

Vikki Howells AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Addysg Bellach ac Uwch
Minister for Further and Higher Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1455
Ein cyf/Our ref VH/10107/24

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair - Petitions committee

27 November 2024

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 4 November 2024 regarding Petition P-06-1455 Protect the junior departments of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama from closure and for sharing the recent correspondence.

I appreciate the decision made by RWCMD to close its junior programme has caused upset and frustration for all those affected, be it learners, parents or staff. During the Senedd Plenary debate on 18 September, in response to the petition to stop the closure of the junior music and drama departments, I reaffirmed the Welsh Government's willingness to continue to engage with the College as it develops its proposals for future provision. I have also met with Ministerial colleagues to discuss the importance of culture and opportunities for engaging young people.

I am aware that a new weekend 'Academi' for young musicians in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan area, developed by CF Music Education, has been launched. Formulated with the support and partnership of tutors with previous experience of delivering youth music activities at RWCMD, the weekly sessions form part of Cardiff Council's Music Strategy, which aims to put music at the heart of the city's development and support a pipeline of new musical talent.

I note that the correspondence from Patricia Kier requests that the Committee reconsiders its decision to close the petition. As I noted in the petition debate, the RWCMD is an autonomous institution, responsible for its own academic affairs and it would not be appropriate for Welsh Ministers to intervene, nor in my view appropriate to re-open the petition.

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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.

I understand RWCMD are undertaking a period of review with young people, staff, stakeholders and external UK advisors, I look forward to receiving updates from the RWCMD as this work progresses.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Howells', with a long, sweeping underline stroke extending to the right.

Vikki Howells AS/MS

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