provide an Individual Development Plan for all learners with ALN. The Committee suggested that, because of resourcing issues in schools, some learners on the SEN register under the

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old system might not be recognised as having ALN, even though the definitions of SEN and of ALN are essentially the same. This Committee referred to this as a ‘raising of the bar’ effect: the threshold for learners to be considered as having ALN could be higher than the threshold for SEN under the old system.

We raised this issue with you in a [letter dated 12 January 2022](#), after the National Deaf Children’s Society Cymru contacted us with concerns about an “erroneous interpretation of NHS Additional Learning Provision (ALP) under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Wales Act and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Code”. [In response](#), you confirmed that “IDPs are for learners with all levels of ALN – from milder through to complex needs”.

#### Transferring pupils from the old SEN system to the new ALN system

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Because the definition of ALN in the 2018 Act is essentially the same as the definition of SEN under the old system, we would expect that all pupils on the old SEN register would be recognised as having Additional Learning Needs, and therefore that those pupils would have an Individual Development Plan.

However, the [provisional statistical release](#) indicates that there has actually been a 20% decrease in the number of pupils who are identified as having SEN or ALN (In 2020-21, there were 92,688 pupils with SEN. In 2021-22, there are 74,595 pupils with SEN/ALN). This decrease coincides with the beginning of the implementation of the new ALN system.

#### The Welsh Government’s response to the decrease

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The provisional statistical release gives two explanations for the decrease:

- Previous data collection included pupils with ‘general learning difficulties’ rather than specifically SEN/ALN. Those pupils are not being transferred onto the new ALN system.
- Schools have reviewed their SEN registers in readiness for implementing the new system and have removed some learners requiring the lowest level of support from their SEN/ALN registers.

During our meeting on [14 July](#), you suggested a third explanation: that schools may now be able to meet some learners’ needs through universal provision rather than meeting their needs via Additional Learning Provision. In other words: schools are adopting a more inclusive approach to teaching and learning in line with the ethos of the new curriculum, which has changed the way that schools meet the needs of pupils with less severe ALN.

Our view

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It is not clear to us why there are 20% fewer children registered as having SEN/ALN system in 2021-22 than there were in 2020-21. All three of Welsh Government's explanations for the decrease imply that provision on the ground is not consistent with past or present Welsh Government policy intention:

- If previous data collection included pupils with 'general learning difficulties' rather than specifically SEN/ALN, this suggests that SEN has been historically over-reported.
- If schools have reviewed their SEN registers in readiness for implementing the new system and have removed some learners, this suggests that the reforms have raised the bar for the provision of Individual Development Plans.
- If schools are now able to meet some learners' needs through universal provision rather than meeting their needs via Additional Learning Provision, this suggests that an unintended consequence of the education reforms is that schools are fundamentally changing how they meet the needs of children with less severe Additional Learning Needs.

Having considered the three possible explanations above in the context of our scrutiny and engagement work to date, we are of the view that either:

- the definition of ALN under the 2018 Act is being interpreted and applied differently to the long-standing definition of SEN, and the needs of some pupils who were on the SEN register are not being recognised as ALN; or
- those pupils' needs are still recognised as ALN but schools are responding to them in ways not envisaged by the 2018 Act.

#### Request for more information

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We would be grateful if you could set out what work the Welsh Government is doing to establish why there has been such a significant decrease in the number of pupils registered as having SEN/ALN, and when the Welsh Government expects to have a definitive explanation for that reduction.

We would also appreciate your views on how the 2018 Act is being implemented so far, specifically in relation to the fall in numbers of children registered with SEN/ALN and the other concerns set out in this letter.

In addition, we would be grateful if you could:

- i. provide to us updated figures on the numbers of pupils registered as having SEN/ALN as of September 2022, and at approximately six-monthly intervals thereafter (i.e. on or around April and September throughout the implementation of the ALN reforms); and
- ii. clarify whether it is still this Welsh Government's policy objective that all pupils who were registered on the SEN register under the old SEN system should be provided with an

Individual Development Plan under the new ALN system if they still meet the unchanged Additional Learning Needs test.

We would appreciate this information no later than Thursday 29 September 2022 so that we can consider it during our Committee meeting on 6 October.

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant MS

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



**CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 8**

**Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc  
ac Addysg**

**Children, Young People  
and Education Committee**

Local authority Directors of Education

Managing Directors of Regional Education Consortia

27 July 2022

## **Everybody's Affected: the Children, Young People and Education's report into peer on peer sexual harassment among learners**

Dear colleagues,

As you may be aware, on 13 July 2022 the Children, Young People and Education Committee published its [report](#) on the findings of our inquiry into peer on peer sexual harassment among primary-, secondary- and college-aged learners. Alongside the written report, we also published a short [summary video report](#), aimed at young people.

Our main findings were that peer on peer sexual harassment among learners is so common that it has been normalised. It begins in primary schools and continues into further education. The overwhelming majority of victims are girls, but other groups of learners are at risk too. We found that the impact of sexual harassment is so severe that not only does it affect their learning, but it affects their relationships, mental health, life prospects and can – in the most serious of cases – lead to self-harm and suicide. Although schools and colleges cannot be held entirely responsible for peer on peer sexual harassment, they have a key role in preventing it. Currently, they are struggling to do so.

Our report makes a total of 24 recommendations. Many of them, if accepted by the Welsh Government and Estyn, will have direct implications for the schools in your local authorities/regions. They include:

- a national sexual harassment awareness campaign, targeted at learners and their families;
- a review of sexual harassment in primary schools;
- ring-fenced funding to train school staff on how to identify and respond to cases of peer on peer sexual harassment; and

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- changes to Estyn's inspection framework to focus on how schools report and respond to incidents of sexual harassment.

I would be grateful if you could bring the written report to the attention of primary and secondary school leaders and chairs of governors in your area/region:

**<https://senedd.wales/media/pmdgeqio/cr-ld15251-e.pdf>**

I would also be grateful if you could share with them the link to our video report so that they can encourage young people to engage in our findings. The video is aimed at children aged between 11 and 18:

**[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bv\\_GG2EBLHM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bv_GG2EBLHM)**

The Welsh Government will respond to our report in autumn 2022. In their response they will confirm whether they accept or reject each of our recommendations. Once they have done so, there will be a Senedd debate on the report in Plenary.

If you have any concerns or would like further information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant MS

Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

## CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 9

### Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

### Children, Young People and Education Committee

David Price

Interim Chief Executive, CollegesWales

27 July 2022

### Everybody's Affected: the Children, Young People and Education's report into peer on peer sexual harassment among learners

Dear David,

As you may be aware, on 13 July 2022 the Children, Young People and Education Committee published its [report](#) on the findings of our inquiry into peer on peer sexual harassment among primary-, secondary- and college-aged learners. Alongside the written report, we also published a short [summary video report](#), aimed at young people.

Our main findings were that peer on peer sexual harassment among learners is so common that it has been normalised. It begins in primary schools and continues into further education. The overwhelming majority of victims are girls, but other groups of learners are at risk too. We found that the impact of sexual harassment is so severe that not only does it affect their learning, but it affects their relationships, mental health, life prospects and can – in the most serious of cases – lead to self-harm and suicide. Although schools and colleges cannot be held entirely responsible for peer on peer sexual harassment, they have a key role in preventing it. Currently, they are struggling to do so.

Our report makes a total of 24 recommendations. Some of them, if accepted by the Welsh Government, will have direct implications for colleges in Wales. They include:

- a national sexual harassment awareness campaign, targeted at learners and their families;
- that the forthcoming review into peer on peer sexual harassment in colleges considers how effectively colleges collect, categorise and analyse sexual harassment data to identify trends and develop college-based interventions; and
- changes to Estyn's inspection framework to focus on how colleges report and respond to incidents of sexual harassment.

I would be grateful if you could bring the written report to the attention of college leaders:

<https://senedd.wales/media/pmdgeqio/cr-ld15251-e.pdf>

I would also be grateful if you could share with them the link to our video report so that they can encourage young people to engage in our findings. The video is aimed at children aged between 11 and 18:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bv\\_GG2EBLHM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bv_GG2EBLHM)

The Welsh Government will respond to our report in autumn 2022. In their response they will confirm whether they accept or reject each of our recommendations. Once they have done so, there will be a Senedd debate on the report in Plenary.

If you have any concerns or would like further information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant MS

Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



**Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc  
ac Addysg**

—  
**Children, Young People  
and Education Committee**

Ffion Williams

Member of the Welsh Youth Parliament

29 July 2022

**Sexual harassment in schools and colleges**

Dear Ffion,

I and the other members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee would like to tell you how impressed we were with your bravery and honesty when you were interviewed by ITV Wales about sexual harassment in schools.

You spoke about your own personal and distressing experiences of sexual harassment with confidence and you made your points clearly and convincingly. You should be proud of what you have done to improve awareness and understanding of peer on peer sexual harassment, which affects the lives of far too many children and young people across Wales.

As you know, Estyn found out that 61% of girls and 29% of boys in secondary schools have been sexually harassed by other pupils. From our work into peer on peer sexual harassment in schools and colleges, we think this is probably an underestimate. We also found out that peer on peer sexual harassment has a massive impact on young people, and that schools and colleges aren't doing enough to prevent it happening and to support people who have experienced it.

Our final report for the Welsh Government and Members of the Senedd makes 24 recommendations, which we hope will help to stop sexual harassment in schools and colleges. We also created a short video version of our report, which is aimed at young people aged 11 to 18. The video report summarises our key findings.

Our work into this important issue is not over. Here are some important dates coming up:

- **Late summer/early autumn 2022:** the Welsh Government will formally respond to our report. In their response they will say whether they accept or reject our recommendations.

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- **Early autumn:** there will be a debate on our report in the Senedd. I will open the debate to talk about the Committee's work. Any Member of the Senedd can speak if they want. Then a Welsh Government Minister will respond to us all. This is a really important part of a Committee inquiry.

I would like to invite you to attend that Senedd debate in the autumn. I would also be more than happy to meet with you and any other interested youth parliamentarians before the debate to talk more about this important issue.

I would also like to extend to you an open invitation to come along to a meeting of our Committee to talk to us about peer on peer sexual harassment and what more we can do to help the Welsh Government, schools and colleges deal with it better.

If you would like to get in touch, you can email me via the committee clerks at any time at [SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales](mailto:SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales).

Once again, thank you for standing up for yourself and your peers across the country. You have helped Wales to move closer to stopping peer on peer sexual harassment in schools and colleges.

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant MS

Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

## Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

### Children, Young People and Education Committee

Members of the Welsh Youth Parliament

29 July 2022

## Everybody's Affected: the Children, Young People and Education's report into peer on peer sexual harassment among learners

Dear Member of the Welsh Youth Parliament,

In December 2021, Estyn published an important [report about sexual harassment between secondary school pupils](#). In its report, Estyn says that 61% of girls and 29% of boys in secondary schools have been sexually harassed by other pupils. It also says that sexual harassment mainly happens online, and that many young people don't feel able to tell their teachers or other adults about it.

When Estyn talks about "sexual harassment", it means:

- making sexual comments, remarks, jokes either face-to face or online.
- lifting up skirts or taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing.
- making nasty comments about someone's body, gender, sexuality or looks to cause them humiliation, distress or alarm.
- image-based abuse, such as sharing a nude/semi-nude photo or video without the consent of the person pictured.
- sending unwanted sexual, explicit or pornographic photographs/videos to someone.

I and the other members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee were shocked by Estyn's report. We decided to do our own inquiry into sexual harassment between learners in primary schools, secondary schools and colleges.

Our inquiry looked at things like how common sexual harassment is, who experiences it, how it affects people, why it's happening, and what schools and the government are doing to stop it. We heard from lots of professionals and organisations that work with young people. We also heard from young people themselves: over 100 young people from across Wales responded to our survey.

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We know from our work that sexual harassment between school and college learners is really common. For many young people, sexual harassment is part of their everyday lives. You might have witnessed sexual harassment yourself. You might even have experienced it.

I therefore thought that you might be interested to know that we have published our final [report for the Welsh Government and Members of the Senedd](#). The report makes 24 recommendations, which we hope will help to stop sexual harassment in schools and colleges.

We also created a [short video version of our report](#), which is aimed at young people aged 11 to 18. The video report summarises our key findings.

The Welsh Government will respond to our report in autumn 2022. In their response they will say whether they accept or reject our recommendations. After that, there will be a debate on the report in the Senedd.

We hope that our inquiry will help the Welsh Government to do more to stop peer on peer sexual harassment happening.

If you have any views on our work on peer on peer sexual harassment, or on anything else, I would love to hear from you. I would also be delighted if you wanted to attend the Senedd debate on our report in the autumn, and would be more than happy to meet with you before the debate to talk more about this important issue.

It would also be great if you could share our report and video with your friends, family and schools.

If you would like to get in touch, you can email me via the committee clerks at any time at [SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales](mailto:SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales).

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant MS

Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



## Children, Young People and Education Committee – re Pupil Absences

**Estyn agreed to provide the Committee with examples of good practice in schools of the support given to different groups of learners who have been affected by general and persistent absence.**

### **Eveswell Primary School**

Eveswell Primary School is in Newport. The school was visited as part of Estyn's engagement visit work.

The school caters for pupils from three to 11 years of age. There are currently over 500 pupils on roll, including 94 in the nursery classes.

Around 30% of pupils come from an ethnic minority background. Around 25% of pupils receive support for English as an additional language.

Initially many parents were very anxious about sending their children back to school when schools reopened to all pupils.

The headteachers says many hours went into and is still going into managing messaging to parents. She has tried to be honest and balanced and explains the rationale for all of the schools' decisions.

The school has a proportion of BAME pupils whose fathers are taxi drivers– initially it was very difficult to persuade these families to send their children back to school as five BAME Newport taxi drivers died at the start of the pandemic and this spread fear across the community. Through working in collaboration with the community these pupils are now back in school.

### **Maindee CP School**

Maindee CP School is located within a diverse community in Newport. Maindee CP School was visited as part of Estyn's engagement visit work.

92 percent of pupils speak English as an additional language with a total of 42 languages spoken in total

A significant number of children have Asian, Turkish or Romany heritage

There are approximately 70 children in each year group from Nursery to Year 6

## **Well-being and attendance**

The school appreciated that many families in the community did not have the resources needed during the pandemic. They felt that the community needed so much from the school to keep going forward.

The school provided support for families in many ways including, help with additional food and clothes, reading official letters, making applications for benefits and providing support with routines and behaviour.

Weekly targeted wellbeing calls were provided for children accessing free school meals, vulnerable learners and families in need.

Pupils in Year 5 and 6 had a wellbeing and emotional regulation check which was followed up with a doorstep visit if needed. Pupils were able to share any concerns such as worries about moving on to high school.

During the pandemic the school's most vulnerable children were visited (on the doorstep) twice a week. Staff feel that this has improved relationships with parents and the 'hard to reach' are now engaged and attending school more regularly.

Staff work hard to support the community for example, organising a 'services fair' in the school hall to share information with families about the services and support available to them.

After noticing parents gathering fruit from trees, the school organised a community project to grow vegetables in raised beds on the school site.

One member of staff raised money to provide free meals to those in need who were not entitled to free school meals.

All of these initiatives have reached out to different parts of the school's community and have supported improved pupil attendance.

## **Porth Community School, RCT**

Porth Community School has just over 900 pupils from nursery to Year 11. Most pupils are from a white British background.

This school was monitored in June 2022 by inspectors and removed from significant improvement.

One of the recommendations from the school's core inspection was to improve attendance.

Inspectors made the following evaluations:

- There is a whole school approach to improving pupil attendance and wellbeing. Senior leaders provide suitable training for all staff. The appointment of whole school attendance officers, family engagement officers and the development of the school wellbeing team have strengthened the school's capacity to improve attendance. This also ensures that there is a consistent approach to improving attendance across the school.
- Staff provide carefully planned provision to help remove barriers to learning. For example, older pupils in the secondary phase have regular meetings with the attendance officer to discuss what the barriers to being in school regularly are. This has identified a variety of pupil needs which the wellbeing team then provide appropriate intervention and support for.
- Leaders robustly monitor and track pupil attendance and wellbeing. Live tracking data is used effectively and leaders ensure that appropriate intervention supports pupils in need well. Daily discussions between professionals helps staff to be aware of any difficulties that a pupil may face so that suitable support can be given to support engagement in learning.
- Dedicated staff members work closely with key staff, pupils, parents and outside agencies to provide appropriate support and bring about improvement. The wellbeing team carefully tracks and monitors the attendance of pupils with persistent absence. They hold fortnightly attendance review panel meetings and discuss and plan appropriate support collectively. This approach has led to improvements in attendance for many pupils.
- There are suitable reward systems in place to promote good attendance across the school. For example, younger pupils have opportunity to take Ted the Attendance Bear home when they get 100% attendance. Older pupils enjoy regular attendance assemblies where good and improved attendance are suitably praised.
- Provision to reduce exclusion rates is strong. The school nurture provisions in both the primary and secondary phase provide effective support to support pupils to re-engage in their learning through a programme of well thought out wellbeing and learning intervention.



## CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 13

Jeremy Miles MS, Minister for Education and Welsh Language  
Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff CF99 1SN

17 August 2022

Dear Jeremy,

I write requesting an urgent call for action to amend existing Welsh Government contracts with specialist further education colleges.

These colleges are commissioned by Welsh Government to meet the education and training needs of young people with complex additional learning needs. There is currently no mechanism for fee adjustments to ensure colleges can continue to meet the needs of learners who have already started their learning programme. This funding gap has historically been accommodated by colleges, but is now unsustainable due to unprecedented inflationary pressures for the sector. Colleges are facing well over 100% increases in energy bills and continue to experience increased wage bills associated with cost of living wage increases, in addition to the post Covid and post Brexit staffing crisis we brought to the attention of your officials in January 2022.

It is unreasonable to expect colleges to have foreseen these wholly unprecedented increases in running costs when negotiating contracts for learners on two and three year study programmes. Existing and future contracts must be able to accommodate the realities being experienced.

Despite your contract stating that funding is agreed annually, your officials consistently state there is no mechanism for in contract fee increases for learners on two and three year programmes. Specialist further education colleges are meeting the education and training needs of some of Wales' most vulnerable learners and your urgent attention to section 4.2 of your contract, and schedule 2 points 10 and 11 is required. It needs to unambiguously state that fee increases can be requested to ensure learner placements and life chances are not jeopardised in these unparalleled circumstances. I would be very happy to meet with you to discuss further.

Yours sincerely,

Clare Howard  
Chief Executive  
cc: Children, Young People & Education Committee







HOUSE OF LORDS

European Affairs Committee

House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0PW

Tel: 020 7219 6083  
hleuroaffairs@parliament.uk

Jayne Bryant MS  
Chair, Children, Young People and Education Committee  
Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

23 August 2022

By email: [SeneddChildren@senedd.wales](mailto:SeneddChildren@senedd.wales)

Dear Ms Bryant,

### **Lords European Affairs Committee inquiry into the future UK-EU relationship**

The European Affairs Committee has just launched an [inquiry into the UK's future relationship with the EU](#). This wide-ranging inquiry will cover a number of topics, including the political, diplomatic, and institutional relationship, foreign policy and security, environment and climate change, and culture, education and the movement of people.

The Committee recognises that issues of this importance require input from as wide a range of stakeholders as possible, and most especially from colleagues in the devolved parliaments across the UK. Members have therefore asked me to write to you personally to make you aware of this inquiry and to ask you to consider whether your Committee would be willing to share your valuable perspective on the matters raised in the [call for evidence](#).

In a further demonstration of the Committee's commitment to hearing from colleagues and stakeholders across the UK, we are hoping to visit Cardiff early in the new year to meet stakeholders and take formal evidence for this inquiry. We would very much appreciate the opportunity to engage with your Committee at that time.

Yours sincerely,

Lord Kinnoull

Chair of the European Affairs Committee

# Agenda Item 4.15

**CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 15**

**Lynne Neagle AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd Meddwl a Llesiant  
**Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Ein cyf/Our ref MA/LN/1901/22



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Russell George MS  
Chair, Health, Social Care and Sport Committee  
Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

26 August 2022

Dear Russell

I am writing to provide you with an update on progress against the recommendations in the 'Everybody's Business' report which is attached at Annex A.

Since the last update, we have made what I believe to be a step change in our approach to prevent suicide in Wales. This approach includes the establishment of a Cross Government Suicide Prevention Strategic Group which met for the first time on 17 March and most recently on 14<sup>th</sup> July. The Group has been established to strengthen programme management arrangements and to drive forward cross government and multi-agency work to prevent suicide in Wales. The group is chaired jointly by the Deputy Director for Mental Health and Vulnerable Groups and Professor Ann John, and includes senior officials from across Government including Health, Transport, Planning and Digital. The new Cross-Government Group will meet quarterly and will report directly to me via the Together for Mental Health Delivery and Oversight Board. We are also working with the National Advisory Group to refresh the terms of reference in the context of the Cross-Government Group and with a focus on oversight of research, evaluation and data analysis.

In April, we launched the Real Time Suicide Surveillance System (RTSS) in Wales which was developed in partnership with Public Health Wales, all Police forces in Wales, and the NHS Wales Health Collaborative. The RTSS is now collecting data relating to sudden or unexplained deaths that are suspected to have been by suicide. The launch of RTSS demonstrates a collective and shared priority to prevent suicide, enabling us to respond much more quickly to any possible changes in rates, to activate preventative measures, and to ensure that immediate support is made available to the individuals and communities most affected.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
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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.

Our National Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Co-ordinator is also working with a multi-agency group to finalise the guidance for *Responding to people bereaved, exposed or affected by suicide*. The guidance has been informed by insights into the needs and experiences of people living with bereavement by suicide in Wales, following a listening exercise that explored the points in their bereavement journey when they interface with statutory or voluntary services. The guidance aims to ensure services provide a more compassionate response. The guidance includes the need for a national suicide bereavement support and liaison service and I have asked officials to explore options to develop or commission this support later this year.

The RTSS and the planned national suicide bereavement liaison service are supported by the additional funding that I have allocated to suicide prevention from 2022/23. This investment will build on our previous investment in this area and must also be considered in the context of our wider and continued investment in mental health services and support. In particular, our transformation of crisis services form part of our suicide prevention approach and we are on track to deliver 24/7 access to urgent mental health support via 111 later this year.

The transformation of the approach that I have outlined demonstrates the Welsh Government's commitment to this important agenda and provides the foundation for systematic and multi-agency approach to suicide prevention in Wales. We have consequently been able to complete and close a number of the recommendations in *Everybody's Business*. Four of the recommendations were deemed complete at the February 2021 review and are now showing at the end of the table under the 'completed actions' section. Of the remaining recommendations, we consider a further eleven can now be closed and these are clearly identified in the attached annex. The remaining actions will continue to be delivered within the context of the work to evaluate and develop the successor to the current Together For Mental Health and Talk to Me 2 strategies and we will provide a further update on progress towards the end of the year.

I would like to thank the Committee for its continued focus on suicide prevention and self-harm.

Yours Sincerely,



**Lynne Neagle AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Iechyd Meddwl a Llesiant  
Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Health, Social Care & Sport Committee - Everybody's Business

Welsh Government Status report on recommendations

[Everybody's Business, a report on suicide prevention in Wales, December 2018](#)

August 2022

	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
1	<p>We recommend that a suicide prevention training framework should be adopted and implemented across all public services in a similar way to the framework for domestic violence, where training requirements are specified depending on the role. In particular, GPs would be one of the groups of professionals with greater training / skills requirements, and it is important that they and their practice staff have confidence to ask the right questions, and respond compassionately and effectively when dealing with patients who may be at risk of suicide. We believe that the National Advisory Group should take this forward as an immediate priority, particularly given that a training framework has already been developed and is being launched in England</p>	<p>We have previously reported that Professor Ann John (Chair of the Suicide and Self Harm National Advisory Groups) contributed to the children and young person's component of the <a href="#">self harm and suicide prevention framework</a> (Health Education England, University College London (UCL), National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health (NCCMH)) (published October 2018), which is in 3 parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people</li> <li>• Adults and older adults</li> <li>• Public (community and public health).</li> </ul> <p>The National Lead (Claire Cotter) is currently leading on the development of a 'capability framework'. This will set out the capabilities required at a universal level across multi-sectoral workforces, working with Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW), and digital experts. Specific groups of front-line workers are engaged to develop this resource through co-production, to build capability and confidence in the system e.g. local area coordinators; further education welfare officers; primary care teams; a health board. We expect this work to be concluded by the end of the secondment period (March 2022).</p>	<p>The work around universal suicide prevention training continues to evolve</p> <p>A digital platform is currently in development providing a 'suicide and self harm (SSH) Cymru training hub' to help front line workers to navigate what is a crowded market of training products and programmes in an informed way. It will also provide short-cuts to free on-line training videos and e-learning resources available across the UK</p> <p>There are also training frameworks available on the ACES AWARE Hub, and another being developed through Traumatic Stress Wales.</p> <p>It is possible that the digital training hub will expose gaps in training provision, as people seek products to suit their particular development needs. The National Coordinator is liaising with AGORED and Adult Learning Wales to look at developing specific units (curricular and learning outcomes) and potentially a national qualification.</p>

Paek Page 168

	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
		<p>The training material for the GP DES is complete but the necessary engagement with GPs has been delayed due to the pandemic. New timescales will be agreed in due course.</p>	
2	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government should take the lead in promoting existing materials, such as the “See. Say. Signpost.” training resource as part of a campaign to raise public awareness and embed the message that suicide is everybody’s business and can happen in any community at any time.</p>	<p>We continue to share and promote resources and the National and Regional Co-ordinators will play a key role in identifying further opportunities to raise awareness of materials.</p> <p>The <a href="#">NHS Wales Health Collaborative</a> now includes specific information on suicide and self-harm and signposts to other key websites for information.</p> <p><a href="#">The Public Health Network Cymru</a> website also has a page, and is developing a new page on suicide and self-harm on the revised platform (currently being updated). This website has facility for a community of practitioners and professionals.</p>	<p>In addition to the update provided in February 2021, please see the update to the previous recommendation.</p> <p>This work will continue in the course of ‘business as usual’ and further activity will be included within the routine National Co-ordinator updates made available to stakeholders. We will also continue discussions on how best to raise awareness through the work of the Cross Government Group on Suicide Prevention and through the work programme of the National Co-ordinator on Suicide and Self Harm.</p>
4	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government and National Advisory Group work with Network Rail and the Samaritans to evaluate the success of the Small Talk Saves Lives campaign with a view to rolling this out to a wider range of organisations</p>	<p>A wide range of initiatives are in place across Wales. Regional suicide prevention leads have now been appointed and are mapping what is available in each area, as well as the outcome measures that are available to evidence impact. Decisions around longer term funding or the upscaling of specific programs will be considered alongside setting the priorities for our recurrent regional funding programme, led by the national coordinator in discussion with the National Advisory Group.</p> <p>Additionally, regional coordinators now attend a bi-monthly Wales and Borders multi-agency meeting</p>	<p>We have strengthened arrangements to identify good or notable practice through the National and Regional Co-ordinators. We have also established a Cross-Government Suicide and Self-Harm prevention Group. This group will ensure that work across Government, including Planning and Transport, is embedded as part of the wider approach to prevent suicide. The National and regional suicide prevention co-ordinators will feed into the cross-Government group.</p>

	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
		<p>organised by Network Rail, and attended by rail operatives including Transport for Wales (TfW), Samaritans and the British Transport Police. This group will link with the Real Time Surveillance work, and they continue to develop opportunities for suicide prevention.</p> <p>We have also strengthened our engagement with our Knowledge and Analytical Services Team, through the recently established Delivery and Oversight Board so as to ensure that all interventions that are developed have a clear evidence base. A number of work streams are reported to this board, one of which being suicide and self-harm prevention.</p>	<p>We are also refocusing the National Advisory Group to ensure our approach is evidence based.</p> <p>We will also be working with Knowledge and Analytical Services as part of our work to develop the successor to Talk to Me too to ensure an evidence-based approach.</p> <p>On the basis that we have established new and robust arrangement to strengthen the analytical and evaluation support for the Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Programme we consider this action closed.</p> <p>With regards to the Small Talk Saves Lives campaign, the latest Real People Real Stories campaign launched across the UK (including Wales) in 2022 and the Samaritans secured major advertising coverage. In addition, a petrol pump campaign was run in every rural local authority in Wales, alongside radio coverage in the South Wales Valleys area. The campaign also featured on ITV Wales News.</p> <p>The Samaritans have a partnership with Network Rail and a regional lead who is employed by Samaritans and covers Wales and the West of England.</p>

	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
5	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government take urgent action to ensure that all GPs in Wales are aware of and understand the GMC guidelines on sharing information and the consensus statement agreed by the UK Department of Health, Royal Colleges and other partners. We support the campaign by Papyrus to encourage chief executives of NHS bodies to provide assurance that they will support staff who make a best interest decision to break patient confidentiality in order to protect life</p>	<p>Whilst we have highlighted this issue internally with policy leads, we have not been able to prioritise further work on this action. This will be taken forward as part of our staged approach to respond to recommendations in this report and the broad range of recommendations across other related Committee reports.</p>	<p>NICE is currently consulting on new guidance on self harm. Welsh Government will issue a Welsh Health Circular on decisions about confidentiality rights when supporting patients who are considered at risk of suicide or self-harm following the publication of the NICE guidance later this year.</p>
	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government must take all necessary steps to ensure parity between mental and physical health services. This should be tied to “A Healthier Wales”, and the Welsh Government must ensure that its plans for the development of health and social care services give the same priority to mental health and wellbeing as to physical health. This includes ensuring the allocation of appropriate resources, and that patient outcomes, in terms of improved</p>	<p>In the budget for 2021/22, an additional £42 million for mental health has been allocated to support the delivery of priorities laid out in the Together for Mental Health Delivery plan 2019-2022. This represents significant additional and recurrent funding for mental health services that will increase the baseline to support services to meet changing mental health needs. This additional investment takes total spending on mental health to £783m in 2021-22. Included within this total is £726 million that will be provided to Local Health Boards in 2021-22 as part of the mental health ring-fenced allocation to support current mental health services and support.</p> <p>Work continues to better integrate mental health services with physical health services, for instance</p>	<p>Ensuring parity between physical and mental health is firmly embedded in health strategies in Wales and the Programme for Government makes a commitment to continue to prioritise investment in mental health. On this basis, this element of the recommendation is closed.</p> <p>In terms of outcome measures for mental health, training and resources to embed the use of patient reported outcome and experience measures in all mental health teams in Wales began in June 2021 and this work will continue to be supported until March 2023.</p>



	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
	<p>mental health, are measured and reported. If the Welsh Government is serious about achieving parity between mental and physical health, it must consider whether the introduction of meaningful targets would ensure health boards give sufficient focus to improving mental health services and patients' experience of care</p>	<p>plans are being finalised for the mental health crisis programme of work to become part of the Urgent and Emergency Access Programme Board. Similarly, as part of the Strategic Programme for Primary Care work is being taken forward to ensure mental health is integrated element of this work.</p> <p>During the pandemic, mental health services have been prioritised and positioned as essential services alongside key 'physical' health services which demonstrates the level of importance that we place on our mental health services Wales.</p> <p>In terms of waiting times, there are good examples where mental health and physical health targets align, for instance for emergency care where the 4 hr emergency assessment criteria for mental health is aligned with the waiting time target in A&amp;E. In addition, targets for routine assessments and referrals to treatment for mental health both have a 28 day target compared with the 26 week referral to treatment for physical health conditions. We are also strengthening the leadership for the Core Data Set work to ensure a focus outcomes and to identify opportunities to accelerate progress ahead of the implementation of WCCIS.</p>	<p>This work is now being taken through the Mental Health Data and Outcomes Measures Board which reports to the Together for Mental Health Ministerial Oversight Board.</p>
8	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government develops an all-Wales triage model which would see community psychiatric nurses based in police control</p>	<p>Improving all age crisis care is a priority in our 2019-22 Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan, including ensuring 24/7 provision. Previous updates have included information about the range of pilot projects to test models of telephone based triage. We have made</p>	<p>As previously referenced, we committed £6million to improve crisis services in 2021/22 and we are making good progress in rolling out 27/7 access to urgent mental health support via 111. Our planned</p>

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	<p>rooms. We believe this work should be carried out in line with the six month timescale set out in the Children, Young People and Education Committee's Mind Over Matter report (its recommendation 15):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ That the Welsh Government, within six months of this report's publication, in relation to crisis and out-of-hours care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ work with Welsh police forces to scope an all-Wales triage model which would see mental health practitioners situated in police control rooms to provide advice when children and young people (and other age groups, if appropriate) present in crisis;</li> <li>▪ outline how resources could be directed towards enabling crisis teams in all health boards to provide training and cascade expertise to other frontline services, particularly colleagues in A&amp;E, in border areas (to improve cross-border relations with those centres most often accessed by Welsh domiciled patients), and in schools (to normalise conversations about</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>good progress in improving crisis care which has been supported by £3.4million of funding over the last 3 years (£1m 2018-19, £1.4m in 2019-20 and £1m in 20/21) to support a range of approaches (telephone triage, conveyance and crisis cafes).</p> <p>Findings from a recent Welsh Government commissioned review of all age urgent access ('Beyond the Call' Report, published 21 December 2020) demonstrate the breadth of needs that people in crisis experience. These include a broad range of social and welfare issues and all partners agree that a multi-agency pathway is required to respond to needs. To support the improvements needed from a health perspective as part of the multi-agency approach, I have committed an additional £6m for crisis care in 2021-22. Work is already underway to test a 111 crisis pathway in three health board areas with a view to scaling up this work. We have also established mental health conveyance pilots with St John Cymru to provide more appropriate and timely mental health transportation. The aim is to roll this work out further during 2021-22.</p> <p>We have also commissioned a review of crisis and psychiatric liaison services by the NHS Delivery Unit to inform our ongoing response. The timescales for this review has been delayed due to the pandemic. This has primarily been due to allowing services to concentrate on sustaining essential services during very challenging times, including the need to adapt services models within the restrictions. However, the review is underway</p>	<p>implementation for April has been impacted by the pandemic and challenges remain for health boards in the recruitment of key staff. Health boards are at different phases of implementation and we are aiming for 24/7 coverage across Wales by the end of the year – with some health board on track to have the service in place before the summer. Once fully implemented, the service will provide a direct line for police officers to call to request advice. Health boards are working locally with police forces where there are existing triage models in place.</p> <p>Continuing the transformation of crisis services is a priority for the additional mental health funding that we have secured for 2022/23. Funding will be directed to support the improvements recommending by the NHS Delivery Unit following its review of crisis care. Health boards submitted plans for this funding at the end of May and officials are considering the bids..</p> <p>We also continue to pilot the mental health conveyance service with St John Cymru. This pilot has received positive feedback from stakeholders, particularly from Approved Mental Health Practitioners and the Police. Plans are in place to roll-out the service following the successful pilot period</p>

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	<p>suicide and self-harm in particular);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ensure that follow-up support is being provided by health boards after discharge, provide information on how health boards monitor this provision, and commit to making this information publicly available to ensure transparency and accountability ensure that all health boards are adhering to the requirement to hold designated beds that could be staffed adequately for unders-18s in crises, indicating how this will be monitored and reported in future, and what steps will be taken if such beds are not available;</li> <li>▪ implement with pace and in a uniform way across health boards the single point of access approach to specialist services, to ensure timely and appropriate access to support, urgent or otherwise; and</li> <li>▪ reflecting on the results of the review of crisis care, outline what more needs to be done to deliver a safe and cost-effective 24/7 crisis care service in all areas of Wales, how that will be done, and by when</li> </ul>	<p>and the aim is to complete fieldwork by the end of October 2021. At the conclusion of each HB review a full local report will be provided to the relevant Board by the NHS Delivery Unit. Therefore the majority of HBs will have received their local reports during the spring and summer with the final HB being reviewed in the Autumn. At the conclusion of the local reviews a national report will be produced and published before the end of the calendar year. This timetable is dependent on restrictions and health boards' ability to engage fully with the review.</p> <p>Schools <a href="#">guidance</a> in respect to responding to issues of self-harm and thoughts of suicide in young people was published in 2019.</p>	<p>Welsh Government commissioned the NCCU to undertake a review of designated bed usage in 2021. The NCCU and the NHS Delivery Unit are now developing updated guidance with more regular data capture to support improvements.</p> <p><a href="#">Guidance on the delivery of liaison psychiatry services (LPS) in Wales</a> was published in December 2021. This document provides guidance on the functions of Liaison Psychiatry Services (LPS) in Wales. It has been developed in conjunction with key stakeholders throughout Wales and all professional groups have been represented. This guidance applies across the age range and whilst differentiation may be needed, no age range should receive services of a lesser quality. Service user and carers' voices have been sought and are reflected in this document. It contains eight standards to support equitable access to and provision of LPS in Wales and reflect both The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and professional body standards. Collecting information in relation to the standards will assist health boards to develop a clear picture of service demand, uptake and delivery. It is expected that both qualitative and quantitative information will become available as services develop and mature. Auditing information about the LPS</p>

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			should enable health boards to make evidenced-based decisions about the future provision of that service. Psychiatric Liaison Services has also been made a priority within this years' service improvement funding.
9	We recommend that the Welsh Government takes urgent action to establish to what extent those discharged from inpatient care are currently receiving follow-up care within the targeted timescale and provide an update to the Committee within three months. This should include steps to ensure that IT systems can identify whether this is happening	<p><b>Response to 9, 10 and 11:</b></p> <p>As part of the Mental Health Core Dataset, contact within 2 days of discharge is a key target – WG is working with NWIS and stakeholders to implement robust performance monitoring around this target via Welsh Information Standards Board procedures. In the meantime, officials are working with health board to ensure follow-ups post discharge are undertaken and recorded locally.</p>	<p>This continues to be progressed through the work of the Mental Health Data and Outcomes Measures Board.</p> <p>The draft core mental health dataset has been circulated to health boards to impact test and to understand which elements are already recorded by health boards and which elements would need to be added. This has helped identify any elements which would be difficult to record. The report on this impact testing has now been received by the NHS Collaborative. The core data was submitted to the Welsh Information Standards Board in July as part of the approval process.</p> <p>Alongside the outcomes training referenced in recommendation 6, the University of South Wales has been commissioned to work with health boards and other stakeholders to develop outcome measures for mental health services. The initial mapping work report is due by Summer 2022.</p>
10	We recommend that the Welsh Government introduces six monthly monitoring and reporting of the target in the Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan that all patients discharged from inpatient care receive follow up care within the specified timescale		
11	We recommend that, in light of the evidence that suicide risk is greatest on the third day after discharge, the target for patients discharged from inpatient mental		

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	health care to receive a first follow-up appointment should be changed to ensure that patients are followed up within 48 hours		
12	<p>We recommend that a target be introduced for waiting times for psychological therapies to ensure that those in need receive this support within a suitable timescale. Accessing appropriate therapy early can provide the intervention that's needed and prevent someone from requiring crisis care at a later stage</p>	<p>Since the publication of these recommendations, we continue to support work to improve access to psychological interventions and therapies and it remains a priority area within the <i>Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan 2019-2022</i>. In 2018/19, we provided £4m of extra funding direct to health boards to support them to improve access to psychological therapies and further investment was made in subsequent rounds of service improvement funding (n 2019/20 and 2020/21), totalling an additional £3.5m.</p> <p>This funding was allocated on the basis it should build on previous investment and that health boards could demonstrate how the funding would support the implementation of Matrics Cymru, the Guidance for Delivering Evidence-Based Psychological Therapy in Wales published in 2017. The supporting National Psychological Therapies Management Committee (NPTMC) Action Plan, published in 2018 was designed to assist health boards evaluate and plan their services against the guidance and the accompanying evidence tables.</p> <p>Following the initial audits undertaken in 2018 in respect to the NPTMC Action Plan, we will be asking health boards to review the implementation of those plans as part of this years' work programme. We will request evidence from them about how they intend to focus on areas where further development is required. This will</p>	<p>We remain committed to publish waiting time data on specialist psychological therapies, but this work has been delayed during the pandemic.</p> <p>Whilst the data is not yet robust enough to publish, operational data is reported by all health boards and used by the Welsh Government to hold services to account. The NHS Delivery Unit has been commissioned to undertake a review of psychological therapies to understand the consistency and variation in services and data reporting across health boards. The waiting time data that will be published only reflects one element of access to psychological therapies – the specialist services. Data is already published for Local Primary Mental Health Services, which includes psychological therapies and we have strengthened low level support, for instance through the introduction of online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy – another form of psychological therapy.</p> <p>The work to develop the mental health core dataset will ensure that we are able to reflect a fuller picture of provision across Wales.</p>

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		<p>be supported by service improvement funding where needed.</p> <p>This year, work has also been undertaken to assess and map the current psychological workforce including capacity, supervision and training needs. This broad analysis has been shared with Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) to inform the workforce planning they are undertaking. Following discussions, this rapidly included additional places to train psychologists from the 2020-21 academic year.</p> <p>We are also supporting an interim infrastructure to support the ongoing provision of psychological therapies, ensuring that the range of therapies available is strengthened, and that service user choice is embedded as routine practice across mental health services. This work includes the systematic and robust review of the evidence tables that underpin Matrics Cymru as it is crucial that they remain updated to ensure that the health boards are able to provide evidence based interventions.</p> <p>Work has also been commissioned to produce a report on the most effective mechanisms for safety planning and it is anticipated the principles identified there will further inform the most appropriate psychological interventions for those experiencing suicidal thoughts and those that have self-harmed.</p> <p>The national coordinator is also working with the National Liaison Psychiatry steering group and the core data set project board to ensure that there is</p>	<p>We are working with HEIW and Improvement Cymru to continue to develop the infrastructure to support health boards to improve access to psychological therapies. This work will ensure that we have a robust process to consider the evidence base of interventions that underpin Matrics Cymru and Matrics Plant.</p> <p><a href="#">Matrics Plant Implementation Plan was published in September 2021</a>. This plan has been designed to support the implementation of <a href="#">Matrics Plant: Guidance on the Delivery of Psychological Interventions for Children and Young People in Wales</a>. It is anticipated that it will assist health boards and partners in ensuring that both the spirit and detail of Matrics Plant are transferred into action.</p>

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		<p>consistency of assessment in liaison psychiatry settings. We are also committed to ensuring that any new evidence based practice identified in this area is shared with all appropriate colleagues.</p>	
13	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government accepts the call made in the mid-point review of Talk to me 2 to develop and implement a Wales-wide postvention strategy for suicide, and that this work should be taken forward as an immediate priority. This should include details of follow up support for individuals bereaved by suicide, and in organisational settings. It should incorporate the recommendation in Mind over matter that guidance should be issued to all schools on talking about suicide (and as a priority, to schools where there has been a suicide or suspected suicide). The Welsh Government should ensure that sufficient ring-fenced resource is available to implement this postvention strategy.</p>	<p>The Welsh Government has provided grant funding (2020/21) for a bereavement support project/service within each of the three regions involving SOBS (NW), MIND (Mid/West), and 2WishuponaStar (Gwent) and these will provide valuable insights to inform a pan-Wales approach</p> <p>The National Coordinator attends the National Bereavement Steering Group which is currently developing a framework for all types of bereavement, this will be going out to formal consultation on the 22 March.</p> <p>People with lived experience of bereavement by suicide are currently being engaged, with the support of voluntary agencies, to share their bereavement journeys so that we can better understand the challenges and opportunities to provide the right support in the right way. This is due to report 31st March 2021, and will form the basis for a postvention strategy, which will set out the costs that will need to be met and the resources that will be required to provide a national response during 2021/22</p>	<p>Informed by the insights gained from the listening exercise conducted in 2020/21 with those living with bereavement by suicide, a multi-agency task and finish group has been meeting to set out guidance for a Wales-wide response to those exposed, affected or bereaved by a sudden death that could be a possible suicide (rapid response would mean pre-inquest). This has included mortuary staff, coroners office, funeral directors, primary care, suicide bereavement support agencies, blue-light and rescue services.</p> <p>The Real Time Surveillance System will provide information to help services to ensure that those bereaved by suicide are offered timely and appropriate support.</p> <p>A draft guidance document is now out for wider review. A key recommendation of this work is the provision of a National Bereavement Liaison Service to make a proactive offer of support following a suspected suicide. Officials are exploring options to develop or commission this support.</p>

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			Guidance on talking about suicide was provided to all schools following publication in September 2019. Officials in the Welsh Government are in the process of developing proposals to review awareness in schools and are considering what further support is needed in this space.
14	We recommend that the Welsh Government and Public Health Wales actively promote the availability of the Help is at Hand Cymru resource. This should include proactively engaging with third sector support groups and ensuring that frontline staff, particularly emergency services, who have contact with those bereaved by suicide are not only fully aware of Help is at Hand Cymru but, crucially, have access to copies of the resource so that this can be distributed to those bereaved at the point of need. As this resource is already available, this should be implemented within 3 months	<p>A version of 'Help is at Hand' has been produced for Wales and is available on-line (<a href="#">Dewis Cymru</a>) in English and Welsh. Funding has been made available to support ongoing printing and distribution costs. Recent print runs were distributed directly to Local Health Boards, a number of third sector organisations, police forces and Public Health Wales for dissemination to wider stakeholders.</p> <p>It is noted that 'Help is at hand' is now due for review and the National Coordinator is linking with colleagues across the 5 UK/Ireland nations who all use the 'Help is at Hand' resource in order to consider further amendments needed, which will also be informed by the recent English review. Early discussions point towards a potential digital option that could be developed collaboratively with other nations. Work around a Real Time Surveillance system will also provide opportunities to enable use of this resource to become more embedded and ensure that the information is available at the point of need.</p>	<p>The digital supplier developing the training hub will be supporting the development of a digital version of Help is at Hand, which will provide an opportunity to review the content, update the signposting to services and resources in Wales, and to consider other ways of making the content available. This will be available in Autumn 2022.</p> <p>While this is being developed a 'business card' with a QR Code to the current version on the Dewis Cymru website is being printed to make available to front-line responders across Wales</p> <p>The same QR Code will be able to take people to the new digital version when it becomes available</p>
15	We recommend that the Welsh Government should, as part of an all-Wales postvention pathway, give active	Response to this recommendation will be considered as part of our work detailed in recommendation 13.	See 'National Bereavement Liaison Service' information in recommendation 13.



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	<p>consideration to providing funding for support groups for those bereaved by suicide, so that people across Wales are able to access much-needed support. We believe such groups can play a key role in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of those bereaved through suicide. This could in turn lead to reduced demand for NHS services</p>		
16	<p>We recommend that the National Advisory Group and regional suicide forums should engage with people who have personal experience of suicide ideation, including survivors of suicide attempts and people bereaved by suicide to ensure that all suicide prevention activity is informed by lived experience</p>	<p>Engagement with people with lived experience is currently through those voluntary agencies who are directly involved with those affected by suicide, and there is also representation from people with lived experience on the National Advisory Group and the regional and local suicide prevention forums. Each region has also allocated an administrative funding pot to cover the costs of coproduction, travel expenses etc. as appropriate to facilitate this ongoing work.</p> <p>Recent examples of people with lived experience being involved in suicide prevention activity include sitting on interview panels for national / regional leads and direct engagement in the development of a national response to bereavement by suicide</p>	<p>People with lived experience, and agencies set up by those with lived experience attend all three regional forums and the National Advisory Group</p> <p>A listening exercise directly engaged with people with lived experience to inform how we respond to people bereaved or affected by a suicide</p> <p>This work will continue in the course of 'business as usual' and further activity will be included within the routine National Co-ordinator updates made available to stakeholders.</p> <p>Therefore this recommendation is now considered as complete.</p>

	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
17	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government works with NHS employers in Wales to ensure that all employees who have dealt with cases of suicide/attempted suicide are able to access appropriate support</p>	<p>Welsh Government has worked with social partners within NHS Wales employers and trade unions to make available a multi-layered wellbeing offer for health and social care workers in Wales, including a confidential Samaritans listening support helpline, funded by Welsh Government, which is dedicated to all health and care workers in Wales.</p> <p>There are also a number of free-to-access health and wellbeing support resources and apps such as Mind, CALL, Sleepio &amp; Daylight and SilverCloud.</p> <p>All NHS employers continue to have Employee Assistance Programs, with wellbeing services offering a range of support. There is also a number of support resources that staff are sign-posted to through <a href="#">HEIW's webpage</a> specifically on suicide, trauma and bereavement:</p> <p>One significant avenue of support is through the Health for Health Professionals Wales Service (HHP). HHP Wales provides all doctors in Primary and Secondary Care with access to British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy (BABCP) in their area. Doctors can self-refer and are assessed by a doctor adviser, qualified in physicians' health, before being referred for face to face counselling. The service consists of four elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A helpline, which explains what the HHP service can provide and puts clients in contact with a doctor adviser;</li> <li>• A network of doctor advisers who ring the client within 24 hours to discuss their concerns;</li> </ul>	<p>We expect all health boards to provide appropriate support to all staff following traumatic events.</p> <p>Health for Health Professionals has been renamed 'Canopi' and provides mental health support to health and social care staff. This includes support for post-traumatic stress.</p> <p>This work is ongoing, and the National Coordinator is in conversation with the Royal College of Psychiatrists regarding the management of vicarious trauma, but also how we can prepare staff for inquests, for example.</p> <p>We are also signposting to the First Hand resource <a href="http://Home - First Hand (first-hand.org.uk)">Home - First Hand (first-hand.org.uk)</a> that supports those affected by the suicide of someone they didn't know</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to a network of British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP) accredited counsellors;</li> <li>• Access to expert clinical support/opinion for all doctors and counsellors in more complex cases.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that Welsh Government should access UK Government funding announced on the 11 March 2020 for a number of measures to assist the NHS, public services and businesses with the preparation and response to COVID-19. An additional funding amount of £1m was requested for 2020-21 to enhance service delivery and upscale psychological support and extend outreach across <u>the whole of the NHS workforce</u>. Funding is now further agreed for 2021-22.</p> <p>The HHP Wales expansion has created an established provider service for the entire NHS Wales workforce that has demonstrated itself to be reliable, responsive and trustworthy. HHP Wales has been designed to work in conjunction and to be complementary to the services offered by occupational health departments and the support available to an individual through their GP and other NHS services. By continuing to work closely with Traumatic Stress Wales (also accelerated in its implementation to support the Covid response), HHP Wales will be well placed to assist NHS staff with presentations directly related to Covid-19 experiences such as post-traumatic stress disorder, prolonged grief disorder and moral injury. It is also expected that NHS staff will present with mental health symptoms related to economic and other family impacts.</p>	

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18	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government recognise male suicide as a national priority and allocate appropriate funding to identify and implement new approaches to reducing the stigma associated with mental health to encourage men to talk about and seek help. This should include scope to roll out existing projects more widely</p>	<p>The Welsh Government is providing grant funding (2020/21) to support a number of projects in the regions that focus specifically on men, to develop ways of engaging particular groups of men and encouraging help-seeking behaviour. The National Coordinator is also establishing a forum to bring all of the projects together to learn from good practice. Alongside this work regional coordinators are mapping initiatives in all areas of Wales to feedback on what is available and to consider any perceived gaps in this area.</p> <p>Wales is also represented by Professor Ann John on the Advisory Group for the National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Safety In Mental Health. Under these arrangements, a study is currently being undertaken to examine the characteristics of middle age men who die by suicide and to make recommendations to strengthen preventative action. The report will be published in 2021 and will inform our next steps</p> <p>An Independent Advisory Group (IAG) provides independent external oversight of the work of the National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Safety in Mental Health. The IAG includes representatives from key stakeholder groups, and lay member</p>	<p>Preventing Suicide is a priority for the Welsh Government and a new cross-Government Group has been established to strengthen the approach. We have also committed additional funding for suicide prevention in 2022-23.</p> <p>We have recently established the Real Time Suicide Surveillance system in Wales, This will provide more timely access to information from all probable suicides (including male suicides) to identify opportunities for prevention and to ensure appropriate support is provided.</p> <p>As part of our programme to review and develop a successor strategy to Talk to Me too, we will be engaging with key stakeholders and reviewing the evidence to ensure new actions are evidenced based. Given the prevalence of suicide for middle aged men, we would expect this to be a key area of focus.</p> <p>We are also working with our National Suicide Coordinator to agree a programme of work to review the evidence of suicide prevention programmes and intervention with a focus on middle aged men.</p> <p>This work will continue in the course of 'business as usual'.</p>

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19	We endorse the recommendation of the mid-point review of Talk to me 2 that the implementation of NICE guidance on self-harm be a priority for the Welsh Government. This should be implemented within 6 months of the publication of this report	<p>The National Coordinator is currently working with Improvement Cymru and the Liaison Psychiatry teams to identify challenges and opportunities to improve services in secondary care where NICE guidance is not being met</p> <p>We will also liaise with the NICE Improvement Facilitator for Wales to explore other areas where we need to focus on to ensure the implementation of NICE guidance, for instance primary care.</p>	<p>A workshop was held in February 2022 to raise the profile of the new NICE Guidance for the assessment and management of self-harm that was out for consultation at that time.</p> <p>The Guidance is expected to be published later this year when a further workshop will be held for those identified as key agencies for implementation, to explore opportunities and barriers and to inform how we support front-line workers to work to the guidance</p>
21	We recommend that the Welsh Government takes a lead in the current work with <u>HEFCW</u> and for it to expect further and higher education providers in Wales to introduce Student Mental Health Charters. This work should be done in time for the start of the 2019-20 academic year to ensure that students in Wales benefit from the work as soon as possible	<p>The Minister for Education has remitted HEFCW to work with partners in the HE sector to address student mental health and well-being. This included allocating HEFCW £3.5m in 2019 to support well-being and health in higher education, including student mental health. HEFCW worked with universities in Wales and students to develop a Wales-wide, strategic approach to well-being and health, including mental health. In November 2019, HEFCW published its Well-being and health Policy Statement, in which it commits to ensuring providers' Wales-wide commitment to well-being and health, including through support for Student Charters, #stepchange [now Step Change: mentally healthy universities] and Suicide-safer Universities.</p> <p>In 2019, HEFCW also published updated guidance on Student Charters. This included the addition of a requirement to include a statement of commitment to supporting student well-being, including mental health</p>	<p>Welsh Government, working with partners, continue to prioritise this area of work and have earmarked another £2m for mental health and well-being within HEFCW's grant in aid for 2022-23, maintaining the level of funding in previous years.</p> <p>This work will continue in the course of 'business as usual'.</p> <p>Therefore, this recommendation is now considered as complete.</p>

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		<p>and signposting to related well-being and health, including mental health</p> <p>In 2020, HEFCW required universities to submit well-being and health strategies. HEFCW will monitor the implementation of the strategies to ensure they remain fit for purpose.</p> <p>The National Coordinator for Suicide and Self-Harm is also working with the national network of Welfare Officers for Further Education colleges, to discuss their experiences of managing suicidal ideation and self harm and is working with them on policy development. Similar links have been made with HEIs and the national network of Student Services Directors. This recommendation is now considered complete.</p>	
22	<p>We recommend that relevant staff from the Welsh Government and other agencies receive appropriate training, such as the Samaritans' "Working with compassion" kit, to show a greater awareness and understanding of the higher suicide risks associated with rural communities, particularly among farmers and their families. This would enable them to respond compassionately when dealing with bereaved families, and promote a greater understanding of the difficulties families in this situation can face</p>	<p>We are taking a range of approaches including through public awareness messaging and improving the information that is available on health board websites. We also work closely with the third sector to ensure information on mental health and mental health services is shared widely.</p> <p>We have also invested in a range of easy to access support – both online and via the telephone. Some of this support is also available 24/7 to ensure support is available at any time. The roll-out of online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy in Wales was based on a successful pilot by Powys Local Health Board which includes some of our most rural communities in Wales. Powys are also working to develop intelligence led services for the prevention of suicide and self-harm, including support pathways for those bereaved by</p>	<p>This work is ongoing and will continue in the course of 'business as usual'.</p> <p>Therefore, this recommendation is now considered as complete.</p>

	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
	<p>in not only carrying on with their day to day farming business, but also in meeting timescales associated with Welsh Government farming processes. We would encourage relevant Government staff to use their discretion to alleviate further stress on bereaved families, for example by deferring farm inspections in appropriate circumstances</p>	<p>suicide. Data collation and analysis is in progress to understand if there are trends within particular Powys communities /demographics; to map and gap service provision and ultimately to target identified need and ensure clear pathways are in place as a means to early intervention and prevention. This work also ties in with a focus on Substance Misuse “Harm Reduction”, particularly in relation to Drug Related Deaths and will support the delivery of appropriate responses to personal crisis’, early intervention and management of self-harm.</p> <p>We are also aware of other sources of support, for instance, FarmWell Wales; an online information hub part-funded by the Welsh Government EU Transition Fund which is available to farmers throughout Wales, this aims to provide farmers with the most up-to-date information and details of support services available. These resources are actively promoted by stakeholders who have given positive feedback on the initiative.</p> <p>On the Welsh Government <a href="#">website</a> we have also ensured that mental health and wellbeing support for farming families is effectively signposted so people know where to access support.</p> <p>Welsh Government Farm Liaison Staff and Farming Connect front line contracted staff have attended Mental Health First Aid training which was delivered by the DPJ Foundation and tailored to the farming Industry. In addition visiting officers within Rural Payments Wales have received training on mental health awareness and</p>	

	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
		managers have also attended additional on-line mental health awareness training with the DPJ Foundation.	
23	We recommend that the Welsh Government liaises with the Home Office with regard to reviewing the process for assessing and managing prisoners' risk of suicide and self-harm to ensure that it is sufficiently robust to identify those at risk and provides the right support for those who are managed through the process	The Ministry of Justice and HMPPS Wales has been working with health boards to revise to the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) process for the case management approach for people at risk of suicide and self-harm within prisons. HMPPS piloted a revised version of ACCT including HMP Swansea, from February to June 2019. The revised guidance is now complete and will now be signed off formally by Prison Health and Social Care Partnership Boards before being implemented in Wales.	The revised guidance has been signed off formally by Prison Health and Social Care Partnership Boards. This recommendation is therefore considered complete.
24	We recommend that the Welsh Government ensures that the Children, Young People and Education Committee's Mind Over Matter recommendations are implemented in order to improve and protect the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in Wales. On suicide specifically, we recommend that the Mind Over Matter recommendation on guidance to schools (its recommendation 16) should be taken forward as an immediate priority: That the Welsh Government, in relation to suicide specifically, work with expert organisations to:	<p>The Committee received a full update on progress with Mind Over Matter recommendations in <a href="#">February 2020</a>, this included confirmation that Guidance: <u>responding to issues of self harm and thoughts of suicide in young people</u>, was published September 2019</p> <p>The Welsh Government is providing grant funding (2020/21) in the Mid/West region for the delivery of NSSI (non-suicidal self injury) training to people who work with young people, which includes promotion of the published guidance.</p> <p>In October 2020 the CYPE Committee published its Mind over Matter: two years on report. This highlighted the progress that has been made, particularly in the field of Education, in addressing the issues and recommendations contained in the original Mind over Matter report. The Welsh Government's response to</p>	Further activity in response to this action will be reported in updates against the Mind Over Matter recommendations.



	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ provide, within three months of this report’s publication, guidance to schools on talking about suicide and self-harm, to dispel the myth that any discussion will lead to “contagion”;</li> <li>▪ work with expert organisations to prioritise the issuing of guidance to schools where there has been a suicide or suspected suicide; and</li> <li>▪ ensure that basic mental health training, including how to talk about suicide, becomes part of initial teacher training and continuous professional development, so that all teachers are equipped to talk about it</li> </ul>	<p>the follow-up report (2 December 2020), noted that given the progress made to date on many of the Mind over Matter recommendations, we have already agreed to review the membership and expand the scope of the Joint Ministerial Task and Finish Group on a Whole School Approach to Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (JMT&amp;FG) to become a ‘Whole System’ Ministerial Task &amp; Finish Group to drive progress for the remainder of this Senedd term. Whilst the focus will remain around school age children, the whole system approach better reflects the current work of the group and enable it to provide leadership and expand across the additional relevant areas. In particular health and social services led actions. The group has been meeting monthly since the start of the year, with the last meeting before the Senedd elections taking place on 22 March.</p> <p>In relation to schools guidance on suicide and self-harm people working with children and young people can now access guidance <a href="#">‘Responding to Issues of Self-harm and Thoughts of Suicide in Young People’</a> which was published on 10 September 2019. The document is available online and hard copies have been made available to schools and youth services. The guidance aims to support people who have direct contact with children and young people, providing them with practical advice about what to do if they have concerns or are faced with self-harm or suicide. Further activity has been commissioned by the Welsh Government and developed by Swansea University and co-produced with young people. With the aim to address the link between online bullying and suicidal</p>	

	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
		<p>and self-injurious behaviour and will provide a better understanding of what to do when they encounter these issues.</p> <p>As part of our whole school approach, we have also developed new framework <a href="#">guidance</a> for schools. The guidance has been designed to help schools develop and build their own consistent and equitable whole school approaches to meet the wellbeing needs of learners. We have made available £9m in our 2021-22 budget to support this work.</p>	
26	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government identifies the most appropriate agency to identify known suicide locations and places signage in those areas encouraging people to seek help</p>	<p>Since the publication of this inquiry, we have invested in both the national and regional infrastructures. Now at a regional level we are establishing forums and local multi-agency groups are responding to themes that are highlighted. This work has evidenced that it would not always be appropriate for one single agency to respond as we need to ensure that we are flexible within our response.</p>	<p>Work is ongoing through the regional coordinators and the Cross-Government Suicide Prevention Group to identify key sites, and they work with relevant colleagues in transport, Samaritans, network rail, canals authority, police and other first responders as needed on a site-by-site basis.</p> <p>The new Real Time Suicide Surveillance System will also provide more timely access to information, including the local of the incident to inform future preventative activity</p> <p>This work will continue in the course of 'business as usual' and further activity will be included within the routine National Co-ordinator updates made available to stakeholders.</p> <p>Therefore, this recommendation is now considered as complete.</p>

	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
27	We recommend that the Welsh Government explores what formal arrangements could be put in place to promote and monitor adherence to the guidelines, given the negative impact that the irresponsible reporting of suicide can have. This should include looking at arrangements in place elsewhere, including the Republic of Ireland	<a href="#">Samaritans</a> and the <a href="#">Independent Press Standards Organisation</a> (IPSO) continue to develop and publish media guidance, both of which the Welsh Government continues to work with as key stakeholders.	<p>Regional Coordinators forward reports of concern to the Samaritans press officer in Wales and Prof Ann John, to ensure a coordinated and appropriate response can be made.</p> <p>This work will continue in the course of 'business as usual' and further activity will be included within the routine National Co-ordinator updates made available to stakeholders.</p> <p>Therefore, this recommendation is now considered as complete.</p>
28	We recommend that the Welsh Government engage with universities, the Samaritans and other relevant parties such as the National Union of Journalists and publishers to explore how training for journalists at university, through continuous professional development or on the job training could include the importance of adhering to the guidelines on reporting suicide and promoting an understanding of the negative impact of irresponsible reporting		<p>The new national bereavement guidance includes specific information for 'touch point' agencies who can impact on an individual's bereavement journey. This includes through media reporting and work is underway to engage with universities as part of the implementation of the guidance.</p> <p>Therefore, this recommendation is considered complete.</p>

	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
29	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government engages with the UK Government on its Internet Safety Strategy Green Paper to ensure that action is taken to protect children and young people online. Additionally, we are keen to see the potential for social media to have a positive impact on people’s mental health and wellbeing maximised. We believe that all opportunities to promote good mental health through social media/internet sites should be explored, for example through more active promotion of sources of support</p>	<p>Welsh Government liaised with UK Government in respect of the publication of the Green Paper.</p> <p>We continue to look at opportunities to use social media and digital media to raise awareness of support and this been a particular focus during Covid 19 and working with Public Health Wales on the <i>How are you doing campaign</i>, to promote positive mental health and signpost to support.</p>	<p>The Cross-Government Suicide Prevention Group will include digital and online safety as an element of the broader work programme including identifying opportunities arising from the Online Safety Bill. Welsh Government officials are currently considering the full impact of the Bill within Wales and across all policy areas which the Bill may touch upon.</p> <p>This work will continue in the course of ‘business as usual’ and further activity will be included within the routine National Co-ordinator updates made available to stakeholders.</p> <p>Therefore, this recommendation is now considered as complete.</p>
30	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government / National Advisory Group provides a clear steer to the regional forums to ensure a consistent approach to their membership, structure and reporting arrangements. The Welsh Government should monitor the effectiveness of the regional forums to ensure that they deliver sustainable and consistent outcomes across</p>	<p>Now that the National and Regional Coordinators are in place, we will review the regional forums, including membership and governance structures. This work will be undertaken in the context of the new Together for Mental Health Ministerial Delivery and Oversight Board for Wales that I have convened. A key function of the board is to hold the key work streams that make up the mental health programme of work to account and to provide assurance on delivery. The suicide and self-harm programme is one the work streams that will report in to the board. The board first met in February and will meet again on 24 March.</p>	<p>The three regional forums have been supported and strengthened through the appointment of the regional coordinators. Two of the three forums have a new Chair, and developed workshops have been facilitated in Q4 (2021/22) to help the forums to review their existing strategies and action plans</p> <p>These forums now share a common template for their TORs and will receive appropriate levels of data from the real-time surveillance for their quarterly meetings.</p>

	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
	Wales, and provide regular updates to the Committee		<p>This work will continue in the course of ‘business as usual’ and further activity will be included within the routine National Co-ordinator updates made available to stakeholders. The Cross Government Group on Suicide prevention will also be kept aware of this work.</p> <p>Therefore, this recommendation is now considered as complete.</p>
31 Back Page 192	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government / other public bodies (LHBs / LAs) make specific funding available for suicide prevention to ensure that it is sustainable in the long term. The Welsh Government should work with the National Advisory Group to ascertain how much funding is needed to ensure this sustainability, and ring-fence the appropriate amount</p>	<p>The National Coordinator and the coordinator team are looking at how suicide prevention can be better integrated and embedded in public service delivery across the board/government departments; how this can be more explicit in policy/strategy.</p> <p>In the meantime, we have provided seed funding to regional forums in order to take forward local approaches in their areas, however this funding should not be seen in isolation as laid out in the covering letter.</p>	<p>A new, cross-Government Suicide Prevention Strategic Group has been convened to strengthen the programme management arrangements for the suicide prevention work programme. This will include driving work across Government and prioritising investment to support this approach.</p> <p>Additional, recurrent funding has been allocated to the suicide prevention work programme in 2022/23. In particular, the new funding will support the newly established Real Time Suicide Surveillance System in Wales launched in April 2022 and to improve suicide bereavement support.</p> <p>Additionally, the wider service transformation also has a focus on preventing suicide – for instance the work to improve crisis care and the establishment of</p>

	Recommendation	Welsh Government Update February 2021	Welsh Government Update August 2022
			<p>the 111 mental health single points of contact.</p> <p>Talk to me 2 is currently being externally evaluated and the findings from which will inform any appropriate next steps.</p>

Pack Page 193

**Recommendations considered complete**

3	<p>We recommend that the Assembly Commission offers suicide prevention training for Assembly Members, Assembly Members Support Staff, Commission staff and contractors. We hope that, as well as equipping Assembly Members and staff to respond appropriately, this will show an example to other employers, and we would urge the Welsh Government to promote suicide</p>	<p>The Assembly Commission will need to update separately regarding the implementation of the recommendation.</p> <p>The Welsh Government HR Directorate (Workforce Department) have reviewed the provisions that are available to staff in respect to support and have strengthened the offerings available. More widely, Welsh Government have an active Health and Wellbeing Strategy that encompasses mental health and wellbeing. This is featured on the staff intranet. The Health and wellbeing Strategy, Toolkit, Reasonable Adjustments Policy and training covers mental health. This is also covered in the Disability Confident training</p>	<p>Recommendation complete.</p>
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	<p>prevention training to all of its staff</p>	<p>for SCS and line managers. 'Let's Talk' performance management process includes conversations about mental health and wellbeing. Support and resources have also been strengthened throughout 2020-21 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training provided by Able Futures covering line manager capability in handling sensitive conversations and providing support to staff experiencing mental ill-health; peer to peer support; and how we can look after our own mental health;</li> <li>• A playlist of extensive resources available on the Welsh Government Learning Lab;</li> <li>• Recruitment of cohorts of Mental Health Allies and Respect Mentors due to commence late March 2021;</li> <li>• Bespoke support in mental health provided to specific business areas by Employee Assistance Programme provider and HR.</li> </ul> <p>This action is now considered complete.</p>	
7	<p>We recommend that the effectiveness of the urgent referral route for GPs implemented by Hywel Dda Health Board be evaluated with a view to rolling this approach out across all health boards in Wales</p>	<p>As stated within our original response, standards are already in place requiring health boards to meet target times from referral to assessment. The Welsh Government Guidance 'The Role of Community Mental Health Teams in Delivering Community Mental Health Services: Interim Policy Implementation Guidance and Standards (2010)' includes the expectation that people who are referred as an emergency are assessed within 2-4 hours, urgent referral within 48 hours, and routine referrals within 28 days as per the Mental Health Measure Wales (2010). Hywel Dda health board has confirmed that they do not have a protocol that differs</p>	<p>Recommendation complete.</p>

		<p>from the existing expectations around GP referrals to Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs) which exist across Wales and therefore this recommendation is deemed complete. However to note that the update of this guidance is included within the work programme of the Mental Health Network in 2021/22.</p> <p>This action is now considered closed.</p>	
20	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government ensures that its forthcoming loneliness strategy reinforces the message that loneliness and isolation should be central considerations when budget and policy decisions are made</p>	<p>The <a href="#">strategy</a> was published in February 2020. Within the document there is a section specifically addressing mental health and suicide prevention and a number of references to ensuring loneliness is considered within budget and policy decisions throughout. This recommendation is considered complete.</p>	<p>Recommendation complete.</p>
25	<p>We recommend that the Welsh Government writes to all planning authorities in Wales emphasising the importance of ensuring that all new structures include measures to prevent them being used as a means of suicide</p>	<p>Letter published on GOV.WALES <a href="#">suicide prevention measures in building design and planning</a> (April 2019).</p> <p>This recommendation is therefore considered complete.</p>	<p>Recommendation complete</p>



**CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 16**

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**  
**Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg**  
**Minister for Education and Welsh Language**



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref  
Ein cyf/Our ref MA/JMEWL/1800/22

Jayne Bryant MS  
Chair  
Children, Young People and Education Committee

30 August 2022

[SeneddChildren@senedd.wales](mailto:SeneddChildren@senedd.wales)

Dear Jayne

Thank you for your further letter of 30 June about Welsh Government support for Service children in Wales.

## Data collection

As stated in my previous letter of 24 May, work is on-going on data collection, however due to the recent challenges you mention in your letter, there is currently a lack of space in the Legislative Programme for 2022-23 for the necessary work to make changes to Regulations to enable data to be collected. I am not therefore able to provide a date for implementation of data collection at this stage.

I will provide a further update as this work progresses.

## Support for Service Children

Education is devolved, and Wales has never provided funding to support Service children in the same way as England. Provision in Wales is more tailored and is closely aligned to schools and individual learners' needs. It is not currently possible to provide a 'Service Pupil Premium' style fund as we do not yet collect data on the number and location of Service children in Wales.

The data collected by the SSCE Cymru project shows that the number and demographic of Service children in Wales outside of a few areas is very sparse, with many schools having only one or two children from Service families. This means that a Service Pupil Premium of around £300 would be of limited benefit to an individual school or child. By funding the SSCE Cymru project, the support we provide is done in a more holistic way and has a wider benefit to the children, young people and their families.

There has not been a Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) completed on funding in Wales vs England as there has never been a Service Pupil Premium in Wales. However, a

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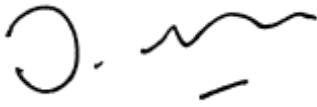
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[Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@gov.wales)

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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.

CRIA was undertaken as part of a full Impact Assessment for the creation of the Supporting Service Children in Education Wales fund.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke at the end.

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**  
Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg  
Minister for Education and Welsh Language

## CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 17

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**  
Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg  
Minister for Education and Welsh Language



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref: Pupil Absence  
Ein cyf/Our ref: CYPE – Pupil Absence

6 September 2022

Dear Jayne,

Thank you for your letter of 6 July in relation to the CYPE Committee inquiry into pupil absence.

Additional information is provided below as requested.

### **Whether, and how school absence data is used to support early identification for mental health support?**

We know that schools use attendance data to highlight concerns to the Education Welfare Service (EWS) which in turn could lead to a CAMHS referral; but I am interested in what more we can do to maximise attendance data to support early identification for mental health support. We intend to commission research to explore this, building on the existing research (published in November 2021), by Professor Ann John et al, which explored the association between school absence, exclusion, and pupils' mental health.

I will update the Committee on progress.

### **When the data on elective home education will be available?**

We have received a report from Data Cymru, containing data on home educated children for 2021-22. The report, compiled by Data Cymru on behalf of Local Authorities, is intended for use for operational and management purposes and is not published. My officials will explore with the data owners whether a modified version can be made available for sharing. The official data, based on PLASC returns will be published in the autumn.

### **Once available the evaluation of the funding provided to local authorities to provide additional emotional, mental health and well-being support to young people.**

Local authorities provide targets and information on how they intend to monitor and evaluate activity as part of their proposals to use their funding allocations, which were agreed in the summer of 2022. Towards the end of 2022-23 we will be contacting LAs to

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[Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Jeremy.Miles@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.

provide final outturn information against their agreed proposals which will be used to assess the impact of the funding.

This in turn will feed into wider activity to evaluate the effectiveness of our whole school approach using the research we commissioned from Cardiff University, published in January 2022 on the development of a theory of change and evaluability assessment for the programme.

Our whole school approach is predicated on ensuring that children and young peoples' wellbeing is as valued as their progression and attainment. Over £12m of funding has been provided in the current year, as part of a package of over £43m over the next three years. Funding will be used to build resilience through the introduction of universal and targeted interventions in schools; training school staff on wellbeing; and ensuring that the wider system is able to support children and young people by ensuring they receive interventions appropriate to their need in a timely fashion.

As you are aware, additional funding was provided in 2021-22 for the provision of targeted person-centred support for Year 11 learners who are not attending school and are not likely to complete GCSEs.

Formal evaluation will take place at the end of September when data is submitted by LAs. Informal feedback from one LA includes the appointment of 4 Education Support Workers to support secondary schools. The Education Support Workers work with children and their families to address the barriers to education and promote the educational achievement, school attendance and integration of these children into formal education settings. Appointing the 4 education support workers has enabled this LA to meet the additional demands on the service and enable provision of more effective advice and support to families and support greater multi-agency working.

As discussed at committee, I will write with a further update on how the funding was used to support learners' attendance and the level of success these approaches have had, upon completion of our evaluation.

**Whether the funding for Family Liaison Officers is ring-fenced at both local authority and school level? If not, what steps are being taken to ensure that this funding is being used for Family Liaison Officers, and not being absorbed into more general school spending?**

Funding for Family Engagement Officers has been provided to Local Authorities via the Local Education Authority Grant (LEAG). The funding is ringfenced for the purpose of expanding the provision of Family Engagement Officers in schools serving disadvantaged communities and where attendance issues are particularly challenging.

Local Authorities have some discretion in how the funding is apportioned in order to respond to local need. We have provided Local Authorities with essential and desirable criteria to target this support.

We have also set out clear monitoring and reporting requirements for the funding, including: a short update report at the end of the Summer term; and completion of a monitoring form at the end of the funding period.

Further to this, schools which benefit from the funding will be required to co-operate with researchers to help us understand the impact of the funding and build an evidence base for future support. Some case studies will be developed to support this.

**Whether the funding for counselling services, discussed during the Committee, goes directly to counselling services?**

Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide counselling services, with some providing these 'in-house' whilst other commission counselling from third party providers. In the current year we are providing local authorities with an additional £2.3m to support improvements in and an expansion of counselling provision, including extending appropriate support to the children below the current Year 6 threshold. LAs submitted proposals earlier in the year which included targets and information to enable us to monitor and evaluate provision. Towards the end of 2022-23 we expect LAs to provide us with further information enabling us to ensure that funding is having the expected impact.

**We are aware, anecdotally, of pressures being placed on some children and young people as a result of sustained specialist teacher absence in secondary schools. For example, where a subject specialist has been away for a long period, and no adequate specialist cover is available. During these lessons, children are being asked to provide support to their peers which is causing stress and anxiety. Are you aware of this issue, and what do you feel can be done to address the issue?**

Under local management of schools arrangements and the Staffing of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2006, head teachers and governing bodies are required to ensure there is an appropriate and effective workforce in place. This includes sourcing supply cover that is suitable for the needs of learners.

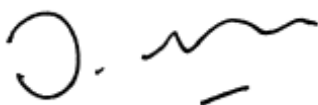
There are around 12,000 support staff and teachers registered in the supply category with the EWC. Overall recruitment and retention rates and numbers of supply staff registered throughout Wales show little evidence of concern, however, we are aware of anecdotal evidence that there are pockets of difficulty in recruiting to certain secondary subjects, in some geographical locations across Wales as well as with certain Welsh medium subject provision.

These recruitment issues for priority subjects are targeted via various policy programmes and financial incentives. For example, schools can pay recruitment bonuses if required and bursaries are available for those training in priority subjects. Additionally, the Welsh Government has a Programme for Government and Co-operation Agreement commitment to develop a new model for the employment of supply teachers.

Planning for the new model is currently underway and it is expected to be implemented during the 2023/24 academic year. The model's focus is on improvements to pay and conditions for supply staff but consideration is also being given to how the model can capture data on supply cover and how schools cover vacancies and absence. Improved data will inform policy and ensure that any identified gaps in specialist cover provision can be addressed.

I trust that this information is helpful and I look forward to receiving the Committee's report.

Yours sincerely,



**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**

Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg

Minister for Education and Welsh Language

# Agenda Item 6

By virtue of paragraph(s) vi of Standing Order 17.42

Document is Restricted

# Agenda Item 7

By virtue of paragraph(s) vi of Standing Order 17.42

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