

Annual report recommendations – REVIEWED September 2019, published October 2019

Quarterly Updates for website

Each year through my annual report I make recommendations to the Welsh Government, on the key policy issues that I would like to see action on in the following twelve months. During the year I follow these recommendations up through meetings with Ministers and Deputy Ministers, lead officials, and other stakeholders including children and young people.

Where recommendations have featured on the same topic in successive years, these are each listed under the same heading, in date order.

I have given each recommendation a Red / Amber / Green rating to measure the progress against the call that I have made. The colour rating is my own assessment based on the engagement with all key stakeholders. It is important to note that the rating is not an assessment of whether or not the Welsh Government agrees with the recommendation. The colour rating reflects whether or not there have been any policy and practice changes that improve children's lives in Wales and give further protection to their enjoyment of their rights under the UNCRC.

Red No evidence of policy or practice changes since the recommendation was made. No improvement in children's experiences.

Amber Some evidence of policy or practice change but the recommendation has not yet been successfully achieved in full.

Green Recommendation implemented and notable differences for children and young people in receipt of a service or support.

	Recommendations	Current RAG rating	Comments
Adoption support	<p>2015/16 Welsh Government should work with the National Adoption Service and regional collaboratives to ensure increased provision of adoption support, providing extra resources where required.</p>	No change	<p>Positive steps are being made to address the support needs of many children and their families. In July 2019, Adoption UK published the first “Adoption Barometer” survey, which explored adopters’ experiences of support, access to services and outcomes for young people in each UK Nation, and made a number of recommendations as to how each nation could strengthen its offer of adoption support. When asked about adoption support, the majority of families in Wales who had received post adoption support felt it had a positive impact on their child, but many felt that the range of support interventions on offer were too limited.</p> <p>The National Adoption Service, along with Adoption UK, announced the development of a range of adoption support services, supported by £2.3 million in additional funding from the Welsh Government. This will enable families in Wales to access Therapeutic Education Support Services for Adopters (TESSA) and children will be able to access child-specific support services. These support services are due to be rolled out across Wales.</p> <p>We will continue to monitor the development support, through our position on the National Adoption Service Advisory Group.</p>
Advocacy	<p>2015/16 The Government should work with ADSS and the WLGA to implement a national approach to statutory advocacy as a matter of priority, to ensure that all</p>	No change	<p>I am pleased to note that the National Approach is now live across all of the regions.</p> <p>Following the recommendation in my 2016-17 report, the Welsh Government has maintained a working group to monitor</p>

	<p>eligible children and young people across Wales receive an 'active offer' of advocacy and are supported to express their views on the care and support they receive.</p> <p>2016/17 I recommend that the Welsh Government monitors the implementation of the National Approach to Statutory Advocacy to ensure that the intended services reach all those who are entitled to receive it, increasing the prospect of positive outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>2017/18 I recommend that the Part 10 Code of Practice is amended to give statutory force to the National Approach to Statutory Advocacy including all of the associated documents.</p>		<p>implementation of the Active Offer, which my officers attend. That group has reviewed the data returns and made small changes to the delivery of the Active Offer of advocacy, to ensure that it works in a way that best suits children and young people and helps them to access this important service. This in turn helps them achieve their rights.</p> <p>Welsh Government have now published the National Standards and Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People in Wales, which sets out what young people can expect from their independent advocacy service. Through the role of the task and finish group that my office was part of, the framework expressly recognises the UNCRC and its application to advocacy.</p> <p>We continue to work alongside the Welsh Government to ensure that the National Approach to Statutory Advocacy and the Active Offer are clearly reflected in the Part 10 Code of Practice. Furthermore, work is underway by TGP Cymru to further understand the consistency in provision for looked after children living in residential homes, to ensure that all entitled young people are receiving this service.</p>
<p>Mental health</p>	<p>2015/16 The NHS Together for Children and Young People Programme should continue to receive adequate funding levels to fulfil its ambitions and should monitor whether</p>	<p>Changed from Amber</p>	<p>Funding for T4CYP was extended until October 2019.</p> <p>I welcome T4CYP's engagement with stakeholders in their final year work plan. I am pleased to note some promising figures in the updated benchmarking data from T4CYP that was published alongside the Welsh Government's update on progress since the</p>

	<p>children’s experiences of mental health care are improving.</p> <p>2016/17 The Welsh Government should ensure that the T4CYP programme is continued beyond this financial year, until the programme has delivered on its ambitions. Before the national programme ends, the programme’s improvements need to be sufficiently and consistently embedded at a local level so that the regional planning boards can then maintain progress and quality of provision for all children across Wales.</p> <p>2017/18 I recommend that the Welsh Government takes action to require Regional Partnership Boards (RPBs) to set up specific multi agency planning structures for children and young people that will report to the RPB. They should also require RPBs to take steps to integrate children’s social care and mental health services into multi-disciplinary teams, that will respond to the needs of their local populations of children and young people who require emotional, behavioural or mental health support and treatment.</p>		<p><i>Mind over Matter</i> report, and which compares Wales to the rest of the UK.</p> <p>Welsh Government updated the committee on their response to <i>Mind over Matter</i> in May. I was pleased to see that in some areas progress in terms of planning structures and mechanisms for addressing these issues. However, these updates do not yet demonstrate tangible change on the ground for children and young people in Wales in many areas of mental health support and care. The Chair of the CYPE Committee wrote to the Ministers in August 2019 with a series of recommendations related to areas where they continue to be concerned that not enough progress has been made. This includes a key recommendation to extend T4CYP beyond its end date of October 2019.</p> <p>I am concerned that legacy arrangements for the Programme have not yet been shared with myself, or the committee. I would expect to see this information published as a matter of real urgency.</p> <p>I am pleased to see that some RPBs have included multi-agency children and young people’s services in their bids to the Welsh Government’s Transformation Fund, and that some of these have been approved.</p> <p>Welsh Government is undertaking a review of strategic partnerships in Wales, which includes RPBs.</p>
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<p>Mental health and well-being in schools</p>	<p>2015/16 The curriculum review programme ‘Successful Futures’ should work closely with the NHS’s Together for Children and Young People programme to promote evidence-based, whole school approaches to healthy relationships, mental health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>I am pleased to see the establishment of a Joint Ministerial Task and Finish Group on a Whole-School Approach to Mental Health and well-being, which has met three times.</p> <p>I am pleased that a National Youth Stakeholder Group has been established to support the Whole-School Approach work. I hope that children and young people will be active participants in this work, both co-producing products and providing advice and guidance to those working on the whole-school approach.</p>

			<p>It is pleasing to see that Mind over Matter recommendations have been mapped against the work plan of the Task and Finish Group. I am also pleased that a logic model with clear outputs and outcomes is being developed</p> <p>I also believe that the Whole-School Approach work has been shaped since its inception and believe there is a better understanding that the whole-school approach must involve every agency and actor involved in children’s lives at school, at home, and in the community – notably, there have been signs of a recognition of the importance of the new curriculum, the role of youth work, and the new Welsh Government guidance on bullying.</p> <p>In my view, this work is now going in the right direction and I look forward to the implementation of a whole-school approach. I would like to see more evidence of the role of the Stakeholder Reference Group’s sub-groups, and their input to the draft framework guidance.</p>
Transport	2015/16 Welsh Government should review the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 and associated statutory provision and	Changed from Amber	Operational guidance supporting the Learner Travel Measure is currently being reviewed for imminent public consultation, which was due last summer.

	operational guidance, to ensure that all journeys to and from school are safe and that local authorities are quite clear about their responsibilities for ensuring that this happens.		There is no current intention to review the Measure and I am greatly concerned by indications from Government that the review to the guidance will be insufficient to meet the needs of young people with additional learning needs to travel safely to their place of education.
Additional Learning Needs	<p>2015/16 Welsh Government should introduce new legislation and a robust Code of Practice that delivers on its commitment to children and young people with additional learning needs.</p> <p>2016/17 The Welsh Government should introduce a duty upon all relevant bodies under the Act to pay due regard to the UNCRC and UNCRPD and to place this duty on the face of the Bill.</p>	No change	<p>The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 passed with due regard to the UNCRC and UNCRPD on the face of the Bill.</p> <p>The draft Code of Practice and Regulations was subject to consultation in spring of 2019. My response to this consultation highlighted some strengths, particularly around participation, but also several weaknesses in the draft Code, including a need to strengthen a needs-led children’s rights approach throughout and to ensure adequate resourcing.</p> <p>In September 2019 Government announced a delay to the implementation of the Act. I urge Government to ensure this delay is communicated widely and appropriately to young people and their families and that the opportunity is taken to ensure that the new Code fully embeds children’s rights across their educational experience. This additional year of preparation should also be used to ensure sufficient resources for the successful implementation of the Act.</p>

<p>Additional Learning Needs</p>	<p>2015/16 Welsh Government should strengthen the coordination, provision and support provided to children and young people with additional learning needs, including the introduction of statutory duties on LHBs and NHS trusts to provide support and to strengthen the powers of the Education Tribunal for Wales.</p> <p>2016/17 The Welsh Government should also strengthen the powers of the Education Tribunal for Wales by extending its remit over health bodies.</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>The Educational Tribunal will now have powers over health bodies under the Act, including the ability to request evidence and reports for appeals.</p>

Child poverty	<p>2015/16 The Welsh Government should demonstrate clear and strong leadership to eradicate child poverty, by engaging positively and collaboratively with the UK Government, and public and private bodies across all sectors, including employers.</p> <p>To tackle child poverty, Welsh Government should put in place and monitor a specific child poverty delivery plan, with clear targets and milestones, to drive the implementation of national strategy to ensure that no child is disadvantaged in realising their rights under the UNCRC.</p> <p>2016/2017</p>	No change	<p>At the beginning of March 2019, I published my Report on Child Poverty, A Charter for Change. The key recommendation in this Report called for a Child Poverty Delivery Plan, to be based around the other recommendations within the report around costs to families of meeting basic needs; the costs of school; and the lack of opportunities and exclusion in the community.</p> <p>The Minister for Housing and Local Government, with responsibility for the coordination of measures to mitigate child poverty, has provided a formal response to the recommendations in my <i>Charter for Change</i> report. There has been mixed messaging across Government as to whether or not a delivery or action plan will be put in place to take forward these recommendations.</p> <p>I acknowledge that funding has been provided to enhance and extend PDG access and introduced free sanitary products in schools and FEIs. The launch of the Holiday Hunger Playworks Pilot over the summer was a positive step in reaching more children who may be experiencing holiday hunger this year and exploring different models of delivery here in Wales. I will be interested to see the evaluation of</p>

	<p>The Welsh Government should use all available levers to alleviate child poverty including use of new tax raising powers. It should support local authorities to offer further relief in specific areas known to cause pressure on the poorest families, including holiday hunger, school uniform costs and high domestic fuel bills.</p>		<p>the pilot and continue to engage with Government around other areas of work for example exploring auto enrollment for free school meals and PDG Access.</p> <p>However I remain concerned that there are no short-term plans to review the eligibility criteria for free school meals here in Wales.</p> <p>I am encouraged that Government is now taking forward a child poverty focused review of funding programmes and I have been assured that my recommendations will be taken into account as part of this and the First Minister’s wider funding review. However, I remain disappointed that at this time the publication of a delivery plan or similar has not been committed to as part of this work.</p>
<p>Curriculum and UNCRC</p>	<p>2015/16 Human rights education, including knowledge about children’s rights should have a firm footing in the new ‘Curriculum for Wales – a Curriculum for life’.</p> <p>2016/17 The Welsh Government should make children’s human rights education a compulsory aspect of the curriculum. The Curriculum Reform programme should embed learning about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child across all parts</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>I am disappointed that despite Government’s acceptance of my 2017/8 recommendation the White Paper does not propose a due regard duty to the UNCRC on the Curriculum and Assessment Bill. In response, I have published a statement for this provision to be made and have responded in full to the White Paper consultation.</p> <p>I am however pleased to see that the UNCRC and a children’s rights approach is included in the overarching principles guiding curriculum delivery. Children’s rights and the UNCRC are also included in the Humanities and Health and Well-being AoLE so that all children will learn about their human rights.</p>

	<p>of the new curriculum. This should include linking the Digital Competency Framework to children’s rights and support children and young people to understand they have the same rights online as they do offline.</p> <p>2017/18 I recommend that the Welsh Government ensures that the long-term needs and welfare of children are safeguarded by ensuring that the new curriculum is overtly underpinned by a Children’s Rights Approach and that learning outcomes support all children to know their rights under the UNCRC.</p>		<p>I will continue to push for the inclusion of a due regard duty on the Bill, and for the human rights of children to have a more prominent role in children’s experience of the curriculum.</p>
<p>Young people’s participation in curriculum reform</p>	<p>2015/16 Welsh Government should ensure that arrangements are in place to support children and young people’s participation</p>	<p>Changed from red</p>	<p>Although it was late in the consultation period, Welsh Government did respond to calls from myself and others to ensure young people had meaningful opportunities to participate.</p>

	<p>in decision making processes relating to education reform.</p> <p>2017/18 I recommend that the achievement outcomes of the new curriculum ensure that all children and young people learn about their rights and that a children’s rights approach underpins the guiding principles of curriculum delivery. The participation of children and young people should be systematically built into the next stage of curriculum development.</p>		<p>I was particularly pleased to see that Government ensured children and young people with protected characteristics were involved in this consultation and that there was an opportunity for young people to participate in different ways, including through a survey and face to face workshops. I was also pleased to see that young people were asked a range of broad and specific questions.</p> <p>It is important that Government ensures that children and young people can continue to take part in planning their curriculum. The developed guidance should clearly inform schools of how young people can participate in curriculum planning at a local level.</p>
<p>Elective Home Education</p>	<p>2015/16 The Government should strengthen requirements for parents to register as electively home educating their children and for every child who is electively home educated to be seen by a professional at least annually so that they can express a view about their educational experiences.</p> <p>2016/17 It remains my view that the Welsh Government needs to amend the current guidance to give it statutory force and include a compulsory register for all home educated children to ensure they do not end up “off the radar” from even universal</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>The Welsh Government response to my annual report for 2017-18 was published on 30th November, accepting my three tests for this policy.</p> <p>Since November I have been assessing the development of statutory guidance to ascertain whether it is able to meet my three tests.</p> <p>Draft Statutory Guidance and a Home Educators Handbook are currently available for public consultation, and I will be responding comprehensively to this.</p> <p>Future consultation on draft Regulations around information sharing to identify home educated children and young people is planned for late autumn.</p>

	<p>services. It is also important that the revision of the guidance includes clear powers for local authorities to ensure that they are seeing children and speaking to them directly about their own education.</p> <p>2017/18</p> <p>I recommend that the Welsh Government brings their updated policy forward to consultation this year, with the aims of meeting the following three tests in full:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Firstly that all children in Wales can be accounted for and that none slip under the radar of universal services, and society in general.• Secondly that every children receives a suitable education and their other human rights including health, care and safety.• This cannot be achieved without the third aim, that every children should have the opportunity to be seen and their views, including their views about their education, and experiences listened to.		<p>I retain the option to use my formal powers of review at any point should I have concerns that Government are not exercising their functions to ensure appropriate policy aims will be met.</p>
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Equal protection	<p>2015/16 A bill should be introduced to the Welsh assembly as soon as possible to remove the 'reasonable punishment' defence.</p> <p>2016/17 No new recommendation was made on this topic in this year; however it formed a large part of our core policy and influencing work during the year.</p> <p>2017/18 I recommend that a Bill should be introduced as soon as possible to make sure that the Government's commitment is followed through.</p>	No change	<p>I am pleased that the Welsh Government has introduced a Bill to remove the defence of reasonable punishment in Wales. I am supportive of this Bill.</p> <p>During Stage 1 of the Bill I provided written evidence and was pleased to have the opportunity to give oral evidence to Committee at their first evidence session on this important issue (2nd May 2019).</p> <p>The Bill is currently at Stage 2.</p>
Youth Parliament	<p>2015/16 Whilst I have no legislative remit to make recommendations to the national</p>	No change	<p>The Senedd Ieuenctid / Youth Parliament sat for the first time in February 2019 and has commenced its annual cycle of meetings. This</p>

	<p>assembly for Wales, I want to reaffirm my intention to press for a reinstated national democratic space for young people, in the form of a youth assembly. I am fully committed to working with young people and the national assembly to realise this ambition.</p>		<p>is a hugely positive development to ensure young people’s participation and representation at a national level.</p> <p>My team continues to engage with the Assembly team that supports this work, to explore the best means through which the Senedd leuenctid can scrutinise my work, and so we can align our priorities where possible to ensure maximum scrutiny of the Government’s work.</p> <p>In October 2019 I will have my first scrutiny session with the Senedd leuenctid, focusing around the topic of mental health. I am very pleased that members will have the opportunity to scrutinise and inform my work in this way.</p>
<p>Young people leaving care</p>	<p>2016/17 The Welsh Government should fulfil all of their commitments set out in the Hidden Ambitions report, including equal support</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>I welcome the Welsh Government’s investment in support for care leavers, in response to my Hidden Ambitions report.</p>

<p>“Hidden Ambitions” report</p>	<p>for all care leavers whether they have come from foster care or residential care, funding for personal advisors to support for all care leavers up to the age of 25, publishing clear information for care leavers on finances and guaranteeing financial support for care leavers entering higher education. The Welsh Government should actively report on their progress against these commitments to local authorities and directly to children and young people themselves.</p> <p>2017/18 I recommend that the Welsh Government works with care leavers and local authorities to produce clear financial information that is available nationally, to help young people and their personal advisers access the range of grants, benefits and entitlements that are available when leaving care.</p>		<p>In particular the creation of the St David’s Day fund and allocating additional funding to Local Authorities to provide personal advisors to all eligible young people up to the age of 25 are positive benefits already being enjoyed by young people leaving care. I am pleased that a high number of young people have already accessed the St David’s Day fund. However, young people we spoke to in 2018 weren’t all aware of the developments around personal adviser support and there is limited evidence to demonstrate consistent access to provision across all 22 LA’s in Wales, which I raised in my response to the consultation on “Measuring Social Services Performance”.</p> <p>The parts of this recommendation that have not yet been progressed are equal support for all care leavers including those from residential care, and clear published information on finances for care leavers. In particular, progress has been slow in ensuring those leaving residential care have equivalent access to housing.</p> <p>My office continues to work closely with the Welsh Government on these points, including acting as an observer to the Task and Finish Group on Residential Care, the Task and Finish Group on Corporate Parenting and the recently established Social Services and Housing Group.</p>
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Young people leaving care Council Tax	2016/17 The Welsh Government should progress their work to exempt young people leaving care from paying council tax up to the age of 21 to assist with alleviating poverty amongst care leavers.	No change	I warmly welcome the regulations that have been laid to introduce a full council tax exemption for care leavers up to the age of 25, following the recent consultation.
Adoption and sibling contact	2016/17 The Welsh Government should work with the National Adoption Service (NAS) to ensure that siblings' rights to contact are fully considered during adoption care planning.	No change	<p>I note that the Welsh Government and National Adoption Service (NAS) have enthusiastically welcomed this recommendation. Practitioners clearly recognise the issues that were highlighted in this annual report.</p> <p>The NAS are committed to working with WG in response to this recommendation and have taken a number actions, including commissioning new information about sibling contact rights for young people and considering how practitioners and adopters can be supported to make active consideration of sibling contact when adoption decisions are made. The Adoption Barometer survey revealed that 60% of recent adopters in Wales had indirect contact agreements in place with siblings living elsewhere. However, it is unclear if arrangements are in place for all adopted children and children who have siblings that have been adopted.</p> <p>There has also been additional funding for the Wales Adoption Cohort Study to include looking at sibling links, which will be reporting shortly on its findings.</p>

			<p>The young people who raised this with me, and many others like them, may not have seen any shift in policy or practice yet, which is why this is still rated Amber.</p>
<p>Residential Care</p>	<p>2016/17 The Welsh Government should deliver against the work plan of their Task and Finish group, set up in response to my recommendations in The Right Care report.</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>This recommendation had previously been rated as Green because the work of the Welsh Government was on track. However I have become increasingly concerned at the lack of tangible progress and change for children and young people.</p> <p>The Group published its implementation plan for 2019-20, which has led to the creation of a number of specific groups to take forward elements of the work plan, such as Extending the Principles of “When I’m Ready”, Secure Accommodation, the reinstated Task Finish Group on Corporate Parenting and provision of Remand and PACE placements, all of which are attended by representatives of my policy team.</p> <p>Despite there being a number of positive research publications arising from the work of the Group which is helping inform this complex area of work, it remains a concern that little has been achieved in regards to delivering improvements in provision or policies for this particular group of young people who still do not have equivalent access to continued support schemes like “When I’m Ready”.</p>

<p>British Sign Language (BSL)</p>	<p>2016/17 The Welsh Government and local authorities should ensure appropriate state support for the communication needs for Deaf and hearing impaired children and young people and their families, including accessible and affordable BSL learning opportunities at a range of levels and the employment of staff in schools who are fluent communicators of BSL, to meet individuals' needs.</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>The urgent need for progress on this issue, underlined in the July 2018 Welsh Government analysis of the local authority special educational needs workforce, has been reiterated by the recent Petitions Committee Report to improve access to education and services in BSL.</p> <p>I am cautiously pleased to see Government accept three of the four recommendations made by this report but note that further clarity and detail is needed about how these might be achieved. A clear and costed action plan is needed to ensure the needs of individuals are met. I note that currently the impact of accepting the committee's recommendations are cost neutral.</p> <p>This action plan needs to include a specific strategy for workforce planning and professional learning for teachers and learning assistants working with Deaf and hearing impaired children and young people.</p> <p>This is needed immediately as currently a third of SEN specialist services do not feel they are meeting the current demands for children and young people with a hearing impairment. More than half of SEN services feel they cannot meet current demand through the medium of Welsh.</p>

			<p>The plan should also be able to demonstrate how it will assist in supporting other aspects of a child's life including early years, communication with their parents and friends and participating in recreational activities and community life.</p> <p>I am pleased that a Debate was held on the Petitions Committee Report on Petition P-04-628 <i>To Improve Access to Education and Services in British Sign Language</i>. Last quarter I welcomed the news that a review of BSL provision for adults in Wales was to take place. I am aware that the review is progressing but I am yet to see the findings.</p> <p>I am pleased to see that the new curriculum suggests that BSL can be learnt by children and young people as an international language. However I am will continue to seek clarification about whether the Language, Literacy and Communications Area of Learning and Experience is inclusive of children that communicate with BSL as their primary language.</p>
Health Advocacy	<p>2016/17 The Welsh Government should ensure that health related advocacy for under 18s is available and accessible to all who need it.</p> <p>2017/18 I recommend that the Welsh Government undertakes an audit of the provision of advocacy in health settings for under 18s</p>	Changed from Red	<p>I was pleased to hear that the Chief Medical Officer wrote to all health boards in March to ask for information about their complaints and advocacy services. The information received back from health boards suggests there is a mixed picture of provision.</p> <p>In August 2019 I responded to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee's consultation on the NHS and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) Bill, where I noted that the Bill demonstrated a missed opportunity to clarify and formalise an advocacy offer for children and young people across health and social care.</p>

	<p>and takes forward measures to ensure that any gaps identified are filled.</p> <p>I also recommend that the Putting Things Right patient information is updated to direct young people and their families as to how they can access face to face advocacy in health settings across Wales.</p>		<p>However, I am pleased that the Welsh Government has agreed to host a meeting this autumn to include representatives from all health boards in Wales, in order to agree a set of Core Principles, and to explore how to ensure that all health boards meet the same standard across Wales.</p>
<p>Transport subsidies</p>	<p>2016/17 I urge Welsh Government to ensure that public transport subsidies for children are available up to age 18 with no change in eligibility at age 16.</p> <p>2017/18 I recommend that the new scheme should as a minimum ensure that the child fare is extended to the age of 18.</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>I am pleased that the MyTravelPass scheme has been relaunched and now covers an extended age range.</p> <p>There were 2,300 applications for concessionary travel from the launch date of 14th February to 12th May 2019.</p> <p>I note that the First Minister indicated his wish to enrol all 16-18 year olds into a youth concessionary travel scheme to ensure that the discounts reach all eligible young people. I understand that officials envisage putting advice to Ministers towards the end of the year. My office is meeting with officials to discuss my support for this plan, which I anticipate would boost take up of this scheme.</p>

	<p>I also recommend that a CRIA is undertake on proposals for revisions to the MyTravelPass scheme to identify any potentially excluded groups such as young parents and carers, care leavers undertaking work place training or apprenticeships, and those engaging in voluntary work.</p>		
<p>Childcare</p>	<p>2016/17 The Welsh Government should ensure through the childcare offer pilot and any subsequent scheme that the children of non-working parents do not miss out on the increased childcare being offered to children of working parents.</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>The Childcare Funding (Wales) Bill has now been passed. I supported the Children, Young People and Education Committee’s recommendations to broaden the wording of the Bill, to allow for changes to be made to ensure that children of non-working parents can also access the benefits of childcare.</p> <p>I gave evidence to the Committee during stage 1 and have also published a position paper on this, which can be found on my website here.</p> <p>I am disappointed that despite the representations of myself and others that some of those children who I believe would benefit significantly from the childcare offer will be unable to access it based solely on their parents’ circumstances. I will continue to monitor the impact that this legislation will have on all concerned. I cautiously welcome that Welsh Government has committed to exploring whether the offer could be extended to children whose parents are in training or in the process of returning to work. However, this falls short of ensuring that every 3 and 4 year old in Wales has an equal</p>

			opportunity to access the offer, particularly those who may benefit from it most.
Bullying	<p>2016/17 The Welsh Government's review of the 'Respecting Others' Guidance should pay attention to the direct experiences and perspectives of children and young people on the impact of bullying and the effectiveness of current policies and practices. It should clearly set out how it intends to prevent and tackle bullying nationally and outline how this work will influence curriculum reform and teacher training.</p> <p>2017/18 I recommend that the Welsh Government's 'Respecting Others' guidance should require schools to integrate robust anti-bullying strategies informed by children and young people into a whole school approach to wellbeing.</p>	No change	<p>I responded in full to the consultation on the refreshed guidance, noting that I was pleased to see it was informed by the perspectives of children and young people but pointing out several concerns.</p> <p>My key concerns were around the status of the draft guidance as it contained no statutory requirements for schools. Therefore, my concern is that the guidance may have minimal impact on the experiences of children and young people in education.</p> <p>The new guidance is to be launched in November 2019 for anti-bullying week. I am hopeful that the finalised guidance will respond to my key concerns and will create new statutory requirements related to bullying.</p>

<p>Child Sexual Exploitation</p>	<p>2016/17 The Welsh Government should ensure consistent collection of data in relation to CSE across Wales to provide a national picture of our challenges in relation to CSE. It should thoroughly analyse and act on challenges and gaps identified by the national data.</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>I recognise that active steps have been taken by Welsh Government, with the cooperation of Local Authorities and other public bodies, to address this recommendation. There has been the pilot of data gathering and an attempt to standardise information that is collected.</p> <p>However despite these efforts I understand that there remains inconsistency in recording, which requires addressing. The review of Child Sexual Exploitation guidance provides opportunities and challenges to meeting this recommendation in full.</p> <p>I continue to monitor progress of this work through my chairing role of The Child Sexual Exploitation Roundtable.</p> <p>A consultation on Measuring social services performance: code of practice, which included proposals for national data collection in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation has now closed. Having provided a response to the consultation I am now awaiting to see whether the arrangements in the final version will assist in addressing the issues identified in this recommendation.</p>
<p>Sexual abuse and exploitation</p>	<p>2017/18 I recommend that the Welsh Government ensures that Sexual Assault Referral Centre provision for each health board area should include 24/7 access to a rota of suitably trained paediatricians and forensic medical examiners, so that no child has to wait for many hours or even days for an examination, and that</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>Provision is still variable across Wales which is affecting children's experiences.</p> <p>I continue to monitor the current provision available here in Wales. This includes the development of a future model in relation to South, mid and West Wales. I acknowledge that positive progress has been made, lead on by Cardiff and the Vale LHB, in respect of securing an interim service for these areas, this should have a positive impact on the experiences of children under 14 years of age, compared to</p>

	<p>sufficient counselling and recovery services for victims are available throughout Wales.</p>		<p>previous arrangements. I am pleased to hear that an evaluation of the arrangement will include sensitively seeking the views of children, young people and their families. Whilst training and experience of relevant professionals is not something that can be addressed overnight I will be continuing to press those concerned about the safest but also most timely route to ensure those age 14 and over and have access to appropriately trained health professionals including the option of paediatric support.</p> <p>I welcome that the Government's National Action Plan Preventing and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse, launched in July 2019, includes a commitment from Welsh Government to 'support the evidence based development of the therapeutic support offer to children affected by trauma related to CSA' and a requirement on safeguarding board partners to 'undertake a review of available therapeutic support for children who have experienced CSA, CSE, HSB or Online sexual abuse in the region, so that gaps in provision can be identified and addressed.' Any opportunity to accelerate the timescales for completing this work would of course be welcomed and it is imperative that programmes and statutory partners in this field coordinate with one another.</p>
<p>Healthy Relationships</p>	<p>2017/18 I recommend that the Welsh Government takes forward the recommendations of their expert Panel's report, and makes healthy relationships education a statutory part of the new curriculum. Healthy relationships education should be</p>	<p>Changed from amber</p>	<p>The Welsh Government Curriculum and Assessment White Paper included Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) within the proposed primary legislation for the new curriculum. I welcome this inclusion and I also welcome the emphasis on healthy relationships within the Health and Wellbeing AoLE.</p>

	rights-based and informed by learner involvement in the design.		It is also encouraging that the White Paper shows Government is considering removing the parental right to withdraw children and young people from RSE. I strongly support this as an essential step to safeguarding children and ensuring all children and young people get age-appropriate information in order to make healthy choices and stay safe. I hope that Government take this forward and support children's human rights by including this step in the Curriculum and Assessment Bill.
All Wales Schools Liaison Programme	2017/18 I recommend that the Welsh Government takes action to agree a funding model with the four police forces to ensure that all schools in Wales continue to have the benefits of a positive relationship with a police liaison officer, and that the programme's role in contributing to the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience in the new curriculum is coherent and future-fit. An assessment on the impact on children's rights of any decision on the future of the Programme should be carried out.	No change	Following a proposal to reduce the funding for this programme, the Government and Police forces have agreed to reinstate this money for 2019/2020. I await publication of the report undertaken this year to look at the content, reach and impact of the Schools Liaison Core Programme to ensure that it develops in line with emerging issues and priorities such as knife crime. I understand that children and young people's views have been gathered as part of that review in order to inform future developments.
Mental Health/ complex needs residential provision	2017/18 I recommend that Welsh Government takes concrete steps towards commissioning new provision that can meet the care and mental health needs of the small number of young people with	No change	I remain frustrated by a lack of any progress on this agenda. I continue to receive cases which demonstrate the desperate and potentially dangerous situation for those children and young people affected by this lack of provision.

	<p>very challenging behavioural and emotional difficulties, for whom there is currently very little suitable residential provision in Wales.</p>		<p>I wrote in June to both the Minister and Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services, expressing my deep frustration at this lack of progress, and suggesting potential ways forward that could be taken by Government to bring about this vital provision.</p> <p>In July 2019, I met with Welsh Government and representatives of organisations including WHSSC, HIW and the Association of Directors of Social Services. At this meeting it was agreed that Welsh Government would explore a potential programme of work to establish such provision. This is a positive step, and I hope that this could mean real change for children and young people in the future.</p>
<p>Profit in care</p>	<p>The Welsh Government should ensure that local authorities deliver their duties under Section 16 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act to involve children and young people in the design and delivery of services and increase the range of not for profit services so that money invested in social care services can be spent on improving outcomes for children rather than providing returns for shareholders.</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>To date I am not aware that the Welsh Government has consulted with children and young people to hear their views on this topic. In the meantime however I have been approached by young people who have themselves expressed concern that their providers are receiving a lot of money and they are unsure where this is going.</p> <p>I have given evidence to the Public Accounts Committee during the last year on this subject, as have others including a group of care experienced young people.</p> <p>The First Minister has stated his intention to “rebalance” the sector and to support local authorities to bring social care services back under their direct control in his leadership manifesto. I am aware that the</p>

			<p>Welsh Government has been gathering information on different models of care and pilots that have taken place in England and Scotland but this is as far as this work has gone to date.</p> <p>Some Local Authorities are bringing some elements of their provision in house but this is taking place individually in the absence of a national directive. CIW are due to publish their thematic review of Care Homes for Children in September 2019, which will provide welcomed information on the number of local authority owned homes and private homes.</p> <p>While I recognise that the stability of the sector must be not be undermined by any sudden changes, I believe that work towards a longer-term policy goal of eliminating profit would be warmly welcomed by young people and those commissioning services alike.</p>
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