

Dyslecsia Cymru/Dyslexia Wales

Llysteifi
Llechryd
Cardigan
SA43 2NX

31 May 2011

Dear Rhodri,

The Petitions Committee

Further to the e-mail that I sent you at the end of last week, I now enclose confirmation from Bangor University (specifically, the unit that is developing the vocabulary test) that the test is not going to aid the process of identifying children who are at risk of being dyslexic.

The Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Leighton Andrews, states that the test will aid the process of identifying dyslexic children. The e-mail from Bangor states that this is incorrect.

Moving on, Welsh Government reports in 2008 and 2009 state/recommend that a dyslexia screening test should be developed for children between 6.5 and 11.5 years old.

Bangor University has confirmed that the test commissioned by the Government does **not** include the age range cited above. It is for younger children. Once again, therefore, the facts reported by the Minister are completely incorrect.

We would ask the Minister to consider again our bid for funding to develop Welsh-language resources for dyslexic individuals. Could you submit the e-mail that we sent last week, as well as the enclosed e-mail from Bangor, as evidence to the Petitions Committee? Could you also confirm that these documents will be included on the relevant agenda and web page relating to the committee's next meeting?

Sincerely
Michael Davies
Chief Executive (voluntary post)

Mr Rhodri Wyn Jones
Committee Services
The Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CP99 1NA

P.S. Could you confirm receipt of this letter and the enclosed document?

Dear Michael,

I can confirm that I am not in the process of developing a dyslexia-specific screening tool. However, it is true that Ginny and myself are in the process of developing vocabulary tests (receptive and productive) which would, of course, aid in identifying language problems, though they are not dyslexia screening tests.

Dear Enlli,

I have received a letter from Leighton Andrews (the Minister for Education and Skills), stating that the Government has commissioned Bangor University to develop a Welsh-medium screening tool and that the work will be completed by the summer of 2012.

He says that it is expected that the receptive and productive vocabulary and grammar tasks that are being developed will help to measure vocabulary and grammar and will therefore be able to identify children with dyslexia.

Could you confirm whether the test being developed is a screening tool for dyslexia and that it is NOT for children between 6.5 and 11.0 years old?

It would be great to have your comments on this because we want to go back to him and ask whether funding is available to develop Welsh-language resources, as was suggested in the 2008 and 2009 reports on dyslexia in Wales.

Thank you

Michael

Leighton Andrews AC/AM
Y Gweinidog dros Blant, Addysg & Dysgu Gydol Oes
Minister for Children, Education & Lifelong Learning



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-298
Ein cyf/Our ref LA/00764/11

Christine Chapman AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

March 2011

Thank you for your letter of 18 March about petition 03-298 'financing the provision of Welsh language resources for people with dyslexia'.

You asked why my Department had not supported a proposal from Estyn to look at the quality of Welsh medium support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in 2011-12. This year's remit was developed following a rigorous process which involved Estyn officials at every stage. The possibility of work on Welsh medium support for ALN was discussed at an early stage of this process, among other topics. The Chief Inspector indicated at the outset of the process that Estyn would be able to undertake fifteen Remit items only in 2011-12, which generated competition for places. My priority was to include items that would inform my stated strategic objectives. I am satisfied that the final remit to the Chief Inspector fulfils that aim.

There is, of course, nothing to prevent Estyn from undertaking this research separately from the annual remit. The Education Act 2005 (S20(4)) states that the Chief Inspector may at any time give advice to the Assembly on any matter connected with schools, or a particular school, in Wales. Alternatively the Chief Inspector may wish to propose the item for inclusion in the remit for 2012-13.

With regard to point two of Estyn's overall conclusions, on the need for Welsh language materials, my officials acknowledge this and will consider the need for more resources to broaden the range of services that are currently available.

Finally, asked about work on the Welsh medium screening tool which we have commissioned Bangor University to develop. I can report that work is well under way and is due for completion in the summer term of 2012.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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It is expected that the receptive and productive vocabulary and grammar tasks that are being developed will help to measure both vocabulary and grammatical abilities and therefore help identify those with dyslexia.

I hope this information is useful to you.

Leighton Andrews AM
Minister for Children, Education & Lifelong Learning