

Each year through my annual report I make recommendations to the Welsh Government, on the key policy issues requiring Government action. 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.

Each quarter I then report on the Government's progress, giving each recommendation a Red / Amber / Green rating. The colour rating is my own assessment based on engagement with key stakeholders. 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.

Whilst this quarterly reporting process has been in place for a number of years, the format of this paper has been amended following the May 2021 Senedd Election. The new format separates and organises areas into key themes and priorities. The intention is to make this paper more user friendly and effective, so we have kept to short and clear wording for readability. We would welcome any feedback on the format and contents of this document via post@childcomwales.org.uk

If you would like more information about any of the areas of work listed in this document, you can read our reports and find out more about our current work plan on our website [here](#) or you can contact our Head of Policy and Public Affairs Rachel Thomas on 01792 765600 or email post@childcomwales.org.uk

HEALTH

Topic	Years raised	Summary of recommendation(s)	RAG rating	CCfW recent work in this area	Where are we now? What do we want to see by April 2022?
RPBs 'safe accommodation'	2017-18 2018-19 2019-20 See also our 'No Wrong Door' report here	Safe places for children in care with complex needs to live and receive suitable and timely support, in every region of Wales	AMBER	We have met with the Deputy Minister for Social Services to discuss this work again following the 2021 election. We have restarted our scrutiny visits to RPBs to ask them about their progress on this work.	4 of the 7 regions have made plans to open new provision but nothing has been able to open yet. By April 2022 we want to see new accommodation opening and plans coming forward from the remaining regions to follow suit.
Advocacy services in health settings	2016-17 2017-18 2018-19 2019-20	An offer of an advocate to every child who needs it when accessing health services, to have their voice heard	RED	We have regularly followed this up with the Welsh Government but were advised that work was paused due to the pandemic. We're writing to WG again to re-raise this issue and seek urgent progress.	There has been little progress in this area since my office created the principles for this work, to assist the WG. By April 2022 we want to see the Welsh Government recommencing work on statutory guidance for advocacy in health settings.
Support following sexual assault	2017-18	Equal level of provision for all children across Wales who have suffered sexual abuse or violence, 24/7	AMBER	We've met with the new SARC programme Director to discuss this work and she presented at our July 2021 CSE/A roundtable.	There had been some progress but momentum had slowed. By April 2022 we expect to see more progress in each region, with the new Director now in post.

Health transitions	2018-19	Implement new guidance to make sure children are supported throughout their journey to being cared for by adult services, where this is needed	AMBER	We responded to the consultation on the draft guidance but a final version has not yet been published. We have also participated in further working group discussions to try to get the support arrangements right for children and families.	There is not a clear plan or timeline for the conclusion of this work. By April 2022 we expect the new guidance to be published and being implemented in practice.
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EDUCATION

Topic	Years raised	Summary of recommendation(s)	RAG rating	CCfW recent work in this area	Where are we now? What do we want to see by April 2022?
Mental health and well-being	2015-16 2019-20s	Support for children's mental health and wellbeing at school – a Whole School approach	GREEN	We have participated in a working group to ensure that the WSA framework was published this year. We're continuing to scrutinise how this is communicated and rolled out to schools.	We are pleased to see the publication of the guidance. By April 2022 we want to see support for schools to implement the guidance effectively.
Learner Transport	2015-16 2018-19	New guidance for accessing school transport in every area of Wales, for children of all ages	AMBER	We have fed in to the WG review but have not seen any outcome or findings. We have asked for an update from the WG as we are concerned at further delay to this work.	The 2020-21 review was commenced but findings have not been published. By April 2022 we want to see meaningful progress and outcomes for learners based on the findings of the review work.
Children's Rights in the Curriculum	2015-16 2016-17 2017-18 2018-19	Including the UNCRC in the Curriculum and Assessment Bill so that all teachers and children know about children's rights and	GREEN	We have supported the WG to ensure that children's rights are written throughout the new Curriculum materials as	My team is working with WG to support the implementation of this duty in the Act.

	2019-20	experience this in the school environment		well as to ensure a duty related to the UNCRC appeared on the Bill (now an Act).	By April 2022 we want to see guidance from the WG to support schools in incorporating rights into their curricula.
Home education	2015-16 2016-17 2017-19 2018-19 2019-20 See also this report of our formal review from 2020 here	New legislation is needed to make sure all children are seen and spoken to about their education	RED	We have undertaken a formal review of WG's actions in relation to this policy and found a lack of due regard for children's rights and a lack of any meaningful process on the policy area.	This work requires urgent action as it has stalled in two previous Senedd Terms. By April 2022 we want to see action by the WG to bring forward the primary legislation necessary to make their proposed changes.
Independent schools	2019-20 See also this report of our formal review from 2020 here	New standards in Regulations that ensure all children in residential schools are kept safe and are well supported with their educational and pastoral needs	RED	We have undertaken a formal review of WG's actions in relation to this policy. The pandemic clearly had an impact on this work but urgent action is required as the WG has been aware of loopholes in the safeguarding arrangements for many years now as the Review found.	We understand that the WG is proposing a "root and branch" review of the legislation and guidance for independent schools. This is welcome as it is long overdue. By April 2022 we want to see concrete progress on this review and a timeline for bringing forward the necessary legislation and guidance.
Healthy Relationships	2017-18	Further development of the draft Relationships and Sexuality Education [RSE] Code and Guidance must take account of the views and experience of young people.	AMBER	We have been observers to the stakeholder group on RSE and responded extensively to the recent consultation on the RSE Code. We've also had	We have set out changes we think are necessary to the Code within our consultation response.

		Wider recommendations of the 2017 Expert Panel must also be progressed, particularly professional learning and the development of whole school approaches to RSE.		several meetings with officials aiming to strengthen the guidance.	By April 2022 we want to see a revised Code being laid, ready for implementation in September 2022.
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SOCIAL CARE AND YOUTH JUSTICE

Topic	Years raised	Summary of recommendation(s)	RAG rating	CCfW recent work in this area	Where are we now? What do we want to see by April 2022?
Support for care leavers	2016-17 2017-18 2018-19 2019-20 See also our Hidden Ambitions report here and follow up here	New legislation is needed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Personal Advisor support for all up to the age of 25 • Expand the duties on public bodies to act as Corporate Parents 	AMBER	We have regularly raised these issues with WG, seeking to secure the commitments they've made in response to our work and reports. We've participated in a number of working groups on corporate parenting and support for care leavers. We submitted a joint letter to the DWP Minister seeking immediate changes to the Shared Accommodation Rate – which were secured.	Commitments in the Programme for Government are welcome to note; it is crucial that these commitments are followed through. By April 2022 we want to see a timetable for implementing these reforms into legislation, along with a plan for children's involvement in the development of a Corporate Parenting Charter.
Support for care leavers	2016-17 2017-18 2018-19 2019-20 See also our	Information on how to access financial support and entitlements to be published by WG	AMBER	We called for improvements in published financial information back in 2017 and have continued to follow those calls up with WG.	We are aware Welsh Government have provided some funding to Children in Wales and Voices From Care Cymru to develop resources for young people leaving care,

	Hidden Ambitions report here and follow up here			<p>We have also maintained our My Planner resource with information and advice for care leavers.</p>	<p>available here: Getting Ready Project Children in Wales</p> <p>Welsh Government need to ensure all LAs are providing up-to-date, service specific advice and guidance to care leavers on the financial support available to them.</p> <p>We also welcome that Care Leavers will be involved in Welsh Government's Universal Basic Income Pilot.</p> <p>By April 2022 we want to see widespread access to financial information for all care leavers.</p>
Sibling contact following adoption	2016-17	Embedding sibling contact into the care planning and review processes for all children in care	AMBER	<p>Through our role as observers on the National Adoption Service Governance Board we are aware of a growing commitment to explore on-going contact arrangements for adopted children with their birth families.</p> <p>We have published a new guide to a rights based approach to social work which you can read and download here</p>	<p>Voices from Care, Children in Wales and National Adoption Service have encouraged good practice and produced guides for young people on sibling contact. However, no changes have been made to legislation or guidance.</p> <p>By April 2022 we want to see clearer national standards in place to ensure that when children are placed in care, or are adopted, Local Authorities and Agencies are routinely putting plans in place to</p>

					support sibling contact, if children cannot be placed together.
Support for young people leaving residential care	2016-17 2019-20 See also our report The Right Care here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equivalent support to the When I'm Ready scheme for those leaving foster care, so support for young people leaving residential care does not end abruptly at age 18 • Implement a protocol to prevent young people being criminalised for minor matters unnecessarily 	AMBER	CCFW participate in a broad number of groups which explore these issues, such as the End Youth Homelessness Partnership, Welsh Government Housing and Social Services Group and are working with organisations to develop the Protocol, led by the 4Cs. We are also undertaking work to explore the issue of unregulated accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds.	Whilst WG's Programme for Government commits to radical reform of the care system, strengthening transitions for young people leaving residential care must be included in this. By April 2022 we want to see the protocol implemented, as well as progress on support for young people leaving residential care.
Profit in care services	2017-18 2018-19 2019-20 See also our own 2021 manifesto calls here	Eliminating profit being made from children's care services, in line with the Labour party 2021 manifesto commitment	AMBER	We have submitted evidence to the Competitions and Markets authority inquiry into profit in care services. We've also met with WG Ministers and officials, and other Senedd members to discuss taking forward the manifesto commitment within this Senedd Term.	The clear commitment in Welsh Government's Programme for Government on this was extremely welcome. By April 2022 we want to see work with the sector taking place to make this commitment a reality.
Youth Justice	2019-20	Urgent progress is needed to achieve the aims and actions of the Youth Justice Blueprint	RED	We've attended and coordinated a lot of meetings with the Government and youth justice bodies to try to encourage progress.	We welcome the Blueprint but there hasn't been enough focus on progressing the youth justice element to date. By April 2022 we want to see concrete progress on new

				We held the inaugural annual policing and justice seminar this year. We are supporting Police Forces, Secure Settings and YOTs to implement children's rights approaches and have pushed for modernisation of facilities at Parc YOI and alternatives to custody.	accommodation for young people in custody within Wales as well as wider support for their needs.
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TACKLING INEQUALITIES

Topic	Years raised	Summary of recommendation	RAG rating	CCfW recent work in this area	Where are we now? What do we want to see by April 2022?
Child poverty	2015-16 2016-17 2017-18 2018-19 2019-20 See also our 'A Charter for Change' report here	A clear plan from WG setting out how they will support children and families living in poverty, and then delivering on this plan.	AMBER	We've participated in a working group and discussions with officials but would still welcome a clear plan on tackling poverty. We've also raised issues with the 2-child limit with the UK government, published here We've submitted evidence to the Welsh Affairs Select Committee inquiry on Benefits and Wales.	Ongoing work to maximise income and take up of welfare benefits is welcome and supports this work. By April 2022 we want to see the review of eligibility for free school meals taking place, and a clear WG plan for tackling child poverty and inequalities in Wales.
BSL support	2016-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient status for BSL within the new curriculum, with accompanying guidance 	AMBER	We have hosted a roundtable meeting with d/Deaf organisations and individuals, and shared the findings with the Welsh Government.	Our roundtable event identified some matters to be discussed further with the EWC; we will help to arrange those discussions.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving access to support in the community for families needing to learn BSL BSL Charter 		We have responded to the WG Curriculum consultations.	By April 2022 we want to see revised curriculum guidance, and progress on the Charter currently being worked on.
Transport	2016-17 2017-18	Extension of full transport subsidies at least to all aged under 18	RED	<p>We have met with officials and the Minister to discuss this issue, as well as with political parties in relation to their 2021 election manifestos.</p> <p>We responded to the WG transport strategy consultation.</p>	<p>We were disappointed not to see a commitment to full transport subsidies for under 18s in the Manifesto or Programme for Government.</p> <p>By April 2022 alongside the learner Travel Review, we want to see more recognition of the impact of the costs of public transport for young people and progress towards achieving fairer policies for them in line with children's rights.</p>
Childcare	2016-17	Enabling more children to access free childcare, from a younger age or even if their parents are in education/training/currently unemployed, so that all young children get the benefit of language and skills development that quality childcare can offer them.	AMBER	<p>We have liaised with officials regarding childcare policies during the pandemic.</p> <p>We have welcomed provision for vulnerable children during the pandemic such as access to childcare hubs.</p>	<p>Changes to the policy during the pandemic reflected that childcare can be offered based on the child's needs/vulnerability rather than parents' employment status.</p> <p>By April 2022 we want to see the WG further reflecting on how childcare can meet children's needs not just respond to parents' working circumstances. Changes to the sector may be required in</p>

					response to more flexible and home based working.
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