



Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref LF/HL/1253/13

Ann Jones AM
Chair
Children and Young People's Committee
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

6 January 2014

Dear Ann,

Education (Wales) Bill

Following the General Principle's Debate on 3 December and detailed consideration of your Committee's helpful Scrutiny report, I have decided, on balance to support the removal of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) provisions from the Education (Wales) Bill.

I remain committed to supporting our learners in Wales, however, I have also listened to the opinions of stakeholders and Assembly Members that their preference is that the SEN provisions are removed from this Bill and included in a stand alone SEN Reform Bill. This Government takes the scrutiny process very seriously - it is for this reason that I will be supporting the removal of Part 3 (Persons with Learning Difficulties), from this Bill.

However, I want to reassure stakeholders and Assembly Members that my officials will work closely with them to bring forward legislation that is cohesive and holistic at the earliest opportunity. Whilst I am disappointed for our learners that the implementation of these provisions will be delayed, I would like to make clear that we are not back-tracking. I recognise the importance of collaborative working on what is a very important piece of legislation and I hope that you and your Committee Members will support the delivery of the SEN Reform legislation when I bring it forward at the next available opportunity.

I am also copying this letter to David Melding AM as Chair of the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee for information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Huw Lewis', written in dark ink.

Huw Lewis AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills