

Tuesday, 14 May 2019

Further notes to consider with petition P-05-879

Following the written response from Janet Finch-Saunders AM to this petition on the 18th of April 2019 here are my thoughts on the the points raised. I will also respond on each of core changes this petition seeks as she has.

- **Mental Health education becoming mandatory teaching for all schools in Wales without the addition of any exams/homework on this subject**

I'm delighted in learning more about the proposed new curriculum that such consideration is being given to the mental health and wellbeing of students. I look forward to taking part in the public consultation regarding this to contribute on the specifics of these changes. In doing so and in raising this petition I hope to ensure these changes are extensive enough to have the transformative positive impact outlined in this petition.

When considering this petition it is also worth noting the level of public support the UK wide petition for this cause has gained. It was created by another of our team at 'Mental - The Podcast to Destigmatise Mental Health' and at the time of writing this petition titled 'Add Mental Health Education to the mandatory teaching curriculum for all schools in the UK' has passed 197,000 signatures. That petition can be viewed at bit.ly/MentalPetition and represents the largest petition ever relating to Mental Health Education across the UK.

- **Every child in Wales having the opportunity to access a qualified counsellor through their school**

On this point I'm grateful for the provisions already available however this point in the petition is around accessibility via schools. This could be in the form of a referral system for external counselling services that schools could use or increased provision of counsellors working in schools who students can have appointments with on site.

- **Every school in Wales offering mental health training for their staff**

I'm already a big supporter of the pilot and other progress mentioned around increased CAMHS presence in schools so do hope this is ultimately rolled out across Wales. However this point in the petition is actually around teachers receiving additional training to deliver mental health education as part of curriculum reforms.

Tuesday, 14 May 2019

Concerns about receiving sufficient training have been raised by teachers via both petitions I am part of so I am keen these concerns are raised and that teachers receive adequate signposting information to provide to those students that need extra support and their families.

Please find below details of politicians, charities, organisations and other notable individuals across the UK who are also supporting this cause.

Many thanks for your time considering this petition.

Best regards, Annie Harris

Politicians supporting this cause

- **Former Plaid Cymru Leader and Rhondda AM Leanne Wood** who told us *“I support plans to for mental health education/awareness to be taught in schools in Wales where education is devolved. I have spoken to teachers who tell me that demand for mental health support for pupils is growing and that services are not coping with that demand.”*
- **Hywel Williams MP** of Plaid Cymru, a former mental health social worker, who told us *‘It is so important that we understand how to protect and promote the wellbeing of all children and young people and that is why I’m pleased to support Mental Podcast with their campaign to break the stigma around mental health.’*
- **Liz Saville Roberts MP** of Dwyfor Meirionnydd with Plaid Cymru who told us *“every single person will be affected by mental health problems, either directly or through someone they love. I am proud to support Mental Podcast with this campaign, because I believe it is vital that education is the key to breaking the stigma around mental health, so no one has to suffer alone.”*
- **Stephen Kinnock MP** of Aberavon with Labour who told us *“This important initiative raises awareness and builds trust, and I fully support their proposal that Mental Health Education should be a mandatory part of the school curriculum, right across the UK.”*
- **Caroline Lucas MP** Co-Leader of The Green Party who told us *“I am proud to support the campaign by Mental Podcast to get mental health education on the curriculum. The understanding we develop as young people about our own mental health, and that of others, has lifelong repercussions, not only in the personal relationships we form, but on our careers and prospects, and the ability to reach our potential.”*
- **Nicola Sturgeon MSP**, First Minister of Scotland and leader of the SNP who told us *“Learning in Health and wellbeing should give children and young people the*

Tuesday, 14 May 2019

knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing and we are currently undertaking a national review of Personal and Social Education which will report at the end of this year.”

- **Rachael Maskell MP** of York Central with Labour (Co-op) who told us *“One of the greatest challenges facing young people today concerns their mental health.”* and *“Placing mental health education on the school curriculum is an excellent initiative to support the wellbeing of children and young adults.”*
- **Lee Rowley MP** of North East Derbyshire with The Conservative Party.
- **Shabana Mahmood MP** of Birmingham Ladywood with Labour who told us *“I am proud to support the campaign by Mental Podcast to add mental health education to the school curriculum. If we are serious about getting parity of esteem between physical and mental health, then we must make sure we equip all of our young people with the knowledge and skills they need for their mental and emotional well being.”*
- **Preet Gill MP** of Birmingham Edgbaston with Labour who recorded a video message for us including *“whenever I visit schools in my constituency young people are constantly raising concerns about young people’s emotional health and well-being and that’s why I support this petition...there’s no reason why it can’t be part of PSHE.”*
- **Norman Lamb MP** of North Norfolk with The Liberal Democrats who told us *“I wholeheartedly support the Mental Podcast campaign to make mental health education a mandatory part of the school curriculum. Schools have a vital role to play in supporting children to better understand, and take steps to look after, their mental health so that every child has a chance to flourish in life”.*
- **Richard Benyon MP** of Newbury with The Conservative Party.
- **Lee Dargue** prospective MP in Birmingham Ladywood of The Liberal Democrats.

Charities supporting this cause

- **Young Minds** who campaign for greater mental health in young people.
- **See Me Scotland** the anti stigma and discrimination charity.

Campaigners/Influencers supporting this cause

- **Jonny Benjamin MBE** Mental health campaigner, writer, filmmaker & speaker.

Tuesday, 14 May 2019

- **Sarah Cardwell** Mental health blogger, campaigner and mum of two
- **Natasha Devon MBE** Mental health campaigner, speaker and writer
- **Hope Virgo** Writer and advocate mainly around eating disorders
- **The Counsellors Cafe** Online publication aimed at an audience of counsellors
- **Rev Mark Edwards MBE** Mental health writer and Reverend
- **Mind over Matter** Live music events to encourage discussion of mental health
- **Fiona Thomas** Non-fiction writer with Trigger Press and Metro
- **Eleanor Segall** Mental health and lifestyle writer at Metro
- **Ben Hart** Suicide prevention campaigner