

Kirsty Williams MS, Minister for Education

Dyddiad | Date: 21 September 2020

Pwnc | Subject: **Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS)**

Dear Kirsty,

I am writing in relation to the Committee's ongoing inquiry into Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS).

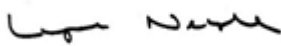
You will be aware that, in June 2019, we agreed to undertake an inquiry into the range of EOTAS provision in Wales, including Pupil Referral Units. You were due to give oral evidence in relation to this inquiry at our public meeting on 19 March 2020.

Unfortunately, but unavoidably, the Covid-19 pandemic required us to re-purpose this session, so that we could ask you urgent questions about the arrangements in place to manage the impact of Covid-19 on our children and young people.

We are committed to completing our work on EOTAS as soon as possible. To this end, I attach a list of questions to which I would be grateful to receive a written answer by 16 October 2020.

We will return to the evidence already gathered in relation to this inquiry this term, with a view to publishing a report as early as possible in the new year.

Yours sincerely,



Lynne Neagle MS

Chair

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



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Annex A

List of questions in relation to the Committee's inquiry into EOTAS

- How has COVID-19 impacted the Welsh Government's general work on EOTAS and the implementation of the Framework for Action?
- To what extent are younger children (under 8s) being excluded?
- How is the Welsh Government strengthening the networks between EOTAS services, schools, local authorities and consortia?
- How will EOTAS settings be actively encouraged to use the framework for the whole-school approach to mental health? Will there be funding available for PRUs to support the development of the whole school approach?
- Are EOTAS providers actively encouraged to undertake ACE awareness training and is there support available to help them do this, given issues around PRU staff time to undertake training?
- Are there specific difficulties in funding for EOTAS provision given the potential for the variation in numbers accessing provision?
- What consideration is being given to measuring outcomes for EOTAS providers to assess the difference they make to learners' lives? How involved are EOTAS providers in this?
- What are the reasons for the delays that some families experience in accessing EOTAS provision? Are there concerns about the impact delays in accessing provision have on a learner and their family, and what more can be done to support them? Is there a greater prevalence in delays in accessing provision in certain areas of Wales?
- What is your view on the levels of unregistered EOTAS provision being commissioned by local authorities? Are there any safeguarding concerns in relation to unregistered EOTAS provision commissioned by local authorities?
- Is there a role for local authorities in quality assuring, monitoring or evaluating the EOTAS provision organised by individual schools?
- What consideration has been given to more able and talented pupils in accessing a curriculum suitable for their needs within EOTAS provision?
- To what extent are PRUs and other providers prepared for the introduction of the new curriculum?
- To what extent are EOTAS learners able to access adequate mental health services? What consideration has been given to improving access to CAMHS for EOTAS learners?

- Does a lack of access to CAMHS or ALN support result in learners being placed in EOTAS when it may not be the most appropriate provision for their needs?
- How can Welsh medium EOTAS provision be made more widely available?
- How can EOTAS staff be better supported to access professional learning?
- What improvements can be made to the career structure for staff working in EOTAS settings?
- Would Welsh Ministers consider using their statutory powers of intervention where there are clear cases of 'off-rolling' and where the local authority has not intervened?