

Gwybodaeth ychwanegol | Additional information

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i'r [Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg](#) ar gyfer yr ymchwiliad: [A oes gan blant a phobl ifanc anabl fynediad cyfartal at addysg a gofal plant?](#)

This response was submitted to the [Children, Young People and Education Committee](#) for the inquiry: [Do disabled children and young people have equal access to education and childcare?](#)

Ymateb gan Comisiynydd y Gymraeg
Response from Wales and Welsh Language Commissioner

26/07/2023

Dear Chair,

Children, Young People and Education Committee inquiry: Do disabled children and young people have equal access to education and childcare?

Thank you for your letter regarding the above inquiry. As you are aware, the work I published with the Children's Commissioner for Wales highlights the fact that children and young people who want to be educated through the medium of Welsh do not always have equal access to suitable Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision. I would therefore wish you to consider the evidence included in our paper as part of your inquiry.

Your letter asks whether there are any specific issues in relation to Welsh-medium education or childcare provision for neurodivergent or disabled children and young people that the Committee should be considering as part of the inquiry. Beyond the general evidence contained in our publication on ALN, there is one specific recommendation in the paper that is very relevant to your inquiry. The paper's first recommendation is about ensuring that we have a comprehensive understanding of the extent to which the needs of Welsh-medium learners are currently being met. Our evidence suggests that this understanding is currently lacking, and that more needs to be done to understand the gaps in current provision and the kinds of challenges that children and families face in Welsh-medium education. We believe therefore that the Committee's inquiry can contribute to improving understanding in this context, and to making sure that the voice of disabled children and young people who speak Welsh is heard.

As well as ensuring that the Welsh language is a theme that will be considered across the inquiry, I believe that the Committee should take specific steps to gather views and evidence on the experiences of children and families receiving Welsh-medium education.

One way to do this would be to secure the input of organisations such as Mudiad Meithrin and Parents for Welsh Medium Education (RhAG) who have an in-depth and expert understanding of these issues. We are also aware that local authorities are required to submit their Welsh in Education Strategic Plan review reports by 31 July 2023. It is therefore possible that the monitoring process in relation to outcome 6 of the plans (which is to improve Welsh-medium ALN provision), will also be relevant to your investigation. Finally, you may be aware that the Government intends to establish a National Welsh

Language ALN Stakeholder Group, and also to appoint a national ALN implementation and Welsh language officer before the end of the year. Although these developments will not be in place to contribute to the Committee's inquiry, I am sure that the findings of the inquiry will be of interest to the stakeholder group and to the national implementation officer.

I would like to thank you again for carrying out this important inquiry, and for ensuring that the needs of Welsh speakers will be fully considered.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Efa Gruffudd Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

Efa Gruffudd Jones
Welsh Language Commissioner