

Agenda – Children, Young People, and Education Committee

Meeting Venue:	For further information contact:
Hybrid – Committee room 4 Tŷ Hywel and video conference via Zoom	Naomi Stocks Committee Clerk
Meeting date: 12 November 2025	0300 200 6565
Meeting time: 09.30	SeneddChildren@senedd.wales

Hybrid

Private pre-meeting

09.15 – 09.30

Public meeting

09.30 – 11.30

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

09.30

2 Scrutiny of the Children's Commissioner for Wales Annual Report 2024 – 2025

09.30 – 11.00

(Pages 1 – 19)

Rocio Cifuentes, Children's Commissioner for Wales

Tomos Davies, Policy Advisor, Children's Commissioner for Wales

[Children's Commissioner for Wales Annual Report and Accounts 2024 – 2025](#)

Attached Documents:

Research brief



3 Papers to note

11.00

3.1 Health and social care workforce

(Pages 20 – 22)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee from the Chief Executive of Swansea Bay University Health Board and the Chief Executive of HEIW

3.2 Services for care experienced children: exploring radical reform

(Pages 23 – 25)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Minister for Children and Social Care from the Chair of the Children Young People and Education Committee and the Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of this meeting

11.00

Private meeting

11.00 – 11.30

5 Scrutiny of Children's Commissioner for Wales Annual Report 2024 – 2025 – consideration of the evidence

11.00 – 11.15

6 Forward work programme – Spring Forward Work Programme

11.15 – 11.45

(Pages 26 – 30)

Attached Documents:

Spring Forward Work Programme

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Pencadlys HEIW

HEIW Headquarters
Ty Dysgu
Cefn Coed
Nantgarw CF15 7QQ

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Bae Abertawe

Swansea Bay University Health Board
Un Porthfa Talbot | One Talbot Gateway
Parc Ynni, Baglan | Baglan Energy Park
Port Talbot SA12 7BR

03rd November 2025

Peter Fox MS
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Dear Mr Fox

Thank you for your letter of 23rd October regarding the job vacancies available for the March 2023 cohort of Adult Nursing students. These graduates form part of a wider cohort of graduating nurses who have studied a specific field of nursing practice as part of their nursing degree. There are four fields of nursing, namely adult nursing; children's nursing; learning disabilities nursing; and mental health nursing. Firstly, please be assured that HEIW, SBUHB, HDUHB, and other NHS system partners continue to work collaboratively to identify employment opportunities for these graduating nurses.

Thank you for your specific questions, which are addressed in turn below:

1. The position regarding band 5 Nursing vacancies for the 2023 training cohort – are any such vacancies available in Swansea Bay University Health Board: do you intend to make any vacancies available in the near future and, if so, how many

Swansea University is commissioned to provide Nurse Education for both Swansea Bay and Hywel Dda University Health Boards. This education is across the four fields of practice. The table below details the current position in relation to numbers of graduating students per field, and vacancies available in Swansea Bay and Hywel Dda:

Cadeirydd/Chair: **Dr Chris Jones**
Prif Weithredwr/ Chief Executive: **Alex Howells**
Pencadlys HEIW/HEIW Headquarters, Ty Dysgu, Cefn Coed Nantgarw CF15 7QQ

Cadeirydd/Chair: **Jan Williams**
Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive: **Abigail Harris**
Pencadlys Bae Abertawe, Un Porthfa Talbot, Port Talbot, SA12 7BR
Swansea Bay UHB Headquarters, One Talbot Gateway, Port Talbot, SA12 7BR

	Swansea University Graduates	SBUHB available posts	HDUHB available posts	Total available posts	Current position (30.10.25)
Adult	65	0	22	22	-43
Mental Health	12	31	3	34	+22
Child	0	0	0	0	0
Learning Disability	3	11	2	13	+10

Collaborative work is ongoing between Swansea Bay and Hywel Dda University Health Boards, HEIW and NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NSSSP), to identify additional vacancies for graduates. The geographical distribution of available posts is also being reviewed in relation to graduates' home postcodes to understand the suitability of posts in specific geographical locations across the Southwest Wales region.

2. Outline what advice has or will be made available to the current cohort on next steps and the options that are available to them.

Information on the streamlining process (the mechanism for recruiting graduates into NHS roles) is provided at several points during students' programme of study. This includes information sessions with each individual University during the summer to prepare students for the process. When streamlining was delayed by one month – from an opening date of 22nd September to 20th October - communications were sent to students, Health Boards, and Universities.

Following the decision to extend streamlining by 2 weeks a further communication was sent to students, Health Boards and Universities. The revised timeline will see:

- Streamlining closed to students on 24th November.
- Health board recruiting managers shortlisting period between 14th and 28th November.
- Allocation based on application and recruiting manager shortlisting on 2nd December
- Outcomes provided on 16th December.

When the outcome of the streamlining process is confirmed, an escalation process starts immediately. For any students not placed at that point. Escalation provides individualised support to help find appropriate employment.

3. Confirm whether this position is similar across other health boards in Wales, not just in relation to nursing but as regards wider healthcare roles.

The position for all other fields of nursing is more positive for the March graduating cohorts, with the small discrepancies between graduates and vacancies likely to be addressed within a short period of time. There are issues with job opportunities for Physicians Associates, resulting from different factors that are being considered through other mechanisms, and there were also issues with Paramedics this year which we have worked with the Welsh Ambulance Service to resolve.

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In relation to the other commissioned disciplines some Health Boards are seeing improvements in some previously hard to fill areas. This demonstrates the positive impact of increased education and training, the national retention programme and international recruitment. However, as this does potentially impact on the availability of vacancies for graduates in some areas/some professions strong collaborative work between all NHS organisations will be required to ensure a smooth transition for our summer 2026 graduates. We will be playing a key role in bringing partners together to ensure a proactive approach.

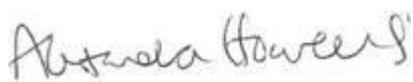
4. Outline what advice has or will be given to the current cohort about the position regarding their bursary funding if they are unable to meet the terms of their bursary agreement due to a lack of suitable posts being made available by the health board.

Our shared priority is to ensure that as many graduates as possible are supported to find roles in NHS Wales as we strive to ensure that they are retained for Wales and supported to have long, productive and rewarding careers.

The current cohort has received information on the bursary terms and conditions. We have assured them that students can be released from the obligation to work in Wales on graduation. It is emphasised that one of these circumstances is if there are insufficient employment opportunities available in Wales on completion of their programme.

We trust this information is a helpful update on the collaborative work that is being undertaken to identify employment for our nursing and other health professional graduates.

Yours sincerely



**ALEXANDRA HOWELLS
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
HEIW**



**ABIGAIL HARRIS
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
SWANSEA BAY UHB**

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Children and Young People Committee

Equality and Social Justice Committee

Dawn Bowden MS

Minister for Children and Social Care

5 November 2025

Dear Minister,

**“If Not Now, Then When? Radical Reform for Care-Experienced Children and Young People”:
request for an update on implementation”**

On 8 October we noted correspondence from a stakeholder who contributed to the above report and inquiry seeking an update in relation to some of our key recommendations. The Equality and Social Justice Committee considered the same letter on 29 September and have attached their names in support of this request.

We would therefore like to request an individual update on each of the report’s 20 recommendations that Welsh Government accepted in full and in part. We would also welcome a narrative update in respect of the policy issues covered by the 7 recommendations that we were disappointed to see rejected, namely:

- the sufficiency of the statutory children’ social care workforce (including the latest statistics on vacancy rates and use of agency staff);
- caseloads for statutory children’s social care workers;
- care experience as a protected characteristic;
- data gaps in the care system;
- independent advocacy and residential visiting advocacy; and
- promoting tertiary education to care experienced people.



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 Contact@senedd.wales
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We would also welcome a specific response to the following issues raised by the Children’s Legal Centre on Deprivation of Liberty Orders. Our report highlighted uncertainty regarding data on the extent of their use and asked you to conduct an analysis that could inform efforts to reduce the use of these orders long term. In response, you agreed to provide an “analysis of the use of Deprivation of Liberty Orders across Wales for the past 24 months, broken down by local authority, age of the child, and length of the order”. We asked you to do this by December 2023; however, it was unclear in your response whether you intended to meet these timescales. Nevertheless, given the length of time that has elapsed since, we urgently request:

- a copy of the analysis including confirmation of when and how it was undertaken;
- a summary of the actions that have been taken as a result of the analysis;
- how this work was considered and has influenced the Transformation Programme for Children’s Services; and
- a general update on progress with the Transformation Programme more broadly.

We appreciate some of these policy areas overlap with other cabinet portfolios and will require input from your colleagues. We would welcome a response within the usual timescales and look forward to hearing from you.

A copy of this letter will be shared with the Children’s Legal Centre for information.

Yours sincerely,



Buffy Williams MS

Chair of Children and Young People Committee



Jenny Rathbone MS

Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee



CC:

Lynne Neagle MS, Cabinet Secretary for Education

Jane Hutt MS, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Agenda Item 6

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

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