

**Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc
ac Addysg**

**Children, Young People
and Education Committee**

Claire Homard

Chair of the Association of Directors of Education in Wales

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Inquiry into Children and Young People on the Margins

Dear Claire,

As you may know, we are currently gathering evidence as part of our inquiry 'children and young people on the margins'. The inquiry is focusing on missing children and criminalised children and young people. More detail about our inquiry, including its terms of reference, can be found on [our web pages](#).

The written consultation window for this inquiry closed on 23 January 2024. We are now in the process of gathering informal evidence from stakeholders via a series of stakeholder events and engagement visits. However, due to pressures to our forward work programme, we have decided to seek targeted written evidence from key stakeholders rather than holding formal oral evidence sessions. We will then hold a joint scrutiny session with the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice and the Minister for Social Services on 19 September 2024.

We are therefore seeking your views on any aspect of the inquiry to bolster our written evidence. In addition to any general comments you wish to make that are relevant to the inquiry's terms of reference, we would appreciate your views on the following specific points:

- The role of schools as protective environments for children who are at risk of marginalisation (i.e. at risk of going missing, being criminalised, or marginalised in some other way). (Frontline stakeholders working with criminally exploited young people told us that none of the young people they work with are attending school.)
- The extent to which school exclusions place children at additional risk of marginalisation, and whether current guidance allows schools' discretion about whether or not children



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should be excluded on safeguarding grounds (and the terms of any exclusion that they do make).

- The merits or otherwise of 'zero exclusion' policies, such as the one adopted by Southwark Council.
- Concerns expressed by stakeholders about children who are EOTAS about which who has oversight of their well-being and safety when they are outside the maintained school system.
- Concerns expressed by stakeholders about their experience of young people they refer to as 'unofficial exclusions' where pupils are not attending school.
- Any other education specific issues relating to missing children or child criminal exploitation alongside any recommendations you would like to see the Committee make in this regard.

I would be grateful for your response no later than Friday 23 August 2024 so that we can take account of your views in advance of our scrutiny session with the Welsh Government.

Yours sincerely,



Buffy Williams MS
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.