

CYPE(5)-29-20 - Paper to note 8

Senedd Cymru

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

Welsh Parliament

Children, Young People and Education Committee

Kirsty Williams MS, Minister for Education

Eluned Morgan MS, Minister for Mental Health, Wellbeing and Welsh Language

Dyddiad | Date: 17 November 2020

Pwnc | Subject: **Support for the mental health and well-being of learners**

Dear Ministers,

As part of our ongoing work looking at the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people, the mental health and well-being of our learners has been a key priority for us.

Throughout this public health emergency, we have heard a wide range of concerns, some of which suggest that the unintended consequences arising from the restrictions put in place to manage the pandemic could be having more of an impact on children and young people than the virus itself.

You will be aware that we reported in July 2020 that we believe that steps to support our children's mental health and well-being are more important now than ever.

Educational settings have a particularly important role to play in this regard, and we welcome the substantial investment made by the Welsh Government in recent months to support the mental health and well-being of learners specifically. This includes:

- the announcement made jointly by the Minister for Education and Minister for Health and Social Services of £3.75 million in May 2020, to support mental health and well-being in schools, including new support for under 11s and for teachers; and
- the £1.25 million announced by the Minister for Education in April 2020 for school counselling services, to deal with an anticipated increase in demand throughout the pandemic.

We would welcome further detail about what specific work the £3.65 million is being spent on, how the Welsh Government is monitoring the use of this funding and the impact it is having. In respect of the school counselling funding, we would welcome information about how this has been allocated, and any statistical information available at this stage. We would also be grateful if you could provide assurances that all of this money is being used as intended, and outline how you are seeking feedback about the impact this money is having on the well-being of learners.

Given our particular interest in this area, and our ongoing inquiry, I would appreciate—if possible—a response ahead of your attendance in Committee on 26 November 2020, to inform our session.



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Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynne Neagle'.

Lynne Neagle MS
Chair

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