



Minutes of Meeting

Saving Futures - Sixth Senedd Cross Party Group on Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

A Youth-Led Session on the Welsh Government's Peer on Peer Sexual Harassment in Education Settings Action Plan – One Year On

Meeting Details

Title: A Youth-Led Session on the Welsh Government's Peer on Peer Sexual Harassment in Education Settings Action Plan – One Year On

Date: Thursday 20th February 2025

Time: 13.30-14.15

Location: In Person/Hybrid, Media Briefing Room, Senedd Cymru

Sponsored by Buffy Williams MS/ Chaired by Joyce Watson MS

Attendees

In Person

- Joyce Watson MS – Member of the Senedd for the Mid and West Wales (JW)
- Ruth Mullineux-Morgan – Senior Policy Officer, NSPCC Cymru (RMM)
- Cecile Gwilym – PAPA Manager, NSPCC Cymru (CG)
- Sarah Witcombe-Hayes – Senior Policy Researcher, NSPCC Cymru (SWH)
- Naomi White – Policy & Public Affairs Officer, NSPCC Cymru (NW)
- Zuzanna Gwozdz – Policy & Public Affairs Assistant, NSPCC Cymru (ZG)
- Saul Cooke - Media Liaison, NSPCC (SC)
- Rani Govender - CSO Regulatory Policy Manager, NSPCC (RG)
- Kathryn Lawrence - Better Futures Practitioner, Barnardo's (KL)
- Nicola Ward - Better Futures Practitioner, Barnardo's (NW)



- Lowri Williams - Better Futures Practitioner, Barnardo's (LW)
 - Poppie Jones - Better Futures Service User, Barnardo's (PJ)
 - Keegan Greenfield-Lewis - Better Futures Service User, Barnardo's (KGL)
 - Robyn Jones - Better Futures Service User, Barnardo's (RJ)
 - Bex Roots - Policy Assistant, Platform (BR)
 - Natalie Lewis - CYP Project Lead, Platform (NL)
 - Siobhan Parry – CEO, Platform (SP)
 - Holly Swan - NSPCC/Platform Youth Voice Amplification Project (HS)
 - Lana Smart - NSPCC/Platform Youth Voice Amplification Project (LS)
 - Claire Hathaway - CYP Support, Young Wales (CH)
 - Emily Ruck - CYP Support, Young Wales (ER)
 - Charlie Lock - Member of the Young Wales Feeling Safe (Online and in Relationships) Advisory Group, Young Wales (CL)
 - Khandi Jarvis - Member of the Young Wales Feeling Safe (Online and in Relationships) Advisory Group, Young Wales (KJ)
 - Gillian Clarke - CPG Secretariat, RASAC Wales (GC)
 - Claire Short - CPG Secretariat, Lucy Faithful Foundation Wales (CS)
 - XXX- Lucy Faithful Foundation, Wales
 - Susan Moore - CPG Secretariat, We Stand (SM)
 - Lynne Neagle - Cabinet Secretary for Education and Member of the Senedd for Torfaen, Welsh Government (LN)
 - Jason Pollard - Official to Cabinet Secretary for Education, Welsh Government (JP)
 - Nicola Edwards - Deputy Director Equity in Education Division, Welsh Government (NE)
 - Prof EJ Renold – Professor, Cardiff University (EJR)
 - David Hopkins - Chair of Stop It Now Wales Action Group (DH)
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- **Online/Virtual** Sarah Cooper – CPG Member, Head of Digital Resilience Team, Welsh Government DRiES Team (SC)
 - Janice Dent – CPG Member, Regional Lead Advisor – VAWDASV, Newport City Council (JD)
 - Ryan Evans - (RE)
 - Gillian Jones – CPG Secretariat, Assistant National Manager, Lucy Faithful Foundation (GJ)



- Lucia Goss - (LC)
- Carl Harris – CPG Member, Assistant Director for Wales, NSPCC Cymru (CH)
- Hayley Fry – Member, Wales National Manager of Crimestoppers (HF)
- Joshua Henley - (JH)
- Katy Smith - (KS)
- Kirrin Davidson- CPG Member, Policy Advisor for the Office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales (KD)
- Dr Kirsty Hudson – CPG Member, Reader in Criminology, Cardiff University (KH)
- Mark Devereux – CPG Member, Social Services Section Manager, Conwy Council (MD)
- Nicola Fitzpatrick - (NF)
- Kate Rothwell - Welsh Government DRiES Team (KR)
- Sarah Walton-Jones – CPG Member, Project Worker, Stop it Now! Wales (SWJ)
- Sharron Wareham – CPG Member, Services Manager, Barnardo's Cymru (SW)
- Siân Bibey - (SB)
- Philip Walker - CPG Secretariat, National Development Manager, Survivors Trust (PW)

Apologies

- Fay Maxted - CPG Secretariat, Survivors Trust

Agenda

Item	Topic	Speaker	Time
	Room Set Up, Arrival, Registration CYP Arrival/Settle		13.00-13.30
1	Open the meeting.	Joyce Watson MS	13.30-13.35
2	Introduce themselves and give a view about (i) why the peer-on-peer action plan is important (ii) their top wish for what the Action Plan will deliver.	Young Wales members	13.35-13.45
3	Cabinet Secretary Update.	Cabinet Secretary for Education	13.45-13.55



4	Why the Peer-on-Peer Action Plan matters – Young people’s thoughts	Young Wales members/Joyce Watson MS/All	13.55-14.10
5	The importance of hearing young people’s voices.	Cecile Gwilym, NSPCC Cymru Policy and Public Affairs Manager	14.10-14.15
6	Networking		14.15-15.00

Minutes

1. Call to Order

[Time: 13.00]

2. Agenda Item 1: Open the meeting

Discussion

- JW Introduced the topic of the event: A Youth-Led Session on the Welsh Government’s Peer on Peer Sexual Harassment in Education Settings Action Plan – One Year On, marking one year since the publication of the Welsh Government’s Action Plan.
- JW Introduced and welcomed young representatives from Young Wales’ Feeling Safe (Online and in Relationships) Advisory Group and in the audience, Barnardo’s Better Future Service and NSPCC/Platfform’s newly established Child Safety Online Youth Voice Amplification project.
- JW outlined the agenda for the event, thanking each speaker for attendance.
- JW explained the Welsh Government’s definition of peer-on-peer sexual harassment, the public health approach advocated by the CPG, and the context and development of the Action Plan.
- JW highlighted the importance of the Senedd and Welsh Government centring the views and experiences of children and young people in the work towards tackling peer-on-peer harassment and acknowledged the advocacy work of the young advocate speakers in the room – CL and KJ.



Decisions: N/A

Actions: N/A

3. Agenda Item 2: Young Wales members introduce themselves and give a view about (i) why the peer-on-peer action plan is important, (ii) their top wish for what the Action Plan will deliver

Discussion

CL and KJ introduced themselves, shared their stories and motivations for becoming advocates on the issue of preventing peer-on-peer sexual harassment. They expressed their wishes and highlighted the thoughts and wishes provided by other young people who have contributed their views during a recent session. These insights were shown on a PowerPoint presentation throughout the event.

- CYP's experiences must be respected no matter their identity.
- Education must deliver change in behaviour and help people understand the consequences and impact of their actions on others.
- Need to normalise discussing sensitive topics so that they are not stigmatised.
- The hope is that the plan will provide support for people in need.
- Action plan is important for covering all types of harassment, including raising awareness of 'less dangerous' forms and understanding of their serious impact.
- Many types of sexual harassment become normalised from a young age; young children conditioned into think its ok to be treated in an inappropriate way.
- This can lead to guilt, self-blame, and children underplaying the impact harassment has had.
- Misogynistic influencers are impacting children's behaviour, normalising these dangerous views.
- Schools are often not equipped to deal with sexual harassment.

Decisions: N/A

Actions: N/A

4. Agenda Item 3: Cabinet Secretary Update

Discussion

LN provided an overview and key updates of progress against the Action Plan.



- Action Plan sends a message that no place for sexual harassment in schools but know that it spills out into wider society and need to address it comprehensively.
- Everyone's Invited shone a spotlight on sexual harassment in society and raised great awareness. It enabled more conversations with CYP about their experiences and how to provide greater support - which led to the Action Plan.
- Update on each part of the AP:
- Prevention
 - Online resources available for teachers and learners
- Early intervention
 - Helplines essential, and continuing to fund two important helplines
 - Also providing other support services like the school counselling programme
- Wellbeing and support
 - Placed wellbeing at heart of education, through curriculum and ensuring schools adopt Whole School Approach; mandatory RSE
 - Statutory guidance has been in place from 2021 for schools on developing plans to support wellbeing - including poor wellbeing from sexual harassment
- Learning and leadership
 - School staff need to take non-stigmatising and inclusive approach to learners that face extra harassment e.g. LGBTQ children
 - WG has important role, providing support and resources, RSE curriculum etc to tackle as part of everyday teaching
- Parents, carers, community
 - Partnerships can lead to positive outcomes for all - WG are investing in promoting home-school relationship in Wales
 - Focusing on a number of campaigns and initiatives to support parent / community / school relationships, e.g. Schools and Family Engagement Officers
- Online
 - New tech can be fantastic but causes harm too
 - To support teachers and others to handle issue of deepfakes have published guidance that developed with UKSIC
 - Also worked with Football Wales regarding speaking out about harassment on social media
- Research
 - Latest report in October - reporting views of secondary schools, including on peer-to-peer sexual harassment



- Noted supporting work with NSPCC and Cardiff University regarding how pre-teen CYP understand sexual dynamics and gender identity

Decisions: N/A

Actions: N/A

5. Agenda Item 4: Why the Peer-on-Peer Action Plan matters – Young people's thoughts

Discussion

CL and KJ spoke about their overall priorities and thoughts on what concerns the Action Plan should address and how this could be achieved. They then invited comments from the floor or attendees online responding to updates and young people's input.

- Education key to tackling misogyny and preventing risky behaviours early on.
- Need support for children outside mainstream education settings.
- Need better focus on prevention to keep safe online, including thinking about other measures for children e.g. age for smartphones being limited.
- Behaviours often carried out because seen others doing it or see it online - need to help children better understand the impact of these behaviours and follow through on consequences

LN response:

- Importance of RSE - teaching how to interact respectfully from a young age
 - Good basis in Wales - but need to ensure all CYP have access to high quality teaching
- WG are updating bullying guidance which will capture more on sexual harassment
- Phones a part of a YP's live, need to help YP use them in a way that benefits them and be mindful of risks - WG looking to do more on this
- Interested in focussing more on restorative approaches in behaviour
- School counselling - good access across Wales, but know there is variation in waiting times, offer on number of sessions etc. Looking to do more work to develop a guarantee for what CYP are getting.

Decisions: N/A

Actions: N/A



6. Agenda Item 5: The importance of hearing young people's voices.

Discussion

- CG thanked CL and KJ for sharing their stories and reflections on the Action Plan, as well as the Young People and audience who attended, reassuring that their points will be considered in the next steps of the Action Plan.
- CG reiterated the value of bringing different groups of young people together and allowing them to share their experiences of peer-on-peer harassment in a safe, supportive and meaningful way. She acknowledged it is not possible for all young people to do so, recognising the importance of navigating this context in a sensitive and trauma-informed way.
- CG reflected on the milestones in developing the Action Plan over the previous 3 years, recounting youth-led events prepared by the CPG, the Time for Action' briefing providing recommendations to the Welsh Government as it finalised the Action Plan on peer-on-peer sexual harassment, extensive youth participation work with schools and youth groups, and NSPCC Cymru's research and policy development to increase our understanding of the nature and effects of peer-on-peer harassment and create effective solutions.
- CG discussed the plans to continue the progress of the Action Plan, including the proposed research project in partnership with Cardiff University and local schools. Also discussed was the idea to establish a children and young people's advisory board to co-design the Welsh Government's approach and to ensure that children's voices are central to the responses developed.
- CG closed the event, again emphasising the importance of giving voices to the young people who are particularly vulnerable and may struggle to share their experience of peer-on-peer harassment without the adequate support from trusted adults and professionals, paired with appropriate RSE. She emphasised the commitment of NSPCC Cymru and the Secretariat and Members of the CPG to this issue and thanked all audience for attending.

Decisions: N/A

Actions: The outputs and key discussion points during the meeting and raised by the CYP will be collated into a visual meeting output with input/feedback from CYP. This will be sent to the Cabinet Secretary and made available on the CPG website in due course.



Date of Next Meeting:

TBC

Adjournment:

RM

Prepared By: Zuzanna Gwozdz, NSPCC Cymru

Approved By: Ruth Mullineux-Morgan, NSPCC and CPG Secretariat