

**Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc  
ac Addysg**

**Children, Young People  
and Education Committee**

Jeremy Miles MS

Minister for Education and Welsh Language

Dyddiad | Date 11 October

Pwnc | Subject: Follow up from ministerial evidence session

Dear Jeremy,

Thank you for giving evidence to the Committee on 23 September. As we indicated, this letter includes some additional questions we did not have time to cover in the session. We also wanted to seek some further clarity on developments with managing COVID-19 in pre-16 settings that have arisen since the session.

**Managing COVID-19 in schools**

We are aware that since the Committee session the education unions have raised continuing concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on schools. We note your letter to headteachers dated 28 September seeking to address some of these. In this letter you state that you will “continue to monitor this situation” and that you can “redouble efforts to improve communications in this area.” Can you outline how you intend to do these two things? You also note that that you are working with the Minister for Health to see what more can be done to support TTP teams and settings, can you provide more detail on what improvements you are hoping to see?

You confirmed to us in Committee the Welsh Government’s position that, where there is a positive case in their household, children should attend school unless they are symptomatic themselves but are encouraged to take a precautionary PCR test. Your statement of 5 October then said they should also take daily lateral flow tests for seven days.

Could you please confirm that the child should still attend school whilst waiting for the result of that precautionary PCR test (assuming they haven’t had a positive lateral flow test)? In other words, would

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you regard the disruption to the child's education (even if only one or two days) disproportionate to the level of risk of asymptomatic transmission that might take place if they attend school?

### Additional questions

There were some areas that we did not have time to cover during the oral evidence session.

While teaching and assessment arrangements are decisions for individual universities to make, we are aware there have been strong public feelings on these issues. For example, we know that the Senedd has been [petitioned on assessment arrangements at Cardiff University](#). (The petition was rejected because it's a matter for the University.) Can you set out what you expect from higher education providers in relation to teaching and assessment arrangements?

Could you explain what you mean by "protecting" the Educational Maintenance Allowance for young learners, and if you expect to increase the award amount from the current entitlements.

What are your expectations of Qualifications Wales in relation to vocational qualification reform, and are you content with the current status quo?

### Information you agreed to send the Committee

You also agreed to provide the following additional information to the Committee:

- the amount of additional funding that has been allocated for school counselling services;
- the letter from Qualifications Wales regarding the reform of qualifications to align with the new Curriculum for Wales. Thank you for providing this already;
- the Welsh Government's modelling in relation to the impact on Welsh institutions if access to higher education for English students is controlled or if English fees are cut following the UK Government's response to the Independent Panel report to the review of post-18 education.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant MS  
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.