

Children and Young People Committee

Equality and Social Justice Committee

Dawn Bowden MS

Minister for Children and Social Care

5 November 2025

Dear Minister,

**“If Not Now, Then When? Radical Reform for Care-Experienced Children and Young People”:
request for an update on implementation”**

On 8 October we noted correspondence from a stakeholder who contributed to the above report and inquiry seeking an update in relation to some of our key recommendations. The Equality and Social Justice Committee considered the same letter on 29 September and have attached their names in support of this request.

We would therefore like to request an individual update on each of the report’s 20 recommendations that Welsh Government accepted in full and in part. We would also welcome a narrative update in respect of the policy issues covered by the 7 recommendations that we were disappointed to see rejected, namely:

the sufficiency of the statutory children’ social care workforce (including the latest statistics on vacancy rates and use of agency staff);
caseloads for statutory children’s social care workers;
care experience as a protected characteristic;
data gaps in the care system;
independent advocacy and residential visiting advocacy; and
promoting tertiary education to care experienced people.



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We would also welcome a specific response to the following issues raised by the Children's Legal Centre on Deprivation of Liberty Orders. Our report highlighted uncertainty regarding data on the extent of their use and asked you to conduct an analysis that could inform efforts to reduce the use of these orders long term. In response, you agreed to provide an "analysis of the use of Deprivation of Liberty Orders across Wales for the past 24 months, broken down by local authority, age of the child, and length of the order". We asked you to do this by December 2023; however, it was unclear in your response whether you intended to meet these timescales. Nevertheless, given the length of time that has elapsed since, we urgently request:

a copy of the analysis including confirmation of when and how it was undertaken;
a summary of the actions that have been taken as a result of the analysis;
how this work was considered and has influenced the Transformation Programme for Children's Services; and
a general update on progress with the Transformation Programme more broadly.

We appreciate some of these policy areas overlap with other cabinet portfolios and will require input from your colleagues. We would welcome a response within the usual timescales and look forward to hearing from you.

A copy of this letter will be shared with the Children's Legal Centre for information.

Yours sincerely,



Buffy Williams MS

Chair of Children and Young People Committee



Jenny Rathbone MS

Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee



CC:

Lynne Neagle MS, Cabinet Secretary for Education

Jane Hutt MS, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

