

**Y Pwyllgor Deddfwriaeth,
Cyfiawnder a'r Cyfansoddiad**

**Legislation, Justice and
Constitution Committee**

Senedd Cymru

Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd, CF99 1SN
SeneddDCC@senedd.cymru
senedd.cymru/SeneddDCC
0300 200 6565

Welsh Parliament

Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN
SeneddLJC@senedd.wales
senedd.wales/SeneddLJC
0300 200 6565

The Rt. Hon Elin Jones MS
Y Llywydd and Chair of the Business Committee

21 March 2025

Annwyl Lywydd

Written Statement by the Welsh Government: The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill

I am writing to highlight our concerns with the above statement by the Welsh Government and, in particular, the absence of any reference to Standing Order 29 (Consent in relation to UK Parliament Bills), which we believe would be engaged by the actions being proposed by the Welsh Government.

In their statement, Lynne Neagle MS, Cabinet Secretary for Education, and Dawn Bowden MS, Minister for Children and Social Care, explain that they have asked the UK Government to apply certain provisions within the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill to Wales in the same way as England, with the possibility of further provisions being applied at a later stage. They also advise that "A further statement setting out the policy rationale for seeking provision in relation to Wales from the Bill will follow in due course, as discussions with the UK government progress."

It is unclear to us why the statement does not acknowledge the need for the Welsh Government to seek the Senedd's consent for provisions within the Senedd's legislative competence being included in a UK Government Bill, together with an indication of the likely timing of a legislative consent memorandum. You will know that, in accordance with Standing Order 29.2(iii), such a memorandum should be laid "normally no later than two weeks after the amendments are tabled or agreed to". The statement confirms that amendments to extend certain provisions to Wales "are currently being considered at Report Stage."; it is our understanding that Report stage has now been completed and that the Bill had its Third Reading yesterday.

This highlights another concern of the Committee. The statement suggests that the provision being made for Wales in the Bill covers significant policy matters but, with proceedings in the House of

Commons complete, minimal time is being left for Senedd Committees to scrutinise the Welsh Government's actions and the provisions for Wales being added to the Bill.

We feel it is necessary to draw these important matters to your attention, particularly in light of your recent letter to the Welsh Government about its approach to the UK Government's Bus Services (No. 2) Bill and matters related to the legislative consent process.

I am copying this letter to Lynne Neagle MS, Cabinet Secretary for Education, and Dawn Bowden MS, Minister for Children and Social Care. Given the subject matter of the Bill, the letter is also copied to Buffy Williams MS, Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Hedges". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Mike Hedges
Chair