

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales  
Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and  
Education Committee

Blaenoriaethau ar gyfer y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg |  
Priorities for the Children, Young People and Education Committee

CYPE 09

Ymateb gan : PACEY Cymru

Response from : PACEY Cymru

**Question 1** – Within the remit set out above: what do you consider to be the priorities or issues that the Children, Young People and Education Committee should consider during the Fifth Assembly?

**1a Opportunities to deliver services**

Equitable opportunities for quality childcare settings in Wales for funding to deliver Flying Start, Foundation Phase and the new childcare offer to young children in Wales. This would also support parental choice, giving more options to parents, which should be a high priority. This would ensure that settings that have demonstrated a high level of quality (see paragraph 1b below) are able to develop their services through accessing funding to deliver Welsh Government programmes. This will be a key area for consideration as the new childcare offer is developed and takes shape. PACEY Cymru believe the committee has a key role to play in ensuring a balanced approach to this that meets the needs of children and families, the childcare sector and the Welsh Government.

**1b Funding**

Consistent funding formula or national guidance produced to ensure that all settings delivering Flying Start, Foundation Phase and the new Childcare offer across Wales receive funding to ensure they can deliver a quality service to children and families, are sustainable and that a more consistent approach is evident across Wales. At present the funding inconsistencies cause confusion and issues for both setting and families accessing services.

**1c Quality**

To define and confirm policy around what is considered to be 'quality' childcare and early years provision. This could be achieved, through consultation with the sector to have clarity on this nationally and enable quality settings to access to funded programmes and to ensure development and improvement of all services across Wales. The introduction of quality judgements/gradings by CSSIW will support this work.

PACEY Cymru strongly believe that an all Wales Quality Scheme for

childcare, play and early years providers, accessible and available to all CYPE 09 PACEY Cymru settings, should be reconsidered following work on this over the previous decade by Welsh Government. This would support a consistent approach to quality across Wales.

PACEY Cymru also strongly believe that this should include a 'quality mark' or key strand around children's rights. Schools across Wales have access to the Unicef 'Rights Respecting School' Award but this is not available to childcare settings even though this area of development is a key priority for the regulators (CSSIW and Estyn).

### **1d Procurement in Wales**

Consideration needs to be given to reviewing procurement guidance and good practice across Wales. Current processes create barriers for small settings when they are weighted in favour of best economic outcome for the buyer rather than quality of provision for the child.

Consideration and guidance also needs to be given to ensure procurement processes are proportionate to the value of the contract being awarded to ensure they are not onerous and deter quality organisations, services or settings from applying.

### **1e ALN**

Review of resources and models to support children with additional learning needs. PACEY Cymru welcomed the recognition of the importance of early identification of ALN within the draft ALN bill in December 2015, and the recognition that childcare providers along with many other professionals have a role to play in identifying children and young people who may have ALN. PACEY Cymru supported the proposed amendment, which addressed a request for clarity of responsibilities and reporting to support identification of ALN for the early years. PACEY Cymru know that the key to supporting this will be in the information provided to professionals working in the Non-Maintained Sector regarding local reporting processes, and access to advice and support regarding their duty to refer children they believe may have ALN. Further to the proposed amendments, PACEY Cymru believe it would be beneficial for professionals working with children outside of funded provision to be made aware of, and have access to local processes which could support the transition into funded provision. This could include the transition from childcare into school and would support the individual needs of children with ALN and their families.

### **1f Review of National Minimum Standards for Regulated Childcare in Wales (NMS)**

PACEY Cymru believe this is now a key time to review the above NMS given the confirmed developments already in place or due to come into force around, for example, the new inspection framework, the introduction of quality judgements/gradings and the childcare offer. We need to ensure, as a sector, that the NMS are fit for purpose and can be

used appropriately. This potentially could lead to identified changes that the sector believe are needed to the associated regulations and so become a much larger piece of work which would need to be carried out through an inclusive approach with key stakeholders, CSSIW and other Welsh Government departments.

### **1g Childcare on Domestic Premises**

In Wales childminding settings are not restricted in size, as long as they meet the requirements of the associated regulations and NMS and local planning departments. There are settings in Wales where a larger numbers of childminders work together from one premises or a childminder employs a large number of assistants from the premises. The number of these settings appears to be growing as business opportunities become more attractive and PACEY Cymru believe consideration needs to be given around their category of registration and new definitions and legislation changes that may be required. CSSIW are aware of some growing concerns around this where the settings are moving away from what is considered to be a childminding setting but as they are on domestic premises are unable to register as full day care. In England the move towards a category of registration for childcare on domestic premises has been introduced and PACEY Cymru believe that a similar approach needs to be considered in Wales. Ensuring the safety of children needs to be the key driver when looking at this issue.

### **1h Welsh Language**

Children need to be able to access a service in their preferred language, be that English, Welsh or Bilingual – according to parental choice for the younger children. This needs to be considered for all children including those with ALN, where the family language may have a significant impact on the child's development and general well-being and is in line with Welsh Government objectives. The provision of Welsh language services could be scrutinised by the committee.

### **1i Children's mental health**

Children's mental health services are hugely important, and there is an increased focus on mental health and well-being strategically across Wales within the Social Services and Wellbeing Act and the Well-Being of Future Generations Act. PACEY Cymru believe that this area of priority should be considered by the committee on how this is being translated into practice and the impact this is having on children and young people in Wales. The recent research around ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) has shown how adverse experiences are impacting on children reaching their potential and should be considered alongside this.

**Question 2** – From the list of priorities or issues you have identified, what do you consider to be the key areas that should be considered during the next 12 months (please identify up to three areas or issues)? Please outline why these should be considered as key priorities.

PACEY Cymru would consider the following to be the key priorities.

1a, b and c above are clearly linked could be considered as two priority areas around Access to funded services and Sustainability. These should be considered high priority due to the development and implementation of the childcare offer specifically and the priorities of the Welsh Government around affordable, accessible and high quality childcare and play provision.

1g- Childcare on Domestic Premises. As this area is growing rapidly and it is likely childminding services will be looking to grow and diversify as the childcare offer is developed and implemented this is one area that PACEY Cymru believes in a high priority. It is important to have clear legislation on this in place as quickly as possible.

PACEY Cymru strongly believes there needs to be a joined up approach between this committee and the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee on issues related to business sustainability in childcare settings. PACEY Cymru have also provided a response to this committee on their priorities for the fifth term 2016-2021.

### **About PACEY Cymru**

PACEY is the Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years. Formed in 1977, we are a charity dedicated to supporting childcare professionals to deliver high quality care and early learning for children. We provide expert support, training and resources to childcare professionals across England and Wales and offer advice and peer support through our nationwide network of PACEY local groups. We represent the views and experiences of practitioners to government, regulators and decision makers and champion their vital role in helping children get the best start in life.

PACEY Cymru is a valuable component of PACEY providing a dedicated service in Wales for childcare and early years professionals and key partners. PACEY Cymru receives funding from the Welsh Government to support our work in Wales.