

**Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i ymgynghoriad y [Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg](#) ar [Flaenoriaethau'r Chweched Senedd](#)**

**This response was submitted to the [Children, Young People and Education Committee](#) consultation on [Sixth Senedd Priorities](#)**

**CYPE SP 95**

**Ymateb gan: Greg Ellwood-Hughes, Swyddog Polisi a'r Cyfryngau, Parentkind**

**Response from: Greg Ellwood-Hughes, Policy and Media Officer, Parentkind**

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Beth yn eich barn chi yw'r prif flaenoriaethau neu'r materion y dylai'r Pwyllgor eu hystyried yn ystod y Chweched Senedd? Os oes modd, nodwch eich barn o ran sut y gallai'r Pwyllgor fynd i'r afael â hyn.

What do you consider to be the main priorities or issues that the Committee should consider during the Sixth Senedd? Where possible, please set out your view about how the Committee could address them.

**Thema 1: Addysg oedran ysgol | Theme 1: School-age education**

Parentkind is the largest network of PTA fundraisers in the UK. We bring specialist fundraising support and advice to parent volunteers so that every school can benefit from a successful PTA. Our 13,000 PTA members raise over £120+ million per year, placing us alongside some of the largest charities in the UK. As a national charity, Parentkind give parents a voice in education. We invest substantial resources in representing parent views on their child's learning to local, regional and national governments and agencies because evidence tells parental participation in education benefits all children in all schools and society as a whole.

Too often, education policy in all parts of the UK is made without reference to parents' views. Parents are generally positioned as recipients of information rather than active agents in their children's education.

There is currently no universal mandatory requirement for a parent body to be established in every school, and there are no direct policies or statements on the introduction of a parental participation framework. Therefore, in line with our manifesto asks, Parentkind believes the priorities for education in Wales should be:



1. A representative parent body to be present in every school in Wales with key stakeholders acknowledging the value of, and endorsing the requirement for, every school to have a parent body such as a PTA, Parent Support Group or Parent Council with a view to making this a statutory requirement if they are not established voluntarily.

2. Teacher training and Continuing Professional Development must include meaningful training in why and how to engage with parents for the benefit of the children. Many teachers are thrust into parental interactions without understanding why they are worthwhile and how to get the most for the child through the relationship. Let's invest in our teachers to build a partnership approach with our parents.

3. Include parental participation in the inspection and assessment criteria of our schools by Estyn. The measure of a school's success must evidence how parent voice and engagement are at the core rather than the fringe. Our education system needs to be assessed on how it is working with parents as partners. Simply put, when schools are inspected, parental engagement must form a core of Estyn's common framework. Parentkind's Blueprint for Parent-Friendly Schools\* is a tool for building a more rigorous way to analyse and ultimately support Wales' schools to become outstanding globally in education.

4. Enable wider use of parental consultation in schools. As a major education stakeholder, parents deserve a seat at the table when decisions are taken about schools at a local, regional and national level recognising parents as partners in education. Parents are increasingly demanding a say in how decisions are made, but what must be clear is how they can have this say beyond their own school. We ask the next Welsh Government to work with Parentkind to create an inclusive path for parents to have a seat at the decision making tables - in their communities, councils, consortia, and in Cathays Park. Parents are essential stakeholders as policy is developed for their children's education. Parent consultation enables parents to support schools more effectively. We would like to see Welsh Government publish statutory guidance outlining clear minimum requirements for schools regarding parent consultation, and publish non-statutory guidance for schools on effective parent consultation.



5. Parent consultation at local, regional and national levels. Parentkind wants Welsh Government to establish processes for formally consulting with parents about children's education. This may include building greater parent consultation into decision-making and publishing statutory guidance for local authorities on how they can consult with parents over local educational and schooling policy issues. An example is the new curriculum. Curriculum for Wales 2022 is a radical overhaul of how schools teach their students, and the content that teachers will deliver. As part of the revised curriculum, the parent's right to withdraw their child from sex education classes is being removed. However, guidance for schools on developing a vision for their new curricula states parents, carers and the wider community should be consulted. Parentkind's Blueprint for Parent-Friendly Schools is the ideal mechanism for maximising schools' parental participation strategies, and can be mapped on to existing strategies with little extra demand on teachers' time.

### **\*Using Parentkind's Blueprint for Parent-Friendly Schools to increase parent participation in schools**

Parentkind wants to see high-quality parent participation take centre stage in schools, and for it to be embedded in accordance with the principles set out in [Parentkind's Blueprint for Parent-Friendly Schools](#). Research for Parentkind has found that high quality parental participation has five drivers:

1. Leadership, ethos and resources
2. Effective two-way communication
3. Supporting learning at home
4. Involvement in school life
5. Community engagement

Our Blueprint for Parent Friendly Schools provides a framework that supports school leaders to maximise parental engagement and involvement to create successful home-school partnerships. Please contact us at [greg.ellwood-hughes@parentkind.org.uk](mailto:greg.ellwood-hughes@parentkind.org.uk) to discuss any of the above policy solutions.

### **Thema 2: Addysg bellach ac addysg uwch | Theme 2: Further and higher education**

N/A



**Thema 3: Iechyd a lles, gan gynnwys gofal cymdeithasol (i'r graddau y maent yn ymwneud â phlant a phobl ifanc) | Theme 3: Health and well-being, including social care (as they relate to children and young people)**

N/A

**Thema 4: Plant a phobl Ifanc | Theme 4: Children and young people**

Better parental participation in school life and effective parent consultation in local, regional and national decision-making would improve educational outcomes for children. Ensuring that no parent feels alienated by their child's school would have many positive impacts, including on behaviour, attendance, building stronger communities and increasing social mobility. When parents are actively and positively participating in their child's learning, the school experience and academic outcomes for the child improve, helping every child to reach their potential.

