

YMGYRCH HANES CYMRU (THE CAMPAIGN FOR WELSH HISTORY)

10 December 2022

For the attention of members of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

Ymgyrch Hanes Cymru (The Campaign for Welsh History) welcomes the fact that the Curriculum for Wales states clearly that Welsh history, in all its rich diversity, should be an integral and central part of the schemes of work within the field of Humanities.

Nevertheless, previous experience of the lack of attention that has historically been paid to Welsh History in a number of schools represents a cause for concern. A report published by Estyn (October 2021) – *The teaching of Welsh history including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic history, identity and culture* – demonstrates that this situation remains unsatisfactory.

Schools have faced very significant challenges over the past few years, which may have had an impact on their ability to plan and prepare for such fundamental changes. Furthermore, there is a shortage of expertise and experience in some schools with regard to presenting Welsh History, alongside a lack of resources.

We are calling for the establishment of an independently chaired Working Group, similar to the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities, Contributions and Cynefin in the New Curriculum Working Group, which would be able to review the way in which Welsh history is presented.

The functions of this Working Group would include:

- identifying a common body of basic knowledge that schools should include in their schemes of work; this would be in accordance with the recommendation of the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee (November 2019)
- drawing up timescales to accompany this

- monitoring the teaching of Welsh history in schools to ensure that it is taught consistently across the country
- identifying gaps in the resources available, and providing advice on the necessary materials
- providing advice on the nature of the training that schools would need.

We realise that one of the basic principles of the Curriculum for Wales is to allow schools to design their own curriculum to meet the needs of their pupils and local priorities. The designation of a common body of knowledge would not limit the freedom of schools to do that, but it would give them clear guidance for ensuring that Welsh national history is being presented. While learning about local history is very valuable, focusing on that alone does not equate to learning about Welsh History.

We hope that there will be an opportunity for the Children, Young People and Education Committee to discuss these issues.

Sincerely

Eryl Owain

Co-ordinator, Ymgyrch Hanes Cymru (The Campaign for Welsh History)