

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**  
**Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg**  
**Minister for Education and Welsh Language**



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref JMEWL/00489/22

Jack Sargeant MS  
Chair - Petitions committee  
Senedd Cymru  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

30 March 2022

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your letter of 03 March 2022, in relation to internet connectivity for schools.

I am fully committed to maintaining support for schools, through the [Hwb Programme](#), to ensure that all maintained schools have access to high quality, effective internet infrastructure and connectivity to enable equitable access to online tools and resources which can be accessed anytime, anywhere.

Broadband connectivity to maintained schools in Wales is delivered across the Public Sector Broadband Aggregation ([PSBA network](#)), with significant investment being made year on year to improve the resilience, efficiency and security of the network. We work in partnership with the PSBA team to ensure the high-speed connectivity for Welsh schools is stable, performant and evolving to meet growing digital needs and ambitions of schools.

The PSBA network provides schools with connectivity based on need, which is adjusted through dialogue with all local authorities in response to demand, rather than imposing a blanket one-size fits all approach.

Local authorities are responsible for ensuring their maintained schools have appropriate levels of internet connectivity. Latest intelligence indicates, based on current usage profiles, that very few primary schools require a 1Gbps service, however all primary schools currently have a straightforward means to substantially increase their existing capacity. Should demand further exceed their current capacity there are existing processes to help facilitate upgraded connections quickly. A potential increase in the bandwidth of all schools internet connectivity to 1Gbps would require significant funding in the core PSBA Network. A move away from a demand led informed model of provision would need to carefully consider the associated costs and benefits.

Welsh Ministers have already invested over £45 million to deliver superfast connectivity to all maintained schools in Wales. Since 2019, all maintained schools in Wales have been

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

able to access superfast broadband speeds. The ever-improving capability of the PSBA network has already supported 177 schools, namely Secondary schools, to upgrade to a 1Gbps service to meet specific increased demands with minimal investment from the local authority.

In addition to investing in the broadband connections to schools, the Welsh Government also supported the development of a national web filtering service to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the network, which enables local authorities to protect their learners from harmful content and provide the freedom to learn without limits. So far, 21 local authorities are already benefitting from this crucial service.

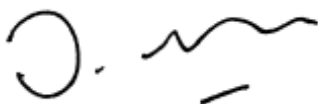
Furthermore, the Welsh Government worked collaboratively with all 22 local authorities to develop the [Education Digital Standards](#). The standards provide guidance on how schools should future-proof their digital environment to meet the needs of a more digitally focused school curriculum.

To help address any local limitations in meeting the standards, Welsh Ministers have invested £107 million to future-proof education technology infrastructure in all maintained schools across Wales. This investment has created national foundations capable of supporting and delivering real transformation to the education sector and helping to ensure digital is at the heart of the Curriculum for Wales.

In the petition from Charles Green, it highlighted that some schools may not be benefitting from super-fast broadband. If you are aware of any specific issues, I would be grateful if any supporting information could be provided to [James.thomas23@gov.wales](mailto:James.thomas23@gov.wales) to enable my officials to investigate further.

I can assure you I remain fully committed to EdTech in Wales and will be announcing further investment imminently. This investment will help further exploit the transformational benefits digital and technology can have on education and continue to ensure schools are equipped with the digital tools they need to deliver and underpin the Curriculum for Wales.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'J' followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke at the end.

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