Dear Lynne,

I refer to my attendance at the Children, Young People and Education Committee meeting on 7th July for the Covid-19 Evidence session.

During my attendance my officials and I agreed to share with the Committee:

- a review of blended learning carried out by the regional education consortia and details of actions taken as a result of it; and
- a paper published jointly with Estyn and the regional education consortia giving more detail on advice to schools on blended learning.

The Blended Learning Guidance (published June 2020) and the Models of Blended Learning (published July 2020) where produced jointly between the consortia and Estyn, this was part of a work stream of the Welsh Government’s Continuity of Learning project. The development of this guidance has been supported by a review that was undertaken by the Regional Consortia ‘National Distance Learning Summary’. This review is a Regional Consortia document and as such is not in the public domain.

At the time the initial guidance was produced, schools were operating distance learning models. The guidance was produced based on a review of international publications about blended learning approaches, many of which are listed in the guidance. The guidance was designed to support the return to school from 29th June, when schools started to deliver blended learning. The models of blended learning gave further detail and exemplification of how the guidance might be applied with different age groups. This was partly informed by the discussions that inspectors and challenge advisors had with headteachers about their plans for the partial re-opening of schools. However, it was mostly informed by evidence of what had worked elsewhere, since this work was in its very early stages of being tried in Wales.
Yours sincerely

Kirsty Williams AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education