

Elin Jones MS, Llywydd and Chair of the Business Committee

Dyddiad | Date: 25 June 2020

Pwnc | Subject: **Request for a Plenary debate on the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people**

Annwyl Elin,

The Business Committee will be aware that the Children, Young People and Education Committee has undertaken detailed scrutiny of the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people in recent months.

Children and young people thankfully appear to be less susceptible to the virus than adults. Nevertheless, there is little doubt from the evidence we have gathered that the wider effects of Covid-19—and the measures taken to manage it—have impacted their lives significantly. As a committee, we are concerned to ensure that a children’s rights approach is not lost in the process of managing this pandemic, nor in our scrutiny as a Senedd.

In a recent Committee session, a leading paediatrician told us:

“What they (children and young people) have been affected by quite greatly is, if I could call it, collateral damage—their schools have been closed, their clubs have been shut, they can't socialise. All those things have affected children, and they're very anxious, because there's a lot of worry about coronavirus, which they're hearing about—their grandparents might have died, or they're hearing that thousands of people have died.”

On this basis, and in light of the imminent phased return of children to schools in Wales, we believe that all Members of the Senedd should have an opportunity to discuss these issues, before the summer recess, as a matter of priority.

In order to ensure that our scrutiny has contributed in a timely and meaningful way to the Welsh Government’s response to the pandemic, we have engaged in regular correspondence with Welsh Ministers. We have published letters, as opposed to laying reports, to ensure that our work has been undertaken at pace and as effectively as possible.

Should our request be accepted, it would be our intention to lay an interim report one week in advance of the debate, to inform Members of the findings of our scrutiny to date, and to provide all responses received from the Welsh Government. Our strong preference would be to schedule a 60 minute debate, but we accept that the volume of Plenary business may require this to be restricted to 30 minutes.



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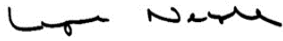
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Kind regards,



Lynne Neagle MS
Chair

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

