

Kirsty Williams AM

Minister for Education

30 January 2020

Dear Kirsty,

Music Services Feasibility Study

Thank you for attending the meeting of the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee on 16 January to discuss the Music Services Feasibility Study.

Equality of access to excellence

As discussed in the meeting, the current inconsistency in provision across schools in Wales can lead to an inequality of access. You mentioned that you are seeking to reduce this through the use of Pupil Deprivation Grant funding. Please can you give examples of how this funding is being used to give children from low income households the same ability to learn to play an instrument as those from better off families?

When discussing the decision not to endorse a new national model of music services provision, you mentioned your support for subsidiarity and the need to allow local communities find solutions which suit them, rather than imposing a national model. Please can you set out how you will ensure all children in Wales have the same opportunity to benefit from music tuition, no matter where they live?

You also mentioned that your department is looking at the patchy performance among Local Education Authorities on the provision of musical services and how best practice is being encouraged. More information on your department's promotional role in this regard would be welcome.

Further information

During the meeting you agreed to provide additional information on the funding and support provided for music education in schools by the Arts Council for Wales. I would be grateful if you could send me the details of this support.

During the discussion on the ways in which the private education sector share their facilities with other schools and community groups you agreed to provide information on how many fee-paying schools are sharing their facilities. I would be grateful if you could let us know the schools which are doing this, whether they charge for the use of their facilities and how often they make their facilities available.

Next steps

Following the meeting, members commented that progress on this issue seems to be taking longer than anticipated. I am worried that there may not be any changes in place before the end of this Assembly.

You told the Committee that the next step in this process is for the stakeholder group to discuss the recommendations in the report.


Thank you for inviting me to attend the stakeholder group meeting to be a part of this discussion. I have since replied to say I would not be attending as I feel it is not appropriate to contribute to a group when the Committee is responsible for scrutinising their decisions and outputs. I would be grateful if you could update the Committee with the membership of the group and the outcomes of their meeting after 29 January.

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
Y Pwyllgor Diwylliant, y Gymraeg a Chyfathrebu

National Assembly for Wales
Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee

I would be grateful if you could reply by 28 February 2020.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bethan Sayed." The signature is written in a dark ink and is centered on the page.

Bethan Sayed

Chair of the Committee