

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i ymgynghoriad y [Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg](#) ar [Flaenoriaethau'r Chwched Senedd](#)

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

CYPE SP 80

Ymateb gan: Simon Jones, Pennaeth Polisi a Dylanwadu, Mind Cymru

Response from: Simon Jones, Head of Policy & Influencing, Mind Cymru

Beth yn eich barn chi yw'r prif flaenoriaethau neu'r materion y dylai'r Pwyllgor eu hystyried yn ystod y Chwched 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

There were some significant strides taken in the last Senedd in providing more mental health support for children and young people through education. From more funding for school based counselling and a CAMHS in-reach programme, to the publication of a framework on embedding a whole school approach to mental health and the amendment made to the Curriculum and Assessment Act that placed a greater priority on mental health. Taken together these have the potential to create a step change in the space and priority provided for discussions about mental health, as well as the support available for all children and young people. The *Mind Over Matter* reports published by the previous committee were central in driving this agenda. We would suggest that the Committee considers further follow up work, towards the mid point of this Senedd term and once the framework for a whole school approach and the new curriculum has bedded in. The focus of this work should be to determine whether and how these developments have made a difference to the experiences and outcomes of all children and young people. This would be absolutely critical in ensuring that the strategic intention is followed through and effectively delivered.



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

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)

Whilst significant progress was made on the education recommendations made by *Mind Over Matter* and its follow-up reports, the progress on those relating to providing mental health support through service provision has been slower. We recognise that there has been considerable work undertaken to develop a new early intervention framework for children and young people, which again has the potential to create a step change in how children and young people are supported at an early point. It is our understanding that this framework will only start to be applied by Regional Partnership Boards from 2022/23 so there is nothing to consider at the moment in terms of impact. However, it would certainly be worth the committee looking at the impact this model is having before the end of this Senedd term.

We are aware from surveys we have carried out during the pandemic that young people are a particular group of concern in terms of how their mental health has been impacted, particularly those with pre-existing mental health problems. Throughout the pandemic it has become increasingly clear that there has been an unequal mental health impact which has seen a greater impact on young people from our different ethnic communities and those living in families where there is a low or insecure income. These groups should in particular be considered in future scrutiny or inquiries relating to mental health. You can read the insight from our latest survey via this link:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/media/8961/the-consequences-of-coronavirus-for-mental-health-in-wales-final-report.pdf>

The conclusion of the ten year *Together for Mental Health* strategy next year provides an opportunity for the committee to consider how this all age strategy has delivered improvements for children and young people, taking into account the work already undertaken through *Mind Over Matter*, as well as priorities for the future. This coincides with the ten year anniversary of the Mental Health Measure implementation, an all age piece of legislation. There is potential for the committee



to work with the Health and Social Care Committee to look at the overall impact on all age groups and the priorities for any future strategy.

Continued scrutiny around *Mind Over Matter* recommendations is absolutely critical. This report and the Committee's determined advocacy for the voices it heard has been central to driving Welsh Government and its delivery partners to create a greater focus on the mental health of children and young people and to seek to improve access and experiences. If the recommendations were not followed up as part of Ministerial scrutiny or in bespoke sessions during this term it would be a significant missed opportunity to keep up momentum and determine where support does not meet the need or the expected experience of young people and their families. We know there is a lack of available, transparent data to effectively track progress, particularly when it comes to equalities, so ongoing scrutiny needs to be built into the committee programme.

We would also welcome a continued focus on the reports relating to perinatal mental health support and the impact of COVID on children and young people, as both these reports had key recommendations that need to be effectively delivered in order to ensure that specific groups and communities are able to access the services and support that they need.

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

