

CYPE SP 72

Ymateb gan: Christian Wilton-King

Response from: Christian Wilton-King

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.

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

Schools need to be prioritising the epidemic of sexual harassment in schools towards girls. They need to make it easier and more welcoming for girls to be able to confidentially report any sexual harassment to nominated members of staff/safeguarding team. Recent research on this kind of behaviour in schools has uncovered issues such as girls being 'contacted by up to 11 boys a night asking for nude images'. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-57498128>

Related to the above, there needs to be more guidelines and rules on controlling children's access to mobile devices, which in turn, gives boys access to pornography. The solution to this, is not for external educators to teach about pornography and run sessions on the variety of sexual activity kids could practice (as some organisations like the Proud Trust and BISH UK do), but rather to teach children how to be safe online and how to protect their personal boundaries. Safeguarding should be paramount and having extensive anti-bullying and harassment policies should help to reduce these shocking statistics.

Further to the issue of children's access to internet devices, should be a focus on how to manage online activity in order to improve children's mental health, as it seems to be ever more apparent that children spending copious amounts of time on social media, which propagates unhealthy ideals based on body image etc, is fuelling a mental health crisis.



Children should also be safeguarded from partisan and political ideologies such as queer theory and gender identity ideology. Both the recent Relationships and Sexuality Education, and LGBTQ+ Action Plan consultations have made it abundantly clear that queer theory and gender identity ideology is to be introduced to schools as a matter of fact. This would potentially place many children who would otherwise grow up to be gay, lesbian or bi-sexual, at risk of a form of conversion therapy. This may be even more apparent for children who are simply gender non-conforming.

The most important thing here is for schools to create a learning environment which encourages and allows children to explore their developing identities, with no fear of being influenced either way.

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

As these older children begin to move into adulthood and become more politically motivated and opinionated, social media and other forms of online activity will become more important to them.

Again, a focus on mental health and how access to pornography can seriously harm young people is a must.

Also, as young people are learning how to form their political positions, care should be taken by colleges and universities to protect free speech and enable young people to speak up without fear of being attacked and bullied by peers.

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)

Having solid and robust anti-bullying policies is very important here, to ensure children, no matter how they present and whatever they believe, are protected from bullying and harassment. For example, if a girl has come out as a lesbian, she should be allowed to maintain her boundaries and maintain same-sex relationships, with no fear of pressure from males who identify as 'lesbian'.



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

As in my response to theme 1, a focus on dealing with the epidemic of sexual harassment in schools (and elsewhere) is essential and this can be achieved through programmes designed to teach children about keeping themselves safe online, monitoring their own time spent online and for this 4th theme, having workshops for parents and carers, on how to manage their children's access to the internet. This includes a focus on improving mental health prospects for children and young people.

I feel a focus on additional learning needs, including some neurodivergent children who may have no learning difficulties, is very important. Many of these children can be hugely vulnerable and often fall through the net, when it comes to support and safeguarding.

In particular, with regards to the increasing use of queer theory and gender identity ideology in schools, autistic girls (diagnosed or undiagnosed) – who are often gender non-conforming – are at great risk of being viewed as 'gender dysphoric' and are at risk of having their autism 'missed', in favour of being put on an unnecessary and harmful medical pathway. This medical pathway, at its worst, could mean they are placed on puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and made sterile.

