

This response was submitted to the [Children, Young People and Education Committee](#) consultation on [Sixth Senedd Priorities](#)

**CYPE SP 17**

**Ymateb gan: Natasha Davies, Arweinydd Polisi ac Ymchwil, Chwarae Teg**

**Response from: Natasha Davies, Policy and Research Lead, Chwarae Teg**

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Beth yn eich barn chi yw'r prif flaenoriaethau neu'r materion y dylai'r Pwyllgor eu hystyried yn ystod y Chweched Senedd? Os oes modd, nodwch eich barn o ran sut y gallai'r Pwyllgor fynd i'r afael â hyn.

What do you consider to be the main priorities or issues that the Committee should consider during the Sixth Senedd? Where possible, please set out your view about how the Committee could address them.

### **Mainstreaming equality into all of the Committee's work**

- 1.1. Inequality continues to be a significant issue, that affects all aspects of life and all areas of policy. We know that scrutiny works in driving change.<sup>1</sup> We are therefore calling on all Senedd committees to mainstream equality into their work. This means considering how equality needs to be included in terms of reference for inquiries and the diversity of those invited to give oral evidence, as well as shaping the issues the Committee looks to explore.
- 1.2. It's also important that all Welsh Ministers are scrutinised on their commitments to equality. While the Equality and Social Justice Committee has an important role in doing this, it's vital that other committees also scrutinise Ministers on issues related to equality. The Welsh Government is committed to mainstreaming equality into all that it does<sup>2</sup>. Progress towards this needs to be seen across all departments of government, and the CYPE Committee can play an important role through scrutiny work, in pushing Ministers and officials to embed equality in their work.

## **Thema 1: Addysg oedran ysgol | Theme 1: School-age education**

### **Tackling gender stereotypes in education**

- 1.1. Girls' and boys' experiences at school have a huge impact on the choices they make, their potential and their aspirations for the future. These early experiences and choices forge paths that can be difficult to shift later on in life.

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<sup>1</sup> Chwarae Teg (2018) *Rapid Review of Gender Equality: Phase One*

<sup>2</sup> As outlined in the recommendations of the Gender Equality Review report [Deeds not Words](#), all of which were accepted by Ministers



- 1.2. Early intervention to break down stereotypes is key to ensure that girls and boys are equally able to access a range of skills, jobs and sectors. We need long-term, generational change to ensure that we have sustainable pipelines of women and people from diverse backgrounds coming into work across different sectors in Wales.
- 1.3. During the last Senedd term, we saw positive moves to embed gender equality and cultural understanding within the school curriculum, the results of which we will see in the coming years. As the new curriculum continues to be rolled out to schools across Wales, it may be helpful for the CYPE Committee to consider how well this roll-out is meeting equality goals, and how well gender stereotypes are being tackled.
- 1.4. Such an inquiry might consider pathways into STEM, how well young women are being prepared for the future economy and emerging sectors as we continue to green the economy, and the extent to which equality is being considered as a central measure of educational success.

### ***Sexual Harassment in Welsh educational settings***

- 1.5. Numerous reports have highlighted the extent of sexual harassment that young women experience in schools. According to Plan UK, 58% of girls aged 14-21 have been publicly sexually harassed in their learning environment, of these 66% were harassed by someone from their school, college or university.<sup>3</sup>
- 1.6. Most recently, 90 schools in Wales were among schools named on the Everyone's Invited website in reports of sexual harassment.<sup>4</sup> This has led to a review of culture in schools by Estyn.
- 1.7. There is still much work to be done to ensure that girls and young women are safe in educational settings, and that all steps are being taken to address the causes of sexual harassment and misogyny.
- 1.8. An inquiry into sexual harassment in educational settings would be timely and should ensure that young women's voices are heard, to fully understand their experiences and their concerns.

## **Thema 2: Addysg bellach ac addysg uwch | Theme 2: Further and higher education**

The above topics would also be relevant to further and higher education.

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<sup>3</sup> Plan UK "More than half of girls have experienced sexual harassment on school, college or university grounds" 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021 <https://plan-uk.org/media-centre/more-than-half-of-girls-have-experienced-sexual-harassment-in-a-learning-environment> Accessed 08.09.21

<sup>4</sup> "Harassment: More than 90 schools in Wales named on abuse site" BBC News, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-57428624> Accessed 08.09.21



### **Thema 3: Iechyd a lles, gan gynnwys gofal cymdeithasol (i'r graddau y maent yn ymwneud â phlant a phobl ifanc) | Theme 3: Health and well-being, including social care (as they relate to children and young people)**

#### ***Early Childhood Education and Care***

- 1.1. Childcare remains a critical barrier to gender equality. Our report [\*One Big Juggling Act\*](#), demonstrated how care continues to largely fall to women, with studies from across the UK showing that childcare continues to be a major barrier to work for many women. Concerns have also been expressed about the potential impact of the pandemic on the childcare sector, which could result in a further reduction in availability.
- 1.2. A truly effective early childhood education and care system needs to deliver on numerous fronts – good educational outcomes for all children, supporting people to work and keeping our economy moving and reducing inequality. While the investment in childcare through the current Childcare Offer is welcome, there is still much more that can be done to deliver the childcare system Wales needs. Despite the continued need to improve childcare provision in Wales, there are limited commitments in relation to childcare in the Programme for Government. We therefore think that there is a strong case for a cross-committee inquiry involving the CYPE, ESJ and ETRA committees, into childcare to consider the issue in its entirety.

### **Thema 4: Plant a phobl Ifanc | Theme 4: Children and young people**

