



Ein cyf/Our ref: MA-P/KW/1483/18

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair of Children, Young People and Education Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

27th April 2018

Dear Lynne,

Thank you for your letter of 19 April which asks for further information on the Bilingual Educational Resources Stakeholders Group.

The group was established following the summit I held last year to discuss how we can work together to find solutions to the delays with the production of some resources that we experienced during the latest round of qualifications reform. The group is looking at the future direction for the production of educational resources in Wales which will ensure that bilingual resources will be available at the same time. The group meets every two months and brings together representatives of key stakeholders including publishers, the media and creative sector, Welsh Books Council Qualifications Wales and WJEC.

Developing an infrastructure to produce resources for the new curriculum and qualifications in Wales is not a simple task and there are no quick fixes. The group will be exploring a number of potential models of how we could organise things going forward and I would be pleased to provide the Committee with quarterly updates as the work progresses. Issues that have been discussed to date include: developing capacity and expertise in Wales in educational publishing (including authoring), funding and the timeline for producing resources for the new curriculum and its related qualifications. The group is considering current processes and models and will also be learning from the experiences and models of other countries which publish in two languages. Between now and April 2019, when the new curriculum will be available for feedback, proposals will be developed for the way forward to meet needs of the new curriculum and its related qualifications.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Kirsty.Williams@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Kirsty.Williams@gov.wales

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.

In the meantime, I remain absolutely committed that everything is done to improve the availability of resources to support qualifications in both Welsh and English, and their publication at the same time. For forthcoming/new resources I am pleased to report that WJEC have held discussions with two of the main textbooks providers, Illuminate Publishing and Hodder, and have come to an understanding that the English version will be withheld for eight weeks to allow for the Welsh version to be produced and for both languages to be issued at the same time. Two titles have been identified to trial this process.

It must be highlighted that there are risks attached to this, in particular relating to the quality and accuracy of content and terminology of Welsh versions. However, if the Welsh medium version is not ready within the eight weeks extension period the publishers will release the English as normal. If this trial is successful then the model could be adopted for other proposed textbooks in the short term.

I have also requested that WJEC outsource a number of the forthcoming/proposed titles to Welsh-medium publishers as part of the new grant agreement. WJEC will mentor the companies so that they gain confidence in undertaking educational publishing and build up expertise. In addition seminars will be held with Welsh and English-medium publishers in Wales to develop their understanding in educational publishing and to develop their skills and confidence in undertaking and competing for such work. These seminars will start in June.

I have also asked the WJEC to commission research into the use by practitioners, learners and parents of educational resources at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. The findings of this work will feed into the decision regarding resources requirements in future and into the Stakeholder Group's discussion on future models. This research will start in May and we will have the findings in the autumn.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', written in a cursive style.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education