

**Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc
ac Addysg**

**Children, Young People
and Education Committee**

Sue Evans
Chief Executive
Social Care Wales

30 January 2023

Services for care experienced children: exploring radical reform

Dear Sue,

As you are aware, the Children, Young People and Education Committee is conducting an inquiry into services for care experienced children. The aim of our work is to identify the priority areas where policy change is needed to make the biggest difference to the lives of the children and young people who experience the care system in Wales, focusing on:

- Before care: Safely reducing the number of children in the care system
- In care: Quality services and support children in care
- After care: On-going support when young people leave care

We are currently taking evidence from a range of stakeholders to inform our work looking at what Welsh Government is doing to deliver its commitment in the Programme for Government to “explore radical reform of current services for children looked after and care leavers”.

We have already met extensively with those with direct experience of the system: birth parents, children currently experiencing care and young people who have left the system.

We note the unique position of Social Care Wales as the regulator with the responsibility for the workforce development of the social care sector. We have been struck by some significant issues that have already been raised with us about the workforce and would welcome your response to the points raised in the annex to this letter.

We are therefore keen for the views of Social Care Wales to inform our forthcoming scrutiny with the All Wales Heads of Children’s Services and the Deputy Minister. We would be very grateful if you

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could submit a response to the points raised in the annex to this letter no later than **24 February 2023**.

I appreciate that this may be a challenging deadline. If you have any concerns please contact the Committee clerks ([**SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales**](mailto:SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales)).

Thank you in advance for your support.

Yours sincerely,

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

Jayne Bryant MS

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Annex

The Committee requests the following information setting out the views of Social Care Wales based on the latest all Wales information you have available.

- **Workforce pressures:** The extent of staff pressure and workloads in local authority children's services and their impacting on the three aspects of our inquiry.
- **Continuity of case worker and staff turnover:** The impact of changing case workers on the quality of assessments and care.
- **Vacancy rates:** The current vacancy rates and their impact on the three aspects of our inquiry.
- **Social Work agency staff:** The extent of the use of agency staff for children's social care and its impact.
- **Residential care workforce:** The stability of the workforce.
- **Initial training and continuous professional development** as relevant to all three aspects of our inquiry.

We would also welcome any recommendations you would like to draw to our attention as relevant to our inquiry.

You may also be interested in this [Senedd Research Statistical Briefing](#) on Care Experienced Children in Wales which has been drafted to inform the Committee's work. It uses some information from Social Care Wales on pages 22-24.