

Agenda – Children, Young People and Education Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 1 – Senedd

Meeting date: 10 January 2019

Meeting time: 09.15

For further information contact:

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Committee Clerk

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Private pre-meeting

(09.15 – 09.30)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(09.30)

2 Welsh Government's progress in developing the new Curriculum for Wales – Evidence session

(09.30 – 11.00)

(Pages 1 – 38)

Kirsty Williams AM, Minister for Education

Steve Davies, Director, Education Directorate

Claire Rowlands, Deputy Director Curriculum

Attached Documents:

Research Brief

CYPE(5)-01-19 – Paper 1

Break

(11.00 – 11.15)



Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales

3 Follow-up on the Perinatal Mental Health Committee Report

(11.15 – 12.30)

(Pages 39 – 72)

Vaughan Gething AM, Minister for Health and Social Services

Liz Davies, Senior Medical Officer, Welsh Government

Karen Jewell, Nursing Officer – Women's Reproductive Health, Welsh Government

Attached Documents:

Research Brief

CYPE(5)-01-19 – Paper 2

4 Papers to note

(12.30)

4.1 Letter from the Welsh Government – Consultation on the draft Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Code

(Pages 73 – 74)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-01-19 – Paper to note 1

4.2 Letter to the Welsh Government – Scrutiny of Estyn's Annual Report 2017-18: follow-up

(Pages 75 – 77)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-01-19 – Paper to note 2

4.3 Letter from the Children's Commissioner for Wales – Elective home education

(Pages 78 – 79)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-01-19 – Paper to note 3

4.4 Letter from the Chair to the Children's Commissioner for Wales – Elective home education

(Page 80)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-01-19 – Paper to note 4

4.5 Letter from the Welsh Government – Update on the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) transformation programme

(Pages 81 – 83)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-01-19 – Paper to note 5

4.6 Letter from the Vice Chancellor of Cardiff University – Welsh Baccalaureate qualification

(Pages 84 – 85)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-01-19 – Paper to note 6

4.7 Letter from the Welsh Government – Welsh Baccalaureate qualification

(Pages 86 – 87)

Attached Documents:

CYPE(5)-01-19 – Paper to note 7

5 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting and for the whole of the meeting on the 16th and 30th January

(12.30)

6 Consideration of the evidence received under items 2 and 3

(12.30 – 12.45)

Document is Restricted

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein Cyf / Our ref: MA/P/KW/4329/18

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair of the Children, Young People and Education
Committee National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1NA

5 December 2018

Dear Lynne,

Developing the new curriculum for Wales

I would like to thank the Children, Young People and Education Committee for the opportunity to provide an update on progress with our programme of educational reforms and introduction of the new curriculum.

Since our last formal update in December 2017 we have made good progress. I am confident that we are in a positive place, with the main design phase of the curriculum on track to complete as planned in the New Year.

I believe the way we work in partnership across the sector with schools, Higher Education, Further Education, educational experts, Estyn, Qualifications Wales, Local Authorities and regional consortia, is a key strength. It allows us to keep schools at the heart of the development work, brings together practice, evidence and policy, promotes a sense of ownership in the reform and supports sustainable change.

A transformational curriculum is at the heart of our system wide reform to education. Supporting its delivery are four essential enabling objectives to drive system change:

- Developing a high-quality education profession;
- Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards;
- Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being; and
- Robust accountability and assessment arrangements supporting a self-improving school system.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

This ambitious reform will touch nearly every part of the school system and this update to the Committee includes progress across our overarching and enabling objectives, within which I also address the Committee's consultation questions.

Lastly, I would like to thank Members for engaging with some of our Pioneer schools to see the good work they are doing. I understand some visits will take place after my written update. I hope those who have been able to visit our schools have had a useful opportunity to discuss the work they are doing directly with practitioners, and for the remainder I hope you will have the opportunity to experience this soon.

1. Governance

The long term aim of the Welsh Government is to build a Wales that is prosperous and secure, healthy and active, ambitious and learning, and united and connected, as set out in our key strategy, *Prosperity for All*.

Our plan of action for education, *Education in Wales: Our national mission*, sets out how the school system will move forward over the period to 2022 with a key goal to raise standards for all, reduce the attainment gap and to deliver an educational system that is a source of national pride.

In addition to our normal engagement and consultation with key stakeholders, we have a robust Governance Framework in place to support delivery of our programme of educational reforms under our national mission and decisions made by me as Cabinet Secretary for Education. For programme level decisions, the key elements are:

Change Board – provides strategic oversight of the programme with specific focus on three key areas of reform which are the curriculum; professional learning; and accountability. The Board is responsible for ratification of decisions in respect of our national mission prior to submission for my final decision. The Board provides assurance on key issues and decisions and on matters escalated from the Delivery Board. It normally meets bi-monthly, but meetings are held more frequently if required and if necessary, decisions are made out of committee. Membership of Change Board includes senior representation from the middle tier including Local Authorities, regional consortia, Estyn, Qualifications Wales and the Education Workforce Council.

Delivery Board – manages and progresses the programme's operational business, monitors delivery and performance, ensures robust processes are followed and makes recommendations in respect of decisions to be ratified by the Change Board. It is able to escalate matters to Change Board for additional assurance. The Board identifies programme risks and suggests mitigation measures to address them. Meeting monthly, its membership includes middle tier representatives at assistant director and equivalent level.

Independent Advisory Group – chaired by Professor Donaldson, the group provides independent expert advice to Change Board, technical feedback, and functions as a critical friend. The Group has an advisory function, engaging with Senior Responsible Officers and influencing decisions, linking in with the Delivery Board.

Strategic Stakeholder Group – provides advice to the Welsh Government, engages with Change Board and Delivery Board and supports the communication of key messages, including through its representative body members. Its Children and Young People sub group has recently been re-established and set up to specifically take account of the views of children and young people in the reform journey. The sub group membership includes

representatives from a range of organisations including, the Children's Commissioner Wales, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Children in Wales, Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team Wales, and Sport Wales.

The Welsh Government has a Programme team directly supporting the governance and management of our priorities under our national mission.

Their work includes programme planning; identification and management of risks, issues and dependencies; servicing the Boards; and facilitating the collection, collation and flow of information between components.

The Welsh Government has its own corporate arrangements for decisions on internal matters. In addition to the transformational curriculum arrangements outlined below, at a programme level, the areas of accountability, professional learning and leadership also have specific arrangements in place to manage and support the work streams. The Curriculum and Assessment Group (CAG) and the Curriculum Coherence Group operate in this context.

Curriculum and Assessment Group (CAG) – The Group's role is to inform and assist with the design of the new curriculum and assessment framework; ensure that the new curriculum remains true to the principles set out in *Successful Futures*; and to support and test the practicability of models for reform as set out in *A curriculum for Wales: a curriculum for life*. Two of its key specific tasks are to ensure the interests and requirements of external stakeholders are taken into account through the design and development process, and to provide independent evidence and confident challenge and direction to the Pioneer Schools Network.

Curriculum Coherence Group – The purpose of the Coherence Group is to bring together the leadership of every Area of Learning and Experience group together with Estyn, Qualifications Wales, the Camau project and the Consortia to ensure the curriculum and assessment arrangements are developed in a coherent manner. Meeting monthly, the Group provides the primary forum for detailed scrutiny and quality enhancement of the work of the Areas of Learning and Experience groups and makes recommendations to the Delivery Board where specific issues for decision arise.

To support the decisions on the transformational curriculum that rest with me as Cabinet Secretary for Education, I can be assured that as an expert representative group, the Coherence Group provides critical input to policy, against which the Delivery Board ensures robust processes are followed, and Change Board ensures consideration and read across with our priorities and related educational reforms. I have also reformed my monthly Ministerial Policy Board so that external stakeholders are included, offering challenge and advice on a different area of policy reform at each meeting.

Communications strategy – The key focus of our communications strategy to date has been ensuring that all schools have the opportunity to be fully informed of the latest developments in curriculum reform, and that the process is completely transparent. Over the past year this has included regular updates via our growing range of *EducationWales* digital channels including Facebook, twitter, regular updates for the *Curriculum for Wales* blog and the launch of a new *EducationWales* podcast. The use of engaging digital content including video and contributions to the blog has resulted in a steady growth of visitors and interest in the curriculum. I also undertake regular live twitter Q&A sessions which result in good engagement; the November Q&A focused on the new curriculum.

Our engagement with head teachers is crucial to the co-production of the new curriculum and to prepare them for the changes being made. During 2018 the Welsh Government and consortia jointly held conferences for primary and secondary school heads to engage them in the development of a new accountability model to support the new curriculum, and head teacher conferences in the autumn focusing on the new approach to professional learning. Raising the status of the profession is a central part of our national mission and the Professional Teaching Awards in 2018 rewarded innovation and excellence in the profession in Wales. They also succeeded in attracting a 20% increase in nominations.

As part of its ongoing work, the Committee may wish to consider some of the information published to date under the Curriculum for Wales blog (<https://curriculumforwales.gov.wales/>) and under relevant sections of the Welsh Government website's education pages (<https://beta.gov.wales/education-skills>), including issues of the Dysg newsletter (<http://learning.gov.wales/dysg-newsletters/?lang=en>).

Update – Delivery of Our National Mission

2. Transformational curriculum

In September 2017 following feedback from the profession and looking at international best practice, we revised the timetable for developing and introducing the new curriculum and assessment framework. This decision was well-received. We are on track to publish the draft curriculum in April 2019 .. The information will be presented in a single, public-facing area of the Hwb website which will allow all users to access the new curriculum and provide feedback.

In line with *Successful Futures*, the Curriculum and its assessment arrangements will be built on progression. Areas of Learning and Experience will include Achievement Outcomes; setting expectations for learners, for curriculum planning and forming the basis for assessment.

Progression Steps will be described at five points in the learning continuum, relating broadly to expectations at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16. For each of the Progression Steps we will set out Achievement Outcomes, which will detail the most important aspects of learning and experiences for learners to achieve in order to securely progress in their learning.

Curriculum - The past year has been a critical and busy period in the design and development of the new curriculum. The development of Areas of Learning and Experience has reached its most intense period, with a significant amount of highly technical work. Over the past year AoLE groups have:

- developed “What Matters” statements, which are the high level key concepts for each AoLE and ways of organising learning across the curriculum;
- engaged with discipline experts to challenge and support their design work
- engaged with national and international curriculum design experts to ensure independent evidence and challenge;
- outlined the essential knowledge, skills and experience needed to achieve the “What Matters” statements and the four purposes, and worked to ensure that the links and dependencies between each of the AoLEs are identified;
- produced achievement outcomes for each progression step;

- Pioneers have been working closely with researchers at the University of Wales, Trinity St David and Glasgow University who have provided an evidence based approach as part of the CAMAU project;
- developed guidance to support schools and settings in using the new curriculum to support learning and teaching, and worked with bilingual editors to ensure the curriculum is developed in both languages.

We have published a number of updates including a key update in June this year through a special edition of Dysg to update on progress in developing the new curriculum including the learner progression model. The update can be found at the following link:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKWALES/bulletins/1f930de>

I also published a written statement later in June to update on progress. The update can be found at the following link:

<https://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2018/newcurriculumandassessmentarrangements/?lang=en>

As the curriculum is being developed, Pioneer schools have a key role in engaging with education professional across the whole sector to share, test, develop and improve their thinking during this design phase. These roles have been set out in a core brief that was shared with Pioneers Schools. Pioneers are currently developing guidance on how assessment will support learning in the new curriculum.

Regional consortia also have a key role in sharing progress with all schools and supporting teachers in the realisation of the new curriculum as it develops. Professional learning pioneers have began 'sense making' the content within their schools and clusters.

Latest checkpoint - The last checkpoint for the Curriculum and Assessment Group in this phase of work was held in early November. The Group provided positive feedback on the design and development work to date. They provided detailed comments and reflections on each Area of Learning and Experience, the curriculum as a whole, and the overarching guidance. The group also discussed the potential implications of curriculum development on wider reform elements as we move towards the feedback phase in April.

Assessment Working Group – Building on the existing work to establish assessment principles for the new curriculum, in October we established a working group, made up of a number of pioneers from each AoLE along with pioneers from the Strand One Assessment and Progression steering group, Estyn and Qualifications Wales, to focus on developing the new assessment arrangements. The overall aim of the Assessment Group is to inform and assist with the design and delivery of new assessment arrangements; ensuring that they support the purposes of education as set out in Successful Futures, and that they adhere to the principle that assessment should always be proportionate to its benefits.

Our future assessment arrangements will have a renewed emphasis on assessment for learning as an essential and integral feature of learning and teaching. The central focus of assessment in the future will be to ensure all learners understand how they are performing and what they need to do next in order to progress and realise their potential.

Online Personalised Assessment – Responding to the Successful Futures recommendation to develop innovative, interactive approaches to assessment, and in line with commitments in Our National Mission, work is proceeding to begin the phasing in of

adaptive personalised assessments to replace the paper-based reading and numeracy tests.

The new assessments adjust the difficulty level of questions to suit the learner being assessed which gives teachers and schools more targeted and detailed information on their learners' performance. They also reduce the time it takes to provide this high-quality feedback, allowing learners and teachers to plan the steps they need to take in order to move forward.

The procedural numeracy assessments went live on the 5 December, with reading following in 2019/20 and numerical reasoning in 2020/21.

Legislation - We are proposing the new curriculum will be underpinned by a Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Bill and the White Paper for the Bill and the draft Regulatory Impact Assessment are scheduled for publication in the New Year.

Welsh - Within Our National Mission and in tandem with the development of a transformational curriculum, the Welsh Government commits to developing a transformational approach to the learning, teaching and assessment of the Welsh language with the aim of ensuring all learners will be able to use the Welsh language when they leave school.

In line with the vision of *Cymraeg 2050* and Professor Sioned Davies' recommendation, the Languages, Literacy and Communication AoLE group is working on the basis of developing one continuum for learning Welsh, English and other languages. This will be available for feedback in April 2019. We have also published the Welsh in Education: Action Plan 2017-21 setting out our plans to achieve the vision of *Cymraeg 2050* to develop a transformational curriculum to enable learners to use the Welsh language when they leave school at 16.

Foundation Phase - We have been working hard with stakeholders to ensure that the needs of our youngest learners in the current Foundation Phase curriculum are taken fully into account in the development of the new curriculum. While the new curriculum will remove artificial barriers, supporting transition through education, the developing curriculum needs to reflect the strengths that the Foundation Phase has brought to education in Wales, and reflect these through coherent and continuous education for all 3 – 16 year olds.

In recent months we have strengthened the work of the AoLEs through strong representation from the Foundation Phase, including representation from the maintained and non-maintained sector, consortia, non-maintained umbrella organisations, academia, and Pioneer schools.

We have also recruited independent expertise to review the progress of this work and to validate how well the Foundation Phase ethos, principles and pedagogy have been incorporated across the new curriculum. We are confident that we can strengthen our approach to early years education, and build on the strengths of the Foundation Phase through this work, to ensure the needs of our youngest learners are fully addressed in the new Curriculum.

Looking forward, we will begin working with partners in spring 2019 to consider how we can build on the current Foundation Phase Profile to ensure we can seamlessly align assessment arrangements in the early years with the new curriculum to support practice.

We will ensure this work is inclusive and considers the needs of our children in Flying Start settings and those with additional learning needs.

3. Developing a high-quality education profession

We believe the success of the new curriculum is dependent on our four enabling objectives. As we come to a key milestone in the design of the new curriculum the next phase of reform will focus heavily on action to ensure the teaching profession is confident and capable to deliver it.

Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership - We worked with consortium colleagues and other partners to develop the five professional standards for teaching and leadership – pedagogy, collaboration, innovation, professional learning and leadership. The new standards concentrate on the essential elements of every teacher's work. The standards are aligned with the four purposes of the curriculum and the national approach to professional learning. They contain descriptors which provide aspiration and a focus for exploration, reflection and career-long professional learning.

The standards were published in September 2017 and all new newly qualified teachers (NQTs) undertaking induction have been using these standards. Since September 2018 all teachers and leaders have been using the standards.

Welsh Government Education officials have also been working with the profession to co-construct a set of standards for all those who assist teaching, using the same model as the professional standards for teaching and leadership. The model, developed via practitioner workshops held across Wales, has been shared with consortia, Higher Level Teaching Assistant assessors, workforce unions and other stakeholders. It has also been trialled in a small number of primary, secondary and special schools and the feedback was used to arrive at the current draft standards. The draft standards were made available in the summer term and on 29 November I announced a formal consultation on the draft standards.

We have also been working closely with consortia induction leads to support the implementation of the new standards with NQTs. This has included taking a fresh look at the role of standards and mentoring in induction. The result has been a shift away from a 'checklist' approach to an emphasis on using the standards to reflect on professional experiences with the support of high quality mentoring. In order to pass induction, NQTs must demonstrate they meet all of the relevant descriptors in the standards.

We have also begun to work with consortia to increase the rigour and value of induction by formalising the induction standardisation and moderation process across Wales.

Another focus has centred on our new recruits into the teaching profession, which I acknowledge is an area identified as underperforming in the past with concerns around recruitment statistics, inspection findings and quality of graduates coming through the system. I have added rigour to the accreditation process by empowering the Education Workforce Council to accredit individual Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes. This exercise seeks to raise the standard of teacher training in line with the new professional standards and with the new national model for professional learning. Newly accredited ITE programmes will commence September 2019.

These new ITE partnerships represent the real step change required in the sector. They will design and deliver courses that support the four purposes of the new curriculum for Wales, and address the six Areas of Learning and Experience.

We are making good progress with the new part-time Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) which combines online study with tutorials and seminars, something that has the potential to make Wales a world-leader in this area. This will enable student teachers to maintain their current commitments whilst studying. In addition we are developing a new Employment Based Route, where student teachers can be employed by a school from the outset. This will be targeted to help address teaching shortages in schools across our regions and together with the new PGCE.

We require a partner of the highest quality that shares our high ambitions and vision for ITE in Wales to work with us to develop and deliver both the part-time PGCE and employment based routes. A procurement exercise is ongoing with the contract scheduled to be awarded February 2019. We expect to see the first students entering the programmes from academic year 2019/20.

To help head teachers manage their workload and focus a greater proportion of their time on teaching and learning, we are working with Local Government to provide £1.2 million over two academic years to reduce unnecessary burden through the appointment of school business managers.

Over 100 schools are being supported through the pilots. However recognising progress has been slower than desired, we also plan to launch a new workload reduction initiative in the coming months.

National Approach to Professional Learning - Our new curriculum cannot be delivered without a high-quality education workforce. That is why I have launched a National Approach to Professional Learning (NAPL) that builds capacity from initial teacher education and is embedded in evidence-based research and effective collaboration. We are expecting a profound transformation in the way our practitioners and leaders think about their professional learning in light of the new curriculum and we need to provide support to schools to enable them to make this step-change.

In November this year, I announced our single biggest investment in support for teachers as part of the NAPL. This will see £9 million in 2018-19 and £15 million in 2019-20 invested to support teachers to plan ahead for the new curriculum and minimise disruption to pupils' learning whilst prioritising the wellbeing of teachers in this significant period of change. Funding will be allocated to the frontline and will be targeted to create and release capacity at school and cluster level for structured, managed and resourced engagement with the professional learning for the new curriculum.

Our own "made in Wales" approach to professional learning is a key point in our reform journey. It pulls together our new professional standards, the *Schools as Learning Organisations* approach, and professional learning model, to create a vision fit for our evolving system. When the draft curriculum is launched in April 2019, we will further develop our understanding of the professional learning challenges associated with implementation in schools.

We are already investing in professional learning to ensure that the workforce can develop their Welsh language skills in accordance with the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership and in preparation to deliver the new curriculum. Through regional consortia, we will also encourage schools to strategically plan for improvements, to include

consideration of workforce planning, and developing a culture and ethos within schools to promote the Welsh language.

Welsh Government Education officials are currently working with the Knowledge and Analytical Services Division to implement appropriate mechanisms to monitor the impact of the emerging National Approach on the ground.

Supporting resources - The launch of the National Approach for Professional Learning during the autumn term education conferences was supported by a new animated explainer, clarifying links with wider curriculum reform, distinctive NAPL branding and an interactive Diamond 9 tool to encourage practitioners to consider immediate professional learning priorities aligned to the Approach in their own setting.

Additional bespoke resources developed to support the education conferences including 'talking heads' videos featuring lead experts and academics and Higher Education Institution research papers will be made more widely available on Hwb. Phased publication of the new resources will commence from January 2019.

Following a national pioneer event in the autumn, a series of vox pop videos were produced featuring professional learning pioneers, regional consortia professional learning leads and Higher Education partners to provide an update on the work of the pioneers and reinforce how the new Approach will support the new curriculum.

System readiness through professional learning - Immediate professional learning development needs will vary according to the school context and the specific needs of individual practitioners.

We are in the phase of the programme now where, through Critical Collaborative Professional Enquiry (CCPE) led by pioneers supported by Higher Education partners, we are drawing out the needs of practitioners, to ensure that professional learning offer in the regions is responsive to emerging requirements.

The regions will have a variety of ways of sharing the outcomes from the CCPE process as part of the Professional Learning offer, and Welsh Government Education officials will work with the regions to ensure that the relationship between pioneers (and other schools who have taken the lead) and the wider community of schools delivers for schools across the system.

The key areas of focus for the initial Professional Learning Programme will be based on what comes out of the AoLE development process, but will certainly include professional learning opportunities for all practitioners on:

- Purposes driven instead of coverage based curriculum – what changes about planning, realising and assessing learning?
- The six AoLE – moving to interdisciplinary models of teaching and learning, and exploring project based approaches;
- Moving from what matters to what we learn – realising the curriculum with local relevance and authenticity;
- The implications for practice of the pedagogic approaches proposed in Successful Futures – what changes in the classroom?
- Incorporating new content and new content relationships across all the AoLE;
- School-level curriculum making – new skills for the new approach;

- Re-thinking assessment and progression;
- Moving from big data to child-centred intelligence about pupil progress.

Consortia have a critical role in the provision of professional learning opportunities that schools can access, and which can prepare them for the realisation of the curriculum at a local and regional level. This includes the work currently being led by the curriculum and the professional learning pioneers, to the work of specialist advisers in regions and the work of challenge advisers.

Welsh Government Education officials are working closely with consortia Managing Directors and with the regional leads for professional learning to ensure that consortia adopt a consistent approach to professional learning; that they meet the quality imperatives; and that all schools have access to a consistent level of provision and support.

Engaging schools - Professional learning pioneer schools have undertaken detailed engagement work with cluster partners to consider initial professional learning implications of the new curriculum.

This work initially began during the Spring Term 2018, when the professional learning pioneers supported engagement cycles led by the CAMAU partnership to explore the emerging progression framework to support the new curriculum. Since the Autumn Term, professional learning pioneers have worked with Higher Education partners to deepen and enhance their intelligence of emerging professional learning needs through a series of enquiries. From the Spring Term, professional learning pioneers will extend their enquiry focus to work with cluster schools and the wider education network, to begin to provide the evidence basis to enhance the ongoing roll-out of the National Approach to Professional Learning.

To enable schools outside the pioneer network to actively engage in this process, enhanced cluster funding will be made available to incentivise and encourage cluster schools to become actively involved in professional learning enquiries led by the professional learning pioneers.

4. Inspirational leaders working collaboratively to raise standards

In 2014, the OECD reported that Wales should '*treat developing system leadership as a prime driver of education reform*'. We have responded positively, enhancing and developing our National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and our new professional leadership standards for schools.

We launched the National Academy of Educational Leadership (NAEL) on 16 May this year. Now operational, the Academy is will secure, nurture and inspire leaders now and in the future. It is responsible for the development of leadership provision which includes quality assurance and supporting all leaders regardless of where they are in their careers path with a common access approach to leadership.

The Academy has already endorsed its first training programme that will benefit 150 new and acting head teachers in the first year and a further endorsement round currently on going with further plans to review and develop the endorsement process. The Academy is beginning to broaden its influence and focus, working with the wider sector including unions, Further Education and work based learning partnerships. It is also starting to look at innovative practice which can be developed.

5. Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being

We believe strongly that our learners must be supported to be emotionally and physically ready to learn in a safe and supportive environment.

In January this year, the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Bill received Royal Assent, paving the way for a new approach that will drive improvement to standards and to support learners up to the age of 25 to meet their full potential. This is part of a much wider Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transformation Programme, supported by a commitment of £20million from 2017-18 to 2020-21. These changes will not be in overnight, but through our ALN Transformation leads, we are supporting delivery partners to be ready for the new system and bring about the cultural change needed to fulfil the duties set out in the Act.

We have made good progress in helping schools address the needs of disadvantaged learners. Our independent evaluation of the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) supports this, also indicating that schools consider the funding to be invaluable. The PDG is currently at £95 million annually, rising to £97 million in 2019-20, including PDG Access. There is considerable evidence that investment which addresses barriers earlier in education has a beneficial impact on learners. We have more than doubled the Early Years PDG to the equivalent of £700 per eligible learner to reflect this.

I have announced £3 million over this year and next to support the development of a new national approach to identifying, supporting and inspiring our most able and talented learners, recognising we must do more to identify, support and stretch these groups of learners. This includes an extension of the Seren Project to inspire more learners from an early age.

In September this year the Cabinet Secretary for Health and I jointly established a Ministerial Task and Finish Group to consider how we embed a whole school approach to emotional and mental health within an integrated system approach.

The Group will have a challenging programme of work, building on progress to date and the recommendations of the Committee's *Mind Over Matter* report from April this year. In September 2017 we announced the mental health CAMHS in-reach to schools, demonstrating we are working across areas to ensure positive outcomes for learners.

Our school based Food and Fun / Bwyd a Hwyl programme was able to accommodate an offer of 2,300 places to learners across sixteen local authorities and all seven Local Health Boards, providing healthy meals, food and nutrition education, physical activity and enrichment sessions to children in areas of social deprivation during the summer holidays.

The challenges associated with the transfer to Universal Credit continue at a UK level. You will be aware that I recently issued a statement setting out that following a public consultation, I now plan to introduce an annualised net earned income threshold of £7,400 to assess the eligibility of UC claimants for Free School Meals in April 2019.

6. Robust accountability and assessment arrangements supporting a self-improving school system

Our new system must have strong accountability that drives excellence and a desire to improve. It is clear that with additional layers added over time, our current processes have become less coherent. We have committed to agree transitional evaluation arrangements

with schools and have worked across the three tiers to develop this work and share our progress.

In preparation and support of these new transitional arrangements we have introduced new interim and transitional performance measures for secondary schools; ceased publication of step one of National School Categorisation; and amended regulations to stop the publication of teacher assessment data and National Reading and Numeracy Tests data below the national level, to re-focus on assessment of the pupil.

I expect our evaluation and improvement arrangements and the first Welsh Government Education Report Card will be published soon. I am also considering the implications of the independent review of Estyn in context of our reforms.

These new evaluation and improvement arrangements will help to bring about the cultural change needed to support the implementation and realisation of the new curriculum. The arrangements are based on four key principles:

- Fair – they will promote equity, inclusion, choice, individual pathways to learning and never losing sight of the learner;
- Coherent – allowing each part of the system to work together without overlapping, with clear roles and responsibilities;
- Proportionate – ensuring that the implementation of the new system and process is manageable and makes a difference and subsidiarity allowing responsibility for accountability for schools to be local, led by self-aware schools;
- Transparent – recognising the breadth of learning experience across schools and the value added by teachers in class.

At the heart of the evaluation and improvement arrangements is robust and continuous self-evaluation for all tiers of the education system. This, along with professional dialogue will support learning and improvement, embed collaboration, build trust, drive self-improvement and raise standards for all our learners.

Evaluation and improvement arrangements will be based on self-evaluation, authentication, planning, publication of summary actions and implementation and validation. This will apply equally to schools, Local Authorities, regional consortia and Welsh Government.

Self-Evaluation – self-evaluation will drive improvement for all learners and cover their starting point, finishing point, progress, background context and potential and experiences. It will focus on the four purposes of the new curriculum; it will be a continuing process and not merely happen at a particular point in time.

Authentication – self-evaluation will need to be authenticated to ensure that it is a true and genuine reflection of strengths and areas for development.

Planning – The outcome of the self-evaluation and authentication will result in the identification of areas for improvement and the formulation of an improvement plan.

Publication of summary actions and implementation plan – A summary of the action plan will be published and implementation and support taken forward.

Validation – At all levels it will require an element of external perspective if it is to benefit from necessary challenge and not be compromised by the interests and experience of those most directly involved. Peer reviewers will provide an external perspective to support the exploration of areas for improvement. Estyn will have a role in validating a school's self-evaluation and local authority/consortia inspections will continue.

To support the self-evaluation process, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Estyn are working with practitioners to design a national self-evaluation toolkit, which will ensure coherence, criteria and a common language for self-evaluation across schools, local authorities, consortia, Estyn and the Welsh Government. This will be shared and piloted with schools in 2019.

The Welsh Government Education Report Card is based on self-evaluation of the Education Directorate and peer review from a number of systems from the Atlantic Rim Collaboratory.

We want to ensure that all children benefit from our educational reforms, which is why we have developed a national approach to small and rural schools within the self-improving school system. Our Rural Education Action Plan published in October brings together all of the actions for rural schools within our national mission into one coherent plan. This includes a new school organisation code which came into force on 1 November and introduces a presumption against the closure of rural schools. In addition we introduced a new small and rural schools grant of £2.5 million a year from 1 April 2017 to encourage innovation and support school to school working, addressing some of the key issues faced by small and rural schools.

I hope this update is useful for the Committee and look forward to discussing progress with you on in the Committee session on 10 January.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', written in a cursive style.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Document is Restricted

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau
Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Our ref/Ein cyf: MA-P/VG/3573/18

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee
National Assembly for Wales

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

26 October 2018

Dear Lynne

Since publication of the committee report into Perinatal Mental Health Services in October 2017 we have continued to work with stakeholders to further develop the specialist community services made possible from investment made in 2015. A snapshot of activity for these services between April and July has shown that just over 1,500 referrals made to services across Wales which further evidences the demands experienced by these services.

As requested, I am writing to provide our 12 month update to the committee's recommendations, I have provided our original response as an annex at the end of this letter for ease of reference:

Recommendation 1: The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government establish and provide national funding for a clinician-led managed clinical network (MCN). The MCN should be provided with the necessary resource including senior clinical and administrative time, and a training budget. This will enable it to provide national leadership, coordination and expertise for the further development of perinatal mental health services and workforce, including in relation to quality standards, care pathways, professional competencies and training resources. The MCN should maintain the current Community of Practice to encourage and develop effective joint working and communication among all relevant professionals.

The Welsh Government has designated funding for an MCN which includes provision for senior clinical and administrative time and a training budget. Recruitment for the Perinatal Mental Health Clinical Lead has been completed, and subject to employment checks it is hoped the successful candidate will take up post by the end of the year. It will be for the clinical lead to establish the network in order to ensure that it is established with the required level of support. Preparatory work is being undertaken prior to the lead being in place in respect to the MCN's membership and terms of reference.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The new lead will be based in the NHS collaborative, working alongside other managed clinical networks in existence, this will enable cross working and good sharing of information.

Whilst recruitment was taking place for the lead, capacity was provided by the 1000 lives mental health and learning disabilities improvement programme. This enabled the continued support of the existing All-Wales Perinatal Mental Health Steering Group (AWPMHSG) and the community of practice. Details of their work over the last year are included in subsequent updates to recommendations.

Recommendation 2: The Committee recommends that the Welsh Government ensure one of the new MCN's first tasks is to agree and publish outcome-based performance measurements for perinatal mental health services. Once these are developed, the Welsh government should collect and publish national and local data on the measures, with service provision, activity and improvement monitored by a named associated body (e.g. Public Health Wales) so that further levers for improvement can be identified and implemented.

Recommendation 4: That the Welsh Government ensure, once the urgent work to establish the level of demand for MBU services is completed as requested by WHSSC, more robust data collection and monitoring methods are maintained across the perinatal mental health pathway in order to understand the ongoing level of need and demand for support and to provide a stronger evidence base for future service development.

As stated in recommendation one we have continued to support the All Wales Perinatal Mental Health Steering Group (AWPMHSG) and Community of Practice over the last year by facilitating dedicated time from the 1000 lives mental health and learning disabilities improvement team. This joined up working enabled the publication of 'Guidance for the Delivery of Integrated Perinatal Mental Health Services in Wales' in July 2018.

This document provides guidance on the functions of integrated perinatal mental health services in Wales. It has been developed in conjunction with key stakeholders including those with lived experience and the third sector. All professional groups have been represented and the most up to date research and evidence have informed its content.

The standards in the document were developed to support equitable access to and provision of perinatal services in Wales. It suggests information to be collected by health boards to develop a clear picture of service demand, uptake and delivery. It is expected that both qualitative and quantitative information will become available as services develop and mature. This work will enable health boards to make evidenced based decisions about the future provision of that service.

A tool and data dictionary definitions to support the collection of information about perinatal mental health services is also being piloted. Maternity, health visiting and perinatal mental health services will work together to determine quantitative and qualitative key performance indicators that they wish to utilise from the data collection/audit question suggested in the companion to this document. This work will now be considered alongside the development of the mental health core dataset and will also include discussion on the reporting requirements of these services. It is however recognised that we will not be in a position to fully report on the level of detail required across Wales until we roll out the Welsh Community Care Informatics Service (WCCIS). WCCIS has a phased implementation up until 2022, although it is recognised that some elements of this required work will be completed sooner.

1000 lives improvement team has also undertaken work to establish the demand for MBU services. The data collection tool currently being piloted will contain information about the demand for inpatient provision.

Recommendation 3: That the work requested by WHSSC to identify the level of demand for in-patient Mother and Baby Unit (MBU) services should be completed as a matter of urgency. We recommend that this work be finished during the 6-week window in which we would expect the Welsh Government to provide a response to this report and should be a core consideration when deciding how to allocate the funding for specialist in-patient perinatal mental health services announced as part of the 01 October budget agreement.

Recommendation 6: That the Welsh Government, based on the evidence received, establish an MBU in south Wales, commissioned and funded on a national basis to provide all-Wales services, staffed adequately in terms of numbers and disciplines, and to act as a central hub of knowledge and evidence-based learning for perinatal mental health services in Wales.

WHSSC have completed our commission to identify the level of demand for in-patient MBU services, required in order to inform required service needs. Whilst this has taken longer than we hoped, this extended time has also allowed the impact of the new community services on inpatient demand to be more clearly assessed.

Following WHSSC-facilitated commissioning workshops, two Welsh Health Boards have expressed an interest in delivering a Mother and Baby Unit service. Work is ongoing to explore the feasibility of any proposals, estimated costs and the timescales. It is envisaged that these submissions will be ready to be presented to the WHSSC Joint Committee on 13 November. Options for the provision of a Mother & Baby Unit service that women in North Wales can access will also be submitted.

We have requested that WHSSC write to the Committee providing an update directly to you following the Joint Committee on the 13 November.

Recommendation 5: That the new managed clinical network (see recommendation 1) prioritises the production of guidance for professionals and information for patients on the evidence-based benefits admission to an MBU can have for mothers, babies, and their families so that more informed decisions about treatment options can be taken.

The established Community of Practice provides clinicians with access to up to date research and information. This is being currently facilitated by the 1000 lives team. The 1000 lives team also held a conference in March 2018 which focused on promoting parent and infant mental health in the first 1000 days.

The new Perinatal Mental Health Clinical Lead, once in post, will prioritise working closely with the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) to create the specific guidance on admissions to a MBU.

Recommendation 7: That the Welsh Government, in light of the fact that an MBU in south Wales will not necessarily be suitable for mothers and families in mid and north Wales, engage as a matter of urgency with NHS England to discuss options for the creation of a centre in north east Wales that could serve the populations of both sides of the border. More certainty should also be established by the Welsh Government in relation to the ability of the Welsh NHS to commission MBU beds in centres in England where those are deemed clinically necessary.

Discussions are ongoing with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. Whilst WHSSC as the commissioners of the current service have had a number of conversations with NHS England, no firm arrangements for procurement of beds in the North have been agreed to date. The Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Team in North Wales are involved in developing plans for a local model for assessment and transfer to a specialist bed either in NHS Wales or England as required. A paper with the various options and outlined costs will go to the WHSSC Joint Committee on 13 November.

As stated above we have requested that WHSSC write to the Committee providing an update directly to you following the Joint Committee.

Recommendation 8: That the Welsh Government deliver a clear action plan to ensure that centres providing MBU beds, wherever they are located (in England or in Wales), are closely integrated with specialist community perinatal mental health teams and that these beds are managed, co-ordinated and funded on an all-Wales, national basis to ensure efficient use and equitable access, especially as they are often needed quickly in crisis situations.

We expect that community teams would link with inpatient services in England (or Wales) to ensure seamless transition from home to specialist services and back in order to support smooth step up and step down transfer between inpatient and community care. The Community of Practice includes membership from each health board community team to facilitate this learning across Wales. Work is ongoing to ensure core services will provide care in people's homes with links to the MBU when necessary. Current provision is managed on a case by case by WHSSC.

Recommendation 9: That, on the basis of an 'invest to save' argument and following analysis of the forthcoming evaluation of services and Mind-NSPCC-NMHC research results, the Welsh Government provide additional funding to Health Boards to better address variation so that service development and quality improvement can be achieved by expanding existing teams. To enable all community perinatal mental health services to be brought up to the standard of the best, the mechanism adopted by the Welsh Government to allocate additional funding should have as its primary aim the need to address the disparity in provision between Health Boards in Wales.

The Mind-NSPCC-NMHC report highlighted the progress which has been made in the provision of perinatal mental health care to women and their families in Wales and made explicit reference to these improvements. It also highlighted areas where further work was needed. Ongoing monitoring of the activity of the community perinatal mental health teams has also shown evidence of increasing demand.

A priority for the £7m mental health transformation fund which commenced this year includes consideration of expanding perinatal mental health community services as a key priority area. Health boards were asked to submit proposals by July and officials have been assessing these proposals. Health boards have confirmed their intention to spend approximately another £0.5m across Wales in respect to perinatal mental health services.

Further investment in this important area has also been included in the draft budget for 2019-20. We will request that health boards consider the Mind-NSPCC-NMHC report when further developing their services.

Recommendation 10: That the Welsh Government ensure work underway on improving access to psychological therapies for perinatal women (and men where necessary) is prioritised given the established link between perinatal ill health and a

child's health and development. Priority should be given to ensuring pregnant and postnatal women with mental health problems have rapid and timely access to talking therapies or psychological services (at primary and secondary care level), with waiting times monitored and published. We request an update on progress in relation to improving access to psychological therapies for perinatal women (and men where necessary) within 12 months of this report's publication.

We have provided £4m of extra funding direct to health boards to improve access to psychological therapies. The National Psychological Therapies Management Committee has produced an action / implementation plan to assist health boards to assess their current position and to make improvements locally. We have approved proposals from all health boards to improve their local services in line with the national plan. Support has now been provided to health boards to implement their individual plans.

There is already a requirement that an assessment by Local Primary Mental Health Support Services (LPMHSS) is offered within 28 days of receipt of referral and that ensuing therapeutic interventions by LPMHSS start within 28 days of the assessment outcome. Both requirements have a performance target of 80%. Last published data (June 2018) shows that Health Boards are meeting the targets for assessment and interventions on an All Wales, all-ages, basis in LPMHSS. This improvement is in the context of increased referrals to LPMHSS. Across Wales from 2013 to 2015 an average of 4,863 referrals were received per month, by 2017-18 this had increased to an average of 5,589 per month. This means that more people are being referred to and accessing LPMHSS services and more people are seen and receiving therapeutic interventions in a timely manner where needed.

We recognise that some women will require more specialist psychological interventions and our investment and national plan is also seeking to improve access to these services and make the access more timely. Our current data collection plans for these more specialist services do not allow us to disaggregate this data in respect to perinatal services currently; ongoing work in relation to the development of the mental health core dataset will improve our ability to do this in the future.

Recommendation 11: That the Welsh Government ensure all Health Boards invest in signing up fully to the Royal College of Psychiatrists' quality standards for perinatal mental health services in order to realise the benefits of peer review, shared learning and service benchmarking.

Through the All Wales Perinatal Mental Health Steering Group (AWPMHSG), all health boards have given a commitment to working towards the Royal College of Psychiatrists' quality standards. The Mind-NSPCC-NMHC report confirmed that two community teams have signed up to this quality standard whilst also giving rich information on where existing teams should focus in order to improve services delivered.

The AWPMHSG and Community of Practice continue to provide opportunities for shared learning and benchmarking.

Recommendation 12: That the Welsh Government ensure that the new all-Wales clinical care pathway for perinatal mental health services requires consistency of outcomes (including referral windows and waiting times) but enables Health Boards to retain the level of flexibility around delivery methods necessary to manage and meet local need. The priority should be to develop and implement within the next 12 months an evidence-based, integrated all-Wales clinical care pathway (with some local differences). The pathway should help to deliver integrated services and incentivise early intervention and holistic approaches to care and recovery.

The guidance for an integrated pathway has been developed – see reply to question 2.

Recommendation 14: That the Welsh Government review information provided in standard pre- and post-natal packs given to women in Wales to ensure that it includes the necessary details about emotional well-being, perinatal mental health and where to seek help and support.

The Bump, Baby and Beyond book (published in 2014) is given to all pregnant women. The book provides information for during pregnancy and for up to 5 years after the baby is born. It contains information on wellbeing and signposts where to seek help and support.

Officials are currently working with Public Health Wales in respect of information provided to parents. A group, chaired by the Deputy Chief Medical Officer, is considering the options for providing information to parents, including the possible use of electronic platforms and apps, rather than Bump Baby and Beyond alone.

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/documents/Pregnancy%20to%204%20Years%20Book%20FINAL%20English%20Revised%20E-Book%20Compressed.pdf>

Recommendation 15: That the Welsh Government design and provide for all Health Boards a national framework for antenatal classes and require Health Boards to do more to encourage attendance. The framework should include conversations about emotional wellbeing and the realities of parenthood in order to break down the significant and damaging stigma surrounding perinatal mental illness.

All health boards have parent craft provision delivered locally to their population. The approaches taken across NHS Wales are being reviewed as part of the work to develop a prudent vision for maternity services, which is due to be published by the end of the year.

We are aware that health boards continue to encourage attendance in a number of ways. Examples include linking with local leisure centres and creating online booking systems. We have also agreed to link into the antenatal education work stream in order to produce a national framework for awareness of perinatal mental health.

Recommendation 16: That the Welsh Government works with the relevant bodies to ensure that perinatal mental health is included in the pre-registration training and continuous professional development (CPD) of all health professionals and clinicians who are likely to come across perinatal women. The Welsh Government should ensure coverage of perinatal mental health as a discrete topic within midwifery and health visiting education is improved and forms part of the pre-registration mental health nursing programme. The Royal College of General Practitioners' core curriculum for general practice training also needs to better equip GPs to deal with perinatal mental health problems.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is the UK regulator for nurses, midwives and specialist community public health nurses such as health visitors. Part of its role is to set the standards of proficiency leading to registration. The standards of proficiency for nurses and midwives are currently being revised and are expected to be introduced for programmes starting in September 2020.

The new nurse proficiency standards have been announced and for all fields of practice there is an expectation that the nurses will have knowledge and skills in mental health.

There is a national implementation working group consisting of members of the approved education institutions and NHS Wales to develop the nursing programmes to be offered in

Wales. The national programme lead has been asked to ensure perinatal mental health care is explicitly included in the mental health nursing field programmes.

While the current midwifery standards do make reference to “monitoring and supporting women who have postnatal depression or other mental illnesses“ there will be an opportunity to enhance future midwives’ knowledge and skills in perinatal mental health care. To make sure that the midwives of the future are ready for the challenges ahead the NMC is currently reviewing and working to future-proof the standards of proficiency for registered midwives. The new standards will outline what is required of student midwives before they can join the register and begin practising as qualified midwives. The range of views and feedback they have gathered is helping to develop draft standards of proficiency. The NMC will take the draft standards to their Council meeting in November 2018, and then consult on them publicly in February 2019. A national implementation working group will be set up once the standards have been approved. In a similar way to the nursing standards work, this group will also be asked to ensure perinatal mental health knowledge and skills are embedded in the midwifery programmes offered in Wales.

We can also confirm that Perinatal Mental Health is covered within the GP training curriculum. In terms of teaching relating to this topic, this is primarily delivered through group Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions as well as one-to-one tutorial sessions between the trainee and Educational Supervisor.

Recommendation 17: That the Welsh Government undertake work to develop and deliver a workforce strategy/competency framework to build capacity and competency across the specialist workforce, looking to experience in England and Scotland’s Managed Clinical Networks (MCNs) which take responsibility for training as part of their leadership and co-ordination role.

A training and competency task and finish group has been established and it is anticipated that this work will be completed by the new perinatal network. Health boards have also submitted funding proposals which include aspects of training through the mental health transformation fund. Implementation of this work will be monitored by Welsh Government.

Recommendation 18 - That the Welsh Government ensure every Health Board has a specialist perinatal mental health midwife in post to encourage better communication between professionals to enable women who are unwell to get the very best care and support they need.

Five health boards now have a specialist perinatal mental health midwife in place and one health board has a specialist perinatal health visitor. We are continuing to work with health boards on the further development of the perinatal mental health teams to ensure that women get the best care and support. These discussions will be informed by the findings of the Mind-NSPCC-NMHC and the Maternal Mental Health Alliance reports. Another role of the clinical lead will be to continue to improve communication between professionals.

Recommendation 19: That the Welsh Government ensure all Health Boards work towards a situation in which every woman has a continued relationship with either a midwife or health visitor. While meeting with the same individual may not be possible on all occasions, continuity of care should be an aspiration to which all Health Boards actively commit resources, with a named lead responsible for each woman’s perinatal care.

Our National Strategy, Prosperity for All, identifies the early years as a priority area. Reflecting the commitment in the National Strategy “to create a more joined up, responsive system that puts the unique needs of each child at its heart”, we have established a

programme of work to explore how we create an early years' system, both locally and nationally. Our aim is to develop a coordinated single approach to early years, which will ensure that services are delivered in a more collaborative and integrated way. This programme of work has underlined the key role the Health Visiting service has in supporting families, especially in identifying those in need of extra help. Officials hosted a Think Tank on 21 August which enabled health professionals from both Flying Start and universal Health Visiting services to explore a vision for future service provision and learn from what works. A work stream is in place to take forward recommendations from the Think Tank and make connections with other pieces of work that are underway in relation to early years.

In addition Welsh Government officials are leading work developing with stakeholders a vision for future maternity provision. All women proposed to have continuity of care ante-natally and post-natally through a buddy system and individualised care planning.

Recommendation 20: That the Welsh Government work with Health Boards to ensure appropriate levels of third sector provision are properly funded, especially where referrals are being made to and from statutory services. A directory of third sector services should be made available to increase awareness of their availability and relevant third sector providers should be invited as a matter of course to attend training jointly with statutory services.

As iterated in our previous response health boards are expected to plan to deliver mental health services to meet the needs of their respective populations. They may choose to deliver these services in partnership with third or independent sector organisations, or commission specific services from them. From our mapping work we are aware of examples of this happening. Any service needs to be supported by appropriate training and we would expect commissioners of services to ensure this is happening, including those from the third sector. The third sector are also key members of the AWPMHSG and the Community of Practice, both of which include a role in sharing practice and fostering learning opportunities. .

We recognise that the demand of perinatal mental health services is currently exceeding capacity which is why we included it as a key priority area for the mental health transformation fund and included it within our draft budget for 2019/20.

We also continue to support DEWIS Cymru which is a 'one stop shop' for information about wellbeing in Wales

Recommendation 21: That the Welsh Government outline within six months of this report's publication how it expects the lack of psychological support for neonatal and bereaved parents to be addressed and standards to be met, and what steps it will take if compliance with the standards is not achieved. The third edition of the neonatal standards should be published as a matter of priority.

Each health board in Wales has a lead for maternity bereavement support. The bereavement leads have been key to delivering All Wales training to clinical staff, developing information for women and families, developing the care standards and working in collaboration with the stillbirth and neonatal society (SANDs) on appropriate environments for care. Support for women and families should range from initial recognition of loss to funeral arrangements and postnatal investigations and debriefing. It is recognised that a single point of contact is critical to ensuring that families feel supported and are kept informed.

There are robust processes in place to review any death. This includes a requirement for local review using the Perinatal Mortality Review Tool (PMRT). The PMRT also generates reports for hospitals to consider at Board level.

The reports will enable organisations to identify themes across a number of deaths to support learning and system level changes in the delivery and commissioning of services to improve future care. The Maternity and Neonatal Network will produce an annual report in line with the PMRT recommendations.

There is also a requirement to report deaths to MBRRACE-UK (Mother and Babies: Reducing Risk through Audits and Confidential Enquiries across the UK) who are commissioned by HQIP to undertake the Maternal, New-born and Infant Clinical Outcome Review Programme. The aim of the programme is to collect, analyse and report national surveillance data and conduct national confidential enquiries in order to stimulate and evaluate improvements in health care for mothers and babies.

The Neonatal Network revised the Neonatal standards with the 3rd Edition having been approved at Neonatal Network Steering Group in September 2017 and fully introduced early in 2018.

The Wales Neonatal Network ensures regular monitoring of progress to full compliance where there is reference to bereavement care. Each unit will ensure there are enough psychologists, counsellors and other mental health workers available to allow parents, siblings and staff access to psychological support.

Under the terms of the Standards, bereavement support will be offered to families whose baby has passed away in the neonatal unit

Officials have provided guidance to health boards on the care of children born on the threshold of survival. As a part of this work, a Welsh Health Circular was issued instructing health boards to ensure that they have suitable provision for bereavement support for families who lose their babies.

We expect Health Boards to work with the Neonatal Network to ensure their neonatal service plans are sufficiently robust to achieve the All Wales Neonatal Standards and improvements across the service.

In addition the End of Life Care Board is working with Marie Curie Research Centre to scope out the provision of bereavement services across Wales. This work is scheduled to run from November 2018 to May 2019.

Recommendation 25: That the Welsh Government ensure all workforce planning for perinatal mental health service provision considers - and provides for - the Welsh language needs of the population.

The Welsh Language Standards for the health sector will build on More Than Just words and are due to come into force in June 2019. The Welsh Language Commissioner will decide which standards will be imposed on health boards and trusts. but standards in the regulations include the requirement for organisations to develop the Welsh language skills of their staff; provide Welsh language awareness training; assess the need for Welsh language skills when advertising posts and the requirement for organisations to publish a 5 year plan setting out the extent to which they are able to increase their ability to offer clinical consultations in Welsh.

Recommendation 26: That the Welsh Government require Health Boards to report on the extent to which their perinatal mental health teams are engaging - and undertaking joint work - with other services such as CAMHS, Community Addiction Units (CAUs) and primary and secondary care mental health teams.

As part of our monitoring, we have confirmation from all health boards that they engage and jointly work with other services. Examples show the specialist teams working flexibly to meeting the needs of individual service users in doing so undertaking joint working between teams including CAMHS, Substance Misuse, primary care and CMHTs.

Recommendation 27: That the Welsh Government undertake further work on the link between health inequalities and perinatal mental health, focusing in particular on the best mechanisms for the early identification and treatment of those populations in greatest need.

Our funding to support the ACE's Hub in Public Health Wales underpins our long term approach to break the link between adverse experiences during childhood and poorer life outcomes, including mental health issues. In addition there are examples of where Midwives and Health Visitors are currently exploring how to ensure services they provide are ACE informed.

The 1000 lives team have also provided opportunities for learning about Adverse Childhood Experiences work outlined above and the development of trauma informed mental health services.

I hope you find my response helpful and look forward to updating you further in January.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services

Annex 1

Original reply to recommendations	
1	<p>Accept - Community perinatal services are now available in all areas across Wales. The work of the All-Wales Perinatal Mental Health Steering Group (AWPMHSG) and community of practice has been instrumental in developing the necessary connections and resources. I fully support the central role both groups have played in taking forward the perinatal agenda in Wales.</p> <p>However, I agree the need to establish a clinician-led managed clinical network (MCN) to support the further development of perinatal mental health services in Wales. The MCN will bring together the clinical leadership and strategic development roles into a single entity.</p> <p>Work to put the MCN in place will begin now, with the aim of recruiting to the leadership role this financial year.</p>
2	<p>Accept - The standards and outcomes subgroup of the AWPMHSG are currently developing an all-Wales integrated framework for the provision of perinatal mental health services in Wales, which we plan to publish in 2018. This will include both qualitative and quantitative outcome measures.</p> <p>The emerging all-Wales mental health and learning disabilities core data set will incorporate perinatal information. The IT systems, currently under construction, will be able to ensure more robust data collection and that monitoring arrangements are available in the future. This will be essential to understand the need and demand for perinatal services, as awareness increases and stigma and discrimination becomes less prevalent.</p>
3	<p>Accept - The current evidence base would suggest there is a need for inpatient care in southern Wales, though there would not be sufficient demand to provide a unit in North Wales alone, as your report has concluded. As you have acknowledged, we have already committed to providing inpatient care in Wales within the draft Budget for 2018-19 and 2019-20.</p> <p>The Tier 4 sub-group of the AWPMHSG is currently costing options for consideration, while considering the concerns raised by WHSSC's Joint Committee. The options are to be presented to the Joint Committee in January.</p> <p>In presenting options for inpatient care, key factors to be considered include the location of the service and resulting distance for families to travel. A single inpatient unit is likely to be one of these options. However, I expect options for more localised inpatient care, with shorter distances between mothers and babies and their families, to also be presented. It is vital the new inpatient model provides excellent care, whilst being sustainable in the longer term and meeting the needs of our whole population.</p>
4	As 2.
5	Accept - We have asked the existing Community of Practice to begin work on producing guidance for professionals and information for patients to support more informed decision making about treatment options.
6	As 3.
7	Accept - I have asked WHSSC to work with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to consider options in North Wales, including this recommendation. The outcomes will inform the overall development of inpatient care in Wales, which will consider the needs of mothers and families across the whole of Wales. The options for provision in North Wales will be presented to the Joint Committee in

	January, as part of the overall development of inpatient care across Wales.
8	<p>Accept - We agree that linking local perinatal community services and other teams across Wales will be instrumental in developing new inpatient provision in order to support smooth 'step up' or 'step down' transfer between inpatient and community care.</p> <p>The MCN will include representation from each health board community team, as the Community of Practice does at present, and will be fully engaged as inpatient care in Wales is developed.</p>
9	<p>Accept in principle - The forthcoming evaluation will provide greater clarity on how community services are currently meeting demand. It is essential there is equity of access to services across Wales and that health boards are able to provide community services which meet the needs of their local population.</p> <p>We have included an additional £20m each year for mental health services within the draft budget agreement for the next two years. This is in addition to the additional £20m included in this year's budget (2017-18). We expect health boards to use their increased mental health budget to address gaps in service provision.</p> <p>The MCN will work with the health boards to set evidence-based standards. This process allows the health boards to develop their services to meet these standards.</p>
10	<p>Accept - I accept the importance of pregnant and postnatal women having rapid and timely access to psychological interventions. Matrics Cymru - Guidance for Delivering Evidence-Based Psychological Therapy in Wales includes the evidence on the provision of psychological interventions during the perinatal period. The all-Wales action plan for the delivery of psychological therapies to support the implementation of Matrics Cymru is currently being developed and will be published in 2018.</p> <p>Existing community teams provide a range of support, including occupational therapy, specialist clinical psychologists and assistant psychologists. However, I will also ask my officials to seek advice from the Standards and Outcomes sub-group about collecting separate information on timeliness of interventions in line with the NICE recommendations in Matrics Cymru. That is, an assessment offered within two weeks of referral and interventions offered within one month of assessment. This is broadly in line with the waiting time targets we have already set for the provision of therapeutic interventions offered by local primary mental health support services.</p> <p>Health and Care Research Wales is also supporting specific research into evidence based practice in the perinatal period. We will ensure new and emerging evidence bases are built into the provision of services and revision of Matrics Cymru.</p> <p>The new MCN will set a strategic agenda and identify outcomes with appropriate timescales for delivery.</p>
11	<p>Accept - I fully support the AWPMSHG recommendations that health boards facilitate their perinatal mental health services to sign up to the Royal College of Psychiatrists' quality standards for perinatal mental health services. This will need to be done in line with Wales-specific legislation, such as the Social Services and Well-being Act and the Future Generations Act.</p>
12	<p>Accept - The new all-Wales integrated pathway and standards will support the delivery of consistency of outcomes for women and families wherever they are in Wales. How such services are delivered will take account of local demand and</p>

	<p>needs.</p> <p>It is important the timescales for the delivery of the pathway are realistic and achievable. Appropriate timescales will be put forward by the new MCN.</p>
13	Rejected
14	<p>Accept in principle - The standards and outcomes subgroup of the AWPMHSG, which has representation from all health boards in Wales, in conjunction with Public Health Wales, is considering the most evidence-based and effective method to improve women's awareness of the importance of mental wellbeing, as well as specific issues relating to perinatal mental health. This will include consideration of whether further information can be included in the pre- and post- natal packs.</p>
15	<p>Accept - The Welsh Government recently commissioned the Consultant Midwife group to explore women's experience of pregnancy and birth in Wales, which I launched in October. The survey aimed to evaluate women's views of antenatal services and how current service provision can prepare women for labour, birth and parenting.</p> <p>Included in the findings was the need for improved access to classes that adequately prepare them for birth and parenting. A programme to develop a strategic vision for future maternity services is underway. I agree the need to combine the antenatal education work stream to produce a national framework for awareness of perinatal mental health.</p>
16	<p>Accept in principle - The training and competency sub-group of the AWPMHSG is developing the perinatal mental health learning and development framework for Wales. It is expected to be published in 2018.</p> <p>Perinatal mental health is currently included in the Midwifery pre-registration training across Wales. The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is currently reviewing the education framework for 'Future Midwives' and I will ask that Welsh representatives ensure this is recommended for the future.</p> <p>Perinatal teams within the health boards are expected to provide post-registration training and updates to all staff involved in the care of women and families in pregnancy and postnatally.</p> <p>GPs work alongside midwives and health visitors in monitoring and managing the mental health needs of pregnant women and new mothers. Further training of GPs, designed to deliver increased awareness of, as well as optimum management of, perinatal mental health disorders should be rolled out via RCGP Wales. Engagement with the GP community will be facilitated through the AWPMHSG.</p>
17	<p>Accept - A sub-group of the AWPMHSG is already developing an integrated training and competency framework to ensure all staff in contact with women and their families during the perinatal period have sufficient knowledge and skills to offer evidence-based assessments and, as needed, interventions. This work should be completed in 2018.</p>
18	<p>Accept in principle - As with my response to Recommendation 9, I await the findings of the evaluation, which will provide a clearer picture of how the current model is meeting the demand for services across Wales. This will include how services in areas of lower population density work with surrounding services to meet the needs of new mothers and babies.</p>
19	<p>Accept - The Welsh Government commissioned the Consultant Midwife group to explore women's experience of pregnancy and birth in Wales, which I launched on 9 October. A key finding of the survey was that women wanted to build relationships with knowledgeable, compassionate and kind midwives. This not only makes women feel safe but enables them to trust in the information and</p>

	<p>advice they receive.</p> <p>When a woman suffers perinatal ill-health, the named midwife and local perinatal mental health team would collaborate to ensure an individualised plan of care and continuity.</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring all health boards have the right number of midwives employed within their services. The birth rate plus workforce acuity tool is applied across all health boards, which are required to be compliant against workforce ratios. This is monitored at annual maternity performance boards and enables the provision of a named midwife to all women in pregnancy.</p> <p>A collaborative event was held with key stakeholders in maternity services this month to develop a future vision for maternity services which will address the key messages from the Women's Survey.</p>
20	<p>Accept - Health boards are expected to plan to deliver mental health services to meet the needs of their respective populations. They may choose to deliver these services in partnership with third or independent sector organisations, or commission specific services from them.</p> <p>The Welsh Government is working with partners to coordinate the development of a single 'virtual' directory of services for health, social care, and the third and independent sectors. It is intended that the directory will be used by both the public and professionals and will underpin the new local authority information, advice and assistance service, as well as the 111 telephone and website service. It will include the wide range of services available in local communities and explain how people can access this care and support.</p>
21	<p>Accept - The revised neonatal standards will be published by the Neonatal Network and implemented across all health boards in the new year. The standards outline the need for each unit to ensure sufficient psychological support is available to parents, siblings and staff. The Welsh Government expects health boards to work together, supported by WHSSC and the Neonatal Network, to ensure high quality neonatal services in line with professional standards.</p> <p>Following the Health and Social Care inquiry into Stillbirths (2012), there is now a bereavement midwifery service in every health board. The service provides support to women and families who have suffered a loss through stillbirth or early neonatal death. Health boards also work with third sector organisations, such as the Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society (SANDS), to improve environments of care, provide support and facilitate professional training.</p>
22	Rejected
23	Rejected
24	Rejected
25	<p>Accept - Health boards are expected to consider the language needs of their local population when planning services. The Welsh Government's strategy to strengthen Welsh language services in health and social care, More Than Just Words, aims to ensure Welsh-speakers receive services in their first language. Under the Welsh Language Measure, the Welsh language has official status which means it should be treated no less favourably than the English language in Wales.</p> <p>We will expect the new MCN to consider how current provision meets Welsh language needs of the population as part of its work.</p>
26	<p>Accept - As in my response to Recommendation 22, I have asked the AWPMSHG to gather information on how the community teams currently engage with relevant services and consider what work needs to be done to improve collaboration.</p>

	<p>As part of the requirements within the Service Framework for the Treatment of People with a Co-occurring Mental Health and Substance Misuse Problem, published in 2015, we also expect a clear joint protocol and integrated pathway between mental health and substance misuse services. It is further expected that mental health and substance misuse services should be tailored to meet the needs of their local population (which will include expectant mothers). Progress on the implementation of this framework is monitored through existing arrangements within the Welsh Government's strategies 'Together for Mental Health' and 'Working Together to Reduce Harm'.</p>
27	<p>Accept - The Welsh Government's Health and Care Research Wales joint call for research into evidence-based practice in the perinatal period will include data on how services address health inequalities. The all-Wales integrated framework will also include specific reference to the need to make reasonable adjustments to ensure equity of access to those with protected characteristics.</p>

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA-L/KW/0776/18

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

11 December 2018

Dear Lynne,

I am pleased to announce the launch of the public consultation on the draft Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Code ('the ALN Code'). Along with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 ('the Act'), which received Royal Assent at the beginning of the year, the final statutory ALN Code will be an essential part of our programme to transform the system for supporting learners with additional learning needs (ALN). This is integral to Our National Mission for education in Wales.

The 15 week consultation will seek the views of delivery partners, families and other interested parties to help shape this important document and ensure the rights and duties under the new legislation are clearly understood.

The Act sets out the process for making the ALN Code, and requires that we consult with particular stakeholders on a draft of it as part of that process. The Committee is one of the statutory consultees listed in the Act under section 5(1). This recognises the significant stake you have in ensuring that the ALN Code reflects the new system in a way which is clear to those charged with its delivery and that the further guidance in it and mandatory requirements imposed by it are also clear and appropriate.

The consultation also seeks views on draft regulations relating to the Education Tribunal for Wales, draft regulations about Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinators, and the policy intent for a number of other proposed regulations relating to additional learning needs. We are also seeking views on proposed revisions to the code on looked after children under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (the Part 6 Code of Practice (Looked After and Accommodated Children)) and the policy intent for proposed regulations relating to the education of looked after children, particularly those with additional learning needs.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

It is crucial that you provide your views to ensure that our proposals are manageable and fair to those who must discharge functions under the new legislative framework, as well as just and equitable for learners with ALN who need the right support to help them achieve their full potential.

During the consultation period, we will be holding a number of engagement events across Wales for stakeholders to find out more about the draft Code and other proposals being consulted on. Details of these will be shared with you by my officials in due course.

Following the consultation, my officials and I will consider what revisions to make to the draft Code in light of the comments received. It is intended that the final drafts of the ALN Code and regulations will be laid before the National Assembly for Wales by the end of 2019, with a view to the provisions of the Act and regulations commencing from September 2020, with a three year implementation period before they apply in full.

Our work to date on reforming the system for supporting learners with ALN would not have been possible without direct involvement and challenge from our stakeholders. I would like take this opportunity to thank you for your collaboration and the efforts made in getting to this significant stage of the process. I invite you to consider this draft of the ALN Code and respond to the consultation by 22 March 2019. You can do this by clicking the following link to our consultation webpage <https://beta.gov.wales/draft-additional-learning-needs-code>.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', written in a cursive style.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

National Assembly for Wales
Children, Young People and Education Committee

Kirsty Williams AM
Cabinet Secretary for Education

11 December 2018

Dear Kirsty,

Scrutiny of Estyn's Annual Report 2017-18: follow-up

On 6 December 2018 the Children, Young People and Education Committee scrutinised the Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector ("HMCI") of Education and Training in Wales 2017-18. A [full transcript of our discussions](#) is available.

Three particular areas on which we would welcome further information from the Welsh Government arose during our discussions:

1. Standards in secondary schools

Standards

HMCI's annual report 2017-18 states that, of the 27 secondary schools inspected in 2017-18, 48 per cent were found to be either 'adequate and needing improvement', or 'unsatisfactory and needing urgent improvement'.

The annual report also states that in approximately half of the secondary schools inspected, a majority of pupils across the age and ability range do not develop their knowledge and skills well enough or make enough progress. Similarly, the majority of pupils do not achieve in line with their abilities at the end of compulsory schooling. We are deeply concerned at this waste of potential.

Interventions

We are also concerned about the extent to which interventions are made effectively and early enough in schools causing the most concern. HMCI has reported:



“Despite various initiatives, including banding and categorisation, it remains the case that these schools are not identified early enough and not enough is done to support them to develop sustainable strategies for improvement.”

In our report, *On the money? Targeted funding to improve educational outcomes*, we highlighted the importance of ensuring that the regional consortia provide the necessary challenge and support to the most underperforming schools, following the closure of the Schools Challenge Cymru programme. We recommended that the Welsh Government should closely monitor and evaluate this.

HMCI, Meilyr Rowlands, told the Committee there is a need “to do something urgently” about schools, particularly in the secondary sector, currently unable to lift themselves out of the statutory categories of intervention. He noted a need to identify schools more quickly, ensure that they have better support, and better “harmonise” their current support. He explained that the Welsh Government had established a working group to look at this area in more detail.

Requested information

We would welcome:

- further information from the Welsh Government about the make-up, programme, timescales, and intended aims for the working group, and an outline of any other steps you intend to take to improve the situation;
- an updated response, in light of HMCI’s latest annual report, to our *On the money?* recommendation that the Welsh Government should closely monitor and evaluate the support being provided by regional consortia to the most underperforming schools.

2. ‘A Learning Inspectorate’ Report

In his report, *A Learning Inspectorate*, Professor Graham Donaldson recommended a one-year pause of Estyn’s routine cyclical inspections of schools, as part of a three-phase move to a self-evaluation model. Professor Donaldson recommended the pause in order to:

- enable Estyn to focus resources on developing its role in supporting improvement and preparation for reforms such as the new curriculum;
- free schools from the potential distraction caused by inspections, enabling them to concentrate on improvement and change (although interventions in schools in need of ‘significant improvement’ or in ‘special measures’ would continue).



In his evidence on 6 December, HM Chief Inspector Meilyr Rowlands stated that there would be 'advantages' to such a pause but that this was a matter for the Welsh Government as changes to legislation and inspection regulations would be required.

Requested information

We would welcome confirmation of:

- when the Welsh Government intends to provide a formal response to *A Learning Inspectorate*?
- whether the Welsh Government intends to take the necessary steps to initiate the recommended one-year pause in routine cyclical inspections and, if so, when?
- the latest position on the development of a new Welsh Government Assessment and Evaluation framework.

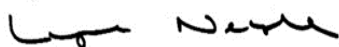
3. Emotional and mental health

We welcome Estyn's intention to undertake a piece of thematic work on support for emotional and mental health in schools in Wales. However, we are concerned that a third of secondary schools in Wales were reported in 2017-18 as being judged either 'unsatisfactory and needing urgent improvement' or 'adequate and needing improvement' for wellbeing and attitudes to learning.

Requested information

We would welcome an update from the Welsh Government on the steps being taken to ensure that training in relation to emotional and mental wellbeing of pupils forms part of initial teacher education and ongoing support for professional development.

Yours sincerely,



Lynne Neagle AM
Chair



Comisiynydd Plant Cymru Children's Commissioner for Wales

Sally Holland

By e-mail only

To: CYPE committee

12 December 2018

Dear Chair,

Elective Home Education

Thank you for your letter dated 26th November 2018, as a follow up to the scrutiny session I attended on 22nd November.

As noted during the evidence session, the letter from the Cabinet Secretary had been received the day before, and as such I was still analysing the contents of that letter.

Since receipt of your letter, I have now had the Welsh Government's full response to my 2017-18 annual report, which was published on 30th November.

The Government response accepts all three of my tests for this policy, which are as follows:

1. Firstly, that all children in Wales can be accounted for and that none slip under the radar of universal services, and society in general;
2. Secondly, that every child receives a suitable education and their other human rights including health, care and safety; and
3. This cannot be achieved without the third aim, that every child should have the opportunity to be seen and their views, including their views about their education, and experiences listened to.

I have also secured a meeting with Welsh Government officials and lawyers on Monday 17th December 2018 to explore in more detail *how* those three tests will be met within the forthcoming revision to the guidance. This meeting will be important; it will form part of my overall assessment as to whether or not the steps being taken are sufficient to ensure that children are being seen and spoken to about their education, and that children are being kept healthy, happy and safe.

As discussed during the evidence session, I have been told that the revised guidance, with statutory force, will be a quicker way to ensure that changes are made to better protect and uphold the rights of children educated at home. It is the details of this that will be the ultimate success or failure of that policy and therefore crucially important that these are considered carefully, which is why I am pursuing this meeting with the lawyers. I am seeking reassurance from that meeting that the three tests can and will be fully reflected in the revised guidance, rather than waiting for the guidance to be published. I have shared a list of questions with the Government in advance to ensure that clear answers can be provided during that meeting.

I shall write again to the Committee in the first week of next term with an update following that meeting taking place.

I would like to note again my appreciation of the Committee's sustained interest in government policy around home education. I believe that we share the position that revisions to this policy must provide

better protection for children and their rights. I am determined to take the best course of action to ensure this and our collective scrutiny is important to ensure children's rights are at the centre of developing policy.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sally Holland', written in a cursive style.

Sally Holland
Children's Commissioner for Wales

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

National Assembly for Wales
Children, Young People and Education Committee

Professor Sally Holland
Children's Commissioner for Wales

14 December 2018

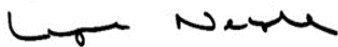
Dear Sally

Elective home education

Thank you for your letter dated 12 December – the Committee is grateful for the update.

I write to note our continued concerns about the pace with which progress is being made and request a further update as early as possible after your meeting next Monday with the Welsh Government.

Yours sincerely,



Lynne Neagle AM
Chair



Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA-(P)-KW-4504-18

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12th December 2018

Dear Lynne,

During your committee's scrutiny of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill, a commitment was made to provide regular updates on the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) transformation programme. This letter is the fifth of these updates.

1. Legislation and statutory guidance

In my previous update, I informed you that the next iteration of the draft Additional Learning Needs Code ("the ALN Code") would be available for consultation later this year. I am therefore pleased to have written to you earlier this week as a statutory consultee announcing the launch of a public consultation on the draft ALN Code under the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 ("the Act"). The consultation also seeks views on draft regulations relating to the Education Tribunal for Wales and ALN Co-ordinators, and the policy intent for a number of other proposed regulations. In addition, it seeks views on proposed

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

revisions to the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 Part 6 Code of Practice – Looked After and Accommodated Children, that have been primarily made relating to looked after children with ALN.

As per my previous letter, it is crucial that you provide your views to ensure that our proposals are manageable and fair to those who must discharge functions under the new legislative framework, as well as just and equitable for learners with ALN who need the right support to help them achieve their full potential.

In January 2019 both a children/young people's version and an easy read version of the consultation will be published. This will provide children and young people, and those who may benefit from an easy read version with an opportunity to engage with the consultation.

2. Implementation/ transition support

In September 2018, the ALN Transformation Leads submitted their regional and further education implementation plans. The plans set out how each region are supporting the early years sector, local authorities, health boards and further education institutions in Wales, to prepare for implementation of the new system. Funding is being used to roll out multi agency training programmes, create post 16 provision maps across Wales, scope the role of the Early Years ALN lead officer, support the role of the Designated Education Clinical Lead Officer (DECLO) and help raise awareness of the ALN transformation programme amongst stakeholders.

Progress and review sessions will take place in January to monitor the development of all projects across Wales.

We are continuing to meet with the ALN transformation leadership group on a bi-monthly basis. The group are helping to develop and consistently apply implementation approaches across Wales and are crucial in driving forward the work of the transformation leads and wider transformation programme. .

3. Workforce Development

The consultation on the draft Code seeks your views on the draft ALNCo regulations (in part 3 of the consultation document). The intention is to use the regulation making power under section 60 of the 2018 Act to ensure that the ALNCo role is undertaken in a consistent and effective way in every school and further education institution in Wales, and supports the delivery of the ALN system and the overarching objectives of the 2018 Act.

The ALNCo role is fundamental to the success of the new ALN system and we are committed to supporting this workforce through professional learning. Officials continue to work with local authorities and regional education consortia to develop an ALNCo professional learning offer.

The Welsh Government currently awards a grant to Cardiff University, which pays fees and bursaries for 10 students per year on their three year Doctorate in Educational Psychology professional training programme. I have decided to continue

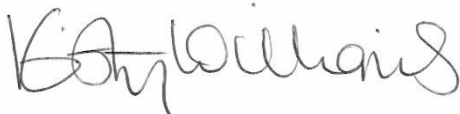
with this arrangement and strengthen it by linking a minimum number of bursaries to students who can already, or have the potential to work through the medium of Welsh, and by encouraging students to stay and work in Wales immediately after graduation.

4. Awareness Raising

In February, we will be hosting a series of stakeholder events across Wales. Each event will provide stakeholders with an update on the ALN transformation programme and will include workshops on specific aspects of the draft ALN Code. Details of the events will be available in due course.

We will also be organising workshops specifically for children, young people and their families, to contribute their views on these proposals.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams'.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Agenda Item 4.6



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Lynne Neagle AM
Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee
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3 January 2019

Dear Ms Neagle

Inquiry into the status of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification

I noted with interest the 28 November and 12 December evidence sessions for the Children, Young People and Education Committee's current inquiry into the status of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ).

Although it was recognised that Cardiff University values the WBQ, the view was expressed in both meetings that the University would prefer admitting a learner with A Levels rather than a learner with the WBQ.

I thought it important to write to you and the Committee as a whole to reiterate the University's position as detailed in our institutional response to the inquiry's survey, submitted on 21 December 2018.

Cardiff University accepts the WBQ Advanced Diploma for admission to all of its undergraduate degree programmes, with the Welsh Baccalaureate Diploma Core accepted as equivalent to an A Level.

For applicants offering graded version of the core, we accept an A* grade as equivalent to an A* at A Level, A as equivalent to an A at A Level, B as equivalent to a B at A Level and a C grade as equivalent to a C at A Level. The WBQ is not, however, able to replace a required specified subject or subjects.

For applicants studying the WBQ Core in combination with three A Levels, any offer made for entry will be flexible, allowing them to satisfy the grades required either from the WBQ Core and two specified A Levels or grade requirements for three A Levels.



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For example, the typical A Level offer for Economics (BSc Econ) is AAB including Mathematics. The Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate will be accepted in lieu of one A Level (at the grades listed above) apart from the required A Level Mathematics.

I would also like to mention the support that we have given the Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate, with staff undertaking joint presentations with WJEC to promote the qualification and the benefits it brings.


Feedback from academic colleagues is that there are early signs that the individual project element of the WBQ is providing particular benefit, equipping students with independent research and study skills required for degree level study.

I understand that during your consultation for the inquiry you received a number of responses from the University. For clarification, the University's official position is detailed above. The views of individual respondents based at the institution do not reflect our policy or practice.

Indeed, we have written to the Committee team to clarify our institutional position. We have also written to all admissions tutors to remind them of our WBQ policy.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like any further information about Cardiff University.

Yours sincerely



Professor Colin Riordan
Vice-Chancellor

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair of the Children, Young People and Education
Committee National Assembly for Wales
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4 January 2019

Dear Lynne

The Children, Young People and Education Committee inquiry into the status of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification

Following my attendance at the Committee on 12 December to provide evidence on the Welsh Baccalaureate, I am writing with information that I agreed to provide to members.

During the session, we discussed entry into university and how different universities include the Skills Challenge Certificate in their offers. It was also suggested that some schools and colleges are exempting learners from the Skills Challenge Certificate to allow more time to study four or five A levels. I explained that a number of Russell Group universities, in particular, want learners with three good A levels and that there is no need for schools and colleges to be pushing learners to undertake four or five A levels.

The research that I was referring to during committee was by Cambridge University¹, which notes that the three highest A Level grades in all subjects, excluding General Studies and Critical Thinking, are used for scoring purposes. The report also shows that for Welsh students there were 297 applications, 76 offers and 60 acceptances to Cambridge in 2017.

Cambridge University admissions have further confirmed that:

- there has been a 21% increase in Welsh state school applicants since the Seren Network began;
- the offer rate for Welsh state schools was 26.51%. The UK average was 26% and the average for Wales as a whole was 25.5%.

1

https://www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/sites/www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/files/publications/ug_admissions_statistics_2017_cycle_4.pdf

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

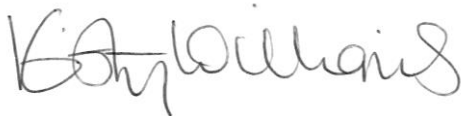
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

As I explained during the session, universities across the UK, including Russell Group universities, are generally very positive with many accepting the Skills Challenge Certificate for entry requirement purposes. Those universities that don't accept the Skills Challenge Certificate as a specific entry requirement still value it for the broader skills and experiences that it gives the young person, and it can enhance applications.

When I visited Cambridge and Oxford earlier this year they both confirmed that they recognise the Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate, they recognised that it provides our Welsh students with the opportunity to develop their research and academic skills, particularly through their independent research project. Members may have seen the recent story in The Times newspaper on the trend in England for more and more schools to offer the 'Extended Project Qualification' so that students can demonstrate research and critical thinking skills in their applications to university. We in Wales are ahead of the game on this through our established approach in supporting the Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate which affords many similar skills, and much more besides.

The WJEC website includes the most recent information about universities that accept the Skills Challenge Certificate² and the case studies published in the WJEC newsletters³ provide some examples of how the Skills Challenge Certificate, and particularly the skills that it develops has helped learners gain entry into university.

Yours sincerely



Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education

² <https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/welsh-baccalaureate/higher-education/>

³ <https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/welsh-baccalaureate/welsh-bacc-from-2015/>