Consultation on the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill

About you
Individual

1 The Bill’s general principles

1.1 Do you support the principles of the Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill?
— Yes

1.2 Please outline your reasons for your answer to question 1.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

I am a retired Deputy Head Teacher of a Primary School and I believe the Bill will bring much needed clarity to the issue of whether or not it should be permissible to smack a child. Teaching staff are in the front line in caring for children and there should be no room for professional confusion or prevarication when it comes to protecting a child's safety and wellbeing. The current legal situation regarding a parent's right to smack their child is dangerously unclear and open to misinterpretation. For example, it is currently permissible to hit a child providing it does not redden the skin but how can that possibly be applied to Black and Asian children? As the law stands teachers and other professionals working with children and families are compromised when it comes to speaking with parents about the need to use parenting methods which do not involve the deliberate inflicting of pain on a child. Until the law is changed and is unequivocal in saying no child should be the subject of physical violence then this confusion will continue and more children will be harmed.

1.3 Do you think there is a need for legislation to deliver what this Bill is trying to achieve?

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)
Yes because the legislation will send a clear message across our society and culture in Wales that it is no longer acceptable for anyone to hit a child. This will have a profound and positive impact on parenting methods across future generations of Welsh families and is something to be wholeheartedly welcomed.

2 The Bill’s implementation

2.1 Do you have any comments about any potential barriers to implementing the Bill?
   If no, go to question 3.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

This legislation has been spoken about for many years in Wales and it is long overdue. I would hope for the sake of Wales’s children that the Bill is passed and that there are no barriers to implementing it as quickly as possible. I believe the people of Wales will quickly accept the reform as a positive and progressive step and that it will contribute to a less violent society for us all to live in.

2.2 Do you think the Bill takes account of these potential barriers?

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

See above

3 Unintended consequences

3.1 Do you think there are any unintended consequences arising from the Bill? If no, go to question 4.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

No. The only consequences I can think of are all positive. This will be milestone piece of legislation for our children and one where I am proud to see Wales taking a lead.

4 Financial implications

4.1 Do you have any comments on the financial implications of the Bill (as set out in Part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum)? If no, go to question 5.1

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

Teachers and other professionals will require training on what the change in the law will mean but this can be easily assimilated into existing child protection and safeguarding courses.
5 Other considerations

5.1 Do you have any other points you wish to raise about this Bill?

(we would be grateful if you could keep your answer to around 1000 words)

This is an extremely positive Bill which will undoubtedly make a significant difference to the lives of many children in Wales. I hope it gets unanimous Assembly Member support when it comes to being voted upon as the wellbeing of our children deserves nothing less.