



Comisiwn  
Cydraddoldeb a  
Hawliau Dynol

Equality and  
Human Rights  
Commission

Buffy Williams MS

seneddchildren@senedd.wales

Via email only

Monday 08 July 2024

Dear Buffy Williams MS,

**Subject: Congratulations and invitation to meet with the Head of Wales at the Equality and Human Rights Commission**

Firstly, I would like to warmly congratulate you on your appointment as Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee. We built a positive and constructive relationship with your predecessor, and we very much hope to be able to do so with you.

As you will be aware, equality for children and young people is one of our strategic priorities. The Commission's [business plan for 2024/25](#) highlights our continued concerns about the use of restraint in school and issues relating to exclusions. Our [Restraint in schools inquiry: using meaningful data to protect](#)

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Bydd y Comisiwn yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg.

The Commission welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English.

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[children's rights](#) included several key findings and recommendations for the Welsh Government that would assist the Committee in its scrutiny role.

Supporting educational reform continues to be an area of focus for us and we have submitted evidence to the Committee's ongoing consultation on this. It is crucial that the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (ALN Act) are used together to improve the educational attainment of those with certain protected characteristics. Persistent attainment gaps are evidenced in our state of the nation report [Equality and Human Rights Monitor – Is Wales Fairer?2023 \(Is Wales Fairer\)](#). One of our key recommendations is that the Welsh Government evaluates the implementation of the ALN Act and the new Curriculum for Wales, ensuring disaggregation of data by protected characteristics.

We also have concerns about the application of aspects of the Equality Act 2010. Our recent [research](#) found that only 12% of schools in Wales have a strategic equality plan (SEP), a requirement under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). In response, we developed a [resource for schools](#) which sets out how the PSED can be used in the development and implementation of the

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curriculum for Wales, making it accessible for all and tackling the greatest inequalities. We want to increase the number of schools that have a published SEP in place.

We are also prioritising our engagement with the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER). We have provided advice and guidance in the development of CTER and will continue with this as they are established from August 2024. We welcomed the recent statement of priorities including the need to use data to identify inequities in tertiary education. A key recommendation in our *Is Wales Fairer?* report is that CTER should collect comprehensive data to provide robust evidence to help address inequalities in post-16 compulsory education.

I would very much welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how we can support the Committee. My colleagues will be available to arrange a meeting or to answer any questions. Please contact us by email

[wales@equalityhumanrights.com](mailto:wales@equalityhumanrights.com)

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Yours sincerely,

Rev Ruth Coombs

Head of Wales EHRC

**Direct telephone:** 029 2044 7720

Wales | Cymru

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