

John Griffiths AM
Chairperson, ELGC Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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8 August 2017

John.Griffiths@assembly.wales

Dear John,

Subject: Human rights in Wales

We were pleased you were able to join us recently for our discussion with stakeholders about human rights priorities in Wales.

The event was part of the Commission's commitment to collaborate with others to develop a human rights action plan for Wales. A priority for this action plan is to embed human rights principles into public service delivery. We expect to be able to share this action plan with your Committee over the coming months, as we recognise the importance of your support in the development and promotion of the plan.

We also wanted to update you on discussions we have held since our oral evidence session with the Committee in April. At that session, our Wales Committee Chair June Milligan undertook to discuss with the Wales Committee our role in promoting children's rights in education settings in Wales. The Wales Committee discussed this matter at its recent meeting.

The Wales Committee believes we have the most impact when we work in partnership with others, such as the Children's Commissioner for Wales. For example, we have identified opportunities to work together with the Children's Commissioner on identity based bullying.

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

The Commission welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English.

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This has included providing advice on how to build the Public Sector Equality Duty into the recommendations of their recent report 'Sam's Report: listening to children and young people's experiences of bullying in Wales'.

We will be meeting again with the Children's Commissioner to discuss how we can play our part in the promotion of 'The Right Way: A Children's Rights Approach to Education in Wales'. This guide, recently launched by the Children's Commissioner, is about placing the Convention on the Rights of the Child at the core of a child's experience of education and at the core of school planning, teaching, decision-making, policies and practice. By working with the Children's Commissioner we will be able to address some of the concerns raised by your Committee. We are also engaging with the Welsh Government as it devises a new curriculum for Wales, due to be available by September 2018. We will continue to make the case that children's rights should be central to the curriculum in Wales.

Furthermore, in our role as the National Human Rights Institution for Great Britain, the Commission makes submissions to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child about how children's rights are taken forward in Wales and across Britain. We have previously highlighted the crucial role of education in promoting the rights of the child. An updated submission we will be sending to the UN Committee later this year will re-iterate this point.

We look forward to working closely with your Committee when your Inquiry into human rights in Wales resumes in the autumn term. Your findings and recommendations will be crucial in helping to set priorities for human rights in Wales. It will be valuable if our action plan and your Inquiry's recommendations complement each other.

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Finally, following my recent appointment as Head of Wales at the Commission, I would welcome the opportunity to meet you to discuss the Human Rights Inquiry and other ways the Commission can provide advice to the Committee. I will be in touch with your office to see if a date can be found over the summer recess or in the new term.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Coombs

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Pennaeth Cymru / Head of Wales

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