

Julie Morgan MS
Deputy Minister for Social Services

30 March 2023

Limitations in data collected about care experienced children

Dear Julie,

Thank you again for giving evidence to Committee on 9 March to support our inquiry into radical reform of services for care experienced children and young people.

Evidence of limitations in data collection in Wales

During that meeting we discussed the adequacy of data collected in Wales about care experienced children and young people. I would like to bring to your attention some key evidence that we have gathered about the limitations of data collection in Wales:

- A letter to us from the Association of Directors of Children's Services in response to our request for data about care experienced birth parents and the care status of their children.
- The evidence we took from higher education representatives on 2 March. See paragraphs 298 to 311 and 343 to 350 in particular.
- A table from a recent research briefing provided to the Committee by Senedd Research summarising data that is collected in England but that is not collected in Wales (see annex 1).

Our final report is scheduled to be published in May. I hope that you find this information useful in the meantime.

Outcome of the Children Looked After census review

We heard from stakeholders during focus group discussions that the Welsh Government recently convened a Children Looked After census review to consider data collection specifically. Please could you provide us with more details about that review, including what (if any) changes were agreed and how they will be taken forward?

I would be very grateful if we could receive that information no later than Thursday 4th May to support us as we finalise our report. Please do not hesitate to contact our Committee clerks if it will be difficult to meet this deadline.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jayne Bryant". The script is cursive and fluid.

Jayne Bryant MS

Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Data available in England and not in Wales

Social care: Children looked after in England including adoptions.

- Offending rates
- Substance misuse
- Health and development outcomes
- Emotional and behavioural health
- Children missing without authorisation

Pre-16 education: Outcomes for children in need, including children looked after by local authorities in England.

- special education needs
- destinations from school
- absence from school
- permanent exclusions and suspensions from school
- type of school attended

Leaving care: General statistics on children looked after in England shows that for 19-21 year old care leavers in 2022:

- 29% were in education (6% in higher education, 22% in education other than higher education);
- 38% were not in education, employment or training (compared with around 11% of all 19 to 21 year old young people).

Higher education: The Department for Education publishes English statistics on widening participation in higher education, which includes progression to higher education for both children in need and looked after children.

Workforce: Children's social work workforce Annual statutory collection for data on the children's social work workforce.

- number of social workers
- number of starters and leavers
- vacancy rate of social workers
- turnover rate of social workers
- sickness absence of social workers
- number of agency workers
- average caseload